

# Honours, Decorations, and Medals to The Royal Corps of Signals for Gallantry & Distinguished Service 1920-2020

This addendum records errors identified in the book in Sections 1 and 2, the Register of Awards and the Appendices (each begins on a new page) and awards to The Royal Corps of Signals made since publication, as of 20 December 2021.

## *Erratum*

(New or amended information is in red.)

### Sections 1 and 2

p. 132, para 3: ‘great reliance on a women...’

p. 133, para 3: Contact with the family of Captain G. P. A. Bégué has allowed a more accurate biographical summary (see below regarding his awards):

Bégué was born on 22 November 1911 in Périgueux, France and his secondary and later education in engineering were completed in Paris before he was called up for national service in the French Army as a signalman; he served with 18<sup>e</sup> régiment du genie (18<sup>th</sup> Engineer Regiment). In 1934 he began his studies in English Literature and History at the University of Hull, where he met his future wife. Bégué went to work as a sales manager for the French company Simca in its dealership on the Champs-Élysées in Paris and the couple were married there in St George’s Anglican Church in 1938. Soon after his wedding, in the autumn of that year at the time of the Munich Agreement he was recalled to service. He was mobilised again in August 1939. At the close of the Battle of France he was evacuated from Dunkirk.

p. 135. Para 1: Lieutenant R. M. Sheppard landed...

p. 135, para 5: in the region. *Pedlar*...

p. 140, para 5: for *their* drop on the night of...

p. 155, para 1: (Pearl Harbour being attacked *first* on the other side of the International Date Line)...

p. 155, para 6: A missing award recommendation resulted in an error of interpretation with regards to the operation of the SOE W/T stations in the Falam/Hakha area of Burma in late 1943; see also the amendments in the Register of Awards (Muir) and Appendix E (De Bu).

From April to the end of October 1943, in support of its operations west of the Chindwin River (‘P’ Force) SOE’s Burma Country Section established W/T stations in the Chin Hills in the Falam/Hakha area. One team was operated by Corporal J. Muir and Mr. E. H. Van Kett, a civilian recruited in Rangoon in 1942 to work with SOE, and a second farther south by Naik De Bu of Burma Army Signals. In October, a station was established 130 miles to the north at Imphal in Manipur, operated by Corporal A. H. Durrant and Signalman B. H. Moore. It was largely due to these *three* teams that Headquarters 4<sup>th</sup> Corps was able to keep in touch with its forward elements. Corporal Muir’s team began to withdraw northwards in October and by December *all of the* teams had returned to Calcutta. All *five* W/T operators were mentioned in despatches. Naik De Bu was later appointed as a Viceroy commissioned officer and mentioned in despatches for a second time and awarded an MC for his work on Mission *Dilwyn*—see Appendix E. Mr. E. H. Van Kett was later commissioned onto the General List, Indian Army and made an MBE for his work with SOE.<sup>1</sup>

p. 169, para 5: Using a *resistance-operated* telephone...

p. 384: This corrects the record of the Belgian award of the Order of Leopold II to Captain G. P. A. Bégué and an error in the layout of the accompanying table:

#### **Order of Leopold II**

(Dutch—*Orde van Leopold II*; French—*Ordre de Leopold II*)

Major G. Blackburn and Captain G. P. A. Bégué were made Officers (the latter for his work with SOE) and 16 Royal Signals officers were made Knights for their Second World War service in the North-West Europe Campaign (the awards to Major G. P. Burt, Captain R. A. G. Whiteman and Captain G. R. Wolff were for bravery in action):

Order of Leopold II, Officer

Major G. Blackburn

Captain G. P. A. Bégué

Order of Leopold II, Knight

Captain (Technical Maintenance Officer) J.  
K. Aitchison  
Captain G. A. Bridge  
Major G. P. Burt  
Captain D. R. Cargill  
Major R. J. Harvey

Captain W. Hemmings  
Captain G. V. Leath  
Major F. Signey  
Major I. W. K. Smith  
Major J. B. Smith  
Major K. R. Sporne

Major B. E. Sykes  
Lieutenant Colonel E. W. Townsend  
Lieutenant Colonel J. M. S. Tulloch  
Captain R. A. G. Whiteman  
Captain G. R. Wolff

## Register of Awards

BÉGUÉ, Georges Pierre André (alias George Robert Noble).<sup>2</sup>

**Military Cross.** Lieutenant. (*Nom de guerre* Georges Robert Mercier; codename *Bombproof*; field name *Georges*.) Autogiro Network, Special Operations Executive. WWII. France, European Theatre. *This officer was the first agent to go to France for the organisation. He was dropped blind by parachute in May 1941, succeeded in establishing himself and his W/T set with which he maintained almost daily communication with headquarters until the following October, rendering most valuable service. He was trapped, arrested and imprisoned at Périgueux, where he not only kept silent in spite of severe torture, but tried with great spirit to install a W/T set within the concentration camp. After months of rough treatment, he escaped in July 1942, crossed the Pyrenees, but was imprisoned in Spain. He has now returned to this country. This officer's great personal courage supported by his initiative and undeviating devotion to duty, apart from enabling us to lay the foundations of our organization in France, have been the inspiration of all those who came after him in the field.* LG 22 July 1943; 36102, p. 3317.

**Légion d'honneur, Chevalier (France).** Captain. (*Nom de guerre* Georges Robert Mercier; codename *Bombproof*; field name *Georges*.) Autogiro Network, Special Operations Executive. WWII. France, European Theatre. *The first organiser to parachute into Europe, this officer dropped into France in April 1941, and succeeded on his own in establishing a network, forming all the necessary contacts and maintaining communications between himself and London. Forty-eight hours after his arrival in France he contacted London and for six months this link was uninterrupted. As a result of betrayal, he was arrested with French and British colleagues. During his imprisonment he never stopped planning an escape; he even tried to get a wireless station into the camp where he was held. Thanks to his efforts the escape of twelve officers was successful. He took charge of a group of six officers who crossed France to reach Spain. On his return to England, despite fatigue and exhaustion due to the rigors of the Spanish diet, he went to work with the staff in London. Since 1942 this officer has ensured all radio communications for the London organization. His extraordinary devotion, his courage and resourcefulness, his unlimited patience and his perseverance during those long years were truly remarkable.* Date of Award: 27 August 1945.

**Médaille de la Résistance, Officier (France).** Commandant. Free French Forces. WWII. France, European Theatre. Date of Award: Decree of 31 March 1947.

Order of Leopold II, **Officer** with palm with *Croix de Guerre* with bronze palm (Belgium). Captain. Special Operations Executive. WWII. European Theatre. Date of Award: 14 April 1949.

CHINN, Major William Ernest.<sup>3</sup> Despatches. WWII. Battle of France. LG 20 December 1940; 35020.

CLEPHAN, Reginald Evelyn Scott.

*Despatches. 50194 (Acting) Serjeant. Royal Engineers Signal Service. WWI. East Africa Campaign. LG 8 February 1917; 29933, p. 1353.*

OBE (Military). (Temporary) Lieutenant Colonel. Scottish Command Signals. WWII. Home Forces. LG 2 June 1943; 36033.

KENWORTHY, Harold.

*Despatches. (Temporary) Major. Officer Commanding No. 1 Ship Signal Section, Landing Ship Headquarters HMS Bulolo, Task Force 'G'. WWII. Operation Neptune—the Normandy landings, North-West Europe Campaign. Major Kenworthy has commanded No. 1 Ship Signal Section of the Royal Corps of Signals embarked in 'Bulolo' since September 1942 and he has been responsible for their organisation, training and cooperation with various Army assault forces throughout this period. Finally, in operation 'Neptune', his unremitting zeal and devotion to duty have resulted in his unit producing results of the very highest standards—results which have earned the praise of the general commanding 50<sup>th</sup> Division and the general commanding 30<sup>th</sup> Corps, both of whom have stressed to me the excellence of his work and that of his men. This, I submit, has very materially assisted in the success of the assault and subsequent military movements.* LG 9 November 1944; 36785.

*Despatches. (Temporary) Major. WWII. Italian Campaign. LG 19 July 1945; 37184.*

MUIR, 2584738 (Acting) Sergeant John. Despatches. Special Operations Executive. WWII. Burma, South-East Asia Theatre, 1943. *This man was NCO in charge of a W/T station of Military Establishment No. 9 located at Falam from 14<sup>th</sup> July 1943 until withdrawn to Calcutta on 15<sup>th</sup> December. During this period with one other operator he maintained continuous W/T contact with the unit's stations at Imphal and in the Haka/Falam area. For some time these links were the only means of communication between 4<sup>th</sup> Corps Headquarters and forward Army units. On 31<sup>st</sup> October 1943 the area commander at Falam ordered Corporal Muir's station to withdraw to Surbung (five stages distant). Corporal Muir was left entirely on his own to make transport arrangements, this being no easy matter owing to lack of coolies. He was instructed to destroy his equipment and documents if withdrawal was impossible. In spite of many difficulties and by sacrificing his personal effects he succeeded in moving the complete station to the new location. During the move W/T contact was maintained and intelligence reports regularly relayed. Later he was ordered to move to Champai, and during this move W/T contact was again maintained. On the 29<sup>th</sup> November 1943 Corporal Muir's station was ordered to withdraw to Calcutta. This was successfully accomplished with many hardships and both operators together with all their equipment arrived in Calcutta on the 15<sup>th</sup> December. This NCO showed marked qualities of initiative, leadership and grit.* LG 4 January 1945; 36876. *Despatches: Lieutenant E. H. Van Kett, General List Indian Army—Muir's other operator.<sup>4</sup> See also Corporals A. H. Durrant and B. H. Moore. See also Appendix E—Naik De Bu, Burma Army Signals.*

## Appendices

### Appendix E, p. 828.

DE BU.

Despatches. W/104 Naik. Special Operations Executive. Burma Campaign. *Naik De Bu was the sole W/T operator at a mobile station of Military Establishment No. 9 located in the Falam/Haka area during the period October to December 1943. Working alone in exceptionally trying and fatiguing conditions he maintained his station in continuous contact with the two stations of the unit located in adjacent areas. His station was moving through extremely difficult country almost continuously during this period and as a result the equipment often suffered damage. Nevertheless, De Bu effected the necessary repairs in addition to enciphering and deciphering messages and operating his set. His station continued to act as a link between 4<sup>th</sup> Corps Headquarters and Lieutenant Colonel Oatts' party until withdrawn to Calcutta at the end of December and was the only contact between advance units in his area and 4<sup>th</sup> Corps Headquarters throughout a critical period.* LG 4 January 1945; 36876. Awarded the Distinguished Service Order: Lieutenant Colonel L. B. Oatts, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, Chin Rifles.<sup>5</sup> **See also Corporal J. Muir, Corporal A. H. Durrant, and Corporal B. H. Moore.**

Despatches. W/104 Jemadar. Mission *Dilwyn*, Special Operations Executive. Burma Campaign. LG 7 November 1946; 37780.

**Military Cross.** W/761 Subadar. Group *Badger*, Mission *Dilwyn*, Special Operations Executive. Burma Campaign. *(No recommendation.) In recognition of gallant and distinguished services whilst engaged in special operations in South-East Asia (prior to September 1945).* LG 25 July 1947; 38024, p 3479.

# New Awards to The Royal Corps of Signals

## Register of Awards

JACKSON, Lance Corporal Gareth Stanley Richard. MBE (Military). (New Year Honours.) LG 31 December 2020; 63218, p. N6.

RIDLEY, Captain Michael David. MBE (Military). (Birthday Honours.) LG 12 June 2021; 63377, p. B7.

SHARKEY Brigadier Sara Louise. CBE (Military). (Birthday Honours.) Head of Application Services and Development Operations, Defence Digital, Strategic Command. LG 12 June 2021; 63377, p. B6.

## Appendix J—Awards of the Royal Signals Institution

### Princess Mary Medal

MCEWEN, Corporal M. 660 Signal Troop, 29 (Explosive Ordnance Disposal and Search) Group. *Corporal M. McEwen was deployed at short notice under Operation Pitting, the hasty evacuation of United Kingdom national and entitled Afghans from Kabul, as the explosive ordnance disposal and search team's electronic counter-measures operator; he was the sole Royal Signals soldier within the mixed Royal Engineers and Royal Logistic Corps team. On the evening of 26<sup>th</sup> August 2021, a person borne improvised explosive device exploded within the vicinity of Hamid Karzai International Airport resulting in a large number of fatalities and casualties. As part of the explosive ordnance disposal team located at the Hotel Baron, Corporal McEwen reacted immediately and deployed towards the horrific scene of the explosion. His courage, initiative and professionalism under extreme pressure in what ensued had a major impact on the success of the United Kingdom mission. Notwithstanding the risk of a follow-on attack, he positioned his electronic counter-measures equipment to provide protection for both British personnel and also the United States forces extracting their casualties from the scene of the explosion and the displaced persons in the vicinity. In addition, he then became the communication link between the explosive ordnance disposal team and higher formations, providing regular situation reports and key information and ensuring that effective command and control was maintained. He did all this with extreme professionalism in a calm and concise manner in a situation that was both chaotic and stressful, fully embracing the very best traditions of the Corps. He is a very worthy recipient of the Princess Mary Medal.* Date of Award: 2021.

### Royal Signals Institution Silver Medal

BROWN, Corporal K. B. 10<sup>th</sup> Signal Regiment. Date of Award: 2021.

CARTER, Staff Sergeant D. 11<sup>th</sup> (Royal Corps of Signals) Signal Regiment. Date of Award: 2021.

FATAKI, Staff Sergeant J. M. 13<sup>th</sup> Signal Regiment. Date of Award: 2021.

GRIFFIN, Sergeant R. T. 13<sup>th</sup> Signal Regiment. Date of Award: 2021.

SMALL, Corporal S. R. 10<sup>th</sup> Signal Regiment. Date of Award: 2021.

### Master of Signals Award

16<sup>th</sup> Air Assault Brigade Headquarters and Signal Squadron (216 Parachute) Deployed Team, Operation *Pitting*. Date of Award: 2021.

Land Information Assurance Group and 254 (Specialist Group Information Services) Signal Squadron Joint Team. Date of Award: 2021.

Project *Caduceus* Team. Date of Award: 2021.

CARSON, Lance Corporal B. 3<sup>rd</sup> (United Kingdom) Division Signal Regiment. Date of Award: 2021.

DURHAM, Mr. Simon. Defence Digital, Strategic Command. Date of Award: 2021.

HOPKINSON, Staff Sergeant (Foreman of Signals) (Information Systems) S. 30<sup>th</sup> Signal Regiment. Date of Award: 2021.

MACKIE, Warrant Officer Class II (Yeoman of Signals) J. 11<sup>th</sup> (Royal Corps of Signals) Signal Regiment. Date of Award: 2021.

QUICK, Signaller J. Date of Award: 2021.

SIZELAND, Mrs. Linda. *For services as Grant Co-ordinator, Royal Signals Association.* Date of Award: 2021.

TENNICK, Captain (Technical Officer Telecommunications) (Information Systems) G. D. 22<sup>nd</sup> Signal Regiment. Date of Award: 2021.

WILLIAMS, Corporal J. 16<sup>th</sup> Air Assault Brigade Headquarters and Signal Squadron (216 Parachute). Date of Award: 2021.

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- <sup>1</sup> MBE (Military). Lieutenant Ernest Henry Van Kett, General List, Indian Army. Group *Mongoose*, Operation *Character*, Special Operations Executive. WWII. Burma Campaign. LG 25 September 1947; 38079, p. 4514. Recommendation: TNA: WO 373/104/106.
- <sup>2</sup> Obituary: *The Daily Telegraph*, 29 January 1994.
- <sup>3</sup> Lieutenant Colonel W. E. Chinn died of natural causes while on a train travelling from Solihull to Nottingham on 1 March 1947. He is commemorated by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission at Brookwood Cemetery.
- <sup>4</sup> Despatches. Lieutenant Ernest Henry Van Kett, General List, Indian Army. Special Operations Executive. WWII. Burma Campaign. *Mr. Van Kett is a civilian operator employed by Military Establishment No. 9. He was recruited in Rangoon in the early days of the 1942 Burma campaign and has served continuously with the unit's forward stations in Burma since that time. From 14 July 1943 he was second operator on a two-man W/T station located at Falam until the station was withdrawn to Calcutta on 15 December 1943. During this time under the command of Corporal Muir continuous W/T contact was maintained between this station and the unit's stations at Imphal and the Hakha/Falam area, these links being for some time the only means of communication between 4<sup>th</sup> Corps Headquarters and forward Army units. On 31<sup>st</sup> October 1943 the station was ordered to withdraw to Surbung (five stages distant) and Mr. Van Kett assisted Corporal Muir in the difficult task of moving the complete station to the new location, which was successfully accomplished with contact maintained throughout the move. The second move was later effected on orders to Champai, W/T contact again being unbroken during period. On orders to withdraw to Calcutta, Mr. Van Kett assisted Corporal Muir in moving the station with equipment complete to Calcutta on 15 December 1943 through many hardships. Mr Van Kett had previously distinguished himself when serving with the unit's W/T station at Fort Hertz in May 1942, the circumstances being equally difficult to those now recorded. Mr. Van Kett has throughout shown outstanding courage, zeal and devotion to duty. LG 7 November 1946; 37780, p. 5467.*
- <sup>5</sup> Distinguished Service Order. Lieutenant Colonel Lewis Balfour Oatts, Highland Light Infantry (City of Glasgow Regiment). Commanding Officer, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, Chin Rifles. *Lieutenant Colonel Oatts took over command of the Chin Levies in May 1943 and continued to command them for two years. During this period the Japanese reached the peak of their strength in the Chin Hills and practically all regular troops were withdrawn. Colonel Oatts retained the loyalty of his men and continued offensive operations against the Japanese and their puppet troops throughout the whole period in spite of the gravest difficulties, and finally took part in the offensive which drove the Japanese from the hills. The Chin Levies destroyed at least 1,000 of the enemy and in addition caused much damage to enemy communications and supplies. LG 17 January 1946; 37433, p 498.*