



Hello my name is Stephanie, for the last six years I have lived in Burton. My daughter Alex and her family live here too, in fact my son-in-law, Matthew, is one of your Parish Councillors! I have a brief story to tell you about my father as part of our Remembrance of VE Day.

My father was a pre war soldier and joined the Grenadier Guards in 1937, but a year later at his own request, he was transferred to the Queen's own Cameron Highlanders because they were embarking for India, a place he wanted to visit. His Battalion was later sent to Abyssinia to fight in the campaign there, however, with the outbreak of World War 2 the Camerons were sent to fight under General Wavell in North Africa.

On June 20 1942 at Tobruk the Battalion was cut off from the remainder of the Tobruk garrison and was being heavily attacked from both front and rear. Seven enemy tanks were seen forming up on the El Adem road.

My father was ordered to engage these tanks with his 2 pounder A/T gun. He held his fire until the tanks were within effective range. He then ordered the gun team to open fire. He maintained complete control of his team as a result of which each tank was successfully destroyed.

Under intense artillery and small arms fire my father smashed an enemy tank attack, which if he had not succeeded would have left the Battalion in a critical position.

My father was subsequently mentioned in dispatches and was awarded the highest level of DCM (Distinguished Conduct Medal) for this cool and gallant action.

The Cameron's held out for another day before the Battalion was captured. The troops were put in the hold of a ship and sent to Northern Italy - an horrendous five days without food, water, or sanitation.

After the capitulation of Italy he was being moved to Germany and whilst being marched from the prisoner of war camp he and his friend managed to escape. He began his 500 mile trek back to the allied lines - a five week journey. Only 12 days from the British lines he lost his friend in a mist while they were crossing a mountain and he was forced to carry on alone. By then he weighed just 6 and a half stone and was only just 23!

Immediately after the war he was sent as a Mounted Policeman to Palestine so he did not attend his investiture at Buckingham Palace to receive his decoration from the King until 1947. However, I did go with my mother to see him being awarded his medal but I don't remember much about it, as I was only 3 at the time. However I did tell my grandmother, apparently with great pride, that I had used the Kings lavatory!!