

Victoria Cross Online



Issue 39 January 2026

EDITOR'S COMMENTS

Welcome to the 39th edition of Victoria Cross Online Magazine.

The feature article this month is by yours truly and features the story of the "Children's VC", a name given to George Evans VC.

There will then be the next instalments in the "Youngest VCs" series which this month will feature the four men who were just 18 at the time of their VC actions - Abdul Hafiz VC, John Hannah VC, Thomas Flinn VC and John Jackson VC.

There is also news of the "Victoria Cross Day" event at the Bankfield Museum in Halifax which will mark the 170th anniversary of the founding of the Victoria Cross by giving the opportunity to view their 4 VCs in their collection.

There is also a request for any information members can give to support the fantastic work of Paul Lee, from www.memorialstovalour.co.uk who has compiled spreadsheets of memorials in many parts of the world, which he is asking members to look at, and let him know if there are any missed.



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The Children's VC



William John George Evans (1876-1937) was born in Kensington, London on 16th February 1876, and his father was Daniel Jones Evans, who was a pub barman, and later a brakeman. His mother was Mary Georgina nee Anderson, and his parents married on 10th April 1875 at St John's, Walworth, Surrey. Tragically, George's mother died when he was just six weeks old, and his father re-married to Caroline Elizabeth Burnett in 1877. Sadly, he would be widowed again in 1880, and in 1881, married for a third time to Ruth Ann Hoskins. George had four half-brothers from his father's third marriage, but two did not survive infancy.

George was educated in various London schools and was employed as a labourer before he enlisted in 1st Scots Guards on 5th March 1894. He was promoted to Lance Corporal on 6th April 1895, but reverted to Private on 19th December 1896. He transferred to the Depot on 15th February 1898 and served in the South African War from 1899-1900. Having returned to Britain to 3rd Scots Guards on 18th April, he was seconded to the Imperial Representative Corps accompanying the future King George V on the Australian Commonwealth inauguration tour. He was discharged to the Reserve on 26th August 1902.

George served for three years with the Derby Borough Police Force and then the Manchester Police. He married Clara nee Bates from Derby on 21st September 1903 at St Chad's, Cheetham, Manchester. She was a tobacconist's assistant. George and Clara had four children – Daniel James, Constance, Violet May and George.

The Children's VC

Name.		Corps.	Rank.	Regtl. No.
EVANS		Manch. R.	N.O. C. II.	10967.
George.				
Medal.	Roll.	Page.	Remarks.	
VICTORIAN	H/1104BP	269		
BRITISH	do	do		
STAR				
Theatre of War first served in				
Date of entry therein				
E. 1389				

Correspondence.

Address.

E 1385. (216) W. W 284—R.P. 627 1,080m. 17/1/20. E. 6989.

George Evans VC Medal Card
(courtesy of Mark Sanders)

The Children's VC

In 1910, George became an Inspector with the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children and the following year was working for the Society in Prestwich, Manchester. He enlisted in 18th Manchester (3rd City) as a Sergeant on 4th January 1915 and was appointed Company Sergeant Major on 18th March. He went to France on 7th November with the Battalion. While he was away, his wife deputised for him with the NSPCC.

On 30th July 1916, at Guillemont, France, Company Sergeant-Major Evans volunteered to take back an important message after five runners had been killed in attempting to do so. He had to cover about 700 yards, the whole of which was under observation from the enemy. He succeeded in delivering the message in spite of being wounded and rejoined his company although advised to go to the dressing station. The return journey had again meant facing 700 yards of severe rifle and machine-gun fire, but by dodging from shell-hole to shell-hole he managed it.

He became known as the "Children's VC" because of his work with the NSPCC. He was taken prisoner later on, 30th July 1916, and was held in various camps in Germany, where he is reputed to have lost six stones in weight due to poor diet. He was exchanged through Holland on 6th June 1918 and stayed there until 19th November, when he was repatriated. He was demobilised to the Class Z Reserve on 19th February 1919. His VC was the last gazetted for the Great War and it was presented by King George V at Buckingham Palace on 12th March 1920.

George resumed his work for the NSPCC in Hackney and Sydenham, London. He worked for the Society for 27 years and is understood to have helped over 12,500 children in that time. George was also a Freemason with the Wilton Lodge No 1077, East Lancashire. George died suddenly at his home at 5 Tremaine Road, Anerley, London on 28th September 1937. He was buried in Elmers End Cemetery, Beckenham, Kent. His grave was refurbished in 2009 by his only grandchild, Dilys Fisher, her husband James and their children William and Jonathan.

The Children's VC

FRIDAY, 30 JANUARY, 1920.

*War Office,
30th January, 1920.*

His Majesty the KING has been graciously pleased to approve of the award of the Victoria Cross to the undermentioned Warrant Officer:—

FRANCE.

10947 Company Serjeant-Major George Evans, 18th Battalion, Manchester Regiment (Manchester).

For most conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty during the attack at Guillemont on the 30th July, 1916, when under heavy rifle and machine gun fire he volunteered to take back an important message after five runners had been killed in attempting to do so. He had to cover about 700 yards, the whole of which was under observation from the enemy.

Company Serjeant-Major Evans, however, succeeded in delivering the message, and although wounded, rejoined his company, although advised to go to the dressing station.

The return journey to the company again meant a journey of 700 yards under severe rifle and machine gun fire, but by dodging from shell-hole to shell-hole he was able to do so, and was taken prisoner some hours later.

On previous occasions at Montauban and Trones Wood this gallant Warrant Officer displayed great bravery and devotion to duty, and has always been a splendid example to his men.

*Chancery of the Order of
Saint Michael and Saint George,*

Downing Street.

30th January, 1920.

The KING has been graciously pleased to give directions for the following appointment to the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George in recognition of services rendered in the Field and brought to notice in accordance with the terms of Army

The Children's VC



Courtesy of Kevin Brazier

The Children's VC

In addition to the VC, he was awarded the Queen's South Africa Medal 1899-1902 with four clasps, 1914-15 Star, British War Medal 1914-20, Victory Medal 1914-19 and George VI Coronation Medal 1937. In 2002, his granddaughter, Dilys Fisher, loaned the medals to the Imperial War Museum.



The Children's VC



The Youngest VCs –

Abdul Hafiz VC



Abdul Hafiz (1915-1944) was born on 4th September 1915 in the village of Kalanaur, Punjab, India, Abdul Hafiz came of age just as the campaign to force the Japanese out of Burma was picking up full steam. When old enough, he joined the 9th Jat Regiment of the British Indian Army. Formed in 1922, the 9th Jat Regiment was an infantry regiment just slightly older than Hafiz himself but would prove to be a unit of highly decorated men who saw action in a variety of locations, including North Africa, Singapore, and Burma. Abdul Hafiz had served on the North West Frontier just prior to the outbreak of World War II.

Hafiz's most memorable action would come during the Battle of Imphal in early 1944. In an attempt to break out of Burma, the Japanese had sought to destroy the Allied forces at Imphal. The broader battle took place between March and July of that year, and once the Allies secured victory it proved to be a major turning point of the Burma campaign. At one point the key Indian city was nearly entirely surrounded by Japanese requiring a great deal of effort to break the siege.

In April 1944, the 9th Jat found themselves in the hills 10 miles North of Imphal as the Japanese pressed the battle plan. On the evening of April 5th, a large Japanese force overtook a Jat position on a hill overlooking the Hafiz's company. With the bulk of the force now dangerously exposed, it became apparent that the hill position had to be retaken as quickly as possible. The hill was prepped with a short artillery barrage and then, on the morning of April 6th the time for the assault had come.

The Youngest VCs –

Abdul Hafiz VC

The War Office, 27th July, 1944.

The KING has been graciously pleased to approve the posthumous award of the VICTORIA CROSS to:—

Jemadar Abdul Hafiz (11460), 9th Jat Regiment, Indian Army.

In Burma, in the early hours of the 6th April, 1944, in the hills 10 miles North of Imphal, the enemy had attacked a standing patrol of 4 men and occupied a prominent feature overlooking a Company position. At first light a patrol was sent out and contacted the enemy, reporting that they thought approximately 40 enemy were in position. It was not known if they had dug in during the hours of darkness.

The Company Commander ordered Jemadar Abdul Hafiz to attack the enemy, with two sections from his platoon, at 0930 hours. An artillery concentration was put down on the feature and Jemadar Abdul Hafiz led the attack. The attack was up a completely bare slope with no cover, and was very steep near the crest. Prior to the attack, Jemadar Abdul Hafiz assembled his sections and told them that they were invincible, and all the enemy on the hill would be killed or put to flight. He so inspired his men that from the start the attack proceeded with great dash. When a few yards below the crest the enemy opened fire with machine-guns and threw grenades. Jemadar Abdul Hafiz sustained several casualties, but immediately ordered an assault, which he personally led, at the same time shouting the Mohammedan battle-cry. The assault went in without hesitation and with great dash up the last few yards of the hill, which was very

steep. On reaching the crest Jemadar Abdul Hafiz was wounded in the leg, but seeing a machine-gun firing from a flank, which had already caused several casualties, he immediately went towards it and seizing the barrel pushed it upwards, whilst another man killed the gunner. Jemadar Abdul Hafiz then took a Bren gun from a wounded man and advanced against the enemy, firing as he advanced, and killing several of the enemy. So fierce was the attack, and all his men so inspired by the determination of Jemadar Abdul Hafiz to kill all enemy in sight at whatever cost, that the enemy, who were still in considerable numbers on the position, ran away down the opposite slope of the hill. Regardless of machine-gun fire which was now being fired at him from another feature a few hundred yards away, he pursued the enemy, firing at them as they retired. Jemadar Abdul Hafiz was badly wounded in the chest from this machine-gun fire and collapsed holding the Bren gun and attempting to fire at the retreating enemy, and shouting at the same time "Re-organise on the position and I will give covering fire." He died shortly afterwards.

The inspiring leadership and great bravery displayed by Jemadar Abdul Hafiz in spite of having been twice wounded, once mortally, so encouraged his men that the position was captured, casualties inflicted on the enemy to an extent several times the size of his own party, and enemy arms recovered on the position which included 3 Lewis Machine-guns, 2 grenade dischargers and 2 officers' swords. The complete disregard for his own safety and his determination to capture and hold the position at all costs was an example to all ranks, which it would be difficult to equal.

With just two sections of his platoon, Hafiz was ordered to move up a prominent hill overlooking the company position. It was initially thought to be defended by as many as 40 men but the after action assessment believed it to be substantially more. The hill which was completely barren and void of any cover for the assaulting force was capped with a steep slope near the crest making it a perfect position for defence and a nightmare for offence. Understanding what awaited them, Hafiz rallied his men and told them they victory was possible, urging them not to give up hope. His speech gave his men such confidence that when the assault began they dashed up the will great speed , roaring battle-cries.

The Youngest VCs –

Abdul Hafiz VC

The Japanese were ready and when the assaulting force neared the crest they unleashed a storm of machine-gun fire and grenades. Hafiz was immediately hit in the leg and the force took several casualties. However, the speed and violence with which Hafiz led his men up the hill carried them through. Coming upon a Japanese Machine-gun near the crest fire upon his men, Hafiz grabbed the red hot barrel and lifted it into the sky while his comrade opened up fire and killed the gunner. He then grabbed a Bren gun from one of the wounded men and continued to press the assault. His men were so inspired by Hafiz's leadership from the front of the assault that they charged with an even greater fury killing every enemy within sight. At this point, the Japanese who still far outnumbered the assaulting force decided they have had enough.

They began to break from their entrenched defensive positions and runaway at great speed. Such was the panic and fervor of the Japanese retreat, the Indian forces aptly named the location, "Runaway Hill." As the Japanese were turning this battle into a sprint for life, Hafiz continued to wield his Bren gun with great effect inflicting heavy casualties on the retreating force.

It was at this point that a Japanese machine gun on a flanking hill opened up fire striking Hafiz directly in the chest. However, Hafiz was still not done despite his wounds. He immediately shouted to his men, "Reorganize, I will give you covering fire." These were the last words Hafiz ever spoke. He died on Runaway Hill, having just led his men to a seemingly impossible victory. For his actions on April 6th, 1944 in Burma, Abdul Hafiz received the Victoria Cross and become the youngest recipient from the British Indian Army. He was buried in Imphal Indian War Cemetery in Hatta Minuthong, Imphal.

The Youngest VCs –

Abdul Hafiz VC



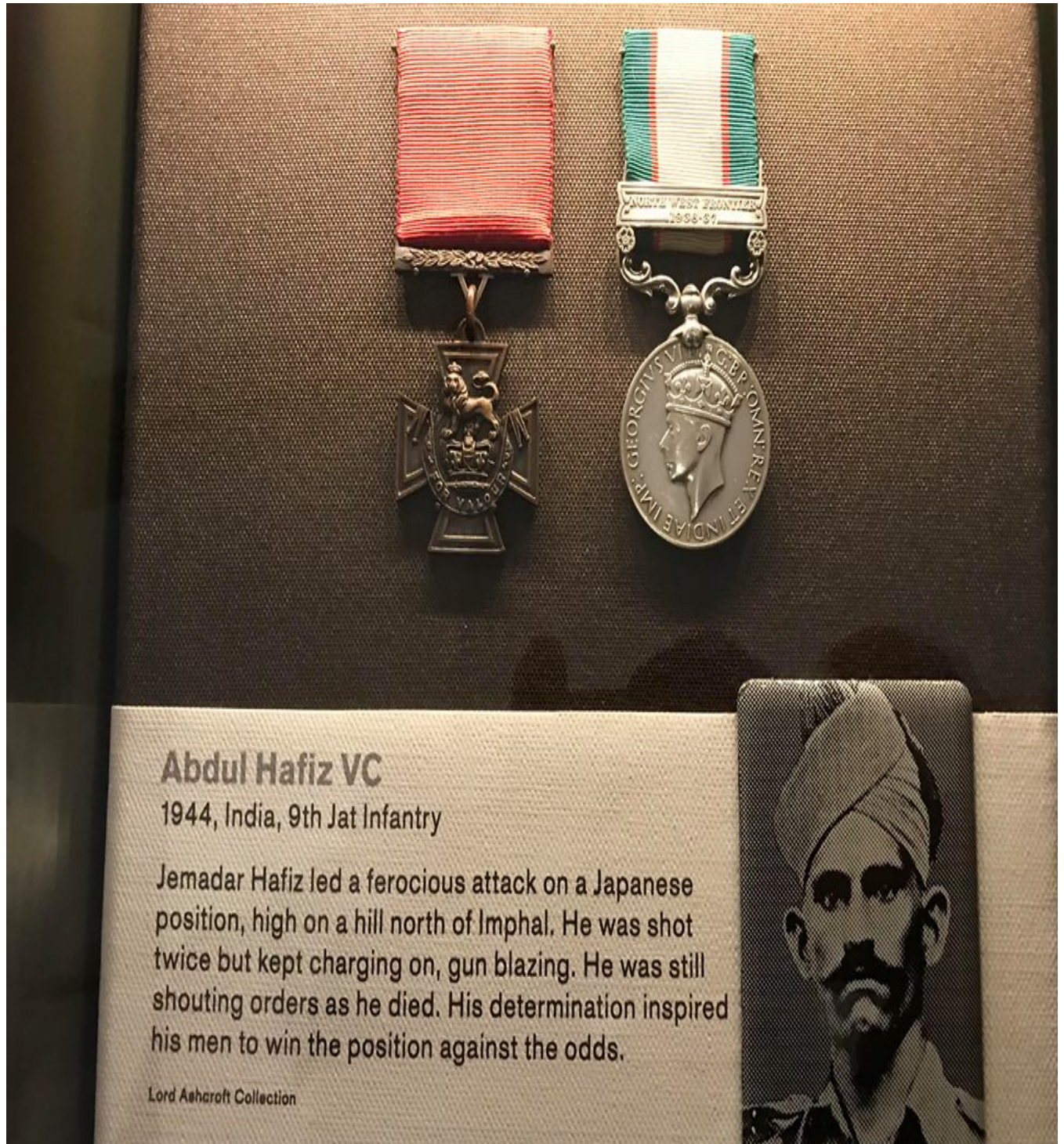
Abdul Hafiz VC's grave at
Imphal Indian War Cemetery

In November 2010, Abdul Hafiz's medals including his VC, India General Service Medal (1936-1939) with North West Frontier clasp, 1939-45 Star, Burma Star, War Medal 1939-45 and India Service Medal 1939-45 were purchased by Michael Ashcroft.

<https://victoriacrossonline.co.uk/abdul-hafiz-vc/>

The Youngest VCs –

Abdul Hafiz VC



The Youngest VCs –

John Hannah VC



John Hannah (1921-1947) was born in Paisley, Scotland on 27th November 1921, the son of an employee of the Clyde Trust and, after receiving an education at the Bankhead Public School, Victoria Drive and Glasgow Secondary School, young John Hannah started to earn a living, as a shoe salesman, in order to contribute to the family purse. On 15th August 1939, however, he decided to enlist with the RAF for a 6 year regular engagement, and after initial indoctrination and attestation at RAF Cardington that month, was posted to No 2 Electrical and Wireless Training School on 14th September 1939 to train as a wireless operator.

On qualifying in this trade he was sent to No 4 Bombing and Gunnery School at West Freugh for a brief course in air gunnery, and on 18th May 1940 was sent to 16 OTU, Upper Heyford to complete his air-crew instruction as a Wireless Operator Air Gunner (WOP/AG). Promoted to Sergeant on 27th May 1940 – he was then only 18 – he joined 106 Squadron on 1st July, based then at Thornaby, Yorkshire and operating Handley Page Hampden bombers. His stay was brief, and on 11th August, he arrived at RAF Scampton to join 83 Squadron's Hampden bombers for operations.

When he joined, the 83 were undertaking day and night operations raiding German-occupied ports and installations bordering France and Belgium along the Channel. The Battle of Britain was reaching its peak, and, with RAF Fighter Command fully extended in the daily defence of British skies, only Bomber Command could provide any form of offensive operations against Germany.

The Youngest VCs –

John Hannah VC

BIG DOUBLE-PAGE MAP OF EGYPTIAN BATTLEGROUND

11th October, 1940

THE WAR No. 51
3D WEEKLY

Incorporating WAR PICTORIAL



THIS BOY OF 18 SAVED HIS PLANE AND WON THE V.C.

Sergeant John Hannah, air gunner and wireless operator, was in an R.A.F. bomber attacking enemy barge concentrations at Antwerp on September 15 when his plane was hit and burst into flames. Nobody would have blamed him if he had baled out. But with the ammunition exploding round him, Hannah stayed and fought the flames, first with extinguishers, then by beating them out with his log book. He put out the fire and the pilot was able to reach home. Hannah, seriously ill in hospital, has been awarded the Victoria Cross.

The Youngest VCs –

John Hannah VC

On the night of 15th-16th September 1940, over Antwerp, Belgium, after a successful attack on German barges, the Handley Page Hampden bomber (serial P1355) in which Sergeant Hannah was wireless operator/air gunner, was subjected to intense anti-aircraft fire, starting a fire which spread quickly. The rear gunner and navigator had to bail out and Sergeant Hannah could have acted likewise, but instead he remained to fight the fire, first with two extinguishers and then with his bare hands. He sustained terrible injuries, but succeeded in putting out the fire and the pilot was able to bring the almost wrecked aircraft back safely.

On landing, the true extent of John's injuries became apparent, and it was immediately arranged to transport him to a nearby Service hospital for emergency treatment. On 1st October 1940 came the official awards of a VC to Sergeant John Hannah; a DFM to Sergeant Hayhurst (Canadian pilot), and a DFC to Pilot Officer C.A. Connor, who landed the plane with Hannah. Tragically, Connor was not destined to wear his DFC for long, as he was killed after a bombing sortie to Norway on 3rd-4th November 1940. Hannah was informed of his award whilst a patient in Rauceby Hospital, Lincolnshire, but after his discharge on 7th October 1940, accompanied Connor to Buckingham Palace on 10th October for their investitures.

Hannah did not return to operational flying and on 4th November reported to 14 OTU, Cottesmore for instructor duties. Here, in January 1941, he met Janet Beaver (1921-2005) his future wife, and on 1st April 1941 was promoted to Flight Sergeant. On 21st July 1941, he married Janet and they went on to have three daughters. In September, he was posted to No 4 Signals School, Yatesbury for further instructor duties, but his health began to deteriorate and he soon contracted TB; resulting in a full discharge from the RAF on 10th December 1942 with a full disability pension. Unable to take full time employment he found it hard to support his young family, and soon his health failed completely.

The Youngest VCs –

John Hannah VC

*Air Ministry,
1st October, 1940.*

ROYAL AIR FORCE.

The KING has been graciously pleased to confer the Victoria Cross on the undermentioned airman, in recognition of most conspicuous bravery:—

652918 Sergeant John HANNAH.

On the night of 15th September, 1940, Sergeant Hannah was the wireless operator / air gunner in an aircraft engaged in a successful attack on enemy barge concentrations at Antwerp. It was then subjected to intense anti-aircraft fire and received a direct hit from a projectile of an explosive and incendiary nature, which apparently burst inside the bomb compartment. A fire started which quickly enveloped the wireless operator's and rear gunner's cockpits, and as both the port and starboard petrol tanks had been pierced, there was grave risk of the fire spreading. Sergeant Hannah forced his way through the fire to obtain two extinguishers and discovered that the rear gunner had had to leave the aircraft. He could have acted likewise, through the bottom escape hatch or forward through the navigator's hatch, but remained and fought the fire for ten minutes with the extinguishers, beating the flames with his log book when these were empty. During this time thousands of rounds of ammunition exploded in all directions and he was almost blinded by the intense heat and fumes, but had the presence of mind to obtain relief by turning on his oxygen supply. Air admitted through the large holes caused by the projectile made the bomb compartment an inferno and all the aluminium sheet metal on the floor of this airman's cockpit was melted away, leaving only the cross bearers. Working under these conditions, which caused burns to his face and eyes, Sergeant Hannah succeeded in extinguishing the fire. He then crawled forward, ascertained that the navigator had left the aircraft, and passed the latter's log and maps to the pilot.

This airman displayed courage, coolness and devotion to duty of the highest order and,

by his action in remaining and successfully extinguishing the fire under conditions of the greatest danger and difficulty, enabled the pilot to bring the aircraft safely to its base.

The Youngest VCs –

John Hannah VC

Finally, on 9th June 1947, aged just 25, John passed away in Markfield Sanatorium, Leicester, leaving his widow Janet and three daughters. He was laid to rest with full military honours in St James the Great Churchyard, Birstall, Leicestershire. Twenty years later, on 6th May 1967, Janet presented her husbands medals to 83 Squadron at RAF Scampton. When 83 Squadron was disbanded later, the medals were passed on to RAF Scampton itself. The medals are now held in the keeping of the RAF Museum, Hendon.



Victoria Cross Day—

On 29th January 2026, the collections of the Calderdale Museums and the Duke of Wellington's Regiment Museum, which includes 4 Victoria Crosses, were opened up to the public. The event was put in place to mark the 170th anniversary of the founding of the award. The audience were given the chance to have an exclusive opportunity to physically engage with the medals and learn more about the men who received them.

The Victoria Crosses of Private James Bergin VC, Major Henry Kelly VC, Private Arthur Poulter VC, and Sergeant Hanson Turner VC will be available for viewing at the Bankfield Museum, Boothtown Road, Halifax, West Yorkshire.



The Youngest VC

Thomas Flynn VC



Thomas Flynn (1839-1892) was born and baptised on 22nd December 1839 in Athlone, County Westmeath, Ireland, the son of Patrick and Eleanor Flynn (nee Kenny).

The 18 year-old Flynn was made a drummer on 17th July 1857 and was part of Sir Colin Campbell's large force formed to relieve the British besieged in the Residency at Lucknow, then found himself a member of Windham's force left behind in Cawnpore.

On 28th November 1857, the rebels opened fire with their 40 guns and one particular battery was causing much damage. The 64th were ordered to take and destroy the battery. It was positioned at a distance of 1,000 yards up a steep ravine. Led by Major Thomas Stirling, 170 men, including Flynn, went forward. Following Lieutenant Standish de Courcey O'Grady, Drummer Flynn raced for the enemy battery and, despite being wounded, engaged two rebel gunners in hand-to-hand combat. The rebels abandoned their guns and retreated. They soon re-grouped and counter-attacked in large numbers forcing the 64th back to the entrenchment.

Later that day, Campbell's main force arrived and the rebels were forced back. For his conduct, Drummer Flynn's name was recommended for the VC but under the misspelling of "Flinn". The award was granted though the spelling error was not corrected, and it appeared in the London Gazette on 12th April 1859. He received his medal in 1860 in Brigadier Hall, Karachi, from Brigadier-General John Hall. This seems to be the pinnacle of his service as he later spent 14 periods of detention for various misdemeanours totalling nearly 600 days. When he arrived back in England in 1861, there followed a period of detention most likely on the Isle of Wight. He finally took his discharge in 1869 and it is believed he returned to Ireland.

The Youngest VCs –

Thomas Flynn VC

64th Regiment

... Drummer Thomas Flynn
Date of Act of Bravery,
29th November, 1857

For conspicuous gallantry, in the charge on the
Enemy's guns on the 29th November, 1857,
when, being himself wounded, he engaged in a
hand to hand encounter two of the Rebel Ar-
tillerymen.

On 6th October 1880, Thomas married Mary Hardiman in St Mary's Parish Church in Athlone. By the early 1890s, life in Ireland had become extremely hard and his plight was even raised in Parliament in April 1892 by his local MP, Donal Sullivan. Sadly, the pleas for help for Flynn were not to succeed, as Flynn died in the Athlone Workhouse on 10th August 1892 aged 52. Thomas was then buried in a common grave in Cornamagh Cemetery, Athlone. The grave remained unmarked until a memorial stone was erected in 2008. His medals are not publicly held.



The Youngest VCs –

John William Alexander Jackson VC



John William Alexander Jackson (1897-1959) or “Billy” as he was known to his family, was born on 13th September 1897 at “Glengower” Station, Gunbar, near Hay, New South Wales, Australia. His father was John Gale Jackson, who hailed from Sydney and was a farm labourer, who moved with his family to Merriwa, New South Wales and later to Ivanhoe, Victoria. His mother was Adelaide Ann nee McFarlane, whose father hailed from Aberdeen, Scotland. Billy’s parents married at Seaton Farm, Gunbar Station, New South Wales in 1890. Sadly, Billy’s mother died when he was eight. Billy had seven siblings, though two of his older sisters died aged 3 and 10.

Following the death of his mother, the children were cared for by their grandparents, John and Elizabeth McFarlane. Their father continued to work on Gunbar Station. Billy was then employed as a labourer by William Gibson of “Carlowrie”, New South Wales until February 1915.

He enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force at Hay on 20th February 1915 and was posted to Liverpool, New South Wales. He embarked with B Company, 17th Battalion, AIF on HMAT Themistocles from Sydney on 12th May. He disembarked at Alexandria, Egypt and was stationed at Heliopolis until taking part in operations at Gallipoli from 20th August. He took part in the initial attack on Kalajik Aghyl (Hill 60) the following day. Illness and a problem with his teeth saw him evacuated to Malta in October 1915. He returned to his unit on 12th February at the Mouscar Garrison.

The Youngest VCs —

John William Alexander Jackson VC



Billy embarked at Alexandria on 16th March, landing at Marseilles, France on 23rd March. By April, he was serving in the Armentieres area. On the night of 25th June, Jackson was acting as a scout for a party of forty soldiers, as they carried out an assault on the forward trenches of a Prussian infantry regiment, south-east of Bois Grenier (near Armentières). During the assault Jackson captured an enemy soldier and returned with him through no man's land. Prisoners were valued for the purpose of interrogation. On learning that some of his party had been hit in the intense shelling and gun-fire, Jackson returned to no man's land. He helped to bring in a wounded man, before going out again. While assisting Sergeant Camden to bring in the seriously wounded Private Robinson, a shell exploded nearby. The blast rendered Camden unconscious, blew off Jackson's right arm above the elbow and inflicted further wounds to Robinson.

The Youngest VCs

John William Alexander Jackson VC

No. 588 Pte. William Jackson, Aus. Infy.

For most conspicuous bravery. On the return from a successful raid, several members of the raiding party were seriously wounded in "No Man's Land" by shell fire. Private Jackson got back safely and, after handing over a prisoner whom he had brought in, immediately went out again under very heavy shell fire and assisted in bringing in a wounded man. He then went out again, and with a serjeant was bringing in another wounded man, when his arm was blown off by a shell and the serjeant was rendered unconscious.

He then returned to our trenches.

obtained assistance, and went out again to look for his two wounded comrades.

He set a splendid example of pluck and determination. His work has always been marked by the greatest coolness and bravery.

The Youngest VCs –

John William Alexander Jackson VC

He was the youngest Australian recipient and the first VC Australian on the Western Front. He was originally recommended for the DCM and unusually it was gazetted on 22nd September, almost two weeks after the gazetting of the VC. The DCM was cancelled by a correction in the London Gazette on 20th October. The VC was presented by King George V at Buckingham Palace on 18th November 1916.

Billy was admitted to 2nd Canadian Stationery Hospital and was evacuated aboard HMHS St Patrick from Boulogne to 3rd London General Hospital on 30th June. He was transferred to No 1 Australian Auxiliary Hospital, Harefield Park, Middlesex on 20th July where the upper part of his arm was amputated. He moved around several hospitals in his recuperation, before being discharged on 5th April 1917.

On 4th May, Billy embarked at Devonport aboard HMAT Themistocles and arrived in Sydney on 5th July. He visited Hay accompanied by Sergeant Camden DCM on 26th July. They were met at the station by a large crowd before being conveyed to the Post Office square. He was offered a farm property by the people of Gunbar during a visit, but had to decline because he did not feel able to handle a farm with one arm. He lived at "Yuletide", Duke Street, Kensington, New South Wales initially. He moved to Merriwa in 1919/20 where he lived in Bettington Street, and later at the Fitzroy Hotel, before building a house in Flags Road, despite his disability. He became a dealer, buying and selling horses and skins and is understood to have bought a property in Merriwa, but was dogged by six droughts in seven years.

Memorials Request

Paul Lee, who is part of the www.memorialstovalour.co.uk website team, has been part of a project to record all the world's memorials to the recipients of the Victoria Cross. The team have kindly provided me with many images to support my website.

In recent weeks, Paul has begun a project to produce some excel spreadsheets which detail the memorials to Victoria Cross recipients in a country or countries around the world. I have provided links below to the existing documents.

Please take time to look at the work, and if you have information to add, or amend, or indeed any missed memorials, please contact Paul at paulee@memorialstovalour.co.uk

To open a file just click on the country name -

FRANCE

ITALY

BELGIUM

NORTHERN IRELAND

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

SCANDINAVIA

CORFU, GIBRALTAR, MALTA

NETHERLANDS