

# DFC Presented To Mother Of Lieut. George O. Ellstrom

JUL 17 1944

At solemn ceremonies yesterday afternoon at Forrest Post, No. 245, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Sellersville R. D. 1, the Distinguished Flying Cross, awarded posthumously to the late Lieut. George Oliver Ellstrom, Army Air Corps, was presented to his mother, Mrs. V. E. Ellstrom of Sellersville R. D. 1, formerly of Bethlehem. The presentation was made by Maj. George Vasilatos, now stationed at the Reading Air Field, and who was at Henderson Field, Pearl Harbor, during the initial attack on Hawaii and the Philippines by the Japanese, during which Lieut. Ellstrom was killed.

Major Vasilatos read the citation for the Distinguished Flying Cross (posthumous) to the large gathering of friends and relatives of the late flier and members of Forrest Post and Auxiliary. The citation stated: "Second Lieut. George O. Ellstrom, o-401152, Air Corps. For heroism while participating in aerial flight at Clark Field, Philippine Island on December 8, 1941. Lieut. Ellstrom exhibited great courage and tenacity of purpose in

attacking a large number of Jap Zeros and destroying three although his supply of gas was running low. Forced to bail out when his gas was exhausted, he was fired on during his descent and after reaching the ground. Despite his mortal wounds, Lieut. Ellstrom gave fellow fliers, who came to his assistance, first hand information on Japanese tactics and firepower."

Mrs. Ellstrom, in accepting the Flying Cross, thanked the Major on behalf of her son, whom, she said, she always thinks of as a typical American boy, who gladly gave all he had for his beloved America. "I feel that his sacrifice and that of other American boys and girls, will soon be justified," she declared.

James Loughridge, commander of Forrest Post, conducted the ceremonies. Friends of Lieut. Ellstrom were seated in the center of the room, with members of the Post and Auxiliary were on either side. Com. Loughridge led the salute to the flag, which opened the ceremonies and Mrs. Florence Hobart

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## Posthumous Award for Lt. Ellstrom



Major George Vasilatos, of the Reading Army Air Field, is shown above presenting the Distinguished Flying Cross to Mrs. V. E. Ellstrom, mother of the late Lieutenant George O. Ellstrom, USAAF, who was killed in action in the Philippine Islands, December 8, 1941. Lieut. Ellstrom had been declared the first American boy killed in World War 2. Mrs. Ellstrom, formerly of Bethlehem, now resides at Sellersville R. D. 1. The ceremony was held Sunday afternoon at the Forrest Post 245, Veterans of Foreign Wars, near Sellersville. (Globe-Times photo)

of Quakertown accompanied the group in the singing of "America" and the closing National Anthem.

The Rev. M. M. Moore, rector of Trinity Episcopal Church, this city, gave the invocation and benediction. Mrs. Irma Hillpot of Perkaskie, president of the Post Auxiliary, presented Mrs. Ellstrom with a large white vase, filled with gladioli.

B. Robert Rhedans of Allentown, read the script of a broadcast he

gave in March, 1942, honoring Lieut. Ellstrom. He told of the assistance the young flier, then a student at Lehigh University, had given the Boys Haven in Allentown in organizing its football team and whom the boys had nicknamed "dynamite." He declared the Army had lost a great flier and a fine officer, who as a member of the Army Air Corps, starred in the service of Uncle Sam the same as he did on the football field and the golf links for Lehigh.

Com. Loughridge declared that Forrest Post was honored that the mother of Lieut. Ellstrom had selected the Post Home for the scene of the presentation. The Post considers the late flier as its first gold star in this war, as his family had moved to Sellersville from Bethlehem shortly before he was killed in action. He invited the audience to remain as guests of the post for dinner following the program, which was concluded with the sounding of "Taps."

*Ellstrom, George O.*

*July 17, 1944*