

HMS CONWAY - WORLD WAR ONE

Companions of the Distinguished Service Order

Major Sydney Vere **Appleyard** (1897/99), Australian Army Medical Corps

LG 30389 dated **19/11/1917** Awards the DSO: *"He established a forward dressing station immediately at the rear of the front line during an attack, and attended continuously to the wounded, frequently going out and dressing cases in the open under heavy shell fire ... his fearlessness under fire was an inspiration to all"*.

The Conway Honours board records the award of a Bar to the DSO; however, the Australian War Memorial Records show that he was recommended twice for the DSO, once on 7 October 1917 and then again on 21 October 1917. On the 28th December he was Mentioned in Dispatches; the only award of the DSO was gazetted in London on 19th November 1917.

Nothing further is known about this Old Conway who "swallowed the anchor" and became a doctor - and dedicated himself to his patients in the carnage on the Western Front.

Lieutenant Geoffrey Howard **Barnish** (1900/02?) RNR

LG 30900 dated **13/09/1918** Awards the DSO: *"For services in action with enemy submarines"*

A terse citation which hides a remarkable story. HMS Fairy was an elderly Torpedo Boat Destroyer built in 1898 operating as an anti-submarine escort under the command of Geoffrey Barnish which tangled with a German submarine UC 75 off Flamborough Head on the night of 31 May 1918. A merchant ship that was being attacked by the submarine managed to ram her and force her to the surface; Fairy arrived on the scene and rammed the submarine; she was in turn herself rammed, but then finally rammed and sank the U-Boat before she herself sank. It was described as "a brief but confused action" - something of an understatement.

There were no deaths in Fairy, but 19 men were lost from UC75.

Tail-end piece: The death was announced in "The Wigan World" on 27 November 1941 of Captain Geoffrey Howard Barnish DSO RD RNR JP, Marine Superintendent at and Harbourmaster of Heysham, a member of a well known Wigan family, aged 54 years.

Lieutenant Colonel Miles **Beevor** (1896/97) East Kent Regiment, attached 1/7th Middlesex Regiment

LG 31370 dated **30/05/1919**: Award of a DSO is listed in the King's Birthday Honours among 132 pages of such honours, but with no specific citation.

Beevor was a regular soldier who was first commissioned as Second Lieutenant on 25/01/1899 and retired after service in India 31/10/1924. The evidence is that he had been a battalion commander and 1st Army Headquarters staff officer on the Western Front. There was also a Major Miles Fitzroy Beevor in the 10th Battalion of Australia Infantry who embarked for Europe in 1914 and served in the Gallipoli campaign; however this is unlikely to be the same Miles Beevor.

In the process of research a sad news item about Beevor's private life was found in the Ashburton Guardian published in New Zealand; he and his wealthy wife were divorced just

after the end of the war - she left the family home in the West End of London "for another" while he went off to India. He death is recorded in Colchester, Essex in March 1969, aged 88 years.

2nd Lieut (Ty Major) Peter Eric **Bent** (10/12) Bedfordshire Regiment

This famous Old Conway hero of the First World War was awarded the DSO before his posthumous award of the Victoria Cross. The London Gazette follows his movements between the Bedfordshire and Leicester Regiments, the last few stating clearly that had had the DSO; however, the actual Gazette and citation for his DSO are not readily available.

H **Berkley** (Years not known)

Information not available

Ty. Lieut. Col. Charles Ross **Campbell** (1890/92) Royal Engineers
(Lieut. Cdr. Royal Indian Marine)

LG 30865 date 23/08/18: Awards the DSO "*For distinguished service in connection with military operations in Mesopotamia*".

The Royal Indian Marine played a significant role in the campaign against the Turkish army in Mesopotamia. Much of the Army's support depended upon river transport and gunboats. For political reasons many RIM officers were assigned military ranks in the Royal Engineers for this period. After the War Campbell returned to the RIM and was promoted Commander in 1919 when the King granted commissions to RIM officers - which eventually led to the formation of the Royal Indian Navy. Recorded as died in Bristol in March 1955.

Commander Herbert Charles Valentine Beresford **Cheetham** (NK) RD RNR

LG 29866 dated 29/12/1916 Awards the DSO "*Was Chief Transport Officer. Performed exceptional service under heavy fire during attacks on Jabassi on 8th October 1914 and the subsequent retirement downstream after dark. He commanded the advance detachment of the Nyong Flotilla on the Edea expedition Enabling the French troops to land without opposition*".

The Cameroons Expeditionary Force was a small but important part of the world conflict; a brief description is at:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West_Africa_Campaign_%28World_War_I%29

Also see the dispatches at:

<http://www.naval-history.net/WW1Battle1409Cameroons.htm>

Cheetham is also mentioned in a Gazette in 1905 when he was a Marine Officer in the Southern Nigeria Marine:

"A force (7 Officers, 6 British Non-Commissioned Officers, 326 rank and file, 6 Maxims, 1 2'95 gun, 1 Gardener gun, 9 marine Officers, 1 stern\wheeler, 4 launches, 8 armoured

canoes, 1 steel canoe, E. J. Kelleher, Medical Officer, A. A. Whitehouse, Political Officer, 85 crews of crafts) assembled at Montanaro, Royal Artillery; garrisons were placed in the principal settlements on the creeks up the Nun River. These prevented several townships from assisting the enemy. Bibikala was hunted from creek to creek, and finally, on the night of the 1st of October, was captured by canoe-men under Lieutenant H. C.V. B. Cheetham, Royal Naval Reserve, of the Southern Nigeria Marine. He was afterwards tried, found guilty of murder, and hanged. The success of the operation was largely due to the co-operation of the Marine Department, under the management of Lieutenant H. A. Child, Royal Navy. Colonel Montanaro commends Lieutenant G. A. S. Williams, Royal Fusiliers, for his work as Intelligence Officer.”

No record can be found of Cheetham's time in Conway which must have been in the 1890s.

Lieutenant Bernard Thomas **Cox** (09/11?) RNR

LG 29264 dated 13/08/1915 Awards the DSO “ ... behaved in most gallant manner when in Trawler No. 318 during the attack on a mine field on 13-14 March (1915). Though severely wounded he refused to quit his bridge until out of action. His vessel suffered serious damage and several casualties.”

HMS Prince George, a 1896 vintage Majestic class battleship, during the Dardenelles campaign where she was employed as a “mine-bumper” - a colloquialism whose meaning is lost but may have involved her being ‘expendable’; Cox, on her books, was assigned to command one of her allocated/attached auxiliary trawlers.

The full report of the Navy's part in the campaign was published in **LG 31322**, page 5496 on 29 April 1919.

On 1 March 1927 Lieutenant Commander B T Cox DSO RNR was awarded the Reserve Decoration (RD); this is the last entry found to date.

Commander Frederick Hume Musgrave **Custance** (1881/83) RD RNR

LG 30153 dated 26/06/1917 Awards the DSO “For services in the Auxiliary Patrol from 1 February to 31 December 1916”.

“The Auxiliary Patrol” was formed from a miscellaneous collection of steam yachts, trawlers and drifters employed on a variety of duties, principally mine-sweeping and against the submarine menace.

The last entry for Custance is his retirement as Captain RNR in March 1919. He was born in Hereford in 1868 and died in Alverstoke on 3 January 1921. He is described as ‘Commander, Royal Mail Steamship Company’. The years at sea in small craft on mine-sweeping and anti-submarine duties in his forties between 1914 and 1918 had possibly taken their toll. See: <http://timsherri.dynalias.net/gene/c239.htm>

Major John Carnegie **de Balinhard** (NK) Eastern Ontario Regiment

LG 13375 dated 02/01/1919 Awards the DSO as one of many so listed in this New Year Honours and Awards listing. “For gallantry and devotion to duty in the field”. There was no further sign of a citation.

There is not much else to be found. The name is well connected to ancient clans and

aristocratic ancestors. His 33 year old son, also named John, followed his father's example in World War Two but was killed in Sicily on 28 July 1943; he was a Lieutenant in the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry at the time.

Commander Alfred Spencer **Gibb** (1882/84) RD RNR

LG 29668 dated 14/07/1916 Awards the DSO:

"The Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty have received with much satisfaction from the officers in charge of the Auxiliary Patrol areas at home and abroad reports on the services performed by the officers and men serving under their orders during the period 1st January, 1915, to 31st January, 1916. These reports show that the officers and men serving in Armed Yachts, Trawlers and Drifters of the Auxiliary Patrol during the period in question have carried out their duties under extremely arduous and hazardous conditions of weather and exposure to enemy attack and mines with marked zeal, gallantry and success."

Alfred Gibb was the winner of the Queen's Gold Medal in 1884. In April 1918 he was mentioned in dispatches for services in the Auxiliary Patrol.

His medal collection is illustrated in an on-line medal auction on 5th March 2010 with the following description :

Alfred Spencer Gibb was born 15 May 1867 in Manchester, England, the son of Master Mariner William Gibb. Educated at Rhodes House School, Manchester but eager to follow his father as a mariner decided to join the naval training school or "school ship" HMS Conway. Joined the Royal Naval Reserve and was promoted to Mid Shipman 1884, and was promoted to Lieutenant 25 January, 1898. Married in 1905 and posted to the Royal Yacht, Gibb was awarded the Prussian Order of the Crown for services aboard the Royal Yacht during the visit of Kaiser Wilhelm in 1908; and received the Royal Naval Reserve Officers Decoration 9 November 1909. In accordance with the Regulations for the Royal Naval Reserve. Lieutenant Alfred Spencer Gibb was placed on the Retired List, with permission to assume the rank of Commander dated 15 May, 1912. Recalled on the outbreak of hostilities in August 1914, he was commissioned to HMY Catania September 1914. Gibb would accomplish a good deal of work alongside monitors and drifters in bombardments off Dunkirk and Zeebrugge, particularly in the autumn of 1915. Transferred to command HMS Nairn from 1917 where he patrolled the North Sea against German Auxillary Cruisers and U Boats. Reports show that the officers and men serving in Armed Yachts, Trawlers and Drifters of the Auxiliary Patrol during the First World War carried out their duties under extremely hazardous conditions of weather and exposure to enemy attack and mines with marked zeal, gallantry and success. On 1 January 1919 Alfred Spencer Gibbs was demoted to be Acting Captain (Retd.). However, on 16 September, 1924 Captain. A. S. Gibb, D.S.O., R.D., was reinstated on the retired list with original seniority from 11 November 1918

<http://www.cjmedals.com/auction/catalog14.pdf>

A death certificate was issued in 1944 in his name in Nottingham.

Major William **Gibson** (NK) MC South Staffordshire Regiment

LG 31043 dated 29/11/1918 Awards the DSO to:

"T./Maj. William Gibson, M.C., S. Staff. R., attd. 10th Bn., W. York. R. For conspicuous gallantry and initiative when in command of his battalion during five days'

operations. He reorganised the battalion after an attack with great skill, pursued the retreating enemy, and assisted in the capture of further important enemy positions. His coolness and determination inspired his men throughout and contributed largely to the success of the operations."

Researching this entry has been unproductive. He was wounded and awarded the Military Cross gazetted on 25/08/1916; otherwise there is little to be found. Yet another Conway who decided to fight the war as a soldier, was commissioned, performed gallantly, and became a Battalion Commander.

Acting Commander Joseph William **Greenhill** (1894/96?) RNR

LG 30687 dated 14/05/1918: Awards the DSO "*For services on the Mediterranean Station*". Not a very helpful citation covering a large number of recipients. This description is usually applied to the Naval Transport Service.

Greenhill's career in the Royal Naval Reserve can be traced in the Gazette from confirmation as Sub Lieutenant on 22/08/1904 until Captain J W Greenhill DSO RD RNR is placed on the retired list on 30/05/1925. Further information is not readily available. There is a possible death recorded in Hampshire in 1949.

Commander George **Gregory** OBE RD RNR

LG 31191 of 18/02/1919 Awards the DSO "*Landing stores and ammunition in Palestine, from October to December 1917. He was Naval Transport Officer in Charge, responsible for landings on an exposed coast of Palestine and by his skill and determination contributed markedly to the success of the operation*"

Gregory was Mentioned in Dispatches On 31/05/1916 for his work in the Dardenelles landings in a gazette devoted to Naval Transport personnel and was later awarded the OBE in the New Year Honours On 31/12/1918. The Sultan of the Nile also awarded him the Order of the Nile IVth Class.

Honours did not cease there for LG 31432 dated 01/01/1919 the King was pleased to award Commander Gregory the CBE "*For valuable services as Divisional Naval Transport Officer, Beirut*".

The first mention in the Gazette is his confirmation as Sub Lieutenant RNR on 24/12/1894. On 07/11/1919 he was promoted to Captain on the Retired List of the RNR. This would infer his Conway dates as around 1888/90.

Temporary Major (Acting Lieut Colonel) F H W **Guard** (01/02), Royal Scots

LG 30450 dated 28/12/1917 Awards the DSO "*For distinguished service in the field*".

Frederick Henry Wickham Guard was a fighting soldier, described as "*a born guerrilla*", who found his metier when he joined the Army at the outbreak of war after a rather chequered "rolling stone" life. A meteoric rise through the ranks saw him become a much respected Battalion Commander who was wounded in Flanders before going on to fight in the North Russian campaign against the Bolsheviks, also serving on General Ironside's staff. On leaving the Army he served with distinction as an Assistant Superintendent in the Royal Irish Constabulary during the Irish "troubles" in the run up to formation of the Irish Free State, and then as Commander of the RAF 3rd Armoured Car Squadron based in Basrah in Iraq up to

1926 where he conducted many successful operations against "dissident tribesmen" in difficult terrain - and gained his RAF 'Wings' as a pilot.

Lieutenant Colonel FHW Guard CMG, CBE, DSO, MiD (twice), CdeG, died in June 1927 of pneumonia, complicated by malaria, aged 37 years. His stirring story is told in a "Tale from the Boards" in The Cadet.

Commander Andrew **Hambly** (1887/89?) RN

LG 30616 dated 05/04/1918 Awards the DSO "*For services in the vessels of the Auxiliary Patrol 1 January to 31 December 1917*"

Hambly was selected for a Supplementary Commission in the RN when he was a Sub Lieut RNR on 15/10/1895. The Navy List of 1908 shows him serving in HMS Indus as a Lieutenant, she was the name ship for the Plymouth Naval Base and "Mechanics Training Establishment". He was placed on the Retired List with permission to assume the rank of Commander on 30/06/1912.

In 1914 the Navy was faced with mobilising a fleet of little ships: trawlers, yachts, etc. to protect the waters from mines, submarines and contraband runners. Experienced officers like Hambly were kept very busy managing these operations.

On the 11 November 1918 he was promoted to Captain (Retired) "*In recognition of services rendered in the Auxiliary Patrol during the war*".

Commander Anthony **Hamilton** (86/88) Royal Indian Marine

LG 29344 dated 29/10/1915 Awards the DSO "*For distinguished services in the field*".

Hamilton was also gazetted with a Mention in Despatches a month later with the same citation. Rather frustratingly there is no indication as to where he delivered the distinguished services. It could be assumed that they were in connection with operations in Mesopotamia where the RIM was particularly active.

Commander Austin Edward **Harold** (87/89) Royal Indian Marine

LG 29876 dated 22/12/1916 Awards the DSO "*For distinguished services in the field in connection with military operations in Mesopotamia*".

Harold was one of several officers of the RIM who held military rank in the Royal Engineers responsible for transporting men and materials along the rivers. The gazette tracks his progress up to Colonel RE in 1920.

In the Gazette of 21/03/1919 he, along with many other RIM officers, was granted "King's Commissions", a move which prefaced the eventual formation of the Royal Indian Navy. By this time Harold was a Captain RIM.

Lieutenant Francis Charles **Harrison** (07/08) Royal Navy

LG 30066 dated 11/05/1917 Awards the DSO "*For Miscellaneous Services*".

The block of names of recipients contains a mention of "Q-Ships" but the subsequent award

of a Bar to his DSO for service in Coastal Motor Boats (CMBs) in the Zeebrugge Raid in April 1918 indicates that he was what came to called "coastal forces".

LG 30807 dated 19/07/1918 Awards a Bar to the DSO "*Was in charge of a CMB Division operating off Ostend. Led his division with conspicuous ability and resource, and carried out the whole programme up to the last moment. Laid out the calcium flares to mark the pier ends in a most efficient manner under a heavy fire from shore batteries and machine-guns*".

On the 4th December 1929 Lieut Cdr F C Harrison DSO* RN was placed on the Retired List at his own request.; on 17th June 1934 he was promoted to Commander (Retd). After this date there is no further mention of his name. Believed died Dec 1974 in Norfolk.

Commander Edward James **Headlam** (1887/89) Royal Indian Marine

LG 29483 of 11/01/1916 Awards the DSO. The name Headlam is among those listed on 56 pages of recipients, the only citation being "*For services in connection with military operations*".

Headlam was granted the temporary rank of Commander Royal Navy while serving as Naval Transport Officer. In the New Year Honours List of 1919 his CMG was awarded to him quoting his RN rank. It is recorded that he was involved in operations in East Africa throughout the war. See:

http://www.headlam.me.uk/html_pages/headlam_E_H.htm

Captain Sir Edward James Headlam Kt CSI CMG DSO RIN retired as Director of the RIN in 1929, he died on 14 July 1943.

Commander Robert Herbert Wilfred **Hughes** (85/86) RD RNR

LG 29423 of 31/12/1915 Awards the DSO: "*For his services during operations in the Cameroons. At the beginning of the campaign Commander Hughes superintended the work of clearing a way through the wreck barrage and piloting HMS Challenger to within bombardment range of Douala, and he has subsequently, at considerable risk and frequently under fire, carried out survey work on the Sanaga, Njong and Campo rivers, and continuously harassed the enemy's coast outposts.*"

A highly regarded Marine Officer in the Colonial Civil Service Marine Department, Hughes is connected with the establishment of Port Harcourt in Nigeria; held the temporary rank of Brigadier General, Royal Engineers during the Gallipoli Campaign for which he was awarded the CMG in 1917. The Conway website list him among our "Conway Notables".

Captain R H W Hughes CB CSI CMG DSO RD died on 23 March 1936

(Your reporter once surveyed "Hughes Channel" near Port Harcourt - now he knows the origin of the name)

Lieutenant George Percy Edward **Hunt** (76/78) RN

This award was made in 1900 in South Africa and is reported elsewhere. Captain G P E Hunt, DSO, RN is listed as "died" while serving in HMS Vivid, Plymouth in 1917.

Lieutenant Commander (Ty Commander) Henry Douglas **King** VD RNVR
LG 29358 dated 05/11/1915 Awards the DSO "*For officers of the Royal Naval Division in recognition of the services in the Gallipoli Campaign*".

Douglas King was a charismatic character who served with great distinction in the RN Division in the Dardenelles and in Flanders. He was a seaman, barrister, and Conservative politician, serving as a Member of Parliament and Minister in the post war government. In 1930 Commodore H D King, PC CB CBE DSO VD RNVR died in a boating accident at sea off Cornwall when his cutter "Islander" sank in a gale with the loss of all six souls on board. See:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Douglas_King_%28Conservative_politician%29

Commander George Holbrow **Lang** (1896/97) RN

LG 30564 dated 05/03/1918 Awards the DSO "*For services in Torpedo Boat and Destroyer Flotillas during the period ending 31/12/1917*"

General Jan Smuts lists Commander G H Lang RN in his dispatches from the East African Campaign on 30th April 1916. It would appear that he moved on to serving in destroyers.

Commander Lang was placed on the Retired List in 1927. Died June 1952 in Stirling, Scotland, aged 70 years.

Commander Alfred Victor Robertson **Lovegrove** (93/95?) RD RNR

LG 31286 dated 08/04/1918 Awards the DSO "*for service in the Auxiliary Patrol between 1 July and 11 Nov 1918; for services in Drifters, Trawlers and Yachts*".

This citation usually means the officers were employed in minesweeping, anti-submarine escorts and defence of coastal waters. It is possible to follow Lovegrove's career at sea through entries in the London Gazette and it can be inferred that he was in Conway in the mid 1890's and served in Canadian Pacific Railways Shipping, being mentioned, as shown below was a senior Master in that company.

Midshipman A V R Lovegrove promoted Sub Lieutenant 15 October 1900
Promoted Captain RNR 31 December 1923
Placed on the Retired List 9 December 1931

In 1935 Captain A V R Lovegrove was in command of "Empress of Asia". Mentioned in the British Columbia Historical Quarterly as "*such well known figures of the Empress Pacific Fleet as A V R Lovegrove ...*" He would have been about 55 years old and must have retired before the outbreak of WW2.

Commander William **Marshall** (89/91) RD RNR

LG 29688 of 14/07/1916 Awards the DSO "*The officers and men serving in Armed Yachts, Trawlers and Drifters of the Auxiliary Patrol from 01.01.1915 to 31.01.1916 carried out their duties under extremely hazardous conditions of weather and exposure to Enemy attack and mines with marked zeal, gallantry and success.*"

LG 30451 dated 28/12/1917 Awards a Bar to the DSO "*In recognition of his services in*

pursuit of the war".

Another Old Conway White Star Line officer serving in the Auxiliary Patrol with great gallantry.

In 1930 he was Commodore Master, White Star Line in command of RMS Majestic and Commodore RNR ADC to the King. Alas, he died in that post at his home in Southampton aged only 53 and the Royal Navy provided a destroyer to carry his remains for a burial at sea off the Isle of Wight. See:

<http://www.encyclopedia-titanica.org/discus/messages/6937/112446.html?1243646653>

Lieutenant Commander Daniel **McDowell** (94/96) Royal Navy

LG 29886 dated 01/01/1917 Awards the DSO "*In recognition of bravery and devotion to duty during minesweeping operations*".

27/11/1917 awarded the Croix de Guerre by the President of the French Republic

Given the Conway dates, McDowell probably passed into "Britannia"; the last entry in the Gazette is when he would have been about 40 years of age: 6th July 1923 Lieutenant Commander Daniel McDowell DSO RN placed on Retired List "*at own request*" in the rank of Commander. No further information about McDowell can be located other than, in the 1901 census, he was in the RN College Portsmouth, described as Naval Officer, and possibly died in St Austell in 1949.

Acting Lieutenant Cyril Edward **McLaughlin** (11/13) Royal Navy

LG 31064 dated 14/10/1919 Awards the DSO "*In recognition of the gallantry and devotion to duty displayed in sweeping and destroying mines, often under heavy enemy fire*"

Sadly, the citation includes the terse statement "*Since killed*". The Commonwealth War Graves Commission records Lieut C E McLaughlin DSO RN died when serving in HMS Humber in North Russia on 05/10/1919 and that he is buried in Archangel Cemetery (Troitzka Churchyard). The Admiralty casualty list records the event as "*accidental explosion*" in the river monitor HMS Humber.

Lieutenant Commander Arthur Alured **Mellin** (86/88) Royal Navy

LG 29866 dated 29/12/1916 Awards the DSO "*In recognition of the skill and determination which he showed in making a successful submarine attack on an Enemy light cruiser on 19th December 1916*".

LG 29997 dated 23/03/1917 Awards a Bar to the DSO "*or acts of gallantry*"

From available information Mellin transferred from the RNR to Supplementary List commission as Lieutenant RN on 15/05/1900 and seems to have been a pioneering submariner. He was promoted to Commander 12 November 1917 as a "*Special promotion for war services*" On 25/04/1918 he was Mentioned in Dispatches "*For services in Ocean Escorts between 01/07/1918 and 11/11/1918*". He retired in 1919.

A website devoted to the Royal Navy in Malta lists Mellin as Lieutenant, single, aged 30 years, born in Stand, Lancashire on board Illustrious 1901. The London Gazette also shows that Sergeant Arthur Alured Mellin RCAF was awarded the DFM on 20/04/1943 under very

gallant circumstances. It seems likely the family tradition of courage and resilience in action continued into the next generation.

Lieutenant Charles Eric **Morgan** (02/04) Royal Navy

LG 31421 dated 24/06/1919 Awards the DSO "*For distinguished service as Navigating Officer, 1st Light Cruiser Squadron*"

Morgan, a specialist navigator, was serving in HMS Caledon in the Baltic when she was deployed against Bolshevik forces in 1919. He was Mentioned in Dispatches on 05/03/1920 for an action in the Gulf of Finland.

Vice Admiral Sir Charles E Morgan KCB CB DSO RN is listed under "Notable Old Conway" in the Conway Club web-site; his last appointment was as Admiral Commanding Reserves. He died at the age of 62 on 1 August 1951, see also:

<http://www.worldnavalships.com/forums/showthread.php?p=83581>

Squadron Commander Eric Roper Curzon **Nanson** (1897/99) RNAS

LG 30133 dated 15/06/1917 Awards the DSO "*In recognition of services with the East African Military Force: he organised his unit with great efficiency and zeal, and carried out reconnaissance and work under great climatic difficulties*". (Taken from entry in "The Cadet")

Born in Carlisle in 1883, Lloyds Captain's register shows Nanson qualified "*Master 1908, Extra 1908, Steamship 1908 and Steam 1909*". He joined the RNR as a Sub Lieutenant in 1906 and gained his flying licence in 1913. He was granted a commission in the RN on 17/02/1914; he remained in the RAF after the war and had a distinguished career before being placed on the half pay list in 1932 as Group Captain E R C Nanson CBE DSC AFC RAF having been promoted to Group Captain RAF 01/01/1929. He died in London in 1960.

This and later date Gazettes actually credit Nanson with the DSC rather than the DSO so there is more than a chance of doubt about this award being listed correctly.

Lieutenant Commander Hans **Oppen** (97/99?) RD RNR

LG 30616 dated 05/04/1918 Awards the DSO "*For services in vessels of the Royal Navy employed in Patrol and Escort duties during the period 1 Jan to 31 Dec 1917*"

Hans Oppen is shown as promoted to Lieutenant RNR on 08/11/1906 implying that he would have been about 23 years and thus born about 1883. Conway years about 1897/99. The last Gazette reference is his promotion to Commander on 29/12/1922. There is coincidental but reasonable evidence that he may have emigrated to Australia as a "man of independent means" in the 1920s after marrying a respected Australian artist, Margaret Oppen (1890-1975). If the 1891 Census is to be believed, his father, a naturalised British Subject, was the UK agent for Colt firearms.

Flight Lieutenant Richard Edmund Charles **Peirse** (06/08) RNAS

LG 29123 dated 09/04/1915 Awards the DSO: "*These officers have repeatedly attacked the German submarine station at Ostende and Zeebrugge, being subjected at each station to heavy and accurate fire, their machines being frequently hit. In particular on 23 January they each discharged 8 bombs in an attack on submarines alongside the mole at Zeebrugge, flying*"

down to close the range.... "

This famous Conway son of a famous Conway father Richard Peirse launched his flying career in the RNVR at the outbreak of war during which he was a bold and effective pilot and subsequently joining the fledgling RAF to reach high office. See <http://www.hmsconway.org/Notablesnew.html> for full details.

Lieutenant Commander (Acting Captain) Charles Mahon **Redhead** (87/88) RD RNR

LG 30451 dated 28/12/1917 Awards the DSO "*For services in the prosecution of the war*".

The terse citation in the New Year Honours gives no information as to how this award was earned, nor where he was serving.

Awarded the RD in 1913, shown as Lieutenant RNR. Promoted Captain 01/07/1921. Died in Tonbridge in 1940 aged 68.

Lieutenant Charles Arthur **Scott** (95/97) Royal Indian Marine

LG 29876 dated 22/12/1916 Awards the DSO "*For services rendered in connection with Military Operations in the Field in Mesopotamia*"

Many Conways were kept busy during this long-drawn out campaign against the Ottoman Empire. His name was one of five RIM officers in this Gazette quoting the same citation and the note "*included in Army awards and lists*".

Lieutenant Commander Henry Philip **Basden-Smith** (1895) RD RNR

LG 29255 dated 06/08/1915 "*For services in the Patrol Cruisers since the outbreak of war*"

Basden-Smith was serving in an Armed Merchant Cruiser, HMS Hildebrand a former Booth Liner, at the time of this award. She was employed with the 10th Cruiser Squadron stopping and searching blockade runners in the Northern North Sea and Western Approaches. Several events and encounters leading to awards are recorded. Basden-Smith was promoted to Commander on 31/12/1918. No further record can be found.

Commander St Ledger Stanley **Warden** (77/78) Royal Indian Marine (Temporary Commander RN)

LG 30581 dated 15/03/1918 Awards the DSO "*For service with the Royal Naval Transport Service in France*"

A number of Conways served in the RN Transport Service which was established in its own right to provide logistical support for the war effort, see:

<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~pbtvc/LondonGazette/Transport.html>

By the time this award was made Commander Warden would have been almost sixty years of age. He died in Cheltenham on 14 September 1951 aged 88. See:

<http://glostons.tripod.com/offzdiedw.htm>

Commander William Henry Farrington **Warren** (92/93) Royal Australian Navy

LG 30687 dated 14/05/1918 Awards the DSO: "*For services on the Mediterranean Station*"

Commander Warren of HMTBD Parramatta was Captain (D) ship of the RAN Destroyer Flotilla. One account quotes: Warren commanded the Australian Destroyer Flotilla operating out of Brindisi in 1918, He had been in Parramatta since outbreak of the war and brought the Flotilla to the Med from Australia. Sadly, on 13th April 1918 he drowned in Brindisi Harbour "while on active service."

He was commanding Parramatta when she was involved in the loss of Australia's first submarine AE1 in September 1914 see: <http://www.gwpda.org/naval/subsunk.htm> for a detailed account of this tragedy.

Lieutenant Commander Graham Francis Winstanley **Wilson** (02/03) Royal Navy

LG 30194 dated 20/07/1917 Awards the DSO "*For Action with Enemy submarines*".

Commanding Officer of HMS Zinnia which successfully attacked an enemy submarine 04/05/1917. There are no details shown in the citation; however it may have been in connection with the sinking of U-29 by Gordon Campbell's ship Pargust on 07/06/1917. Zinnia is mentioned as picking up the survivors.

This entry on the World War 1 Honours Board led to a surprise: Captain Wilson's name has been omitted from the World War 2 Board despite his award of a Mention in Dispatches in 1945, now remedied.

Zinnia was an Azalea Class sloop which Wilson commanded from September 1915 until September 1919. She operated for much of this time in partnership with the Queenstown based "Q"-Ships under Commander Gordon Campbell VC tempting U-Boats to attack defenceless small merchant ships by surface gun-fire, only to find they were well armed and prepared to fight.

Wilson continued his career in the Navy, being promoted to Commander 30/06/1920 and retiring "*at his own request*" in 1932 with the rank of Captain RN (Retd).

Now the surprise. In 1939 Captain Wilson was recalled for service and given command of an Armed Boarding Vessel HMS Vandyck (ex-Lamport & Holt passenger ship). En route to Norway to assist in the evacuation of troops Vandyck was set on fire by enemy aircraft, and she subsequently sank. Wilson and the rest of the survivors was made a Prisoner of War and became the Senior British Officer in the POW camps MARLAG and MILAG near Westertimke, Germany until 1945. For the leadership and inspiration he showed in this role he was mentioned in dispatches.

Wilson died in 1972. In February 2007 his medals were sold at auction by Dix Noonan Webb for £4100. See for the full story:

<http://www.dnw.co.uk/medals/auctionarchive/searchcataloguearchive/itemdetail.lasso?itemid=60261>