

engaged with twenty of the enemy for five hours, and prevented them from getting two machine guns into position. He displayed fine fighting qualities as a leader.

307357 Sjt. W. Sowden, R. War. R. (Chester).

For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. When in command of a platoon which was attacked at dawn, he visited his posts and repelled the attack. Afterwards, with another non-commissioned officer, he located an enemy machine gun and captured prisoner.

14766 Sjt. E. Spalding, Suff. R. (Suffolk).

For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. During two days continuous fighting Serjeant Spalding on more than one occasion was able to secure the safety of his company by leading reconnaissance patrols to get touch with the enemy and obtain timely information. At a critical stage of the fighting, when he was in command of an outlying post some 300 yards in advance of the main position, he saw the enemy forming up in large numbers for an attack from the flank. He immediately disposed his platoon in the best position for defence, while he himself and a few men remained in front to engage the enemy in the first stages of their advance. All these measures were taken under heavy shell and machine-gun fire in presence of greatly superior enemy forces. The result was very successful, and it was largely owing to Serjeant Spalding's skilful arrangements, as well as to his great courage and untiring efforts, that his company were able to hold their own against odds which might have been overwhelming.

1504 Sjt. P. Spargo, R.A.F. (Liverpool).

For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. When clouds were low and weather conditions unfavourable, he flew at a height of 300 feet, and in face of intense rifle and machine-gun fire dropped his bombs on the objective, destroying a machine-gun emplacement gun and crew. He then flew along the hostile trenches, bringing machine-gun fire to bear on the occupants, and caused many casualties. He then returned to his aerodrome for more bombs, but in view of the weather conditions he was not allowed to go out again.

11701 Sjt. W. H. Sparks, M.M., Leic. R. (Loughborough).

For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty as signal serjeant. His fine example to the men under him caused telephone communication to be maintained under very trying conditions for two days with brigade and battalion headquarters. He frequently carried messages, under machine-gun fire, to battalion headquarters.

15334 Pte. L. O. Sparrow, L'pool R. (Birkenhead).

For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. He acted as battalion runner, and showed great pluck and perseverance in successfully carrying a message through heavy shell and machine-gun fire to the front line after four others had failed.

10249 Sjt. W. J. Spokes, R. Berks. R. (Twyford).

For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. When his battalion was completely surrounded he was one of a bombing party ordered to clear a communication trench for the withdrawal of the battalion. Both officers of the bombing party being killed, he organised a fresh party and successfully cleared the trench of the enemy. He showed great gallantry and determination.

11073 Sjt. W. Spick, Notts. & Derby R. (Nottingham).

For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty in action. During an initial gas bombardment before a hostile attack he remained at the telephone without a mask, and stuck to his post until all the wires had been cut. Later, although feeling the ill effects of the gas, he took charge of the few remaining signallers and employed them as a rifle section. He set a fine example of courage and devotion to duty.

17516 Spr. (A./Sjt.) E. J. Springer, R.E. (Ryde).

For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty during lengthy operations. Hearing that some of the battery lines were cut, he continually went out under heavy shell fire and repaired the cables. He did the same work on four consecutive days, and it was chiefly owing to his courage and coolness that communications were maintained. Throughout he set a magnificent example to the brigade signal section.

G/593 Pte. (L./Cpl.) C. Sprunt, R. Suss. R. (near Saxmundham).

For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. With a serjeant and another man he manned a Lewis gun in a Tank, and by his accurate handling of the gun inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy and took fourteen prisoners.

1618 C.S.M. W. D. Stafford, M.M., R. Fus. (Pietermaritzburg).

For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. His coolness and courage made him of great assistance to his company commander, and when the latter was wounded and there were no other officers remaining he handled the company with ability and skill. Later, while acting as regimental serjeant-major, he was most useful to his battalion commander in organising the battalion. He also personally worked a Lewis gun and killed numbers of the enemy, cheering and inspiring confidence in the men. He set a very fine example of courage and initiative under adverse conditions.

1407 Cpl. A./S.Sjt. G. Staples, M.M., R.A.M.C. (Sevenoaks).

For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty when in the collection and evacuation of wounded he showed a complete disregard of personal danger, and brought in Capt. Hancock, who was lying severely wounded, exposed to machine-gun fire, although in great danger of being cut off by the enemy. Later, during the retirement, he rendered valuable service in organising relay posts and evacuating the wounded.