

AN EXTREMELY FINE 93RD HIGHLANDERS 'THIN RED LINE' CRIMEAN WAR AND INDIAN MUTINY PAIR TO A PRIVATE WHO'S DETAILED OBITUARY CONFIRMS HIS PRESENCE AT BALACLAVA, SOMETHING RARELY TO BE FOUND WITH NON OFFICER OR CASUALTY MEDALS



CRIMEA 1854-56, 3 CLASPS, ALMA, BALAKLAVA, SEBASTOPOL '2034 PTE EDWD COLLINS 93RD FT', OFFICIALLY ENGRAVED BY HUNT AND ROSKELL, INDIAN MUTINY 1857-59, 2 CLASPS, RELIEF OF LUCKNOW, LUCKNOW 'EDWD COLLINS, 93RD HIGHLANDERS'

2034 Private Edward Collins, 93rd Highlanders is confirmed as present at Balaklava on 25 October 1854, when the 93rd routed the Russian cavalry and won themselves the title of 'The Thin Red Line'. The Times correspondent, William Howard Russell, who, standing on the hills above, could clearly see that nothing stood between the Russian cavalry and the defenceless British base but the 'thin red streak tipped with a line of steel' wrote of the 93rd:

'With breathless suspense everyone awaits the bursting of the wave [of Russian Cavalry] upon the line of Gaelic rock, but ere they came within 200 yards another deadly volley flashes from the levelled rifle, and carries terror into the Russians. They wheel about, open files right

and left, and fly back faster than they came. "Brave Highlanders! Well done!" shout the spectators.'



Collins subsequently proceeded with the Regiment to India, and saw service during the Great Sepoy Mutiny, being present at the Second Relief of Lucknow and subsequent operations.

An obituary for Collins, entitled '*DEATH OF A THIN RED LINE VETERAN*' appears in 'The Thin Red Line: The Regimental Paper of the 2d Batt., Princess Louise's, Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders' 1894:

"Another of the last survivors of the historical 'Thin Red Line' has passed away in the person of Mr Edward Collins, who died at his residence, 116 High Street, the other day. Deseased who's figure was a well-known one in the streets of Perth, was born in the parish of Dailly, in the county of Ayr and at the age of 218 enlisted at Irvine for the 93rd Highlanders on the 3rd October 1846. After a spell of service at home, Private collins was sent on foreign service, where he was fated to see some stirring times in connection of the Crimean War and Indian Mutiny. With his Regiment he arrived in Malta on 27th February and remained there till April 1854. From there he went to the Crimea in the following august, and till august 1855 went through that trying campaign. Landing with his regiment, he took part in the storming of the heights at Alma, and later on was at Balaclava and at the fall of Sebastopol. For his services in the Crimea, Collins was awarded the British and Turkish medals, with clasps Alma, Balaclava and Sebastopol. The deceased weas next sent to India and here to, he went through the Indian Mutiny, being present at the Relief and capture of Lucknow, in the action with the Gwalior contingent at Cawnpore, the captures of Bareilly, and practically went through the whole campaign. He obtained the medal for the Indian Mutiny and two clasps for the relief and fall of Lucknow. After going through these two stirring campaigns, Collins returned home, and on 12th August 1859, he left the regular army and elected to join the reserve, in which he completed the remaining part of his army career. In late years the deceased was employed at messrs. Pullar, from whose services he retired

some time ago. Deceased last public appearance in connection of military affairs was at the unveiling of the 90th regiment memorial on the North Inch, when he, along with several other veterans, turned out to meet Lord Wolseley, the Commander-in-Chief. On that occasion, Lord Wolseley took a great interest in the old veteran and questioned him regarding the various engagements in which he had taken part. Deceased leaves a family of two sons and one daughter. From a Perth Paper”



THE CRIMEA MEDAL

Medal roll for the Collins Crimea medal has a sub note 'D 25/6/56', his medal being officially engraved at Hunt and Roskell in a most distinctive manner. An identical style of engraving on medal to a soldier of the 41st foot, (roll date 23/6/56), can be seen on page 128 of the outstanding 'By Order of Her Majesty The Crimea Medal' The authors have coined this particular engravers style as the 'Diamond Geezer'. Interestingly, Collins regimental number on Crimea medal engraved in a different and less skilled hand to the Hunt and Roskell naming and was clearly added later by Collins.





Condition Vf/GVF, couple of small EK's and 'TE' of Private on Crimea pretty much lost from contact wear. Attractive patina to both medals. Sold with copy service papers.

An extremely fine pair of medals and very scarce to have confirmation that a soldier actually was part of the Thin Red Line and wasn't just entitled to the Balaclava clasp but didn't take part in the battle, which some of the 93rd were.