

AWARDS FOR THE DEFENCE OF SANGSHAK

The London Gazette date and the British National Archives reference for the award appear beneath the unit description.

NAME	RANK NUMBER UNIT	CITATION
ABDUL REHMAN	<p>Subadar. 152 Indian Parachute Battalion.</p> <p>27 July 1944. WO 373/33/52</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>AWARDED THE MILITARY CROSS (MC)</u></p> <p>At Sangshak on 24-25 March 1944, this Viceroy's Commissioned Officer (VCO) was in command of his platoon in an extremely exposed forward position on the perimeter. During this time, the enemy were making constant and fierce attacks on the position, which was also under heavy and accurate small arms and artillery fire. Subadar ABDUL REHMAN had to move his section posts at frequent intervals in order to rally and encourage the men and he did this quite regardless of his personal safety. On several occasions, the enemy penetrated his platoon position, but this VCO by rapidly organised and personally led counter attacks never allowed them to retain the hold they had gained. In the end, he was seriously wounded in the face, but returned to command his platoon directly after his wound had been dressed. During the whole action his bearing and courage were an inspiration to all, and he at all times displayed personal gallantry of the highest order.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Recommended by Major R. Steward, Commanding 152 Indian Parachute Battalion, for an Indian Order of Merit, 2nd Class, but awarded a Military Cross by higher authority.</i></p>
ABDULLAH KHAN	<p>Mess Waiter. HQ 50 Indian Parachute Brigade.</p> <p>20 September 1945.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>AWARDED A MENTION IN DESPATCHES</u></p> <p>ABDULLAH KHAN was taken prisoner at SANGSHAK in March 1944, when his Brigade broke out of a Japanese encircling movement. He was later moved to UKHRUL, where a detachment of Indian National Army endeavoured to persuade him to join up with them but to no avail. He was roughly treated by the JAPANESE, and was offered the job of returning to SANGSHAK to look after the wounded Indian Other Ranks (IORs) who</p>

		<p>were still there. Gladly accepting because it brought him nearer to our troops, ABDULLAH KHAN and four others returned to SANGSHAK. Whilst looking after those wounded IORs ABDULLAH KHAN decided to escape, and although in a very weak condition from lack of food, he escaped with two other IORs. He later became separated from his companions and wandered in the jungle for 40 days, living on berries in a completely uninhabited tract. ABDULLAH KHAN eventually reached PANDU where he reported to our troops. For his bravery and endurance it is recommended that Mess Waiter ABDULLAH KHAN should be awarded a 'MENTION IN DESPATCHES'.</p> <p><i>Recommended by an anonymous British interrogator responsible for evaluating the reports of escapers.</i></p>
APPA DESAI	<p>Lance Naik. 20577. 4th Battalion, 5^h Mahratta Light Infantry.</p> <p>27 July 1944. WO 373/33/152</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>AWARDED THE MILITARY MEDAL (MM)</u></p> <p>On 20 March 1944 near Point 7378, SANGSHAK – PUSHING road. For personal courage and devotion to duty. Acting as body guard and runner to his Platoon Commander he advanced ahead of his Platoon in three attempts to scale a steep cutting of a road in face of heavy opposition. In the third effort his Platoon Commander was wounded and lay in the middle of the road. With complete disregard of enemy fire he helped to drag his Platoon Commander off the road and returned to carry another wounded man from the same place. He himself was wounded in so doing but nevertheless again returned to the road and alternately hurled grenades and fired his Tommy gun into the Jap post not more than 10 yards to his front, thus enabling other casualties to be evacuated. When his ammunition was exhausted, from his exposed position he shouted abuse at the enemy and encouragement to his platoon. He had finally to be ordered to retire, refusing assistance.</p> <p><i>Recommended for the Indian Distinguished Service Medal by Lieutenant Colonel J.H. Trim, Commanding 4th Battalion, 5th Mahratta Light Infantry, but downgraded to a Military Medal by higher authority.</i></p>
BHOJ RAJ	<p>Subedar. 17626.IO.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>APPOINTED MEMBER OF THE MOST EXCELLENT ORDER OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE</u></p>

	<p>15 (Jhelum) Mountain Battery, 28 Indian Mountain Regiment., Indian Artillery.</p> <p>8 February 1945. WO 373/80/356.</p>	<p>This officer went to BURMA with his Battery in February 1942 and served with distinction throughout that campaign. When the Burma Army returned to India, 15 Mountain Battery remained in the MANIPUR area of the ASSAM/BURMA border. Subedar BHOJ RAJ has been largely instrumental in maintaining the spirits of his Section throughout the trying Monsoon periods.</p> <p>In March 1944 he was with his Battery in SANGSHAK and during the march back through enemy held territory after withdrawal was ordered, his calmness and example were an inspiration to all.</p> <p><i>Recommended by Lieutenant Colonel L.H. Landon, Royal Artillery, Commanding 28 Indian Mountain Regiment, Indian Artillery.</i></p>
COWELL, Alan	<p>Lieutenant. EC 12219. 152 Indian Parachute Battalion.</p> <p>27 July 1944. WO 373/33/51</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>AWARDED THE MILITARY CROSS (MC)</u></p> <p>At SANGSHAK on 24th March 1944 whilst in command of an exposed forward position this officer showed exceptional personal courage and powers of command. The position was continuously under intense enemy fire but he inspired such confidence that the position was held despite strong enemy attacks. During the night 24-25 March, enemy snipers infiltrated into a disused church within the position. With complete disregard of his personal safety Lieutenant COWELL entered the church and evicted the snipers by using hand grenades. Eventually he was wounded in the shoulder but remained in command until relieved. Throughout the action, by sheer courage and personal leadership, he was directly responsible for the holding of the forward position despite the attacks by superior enemy forces.</p> <p><i>Recommended by Major R. Steward, Commanding 152 Indian Parachute Battalion.</i></p>
CROWLE, Robert Martin	<p>Gunner 5436958 D Troop, 582nd Field Battery, 158th Field</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>AWARDED THE MILITARY MEDAL (MM)</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">20 – 27 March 1944. SANGSHAK.</p>

	<p>Regiment, Royal Artillery.</p> <p>27 July 1944. WO 373/33/114</p>	<p>No. 5436598 Gunner CROWLE whilst on active service was burnt when his mortar pit received a direct hit by an enemy shell. The bombs in the mortar pit were set on fire and CROWLE assisted in quickly putting out the fire and saving the remainder of the detachment. Although badly burnt, CROWLE joined another detachment and continued his duties of firing another mortar. CROWLE also volunteered on numerous occasions to go out under enemy fire and bring the wounded out of the danger area.</p> <p>During the whole period the mortars were in action in a most exposed position on the perimeter and were continuously under enemy fire from both snipers and guns.</p> <p>COMMENT BY DIVISIONAL COMMANDER, Major General O.L. Roberts: <i>Recommended. All ranks of all arms who saw this mortar troop in action are unanimous in praise of the efficiency, gallantry and cheerfulness of this troop in action under heavy enemy fire.</i></p> <p><i>Recommended for the Military Medal by Major B.E. Hutton, Royal Artillery and his Divisional Commander. Downgraded to a Certificate of Gallantry by his Corps and Army Commanders, but reinstated to a Military Medal by higher authority.</i></p>
<p>CROWSON, Herbert</p>	<p>Gunner 1064759 D Troop, 582nd Field Battery, 158th Field Regiment, Royal Artillery.</p> <p>27 July 1944. WO 373/33/115</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>AWARDED THE MILITARY MEDAL (MM)</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">20 – 27 March 1944. SANGSHAK.</p> <p>No. 1064759 Gunner CROWSON, H. while in action with 'D' Troop, of 582 (Mortar) Battery Royal Artillery, during the above period showed outstanding courage by bringing in under heavy enemy fire several stretcher case wounded from the perimeter of the village, back into the Field Ambulance with complete disregard to his own personal safety, having already been wounded himself.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Recommended by Major B.E. Hutton, Royal Artillery.</i></p>

<p>DAVIS, Robert Brocklesby</p>	<p>Lieutenant Colonel. MZ 15936. Indian Army Medical Corps, commanding 80 Indian Field Ambulance (Para).</p> <p>27 July 1944. WO 373/33/9</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>APPOINTED COMPANION OF THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE ORDER (DSO)</u></p> <p>At SANGSHAK between 21st and 26th March 1944, this officer was in command of the Brigade Field Ambulance. The position was being attacked heavily during this time and there were a large number of casualties. The Field Ambulance area was at one time penetrated by the enemy, but Lieutenant Colonel DAVIS organised the attack that drove them out. Under heavy artillery and machine gun fire this officer continued to attend to the wounded, and so marked were his personal example and coolness that no one who encountered him in the course of his duties could fail to be influenced by him.</p> <p>Under his direction the Field Ambulance was evacuated to another position when the perimeter in the neighbourhood had been overrun by the enemy. Lieutenant Colonel DAVIS supervised this move which took place under heavy fire and it was entirely due to his clear orders and direction that very few more casualties occurred. When evacuation of the position was directed by higher authority Lieutenant Colonel DAVIS had to be ordered not to stay behind and look after the men seriously wounded. His selflessness and complete lack of fear were an inspiration to all ranks during this dangerous and critical period.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Recommended by Colonel B.E Abbott, Commanding 50 (Parachute) Brigade.</i></p>
<p>DUDHJANG GHALE</p>	<p>Jemadar. 23149, 153 Gurkha Parachute Battalion.</p> <p>27 July 1944. WO 373/33/76</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>AWARDED THE MILITARY CROSS (MC)</u></p> <p>At Sangshak on 26 March 1944, the enemy captured a part of the perimeter the holding of which was vital to the defence of the formation. Several counter-attacks on this position failed to dislodge the enemy. Jemadar DUDHJANG GHALE's platoon was one of the platoons ordered to put in a final counter-attack. Led by Jemadar DUDHJANG GHALE the platoon attempted to charge, but the ground over which they moved was so cut up with defensive works that they were unable to double forward more than a few yards in the hail of light machine gun and grenade fire, which met them. Regardless of the fire Jemadar DUDHJANG GHALE re-organised his platoon and yard by yard advanced forward until the whole position was re-captured.</p>

		<p>During the attack the platoon suffered heavy casualties; 26 men being either killed or wounded. Jemadar DUDHJANG GHALE was himself wounded twice, but in spite of this he continued to lead his platoon in the face of heavy enemy fire in complete disregard of his own personal safety, and it was entirely due to his fine powers of leadership and command and to his great example of personal bravery that this vital position was re-captured.</p> <p><i>Recommended by Lieutenant Colonel H.R.E. Willis, Commanding 153 Gurkha Parachute Battalion.</i></p>
<p>HIRST, Reginald Geoffrey</p>	<p>Sergeant. 997265 D Troop, 582nd Field Battery, 158th Field Regiment, Royal Artillery.</p> <p>27 July 1944. WO 373/33/106</p>	<p><u>AWARDED THE MILITARY MEDAL (MM)</u></p> <p>At SANGSHAK between the 24th-26th March this Non-commissioned officer (NCO) displayed great coolness and devotion to duty. When his Battery Commander was killed Sergeant HIRST was given command of a Section. It is in great measure due to his example and force of character that the mortars continued to be served to the last. When evacuation of the position was ordered on the evening of the 26 March the NCO took charge of a party of severely wounded gunners and it was largely owing to his courage, personality and discipline that this party succeeded in walking 25 miles over very different country to our lines.</p> <p><i>Recommended for a Distinguished Conduct Medal by Colonel B.E Abbott, Commanding 50 (Parachute) Brigade but reduced to a Military Medal by higher authority.</i></p>
<p>HOMBAHADUR GURUNG</p>	<p>Jemadar. Kalibahadur Regiment, Nepalese Contingent.</p> <p>16 November 1944. WO 373/34/293</p>	<p><u>AWARDED THE MILITARY CROSS (MC)</u></p> <p>During the enemy attack on SANGSHAK between 21st and 26th March 1944, some enemy penetrated the wire in front of his platoon position and approached the bunker in which this officer had his Platoon HQ. He promptly shot out two of them dead with his pistol and then jumped out of the bunker looking for any others. Failing to find any, he proceeded to visit all his platoon positions under heavy fire and encouraged his men as a result of which the enemy attack was repulsed. This occurred at night and the Officer ran considerable risk from our own as well as the enemy's fire, which he completely ignored. Prior to the attack, he had also carried out several important patrols.</p>

		<i>Recommended for the Indian Order of Merit, 2nd Class, by Lieutenant Colonel Baldev Shamsher Jung Bahadur Rana, Commanding the Kali Bahadur Regiment, but awarded the Military Cross by Higher Authority.</i>
HUGHES, Reginald Hugh	<p>Corporal. 7370578. Royal Army Medical Corps. 80th Indian Field Ambulance, 50 Parachute Brigade.</p> <p>27 July 1944. WO 373/33/148</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>AWARDED THE MILITARY MEDAL (MM)</u></p> <p>During the action at SANGSHAK from 22 to 26 March 1944 this Non-commissioned officer was working almost continually under fire, nursing the wounded in the Dressing Station, preparing the wounded for operation, sterilising instruments, and assisting at operations. Finally when the Dressing Station was moved, he assisted in carrying the wounded to safety, and organised a party to bring in essential medical equipment under heavy fire. The high level of work of all men of the unit should be considered in this award.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Recommended by Lieutenant Colonel R.B. Davis, Commanding 50 Indian Field Ambulance (Para).</i></p>
HUTTON, Brian Elliott	<p>Lieutenant. 126204. 'D' Troop, 582 Field Battery, 158 Field Regiment, Royal Artillery</p> <p>WO 373/33/18 27 September 1944</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>AWARDED THE MILITARY CROSS (MC)</u></p> <p>Lieutenant B.E. HUTTON was in command of 'D' Troop of 582 Mortar Battery during the operations in the SANGSHAK area between 20-27 March 1944. Throughout this period his mortars were in action in a most exposed position on the perimeter and were continuously open to enemy sniping and shell-fire.</p> <p>Lieutenant HUTTON showed quite outstanding bravery and devotion to duty throughout, on one occasion rallying the infantry around two of his mortars and so beating off an enemy attack. He was a great example and inspiration to his junior officers and men.</p> <p>COMMENT BY DIVISIONAL COMMANDER, Major General O.L. Roberts: <i>Recommended. All ranks of all arms who saw this mortar troop in action are unanimous in praise of the efficiency, gallantry and cheerfulness of this troop in action under heavy enemy fire.</i> This comment was attached to every recommendation for awards to 'D' Troop personnel.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Recommended by Colonel B.E. Abbott, Officer Commanding 50 Parachute Brigade.</i></p>

<p>KHAN ZAMAN</p>	<p>Havildar. 90. 152 Indian Parachute Battalion. 1 November 1945. WO 373/64/88</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>AWARDED THE INDIAN DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL (IDSM)</u></p> <p>Havildar KHAN ZAMAN was in action with his platoon for five days continuously towards the end of March 1944. They were cut off from the main perimeter by a very strong force of Japs and they had very little food and even less rest. KHAN ZAMAN was wounded but he fought on and kept his men fighting. Eventually the position was in danger of being overrun and the platoon was ordered to withdraw. There was not sufficient time to take away all the severely wounded and Havildar KHAN ZAMAN was captured.</p> <p>During nearly all the whole of his captivity he was in hospital but still managed to organise two escape parties, instructing the men to get back to IMPHAL and give as much information as possible to the nearest British HQ. As soon as he was strong enough himself he escaped, and successfully led eleven others to safety. This Havildar showed magnificent courage and was an inspiration to his men not only in action but during the time of his captivity and it is recommended that he be awarded the Indian Distinguished Service Medal.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Recommended by an anonymous British interrogator responsible for evaluating the reports of escapers.</i></p>
<p>KIDD, Joseph Goronwy</p>	<p>Lieutenant. 203480. (Emergency Commissioned Officer). Royal Regiment of Artillery attached 15 (Jhelum) Mountain Battery, 28 Indian Mountain Regiment. 27 July 1944. WO 373/33/21</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>AWARDED THE MILITARY CROSS (MC)</u></p> <p>At SANGSHAK (RK 7888) on 26 March 1944, when by the wounding and subsequent death of his Battery Commander, he was left in command of 15 Indian Mountain Battery which was then in action on the perimeter of the 50 Brigade position, and was being subject to continual infantry attacks and the fire of enemy, guns, mortars, grenades and small arms, he showed such conspicuous devotion to duty, coolness under fire and self-confidence as to inspire his men to continue to fight the guns and to resist enemy attacks on the gun position. On being ordered to withdraw the guns to new positions, he organised this withdrawal keeping one gun in action on the perimeter from which he engaged and silenced two enemy guns, which did not again open fire during the battle.</p>

		<p>When ordered, with the rest of the brigade, to evacuate the position, he led his battery in an ordered body out of the position, each man carrying an arm (weapon), at night through dense jungle and over steep mountain ridges, and arrived two and a half days later in our lines with over half of his battery in a formed body (the remainder subsequently arriving in small parties); he showed on this march considerable powers of leadership, resource, initiative and determination.</p> <p><i>Recommended by Colonel B.E Abbott, Commanding 50 (Parachute) Brigade.</i></p>
KURSHID MASIH	<p>Ambulance Havildar. 99029. 80 Field Ambulance, Indian Army Medical Corps.</p> <p>27 July 1944. WO 373/33/190</p>	<p><u>AWARDED THE MILITARY MEDAL (MM)</u></p> <p>During the action at SANGSHAK from 22 to 26 March 1944 this non-commissioned officer worked consistently well day and night under heavy fire leading stretcher squads and digging parties. On the night of 22-23 March he was in charge of a party holding a small section of the perimeter which was attacked by a few enemy with no success. The Japanese who had probably infiltrated through this sector were found inside the perimeter in the morning, one dead and one dying. His courage and reliability throughout the action were an example to all Indian ranks in the unit.</p> <p><i>Recommended for an Indian Distinguished Service Medal by Lieutenant Colonel R.B. Davis, Commanding 50 Indian Field Ambulance (Para), but downgraded to a Military Medal by higher authority.</i></p>
KYNOCH-SHAND, Robin Keith	<p>Lieutenant. 10097. 153 Gurkha Parachute Battalion.</p> <p>27 July 1944. WO 373/33/78</p>	<p><u>AWARDED THE MILITARY CROSS (MC)</u></p> <p>On 27 March 1944 while carrying out a withdrawal through the enemy lines to the North-east of IMPHAL Lieutenant KYNOCH-SHAND was captured by an enemy post. He was taken to the HQ of the Battalion which had captured him and was searched. He was then questioned, but when he refused to answer the questions put to him, his boots were removed and he was bound up with his hands behind his back and with a rope running from his bound up feet round his neck. He was then further questioned and was beaten over the head and was threatened with a sword bayonet and pistol. He still refused to answer questions put to him</p>

		<p>and was then placed in front of a large fire and was kept there without water for the greater part of the night.</p> <p>At about 0400 hours on 28 March the Battalion moved forward. Lieutenant KYNOCH-SHAND's feet were released and he marched with the Battalion under the guard of one section. Just before dawn as the Battalion were moving along a track cut in the steep khud (hill) side, Lieutenant KYNOCH-SHAND, although still bound by the hands, threw himself over the khud side. His guard fired at him and then searched for him, but he had fallen so far down the khud side, that he was able to avoid re-capture. He lay up for several hours and then again decided to attempt to get through the enemy lines. For three days he moved between enemy posts, during all of which time his hands were bound behind his back and his feet were bare. He then met a Naga who cut his cords and the following day he arrived in IMPHAL. Thus by initiative, courage and endurance of a very high standard Lieutenant KYNOCH-SHAND not only escaped from the enemy and re-joined his own unit, but also brought back valuable information with regard to the enemy.</p> <p><i>Recommended by Lieutenant Colonel H.R.E. Willis, Commanding 153 Gurkha Parachute Battalion.</i></p>
<p>LAXUMAN DESAI</p>	<p>Jemadar. 2620653. 4th Battalion, 5th Maharatta Light Infantry.</p> <p>27 July 1944. WO-373-33-58</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>AWARDED THE MILITARY CROSS (MC)</u></p> <p>On 23 March 194, near Point-7378 Sangshak - Pushing road. For outstanding leadership and courage. His platoon was given the task of clearing a portion of a roadblock to a depth of 100 yards. Although harassed by Jap snipers, dischargers and at least one automatic, from the start line he maintained a steady advance in 'blitz' formation, holding his fire till within 15 yards of the enemy light machine gun (LMG) position. He cleared his own objective, silencing two LMGs and killing several tree snipers. His Platoon was then ordered to attack in flank a wooded knoll from which the enemy held up the advance of the Platoon on his right. To do this he had to cross a road covered by automatic fire and flanked by a steep base cutting on the side of the wooded knoll. Three times he led his Platoon across the road in attempts to scale the bank on the opposite side, suffering casualties at each attempt. In the third attack he was severely wounded and lay in the middle of the road giving orders until he lost consciousness.</p>

		<i>Recommended by Lieutenant Colonel J.H. Trim, Commanding 4th Battalion, 5th Mahratta Light Infantry, for an Indian Distinguished Service Medal but awarded a Military Cross by higher authority.</i>
MOHD ALI	Havildar. P-1110. 152 Indian Parachute Battalion. 22 March 1945. WO 373/36/311	<u>AWARDED THE MILITARY MEDAL (MM)</u> <u>FOR CONSPICUOUS GALLANTRY IN ACTION.</u> P-1110 Havildar Mohd Ali was in charge of a light machine gun of No. 5 Platoon 'A' Company which was defending the church position at SANGSHAK, on 24 March 1944. His particular position had been the object of the main Japanese attack as it covered the easiest entrance to the position. A section of the enemy finally penetrated the position but the Havildar remained in his trench firing and but for this action the position could not have been held and would have been completely over-run. When the Platoon was cut off from the main perimeter the Havildar arranged for contact to be maintained with Company. He himself one went back to Company HQ and on his return, he found that four of the enemy were attacking the Platoon Commander's trench from inside the position. He immediately brought fire to bear on them and they were driven out of the position. Throughout the next two days of battle the Havildar proved himself to be an excellent leader and was an inspiration to the other men of the Platoon. <i>Recommended by Lieutenant Colonel P. Hopkinson, Commanding 152 Indian Parachute Battalion, for an Indian Distinguished Service Medal, but downgraded by higher authority to a Military Medal.</i>
MOHAMED ASHRAF	Havildar Clerk. 1002. 152 Indian Parachute Battalion. 1 November 1945. WO 373/64/104	<u>AWARDED A MENTION IN DESPACHES</u> Havildar MOHAMED ASHRAF was captured in the SANGSHAK area in March 1944 and attempted his first escape three days later. This was unfortunately unsuccessful and he was recaptured after a few days. He was then armed and told he was a member of the Indian National Army (INA). This was to prove useful four days later when he escaped again – this time with 4 companions. Their idea was to strike for KOHIMA but they had not gone very far when they ran into about 50 Japs who immediately opened fire on them with a Sten Gun. The party went to ground, and MOHD ASHRAF, keeping his head with remarkable success, waved

		<p>his INA badge. The Japs were deceived and the party able to proceed. They reported to our forces the next day.</p> <p>MOHD ASHRAF during his brief time of captivity had kept his eyes and ears very well open and brought back with him a great deal of operational information of immense value, all of which has since proved to have been absolutely accurate. For his devotion to duty and his courage, and the cool-headed manner in which he carried out two desperate escapes, it is recommended that he be awarded a "Mention in Despatches".</p> <p><i>Recommended by an anonymous British interrogator responsible for evaluating the reports of escapers.</i></p>
<p>MOHAN LAL</p>	<p>Havildar. 44537. 15 (JHELUM) Mountain Battery, 28 Mountain Regiment, Indian Artillery.</p> <p>27 July 1944. WO 373/33/202</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>AWARDED THE INDIAN DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL (IDSM)</u></p> <p>At SANGSHAK on 26 March 1944 this non-commissioned officer (NCO) was in a gun team near the edge of the perimeter. This gun position was under heavy fire and enemy ground attack and was eventually evacuated after the gun had been rendered useless by orders of Commander 50 (Parachute) Brigade. After this had been done Havildar MOHAN LAL went to a nearby trench occupied by troops of 152 Parachute Battalion. The officer in charge was wounded and very short of NCOs, due to previous heavy casualties. He asked Havildar MOHAN LAL to help him organise a counter attack and this NCO readily agreed and started to help collect the men for this purpose. Meanwhile the officer was trying to throw grenades to keep the enemies' heads down, but he could not do this effectively owing to his wounds. Having collected the men Havildar MOHAN LAL himself started to throw grenades to prepare the way for the counter-attack. He then led several local counter-attacks in person and showed himself completely regardless of his personal safety, and in spite of being wounded, his example and courage were an inspiration to all ranks who followed him regardless of the fact that they had never seen him before. On one occasion when the Japanese had planted a flag on the perimeter, he went right up to it, knocked it over and killed the enemy round it with a well-aimed grenade. It was largely owing to this NCO's spirit and example that the troops held on till an organised counter-attack restored the situation.</p>

		<i>Recommended by Colonel B.E Abbott, Commanding 50 (Parachute) Brigade.</i>
MOHD NAWAZ	<p>Jemadar.</p> <p>152 (Parachute) Battalion.</p> <p>WO/373/34/247 16 November 1944.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>AWARDED THE MILITARY CROSS (MC)</u></p> <p>At SANGSHAK during the night 24th/25th March 1944, Jemadar MOHD NAWAZ was commanding a mortar platoon which was in position on the left flank of a very exposed company position. Throughout the night his platoon was subjected to continuous and accurate mortar and small arms fire. Shortly before daylight on 25th March he was wounded in the arm but continued to command his platoon until effective enemy resistance died down and only then did he go down to the Advanced Dressing Station to have his wound dressed. He then returned to his position and re-assumed command of his platoon.</p> <p>His platoon position was subjected to heavy shelling by enemy artillery during the afternoon 25th March, several men being wounded. Throughout the day he maintained accurate covering fire for the company on his right flank and was an inspiration to all ranks for his coolness under fire and devotion to duty as his wound was painning him considerably.</p> <p>During the night 25th/26th his position was again subjected to heavy mortar and small arms fire and during the early hours of 26th March was heavily attacked. The attack was driven off but at dawn the enemy had overrun the forward positions of the company on his right and his HQ came under enemy grenade fire. The enemy was infiltrating round his right flank which compelled him to withdraw to a position further in rear.</p> <p>The movement was carried out under intense enemy fire and was successful, owing to his leadership and the confidence which he inspired to those under his command by his coolness under fire. Later in the morning when the company position had been retaken, he took his platoon forward again and remained in position until relieved. This he did on his own initiative as his Company Commander and Company Officer had previously been killed. The personal bravery of this Viceroy's Commissioned Officer and his devotion to duty was an outstanding example of leadership and an inspiration to all ranks of his platoon. Although wounded, his courage, skill and leadership never failed.</p>

		<i>Recommended by Lieutenant Colonel R. Steward, Commanding 152 (Parachute) Battalion.</i>
MOHD SARWAR	Havildar. P45. 152 Indian Parachute Battalion. WO 373/34/110 5 October 1944.	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>AWARDED THE MILITARY MEDAL (MM)</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Highly distinguished services and Gallantry in action.</u></p> <p>Havildar MOHD SARWAR has been in command of No. 6 Platoon, 'B' Company, ever since this Battalion has been in the theatre of operations. Throughout the actions at SHELDON'S CORNER and SANGSHAK this non-commissioned officer (NCO) proved himself to be fully qualified to command a Platoon and by his own personality and powers of Command has always inspired the men under his command.</p> <p>On the 11th June when 'B' Company were ordered to counter attack and secure the BASTION position, Havildar MOHD SARWAR's platoon followed the tanks and were to assault the position. This NCO led his platoon exceptionally well and was always to the fore cheering his sections on when assaulting the position. Although heavy light machine gun, rifle and grenade fire was brought to bear on the Platoon they never faulted and courageously assaulted the position. He personally led the sections right into the enemy pits, evicting them by the use of grenades and at the point of the bayonet.</p> <p>By exceptional disregard for his own safety and extraordinary powers of leadership, he inspired complete confidence in the men under his command and their morale was of the highest order. The position was captured within 15 minutes which was due to Havildar MOHD SARWAR's determined assault and complete co-ordination of plan.</p> <p><i>Recommended for the Indian Distinguished Service Medal by Lieutenant Colonel R. Steward, Commanding 152 Indian Parachute Battalion, but downgraded to a Military Medal by higher authority.</i></p>
POZNER, Harry	Captain. 10100. Royal Army Medical Corps attached 80	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>AWARDED THE MILITARY CROSS (MC)</u></p> <p>During the action at SANGSHAK from 22 to 26 March 1944 this officer worked most continuously night and day, giving anaesthetics and blood transfusions in a dressing station which was at first under enemy small</p>

	<p>Indian Field Ambulance.</p> <p>27 July 1944. WO 373/33/48</p>	<p>arms fire and later under mortar and gunfire. On the second day when it was necessary to roof over the operating dugout, work was held up owing to accurate enemy fire. Captain POZNER personally led a working party and finished the dugout so that surgical operations could be started. At a time when the weather and the enemy combined to make conditions in the dressing station extremely unpleasant, he remained imperturbably cheerful and raised the morale of both patients and medical personnel. Finally when the dressing station had to be evacuated owing to a threat of direct enemy attack this officer himself carried several of the patients to safety under heavy fire.</p> <p><i>Recommended by Lieutenant Colonel R.B. Davis, Commanding 50 Indian Field Ambulance (Para).</i></p>
<p>RANDHOJ RAI</p>	<p>Havildar. 4174. 153 Gurkha Parachute Battalion.</p> <p>27 July 1944. WO 373/33/177</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>AWARDED THE MILITARY MEDAL (MM)</u></p> <p>At SANGSHAK on 26 March 1944, 4174 Havildar RANDHOJ RAI was commanding a section of a platoon detailed to carry out a counter-attack on a position captured by the enemy and still held by them after several counter-attacks. Owing to very heavy machine gun and grenade fire this Platoon could only make its way forward very slowly and the final objective was captured and lost again several times. Havildar RANDHOJ RAI was indefatigable in encouraging the men of his own and other sections with complete disregard to his own personal safety. He repeatedly remained alone in an advanced position when the rest of his section had been thrown back by enemy fire. During one of these periods he remained in a forward position and dressed the wounds of a mortally wounded comrade. The coolness he then showed under heavy fire had a most steadying effect on all ranks, and throughout the engagement his leadership, steadiness and personal bravery under heavy fire was a great example to all ranks and constituted in a large extent in the final capture of the objective.</p> <p>Towards the end of the engagement Havildar RANDHOJ RAI was seriously wounded, part of his cheek and jaw being blown away. In spite of this and of the fact that he could eat nothing and drink only minute quantities of water, Havildar RANDHOJ RAI on the order to withdraw, walked back to IMPHAL and there reported to his unit, thus showing fortitude and endurance of a very high standard and setting a fine example to all ranks.</p>

		<i>Recommended by Lieutenant Colonel H.R.E. Willis, Commanding 153 Gurkha Parachute Battalion.</i>
SAMBHAJI BHUINGDE	<p>Havildar. 8310. 4th Battalion, 5th Maharatta Light Infantry.</p> <p>27 July 1944. WO 373/33/204</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>AWARDED THE INDIAN DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL (IDSM)</u></p> <p>This non-commissioned officer arrived at SANGSHAK with two detachments of mortars before the rest of the Battalion on 24 March 1944. Immediately he arrived he got his two guns into action with the least possible delay and supported an enemy bunker attack with conspicuous success. From that time onward until he was wounded on the morning of 28 March 1944, his good orders and fire control and complete disregard for danger were an inspiration to the rest of his platoon. When part of the perimeter of 152 Parachute Battalion was overrun on the morning of 28 March 1944, his guns were left in a completely exposed position. When he saw what had happened he immediately jumped out of his emplacement ignoring the fire which was coming down heavily in the area, and organised his detachments into a position of all round defence, and by setting an example to his men by throwing grenades and firing his rifle kept the enemy out of the perimeter long enough for 'D' Company to arrive and take it over, thereby saving his guns and possibly staving off a complete debacle. It was at this time he was seriously and painfully wounded in the chest, and although unable to stand up, he continued to encourage his men lying on his back in a trench. That night he moved out from SANGSHAK with the rest of the Battalion and reached IMPHAL, a feat which could only have been carried out by a man of very considerable determination.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Recommended by Lieutenant Colonel J.H. Trim, Commanding 4th Battalion, 5th Maharatta Light Infantry.</i></p>
SARWAN DASS	<p>Havildar. 38791. 15 (JHELUM) Mountain Battery, 28 Indian Mountain Regiment, Indian Artillery.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>AWARDED THE INDIAN DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL (IDSM)</u></p> <p>At SANGSHAK (7888) on 26 March 1944 when the battery position was partly overrun Havildar SARWAN DASS was No.1 of No. 2 gun. In the first onslaught the Infantry retreated behind his gun position but Havildar SARWAN DASS held his men together and although outnumbered 10 to 1 defied the enemy. This part of the perimeter was actually being held by the gun detachments, the Infantry having fallen back, and the enemy, in vastly superior numbers, pressing his advantage obviously hoped to carry out his favoured counter-battery plan of overrunning the guns completely. During the action, lasting 2 to 3 hours, the enemy made repeated</p>

	27 July 1944. WO 373/33/203	<p>and determined attacks on No. 2 position but Havildar SARWAN DASS held on until eventually the infantry were able to move forward again. His calmness and leadership at this time was an inspiration to all and undoubtedly his tenacity and determination to defend his gun position at all costs did a great deal to prevent the whole of the battery being overrun. Later in the day Havildar SARWAN BASS was ordered to put his gun into action for counter battery work, and despite the fact that his gun position was covered with machine guns, he fired his gun with perfect laying (setting of the sighting mechanism) until the enemy guns were silenced.</p> <p><i>Recommended by Lieutenant J.G. Kidd, Royal Artillery, 15 (JHELMUM) Mountain Battery, Indian Artillery.</i></p>
SHANDI GUL	<p>Jemadar. 50 (Parachute) Brigade Medium Machine Gun Company.</p> <p>27 July 1944. WO 373/33/53</p>	<p><u>AWARDED THE MILITARY CROSS (MC)</u></p> <p>Jemadar SHANDI GUL was in command of a section of Vickers Machine Guns at SANGSHAK on the night of 25-26 March 1944. He engaged the enemy throughout the night inflicting many casualties on the advancing Japanese. Just after dawn broke, he position was surrounded but Jemadar SHANDI GUL kept on firing on an all-round traverse until the guns were rendered useless, either by shrapnel or bullets and the crews wounded or killed. He then fought his way out, with the remaining members of his section, by grappling with a Japanese, wrenching his rifle and bayonet from him, and killed him. By this action of courage and initiative, his section was able to retire to another position. Jemadar SHANDI GUL was consistently cool and gallant throughout the operation and eventually, on retiring from Sangshak brought the remainder of his platoon with him.</p> <p><i>Recommended by Captain T.J.P. Lewis, Officer Commanding 50 (Parachute) Brigade Medium Machine Gun Company.</i></p>
STEELE, Harmer Richard Rae	<p>Captain. 177923. Reconnaissance Regiment, Royal</p>	<p><u>AWARDED THE MILITARY CROSS (MC)</u></p> <p>At SANGSHAK on 22 March 1944 this officer was in command of a company. In the morning he was ordered to move out and lay on an ambush for the enemy who could be seen moving up in the direction of FINCH'S</p>

	<p>Armoured Corps, attached 4th Battalion, 5th Maharatta Light Infantry.</p> <p>27 July 1944. WO 373/33/12</p>	<p>CORNER. He carried out this task at short notice with considerable success and returned to SANGSHAK by 1700 hours. At this juncture the enemy started to move up the West end of the SANGSHAK ridge and by sniping and medium machine gun fire were seriously harassing our troops moving into the SANGSHAK box from the SHELDON'S CORNER area. Captain STEELE was told to attack and hold the enemy position till our troops were all in. He led his company into the attack with great speed and dash and his orders and bearing were a model of brevity and coolness. He held the position against fierce enemy attacks till ordered to withdraw and carried out the withdrawal with his tired troops in a most cool and exemplary manner. The successful withdrawal of troops into the box was almost entirely due to his courage, resolution and the quickness with which he carried out his orders.</p> <p><i>Recommended by Colonel B.E Abbott, Commanding 50 (Parachute) Brigade.</i></p>
<p>TRIM, Jack Harold</p>	<p>Lieutenant Colonel. IA772. 4th Battalion, 5th Maharatta Light Infantry.</p> <p>8 February 1945. WO 373/80/349</p>	<p><u>APPOINTED OFFICER OF THE MOST EXCELLENT ORDER OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE (OBE)</u></p> <p>Through the fighting at SHELDON'S CORNER and SANGSHAK from 19 to 26 March 1944 this officer commanded his Battalion with marked ability and courage, remained calm and unruffled under most trying circumstances and showed himself in control of a series of difficult situations. When ordered to withdraw his Battalion under heavy pressure from an unbroken enemy he successfully broke contact and brought his Battalion in four days across extremely difficult and Jap infested country. The fact that his Battalion suffered relatively few casualties was largely due to his fine leadership.</p> <p>The Commander of the Brigade at SANGSHAK, under whom Lieutenant Colonel Trim was serving at the time, has been evacuated. I have however, obtained reports from the Brigade 2nd-in-Command and other Commanding Officers, who are unanimous in praising the inspiring example set by Lieutenant Colonel Trim, who remained calm and unruffled under very trying circumstances. The Brigade 2nd-in-Command says: "The worse the situation became, the more quickly cheerful and confident did Lieutenant Colonel Trim become". It is clear that by his calm demeanour, quick grasp of the situation and efficient handling of the battalion he had trained so well, he set an inspiring example to all and was in a great measure responsible for the way the</p>

		<p>defence held together. He was even on one occasion personally sent by the Brigadier to restore confidence in another battalion.</p> <p><i>Recommended for Companionship of the Distinguished Service Order (DSO) by Brigadier F.A. Esse, Commander 49th Indian Infantry Brigade, but appointed OBE by higher authority.</i></p>
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