

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.

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