

## Meeting notes BMS at Bromsgrove 2.6.22

**'From Russia with Thanks'**. By Martin Harrison. President Paul Handford welcomed Martin to give his talk.

Martin began by explaining he collected double/treble Long Service groups, but out of this had evolved a number of sub-themes, one of which are Police Officers awarded the Silver Jubilee Medal 1977 ['SJM'].

The group awarded to Special Chief Inspector John Henry Lloyd had been acquired from the DNW online auction in March 2020 and of interest mainly because of the Special Constabulary Long Service Medal ['SCLSM'] with two long service clasps 1969 and 1979 plus the SJM 77 and a good quality picture of John wearing the medals.



**Photos above:** Medals and picture of the recipient John Henry Lloyd.

With the group came much paperwork enabling a biography to be pieced together and confirmation of the award of USSR 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Great Patriotic War Medal. The lot demonstrated the importance of keeping documents together with medals.

### **John Henry Lloyd:**

He was born Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> July, 1920 in Garibaldi Street, Everton, Liverpool, the eldest of 7 children of John, a builder's labourer and Margaret.

After school, he became a painter and decorator. Sadly, he had a bad stammer something which struggled to overcome most of life. During WWII on 3 May 40 and aged 21, he joined the Royal Navy [RN] enlisting on 8th January, 1941 at Devonport as an Assistant Cook. He was described as 5'7½" tall, 33½" chest, brown hair, blue eyes and fresh complexion.

His initial training was in HMS Royal Arthur - a shore training establishment, based at requisitioned Butlin's Holiday Camp at Ingoldmells near Skegness, until 2nd June when he passed out. The next day, at St Mary's High Church, Walton, he married Doreen Leah Mapstone. Two days later on 5<sup>th</sup> June, he was posted to HMS Drake, another shore establishment based at Devonport, and that was the last Doreen saw of him for two years.

## H.M.S. DUKE OF YORK



He was promoted to Cook on 8th January, 1942 and on 20th March, was posted to HMS Duke of York, a King George V class battleship. This ship was laid down in May 1937, constructed by John Brown and Company at Clydebank, Scotland and commissioned into the RN on 4th November, 1941 shortly before John's posting. In December 1941, HMS Duke of York transported the Prime Minister Winston Churchill to the United States to meet President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Between March and September, 1942, Duke of York, with John onboard, took part in the arduous Arctic Convoy duties in the Norwegian Sea and Arctic Ocean and in June 1942, was the flagship of the Heavy Covering Force of Convoy PQ-17 – the '**Convoy to Hell**'. PQ17 was shadowed and continuously attacked by the Germans whilst sailing from Hvalfjord, Iceland to Arkhangelsk in the USSR. The ships were dispersed at times leaving the convoys unprotected. This action was a defining moment of WW2 and in Churchill's view encouraged a more careful approach to fleet movements in the future. He described it "*one of the most melancholy naval episodes in the whole of the war.*"



In October 1942, the Duke of York also saw service in Operation Torch, the Allied North Africa landings with the role of protecting accompanying aircraft carriers. John, promoted to Leading Chef in February, 1943, was posted back to HMS Drake in April, 1943 spending rest of war there and also in HMS Eaglet [both were shore establishments]. He was discharged from the RN as unfit for service on 7th April, 1944 due to medical reasons. His character was described as very good and his efficiency as satisfactory.



For his war service awarded the 1939-45, Atlantic Star, Africa Star with 'North Africa 1942-43' clasp and the 1939-45 War Medal. Doreen later recalled that when home on leave during 1943, he rescued a lady in Breeze Road, Walton, when a bomb had fallen on her house. After the war, they had 2 children David and Peter. He returned to painting and decorating working 'Liverpool Corporation'. He became renowned for climbing 60' ladders lashed together with rope - showing no fear! His fearlessness becoming a trademark!

He also became a bouncer working in local ballrooms, but missing uniformed service, he applied to join the Police but was too short and by the time the height limit was dropped, he was too old. In 1949, he applied to join the Territorial Army but being declined this time due to poor medical history.

In 1960, he passed driving test aged 40, bought Hillman Minx and became an Insurance Agent for the 'Co-op' collecting premiums house to house in Kirby. There followed numerous jobs repossessing furniture, clothes and TV rental sets with a 'mate' in a van – fearless. Finally in the 1970s, he became security patrolman for Merseyside Council.

John was accepted in October 1950 as a Special Constable [SC] in the Liverpool City Police Special Constabulary collar number S.52E. Liverpool was renowned as not an easy area to police but John took in stride with usual lack of fear. He had a very successful career with the Specials later becoming the first mobile Special in the area 'Mobile 1'.



In 1959 he qualified for SCLSM and in 1964, was commended for '*alertness and zeal*' in chasing and arresting a drunken driver following a 55mph chase. In December same year, he received a commendation for *bravery* from the Chief Constable. For breaking up a fight in Bootle involving 50 youths, one was armed with a knife and threatening another who had a studded belt, John arrested them both. At Court, he was also commended by the Magistrate for his prompt action in averting what could have been a more serious offence.

The youths pleaded not guilty but were found to be guilty and fined £2.00 each.

In January 1967, he was promoted to Special Sergeant. Later same year Liverpool City Police merged with Bootle Borough Police to form Liverpool and Bootle Constabulary and in October 1969, he was awarded the 1<sup>st</sup> clasp to LSGC.

In 1970, he was commended a third time for catching youth breaking into a shop in Broadway, this offender had already burgled 9 other shops in area! On 1st June, 1970, he was promoted to Special Inspector and on 7<sup>th</sup> March, 1972, further promoted to Special Chief Inspector and Divisional Commander of 'B' Division in the city.

Under John's command, the division won the 'Tushingham Trophy' [for the best attendance record during a year in Merseyside] seven years in a row 1973-1980.

During 1974, the Force amalgamated again under Local Government Act 1972, with parts of Lancashire and Cheshire Constabulary to form Merseyside Police, which is still in existence today.



In 1977, John was stationed at Walton Lane Police Station and at a surprise presentation held at Police HQ, was awarded the Silver Jubilee Medal 1977 as Special Chief Inspector for his services to the Special Constabulary. Two years later received 2<sup>nd</sup> clasp to SCLSM

medal dated 1979 which was presented by the High Sheriff of Merseyside. It was noted that John was the only SC to have received a commendation from a Chief Constable of an outside force.

John retired from Specials in July 1980, aged 60, after 30 years' service, as the longest serving Special on the force and sadly with continuing poor health. On retirement he said, *"The work can be exacting, particularly if you have to begin a day at five or six in the morning, or when you're working over-time on your other job"*.

According to son Peter, John didn't hand in his Warrant Card following retirement. If he disliked someone's driving, he would race after them and give them 'words of advice'!

In January 1988, John was awarded the *Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, commemorative medal for the 40th Anniversary of Victory in the Great Patriotic War 1945-85* For service in the Duke of York on the Arctic Convoys. The medal was awarded to him the Russian Embassy in London.

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**FROM Russia with thanks:**  
That's a medal just received by former naval cook John Lloyd more than 40 years after his service on the wartime suicide shipping convoys from Britain to northern Russia.

**Soviet 'gong' opens past**

The Russians have honoured the 67-year-old former Leading Cook from Walton "in recognition of our common struggle against Fascism during the last war."

After receiving the medal from the Russian Embassy in London, John, who now lives in Moss Delph Lane, Aughton, Ormskirk, said: "The medal brings a lot of memories back.

"It means a lot to me because many people were lost on the convoys, both naval lives and merchant seamen."

John, who served in HMS Duke of York, added: "The supplies of machines, food, guns and ammunition were life-saving for the Russians".

John's wife, Doreen, recalls: "We were married on a Tuesday, and John was away by the Thursday for two years on the Russian convoys.

"Then when he came home on leave he rescued a woman in Breeze Road, Walton, when a bomb fell on her house".

After the war John became a special constable, serving for 30 years and receiving the Queen's Silver Jubilee medal in 1977.

"It's good to see the Russians recognise what we did to help them," said John. "A gesture such as this takes a bit of the cold out of the cold war."



**The medal that brings back memories: John Lloyd and his wife, Doreen**

John commented of the award *"It's good to see the Russians recognise what we did to help them. A gesture like this takes a bit of the cold out of the cold war"*.

In later life, he attended all local remembrance parades with his son and he and Doreen moved into a care home in Ormskirk. Sadly, both John and Doreen suffered from dementia. Life became very difficult for the family as John became particularly argumentative in his later years.

Sadly, John passed away in Ormskirk District General Hospital on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2003 aged 82 after a stroke. His funeral was held at Ormskirk Parish Church with police cap on coffin. He was buried at Kirkdale Cemetery wearing police tunic. Doreen lived another year and passed away in July 2004 also in Ormskirk.

John was described by his son Peter as *“An often-difficult person to get on with, who loved a fight of any description, but one with confidence, courage and a will to succeed, despite some demons in his life he had to overcome”*.

Martin then managed to contact Peter Lloyd, John’s son via facebook and Peter kindly agreed to help with research. It was now that Martin revealed Peter Lloyd was present watching the presentation on zoom – a great honour to have John’s son present – a round of applause was given.

As a result, much further detail was provided to expand John’s biography and **he was posthumously awarded the Arctic Star and Emblem** by the Ministry of Defence Medal Office in 2020.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2020, Martin visited Liverpool and John’s grave in Kirkdale Cemetery and met Peter. Presenting him with a framed set of miniature medals of his father’s. [See photos below].





**Photo above:** Full medal group to J.H.Lloyd [details in text].

This, however, was still not the end! Martin found the Liverpool City Police Web Site with the detail on it giving the names of all ten Specials to have been awarded the SJM 77, included on the list was John and SCI Frank Lamber Wilson, whose medals appeared on Norman W Collett's web site in January 2021! These too were immediately acquired.



**Photo above:** Medal group of SCI F.L. Wilson.

Martin then showed a Pathe news video of the breaking up of HMS Duke of York.



President Paul Handford thanked our speaker for an excellent and well researched talk – another case of ‘PRO’ – Purchase, Research and Outcome!!

**Post talk discussion and medals shown;**

Also discussed was the ‘Ushakov’ medal which was a Russian medal issued to surviving convoy participants. This was another retrospective medal issue in common with the Arctic Star and Arctic Emblem. [Lloyd was not entitled to this medal]. The Russian awards for Convoy Service were notably issued much earlier than the British Arctic Star and Emblem [which was issued retrospectively from 2013].

Also, there are further Russian Anniversary medals reflecting the 50<sup>th</sup>, 65<sup>th</sup>, 65<sup>th</sup> and 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversaries of the ending of WWII.

Alistair Maclean’s novel ‘HMS Ulysses’ reflected on the appalling conditions for those involved in the Arctic convoy duty. Maclean’s brother had served in them.

Also discussed was the use of ‘dazzle’ paint to assist camouflaging vessels seeking refuge amongst icebergs or snowy backgrounds.

A British War Medal ['BWM'] to 93952 Sergeant Douglas Marshall of the Royal Engineers ['RE'] was shown. Marshall was a carpenter by trade and had enlisted in the RE in 1915. He had briefly been part of the Russian Expeditionary Force in late 1918. Several years later, further research on the 'Ancestry' site revealed that he was awarded the silver medal [on the ribbon of St Anne] of 'Russian Medal of Zeal' but it is not known if it was ever received nor for which actions it had been awarded. Marshall's award is listed in the book 'White Russian Awards'. The award was announced in the confidential London Gazette of 16<sup>th</sup> July, 1921.



**Photos above:** BWM Obverse and naming of BWM to 93952 Sjt D. Marshall.[Also entitled to the Victory Medal].

It was noted that there would have been 'political' issues with these awards and whether they were issued in that such service was for 'White' Russia, the defeated side. Sometimes, Russian awards can be numbered. The example of Sergeant Marshall was another case of a fascinating story behind a simple medal.

The final two medal groups shown were from the Crimean War. Each recipient had received their Crimea medals from Queen Victoria at Horse Guards on the occasion of the first presentation of campaign medals to her soldiers and sailors on 18<sup>th</sup> May, 1855.

The trio of awards to Corporal William Clark 11th Hussars were shown – Lummis' book [book 'Honour the Light Brigade' by Canon Lummis] states that Clark was not entitled to the clasp 'Balaklava' and, therefore, did not ride in the charge but simple research at the Public Records Office, in fact, confirmed he did have the clasp 'Balaklava' and went on to have an exemplary military service being later awarded the Meritorious Service Medal ['MSM']. There is no *written* evidence to say he was *not* in the Charge of the Light but most likely was.



**Photo above:** Crimea trio of medals to Corporal W. Clark 11<sup>th</sup> Hussars. Left to right: Crimea medal with three clasps 'Alma', 'Balaklava' and 'Sebastopol', Turkish Crimea medal [Sardinian issue] and MSM Obverses shown.



**Photo above:** Corporal W.Clark Crimea medal showing engraved naming.

The final group was an officially impressed [in small block capitals] Crimea Medal to Private Robert Hunter 2<sup>nd</sup> Dragoons a charger in the Heavy Brigade.



**Photo above left:** Crimea medal 3 clasps 'Balaklava', 'Inkerman' and 'Sebastopol' and Turkish Crimea to Private Robert Hunter 2<sup>nd</sup> Dragoons [obverse].

**Photo above right:** Reverses of the medal pair to Robert Hunter.



**Photo above:** Naming of Robert Hunter's Crimea medal in small block capitals [My apologies for picture quality].

President again thanked all for their contributions to some interesting debate! Yet more 'PRO' had been demonstrated tonight! 'Purchase, Research Outcome'!!

Chris Davies

BMS Secretary.

Typed 7.6.22-17.6.22

My thanks again to Martin Harrison for the summary of his talk which forms the bulk of the minutes and my apologies for any typos or other errors. All photographs and materials are reproduced with permission.