



Journal of the

# Orders & Medals Research Society

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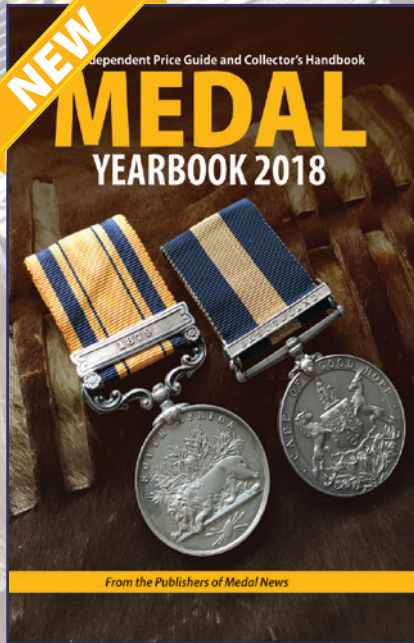
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## The Jordanian Order of Military Gallantry: two British recipients

by Owain Raw-Rees, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

THIS ARTICLE is the result of a query from Colonel Ted Shields, late Defence Attaché at the British Embassy in Amman, Jordan. He had received a request from serving colleagues in London asking if he could find, on behalf of a nephew, any information concerning the circumstances of a bravery award made to a Major Stanley George Townsend Corfield (1924-2004). The only information he had received was as follows:

Commissioned into the Arab Legion of Trans Jordan about 1947-48, having served all the way through WW2 with the British Army. Awarded the Jordanian Order of Military Gallantry Medal. Otherwise known as the Wisam Al-'Iqdam Al-'Askari by King Abdullah. Apparently, he was 1 of only 3 Brits to be award[ed] this medal. The medal can be awarded to all ranks of the Arab Legion for the highest gallantry. It is analogous to the Victoria Cross. The medal was established by King Abdullah ibn Hussain in 1946.

In addition to this brief summary there were two pictures of Major Corfield, one taken from his Jordanian army service book.

Colonel Shields kindly referred this matter to me and our mutual friend Lieutenant Colonel



Page of Maj Corfield's Arab Legion service book  
(courtesy of Maj Corfield's nephew)



Maj Stanley Corfield in Arab Legion service dress  
(courtesy of Maj Corfield's nephew)

Tim Brown, who was serving with the British Military Training Team attached to the Royal Jordanian Army. Lt Col Brown had previously been able to obtain a scanned copy of the most recent source of information concerning Jordanian awards, the *Handbook of the Orders and Badges used by the Jordanian Armed Forces*, issued by the Department of Personnel Affairs until 2011. Further to having the text of this publication translated, the handbook notes the then-current Jordanian military awards for bravery as follows:

### Order of the Hashemite Star

This is the highest military order in seniority, consisting of just one class.

This order is awarded to officers, non-commissioned officers and personnel of the Armed Forces and Public Security who exert heroic effort in defending the homeland.

The Order of the Hashemite Star is a seven-pointed white-enamelled star suspended from a Hashemite crown and set upon a gilded wreath bearing round its lower edge the inscription in Arabic 'The Hashemite Star'. In the centre, on



The Order of the Hashemite Star

a red background upon a green seven-pointed star, is a gilt bust of King Hussain with the Arabic inscription 'Al Hussein Bin Tala'. The reverse is plain. The star is 49mm in diameter and is suspended from a 42mm x 7mm bar. The 36mm wide scarlet ribbon bears a gilt Arabic sword 46mm in length. The suspension loop has the maker's mark of Arthus Bertrand of Paris.

**Order of Military Gallantry**

This is a senior military order that is second in seniority and consists of one class.

The order is awarded to all ranks of the Jordanian Armed Forces and Public Security that

demonstrate courage, bravery and sacrifice in performance of their duty.

While the *Handbook* does not give the date of institution of the Order of Military Gallantry, the inscription on the medal dates to the period when the Kingdom became independent and was instituted by Emir Abdullah in 1948 or shortly thereafter when he was proclaimed king of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Unfortunately I have, to date, been unable to source a copy of the decree instituting this award.

On referring to Colonel Shield's email and subsequent correspondence with Major Corfield's



Order of Military Gallantry manufactured by Garrard & Co., London



Order of Military Gallantry manufactured by Arthus Bertrand, Paris (courtesy Jean-Christophe Palthey)



Major Corfield's medals 'as worn'  
(courtesy of Maj Corfield's nephew)

nephew, a photograph of the major's medals was obtained, from which it is apparent that, while the green ribbon is common to both Major Corfield's bronze medal and the Order of Military Gallantry, it is evident that this particular bronze medal is *not* the same as the one illustrated in the *Handbook of the Orders and Badges used by the Jordanian Armed Forces*.

Referring to my research on the order, I had noted that two distinct designs of the Jordanian gallantry medal, both with a green ribbon, are known. My assumption had been that, while trial pieces in silvered bronze and bronze had been made by Bichay of Cairo (the manufacturer of Egyptian awards), a design by Garrard & Co of London was chosen and subsequently manufactured in silver. The designs of the two medals are visibly different, categorised below as the 'For Military Gallantry' and 'For Bravery' variants.

'For Military Gallantry' variant: on the obverse in the centre is a bust of King Abdullah wearing Arab headdress consisting of a *ghutra* (or keffiyeh) held in place by an *agal* and surrounded by the Arabic inscription: 'Abdullah bin Al Hussain King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan'. On the reverse, in the centre, the Dome of the Rock, or the Mosque of Omar, in Jerusalem, with a cypress tree to the left, below which is the inscription, in Arabic, 'For Military Gallantry'. The medal is 49mm in diameter and suspension

is by a loop through a ring affixed to the top of the medal. The silver medal was originally manufactured by Garrard & Co of London. Later examples are known in silvered base metal and bronze by Arthus Bertrand of Paris, but these may be trial pieces.

'For Bravery' variant: on the obverse in the centre is a bust of King Abdullah wearing a *luffah tarboosh*, and surrounded by the inscription: 'Abdullah bin Al Hussain King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan'. On the reverse in the centre, the Dome of the Rock, or the Mosque of Omar in Jerusalem, below which is the inscription, in Arabic, 'For Bravery'. The name 'S.T. Bichay' is engraved below and to the right of the mosque. The medal is 49mm in diameter and suspension is by a loop



'For Bravery' variant of the Order of Military Gallantry  
in silvered metal, probably a trial piece



through a ring affixed to the top of the medal. The designer was Sadiq Tewfiq Bichay and the medal was manufactured by Fahmy Tewfiq Bichay of Cairo.

The evidence provided by the picture of Corfield's medals indicates that it was the 'For Bravery' variant in bronze by Bichay which was actually awarded to him. While there can be no definitive answer to this anomaly, it would appear that the Jordanian 'For Bravery' medal was only extant for a brief period as a 'First Type' before being replaced by the later design with the inscription 'For Military Gallantry' and thus both are correctly called the Order of Military Gallantry. It may be that the Bichay design was used due to the geographical proximity of the manufacturer and that it was subsequently superseded by the Garrard & Co design. From the evidence of known examples, consideration may also have been given by the instituting authorities to have the award in two classes, but this is only speculation. Perhaps the earlier Bichay medal was manufactured in haste in nearby Egypt and subsequently superseded by the Garrard medal when the regulations were concluded and time allowed manufacture in the United Kingdom. Sight of the original instituting decree would go some way to clarifying this matter.

### Major Corfield's service in Jordan

Having ascertained the details of the medal awarded to Major Corfield, the next step was to try to find out the circumstances of the award. Searching the *London Gazette* for notice of the award, no evidence of any 'permission to wear' was found. As Major Corfield was serving with the Arab Legion, it may be that any awards were notified in the Jordanian equivalent of the *London Gazette* or in Arab Legion army orders of the day. To date it has not been possible to access any such records. Reference has also been made to Lieutenant General Sir John Glubb's books on the Arab Legion; however, a quick search of the various indexes has not revealed Major Corfield being referred to in any of these books. Further correspondence with the family resulted in a full copy of Major Corfield's Arab Legion service book. Although in Arabic, a subsequent translation extracted the following details:

*Page 3:* Record of Military Service - Number: 537  
/ Name: S.G.T. Corfield / Nationality: British /  
Date of Joining: 1 November 1947 / Place:  
Amman / Date of Issue: 17 March 1948

*Pages 4 & 5:* Appointments, Promotions, Renewals and Movement of Location

Rank	Date	Order of the Day
Captain	1 Nov. 1947	14 March 1948
Staff Colonel	7 July 1948	25 July 1948

*Page 6:* Unit holder posted to and date: 2nd Battalion, 1 November 1948

In addition to the service book, the family provided a cutting taken from the *Shropshire Express and Star* newspaper dated Monday, 27 September 1948; the following extracts are of interest:

#### MAJOR WAS HUNTED BY NIGHT IN CAIRO STREETS

Threatened By Stern Gang

A 24-year-old officer in the Arab Legion, Major Stanley George Townsend Corfield, of Shrewsbury, who has been told that the Stern gang intended to kill him and who was chased by a taxi containing three men in Cairo, arrived in London yesterday, and this morning was at his home in Shrewsbury.

...

Major Corfield joined the army at 18, served with the K.S.L.I., and was commissioned through the K.R.R.C. to the Buffs. He was with the 1st Royal Hampshire Regiment in Palestine when demobilized in 1947, and then joined the Arab Legion, and holds a King Abdullah commission.

Online research by Lt Col Brown ascertained that S.G.T. Corfield (277471) was commissioned in the Buffs on 2 May 1943 and remained in service until 10 January 1948 when he relinquished his commission and was granted honorary rank of captain, presumably to go into the Arab Legion whereupon he received a Jordanian commission. Following his service in Jordan, on 3 December 1951 he was given the substantive rank of captain. His entitlement to the General Service Medal 1918-62 with clasp 'PALESTINE 1945-48' is noted on two medal rolls dated August 1952: as Captain S.G.T. Corfield on the Buffs medal roll, and again as W/Qaid (*Waqeel Qaid* or Major) S.G.T. Corfield on the Arab Legion medal roll. In both instances the date of 8 January 1952 is noted after his name. On 16 December 1952 Captain Corfield moved from the Active List to the Territorial Army Reserve, retaining his rank of captain and seniority. From late 1952 until his re-enlistment, online records indicate he was employed in insurance. In 1954 he returned to the Active List but by the end of 1959 he was back with the Territorial Army, being promoted on 1 November to the rank of major.

He married in 1961 and on 15 November of that year he is noted as a major in the TA Reserve of Officers.

In addition to the online research, Lt Col Brown was able to conduct some further research in Amman. He spoke to a number of Jordanian officers to try to ascertain where any archives for medal citations would be. The consensus was that they would be in one of three places: G3 Operations in GHQ; G1 Personnel in GHQ; or Officers' Affairs. Further to a visit to GHQ and Officers' Affairs, the latter confirmed that Major Corfield served with the Arab Legion from 1946-48. They also confirmed his Army number as 537 as shown in his ID papers and noted that he served with the Hussein Battalion, formerly the Second Battalion, and which still exists and is currently in Martyr King Abdullah Brigade. Importantly, they confirmed that the award of the 'For Bravery' medal was dated 21 June 1948; however, they did not hold a citation.

Lt Col Brown then met a brigadier who commanded the battalion during 2004-06 and was very knowledgeable about its history. He managed to produce the 'Battalion Book' in

which all the major events in the battalion's history are noted; one copy is kept with the battalion and one remains with GHQ. In the Jordanian army the battalion is a famous one and has the nickname 'Mother of Martyrs' because so many of its serving soldiers lost their lives in the conflicts of 1948, 1967 and 1968. The ex-CO also stated, though this was not confirmed, that the whole unit was awarded the Bravery Medal, date unknown, and to this day they wear green flashes on their epaulettes.

With regard to the date of Major Corfield's award, 21 June 1948 was not the date of one of the battalion's major battles as recorded, thus it may be that the 'date of award' is the date when it was announced or authorised rather than when it was earned. The dates of large engagements or battles noted in the Battalion Book are 18 May 1948, 22 May 1948, 16 July 1948 and 19 July 1948, however, the whole of this 14-month period was one of intense activity.

At the end of his service with the Arab Legion, Major Corfield was given a letter of commendation by his brigade commander wherein reference is made to his bravery:



**Maj Corfield seated centre with brigade staff, 1st Infantry Brigade, Arab Legion in August 1948**  
(courtesy of Maj Corfield's nephew)

HQ 1<sup>st</sup> Inf. Bde. Arab Legion.

5th November 1949.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I have known Major S.G.T. Corfield for approx. 2 years.

During this period he has held the appointment of Bde Major in my Bde and carried out his duties in an exemplary manner. In addition he was responsible for organizing a new Brigade Staff consisting of a Staff Captain, Signal Officer, Intelligence Officer and Camp Commandant, prior to the Bde going into action. He succeeded in doing this most successfully and was very popular with all ranks.

He has a very quick and active brain, a strong sense of humour, and is most adaptable.

During the Arab Jewish War, he conducted himself on several occasions with the greatest bravery, and was awarded the Gallantry Medal by King Abdullah on termination of the campaign.

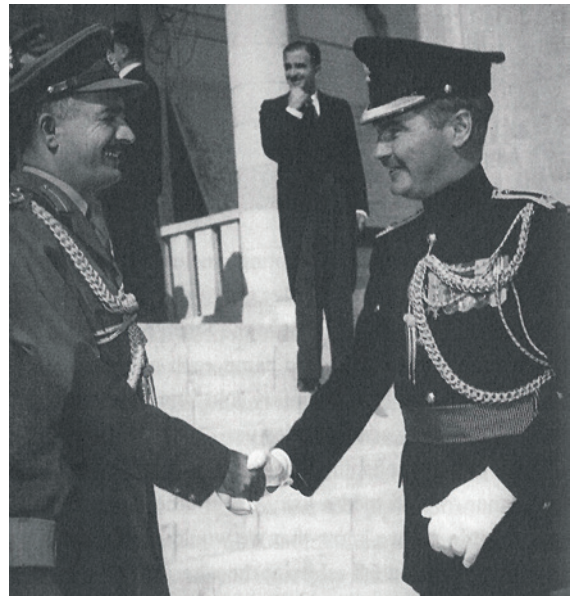
I recommend him most strongly for a short service Commission in the British Army  
(signed) H.D.B. Goldie COLONEL  
Royal Scots Fusiliers (Regular Officer)  
Comdg 1st Bde, Arab Legion

In addition to Corfield's bravery award, the family advised that as far as they were aware a total of only three such medals were awarded to British recipients, including the one to Major Corfield and one to his batman. Sadly no details are available, but presumably they were for the same action, nor for the third award which was unknown to the family. However, by a stroke of good fortune it would appear that the third award was made to a Colonel Nigel Bromage (1927-2013).

### Colonel Nigel Bromage

Col Bromage's obituary was published in *The Daily Telegraph*, a London newspaper. It notes:

In 1945 Bromage was commissioned into the Grenadier Guards and posted to 3rd Battalion in Palestine. He was seconded to the Arab Legion and, as the commander of a Jordanian armoured unit, took part in a number of fierce skirmishes with Jewish forces during the campaign which preceded the birth of the state of Israel. On one occasion one of his armoured cars was hit by an armour-piercing shell and the vehicle set on fire. Unwilling to see it fall into the hands of Jewish fighters, he had it taken in tow while he tried to steer it, the driver being dead in his seat. He wrote afterwards: "I had an interesting 20 minutes sitting on the mudguard while the Israelis shot at us with everything they had." In 1948, at the battle of Latrun, he was wounded by a grenade.



Colonel Bromage being received at the palace in Amman in 1958

(photograph courtesy of the Bromage family)

He was subsequently awarded the Jordanian Gallantry Medal by King Hussein.

In the photograph, Col Bromage's medals are clearly seen as follows: Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE); War Medal 1939-45; General Service Medal 1918-62 with clasps 'PALESTINE 1945-48' and 'CYPRUS'; Jordanian Order of Military Gallantry; and Jordanian 1948 Palestine War Medal. Colonel Bromage's MBE was gazetted on 2 January 1950 (*LG Supplement* No 38797). As with Major Corfield, on referring to the *London Gazette* for notice of the Jordanian award to Colonel Bromage, no evidence of any 'permission to wear' was found.

Colonel Bromage's autobiography, *A Soldier in Arabia – A British Military Memoir from Jordan to Saudi Arabia*, was published in 2012. In the book, Bromage notes that while on a training course at Warminster in late 1949:

... [a] letter arrived from the authorities in London giving me permission to wear the Jordanian Gallantry Medal, which was presumably granted for my driving the wrecked armoured car back to our lines. As it was already a wreck, I do not know what benefit I gave by driving it back, except that I had caused a very large weight of Israeli ammunition to be expended. [Chapter 10, Page 56]

Further referral to the book gives details of the action earlier that year at Wadi Gharandal near Maan in Jordan concerning the border demarcation:

The following night we erected our wire barricades and notices, telling the Israelis that we considered that area of the diversion to be part of Jordan. The Israelis did not take kindly to this, and a running battle ensued, as they ignored the instructions that the road was closed. It was not long before shooting started in earnest. I never discovered what they had in mind in reopening the diversion, but there was a long battle between our armoured cars and the enemy, who probably had enough armour-piercing weapons to resist us. And resist us they did! Unfortunately, we lost an armoured car, which must have been hit by an armour-piercing weapon of some sort. The Israeli projectile killed the driver and set the vehicle on fire. Not wanting it to fall into Israeli hands, I went myself, in my Jeep, and having opened one of the driver's doors I was able to steer the vehicle by holding the steering wheel, the driver being dead in the seat, which was somewhat of an obstacle. We managed to get one of our armoured personnel carriers, which consisted of an armoured car with turret removed, and took the damaged vehicle in tow. I had an interesting twenty minutes sitting on the mudguard of the armoured car while the Israelis shot at us with everything they had. They fortunately missed us, and I survived to tell the tale. When I pulled the damaged vehicle back into our lines I was able to release it, as by then it was safe from any Israeli attempts to tow it. [Chapter 8, Page 51]

Colonel Bromage's subsequent career included Staff College in 1954 and a tour of duty in Cyprus during the Eoka emergency in 1956. Thereafter he served in Jordan as assistant military attaché, and in 1963 was posted to Saudi Arabia to set up the British Military Mission to the Saudi Arabian National Guard; his work there resulted in his promotion from MBE to OBE. Subsequently he became an adviser to the Kuwait Liaison Team and then Military Adviser to the United Arab Emirates. He retired in 1978.

In the photograph, Colonel Bromage is wearing the Jordanian 1948 Palestine War Medal. It is the convention that British service personnel may, on occasion, accept foreign campaign medals, but not wear them. If they have been formally awarded the medal it is usually a courtesy to the host nation to wear the award if serving in that country. In this instance, as far as can be ascertained, the Jordanian government did not award this medal to British personnel and thus no permission was given for British military personnel to accept the medal. On referring to the regulations concerning the medal, it is noted that it was awarded to each serving member

of the Arab Legion who saw front line service for a minimum of seven days during the period 19 July 1948 to 15 August 1948, and thus while both Bromage and Corfield may have qualified through service during the qualifying period, as British officers their service was recognised by the award of the British General Service Medal 1918-62 with clasp 'PALESTINE 1945-48'. (Army Order 146 of 1957: awarded to personnel on the strength of a unit in Palestine from 27 September 1945 to 30 June 1948. The Arab Legion and Grenadier Guards are included within the list of qualifying units for this award.)

Referring to the *Handbook of the Orders and Badges used by the Jordanian Armed Forces*, the regulations (translation) for the 1948 Palestine War Medal state:

1. The Medal comes in the 6th place among the Army Orders and consists of just one class.
2. The Medal is awarded to any of the Jordanian Army Members who served in the front units in Palestine for a period of not less than 7 days from July 19, 1948 to August 15, 1948. *It is also awarded to those who were injured, killed or granted the Military Glory Order for his services during these operations* [Author's emphasis].

Accordingly, Colonel Bromage, by virtue of being awarded the Gallantry/Bravery Medal, was automatically entitled, regardless of nationality, to the Jordanian 1948 Palestine War Medal. It



The Jordanian 1948 Palestine War Medal



**Maj Corfield in later life**

(photograph courtesy of Maj Corfield's nephew)

would appear that Major Corfield was unaware of this regulation; he would have thus been entitled to add the Jordanian 1948 Palestine War Medal to his awards.

From a medallic standpoint these bravery awards are of great interest as they represent a hitherto undocumented chapter of the bravery of British personnel attached to the Arab Legion during the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. If it is possible to obtain details concerning the third recipient of this award, the author would be grateful.

Further correspondence with Major Corfield's family noted:

George died on 2 April 2004 aged 80. He lived his last few years near Cork in Ireland. His ashes are interred in Bicton Church graveyard in Shropshire. There was no obituary written but I attach the only photo I have of him wearing his medals. After the war he held a variety of jobs mostly in the agricultural machinery industry. He also devoted much of his spare time as a member of the Royal British Legion helping old soldiers and their families.

Major Corfield's family also noted that he had:

... visited Jordan around 2000. He called on the HQ of the Jordanian Armed Forces. Having explained who he was and showing his medals, eventually Colonel Wael Bukaein came out to see him. He said he would look at the records. This he did and later met George at his hotel. After that, the Colonel looked after George for several days, showing him sites of interest from the war. The Colonel described George as 'My hero' to Jan, his sister, my aunt.

### Acknowledgments

I would like to express my thanks to the family of Major Corfield for their support in the compilation of this article, and also my thanks to Colonel Ted Shields and especially Lieutenant Colonel Tim Brown for their contributions.

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Correspondence with Major Corfield's family, Colonel Ted Shields and Lt Col Tim Brown.

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## A Waterloo veteran disowned by his regiment and twice court martialled: Captain John Montmorency Tucker, 27th and 8th Regiments of Foot, sometime colonel, Spanish service. A gentleman or a rogue?

by Nick Tucker

JOHN MONTMORENCY Tucker, aged 17 and a 'gentleman', was appointed ensign, by purchase, in the 28th Regiment of Foot on 11 October 1797 (*London Gazette*, 24 October 1797), and on 25 December he proceeded to Gibraltar. In June 1798 he was recorded as serving in Captain Groves's Company of the regiment, but between the following September and March 1799 he was shown as being sick, and then between March and November 1799, as being on 'Colonel Stewart's leave'. However, in his subsequent letter applying for promotion to lieutenant he stated 'I have seen the taking of Minorca', in which the 28th Regiment took part between 7 and 16 November 1799.

On 23 November 1799 he exchanged, as an ensign by purchase, into the 14th Regiment of Foot (*London Gazette*, 23 November 1799), aged just 19. He had served with the 28th for two years and 43 days but he was to be with the 14th Regiment for only 235 days. The 14th was then stationed on Martinique in the West Indies, and in March 1800 John Tucker was listed in Captain Powell's Company, but he never joined his regiment. On 11 July 1800 John Tucker wrote to the Prince Regent requesting permission to be considered for promotion to lieutenant without purchase, due to being entirely reliant on the profession of his father. His boldness paid off, for on 16 July he was promoted lieutenant, without purchase, in the 27th Regiment of Foot, still aged 19 (*London Gazette*, 19 July 1800) and he appears on the roll of the 2nd Battalion at Enniskillen on 25 September when he presented himself for duty.

By 1801 he was serving with the 1st Battalion at Lisbon and on the River Tagus in Portugal, and between January and February at Mahon Bay in the Balearic Islands (Spain). By the end of February he was with the battalion in Egypt, landing at Aboukir Bay on 8 March 1801 and taking part in the Egyptian campaign, which included the battle of Alexandria on 21 March. For this campaign John Tucker was first awarded the Sultan's Medal for Egypt 1801 (in gold, 36mm), and subsequently was issued with the clasp 'EGYPT' to his Military General Service Medal

1793-1814 (MGS). By September the 1st Battalion had returned to Malta. From November 1802 John Tucker disappeared from the muster rolls, presumably to go on regimental half-pay, because on 1 April 1803 he was appointed lieutenant from regimental half-pay (*London Gazette*, 2 April 1803), aged 22, and returned to the 2nd Battalion. However, a comment in the December muster roll states 'not joined since appointment'.

By December 1805 he was back with the 1st Battalion, serving at Messina on the island of Sicily and in 1806 the battalion formed part of the expedition to Naples under Sir James Craig, being employed in July as part of Sir John Stuart's expedition to Calabria, where on 4 July it fought at the Battle of Maida. The battalion suffered six killed and 47 wounded in the short, but successful, campaign against French forces in southern Italy; this earned Tucker his second clasp to the MGS. In August the battalion returned to Sicily, where it served on garrison duty until 1811. On 3 March 1808 John Tucker was promoted captain, without purchase, aged 27 (*London Gazette*,



Captain Tucker's Military General Service Medal



#### The Battle of Maida

(The Battle of Maida 1806 - Fifteen Minutes of Glory, by Richard Hopton)

5 March 1808), and was in command of the Grenadier Company of the 2nd Battalion while at Malta. However, while his regiment continued to garrison the Mediterranean islands, John Tucker secured a secondment to the Spanish army, described variously as 'in Spanish Service', 'with Spanish patriots' and 'with Spanish guerrillas'. The MGS medal roll for the clasps 'MAIDA' and 'BARROSA' lists him as: 'Colonel, Spanish Service'.

In this capacity he served at the defence of Cadiz during 1810-11 during the siege by the French, and was present at the battle of Barrosa on 5 March 1811, where, it is reported, he was employed with Spanish irregulares. This action earned him his third clasp to his MGS, which is unique to the 27th, his medal being impressed: J. TUCKER, CAPT<sup>T</sup> 27<sup>TH</sup> FOOT.<sup>1</sup>

Tucker, John Montmorncy  
 Capt 27 Ft. 3 Mar '08.  
 He attached Spanish Army Aug 10 to  
 Cadix, Barr, Costa, Tarra, - ; 7/17 Mar to July '13.  
 S.M. Maida, Barr, Egypt.  
 o o m o d o M o i M a i d e o f S i c i l y . W l o o . w d D 22 Feb. 1852

Capt Tucker's entry on 'Challis's Peninsula Roll Call Card'

In November 1812 the 1st Battalion landed at Alicante in southern Spain and John Tucker returned to the battalion, but between March and July 1813 he was with the 2nd Battalion again, and was engaged at the battle of Castalla on 13 April 1813 with Colonel Frederick Adam's brigade, 20 miles north west of Alicante. The battalion fought brilliantly, forming a line two-deep and inflicting 369 casualties on the French 121st Line Infantry Regiment in just a few minutes, while the entire brigade suffered only 70 casualties. He was also at the siege of Tarragona, between 8-11 June that year, which means that he must have returned to the 1st Battalion, as the 2nd Battalion was not present.

Following the defeat of Napoleon's forces, the battalion gathered at Bordeaux where it embarked for America in May 1814, with John Tucker on its strength. It arrived in Canada in August 1814 and advanced on Plattsburgh where it was engaged between 6-11 September under Major General Sir Manley Power. The force retreated to Montreal where, on 5 November, the 1st Battalion, including John Tucker, embarked to reinforce the army at New Orleans. It was a tortuous passage, arriving at Halifax, Nova Scotia on 10 December and sailing again eight days later for Bermuda, arriving in January 1815;

Jamaica was reached in March, and the entrance to the Mississippi on 14 March. However, the battalion was ordered back to Europe where seven companies, including John Tucker's, arrived at Portsmouth on 10 May 1815; three companies, including the headquarters, had become separated in a gale. The seven companies were brought up to strength of one hundred rank and file each by drafts from the 2nd Battalion and on 17 May they embarked for Ostende, where they disembarked seven days later and then moved to Ghent. On 16 June they marched from Ghent, passing through Brussels the next day and arrived at Waterloo on the morning of 18 June, the only Irish regiment present.

As part of the 10th Brigade commanded by Major General Sir John Lambert, the seven companies of the 1/27th Foot were left for some time in reserve at the village of Waterloo. At about 11am the brigade was brought up to the Charleroi Road near the farmhouse of La Haye Sainte where they formed into battalion squares; the 1/27th was on the right of the brigade bordering the road. Commanded by Major John Hare, along with Captain George Holmes and Captain John Tucker, it stood firm for many hours, enduring heavy artillery fire and repeated cavalry charges. Major Charles Beckwith, a light



**'The Green Square' at Waterloo**  
(Painting held by the Museum of the 27th Regiment of Foot, Enniskillen)



division staff officer, graphically described the conduct of the 1/27th:

The bullets ploughed through their mass until nearly two-thirds went down, and the survivors, as if fearing their own nerves would give way, but resolved not to go back, pressed their heads and shoulders inwards, forming a solid ring; and thus leaning together and striving as it were to push all to the centre, moved round and round, stamping like men in a mill; apparently frantic with horror and excitement, yet firm in their resolution to overcome nature and fall to the last man, continued their tramp, constantly closing in, etc., lessening their glorious ring as the crashing flights of metal continued to tear through the living mass.<sup>2</sup>

Captain John Kincaid, of the nearby 95th Rifles, wrote that at 7pm the ‘twenty-seventh Regiment were lying literally dead, in a square.’ He further recorded that he had ‘never thought there would be a battle where everyone was killed; but this seemed likely to be an exception.’ The 1/27th became known as the ‘square of the dead’.

Captain John Tucker, describing the experience some thirty years later in *The Life of the Duke of Wellington*, stated:

Many battalions were miserably reduced, and presented but skeletons of what these beautiful brigades had been when they left Brussels two days before. The loss of individual regiments was prodigious. One, the 27th, or Enniskillen’s, had above four hundred men mown down in a square, without drawing a trigger: it lost almost all its officers; and it was subsequently reduced to one officer and fifty men [*sic*], out of twenty-one officers [*sic*] and seven hundred men, with which it had entered the field.

Having stood in square all day above the sandpit on the Charleroi Road, the 1/27th saved Wellington’s flank by not giving an inch of ground, and this was acknowledged by Wellington to have saved the centre of the line. It was cut to ribbons and took the full brunt of the French cavalry charge. Of the 16 officers present, two were killed and 13 wounded. An adjacent regiment offered to lend the 1/27th some officers, to which Major Hare refused, saying: ‘the sergeants like to command the companies, and I would be loathe to deprive them of such honour’.

The 27th Enniskillen’s suffered 526 casualties, from a pre-battle strength of 747, a casualty rate of 70%.

One of the wounded was Captain John Tucker, who, according to regimental lore, after being

shot in the thigh was rescued from the battlefield by his wife who hurried to the field from the baggage train when she heard he was wounded; she also rescued her brother, Ensign Thomas Charlton Smith, who was severely wounded. Captain John Tucker’s Waterloo Medal was extremely hard won.<sup>3</sup>



Captain Tucker’s Waterloo Medal

27th Enniskillen’s casualties

Category	Officers	Other ranks	Total
Killed	2	71	73
Died of wounds	0	49	49
Sub-total killed	2	120	122
Wounded	13	391	404
Total casualties	15	511	526

By 8 September John Tucker was at Neuilly, near Paris, with the battalion which needed to be brought up to strength from the 2nd Battalion and elsewhere. John Tucker objected to the reinstatement of Lieutenant Alexander Fraser who had resigned from the battalion in Bermuda in February 1815 rather than face a court martial for charges of repeated drunkenness, disobedience, and causing a riot on board a transport ship, i.e. the ship transporting them from Montreal to New Orleans. As Fraser’s former commanding officer, Tucker reminded Colonel Warren of the circumstances leading to the resignation, but Warren gave more weight to his own opinion of Fraser. Tucker refused to withdraw his objection and wrote on 11 September to Major General Sir Manley Power

reminding him of the events in Bermuda. As a consequence, Tucker was shunned by many of his fellow officers, which he noted in a letter to Lieutenant General Sir Lowry Cole on 19 September, and charges were then brought against Tucker on 27 September. On 1 November 1816, he was court martialled, accused of 'scandalous and infamous conduct, unbecoming an officer and gentleman', on five charges:

1. Aspersing the character of Sir Lowry Cole, Colonel Warren and the officers of the corps.
2. Taking away a bay mare belonging to a British regiment, effacing the regimental mark and advertising it for sale.
3. Taking away a grey mare belonging to a foreign regiment, effacing the regimental mark and selling the mare to Lieutenant Cubigg, of the 27th Regiment for two hundred francs.
4. Opening the trunks of the late Captain Holmes and appropriating their contents for his own use.
5. Burning or destroying the papers and contents of Captain Holmes, and those relating to the regiment.

He was found guilty of the second charge and guilty of acting inappropriately on the fourth charge, and was sentenced to be dismissed from the Army. However, in view of Tucker's length of service and family circumstances, the President of the Court, Lieutenant General Sir Henry Clinton, wrote to the Duke of Wellington describing the proceedings of the court martial and recommending mercy from the court. Tucker's character was admitted to be irreproachable, as proven by the 'very respectable testimonies laid before the court martial, attesting to his honourable conduct as an officer and a gentleman'. These testimonials were included in the evidence of Lieutenant General Sir Lowry Cole; Major General Sir Manley Power; Lieutenant Colonel Thomson, 27th Regiment; Lieutenant Colonel Milling, 81st Regiment; Major General Sir Frederick Adam; and Colonel Walker, 58th Regiment, who testified:

I have served perpetually in the same army since the expedition to Egypt in 1801; and I know Captain Tucker, not as a casual acquaintance, but most intimately; and have always considered him, from what I myself know, and have heard, as an officer of unimpeachable character.

The sentence was reduced by the Prince Regent, due to irregularities in the court

proceedings, and John Tucker was placed on half pay. On 24 November 1815 he left France. He was not replaced in the 27th Regiment musters until 24 March 1816, and on 23 May 1816 he was appointed a captain in 1st Battalion, 8th Regiment of Foot (*London Gazette*, 1 June 1816); he was now aged 35. He had served with the 27th Regiment for just under 16 years.

The 8th Regiment was serving at Cork, Ireland, and in March 1817 Tucker was in command of No 2 Company. In January 1818 the battalion embarked for Malta but Tucker remained with the depot battalion at Albany Barracks, as senior officer in command of 60 soldiers engaged in recruiting duties. In 1819 the battalion moved from Malta to Corfu (which had become a British protectorate in 1815). Three companies were sent to garrison the island of Zante. On 26 May 1820 Tucker embarked aboard the *Duncombe*, bound for Corfu, where he resumed command of No 2 Company. By now the battalion was split between Cephalonia and Zante.

On 13 October 1821, 18 Greek vessels from Idra had chased a Turkish brig-of-war into Cheri Bay, near Zante, where it then went aground. A small detachment of one officer and 12 men, sent to ensure neutrality between the local Greeks and Turkish crew, came under fire from the Greeks, wounding the officer and several men, and one was killed. More soldiers were despatched from Corfu under Major General Sir Frederick Adam. On 6 November the Lord High Commissioner issued a proclamation imposing martial law, and to disarm the population. The 8th and 90th Regiments were ordered to disarm the population and enforce martial law in consequence of an 'insurrectionary spirit having shown itself in Zante and the adjoining islands'. Many thousands of guns, pistols and blunderbusses were delivered to the authorities in Zante and five of the ring leaders were hanged after being convicted of taking an active part in the insurrection. On 7 November Tucker, as commander of the garrison in Zante Castle, had several persons known to be hostile to the government arrested and imprisoned. Tucker was then accused of abusing his power and of using intemperate language and threatening one of the prisoners, Signor Strani, with hanging the next day, and also of showing undue partiality to another prisoner, Count Querino. As a consequence, Tucker faced a court martial for a second time, charged with:

1. Being intoxicated.
2. Abusing his power and authority.
3. Taking certain articles from an inhabitant of Cartala.
4. Quitting his company during a march without leave.

He was acquitted of the first and third charges, and the second charge was not proven, but he was found guilty on the fourth charge. The minutes of the court martial revealed that Tucker had been absent from his company for less than an hour while they halted at Cartala after having marched for seven hours. He had returned with some inhabitants of the village with a basket of food and a glass basin. These containers were the items he retained: he claimed that he had no opportunity to return them, and that he had shared the food with other members of the detachment. He was recommended to be deprived of two years' seniority and publicly and severely reprimanded. King George IV (previously the Prince Regent) approved and confirmed the sentence but, having been court martialled before in 1815, when he was recommended to be dismissed the service, a sentence which was then mitigated by His Majesty to a reduction on half-pay, and having in this second instance incurred serious censure, His Majesty considered Captain Tucker unfit to hold the King's Commission. He was to be dismissed from the service but, in view of his long service, he was allowed to keep the value of his commission, about £1,800. On 24 July 1822, Captain John Tucker was removed from the service and he was officially retired on 3 October 1822, aged 42 (*London Gazette*, 17 October 1822). He had served with the 8th Regiment for six years and four months and had served as a commissioned officer in the Army for one week short of 25 years.

John Tucker then moved to live in Italy between 1824-31 and it is strongly believed that he served with British volunteers in the British Legion against the Carlists in Spain between 1835-37, but he may also have served in Italy. Having been a career Army officer who served for over 20 years, largely against Napoleonic forces including being attached to Spanish forces in Spain, and having no other trade, it might have seemed an obvious opportunity. He next came to public attention in 1839 when he was mentioned in a police report in the *Morning Chronicle* on a charge of attempting to obtain money under false pretences. After a court hearing following prosecution by John

Booth, John Tucker was conveyed to the New Prison, for want of bail. It was reported in *The Times* the following week that the charges had been dropped as John Tucker had promised to remove himself to France if released, and it was stated that he had moved in the best society before the present exposure took place. It is believed that he probably resided in Nice, where he became a member of a group of military officers that formed there and from where in 1844, as Colonel John Montmorency Tucker, he was the author of *Tales of Camp and Cabinet*. In 1846 he was the author of *The Life of the Duke of Wellington*, which was largely a biography of the duke written from despatches but also clearly written with some first-hand experience on the part of the author. In August 1846 it was reported that he was appointed by Queen Victoria, on the recommendation of the Literary Fund Society, to one of the poor benches of the Charter House.<sup>4</sup>

His name was again in the public domain on 25 August that year when it was reported that Colonel Montmorency Tucker, along with some Polish officers and gentlemen, attended a magistrate applying for assault warrants against a curate, his clerk, a parish beadle and a police constable who were accused of disrupting the funeral of a Polish officer. Colonel Tucker intimated that he was a stranger to the complaining parties but after seeing the distressed gentlemen leaving the churchyard and hearing from bystanders what had occurred, he felt it his duty to assist the aggrieved parties. In 1849 Colonel John Montmorency Tucker was the author of *The Life and Naval Memoirs of Lord Nelson*.

John Montmorency Tucker was born on 25 October 1780, at Swansea, Glamorganshire, the son of Walter Tucker, a collector of customs, and Alice Tucker (formerly Mansel). He was baptised on 28 October 1780 at St Mary's, Swansea. He is known to have had one sister, Maria Tucker, born in 1783, and his mother died in December the same year; his father died in 1810.

He married Letitia (born 1795), the eldest daughter of Edward Smith who was the 27th Regiment's surgeon (formerly of the 8th Regiment of Foot), possibly when the battalion was in Malta, and Letitia accompanied her husband with the 1st Battalion to the Americas. They had seven children, six sons and one daughter.

John Tucker married for a second time on 20 July 1848, when he was 68, Jane Emily Colenso,

the daughter of Samuel May Colenso, an ironmonger, at St Mary's Church, Paddington, Middlesex. She was aged just 31, and was 37 years his junior. John Tucker described himself as a bachelor and a gentleman, however, he had only recently been widowed and actually had his first banns for his second marriage read in 1847 before Letitia had died; they had to be read again once he had become a widower!

By 1851 John Montmorency Tucker, described as a 'retired colonel, army', was living at No 19 Huggens College, Northfleet, Kent.<sup>5</sup> His wife was not present at the time of the census. He died on 22 February 1852, aged 71, at No 19 Huggens College, (Huggens Military Asylum), from paraplegia, from which he had suffered for 19 days. He was buried at Northfleet.

Jane Emily Tucker did not re-marry. She is found in the 1881 census living at 9 North Villas, St Pancras, London, being of independent means, and in 1891, at 51 St Clare Street, Penzance, Cornwall, the town where she was born, again living on her own means, and where she died in 1896, aged 78.

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Just six officers of the 27th claimed the clasp 'EGYPT'—four as single clasp medals and two as additional clasps. Ninety such clasps in total were claimed by the regiment. One-hundred-and-twenty-two 'MAIDA' clasps



Huggens College, Northfleet, Kent

were claimed by the regiment. Tucker's 'BARROSA' clasp is unique in the regiment. It is believed that this three-clasp combination is unique within all the issues of the Military General Service Medal. There are certainly no others with this combination among the cavalry and infantry regiments.

<sup>2</sup> W. Copeland Trimble (1876), *Historical record of the 27th Inniskilling Regiment: from the period of its Institution as a Volunteer Corps till the Present Time*.

<sup>3</sup> The Waterloo Medal is still in the possession of one of his descendants.

<sup>4</sup> The Royal Literary Fund was established in 1790 to aid authors and their dependants in distress. The Charterhouse Hospital provided for around 80 pensioners, usually men who had been in the service of the Crown. They received accommodation and food.

<sup>5</sup> Huggen's College, or Asylum, was built in 1844 and opened in 1847, by John Huggens, as almshouses, with its own chapel and croquet lawn. The original college was demolished in 1968.

## The Journal needs more articles

It is often said, and it is very true, that the *Journal* can only publish the articles that it receives. Unfortunately, over the last 18 months there has been a falling off in the number of articles that have been submitted for publication and at the current rate of submissions we may need to reduce the size of the Journal from the middle of the year.

Therefore, whether you are a regular or occasional author, or have yet to write for the *Journal*, why not write an article and send it to the Editorial Team at: [editor@omrs.org](mailto:editor@omrs.org). All we ask is that the article is your own work, that it has not been published before and that it has relevance to medals and their research – the *Journal* is not a military history publication.

The Editorial Team are always most willing to offer advice on any prospective article and with all three of last year's *Journal* prizes being won by first-time contributors there is no excuse for not giving it a go. We look forward to hearing from you.

**The Editorial Team**

## 'With Gratitude' – a Wiltshire town's thanks to those who served in the Great War

by Will Bennett

AFTER THE END of the First World War many communities debated how to pay tribute to local men and women who had served during the conflict. War memorials commemorating those who had died were almost universal but some cities, towns, workplaces and other organizations also produced tribute medals, usually given to those who survived and to the families of those who did not. The medal awarded by the west Wiltshire town of Bradford-on-Avon is unusually well documented and named to the recipients, and so it is worth recording.

The decision to produce a medal for all those who had served was taken by Bradford-on-Avon Urban District Council shortly after the war ended and the design entrusted to Mrs Miriam Christopher, the wife of the local chemist. The obverse of the bronze medal has a figure of Britannia holding a shield with the Union Flag on it in one hand and a wreath in the other which she is pointing towards the sea. A lion lies at her feet, a warship patrols the sea and a biplane flies above it. The words 'FOR SERVICES RENDERED IN THE GREAT WAR. 1914-19' are round the edge of the obverse. The reverse depicts the town's distinctive bridge across the River Avon with the words 'FROM THE CITIZENS OF BRADFORD-ON-AVON' and the date '19 JULY 1919' around the edge. Below the bridge is 'WITH GRATITUDE TO' followed by the name of the recipient.

The medal was presented in a box with the dates '1914-19' inside the lid and accompanied by a printed note which reads:

The Men and Women of Bradford-on-Avon, your fellow Townspeople, send you the accompanying

Medal, which they hope you will accept as a slight token of their gratitude for the part you took in helping to save our Country and to bring the War to a successful termination and as an appreciation of the many hardships and losses you endured.

I have two examples of the medal in my collection. The one pictured was awarded to Sergeant William Chivers of the Wiltshire Regiment, whose Queen's South Africa Medal and 1914-15 Star trio I also have. Chivers served as a regular soldier from 1891 to 1903 and rejoined the Wiltshires shortly after the outbreak of the First World War. He spent almost two-and-a-half years on the Western Front so his tribute medal was hard earned. The fact that some recipients wore their tribute medals is illustrated by the other specimen in my collection to Sergeant William Walton, also of the Wiltshire Regiment. Walton had a ring attached to the top of the medal and through this ran a narrow red, white and blue ribbon.

Estimates of the numbers presented vary. *The Wiltshire Times* of 7 May 1921 said that 700 were given out while other sources indicate that the medals went to the 488 service personnel on the town's official Roll of Honour. What is certain is that in 2010 the present town council discovered 17 unclaimed tribute medals in a cupboard and handed them over to the local museum. One has already been claimed by the descendants of the soldier named on it and the museum is keen to reunite the others. A list of them can be found at <http://www.bradfordonavonmuseum.co.uk/archives/5791>.



## A medalllic account of the introduction of the machine gun to the British Army

by Peter M.R. Helmore

I AM RELIABLY informed by OMRS member 2084 David M. Potterton, a retired armourer from HM Forces, that to qualify as a true machine gun the weapon must be fully automatic once the trigger is operated. The weapon will therefore need to rely upon a gas and spring mechanism. The Gatling gun invented in 1861 and the Gardner gun two years later in 1863, both being 'hand cranked', do not meet this criterion.

The recognised inventor of the machine gun is Hiram S. Maxim who was born in the United States in 1840 and moved to London in 1884. He registered his first patent, No 13113, for the weapon which he designed and manufactured at a site now situated at 57C Hatton Garden, Holborn, London EC1N 8HP where a Blue Plaque commemorates this event.

Maxim made various attempts to interest both the War Office and overseas potential buyers and gave several demonstrations between 1885 and 1890. A trial gun was supplied to the Royal Artillery at Woolwich for evaluation and a file of photographs recording this is now held at the National Army Museum (under accession number 1987-02-03) following the closure of the Royal Arsenal Woolwich. From all accounts the trial was not considered to have been a success due to the gun's lack of manoeuvrability and possibly due to the RA confusing the weapon with a 'field gun' and introducing the trajectory concept. As originally designed it needed a team to employ it, and thus it fell somewhere between an infantry and an artillery weapon.

A limited issue of Maxim's original design capable of firing 500 rounds per minute was made from 1890. It is recorded as being employed by Colonial Forces (the British South Africa Company) during the Matabele War of 1893 when the gun was deployed mounted on the back of bullock carts, but once again the reports back as to its usefulness were not encouraging.

We now move the story forward to India in 1893/4 where Captain Allan Laing Peebles of the Devonshire Regiment, under the patronage of General Sir George White, was encouraged to modify Maxim's design.<sup>1</sup> This work was carried out under Peebles's supervision at the Rawalpindi Arsenal. In order that the gun might be transported by a team of pack mules,

Peebles reduced the barrel size from Maxim's previous .577/.450 calibre in order to comply with the then British standard .303 ammunition. Now minimized as a whole, the weapon could be broken down into component parts for transportation on three pack mules and be operated by an eight-man team. Early evidence of this can be seen in a photograph in the author's collection annotated 'Gharial, Murree Hills, India 1894', the 1st Battalion Devonshire Regiment being stationed at Gharial at the time. Further



Captain A.L. Peebles, Devonshire Regiment

evidence is contained in a letter 3339 Private W. Ware of 1/Devon Regiment wrote home to his parents from Chirat and dated 25 May 1895 stating 'Captain Peebles ... was a very expert man with the maxim gun ... he had improved the gun a lot he almost made another'.<sup>2</sup>

Satisfied that the weapon now exhibited potential, General Sir George White sent a telegram dated November 1894 to the commanding officer of the 1st Devons with instructions for Capt Peebles with a single, now modified, Maxim gun and team to join Lieutenant General Sir William Lockhart, KCB, CSI.<sup>3</sup> Lockhart was commencing a punitive action against the Mahsud Waziri tribe following an attack on the delimitation party at Wana. The delimitation party, headed by the British commissioner with an escort commanded by Brigadier General



Devonshire Regiment Maxim gun team at Gharial, India in 1894

A.H. Turner, had been tasked with defining the Waziristan border following several serious raids into the Gumal and Zhob valleys by the Mahsud Waziris. The operations of the Waziristan Field Force from 15 December 1894 to 13 March 1895 are recorded in the *London Gazette (LG)* of 2 July 1895. The force comprised the 1st, or Wana, Brigade, the 2nd, or Jandola, Brigade and the 3rd, or Bannu, Column. Listed within the Jandola Brigade is 'one Maxim gun, with detachment of Devonshire Regiment'. It is recorded that several towers were blown up and villages destroyed but, notably, mosques were spared. In conclusion Lockhart announced to the Mahsuds the orders of the Government on 21 January 1895 and then commenced an orderly withdrawal, leaving Brigadier General Symons, CB with his brigade in Khaisara to see the terms carried out. Captain Peebles, together with his Maxim gun and eight men, rejoined 1st Battalion Devonshire Regiment at Rawalpindi on 14 March 1895.

The exploits of the Waziristan Field Force were duly recognised with the clasp 'WAZIRISTAN 1894-5' to the India Medal 1849-95 being authorised on 1 September 1895. The medal roll for 1st Battalion Devonshire Regiment dated November 1895 (TNA WO100/75) lists two officers (Peebles and Warwick, the latter attached to the Commissariat Department) and eight men who are annotated 'Maxim Gun Detachment'. Peebles and his eight men were the first recorded names within the British Army to receive medallic recognition while employed in the use of a machine gun. The eight medals with clasp 'WAZIRISTAN 1894-5'

together with the single clasp for Private Herbert Shergold who already held the medal with clasp 'BURMA 1889-92', were issued to the Officer Commanding 1st Battalion Devonshire Regiment on 30 June 1896.

Although not specifically mentioned within the report of the Waziristan Field Force, Peebles's Maxim gun must have met with approval. A mere 16 days after returning from Waziristan, Peebles, together with one further officer, one sergeant and 11 men, left to join the Chitral Relief Force on 30 March 1895 taking with them the two Maxim guns from 1st Battalion Devonshire Regiment.<sup>4</sup> Major General Sir R.C. Low, KCB commanded the Chitral Relief Force and the exploits are recorded in the *London Gazettes* of 2 July, 16 July and 15 November 1895. Two contemporary works were published shortly after: *Relief of Chitral* by Younghusband (1895) and *Chitral the Story of a Minor Siege* by Robertson (1899). There is also a further modern work, *The Unlikely Hero G.S. Robertson* by Dorothy Anderson (2008), which benefits from the availability of historic records. These three works cover the siege and relief of Chitral in considerable depth.

The two Maxim guns under Peebles were particularly brought to notice during the precarious crossing of the Panjkora River, 13-15 April 1895, when misfortune struck and Peebles was hit by a chance bullet and received a fatal wound, as recorded in the *LG* of 16 July 1895, page 4019. 3194 Private R. Northway, Devonshire Regiment, also received a severe gunshot wound to his leg (*LG*, 15 November 1895, page 6180).



The medals of 1970 Private J. Farr, Devonshire Regiment Maxim gun team, one of the four recipients of both India Medals and clasps 'WAZIRISTAN 1894-5' and 'RELIEF OF CHITRAL 1895'



The medals of 1925 Private H. Shergold, the only man of the Devons Maxim gun team who received the India Medal 1849-95 and clasps 'BURMA 1889-92' and 'WAZIRISTAN 1894-5'



68  
11  
172

Medals issued in India to 1<sup>st</sup> Devonshire Regt. 30.6.96

1<sup>st</sup> Battalion Devonshire Regiment

Medal Roll of individuals entitled to the India Medal 1895 with clasp inscribed 'WAZIRISTAN 1894-5' under the provisions of Army Order No. 141 of 1895

At the time the Medal was earned		Corps or Department in which the Medal was earned	Whether already in possession of the India Medal (naming the clasp)	Entitled to		Name of Brigade or column and date when which the Medal was earned		Remarks	
Regimental No.	Rank			Name	KEOAL	CLASP	Brigade or column		Dates
	CAPTAIN	PEEBLES, ALVAN JAHNG	INDIA REGT	No	KEOAL	CLASP	UNATTACHED	21.11.94 to 1.11.95	DECEASED
	DRIBENANT	WARWICK, CHARLES SPENCER	INDIA REGT	No	KEOAL	CLASP	UNATTACHED	7.11.94 to 13.1.95	
2249	PRIVATE	BUSH, CHARLES	INDIA REGT	No	KEOAL	CLASP	UNATTACHED	11.11.94 to 1.11.95	
2177	PRIVATE	DYKING, MARK	Do	No	KEOAL	CLASP	Do	11.11.94 to 1.11.95	
1976	PRIVATE	FARR, JANK	Do	No	KEOAL	CLASP	Do	11.11.94 to 1.11.95	
2308	PRIVATE	HALL, FRANK	Do	No	KEOAL	CLASP	Do	11.11.94 to 1.11.95	
2950	PRIVATE	KELSGRIVE, JOHN	Do	No	KEOAL	CLASP	Do	11.11.94 to 1.11.95	
2220	CORPORAL	KURPXT, JAMES	Do	No	KEOAL	CLASP	Do	11.11.94 to 1.11.95	
1425	PRIVATE	SHERGOLD, HERBERT	Do	YES BURMA 1892	CLASP		Do	11.11.94 to 1.11.95	STARKY RESERVE
1852	PRIVATE	WINGIE, FREDERICK	Do	No	KEOAL	CLASP	Do	11.11.94 to 1.11.95	Do ARMT RESERVE

NOVEMBER 1895  
PESHAWAR

I certify that the individuals named in this Roll were actually present on the occasion for which the KEOAL is claimed, under the terms of the order named at the bottom of the page.

M. J. Cole  
LIEUT.-COL.,  
Commanding, 1st Devonshire Regt.

Extract of WO 100/75 Waziristan 1894-5 medal roll (courtesy of The National Archives)

The relief itself was no mean feat, conducted in hostile enemy territory, geographically challenging and facing the most severe of weather conditions. The force crossed five mountain passes, bridged two major rivers, fought five actions and built many miles of mountain roads while suffering from snow blindness and frostbite. Much of the supplies had to be manhandled as the depth of the snow prevented the mules making any progress. Eventually successful, the relieving force finally marched into the fort at Chitral on 20 April 1895. Sir George White in his despatch (LG, 15 November 1895, page 6171), states:

... the late Captain A L Peebles, Devonshire Regiment, would have been prominently brought forward for the favourable consideration of Government had he survived.

The clasp 'RELIEF OF CHITRAL 1895' to the India Medal 1895-1902 was authorised in Army Order 72 of 1 April 1896. The medal roll (TNA WO100/78) for 1st Battalion Devonshire Regiment dated 7 August 1896 lists five officers and 21 men. Of these, three officers (Lieutenant Price-Dent having been sent as a replacement for Peebles) and 15 men are annotated 'Maxim Gun',

being the second list of names recorded within the British Army to receive medallion recognition while employed in the use of a machine gun. The India Medal 1895-1902 with clasp 'RELIEF OF CHITRAL 1895' was issued on 29 September 1897.

Of the total 23 officers and men (see summary table) first recorded as in action with the machine gun, only one officer and three men received both India Medals, respectively with the 'WAZIRISTAN 1894-5' and the 'RELIEF OF CHITRAL 1895' clasps, these being Captain A.L. Peebles, 2249 Private C. Bush, 1970 Private J. Farr and 2308 Private F. Hall.

Examination of the summary table overleaf notes reveals that medals to 12 of those named are known as being extant, a survival rate just exceeding 50%. Both India medals are engraved in running script in the manner usual to medals issued for service in India at this period.

**Notes**

- 1 Aggett, W.J.P. (1994), *The Bloody Eleventh Vol II*, p 270.
- 2 NAM Accession No. 2001-09-77
- 3 Aggett *op cit*, p 270.
- 4 *Ibid*, p 268

## 1st Battalion The Devonshire Regiment: Maxim gun detachment

Waziristan 1894-5 and Relief of Chitral 1895

Name	Rank	Reg. No	India Medal 1849-95		India Medal 1895-1902			OSA	KSA	WWI	LSGC	Notes
			Burma 1889-92	Wazistan 1894-5	Rel of Chitral	Punjab Frontier	Tirah					
F. Berryman	L/Cpl	3486			Yes	Yes	X2	X2				
G. Bettam	Pte	1733	Yes		Yes	Yes			14-15 trio		Duplicates 10 April 1923. Original IM'95 medal only private collection	
A.W. Bradford	L/Cpl	3278			Yes	Yes	X3	X2			Medals regt archive Exeter on loan - now returned to private collection	
C. Brand	Pte	2207			Yes						Died Dostar Chitral, 11 June 1895. Medal private collection	
C. Bush	Pte	2249		Yes	Yes		X6					
M. Dymond	Pte	2658		Yes			X6		1909		Wounded Ladysmith, 23 January 1900. Medals private collection	
G. Ellwood	Pte	2326	Yes		Yes						Drowned Panjkora River, April 1895	
J. Farr	Pte	1970		Yes	Yes		X5				Medals private collection	
G.H. Foxlow	L/Cpl	3003			Yes	Yes	X3	X2	14-15 trio	1908	Medals private collection	
F. Hall	Pte	2308		Yes	Yes	Yes	X3	X2			Rescued Panjkora River. Medals Royal Military Hospital Chelsea	
W. Hickey	Pte	2541	Yes		Yes		X1					
J. Holsgrove	Pte	2950		Yes	Yes	Yes	X3	X2			Medals regt archive Exeter on loan - now returned to private collection	
J. Jerney	Pte	2579			Yes		X2				Wounded Ladysmith, 24 February 1900	
F. Jewkes	Pte	2589			Yes		X5	X2	14-15 trio		Medals private collection	
D.C. Kane	Lieut				Yes	Yes						
G. Mallett	Pte	2387			Yes							
J. Murphy	Cpl	2220		Yes	Yes	Yes	X3	X2		1908	Awarded MSM February 1919 (4/Devons Home Service)	
R. Northway	Pte	3194			Yes		X4	X2			Wounded Panjkora River, Boer War 1st M.I. QSA only private collection	
A.L. Peebles	Capt			Yes	Yes						Died of wounds Panjkora River, 15 April 1895	
P.H. Price-Dent	Lieut				Yes	Yes	X2				Died of wounds 31 December 1899, Ladysmith	
H. Shergold	Pte	1925	Yes		Yes		X5				Medals private collection	
C. Treasure	Sgt	1931			Yes	Yes	X4	X2		1906	To Devon Militia 1902	
F. Wimble	Pte	1852		Yes							Medal private collection	

## Miniature matters

Let's hear it for the sergeant pilots ...



Norman Hearn-Phillips's miniatures, including the GSM 'CANAL ZONE' that he did not live long enough to claim

By all accounts, officers in the Royal Air Force of the 1930s were a fairly class-ridden bunch. So it must have seemed to young Norman Hearn-Phillips when he applied for a commission as a pilot. For one reason or another he did not fit the bill; wrong school, wrong family – who knows?

And so it was that he joined the RAF as a direct entry sergeant pilot in November 1936, winning his wings flying Hawker Harts the following year.

After a spell flying Swordfish, Norman joined No 22 Squadron early in 1938. In November 1939, his squadron converted to Beauforts, and H-P (as he had already become known) flew his first operational sortie in April 1940.

On 17 September 1940, six Beauforts attacked shipping in Cherbourg in the RAF's first night torpedo raid. H-P's aircraft was badly hit in the process of sinking a 5,000-ton ship but he

managed to fly it back to belly flop at Thorney Island. This and 30 sorties earned him a DFM.

H-P went on to become one of the most respected pilots in Coastal Command, described as '... a reticent, self-effacing man who never bragged nor even spoke much about his exploits.'

Critically, he 'would not expose his aircraft to danger unnecessarily nor would he seek glory for its own sake.' He knew his aircraft inside-out.

Commissioned in 1941, he went on to serve with No 42 Squadron in the Middle East (Beauforts) and then in Burma, supporting Chindit operations, flying Blenheims. After a spell with No 217 Squadron in Ceylon, he returned to the UK to fly Beaufighters, gaining an AFC in 1944.

He retired in 1965 as a squadron leader having served as an air traffic controller in the Canal Zone and Germany. H-P died in 1994, aged 79.



H-P's painting of his Beaufort over Cherbourg Harbour (courtesy of Ian Hearn-Phillips)



Images of H-P (courtesy of Ian Hearn-Phillips; cartoon by Pat Rooney)

## A great sales pitch, family folklore or the truth?

by Robin James

I AM a natural sceptic and I find it difficult to decide in relation to medal collecting and research whether this is good or bad. Does it destine me to disappointment, or spur on my research for provenance? Who knows? This article is about the journey of research as well as the results. As you read it you will probably say to yourself 'I knew that' or 'how did he miss that?' or, that you might have done things differently, but each project is different and each researcher brings different experiences and knowledge to the table.

How many of us have been told by dealers, or have seen in catalogues, that a recipient was thought to have served here or there, been involved in this battle or that, or to have captured the entire German army on the Western Front single-handed? How many veterans have (entirely needlessly, I hasten to add) over-inflated their involvement to their families by the fireside, and the resulting generations pass the story down the line until it becomes family folklore? How many families make up stories to accompany medals they find in drawers but know nothing about? The answer to these questions is, of course, that we will never know, but occasionally we are offered a medal or group that comes with a story that is unsubstantiated but if proven would be remarkable and would make the difference between an excellent medal group and an exceptional one.

I have collected medals to the Cambridgeshire Regiment for many years and am in contact with a number of dealers who know my interests. The Cambridgeshire Regiment was a small infantry regiment of a not particularly densely populated county, with no regular battalion. Ignoring naming on the medals themselves, a quick keyword search of medal index cards online shows approximately six thousand 'hits' compared to 45,000 for the Suffolk Regiment, so although dealers often do, I would not classify them as rare, though medals to the unit are less often seen, and gallantry medals to the unit even less so.

About ten years ago I was called by a dealer and offered a medal group. It was a Military Medal (MM) named: 43343 PTE-LCPL W DOCWRA 4/ BEDF:R, and a 1914-15 Star Trio named: 2948 PTE W DOCURA CAMB R. The first point of suspicion was

that there was a difference in spelling of the surname between the MM and the trio. Was this something to worry about? I had not encountered this before, but both matched their respective MICs and I could see where the handwriting on the MIC for the trio was misleading. Also, the service numbers on both tallied, confirming the change of regiment, so I was happy.

The group also came with a nice Cambridgeshire cap badge and a couple of attractive silk embroidered cards, one depicting the Cambridgeshire badge and the other a remembrance card. The medals, cap badge and postcards were crudely mounted with drawing pins in a clearly home-made wood-effect paper-covered display cabinet, but this simply added to the appeal of the group. It was clear from this small display that the recipient considered himself to be a Cambridgeshire Regiment man despite his service and subsequent award for gallantry with the Bedfords, and this was an aspect which really appealed to me.

While negotiating the price with the dealer I was told that the group had come straight from the family and that they stated that the recipient had been involved in a Victoria Cross action. This sounded like a good story and a great sales pitch, but what does this mean for the buyer?

The dealer, who is also an extremely competent researcher, then made me a curious offer. He was rather busy at that moment and did not have time to do much research into the group, but wanted a relatively quick turnover. Therefore, he was willing to sell me the group now, unresearched, at slightly over the market rate, or I could wait and he would do his research and price the group accordingly which, if he substantiated the VC action claim, might increase. I was dubious, it sounded like a rather good sales pitch to gain a quick buck, but I had been buying from this dealer and using him for research for several years and he had been straight, up to that point.

Despite numerous superlative citations for level two and three gallantry awards, including two downgraded VC recommendations, the Cambridgeshire Regiment did not receive any awards of the VC. Therefore, prior to this offer I had never given much thought to VCs in a collecting or research context. Of course, like all medal collectors I admire VC groups and had



The Military Medal group awarded to William Docwra

read about the VC more generally, but had never contemplated researching the actions. Also, I had never given any thought as to whether having been involved in a VC action *really* did make medals more desirable or valuable. So, there was a decision to be made; do I take a gamble and buy them straight away at a slightly elevated price, or wait and see if the price falls while running the risk that it might climb considerably if the research proves positive? Also, was the dealer telling the truth? How did the family know about the action but then not provide information with the medals? What difference to the cost would it actually make? How do you go about researching a VC action? How easy is it to research the Bedfordshire Regiment or the Royal Naval Division (RND), to whom the 4th Bedfords were attached when their only

VCs were won? Considering this long list of unanswered questions to be a challenge rather than a drawback I decided to buy the group. Although the Bedfordshire Regiment element was an unknown quantity it represented a potentially interesting avenue of research.

So, where to start? I had the MICs for the trio and the MM. These confirmed service in both the 1/1st Cambridgeshire and 4th Bedfordshire Regiments with the service numbers 2948 and 43343 respectively, and his date of entry into theatre 1: France and Flanders on 10 July 1915. In addition, the date of the *London Gazette* for his MM given on the MIC was 20 August 1919. The recipient's name was unusual, William Docwra, or as misspelt on the trio, Docura. It was easy to locate him in the 1901 census. This showed that he was from Bourn, a small village

west of Cambridge, and had two brothers and two sisters.

MMs from the First World War can be quite difficult to research at the best of times, but awards gazetted in 1919 are doubly so. Very few citations survive and in my experience the local newspapers in Cambridge moved on from the war quite quickly so stories about these late awards are rare. But what of the VC action? Working under the supposition that the MM action and the VC action were the same, I set about looking at the RND VC awards for mid- to late-1918 and identified that there were two, but I could not link them in any way. I then looked for Distinguished Conduct Medal and Military Cross awards for the same period for the 4th Bedfords to see if I could find information to link to the MM. Again, nothing useful was found and it was quickly becoming very frustrating. I then tried looking at the other Bedfordshire Regiment recipients of the MM from the same *London Gazette* entry, but there was still nothing to link William Docwra to any VC action.

Some months later I chanced across the publication *The Shiny Seventh: the 7th (Service) Battalion Bedfordshire Regiment at war, 1915-1918*, edited by M.G. Deacon. It was a well-researched publication, with an index, and when coming across these types of books I often glance through the indexes on the off-chance that names may jump out. Imagine my surprise when I saw William Docwra mentioned. It turns out that prior to transferring to the 4th Bedfords he had also served in the 7th Battalion. He was listed in the casualty returns for 'C' Company as wounded during their attack on the Schwaben Redoubt on 28 September 1916. This was an excellent discovery of some new information and fascinating considering William's old unit, the Cambridgeshires, were to successfully capture the Redoubt a few weeks later. But this occurred almost two years before his award of the MM and thus I did not feel it moved my VC quest on much further.

My research on William then stalled for a few months but was re-energised when *Ancestry.com* digitised the medal index cards allowing researchers to see what was written on the reverse of the cards. William had requested his medals be sent to him at an address in Gateshead. Looking at the Gateshead Council website, it had an online search facility for the register of deaths. William Docwra had died in 1996 in Gateshead at the ripe old age of 100. The daughter

of a friend was studying in Newcastle and was commissioned to check the local papers in the hope of finding an article about William's 100th birthday. It turned out that he had been living in an old people's home and they had had a party for him and a small article had been printed in the *Gateshead Chronicle*. I was delighted to add a copy of this to his file. Disappointingly, the newspaper had not included any photographs but it did confirm that William had worked for his entire career for the Great North Eastern Railway.

I now knew that William had moved away from Cambridge after the war and was living in Gateshead by 1922. Plus, he had worked for GNER his whole working life and had lived to be 100. The very last Great War Cambridgeshire Regiment veteran had died in 2001, but the Regimental Association had not known about William; he would probably have been the last surviving Cambridgeshire Regiment holder of a First World War gallantry medal, although it had been won with a different regiment.

Having laboriously checked the GNER staff magazine for any mentions from 1920-60, with no results, my research on William stalled again at this point but that was alright as it mirrors my, and no doubt other collectors' projects which ebb and flow over the years, and I knew that sooner or later another snippet of research would come along to add to the file.

Being a librarian by profession and working in a large library, I see many books, more than I could ever read. However, occasionally I keep back the military or medal related books to go through in more detail in my spare time. As previously stated, I have a passing interest in Victoria Crosses and do enjoy reading about the exploits of VC winners, so when books on this subject come along I often have a thumb-through. One which caught my eye was Roderick Bailey's *Forgotten Voices of the Victoria Cross* and as I was reading about various recipients I chanced across the story of 2nd Lieutenant Adlam of the 7th Bedfordshire Regiment who had won the VC during an attack on the Schwaben Redoubt on 28 September 1916.

The 7th Bedfords attack had lost its momentum and Lieutenant Adlam had rallied some troops and ordered them to follow him as he bombed his way up a face of the Redoubt capturing several trenches and regaining the momentum of the attack. His citation, published in the *London Gazette*, is as follows:

For most conspicuous bravery. A portion of a village which had defied capture had to be taken at all costs, to permit subsequent operations to develop. This minor operation came under very heavy machine-gun and rifle fire. Second Lieutenant Adlam, realising that time was all-important, rushed from shell-hole to shell-hole under heavy fire, collecting men for a sudden rush, and for this purpose also collected many enemy grenades. At this stage he was wounded in the leg, but nevertheless he was able to out-throw the enemy, and then seizing his opportunity, and in spite of his wound, he led a rush, captured the position and killed the occupants.

Throughout the day he continued to lead his men in bombing attacks. On the following day he again displayed courage of the highest order, and, though again wounded and unable to throw bombs, he continued to lead his men. His magnificent example of valour, coupled with the skilful handling of the situation, produced far-reaching results.

Here it was, the link I had been searching for. Adlam was 'C' Company, 7th Bedfords, as was



Private William Docwra, MM (seated)

William Docwra, who had also been wounded in action on 28 September 1916 at the Schwaben Redoubt. Whether he was one of the men who participated in the final rush of the enemy position it will probably be impossible to know but I am content that William Docwra was there. On this occasion the family folklore seems to have been well founded, though ironically it has no connection to William's MM at all. That was awarded for the later stages of the war, but I had quite reasonably assumed them to have been awarded for the same action and this had then, incorrectly, been the premise of my research.

Luckily though, the story does not end there and the next two chapters of research are courtesy of friends who are both fellow researchers and collectors. The reader will note that up to this point I had yet to discover any photographs of William. Like many medal collectors, I strive to find photographs of the men whose medals are in my collection, finding that being able to look at the man brings the whole story to life.

So far, William had eluded me but his unusual name was about to become very handy indeed. The curator of the Cambridgeshire Regiment collection, which is housed at the Imperial War Museum at Duxford, had been digitising a loaned collection of photographs and passing them piecemeal to a friend who researches (but does not collect to) the Cambridgeshire Regiment. In one batch was a photograph of a Bedfordshire Regiment soldier and my fellow researcher (who has a prodigious memory) and was familiar with my research on Docwra asked to see a scan of the back of the photo to see if it was captioned. It was: Pte W. Docwra, and it turned out there was also another photo of the same man, but without his cap on. I now had not one but two photos of William, one including the wound stripe earned during the VC action.

But what of the award of the MM? Information still proved to be elusive, but I edged slightly closer when a friend and I were talking about this group. He later accessed the online local newspaper database and emailed me three articles; a most generous act by a competing collector.

The first, a one-line article, confirmed that Docwra's MM was awarded for an action near Cambrai in September 1918 and this is my current avenue of research.

The second article was also a one-line article noting that 'Willie Docwra' was home on leave for a week but provided no more detail.

The third article, published in the *Cambridge Independent Press*, was more substantial and very interesting. It was a sad account of the suspicious drowning of a child in Bourn which William was partially to witness.

The article reads:

#### BOURN DROWNING TRAGEDY

Coroner & "very unsatisfactory evidence" of stepfather

The County Coroner (Col. A.J. Lyon) held an inquest at Bourn Schoolroom on April 3rd, on the body of a lad aged two years – Bernard Caldecoat – who was accidentally drowned in a deep pond on the previous Wednesday.

The Mother, Mrs Frances Elizabeth Morgan, said she last saw her son alive at about tea-time on Wednesday. He was then on the doorstep, and she was in the house folding clothes. He was playing about by himself. Her husband, Joseph Walter Morgan, came in for tea soon afterwards, and told her to call the child in. She called but got no answer, and sent Jack (a step son) to find him. He came back, however, and said he was unable to find the child. She went out again, and in glancing at the pond saw something white. She thought it was the child, and called her husband, who came at once. She called her brother Bertie to fetch help, and he went to the house of Mr Merden, who was unfortunately out. She could do nothing, and her husband was attending to her. Some more people then came, and she saw her husband and a Mr Docwra carrying the child into the house. She did not see how the child was got out of the pond. The pond was very deep.

Mr William Docwra M.M. said that at 6 p.m. on Wednesday he was at home when he heard shouting, and someone said, "Little Bernard is in the pond!" He went to the pond against Mr Morgan's house. Mr and Mrs Morgan were standing against their door, Mrs Morgan crying and Mr Morgan trying to pacify her. He asked Mr Morgan if the child was out of the pond, but looking towards the pond saw the child floating in the water. He went to the other side of the pond with Mr Morgan, but could not reach the body, which was three or four feet from the bank. He shouted for a rake, which was brought, and with it he got the child out of the pond. It appeared quite dead. He took the child into the house, and laid it down on a table. He reported the matter to the police.

Cross examined by the County Chief Constable (Mr W.V. Webb), [the] witness said there was no



Private William Docwra, MM; note the unusual placement of the Cambridgeshire shoulder titles

one near the pond except Mr and Mrs Morgan. When he got there Mr Morgan asked him why he was there and he replied that Mrs Pettit had told him that Bernard was in the pond. Mr Morgan, who was near the when [the] witness arrived, said, "Will you see after my wife while I get the child out?" Bertie Pettit, aged 14 years, of Bourn, farm labourer, said that on Wednesday he was working in Mr Morgan's garden, and Bernard and Jack went into the garden with him. Bernard afterwards went away, and after a while someone called out that he was in the pond. He went to fetch Mr Merden, who was not at home, however. When he got back the child was out of the pond. Joseph Walter Morgan, general labourer, said the deceased was his stepson. He bore out his wife's evidence, saying that when she went out to find Bernard she screamed and said, "Oh my poor Bernard!" He ran out. His wife appeared as if she was going to jump into the pond. She said she wished to go with Bernard. He saw Bernard's back and head in the water. He forced his wife into the house, and called two boys. He tried to make his wife stop in the house whilst he went to get the child out, but she would not. When Docwra came he asked him to hold his wife whilst he got the boy out of the pond, but Docwra got him out.



The child did not move after he first saw it.

By the Chief Constable: He was anxious to get the child out. He knew his wife had tried to get the child into a Home. They were going to Canada, but could not get a ticket. "If I asked Docwra why he was there, I cannot remember. But if I did say that, it would be an extraordinary question."

The coroner returned a verdict of "Accidentally drowned." He added that he considered the evidence of the last witness very unsatisfactory. Mr Morgan showed considerable indifference to the fate of the child.

No doubt William Docwra would have seen many unpleasant things during his time on the Western Front and he clearly kept his cool and was the first to react and recover the boy's body from the pond, but it must have been a dreadful experience.

So the research on William Docwra has given varied results, with interesting elements from both his military and civilian life being unearthed.

I am still hopeful of a breakthrough regarding his MM but am content that his experiences on 28 September 1916 were exceptional and have made the research incredibly satisfying. Although the majority of his service was with the Bedfordshire Regiment, this remains one of my favourite Cambridgeshire Regiment groups. I have learnt that when researching outside one's normal scope of activity it pays deliberately to overlook the obvious, discuss the medals and research with friends and fellow collectors and be prepared for the project to take many years to complete – if it is ever really complete, that is.

### Acknowledgements

Cliff Brown

Felix Jackson

The Cambridgeshire Regiment collection for their kind permission to reproduce the two images of Pte Docwra

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## Book review

***Sailors behind the Medals*** by Chris Bilham, 2017, hardback, black and white illustrations, 254 pages. £25; ISBN 978-1-47389-649-9; published by Pen & Sword Maritime.

They used to say there was a field marshal's baton in every soldier's knapsack. It could be that with this closely researched work Chris Bilham shows us there could be a book in every medal enthusiast's collection.

The author, a recipient of the Society's Distinguished Service Medal, has taken the 'man behind the medals' approach, a format familiar to every reader of the *Journal*, to its ultimate and logical conclusion. He weaves the stories and medals of 23 sailors – officers and ratings – into a stirring account of the Second World War at sea, covering all the major areas of conflict involving the Royal and Merchant Navies. The men about whom he writes range from 'Hostilities Only' ratings to long-service regulars, sailors who saw active service in almost every type of warship from landing craft to aircraft carrier.

As the author points out in his foreword, of the men whose medals are featured in the book, ten were sunk and two became prisoners of war while many were decorated or mentioned in despatches. There are indeed some quite glamorous medal groups depicted in the book but one of the simplest, a 1939-45 Star, Atlantic Star, War Medal 1939-45 and Naval Long Service and Good Conduct Medal group shows what dramatic stories can lie behind some very modest awards. In this case the medals were to a man who

was the sole survivor from his ship and who went on to endure great hardships as a prisoner of war.

The arrangement of the numerous illustrations helps with the telling of each of the 23 stories. They are inserted into the chapter to which they refer, making it much easier for the readers who do not then have to keep flicking to separate pages of illustrations. This inevitably leads to a slight reduction in image quality but this is more than offset by the obvious advantages.

Less advantageous, however, is the complete lack of any index to personnel. The index itself (barely more than two pages) will allow the reader to locate warships, convoys and battles, but none of the men whose names appear in the text. If this possibly drawn-out task could not be attempted, it would at least have been helpful to have the medal recipients named under the appropriate chapter headings at the start of the book. Despite this caveat, the book is one to be recommended to both the specialist and the general reader. The latter will be helped by the five pages devoted to an explanation of the medals referred to in the text, ranging from the Lloyds Medal for Bravery at Sea to the so-called Russian Convoys Commemorative Medal.

The author, who has been a medal collector for 40 years, dedicates his book to the memory of his father, wartime veteran Chief Yeoman of Signals Geoffrey Albert Bilham RNZNVR, through whom he developed a life-long interest in military and naval history.

**Richard Taylor**

## Australia's Female Relatives' Badge of the Second World War

by Bernard Begley and Donald Wright, Brisbane, Australia

DURING the First World War the Australian Government approved the issue of about a dozen different official badges to be worn by both ex-service personnel and civilians. From 1916 these badges identified men who had already been discharged from the forces or who had volunteered for active service in the army and navy but had been rejected medically unfit, or were required for service on the home front. This practice was intended to prevent the over-zealous presentation of white feathers to men who appeared fit and were not in uniform. It must be remembered that Australia had a fully volunteer army and navy throughout the First World War and there was constant pressure for more volunteers. The Silver War Badge had a similar role to this range of badges and the Australian issue was identical to those issued to British and Empire recipients but with an 'A' prefix to the number on the reverse.

After the war, the Nearest Female Relatives' Badge was issued to the wife and/or mother or nearest female relative of members of the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) who had been on active service overseas. A similar badge was issued by the Royal Australian Navy (RAN). Both types were made in sterling silver with blue enamel. An unmarked silver bar was added to the badge for each additional relative serving in the Australian forces. This badge recognised the support for the war effort by women on the home front.

On 10 May 1940 the Dominions Office, Downing Street, wrote to the Australian authorities

advising that the King had approved the issue of a badge to those servicemen invalidated from the UK military and other forces and had also approved a Royal Message of Condolence to the relations of members of the fighting forces of the United Kingdom who had lost their lives in qualifying circumstances.<sup>1</sup>

This led the Defence Committee in Australia on 30 May 1940 to discuss what implications this held and it then considered each of the official badges from the First World War and whether they were appropriate for the new war. The committee made recommendations to a War Cabinet meeting in early June 1940 to issue four badges and asked whether a further badge for female relatives of service personnel should be issued.

On 5 June 1940 the War Cabinet approved the issue of badges in six categories, including:

(e) Female Relatives' Badge. To be issued to the wife and/or mother or nearest female relative of a member of the R.A.N., A.I.F. or R.A.A.F. (including a member of the Australian Army Nursing Service) on active service abroad, bar to be added for more than one son (or daughter).

This was clearly modelled on the Nearest Female Relatives' Badge from the First World War.

Within five days a call was made for collaboration between the three services to promulgate detailed instructions regarding issue of the badges, with the designs to be dealt with separately. The intention was specifically spelt out that only one badge was to be issued to a female relative regardless of whether she had relatives serving in more than one service. It had been possible in the First World War to receive both the RAN and AIF badges with bars added as appropriate to each badge by the issuing service.

By 15 July 1940, as well as wives and mothers, it was determined in what other circumstances the badge could be issued to, say, the eldest unmarried daughter, a sister etc. It was decided that in these cases they must be blood relations and unmarried. Badges had to be applied for and it was determined that duplicate badges would not be issued under any circumstances. Soon questions were raised: what about stepmothers, who had been issued with badges in the First World War? were husbands included, as well as sons and daughters serving?



First World War Female Relatives' Badges for the AIF (left) and RAN (right)

Issuance of the badges was taken seriously and separate registers were to be maintained by the three armed services, by command or district, for each type of badge granted, setting out details, including the surname, Christian names and address of the recipient of each individually-numbered badge, which remained the property of the Commonwealth of Australia. Where badges were posted they had to be sent by registered mail and a receipt was to be returned to the sending authority by the recipient. It is noteworthy that a Merchant Navy Badge was issued to ‘officers and men in the Mercantile Marine’ by the Commonwealth Government, but it was determined that their female relatives were not eligible for the Female Relatives’ Badge as the Merchant Navy members were civilians.

On 25 July 1940 some changes were made, including that the extra bars for more than one relation serving be replaced by a single bar to each badge with a star on the bar to signify one relation serving i.e. every badge would have a bar and for, say, three relations serving there would be three stars on the bar. On this date it was decided that ‘as the badges are to be of a common type for the three Services’, the Contract Branch of the Department of Supply and Development would supply the badges. Issuance was also allowed to a foster-mother or a female guardian of a legally adopted child and it was even decided that if a badge was to be issued to an eldest sister, and if there were twins, ‘the badge will be issued to the elder twin sister’.

It was determined that each service would issue badges and stars for personnel enlisting in that service and where an application was received for an additional star to a badge issued by another service, this entitlement had to be verified by the service that issued the badge initially. To facilitate the addition of stars, it was considered that bars should be detachable from badges so that new bars with the requisite number of stars could be issued.

Perhaps the greatest difference in the Second World War was that the badge was to be issued during the war and not afterwards, reflecting the important role that women were expected to play in supporting the total war effort.

The Female Relatives’ Badge is 25mm in diameter, broadly circular and with a crown at 12 o’clock. A map of Australia surrounded by a chain at its centre, with a laurel wreath at its edge, inside which is ‘TO THE WOMEN OF AUSTRALIA’. Each badge has a bar 29mm by 6mm on which is



Female Relatives’ Badge with two stars, obverse and reverse

attached at least one gilt seven-pointed star. On the reverse of the badge is ‘ISSUED BY THE C’WEALTH GOVT’ and an impressed number with a prefix for the service; ‘N’ for Navy, ‘A’ for Army, ‘AF’ for Air Force. Also shown is the maker’s name. The reverse of the suspended bar is plain.

On 11 November 1940 the Department of Defence Coordination placed the initial orders for all official badges for the three services, including the Female Relatives’ Badge, as follows:

	Navy	Army	Air Force
Totals	10,000	80,000	10,000
Bar with 1 star fitted	6,000	48,000	6,000
Bar with 2 stars fitted	2,500	20,000	2,500
Bar with 3 stars fitted	1,500	12,000	1,500

Each badge was to be numbered in a separate sequential series for each service.

The badges themselves were manufactured by three firms: G & E RODD of St Kilda, Melbourne undertook the first order of 100,000 badges which were specified to be ‘made of Nickel Silver, (heavily silver plated)’. As shown above, this order was spread over the three services. While Rodd made these badges for the Navy and Air Force throughout the war, Army badges are also made by ANGUS & COOTE, Sydney and AMOR, Sydney. A summary of makers’ reverse marks seen by the authors, by service, shows:

Maker	Navy	Army	Air Force
G & E Rodd 1940	Yes	Yes	Yes
Angus & Coote 1942		Yes	
G & E Rodd 1943			Yes
G & E Rodd 1944	Yes		Yes
Amor (no date)		Yes	

The dates above are the year of manufacture and not necessarily the year of issue and several varieties exist.

The bars were all manufactured by Amor Pty Ltd, Sydney. All had either one star fitted in the centre of the bar, two stars equidistant from the ends and if three stars, centre and equidistant from the ends. The stars were 'seven pointed 3/16' [inch] wide of 'gilding metal gilt', and had a split shank affixed to the back for holding purposes when the star was mounted to the bar. One order was for Amor to also make 10,000 individual stars, which were used to create badges where more than three stars were required. Bars had rectangular holes punched in them to hold one to three stars and this was so that stars on their split pin would not rotate. Officials stated that one bar was capable of holding five stars, but situations arose where more than one bar was required and the maximum number of stars verified is seven, being on two bars; four on one and three on the other.<sup>2</sup> Extant badges indicate that the stars added later were affixed by drilling round holes.

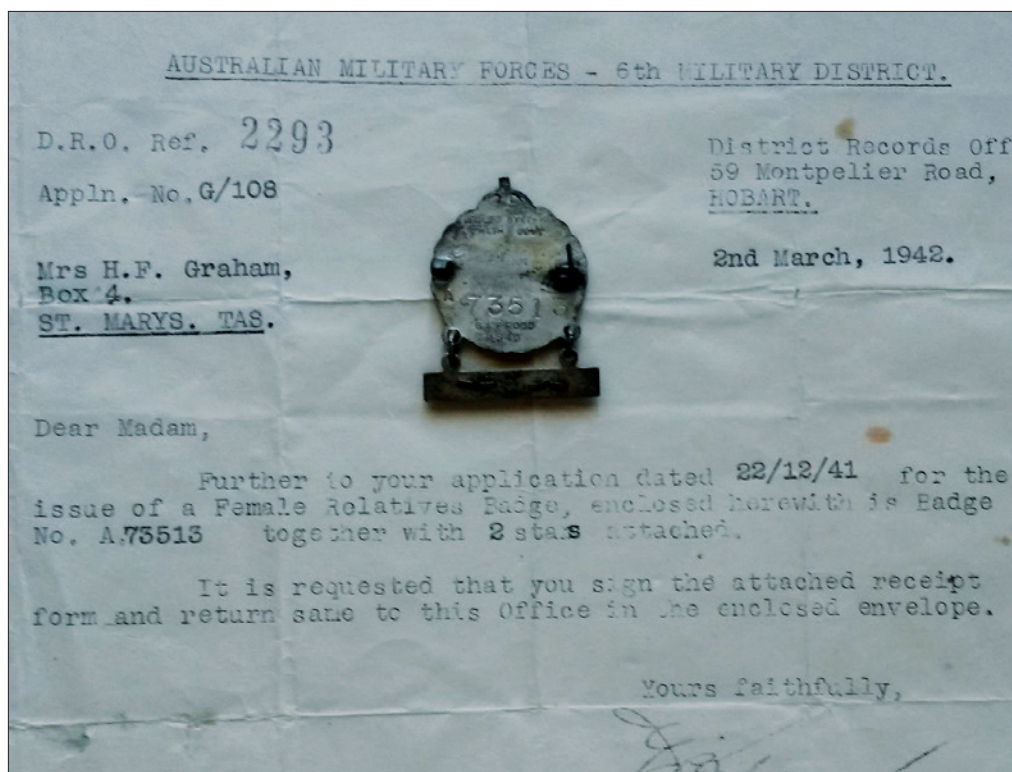
Badges were not freely granted. Instructions to issuing officers stated 'It is imperative that the utmost caution be observed in connection with the issue of the badges'. The strict application of the entitlement caused difficulties on three

fronts: the meaning of the term 'active service abroad'; the ineligibility of a step-mother; and the treatment of *de facto* wives.

Active service abroad was much easier to identify in the First World War when fighting took place outside Australia. However, when Australia came under direct attack in the Second World War, lines were drawn and dates set to define areas of active service. Inevitably individual circumstances arose that caused the administering authorities difficulties, and heavy reliance was placed on the entitlement to another badge, the Returned from Active Service Badge, to establish eligibility for the Female Relatives' Badge. This was not always sensitively handled by the three forces and there was criticism of the manner and blunt wording used when communicating negative decisions to the women involved, some of whom had also had their son killed.

Step-mothers were treated as ineligible despite the application form allowing: '6. Female guardians of legally adopted children will be eligible to receive the badge'.

The instance of Mrs Sellar of Toorak, Victoria, step-mother of Pilot Officer E.C.S. Sellar illustrates the case; her stepson, whom she had largely raised, had volunteered for overseas service and subsequently qualified as an RAAF



Female Relatives' Badge with letter



Returned from Active Service Badge

pilot and received further training in Australia during which he was killed in an air accident in Bowen, Queensland. Despite protests at a high level in August 1943, the requirements to be a blood relation if not the legal guardian and for the relative to have served overseas, were both cited as the reasons her application for a Female Relatives' Badge was rejected. Step-mothers were only accepted as eligible in August 1945 and Mrs Sellar's badge was belatedly approved.

*De facto* wives were initially treated differently by the Army and Air Force authorities. While the Air Force was inclined strictly to follow the list of eligible women on the back of the badge application form, it subsequently followed Army practice to issue badges to 'de-facto wives in receipt of dependent's allowances' from the serviceman named.

Another aspect of this badge is that the mothers of those men who volunteered and enlisted with the RAF (of whom many died during that active service) were regarded as ineligible for the Female Relatives' Badge, even where they had previously served with the RAAF. The logic stated at the time was that the relatives would be eligible for appropriate badges issued by the British authorities.

By the end of the war more clarity had been determined and Military Board Instruction 44 of 31 May 1946 stated:<sup>3</sup>

10. Female Relatives' Badge - The following conditions govern the issue of the Female Relatives' Badge:-

(i) To qualify for this badge, a person must be a female relative of a member who, on discharge, will be eligible for the Returned from Active Service Badge.

(ii) For the purpose of this paragraph, a "female relative" of a member means-

(a) If the member is married - the wife and the mother of the member;

(b) If the member is a widow, widower or divorcee - the member's eldest living daughter

and mother;

(c) If the member is a widow, widower or divorcee without mother or daughter - the member's eldest living sister;

(d) If the member is unmarried - the member's mother;

(e) If the member is unmarried and his mother is dead - the member's eldest living sister;

(f) If the member has no female relative within any of the foregoing categories - the member's nearest female blood relative, nominated in writing by him.

(iii) A Star will be attached to a bar suspended from this badge to indicate one member who has rendered qualifying service and another Star will be added for each additional member who has rendered qualifying service.

When badges were posted they were housed in a numbered envelope or pinned to a numbered card. These ephemeral items are seldom encountered.



Female Relatives' Badge with card as issued

It is easy to overlook the contemporary importance of the more than 300,000 Female Relatives' Badges issued in Australia during the Second World War, and it is hoped that this modest badge is better appreciated from the information above.

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Australian Archives Series A705/1 Item 55/1 273 parts 1 and 2 (RAAF files)

<sup>2</sup> Australian War Memorial: REL 46813.001

<sup>3</sup> Graham Donley (2007) *Australian War Badges of World War One and World War Two*. Bibra Lake: Raine Educational and Research Services

## William Flack Stevenson: foremost Army surgeon

by Martyn Lovell

I AM CUSTODIAN of the Boer War CB group of three medals to Major General W.F. Stevenson, Royal Army Medical Corps. He was a senior surgeon of high standing and active in research, who became Honorary Surgeon to the King. His Queen's South Africa Medal 1899-1902 (QSA) came with the clasps 'CAPE COLONY', 'PAARDEBERG', 'DRIEFONTEIN', 'JOHANNESBURG' and 'BELFAST'. In South Africa, he held the temporary rank of surgeon general while principal medical officer (PMO) for the lines of communication from 12 November 1899 to 15 February 1900. He was then PMO on General Roberts's staff at Army HQ until 4 May 1900.

In addition to his 'battle bars', he was also present at Poplar Grove, an action where the Boers attempted to defend Bloemfontein, the capital of the Orange Free State, while the British tried to capture the main Boer army. Following the surrender of General Cronjé at

Paardeberg, the Boers at Poplar Grove were badly outnumbered, having around only 6,000 men left to defend Bloemfontein. The morale of their commandos was also said to be low as a result of this surrender.

Lord Roberts decided to send two infantry divisions straight at the Boer position at Poplar Grove, while his cavalry was to make a wide flanking move to the south, coming up behind the Boers to prevent their escape. His main problem was the poor condition of his cavalry horses.<sup>1</sup> As a result, Lieutenant General French, commander of the Cavalry Division, moved very slowly on the morning of 7 March 1900. He started late and stopped twice to take long breaks to rest his horses. As a result, the cavalry was nowhere near where they needed to be when the infantry advance began.

However, even before the British infantry was in position to attack the Boer camp, the burghers



The CB group of William Flack Stevenson

simply turned and fled. The Boer commander, Christiaan de Wet, blamed the fiasco on Cronjé's surrender only two weeks earlier, although it probably helped save his army. If the Boers had stood and fought at Poplar Grove, then French's cavalry would have been able to get into place to cut off their retreat, and their entire force might have been lost. As it was, three-quarters of De Wet's men abandoned the fight. When he made his next stand at Driefontein, it was with only some 1,500 men.<sup>2</sup>

The Battle of Driefontein was fought on 10 March 1900 as the British moved towards the two Boer republic capitals of Bloemfontein and Pretoria. The Boer forces under de Wet's command were holding a seven-mile line covering the approach to Bloemfontein. Lord Roberts subsequently ordered a division under Lieutenant General Thomas Kelly-Kenny to attack the position from the front, while Lieutenant General Charles Tucker's division moved against its left flank. The Boers were subsequently forced to withdraw, losing a hundred men, while the British lost 424. As his QSA proves, Surgeon General Stevenson was present at actions near Johannesburg in May and at Belfast on 26-27 August 1900, and he also served in actions in between both of these – at Pretoria and to the east of there – for which no clasp was issued.

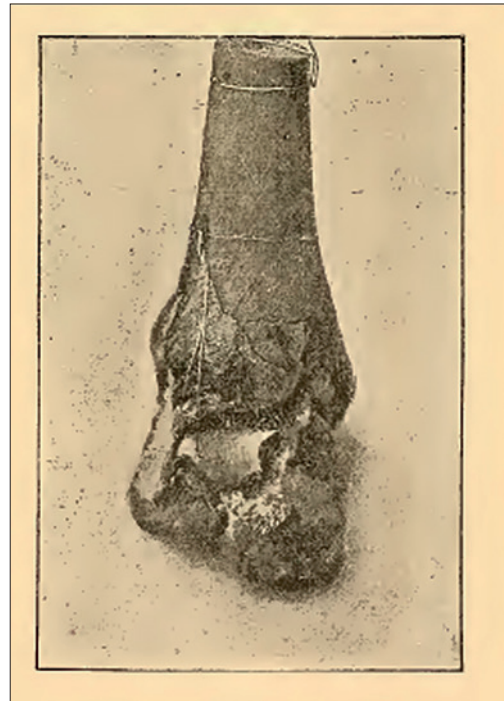
William Flack Stevenson was born in Dublin on 29 May 1844, the son of John Stevenson of Strawberry Hill, Dalkey. Educated at Trinity College, Dublin, he gained the BA, MB and MCh in 1865. In March 1866 he entered the Army Medical Service as an assistant surgeon on the Staff and with the Royal Artillery. He was promoted to surgeon, March 1876; surgeon major, March 1878; surgeon lieutenant colonel, March 1886; and brigade surgeon lieutenant colonel in August 1892, during which time he served in the West Indies and India. From 1890-92 he was employed as Assistant Professor of Medicine at the Army Medical School, Netley,<sup>3</sup> and was Professor of Clinical and Military Surgery there during 1892-95. Stevenson was promoted to surgeon colonel in July 1896.

He is mentioned in an account of Netley Hospital, in connection with the experimental and, indeed, pioneering use of X-rays in 1898:

Colonel Stevenson and Major Dick, professors of surgery in the school, were engaged in experiments with the latest appliances for locating bullets by Rontgen rays ... What bungling

and haphazard work all former methods seem to be by comparison with this!

For his services in the Boer War, William Stevenson was mentioned in despatches (*London Gazette*, 8 February 1901) and created a Companion of the Order of the Bath (*London Gazette*, 23 April 1901). Thereafter, he retained the temporary rank of surgeon general while employed at the Royal Army Medical College up to 14 January 1903. During this period,



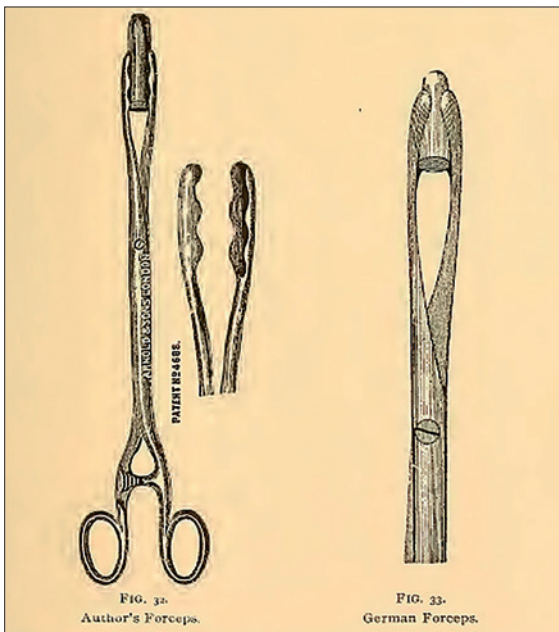
Effect of a Lee-Metford bullet on the ankle joint  
(*Wounds in War, the Mechanism of their Production and their Treatment*)

he published an article 'Notes on Surgical Experiences of the Boer War' in the *Journal of the Royal Army Medical Corps*.

Following his retirement on 1 August 1905, he was appointed Honorary Surgeon to King Edward VII. He received the honorary rank of surgeon general on 16 July 1913.

In 1898, William Stevenson had published *Wounds in War, the Mechanism of their Production and their Treatment*.<sup>4</sup>

This significant study established his reputation as the leading authority of his day on this subject. Much of what he wrote in *Wounds in War* was quite progressive – given that mortality figures for earlier treatments of, for example, penetrating abdominal injuries are quite depressing. With more than 90% of men succumbing to their wounds in previous



#### Forceps for extracting bullets

(*Wounds in War, the Mechanism of their Production and their Treatment*)

conflicts, it is highly likely that surgeons in later wars took on board his far more effective methods of dealing with abdominal wounds.<sup>5</sup> He also described and illustrated his own improved design for forceps used for extracting bullets.

Surgeon General Stevenson was re-employed on the outbreak of the Great War, aged 70 years, though it has not been possible to establish his exact role at that time. By then, his previous work on ballistics and wounds still remained highly relevant, being cited, for example, in an article which appeared in the *British Medical Journal* in December 1914. This pointed out that the centre of gravity of the German bullet being near its base made it tumble on impact – causing more serious wounds.

William Flack Stevenson, foremost Army surgeon, died at Bournemouth on 7 July 1922. His obituary stated that he was possessed of great charm and manner – qualities which combined

to give him influence at Netley and elsewhere. He was survived by his wife, Maria Theresa, and two daughters. His son, also a doctor, died of heat stroke at Lucknow in 1910.

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*Ibid*, 15 July 1922 p 112: Obituary of W.F. Stevenson.

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#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Many horses had been lost during the successful relief of Kimberley, while the remaining ones had been on short rations since the loss of the main supply column at the start of operations in February 1900

<sup>2</sup> With acknowledgements to Rickard, J. (2 March 2007) 'Battle of Poplar Grove' at [www.historyofwar.org](http://www.historyofwar.org)

<sup>3</sup> Netley Hospital opened in Southampton after the Crimean War and was the largest military hospital and single-corridor building at the time. Patients continued to be treated there until 1958, when it was closed due to high maintenance costs. The building was demolished after a fire in 1963, though its chapel remains. From its construction until 1902, Netley Hospital served as the home of the Army Medical School, which eventually moved to Millbank

<sup>4</sup> A third edition of this work came out in 1910, with 1904 being the possible date of the second edition

<sup>5</sup> *Wounds in War* has been digitised and is available to download online. It starts with the mechanics of wounding and provides relevant thoughts on ballistics. The impact of missiles and bullets on all parts of the body is dealt with in some detail. Although a lengthy tome, it may be worth dipping into – given that it provides useful information about the treatment of wounded men at that time, whose medals might well reside in our collections

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## Special awards of the France and Germany Star – a follow up

by Peter M.R. Helmore

THE ARTICLE in the September 2017 *Journal* by Bob Barltrop raises an issue that for some time has concerned those researching the medals actually issued to those who served in the Army during the Second World War. The problem has been exacerbated in recent years by the fact that the post-1922 service papers have become available via MoD, Glasgow.

To summarise briefly, my understanding is that those who continued to serve after the end of hostilities had their medal entitlement and application submitted to the medal issuing authority by their unit. Those whose service had been completed were invited to submit an application to the War Office by completing the application form C.S.20.

Having personally submitted a significant number of requests to MoD, Glasgow for copy service papers, I have found the annotations on service records referring to Second World War medals issued to those who continued in service to be largely in line with the individual's record of service. Where questions have been raised however, is in relation to those who had ceased their service and applied in person; here several anomalies seem to appear. If one pauses for a moment, the logic of this becomes clear; still-serving personnel have their records updated by their unit and are likely to be accurate, those who have left the service have their records updated by a War Office clerk after the event acting on information received. The risk of an

error or an omission occurring is more likely in the latter scenario.

Those seeking to confirm the actual stars/medals issued in relation to the Second World War can be guided by the relevant entries found on service records received from MoD, Glasgow, but to obtain actual proof of issue for those who left the service at the end of hostilities, one must seek reference to the C.S.20 – here the problems start!

When asked, MoD, Glasgow stated that it had no knowledge of Army Form C.S.20 and referred me to the MoD Medal Office at Innsworth. The response to a 'Freedom of Information' request to the MoD Medal Office, Innsworth referred me back to MoD, Glasgow! My understanding is that the C.S.20 records are still referred to by staff at the MoD Medal Office when requests are made for late/duplicate issues. It is interesting to note that in the past the MoD Medal Office has been prepared to respond to enquiries from researchers and provide copies of requested C.S.20s – I have obtained a number and an example is illustrated. These apparently are no longer available to researchers.

We often hear that medals were not issued for the benefit of collectors and this I do not dispute. Of course, had the powers that be at the time agreed to cover the cost of having Second World War medals named we, as researchers, would not have these difficulties.

APPLICATION FOR ISSUE OF CAMPAIGN STARS AND MEDALS, Ex-Army Personnel				(C.S. 20)
WRITE IN INK IN BLOCK CAPITALS				
I desire Campaign Stars and Medals, as shown below, awarded to me (or to the late)				
Number	Christian or First names	Surname of Officer, soldier or auxiliary		
5613617	GRAHAM-JAMES	QUAINTANCE		
Class of Release or Discharge and Date	Age and Service Group No.	Rank	Last Regiment or Corps according to cap badge worn (R.A. to state Branch; Home Guard to insert H.G. with County and Battalion number)	
A: 1-1-46	42-13	ROWS	DEVON-REGT	
to be addressed to me as follows:—(State Rank, Title, Mr., Mrs. or Miss)				This Box for War Office Use Only
(Name) G. J. QUAINTANCE				E. 19 OCT 1948
(Full Postal Address, with Post Town and County — or Postal District and Number — if appropriate)				18 MEDALS ISSUED
82. FORTUNE-GATE. RD HARLESDEN N.W.10				Strike out items which were NOT awarded
NOTE—YOUR STARS or MEDALS may not be issued for		SEVERAL MONTHS		
If you should change your permanent address before		receiving them,		
send a postcard at once to War Office marked "Medals: New Address" and showing		1939-45		
(i) the new address and (ii) No., name and last Regiment or Corps.		ATLANTIC		
Signature of Applicant: G. J. Quaintance		AFRICA		
If claiming as legatee or next-of-kin, state relationship to deceased		EUROPE		
		BURMA		
		FRANCE & GERMANY		
		MEDALS		
		DEFENCE   WAR 6-0		

An example of a completed Army Form C.S.20

## Jemadar Raidolah Khan, British North Borneo Constabulary

by Malcolm Little, Australia

I ALREADY had a bronze British North Borneo Company Medal 1900 with the clasp 'TAMBUNAN' when, in September 2006, a friend rang to tell me there was another one for sale on eBay. Thinking I might be able to pick up a bargain for exchange purposes I put in a bid and was successful. I now had two but which one to keep?

Since I had acquired my first one in October 2003, I had been in contact with Alan Cathery (OMRS 648) whose 1989 OMRS *Journal* article 'Punitive Expeditions: British North Borneo 1883-1898' had first sparked my interest in the British North Borneo Company (BNB Co) and its medals. Alan had sent me a wealth of information including a list of medals sighted over the years. When comparing the names on the two medals I had with those on the list of those sighted I saw that 247 Lance Cpl Raidulla (*sic*) Khan had also been awarded a British North Borneo Company Medal 1897-1916 with the clasp 'PUNITIVE EXPEDITION' and that this medal had been reported on 6 May 1988 as being 'in America with a collector'. The medal I had bought on eBay was named 247 PRIVATE RAIDOLAH KHAN so I kept my latest purchase hoping that some time down the track there might be a reunite.

### British North Borneo Company Medals

There were two BNB Co medals, issued in two designs and described in *British Battles and*



Raidolah Khan's British North Company Medal 1900 with clasp 'TAMBUNAN'

*Medals* as the British North Borneo Company Medal 1897-1916 and the British North Borneo Company Medal 1900. The 1897-1916 medal was awarded initially with the clasps 'PUNITIVE EXPEDITION' and 'PUNITIVE EXPEDITIONS' while the 1900 medal was awarded with a clasp 'TAMBUNAN'. These medals were issued in silver to officers and bronze to non-commissioned officers and men although later, in 1905-06, bronze medals could be exchanged for silver ones. The 1897-1916 medal was again used in 1915-16 when it was issued with the clasp 'RUNDUM' in silver to all who took part in the relief of the village of that name.

Spink and Son, which made all the BNB Co medals, record 98 recipients of the 1897-1916 medal with clasp 'RUNDUM' and two 'RUNDUM' clasps only. Of the other earlier issues Spink records show that 12 silver and 74 bronze medals with the clasp 'PUNITIVE EXPEDITION' were awarded while those awarded with the 'PUNITIVE EXPEDITIONS' clasp amounted to five silver and 47 bronze. A further seven silver and 116 bronze 1900 medals were issued with the clasp 'TAMBUNAN'.

Fewer than three years had elapsed when on 23 July 2009, Spink had a sale which included 'The Collection of the late Lee E. Bishop, Jr.'. Lee Bishop was a former President of the Orders and Medals Society of America and a recipient of the OMRS Silver Medal of Merit. And there, in Lot 308, was the missing British North Borneo Company Medal 1897-1916 with the clasp 'PUNITIVE EXPEDITION' named RAIDULLAH KHAN 247 LANCE CORPORAL. Needless to say I bought it, reuniting it with the medal I had bought on eBay. When it came, the medal arrived with research.

### Raidolah Khan's service

Raidolah Khan, like many in the BNB police, came from the North-West Frontier area of what was then India, and was a Pathan. The names Khan and Singh are seen frequently on the Tambunan medal roll. His name, with a number of variations of spelling, appears quite regularly in the *State of North Borneo Official Gazette* and extracts are quoted below.

*April 1905, p47:*

The Civil Police are under the Wing Officer, and I have no District Police, the work that would



**Raidolah Khan's British North Company Medal 1897-1916 with clasp 'PUNITIVE EXPEDITION'**

fall to them being done partly by Military Police, but mainly by Cpl. Redelakhhan [sic] of the Civil Police. I am glad of this opportunity to note the excellent work done by this Corporal, who has been of very great assistance to me. He knows the district, the natives, their language: he has a head and can use it: a combination of qualities sufficiently rare to be remarkable when met with and valuable.

*1 May 1906, p109:*

REPORT ON THE DISTRICT OFFICE, JESSELTON, 1905

*Police* - The Civil Police, under the control of the Wing Officer, have done their work well, and very good order has been kept in the town. One policeman was placed in Putatan, at my request, in February and the arrangement seems satisfactory. I was very glad to hear that Corporal Redolah Khan had been made a Sergeant, as he fully deserved the promotion, and it would be difficult to find a more useful man.

*1 October 1906, p190:*

Civil Police, Jessleton Division.

This division is under the supervision of W.O. Mr. Bond who has brought it to a fairly efficient state, very much handicapped by the material at his disposal. The back bone of the division is Corporal (promoted during the year to Sergeant) Raidolah Khan who has much energy and zeal and knows the District thoroughly. The District Officer has invariably reported well of this man.

*1 July 1907, p127:*

Jesselton - Sergeant Raidolah Khan of Jessleton Civil Police was granted a reward for a most plucky act in effecting the arrest single handed

at night of two desperate Chinese, and, being severely wounded himself brought them in two miles single handed to Jesselton. This is not Sergeant Raidolah Khan's first act of conspicuous pluck.

*1 October 1908, p216:*

Sergt. Lab Singh, the N.C.O., in charge at Sandakan and Sergt. Raidullah Khan at Jesselton are two of the best men in the force, both are hardworking and understand thoroughly the routine work. The latter is an excellent detective, and speaks Dusun and Bajau and has proved of great assistance in detecting crime in the Putatan District.

*1 July 1909, p171:*

Crime and Police Working - Jesselton Convictions, 1908

Twenty-two of these convictions were theft cases, owners of unlicensed dogs twenty-two and vagrancy comes next with eight convictions. The following Civil Police Officers deserve mention: Sergeant Raidolah Khan, Sergeant Lab Singh, Detective Sergeant Lam Fat and Hoh Eng Chiang the Sanitary Board Clerk in Sandakan.

*13 June 1910, pp129-130:*

ANNUAL REPORT ON CONSTABULARY AND PRISONS DEPARTMENT, 1909

*Sergeant Major Raidolah Khan* - Sergeant Major Raidolah Khan received his Warrant rank during the year and has been of the most inestimable value to the West Coast Residency, knowing the geography of the Coast so well from so many years of experience. The arrests of a great many absconding coolies from the different Estates were due to his efforts.

*22 April 1911, p 52:*

Sergeant Major Raidolah Khan of Jesselton Town station who received his promotion in July 1909 has done sterling police and detective work on the West Coast.

*1 August 1912, p153:*

Sergeant Major Raidolah was absent on furlough six months during the year.

*1 May 1913, pp163, 167, 168:*

*Murder* - The male child of a Chinese gardener was found strangled by his father in his house at Bongawan. Some money was stolen and a coat. On the same day a Chinese cooly under contract deserted from Bongawan Estate. Investigation pointed strongly to this cooly as being the Murderer. He had borrowed money from the gardener and on one occasion stole 50 cts. Which theft was discovered by the child. The cooly on hearing this, threatened both the gardener and his son. After some weeks the cooly was traced by Det. S.M. Raidulah Khan to a house in Putatan

and was arrested at night. He was charged but the Assessors found him not guilty of murder. And accused was discharged and sentenced later for desertion. The detective S.M. Raidulah Khan engaged on this case was afterwards rewarded by H.E. Mr Ellis and promoted to Jemadar on probation.

1 October 1913, p1:

#### APPOINTMENTS

NO 223 - The following Constabulary Officers, serving on probation as Jemadars, are confirmed in such rank with effect from 1st May, 1913.....Jamadar Raidulah Khan.

#### 1915 expeditions

In 1915 a number of expeditions took place against recalcitrant natives. In a letter dated 15 February 1916, the Commandant of the Armed Constabulary, Major C.H. Harrington, made a submission to the Government Secretary at Jesselton for medals or clasps for the Rundum, Mesopo and Pendasan Expeditions. His letter was then forwarded by the Government Secretary to the Chairman of the BNB Co with the comment that:

Since writing this letter the Officer Commanding Constabulary has discussed with me the position of awarding a separate medal for the Mesopo Expedition and has expressed the opinion in which I concur, that as the Mesopo Expedition was an off shoot of the main Rundum Expedition, one medal, inscribed 'Rundum', should be issued for both expeditions.

Part of Harrington's submission also included 'List E. Officers, Non-Commissioned Officers and men for Punitive Expedition Medal "Pendasan" (if to be awarded)' and 'List F. Officers, Non-Commissioned Officers and men and civilians for clasp "Pendasan" (if to be awarded)'. List F, that is those already in possession of a British North Borneo Company Medal, contained six names including Jemadar Redolah (*sic*) Khan. Unfortunately neither a medal nor a clasp was awarded for Pendasan. However in a letter to the Chairman of the BNB Co dated 19 July 1917, the then governor of British North Borneo, A.C. Pearson, made the following submission:

#### Rundum Expedition Medals

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a copy of a letter from the Officer Commanding Constabulary relative to the above subject., which speaks for itself. I shall be glad if the 15 asked for may be supplied.

2. In connection with the issue of these medals,

I am asked to bring to your notice the case of Jemadar Raidullah Khan, who was the only native officer present during the abortive rising at Pindasan. The thanks of the Court were by your instructions communicated to the European Officers, while the rank and file received good conduct badges (your 690 of 7th September 1916). Thus no recognition was made of the services of this native Officer, a man whose name has more than once been brought to notice for the fearless execution of his duty in connection with the arrests of dangerous criminals.

3. The Commandant suggests that the case could be met by presenting him with a certificate in the form of the attached draft. If the Court approve this, I propose to have the certificate printed. I am informed that such certificates are greatly prized by Indians and that the Jemadar would highly appreciate this permanent testimonial of services which the Commandant states were of great value on this occasion.

#### DRAFT CERTIFICATE.

To

Jemadar Raidullah Khan:

I am desired by the Court of Directors of the British North Borneo Company to convey to you their appreciation of the valuable services rendered by you on the occasion of the armed rising of natives at Pindasan during April, 1915, which was rapidly quelled by a force of Constabulary acting under the directions of the Honourable Mr. E.H. Barraut, Resident, West Coast, you being the Senior Constabulary Officer present. As no medal is being granted for these operations, it is desired to place your services on record by means of this certificate.

Seal

.....

Governor

Dated.....

The Company duly agreed to the governor's request and in a letter dated 20 September 1917 stated 'that the Court approve the issue to Jemadar Raidullah [*sic*] Khan of a Certificate in the form indicated in the enclosure to your despatch'.

#### Later years

No records have been found of Khan for the next few years. Then, in *The British North Borneo Herald* of 1 July 1922 the following item appeared:

Presentation to Jemadar Raidullah Khan

Before leaving Jesselton on the 28th June, His Excellency the Governor presented Jemadar Raidullah Khan with a gold watch on completion

of 27 years' service and in recognition of his valuable work as a Police Officer. The presentation took place at the Customs after the inspection of the guard of honour. Before presenting the watch His Excellency congratulated the Jemadar on his fine record in a speech in Malay.

Two more mentions of Khan were made in the *State of North Borneo Official Gazette*. The first was on 1 August 1924 when 'Jemadar Redollah [*sic*] Khan is appointed to act as Chief Police Officer, Jesselton, with effect from 13th July, 1924'. The second mention was on 1 November 1926 when it was announced that 'Jemadar Raidullah [*sic*] Khan retires on pension from the Armed Constabulary with effect from 1st October 1926.'

Whether Raidolah Khan ever returned to India is unknown. He had spent over 30 years in North Borneo. He may have married and settled locally, however, in a letter to Alan Cathery dated 1 September 1994 the late Philip Burman mentioned a number of BNB Co medals he had purchased in Pakistan, indicating that at least some of those recruited from India had returned on completion of their term of enlistment.

As a pair the two British North Borneo Company medals to Raidolah Khan are scarce if not rare. In an email to me on 30 November 2009, Alan Cathery stated that 'under [my] early Tambunan notes I read 3 recipients also received the Expedition medal and 9 the Expeditions'. The scarcity of BNB Co medals as pairs, together with the fact that so much information is available on Raidolah Khan when generally little or no information is available on natives, makes the medals significant historically as well as numismatically and I look forward to having them for many years to come.

#### Acknowledgement

My thanks to Bob Climpson of Noble Numismatics for photographing the medals.

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Cathery, A. (1989) 'Punitive Expeditions: British North Borneo 1883-1898', *Journal of the Orders and Medals Research Society*, 28(4)

Colonial Office 374/833 (The National Archives)

## The Hungarian Military History Museum, Budapest

On the occasion of the 90th Hungarian Stamp Day, the Hungarian Post (*Magyar Posta*) issued two postage stamps and a souvenir sheet on 3 November 2017. The two stamps commemorate the Royal Hungarian Defence Forces instituted in 1868, through the portrayal of artefacts preserved by the Hungarian Military History Museum in Budapest.

Following the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867, Act XLI of 1868 provided for the establishment of the Royal Hungarian Defence Forces, which first comprised infantry and cavalry and then, from 1913, artillery as well. Its first commander-in-chief was General of the Cavalry Archduke Joseph Karl of Austria (1833–1905), who was awarded the Military Merit Cross with War Decoration for his achievements in the 1866 Austro-Prussian War, and from 1898 (i.e. the 50th anniversary of the reign of Austro-Hungarian monarch Francis Joseph I) wore a



Archduke Joseph Karl of Austria's Military Merit Cross

special version of the insignia, set with brilliants and rubies. This most valuable medal and its wearer are depicted on the HUF120 stamp.

**Gergely Pál Sallay**

## The Holy Land Pilgrim's Cross

by Anthony Bateman

THE HOLY LAND Pilgrim's Cross is seldom encountered and is usually seen as a single decoration and not part of a medal group. Its status is generally unclear to collectors – is it a pontifical honour, a decoration connected to the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, a Franciscan medal or just a commemorative religious medallion, and is it still extant as an award? I have only recently discovered answers to these questions a third of a century after I first became aware of the Pilgrim's Cross. I hope that my description of its origin and characteristics will clarify the situation for medal collectors as well as for any readers who might visit the Holy Land.

When my wife and I were in Jerusalem in 1981, I had read in a guide book that someone visiting the holy places could pay a call on the Custodian of the Holy Land and apply for a token of his or her pilgrimage in the form of a medal. We did this, and a friendly Franciscan friar gave me a pamphlet explaining the requirements for this award. All applicants had to certify that they had visited not only the Church of the Holy Sepulchre but also the Mount of Olives, Gethsemane and other sites in Jerusalem as well as places further afield, such as Bethlehem. These conditions were easily met, but to no avail as I learnt belatedly that aspiring pilgrims had also to bring a certificate from their parish priest attesting to the applicant's piety and countersigned by the 'Ordinary' – a bishop.

I returned home with just the pamphlet issued by the Custodian but was intrigued by the illustration of the medal – an elaborate design

struck in bronze, silver or gold in the particular Jerusalem-shape of the cross as used in the insignia of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre. I could discover nothing more in those pre-Google days but resolved to acquire one for my collection as a really worthwhile souvenir of Jerusalem.

Within a few months, I found a silver cross in a tiny numismatic shop underneath the arches at Charing Cross Station, sadly long gone along with its interesting neighbours. This one was of European silver, hallmarked 935, and had its original silk ribbon.

I recently bought a very similar silver cross on eBay with a hallmark of 800. I resolved to collect the others in the set, but it was many years before I found a gold cross, with ribbon, lurking in a dark corner of a dealer's display case at a small militaria fair in Norwich. It was an inexpensive buy, but I was amazed to discover later that the cross was marked as 18-carat gold.



Gold cross (18k hallmark at bottom of central roundel) – reverse



Silver cross (935 hallmark at bottom of central roundel) – reverse

My next find was at the OMRS Convention – a miniature silver cross, also with ribbon. The very detailed obverse and reverse designs appeared to be hand engraved and this cross conformed to the British half-sized pattern rather than the smaller European form. I bought this expensive little item as I had not seen one before. My quest for the final member of the trio was a long one but eventually I saw a bronze cross in a dealer's window just off Charing Cross Road. It probably cost me more than I had paid for even the gold cross but was well worth it, complete with its original box, to complete the set.



Gold, silver and bronze crosses (original design) – obverses

However, as is the way with medals, I was not yet finished. In 2012 I was leaving the main hall of the extensive antique and collectors' fair held twice yearly at the Norfolk showgrounds. I glanced at a tray of buttons and odds and ends on a small table on the off chance of finding another one of the scarce RNAS officers' buttons mixed up with their mundane RAF successors. Instead, I spotted a small cross of the Jerusalem shape. It was a good quality striking of the bronze Pilgrim's Cross complete with ring suspension but had no ribbon and cost me only a couple of pounds. It was just over three-quarters the

The clarity of the detail on both the old (large) and current (small) bronze crosses is significantly sharper than on the gold and silver large versions. I had thought that this was because they were gold and silver plated until I discovered their hallmarks. I have found no record of when the rather large original crosses were replaced by the current smaller version,



Boxes for current bronze cross (black) and earlier bronze cross (red)

size of my three crosses, so I assumed that it must be some sort of souvenir and not the actual decoration.

Google searches shed no light on my chance purchase but I saw that a framed set of all three classes of cross had been sold. Other sales of single crosses were recorded at considerably more than I had paid over the years, so my interest in this somewhat obscure award was at least economically justifiable.



Bronze cross (current design) and silver cross (older miniature) – obverses

but the respective dimensions of all the crosses in my possession are as follows:

Original crosses (4): diameter 40-41mm, ribbon width 33-34mm

Current crosses (2): diameter 32mm, ribbon width 23-24mm

Miniature crosses (2): diameter 18mm, ribbon width 16mm

Eventually Google revealed a pamphlet published by the Franciscan Custodian of the Holy Land in 2005. It explained that Pope Leo XIII had instituted the cross as a decoration in 1901, to be collected by duly-attested pilgrims in person from the office of the Custodian within the walls of the Old City. Pope Paul VI had ended its conferment in 1977 but his Custodian had taken it over – not least because the donations made by pilgrims upon receiving the decoration are used to assist the poor and the sick. A certificate from one's priest and bishop is no longer required, but the Custodian may still only present the decoration to the applicant at his offices in St Saviour's Convent just inside the New Gate of the Old City. Those who make a second pilgrimage are entitled to a silver cross and the gold cross may be awarded to people for further pilgrimages or who have rendered special services to the holy places. Anyone who has made the entire pilgrimage on foot may receive the cross without making any payment. The donations specified in 2013 for obtaining

the bronze, silver and gold crosses were US\$150, \$200 and \$250 respectively. The wording of the papal decree instituting the Holy Land Pilgrim's Cross and an explanation by the Custodian of the meaning of this decoration in the 21st century are set out on the Franciscan Holy Land website.<sup>1</sup>

Various references that I have consulted explain that the Pilgrim's Cross has never been classified as a pontifical decoration, despite having been founded by papal decree. Its current status is thus that of a decoration conferred by the Franciscan Custodian of the Holy Land. The official translation of the Latin diploma of award is as follows:

Brother Petrus Baptista Pizzaballa of the Order of Friars Minor, Guardian of Mount Zion and of the Holy Sepulchre,

Commissioner Visitor General, Custos of the Holy Land and humble servant of the Lord,

To our Dearly Beloved in Christ (*name of the recipient*)

By apostolic authority, faculty was given us to confer on the faithful the commemorative cross of pious pilgrimage to the Holy Places. We have resolved to decorate with this honourable symbol in bronze the ardour of your devotion that moved you to venerate the monuments of our Redemption, so that the memory and the fruits of this salutary voyage will always be present in your memory.

Given at Jerusalem in our Convent of Saint Saviour

(*the date and two signatures*)



Certificate of award for bronze cross (current)





The author's medal group with the current Holy Land Pilgrim's Cross (bronze)

This story ended finally for me in 2013 when I was offered an international development consultancy assignment in Palestine with the European Commission, having spent most of the previous decade in Baghdad, Kabul and Islamabad. I attended the office of the secretariat to the Custodian of the Holy Land one Friday where I was welcomed by a gracious nun, the assistant to the secretariat, and received the bronze cross and an illuminated certificate of award. My certificate is numbered 215/13, dated 6 December 2013 which suggests that a relatively small number of awards are made despite the many large groups of people who make the pilgrimage in these days of cheap air fares.

This bronze cross was exactly the same as the three-quarter-sized one I had found in Norwich a year earlier, but with the addition of a very narrow ribbon and a brooch suspender top bar bearing the legend 'JERUSALEM'. This top bar is missing from the other crosses in my possession, however. Two of the larger old crosses have gold coloured bar brooch suspenders at the top of the ribbon, but these are devoid of any wording (see the top photo on page 45). The size of the modern crosses is similar to that of standard British medals. I decided to mount it at the end of my own medal group, placed after the several foreign awards that are duly authorised for wear by me as a British subject. It also appears to be fairly common practice these days for British subjects to wear papal orders and decorations.

Although this addition probably contravenes the UK conditions for wearing awards, I feel that the Pilgrim's Cross complements the two new civilian service medals<sup>2</sup> that I received from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in 2013 for my work in Iraq and Afghanistan. However, I had never expected having to remount my medals in my seventy-second year. Very recently I bought a miniature gold Pilgrim's Cross on eBay. This modern cross is struck or moulded, and not engraved as is my silver miniature. The chief difference between this and the older miniature is that it is one sided, with a blank reverse.

### References

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### Notes

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.custodia.org/default.asp?id=1165>

<sup>2</sup> Namely, the Iraq Reconstruction Service Medal 2004 and the Civilian Service Medal (Afghanistan) 2011

## 'Unofficerlike conduct after football match'

by Richard Taylor

FIRST World War mine clearance badges are often found with medals to naval personnel, but this one discovered on eBay is very different. A scroll and shield have been added beneath with the engraved wording: ENG. LIEUT L. J. SMITH. R.N.R.



Lionel Smith's cased minesweeping badge

1919. The badge is then beautifully fitted into what is obviously a specially made case with a velvet lining, probably the work of the East London jeweller who produced the badge.

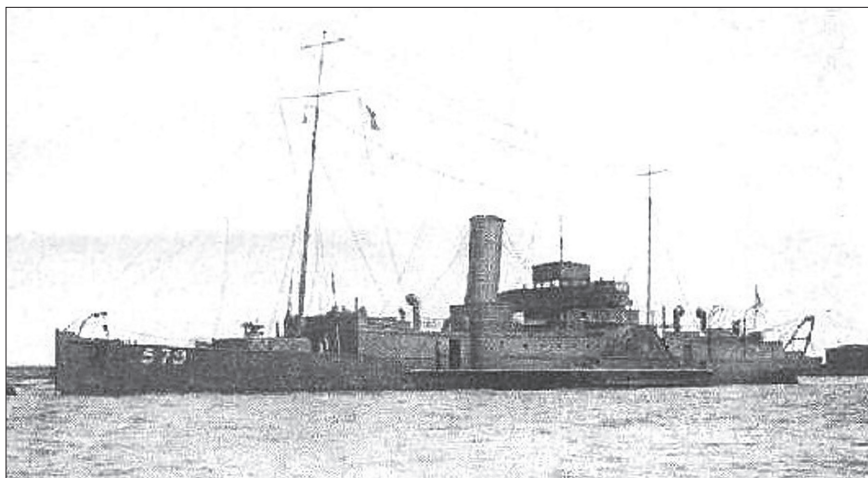
Lionel James Smith was born in 1885, the son of ship rigger David Smith, who in the 1901 and

1911 censuses is shown as living with his family in Leytonstone. In 1910 Lionel married his teenage bride Marjorie Edwards, from Sydney. Although the ceremony was at Paddington, his wife's birthplace is probably evidence of the fact Lionel was now serving at sea. He was certainly away from home at the time when the 1911 census took place.

There is no evidence that he was entitled to the Mercantile Marine War Medal 1914-18 but it was January 1916 before he was commissioned as a temporary engineer sub lieutenant in the Royal Naval Reserve. His first posting was to the paddle minesweeper *Walton Belle*, which had been requisitioned by the Admiralty the previous month. She was a ship which was to go on to have an interesting career after 1917, when Lionel left her. She became a hospital ship in 1919 following which she was sent to the White Sea and River Dvina in North Russia for transport duties. She and the *London Belle*, which had served with her, returned home after about four months operating around Archangel. They were under fire several times and were given back to their owners with many bullet scars on the funnels, ventilators and hulls.

But why did Lionel leave the *Walton Belle*? His service sheet for 9 April 1917 records:

Court of Enquiry into alleged unofficerlike conduct after football match; found to blame and influence over other officers detrimental to discipline. To be appointed to a ship where he will be under stricter discipline.



The *Walton Belle* as a minesweeper

That ship was another paddle minesweeper, the *Wanderer*, serving off the River Tyne.

With the war over, another disciplinary charge had hung over him in January 1919 when he was acquitted of an accusation of 'absence over leave'. With minesweeping work tailing off, he was posted in July 1919 to the *Sunhill*, an accommodation ship for mercantile ratings at Portsmouth.

His war service earned him the British War and Victory Medals and his temporary commission

as an engineer lieutenant was returned to him in August 1919 at his home address at 72 Grove Green Road, Leytonstone. Phone books list him at that address until 1938. Subsequent books show Lionel or L. J. Smith at various addresses, including 30 Foresters Drive, Leytonstone, but it is not known if this is the Lionel to whom the minesweeping badge was awarded – or did he have it done for himself as a souvenir of what for him appears to have been a very mixed war?

## Erratum

In the September 2017 *Journal*, under the 'Treasurer's report 2016-17', on page 302 the 'Schedule of overheads for the year ended 30 June 2017', the comparative column with the figures

for 2016 was unfortunately truncated. The full schedule with the figures for both years is now produced in full below.

The Editorial Team apologises for this error.

### ORDERS AND MEDALS RESEARCH SOCIETY SCHEDULE OF OVERHEADS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2017

	2017 £	2016 £
<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>		
Branch grants	580	1,232
Society awards (see note 5)	1,071	333
Journal prizes	800	800
Room hire	280	280
Telecommunications and postage	1,843	2,128
Printing & stationery	1,021	1,474
Computer costs	444	513
Insurance	1,372	1,313
Advertising	2,188	1,393
Subscriptions	34	24
Travel expenses	3,505	3,445
Accountancy fees	1,522	1,527
Depreciation of office equipment	194	623
Donations	205	205
Website costs	20,985	8,909
	<u>36,044</u>	<u>24,199</u>
<b>FINANCIAL</b>		
Corporation tax (see note 3)	124	128
Direct debit costs	546	545
Credit card charges	961	938
Bank charges	470	463
	<u>2,101</u>	<u>2,074</u>

## New Nova Scotia Baronet's Badge

by Edward Hilary Davis

THE FIRST 200 Baronets of England were created by James I in 1611. They had to be a 'Gentleman' (a legitimate rank in those days, requiring an income in excess of £1,000 per year) and, in return for their new title, had to pay for the upkeep of 30 soldiers in the Army for three years – a considerable fortune – 'Cash for Honours' was acceptable in the 17th century! This scheme was devised to support the English Protestant armies both in Ireland and abroad. Similarly, the Baronetage of Ireland was created to support Protestant plantations and settlements, particularly in Ulster. However, unlike English or Irish baronets, the creation of Baronets of Nova Scotia was a scheme devised by

– the latter, however, was revoked by George IV. Baronets, although not peers, hold the hereditary title of 'Sir' with the post-nominals 'Bt' and rank below barons and above knights (except for Knights of the Garter or Thistle). It is the only hereditary title to come with a recognised neck 'decoration' in the British 'order of wear' and a baronet's badge takes precedence over all orders worn around the neck with the exception of the Order of Merit. To this day they are still worn by baronets, particularly at dinners and banquets.

Although holders of an hereditary title, baronets are not considered members of the nobility nor aristocracy but senior members of the gentry. That said, they are often treated as such as they are recorded in publications such as *Burke's* and *Debrett's*. However, unlike a peerage, succession to a baronetcy is not automatic; the heir or claimant must first register his claim with the Crown Office via the College of Arms, or Court of the Lord Lyon, who will judge whether that person should be entered onto the Official Roll of the Baronetage. This is usually a formality; however, there have been historic and recent cases where different sides of families have contested the succession.

Baronetcies have often been created in recognition of public or military service achieved by governors, politicians, musicians, industrialists, admirals and generals. Sometimes a baronetcy has been a 'backhanded compliment' – when the Crown does not wish to raise the individual to the peerage but nevertheless wishes to give them an hereditary title. A good example of this is Sir John Conroy, Bt, KCH, Queen Victoria's mother's household comptroller, whom Victoria detested.

Members of the Baronetage of England, Ireland, Great Britain and the United Kingdom may augment their coats of arms with a small white escutcheon charged with the red hand of Ulster – the symbol of the province for which the dignity was originally set up to support. Nova Scotia (Scottish) members have an escutcheon bearing the arms of that territory. This means that one can tell to which baronetage someone belongs just by looking at their shield.

In 1629 Charles I gave Nova Scotia baronets the right to wear a neck badge suspended on a tawny orange ribbon, consisting of a white shield



New Nova Scotia baronet's badge  
(courtesy of Spink)

James I and Charles I to aid the settlement of this new colony. In exchange for baronetcies, Scottish gentry were expected to support six colonists for two years and give a sizable sum towards its plantations. The first Nova Scotia baronet was created in 1625.

Many of the original conventions and customs surrounding baronetcies are surprising, such as being given precedence immediately behind that of the younger sons of peers, and the right of an 'automatic' knighthood for a baronet's eldest son

with a blue saltire with an inescutcheon of the Royal Arms of Scotland, Imperially-crowned and with a blue and gold motto around the outside: 'HONESTAE GLORIA FAX MENTIS'. No such 'decoration' was permitted for English or Irish baronets. For this reason, it is rumoured, Lord Nelson turned down a baronetcy in favour of a knighthood in the Order of the Bath (a junior rank) because at least it came with something to wear!

Other baronetcies were not granted a badge until 1929, making the Nova Scotia badge one of the oldest decorations in constant use in the British 'order of wear'. The other baronetcies' badges, with a red hand of Ulster on a white Imperially-crowned shield, are surrounded by a border of gold flowers depending on the baronetage to which they belong: England (roses), Ireland (trefoils), Great Britain (roses and thistles), or United Kingdom (all three). Each one usually has the surname and territorial

designation of the baronetcy engraved on the reverse.

Creation of baronetcies of Nova Scotia ceased in 1707 for the Union of England and Scotland. The last baronet (in the Baronetage of the United Kingdom) was created in 1990 for Sir Dennis Thatcher, Bt, MBE, TD, husband of former prime minister Baroness Thatcher of Kestevan, LG, OM, PC.

The first new Nova Scotia baronet's badge in several decades has been produced recently by Spink – silver gilt, hallmarked and with vitreous enamel in a personalized leather presentation box. There has not been a set or detailed specification for this badge for nearly 400 years and therefore these decorations have been open to individual artistic embellishment and interpretation. This badge was made after carefully studying a photograph of the baronet's predecessor's badge.

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## The Liverpool Shipwreck & Humane Society

The committee of the Liverpool Shipwreck & Humane Society has decided to suspend the award of their swimming and lifesaving medal. For 130 years the medal has been available for award to Merseyside schoolchildren, and in total there have been 1,306 silver and 1,028 bronze medals awarded, along with several championship watches.

From 1887 to 1946 a medal in silver was awarded to the winner of each school competition. In many cases this would be a medal to the best boy and the best girl. In the early years there were children from Liverpool, Birkenhead, Wallasey, Garston, the deaf and dumb schools and institutions, Merchant Taylors Crosby, the Florence Institute, the Liverpool Police cadets and the training ships *Conway*, *Akbar*, *Clarence* and *Indefatigable*. From 1947 to 1977 a medal was awarded in bronze to the winner of each school competition regardless of sex, and one silver medal awarded to the winner of the championship between all the bronze medal winners. Again, these were awarded to children from Liverpool, Birkenhead, Wirral, Warrington, Wigan, Cheshire and St Helens schools and institutions. From 1978 to 2017 a single bronze medal was awarded to the competition winner.

Sadly, the participation of schools dwindled in the later years as costs increased and the changing curricula meant less time could be afforded away from school.

The society's longest serving swimming judge, Mr Eric Deakin, lived in Liverpool so the competition revolved around Liverpool schools and the final swimming judge, Mr Tony Jones, lived on the Wirral so the final awards were made to children from the Wirral.

However, following a generous donation from the late Mr Eric Deakin, the society has decided to institute a special award in his name. The intention is to award just one medal per year for what the committee feels is the most meritorious water-based rescue in the Merseyside area. This is in honour of Mr Deakin's commitment to teaching and extending swimming and lifesaving techniques within the Merseyside area. The new award will be a gilded swimming and lifesaving medal, suitably inscribed with the recipient's name and date of the rescue. It will be the sole decision of the committee as to whom the medal will be awarded.

For any further information or background please contact the secretary of the society at: [secretary@liverpoolshipwreckandhumane.soc.org](mailto:secretary@liverpoolshipwreckandhumane.soc.org)

## Lieutenant Colonel G.A. Rosser, Royal Tank Corps, formerly Hampshire Regiment and Machine Gun Corps

by Tony Conroy

MANY YEARS ago, in April 2004, I obtained a group of medals from the dispersal sale in Dix Noonan Webb's rooms of 'The Collection of Medals to the Tank Corps' formed by the late Bill Green, though he had signed an earlier letter to me as 'Frank'. The group, named to G.A. Rosser, consists of the 1914-15 Star (CAPT. G.A. ROSSER, HAMPS. R.), British War and Victory Medals with MiD oak leaf (MAJOR G.A. ROSSER) and the India General Service Medal 1908-35 with two clasps, 'MALABAR 1921-22' and 'WAZIRISTAN 1921-24' (CAPT. G.A. ROSSER, R. TANK C.). The purchase of this group set in motion a voyage of discovery that uncovered the extraordinary account of a man whose place in military history has been assured.

Born George Archibald Rosser in 1890, he was commissioned in 1909 and joined 2nd Battalion, Hampshire Regiment. In 1914 the battalion, then in India, received orders to return to England. A visit to The National Archives (TNA) revealed the part they played in the 1915-18 campaigns.

### Gallipoli – the *River Clyde* affair

The official war diary for the battalion at TNA, part written by Rosser, shows men from the battalion were selected for the main assault on Gallipoli aboard a collier called the *River Clyde*. Rosser's task on board was to command the machine guns placed in the bow of the ship to provide support for the attacking troops. The

events of 25 April 1915 are well documented, so a brief extract from *Story of the 29th Division* by Captain Stair Gillon shows the part played by Rosser in the landings:

Only the machine guns in the bow of the *River Clyde*, ably controlled by Lieutenant G.A. Rosser of the 2nd Hants and Commander Josiah Wedgwood, M.P., of the R.N.D., the moral effect of the naval guns, and possibly the barrier of wire, prevented the Turks from counter-attacking and annihilating the party at the water's edge.

For this, Rosser was mentioned in despatches in August 1915.

Events moved rapidly for Rosser after 25 April; promoted captain and adjutant, he was present during the First Battle of Krithia, the Turkish night offensive at Eski Hissarlik on 1 May and the following day when the battalion counter attacked. He was also present during the Second Battle of Krithia that saw the battalion suffer many casualties, leaving only four officers, including Rosser, and 204 men present for the roll call. The battalion was then withdrawn to a reserve position and allowed to recover. It returned to the front line in time to participate in the Third Battle of Krithia in early June, where Rosser received a gunshot wound to the thigh. This was Rosser's last action on the Gallipoli Peninsula as he was evacuated with the rest of the wounded.



Lt Rosser (centre) gives instruction to Lt Silk during a short stay in Alexandria, Egypt *en route* to Gallipoli (reproduced by permission of the National Army Museum)

After recovering from his wounds, Rosser was posted in early 1916 to the Machine Gun Corps Training Centre as an assistant instructor. At the end of September 1916, Rosser, now acting major, was given command of the newly formed 133rd Company, Machine Gun Corps (133 MGCoy) and was posted to Mesopotamia.

### Mesopotamia

Rosser was given the task of writing the official war diary for his unit, and we therefore have a clear view of the company's actions during the Mesopotamia campaign.

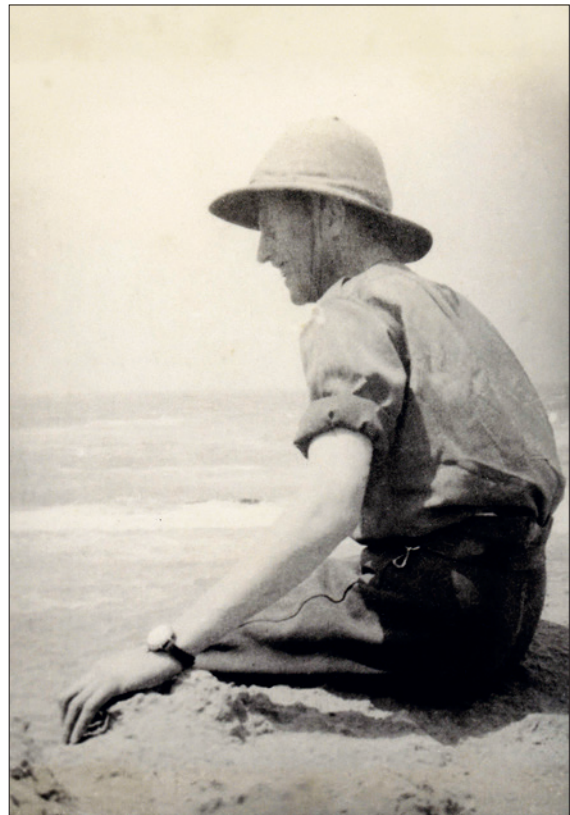
On 19 December 1916 the company arrived at the front in Turkish Mesopotamia and joined



The collier *River Clyde*

9th (Indian) Infantry Brigade headquarters, located at Dead Calf Pond. The brigade, part of the Indian 3rd (Lahore) Division, comprised the 2nd Battalion The Dorsetshire Regiment, the 93rd Burma Infantry, the 105th Mahratta Light Infantry, and the 1/1st Gurkha Rifles.

The 133rd Machine Gun Company saw its first action on 24 December, with orders to establish strong points and suppress the enemy's fire while the brigade advanced. During the action three sections remained in the front line with one in reserve. On 31 December the enemy attacked a T-head position, and after a brief struggle the defenders managed to eject the attackers from the trenches. During this action a sergeant of the 133rd, firing a Lewis gun, aided the defenders in



Captain Rosser in Gallipoli

(reproduced by permission of the National Army Museum)

repulsing the enemy, earning himself a mention in despatches. In the same action, another NCO from the unit also received an MiD and was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal.

On 3 January 1917 the British artillery bombarded Turkish defences in preparation for a major attack. All the company's machine guns were now in the front line throughout the night to prevent the enemy from repairing their defences. On 9 January, 9th Brigade was engaged in attacking Turkish positions on the right bank of the Tigris at Khudhaira Bend. The fighting was severe, mainly involving hand-to-hand fighting, with heavy losses on both sides. During the battle 133 MGCoy was placed in positions around the Abdul Hassan Bend sector, providing support for the infantry assault that captured the enemy's frontline. During the action the company suffered a number of casualties and the loss of one gun.

On 11 January, as the infantry attempted to assault the enemy second position, 133 MGCoy received orders to support the attack by firing continually on enemy positions to suppress rifle and machine gun fire. Private Hailstone of the 133rd was subsequently awarded the DCM for his

actions on this day. Although 9th Brigade was relieved, Rosser's company remained in the front line, their objective being to establish strong points as the line continued to move forward. Later it re-joined 9th Brigade at Sinn Abtar and was placed in strong points on the Hai Defence Line. By the end of the offensive the British 3rd Division had suffered more than 1,639 casualties, though the Turkish losses were even greater and in the dead of night on 18 January the enemy withdrew across the river to Kut.

### **The Battle of Jebel Hamrin**

To impede the Turkish retreat and prevent a breakout west across the Diyala River, General Maude ordered 3rd Division under General Keary to advance north west of Baghdad along the left bank of the Diyala River. At 0530hrs on 25 March 1916, 9th Brigade reached the lower edge of the foothills of Jebel Hamrin, thought to be the Turkish flank. It was estimated that the Turkish strength was about 3,000 rifles and ten guns. The British force numbered 4,600 rifles and 26 guns and was therefore considered sufficient to pin down the Turks and prevent their withdrawal across the Diyala. Unfortunately the intelligence was faulty, as it was later discovered that the enemy's strength was in fact about 5,400 rifles and 24 guns.

The brigade advanced into the foothills in diamond formation with 133 MGCoy in the centre with Brigade HQ. It was immediately engaged on all sides by the enemy. Rosser later wrote in the war diary: 'It became obvious the Turkish flank was not there but that we had bumped him partially'. The Dorsets took the lead, the Gurkhas on the left, the Mahrattas on the right and the Burmas brought up the rear with 133 MGCoy. At 0630hrs four guns were sent to support the Dorsets who had gained a forward crest line with only slight opposition, at the same time another four guns were detached to support the Gurkhas. The Dorsets, having advanced a further two and a half miles to the next crest came under heavy fire.

Two of the gun crews with the Dorsets found themselves too far ahead and had most of their mules killed. Lieutenant Peden of 133 MGCoy and a number of his men were killed while attempting to extract the guns. At 0700hrs, four guns were sent to an isolated and commanding hillock between both battalions. The section succeeded in holding back large numbers of Turkish troops during the morning, and a further section was

placed to cover a large open valley. By now it became obvious no progress could be made and a withdrawal was ordered. The brigade retired over an open plain to the position held on the previous day, all the time under heavy enemy fire. The action cost 133 MGCoy two officers killed and 34 other ranks killed, wounded or missing. Two guns were lost; one was smashed and the other was dropped when one of the bridges over the water course collapsed, but this was later recovered. In the infantry battalions there were a total of 122 killed, 726 wounded and 316 missing. The Jebel Hamrin was eventually occupied on 31 March 1916, after the withdrawal of the Turkish forces across the Diyala River.

The company did receive some recognition for this action, as Lieutenant George Tipping Lawden and Assistant Surgeon Rogers were both awarded the Military Cross and Sergeant W. Coyle received the Distinguished Conduct Medal for conspicuous gallantry.

The company moved into Baghdad after the surrender of the city, where it conducted a number of duties, one of which was to support flying columns on reconnaissance missions. Another was to provide a gun section as escort for the Baghdad-Samarra train. Unfortunately, on 18 May a train crashed killing one man and injuring seven others from the unit. In August 1917 Rosser received news of his second mention in despatches.

### **The Battle of Megiddo**

After the fall of Baghdad, the Palestine campaign was given priority over Mesopotamia and in March 1918 the division was transferred to Egypt to join Sir Edmund Allenby's Egyptian Expeditionary Force. At the Battle of Megiddo in September 1918 the division formed part of Sir Edward Bulfin's XXI Corps on the right flank. Prior to the move to Egypt, Rosser was appointed temporary major, dated 16 February 1918.

The objectives of 3rd (Lahore) Division, which consisted of the 7th, 8th and 9th Brigades, was to break through the Tabsor defences at Sabiye and advance east, capturing Jaljulye and the Railway Redoubt, before advancing towards Qalqilye, Kh. Kefar Thilth, 'Azzun and Jiyus in the foothills of the Judean Hills.

As 9th Brigade began its advance towards its objectives it came under heavy Turkish shell fire. During the battle 133 MGCoy was constantly in support of the brigade, helping it to achieve the objectives as it moved eastwards to final victory.



## Malabar

A visit to the British Library revealed that after the war Rosser was attached to 8th Armoured Car Company (8 ACC) as a probationary officer. As information regarding his service with this unit was non-existent via the usual sources, I made an appointment at The Tank Museum at Bovington.

The war diaries, or 'Historical Records' as they are titled in the inter-war period, provided much information. The records show Rosser, in the rank of captain, joined 8 ACC at Lahore in late September 1921, around the time that the company HQ received notice to make ready a section for active service in the Malabar region, which was in open rebellion. Although a newcomer, Rosser was placed in command of the section that comprised Lieutenant Dawson and 24 other ranks with four armoured cars (L3, L4, L5 and L6), one Peerless lorry, one Ford touring car and two motor cycles.

The area where the section was expected to operate was described as 'rather difficult for mechanical vehicles' as the roads were very narrow and poor while the country consisted largely of thick jungle giving a very small field of vision.

Arriving at their destination in early October, the main duties were patrolling and convoy and reconnaissance duties, though Dawson would later write:

Before we arrived, the campaign, which lasted nine months, had been a terrible failure mainly because of the selection of the type of force suitable for the job. We replaced the Cavalry; the field artillery was replaced by pack artillery. The flat footed Indian Infantry were replaced by Gurkha and Burmese regiments... The war became a series of Tiger hunts. The infantry were the beaters, the artillery the side stops and we were the guns shooting up anyone that attempted to cross our tracks.

It was said that the Mophals developed a healthy respect for the armoured cars as no convoy was attacked when escorted by one. The movements and actions of the section are well documented by Rosser in the war diaries. Though most of the entries refer to these patrols, reconnaissances and other duties, there are a number of incidents worth mentioning.

On 14 October 1921 while patrolling the Calicut road, cars L3 and L4 spotted a small party of rebels on the Pohhatur Ridge. Although both cars fired on the party without effect, it was enough to

scatter the rebels in all directions. On 20 October, the whole section took part in a combined operation with the Gurkhas and Dorsets and managed to engage a band of rebels killing about 46, mostly with the kukri. During the following five days there were several encounters with the rebels, the most serious on 25 October in another operation called the 'Melmur Drive'. On this occasion all four cars along with 2nd Battalion the Dorsetshire Regiment engaged and killed 246 of the enemy. In the war diary account for that day, Rosser wrote that they 'claimed 30 casualties'. It is possible that not all were active rebels, but the encounter seems to have had a considerable moral effect, for shortly afterwards petitions began to be received from the rebels in the neighbourhood of Malappuram offering their submission.

On 11 November, cars L4 and L5 were patrolling towards Kalikavu and made contact with and engaged the rebels, inflicting many casualties. On the morning of 14 November the whole section was moved to Manjeri. From this base Rosser ordered cars L3 and L4 to Pandikhad, where an action had been fought that morning by the Gurkhas. It was reported later that the rebels had seized the opportunity, due to the absence of most of the troops, to surprise the Pandikhad post which was held by a company of the Gurkhas. The attackers succeeded in penetrating the post, killing one British officer and inflicting a number of other casualties, but they paid dearly for the attempt and 234 dead bodies were later counted. The cars arrived too late to engage the rebels though they remained all night at stand-to as another attack was expected, but none came. On the same day, car L6 while on patrol duty engaged a party of about 50 rebels, killing three.

Over the following weeks the section continuously patrolled the area, the monotony only broken at times by a brief fire fight or supporting other troops. In one case, car L5 successfully assisted the Dorsets in rounding up a rebel band hiding in a Mosque.

At times the section's support crew were also involved in the action, as was the case with the crew of the Ford truck. On 5 December, while travelling along a road the truck was fired on from both sides of the road, fortunately without incurring casualties. Cars L4, L5 and L6 were sent to escort them in. Another time the lorry had to rescue car L3 which was stuck in a ditch in an area known to be a haven for the rebels. The incident related to a reconnaissance conducted

by Lieutenant Dawson who while scouting the area had come upon a felled tree straddling the road ahead. Dawson, suspecting an ambush, started to reverse the car. Unfortunately, while still moving backwards, the car veered into a ditch and was unable to extricate itself. As it was getting dark it was decided that they should lock themselves into the vehicle and use the searchlight to prevent the enemy sneaking up during the night. Dawson later wrote: 'The moral of the story is that an Austin car must never go by itself even on a short recce'.

Although the fighting was nearly over by late December, the section was still on alert. On 8 December Car L5 encountered and engaged some rebels, wounding one, and on the following day Cars L5 and L6 were fired on by a rebel party. At 500 yards both cars returned fire, killing five of the rebels. After this things quietened down and no further action was reported, allowing the section to 'stand down' and return to other duties. However, prior to the section's departure Rosser received a personal letter of thanks from the commander of the expeditionary force regarding the section's conduct during the campaign.

On 9 January 1922, after a brief rest, Rosser's section was despatched to Madras, where the Prince of Wales was due to arrive shortly. The section was well placed to aid the civil power when riots broke out on the streets; it managed to clear the streets without firing a shot. From there, it was sent to Guntur where people were running a campaign of civil disobedience by

refusing to pay their taxes and causing trouble with the police. There was no actual fighting, but the cars were used to overawe the people. It was found that firing at the banks on the side of the road near the villages had the effect of encouraging the people to pay their taxes, thus breaking up the campaign. The car section then returned to Lahore.

### Waziristan and Egypt

Rosser was posted to 9 ACC in January 1922 and saw action with the unit in Waziristan in early 1923. During this time the company was employed on the Takhi Zam line, south of Waziristan. The company was distributed over a large area, where they carried out a number of road patrols and special escort duties involving covering the withdrawal of troops from strategic positions and fighting off or chasing raiders. In August 1923 Rosser was promoted major and left for England a short time later.

After three years in England, Rosser was posted to Cairo to assume command of 3ACC, and he remained there until 1929 when he was posted to the 5th Royal Tank Company in England.

### 1st (Light) Battalion, Royal Tank Corps

In 1934, Rosser was promoted lieutenant colonel and had the distinction of becoming the first commanding officer of the newly formed 1st (Light) Battalion, Royal Tank Corps which was equipped with Vickers Mark II and Mark III light tanks. In his book *The Tanks: The History of the Royal Tank Regiment ...*, Liddell Hart writes:



The medals awarded to Lt Col Rosser

The enthusiasm that prevailed in the 1st Tank Brigade has rarely been equalled and never exceeded... Where so many did so well it is invidious to single out a few – to have been a member of the 1st Tank Brigade in 1934 is itself a distinction that does not fade with time. Yet for the record the names of the battalion commanders at least must be mentioned; Lt Colonels G.A Rosser, etc...

Lt Col Rosser retired on 13 April 1935 and died in Vancouver, Canada on 24 October 1950.

### Acknowledgements

My thanks to Lynne Conroy for helping to edit this article, and The Tank Museum, Bovington, for allowing use of their historical records.

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## Book review

***New Zealand Gallantry Awards 1940-1975***, by James Sutherland, 2017. Hardback, 524 pages, black and white illustrations and colour plates, bibliography. Regal Books, Christchurch, New Zealand 8023 or email the author at bella-bella@xtra.co.nz. \$NZ85 per copy, p&p \$NZ5 per copy within New Zealand. For overseas p&p costs please contact the author.

In various fields of endeavour New Zealanders are recognised as punching above their weight, out of proportion to their numbers. This is very much the case in the field of armed conflict, where the Kiwis have established a proud reputation as courageous fighters on land, sea and in the air. OMRS member James Sutherland's latest book, *New Zealand Gallantry Awards 1940-1975*, is a two-part biographical listing (Second World War and post-Second World War to 1975) of New Zealand recipients of gallantry awards, including foreign awards.

This is an excellent volume clearly representing many years of hard work and the collection of snippets of information by Mr Sutherland, with a huge volume of information on award recipients from the Second World War, Korea, Malaya, Borneo and Vietnam.

Individual entries typically include full names with personal biodata and service details, and *London Gazette* details of the award(s) received. Mr Sutherland notes that, as there are existing books with full recommendations for the various awards, he has instead concentrated on 'the more personal aspects of the recipients'. As to be expected, the amount of information varies significantly from entry to entry. It must be said that many entries do however contain details of the deeds for which the

awards were made but also in numerous cases details of the achievements – and sometimes tragedies – of the recipients in civilian life. There are numerous photographs of recipients, and also ten pages of colour photographs of various medal groups.

Of course, at the top of any New Zealand list is Captain Charles Upham, VC\* – his medals are illustrated on the cover. The nearly 3,500 other entries include such well-known figures as Alan Deere, Bernard Freyberg, Keith Park, Les Munro and Lloyd Trigg. Naturally there are many others who are less well-known but deserve to be remembered including Sergeant M.K. Hudson, awarded a posthumous George Cross for a grenade incident in 1974.

In my view the book would have benefited from an introduction clearly describing the scope of the work, so the user knows who is and who is not covered. There are numerous entries for New Zealanders who distinguished themselves serving outside the NZ forces, particularly in the RAF but also the RAAF and RAN, and the Indian Army. No entries were noted for New Zealand-born members of the 2nd AIF. And although the title refers to gallantry awards, the entries include numerous recipients of the various levels of the Order of the British Empire, including the civil MBE to the woman who ran the NZ Forces Club in Cairo – not a gallantry award but worth including. I would have probably included an entry for Peter Maling, a New Zealand medical student in London who won the George Medal in the Blitz in 1940, and whose two brothers have their own entries. Further details on sources would also have been useful.

But these are relatively minor quibbles, and Mr Sutherland is to be congratulated for an extremely interesting and useful (not to mention heavy) book.

**Lloyd Brodrick**

## Book review

***Givenchy in the Great War: A village on the front line 1914-1918***, by Phil Tomaselli, 2016. Hardback, illustrated, 240 pages. £19.99 plus p&p; ISBN 978-1-47382-550-5; Pen & Sword Books Ltd.

This is the author's latest offering in a series of military books, most of which explain how to trace one's military ancestors and which are very helpful both to family historians and medal collectors alike. This book focuses on the confrontation during each year of the First World War in one typical small French rural village on the Bethune Front – Givenchy. The book has a strong focus on the many brave deeds of the gallantry medal winners, with both citations and personal accounts of the deeds and, in many cases, artists' impressions of the actions are provided. No fewer than 11 Victoria Crosses were awarded for actions in and around this one village.

Givenchy is situated just north of the La Bassée Canal and, crucially, was overlooked to the north east by a tactically-important low ridge which, if the Germans held it, would give them commanding views over the Allied lines to the west. The Allies had to hold the ridge at all costs and those costs were high with bitter fighting in all five years of the war.

Lieutenant General Rawlinson summed up the village very succinctly in 1915 when he described it so: 'You never saw such a scene of desolation and destruction.' Apart from two short periods, in 1914 and again in 1918, the Allies managed to hold onto the ridge, which at various times was defended by the British, Indian, Canadian, French and Portuguese armies.

The author has the ability to paint a very vivid picture of the awful conditions and, at times, the futility of the continuous offensives, counter offensives and trench raids that were such a feature of the location. The book is very useful to regimental researchers as the author's attention to detail provides an abundance of names of both officers and men of the various regiments that fought, lived and died on the ridge which, by 1918, was just a series of craters. Indeed, this was the scene of the first German mine attack and became the most mined section of the line, littered with both Allied and German tunnels, shafts and dug-outs. The constant mining, shelling, sniping, grenade throwing and gas attacks is staggering and four days in the line here must have seemed like a lifetime.

Well worth a read as both an account of how the First World War was fought as well as a research tool for medal collectors.

**Simon Butterworth**

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## General Secretary's notes

Dahlia Harrison

On behalf of the Society, the Executive Committee extends its warm congratulations to OMRS member Simon Ovens. Her Majesty The Queen was pleased to appoint Simon a Deputy Lieutenant for Greater London with effect from 28 November 2017 (*London Gazette* 10 March 2018).

**The latest OMRS publication: 'By Order of Her Majesty' The Crimea Medal:** The hard-back edition of this book has now sold out, so the Society has made the book available as a paperback through the print-on-demand service Lulu.com. The book is not available via the Society's website and must be ordered directly from Lulu where your copy will be printed for you. Just go to [www.lulu.com](http://www.lulu.com) and search for 'Crimea Medal' in the bookstore, or alternatively use the following link: <http://www.lulu.com/shop/tony-martin-and-william-pickering-and-arthur-satterley/by-order-of-her-majesty-the-crimea-medal/paperback/product-23431970.html>

Overseas members please note that the books are printed at a location local to you. Therefore the cost of postage should be much less than postage from the UK.

***Caveat emptor:*** The Society has been contacted by an auction house which has highlighted problems with the sale and purchase of modern medals. They experienced three problems with the sale of modern groups in 2017. In the last case the auction house saw that the group had been sold publicly a number of times in the past and therefore had no concerns about it. However, the recipient complained that his medals had been stolen from him, although he had not reported this to the police previously and therefore had no crime number. The Police decided that it was not feasible to look into a 25-year-old case but that, as the recipient was an upstanding member of the community, the medals should be returned to him. The auction house says that all of these cases were the result of forums of former veterans giving notice of medal groups being offered for sale. The auction house has indicated that it would be interested to know if any member has had, or knows of, a similar experience/outcome with modern medal groups. If you have any information on this type of incident, please inform the General Secretary so that the information may be passed to the auction house.

**OMRS Annual Convention 2018:** This year's Annual Convention is to be held on 14-16 September at the Nottingham Conference Centre (NCC), a superb recently-refurbished building in the heart of the city. Please see the insert and member application form for further details. The popular medal fair on the Sunday will be open to the general public who can pay on the day, so do encourage all those non-member collectors of your acquaintance to come and join in the search for the next medal group to add to their collection.

**International Convention 2018:** The Swedish Chancery of the Royal Orders of Knighthood will host the 12th European Conference of Phaleristic Societies on 25-27 May in Stockholm. Please see the Society's website for full details.

**Honours and awards:** The Honours Sub-committee

may recommend up to three Gold Medals and six Awards of Merit in any one year. Nominations for awards may be submitted at any time but the cut-off date for awards to be made at the 2018 Annual Convention is 31 May. Nominations should be sent to the General Secretary. For further information see By-Law No 2 which can be viewed on the Society's website.

**OMRS online shop:** This is the Society's preferred option for the purchase of back copies of the *Journal*, books, etc. Any member who does not wish to order online may still contact the General Secretary direct with their requirements. In addition, the Society holds back numbers of the *Journal* for some of the years which precede those that are offered online and enquiries for these and/or individual articles are welcomed.

## Membership Secretary's notes

Jim Lees

The committee has considered the following candidates suitable for membership. If no objection is received, in writing, by the General Secretary within thirty days of publication the candidates shall be deemed to be members (Reference: Constitution Membership 3a).

### New Members

**7984 STILWELL, Keith E.S:** USA. Campaign medals.

**7985 DE VLIENER, MA, Auke R.K:** Netherlands. Former member. Awards & paraphernalia of the Soviet Union (1917-91), Mongolia (1924-91), Bulgaria (1908-43) & Austria-Hungary (1867-1918).

**7986 DONELEY, Robert J.T:** Australia. Medals to Australian & British infantrymen.

**7987 LYONS, CBE, Major General Adrian W:** Middlesex, UK. Former member. British Medals, gallantry awards & various 19th century campaigns.

**7988 IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM:** London, UK. Former member.

**7989 HEWER, Peter H:** Powys, UK. Miniature medals & Third Reich medals & militaria.

**7990 ROHLOFF, Adam:** USA. Primarily WWI pairs & trios, all branches of service.

**7991 DIEM, Edwin:** Austria. General.

**7992 BUDGEN, Marcus:** London, UK. 2nd Foot/Royal West Surrey Regiment; hunting & racing men; attributable miniature dress medals.

**7993 JACKSON, Robert I:** North Yorkshire, UK. UK & Empire WW1 casualty medals.

**7994 HARDEN, Anthony:** Kent, UK. Former member. Campaign medals.

**7995 NEAL, Justin P:** Australia. Former member. Medals to family name Neal.

**7996 STOKES, David J:** Avon, UK. WW1 officer casualties.

**7997 BUCK, Maurice H:** Lincolnshire, UK. Former member.

**7998 PICTON-KING, David:** Australia. UK, British

Colonial & Commonwealth, particularly police-related awards, decorations & medals.

**7999 THURGAR, Sidney J:** Australia. Queen's South Africa Medal and groups.

**8000 SEARLE, Paul:** Surrey, UK. General.

**8001 CROOK, John:** USA. General.

### Re-Admissions (Deleted Under Rule 5B)

The committee has considered the following lapsed members suitable for re-admission. If no objection is received, in writing, by the General Secretary within thirty days of publication the applicants shall be deemed to be re-admitted. (Reference: Constitution Membership 3a).

**7565 BONNEY, R**

**2733 CORRIGAL, M**

**7574 CUNLIFFE, B.S**

**7732 EASTWOOD, M.G**

**1529 OLDHAM, G**

### Deceased

**2370 BARLOW, A**

**3670 MALLINSON, J.I**

**7530 STARR, E**

**5225 STEWART, D.A**

**1488 WILKINSON, V.L**

### 25-Year Silver Badge

Members with a membership number of 4961 or lower may now apply, if they so wish, for their 25-year silver badge. Applications should be made in writing to the Membership Secretary enclosing a small size stamped addressed envelope but with a 'large letter' valued stamp. The ideal envelope should be a small bubble-lined type as a number of badges have been lost in the post due to the use of ordinary envelopes, which tend to split open. The initial badge is free; duplicates are charged at £5 each.

## Members' wants

### NB 1. Data Protection Act. 1998

As a not-for-profit organisation the Society has a legal responsibility to comply with the above Act. Names and addresses in the 'Members' wants' pages of the *OMRS Journal* are only published with the permission and expressed wish of the individual advertiser. (Publication of telephone numbers and email addresses are exempt from the Act should the advertiser wish to provide them). Where only a membership number is quoted members should contact the advertiser through either the Membership Secretary or the General Secretary and not through the Advertising Manager.

### NB 2. Payment for advertisements

Advertisements cost £5 per *Journal* entry. Please make out cheques to 'OMRS' and post your request to Graham Grist at OMRS, PO Box 612, Walton on Thames, Surrey, KT12 9FQ. Any queries please telephone 01932 229281 or e-mail: grahamila@googlemail.com.

**5585 Paul Evans** is seeking all WWI medals (singles or groups), Memorial Plaques, named squad photographs (or copies of), postcards, etc to the Welsh Guards. Also seeking Memorial Plaques to Walter Morgan, John Charles Lewis, Walter Edwards, Lewis Watkins, William Thomas and any medals to men from St Clears area, West Wales. Please telephone Paul on 01269 592699 or e-mail: paulevans970@aol.com.

**7774 Stephen Fisher** is looking for the Canada General Service Medal 1866-1870 to the following: 693, Bugler J Connolly, 25th Regt; 1875, W Glue, 47th Regt (Sold Spink 23 April 2009); 225, C Petty, Rifle Brigade; 3911, F Taylor, RE and 1269, L Gorman, AHC. Please telephone Stephen on 01953 860533 or e-mail: norfolkcider@mail.com.

**7933 Martin Shoebottom** is seeking the whereabouts of his Grandfather's medals to reunite with his Sudan medals and MSM:

WWI Trio to 2418, Sgt G.W. Shoebottom, Royal Warwickshire Regiment.

Six clasp QSA to 4263, Sgt G.W. Shoebottom, Royal Warwickshire Regiment.

He is also seeking the Egypt, clasp 'TEL-EL-KEBIR' and Khedives Star to his grandfather-in-law, 1697, V.T. Hebditch, 2 Yorks and Lancs Regiment.

Martin is also seeking the whereabouts of the medals to the following Somme casualties:

KW/640, Able Seaman J.D. Longmore, RNVR.

1961, Pte I. MacLaren, Royal Highland Regiment.

Please e-mail: martin.shoebottom@btinternet.com.

**5131 Peter Sheen** wishes to establish whether the following Canada General Service Medals 1866-70 to Royal Navy personnel have survived: Able Seaman William James Babb (medal roll indicates he was entitled to 3 clasps - 'FENIAN RAID 1866', 'FENIAN RAID 1870' and 'RED RIVER 1870,' but photograph of the recipient in later life exists showing him wearing a 2 clasp medal only); Able Seaman John Thomas Smith (medal roll again records as a 3 clasp medal). Please telephone Peter on +353 1 6708295 or e-mail him: petesheen@gmail.com.

**4716 James Young** is seeking the 1914/15 Star to 2093, Pte J Connor, City of London Yeomanry. Also, does any member know of the whereabouts and the accessibility for the Central Index of the 1939/45 Defence Medal? Please e-mail James: jamescaruthyoung@yahoo.com.

**4302 Paul Horsfield** wishes to locate any of the following:

Alfred Flowers or Flower - Memorial Plaque

2036?, AB C Fuller, RN - QSA, clasp 'NATAL'

Lt Col L H Kirkness - Victory Medal

2/Lieut A M Ludovici - Victory Medal

21959, Dvr G Smith, RFA - 1914/15 Star Trio

5544, W Tulloch, R Highrs - QSA and KSA (sold at DNW in 2000)

4391561, Sgt J A Warcup, AAC - "Replacement" BEM

Lieut D Bluett, HAC - WWI Group

Pere Bugge, Norwegian Air Force - WW2 Group

Military Cross (GVI) dated 1943.

If you can help please e-mail Paul: pjh453@btinternet.com.

## OMRS North 2018

It is with great regret that, due to the low number of bookings from dealers and collectors, OMRS North 2018 was not considered to be viable and therefore the OMRS Northern Branch has decided to cancel it. It is hoped that the event will be resurrected at some time in the future.

**OMRS Northern Branch**

## Lost or stolen medals

**OMRS member's personal, distinctive medals reported lost in December 2015:** South Atlantic Medal with rosette (on the *Uganda*) and Merchant Navy Medal (first type) named Martyn P. Coombes. Lost property report number 24862. Contact: Cheltenham Police.

**Stolen in a burglary in Ballymena in October 2017:** A Royal Irish Constabulary Medal named to Head Constable James McKeown was among a number of items taken in this burglary. If you have any knowledge of the whereabouts of this medal please contact Ballymena Police Station. Crime number: 694 11/1017. Investigating officer Detective Constable Ross Olphert, email: [ross.olphert@psni.pnn.police.uk](mailto:ross.olphert@psni.pnn.police.uk).

**Stolen in Streatham, London on 17 November 2017:** The following 11 medals awarded to Alan Marshall have been stolen: GSM 'NORTHERN IRELAND', UNTAC, NATO Bosnia, NATO Kosovo, OSM Sierra Leone 2000-02, OSM Operation Afghanistan, Iraq Medal with clasp, Golden Jubilee Medal, Diamond Jubilee Medal, ACSM (three years) with Bar and ACSM (two years). Alan Marshall's units were R. Irish and then Int Corps (Iraq and Afghanistan onwards). If anyone offers you these medals, or you have any knowledge of their whereabouts, please contact the Metropolitan Police, Crime number CAD 7826/17 Nov 17 or 1234491-17. Alternatively, contact Alan Marshall direct on 07882 590243.

**Stolen from Miserden Park, Stroud, Gloucestershire on the night of 24 November 2017:** A frame containing the medals awarded to Captain M.D.H. Wills, MC, Grenadier Guards together with a small portrait. The medals concerned are: Military Cross, General Service Medal 1918-62 clasp 'PALESTINE', 1939-45 Star, Africa Star with bar, Defence Medal and War Medal 1939-45 with MiD (oak leaf). Contact Pc Sophie Kerry email: [Sophie.Kerry@gloucestershire.pnn.police.uk](mailto:Sophie.Kerry@gloucestershire.pnn.police.uk). Crime reference number: CR/033650/17.

**Stolen in a burglary in Everton, Hampshire in October 2014:** British War and Victory medals to 3/5518 PTE D. Montgomery CAM. H (Donald Montgomery, born Garrabost, Stornoway, Ross-shire. Died F&F 26/1/17 and is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial). Contact: Steve Law, Great War Medals, 0208 482 1918.

**Stolen in a burglary in Woking, Surrey on the weekend of 9/10 December 2017:** 1914-15 Star named to 1477 Pte P. Watt, KOSB; British War and Victory medals named to 1477 A/Cpl P. Watt, KOSB. Peter Watt drowned on 16 January 1917 in Salonika serving with the 1/5 Bn KOSB. The medals were stolen from the home of his great-nephew (together with his late wife's jewellery). Contact: Surrey Police: crime reference number: 45/17/0137371.

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## Wg Cdr Reg Reynolds, DSO\*, DFC\*: he forced Goering off-air for an hour

Wing Commander Reg Reynolds, one of the RAF's finest low-level daylight attack pilots, decorated four times for gallantry, died in November 2017 at the age of 98.

Reynolds joined the RAF in 1937 on a short service commission. He flew Hampden bombers during the 'Phoney War' in the summer of 1940 and was awarded the DFC after 30 operations (*London Gazette*, 13 September 1940).

In late 1942 he converted to the new Mosquito fighter bomber and was posted to No 105 Squadron, where he teamed up with Pilot Officer Ted Sismore who was to be his navigator for most of the next 20 months.

On 30 January 1943, he led three Mosquitos in an attack on Berlin timed to disrupt a rally to be addressed by Goering and broadcast at 11am. At the precise moment, bomb explosions were heard on the radio and Goering's oration was delayed by an hour, to the Reichsmarschall's

considerable rage. Reynolds was awarded the DSO and Sismore the DFC (*LG*, 16 February 1943).

Their next 'spectacular' was an attack on the glass and optical works at Jena, near Leipzig, on 27 May, the longest low-level daylight bombing raid into Germany at the time. Reynolds was awarded a Bar to his DSO and Sismore a DSO (*LG*, 18 June 1943). Promoted wing commander, Reynolds continued to fly on operations, and on 31 October 1944, with Sismore again, he led 24 Mosquitos in a low-level raid on the local Gestapo headquarters at Aarhus University in Denmark during which the head of the local SS was killed. Both men were awarded a Bar to their DFCs (*LG*, 15 December 1944), making Reynolds one of only 30 recipients of two DSOs and two DFCs.

Reynolds left the RAF in January 1946 and continued to fly with various commercial operators until 1983, by which time he had 22,000 flying hours.



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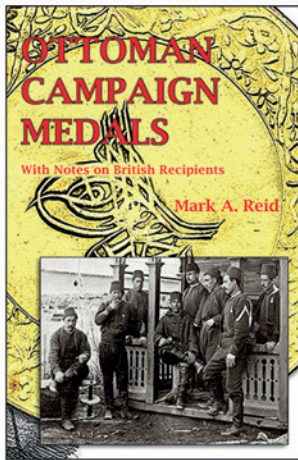


# NEW OMRS PUBLICATIONS

## OTTOMAN CAMPAIGN MEDALS

*With Notes on British Recipients*

by Mark A. Reid



As the once-mighty Ottoman Empire declined during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the British Empire was growing ever stronger. Although their respective fortunes were changing, these two imperial powers became allies on a number of occasions, particularly against the increasingly assertive Russians. Because of this British soldiers and sailors received a variety of Ottoman campaign awards, most commonly the Turkish Crimea Medal. In this excellent, concise, yet detailed book, Mark A. Reid examines the campaign medals awarded by the Ottoman Empire from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century until the First World War. Reid's book lists known British recipients of some of the medals, gives precise measurements and details of all the awards and has a useful section for collectors on where they can be found and how to spot fakes and reproductions. It has numerous illustrations of the medals, the campaigns for which they were awarded and of the men who received them.

Published March 2018, 155x234mm, soft bound with colour cover, 80 pages, numerous colour and black and white illustrations, ISBN 978-0-

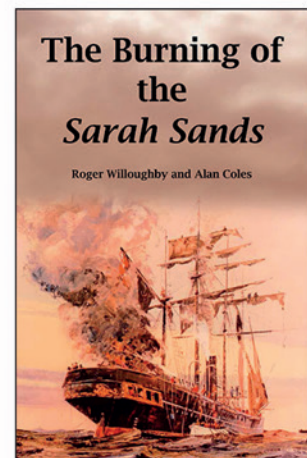
9957505-2-4. This limited edition is priced at £5.00 to members (restricted to one copy each) and £7.00 to non-members, plus post and packing (UK - £2.10, Europe - £6.70, rest of world - £9.50).

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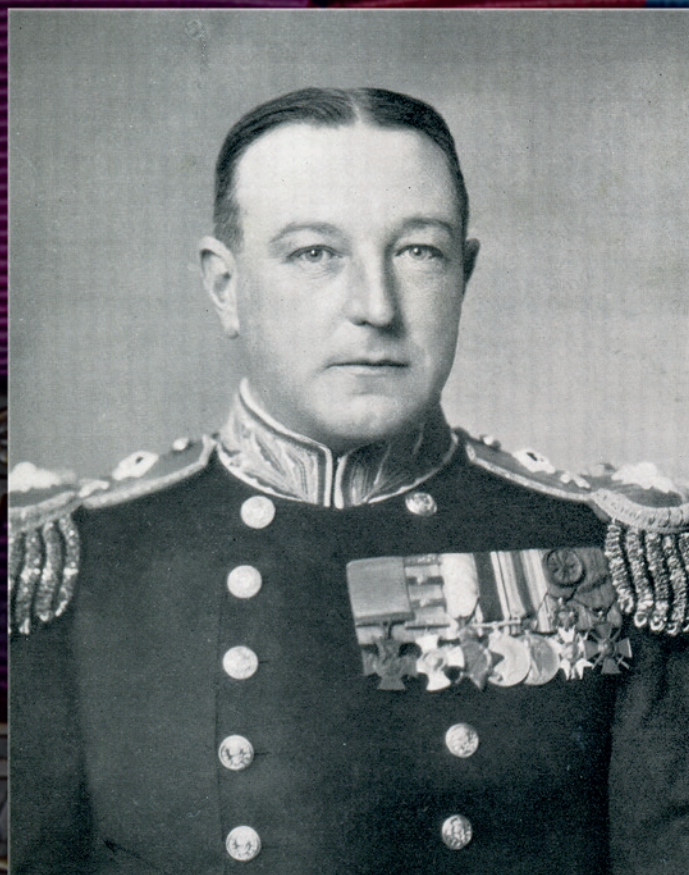
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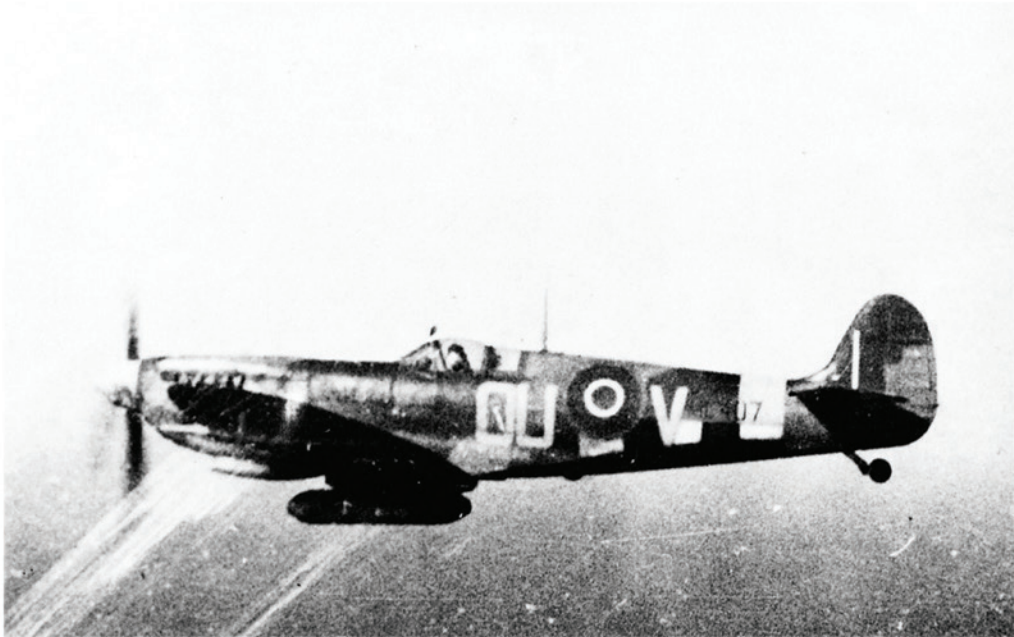


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