

THE FINE WW2 'BATTLE OF THE BULGE' M.M. AND DOCUMENT GROUP TO AN NCO OF THE 4TH WELCH REGIMENT FOR HIS GALLANTRY 'WHILST FIRING HIS STEN GUN' HE CHARGED AN ENEMY POST HELD BY THE MEN OF FAMED GERMAN 116 (GEYHOUND) PANZER DIVISION, DURING THE BITTER AND CONFUSED FIGHTING DURING THE HEIGHT OF WINTER THAT WAS ASSOCIATED WITH THE ARDENNES OFFENSIVE. POST WAR HE SERVED WITH THE GLAMORGAN CONSTABULARY



MILITARY MEDAL, G.V.I.R. '3968753 L.CPL. T. C. HARDING. WELCH. R.', 1939-45 STAR, FRANCE AND GERMANY STAR, DEFENCE AND WAR MEDALS. THESE COURT MOUNTED AS WORN, SPECIAL CONSTABULARY LONG SERVICE MEDAL E.I.R. 'THOMAS C HARDING'. IN BOX OF ISSUE WITH GLAMORGAN CONSTABULARY AWARD DOCUMENT, DATED 12 OCTOBER 1959.

M.M. London Gazette 12 April 1945. His recommendation for an Immediate Award reads:

"During the attack on Au Thiers De Talles feature on 7 Jan 45 L/Cpl Harding was commanding a sec in C Coy 4th Bn The Welsh Regiment. Shortly after crossing the start line a previously unlocated pl locality was encountered and the sec came under heavy aimed rifle and MG fire. Without any hesitation L/Cpl Harding charged the nearest enemy post whilst firing his Sten Gun and shouting encouragement to his section to follow him. Inspired by his leadership and devotion to duty the section followed L/C Harding, and the enemy position was captured. Later when confused fighting was taking place on the objective L/Cpl Harding showed outstanding courage and disregard for danger in leading his sec from enemy post to enemy post, nearly all the time under aimed small arms fire. In spite of fairly server casualties within his section L/Cpl Harding occupied his objective and carried out the reorganisation of his section on it. Throughout the action L/Cpl Harding was an inspiration to his section and by his personal bravery and devotion to duty was largely responsible for his section reaching their objective."

A newspaper cutting with the group regarding the award adds the following:

"On January 7th, 1945 Sgt Harding(then L/Cpl) as Section Commander with the 4th Btn of his Regiment, during the advance into the Ardennes, lost his complete Section under German Machine Gun fire, armed with hand grenades, he cleared the German position single handed, & took command of another Section, which had lost its Commander and continued the Advance."



Lance Corporal Harding's M.M. was awarded for his gallantry during the German Ardennes offensive, also known as the 'Battle of the Bulge' much of the battle taking place in the heavy forested area, which often caused the fighting to be of a confused nature, fought in terrible winter conditions. At the time of his award, the 4th Battalion, Welsh Regiment, which formed part of the 53rd Welsh Division were locked a severe back and forth battle with famed German 116 (Geyhound) Panzer Division, and it was for the attacks on positions of elements of this Panzer Division, that Harding would perform his acts of great gallantry.

It was clear Harding was to gain some kind of award, for on 30 January 1945 he was given a South Wales Infantry Brigade card, signed by Brigadier Coleman congratulating him on his *"Great courage and inspirational leadership during the attack on Au Thiers De Talles on Jan 7. 45"*. He was further notified of the award of the M.M. on 3 March 1945, the original award notification, signed by the Adjutant of the 4th Welsh. Both these documents forming part of the group.

Harding was awarded his MM by Sir Brian Horrocks, Lt. General 30th Corps, G.O.C. KBE CB DSO MC, at the 21st Holding Btn HQ, Wrexham on 20 May 1945.

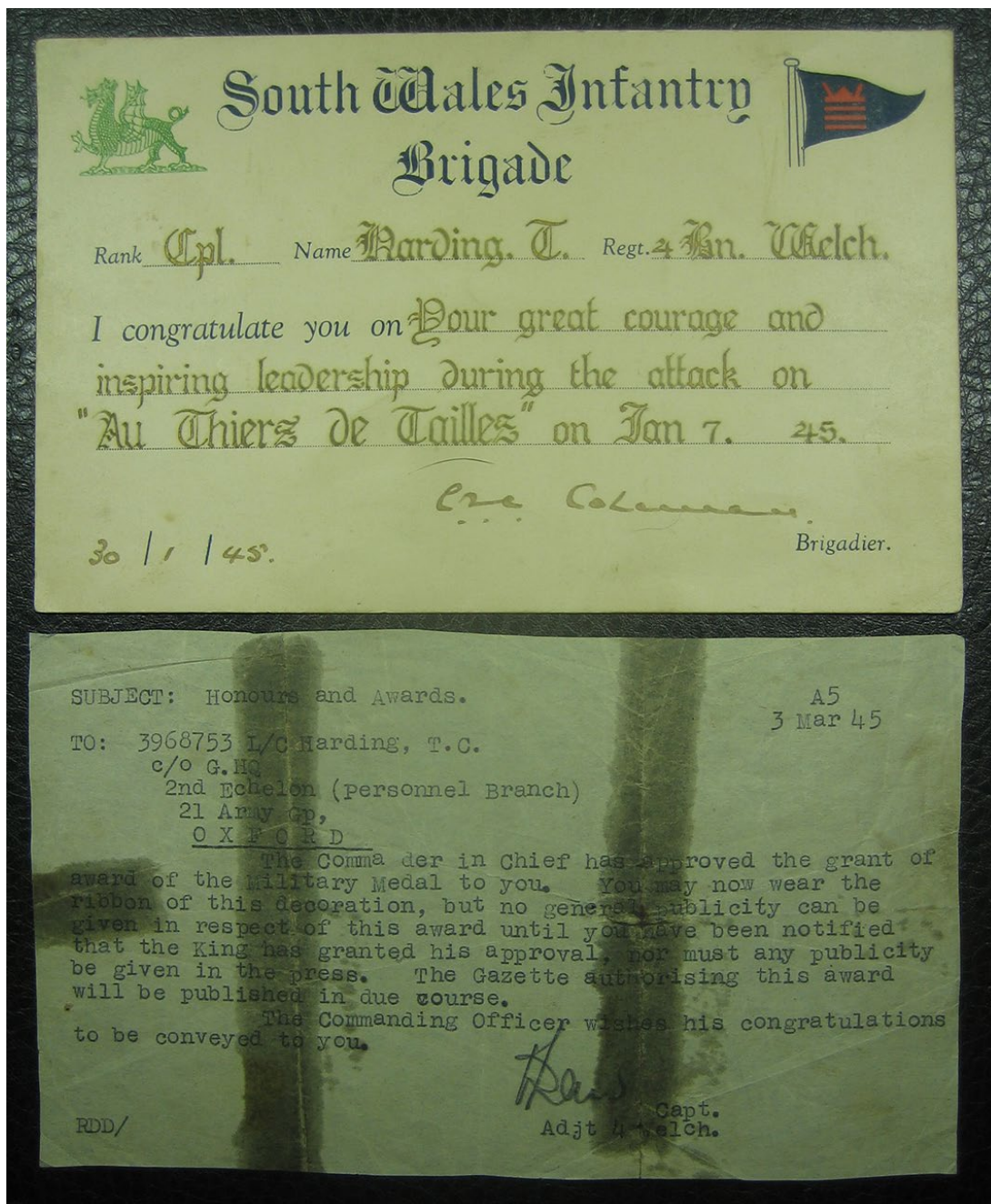
Thomas Christmas Harding was born on 27 February 1920 and was a motor driver by trade. His Soldiers book noting he lived at Aberdare, Glamorgan. He enlisted into the 4th Battalion, Welsh Regiment at Cardiff on 18 April 1940. Initially serving as a Motor Transport driver for his battalion, he served with the Regimental Police from 25 February 1944 and then as an N.C.O. in 'C' Company. He entered the European Theatre after D-Day and took part in the 53rd Welsh Divisions push through Northwest Europe and into Belgium and Holland, the Division seeing a great deal of action during the Ardennes in the area around Hertogenbosch. Harding was release from service on 13 June 1946, his

Soldier's Release Book giving him an 'Exemplary' testimonial, noting he had served as Provost Sergeant for the past 3 months, having previously been a Corporal on the Provost Staff.



Post war, Harding served with the Glamorgan Constabulary as a Special Constable and would be awarded the Special Constabulary Long Service by Glamorgan Constabulary on 12 October 1959.





SOLD WITH A QUANTITY OF ORIGINAL ITEMS INCLUDING:

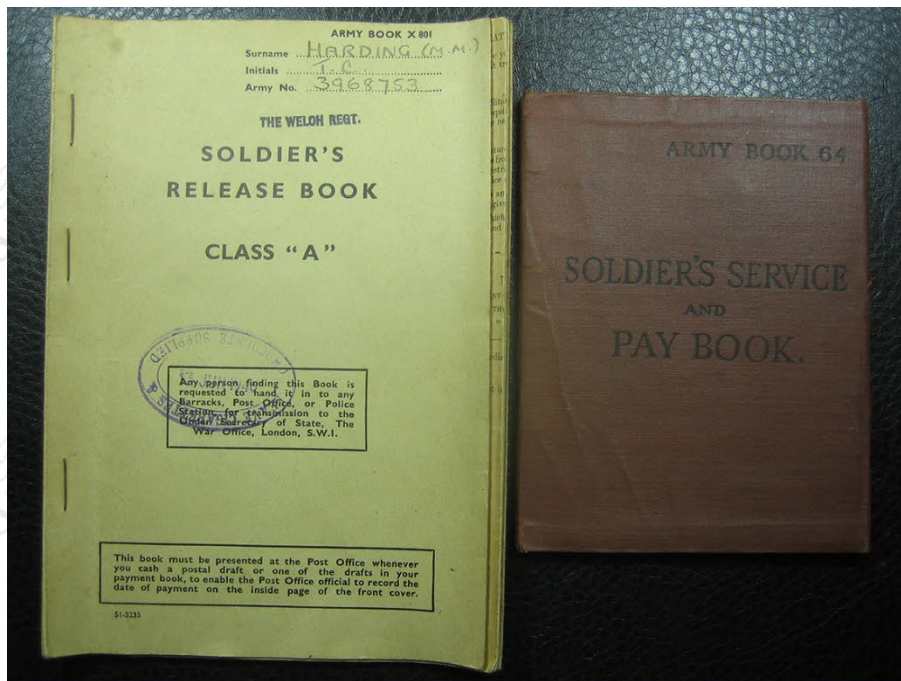
- 1) Original South Wales Infantry Brigade gallantry card, dated 30 January 1945
- 2) Original M.M. award notification, dated 3 March 1945
- 3) Harding's Dog Tags.
- 4) Soldier's Service and Pay Book
- 5) Soldier's Release Book, Class "A"
- 6) Box of issue for M.M. (M.C. type), with Buckingham Palace forwarding letter
- 7) Campaign medals entitlement
- 8) Original 1945 Wrexham Newspaper cutting of the citation/action etc
- 9) 1 original and one larger portrait photos of Harding in uniform
- 10) 4 original photos of Harding and comrades in uniform
- 11) New Testament, Welsh version. Inside with dedication in Welsh, dated 1940
- 12) ARP whistle and chain.
- 13) ABC for Special Constables

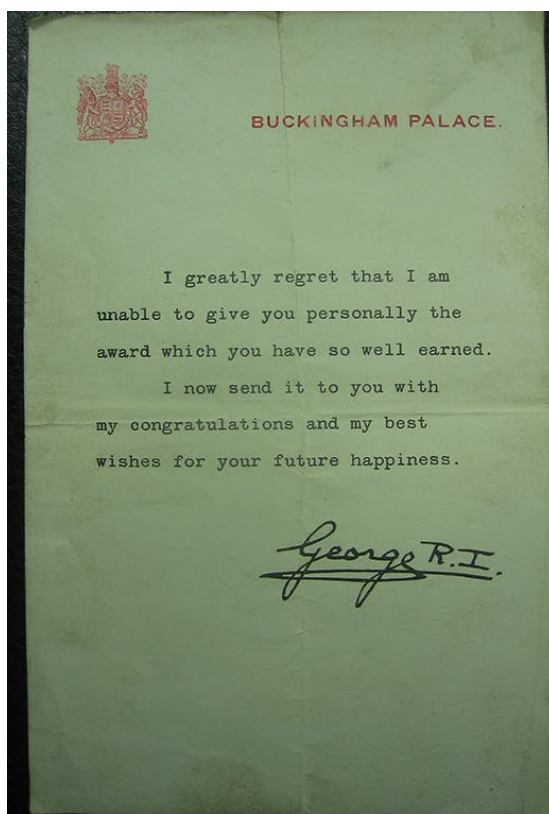


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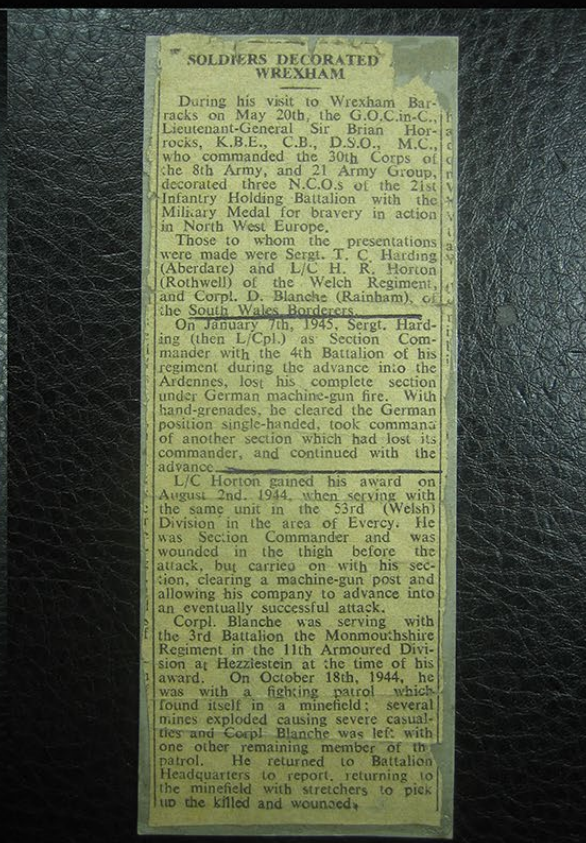
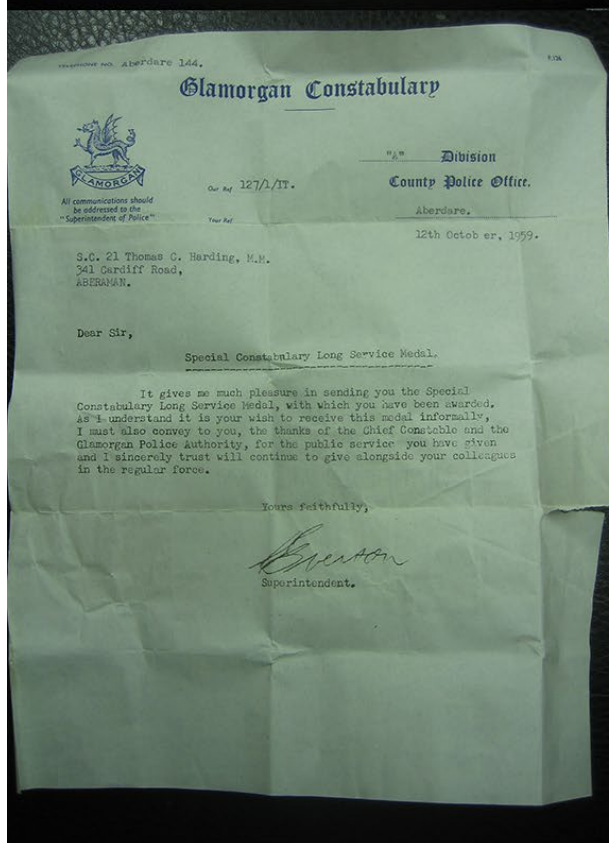


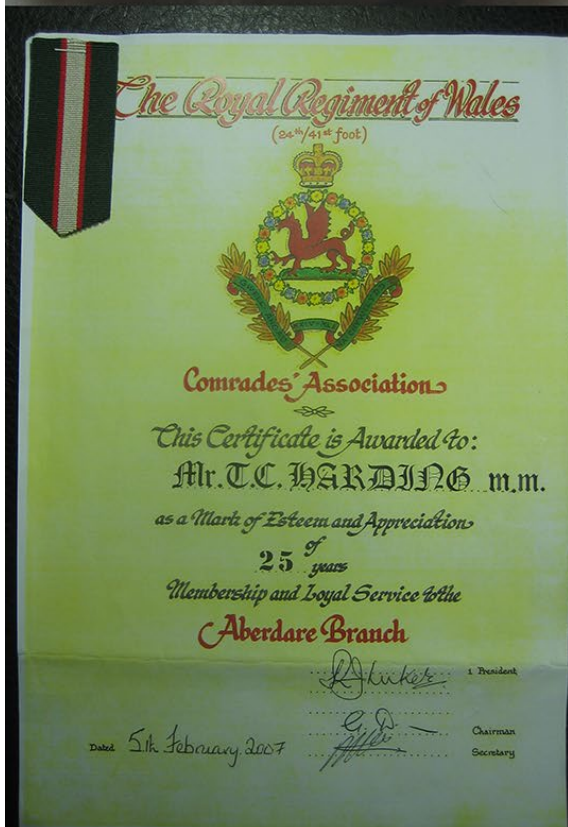
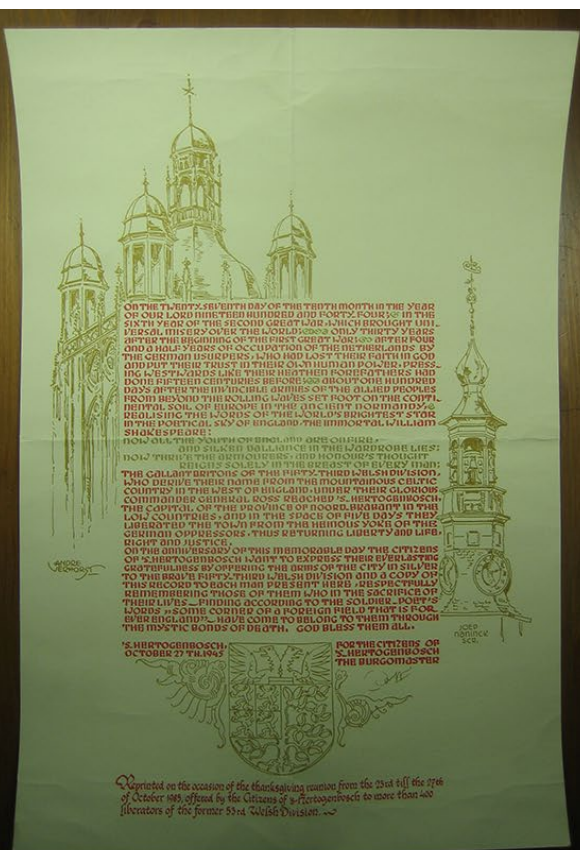
CHRIS FAHEY

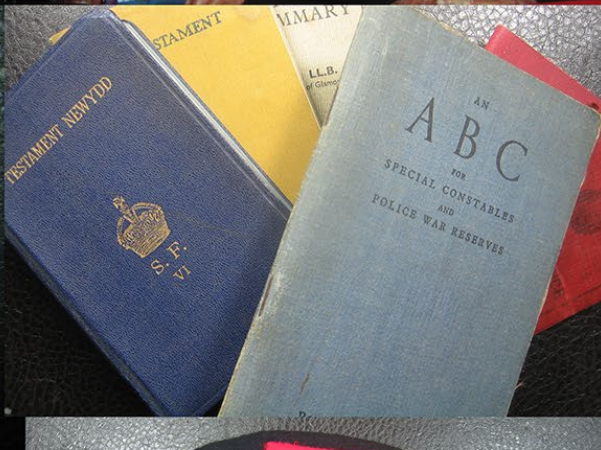
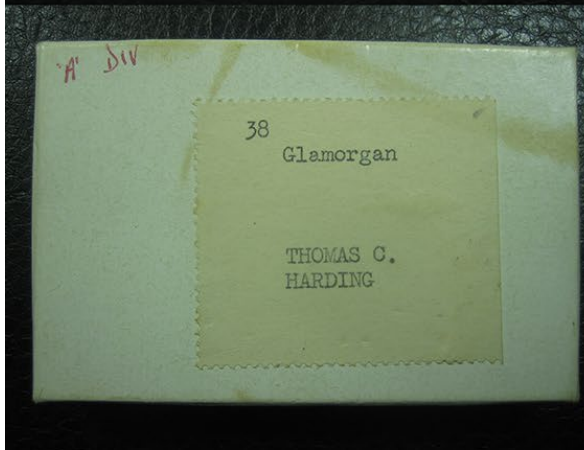




Campaign Stars, Clasps and Medals instituted in recognition of service in the war of 1939-45		
NUMBER OF STARS, MEDALS, CLASPS OR EMBLEMS ENCLOSED 4-0		
Order in which the awards should be set up e.g. for framing	Description of Ribbon	Clasp or Emblem (if awarded)
1 1939-45 Star	Dark blue, red and light 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	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







Veteran items include:

- 1) A small circular enamelled Military Medallists league badge
- 2) 1984 cuttings from a Dutch Newspaper, which shows the Recipient meeting then Prince Charles in Hertogenbosch Holland, when all the living members of the Btn were given a Scroll for their bravery in the liberation of their City,
- 3) The above liberation scroll
- 4) The Royal Regiment of Wales Comrades Association Award Certificate for 25 years, 5 Feb 2007
- 5) Colonel of the Royal Regiment of Wales Commendation, dated February 2006
- 6) Photograph of Harding and a fellow veteran in later years
- 7) Black Beret with bright red patch affixed by Compton Webb Ltd. Presumably worn as veteran
- 8) Couple of driving licences etc

Additionally, Harding Sons Prison Service Long Service & Good conduct medal, named 'OSG J HARDING BM916' and a hallmarked silver circular 25 yrs Service pin badge named Jeffrey Harding on the rim. Both these awards in original Royal Mint boxes.



Condition GVF. A very fine and complete archive to a brave Welsh soldier