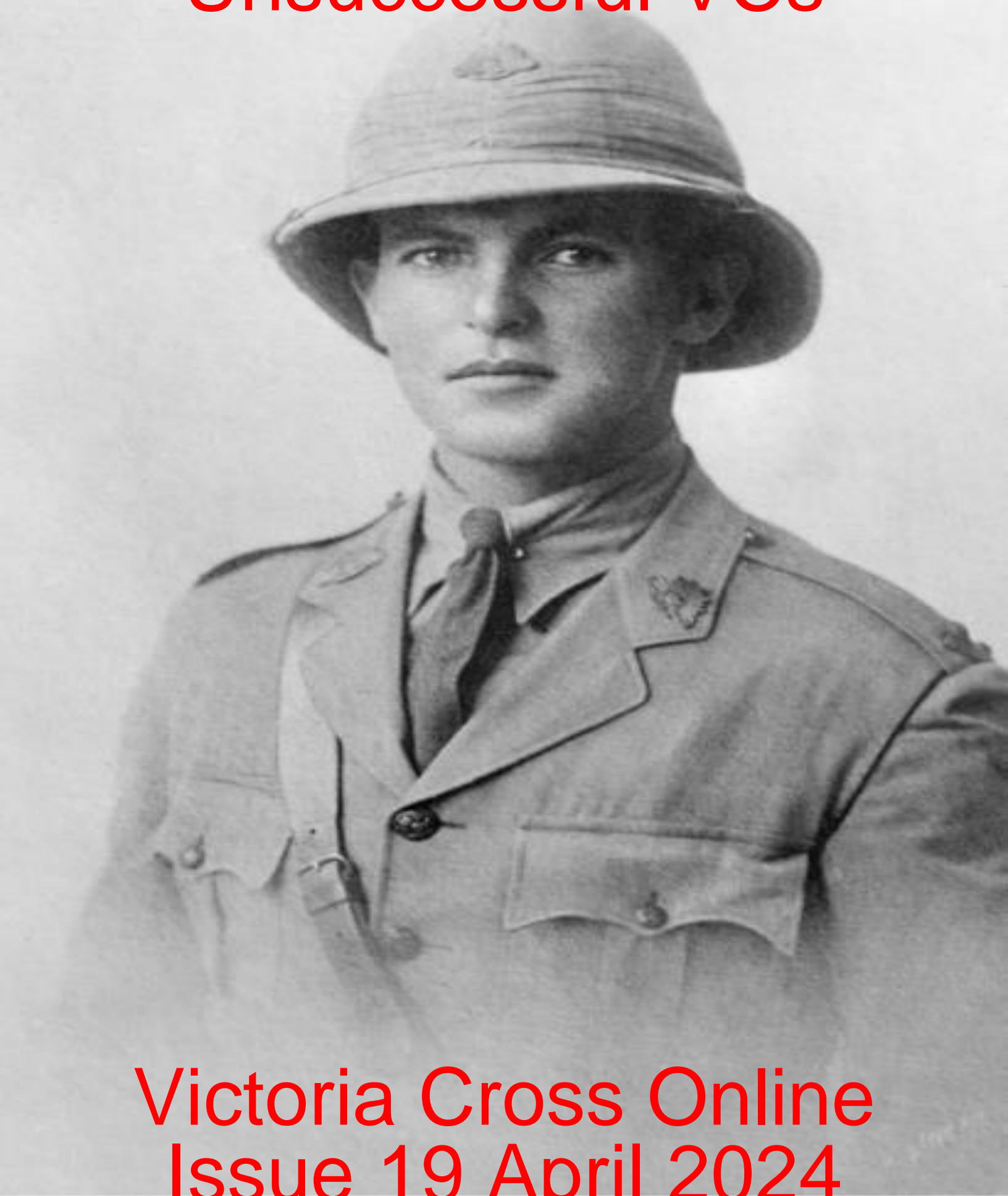


Unsuccessful VCs



Victoria Cross Online
Issue 19 April 2024

EDITOR'S COMMENTS

Welcome to the 19th edition of Victoria Cross Online Magazine. The feature article this month is by regular contributor, Craig Blanch. Craig tells the story of unsuccessful Victoria Cross recommendations from Australia.

There is also the next three instalments in the Medical VCs series with the stories of three Williams – William Bradshaw VC, William Temple VC and William Manley VC (also the only recipient of a VC and German Iron Cross).

There is also news on the new research that changes previous information surrounding the last resting place of Edward Bamford VC DSO.

There is also news of the latest VC sale with the auction at Spinks of the Hastings Harington medal. There is also news of the latest VC grave renovation by Steve Davies, the Military Grave Restorer.



Contents

- 3-13 “Unsuccessful VCs” by Craig Blanch
- 14-15 Medical VCs Pt 8 William Bradshaw VC
- 16-19- Medical VCs Pt 9 William Temple VC
- 20–23 Medical VCs Pt 10 William Manley VC
- 24 – Bamford VC DSO Grave Location
- 25 Harington VC Sale
- 26 – Chard VC Grave

Unsuccessful VCs

By Craig Blanch

I had previously talked to the subject of unsuccessful Australian Victoria Cross recommendations in Victoria Online posts. This article takes a closer look at two aspects of the topic - humanitarian recommendations, and recommendations from failed battles.

As early as 1864, the number of humanitarian acts leading to Victoria Cross recommendations were a source of frustration. In August of that year, five recommendations from events in New Zealand were forwarded to the Permanent Undersecretary of State Sir Edward Lugard. The five nominees, Assistant Surgeon William Manley, Assistant Surgeon William Temple, Lieutenant Arthur Pickard, Ensign John Down, and Drummer Dudley Stagpoole, were all recommended for actions in saving life. Attached to the recommendations forwarded to Secretary of State Lord de Grey, Lugard wrote:

“I regret to say [the Victoria Cross] is losing its value in the Army, being looked upon in the light of a medal from the Royal Humane Society, instead of a reward for heroic bravery...leading to important Military results.” (M J Crook, *The evolution of the Victoria Cross*, p. 255)

In the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879, the awarding of the Victoria Cross for saving life, regardless of how brave the action, was further examined.

Unsuccessful VCs

By Craig Blanch

In the case of the Victoria Cross awarded to Lord William Beresford (see left) for actions in rescuing Sergeant Fitzmaurice in Zululand on 3 July, the dangers of falling into the hands of a 'barbaric' enemy, rather than a more civilised European enemy was an influencing factor. 'Barbaric' or 'civilised' enemy aside, bravery in lifesaving was a vexing issue for commanders. Particularly when heroism and discipline collide. The job of a soldier was to follow orders. Individual initiative, particularly for saving life, took fighters from the field.



By 1901, three of the six Victoria Crosses received by Australians in the Boer War had been awarded - all humanitarian. On 26 June, Lord Kitchener wrote in response to a further list of recommendations that:

"I think that some steps should be taken to discourage recommendations for the Victoria Cross...in cases of mere bringing in of wounded and dismounted men."

Another three Australians were awarded lifesaving Victoria Crosses by the end of the war. But humanitarian acts recommended for the Victoria Cross were being actively resisted at the highest levels.

Unsuccessful VCs

By Craig Blanch

In 1914, soon after the outbreak of the First World War, Sir Douglas Haig wrote that he “was not in favour of [the Victoria Cross] being granted for bringing in wounded officers or men...”.

The first explicit order prohibiting humanitarian recommendations, for the Australians at least, came in 1916. On 29 August the Second Australian Divisional Headquarters issued the following order from Haig. A similar advisory was issued by the 1st Australian Division the following day:

“Advice has been received that in future the V.C. will only be given for acts of particular gallantry, which are materially conducive to the gaining of a victory. Cases of gallantry in life saving, of however fine a nature, will not be considered for the Award of the V.C.”

Honours, awards, and special distinctions to the Medical Services
1918, AWM25,391/2

The 1916 Order had two distinct components – restrictions on humanitarian recommendations, and a criterion that only those actions that are “conducive to victory” would qualify for the Victoria Cross. Both contravened the clearly defined clause within the Victoria Cross warrant setting out eligibility, i.e. it being for ‘conspicuous bravery’ alone. ‘No other circumstance or condition whatsoever’ were to be considered.

Unsuccessful VCs

By Craig Blanch



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

A05381

Charles Bean

Unsuccessful VCs

By Craig Blanch

The order caused anger and confusion. Australian war correspondent, and later official war historian and founder of the Australian War Memorial, Charles Bean was incensed and wrote in his diary on 3 September 1916:

“They tell me that a notice has been issued that the V.C. will not in future be given for acts of gallantry but only for acts which help to win a battle. If that is so, then the stretcher-bearers are out of it. This stupid fiddling with the Victoria Cross does not detract from the acts which do not get it – they stand unchanged by War Office in G.H.Q. or anyone else in the world. It is the Victoria Cross that suffers. If this class of action is cut out from recognition by the Victoria Cross, it is the Cross which becomes a poorer thing – a cheaper class of decoration – not the act which fails to win it.”

On 29 September a clarification of the order was issued by Haig:

“It is notified for your information that in future, the Victoria Cross will not be given for the rescue of wounded, excepting to those whose duty it is to care for such cases. Such attempts, more often than not, result in the death of the would-be rescuer and rescued. Moreover it depletes the fighting strength of Units perhaps at most critical moments.”

Unsuccessful VCs

By Craig Blanch



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P11131.001 AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

Arthur Justin Sandford



H06652

John Stanley Lees

Unsuccessful VCs

By Craig Blanch

Haig's attempt at excluding 'those whose duty it is to care for such cases' from the order was, according to Arthur Butler, official historian of the Australian Army Medical Services, 1914-1918, 'not universally appreciated'. A further attempt by Haig to dispel uncertainty surrounding the order was issued on 2 November. It managed to further complicate a broadly misunderstood instruction.

Did the directive from Haig compelling victory as a pre-requisite for a Victoria Cross have its origins in the terrible battles at Fromelles in July 1916 and the Somme? Quite possibly. The three Australian Victoria Cross recommendations from the fighting at Fromelles were unsuccessful. (unsuccessful Victoria Cross recommendations to other Allied forces fighting further south on the Somme at that time are unknown to the author). All three recommendations were for offensive actions, but the battle was a costly disaster. The posthumous recommendation to Major Arthur Justin Sandford Hutchinson of 58 Battalion AIF did not proceed. Private Thomas Charles Rowley of 56 Battalion was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal. Lieutenant John Stanley Lees of 30 Battalion was awarded a posthumous Mention in Despatches.

On a humanitarian level, the Order continued to be applied in opposition to the rules of the Warrant.

Unsuccessful VCs

By Craig Blanch

Confidential
Headquarters,
Australian Corps 'A'.

Copy.



12 A 9 Bde
Prrr
HR/36/AMS.

391.1.188

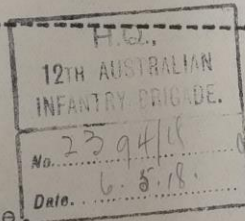
With reference to the recommendation that Lieut. A.J.C.MURIEL, 46th Battalion, A.I.F., be awarded the VICTORIA CROSS, submitted under your No. 97/233 of the 15th instant, it is regretted that in view of the definite instructions issued under Military Secretary's letter No. MS./H/3631 of the 29th September, 1918, (to the effect that Immediate Awards would not be given for the rescue of wounded except to those whose duty it is to care for such cases), the Field Marshal Commanding-in-Chief cannot forward this recommendation.

In these circumstances the name of Lieut. Muriel has been noted for "Mention" in a future Honours Despatch.

Headquarters,
Fourth Army.
21st April, 1918.

(sgd) S.MASSINGBERD, Major,
for Assistant Military Secretary,
to G.O.C. Fourth Army.

CONFIDENTIAL.



Headquarters,
4th AUSTRALIAN DIVISION.
4th May, 1918.

12th Aust. Inf. Bde

The above copy of Fourth Army letter is forwarded for information with reference to the recent recommendation of Immediate Reward of Victoria Cross to Lieut. A.J.C.MURIEL, 46th Bn.

Receives
Lieut-Colonel,
A.A. & Q.M.G.,
4th AUSTRALIAN DIVISION.

Unsuccessful VCs

By Craig Blanch

At Albert on 5/6 April 1918, Lieutenant Arthur Muriel of 46 Battalion went out into no man's land to rescue a wounded officer. The area was illuminated by a fire burning in the nearby town and was continually swept with machine gun fire 'at close range'. The men in the trench 'considered he was going to certain death'. Muriel reached the officer and fastened his legs about him. Under heavy fire he slowly dragged the officer to safety. It was an act of incredible courage. The Victoria Cross recommendation for Muriel was passed at Brigade and Division level before it was quashed as a result of the 1916 Order. In lieu of the Victoria Cross, Muriel was awarded a Military Cross and a Mention in Despatches.

In 1967, "the 1916 Order" was queried in relation to the Victoria Cross recommendation to Kevin Arthur 'Dasher' Wheatley. The British Ministry of Defence, the Imperial War Museum and the Victoria Cross and George Cross Association were all approached for comment. The organisations were unable to shed any light on the order or had any knowledge of its existence. In their opinion, it could only have been a local order and queried its official backing. Was it a uniquely Australian ruling? That is, perhaps, a line of enquiry for another time.

Unsuccessful VCs

By Craig Blanch



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

044438

Kevin "Dasher" Wheatley VC

Unsuccessful VCs

By Craig Blanch

It will never be known just how many deserving soldiers were deprived of the Victoria Cross because of the ill-conceived 1916 Order. The latter years of the war have an almost total absence of Victoria Crosses awarded to Australian stretcher-bearers, members of the AAMC, or for humanitarian actions. Butler leaves no doubt as to the Order's impact on the list of awards to members of the AAMC during the First World War:

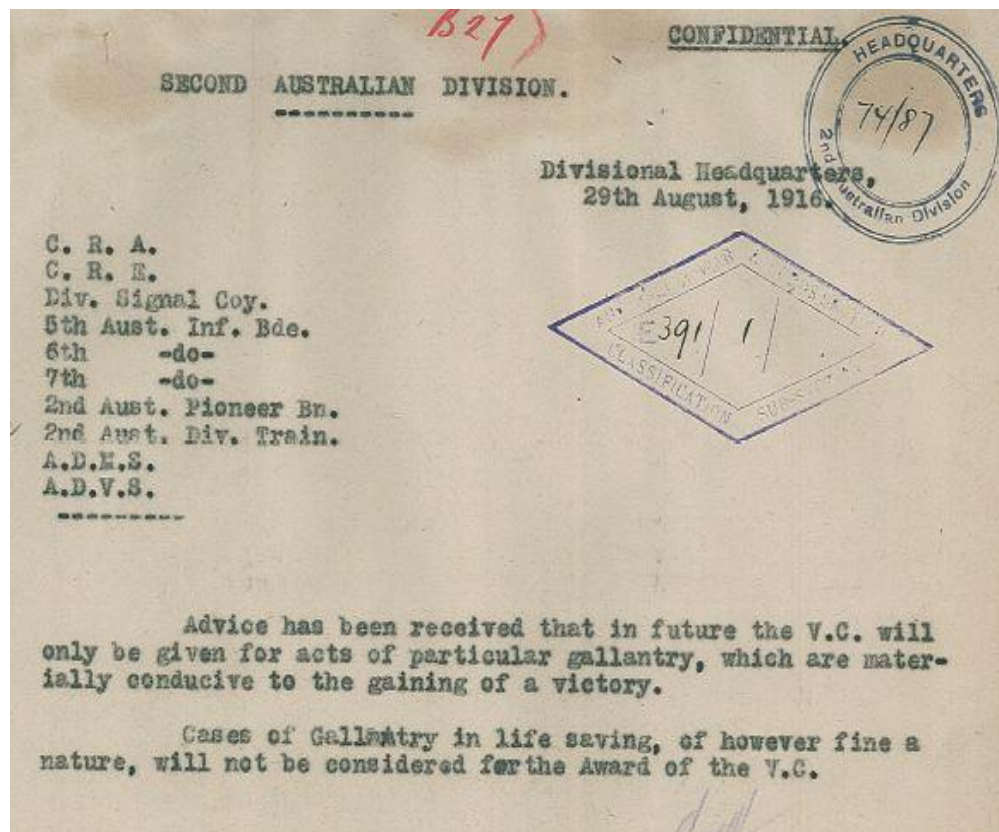
It was well known in the Australian Imperial Force that the absence of the Victoria Cross from this list was due to the interpretation placed by the Australian Army Medical Corps on a direction that was issued by the British high command in August 1916.

More than a century after it was issued, it would be reasonable to ask why Neville Howse remains the only Victoria Cross recipient from the Australian Defence Force medical services.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

A02711



Medical VCs

8. William Bradshaw VC

William Bradshaw (1830-1861) was born in Thurles, County Tipperary, Ireland on 12th February 1830, and qualified LRCS (Licentiate of the Royal College of Surgeons) before joining the Army in 1854. He served in the Crimea with the 50th Regiment of Foot (West Kent) before being transferred into the 90th Light Infantry (later The Cameronians).

Bradshaw became the Assistant Surgeon to the 90th Light Infantry on the outbreak of the Mutiny in India, and found himself in the thick of the fighting during the assault on the Lucknow Residency on 26th September 1857.



During the chaotic attempt to reach the Residency, Assistant Surgeon Bradshaw became separated from the rest of the party along with Surgeon Home. Despite this, Bradshaw managed to bring in twenty litters (stretchers) of wounded men to the Residency via a path next to the river bank. He did this under heavy rebel fire. He was recommended for the VC and gazetted on the same day as Anthony Dickson Home on 18th June 1858. He attended his investiture with Surgeon Home at Buckingham Palace on 8th June 1859.

Bradshaw retired from the Army shortly afterwards and returned to his native Ireland. Sadly, he died just two years later, aged 31 on 9th March 1861 and was buried in St Mary's Churchyard, Thurles, County Tipperary.

Medical VCs

8. William Bradshaw VC



Images of Bradshaw's grave and medals courtesy of Thomas Stewart

Medical VCs

9. William Temple VC



William Temple (1833-1919) was born at Monaghan, Ireland on 7th November 1833, the son of Dr William Temple of the Terrace Monaghan and Anne, the Daughter of Hugh Hamill of Roosky, Ireland. William was educated privately at the Reverend John Bleckleys school, Monaghan and later at Trinity College Dublin.

After qualifying, William entered the Army on 1st November 1858, as an Assistant Surgeon on the staff and on 11th January 1859 was appointed Assistant Surgeon Artillery. In November 1860 he accompanied his Regiment to New Zealand and soon after served in the Taranaki Campaign of 1860-61 and saw action at Teairci, Rangiriri and Rangiawhia.

On 21st October 1862 he got married to Anne Theodosia at St Paul's Church, Auckland, New Zealand. Anne was the 4th daughter of Colonel [Later Major-General] T.R. Mould CB RE who was commanding the Royal Engineers in New Zealand. Anne was born in 1838 in Pembroke, Pembrokeshire, Wales. They had eight children, 3 boys and 5 girls. In October 1863 Temple found himself as part of the force engaging the Maoris on the right bank of the Waikato River at Rangiriri, south of Auckland on the North Island.

Medical VCs

9. William Temple VC



The Maoris offered strong resistance and erected a strong and formidable earthwork, this earthwork was bombarded by gun boats from the river and field guns of the Royal Artillery and then finally assaulted on 20th November. The outer works were taken but the inner redoubt resisted the British assault.

Temple had gone forward to treat the wounds of a Gunner who informed him that Captain Mercer of the Royal artillery was also wounded and had in fact been shot through the jaw and tongue.

Medical VCs

9. William Temple VC

Royal Artillery ...	Assistant-Surgeon William Temple and Lieutenant Arthur Frederick Pickard	For gallant conduct during the assault on the enemy's position at Rangiriri, in New Zealand, on the 20th of November last, in exposing their lives to imminent danger, in crossing the entrance of the Maori keep, at a point upon which the enemy had concentrated their fire, with a view to render assistance to the wounded, and, more especially to the late Captain Mercer, of the Royal Artillery.
	Date of Acts of Bravery, November 20th, 1863.	Lieutenant Pickard, it is stated, crossed, and re-crossed the parapet, to procure water for the wounded, when none of the men could be induced to perform this service, the space over which he traversed being exposed to a cross-fire; and testimony is borne to the calmness displayed by him, and Assistant-Surgeon Temple, under the trying circumstances in which they were placed.

Temple observed Mercer crawling towards the gate of the earthworks, every man who attempted to cross this gate was wounded. Along with Lt Arthur Frederick Pickford, Royal Artillery, Temple rendered assistance to the wounded, including Mercer, by dressing their wounds and providing water.

Following the award of the Victoria Cross, he became a Surgeon in the Army Medical Department from 1868 to 1873. He was then promoted to Surgeon Major and was stationed in Portsmouth and in charge of the Station Hospital in Southsea. After a period as a Staff Surgeon, he returned to India from 1884-1889 where he served as Lieutenant Colonel and Secretary to Surgeon General of the Indian Army Medical Services.

In April 1885, he was appointed as Brigade Surgeon, and became Honorary Surgeon to His Excellency the Viceroy of India. He retired from service as a Lieutenant-Colonel on 1st November 1889. He returned to England on retirement, and died on 13th February 1919 at Tunbridge Wells, Kent. He was buried five days later in Highland Road Cemetery, Southsea. He had outlived his wife Anna by five years, and he was buried with her. His medals are not publicly held.

Medical VCs

9. William Temple VC

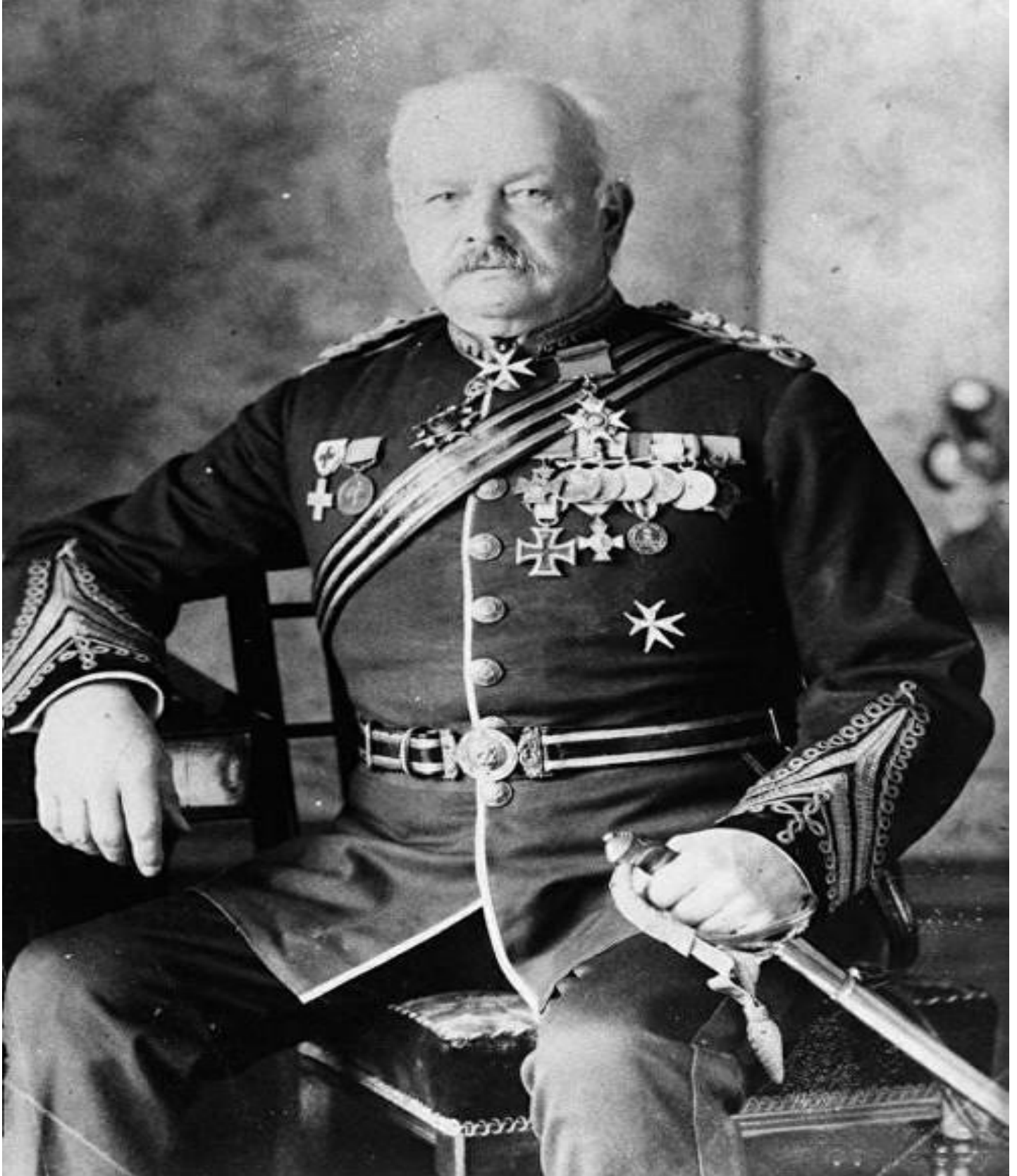


Picture courtesy of Thomas Stewart

<https://victoriacrossonline.co.uk/william-temple-vc/>

Medical VCs

10. William Manley VC



Medical VCs

10. William Manley VC

William George Nicholas Manley (1831-1901) was born in Dublin, Ireland, on 17 December 1831. He was the second son of Reverend William Nicholas Manley. His mother was Elizabeth Browne, a daughter of Dr. Browne of the Army Medical Staff. He was educated at the Blackheath Proprietary School. Manley developed an interest in surgery and became a member of The Royal College of Surgeons in England in 1852. In 1854 Manley joined the Army Medical Staff, and was attached to the Royal Regiment of Artillery serving in Crimea from 11 June 1855. He was present at the siege and fall of Sebastopol during the Crimean War, and was granted the medal with clasp and the Turkish medal. He was later posted with his regiment to New Zealand during the New Zealand Wars.

Manley was part of the storming party into Gate Pā on 29th April 1864. He was awarded the Victoria Cross for attending to Commander Edward Hay (1835-1864) as he was carried away mortally wounded and for then returning to the pā to search for more wounded. He was the only officer of those that gathered for dinner at the Elms the night before the Battle of Gate Pā to survive. Manley Grove in Tauranga was named after him.

Manley was present under the command of Sir Trevor Chute at the assault and capture of the Okotukoo, Putahi, Otapawa, and Waikohou Palis, and for his services he was again mentioned in despatches and promoted to the rank of Staff Surgeon. For rescuing from drowning a gunner of the Royal Artillery who had fallen overboard whilst disembarking from a steamer on the Waitotara river, he received the bronze medal of the Royal Humane Society.

He married Maria Elizabeth Darton on 9 February 1869 at Sheerness, Kent, England. Maria's father was Thomas Harwood Darton, of Temple Dinsley, Hertfordshire. He and Maria went on to have eight children, six boys and two girls. One of his sons became a Lieutenant Colonel, and one was killed in the Boxer Rebellion in China in 1901.

Medical VCs

10. William Manley VC



When the Franco-Prussian war broke out in 1870, Manley was placed in charge of the B division of the British ambulance corps, which was attached to the 22nd division of the Prussian army. He was present at several engagements, and afterwards received the German steel war medal and the Bavarian order of merit.

William I, the German Emperor, at the request of the Crown Prince, decorated him with the Second Class of the Iron Cross for his conduct in seeking for the wounded of the 22nd division in the actions of Chateauneuf and Bretoncelle on 18 and 21 November and the battles of Orleans and Cravant on 10 December 1870. He marched with the division between 200 and 300 miles during the severe winter of November and December.

Manley was also present at the siege of Paris and on the declaration of the armistice he went into the city with supplies for the hospitals. For his attention to wounded Frenchmen he received the cross of the Societe de Secours aux Blesses.

In 1877 Manley moved to Cheltenham, purchasing 1 Hatherley Place. His wife Maria lived there during his sometimes lengthy periods of service overseas. He served with the Quetta field force in the Afghan war of 1878-9, and was present at the occupation of Kandahar, receiving the thanks of the viceroy and the medal. Manley was principal medical officer under Sir Edward Hamley during the war in Egypt of 1882, and was present at the battle of Tel-el-Kebir.

Medical VCs

10. William Manley VC

Manley was promoted to the rank of deputy surgeon-general, and retired from the army in 1884 with the honorary rank of surgeon-general, being made C.B. in 1894. In 1896 he was granted a distinguished service pension. On his retirement the family moved to 3 Lansdown Terrace in Cheltenham. He died from diabetes at Lansdown Terrace, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, England, on 16 November 1901 and was buried in Cheltenham Cemetery on 20 November 1901. His medals are not publicly held.



Bamford VC Grave

New evidence has recently come to light about the final resting place of Edward Bamford VC DSO. It had been previously believed that Bamford was laid to rest in Bubbling Wells Cemetery in Shanghai, China following his death in 1928. The cemetery no longer exists as it was rebuilt over with a shopping centre.

The new research has unearthed an obituary published in the "North China Herald" of Major Edward Bamford VC DSO, Royal Marine Light Infantry, who died on 30th September 1928 in Shanghai. "Another of the Empire's heroes, honoured by the King with the highest of all decorations "For Valour" has died. News reached the port on Sunday that Major Edward Bamford VC DSO of the Royal Marines passed away on board HMS "Cumberland" anchored at Woosung, the same morning (30th September) at five o'clock, following an attack of pneumonia. The deceased was the Instructor of Small Arms and Musketry Officer at Hong Kong having taken up the appointment in September 1926.

Major Bamford had accompanied the Marines aboard "Cumberland" on her trip to Weihaiwei from which port the vessel was en route to Hong Kong when he was taken ill.

The funeral took place on Sunday afternoon (7th October) at HUNGJAO CEMETERY (Shanghai, China) when representative gatherings from the Navy and Army and others attended to pay their respects."

It is therefore believed he is now buried in Hungjao Cemetery. Sadly, the grave no longer exists, as following the Cultural Revolution in China in 1949, all foreign graves in Shanghai were destroyed.

Research courtesy of Iain Stewart www.victoriacross.org.uk

Harington VC Sale



On 18th April 2024, the Victoria Cross and Indian Mutiny Medal with 3 clasps was sold at Spink & Son, London by a direct descendant of Hastings Edward Harington VC. Harington was awarded the VC following a ballot of his fellow officers at the Siege of Lucknow. He was invalided home following a severe wound to the thigh. He did return to India but died of cholera aged just 29.

The medals were auctioned with a guide price of £120,000 to £150,000 and realised a price of £140,000.

<https://victoriacrossonline.co.uk/hastings-edward-harington-vc/>

Photos of medals
courtesy of Simon Ralph



Chard VC Grave

Before



After



In April 2024 the latest VC grave project was completed by Steve Davies, Military Grave Restorer. He visited the grave of John Rouse Merriott Chard VC in Hatch Beauchamp and completed some remedial work to the lettering on the headstone, and replenished the gravel chippings. Chard's story can be read at <https://victoriacrossonline.co.uk/john-rouse-merriott-chard-vc> Visit/Donate to Steve's work at <https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/steven-davies-4>