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E11R Military Medal pair for South Arabia 1967, 1st Battn Lancashire Regiment (PWV)







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Medal Description

M.M. (E11R - L/Cpl.) G.S.M. clasp South Arabia (Corpl.)

R.J. Sanderson, Lan. R. (PWV)

L.G. 23/1/1968

The original recommendation reads as follows: "During the night of the 19th/20th May 1967 Corporal Sanderson was in command of a patrol in the Al Mansura area of Sheikh Othman, when he heard distant shots being fired which he correctly deduced were terrorist fire at the static posts of the Al Mansura Detention Centre. At this time he was some distance from the Detention Centre and in an unfamiliar area. However, despite the unfamiliarity of the ground and darkness he decided to deviate from his patrol route and try to ambush the terrorists. He therefore quickly re-briefed his patrol and with considerable speed and despatch moved into a position in rear of the terrorist firing point. To ensure that his ambush was in the correct position without making the enemy aware of his presence was extremely difficult and involved him in danger during reconnaissance.

Nevertheless he soon had his ambush positioned and was in time to see two men approach from the direction of the enemy firing point. Quietly and skilfully he and his patrol lay low until the men were in the trap. Corporal Sanderson then exposed himself and gave the normal and correct challenge. He was immediately fired upon by one of the men who turned and ran. Corporal Sanderson calmly and deliberately gave a fire order and one man was shot dead. The other immediately surrendered.

Corporal Sanderson's actions and skilful handling of his patrol undoubtedly eliminated two extremely dangerous terrorists in an area where one mistake may have resulted in the death or injury of innocent persons. To ensure he had the right men Corporal Sanderson deliberately exposed himself to the enemy and their fire. In this action Corporal Sanderson displayed outstanding professional skill and a complete disregard for his personal safety without which the operation could not have been successful.'

Sanderson's award was published in the London Gazette for 23rd January 1968, and he was subsequently presented with an Illuminated Award Scroll from the Rishton Urban District Council on 22nd February 1968. Sanderson is one of 28 recipient's of the Military Medal for the Aden Emergency, of whom 8 received awards for operations in 1957, three awards were made to members of the 1st Battalion, Lancashire Regiment. Together with an unusual Illuminated Award Scroll from the Rishton Urban District Council presented to Corporal Robert John Sanderson on 22nd February 1968 on his having been awarded the Military Medal, this giving the full details of his citation, as well as other personal details.

Robert John Sanderson was born on 30th November 1944 and served as a Corporal (No.23935360) with the 1st Battalion, The Lancashire Regiment - The Prince of Wales Volunteers. Sanderson was a Battalion athlete, soccer player and boxer, and came from Rishton near Blackburn in Lancashire.

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