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*War Office, 15th May, 1945.*

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

Lieutenant William Basil WESTON (311376), The Green Howards (Alexandra, Princess of Wales's Own Yorkshire Regiment) (attd. The West Yorkshire Regiment (The Prince of Wales's Own)) (Ulverston, Lancs.).

In Burma, on 3rd March, 1945, during the Battalion's attack on the town of Meiktila, this officer was commanding a Platoon. The task of his Company was to clear through the town from the North to the waters edge in the South—a distance of about 1,600 yards, of which the last 800 yards was not only very strongly held but was a labyrinth of minor roads and well constructed buildings. The Company was working with tanks and Lieutenant Weston's Platoon was one of the two Platoons leading the attack. The clearing of the final 800 yards was commenced at 1330 hours and was to be completed by dusk. Practically every man in Lieutenant Weston's Platoon was seeing active service for the first time and under the most difficult conditions. From the start Lieutenant Weston realised that only by the highest personal example on his part could he hope to carry out his task within the time given. As the advance continued the already determined opposition increased until in the final stages it reached a stage when it can only be described as fanatical. Fire from guns and light automatics was heavy from well bunkered positions and concrete emplacements. Each bunker position had to be dealt with separately and superimposed on the enemy's fire from the front was accurate sniping from well selected positions on the flanks. The fighting throughout the day was at very close quarters and at times was hand-to-hand.

With magnificent bravery Lieutenant Weston inspired the men of his Platoon to superb achievements. Without thought of his own personal safety he personally led his

men into position after position, exterminating the enemy wherever found.

Throughout, the leadership was superb, encouraging his Platoon to the same fanatical zest as that shown by the enemy. His bravery, his coolness under fire and enthusiasm inspired his Platoon. There was no hesitation on his part and no matter how heavy or sustained the enemy's fire he boldly and resolutely led his men on from bunker position to bunker position. It was at 1700 hours, within sight of the waters edge which marked the completion of the Platoon's task, that he was held up by a very strong bunker position. Lieutenant Weston, appreciating the limited time now at his disposal and the necessity of clearing the area before night-fall, quickly directed the fire of the tanks with him on to the position. He then led a party with bayonets and grenades to eliminate the enemy within the bunker. As on many occasions before, he was the first into the bunker. At the entrance to the bunker he was shot at by the enemy inside and fell forward wounded. As he lay on the ground and still fired by the undaunted courage that he had shown throughout the day, he withdrew the pin from a grenade in his hand and by doing so killed himself and most of the enemy in the bunker. It is possible that he could have attempted to reach safety but to do so would have endangered the lives of his men who were following him into the bunker. Throughout the final 3½ hours of battle Lieutenant Weston set an example which seldom can have been equalled. His bravery and inspiring leadership was beyond question. At no time during the day did he relax and inspired by the deeds of valour which he continually performed, he personally led on his men as an irresistible force.

The final supreme self-sacrifice of this gallant young officer within sight of victory was typical of the courage and bravery so magnificently displayed and sustained throughout the day's operation.