

AN OUTSTANDING AND HISTORICALLY IMPORTANT CRIMEAN WAR 1ST ROYAL DRAGOONS OFFICERS AND HEAVY BRIGADE CHARGERS MEDALS, PERSONAL WAR DIARY; MAY 1854- OCTOBER 1855, GOLD AN DIAMONDS BROACHED PORTRAIT AND RUSSIAN MEDAL PICKED UP FROM THE BATTLEFIELD AT INKERMANN



THE GROUP INCLUDES:

- 1) CRIMEA 1854, 3 CLASPS, BALAKLAVA, INKERMANN, SEBASTOPOL 'M STOCKS, CAPT: ROYAL DRAGOONS. 1855', ORDER OF THE MEDJIDIE 5TH CLASS, NAMED TO REVERSE 'MAJOR STOCKS. ROYAL DRAGOONS 1858', TURKISH CRIMEA 'MAJOR. M. STOCKS ROYAL DRAGOONS. 1855', Medals all contemporary engraved, with original ribbons and ribbon brooch bars for wear, contained in fitted glazed case.
- 2) MINIATURE CRIMEA 1854, 3 CLASPS, BALAKLAVA, INKERMANN, SEBASTOPOL, ORDER OF THE MEDJIDIE 5TH CLASS, TURKISH CRIMEA, with original ribbons and mounted for wear.
- 3) A fine portrait miniature of Major Stocks in uniform wearing the medals, probably from an over painted photograph, which was common practice at this time. Portrait mounted in a within a rosecut diamond and gold frame with gilt back. Glazed reverse with the enamelled wording 'MICHAEL STOCKS ROYAL DRAGOONS 1861'. This in its original fitted case. Brooch measures 4.75cm x 8.5cm and weighs 52.82g, so quite weighty. An extremely attractive piece.
- 4) A Russian medal with ribbon picked up after the battle of Inkermann, with old note; 'THIS MEDAL WAS TAKEN FROM THE BODY OF A DEAD RUSSIAN ON THE FIELD OF INKERMAN THE DAY AFTER THE BATTLE, BY MAJOR STOCKS, ROYAL DRAGOONS, CRIMEA 1854'. Contained in old leather box

5) A most attractive little diary measuring 18 x 10.5 cm and bound in Morocco leather. To the front cover 'DIARY OF CAPTAIN STOCKS, ROYAL DRAGOONS "CRIMEA" 1854 is impressed in gold letters. It contains 118 pages up until 22 May 1855. Stocks then tells how this 1st part of his diary had been sent home and he may as well start another. This he did, this new diary being slightly smaller and running over another 88 pages up until 19 October 1855. This smaller diary has been bound together with the first, so together we have in the region of 206 fully filled pages of hand written entries, in small writing, with easily enough content for a book to be written on Stocks experiences and observations of the Crimean War.

MAJOR MICHAEL STOCKS

Michael Stocks was Commissioned Cornet, 1st Royal Dragoons on 11 December 1846. Advanced to Lieutenant, 21 July 1849 and Captain on 25 February 1853. Promoted Major on 23 October 1857, he retired by sale of his Commission on 16 October 1860. He served abroad in Turkey and the Crimea between May 1854 and June 1856, the rest of his service being at home. He served during the Eastern campaign of 1854-55, including the battles of Balaclava, Inkerman and Tchernaya and siege of Sebastopol. His awards consisted of the British Crimea medal with 3 clasps, Turkish Crimea medal and 5th Class Order of Medjidie, the latter being one of three such awards to men from his Regiment. Major Stocks died at Latheronwheel, Caithness on 30 September 1895, his obituary in the Glasgow Herald noting he was the only senior Officer of his Regiment not wounded at the battle of Balaclava.



THE HEAVY BRIGADE AND THE BATTLE OF BALACLAVA

Captain Stocks was present with his Regiment on 25th October 1854 at the battle of Balaclava, taking part in the famous charge of the Heavy Brigade as one of the Troop commanders. On any other day, at any other battle, this outstandingly successful charge, which routed a Russian cavalry force of five times its number, would have created a

sensation. However it was overshadowed by the disastrous charge of the Light brigade fought just over an hour later, a charge in which the Heavy Brigade also played a part, something often forgotten. In an indication of what Captain Stocks experienced during the battle, he starts his entry for the day with; *"Thank God I am here to write this"*

The Heavy Brigade at Balaclava consisted of two squadrons each of the 1st Royal Dragoons, Scots Greys, 6th Inniskillings, 4th and 5th Dragoon Guards. Commanded by General Sir James York Scarlett, the Heavy Brigade made a gallant uphill charge to defeat a greatly superior force of onrushing Russian cavalry. The desperate sword on sword battle lasted but 10 minutes before the Russians retreated and the heavy Brigade reformed. The number of casualties suffered by the Brigade were relatively small in number considering the scale of the victory. An hour and a half later, the Light Brigade fatally charged the Russian guns, resulting in the Brigade being all but wiped out as an effective fighting unit. During the charge, the Heavy Brigade supported the Light Brigade, led by the Royal Dragoons and the Scots Greys.



Suffering casualties from the artillery crossfire as they rode up the valley behind the Light Brigade, The Royal and Greys were ordered to halt their advance and reformed just before entering into the Russian batteries, therefore not suffering the same fate as the Light Brigade. Casualties in the Heavy Brigade would have been far higher had it not been for the French Chasseurs d'Afrique, who bravely charged the flank of the Russian battery on the Fedioukine Heights, forcing them to drag away their guns. It was the Scots Greys and the Royal Dragoons that suffered the brunt of the casualties from the artillery crossfire as they were in line in advance of the rest of the Brigade, Captain Stocks diary entry noting just how heavy a fire they were under. During this part of the battle they lost in wounded their Colonel, two Captains and a Lieutenant, leaving Captain Stocks the senior Officer of the Royals left on the field.



Recorded casualties for the 700 strong Heavy Brigade at Balaclava on 25 October were 105. However reports and accounts suggest there were a very large number of unrecorded casualties; men with minor sword cuts and contusions that were not treated in hospital and therefore not recorded.

On 25 October 1854, the 1st Royal Dragoons mustered 253 Officers and men with only 182 effective troop horses, the latter being the second lowest number of the entire brigade. Officers had their own horses, so these can be added to this number, though a number of mounted men would have been on forage or picket duties, so can be reduced again. As such, with only in the region of 165 chargers. 239 Balaklava clasps were issued to the Royal Dragoons, which shows the issues with knowing who did charge and who were present at the camp at Balaclava but didn't actually charge.

CAPTAIN STOCKS RETURN HOME

It seems some time in late 1855, Captain Stocks was given a well needed and limited leave of absence before retuning to the Crimea in early 1856. On his return to England, in January 1856, his hometown of Halifax held a banquet in honour of Captain Stocks. A lengthy commentary of proceedings and speeches at this banquet was published in the Leeds Mercury in January 1856, the beginning of which is copied below:

"DINNER TO CAPTAIN STOCKS, 1st ROYAL DRAGOONS, AT HALIFAX.

When the Russians, in overwhelming numbers made their desperate attempt to retake Balaklava. On the 25th October 1854 and an immense body of Russian cavalry were advancing to attack, the British heavy brigade, consisting of the Inniskillings, the Scots Greys, the 1st Royals and the 4th and 5th Dragoons, were ordered to charge. Forward they dashed and though vastly inferior in numbers to the enemy, they bore down all before them, cut their way completely through the dense mass of Russians, wheeled right and left and cut their way

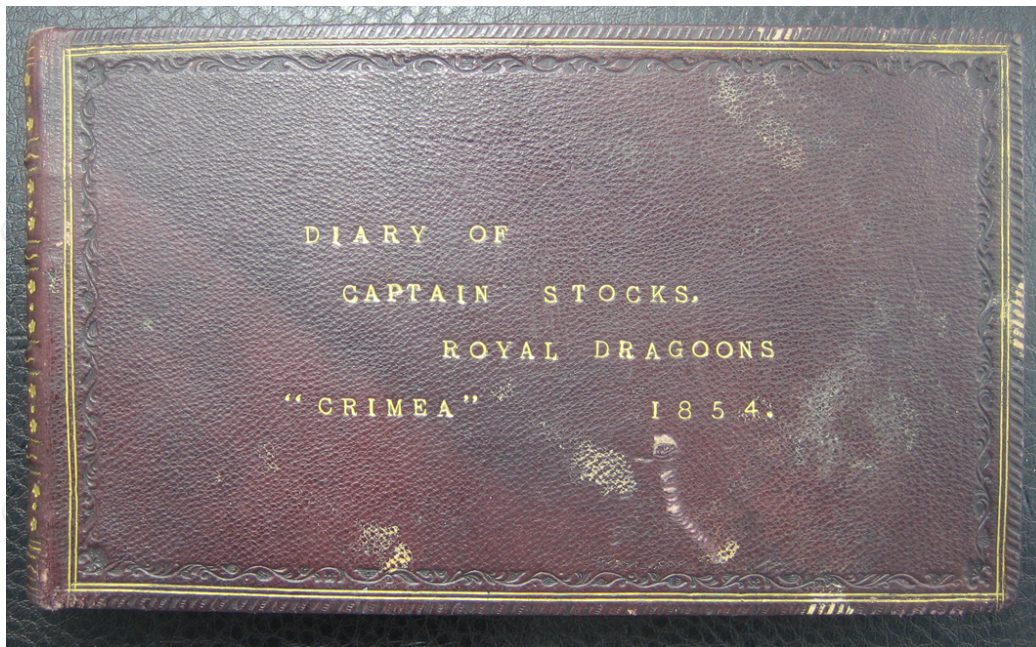
back again, scattering and slaying their foe in every direction. This feat of arms excited the astonishment and awe of the hundreds who were witnesses. Later in the day the heavy brigade covered the retreat of the light brigade, after their brilliant and disastrous attack on the Russian guns in position. The First Royals went into action that morning with nearly its full complement of officers; when the day closed, the senior officer of the regiment fit for duty was Captain Stocks, son of Michael Stocks Esq Solicitor, Halifax. Upon arriving in England recently on a limited leave of absence, Captain Stocks was received by his fellow townspeople with every demonstration of admiration and rejoicing; and as the period of his return to the Crimea is rapidly approaching, the leading gentlemen of Halifax, of all parties, determined to give a banquet in his honour.....The large room in which the banquet took place was handsomely and appropriately decorated with flags of the Allied nations, surmounted by devices in small arms, military trophies &c.....

What follows is numerous speakers and toasts talking of the Crimean War in general, the charge of the heavy brigade and how it had been overshadowed by the charge of the light brigade, the part Captain Stocks played, calls for him to be awarded a Brevet Majority and a speech by Captain Stocks himself

THE DIARY AND ENTRY EXAMPLES

Of particular note is that the diary includes a description of events seen and experienced by Captain Stocks during the battle of Balaklava, an understandably longer entry than most (but not all) of his others, covering 3 pages. This was of course a diary entry, not a detailed description or letter describing events but what is interesting is he talks not only the charge of the Heavy and Light Brigades but the 93rd Highlanders (the Thin Red Line) and the part the French Chasseur d'Afrique played in attacking the Russian guns which were causing a large number of casualties to the Royals and Greys ranks as they rode in support of the Light Brigade. Interesting Stocks recounts how both Regiments actually followed the light Brigade three quarters of the way up the 'Valley of Death' (to around 3rd redoubt) before being halted by Scarlett. It was during this part of the battle that both Regiments suffered the brunt of their casualties, not during the Heavy Brigades famous charge:

"October 25th 1854...Thank God I am here to write this, we all as usual turned out half an hour before day break, and when it got light the guns on the advanced field works thrown up by the turks began to fire, an aide de camp came galloping in to us to say we were to advance, as the enemy were approaching in large numbers, so on we went near the field works, the enemy still continued to move on & the round shot came into us (spent balls) but still with sufficient force to do damage, one ball came rolling down the hill straight where I stood, I saw it was coming right to me, so put the spurs into my horse and only just in time, for it went close behind me and broke the legs of two horses, the next took a long hop and hit a man on the head and he never moved more... The enemy had advanced.. took one of the hills from the Turks... after a time up comes their cavalry part of which made a dash where the 93rd flanked by Turks were waiting to receive them, and as soon as they saw them coming away went the Turks leaving the 93rd to stand the brunt of it... and sent the Huzzars to the right, at the same time another body of cavalry came at us, the Greys and 6th were ordered to meet them and the others to support....."



After a brief description of the Heavy Brigades charge:

".....an order from Lord Raglan was brought to Lucan to attack the enemy which he did by sending the light cavalry into the greatest trap that ever was made, we and the Greys advanced first and then somebody said let the light cavalry go on, and on they went ... to take some guns in front, we followed at a trot, they went at a gallop and we saw nothing more of them until we saw them coming back by ones and twos some mounted but mostly dis-mounted, such a smash never was seen , they were murdered it seems they got & took - killed the gunners at the guns but could not keep them, the infantry played on them and when they looked round they found their way stopped by Cossacks, then they cut their way through and about 40 came back in a body, the French Cavalry came down at this time and cleared the opposite hills of the guns but for us now we got about three parts of the way and the shot & shells & bullets came down on us like hail, every second I expected to get one, when luckily Scarlett gave the word Halt. "

Though the entry about the battle of Balaclava stands out, the entire diary is of great importance and scale; a look at the example pages pictured in this write up will give an idea of just how much is written on each page. As such, with so many pages and so much of interest in the diary, it is hard to pick out examples of entries that are of more interest than others. Stocks describes his voyage to Crimea in detail, the disease and waste of lives in both men and horses at Varna; a common theme throughout the campaign. He describes the horrors of his transport lost its tow during a storm, during which they lost almost all their horses in horrific circumstances. During the siege of Sebastopol, Stocks talks much about attacks, defences, batteries both British and French, sometimes going into a fair amount of detail. Also visits to the trenches. Picket duty (lots), arrival of troops, losses of officers and men and day to day things. Below are a number of examples and mostly only snippets from days entries. Here I've tried to pick out varied subject entries to give a very rough idea of the varied content.

First page of diary; leaving for the Crimea in 25 May 1854;

"Left Liverpool by the good ship 'Coronella' Her Majesty's transport with 48 men 150 horses belonging to the 1st Dragoons at 5 on the morning of 25th May 1854, The tug took us as far as Holyhead & eased us off to the tender. At 4 the winds light and as the evening advanced it died away all together and left us becalmed. Amused ourselves with trying to catch fish but were not successful, so took to shooting at gulls with my rifle but did not hit any (not likely) with a bullet so got a bottle to shoot at..."

Landing at Constantinople 6 July 1854;

"..found a great gate that stopped our progress, with sentinels on, they made signs to say we must not go in but tried them with a few shillings and in we went, horrible smell, never saw such a place there was not a street 10 yards straight, very narrow, very dirty & looked very unsafe as it was 9 o'clock & dark. We thought the best thing to do was go back, lots of soldiers, dogs by dozens laying everywhere, you could scarcely walk for them & they growled & showed their teeth. We are to go on at 3 in the morning, Col Scarlet being much in want of us...."



30 July 1854; *".....Still at our first encampment, it is truly deplorable to see our horses dwindling away one by one. We have now only 23 horses left..... been very poorly for the last 36 hours, hope it is not cholera, for it is very much about, that is the reason they moved the 1st division over here but up at Varna they are suffering a great deal worse, the 23rd lost 17 men in one day!..."*

12 - 22 August 1854; *"...wish I was shooting grouse instead of about to shoot men. 13th, Dined on board the 'Sans Pariel' war steamer, never men so much civility in my life from mere strangers, nothing was too good for us. 22nd Great preparations for the Crimea, the French are embarking today and tomorrow the English begin. 13,000 English, 37,000 French & 15,000 Turks all going. The Royal Dragoons of course go but tis not settled about me, my horses are still very suspicious, so perhaps.."*

26 September 1854 At sea in transport during storm on way to Crimea from Varna, Stocks transport the *Wilson Kennedy* broke loose from the steamer it was being towed by. They would loose 99 of the 110 troop horses:

"... shortly about 2 the ropes snapped and let us loose from the steamer and then such a rolling began us I never felt.. by this time many horses in the hold were loose all together, made a little sail & waited with much anxiety for daylight for we did not know where we were & it rained & blew furious. Day broke & found us in the middle of the sea, no land in sight.. could not do anything for the horses either on deck or below, the ship rolled so we were obliged to leave every thing as it was, in the evening the sailors set to work to clear the deck & a more deplorable sight one seldom sees. Horses that had cost hundreds lying with broken backs, legs were sent over board but 2 out of 19. Cleared the deck blew as hard as ever, rolling from side to side like a child's cradle, thought their could not be many live ones in the hold, by next morning rather better weather got below & looked about there were horses & saddles, carbines & swords all mixed up like they had been shook up in a bag. Got up a winch & hoisted them overboard to the number of 80 & two pony's. Nice days work not much use in the Crimea now, never saw such a wreck of as fine troop horses as were in the service.."

Early October 1854 Having finally landed at Balaclava several days before and doing picket duty:

".. On picket again for 21 hours, the poorest fun I know of.... Was on picket the night before last, saw about 40 Cossacks who retired when our patrol advanced, they remind you of rabbits only not quite so harmless. They say they make no prisoners, had a very narrow escape of shooting myself for in taking my pistol from the holster it went off, I was dismounted & if it had not been for my cloak turning the direction of the bullet, it would have gone right through me.. Mem. Take care & not to be on that side of my horse when I take my pistol out..."

5 – 6 November 1854. On Picket and the battle of Inkermann and after:

"The weather has decidedly changed for the worse..... luckily made friends with a sailor (Officer) who has got me a famous pea coat which I have been to fetch today... awful fight yesterday, the Russians attacked our right & the first intimation of their approach was a shell bursting in the middle of the hospital tent. They chose their attack on the right place for that was our weak point and at first there were no troops against them but the Guards who they have nearly annihilated at one time we were obliged to retire the enemy taking 4 of our guns but the French coming up directly after it was a great sport of theirs to try and turn our flank but they were driven back with immense loss.....Frampton was wounded in his arm, his only one, the other was lost in India.."

14 December 1854. Whilst in the Crimea, Stocks seems to have built a particular friendship up with Officers of the 50th as he mentions them numerous times:

"...nothing new up at the front where I went yesterday, the town is perhaps more knocked about and the French have advanced their trenches nearer... no less than 6 of the 50th are selling out, the trenches are the very devil, they say the Russians are still fortifying and throwing up earthworks.... 22nd Poor Frampton was taken prisoner and Clark in the trenches yesterday morning at 3am. I hope to goodness he is not wounded, it seems that he was in what they call the advanced trench 200 yards from the place and the men rushed in, about 500 of them and he had only 100 men to oppose them, they fought well until relief came to them & when they were driven back Frampton & Clark were found missing...."



6 January 1855; As the siege of Sebastopol continued, some Officers began to build small wooden huts so they could get out of sleeping under canvas. Stocks was no exception:

"....Raised the roof of a wooden house this day, 9 feet by 16 – and 14 deep, to the envy of the whole camp – what luxury we propose to enjoy with such a palace to live in after our poor weather beaten canvas tent. Jan 7th Wrote to Tom & sat up as Gorringer says till 1 o'clock in the morning, much to his disgust..... 8th Plastered the crevices with mud & tow in place of mortar, many friends looked in to see our new abode, attended a sale and bought a few things belonging to the late Capt Campbell 5DG..."

16 January 1855; "On picket all day and such a day, my whiskers actually froze to the chin strap of my helmet. We do indeed earn our pay out here. Got served out with a sheepskin coat, ornamented with flowers & in coloured worsted..."

22 February; "On the evening of the 7th we were rather surprised to receive orders to turn out at 12 o'clock. No one could guess for what purpose we were wanted... it began to rain slightly but out we went & it rained in torrents, the wind changed to the north & it was pitch black & you were not able to see the man in front of you & getting out of this camp & amongst the walls & ruined houses was no joke but somehow we did it & found themselves about two miles from here, together with the Highland Brigade and some guns and as it was supposed to be some grand reconnaissance together with the French who had put it off seeing what a bad night it was & sent a messenger to us who never arrived. We came back about 11 the next morning, horses done up & many of the Officers and men frost bitten. No one knows to this day what was going to be done..."

again made their appearance in the Crimea, with positive orders, I suppose this time not to return until they have driven us into the sea, & consequently on their coming at all points but the only unusual occurrence noticed as yet has been the march of about 3000 men across the Tcherneya valley towards the hills surmounting Balaklava harbour. all the Transport men were turned out at 5 yesterday morning to see what use could be made of them than supposed about to take place but the Russians failed in courage we must suppose & quietude still remains, a new battery is in course of construction to guard the approach to the town of 3, 32 lbs of what is going on at the front, I only know by hearsay, but judging from the mighty boom of artillery the enemy disputes the ingress to the town as much as ever waggons drawn by 14 or 18 horses are continually passing our camp loaded with munitions of war, in shape of gun carriages & shells no doubt destined for our new battery, yesterday afternoon we thought the Russians were down upon us the Highland battery fired three shots it turned out a deserter of ours going over to the enemy either a sailor or a Turk, not known which soon to say he made good his escape a Russian mounted & dismounted videt stands upon the top of a

5 March 1855; "Cavalry were inspected yesterday by Gen Scarlett, the heavies came out strong (50 per Regt) but the lights made a sorry appearance, the 11th having only 3 horses & the other Regts not much better.... The first meeting in the Crimea came off this day at 2 o'clock above the cavalry camp, just after the first race our vidette was seen to fire his carbine & join the picket which mounted & retreated towards Balaklava, this of course caused a great stir...."

19 March 1855; "We took two rifle pits last night to show how foolishly they manage things here. Four Regts were ordered to attack the rifle pits 3 of them were countermanded, they forgot to countermand the other one consequently at the time ordered they advanced against two of these pits and took them but the Russians then brought a large force against them,

forced them to retire, killed the Col. (Egerton) and one Captain, 60 men killed & wounded all in consequence because they had not the other Regts to support them, this is a specimen of how they manage men out here.....”

7 April 1855; “.. The 12th Lancers have arrived... the French army of reserve 40,000 together with 11,000 of the Imperial Guard is ordered up from Const’le, so perhaps the ‘Sardines’ will come at the same time...”

13 April 1855; “Rained incessantly for three days & nights, made the place in an awful mess, nearly as bad as the winter give the amateurs a taste of what the winter might.. a Regiment of Sardinian Rifles marched up to the camp at Karani they wear a wide awake cap with some cocks feathers in the top, dark green uniform with the tunic.... Yesterday went hunting for some parsley which I had seen before the winter set in, saw a Pole with a long double barrelled gun shooting pigeons, told us he shot a Russian Officer on the 25th, seemed to gloat over it, how those fellows hate the Russians...”

20 April 1855; “Lots of Sardines have arrived, they look nice troops well disciplined... a compact little army, one of their bands play every evening, they play well & have great audiences up at Kariam, Mrs Duberly graces them with her presence which seems to astonish them much, they are very civil all touching their hats... if they fight as well as they look we shall have a great addition to our force...”

Early May 1855 (exact date unclear); “...two men gone into hospital of fever, never had such little sickness in the Regt since we left England.... We have 210 men here and 70 horses, we brought out 300 men and 250 horses, an Officer of the 46th told us yesterday that they had buried 500 men of his Regt alone. What thousands have already died by & on account of this war, somebody will have a long score to settle it, up above or down below...”

22 May 1855 – end of diary one, 118 pages in total: “and now having completed a year from the time I left England on Foreign service not unattended by some queer incidents I have jotted them down for the amusement of my friends, often have I been tempted to give up this diary but recollecting the Pater’s word “keep a diary my boy” & thinking that if I did get a quick passage to another world I should leave something behind, I have preserved. The Crimea May 22d 1855”

23 May 1855 – Start of new diary. Many pages talking of actions and attacks, Captain Stocks clearly becoming more disillusioned, so in brief; “Having sent one book of notes to the Pater, I may as well keep another. The French attacked the Russian positions on the left night before last with 15,000 men. They wanted to take some work of the enemy’s which interfered with their advance, the row began about 9 o’clock and lasted three or four hours without intermission... the French lost 1,200 men killed & wounded so they say and took....”

8 June 1855; “....next day they said the place was to be assaulted at 6pm so I went up & true enough something desperate was about to take place if one might judge by the gathering of troops, went to Colonel Shearman’s 62nd and got a mouthful of dinner but only half one as I was afraid if being too late, went to picket house, but I had not my sword on, the big wigs made the place too hot for me, so bolted in a hurray to the 62nd for it. I went to Cathcart’s hill expecting to find Col Shearman and his brother there but there were such lots of people there I could not find him..... (FOLLOWS SEVERAL PAGES ABOUT THE ATTACK).... Next day I was horror struck to hear that poor Colonel Shearman was no more, the man who I had only dined with the night before, a round shot hit him..... poor fellow, he was as nice a fellow as I ever knew, as brave as a lion; the man whom Gen Gough picked to open the battle of Sobraon, he had been twice in the trenches but not wounded. He leaves a young wife & one child, what must be her feelings when she hears of his death & who dare tell her... then again Corbitt of the 88th is gone, a man well known by nearly every man in the army, of

my friends in the 34th, poor Laurenson is gone shot right through the head... Peel wounded, do Westhead, do Sanders, awful work....."

25th June 1855; *".... Quite tired of this life, more so every day I wish to goodness I was home again. Gen Eslcourt is dead of cholera and his goods & chattels are to be sold on Friday. The 4th DG had a great...."*

3 July 1855; *".....Capt Power of the 6th ordered home being a supernumerary Capt, lucky fellow, Capt Buchanan of the 5th DG also going home after some row with the Col, tis said. Two divisions of Russians are expected shortly to drive us into the sea & 40,000 more are on the road....."*

July 1855; *"...Ainslie arrived in the Golden Fleece on the 10th much to his disgust. Got a boat & went to see him, wants to know when he can go home, 92 horses & 50 men, they ought just reverse it, we want men, people at home never think of casualties in a Regt, the work becomes double for some & that all helps drive me to hospital... On the night of the 15th the enemy tried to take a large rifle pit French had made near the Malahof but did not succeed....."*

August 1855; *"I met an officer of Engineers just returned from Russia he having been taken prisoner about four months ago, they treated him with much civility, he liked the Russian gentry & spoke well of them, the morning after he was taken they took & showed him the Redan & other fortifications. His opinion then was we should never take the place, he travelled 2000 miles at the rate of 8 miles a day in carts without springs on no roads, he was at Moscow and was exchanged via Odessa. A shell came right through the tent of Capt Bowles of the"*

16 September 1855; *"...& people at home wonder why you want to sell out "truly in the midst of life we are in death" Got out two more "spring chickens" Coleman & cutter & 53 men, we have now nearly 400 men, there are lots in hospital about 2 die a week some of them are such poor miserable looking children. The 10th & 100 Chasseurs D'Afrique are gone to catch Cossacks...."*

19 October 1855. End of diary two, 88 pages in total; *"They have received orders from the *** to attack at all ** "Good defend the right" Here closes the diary of Michael Stocks October 19th 1855 Captain Royal Dragoons"*

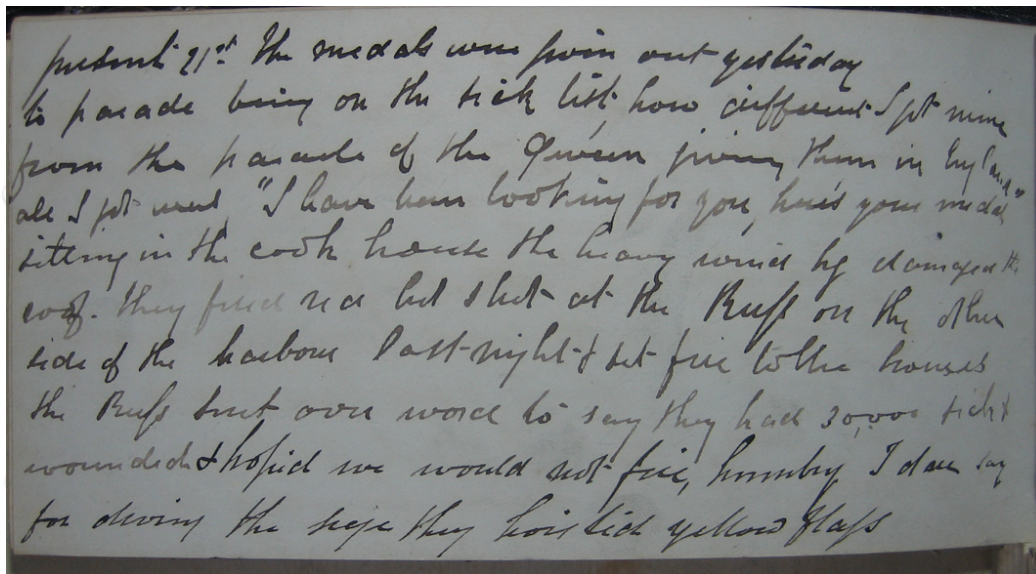
THE MEDALS

Major Stocks Crimea medal was issued to him unnamed and was later sent to a jeweller to be engraved, as was his Turkish Crimea medal. As such they would be described as contemporary but unofficially engraved. Each medal and his Order of Medjidie, which has also been engraved to the rear, has his name and rank at the time he actually received the medal, along with the date. As such, his Crimea medal was issued in September 1855 and has his rank as Captain and the date 1855. His Turkish Crimea and Order of Medjidie weren't issued to him until 1858, by which time he had been promoted Major, therefore both give his then rank of Major and 1858. Medals are contained in a fine contemporary fitted glazed case, the front of which opens up. To the rear was a picture type stand which has broken off and is now missing. Medals have a few EK's and contact marks from wear but generally in VF or better condition.

As noted, the medals, diary and other artefacts were passed down though the family until recently being sold for auction, which is a very firm form of provenance. To add to this, Stocks actually mentions receiving his medal in the Crimea on 20 September 1855! This is a key date, for the first batch of 12,000 Crimea medals sent from England, all unnamed and all

destined for the army, were landed by, *H.M.S. Transit* on 10 September 1855. From there they were handed out the various regiments for issuing. Captain Stocks was less than impressed by the way he received his medal, especially since some of his fellow Officers and men who were back in England, sick or wounded, had been awarded their medals by the Queen herself at Hyde Park on 18 May 1855. According to Stocks:

"21st September, the medals was given out yesterday to parade, being on the sick list, how different I got mine, from the hands of the Queen given them in England & all I got was "I have been looking for you, here's your medal"



At this date, the Sebastopol clasp had not been authorised so medals issued in the Crimea had only any other the clasps the recipient was entitled. The Sebastopol clasp was issued separately and later to the medal and could be returned with the medal to have the clasp added or more often it was either riveted by the armourer or by a jeweller. Stocks medal perfectly shows this, the Inkermann and Balaklava clasp being officially attached but the Sebastopol clasp being unofficially riveted.

Note: A 3 single Clasp Crimea medal named 'Capt. M. Stocks, 1st RI. Dragoons.' Was sold by Seaby Coins & Medals in 1976. Noted as VF and impressed naming. No other details in listing and its unclear if the naming was supposedly officially or just impressed. However given that the original medal rolls give no indication that Stocks would have been issued anything but an unnamed medal alone throws doubts on this medal. To add to the fact that Captain Stocks himself mentions receiving his medal in the Crimea, which would 100% have been unnamed, makes one wonder if the medal sold in 1976 was one of those produced by the infamous faker who had been active around this time. This medal has not been noted for sale since 1976.



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 we followed at a trot, they went
 at a gallop & we saw nothing more
 of them until we saw them coming
 back by ones & twos some mounted
 but mostly dis-mounted, such a
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 Scarlett gave the word halt.

about & away we went back
 the Colonel got shot in the leg & broke
 the bone Edwards through the arm



A quite outstanding and rare artefacts belonging to an officer who took part in one of the most famous battles in history, his diary in particular being of great historical importance.

Provenance, medals new to the market in June 2022, having recently been consigned for sale by the family, Wood Hall, Hilgay, Norfolk. Also sold by the family were the Crimea group awarded to Colonel Sir Richard George Ellison C.V.O. and QSA pair to Captain George Paget Ellison, 9th Lancers