



Barkhamsted, CT  
Silver Star

### SERGEANT FIRST CLASS WILLIAM TOMLIN

After two full days of fierce fighting in the Helmand Province of Afghanistan, approximately 300 enemy fighters began closing in on SFC William Tomlin III and his scout platoon of 45 soldiers. They were part of the U.S. Army's Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 508<sup>th</sup> Parachute Infantry Regiment, 4<sup>th</sup> Brigade Combat Team.

It was April 9, 2007, about 9:30 a.m., with the temperature already near a scorching 120 degrees. Tomlin, as the scout platoon leader, was maneuvering his platoon near Chakak, Afghanistan to extend the battalion's security zone when he heard the sharp crack of incoming hostile fire from enemy fighters. Immediately, he sprang into action and instinctively ordered a small team of snipers to scout for the incoming enemy, but soon enemy gun fire and rocket propelled grenades rained down on the team halting their efforts.

Tomlin immediately rose to the occasion to lead a dismounted counter-attack against the enemy forces which had closed to within 15 meters of the platoon's location.

"I grabbed three or four guys with me, and we moved into a position where we could suppress the bad guys," said Tomlin.

During a non-stop six hour battle, Tomlin had one goal in mind – keep his fellow soldiers safe while not being overrun by enemy forces that had his platoon outnumbered six to one. He surged ahead of friendly forces to single-handedly employ multiple weapon systems including fragmentary hand grenades, AT-4s and his M4. Simultaneously, he directed the fires of platoon-organic heavy weapon systems.

By the third assault, Tomlin was suffering from severe dehydration and was near exhaustion, according to his award citation. But, he was able to work hand-in-hand with his Joint Tactical Air Controller, directing the devastating effects of close air support to within 100 meters of his platoon. Additionally, he organized reinforcements from four separate units into a cohesive element that ably completed the enemy's destruction. These efforts helped lead his scout platoon to victory without a single American loss.

Tomlin's leadership, personal courage, and selfless dedication in the presence of a determined, numerically superior enemy force were the difference between victory and defeat on this day. For his valorous actions, he was awarded the Silver Star.



*Excerpts from an article by Jim Moore in America's North Shore Journal, Dec. 1, 2008.*