

Minutes of BMS meeting 7.2.2019.

1. Welcome to all by Roger Bragger. The first item was to hold a minute's silence in respect of the passing of longstanding BMS member Jeff Taylor who'd died in January, 2019.
2. Apologies received: J. Barker, A. Bostock, C. Burns, J Carver, M. Platt, D. Rees and P Wilson.
3. Stats: Meal 7, Drink 10 and ONS 1.
4. No new members.
5. Library requests/Research questions. No library requests. Roger Bragger produced a copy of a medal/medallion bearing a German inscription – No members were able to tell Roger of the translation of the inscription or identify the medal.
6. Functions/Visits: At St Barnabus church in Erdington 11.2.19, there would be an evening talk about the Castle Bromwich airfield.
7. Committee points: Congratulations to Danny and Catherine Rees on the arrival of new son Tom! Further discussion re the late Jeff Taylor to confirm funeral details and collate possible numbers of attendees. Secretary Chris Davies confirmed his email account had been scammed and **cautioned all re the 'dropbox' fake messages.** Please use my latest email for any communications – [cmarcdavies@outlook.com](mailto:cmarcdavies@outlook.com) .  
Members planning to attend the miniconvention – could members let Martin Harrison know of their intentions to attend – Cash/cheques welcome – Martin will be at the next BMS meeting in March but will then be abroad for several months.
8. Tonight's talk : President Roger Bragger welcomed Martin Harrison to give tonight's talk on 'The crown of England' .
9. Next BMS meeting – 7.3.2019 'On the lines of communication' by Paul Handford.

### 'The Crown of England'

Martin introduced the topic as one he'd prepared and delivered in Thailand to try to explain the nuances of British political and monarchical evolution through hundreds of years – which include one civil war, one bloodless revolution in 1688 and especially now that we have an American Princess!!

The crown has symbolised the authority of the anointed monarch whether King or Queen. In the modern era, it represents a political symbol of authority.

The Saint Edward's crown [named after King Edward the Confessor 1042-1066] is from the 13<sup>th</sup> century. This was used for the crowning of the monarch – the original crown was melted down after the civil war during the Cromwell era but was remade for the coronation of King Charles II – it contains 2.33kg of gold and some 444 stones. King George V was crowned using this crown. There is a further crown known as the 'Imperial State Crown' – this is the crown worn by the monarch for the state opening of parliament.

Martin discussed the sheer number [2901] of and notable stones in this crown which include the 3000 carat Cullinan II presented to King Edward VII by the Transvaal state in 1907 – the Cullinan I diamond, which is the largest cut diamond in the world, is in the head of the monarch's sceptre.

Also in the Imperial state crown are the 'St Edward's' sapphire said to be from King Edward's coronation ring in 1042, pearls from Queen Elizabeth I's pearl earrings and the Black Prince's ruby from the mid 14<sup>th</sup> Century – Martin reflected on the military history aspects of this important jewel which would have been worn at the decisive battles of Agincourt in 1415 [Henry V] and Bosworth field in 1485 [Richard III].

Queen Elizabeth II's reign entered in its sapphire jubilee [65<sup>th</sup>] year in 2017. The Queen is now in her 67<sup>th</sup> year of reign. Martin invited members to name the thirteen Prime Ministers of her reign. Over the same time, there have been some 12 United States presidents, 10 Russian leaders and over 40 Italian Prime Ministers.. The BMS membership did very well naming the leaders but were not asked [fortunately] to name the Italian Prime Ministers..!

### The Crown and Medals:

There was some detailed discussion about the 'tudor' crown as seen on the Coronation medal 1953 and some long service medals. A clarification by Phil McDermott [Worcester Medals] explained that the 'tudor' crown as commonly called, was, in fact, named 'our imperial crown' compared with the Saint Edward's crown as seen on the Silver Jubilee medals or South Atlantic medal.

Some medals have the uncrowned head of Queen Elizabeth II eg the Queen's Korea medal, RAF Long service [still issued with the young uncrowned Queen's head].

The Queen's Diamond Jubilee 2012 medal has the monarch's coinage profile with diademed head.

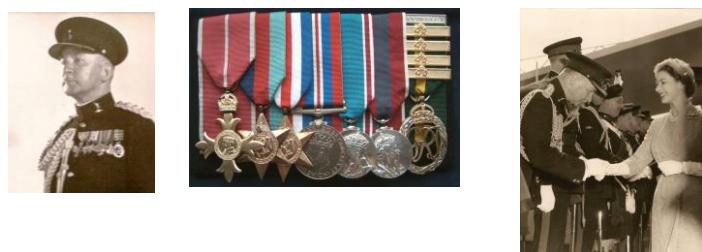
Bars and clasps to certain awards also feature crowns eg bars to the Military Cross and Efficiency decorations.

Specific Medal groups:

First discussed was Aldermann Alfred Baynton OBE. A photo of him meeting Queen Mary was shown . Alfred Baynton died aged 97yrs - some years later than his wife - collector Martin Harrison established that Alfred Baynton's details had never been added to her headstone and was inspired and had them added.



Next up was Colonel Thomas Patrick Edward Murray – a photo of Murray with the young Queen Elizabeth II was shown. His group was unnamed and included a 1939-1945 War medal, no defence medal but had a France and Germany star – A suggestion from D Seeney was that this could be explained by service linked with a resistance group after D-day.



Brigadier Sir Duncan Law Anderson's group featuring a KBE [Knight Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire] was discussed. Anderson oversaw the development and construction of the 'Kariba' dam [now in modern Zimbabwe]. Anderson was photographed with the Queen Mary the Queen Mother at the opening of the dam in 1960.



Next up was 3 clasp Territorial Efficiency medal in an unnamed group which included the Order of St John to Major Cecil Crosthwaite. The clasps were not gazetted and more enquiries confirmed the correct entitlement to one clasp which hadn't, in fact, been claimed... There were photographs of Crosthwaite with Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Charles.



Councillor Major Ralph Clews was the Lord Mayor of Coventry in 1977 – His group consisted of 1939/1945 Star, Defence medal, 1939/1945 War Medal, General Service medal [Bar Palestine 1945-1947], Silver Jubilee medal and Territorial Efficiency medal – Mayor Clowes collected a drink driving conviction. Clews' photograph in 1977 along with Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh was shown.



Finally, Martin explained his good fortune to be present [in a work capacity not a shopper] at the opening by the Queen of the Touchwood Centre in Solihull in 2002 and produced the photographic confirmation!

For the full stories on Martin's medals check his web site at [Martin Harrison Room 405](#)

Ken Weston contributed that, in the Prison Service, it was possible to claim the Golden Jubilee medal of 2002 only after the Prison Service had led a successful appeal.

Dave Seeney produced a Distinguished Conduct Medal [DCM] [EdwVII] Queens South Africa [QSA] pair to Sgt Major Parker of the Warwickshire Regiment. There was no citation for the DCM which was thought to have been issued for a general 'high level of service'. His DCM had been presented to him by King Edward VII. Parker was later to serve in WWI.



Above left: DCM and QSA pair to Sgt Major Parker

Above right : Naming of same pair.

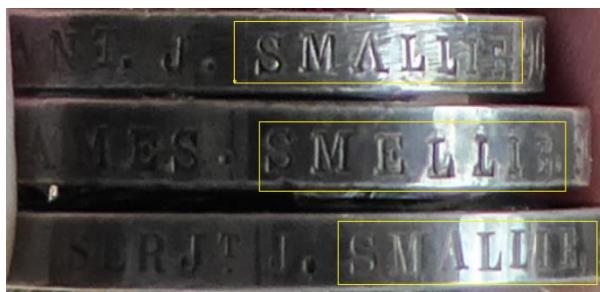
Chris Davies showed a five medal Crimean DCM group to Sgt James Smallie of the 90<sup>th</sup> Light Infantry. He'd previously given a short presentation about 'Smallie' to the BMS in 2016. Smallie had been given the DCM on account of another soldier of the 90<sup>th</sup> LI [Private Nash] being convicted of theft and losing his.



Above left. Obverse Smallie DCM group with left to right DCM, Crimea Medal Bar Sebastopol, Indian Mutiny Medal with bar Defence of Lucknow, Legion d'Honneur 4<sup>th</sup> Class [Reverse missing central gold section] and Turkish Crimea Medal.

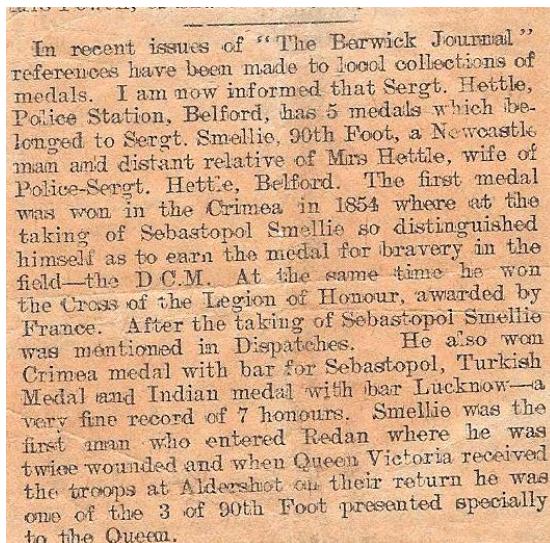
Above right: Reverse of Smallie group.

Smallie's surname was spelt differently on his medals and also similarly variable in contemporary paperwork of this era - the variants being 'Smellie', 'Smaller' and 'Smillie' seen in the London Gazette and the Jesmond Cemetery burial records.



Above: Variances in 'Smallie' naming - DCM [upper] Crimea [middle] and Mutiny [lower].

Sold with the medals was a small newspaper cutting from 'The Berwick Journal' from early 1915 which reported that 'Smallie was one of three soldiers of the 90<sup>th</sup> LI presented to Queen Victoria when the regiment returned to Aldershot'.



Above: Early 1915 'Berwick Journal' cutting reference Sgt Smallie's achievements and mention of special presentation to Queen Victoria [final sentence].

Smallie's health 'began to fail under the progress of a disease contracted amid the privations and endurances of foreign service'. His death certificate records his cause of death in 1862 at age 29 years as 'Phthisis' – This was a name for Tuberculosis.

I'm grateful to Ken Weston for pointing out that this refers to Tuberculosis with a particularly wasting component.

John Scott showed an unnamed [as issued] Royal Victorian Medal [RVM] in a group which included an RAF long service medal. The RVM was awarded 1.1.1971 for service with the Queen's Flight. This medal was originally worn before any campaign medals.



Above left : Obverse RVM, WWII medals and RAF Long Service and Good Conduct.

Above right: Reverse of same group.

Next Phil McDermott showed a Royal Household group [containing amongst others a Royal Household Faithful Service Medal – ‘RHFSM’] awarded to Mr Humphrey known as ‘Humphrey at the wheel’ who was George V’s chauffeur. After the death of King George V, he became the personal chauffeur of Queen Mary the Queen Mother. The RHFSM is named and the length of service is indicated in his case 1908-1928.



Above: Mr Humphrey's medal group with Royal Household Faithful Service Medal on the far left

Finally, Mick Atkinson informed the group that he had ‘presented’ an Iraq medal which is now in the Queen’s collection – the medal which was his design – has edging inscription indicating that it was ‘presented to the Queen by Major Mick Atkinson’.

President Roger Bragger thanked Martin Harrison for his talk and thanked all others for their contributions to an excellent evening.