

CROSS

JUST A PLAIN MALTESE OF BRONZE, WITH THE ~~INSCRIPTION~~

Its plain Maltese Cross of bronze, with the simple inscription "FOR
INSCRIPTION - "FOR VALOUR".

~~It is a badge of courage, the Victoria
Cross.~~

The value is about a shilling. It's honour is priceless. To buy one?

Well, listen to the bidding at Christie's for Sgt. Craig's V.C., won in
the Crimea / SOUND

Up past the £400 mark - a new record price.

But what are the qualities that have won this decoration? Self-Sacrifice:

Armed
the Merchantman sailing towards the enemy to save the convoy.

Immortal courage and daring, often against overwhelming odds. The Battle
of Britain pilot.

Endurance and fortitude, coupled with extreme devotion to duty ~~in~~
~~in~~ desert waste or jungle swamp.

It all began 100 years ago, when Queen Victoria decided that there should
be an award for supreme gallantry. Lt. C.D. Lucas was the first
recipient, when ~~sixty-two~~ crosses were presented by the Queen, in Hyde
Park, in 1857. 2

Most of the awards were made for acts of bravery in the Crimea.

AN EARLY WINNER,
~~Lord Roberts~~ Lord Roberts, heads one of three instances of Father and
Son V.C.'s.

One of the first airmen honoured was Lt. Leefe Robinson, who shot down a
Zeppelin.

Here, King George the Fifth ~~decorates~~ invests heroes during the First
World War, and a boy receives a posthumous award - a feature instituted
by ^{KING} Edward the Seventh.

World War Two. Sgt. Hannah wins the V.C. at eighteen - after fighting a
fire in his ^{crippled} ~~crippled~~ bomber. 2

In the desert, the late King decorates a Ghurka officer: The Cross was
made available to Indian troops in 1911.

~~Accidentally killed~~ Sgt Kenneally, who routed over two hundred Germans in a single-handed charge.

~~There - outstanding among a company of heroes~~ Major Cain of Arnhem fame

~~in 1944, Conington, in Cheshire, welcomed home Sgt. Bailey, the man who~~

~~wiped out three machine gun nests.~~

Back to peace. The heroes became ordinary citizens, they ~~preferred~~ preferred it that way. But a reunion of Bomber Command V.C.'s reminded us, again, of a gallant company ~~of~~

One of these, Group-Captain Cheshire, was winning a battle for ^{his own} health ~~with~~

~~and fighting the battle of recovery for others in the Cheshire Homes.~~

From the upright Chelsea Pensioner, with his memories of the Boer War, to Lance-Corporal Bill Speakman, a Korean V.C., this exclusive brotherhood, drawn from all walks of life, is united by the highest ideals of chivalry.

Another Korean hero, Colonel Carne, who led the "Glorious Gloucesters" to immortal fame.

Yet, not the least of their qualities is that of humility. For though they fill an honoured place in national celebration, such as the Victory Parade, the V.C.'s recognise, in the ranks of their fellow-servicemen, the loyalty and comradeship that inspired their own bravery.

~~There have been 1344 holders of Queen Victoria's Cross - We pay centenary~~
^{what Teanyson has called}
tribute to "the goodliest fellowship of famous knights whereof this ~~world~~
world holds record!"