

Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM)

John Grant Sandford

775188. Sergeant
Royal NZ Infantry Regiment
Victor Three Company

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CITATION

Throughout his year of service in South Vietnam (dates) as a Platoon Sergeant in Victor Three Company, Sergeant Sandford displayed exemplary conduct, devotion to duty and professional ability. His loyalty, forceful leadership and aggressive demeanour were a fine example to his platoon.

On 3rd October, 1968¹ Sergeant Sandford while commanding 1 Platoon found three well concealed caches. Lacking Engineer assistance he personally undertook the dangerous investigation of the caches and their surrounds for mines and booby traps. His prompt and resourceful action resulted in the capture of 31,000 pounds of rice.

In November 1968² Sergeant Sandford again commanded the 1 Platoon on operations. On the 10th November his platoon engaged an enemy force moving cautiously through the jungle. His excellent siting and control enabled the platoon to engage an alert enemy party at close range. The enemy survivors of the initial engagement took cover and returned fire. After a fierce firefight the enemy soldiers fled leaving one of their members firing from an almost inaccessible position. After placing a machine gun to give covering fire, Sergeant Sandford ran forward under fire to a position from where he could throw a grenade and, at great risk to himself, killed the remaining enemy soldier.

On 9th April 1969³ Sergeant Sandford was again in command of 1 Platoon when it engaged a strong enemy party. He moved forward to the section most closely engaged and as he arrived in this section's area the enemy threw a grenade, which landed close to several members of the section. Unhesitatingly Sergeant Sandford leapt forward, picked up the grenade and threw it back at the enemy. This unselfish act was successful. The grenade exploded to the front of the section and Sergeant Sandford and two other soldiers were only lightly wounded. At the conclusion of his action he elected to remain on duty commanding the platoon in spite of his wound.

Throughout his service in South Vietnam Sergeant Sandford distinguished himself as a skilled and courageous soldier, whose personal gallantry was an inspiration to the men under his command.

¹ Nil casualties

² Nil casualties

³ 9/4/69 LCpl Bush RA, WIA; Sgt Sandford JG, WIA; Pte Rimington GR, WIA.

