

AN EXTREMELY FINE AND RARE GREAT WAR 'ITALIAN FRONT' 1918 D.F.M. GROUP AWARDED TO AERIAL GUNNER OF 66 WING R.A.F., EX 6 WING R.N.A.S. FOR SHOOTING DOWN AN AUSTRIAN SEAPLANE. ONE OF JUST 105 D.F.M.S AWARDED DURING WW1, THE VAST MAJORITY FOR THE WESTERN FRONT. ADDITIONALLY SERVED WITH THE B.E.F. IN 1940 AND WAS EVACUATED FROM ST. NAZAIRE IN JUNE THAT YEAR



DISTINGUISHED FLYING MEDAL, G.V.R. '203962 A.M.2. D. L. MOXEY. R.A.F.', IN ITS NAMED CARD BOX OF ISSUE; 1939-45 STAR; WAR MEDAL 1939-45, WITH SLIP OF ISSUE.

D.F.M. *London Gazette* 20 September 1918:

'An excellent gunlayer observer. During a late raid he shot down and destroyed an Austrian seaplane, displaying marked skill and resource.'

David Lewis Moxey was born at Lambeth, London on 4 April 1896 and worked as an engineer's draftsman prior to enlisting with the Royal Naval Air Service on 16 April 1915. Graded as Air Mechanic Class II Moxey was listed as posted to France with No. 3 Wing likely in June 1916. No. 3 Wing had served in the Gallipoli Campaign but was later disbanded only to be re-formed in France in May 1916 at Luxeuil-les-Bains, although no personnel were on the ground until June.

From their base at Luxeuil-les-Bains the Wing was tasked with attacking German industry, a difficult task made harder by German aircraft and poor weather. Moxey was promoted Air Mechanic Class I while serving in France on 15 December 1916. He was not to remain there for much longer however, returning to Britain by 25 April 1917 where a brisk series of postings soon saw him on the books of Queen II the R.N.A.S. base responsible for the Otranto Barrage. He was graded as Air Mechanic, Gunlayer (aerial Gunner) on 10 October 1917 giving him the role of rear gunner/ Observer and joined

Queen II for No. 6 Wing on 10 November that same year.

The Otranto Barrage was a blockade between Brindisi in Southern Italy and Corfu, intended to prevent the Central Powers from accessing the Mediterranean from the Austrian controlled ports in the Baltic. Unfortunately, a lack of resources made this blockade largely ineffective and air assets like No. 6 Wing were essential for their reconnaissance capabilities. Moxey's arrival coincided with an attempt to improve the effectiveness of the Barrage in late 1917 as outlined in the book *Naval Strategy and Operations in Narrow Seas* which states:

'The Allies tightened their control of the Strait of Otranto at the conference in Rome held in November 1917. They decided to greatly improve the barrage by speeding up delivery of material to establish an anchored-net barrage and net mines between Otranto, Fano, and Corfu. In addition, about 90 destroyers and submarine chasers (SCs), 125 fishing steamers and a number of seaplanes were used in this effort. The British base at Otranto and the French base in Corfu were primarily used in the search for U-boats. These measures came into effect in May 1918 and remained in force until the end of war.'



6 Wing was formed from various Flights, equipped with a mixture of land and seaplanes, both fighter and 2-seaters. When the R.N.A.S. and the R.F.C. combined to form the Royal Air Force in April 1918, No. 6 Wing R.N.A.S was reformed into No. 66 Wing R.A.F., the various Flights reformed to form 224 and 225 Squadrons. These squadrons flew the same mixture of aircraft and upgraded types as the war progressed. Types known were Short Seaplanes, Sopwith Camel's, Sopwith Strutters, DH4's and DH9's. The squadrons continued to perform the same function as previously. It was not long after this that he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Medal for his part in a successful combat

with an Austrian seaplane.

With the end of the War he was posted to 5 Aircraft Repair Depot on 19 December 1918. Moxey was to serve there for several months before finally being demobilised on 3 February 1919 at Kinross Dispersal Centre (additionally entitled to the British War & Victory Medals).

Note; Gunlayer was the name of RNAS aerial gunners. However on formation of the RAF in April 1918, Aerial Gunner became the official name of those qualified in this trade. Ranks were also changed to reflect the new service, therefore Moxey became a Private 1, Aerial Gunner. According to his service papers, he served in France from 29 June 1916 until 26 April 1917 and Italy, 9 November 1917 until 2 November 1918.



SERVICE WITH THE B.E.F. IN 1940 AND EVACUATION

After the war he was posted to the R.A.F. Reserve and joined the Civil Service as a Clerk, he was appointed as Special Clerk with the Inland Revenue on 9 October 1936. Enlisting to with the Royal Air Force again on 29 July 1939 as a reservist with war looming, Moxey was rated as a Draughtsman. On the outbreak of war he was mobilised as Aircraftman and posted to France where he witnessed the

1940 campaign and the Fall of France. As the British Forces were driven back the R.A.F. found themselves forced to withdraw towards the coast and evacuate where they could. A letter written by Flight Lieutenant Les Gillard, Moxey's nephew expands upon his experiences here stating:

'In June 1940. Dave's RAF unit was on the run from the German Panzer units. They arrived at St. Nazaire in the Loire Estuary in Western France, to find that the ship they were expecting to board was full up with evacuating civilians and soldiers. The ship was the "Lancastria". Dave saw the ship being bombed and subsequently [SIC] go down. Dave was able to board another smaller ship later on which safely returned to England.'

The sinking of the Lancastria was one of the worst disasters of the evacuation, with the liner being severely overloaded. Moxey was to witness the tragic sinking as it unfolded before being evacuated to Britain where he continued to serve with the R.A.F. Unfortunately the strains of service began to weigh heavily on him and he was discharged as a result of ill health on 15 February 1943. His statement of conduct at this time reads *'This airman was superior in his trade as a Draughtsman, his general character and conduct was excellent.'*

Moxey returned to London where he lived at 55 Abbotsbury Road, Morden. He died in 1960 and his funeral was held on 3 November 1960 at Streatham Park.



SOLD WITH

Condition GVF. Recently to the market direct from the family. Sold together with copied citation, R.N.A.S. and R.A.F. service records along with the following original documents and militaria, comprising:

- 1) Three original photographs of the recipient in uniform
- 2) Identity tags and a riband bar with DFM, British War and Victory.
- 3) Two sets of original Observer's Wings. Both removed from uniform

- 4) An R.A.F. cap badge; R.N.A.S. badge, silver, hallmarked for London 1915 and a British Legion Enamelled Badge numbered '791755'.
- 5) Brief Statement of Service and WW2 Discharge Certificate.
- 6) Several documents of issue and communications relating to the award of the D.F.M. These mostly repaired with old tape.
- 7) Certificate of Birth for the recipient's wife.
- 8) Copied letters from the recipient's Nephew, himself a Flight Lieutenant in the Royal Air Force, giving details of the recipient's service.
- 9) Extracts from articles relating to the RE8 reconnaissance aircraft and the sinking of the Lancastria.
- 10) Slip relating details of the recipient's Funeral.
- 11) A whistle; set of keys; comb; handkerchief and penknife.



A very scarce award, just 104 DFM's and one Bar awarded between 1918 and 1920 (6700 were awarded during WW2)



Extract from the London Gazette dated Saturday 21st September, 1918.

Air Ministry,
21st September 1918.

His Majesty the King has been graciously pleased to confer the undistinguished rewards on Officers and other ranks of the Royal Air Force, in recognition of gallantry in flying operations against the enemy :-

AWARDED THE DISTINGUISHED FLYING MEDAL.

203962 A.M./2 (Gunner) David Lewis Moxey (Kennington, S.E.).

An excellent gunlayer observer. During a late raid he shot down and destroyed an Austrian seaplane, displaying marked skill and resource.

A3/Medals/13094.

From:- G. I/O R.A.F. Records,
Blandford Camp,
Dorset.

To:- Mr. D. L. Moxey,
53, Coopers Road,
Kennington,
London, S.E. 11.

30th May, 1919.

Subject:- Awards.

203962. D. L. Moxey, R.A.F.

In reply to your letter of the 26th inst. I have to inform you:-
(1) The Distinguished Flying Medal is not yet available for issue, and I am unable to say when it will be received in this Office.

If you have any further information regarding the award should such award be made, please inform me.

W. B. Moxley
Lieut. Colonel,
G. I/O R.A.F. Records.

R/T/11.

R.A.F. FORM 1394.

ROYAL AIR FORCE

BRIEF STATEMENT OF SERVICE AND CERTIFICATE OF DISCHARGE OF

SURNAME: Moxey. OFFICIAL No. 203962

CHRISTIAN NAMES: David Lewis.

Date of enlistment: 29.7.99. Terms of enlistment: 4 years Reserve.

(a) Date reported for regular service: 29.8.99.

(b) Branch of Air Force in which enlisted: Class "B" Reserve, A.F. trade Draughtsman.

(c) Date of discharge: 15th February 1918. Rank: Aircraftman Second Class.

(d) Cause of discharge: Physically unfit for Air Force Service although fit for selected employment in civil life.

(Para. 552, Class 4(b), King's Regulations and Air Council Instructions)

(e) General character (f) during service: Very Good. (g) on discharge: Very Good.

(h) Degree of trade proficiency: A (i) Superior. A (ii) N/A. B N/A. C N/A.

Special qualifications:

(j) Medals, Claps, Decorations, Mentions in Despatches, Special Commendations, etc.

N.I.
Victory Medal 1914 - 1918
General Service Medal 1914 - 1918
Distinguished Flying Medal.

DESCRIPTION OF ABOVE-NAMED AIRMAN/AIRWOMAN ON DISCHARGE.

Date of birth: 4.4.1896. Marks or scars: N.I.

Height: 6 ft. 2 ins. Colour of hair: N.I.

Complexion: Light. Colour of eyes: Blue. Colour of hair: Brown.

Airman's signature: *David Lewis Moxey*

(k) Brief statement of Trade Qualifications and General Conduct :-
This airman was superior in his trade as a Draughtsman, his general character and conduct was excellent.

(Signed) *W. B. Moxley*
Commanding Headquarters Unit No. 26 Group, Royal Air Force.

Stamp: ORDERLY ROOM, 10 JAN 1919

Stamp: NATIONAL REGISTERATION OFFICE

Attention is directed to Notes (a) to (g) on reverse.

203962

A.M.2.

D. L. MOXEY.

R.A.F.

D.F.M. (GEO.V.)

Telephone No.:
 Cables: 249; and direct line from
 Air Ministry via Island Area.

Telegraphic Address:—
 "RECORDS," BURLING.

RECORD OFFICE,
 ROYAL AIR FORCE,
 BURLING,
 UXBRIDGE, MIDDLESEX.

Date: 9th April

The following reference number should be quoted in any communications on the subject of this letter
 Reference No. — C.P.O. 13094

Mr, D.L. Moxey
 53 Cooks Rd
 Kennington, S. 17.

Sir,
 With reference to previous correspondence regarding Gratuity in connection with the award of the Distinguished Flying Medal, enclosed please find Home Order value twenty pounds in settlement of your claim.

Your letter of the 2nd inst. is acknowledged herewith, and you are requested to kindly acknowledge receipt for which purpose a franked address slip is enclosed.

I am, Sir,
 Your obedient servant,
 Flying Officer
 for Wing Commander
 Officer i/c Records
 Royal Air Force.

NOTES.

- (a) Date of Mobilization, Embodiment or Recall from "Deferred" Service.
- (b) Here insert R.A.F., R.A.F.V.R., A.A.F., W.A.A.F., or Class E. or F. Reserve, as applicable.
- (c) "Cause of Discharge" should give precise words as applicable in K.R. & A.C.I., para. 652.
- (d) "V.G." is the highest character which can be awarded in the Royal Air Force.
- (e) The trade proficiency headings A, B, and C are—
 A (i) Skill in his trade (applicable to all trades).
 A (ii) Proficiency as Pilot, Air Observer, or Air Gunner (if so instructed).
 B. Ability as technical Warrant or Non-commissioned Officer, i.e., as Foreman, Manager, Foreman, or Supervisor in his Trade.
 C. Ability as a Warrant or Non-commissioned Officer in administration, drill, discipline, etc.
- (f) The word "None" to be inserted where necessary.
- (g) Should be a brief narrative statement in the form of a testimonial.


WARNING.

(To the airman/airwoman named on this Form.)

- (i) You are hereby reminded that the unauthorized communication by you of the contents of any form of any information you may have acquired whilst in His Majesty's Service might be useful to an enemy in war and you are liable to prosecution for such communication.
- (ii) Your discharge does not remove any liability you may still have to be called up for service under the National Service (Armed Forces) Acts of 1939 and 1940 or any such liability that may be placed upon you by subsequent legislation.
- (iii) You should on no account part with this certificate or forward it by post when applying for a situation, but should use a copy attested by a responsible person. If the certificate is lost it will be replaced only when its loss can be proved to have been due to very exceptional circumstances. Application for replacement should be made to the Air Officer-in-Charge of Records, Royal Air Force.

ANY PERSON finding this Certificate is requested to forward it in an unstamped envelope to the Under Secretary of State, Air Ministry, London, W.C.2.

(1945) W.L. 2038—244 3,000 pads 2 1/2 T.S. 700



The Under-Secretary of State for Air presents his compliments and by Command of the Air Council has the honour to transmit the enclosed Awards granted for service during the war of 1939-45.

Campaign Stars, Clasps and Medals instituted in recognition of service in the war of 1939-45

THE AWARDS ISSUED ARE MARKED X ON THE ACCOMPANYING SLIP

Order of Wearing	Description of Ribbon	Clasp or Emblem (if awarded)
1 1939-45 Star X	Dark blue, red and light blue in three equal vertical stripes. This ribbon is worn with the dark blue stripe furthest from the left shoulder.	Battle of Britain
2 Atlantic Star	Blue, white and sea green shaded and watered. This ribbon is worn with the blue edge furthest from the left shoulder.	Air Crew Europe or France and Germany
3 Air Crew Europe Star	Light blue with black edges and in addition a narrow yellow stripe on either side.	Atlantic or France and Germany
4 Africa Star	Pale buff, with a central vertical red stripe and two narrower stripes one dark blue, and the other light blue. This ribbon is worn with the dark blue stripe furthest from the left shoulder.	8th Army or 1st Army or North Africa 1942-43
5 Pacific Star	Dark green with red edges, a central yellow stripe, and two narrow stripes, one dark blue and the other light blue. This ribbon is worn with the dark blue stripe furthest from the left shoulder.	Burma
6 Burma Star	Dark blue with a central red stripe and in addition two orange stripes.	Pacific
7 Italy Star	Five vertical stripes of equal width, one in red at either edge and one in green at the centre, the two intervening stripes being in white.	
8 France and Germany Star	Five vertical stripes of equal width, one in blue at either edge and one in red at the centre, the two intervening stripes being in white.	Atlantic
9 Defence Medal	Flame coloured with green edges, upon each of which is a narrow black stripe.	Silver laurel leaves (King's Commendation for brave conduct. Civil)
10 War Medal 1939-45 X	A narrow central red stripe with a narrow white stripe on either side. A broad red stripe at either edge, and two intervening stripes in blue.	Oak leaf