


NOTES ON SOME INTERESTING BRITISH MEDALS.

BY CHARLES WINTER.

T the Meeting of March 23rd, 1910, at which exhibitions of military and other medals were specially invited, Mr. S. M. Spink showed a collection from which the following have been selected for illustration, or description, and I have been asked by the Editors to offer a few explanatory remarks upon them.

The "Blake" gold medal, Fig. 1, is one of the rarest in the Naval series, and was issued by the Commonwealth to those officers who fought under Blake in the war against the Dutch in 1653. The specimen illustrated is of the smaller size, and was granted to captains. On the obverse is an anchor from which is suspended three shields charged with the crosses of St. George and St. Andrew, and the Irish harp. Reverse, ships in action. The larger medal granted to senior officers was surrounded by a wide border representing the bow, stem, mast, flags, drums, and arms taken from the enemy; both are in gold, and the work of the celebrated engraver Thomas Simon. Blake's own medal was purchased by His Majesty, King William IV.

The silver medal, Fig. 8, which bears the head of George II. is extremely rare, and was issued by an association formed by the Society of Friends in Philadelphia for the purpose of encouraging peace with the Indian tribes. *Obverse*, a laureated bust of George II., GEORGIUS · II · DEI · GRATIA · . *Reverse*, a white man and Indian seated by a fire, the former is passing the calumet of peace; on the

right is a tree and on the left the sun ; in the exergue is the date 1757. Legend, LET US LOOK TO THE MOST HIGH WHO BLESSED OUR FATHERS WITH PEACE.

Medals were struck in gold, silver, and bronze to commemorate the exploits of the two services against France, in consequence of the encroachments made by her upon our North American Colonies. On the obverse is a rock on which is a globe inscribed "America, Canada," supported by a soldier and sailor at whose feet is lying a prostrate figure representing France, who is in the act of letting fall a fleur-de-lys ; above the globe is a scroll on which appears the motto PARITER IN BELLA ; the Union Jack and Fame. *Reverse*, view of the cutting out of the "Prudent" and "Bienfaisant." Legend, "LOVISBOVRG TAKEN MDCCCLVIII." The specimen shown by Mr. Spink was in gold.

A very interesting medal is the small gold memorial presented by Lord Newark to the commissioned officers of the Nottingham Troop of Yeomanry on the occasion of their disembodiment, May 13th, 1802. *Obverse*, bust of king to right, GEORGIUS III. MDCCCII ; *reverse*, an old oak tree—the oak of Sherwood—on which is inscribed "FOI LOI, ROI" : below, "Green Dale Oak" ; above, "NOTTS YEOMANRY." The non-commissioned officers and privates received it in silver.

A group of decorations granted to two brothers. The gold and enamelled cross is the badge of a Companion of the Order of the Bath, and is accompanied by the field officers' gold medal for the Battle of Albuhera, May 16th, 1811, when Beresford defeated the French under Soult. It was worn with a crimson riband with blue edges to which is attached a massive gold clasp granted for services at the capture of Martinique. The two decorations were conferred on Lieut.-Colonel John Mervin Nooth of the 7th Foot, now The Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment), which formed part of the Fusilier brigade in the memorable charge on the heights of Albuhera, when their loss was so heavy that it was proposed to form the remains of the two battalions into one. The silver medal with clasp for Corunna is one of the Military General Service type granted in 1848

by Queen Victoria. On the edge is inscribed, "Captain H. Nooth, 14th Foot."

On the assumption of the title of Empress of India in 1877 by Her late Majesty Queen Victoria, large gold, Fig. 6, and silver medals were struck in commemoration of the event. *Obverse*, diademed bust of the Queen-Empress with veil VICTORIA 1ST JANUARY, 1877; *reverse*, "Empress of India" in Persian, English, and Hindustani, the whole surrounded by an ornamental border. The medal was worn round the neck by a broad crimson riband.

The gold Seringapatam medals issued by the Honourable East India Company are very rare, and few collectors are able to produce an original specimen. Many restrikes, however, have made their appearance in late years. The medal, illustrated as Fig. 4, is a very fine original, and is one of only three that I have seen. *Obverse*, the British lion trampling on the Bengal tiger; a pennon floating overhead bears Tippoo Sultan's title "Asadullahal Ghalib"; exergue, IV May, MDCCXCIX. *Reverse*, view of Seringapatam with troops advancing to the assault; exergue, a Persian inscription. Mathew Bolton in 1801 struck:—

30 Gold.
185 silver-gilt.
850 silver.
5,000 bronze.
45,000 tin.

After a practicable breach had been made, on May 4th, 1799, the grand assault followed, and in a short space of time the British colours were planted on the summit of the breach.

Another rare medal given by the above company is that issued to the Coorgs for their loyalty to the British Government in suppressing the mutiny of their neighbours. *Obverse*, a Coorg warrior in the act of striking; legend in Canarese; *reverse*, trophy of Coorg arms. Legend, FOR DISTINGUISHED CONDUCT AND LOYALTY TO THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT, COORG, APRIL, 1837. The medal, Fig. 3, is in gold, but it was also issued in silver. Casts of these medals have of late been offered at sales.

One of the rarest decorations of recent years is the Albert Medal, granted for saving life. It consists of two classes, first, in gold, and second, in bronze. That for saving life at sea is distinguished by bearing an anchor and the monogram V.A. on a blue enamelled ground, and is worn attached to a blue and white riband, whilst that for saving life on land bears the monogram "V.A." on a red enamelled ground, and is worn with a red and white riband. The specimen shown as Fig. 5 is the second class badge for services on land.

Two examples of the Victoria Cross; one, Fig. 3, granted to a sailor which is worn on a blue riband, and the other granted to a soldier which is attached to a crimson riband. Both crosses are accompanied by the Indian Mutiny medal. The former was granted to Seaman Edward Robinson, Royal Navy, who died at Windsor, October 2nd, 1896. It was at Lucknow whilst serving in the Naval Brigade that he gained his Victoria Cross. On March 13th, 1858, the battery served by the Naval Brigade ignited, owing to the sandbags catching fire. Robinson dashed up and, under a terrific fire from the enemy, who were only 50 yards distant, succeeded in extinguishing the flames, but was dangerously wounded during this heroic act. The latter was granted to Corporal William Goat. This brave young soldier took part in the siege and capture of Lucknow in 1858. On March 6th, while in action with the enemy's cavalry, he coolly dismounted, took up Major Smyth of the 2nd Dragoon Guards, who was thought to be only severely wounded, and attempted to remove him off the field. This, at first, he was unable to accomplish being surrounded by the enemy's horse. Nothing daunted, he made a second attempt, this time under a heavy fire, and, succeeding in his endeavours in defiance of the rabble around him, removed the officer's body, for he was then dead, out of reach of those waiting to mutilate it.

A series of medals known as The Naval General Service which was granted for services during the turbulent period of 1793-1840. A clasp was issued for each engagement at which the recipient was present, but six was the largest number granted to any one man. That illustrated as Fig. 10 has three clasps. I would call attention to the single clasp "Trafalgar" exhibited, which is accompanied by a pewter



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medal presented to the seamen by Mathew Bolton, and is contained in an old Pinchbeck case.

The next series is that which was issued on the same occasion to the Army, and is known as The Military General Service. Unlike the sister service, many recipients received a large number of clasps, and they range from one to fifteen, but only two men were able to make good their claims for the largest number. The medals exhibited had from one to thirteen clasps, Fig. 11.

Medals issued to The Army of India, 1799-1826, Fig. 12, and for the campaigns of Waterloo, Fig. 7, Afghanistan 1842, Scinde 1843, Gwalior 1843, Sutlej 1845-1846, New Zealand 1845-1846, Fig. 4, Punjab 1849, Crimea 1854, New Zealand 1863-1866, and others of a later period including Egypt and Soudan 1882, were also exhibited.

