

3 Dudley Graham Johnson VC, CB, DSO*, MC (1884-1975) #6128 on the web family tree.

June 2019

Dudley served with the 3rd Wiltshire Regiment during the second Boer War transferring to the South Wales Borderers on 4th July 1903 where he was Adjutant from 1909 to 1912. Serving in China with 2nd Bn. at the outbreak of WWI, he was awarded the DSO for his actions on the night of the 5th/6th November 1914 in Tsing-tau, China. The citation was posted in the London Gazette on 16th March 1915. He then saw service in Egypt and Gallipoli from March to June 1915.

He joined The Royal Sussex Regiment in November 1916 and was the Commanding Officer of the 2nd Bn. from March 1918 until April 1919. He was awarded the MC on 1st January 1918. It was during the assault on the Sambre Canal on 4th November 1918 (a week before the Armistice) that he was to perform the action which led to the award of the Victoria Cross.

The 2nd Infantry Brigade, of which 2nd Bn. Royal Sussex formed part, was ordered to cross the lock south of Catellon. The position was strong and before the bridge could be thrown, a steep bank leading up to the lock and a waterway about 100 yards short of the canal had to be crossed. The assaulting platoons and bridging parties, Royal Engineers, on their arrival at the waterway were thrown into confusion by a heavy barrage and machine gun fire, and heavy casualties were caused.

At this moment Lt. Col. Johnson arrived and realising the situation at once collected men to man the bridges and assist the Royal Engineers and personally led the assault. In spite of his efforts heavy fire again broke up the assaulting and bridging parties. Without any hesitation he again organised the platoons and bridging parties and led them at the lock, this time succeeding in effecting a crossing after which all went well. During all this time Lt. Col. Johnson was under heavy fire which, though it nearly decimated the assaulting columns, left him untouched. His conduct was a fine example of great valour, coolness and intrepidity, which, added to his splendid leadership and offensive spirit that he had inspired in his Battalion, were entirely responsible for the successful crossing.



*Lt. Col. D G Johnson (left)
and his runner in the
Sambre operations, Sgt. E J
Brown DCM, MM, Croix
de Guerre, 1919*



*Dudley Johnson's medals
are displayed at the South
Wales Borderers Museum
in Brecon, Wales*