

LIEUTENANT GEORGE ALBERT CAIRNS, V.C.
THE SOMERSET LIGHT INFANTRY

The *London Gazette* of 20th May 1949:

"The King has been graciously pleased to approve the posthumous award of the Victoria Cross to Lieut. George A. Cairns, The Somerset Light Infantry, attached South Staffordshire Regiment.

"On March 12, 1944, columns from the South Staffordshire Regiment and 3/6 Gurkha Rifles established a road and railblock across the Japanese lines of communication at Henu Block. The Japanese counter-attacked this position heavily in the early morning of the 13th, and the South Staffordshire Regiment was ordered to attack a hill-top which formed the basis of the Japanese attack. During this action, in which Lieut. Cairns took a foremost part, he was attacked by a Japanese Officer, who, with his sword, hacked off Lieut. Cairn's left arm.

"Lieut. Cairns killed this Officer, picked up his sword and continued to lead his men in the attack and, slashing left and right with the captured sword, killed and wounded several Japanese before he himself fell to the ground. Lieut. Cairns subsequently died from his wounds.

"His action so inspired all his comrades that, later, the Japanese were completely routed, a very rare occurrence at that time."

On joining The Somerset Light Infantry in 1941, Lieut. Cairns was posted to the 6th Battalion. Subsequently he went to India, where he was attached to the South Staffordshire Regiment.