

**A CRIMEAN WAR D.C.M. AWARDED TO A PRIVATE, 88TH CONNAUGHT RANGERS WHO WAS ADDITIONALLY WOUNDED DURING THE FINAL ATTACK ON THE REDAN WHEN THE 88TH'S D.C.M. WINNERS WORE THEIR MEDALS INTO ACTION**



**DISTINGUISHED CONDUCT MEDAL, V.R. ‘...HN CONNELL. 88TH REGT’**

DCM recommendation dated 21 January 1855.

3134 Private John Connell served with the 88th Foot during the Crimean War, and having already distinguished himself earlier in the war, is recorded in *The Crimean Campaign With The Connaught Rangers* as being wounded in action during the Final Attack on the Redan, 8 September 1855:

*‘My friend M. was, like the rest of us, carried into the ditch of the Redan, and was in the act of scrambling out of it with no little effort, when a sturdy officer of one of the regiments put his foot most inopportunistly upon M. ’s shoulder; and sent him back into the ditch. When he shortly afterwards met M. in the trenches, he made the “amende” by offering him a “refresher” out of his flask.*

*Immediately upon our reaching the trenches, after quitting the Redan, we received instructions to keep up a continuous fire upon the salient, and Russian accounts stated this incessant fire caused many casualties among them. About five pm we were relieved by the 79th Highlanders, and marched back to camp, under the command of Major E. H. Maxwell, our ranks considerably thinned, having left behind us so many of our brave fellows, besides those who had been carried off wounded. It was a remarkable fact that almost, if not every, man of ours, in possession of a Distinguished Conduct Medal, was either killed or wounded.... Sergeant Major Cooney, wounded, lost a leg; Corporal Hourigan, wounded; Sergeant Price, killed; Sergeant Wrenn, killed; Corporal Connelly, wounded,*



lost an arm; Private Mills, O'Rourke, and Connell, wounded; altogether, two killed and seven wounded. Fifteen men had been awarded the D.C. Medal [sic] in April 1855; nine were present at the last attack on the Redan; and, of the remaining six, two had been killed in the trenches; one died of sickness, and three had been invalided.'



Connell is not recorded in the published transcription of the casualty roll, but the above book notes his wound was slight. If this was light enough for him not to be hospitalised, he would not have been included in the casualty returns. A large number of other soldiers with such wounds would also not have been included, which is the case in any action or battle of the time.

According to Abbott's Recipients of the Distinguished Conduct Medal 1855-1901, 9 of the 88th Regiment's 15 D.C.M. winners (including Connell) wore their awards for the Final Attack on the Redan:

*'as is the way with all soldiers, it was not long before medals began to be lost. Thus on 30th October 1856 replacements were sent to the Crimea for Corporal D. Hourigan and Private W. Mill [sic], both of the 88th Foot, who had lost their medals in the assault on the Redan on 8th September 1855.'*

Medal roll confirms Connell entitled to the Alma and Inkermann clasps, Sebastopol roll not located but Connell would certainly have been entitled to it. There is no indication of issuing of his medal through the War Office, Hunt & Roskill etc and as with the majority of medal, Connell's British and Crimea medals would have been unnamed as issued.

Only lightly engaged at the battle of Alma, the 88<sup>th</sup> lost 121 Officers and men at the battle of Inkermann and 154 men during the final attack on the Redan. Given the recommendation date, it is likely Connell's DCM was awarded for acts performed in late 1854, possibly at Inkermann or early sorties at Sebastopol



Condition; suspension repined, edge bruising and contact marks from other medals with loss of 'JO' of 'JOHN', rest of naming good. Medal was clearly worn by the recipient and it is remarkable that it survived being worn during the attack on the Redan, when the 88<sup>th</sup> suffered so many casualties. Ex Spink 1984 and DNW 2017

Sold with a digital copy (PDF) of The Crimean Campaign With The Connaught Rangers, a most detailed book, which goes as far as naming individual casualties throughout the campaign.