

## FOR OFFICERS AND MEN, THE SAME MEDALS

*Sir Arnold Wilson suggests that as in the case of the Victoria Cross all rewards for gallantry should be available for all ranks.*

Sir Arnold Wilson, M.P., writing in the "Quarterly Review" on the subject of "Awards for Military Gallantry," after dealing with their bestowal from the Elizabethan period to the present day, referring to Queen Victoria's adoption of the Victoria Cross, states:

"HEROISM should be recognised at all times, and there is no good reason to distinguish between acts of heroism in the field, such as earned Lord Gort his V.C., and equally heroic acts behind the lines which in 1915 earned Captain (now Air Marshal Sir Cyril) Newall the Albert Medal in Gold. From 1856 to 1914 there were 522 V.C. awards; during the last war 579, and five since, of which last all but one were posthumous."

Dealing with other awards, Sir Arnold Wilson writes:

"The Distinguished Service Order (D.S.O.) is for commissioned officers of the three arms of the service only. Alone among British Orders it has no motto. It dates from 1886; the bar dated from 1916. The V.C. is not an order; holders are entitled to no precedence but that of public respect.

### The D.S.O. and the Military Cross

"The D.S.O. is an order, and ranks after the Order of the British Empire. It was originally awarded for meritorious or distinguished service, but the Royal Warrant of 1931 now requires that no one shall be eligible save for distinguished service under fire, or under conditions equivalent to service in actual combat with the enemy.

"We are alone among the nations of the world in having such an order of gallantry 'for officers only.' Awards during the last war totalled 9,002; 709 first, 71 second, and seven third bars were awarded.

"The Military Cross (M.C.) is for officers and warrant officers of the Army and Air Force only (the Navy not being eligible), not above the substantive rank of Major, 'for gallant and distinguished service in action,' whether in the air or on the ground. This definition in the amending warrant of 1931 replaces that of December, 1914, which provided for awards 'in recognition of distinguished and meritorious services in time of war.' Future awards will, therefore, be for gallantry only.

"No annuity or extra pay is provided for officers and the receipt of the decoration confers no precedence, but warrant officers who hold it are entitled to receive a gratuity of £20 on discharge or promotion, and, if pensioned, an extra 6d a day (3d for non-European or Maltese holders). Awards during the last war were 38,004; 2,984 first, 169 second, and four third bars were awarded.

"In no other country does there exist a gallantry medal for army and air force, but not for the navy; for officers and warrant officers, but not for men. The equivalent in the Royal Navy is the Distinguished Service Cross (D.S.C.).

"Officers and warrant officers below the rank of Lieut.-Commander are eligible, provided that their services have been marked by special mention of their name in despatches for meritorious or distinguished services before the enemy. It replaces the Conspicuous Service Cross (C.S.C.), instituted by Royal Warrant in June, 1901. The equivalent in the Royal Air Force is the Distinguished Flying Cross.

"There seem to be good grounds for amalgamating the M.C., D.F.C., and the D.S.C. under the last title, and for making members of all three Services eligible upon identical conditions. It is to the advantage of the Services that, when possible, equivalent distinctions should be awarded for like services and that the decorations should be readily recognisable.

### Acts of Exceptional Valour

"The Distinguished Flying Cross (D.F.C.) is peculiar to the Royal Air Force and is awarded to officers and warrant officers only in recognition of acts of exceptional valour, courage, and devotion to duty whilst flying against the enemy.

"Up to January 1st, 1920, 1,080 Distinguished Flying Crosses had been awarded. The number awarded since is about 1,190. The Air Force Cross (A.F.C.) is also limited to the Royal Air Force and is likewise awarded to officers and warrant officers only, for exceptional valour, courage, or devotion to duty whilst flying though not in active operation against the enemy. Up to January 1st, 1920, 655 Air Force Crosses had been awarded. Number awarded since is about 800."

After writing about the Conspicuous Gallantry Medal (C.G.M.) the Distinguished Service Medal (D.S.M.), the Distinguished Conduct Medal (D.C.M.), the Military Medal (M.M.), the Distinguished Flying Medal (D.F.M.), and the Air Force Medal (A.F.M.), as medals for which the rank and file alone are eligible, Sir Arnold concludes:

### An Inescapable Conclusion

"The inescapable conclusion which most readers will have reached for themselves is that the whole system of awards for gallantry requires overhauling. There should be no awards peculiar to one service, and pecuniary rewards, when they exist, should be the same for all services. There should, as in France, be no awards of gallantry which can be given only to officers, as the D.S.O. and

M.C., D.F.C. and A.F.C. or only to men, as the C.G.M., D.C.M., D.S.M., and M.M., D.F.M. and A.F.M.

"A possible solution would be to replace the M.C., the D.F.C. and the D.S.C. by a new decoration, a Cross for Conspicuous Gallantry for which officers and men of all the fighting services would be eligible. The C.G.M., D.S.M., D.C.M. and the M.M., D.F.M. and A.F.M. might be replaced by two medals, the Distinguished Service Cross and the Meritorious Service Medal. This would promote a feeling of solidarity among all ranks of all the services.

"Gallantry Medals should be easily distinguished from others, and, other considerations apart, there is much to be said for restricting the use of the cross in any form to awards for gallantry, so as to make them more easily recognisable.

"Few would deny that honourable recognition of noble deeds accorded to those who survive and their dependants should they perish helps to create an attitude of mind which is ultimately the deciding factor. That, indeed, is the very basis of every system of honour and awards. Men who receive them, as Plutarch says in his *Life of Coriolanus*, 'do not think so much that they have received a reward as that they have given a pledge'—which they are determined to honour."

### Requisition of Ships

The whole of the ocean-going merchant fleet of the United Kingdom, totalling about 3,000 vessels, is under the requisition of the British Government. Vessels are paid for at fixed rates per month, wherever they are sent, and whatever they are asked to load. They carry either Government cargoes or such cargoes as the Government may direct. Any freights they earn are earned for the British Treasury. This system of requisition did not begin until 1917 during the last war, but this time it was brought into operation almost immediately because of the greater advantage in carrying on the war effort. This requisition of shipping does not apply to ships on the registers of the Dominions and India, which are therefore able to decide what shall be done with their own ships.

### Major-General, Now Private

A major-general is serving as a private in the ranks of the French Army. He was not cashiered, nor has he suffered disgrace. Private de Grancourt is over 65 years of age, and will not take any privileges. He is treated like any other *poilu* of the French fighting forces. In the 1914-18 campaign this man rose to the rank of major. After the war he became a major-general, and led expeditions against the rebel Druses in Syria. When he retired from active service he gained a new reputation as the author of several books on the life and customs of the Syrian peoples. Then came this war. Too old to take his former rank, he insisted on enlisting and serving as an ordinary ranker. There are few private soldiers in either the British or French armies who are able to wear four rows of orders and decorations.

### Ready For Winter

BY the end of March, 32 new huts will be finished at Trentham and tents will be things of the past. During the coming winter all men in camp will be housed in comfortable hutments. Fourteen of the new buildings were taken over by the men of the 2nd Echelon before they went on leave before Easter.

These new huts have gone up as if by magic. Each stands on concrete piles to allow for good ventilation beneath the floor. The walls are put together in one whole piece, lying flat. Then the whole thing is raised and put into position in one operation. Even the window frames are completed before the wall is raised to its permanent position.

Between the weather-boarding and the match-lining of each wall is a layer of tarred building paper, to make for greater warmth and to prevent draughts.

There are eight double windows to each hut, each window opening outwards on hinges. Smaller ones above the large windows allow for ventilation during inclement weather.

Each hut is divided into two parts, with accommodation for 20 men in each partition. Between those partitions there are two cubicles for sergeants on one side, and a large box-room on the other. Here, in this box-room, the men are able to store their private belongings until their departure from New Zealand, when all personal clothing must be returned to the soldier's home.

The interior of each hut is painted a light warm colour, the ceiling and overhead beams white. Outside walls and roof are in two shades of green. Ultimately all buildings in the camp will be painted in this colour, to give a uniform effect. This will also have the effect of brightening up the present drabness of the other buildings.

Plans for the new headquarters mess room have been drawn up. This will be in three sections and will accommodate the officers, sergeants, and other ranks of the Camp Headquarters' staff. It will occupy a vacant space near the entrance to the camp, but not the grassed space in front of the present headquarters building. There will be a tennis court in front of the new mess room.

NEW ZEALAND

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