

Zoom meeting minutes from 19.9.2020

Greetings BMS Members!

We've just had our second Zoom meeting.

Various informal apologies received [thanks] the most unusual being Dave W who was going to witness the firing up of a 1950's Rolls Royce 'Artouste' jet engine somewhere in North Worcestershire – so if you saw a strange celestial body circling Kidderminster last Saturday, it probably was a UFO and not Dave attached to the said jet... These photos are on the BMS Whatsapp group page but for those not in that group... ta-daa!



Items discussed:

**Gunner
Charles Newton Woodroffe
Royal Artillery and Royal Observer Corps**



Charles Newton Woodroffe was born in the United States of America in August 1921. Son of Vincent Bridge and Beatrice. Vincent was himself a veteran of the Great War, serving in the Labour Corps and receiving the Silver War Badge. Vincent seems to have travelled to the US some time after the War, becoming a farmer and marrying Beatrice.

Charles had two siblings, Frank E born in 1918 also in the US and Mary L 1925.

Charles aged 8 months, travelled from New York to the United Kingdom with his family aboard the Steamship Adriatic, part of the Whit Star Line arriving in Liverpool on 17th April 1922 and resided at High Street, Tideswell, Derby.

On 31st March 1939 aged 18, Charles enlisted into the Royal Engineers Territorial Army with service number 2082079 as a Gunner. The family were shown as living in Buxton, Derbyshire and Vincent now worked in a limestone quarry. Charles was called up at the outbreak of World War II and was transferred into the Royal Artillery on 26th November 1940.

During the second quarter of 1942 Charles married Jessie Smith in Scunthorpe and subsequently served in the 149 Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment from 25th August 1943 and later the 127 Field Regiment. He was involved in the D-Day landings seeing active service in France and Holland and released into the Z Class reserve on 25th July 1946.

For his war service he was awarded the 1939-45 Star, France and Germany Star, Defence Medal and War Medal 1939-45. In January 1946, Army Order 20/46 Charles was also awarded the Efficiency Medal 'Territorial'.

Only 12 months after his demobilisation Charles joined the Royal Observer Corps, No 8 Group whose Group Headquarters at the time were based in Leeds and from late 1953 in Coventry. He served for 12 years as Observer and in Air Ministry Order N464 – 8th July 1959 was awarded the Royal Observer Corps Medal, and 12 years later in 1971 having been promoted to Chief Observer, the first clasp to the medal totalling 24 years' service.

Charles continued living in Buxton, at Hall Bank Cottage, Hartington and died on 1st October 1993 aged 72.

Corporal
R G Baxter
Suffolk Regiment and Army Catering Corps



R G Baxter enlisted into the 1st Battalion Suffolk Regiment in about 1944 as a Private with service number 14460056. Following the end of World War II, he was awarded the War Medal 1939-45.

He then saw service in Palestine and later Malaya, being awarded the General Service Medal with clasps 'Palestine 1945-48' on 22nd September 1952 and appearing in Army Order 146 of 1947. He also subsequently received the clasp 'Malaya'

In about 1967 he re-enlisted into the Army Catering Corps Territorial Army, with a new service number 24029569. He was promoted to Corporal and received the Efficiency Medal 'T&AVR' in Army order 119 of 1979.

No other details are currently known about R G Baxter.

Next up were a pair comprising the Special Constabulary Long Service medal [Geo V with crowned head] and a City of Glasgow Special Constabulary medal in 'acknowledgment for services rendered' and named to Inspector Peter H. Gow. The City of Glasgow medal is quite a small medal – diameter 26mm approximately – it is not issued with a ribbon but has a clasp suspender for uniform wear.



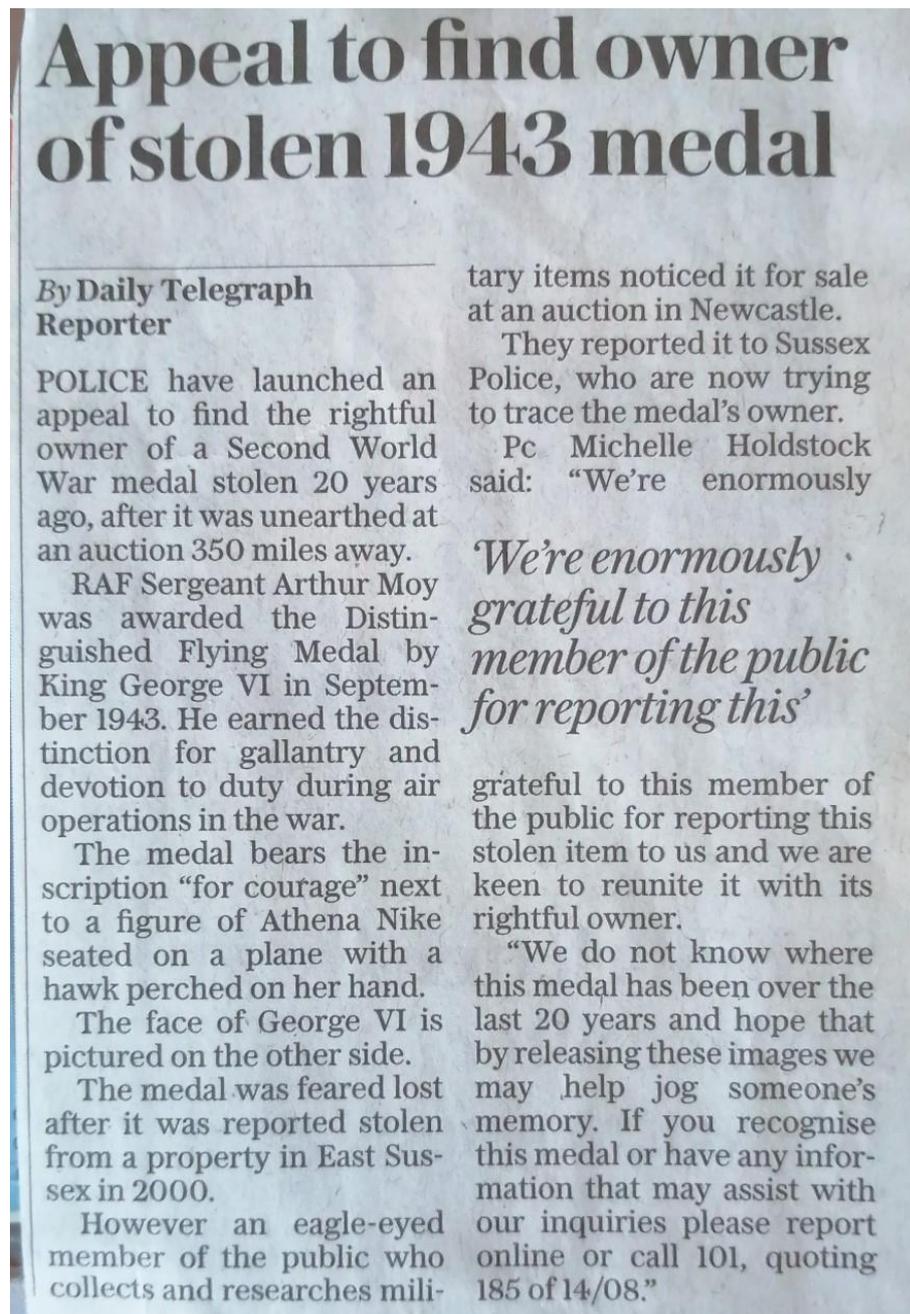
Above: Special Constabulary Long Service Medal and City of Glasgow Special Constabulary Medal

The final item was a piece of militaria in the form of a French WWI shell case for a 75mm gun. This famous piece of late 19th/early 20th century weaponry was respected and renowned for its quick rate of fire, ingenious recoil system [up to thirty rounds per minute were possible] and even had a cocktail named after it – the 'Soixante Quinze' - said to 'feel like what being shelled by a 75'. So here's the recipe for BMS purists - 30ml gin, 2 dashes simple syrup, 15ml lemon juice and 60ml champagne – Instructions: add the first three items to your cocktail shaker with ice – strain into a champagne flute and then add your champagne!



Left: 75mm shell case and cocktail ingredients.

Also discussed: a BMS member involvement in solving a missing DFM case [reported stolen in 2000 see newspaper clip 'The Daily Telegraph' on the next page], Silver Jubilee Medal 1977 issued in much smaller numbers [30k] compared with Gold and Diamond Jubilee Medals [about 400k issued] and a Royal Marine Double MID recipient [the relative of a member] whose miniatures appeared on the market in 2018 unknown to the family – The purchaser also a BMF member in Canada [!] sent a chance email enquiry to the 'Ancestry' site where the recipient's photos and other extensive detail had only recently been added because of Covid Lockdown....



Above: Newspaper clip from 'The Daily Telegraph' referred to in the previous paragraph.

Your secretary advises don't mix your '75' in or drink it from a shell case...

Santé!!

Chris Davies

BMS Secretary. Typed 24.9.20

My thanks to the 'ZOOM' participants for allowing the recording of the meeting, to Dave Seeney for sending me the recording and Martin Harrison for reproduction of his research files and medal photos.