

*War Office,
22nd October 1918.*

His Majesty the KING has been graciously pleased to approve of the award of the Victoria Cross to the undermentioned Non-commissioned Officers and Men:—

No. 358 Sjt. Thomas James Harris, M.M., late R. W. Kent R. (Lower Halling, Kent).

For most conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty in attack when the advance was much impeded by hostile machine guns concealed in crops and shell-holes. Sjt. Harris led his section against one of these, capturing it and killing seven of the enemy.

Later, on two successive occasions, he attacked single-handed two enemy machine-guns which were causing heavy casualties and holding up the advance. He captured the first gun and killed the crew, but was himself killed when attacking the second one.

It was largely due to the great courage and initiative of this gallant N.C.O. that the advance of the battalion was continued without delay and undue casualties. Throughout the operations he showed a total disregard for his own personal safety, and set a magnificent example to all ranks.

No. 4/400 Sjt. Samuel Forsyth, late N.Z Engrs.

For most conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty in attack.

On nearing the objective, his company came under heavy machine-gun fire. Through Sjt. Forsyth's dashing leadership and total disregard of danger, three machine-gun positions were rushed and the crews taken prisoner before they could inflict many casualties on our troops.

During subsequent advance his company came under heavy fire from several machine guns two of which he located by a daring reconnaissance. In his endeavour to gain support from a Tank, he was wounded, but after having the wound bandaged, he again got in touch with the Tank, which, in the face of very heavy fire from machine guns and anti-Tank guns, he endeavoured to lead with magnificent coolness to a favourable position. The Tank, however, was put out of action.

Sjt. Forsyth then organised the Tank crew and several of his men into a section, and led them to a position where the machine guns could be outflanked. Always under heavy fire, he directed them into positions which brought about a retirement of the enemy machine guns and enabled the advance to continue. This gallant N.C.O. was at that moment killed by a sniper.

From the commencement of the attack until the time of his death Sjt. Forsyth's courage and coolness, combined with great power of initiative, proved an invaluable incentive to all who were with him, and he undoubtedly saved many casualties among his comrades.

No. 51396 Cpl. (L./Sjt.) Edward Smith, D.C.M., Lan. Fus. (Maryport).

For most conspicuous bravery, leadership and personal example during an attack and in subsequent operations.

Sjt. Smith while in command of a platoon personally took a machine-gun post, rushing the garrison with his rifle and bayonet. The enemy on seeing him advance scattered to throw hand grenades at him. Regardless of all danger, and almost without halting in his rush on the post, this N.C.O. shot and killed at least six of the enemy. Later, seeing another platoon requiring assistance, he led his men to them, took command of the situation and captured the objective.

During the enemy counter-attack on the following day he led a section forward and restored a portion of the line. His personal bravery, skill and initiative were outstanding, and his conduct throughout exemplified magnificent courage and skill, and was an inspiring example to all.

No. 40684 Pte. (A./Sjt.) Harold John Colley, M.M., late Lan. Fus. (Smethwick).

For most conspicuous bravery and initiative when in command of a platoon in support of forward platoons which had been ordered to hold on at all costs.

When the enemy counter-attacked in force, he rushed forward on his own initiative to help the forward line, rallying and controlling the men holding it. The enemy by this time were advancing quickly, and had already obtained a footing in the trench. Sjt. Colley then formed a defensive flank and held it. Out of the two platoons only three men remained unwounded, and he himself was dangerously wounded.

It was entirely due to Sjt. Colley's action that the enemy were prevented from breaking through, and were eventually driven off. His courage and tenacity saved a very critical situation.

No. 28930 Pte. (Piper) James Richardson, late Manitoba R.

For most conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty when, prior to attack, he obtained permission from his Commanding Officer to play his company "over the top."

As the company approached the objective, it was held up by very strong wire and came under intense fire, which caused heavy casualties and demoralised the formation for the moment. Realising the situation, Piper Richardson strode up and down outside the wire, playing his pipes with the greatest coolness. The effect was instantaneous. Inspired by his splendid example, the company rushed the wire with such fury and determination that the obstacle was overcome and the position captured.

Later, after participating in bombing operations, he was detailed to take back a wounded comrade and prisoners.

After proceeding about 200 yards Piper Richardson remembered that he had left his pipes behind. Although strongly urged not to do so, he insisted on returning to recover his pipes. He has never been seen since, and death has been presumed accordingly owing to lapse of time.