

VICTORIA & GEORGE CROSSES

June 2019

Our family tree includes 4 recipients of the **Victoria Cross** and 2 recipients of the **George Cross**. These were awarded between 1897 and 1942. Sadly, none of the recipients is still living but we will be remembering them this month as part of our commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the D-Day landings on 6th June 1944.

The Victoria Cross was introduced on 29th January 1856 by Queen Victoria to reward the bravery of her soldiers in the Crimean War. Originally all Commonwealth combatants were eligible but since then Australia, New Zealand and Canada have introduced their own equivalents. Initially the VC could not be awarded to those who had died in the action but this was changed in 1902 when 6 VCs were awarded posthumously to soldiers of the Second Boer War.



Victoria Cross

The George Cross was instituted on 24th September 1940 by King George VI at the height of the London blitz. It is awarded to recognise civilian gallantry in the face of the enemy. The GC replaced the Empire Gallantry Medal (EGM) and all holders of the EGM were instructed to exchange their medals for the new GC, a substitution unprecedented in the history of British decorations. This substitution ignored holders of the Albert Medal (AM) and the Edward Medal (EM) awards which both took precedence over the EGM. The anomaly was rectified in 1971 when the surviving recipients of the AM and the EM became George Cross recipients and were invited to exchange their medal for the George Cross. **John Gregson (1924-2016) #10872** on the web family tree was one of the 16 holders of the AM who refused the option to exchange. He argued that it was the AM he had been given by George VI and it was the AM that he intended to keep for the rest of his life.



George Cross

The next 6 Cobbwebs are devoted to our 6 recipients and are presented in date of award order starting with the oldest.