

A black and white close-up photograph of a man in a military uniform. He is wearing a wide-brimmed campaign hat with a dark band. He has a serious expression and is looking slightly to the right of the camera. The background is out of focus, showing what appears to be a military vehicle or equipment.

Kevin “Dasher”
Wheatley VC

“A Man I’m proud
to call my Dad”

Victoria Cross Online
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EDITOR'S COMMENTS

Welcome to the March edition of the Victoria Cross Online magazine. The main feature of this month is a very poignant and personal article written about his father by George Wheatley, who I had the pleasure of meeting very recently. I have to thank George for his generosity of time, his stories of his father and for penning a fitting tribute.

There is the third and final article in a series of three on the missing, stolen and destroyed VCs completed by yours truly. This month will focus on the Stolen VCs.

Finally, there is another piece by regular contributor Richard Pursehouse. This month's feature is on Arthur Scarf VC whose medal group has been heavily in the news over the past few months as online campaigns are trying to raise the money to keep it in the UK.



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“A Man I’m proud to call my Dad”

My Dad was Kevin Arthur “Dasher” Wheatley who was killed in action on 13th November 1965 in Vietnam. He gave his life trying to rescue his mate Ron “Butch” Swanton who had been shot trying to rescue a wounded soldier.

The following day I was playing in the backyard with my three younger sisters when our life took a dramatic turn. Mum, who had just commenced a new job came through the side gate followed by an Army Padre and another Army person. I knew immediately something was wrong. Mum brought us all together, hugged us and said “Your Dad isn’t coming home, he has been killed”. We all cried it didn’t seem real. Of course none of us at that moment could have possibly known what laid ahead not even Mum. I was stunned, I was the eldest at just 11. It was hard to comprehend, it was a mistake. I had last seen Dad in February before he was deployed, and his last letter had arrived in August.

The news of Dad and Butch’s death was front page news for a while until Doug Walters hit a ton before lunch in an Ashes Test Match! The press would approach us at school, follow us to Grandmas house, and turn up at football and cricket.



Edna Wheatley with her four children with a photo of their Dad (George Wheatley)



“A Man I’m proud to call my Dad”

The Australian Government had a policy at the time of not returning deceased soldiers bodies home. They asked for £300 to bring him home – a huge amount of money for Mum. This was leaked to the press by Mum’s sister and it caused an outrage. There followed another media frenzy and Mum and I were interviewed numerous times. We were all struggling to get over Dad’s death. Mum was distraught of course. It must have been hell for her. Pat Burgess, a war journalist and a friend of Dad’s approached our family with an offer from a group of funeral parlour owners and offered to fly his body home and donated a plot for him at the new Lawn Cemetery in outer Sydney very near the flag pole. During this time some public fundraising on a then popular TV show and it was placed in a trust fund for our schooling. People mistakenly thought this money went to Mum.

When the day of the funeral came, the first service was at a church in Campbelltown where me and my sisters went to Sunday School. My sisters didn’t attend the funeral as they were seen as too young to cope! I remember standing next to Dads coffin draped in the Australian flag on a gun carriage. I can’t recall a lot of the funeral, I’ve blocked it out of my memories. I remember passing an Army base and people lining the streets for miles saluting.

At school though, older kids would tell me my Dad was a murderer. The war was escalating and the press needed a story about Vietnam. When stories of Dad’s recommendation for the VC were announced, the media spotlight became intense and opinions about Dad’s action such as was it a suicide pact? Also was it a token gesture by the Government?

“A Man I’m proud to call my Dad”

During this time privacy was not our own. My sister Phyllis and I were regularly taken home from school by the Principal because of press intrusion. Mum did her best to protect us. It had a devastating impact on Grandma. She had lost her son at Puckapunyal Army Training Base in July 1952 and her husband who served in WWII came home with PTSD. She couldn't accept Dad was dead and wanted to view the body. She sadly died aged just 56 from what we believe was a broken heart. She is buried just 50m from Dad. When Dad's VC was finally announced on 15th December 1966 there were numerous TV interviews with everyone wanting a piece of Australian history. It was the first Australian VC for 20 years, and a good news story out of Vietnam.

THURSDAY, 15TH DECEMBER 1966

The QUEEN has been graciously pleased on the advice of Her Majesty's Australian Ministers to approve the Posthumous award of the VICTORIA CROSS to:

29890 Warrant Officer Class II Kevin Arthur WHEATLEY, Australian Army Training Team.

Warrant Officer Wheatley enlisted in the Australian Regular Army in 1956. He served in Malaya with 3rd Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment from 1957 to 1959 and then with the 2nd and 1st Battalions of the Regiment until February 1965 when he was posted to the Australian Army Training Team Vietnam.

His posting in this area has been distinguished by meritorious and gallant service.

On 13th November 1965 at approximately 1300 hours, a Vietnamese Civil Irregular Defence Group company commenced a search and destroy operation in the Tra Bong valley, 15 kilometres East of Tra Bong Special Forces Camp in Quang Ngai Province. Accompanying the force were Captain F. Fazekas, senior Australian Advisor, with the centre platoon, and Warrant Officers K. A. Wheatley and R. J. Swanton with the right hand platoon. At about 1340 hours, Warrant Officer Wheatley reported contact with Viet Cong elements. The Viet Cong resistance increased in strength until finally Warrant Officer Wheatley asked for assistance. Captain Fazekas immediately organised the centre platoon to help and personally led and fought it towards the action area. While moving towards this area he received another radio message from Warrant Officer Wheatley to say that Warrant Officer Swanton had been hit in the chest, and requested an air strike and an aircraft, for the evacuation of casualties.

At about this time the right platoon broke in the face of heavy Viet Cong fire and began to scatter. Although told by the Civil Irregular Defence Group medical assistant that Warrant Officer Swanton was dying, Warrant Officer Wheatley refused to abandon him. He discarded his radio to enable him to half drag, half carry Warrant Officer Swanton, under heavy machine gun and automatic rifle fire, out of the open rice paddies into the comparative safety of a wooded area, some 200 metres away. He was assisted by a Civil Irregular Defence Group member, Private Dinh Do who, when the Viet Cong were only some ten metres away, urged him to leave his dying comrade. Again he refused, and was seen to pull the pins from two grenades and calmly awaited the Viet Cong, holding one grenade in each hand. Shortly afterwards, two grenade explosions were heard, followed by several bursts of fire.

The two bodies were found at first light next morning after the fighting had ceased, with Warrant Officer Wheatley lying beside Warrant Officer Swanton. Both had died of gunshot wounds.

Warrant Officer Wheatley displayed magnificent courage in the face of an overwhelming Viet Cong force which was later estimated at more than a company. He had the clear choice of abandoning a wounded comrade and saving himself by escaping through the dense timber or of staying with Warrant Officer Swanton and thereby facing certain death. He deliberately chose the latter course. His acts of heroism, determination and unflinching loyalty in the face of the enemy will always stand as examples of the true meaning of valour.

“A Man I’m proud to call my Dad”

It was another 3 months until the investiture. Mum bought us new clothes. We were briefed on what was to happen but nothing could prepare me for what I was going to feel. I was first off the plane in Canberra and we were met by Colonel Russell McNamara (later a family friend) who waved cameras away from us on the tarmac.

We had a tour of the Australian War Memorial then off to Parliament House. Mum and our family were seated and I was taken into another room and was given instructions as to what was going to happen. As I waited in the hallway I was nervous and shaking and Colonel McNamara stated “Stand tall George make your Dad and family proud.”

I was just 13 years of age about to be presented with the most prestigious military award, the only son to have at the time, and even now to receive it on behalf of their family. I stood in front of Lord Casey and he handed me the case with Dad’s VC in it. I remember thinking how small it was, and when Lord Casey said “You must be very proud of your Dad” I replied “Yes Sir” forgetting the “Your Excellency” I then turned around and placed the case in Mum’s hands.



“A Man I’m proud to call my Dad”

Following the investiture, life changed again with the usual mix of good and bad press. The anti-Vietnam War protest was in full swing and Dad’s medal was a medal for a corrupt war. People wrote to the newspapers questioning the validity of the award. They even questioned Dad’s courage compared to other VC actions and I thought to myself “How do you judge or compare a man’s courage?”

When I was young, it was very daunting wearing Dad’s medals, representing him at various events laying wreaths etc. I was extremely proud of course but it was also tough to deal with ex Army mates of Dad hugging me and shedding tears.

Throughout those years it helped thinking of the good times with Dad – playing cricket, football and trips to Manly Fair on the train. When we were in Malaya I think of the Army rations with rice cream which even now when I eat it I think of Dad. I also wonder over the years how different life would have been if Dad was wounded rescuing the South Vietnamese soldier and Butch tries to rescue him?



“A Man I’m proud to call my Dad”

After the Victoria Cross Award to my Dad, there were three more VCs awarded to Australians in Vietnam – Peter Badcoe VC in 1967, and Keith Payne VC and Ray Simpson VC in 1969. The medals came quicker than Dads due to the drama around Dad's citation and the personal involvement of the Queen in changing the wording of it. The process was changed after this to speed up announcements.



For many years I stayed away from larger events although my sisters and Mum still attended several to represent the family. In March 1987 the Welcome Parade for Vietnam Veterans was held in Sydney and I was asked to march alongside Keith Payne VC, Sue Badcoe (daughter of Peter) and the niece of Ray Simpson VC. Keith was joined on parade by numerous veterans and all the personnel from Vietnam KIA received an Australian flag. I got treated and accepted as part of a bigger family and share a different bond. Keith Payne once signed a book to me “George, you are part of the Army family. You are one of us.”

“A Man I’m proud to call my Dad”

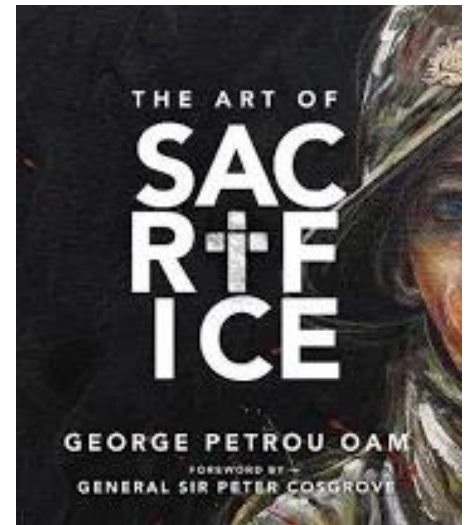
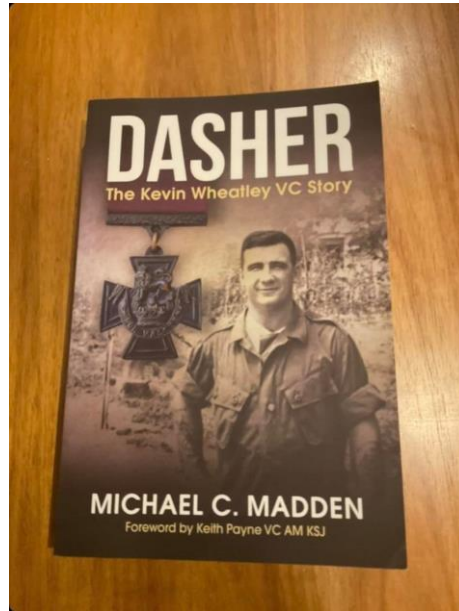
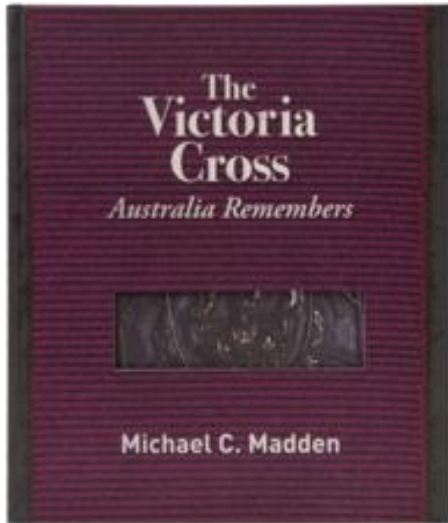
At the Welcome Parade in 1987 and at the dedication of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Canberra in 1992, I got to know more about the Badcoe family from his daughter Sue. Their experiences were very similar to ours with press harassment, no help from the government and that her family had been asked to leave the Army married quarters a week after Peter had been KIA. No time to grieve at all.

In 1993, our family made the decision to sell Dads medals to help Mum financially. There is a myth that the VC brings fame and fortune. The fame came for us but not fortune with Mum struggling with little help and two jobs. Our decision caused another media circus as a VC had not been sold for a long time. Opinions were varied and many people rang me to call me a “gold digger” and that they are not yours to sell and belong to the Australian people. During this time, a man who claimed to know Dad rang and later turned out to be a journalist after a story. I politely told him to “F*** off” and put the phone down. After the sale, the circus died down and the Gulf War was in full swing so it went out of the news.

In 2016, I happened to come across a “Go Fund Me” page regarding the Victoria Cross and a proposal to write a book involving the recipient’s families. The profits were to go to TPI Veterans in Victoria and the three men largely involved – Michael C Madden, Gordon Traill and George Petrou OAM – are all now firm friends of mine. The book “Victoria Cross Australia Remembers” was a huge project and has been a great success raising a good deal of money for veterans.

Another fundraising event close to our family is the Keith Payne VC AM Diggers Day event run by his Veterans Benefit Group. Led by two veterans Rick Meehan and Fred Campbell alongside Doug Rattey (nephew of Reg Rattey VC), it brings together VC, GC and Cross of Valour (Australia’s GC) recipients all whom I respect and admire.

“A Man I’m proud to call my Dad”



In 2019, our family approached Michael C Madden again to tell Dad's story. We have had numerous people over the years offer to do it, but Michael was the one we felt comfortable with to do Dad's story justice. Throughout the 2 year project I was in constant contact with finding information through letters, old telegrams and used social media to contact friends of Dad with hope of hearing new stories. I was sent photos I had never seen before. Many people have contacted since the publication of "Dasher" and are in awe of what he did and also offer apologies for how the media and government treated Mum and our family. I hope lessons are learnt about the mistakes that were made, though looking at and hearing stories from our current Veterans shows little has changed sadly.

Around the same time, I was asked on behalf of the Wheatley family to contribute to a book by the famed artist George Petrou OAM. The title of the book was "Art of Sacrifice", about Australians from both military and civilian life sharing stories of bravery and courage, and is full of amazing paintings by George. It was a fantastic project I was proud to be included in.

“A Man I’m proud to call my Dad”

In Australia every deceased service person is entitled to a Last Post Ceremony at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra. After organising this with AWM staff it was arranged for 13th November 2020 (the 55th anniversary of Dad’s action and death). Due to COVID numbers were limited on who could attend but the Governor General David Hurley, Kerry Stokes, Chris Hartley (Gurkhas Australian Association), Richard Rolfe OAM, Keith Payne VC AM and his wife Flo, Rick Meehan, Fred Campbell and Doug Rattey did pay their respects to my Dad. His citation was read out and wreaths were laid. As the Last Post was played around the Pool of Reflection I found myself doing just that (see the photo above with my Mum and sister), thinking about how peaceful it was and that another chapter in Dads life was concluded. We all went for a drink and catch up afterwards and raised a glass to remember two brave men who died that day 55 years ago.



The VC can do strange things to people. I have seen some descendants act as if they are the recipient. People compare and citations and criticise some awards. In 1974 there were 320 living VCs now there are 8 but the interest and intrigue of the medal has never been higher. With so much social media and VC historians, the interest is growing and I am a member of a number of sites that I feel are doing a wonderful job of telling the story of the VC in a respectful way. These sites are for contributing information and stories but I think sometimes is all this relevant? Am I sharing too much? Do I look like I am seeking recognition personally? Sadly I have been accused of this! I still love reading VC stories and endeavour to keep Dads story alive which he duly deserves.

“A Man I’m proud to call my Dad”

I have had the privilege of meeting many VC recipients, George Cross recipients and Cross of Valour recipients, all extremely brave and humble people. One thing that they all have in common is their love and compassion for their fellow human being. All veterans are brave but sometimes people do extraordinary deeds.

Dad’s action was an heroic act as was Butch Swanton’s. They both left behind fear and faced a decision very few of us could imagine or endure. Many have called it foolish but I personally feel it was a display of loyalty, compassion, and deficiency of the odds. Friends of Dad’s who served with him have told me they weren’t surprised at what he did. He had already displayed acts of bravery. It was not in his nature to have left Butch to die alone. There was a chance, he took it. He discarded his empty rifle and radio and half carried, half dragged Butch to cover. He would have known by then all was lost. No help was coming and the enemy was approaching. He met that fate holding two hand grenades.

I have met the last serviceman to have heard Dad’s final radio transmission “Somebody help us I am trying to get some cover. Butch is failing and the ARVN have left us! We are in dire straights! For gods sake someone help us!” The serviceman tells me it still haunts him today and it took over 50 years before he told me and I will not betray his trust and reveal his name.

Dads legacy lives on through many memorials across Australia and at Fort Bragg in the USA. Alongside his fellow three Vietnam VCs they are the only Australians honoured there at the John F Kennedy Centre Hall of Heroes.

“A Man I’m proud to call my Dad”

How do others summarise my Dad? At the 25th AATTV Reunion, the AATTV Commanding Officer, Colonel AV Peece DSO MVO said the following –

“How does one begin to describe a personality like Dasher? On first meeting him there was little doubt he was a personality. He wore his cap at a rakish angle and had a slightly crooked smile. He was a friendly soul with an expression that suggested a devilish sense of humour with a large dose of the Devil Don’t Care, Don’t Give a Fuck to the conventional. He only had to walk into a room or join a conversation and faces lightened and brightened up. Like the rest of the AATTV he was a very capable professional soldier and possessed in abundance these qualities and more which set him apart from the rest! At the time of his death Dasher didn’t hesitate to risk his life to try and save his friend, when the enemy was getting closer he chose to stay knowing death wasn’t far away. If I was to summarise my recollection of Dasher Wheatley VC it is one part humourous larrikin and practical joker, one part professional soldier. A very likeable fellow but most of all a loyal caring mate.”



“A Man I’m proud to call my Dad”

During the 58 years since Dad’s death I have often thought about Captain Fazekas MC and the emotions he must have felt that day and the morning after? He tried heroically to get to Dad and Butch. Every year on the 13th November he used to light two candles, one for Dad and one for Butch and reflect. He did this until his passing in 1998. I was contacted by Mark Donaldson VC who put me in touch with Captain Fazekas’ son who is now himself a retired Captain. I have shared a letter with him from his Dad which I have had for over 50 years which was quite emotional. At the time of writing I hope to meet up with him later this year.

When I wear Dad’s medals it takes me back to when I was 13 at Parliament House. It is a very surreal moment when I am asked to sign books, have photos taken or attend functions. I have signed books for Lieutenant Generals who have told me Dad’s story influenced their decision to join the services.

At the opening of the new Hall of Valour a few years ago, the then Governor General chose Dasher’s story to describe Valour, Courage and Mateship. There were 3 living VC recipients in the room and at the end they all said your Dad is a legend and they had all heard of him going through the services and to be proud!

Representing Dad is a honour I find very hard to describe. There can be Governor Generals, Prime Ministers, and leaders of business who all can get lower reactions from people than to the Victoria Cross. I cant imagine the pressure our living VC, GC or CV recipients must go through. They all do amazing work through various charities through their recognition.

Lest We Forget Kevin “Dasher” Wheatley VC SS (USA)
A man I am proud to call my Dad. I just wish we had more time together.

“A Man I’m proud to call my Dad”



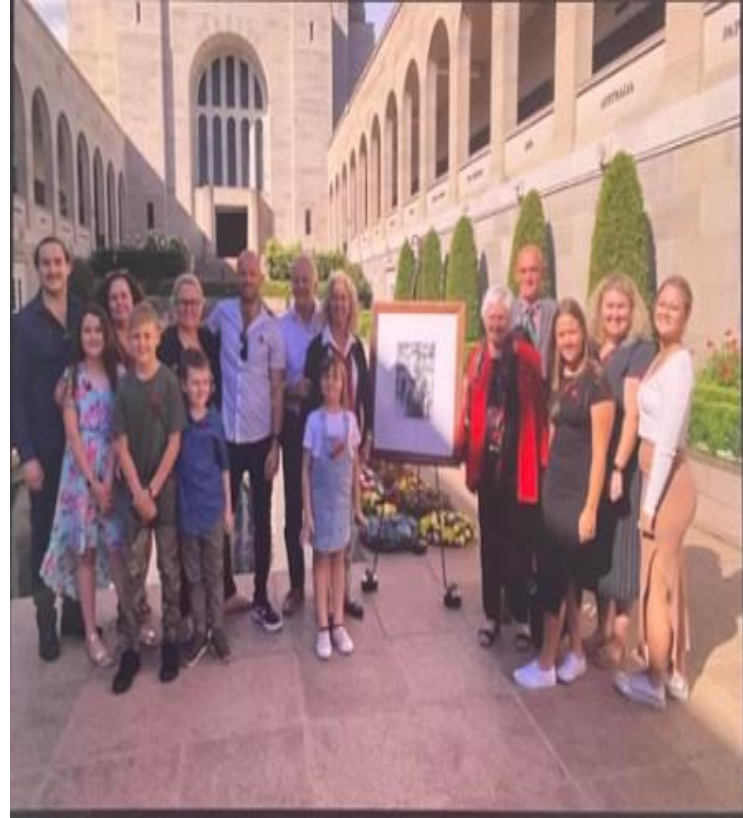
Editor's Note

I was very humbled when I contacted George to ask if he would do me the honour of writing a piece for this magazine, and he duly accepted. I hope you agree when reading this piece that it is very poignant, emotional and deeply personal account of not only George's life pre and post the events in Vietnam on 13th November 1965, but also of his family and especially his Mum. I was lucky enough to meet up with George on 24th February this year, and spend 3 fascinating hours with him and also hold his Dad's Silver Star which was presented to the family in 2021. George wanted me to end the article with a poem by Bill Charlton....

“A Man I’m proud to call my Dad”

A Heroes Family – He died on the field of battle

Leaving wife and family behind
But politics ruled the country
They were left to fend on their own
The wife worked at the local RSL
So she could make ends meet
To raise money for her children
So they had clothes and food to eat
They had honoured the soldiers service
The was awarded the Victoria Cross
But Mum lost the job at the RSL
In case there was patronage loss
Fortunately there was some decent folk
Who gave her a job right there
It disgusts me to even think of
Those people who put her there
Now the soldier is a national hero
There has been a change of heart
The family are back in favour
Where they should have been at the start
When a man dies for his country
In any war that he was sent
His family is entitled to be cared for
By the Australian Government
Politics and public opinion
Have ruled the country for too long
It is time for our people to stand up for their
right
To correct the many wrongs
Today there is some improvement
But the damage has been done
I am ashamed this family was treated this way
And what the country has become
We are ruled by a government that looks after
none
Concerned with its own agenda
The Australian people are thrown to the
wolves
And that includes anyone that defends here.



The Stolen VCs

In the final article of three, the focus is on the Victoria Cross medals which over the course of the history of the gallantry award, have been stolen in a variety of circumstances. Sadly there are 16 Victoria Cross original medals that fit into this category. They will feature over the course of the next few pages in alphabetical order of the recipients surname.



Edward Donald Bellew VC

https://victoriacrossonline.co.uk/?page_id=1510

It was during the Second Battle of Ypres that a mass attack on the Canadian line developed on the morning of Saturday 24th April 1915 near Kerselaere, Belgium. The Canadians were suffering heavy casualties. The advance of the enemy was temporarily stayed by Lieutenant Edward Donald Bellew, the battalion machine-gun officer, who had two guns in action on high ground when the enemy's attack broke in full force. The reinforcements sent forward having been destroyed, and with the enemy less than 100 yards (91 m) away and no further assistance in sight, Lieutenant Bellew and a Sergeant Peerless decided to fight it out. The sergeant was killed and Lieutenant Bellew wounded, nevertheless, he maintained his fire until his ammunition failed, when he seized a rifle, smashed his machine-gun and, fighting to the last, was taken prisoner.

Having been taken as a POW, he was taken to Staden and tried for breach of the laws of war, as he continued firing after part of his unit had surrendered. He was found guilty and sentenced to death. He was about to be shot when he protested to the commander that word of this crime would become known and reprisals would follow. The officer returned Bellew to custody. A retrial took place and he was acquitted and sent to a prison camp in Saxony with a large party of wounded Canadians.

Edward Bellew's Victoria Cross is believed to have been stolen from the Royal Canadian Military Institute, Toronto, between January 1975 and 22 July 1977. The VC has never been recovered.

The Stolen VCs



William Frederick Faulds VC MC

https://victoriacrossonline.co.uk/?page_id=5175

On 18th July 1916 at Delville Wood, France, a bombing party under Lieut Craig attempted to rush over 40 yards (36 m) of ground which lay between the British and enemy trenches. Coming under very heavy rifle and machine gun fire the officer and the majority of the party were killed and wounded. Unable to move, Lieut Craig lay midway between the two lines of trench, the ground being quite open. In full daylight, Pte Faulds, accompanied by two other men, climbed over the parapet, ran out, picked up the officer, and carried him back... Two days later Private Faulds again showed most conspicuous bravery in going out alone to bring in a wounded man, and carried him nearly half a mile to a dressing-station... The artillery fire was at the time so intense that stretcher-bearers and others considered that any attempt to bring in the wounded man meant certain death...

He was the first South African born soldier serving with South African forces to be awarded the VC. He was promoted to Lance Corporal on 20th August and Corporal and Lance Sergeant on 18th October. The VC was presented by King George V at York Cottage, Sandringham, Norfolk on 8th January 1917.

He served for five years during World War Two, enlisting as a Private in the Mechanical Service Corps and served in Abyssinia and Egypt. He was commissioned later and was a Lieutenant in East Africa in 1941. After the war he became a Rhodesian Government Industrial Inspector in 1945 in Salisbury (now Harare). He died at Salisbury General Hospital, Rhodesia on 16th August 1950 and was buried in an unmarked grave at Salisbury Pioneer Cemetery. A headstone was placed in 1972. William Faulds' Victoria Cross was stolen in October 1994 off a display in the National Museum of Military History, Johannesburg. The VC has never been recovered.

The Stolen VCs



William James Gordon VC

https://victoriacrossonline.co.uk/?page_id=5997

He was near the town of Toniataba, Gambia on 13th March 1892 when the following incident occurred. Major G.C. Madden was in charge of a party of 12 men who were trying with a heavy beam, to break down the south gate of the town. Suddenly, a number of musket muzzles appeared through a double row of loopholes in the gate, some of which were extremely close to the Major and his men. Before Madden had realised the danger he was in, Lance-Corporal Gordon threw himself between the Major and the muskets, and pushed him out of the way. At that moment, Gordon was wounded by a musket ball to the lungs.

He was gazetted for the Victoria Cross on 9th December 1892, and was presented to him on 7th February 1893 whilst he was still in West Africa. His original VC was stolen, and an official replacement was issued. He retired from the Army on pension in April 1902. He returned to Jamaica where he died on 15th August 1922, aged 58. He was buried in the Up Park Camp Military Cemetery. His official replacement VC was donated to the Jamaica Defence Force Museum, Up Park Camp, near Kingston, Jamaica.



Courtesy of Melissa Bennett

The Stolen VCs



**Milton
Fowler
Gregg
VC, PC, OC, CBE,
MC, ED, CD**

https://victoriacrossonline.co.uk/?page_id=6309

It was near Cambrai, on the Canal du Nord on the 28th September 1918, that his bravery and courage would see the award of the VC. When the advance of the brigade was held up by fire from both flanks and by thick, uncut wire, he crawled forward alone and explored the wire until he found a small gap through which he subsequently led his men and forced an entry into the enemy trench. The enemy counter-attacked in force and, through lack of bombs, the situation became critical. Although wounded Lt. Gregg returned alone under terrific fire and collected a further supply. Then rejoining his party, which by this time was much reduced in numbers, and in spite of a second wound, he reorganized his men and led them with the greatest determination against the enemy trenches, which he finally cleared. He personally killed or wounded 11 of the enemy and took 25 prisoners, in addition to 12 machine guns captured in the trench. Remaining with his company in spite of wounds he again on the 30th September led his men in attack until severely wounded. The outstanding valour of this officer saved many casualties and enabled the advance to continue.

Gregg died in Fredericton, New Brunswick on March 13th, 1978. He was buried at Snider Mountain Baptist Church Cemetery, Snider Mountain, New Brunswick. The University of New Brunswick opened the Brigadier Milton F. Gregg, VC, Centre for the Study of War and Society. Milton Gregg's Victoria Cross was stolen on 24 December 1978 from the Royal Canadian Regiment Museum, London, Ontario. The VC has never been recovered.

The Stolen VCs



Lanoe
George
Hawker
VC DSO

https://victoriacrossonline.co.uk/?page_id=7001

During the Second Battle of Ypres, Hawker was wounded in the foot by ground fire. For the remainder of the battle he had to be carried to and from his aircraft, but refused to be grounded until the fight was over. Following an initial air victory in June, on 25 July 1915 when on patrol over Passchendaele, Captain Hawker attacked three German aircraft in succession, flying Bristol Scout C, serial No. 1611. The first, after he had emptied a complete drum of bullets from his aircraft's single Lewis machine gun into it, went spinning down. The second was driven to the ground damaged, and the third – an Albatros C.I of FA 3– which he attacked at a height of about 10,000 feet, burst into flames and crashed. (Pilot Oberleutnant Uebelacker and observer Hauptmann Roser were both killed.) For this feat he was awarded the Victoria Cross. This particular sortie was just one of the many which Captain Hawker undertook during almost a year of constant operational flying and fighting. He claimed at least 3 more victories in August 1915, either in the Scout or flying an F.E.2.

Hawker would be killed in a lengthy dogfight on 23rd November 1916 over Bapaume by “The Red Baron” Manfred von Richthofen. Hawker’s body was not recovered and he is commemorated on the Arras Memorial to the Missing.

The Hawker family belongings were left behind after the fall of France in 1940. On their return, their possessions had been looted and stolen, including the VC. A replacement was issued to Hawker's brother on 3 February 1960.

The Stolen VCs



Thomas William Holmes VC

https://victoriacrossonline.co.uk/?page_id=7453

On October 26th, 1917 near Passchendaele, Belgium, he performed a deed for which he was awarded the Victoria Cross: when the right flank of the Canadian attack was held up by heavy machine-gun fire from a pill-box strong point and heavy casualties were producing a critical situation, Private Holmes, on his own initiative and single-handed, ran forward and threw two bombs, killing and wounding the crews of two machine-guns. He then fetched another bomb and threw this into the entrance of the pill-box, causing the 19 occupants to surrender.

At the time Tommy was the youngest VC in the Canadian forces and the second from Owen Sound, the first being air ace Billy Bishop VC. He was granted two weeks' leave from 25th November 1918, which was extended to cover his investiture. He was presented with the VC by King George V at York Cottage, Sandringham on 31st December 1918.

In 1942 he was lucky to escape death when a launch exploded and he suffered burns. He became a chauffeur for fourteen years before ill health forced him to retire. He attended the VC Dinner at the House of Lords in 1929, and was presented to the King and Queen in Toronto in 1939 alongside fellow VCs. He contracted cancer in the last three months of his life and spent them in Sunnybrook Hospital, Toronto, where he died on 4th January 1950. He was buried with full military honours in Greenwood Cemetery, Owen Sound. Thomas Holmes' Victoria Cross was stolen from him in 1935. A replacement was issued to him on 6 August 1935 and this was also stolen in 1978, but later retrieved. The original VC has never been recovered.

The Stolen VCs



Francis Arthur Jefferson VC

https://victoriacrossonline.co.uk/?page_id=8134

On May 16th, 1944, during an attack on the Gustav Line, Monte Cassino, Italy, the leading company of Fusilier Jefferson's battalion had to dig in without protection. The enemy counter-attacked opening fire at short range, and Fusilier Jefferson on his own initiative seized a PIAT gun and, running forward under a hail of bullets, fired on the leading tank. It burst into flames and its crew were killed. The fusilier then reloaded and went towards the second tank which withdrew before he could get within range.

By this time, British tanks had arrived and the enemy counter-attack was smashed. Jefferson was promoted to Lance Corporal the day after his VC action, and received a shrapnel wound to his shoulder on 21st June 1944. Evacuated to England by air, arriving on 26th August 1944 and was admitted to the military hospital at Catterick, Yorkshire. Whilst back in England, he attended his investiture with his parents at Buckingham Palace, where his medal was presented to him by King George VI.

Sadly, in 1982, his prized possession was stolen from his mother's home, and to this day has never been recovered. Frank never recovered from this blow, and began to drink heavily and suffered from bouts of depression.

On 4th September 1982, just 200 yards away from his home, he was struck by a passing train, and despite being rushed to Bolton Infirmary, he passed away aged just 61. He was cremated at Overdale Crematorium, Bolton, and following his wishes, his ashes were scattered in the Memorial Gardens at Wellington Barracks, Bury, Lancashire.

The Stolen VCs



George Arthur Knowland VC

https://victoriacrossonline.co.uk/?page_id=8969

On 31st January 1945 near Kangaw, Burma, Lieutenant Knowland was in command of a forward platoon of a troop which was being heavily attacked - some 300 of the enemy concentrating on his 24 men. During the attacks he moved among the men distributing ammunition and contributing with rifle fire and throwing grenades at the enemy. When the crew of one of his forward Bren light machine guns had been wounded, he rushed forward to man it himself. The enemy was only 10 yards (9.1 m) away but below the level of the trench so to fire into them he stood up. He continued to fire until the casualties had been evacuated. A replacement gun team that had been sent for were injured while moving up and he stayed with the gun until a third team arrived.

In a subsequent attack he took over a 2 inch (51 mm) mortar which he fired from the hip directly into the enemy. He returned to the trench for more ammunition and fired the mortar from out in the open. When this was used up he fired his rifle. The enemy were then very close and without time to reload his rifle, he picked up a "Tommy gun" (sub machine gun) and used it. He killed more of the enemy but received mortal wounds. Despite over 50% losses in the platoon the remainder held on. By the time they were relieved the men had held the ground for 12 hours; they prevented the enemy from advancing further on that hill.

Knowland's body was buried at Taukkyan War Cemetery, near Rangoon, and his VC was received by his widow, Ruby, who passed it on to his father. His father proudly displayed it in his pub, The Spredaegle Inn, in Finsbury, London. Sadly, the medal was stolen from the pub in 1958 and never recovered.

The Stolen VCs



Rambahadur Limbu VC

https://victoriacrossonline.co.uk/?page_id=12831

Limbu was approximately 26 years old, and was a Lance-Corporal in the 2nd Battalion, 10th Princess Mary's Own Gurkha Rifles, British Army during the Indonesian Confrontation when, on 21st November 1965 in Sarawak, Borneo, Lance-Corporal Rambahadur Limbu was in an advance party of 16 Gurkhas when they encountered about 30 Indonesians holding a position on the top of a jungle-covered hill. The lance-corporal went forward with two men, but when they were only 10 yards from the enemy machine-gun position, the sentry opened fire on them, whereupon Limbu rushed forward and killed him with a grenade. The remaining enemy combatants then opened fire on the small party, wounding the two men with the lance-corporal who, under heavy fire, made three journeys into the open, two to drag his comrades to safety and one to retrieve their Bren gun, with which he charged down and killed many of the enemy.

Tragically at the time of the announcement of his Victoria Cross, came the news of the sudden death of his young wife, leaving him to care for his young family. Lance Corporal Rambahadur Limbu received his VC from the Queen at Buckingham Palace on 12th July 1966, accompanied by his 5 year-old son, Bhaktabahadur.

His was the only VC awarded to the 10th and the only VC awarded to a Gurkha since the World War 2. Rambahadur Limbu's Victoria Cross was stolen, along with all his possessions, whilst on a train journey from India to his native Nepal in 1967. Rambahadur Limbu later received an official replacement VC.

The Stolen VCs



William Fraser McDonnell VC

https://victoriacrossonline.co.uk/?page_id=10446

McDonnell chose to join the Bengal Civil Service and became the Assistant Magistrate and Collector in Sarun from 1852-1855, and became Magistrate of Sarun from 1855-1859. He remained in the Sarun district until the outbreak of the Mutiny when he found himself Joint Magistrate with his lifelong friend R.J. Richardson. When the Civil Officers of the outlying areas were called to Patna, McDonnell was left without employment so he volunteered to accompany the expedition to relieve Arrah which began on the 29th July 1857.

On the following day, McDonnell would be involved in the incident which would lead to him becoming only the second civilian to be awarded the VC (London Gazette, 20th January 1860). During the retreat from Arrah on 30th July 1857, McDonnell climbed out under incessant fire from a boat in which he and several soldiers were, up to the rudder, and with considerable difficulty he cut through the lashing which secured it to the side of the boat. On the rope being cut, the boat was able to be steered to safety, saving 35 Europeans from certain death.

On the collapse of the Mutiny in Bihar, McDonnell was given the task of settling the confiscated estates of the rebel leader, Koer Singh, until June 1860. He then decided to return to England, and whilst there, on 9th November 1860, he attended his investiture at Windsor Castle. In 1878 a replacement Victoria Cross was sent to the India Office for forwarding to William McDonnell, a High Court Judge in Calcutta, to replace his VC which had been stolen. The original VC has never been recovered.

The Stolen VCs



Edward McKenna VC

https://victoriacrossonline.co.uk/?page_id=10652

On the 7th September 1863, at Cameron Town, New Zealand, Colour Sergeant McKenna would perform supreme gallantry when after both his officers, Captain Smith and Lieutenant Butler had been shot down, he charged through an enemy position where he was heavily outnumbered. He managed to take the position with a small party of just two sergeants, a bugler, and thirty-five men over rugged country, with the loss of just one man killed and another missing.

McKenna was gazetted for the VC on 16th January 1864, and was presented with his medal on 18th June 1864 by the GOC New Zealand, Lieutenant-General Sir D A Cameron at Te Awamuta Camp. Sadly, his original VC was stolen sometime in 1868, and he purchased an official replacement. He retired from the Army as an Ensign, and lived the remainder of his life in New Zealand. He died on 8th June 1908 in Palmerston North, aged 81, and was buried in Terrace End Cemetery. By his own wishes, his widow presented his replacement VC, other medals and revolver to the Auckland Institute & Museum, shortly after his death.

The Stolen VCs



John O'Neill VC MM

https://victoriacrossonline.co.uk/?page_id=11963

On the 14th October 1918, the 2nd Battalion, Prince of Wales' Leinster Regiment, moved out of Ypres towards the heavily contested ground around the strongly held town of Courtrai. They advanced slowly to a point between the villages of Ledegem and Moorsele, some six miles from Courtrai, where the attack ground to a halt, checked by two enemy machine guns and an artillery battery firing over open sights. Sergeant O'Neill, leading a small group of eleven men, decided to charge the German battery. The small party successfully overcame the enemy positions and some of the captured guns were turned towards the German lines. Elevating them as high as possible, they loosened them off in the vague direction of the enemy.

Six days later, on the 20th October 1918, O'Neill was once again involved in an action which was part of his VC citation, when he charged a machine gun position single-handed, with only one man to cover him. Both of O'Neill's actions were witnessed by Captain John Moran MC, an officer in the 2nd Leinsters, who later in life became Father Moran.

John was gazetted for the award of the VC on Boxing Day 1918, and John O'Neill was invested with his Victoria Cross by King George V in Buckingham Palace on the 2nd August 1919. John O'Neill's Victoria Cross and campaign medals were stolen on 13 February 1962 during a burglary at the premises of coin & medal dealer Seaby & Co, in Great Portland Street, London. The VC has never been recovered.

The Stolen VCs



Michael John O'Rourke VC MM

https://victoriacrossonline.co.uk/?page_id=11997

During the period 15th – 17th August 1917 at Hill 70 near Lens, France, Private O'Rourke, who was a stretcher-bearer, worked unceasingly for three days and nights bringing in the wounded, dressing their wounds and getting them food and water. During the whole of this period the area in which he worked was swept by heavy machine-gun and rifle fire and on several occasions, he was knocked down and partially buried by enemy shells. His courage and devotion in carrying out his rescue work in spite of exhaustion and incessant heavy fire inspired all ranks and undoubtedly saved many lives.

He began to suffer from severe sciatica and was also gassed during the Third Battle of Ypres in October 1917 and was granted 2 weeks' leave. He was posted to Canadian Discharge Hospital on 1st December and the British Columbia Regiment Depot at Seaford on 9th December. He received the VC from King George V at Buckingham Palace on 5th December.

Michael sailed for Canada on SS Metagama from Liverpool on 23rd December 1917, arriving at St John on 6th January 1918 for ten weeks' furlough. He reported for duty in March, and was posted to Special Service Company at Vancouver on 2nd April and to 11th Battalion, Canadian Garrison Regiment CEF at Vancouver on 1st May. His sciatica saw him only fit for Home Service and he was discharged in July 1918. It is believed at some time during the 1920s Michael O'Rourke's original VC was either lost by the recipient or possibly pawned. The VC has never been recovered.

The Stolen VCs



Alfred John Sephton VC

https://victoriacrossonline.co.uk/?page_id=14129

It was as a 30-year-old Petty Officer serving on the HMS Coventry that Sephton showed the gallantry that would secure his place in history.

On May 17th 1941, the Coventry was patrolling with another cruiser, the Pheobe, when an SOS was received from a hospital ship called Aba and a large group of bombers attacked all three ships. The Coventry sank, killing 67 men. During the attack a bullet passed through Sephton before hitting another man and, though bleeding heavily and partially blinded, he carried on his duties as director-layer until he collapsed on deck, only to die from his wounds the next day. As in keeping with naval tradition, Alfred was buried at sea, off the coast of Alexandria, Egypt. He is commemorated on the Portsmouth Naval Memorial.

His posthumous VC was gazetted on 2nd December 1941, and was formally presented to his parents at Buckingham Palace by King George VI on 23rd June 1942. In 1971, Alfred's sister presented the medal to Coventry Cathedral, where it was proudly displayed until 1990. Sadly, it was stolen from the display that year, and has yet to be discovered. An official replacement was issued to the family following the theft, but it was sold at Cuttlestone's Auction House, Wolverhampton in November 2011 for £1,200 to a private buyer.

The Stolen VCs



Gian Singh VC

https://victoriacrossonline.co.uk/?page_id=5812

With the Japanese retreating, in February 1945, combined British and Indian forces made the widest river-crossing of the Second World War when they crossed the Irrawaddy and advanced on the port of Myingyan which was being defended by the Japanese. Niak (which is the equivalent of a Corporal) Gian Singh was leading his platoon on 2nd March, ahead of the rest of his battalion which was advancing down the road between Kamyé and Myingyan when the enemy opened fire with both artillery and intense machine-gun fire from behind well- camouflaged positions and a number of foxholes.

Singh immediately recognised the severity of the situation as his casualties increased; somehow the attack had to be repulsed. Pulling on his tactical intelligence and a deep reservoir of courage, he decided to attack the enemy single- handed. Ordering his light machine gunner to cover him, he assaulted foxhole after foxhole, hurling grenades and mopping up with his sub-machine. Although badly wounded in the arm, he refused medical attention and gained permission to attack again, this time a cleverly concealed anti-tank gun which was inflicting heavy casualties among his men. He ran forward at an oblique angle to the gun and killed the enemy with both grenades and sub-machine gun. Both his actions, by any standards of gallantry in battle, were extraordinary. His men, previously held up, now inspired by his example, found again the quality of courage within and followed him down the road, destroying the enemy along both sides as they advanced.

Singh was presented with his Victoria Cross by King George VI, in a ceremony at Buckingham Palace on 16th October 1945. Gian Singh's Victoria Cross was stolen between 26 June and 23 September 1960. A replacement was issued to him on 18 September 1961. The original VC has never been recovered.

Arthur Scarf VC

Squadron-Leader A. S. K. Scarf was born in June, 1913, at Wimbledon, and educated at King's College School, Wimbledon. He entered the R.A.F. as a pupil in January, 1936, and in March was granted a short Service commission. In October, 1936, he was posted on flying duties to No. 9 (Bomber) Squadron at Aldergrove (18 miles north west of Belfast).

Between November and the following January Squadron-Leader Scarf attended a conversion course on high-speed aircraft, and later was posted to No. 61 (Bomber) Squadron. In April, 1937, he joined No. 62 Squadron at Cranfield (Bucks), and went with it to the Far East in August, 1939. For a month in 1940 he was attached to headquarters Far East, at Alor Star, Malay States, on operational duties, returning in March to No. 62 Squadron. with which he served until his death.

While in Singapore, he would meet Elizabeth (later to remarry as Mrs Gunn) who recalled that "We met in Singapore where I was then in the Queen Alexandra's nursing service. We discovered we were both natives of Wimbledon I was at the Ursuline Convent there and he at Wimbledon College and though I passed his house every day we did not meet until a dance in Singapore 1941. We were married seven months before his death.



Mrs. Elizabeth Gunn at her Birmingham home yesterday

Arthur Scarf VC

In April 1946, an RAF corporal named Calder, greying as the result of his war experiences in the Far East, walked into the Air Ministry, Aldwych, and asked 'permission to speak about Squadron-Leader Scarf, sir.'

Corporal Calder, just home from Malaya, where he had been ill, told an Air Vice-Marshal and other high-ranking officers of the deed which had made 'Pongo' Scarf's name a legend "out there."

Calder's story, was that of the heroism in December 1941, in Malaya, of Squadron-Leader Arthur Stewart King Scarf, of North Parade, Lincoln and of Arterbury Road, Wimbledon.

Three months later, and five and a half years after Scarf exploits, the posthumous award of the Victoria Cross was announced.

Deep down under Whitehall an RAF officer searched through the filing system. He picked out a slip of cardboard headed: "Scarf, A. S. K., Squadron Leader. Deceased." He wrote on it: "Awarded Victoria Cross. June 21, 1946." and so added a P.S. to a great story which could have, but did not, come out of Hollywood.



Arthur Scarf VC

Several newspapers in June 1946 ran the story of 'Pongo' Scarf, including one under the headline 'THIS SOUNDS LIKE A FILM. WIFE WITH DYING V.C. IN BATTLE'

"This is the only story from the war in which a cold-blooded hero, shot down and dying in the field, was nursed and comforted, and given a blood transfusion by his wife. The Japanese were overrunning Singapore, fanning out up the Malacca Straits, Burma.

"On December 9, 1941, just two days after the surprise attack on the American Pacific fleet at Pearl Harbor, which brought America into the Second World War, as Arthur Scarf trundled his Blenheim bomber on to the runway at Fort Butterworth (near Penang, Malaysia), heavy forces of Japanese bombers, dive-bombers and fighters came in to obliterate the airfield.

"One Blenheim bomber managed to take off, Arthur Scarf's. He saw every plane of his squadron blown to bits on the ground. Then he turned East to certain death, following the Japanese home.

"It would have been easy to land. 'We would have expected him to do that,' said a spokesman for the Air Ministry. 'God knows how many fighters he fought his way through, scores and scores.'

"Arthur Scarf bombed and strafed the Japanese forward air-base and started to fight his way back. His arm was shot ribbons and later had to be amputated. Japanese bullets thudded into his back. He knew he was dying, but continued to fly his aircraft.

"As he crossed the coast of Malaya, he looked down and said, 'I know this place, it's Alor Star,' and gently he crash-landed in a paddy field near the village. His crew, unhurt, carried him away from the plane, as doctors and nurses from the little military hospital ran up.

"'Hello, Elizabeth,' he said to one the nurses. It was his wife. Elizabeth did not think about the Japanese, a few hours away. She nursed Arthur. He was cheerful and conscious. And she gave him her blood.

Arthur Scarf VC

"Arthur died. The Air Ministry wrote 'deceased' on a little cardboard slip in the Whitehall files and decided to wait for the full story. Five and half years later it came, and at last the Victoria Cross was awarded.


"Flying 'ace' friends say it was the best V.C. awarded for World War II: 'Scarf was all guts,' they said.

"They did not know of the great heart of his wife Elizabeth, who, expecting a baby, gave two pints of her blood for her wounded husband. She unfailingly nursed her husband and other patients, was evacuated under bombing from Singapore to Java, nursed patients on a hospital ship to India, was ill, and then lost her baby. She lost all her possessions, including photographs of her husband, and her engagement ring.



HIS WIFE

"Hello, Elizabeth," he said to one of the nurses. It was his wife. Elizabeth did not think of the Japs. a few hours away. She nursed Arthur, who was cheerful and conscious. And she gave him her blood.



Arthur died. Air Ministry wrote "deceased" on a little cardboard slip in Whitehall files and decided to wait for the full story. Five and a half years later it came, and last night the Victoria Cross was awarded.

Flying "ace" friends of mine say it is the best V.C. awarded to the RAF for World War II.

"Scarf was all guts," they say.

GAVE BLOOD

They don't know of the great heart of Elizabeth, who, expecting a baby, gave two pints of her blood, unfailingly nursed her hus-

Arthur Scarf VC

SHE GAVE HER BLOOD IN LAST-MINUTE BID

***Olton nurse saw
her husband die***

**BUT HIS HEROISM
MEANS V.C. NOW**

**TRAIN LOST
ALL DAY**

AFTER urgent radio appeals had been sent out from Canberra asking anyone who had seen a missing mail train to report to the nearest police, a radio station last night reported that the train had arrived at its destination, Cooma, after ploughing through one of the worst snow falls in Australia's history.

The train, carrying 100 passengers, was missing all day in the snow-covered hills 50 miles north of Canberra and the radio appeals were sent out as telephone and telegraph lines were out of commission.

**JEW PLOT
TO KIDNAP**

A TRAGIC episode in the life of Mrs. Elizabeth Gunn, of The Staithe, Grange-road, Olton, was recalled to-day when the Air Ministry announced the posthumous award of the Victoria Cross to S/Ldr. Arthur Stewart King Scarf, Mrs. Gunn's husband by a former marriage.

Sqd.-Ldr. Scarf lost his life by an act of "supreme heroism" in Malaya during the Jap invasion in December, 1941. His wife, then an emergency nurse at the R.A.F. base at Alor Star, was with him during the last four hours of his life, after he had been mortally wounded in action.

One survivor

The official citation, which the widow received to-day, describes how on 9 December, 1941, all except one of the Blenheim aircraft of 62 Squadron were destroyed or damaged on the ground by a

sudden Japanese attack just before it was about to take off on a formation raid of the Japanese base at Singora, Thailand.

Taking off a few seconds before the Jap attack, Squadron Leader Scarf's Blenheim alone survived. He decided, nevertheless, to press on with a hazardous solo attack on Singora, which he completed successfully despite severe opposition, and, though mortally wounded, he landed his aircraft at Alor Star without injury to the rest of his crew.

He landed at the airfield where his wife, now Mrs. Gunn, was working as a nurse

The Birmingham Daily Dispatch reported the story on 21 June 1946 under the headline 'SHE GAVE HER BLOOD IN LAST-MINUTE BID'

"A tragic episode in the life of Mrs Elizabeth Gunn of 'The Staithe', Grange Road, Olton was recalled to-day when the Air Ministry announced the posthumous award of the Victoria Cross to Squadron Leader Arthur Stewart King Scarf.

"Mrs Gunn's husband by former marriage, Squadron-Leader Scarf lost his life by an act of 'supreme heroism' in Malaya during the Japanese invasion in December 1941. His wife then an emergency nurse at the RAF base Alor Star was with him during the last four hours of his life after he had been mortally wounded in action.

"In the aircraft with her husband were two others, Corporal Calder and a sergeant whose name she did not know. 'Later, I met Corporal Calder in India,'

Arthur Scarf VC

added Mrs. Gunn, 'and he told me that with flak all round them my husband was completely unperturbed and even after he was badly wounded, he remained at the controls.'

"The official citation which the widow received to-day describes how on 9 December 1941 all except one of the Blenheim aircraft of 62 Squadron were destroyed or damaged on the ground by a sudden Japanese attack just before it was about to take off on a formation raid of the Japanese base at Singora, Thailand.

"Taking off a few seconds before the Japanese attack Squadron Leader Scarf's Blenheim alone survived. He decided nevertheless to press on with a hazardous solo attack on Singora which he completed successfully despite severe opposition and though mortally wounded landed his aircraft at Alor Star without injury to the rest of his crew.

"He landed at the airfield where his wife, now Mrs Gunn, was working as a nurse, in Queen Alexandra's nursing service.

"They brought him into the hospital at Alor Star,' Mrs Gunn added. 'He was badly shot up. He had bullet holes in his back and left arm but was conscious. He had lost a lot of blood however, and I immediately volunteered and gave two pints of my own blood. Before the transfusion was completed however, he died, probably as the result of shock four hours after reaching the hospital.'

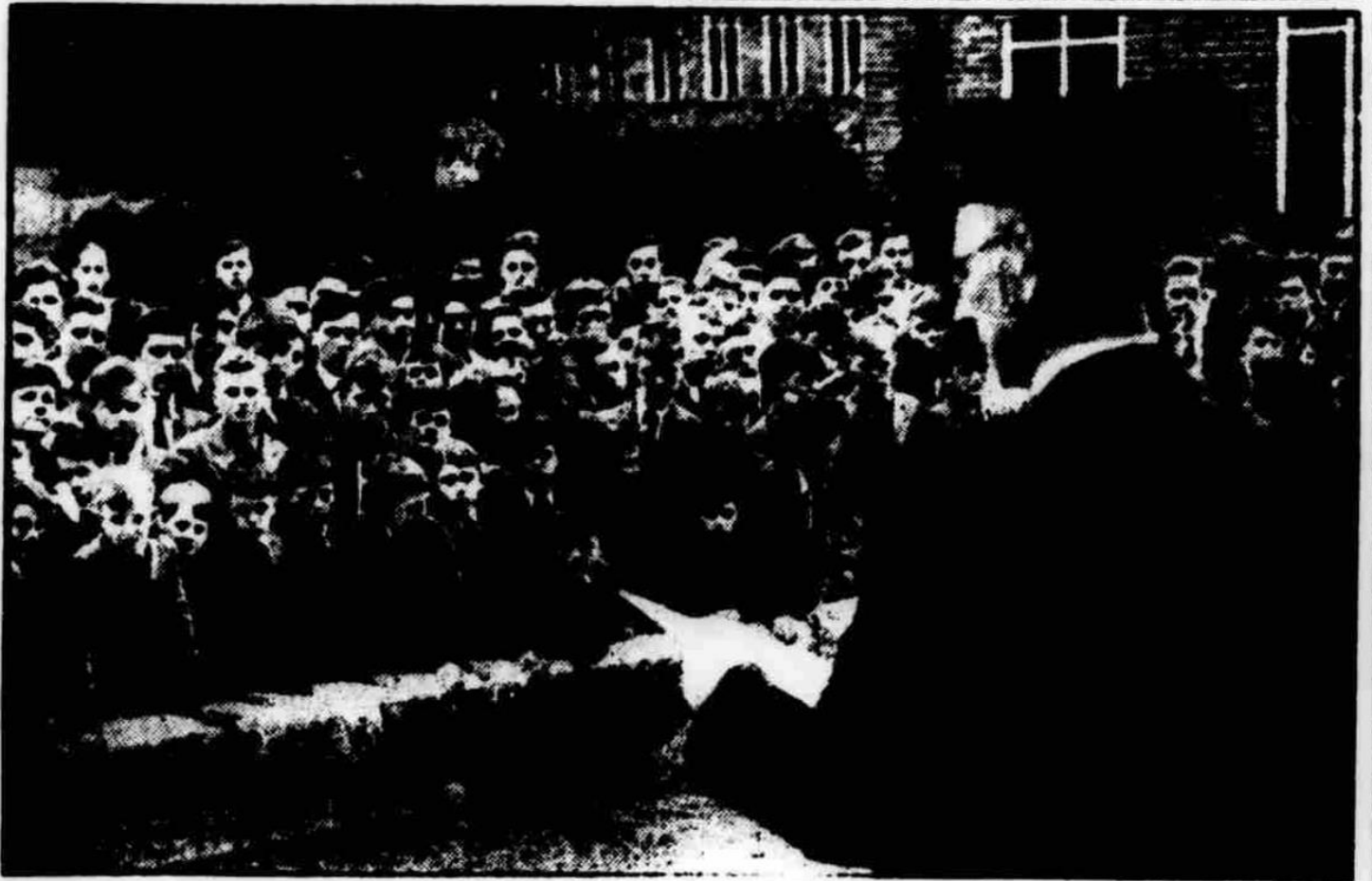
"Mrs Gunn said she was 'numbed' by the shock and afterwards lived without feeling fear all through the Japanese invasion of Malaya and the fall of Singapore during which she lost all her belongings.

"After being evacuated via Java to India however the reaction set in and she had to have psychiatric treatment in India where she later met and married her present husband, formerly an Army officer.

Arthur Scarf VC

"AN ORDINARY CHAP"

Spain 1900



**BOYS of King's College,
School, Wimbledon.**

SOLDIERS MISSED

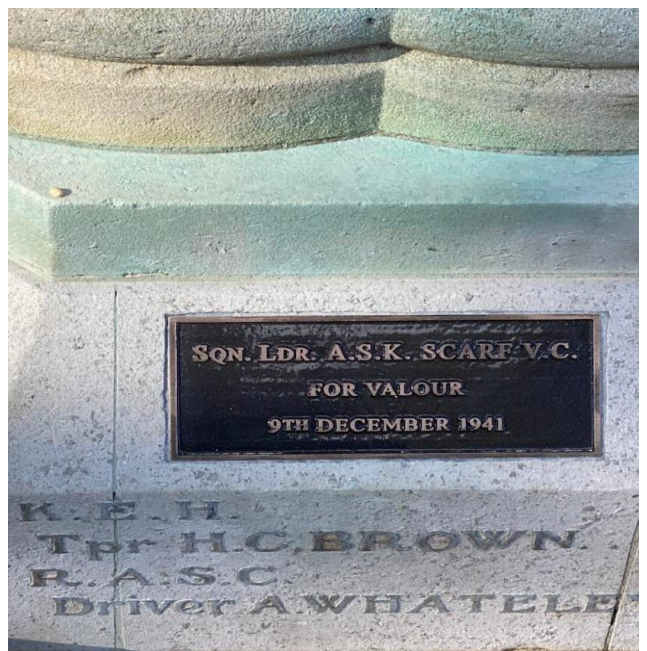
"The headmaster of King's College School, Wimbledon, assembled 550 boys 'in red-and-blue blazers and grey flannels' on the school playing field and told them that an 'Old Boy had died winning Britain's greatest honour.' A Master at the school described him as 'A fine, ordinary chap.' The Headmaster, Mr A.J. Dixon, told them that as this V.C. was posthumous, they should acknowledge it, not by cheers and clapping, but by standing 'in proud memory of great heroism.' And for a minute they bowed their heads in silence.

Mrs Gunn attended the Investiture at Buckingham Palace to receive the decoration at the end of July 1946, the 179th in the second World War, and the 29th gained by the R.A.F.

Arthur Scarf VC

There is an appeal on the Gofundme website to raise the final £200,000 to add to the RAF Museum's funds to pay for his medal, which sold in auction in April 2022 for £550,000 (plus fees, totalling £682,000), a temporary block on the export by the Department for Digital, Culture Media and Sport and Arts Minister expires in April 2023.

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/save-the-scarf-vc>



Scarf VC Images

STOP PRESS – During Richard Pursehouse's research for this issue's article on Arthur "Pongo" Scarf VC, he received a number of photographs from the RAF Museum which they have kindly agreed can be used. As they could not be fitted into the article the editor (ie me) has included them as a stop press!



Pictures:

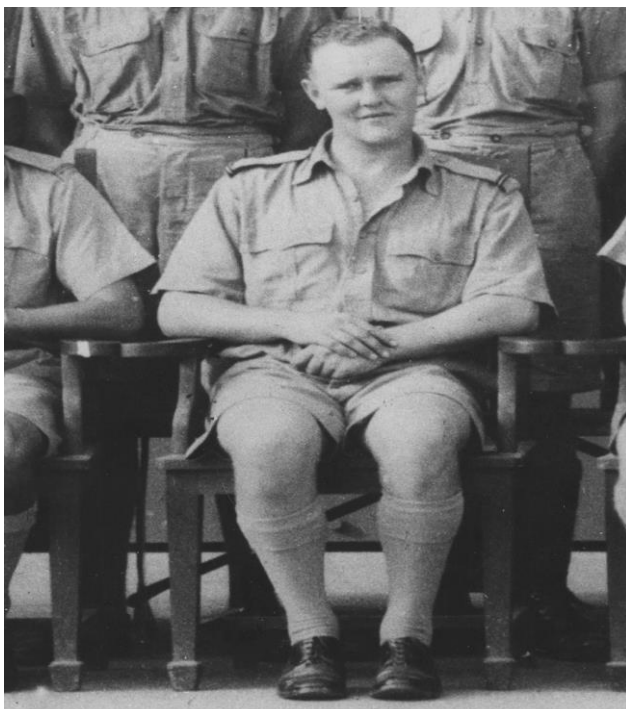
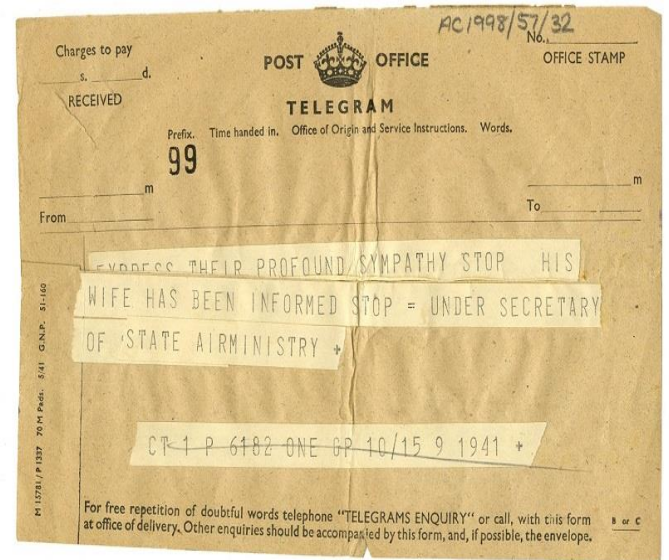
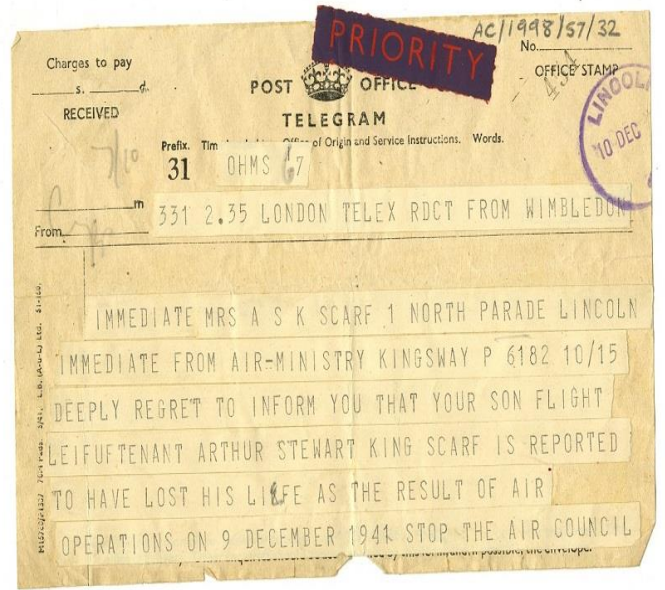
Top Left – 62 Squadron at RAF Tengah ready to deploy to Malaya.

Top Right – A Flight, 62 Squadron in 1938 at RAF Cranwell

Bottom Left – Alor Star, Malaya in 1940

Bottom Right – Attending Scarf VC's grave.

Scarf VC Images



- Pictures:
- Top Left – Scarf (Centre) after gaining his pilot wings
 - Centre Left – Wreath left postwar at his grave.
 - Bottom Left – Scarf at RAF Tengah c.1938
 - Top Right – Telegram informing of his widow of his death.