



SUPPLEMENT
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The KING has been graciously pleased to approve awards of the VICTORIA CROSS to the undermentioned:—

No. 3663590 Fusilier Francis Arthur Jefferson, The Lancashire Fusiliers (Ulverston, Lancs.).

On 16th May, 1944, during an attack on the Gustav Line, an anti-tank obstacle held up some of our tanks, leaving the leading Company of Fusilier Jefferson's Battalion to dig in on the hill without tanks or anti-tank guns. The enemy counter-attacked with infantry and two Mark IV tanks, which opened fire at short range causing a number of casualties, and eliminating one P.I.A.T. group entirely.

As the tanks advanced towards the partially dug trenches, Fusilier Jefferson, entirely on his own initiative, seized a P.I.A.T. and running forward alone under heavy fire, took up a position behind a hedge; as he could not see properly, he came into the open, and standing up under a hail of bullets, fired at the leading tank which was now only twenty yards away. It burst into flames and all the crew were killed.

Fusilier Jefferson then reloaded the P.I.A.T. and proceeded towards the second tank, which withdrew before he could get within range. By this time our own tanks had arrived and the enemy counter-attack was smashed with heavy casualties.

Fusilier Jefferson's gallant act not merely saved the lives of his Company and caused many casualties to the Germans, but also broke up the enemy counter-attack and had a decisive effect on the subsequent operation. His supreme gallantry and disregard of personal risk contributed very largely to the success of the action.

Lieutenant (temporary Captain) Richard Wakeford (174363), The Hampshire Regiment (London, S.W.6).

On 13th May, 1944, Captain Wakeford commanded the leading Company on the right flank of an attack on two hills near Cassino, and accompanied by his orderly and armed only with a revolver, he killed a number of the enemy and handed over 20 prisoners when the Company came forward.

On the final objective a German officer and 5 other ranks were holding a house. After being twice driven back by grenades, Captain Wakeford, with a final dash, reached the window and hurled in his grenades. Those of the enemy who were not killed or wounded, surrendered.

Attacking another feature on the following day, a tank became bogged on the start line, surprise was lost and the leading infantry were caught in the enemy's fire, so that the resulting casualties endangered the whole operation. Captain Wakeford, keeping his Company under perfect control, crossed the start line and although wounded in the face and in both arms, led his men up the hill. Half way up the hill his Company came under heavy spandau fire; in spite of his wounds, he organized and led a force to deal with this opposition so that his Company could get on.

By now the Company was being heavily mortared and Captain Wakeford was again wounded, in both legs, but he still went on and reaching his objective, he organized and consolidated the remainder of his Company and reported to his Commanding Officer before submitting to any personal attention. During the seven hour interval before stretcher-bearers could reach him his unwavering high spirits encouraged the