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War Office, 2nd January, 1945.

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

No. 6092111 Private (acting Sergeant) George Harold Eardley, The King's Shropshire Light Infantry (Congleton, Cheshire).

In North-West Europe, on 16th October, 1944, during an attack on the wooded area East of Overloon, strong opposition was met from well sited defensive positions in orchards. The enemy were paratroops and well equipped with machine guns.

A Platoon of the King's Shropshire Light Infantry was ordered to clear these orchards and so restore the momentum of the advance, but was halted some 80 yards from its objective by automatic fire from enemy machine gun posts. This fire was so heavy that it appeared impossible for any man to expose himself and remain unscathed.

Notwithstanding this, Sergeant Eardley, who had spotted one machine gun post, moved forward, firing his Sten gun, and killed the occupants of the post with a grenade. A second machine gun post beyond the first immediately opened up, spraying the area with fire. Sergeant Eardley, who was in a most exposed position, at once charged over 30 yards of open ground and silenced both the enemy gunners.

The attack was continued by the Platoon but was again held up by a third machine gun post, and a section sent in to dispose of it, was beaten back, losing four casualties. Sergeant Eardley, ordering the section he was with to lie down, then crawled forward alone and silenced the occupants of the post with a grenade.

The destruction of these three machine gun posts singlehanded by Sergeant Eardley, carried out under fire so heavy that it daunted those who were with him, enabled his Platoon

to achieve its objective, and in so doing, ensured the success of the whole attack.

His outstanding initiative and magnificent bravery were the admiration of all who saw his gallant actions.

War Office, 2nd January, 1945.

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

No. 4751678 Corporal John William Harper, The York and Lancaster Regiment (Doncaster).

In North-West Europe, on 29th September, 1944, the Hallamshire Battalion of the York and Lancaster Regiment attacked the Depot de Mendicite, a natural defensive position surrounded by an earthen wall, and then a dyke, strongly held by the enemy.

Corporal Harper was commanding the leading section in the assault. The enemy were well dug in and had a perfect field of fire across 300 yards of completely flat and exposed country. With superb disregard for the hail of mortar bombs and small arms fire which the enemy brought to bear on this open ground, Corporal Harper led his section straight up to the wall and killed or captured the enemy holding the near side.

During this operation the platoon commander was seriously wounded and Corporal Harper took over control of the platoon.

As the enemy on the far side of the wall were now throwing grenades over the top, Corporal Harper climbed over the wall alone, throwing grenades, and in the face of heavy, close range small arms fire, personally routed the Germans directly opposing him. He took four prisoners and shot several of the remainder of the enemy as they fled.

Still completely ignoring the heavy spandau and mortar fire, which was sweeping the area, once again he crossed the wall alone