

Peter H. Monfore WHS 1945



Peter Howland Monfore

First Name: Peter

Middle Name: Howland

Last Name: Monfore

Birthplace: Yankton, SD, USA

Date of Birth: 10 August 1927

Gender: Male

Date of Death: 19 September 1951

Branch: Army (1784 - present)

Rank: First Lieutenant

Years Served: 1950 - 1951

Home of Record: Springfield, SD

Graduate, U.S. Military Academy, Class of 1950

Engagements:

- Korean War (1950 - 1953)

Biography:

Peter Howland Monfore
First Lieutenant, U.S. Army

Peter Howland Monfore was born in Yankton, SD, to Howland Swift and Gertrude Margaret *Kositzky* Monfore. Pete had three brothers, Robert, James, and Thomas, and one sister, Diana. After attending school at Springfield and Tyndall, SD, Pete won academic honors and excelled in football and boxing while attending Washington High School in Sioux Falls, SD. Upon graduation, he immediately enlisted in the U.S. Navy, where he remained and continued boxing

at the intercollegiate level until 1946, when he received a letter from the Secretary of War notifying him of an appointment to the United States Military Academy.

At West Point, he became captain of the boxing team, eventually achieving the title of Eastern Intercollegiate light heavyweight champion in 1949 and 1950. He graduated from the Academy in 1950.

Monfore was sent to Korea in August 1950 and assigned as a Platoon Leader of Company E, 2nd Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division, which had been engaged in heavy fighting while breaking out of the Pusan perimeter. He was seriously wounded in this action, and was evacuated to Japan for treatment. After treatment and recovery, 1LT Monfore returned to combat duty on 7 October 1950, and fought with his division all the way through North Korea to the Yalu River. When Chinese forces swarmed across the river, his heavy weapons company provided rear guard security for the 23rd Infantry Regiment, inflicting heavy casualties upon the attacking Chinese.

In August 1951, 1LT Monfore turned down an opportunity to be Aide-de-Camp to General Matthew Ridgeway. Instead, he chose to command an infantry company. He was made Commander of Company L, 3rd Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment. 1LT Monfore fought in more intense combat, and received the French Croix de Guerre award for rescuing the encircled French Battalion. On 19 September 1951, his company was ordered to lead a night assault on Hill 851 during the battle of Heartbreak Ridge in North Korea. His company was successful in capturing Hill 851. Immediately, 1LT Monfore set about retrieving weapons and ammunition from dead enemy soldiers, showing his men how to use them as they established defensive positions.

1LT Peter Howland Monfore was killed in action while defending his position on Hill 851 on 19 September 1951.

Medals and Badges

Distinguished Service Cross
Purple Heart with Oak Leaf Cluster
National Defense Service Medal
Korean Service Medal
United Nations Service Medal
Republic of Korea War Service Medal
Korean Presidential Unit Citation
Combat Infantryman Badge

Distinguished Service Cross Citation

The President of the United States of America, under the provisions of the Act of Congress approved July 9, 1918, takes pride in presenting the Distinguished Service Cross (Posthumously) to First Lieutenant (Infantry) Peter Howland Monfore (ASN: 0-62499), United States Army, for extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations against an armed enemy of the United Nations while commanding Company L, 3d Battalion, 23d Infantry Regiment, 2d Infantry Division. First Lieutenant Monfore distinguished himself by extraordinary heroism in action against enemy aggressor forces in the vicinity of Satae-ri, Korea, on the night of 18 - 19 September 1951. On that night, Lieutenant Monfore received orders to lead his company in an attack against a numerically superior hostile force occupying heavily fortified positions on a key terrain feature. On the morning of 19 September 1951, the friendly forces had fought its way, yard by yard, to its objective under the inspiring leadership of Lieutenant Monfore, who had consistently remained with the leading assault elements, exhorting his men onward. After reaching the objective, Lieutenant Monfore deployed his men in defensive positions in anticipation of the enemy counterattack which was inevitable. It began with a tremendous artillery and mortar barrage which inflicted many casualties among the already battered friendly force. Disregarding his own personal safety, Lieutenant Monfore constantly moved about the exposed terrain, calming his men and inspiring confidence. Immediately after the barrage abated, two battalions of the enemy launched a fanatic attack to regain the hill. For five and a half hours the battle raged with the friendly troops repeatedly hurling the enemy back. Realizing that the ammunition of his small force was practically exhausted, Lieutenant Monfore moved about the fire-swept terrain, gathering ammunition and weapons from both friendly and enemy casualties. At one point, he found a friendly gun crew dead in its emplacement. Without hesitation, he manned the machine-gun and poured a devastating volume of fire into the onrushing ranks of the enemy. When the ammunition of the friendly troops was almost depleted, he ordered them to withdraw. As he moved about the terrain in order to direct his men as they withdrew, Lieutenant Monfore was killed by enemy sniper fire.

General Orders: Headquarters, Eighth U.S. Army, Korea: General Orders No. 62 (January 31, 1952)

Burial

First Lieutenant Peter Howland Monfore is buried at Springfield Cemetery in Springfield, SD.
