

THE OUTSTANDING WW1 1918 'SPRING OFFENSIVE' MILITARY CROSS AND '100 DAYS' BAR GROUP TO A CAPTAIN, 'C' COMPANY, 5TH YORKSHIRE'S, WITH AN EXTENSIVE AND QUITE EXCEPTIONAL ARCHIVE OF HIS PERSONAL FIELD MESSAGE BOOKS, TRENCH MAPS, BATTLEFIELD MESSAGES, PHOTOGRAPHS ETC , TOGETHER WITH A COMPILED DIARY OF HIS FRONTLINE SERVICE 1915-18. HAVING BEEN 3 X WOUNDED DURING THE DEFENSIVE ACTION THAT WOULD LEAD TO THE AWARD OF THE M.C. HE RETURNED TO THE FRONT WITH THE 15TH K.O.Y.L.I., HIS OWN BATTALION HAVING BEEN WIPED OUT AND IN AUGUST 1918 TOOK COMMAND OF A PLATOON OF HIS COMPANY DURING AN ATTACK IN WHICH SEVERAL PRISONERS AND A MACHINE GUN WERE CAPTURED, THIS RESULTING IN THE AWARD OF A BAR TO HIS M.C.



MILITARY CROSS, G.V.R., WITH SECOND AWARD BAR, IN CASE OF ISSUE, 1914-15 STAR '2.LIEUT. W. E. E. GARROD. YORK.R.', BRITISH WAR AND VICTORY MEDALS 'CAPT. W. E. E. GARROD', THESE THREE MOUNTED AS WORN, DEFENCE AND WAR MEDALS 1939-45, WITH ENCLOSURE

M.C. *London Gazette* 13 September 1918. For German Spring 1918 Offensive, specifically 25 March, whilst serving as a Captain of 'C' Company, 5th Yorkshire Regiment:

'For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. This officer was in command of a company in the front line, when the enemy attacked, and though the troops on his right withdrew, he formed a defensive flank and held on all morning. Although twice wounded, he remained on directing operations, showing great courage and judgement'

Bar to M.C. *London Gazette* 5 November 1918. For 1918 the Hundred Day Offensive, specifically 23 August 1918, now Serving as a Captain of 'C' Company, 15th King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry:

'For conspicuous gallantry and good leadership while commanding his company in action. He reached the objective allotted to him with his leading platoon, although both flanks were in the air. He then pushed forward beyond his original objective and succeeded in clearing the road of the enemy. It was owing to his fine example that so much progress was made. His clear and accurate reports, written under fire, were of great assistance.'

War Diary notes that Garrod was awarded the Bar by the GOC Division in the square at Lannoy, 8 December 1918



Wilfred Edwin Evan Garrod was born on 13 March 1893, the son of Reverend Canon Garrod, East Witton Vicarage, Middleton, Yorkshire. A student at the outbreak of the Great War, he was Commissioned 2nd Lieutenant 28 September 1914, initially serving with the 2/5th Yorkshire Regiment before transferring to the 1/5th Yorkshire's in France on 9 November 1918. Serving at the front (Ypres) from 19 November 1915, he was promoted Lieutenant 2 March 1916 and Captain on 28 January 1917, commanding 'C' Company. During early 1916, the 5th were in the trenches at Sanctuary Wood and fought on the Somme, including fighting at High Wood and Flers-Courcelette. They took part in the Arras campaign in April 1917 and later at Passchendaele (Third Battle of Ypres). In 1918, Garrod was 3 x wounded in action on 25 March during the great German offensive and was invalided to England. It was for his actions commanding his company during the confused fighting that resulted in him being wounded, that he would be awarded the Military Cross.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/German_spring_offensive

Having recovered from his wounds by late May, Garrod applied to be returned to his battalion, however on the 27 May 1918, during the first day of the battle of Aisne, his battalion was all but wiped out. With only the numbers left to form a company, the remnants of the 5th were consolidated into a battalion formed from companies from other decimated battalions. As such, on 10 June 1918, Garrod was instead posted to 15th (Service) Battalion, King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry, which was then being formed in France from the 10th Garrison Battalion. This battalion was made up of invalided soldiers with light disabilities etc who though fit enough for service, were deemed not suitable for long marches, carry heavy equipment etc. These men were joined by 700 men taken from various Labour battalions. As Garrod notes in his diary these men were to be quickly trained to take any duty required and this was achieved, Garrod noting their were amongst the ranks a cadre of experienced veterans. (Officers and men). The battalion was first moved up to the support lines at Aval Wood during the first week of August and then onto the front line around the 10th, the battalion suffering their first casualty on 11 August. On 23 August 1918, 'A' and 'C' companies (Garrod commanding 'C') were tasked with attacking a portion of the enemy trench line between Cochin Corner and Pont Rondin and it was for his actions during this attack that Garrod was awarded the Bar to his MC; his company reportedly advancing 700 yards and taking a number of prisoners and a machine gun.

Remaining with the 15th throughout the Hundred Day Offensive and after the armistice, on 20 April 1919, Garrod volunteered for extended service and was posted to the 83rd POW Company, serving with this unit until finally discharged from the army in January 1920

Regarding military courses, he attended Chelsea School in March 1915, GHQ Lewis Gun School in March 1917, Third Army Infantry School in October 1917 and Eight Corps Gas School in March 1918.



SOLD WITH:

- 1) Commission warrant as 2nd Lieutenant, 30 September 1914, in envelope of issue with covering letter
- 2) Officers Record of Service Book (Army Book 439); this gives details of Garrod's service, courses, promotions, units served etc
- 3) A letter from Garrod's Colonel (Col. Raymond Thomson), dated 12 May 1918, wishing him well on his recovery from his wounds, updating him on the latest events and also thanking him for his efforts. Garrod has noted himself at the foot of the letter, that Col. Thomson was killed a few weeks later, at the (Third) Battle of the Aisne. His battalion being pretty much wiped out then.
- 4) A collection of black and white 'France Battlefield' photographs taken by him, mostly annotated to the reverse in his hand, taken in 1919 whilst he was guarding German POWs. Many of these battlefield shots relate of areas he found in and some the exact positions he was in. 'Report on Gass attack on Second Army Front on the night of 29/30th Aril 1916' – running several pages
- 5) A hand written battlefield despatch from GOC to Officer Commanding 'C' Company (ie Garrod). Reverse Garrod has added 'Pat on the back by GOC conveyed by Col Isaac 29.8.1918' This is for what would end up being the award of the Bar to the MC
- 6) 'A' Form Messages and Signals; orders from CO sent to Garrod whilst in action with his Company on 22 March 1918 during the German March Offensive; talking of Brigade withdrawal, units positions etc – 2 pages
- 7) 'A' Form Messages and Signals. Orders sent to Garrod 9 February 1918 regarding movements and rations for his Company– 2 pages
- 8) Orders (Secret) sent to all company commanders 15 KOYLI 23 August 1918 regarding movement to forward zone.
- 9) Army Form C 398 envelope to Officer Commanding 'C' Company, with 'A' Form Messages and Signals. Orders sent to Garrod from Adjutant whilst in action 23 August 1918. It was for his action during this day that Garrod would be awarded the Bar to his MC
- 10) 2 page Letter in envelope, dated 24 May 1918 from one of Garrod's fellow 5th Green Howards Officers, updating him on events, news of other officers etc. An emotive letter as most of the battalion war wiped out just 3 days latter
- 11) 3 x photographs of Garrod; one of an annual inspection in 1914, another of Garrod taken in 1919 when he revisited some of the battlefields he fought over. This pictures notes him outside is old Company dugout in Cavalry Farm Sector, August 1917. A third of Garrod taken at the front line trenches at Sanctuary Wood (Ypres) in March 1916
- 12) A sizable piece of shrapnel in a box titled 'Poperinghe Stn 19 Dec 1915' Poperinghe Railway Station, outside Ypres, was the main station troops arrived at on their way to the front line and according to his diary, Garrod arrived there on 19 December 1915. He talks in detail about the trenches and shelling around this and Shrapnel Corner and presumably he picked it up as a memento of his first day at the front.
- 13) Handbook of the 303 Lewis Machine Gun 1915

14) A notebook which appears to be courses attended; VIII Corps Gas School etc

15) Company Accounts form dated 30 September 1919

16) Copies of the London Gazette 13 September and 5 November 1918; those for his M.C. and Bar





MAPS

Also present here are a number of his own annotated maps showing trenches etc. Garrod has labelled each at a later date giving details of when his battalion in that particular sectors trenches etc. Maps vary in size, some being very large:

- 1) 2 x hand-drawn different maps of 'Berny Sector' 13 and 17 February 1917 (5 Green Howards)
- 2) A linen-backed 'Pys-le-Sars-Ligne-Thillois' (5 Green Howards, January 1917)
- 3) A German map, 9th March 1918, showing Trenches, positions etc just prior to March offensive
- 4) Eeckhout Casteel – Trenches corrected to 20 June 1918 (15 KOYLI)
- 5) Berny and Fresnes sector – hugely detailed trench systems (5 Green Howards, 12 February 1918)
- 6) Beaulieu Corps Tapo Section 6 August 1918
- 7) Passchendaele Ridge December 1917-February 1918 (5 Green Howards, February 1918). Accompanying this map is a detailed description by Garrod running several pages
- 8) France Trenches Juine – August 1918. 'C' Coy 15 KOYLI posts noted 22-27 August (period for Bar to MC)
- 9) Hazebrouck trenches – British and German lines marked for April, June and September 1918; 15 KOYLI

FIELD MESSAGE BOOKS ' ARMY BOOK 153'

A selection of his own 'Field Message' books 'ARMY BOOK 153'. The content of these is amazing, these are basically his own personal War diaries and message books and are full of detailed information relating to events, troop positions, his companies strength, orders etc etc. Some have inserted messages:

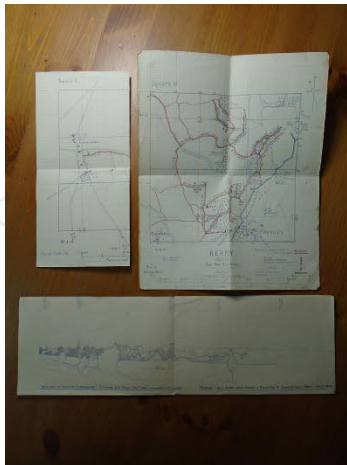
- 1) Titled 15-27 September 1916. Inserted into the books pocket are various documents, including; several of Garrod's calling cards, some small family photographs, a field service postcard and an envelope with an amusing advert cut out regard 'Drink Habit'
- 2) Titled '1917-18 Passchendaele', the cover of which appears to have damage from shrapnel which penetrates through about half the pages in the book. Inserted into the books pocket are various documents, including: 5th Battalion Operational Orders (Secret) dated 23/12/17, another 8/2/18 and 9//18, company casualty returns for 10 and 11 December 1917 and pencil written orders regarding movements 9/2/18.
- 3) Titled March 20-27 1918; this pretty much transcribed onto A4 sheets at a later date
- 4) Titled '1917 Arras Passchendaele'. Quite a lot of the messages have been used
- 5) Scribbling Book 'ARMY BOOK 119' – message and signals book; intelligence reports, messages to Adjutant etc giving positions, movements of company etc in and out of action

WAR MEMORIES 1915-18

A copy of Garrod's war diary compiled in 1971 and entitled 'War Memories 1915-18' and presumably much taken from the various documents, message books etc and Garrod's memory; all handwritten. It starts when he landed in France right through to the end of the War, 83 A5 sized pages in all, 2 per A5 sheet. Diary is extremely descriptive, especially regarding troop positions, battlefields etc, also referencing the maps and reading this in conjunction with the Regimental History and the War diary (digital copies of both) gives a fantastic picture of events from the view of a company commander. Details of 1917 are quite thin but there are 1917 field service details within the group so it seem it just wasn't transcribed. The period of the March offensive is not within either. However a far more detailed account of events by Garrod is separately typed out. Again this is extremely detailed and covers 'C' companies and Garrod's activities March 20 – 27 1918. The latter over 11 A4 typed pages.

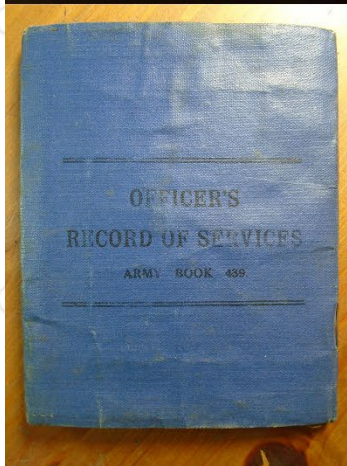
Though his M.C. recommendation states he was twice wounded, when reading the above, Garrod was initially slightly wounded in the right leg by a MG bullet and soon after the right thigh and then a little latter the left toe, again by MG fire.



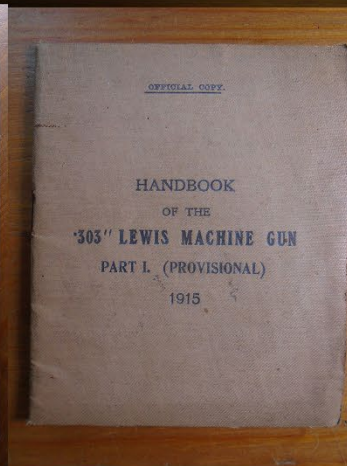


Form MESSAGES AND SIGNALS with handwritten entries in blue ink.

IMPRINT ACCOUNT form with handwritten notes and a signature.



Handwritten notes on a page titled 'STEENVOORDA, MARCH 1915' and 'VIII Corps Gas School'.



Handwritten notes dated 'March 1916' in 'Sanctuary wood' and 'Front line trenches'.



A typed document with the heading 'REPORT' and 'REPORT OF THE STATE OF TEXAS'.



Handwritten notes including 'Landscape from position' and 'Raid 1919'.



Condition of the medals is NEF. Research wise, included are digital copies of the War Diaries for both the 5th Yorkshire's and 15th KOYLI covering Garrod's entire service, along with regimental histories for both.

This really is an exceptionally complete group containing rarely seen artifacts which gives the group great research potential