

which was the battalion Lewis gun which had been captured by the enemy on the previous day.

Throughout the seven days of operations 2nd Lt. Crowe showed an utter disregard of danger and was recklessly brave. His personal example and cheerfulness contributed largely to the determination of the garrison of the post to hold out. It may safely be said that but for his coolness and skill at the last moment, when he personally placed the covering party in close proximity to the enemy, who were again closing round, and were also forming up in fours near by, the garrison of the post could never have effected its escape. The valour and zeal displayed by 2nd Lt. Crowe were of the highest order.

No. S.6522 Sjt. William Gregg, D.C.M., M.M., Rifle Bde. (Derby).

For most conspicuous bravery and brilliant leadership in action.

Two companies of his unit attacked the enemy's outpost position without artillery preparation. Serjeant Gregg was with the right company, which came under heavy fire from the right flank as it advanced. All the officers with the company were hit. He at once took command of the attack. He rushed an enemy post and personally killed an entire machine-gun team and captured the gun and four men in a dug-out near by. He then rushed another post, killed two men and captured another. In spite of heavy casualties he reached his objective, and started consolidating the position. By this prompt and effective action this gallant N.C.O. saved the situation at a critical time and ensured the success of the attack.

Later, Sjt. Gregg's party were driven back by an enemy counter-attack, but, reinforcements coming up, he led a charge, personally bombed a hostile machine gun, killed the crew, and captured the gun. Once again he was driven back. He led another successful attack, and hung on to the position until ordered by his company commander to withdraw.

Although under very heavy rifle and machine-gun fire for several hours, Sjt. Gregg displayed throughout the greatest coolness and contempt of danger, walking about encouraging his men and setting a magnificent example.

No. Z.1030 Cpl. (L./Sjt.) Joseph Edward Woodall, Rifle Bde. (Salford).

For most conspicuous bravery and fine leadership during an attack.

Sjt. Woodall was in command of a platoon which, during the advance, was held up by a machine gun. On his own initiative he rushed forward and, single-handed, captured the gun and eight men.

After the objective had been gained, heavy fire was encountered from a farmhouse some 200 yards in front. Sjt. Woodall collected ten men and, with great dash and gallantry, rushed the farm and took thirty prisoners.

Shortly afterwards, when the officer in charge was killed, he took entire command, reorganised the two platoons, and disposed them most skilfully.

Throughout the day, in spite of intense shelling and machine-gun fire, this gallant

N.C.O. was constantly on the move, encouraging the men and finding out and sending back invaluable information.

The example set by Sjt. Woodall was simply magnificent, and had a marked effect on the troops. The success of the operation on this portion of the front is attributed almost entirely to his coolness, courage and utter disregard for his own personal safety.

No. 15883 L./Cpl. James Hewitson, R. Lanc. R. (Coniston).

For most conspicuous bravery, initiative and daring in action.

In a daylight attack on a series of crater posts, L./Cpl. Hewitson led his party to their objective with dash and vigour, clearing the enemy from both trench and dug-outs, killing in one dug-out six of the enemy who would not surrender. After capturing the final objective, he observed a hostile machine-gun team coming into action against his men. Working his way round the edge of the crater he attacked the team, killing four and capturing one. Shortly afterwards he engaged a hostile bombing party, which was attacking a Lewis-gun post. He routed the party, killing six of them.

The extraordinary feats of daring performed by this gallant N.C.O. crushed the hostile opposition at this point.

No. B.203174 Pte. William Beesley, Rifle Bde. (Nuneaton).

For most conspicuous bravery.

The enemy's outpost position was attacked by two companies of his unit without artillery preparation. Pte. Beesley was in the leading wave of the left company, which came under heavy fire as it approached the enemy's front line. His platoon serjeant and all the section commanders were killed. This young soldier, realising the situation at once, took command and led the assault. Single-handed he rushed a post, and with his revolver killed two of the enemy at a machine gun. He then shot dead an officer who ran across from a dug-out to take their place at the machine gun. Three more officers appeared from the dug-out. These he called on to surrender; seeing one of them trying to get rid of a map he shot him and obtained the map. He took four more prisoners from a dug-out and two others from a shelter close by, disarmed them and sent them back to our lines. At this moment his Lewis gun was brought up by a comrade, who was acting as a carrier. Pte. Beesley at once brought it into action, and used it with great effect against the enemy as they bolted towards their support line, inflicting many casualties.

For four hours Pte. Beesley and his comrade held on to the position under very heavy machine-gun and rifle fire. The enemy then advanced to counter-attack, and the other soldier was wounded. Pte. Beesley carried on by himself, and actually maintained his position until 10 p.m., long after the posts on his right and left had been practically wiped out and the survivors had fallen back.

It was mainly due to his action that the enemy were prevented from rushing the position, and that the remnants of his company, when compelled to withdraw, were able to do so without further loss.

When darkness set in Pte. Beesley made his way back to the original line from which