



Drayton Parish Council

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Invites you to the unveiling of a commemorative paving stone in honour of
Edward John Mott VC DCM



10:00am Sunday 22nd January 2017, St Peters Church, Church Lane, Drayton , OX14 4JS
The Service will be conducted by the Bishop of Dorchester, the Rt Revd Colin Fletcher OBE
Reception at Drayton Village Hall, Lockway, OX14 4LG. 11:15am



Edward Mott was awarded the Victoria Cross, the highest and most prestigious award for gallantry in the face of the enemy that can be awarded to British and Commonwealth forces, for an action in the First World War. The Centenary of his Victoria Cross award is January 2017.

Born in Drayton on 4th July 1893, Edward was a career soldier. He enlisted in The Border Regiment in 1910 and in 1915 took part in the ill-fated Dardanelles Expedition, where he was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM) "for gallant conduct in leading his company to successive fire positions, and again for conspicuous bravery and good service in attacking over difficult country". He later served in Egypt and then on the Western Front.

When he was 23 years old and a Sergeant in the 1st Battalion, The Border Regiment, Edward was awarded the VC for an action which took place on 27 January 1917 south of Le Transloy, France. Sergeant Mott's company was held up at a strong-point by machine-gun fire. Although severely wounded in the eye, Sergeant Mott made a rush for the gun and after a fierce struggle seized the gunner and took him prisoner, capturing the gun. It was due to the courage and initiative of Edward Mott that the attack on the left flank attack finally succeeded.



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Key dates in the life of Edward John Mott 1893-1967

- 1893 born 4th July in Church Lane, Drayton
- 1898-1907 attended Abingdon Council School (now Carswell Community School)
- 1901 living in Sutton Courtney
- 1907-1910 farm hand with his father at Shippon Manor.
- 1910 31st Dec. enlisted aged 17, in the 1st Border Regiment at Carlisle
- 1910-1914 in Burma with Regiment
- 1915 sailed home and joined 87th Brigade.
- 1915 posted to the Dardenelles in April, as a Corporal
- 1915 28th April, awarded the DCM for gallantry and made Sergeant
- 1917 27th Jan., awarded VC for most conspicuous gallantry
- 1918 2nd Sept., married Evelyn Maud Hopwood at Alverstone, Hampshire
- 1920 11th Nov., VC Honour Guard for The Unknown Soldier, Westminster Abbey
- 1920-1926 Commissionaire, Selfridges Department Store on Oxford Street, London
- 1926-1940 lived in Milton Heights
- 1926-1940 security at 3 M.U. and RAF supply depot in Berkshire.
- 1940-1967 lived at Heather Road, Milton
- 1941-1958 ground staff for Esso Petroleum, Milton Hill
- 1967 20th Oct., died at Witney, aged 74.



9867 Sergeant E. J. MOTT, VC, DCM

For exceptional gallantry and initiative when in an attack, the company to which he belonged was sent up at a strong point to maintain gun fire. Although severely wounded in the eye, Sergeant Mott made a run for the gun, and after a fierce struggle started the gunner and took him prisoner, capturing the gun. It was due to his deed that the left flank attack succeeded.

The gun captured by Sergeant Mott, is the Machine Gun in the museum.



9867 SERGEANT E. J. MOTT V.C., D.C.M.

1ST BATTALION
THE BORDER REGIMENT

Edward John Mott who was born in Drayton, Berkshire, on the 4 July 1893.

Edward's father, John, was born in Sunningwell in 1867. He married a Drayton girl, Jane Harris. They had ten children but sadly Jane died in 1889. According to the 1891 census, the family lived at 20 Church St. (now called Church Lane). In 1892, John married Mrs Lydia Woodley (nee Bradfield) a widow with five children. John and Lydia had three sons; Edward (known to family and friends as Jack), Bert and Frank. Edward attended the local school in High Street before going on to the Council School (now Carswell Community School) in Abingdon. At fourteen Edward left school and worked with his father for Mrs Aldwinkle at Shippon Manor Farm.

On 31 December 1910 at the age of 17 ½ he enlisted in the army at the Border Regiment Depot, Carlisle. After completing his training he was sent abroad to join the 1st Battalion.

Meanwhile storm clouds were gathering in Europe. By December 1912 the German leaders accepted that war was inevitable. It was just a matter of when and where. The answer came on 28 June 1914 when Bosnian student Gavrilo Princip shot dead Arch Duke Frank Ferdinand and his wife at Sarajevo. This single act plunged the world into a war involving 30,000,000 men under arms from twenty nations. On the 4 August 1914 Germany violated Belgium's neutrality and as a consequence Britain declared war on the aggressor.

The outbreak of war found the battalion in Upper Burma. Having been abroad for eight years, they confidently awaited a home posting. Instead they were placed on a war footing in preparation for active service. In December they sailed for home by way of Aden Suez and Gibraltar, arriving in England on 10 January 1915. They joined the 87th Brigade and were stationed in billets in Rugby awaiting orders for an overseas posting. On 17 March the 29th Division to which they belonged embarked at Avonmouth for an unknown destination.

In early 1915 Russia appealed to Britain for help. Turkey had closed the Dardanelles, a stretch of water 40 miles long and up to 4 miles wide, which separates Europe from Asia Minor. British and French battleships and cruisers were sent but after six allied ships were sunk by mines it became obvious that naval action unsupported by military action would not succeed.

On 25 April 1915 the British Expeditionary force landed at five points around the southern tip of the Gallipoli peninsular. The 1st Battalion Border Regiment, with Edward now a corporal, landed at X beach. Here there was no serious opposition at first but soon fierce machine-gun fire swept down from the cliffs. There was a brave charge that pushed the enemy back. The Borderers then dug in. For the next two days the Borderers consolidated their position, losing a few men to sniper fire. On the 28 the brigade was ordered to advance and it was in this action that Edward was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal. His award in the London Gazette, 3 June 1915 read: -

No. 9887 Sergeant Edward Mott, 1st Bn Border Regiment. On 28th April, 1915, during operations South of Krithia for gallant conduct in leading his company to successive fire positions, and again for conspicuous bravery and good service in attacking over difficult country.'

Sergeant Edward John Mott VC

**Medals: Victoria Cross (VC),
Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM)
1914-15 Star
British War Medal (1914-20)
Victory with Mentioned in Dispatches (MiD)
1937 and 1953 Coronation Medals.**



**Embarked with the 1st Battalion for Gallipoli in March 1915 serving as a Private .
Awarded the DCM as Corporal whilst serving with the 1st Battalion.**

“On 28th April 1915, during operations south of Krithia for gallant conduct in leading his company to successive fire positions, and again for conspicuous bravery and good service in attacking over difficult country”.

Edward was promoted to Sergeant after his D.C.M award and was sent to a hospital in Manchester to recover from his wounds. Here he was visited by the widow of his Commanding Officer whom he had rescued under heavy fire. She thanked him for his efforts to save her husband, who was mortally wounded. On his recovery Edward went out again to Gallipoli with a draft of recruits and was wounded again in the face. In hospital at Alexandria an operation was necessary for the removal of a bullet.

The campaign in Gallipoli, involving 60,000 British, Anzac, French and Indian troops had become a stalemate. Lord Kitchener, secretary of war, visited the peninsula and ordered a complete evacuation. The departures in January 1916 were the best-organised features of the ill-fated campaign. It had lasted just thirty-seven weeks.

From Gallipoli the Borderers sailed to Egypt where they undertook rigorous military exercises in preparation for fighting on the Western front. On the 10th March 1916 they sailed from Alexandria to Marseilles and then proceeded overland to Billets at Gorenflos. The battalion was now part of the Fourth Army, which held a line from Albert to the Somme, and for the remainder of the war it saw almost continuous trench warfare. On 21 January 1917 the Battalion in company with the 1st Royal Enniskillen Fusiliers had orders to attack a section of the enemy position south of Le Transloy, known as Landwehr Trench. An artillery barrage of 96 eighteen-pounder guns, with support from 30 Australian howitzers preceded the attack which began at 5:30 a.m. along a 750-yard front. By 7:00 a.m 117 prisoners had been taken and the first and second objectives had been captured with light casualties. But consolidation on the flank proved difficult because of the frozen ground, enemy shelling and pernicious sniping. It was here that Edward became the Border Regiment's first V C of the war.

**He was 23 years old and a Sergeant in the 1st Battalion, The Border Regiment,
during the First World War, when he was awarded the VC.**

No. 9887 Sjt. Edward John Mott, Border R.

For most conspicuous gallantry and initiative when, in an attack, the company to which he belonged was held up at a strong point by machine-gun fire.

Although severely wounded in the eye, Serjeant Mott made a rush for the gun, and after a fierce struggle seized the gunner and took him prisoner, capturing the gun.

It was due to the dash and initiative of this non-commissioned officer that the left flank attack succeeded.

He was presented with his VC by King George V at Buckingham Palace on 4th April 1917.

The actual gun which John captured, now on display at Cumbria's Museum of Military Life, in Carlisle Castle.

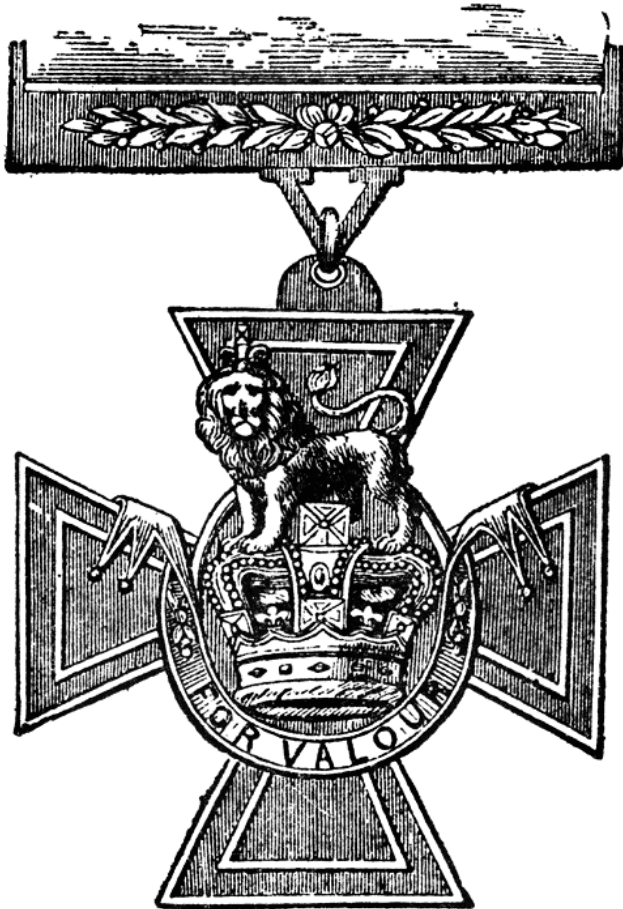


A PROUD FATHER.



John Mott, the aged father of Sergt. E. J. Mott, proudly reads the intimation that his son has won the Victoria Cross.

Leeds Mercury 13 March 1917



“For Valour” is the inscription on the Victoria Cross, Britain's highest military award for gallantry, irrespective of rank, and instituted by Queen Victoria after the carnage of the Crimean War. In its nearly one hundred and fifty year history fewer than 1400 have been awarded.

Trench warfare on the western front dragged on for a further 18 months until the collapse of the Central Powers and the fall of their governments. Peace was declared at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month 1918.

On leave from France on 2 September 1918, Edward married Evelyn Maud Hopgood who was born at Fareham, Hants. They had eight children.



After he left the army Edward became a commissionaire at Selfridges in London. In 1926 he returned to his native Berkshire and was employed on security duties at 3 M.U. an R.A.F. supply depot. The family home was 15 Duke of York Avenue, in Milton Heights.

**THE UNKNOWN WARRIOR'S VC GUARD OF HONOUR:
MEMBERS OF BRITAIN'S HIGHEST ORDER OF COURAGE
WHO TOOK PART IN THE ABBEY SERVICE ON ARMISTICE DAY,
UNDER THE COMMAND OF COLONEL BERNARD FREYBERG**



The VC Guard photographed before the ceremony in Westminster Abbey

The order of the service in Westminster Abbey was published in 'The Times' newspaper on Tuesday, 9th November 1920.

"The Unknown Warrior will be carried to his last resting place in Westminster Abbey between two lines of men who won the Victoria Cross or who had otherwise distinguished themselves by special valour during World War I. These will include representatives of the Royal Navy, the Army, and the Royal Air Force.

The blackest day in Edwards's life occurred on the 21st September 1940 when he was dismissed from his post as a warder at the R.A.F depot. The following extract is from the North Berks Herald dated 4th October 1940.

V.C. DISMISSED AT MILTON. PROTEST TO M.P. EX-SERGEANT'S ALLEGED GRIEVANCE

Major Sir Ralph Glyn, M.P. for North Berks has been approached respecting the dismissal from his post as warder at Milton R.A.F Depot of ex-Segt. Edward John Mott V.C

Mr. Mott told a reporter: "I was ordered to do a special duty at the Depot on 21 September, and it was to stop all personnel, especially officers, and ask for their identification cards. "I tried to stop a new officer I had never seen before, but he ignored my signal. He was also smoking which is an offence, and this I pointed out to him. "My inspector then relieved me off the gates took me to his office, and the officer told him to tell all warders to salute and 'sir' officers, and turning to me said, "You are suspended from duty." I asked why, but he told me to get out of the office. I told him I had not committed any offence and had only tried to do my duty.

"Asked to Resign"

"On the following Monday I saw the C.O. who suggested to me that I should resign. Nothing had been read out to me, and I had not been charged with anything, and my reply to his suggestion was that I should do nothing of the sort. On the Tuesday I was sent a letter indicating that they had no further use for my services at the Depot. "I was suspended on 24 September, had to take leave from 25 September to 1 October, when I finally finished. I have written to the Under-Secretary of the state for Air, Major Sir Ralph Glyn M.P., and the British Legion. "He said. Mr Mott added that his dismissal under existing circumstances would mean the forfeiture of his gratuity, and as he has not been charged with any specific offence he felt that he had a grievance, which should be investigated.

At the end of the forties, the family moved to a house in Heather Road, Milton. Edward was employed by Esso Petroleum at Milton Hill and employed on the ground staff until his retirement in 1958.



Above: (r to l) Edward Mott, Fred Greaves (p254) and George McIntosh (p232) gather in front of Buckingham Palace on 2 June 1953 to watch Queen Elizabeth's coronation procession.



One of the proudest events in Edwards's life began Monday 25 June 1956 when he and his wife attended the Centenary of the Institution of the Victoria Cross in London. The following is an extract from the Milton page of the Deanery of Abingdon Church News.

VICTORIA CROSS CENTENARY

Milton may be justly proud of having one of the five V.C.'s in Berkshire; all of whom attended the Centenary of the Institution of the Victoria Cross, Mr Mott of Heather Road, together with his wife, went to London for the occasion. The ceremonies arranged to do honour to winners of the Victoria Cross began with a very impressive Service of thanksgiving in Westminster Abbey on Monday, 25th June.

The Archbishop of Canterbury spoke to the vast congregation. After the Service the 300 V.C.'s, with their relations, went to Westminster Hall. The Prime Minister was there, and he gave Mrs. Mott his autograph. The V.C.'s and their relatives had tea as guests of the Government in the House of Commons and signed their names. They were made to feel very welcome.

On Tuesday morning, the 26th, the V.C.'s assembled at Wellington Barracks and from there drove to Hyde Park to be reviewed by the Queen. The weather was perfect. The Queen, with the Duke of Edinburgh, drove in an open landau drawn by four Windsor Greys to the dais where they joined other members of the Royal Family. After the playing of the National Anthem the Queen inspected the ranks, and frequently stopped to talk to individuals. She did Mr. Mott the great honour of stopping and chatting to him. When the Queen had addressed the parade, the V.C.'s marched past and off the ground to the playing of the R.A.F. Central Band. Everyone sitting in the stands stood up and all present joined in hand-clapping. So ended a wonderful and glorious parade.

In the afternoon the V.C. holders and their relatives were entertained to a Garden Party at Marlborough House. Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother and Princess Royal were present. The V.C. Centenary Exhibition in the house was open to the guests.

On Wednesday the 27th the Corporation of London held a reception from 8 o'clock to 11 at Guildhall. As each V.C. arrived, he and his wife and shook hands with the Lord Mayor.

On Thursday, Mr. and Mrs. Mott went to the Lyceum where film stars acted as hostesses and entertained the V.C.'s and their relatives to tea and a Cabaret Show.

So ended a truly marvellous week.



On 20th October 1967 Edward John Mott VC. D.C.M died aged 74. His gallantry and campaign medals are now proudly displayed in Cumbria's Museum of Military Life, in Carlisle. With them is the machine gun he captured.



The V.C. awarded for gallantry regardless of rank, is intrinsically almost worthless. It is a small bronze cross made from guns captured in the Crimean War and weighs a little over three ounces. If it is cast in a rather solid Victorian Style with no pretentious to elegance. Its value is its rarity. The award which King Edward VIII once called, 'the most democratic and at the same time the most exclusive of all orders of chivalry - the most enviable order of the Victoria Cross'.





SERGEANT
EDWARD MOTT
BORDER REGIMENT
27TH JANUARY 1917