

AWARDS FOR GALLANTRY

The following details are now available in respect of the Awards for Gallantry announced in The London Gazette on 4th November, 1941:-

THE MILITARY CROSS

Captain Carl Nelham WATSON (9250),
New Zealand Military Forces.

Throughout the operations in Crete this officer showed outstanding qualities of leadership, tenacity, and skill in handling his company, and at one period, the whole Battalion. His personal example of continuous conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty in very adverse circumstances, his extreme coolness and contempt for danger under heavy and continuous fire, and the quick decisions made by him on the spot for counter-attack or withdrawal, inspired the officers and men under his command with confidence.

On May 22 at Maleme, his men, suffering heavy casualties, had been forced to evacuate an important line of posts in the defensive area facing north. In spite of intense mortar, machine gun and pom-pom fire, Captain Watson and his storeman, by the skilful use of Thompson sub-machine guns, drove back the enemy who were about to penetrate our position up a covered ravine, and enabled our troops to reoccupy their original positions.

Captain Watson later led a successful counter-attack against the enemy from this line, enabling this vital position to be held for a further two days.

THE DISTINGUISHED CONDUCT MEDAL

No. 2754237 Serjeant John Izatt ADAMSON,
The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment).
(Home: Hill of Beath, Fife. Born: Dunfermline, Fife).

At Heraklion on 21st May, this N.C.O. showed conspicuous courage and leadership when ordered to take his platoon forward to destroy an enemy strong point. In spite of the strength of the enemy being greater than was previously supposed, he pressed home the attack until held up by heavy fire at close range. He then showed great courage by standing up so as to persuade the enemy to surrender. This he successfully accomplished with the result that twenty-five men, one machine gun and several sub-machine guns were captured and further casualties amongst our troops prevented.

Throughout the operations Serjeant Adamson showed coolness, courage and initiative of the highest order, setting a fine example to the men under his command.

No. 1071767 Warrant Officer Class II (Armament Quarter-
Master-Serjeant Stanley John BARTON,
Royal Army Ordnance Corps.
(Home: Havant, Hants. Born: Portsmouth).

On 22nd May in the Sternes Area of Crete, this W.O. and two N.C.O.'s proceeded to a Bofors Gun site to carry out urgent repairs. The party, whilst proceeding in a Bren Carrier, ran into an ambush, the driver being killed and one N.C.O. wounded. They got through, warned the gun crew and assisted in the dispersal of the parachute troops, and then completed the repairs.

On the following night the same three, with a small party of fitters, proceeded to Korares. They were again attacked on route but made their way through, and under continuous sniping succeeded in changing the barrels of three 3.7" A.A. Guns, a very remarkable feat, and by this act enabled the battery half section to come into action by the next morning. These are only two of many similar occasions where Q.M.S. Barton, by his work, maintained guns in action.

(Contd.)

THE DISTINGUISHED CONDUCT MEDAL

No. 4435724 Company Quarter-Master-Serjeant (acting Warrant Officer Class II (Company Serjeant-Major))
Abraham GRETTON,
The York and Lancaster Regiment.
(Home: Edgbaston, Birmingham. Born: Wednesbury, Staffs)

At Heraklion on 25th May, a counter attack by two Companies of the York and Lancaster Regiment was carried out. Though successful at first it was eventually stopped by heavy fire from enemy machine guns and tommy guns, and both Companies withdrew to their starting lines. Shortly after this C.S.M. Gretton was informed by a runner from the next Company that their Headquarters had been surrounded and had had to fight its way back, leaving their Company Commander wounded in a house. C.S.M. Gretton at once organised a party and personally led them to recover the officer. The enemy were in occupation of the area of the house, but by skilful handling of this party he succeeded in keeping down the enemy fire and brought back the wounded officer without casualties. Throughout the whole operations at Heraklion he showed great coolness under fire and set a fine example to the N.C.O's and men of his company.

THE MILITARY MEDAL

No. 3967404 Corporal Myrddin McTIFFIN,
The Welch Regiment.
(Home: Swansea. Born: Tonypany, Glam.)

On 18th May in Crete this N.C.O. was commanding a section when his company was engaged in mopping-up a party of about 60 or 70 parachutists who had landed on the Akroteri Peninsula four or five days previously.

At the end of the operation the Commanding Officer ordered the company to go to an area where it was believed that there might still be some more Germans lying-up. This proved to be the case and they were engaged. One party in a sangar on a hill side was difficult to dislodge and were causing casualties. Corporal McTiffin was ordered to take his section consisting of himself and four men, and working round the right flank to get above them and destroy them. He at once set out but on coming into view of the sangar three of his men were at once either killed or wounded. He himself without hesitation charged the sangar and either bayoneted or shot the seven Germans it contained, killing them all. Corporal McTiffin was wounded in the process. In doing this Corporal McTiffin displayed courage of the highest order and devotion to duty difficult to surpass.

No. WX.953 Private Stanley Lawrence CARROLL,
Australian Military Forces.

At Retimo this soldier rendered every possible assistance to his unit either in signalling for ammunition, etc., when required, or combating enemy parachutists with Vickers guns or captured tommy guns. When the order to evacuate came, he proceeded to the south coast. After waiting eight days with other members of his unit for means of transport off the island, he and three others arranged to evacuate in a 16-foot boat. During the afternoon of the day they had agreed to evacuate, his three comrades, who had gone to obtain water, were captured by the Germans. Private Carroll rigged the boat on his own and set sail on 11th June. When five miles out, he was becalmed and endeavoured to return but at each point he attempted to land he was fired on and was forced to set out sea. An enemy plane machine gunned him from the air and put a few bullets through the sail and along the dinghy but not below the water-line. He had no compass but just laid for the south. After eight days, on three of which he was becalmed, he ran into a heavy wind and his craft broke up when ten miles from land. He came in on his 2-gallon water tin, partly floating and partly swimming. He finally succeeded in reaching land east of Sollum where he ^{was} found and befriended by British troops. On reaching Headquarters, he was able to give a most informative and militarily useful account of the actions taken to combat enemy parachutists in his particular sector in Crete.

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