



CATANIA WAR CEMETERY

Major John Geoffry Appleyard



Major John Geoffry Appleyard DSO MC and Bar (20 December 1916 -13 July 1943) was a British Commando and Special Air Service (SAS) officer. Appleyard was born in Bramley. Son of John Appleyard e Mary Northrop Brother of Margaret Appleyard, Joan Appleyard e Ian Appleyard.

He was educated at Bootham School in York, where he combined academic success with natural history and roof-climbing and at Caius College, Cambridge, where he obtained a first in Engineering and a skiing blue, while he was also his college's Captain of Boats and competing as a highly successful international skier. He was commissioned into the Royal Army Service Corps in 1939. On meeting Appleyard at his third investiture in eleven months, the King had been both amused and impressed, greeting him with: "What, you again?"

His war exploits as a commando on special service with No.62 Commando which he commanded after Operation Aquatint and the SAS culminated with the SAS landing on Pantelleria and soon after that his loss when his plane crashed on its return from reconnoitering the foothills of Etna. Describing him "Popski" says, " He was one of the few officers who had developed the technique of the small scale raid : the care he took of his men made him stand out of among brother officers who ere too excited by the prospect of adventure to think of anybody but their own selves".