

Brigadier Guy Fawkes

Brigadier Guy Fawkes, who has died aged 90, was awarded an MC in an action in front of the Gazala Line, North Africa, in 1942 and a DSO in an attack on the Mareth Line the next year.

On April 9 1942, Fawkes, then a major in command of a battery of 74 Field Regiment RA, was operating with a mixed column of tanks, artillery and infantry forward of the Gazala Line. The column was heavily shelled and attacked by tanks, but he set a fine example by his coolness under fire at one of his troop positions.

When three guns had been put out of action and the entire detachment of the fourth had been killed or wounded, Fawkes continued to fire the remaining gun until all his ammunition was exhausted.

He was the last to leave and, after making sure that his other troop had withdrawn safely, he went back to try to recover the gun sights, although it was almost certain that the position was in enemy hands. He was awarded an immediate MC.

Lindsay Valentine Francis Fawkes was born in South Africa on May 6 1913. Parachuting held a fascination for him from an early age and, as a child, he used to experiment in jumping from the roof of a house using bed sheets.

Fawkes went to Cheltenham College before attending the Royal Military Academy Woolwich. Known as "Guy" from his early days in the Army, he was posted to India in 1934 and served as second-in-command of 79 Field Battery at Fyzabad, Lucknow and Mhow. He transferred to 74 Field Regiment RA in 1941 and served as a troop commander in Cyprus and Iraq before taking command of his battery in North Africa.

On the night of March 20 1943, Fawkes's battery had the task of providing fire support to the 8th Battalion Durham Light Infantry in the attack on the heavily-defended Mareth line. When the battalion commander of the Durhams was killed and the second-in-command wounded, Fawkes encouraged the men to get forward while he crossed the Wadi Zigzaou under heavy machine-gun fire and dug himself an observation post which he occupied throughout the next day.

Fawkes sent back vital information, and when the battalion withdrew and his post came under tank fire, he continued to direct his battery on the advancing armour and infantry. His actions at a critical time were recognised by the award of the DSO.

Fawkes fought in Sicily with 74 Field Regiment RA before attending Staff College at Haifa. After a staff appointment at Algiers and Caserta, he served as Brigade Major RA at 8th Indian Division in Italy again.

In 1950, after a number of staff and regimental appointments, Fawkes took command of 11 (Sphinx) LAA Battery in 27th Independent Infantry Brigade in Korea and was mentioned in dispatches. In 1955, he commanded 33 Parachute Field Regiment and saw active service in Cyprus in operations against Eoka terrorists and in Egypt during the Suez crisis. He was appointed OBE in 1957.

In the second of two postings to Far East Land Forces in Singapore, Fawkes was appointed Commander RA of the 17th Gurkha Division; he was responsible for advising the C-in-C on artillery support for operations in North Borneo to counter Indonesian incursions across the border.

Fawkes was ADC to the Queen from 1966 to 1968, when he retired from the Army.

He moved to a village near Farnham, Surrey, and embarked on a second career as a stockbroker in London. He enjoyed fishing, shooting and gardening, and would climb apple trees to gather the fruit until he was well into his eighties.

Guy Fawkes died on October 3. He married, in 1945, Susan Kemble, who predeceased him. He is survived by a son and a daughter.