

**THE 6<sup>TH</sup> AIRBORNE CASUALTY GROUP TO AN NCO, 12TH 'RED DEVONS', WOUNDED IN ACTION AT RANVILLE ON 9 JUNE 1944. PRE WAR, HE WAS ONE OF JUST THIRTEEN MEN FROM HIS REGIMENT TO RECEIVE THE NORTH WEST FRONTIER 1936-37 CLASP**



INDIA GENERAL SERVICE 1936-39, 1 CLASP, NORTH WEST FRONTIER 1936-37 '5616714 PTE. W. A. COUCH. DEVON. R.'; 1939-45 STAR; FRANCE AND GERMANY STAR; DEFENCE AND WAR MEDALS 1939-45. MOUNTED FOR WEAR

William Anthony Couch was born in Keyham, Plymouth in 1915. He attested as a Boy aged 16 for the Devonshire Regiment at Plymouth on 29 April 1931 and was initially posted to the 2nd Battalion stationed at Bordon, Hampshire. The following year he embarked for India to join the 1st Battalion at Quetta on the North West Frontier. Having attained the age of 18 he was appointed Private at Quetta on 4 January 1933. From Quetta the 1st Battalion commenced their notorious march on foot of 187 miles to Razmak which they reached on 25 March 1934. Whilst stationed at Razmak 1 Sergeant and 8 men including, Private Couch, were attached to the 14th Sanitary Section on 5 May 1937 for service in Waziristan and each subsequently received the India General Service Medal with clasp North West Frontier 1936-37.

Posted to 2nd Battalion at Dover in February 1938, Couch transferred to the newly formed 12th Battalion in 1941 for a period of home duties. Promoted Corporal in February 1943 he successfully completed a mine laying and clearance course at Ripon in April 1943. In preparation for D-Day the 12th Battalion were posted to the 6 Air Landing Brigade, 6th Airborne Division at Bulford in October 1943 to commence a period of intensive glider training at the end of which each man was issued with his coveted Maroon Beret and Pegasus arm-badge, earning the 12th Battalion Devonshire Regiment the title 'Red Devons'. Embarking in Liberty ships at Tilbury on 3 June 1944 the 'Red Devons' disembarked from Landing Craft Infantry on Sword Beach on 7 June 1944 and relieved the 12th Parachute Battalion, digging in at Ranville later that day. In action at Ranville on 9 June 1944 he received a gunshot wound to his right hand.

[https://www.pegasusarchive.org/normandy/unit\\_12devons.htm](https://www.pegasusarchive.org/normandy/unit_12devons.htm)

Evacuated to England, Couch was posted to No 1 Recovery Training Course in September 1944 before being transferred to the Depot at Exeter. Promoted Sergeant in March 1946 he re-joined the

2nd Battalion at Luneberg in February 1947 before being released to Class 'Z' Army Reserve on 22 February 1948. Returning to Exeter he was employed as a Storekeeper with a firm of Motor Agents. He died in Exeter on 26 January 1983, aged 68.



Just 13 India General Service Medals with clasp North West Frontier 1936-37 awarded to the Devonshire Regiment.



Condition GVF, the first rare to unit. Sold with a quantity of copied research including service papers, transcripts of such etc

A good 6<sup>th</sup> Airborne Normandy casualty group and a regimentally rare combination of medals