

Minutes of BMS meeting 4.7.2019:

1. Welcome by President Roger Bragger. Guest R.Pugh.
2. Apologies: M. Atkinson, A. Bostock, C. Burns, M. Platt, K. Weston, P. Wilson, and P. McDermott.
3. Stats: Present - 25, M - 14, D- 6 and ONS – 1.
4. New Members: A special welcome to John Somner.
5. Matters arising previous meeting/Library requests/Research questions:

Chris Davies circulated some original black and white photos of Hermanville War Cemetery . They showed the grave of a Normandy casualty T/107307 Lance Corporal Reginald J Sears who was KIA 10.6.1944 – The photos [and the negatives] had been sold with Sears' medals. The reverse of one photo was marked with ' Hermanville Beach British Cemetery' with plot details and 'No1 Cemetery Construction Unit'. This cemetery was commonly known as 'Sword Beach Cemetery' being so close to the landing beach. In this early post war era, the graves are marked by wooden crosses bearing the soldiers details or 'unknown' as the case may be. The headstones were installed at a later date. [See pictures below].



No library requests or research questions.

6. Functions/visits: Martin Harrison updated all on the numbers attending [28 or 29 now]. As our timetable requires us to be out of the building by 16.00hrs, strict time keeping will be enforced for the ten minute talks!
7. Committee points: Your programme 2019-2020 is now finalised. There was brief discussion re the merits of our usual small printed cards or otherwise - members wished to continue having these. [Secretary and Mark Platt being actioned].
8. Tonight's topic: Members Own, Recent Acquisitions and Short Talks.
9. Next meeting: 01.08.2019 – 'Like Father almost like Son' by Roger Bragger.

The first medal discussed tonight was a particularly pleasing single Regimental medal to Sergeant Major Thomas Godding 9th Lancers – This was engraved with his details [See photo]. He served for a considerable time! His discharge papers show a total of 32 years and 227 days by 23.3.1837! – this included being present at the siege of Buenos Aires in 1806. The medal had been presented to him in 1832 by the NCO's and men of the Regiment - another medal had been presented by the Officers of the Regiment. In his two year's service during the Peninsular War, he'd saved the life of Captain Handley when they were under attack by French Dragoons.

Thomas Godding is not listed in the Mullen MGS [Military General Service] roll which could mean either he'd not survived till the claiming date of 1.6.1847 or possibly he hadn't claimed it.



Above: Regimental medal to Thomas Godding. Obverse and Reverse.

Next presented was a British War Medal to Acting Sergeant AW Reid Royal Army Medical Corps [RAMC]. Reid's Victory Medal [VM] was missing. A Volunteer Long Service award to a Private Edwin Jew of the 2nd Volunteer Battalion Worcester Regiment was shown. The possibility of a 're-unite' was raised in the meeting by a member but, later in the meeting, the forename turned out to be different. [Apologies as I have no pictures of these medals].

A Merchant Navy group to Farah A. Abdi was shown – His service started in the early 1940's and ran through to the Falkland's campaign of 1982 – His medals were the Italy Star, 1939-45 Star, 1939-45 War Medal and South Atlantic Medal with Rosette. It was noted Korea and South Atlantic Medals can sometimes be seen together in recipients' groups.



Above left: Farah A. Abdi medal group - WWII and South Atlantic Medal [obverse].

Above right: South Atlantic Medal [reverse] to Farah A. Abdi.

A four medal group of a Queen's South Africa [QSA] 5 bars [QSA to the South African Constabulary] and WWI trio as a Lieutenant in the North Irish Horse featured next – the recipient's miniatures were also in the display case. The recipient Lieutenant J.V. Gillighan had died in the 1920's.



Above left: Gillighan 5 bar QSA and WWI Trio. Above right: Gillighan naming on 1914 Star.

A single Australian Vietnam Medal to Matlow [Royal Australian Navy] was shown - reference was made to a book about the experience called 'Operation Sea Dragon' [by Rudolf Bojtschuk also known as 'Ronald' Bojtschuk] a signed copy of which had been successfully purchased on 'E-bay' by the member.

Next up were a trio of separate awards relating to the saving of the Regimental colours at Winburg, Orange Free State, South Africa in November, 1914. The circumstances were triggered by a Boer uprising known as the 'Maritz' rebellion – In Winburg, the Regimental Colours had been saved by a Mrs W Pienaar who had concealed them on her person thus denying them to the rebels! Her medal was the 'The African World Roll of Honour medal' in 9ct gold and engraved with her details. The Boer rebellion was suppressed.



Above left lower: 'The African World Roll of Honour medal to Mrs W. Pienaar.

Above left upper: Top bar to the 'African World Roll of Honour'.

Above right upper and lower: two other items relating to the rebellion at Winburg.

There followed medals to two Officers from different regiments who were attached to Jacob's Rifles [the 30th Bombay Native Infantry] at the time of the Afghanistan campaign 1877-79. They were further connected as they had both volunteered to rescue an injured Officer [a Lieutenant Paul Wood] from outside the city of Kabul in 1879 by descending a rope ladder from the city gates. The no clasp Afghanistan Medal to Captain Mordaunt Broome Salmon of the 2nd West Indian Regiment was shown as well as the group to the other Officer, Colonel Walter Adye, of the Royal Irish Rifles. Despite the rescue, Lt Wood succumbed to his injuries shortly afterwards. Both Salmon and Adye had been recommended for Victoria Cross for their gallant attempt.

Colonel Adye, a native of Leamington, was to serve in the Second Boer War being one of the Intelligence Officers [Rank of Major at that time] in the column of Colonel Carlton at 'Nicholson's Nek' 30.10.1899. This was one of several disasters on 'Mournful Monday' as it became known. Colonel Carlton's force of 1100 men had made a night march to Nicholson's Nek. Nearly at the end of the march, their pack-mules, carrying their small arms ammunition and a mountain battery, had been startled by noise and got away – This left the column with minimal ammunition - this being 20 or so rounds per man. Once it became light, the British force realised it was completely surrounded by higher hills on which were great numbers of Boers. Carlton held out but eventually, surrounded and having taken casualties, he was forced to capitulate - 37 Officers [including Adye] and 917 British soldiers surrendered to the Boers. Adye was subsequently exonerated in an enquiry after the war. Captain Salmon had distinguished himself at the disaster at Maiwand, survived this and joined the retreat to Kandahar.



Above left and centre: No clasp Afghanistan 1878-1880 medal to Mordaunt Broome Salmon.

Above right: Colonel Walter Adye medal group – The Most Honourable Order of the Bath CB, Afghanistan medal [reverse] clasp 'Kandahar', QSA [obverse] bar 'Natal' and Coronation Medal 1902 [with apologies for photo quality].

Also shown was the Dorset [39th] Regiment group to Colonel Robert Newport Tinley:



Above left to right: Group to Captain R.N.Tinley; Maharajpooor Star 1843, Crimea medal [obverse] bar 'Sebastopol', Legion d'Honneur [obverse], Order of Medjidie 5th class and Turkish Crimea fitted with replacement scroll suspension.

A General Service Medal bar Malaya to a nurse in the Princess Mary RAF Nursing Service Reserve [PM RAF NSR] was shown next. Her service had started pre-1939, she had been commissioned post WWII and in 1948, was stationed in Malaya. By September, 1950, she had resigned from the service presumably as a result of getting married - which precluded from remaining in the PM RAF NSR]. [see photo below GSM bar 'Malaya' - left:obverse, right:reverse].



There followed an incomplete group to Corporal G Southcott – these were a BWM and Meritorious Service Medal [MSM]. He was entitled to a Victory Medal [VM] and India General Service 1908 [IGS] – It wasn't clear which Afghanistan clasp he would have been awarded. His MSM was one of five to the RAF for services to 20th Squadron on the North West Frontier.[See photo : Below left: BMW and MSM. Below right: MSM and BWM obverse].



An IGS featured next this being to the named rank of 'Sweeper' in the 1st Royal Warwicks – He was named Ladha Jat – This was a two bar example 'North West Frontier 1908' and 'Afghanistan NWF 1919'. Silver medals tended to go to public employees and bronze examples to Officer's servants. see photo below



Above left obverse and above right reverse of 2 bar IGS to Sweeper Ladha Jat 1st Royal Warwicks.

Next up was a long group to Captain RN Lilley attached King's African Rifles which included Distinguished Service Order [DSO], Order of the British Empire [OBE], Africa General Service [2 bars], WWI trio and the Order of the Nile. This 2 bar AGS is one of only two with the combination of bars 'East Africa 1913' and 'East Africa 1914'. He received the OBE for services as a District Commissioner in the Sudan after the Great War. [see photo below].



The next three groups shown are for sale in the Dix Noonan Webb July 17-18th sale:

The first was the Iraq 2007 Military Cross [MC] group to Corporal Jokini Sivoinauca 3rd Battalion the Rifles Regiment. His citation was read out. He was the first Rifleman in the newly formed Regiment to be awarded the MC. [Lot No45 – photo below].



The final medals shown were life-saving awards. The first was to Cadet Aubrey Maguire who was awarded the Bristol Humane Society medal – He rescued a boy Charles Burden who had fallen overboard 7.7.1878 from HMS Formidable – He subsequently joined the Navy where his career path, although good initially, steadily worsened with the descriptors of 'bad', 'objectionable' and 'insubordinate' leading to a dishonourable discharge from the Navy. He then joined the Merchant Navy Fleet but drowned in the South Pacific 3.6.1908..

In the 1920's, the Boy's Brigade and the Boys Life Brigade merged – a new bronze cross and new ribbon was designed from the old entities to represent the new. An award was made to James Fisher aged 15 years for recovering a girl in deep water from drowning. The member commented that most of these awards are saving life from drowning but they are not universally so – some awards are for saving life from fire.

The meeting was declared closed at 20.52hrs. President Roger Bragger thanked all for their contributions – The meeting had clearly been very enjoyable, stimulating and full of variety!

Chris Davies

BMS Secretary.

Typed 11-13.7.19