

Capt. Herman Bottcher, S. F. Hero Wins DSC for Raid on Buna Japs

Led Attack, Fought Off Counter Action by Nip Troops

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UNITED NATIONS HEAD-QUARTERS IN AUSTRALIA, Jan. 11.—Capt. Herman Bottcher of San Francisco, German born, "one man army" of the American forces in New Guinea, has received the Distinguished Service Cross for extraordinary heroism, it was announced today.

An ace Jap killer and an expert with the hand grenade, the 33-year old veteran of many battles on both sides of the world was granted the coveted decoration for having led a group of United States soldiers in a brilliant attack that drove a wedge between Japanese positions to the northeast New Guinea coast.

BEAT OFF ATTACKS.

Gaining the beach, Bottcher and his men held their position against repeated counterattacks from east and west by numerically superior enemy forces until the main body of American troops in the sector between Buna village and Buna Mission moved up and secured the beachhead.

Cool under fire, Bottcher pitched grenades at the counter attacking Japanese just as he did some five years ago during the battle of Belchite on the Spanish Aragon front. He was wounded in action, but refused to leave his men on the Papuan New Guinea shore, though he ordered other wounded soldiers of his group back for treatment.

ALREADY PROMOTED.

Even before the DSC was conferred upon him, he had been promoted from sergeant to captain in recognition of his outstanding feat which contributed no little to the Allied victory in Papua.

A sergeant during the Papuan battle, Bottcher now holds in the American Army the same rank as



CAPT. HERMAN BOTTCHER
Former Student of S. F. State

that to which he rose in the Spanish Loyalist Army as a member of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade. His home is in San Francisco.

The citation, accompanying the DSC awarded to Bottcher, related:

"During an attack on enemy positions in the period between December 5 and 11, Captain Bottcher, then a staff sergeant, personally led a unit which cut the communications between the enemy forces at Buna Village and those at Buna Government Station (Mission).

"On succeeding days, he repeatedly repulsed strong enemy counterattacks on this vital position.

GRENADES FOR JAPS.

"During one simultaneous attack from both enemy positions, he calmly stood up in the face of enemy fire and threw hand grenades at the advancing enemy.

"Although wounded in this action, he remained with his unit until it was relieved.

"His outstanding leadership and personal heroism repeatedly inspired his men and was

Grenade Expert Wounded, Stuck To Battle

primarily responsible for the success of the defense."

Capt. Herman Bottcher, the San Franciscan awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, was born in Germany, thirty-three years ago, and came to this country in 1931 from Australia. He took out citizenship papers then, but let them lapse when he enlisted to fight for the Loyalists in the Spanish Civil War.

Interned at the conclusion of hostilities, he was finally released, returned to San Francisco, and again took out citizenship papers. Between wars, he worked at the Emporium as a cabinet maker and attended San Francisco State College.

Mrs. Alice Bottcher, of 239 Ramsell Street, his uncle's widow, is his only living relative. He was reported as on his way to a convalescent center.