



SUPPLEMENT
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War Office, 8th November, 1945.

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

No. NX.20317 Corporal John Bernard MACKEY, 2nd/3rd Australian Pioneer Battalion, Australian Military Forces.

For most conspicuous bravery in the face of strong enemy resistance in the attack on the Helen feature at Tarakan on 12th May, 1945.

Corporal Mackey was in charge of a section of the 2nd/3rd Australian Pioneer Battalion in the attack on the feature known as Helen, East of Tarakan town. Led by Corporal Mackey the section moved along a narrow spur with scarcely width for more than one man when it came under fire from three well sited positions near the top of a very steep razor-backed ridge. The ground fell away almost sheer on each side of the track making it almost impossible to move to a flank so Corporal Mackey led his men forward.

He charged the first Light Machine Gun position but slipped and after wrestling with one enemy, bayoneted him, and charged straight on to the Heavy Machine Gun which was firing from a bunker position six yards to his right. He rushed this post and killed the crew with grenades.

He then jumped back and changing his rifle for a sub-machine gun he attacked farther up the steep slope another Light Machine Gun position which was firing on his platoon. Whilst charging he fired his gun and reached within a few feet of the enemy position when he was killed by Light Machine Gun fire but not before he had killed two more enemy.

By his exceptional bravery and complete disregard for his own life Corporal Mackey was largely responsible for the killing of seven Japanese and the elimination of two machine

gun posts which enabled his platoon to gain its objective, from which the Company continued to engage the enemy. His fearless action and outstanding courage were an inspiration to the whole battalion.

War Office, 8th November, 1945.

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

No. WX.11519 Private Leslie Thomas STARCEVICH, 2nd/43rd Australian Infantry Battalion, Australian Military Forces.

For most conspicuous gallantry and extreme devotion to duty at Beaufort, North Borneo, 28th June, 1945.

WX.11519 Private L. Starcevich was a member of the 2nd/43rd Australian Infantry Battalion during the capture of Beaufort, North Borneo.

During the approach along a thickly wooded spur, the enemy was encountered at a position where movement off the single track leading into the enemy defences was difficult and hazardous.

When the leading section came under fire from two enemy machine gun posts and suffered casualties, Private Starcevich, who was Bren gunner, moved forward and assaulted each post in turn. He rushed each post, firing his Bren gun from the hip, killed five enemy and put the remaining occupants of the posts to flight.

The advance progressed until the section came under fire from two more machine gun posts which halted the section temporarily. Private Starcevich again advanced fearlessly firing his Bren Gun from the hip and ignoring the hostile fire captured both posts single-handed, disposing of seven enemy in this assault.