

Brigadier Cheyne is a forceful commander whose aggressive leadership and cheerful enthusiasm has been a constant inspiration to all ranks of the nineteen major units which have served under his command since December 1964.

Bar to the Military Cross

Captain (temporary Major) Peter Edgar de la Cour de la BILLIERE, M.C. (424859), The Durham Light Infantry (serving with Special Air Service Regiment).

Major de la Billiere has commanded his Special Air Service Squadron for two years, during which it has been engaged on two operational tours in Borneo and one in South Arabia. Throughout this time and these operations he has displayed qualities of leadership and of command far above those to be expected of his rank or age. His squadron has performed outstandingly well on operations, gaining a number of decorations and earning the praise of all senior commanders under whose command it has been placed. A Squadron Commander in the Special Air Service, unlike in other Arms, has to deal with a wide spectrum of affairs, both political and military, and to negotiate with senior officers far superior to him. This alone calls for maturity and a wide knowledge, apart from the tact and ability necessary to conduct affairs as a junior officer. The skill and ability with which Major de la Billiere has led his squadron, the manner in which he has planned and conducted operations, as well as training his squadron, is worthy of the highest praise.

During his recent Borneo tour he personally led his squadron on three dangerous and arduous missions. During them, and as a result of his planning and execution, a considerable number of enemy were killed, and the actions of his squadron contributed very considerably to the success of the Brigade Commanders and Director of Operations overall plan. His personal courage and skill during these operations were of a very high degree.

During this two years of outstanding service Major de la Billiere has shown a devotion to duty and a personal skill and bravery worthy of high recognition.

Military Cross

Major Peter Miles WELSH (418431) 2nd Battalion, The Royal Green Jackets, The King's Royal Rifle Corps.

Throughout the four and a half months of his Battalion's operational tour he displayed leadership and devotion to duty of a very high order.

During this time, quite apart from controlling every aspect of his company's operations, he has personally led six fighting patrols all of which were very successful. Moreover by his skill and offensive spirit he so completely dominated the enemy in the area allotted to him, that the enemy threat in that sector was reduced to a fraction of what it was when he took over.

One only had to talk to the men of his company who accompanied him on one of these patrols, to realise what a magnificent effect his leadership, personal example, and disregard for his own comfort and safety had on their morale and fighting qualities.

Three of the actions mentioned have involved crossing rivers, whose width of at least 80 yards, twelve foot depth and 4 to 6 knot current would have deterred any but the stoutest heart. Across these he has taken his whole company in full equipment (in each case, in both directions) with his men constantly out of their depth and with the threat of enemy attack ever present. The fact that he did not lose a single man or weapon is a tribute not only to his clear orders and painstaking planning, but also to his inspiring example and constant encouragement.

Thanks to these skilful operations he was able on each of these occasions to achieve complete surprise and inflict significant losses on the enemy without any casualties to his own men.

On another occasion he personally so skilfully sited and sprung an ambush against an enemy that he was able to inflict at least 14 casualties on them, and then extricate his own small force without loss, in spite of the fact that the enemy had reacted vigorously and at once with machine guns and well aimed mortar fire.

Throughout this operation he displayed great courage and calmness under fire, not only personally directing his troops, but also reporting back to Battalion Headquarters everything that was happening most lucidly and accurately.

His constant calmness and courage, his determination to close with any enemy who have penetrated into his area has been an inspiration not only to the officers and men of his own company but also to the whole Battalion.

Military Cross

Lieutenant Michael John Calverly ROBERTSON (474047) 2nd Battalion The Royal Green Jackets, The King's Royal Rifle Corps.

On the 16th August 1965, Lieutenant Robertson was ordered to take his platoon and lay an ambush near the border in the Serian District of Sarawak on a likely enemy approach route. To achieve this he had to negotiate some extremely difficult country with an ever present risk of an enemy ambush en route.

He sited his ambush most skilfully and maintained it carefully concealed for three days before anything came into it. Then late on the third day a party of approximately 30 walked into the ambush area. Lieutenant Robertson waited until ten of the enemy were in the killing area and then personally sprung the ambush killing the centre man. Rapid fire was then opened by the rest of the ambush party at a range of about 70 yards and six of the enemy were seen to fall killed or seriously wounded. He then gave the order "watch and shoot".

In the ensuing 10 to 15 minutes the enemy tried hard to retaliate and regain the initiative but every one of their efforts was thwarted by Lieutenant Robertson who was calmly controlling the battle with great skill. When the enemy brought down mortar fire close to his position he called for artillery support which quickly silenced the mortaring, and when the enemy got first one and then two machine guns into action he ordered his platoon sergeant to engage them with a rifle grenade. This action effectively silenced each gun in turn.

When there were no more targets still visible to engage Lieutenant Robertson withdrew his ambush in good order to a pre-arranged rendezvous. During this withdrawal one rifleman was hit in the leg by a burst of fire and Lieutenant Robertson immediately went to his aid and helped to carry him back to the rendezvous where his wounds could be dressed before continuing the arduous journey back to the company base.

Throughout this highly successful action Lieutenant Robertson was in complete control and by his calmness, courage and good tactical sense displayed leadership of a high order which set an inspiring example to his men.

Military Cross

Major Piers Hector ERSKINE-TULLOCH (403442), 2nd King Edward VII's Own Gurkha Rifles (The Sirmoor Rifles).

On the 10th and 30th November respectively Major Erskine-Tulloch commanded a composite company on two separate operations. His force was made up from B and D Companies, 2/2nd Gurkha Rifles. The aim of both operations was to ambush enemy movement in the border region of Sarawak's Lundu District.

On the first operation Major Erskine-Tulloch had to take his company through a considerable amount of bad swamp jungle where enemy patrols were known to operate. Because of severe flooding of the swamps it took him five days of gruelling marching to reach the area in which he wished to lay his ambush. On reaching his ambush position he personally sited every man's position in the ambush which he laid along a track. On the third day of waiting a party of nineteen enemy moved into the ambush. Major Erskine-Tulloch opened fire at 15 yards range. The ambush was so well laid and the fire so effective that all the enemy were killed.

On the second operation he had temporarily halted his force on a hill near his ambush position. An enemy company, over 100 strong, had been following his trail and chose this moment to attack without warning. Heavy fighting broke out on Major Erskine-Tulloch's perimeter with the charging enemy platoons getting as close as 5 yards away before being knocked back with heavy casualties. He quickly appreciated that the enemy company had cut off his best withdrawal route so he planned to hold firm where he was and defeat every enemy attack with small-arms and artillery fire. To control his defensive battle properly Major Erskine-Tulloch moved to the centre