

FOR VALOUR



THE UNVEILING OF A VICTORIA CROSS
COMMEMORATIVE PAVING STONE IN
HONOUR OF

Second Lieutenant Alfred Herring VC
Royal Army Service Corps

FRIDAY 23 MARCH 2018 AT 11AM

TOTTENHAM WAR MEMORIAL,
TOWN HALL APPROACH ROAD,
LONDON N15



The Victoria Cross

Queen Victoria created the Victoria Cross medal in 1856. It stemmed from the Crimean War, which was one of the first wars to be covered by journalists, who gave eyewitness accounts of battles in their newspapers. They wrote about the heroism of all ranks of the serving military personnel. The Order of the Bath existed for gallant officers, but no such award was available to acknowledge the bravery of ordinary British service men and women.

The original royal warrant for the Victoria Cross stated the award should be:

“Ordned with a view to place all persons on a perfectly equal footing in relation to eligibility for the Decoration that neither rank, nor long service, nor wounds, nor any other circumstance or condition whatsoever, save the merit of conspicuous bravery shall be held to establish a sufficient acclaim to the honour.”

With mounting public support in 1856, Queen Victoria ordered the War Office to strike a new medal to recognise the acts of bravery of all the military, regardless of rank. The award was backdated to 1854 in order to recognise the acts of bravery of service personnel in the Crimean War. Since its inception, the medal has been awarded 1,358 times to 1,355 individual recipients.

The VC ribbon is crimson and one 1/2 inches (38 mm) wide. The original (1856) specification for the award stated that the ribbon should be red for army recipients and dark blue for naval recipients. The dark blue ribbon, however, was abolished soon after the formation of the Royal Air Force on 1 April 1918. On 22 May 1920, King George V signed a warrant that stated all recipients would now receive a red ribbon and the living recipients of the naval version were required to exchange their ribbons for the new colour. Although the army warrants state the colour as being red, it is defined by most commentators as being crimson or 'wine-red'.



First World War VCs

In 2014 the Department for Communities and Local Government announced that as part of the forthcoming national Remembrance events marking the First World War, all recipients of the Victoria Cross awarded between 1914 and 1918 will have a memorial stone unveiled in their honour in the borough associated with the recipient. Where possible, each VC memorial stone should be unveiled on the 100th anniversary date of when the VC was awarded.

Haringey was formed in 1965 of the boroughs of Hornsey, Tottenham and Wood Green. There are four such recipients for Haringey, all falling in 2018.

Each paving stone will be laid at the war memorial for the borough at the time of the war—this means two at the Tottenham Memorial and two at the Hornsey Memorial. The reason for this choice is while none of the recipients were killed during the great war these are visible landmarks where Haringey people remember those that died in the World Wars and recent conflicts.

Haringey's four Victoria Cross recipients were among an astonishing 628 VCs awarded throughout the First World War.

Our first stone will be unveiled today in honour of 2Lt Alfred Herring and three further stones will be unveiled during this year.

This morning we stand together to remember the heroic action of Alfred Herring and we shall reflect on the incredible courage displayed by Alfred one hundred years ago.



Second Lieutenant Alfred Herring

Alfred Cecil Herring (1888-1966) was born in Tottenham, Middlesex on 26 October 1888, the son of George Edward and Cecilia Emily Herring. He was educated at Bruce Grove Primary and Tottenham County Schools and was captain of cricket and football. He chose accountancy as a career and served his articles with D.S. Fripp, passing his final examinations in December 1912.

He joined the Army on 10 December 1914 as a Paymaster and served in Chatham from 1914 - 1916. He joined the Army Service Corps as a Temporary Second Lieutenant and served with them for a year in France between November 1916 and November 1917. He was then attached to the 6th (Service) Battalion, Northamptonshire Regiment.

On 23/24 March 1918 at Montagne Bridge, France, the enemy had gained a position on the south bank of the canal and Second Lieutenant Herring's post was surrounded, but he immediately counter-attacked and recaptured the position, together with 20 prisoners and six machine-guns. During the night, the post was continually attacked, but all attacks were beaten off, largely because Lieutenant Herring was frequently visiting his men and cheering them up.



It was owing to his bravery and magnificent handling of his troops that the enemy advance was held up for 11 hours at a very critical period.

After the action, Alfred was taken prisoner and interned at Graudanz Camp, West Prussia. Some accounts state that he was presented with the VC by the German Commandant of the Camp. Although the award was gazetted on 7 June 1918, he did not receive the news for several weeks. He was later presented to the Kaiser, who congratulated him on a very fine fight. He had been promoted to Temporary Lieutenant, Royal Army Service Corps on 26 April 1918.

On 23 December 1918, he returned to England and on 27 January 1919, he was promoted to Major and served as Group Accountant with the Cost Accounting Committee. King George V presented him with the VC on 15 February 1919. Alfred resigned his commission and left the Army in 1922, becoming a partner in the firm of Evans Fripp Deed & Co. In May 1925, he became a member of the Stock Exchange and was a partner in a stockbroking firm from 1925 to 1961.

While working between the wars, he lived in Fox Lane, Palmer's Green. In February 1922, he married Miss Winifred Frankland at St Barnabas Church, North Dulwich, and in April 1929, they had a daughter. Alfred was an active golfer and having been captain of football and cricket at school, he later captained the Old Boys' Football Club. He attended a couple of VC events during the 1920s and the 1956 VC Centenary in Hyde Park. He held a number of directorships, including one with the Austin Motor Company.

Alfred died on 10 August 1966 in the Oatlands Park Hotel, Weybridge, Surrey, where he was living at the time. He was cremated at Woking Crematorium and his ashes were scattered in the Vase Garden. In his will, Alfred left £82,681 gross, a sum which made him one of the most financially successful of all the 1918 VCs. His medals were donated to the Royal Logistic Corps Museum, Camberley, Surrey.

Alfred Cecil Herring VC



Alfred Cecil Herring's medals including VC on display at the Royal Logistic Corps Museum, Camberley, Surrey (Picture courtesy of Thomas Stewart).



Palmers Green, London



The Royal Army Service Corps (RASC)

The Army Flag (non-ceremonial): is authorized to be flown at any Army or inter-Service events of a non ceremonial nature, at Army headquarters and recruiting offices. The Army Flag is not to be flown as the principal flag denoting Army participation at any international event where the Union Flag should be flown (Ministry of Defence (1996). The Queen's Regulations for the Army 1975. Government of the United Kingdom p. 227. Retrieved on 14 November 2015.).

Royal Army Service Corps



George VI Royal Army Service Corps badge. Motto: *Honi soit qui mal y pense*

The Royal Army Service Corps (RASC) was a corps of the British Army responsible for land, coastal and lake transport, air despatch, barracks administration, the Army Fire Service, staffing headquarters' units, supply of food, water, fuel and domestic materials such as clothing, furniture and stationery and the supply of technical and military equipment. It became a "Forming Corps" of the Royal Logistic Corps.

Programme

10.45am

Guests and public to meet at Tottenham War Memorial

11.00am

Opening Address by Councillor Stephen Mann, the Worshipful, the Mayor of Haringey

Lieutenant Colonel S Day to respond

The VC citation

On 23/24 March 1918 at Montagne Bridge, France, the enemy had gained a position on the south bank of the canal and Second Lieutenant Herring's post was surrounded, but he immediately counter-attacked and recaptured the position, together with 20 prisoners and six machine-guns. During the night the post was continually attacked, but all attacks were beaten off, largely because Lieutenant Herring was frequently visiting his men and cheering them up. It was owing to his bravery and magnificent handling of his troops that the enemy advance was held up for 11 hours at a very critical period.

Mayor to announce the unveiling of the VC memorial stone to 2LT Alfred Herring

Paving stone is unveiled by Mayor and Lieutenant Colonel S Day to step forward

Blessing of the V.C. memorial stone to 2LT Alfred Herring by local clergy

On Completion

The Exhortation (Act of Remembrance)
read by Brian Dee, Chairman,
Muswell Hill and Highgate Royal British Legion

*They shall grow not old
as we that are left grow old*

*Age shall not weary them
nor the years condemn*

*At the going down of the sun
and in the morning*

We will remember them.

All present will repeat: *We will remember them*

The Last Post

One minutes silence

Reveille

Blessing and closing words by local clergy

The National Anthem

God save our gracious Queen!

Long live our noble Queen!

God save the Queen!

Send her victorious,

Happy and glorious,

Long to reign over us,

God save the Queen.

After the service, the Mayor would like to thank everyone for attending and welcome everyone back for tea and coffee at Tottenham Town Hall.

Standards to lead off,
Mayor Senior Officer, Deputy Lieutenant and everyone else to follow.

