

HISTORY IN BEDFORDSHIRE

VOLUME 6, NO 1

AUTUMN 2012

www.bedfordshire-lha.org.uk

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Notes and news

The **Heritage Lottery Fund** has launched a new £1m small grants programme 'All Our Stories' to provide grants of £3,000–£10,000 to support charities, community groups and heritage organisations running local history projects. You need to register on the Heritage Lottery Fund website to access the application materials. Visit the Heritage Lottery Fund website at:

www.hlf.org.uk/HowToApply/programmes/Pages/Allourstories.aspx

New book: *Knighton Grange Memories of My Childhood on a Lone Farm* by Mary Wade has been published by Carlton & Chellington Historical Society. It is a paperback of 120 pages, price £5.00 (plus £1.20 postage). Contact Mike Meade for further information: (m.l.meade@btinternet.com; 01234 720070).

Apsley Cherry-Garrard 1886–1959

This year is the centenary of Captain Scott's ill-starred expedition to the South Pole and Apsley George Benet Cherry-Garrard, who was born in Bedford on 2 January 1886 and died in London on 18 May 1959, was a member of that expedition. He wrote an acclaimed historical account of the expedition, *The Worst Journey in the World*

Early life

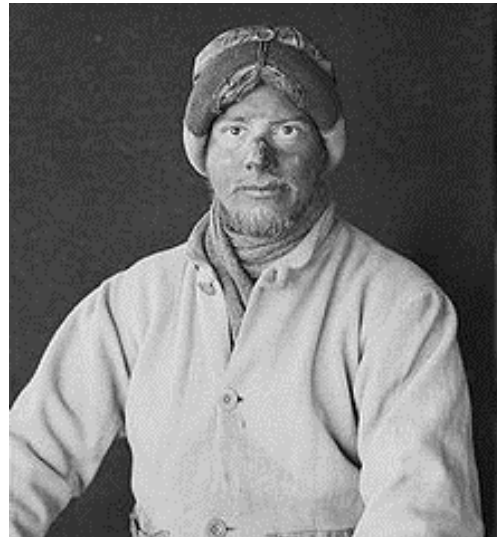
Apsley George Benet Cherry-Garrard was born in 1886 at 15 Lansdowne Road, Bedford, as Apsley George Benet Cherry, the son of Major-General Apsley Cherry (53) (later Cherry-Garrard) of Denford Park in Berkshire and his wife, Evelyn Edith (28), daughter of Henry Wilson Sharpin of Bedford.¹ He was the eldest son of a typically Victorian upper-middle-class household.

As a child, he enjoyed his own company and, aged 7, was sent to the Grange Preparatory School at Folkestone. After Winchester College he went to Christ Church, Oxford, to read Classics and Modern History. He was a keen rower and, in 1908, helped his college eight to win the Grand Challenge cup at Henley. After Oxford, because the Cherry-Garrards

were rich, Apsley had no immediate purpose in life but was looking for meaning and direction. He had always loved the stories of his father's achievements, and felt that he must live up to his example. Direction and meaning were found when he met 'Bill' Wilson, an inspirational scientist through whose efforts he obtained a place on Scott's expedition.

Antarctica

At the age of 24, 'Cherry' was one of the youngest members of Robert Falcon Scott's 1910–13 expedition. The previous year, at the age of 21, he had inherited his father's estates and spent some of his wealth travelling around the World, on cargo ships. He heard of Captain Scott's proposal for a second Antarctic expedition and Scott's aim to be the first man at the South Pole. Apsley wrote to Dr Wilson to volunteer. He was twice rejected, but Scott was eventually persuaded to take 'Cherry' on as an assistant zoologist for the scientific programme, after he gave the expedition a donation of £1,000 (worth about £60,000 now).



Apsley Cherry-Garrard during the 1912 expedition

Life on board the *Terra Nova* was all he had hoped it would be. 'I really have never seen anyone with such a constant expression of "this is what I have been looking for" on his face', Wilson wrote. All his crewmates testified to his pluck, charm and enthusiasm.

Scott and 65 members of the Expedition arrived in Antarctica in January 1911. They first explored King

Edward VII land and set up food and fuel depots for use on the journey to the Pole and Cherry reissued the *South Polar Times* previously published by Shackleton on the *Discovery* expedition.

Cherry was commended by Scott for his efficiency, unselfish sledging and tent-sharing. He was well liked. On June 27 Wilson, Cherry and Henry Bowers started on a journey to Cape Crozier to get an unhatched Emperor Penguin's egg. Temperatures dropped as low as -60°C as they hauled their sledge 60 miles to the Cape. They arrived at the penguin site exhausted and in a blizzard and, when they tried to camp, their tent was blown away and they were left in their sleeping bags in the snow drifts. When the wind ceased, they found their tent wedged in nearby rocks. They collecting three eggs, and slowly made their way back to Scott's camp. Cherry said this trip was the 'the hardest that has ever been made', which later suggested the title for his book.

Polar trek and the recovery operation

In October 1911, Scott and 15 others, including Cherry, started for the South Pole – most of them would be sent back at various stages but they did not know who. It was not a good journey. Motor-sledges failed, exhausted ponies were shot and blizzards forced them to use rations reserved for later. Cherry went as far as the top of the Beardmore Glacier where, on 22 December 1911, due to his youth, they sent him back to base, with Edward Atkinson and Patrick Keohane. On the return, Cherry navigated, but he was short-sighted and could not see much without glasses which could not be worn while sledging. He used the sight of the others, until snow-blindness prevented this and then used the gleam of the sun which he could still just make out.

On 26 February 1912, Cherry and dog handler Dimitri Gerov made a final supply run out to the 'One Ton Depot'. They waited there seven days hoping to meet the South Pole team on their return journey, although their mission was to resupply, not to provide an escort for the polar party. Cherry turned back on 10 March 1912 to preserve his dog team which was short of food, and out of concern for the health of Gerov. Nineteen days later, Scott, Wilson and Bowers died 11 miles (18 km) south of the One Ton Depot in a blizzard.

By April 1912, the Antarctic winter was approaching, and it was obvious to Cherry and the remaining expedition members that the South Pole team would not return. Atkinson took command, and Cherry, suffering from strain, was appointed record keeper and continued his zoological work. Scientific work continued through the winter and it was not until October 1912 that, led by Atkinson, a team including Cherry headed south to find the South Pole team. On 12 November, the bodies of Scott, Wilson and Bowers were found in their tent, along with the diaries, records and geological specimens. Cherry was deeply upset, especially by the deaths of Wilson and Bowers, with whom he had made the journey to Cape Crozier.

Later life

Cherry joined the army during the First World War and commanded a squadron of armoured cars in Flanders. Invalided out in 1916, he had developed a number of health problems, including irritable bowel syndrome, as well as depression. At that time post-traumatic stress disorder was unknown and, though his psychological problems were never cured, he treated himself by writing of his experiences, although he spent many years bed-ridden. Confined by his illnesses he worried over whether anything could have prevented the deaths of Scott, Wilson and Bowers and secured the success of the Expedition. In 1922, he published *The Worst Journey in the World* – since said to be the greatest true adventure story ever written. His friend and neighbour George Bernard Shaw encouraged him and friendships with other literary men included H G Wells and Arnold Bennett and there were also adventurers, like Mallory of Everest and Lawrence of Arabia. Cherry also published an obituary of the expedition photographer, Herbert Ponting, and wrote an introduction to *Edward Wilson of the Antarctic: Naturalist and Friend*, a book by George Seaver on 'Bill' Wilson. He also contributed an essay in remembrance of T E Lawrence in the first edition of a volume edited by Lawrence's brother A W Lawrence: *T E Lawrence, by His Friends*. In this essay Cherry thought that Lawrence undertook his extraordinary feats out of a sense of inferiority and cowardice and a need to prove himself.

He regained some strength during the later 1920s, but was haunted by his past. He gave up shooting and fox-hunting, and the clergy near his estates lost his support in parish matters. He took Mediterranean cruises and collected first editions.

Cherry-Garrard, aged 50, met 20-year-old Angela Katherine Turner (1916–2005), the daughter of Kenneth Turner of Fairfields in Suffolk, on a Norwegian cruise in 1937. When the ship docked they went for a walk on their own and sat on a bench where Cherry picked up a small piece of quartz and offered it to Angela. 'Years later, when she had become an Antarctic expert, Angela discovered that the courtship ritual of the penguin centres around stone-giving, stones being a vital commodity for the construction of the nest.' At that time, practically no one in the world would have known this. This type of non-verbal communication was a perfect solution for a man who felt things deeply but had trouble talking about them. They married in 1939 three days after the outbreak of World War Two. He chose not to have children for fear of passing down mental health issues.

After the War, ill-health and tax demands forced him to sell Lamer Park which was, unfortunately, demolished. He moved to a flat in London where he lived to the age of 73, dying in London on 18 May 1959. He is buried in the north-west corner of St Helen's churchyard at Wheathampstead and there is a bronze statue commemorating his life inside the church.

The three intact penguin eggs that Wilson, Bowers and Cherry brought back from Cape Crozier are now

in the collection of the Natural History Museum, London. A blue plaque in memory of Apsley Cherry-Garrard's birth was unveiled in Lansdowne Road, Bedford, on Wednesday, 17 November 2010.

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- Smith, Michael: *An Unsung Hero: Tom Crean, Antarctic Survivor* (London: Headline Book Publishing, 2000. ISBN 1-903464-09-9.)
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Note

1. Major-General Apsley Cherry was a cousin of the Cherrys of Burghfield, and descended from the Cherrys of Maidenhead, cousins of the famous non-juror, Francis Cherry (1685-1713), of Shottesbrooke House. Apsley was brought up at Denford Park, Kintbury, Berks, until the age of six, when his father inherited Lamer Park at Gustard Wood, above Wheathampstead in Hertfordshire. Cherry's father, who had fought with merit in India and China for the British Defence Forces, inherited the Hertfordshire estates from his brother and aunt, when they died shortly after one another. The only condition for the inheritance was to take on the Garrard name and arms. The family moved there and changed their name to Cherry-Garrard. His father became High Sheriff of Hertfordshire. Denford Park was rented out and later sold.

TED MARTIN

The Zeebrugge Raid – Part 2

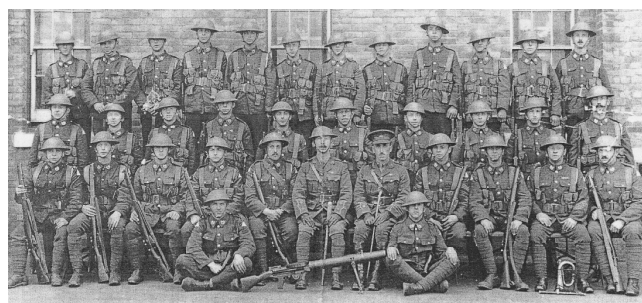
On their return from the Raid, King George V said: 'The splendid gallantry displayed by all under exceptionally hazardous circumstances fills me with pride and admiration.'

Because of the innumerable individual feats of heroism it was decided that eight Victoria Crosses should be awarded under Rule 13 of the Victoria Cross warrant which allowed the participants to nominate their own candidates for the award.

Such was the courage of the 700 or so members of the 4th Battalion RM that took part in the raid that it was decided to invoke Article 13 of the Royal Warrant governing its award which stipulates that, when a corps or unit so distinguishes itself as to make it impossible to single out individuals, crosses should be awarded by a ballot of those who survived. When the ballot was completed, it was announced that Captain E Bamford, who had a DSO from Jutland, and Norman Finch, a Royal Marine Artillery sergeant who had kept his pom-pom and Lewis Gun firing from the *Vindictive's* foretop throughout the attack, were to be awarded the VC – although there was some controversy in later years on how the ballot was conducted.

Every man who had taken part had it noted on his Register of Service. One of these was Charles Knight, a native of Bedford who might well have been selected as a recipient of the VC. He was born on 7 September 1899 in St Leonards, Bedford, his

address, given on 15 September 1917 when he enlisted in London at the age of 18, was 5 Muswell Road, Bedford. His mother Mary Jane is given as his next of kin. Charles Knight held the rank of Private in the Royal Marine Light Infantry, his service number being PLY2504(S); 'PLY' denotes Plymouth Division and '(S)' stands for a short service enlistment. He was 5 feet 8½ inches tall, with dark complexion. He was first sent to the Recruits depot at Deal and then to the Plymouth Division. His classification for conduct was 'First Class', general character, 'very good' and ability 'satisfactory'. It is noted on his service record that he participated in the ballot for the award of the VCs. He was demobilised on 1 September 1919.



12 Platoon, 4th Battalion, Royal Marines at Deal, March 1918.
Charles Knight is in this photo but has not been identified.

Charles Knight's membership badge as a member of the Zeebrugge Association was sent to him in 1936 when he was living at 23 Holme Street, Bedford. He lived at Holme Street from 1936-1939 and his occupation was a Fitter (mechanic).

Charles Knight died on 26 November 1938, at the young age of 41, at the County Hospital and left a widow, Amy Sarah Knight. He was buried at Foster Hill Road Cemetery on 30 November 1938 and his wife Amy Knight was buried there on 29 May 1969, aged 71, she had been living at 11 Howard Avenue, Bedford. They were married in September 1925 and Amy's maiden name was Hart.

The sailors from the *Vindictive*, *Iris* and *Daffodil* chose 20-year-old Able Seaman Albert McKenzie to represent them. McKenzie survived the raid but his injuries made him vulnerable to infection and he died from pneumonia less than nine months later and just one week before the Armistice.

The *Iris* and the *Daffodil* sailed back to a rapturous welcome in Liverpool and there was a special message for them from the King: 'His Majesty decreed that because of their exploits the vessels – and their successors – should henceforth be known as the *Royal Iris* and the *Royal Daffodil*.'

The Zeebrugge Raid was promoted by Allied propaganda as a key British victory and resulted in the awarding of eight Victoria Crosses. The British casualties totalled 214 killed and 383 wounded and 13 taken prisoner – remarkably low when considering the tremendous odds, bravery, skill and courage of all those (mainly volunteers) involved. This is reflected by the decorations awarded: 11 VCs, 21 DSOs, 29 DSCs, 16 CGMs and 143 DSMs. The awards worked out at a rate of six medals for every minute of the action but the Royal Marines and Royal Navy sailors who took part paid a heavy price. Some of the

casualties were buried in England, either because they died of their wounds *en route* or because their comrades had recovered their bodies with the intention of repatriating their remains. Two are buried in the Hamilton Road Cemetery, Deal, Kent. At least nine are buried in St James's Cemetery, Dover.

The block ships only managed to block the canal for a few days. The Germans removed two piers in the western bank of the canal, near the block ships, and created a channel through the silt near their sterns – they were then able to move submarines past the block ships at high tide.

On 23 April 1964, some of the 46 survivors of the raid, along with the families, the mayor of Deal, and a large Royal Marines Honour Guard, held a service of commemoration for their fallen comrades at the Royal Marines Barracks in Deal, and a tree was planted near the officers' quarters in remembrance.⁵

On 23 April 2012 retired Royal Marines took part in an emotional ceremony marking the 94th anniversary of the raid when the annual Zeebrugge Remembrance service took place at Seacombe Mersey Ferry Terminal and on board the *Royal Daffodil*.

Acknowledgement

This article came about as a result of a request for information from Harry Piper, of 145 Woodlands Avenue, Poole, Dorset BH15 4EG, to our secretary, Clive Makin. Harry is researching the life of Charles Knight and Clive was able to help in some respects but Harry would be delighted to hear from anyone who could add anything more to the story. I am grateful to both for being able to incorporate their research into this article.

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Pitt, Barrie, *Zeebrugge: Eleven VCs Before Breakfast* (London: Cassell, 1958).
Prince, Stephen, *The Blocking of Zeebrugge – Operation Z-O 1918* (Osprey Raid Series No 7, Osprey Publishing, 2010).

Notes

5. The event gained major press coverage and was reported in the *Deal, Walmer and Sandwich Mercury* newspaper, dated 23 April 1964, and 30 April, and a message to the veterans from a by-now very ill Winston Churchill was read to those assembled. There are two memorials to the Zeebrugge Raid in Dover. The first is the Zeebrugge Bell, which was given to Dover by the King of the Belgians in 1918, and is to be found with a memorial plaque in Dover's Town Hall. The second is the Zeebrugge memorial in St James's Cemetery. A regular memorial service is held there.

TED MARTIN

Book Review

How Bedfordshire Voted, 1735–1784 by James Collett-White. ISBN 978–0–85155–077–0. Hardback. xvii+ 305pp (incl. indexes). Published for the Bedfordshire Historical Record Society by Boydell & Brewer, PO Box 9, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP12 3DF, tel 01394 610600; e-mail trading@boydell.co.uk; web: www.boydellandbrewer.com. £25 reducing to £18.75 on presentation of code 12151.

This book is Volume 3 in the Historical Record Society's series of Poll Books. The author, James Collett-White, was an archivist at BLARS but has recently retired. The book covers the years from the fall of Walpole to the rise of

William Pitt the younger – a period when Britain was constantly at war, contending with the Jacobite rebellion and lost the American colonies. But warfare did not produce the revolutionary changes to the national and local economy that were brought about by the Napoleonic wars. In the Introduction the author points out that Bedfordshire was much the same in 1790 as it had been in 1740: there was mostly a scattered field system as in medieval times, all the towns were small market towns, only Bedford was a borough.

Only the 1774 poll book is complete for the county but lists survive from Bedford Borough, including a partial poll book of 1747, enabling political allegiance to be gauged. No contested elections did not mean no political activity. Trends are illustrated from the Duke of Bedford's archives and the Hardwicke manuscripts in the British Library, including the attempts of the Duke to increase his power – successfully challenged in Bedford Borough by creating in 1769 many new out-of-town freemen; the decline of formerly prominent political families; and, from the 1760s, the rise of the Whitbreads.

The book also details the political dimension of law cases about the appointment of the rector of St John's, Bedford, the administration of the Harpur Trust and Turnpike and Enclosure Acts.

There are 10 chapters of which the first seven describe national and local politics in eight-year periods from 1734 to 1774; Chapter 8 describes the 1774 general election with relation to both Bedford borough and the county and Chapter 9 supplements this with a reprint of the poll for the county for that election. The final chapter (10) reverts to the national and local politics theme for 1768–1774 and all the chapters are supported by quotations from documents and extant poll books. There are two appendices: one on the constitution of the Borough of Bedford in the 1740s and the second on Bedfordshire local legislation, 1685–1785. In the title pages there is a General Summary of Election results and spread throughout the text four analytical tables. The whole is rounded off with no less than three indexes (Personal Names, Places and Subject). There are 11 illustrations (some in colour) of some of the principal persons mentioned in the text, two views and a plan of Bedford and the 1774 poll book.

Production values are good: good paper, printing and case binding. The jacket illustration, Hogarth's 'An Election Entertainment' is appropriate and amusing and repays close study. It would be nice for a history book to be set in an historical typeface rather than Times, designed for the newspaper in the 1930s, but I suppose a series must follow the previous volume.

The book exhibits considerable research and scholarship, which is just what would be expected from this author. In just over 300 pages there is a tremendous amount of information and enough to keep the local historian happily dipping into it for years to come: highly recommended.

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History in Bedfordshire is published by the BEDFORDSHIRE LOCAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION
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