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M.S.ESCAPES FROM CAMP 70 (MONTURANO), ITALYRECOMMENDATIONS FOR AWARDS

(1) After the Armistice with Italy, the Senior British Officer forbade escapes by P/W and posted armed British pickets to support the Italian guards. He stated that if the Germans approached the camp, P/W would be marched out and dispersed in parties of 50, while the Italians held up the Germans.

On 15 and 16 Sep 43 the Italian guards deserted and the situation in the camp became somewhat confused. A number of P/W escaped, having been told by the Senior British Officer that it was no longer a court-martial offence to get away, but a large majority remained and were captured by the Germans when they arrived. A number of P/W escaped by jumping from trains in which they were being transported to Germany by the Germans.

(2) I recommend the following other ranks for the awards shown, brief particulars being given in the enclosures stated opposite their names:-

(a) Recommended for M.E.

2091138 Dvr. COMAN, Jack, 505 Md. Coy. R.E., 50 (N) Div.	1A
2077664 Dvr. DOLAN, John Robert, 505 Md. Coy. R.E., 50 (N) Div.	
1025295 R.Q.M.S. DAVISON, George William, 25 Md. Regt. R.A.	1B
6397126 Cpl. BACH, James Nicholas, 1 R. Sussex Regt., 4 Ind. Div.	1C
851446 Gnr. HORGAN, William Cowles, 11 R.E.A., 22 Armcd. Bde., 10 Ind. Div.	1D
3908906 Pte. O'SHEA, Edward, 1 Bn. S. Wales Bord., 20 Bde., 10 Div.	1E
7902535 Sgt. STONE, Claude Archibald, 4 C. of L. Yeomanry, R.A.C.	1F
3912024 Pte. STUDLEY, Clifford Ralph, 1 Welch Regt., 5 Bde., 4 Div.	1G

(b) Recommended for "Mentions".

2117655 Spr. CHANTON, George Robert, 571 Army Md. Coy. R.E.	1H
929013 L/Bdr. WALMER, Robert, 107 Regt., R.E.A.	
182159 Sgt. MARCHETT, George, 906 Coy. R.A.S.C.	1J

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(b) Recommended for "Mentions" (Contd.)

4979807 Pte. MAYCOCK, Walter, 1 Bn. Foresters.	1J	
405220 Sgt. GATLAND, Alfred John, Royal Dragoons, 2 Armd. Bde., 1 Armd. Div.	1K	
7587543 S/Sgt. GOODWIN, Frederick Samuel, 500 A.O.D., R.A.O.C.	1L	
5436422 C.S.M. HOLT, Leonard, D.C.M., 1 Bn. D.C.L.I.	}	
294708 Sqn.Cpl.Major SUMMERS, Walter Edwin, Life Guards (Household Cavalry), 7 Armd. Div.		1E
7587855 S/Sgt. MARSH, Horace Cyril, 32 Army Tank Bde. Ordnance Coy. R.A.O.C.		
2881250 Pte. MACKAY, John Stewart, 2 Bn. London Scottish, attd. M.E. Commando.	1F	
1485383 Sgt. SWAN, William Henry, 171/57 L.A/A Regt. R.A.	1P	

24 Nov 44.

D.D.M.I.

29 Nov 44

I agree  
 J. Evans  
 J. Evans (A)  
 L. M. S.

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6397126 Cpl. MACK, James Nicholas,  
1 R. Sussex Regt., 4 Ind. Div.

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Although MACK evaded capture for five days after his unit had been surrounded at BENGHAZI, he was apprehended on 2 Feb 42. At the time of the Italian Armistice he was imprisoned at MONTURANO (Camp 70) and, obeying the orders of the Senior British Officer, did not try to escape until the Germans arrived.

On 27 Sep 43, when P/W were being transferred to GERMANY, MACK hid in a tree and left the camp the same night. After an unsuccessful attempt to penetrate the lines, he worked for Italians for three months. Apprehended by Fascists, and sent to a camp at ARNEZZO on 4 Mar 44, he bluffed the German guards into believing that he was an Italian workman.

He returned to the TERAMO area to form a guerilla group which did useful work harassing Germans and Fascists until Polish troops arrived on 23 Jun 44. A member of his band has paid tribute to his zeal, ability and powers of leadership in the following terms:-

"I joined the rebels and found this Englishman whose actual name was JAMES MACK - his unit and No. is 6397126 Cpl. James MACK, 1 Bn. Royal Sussex Regt. He I know personally well was outstanding; showing good zest and leadership; and got a real good disciplined band together, smashing many German trucks on the roads during the night. I stayed with this band until the end. He is the best man I have ever come across in my experience of war."

A-9640

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