

THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY  
WASHINGTON

The Secretary of the Navy takes pleasure in commending

JOSEPH K. HILTON  
CHIEF DAMAGE CONTROLMAN  
UNITED STATES NAVY

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

"For outstanding performance of duty as a Crew Member on board the USS Erie when that vessel was torpedoed by enemy forces in the Caribbean Sea, Nov. 12, 1942. While the after part of the torpedoed Erie was enveloped in fuel-oil and gasoline fires which caused the exploding of 6-inch charges and projectiles in the No. 4 ready room, Hilton assisted in throwing overboard the powder charges of the nearby No. 3 ready room despite the great personal danger involved in handling powder cans so hot they could not be touched by bare hands. As a member of the damage control party, he rendered additional service by taking charge of separate groups charged with closing off the after part of the ship in order to prevent the spread of fire to the second deck. By his courage, loyalty and determination, Hilton contributed materially to the successful beaching and saving of the Erie, thereby upholding the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service."

The Commendation Ribbon is authorized.

(Signed) Francis P. Matthews  
Secretary of the Navy