

Birmingham Medal Society Meeting Thursday 1 February 2018

16 members present and 3 guests, (9 of whom sat down for meal before the meeting, 2 with drinks only, 1 staying overnight at the hotel).

The President opened the meeting, thanking all for attending and welcomed our three visitors: Jim Carver, Christopher Mellow-Hill and Brian Benbow.

Apologies being received from Andrew Bostock, Chris Burns, Martin Harrison, Roy Painter, Mark Platt, John Scott and Jeff Taylor.

Functions and Visits – It was announced that Bill Traynor, a past BMS President and long serving member had recently passed away. The details of his funeral on 27 February have since been circulated to all members – see his obituary in our website.

Library – Dave Seenev has kindly donated nine School Registers containing much useful information on individuals circa WW1 to the BMS Library. The Members present were reminded that if they wished to borrow a book from the BMS Library that they should contact John Scott direct.

Committee Points – none it being noted that the AGM would be held on the 5 April when the new President would be inaugurated, followed by John Scott's talk on the 100th Anniversary of the Royal Air Force. Digital images of the inauguration would be sent to Martin Harrison for inclusion in the website, subject to their being an iPhone in the room that night.

The President then outlined the subject of the Meeting – 'Recent Acquisitions and Small Talks' reminding members to complete a slip or provide sufficient details by way of a short written précis ideally at the commencement of the meeting which would make the job of constructing the meeting report that much easier.

Ken Weston commenced with a 14-15 Trio to 11/989 Tpr E.S. Doddington, Wellington Mounted Rifles NZEF for Egypt/Palestine with no record of service for Gallipoli. During the course of the evening Ken showed two further groups with Naval General Service Medals clasp Persian Gulf – one group being to a Paymaster who served on HMS Sphinx which was Paddle Steamer, launched in 1882 and sold in 1919 – images of which can be found in the web.

Mick Atkinson very enthusiastically gave a splendid power point presentation on his latest acquisition a Waterloo Medal to a man buried 2 minutes away at St Bartholomew's Church Tardebigge who is the subject of a painting by Sir Francis Grant. . Captain William Emmott who captured the Chartist Leader Rev. Arthur G.O. Neill. Emmott was born in 1790, and having enlisted in the Royal Horse Guards in 1810, served through the Peninsula War, being present at the battles of Vittoria, the Pyrenees, Toulouse and Waterloo. He became Quartermaster of his Regiment and eventually retired on half pay. Emmott was made Adjutant of the Worcestershire Yeomanry Cavalry in 1831. He died in April 1865 - his funeral was a very grand occasion and was attended by the Lord Lieutenant, The Bromsgrove and Redditch Rifle Volunteers, and 450 men of the Worcestershire Yeomanry Cavalry, with their Band, under the command of Lord Dudley. Emmott was the subject of a fairly large painting of him on horseback which appears on page 73 of The Yeomanry Cavalry of Worcestershire 1794-1913 by QL. The precise whereabouts of this painting is not known.

Tony Sturges produced a well researched IGS Medal clasp Sikkim to Captain William Cecil Welsh Rawlinson with supporting photo who was ADC to Sir Stewart Bayley C.I.E.

Philip Wilson mentioned that he recalled book reviewing 'A Dangerous Game – British Colonial Warfare 1854-1895 by Parritt and Waibel for the OMRS. The 4 volume set of this book provides a fairly comprehensive summary of the circumstances which led to the award of the clasps on the IGS Medal for that period. Volume 3 includes the Sikkim campaign in some detail. On page 31 can be found the incident which Philip graphically described when Lieutenant W.I. Ryder and his patrol of 2/1st Gurkas which had been ordered to capture a prisoner lay out in the open near an enemy sangar; when their bugler had a coughing fit, turning the bugle mouth piece upside down into the ground he coughed violently into the wide end – Ryder recounts that fortunately the enemy did not hear this. Philip has Lieut. Colonel W.I. Ryder's medal group (IGS 1854: Sikkim, IGS 1895, clasps Tirah, Malakand and Punjab Frontier, QSA: Cape Colony, BWM & VM.) plus supporting documentation. The action at Shahi Tanga on 16 September 1897 when Captain Ryder's 35th Sikhs did not

receive the order to retire and had to be rescued by the Guides on foot is well covered in pages 56-57 of 'The Frontier Ablaze' by Michael J. Barthorp; it includes a sketch of the final counter attack in which Winston Churchill was present as they covered the evacuation of 35th Sikhs casualties, drawn by W.B.Wollens on page 60.

Chris Newton provided a detailed description of the action in LCF32 equipped with medium guns at Walcheren on the River Scheldt which resulted in a well deserved DSM for combined operations to a Royal Marine. The LCF was eventually disabled – the court mounted group consisted of DSM, 39-45 Star, Atlantic Star with clasp France & Germany and War Medal, with supporting papers.

Paul Handford produced an exceptionally well researched 1914 Star and bar to John Arthur Platt of the British Red Cross, who was a motor ambulance driver who later saw service with the Royal Air Force as an Air Mechanic.

John Barker – a 4 clasp QSA: CC, OFS SA01 & SA02 to 6861 Pte A Cuthbert Worcester Volunteer Company who qualified for the Worcester Jewel (Bewdley Medal worn as pendant on a watch chain.) There being 4 types of Worcester Imperial Yeomanry Jewel. In May 1900 the 2nd Contingent were in Blockhouses at Brandfort.

Danny Rees produced a pair consisting of a type 2 Korean War Medal with UN Medal explain that out of 6,000 Korean War Medals, in the data base less than 3% are the type 2, with only one being recorded to the KSLI.

David Seeney showed an exceptionally nice group of five French Medals (Foreign Legion) which included a Cross for Military Valour Air Brigade mounted as worn in two rows. The discussion centred as to just whose these might have belonged to given that they were fairly modern and not named.

Danny Rees also showed a heavily polished 1914-15 Trio named from Pte to WO11 with LSGC as Pte and a Corps of Commissionaires Long Service Medal mounted up as one group. One wonders how many tips this guy got on for opening and shutting doors resplendent in his Corps of Commissionaires Uniform.

Danny Rees concluded with a short presentation on a uniform on display belonging to Major the Honourable Frederick Raymond Clegg-Hill who was the brother of the 7th Viscount Hill born Carnarvon 10 August 1919, died 13 April 1945 aged 35; 4th Bn KSLI. Commissioned 12 December 1928, mentioned in dispatches as a Captain 11 February 1941 for Services in the Field Somililand, attached 1st Bn. Northern Rhodesia Regt. Buried Becklington War Cemetery.

Jim Carver produced several very early Africa General Service Medals to natives including a West African Frontier Force DCM with Africa GSM and 14-15 Trio. Also a 1914 Star to a nurse in QAINS with ARRC for Iraq, which was missing the Victory Medal. Unfortunately it was not possible to record the actual details as these medals did not end up on the table at the conclusion of the meeting.

Christopher Mellor-Hill produced a Great War 1917 Albert Medal in Gold for Land awarded to Air Mechanic 1st Class H. V. Robinson, Royal Naval Air Service and Royal Air Force, for gallantry in saving the lives of the crew of airship SSZ 7 following her collision with SSZ 10, just outside of RNAS Polegate, 20 December 1917. Robinson, in company with one other, rescued the pilot and two crewmen from the flames, and returned to the towering inferno to remove her bombload, suffering serious burns in the process.

Robinson's award is 1 of only 3 Albert Medals in Gold awarded to flying personnel during the Great War, with Robinson, himself, being the last surviving recipient of the Albert Medal in Gold – for further details sees DNW Auction 28 Feb /1st March 2018.

https://www.dnw.co.uk/auctions/catalogue/lot.php?auction_id=475&lot_id=4881

Christopher Mellor-Hill also showed two exceptionally interesting original miniature medal groups:

Colonel Edmund Barron HARTLEY
Cape Mounted Riflemen, South African Forces

- Victoria Cross
- Companion, Order of St Michael & St George (CMG)
- Knight of Grace, Order of St John of Jerusalem (KStJ)
- South Africa Medal (1877-79)

- 1 clasp:
- "1877-8-9"
- Cape of Good Hope General Service Medal (1880-97)
 - 3 clasps:
 - "Bechuanaland" - "Basutoland" - "Transkei"
- Queen's South Africa Medal (1899-1902)
 - 3 clasps:
 - "Cape Colony" - "Transvaal" - "Wittebergen"
- King's South Africa Medal (1901-02)
 - 2 clasps:
 - "South Africa 1901" - "South Africa 1902"

When war broke out in 1877 he volunteered for service, being appointed Surgeon of the Frontier Armed Mounted Police which later became the Cape Mounted Rifles. His VC is for the unsuccessful attack on Moirosi's Mountains in Basutoland on 3rd June 1879 when he rescued a severely wounded man and returned in order to dress the wounds of other men of the storming party. For further details see the booklet 'The Medical Victoria Crosses.'

The second group of miniatures was to the Royal Marines and included an early CGM, DSM and was a long runner– the name of the recipient was not mentioned.

The President thanked all very attending and for their excellent contributions which had generated much discussion. The next meeting would be Paul Handford's talk 'On the Lines of Communication' on 1 March 2018.

Philip Wilson, President BMS.

2 March 2018

A selection of medals showed at this evenings meeting.





DSM group to a RM for Walcheren

