



SUPPLEMENT  
TO  
**The London Gazette**

Of TUESDAY, the 28th of MARCH, 1944

Published by Authority

*Registered as a newspaper*

THURSDAY, 30 MARCH, 1944

*War Office, 30th March, 1944.*

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

Captain (temporary Major) William Philip Sidney (42108), Grenadier Guards (Girvan).

For superb courage and utter disregard of danger in the action near Carroceto, in the Anzio Beach Head, in February, 1944.

The period 6th-10th February, 1944, was one of critical importance to the whole state of the Anzio Beach Head. The Germans attacked a British Division with elements of six different divisions and a continuous series of fierce local hand-to-hand battles was fought, each one of which had its immediate reaction on the position of other troops in the neighbourhood and on the action as a whole. It was of supreme importance that every inch of ground should be doggedly, stubbornly and tenaciously fought for. The area Carroceto-Buonriposo Ridge was particularly vital.

During the night 7th-8th February, Major Sidney was commanding the support company of a battalion of the Grenadier Guards, company headquarters being on the left of battalion headquarters in a gully South-West of Carroceto Bridge. Enemy infantry who had by-passed the forward rifle company North-West of Carroceto, heavily attacked in the vicinity of Major Sidney's company headquarters and successfully penetrated into the wadi. Major Sidney collected the crew of a 3 inch mortar firing nearby and personally led an attack with Tommy guns and hand grenades, driving the enemy out of the gully. He then sent the detachment back to continue their mortar firing while he and a handful of men took up a position on the edge of the gully in order again to beat off the enemy who were renewing their attack in some strength. Major Sidney and his party succeeded in keeping the majority of the Ger-

mans out but a number reached a ditch 20 yards in front, from which they could out-flank Major Sidney's position. This officer—in full view and completely exposed—dashed forward without hesitation to a point whence he could engage the enemy with his Tommy gun at point blank range. As a result the enemy withdrew, leaving a number of dead.

On returning to his former position on the edge of the gully, Major Sidney kept two guardsmen with him and sent the remainder back for more ammunition and grenades. While they were away, the enemy vigorously renewed his attack, and a grenade struck Major Sidney in the face, bounced off and exploded, wounding him and one guardsman and killing the second man. Major Sidney, single-handed and wounded in the thigh, kept the enemy at bay until the ammunition party returned five minutes later, when once more they were ejected. Satisfied that no further attack would be made, he made his way to a nearby cave to have his wound dressed, but before this could be done the enemy attacked again. He at once returned to his post and continued to engage the enemy for another hour, by which time the left of the battalion position was consolidated and the enemy was finally driven off. Only then did Major Sidney, by that time weak from loss of blood and barely able to walk, allow his wound to be attended to.

Throughout the next day contact with the enemy was so close that it was impossible to evacuate this officer until after dark. During that time, as before, although extremely weak, he continued to act as a tonic and inspiration to all with whom he came in contact.

Throughout the engagement Major Sidney showed a degree of efficiency, coolness, gallantry and complete disregard for his personal safety of a most exceptional order, and there is no doubt that as a result of his action, taken in the face of great odds, the

battalion's position was re-established with vitally far reaching consequences on the battle as a whole.

*War Office, 30th March, 1944.*

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

Lieutenant Alec George Horwood, D.C.M. (165583), The Queen's Royal Regiment (West Surrey), attached The Northamptonshire Regiment (Yeovil).

At Kyauchaw on 18th January, 1944, Lieutenant Horwood accompanied the forward company of the Northamptonshire Regiment into action against a Japanese defended locality with his forward mortar observation post. Throughout that day he lay in an exposed position, which had been completely bared of cover by concentrated air bombing, and effectively shot his own mortars and those of a half troop of another unit while the company was manoeuvring to locate the exact position of the enemy bunkers and machine gun nests. During the whole of this time Lieutenant Horwood was under intense sniper, machine-gun and mortar fire, and at night he came back with most valuable information about the enemy.

On 19th January he moved forward with another company and established an observation post on a precipitous ridge. From here, while under continual fire from the enemy, he directed accurate mortar fire in support of two attacks which were put in

during the day. He also carried out a personal reconnaissance along and about the bare ridge, deliberately drawing the enemy fire so that the fresh company which he had led to the position and which was to carry out an attack might see the enemy positions.

Lieutenant Horwood remained on the ridge during the night 19th-20th January and on the morning of 20th January shot the mortars again to support a fresh attack by another company put in from the rear of the enemy. He was convinced that the enemy would crack and volunteered to lead the attack planned for that afternoon. He led this attack with such calm, resolute bravery, that the enemy were reached and while standing up in the wire, directing and leading the men with complete disregard to the enemy fire which was then at point blank range, he was mortally wounded.

By his fine example of leadership on the 18th, 19th and 20th January when continually under fire, by his personal example to others of reconnoitring, guiding and bringing up ammunition in addition to his duties at the mortar observation post, all of which were carried out under great physical difficulties and in exposed positions, this officer set the highest example of bravery and devotion to duty to which all ranks responded magnificently. The cool calculated actions of this officer, coupled with his magnificent bearing and bravery which culminated in his death on the enemy wire, very largely contributed to the ultimate success of the operation which resulted in the capture of the position on the 24th January.

LONDON

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE

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1944

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S.O. Code No. 65-36445