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MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

ARMY DEPARTMENT

The QUEEN has been graciously pleased to approve the award of the George Medal to the under-mentioned:

Major Henry Percival QUALTROUGH, M.B.E. (304206), Corps of Royal Engineers (Now retired).

1906111 Sergeant Horace Edward COOKE, B.E.M., Corps of Royal Engineers.

Major Qualtrough and Sergeant Cooke undertook a reconnaissance of the notorious Japanese bomb and sea mine dumps on Penang Island after which they cleared about one hundred tons of bombs and shells from Japanese bunkers on the Island of Betio in the Gilbert and Ellice Islands. Their drive and complete disregard of personal safety were the two factors which led to the completion of these two difficult tasks in the short time available. On Penang Island they located tunnels and covered trenches at nine major sites and excavated and removed for analysis samples of bombs and mines from each site. The dangers included the possibility of the formation of most dangerous unstable picrate crystals from picric fillings, the presence of corroded and unsafe fuzes and the likelihood of very dangerous copper azide formed from the lead azide in detonators. Well knowing the risks involved they entered a tunnel which had partially collapsed and was in imminent danger of further roof falls and removed 60 kg Japanese bombs which in addition to damage by roof falls had been subject to years of corrosion. On Betio Island about forty Japanese bunkers were excavated and cleared. These bunkers had been sealed by dozing during a previous clearance shortly after the war, but remained a serious danger to the inhabitants of this highly populated island. Their clearance and the detector search and clearance of the whole island including a coral causeway produced about one hundred tons of Japanese and American bombs and shells many of which were fuzed or in a state of critical decomposition. At all times during these hazardous tasks Major Qualtrough and Sergeant Cooke displayed the highest standard of courage and skill.

The QUEEN has been graciously pleased on the advice of Her Majesty's Australian Ministers to approve the undermentioned awards in recognition of gallant conduct in Vietnam with effect from 29th December 1966:

Distinguished Service Order

Brigadier Oliver David JACKSON, O.B.E. (2111), Australian Staff Corps.

Brigadier Oliver David Jackson graduated from the Royal Military College in December 1939 in the Royal Australian Infantry. In May 1966 he was

appointed Commander 1st Australian Task Force which was deployed on active service in Phuoc Tuy Province of South Vietnam commencing in June 1966. This appointment immediately followed a period of 15 months of distinguished service in Vietnam as Commanding Officer Australian Army Training Team Vietnam and Commander Australian Army Force Vietnam. He successfully planned and executed the deployment into operations of the Task Force following its arrival from Australia. This was accomplished despite unfavourable weather conditions and logistical and operational problems of considerable magnitude which demanded his constant personal attention.

Following initial deployment he personally directed and controlled the operations of the Task Force in Phuoc Tuy Province with conspicuous success. In one action on 18th August 1966 he personally directed the engagement which accounted for 254 enemy dead by body count with very light comparative losses to his own troops. His able personal direction was a decisive factor in obtaining an extremely favourable outcome in very difficult circumstances.

Throughout his period of command of the Task Force his professional skill and leadership has been outstanding and he has developed excellent relations with the allied formations with which the Task Force is associated.

His consideration of his troops without thought for himself and his personal example have been an inspiration to those under his command.

Military Cross

Major Harry Arthur SMITH (6776), Australian Staff Corps (Royal Australian Infantry).

Major Harry Arthur SMITH was commissioned from the Officer Cadet School on 13th December 1952 and first saw active service with 2nd Battalion The Royal Australian Regiment during the Malaya Emergency 1955-1957.

In August 1966 Major Smith commanded D Company 6th Battalion The Royal Australian Regiment. On 18th August 1966 D Company began a Search and Destroy Patrol in Phuoc Tuy Province, South Vietnam.

During the patrol the leading platoon contacted what appeared to be a small Viet Cong patrol in thick rubber. The enemy soon proved to be the vanguard of a regimental size force, and the platoon engagement quickly developed into a company battle. The Viet Cong attacking from two flanks and supported by intense mortar and recoilless rifle fire, soon penetrated between the leading platoon and the rest of the company.

Despite the intense and accurate enemy fire Major Smith formed the remainder of his company into a small defensive perimeter from which he made