

MEDALS AND MEMORIES MINUTES



Another Look at Monte Cassino

At the beginning of 1944 during the battle for Monte Cassino on the outskirts of Rome, a company of Nepali Ghurkhas and British troops were pinned down on Hangman's Hill, a rock outcropping near the monastery on the hill. American bombers dropped food and water for them, but, much of it fell into German hands. Cut off from their lines for nine days, the situation seemed hopeless. Finally three British volunteers, each with a haversack containing an American homing pigeon, set off by three different routes to try to penetrate the German lines. One man was pinned down by machine gun fire, but, the other two managed to get through. All three men sent messages about their routes to headquarters. That night Allied guns provided the fire to clear an escape route along the safe paths the scouts had identified. Three men and three pigeons saved the day.