



SUPPLEMENT
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*Government House, Canberra.
23rd March, 1944.*

AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES.

The KING has been graciously pleased to approve the award of the VICTORIA CROSS to:—

Sergeant Thomas Currie Derrick, D.C.M., Australian Military Forces.

For most conspicuous courage, outstanding leadership and devotion to duty during the final assault on Sateberg in November, 1943.

On 24th November, 1943, a company of an Australian Infantry Battalion was ordered to outflank a strong enemy position sited on a precipitous cliff-face and then to attack a feature 150 yards from the township of Sateberg. Sergeant Derrick was in command of his platoon of the company. Due to the nature of the country, the only possible approach to the town lay through an open kunai patch situated directly beneath the top of the cliffs. Over a period of two hours many attempts were made by our troops to clamber up the slopes to their objective, but on each occasion the enemy prevented success with intense machine-gun fire and grenades.

Shortly before last light it appeared that it would be impossible to reach the objective or even to hold the ground already occupied and the company was ordered to retire. On receipt of this order, Sergeant Derrick, displaying dogged tenacity, requested one last attempt to reach the objective. His request was granted.

Moving ahead of his forward section he personally destroyed, with grenades, an enemy post which had been holding up this section. He then ordered his second section around on the right flank. This section came under heavy fire from light machine-guns and grenades from six enemy posts. Without regard for personal safety he clambered forward well ahead of the leading men of the section and hurled grenade after grenade, so

completely demoralising the enemy that they fled leaving weapons and grenades.

By this action alone the company was able to gain its first foothold on the precipitous ground.

Not content with the work already done, he returned to the first section, and together with the third section of his platoon advanced to deal with the three remaining posts in the area. On four separate occasions he dashed forward and threw grenades at a range of six to eight yards until these positions were finally silenced.

In all, Sergeant Derrick had reduced ten enemy posts. From the vital ground he had captured the remainder of the Battalion moved on to capture Sateberg the following morning.

Undoubtedly Sergeant Derrick's fine leadership and refusal to admit defeat, in the face of a seemingly impossible situation, resulted in the capture of Sateberg. His outstanding gallantry, thoroughness and devotion to duty were an inspiration not only to his platoon and company but to the whole Battalion.

CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD.

*St. James's Palace, S.W.1.
23rd March, 1944.*

The KING has been graciously pleased to give Orders for the following appointment to the Most Honourable Order of the Bath, in recognition of gallant and distinguished services in Sicily:—

To be an Additional Member of the Military Division of the Third Class, or Companions, of the said Most Honourable Order:—

Major-General (temporary) William Ronald Campbell Penney, C.B.E., D.S.O., M.C. (3029), late Royal Corps of Signals.

CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD.

*St. James's Palace, S.W.1.
23rd March, 1944.*

The KING has been graciously pleased to give Orders for the following promotions in, and