

HIGHEST HONOR:

**Nominated
GI for Award
3 Times—CO**

WASHINGTON (NNPA)—Among 250 persons witnessing presentation of the Congressional Medal of Honor posthumously to Pfc. William Thompson, 22, was his commanding officer, Col. ~~Nervm R.~~ Blair, who told reporters he had to submit the hereo's name for the medal three times because Gen. Headquarters return it after each invstigation.

The colonel, on furlough from the Korean front, declared boldly: "The United States will never realize the full benefit of its military power until the complete in-

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—Medal of Honor

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tegration of colored soldiers with whites is accomplished," adding that he has made that observation to the War Department several times.

The Medal of Honor, the nation's highest military award, was presented on Friday to his mother, Mrs. Mary Henderson of Brooklyn, by General of the Army Omar N. Bradley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, at a ceremony in the Pentagon, at which Medals of Honor were presented by him to the families of ten other Army heroes of the Korean war.

No known facts of Thompson's life disclose any inheritance from his parents or any influence from his environment which would account for his heroism. Apparently, he was a waif, who sought refuge in the Army. At the time of his enlistment, he gave as his home address 462 E. 158th St., the Bronx, New York—the Home for Homeless Boys.

Evidently he did not know the whereabouts of his mother at the time of his enlistment. He listed her as his sole beneficiary and gave her address the same as his. The youth had nine years of elementary and intermediate schooling. He quit school in 1941 and in 1944 worked for a short period as a semi-skilled fabric cutter at \$30 a week.

The Rev. M. Eva, superintendent of the home and Presbyterian minister, told the AFRO that Thompson was quick to learn, cheerful, with a delightful personality and a singing voice that earned him a place as soloist in the chapel choir.

Member 25th Division
Company M, 24th Infantry Regiment, 25th Division, when the enemy launched a surprise night attack against his unit. He set his machine gun directly in the path of the attacking force, laying down such intense fire that the enemy was temporarily forced to take cover.

His citation said: "Although hit

repeatedly by grenade fragments and small arms fire, he resisted all efforts of his comrades to induce him to withdraw, steadfastly remained at his machine gun and continued to deliver deadly, accurate fire until mortally wounded by an enemy grenade."

Also present at the ceremonies was Thompson's stepfather, Harry Henderson. Mr. and Mrs. Henderson were guests of the Army on their visit to Washington and were quartered at the Willard Hotel.