

Panoc, Joseph R.

Sgt. Joseph R. Panoc, Formerly Of City, Saves Buddy's Life

43RD DIVISION IN THE SOUTH-
WEST PACIFIC. — The Soldiers'
Medal has been awarded to a former Bethlehem man, Sergeant Joseph R. Panoc, now of Fall River, Mass., for plunging into a river near here to save one of his buddies from drowning.

The infantry outfit of which Panoc was a member was returning from a Jap stalking patrol on Aug. 23, 1944. As they were crossing one of numerous streams that thread through the jungle, Panoc's mate, Pfc. Richard Hebert, of Wisconsin, lost his footing and swift current carried him downstream. "Seeing the man helplessly floundering in the water, Panoc unhesitatingly and with utter disregard for his own safety, dived into the stream fully clothed and weighted down with a full field pack." Removing his equipment while still in the water, Panoc swam to where the man had gone down for the second time. According to his citation, "alertness, aggressive and heroic action" saved the man's life.

Inducted into the Army June 29, 1943, Panoc previously worked as a maintenance man for the Firestone Rubber Company in Fall River, Massachusetts. His wife, Mrs. Helen Melazzi Panoc, resides there now at 14 Downing Street. He is in his 12th month of foreign service.

He is the son of Mrs. Mary Panoc of 737 East Morton Street. Letters received from his wife by

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Given Citation



SGT. JOSEPH R. PANOC

his sister, Mrs. John Timko, of 625 Itaska Street, told of the citation and the medal which she has received. The medal is the highest award for bravery outside of combat.

December 8, 1944