

# THE PURPLE HEART

## WORLD WAR II



**Purple Heart - By order of the President of the United States, the Purple Heart established by George Washington at Newburgh, NY, August 7, 1782, during the War of the Revolution, is hereby revived out of respect to his memory and military achievements.**

**Peter J. Rondero, Corporal  
USMC,  
2nd Battalion, 5th  
Marine Division FMF  
27th Regiment,  
Fox Company,  
Rifleman  
March 7, 1945  
Iwo Jima**

### **World War II & Korean War 1943-1953**

October 17, 1943 I became a United States Marine.

I was assigned to the 5th Marine Division FMF 27th Regiment, 2nd Battalion, and Fox Company. Our company was trained at Camp Pendleton, Hilo Hawaii and Camp Tarawa for the invasion of Iwo Jima. On February 19, 1945 0900 hours we landed on Red Beach #1. Fox Company was in on the first wave. Iwo Jima was my first taste of combat and yes we were scared, but so was everyone around us. We forgot our fears as we moved forward and gained much ground. Marines were falling all around us, but we by passed them and prayed the (Phm) Navy Corpsman would help them soon. The gunfire from the Japanese machine gun nest was heavy and took its toll on the F-2-27 and it slowed us down as we moved forward.



The 1st to the 6th waves made it to shore and all hell broke loose, the Marines were being massacred on the beach. Heavy fire was coming from Mt Suribachi and the artillery fire from the northern end of Iwo Jima kept them pinned down. After moving inland the 28th Regiment Marines took over Mt Suribachi. The Japanese enemy defending the Island were dug into caves we blasted the caves with Marine Tanks and flame throwers to burn the enemy out of their location.

March 7, 1945 I was wounded while Fox Company moved forward over a rocky area. I was crawling forward and when I raised up to look around... Wham! I was hit on the right side of my helmet by a Japanese sniper. The shot was almost in the center of the forehead. The bullet went between the fiber helmet and steel helmet, causing a welt on the steel helmet and cutting the chinstrap sending bits of steel into my neck and cutting my ear. I survived another day. Some of the Marines were able to survive a horrible 26 days on Iwo Jima.

On March 27th we boarded the LST 715 for the Marshall Islands where we were transferred to the USS Highlands for our return to Camp Tarawa, Hawaii. I was sent home on points and was discharged on April 28, 1946.

1949 I reenlisted in the United States Marines Reserves and the Korean War broke out on August 1, 1950 I was assigned to the 4.2 Mortar Company, 1st Regiment, 1st Marine Division. FMF.

I was squad leader of the first platoon. We made the Inchon Landing, Wonson, Korea landing on September 17th, and the battle of Seoul, Korea I was in the Chosin Reservoir campaign. April 1951 while in Korea I made Sergeant. I was discharged on August 30, 1951 and returned home with frostbite, cold weather injuries, and loss of hearing in both ears. I am rated 100% disabled with the VA.

God Bless America