

Merry Christmas Simon...

... I hope you like your gifts! Here's a brief introduction on them.

Air cadets -patch

Even though I'm not sure whether you wore DPM-clothing during your time at the Air Cadets, I hope this patch might serve as memorabilia. You could always sew it onto one of your DPM-jackets!

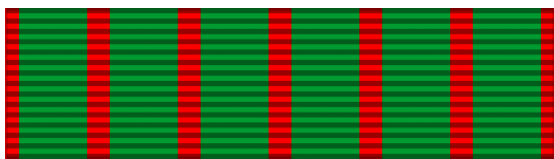
All I know for certain is that this patch is worn only on the CS95 jacket and the DPM-camouflaged windproof smock. It seems that the patch isn't worn on the newer, MTP-camouflaged jacket or the windproof smock, which might suggest the patch may be phased out in the near future.



"Affixed centrally above right breast pocket for other members of uniformed staff and cadets combat 95 only"



Croix de Guerre 1914 - 1918 -arm patch



Croix de Guerre ribbon bar awarded to the Devonshire regiment in World War I

The Croix de Guerre is a French honorific military decoration awarded to both French and allied soldiers and units that served in WWI. This may interest you because the Devonshire regiment (the unit your grandfather served in at the end of WWII) received this award in WWI.

The decoration was earned by the 2nd Battalion of the Devonshire regiment in the Third Battle of the Aisne (1918). The German 1st and 7th Armies began to gain the upper hand over the allied forces, which consisted of the French 6th Army, British IX Corps and later 2 American Divisions.

As allies were forced to withdraw, only the 2nd Battalion was left to fend off the Germans on the wooded hill of Bois des Buttes. Low on ammunition, outnumbered and cut off from allied units, they were able to withstand 8 hours of repeated assaults before being overrun by the enemy. This sacrifice bought the retreating allies more time to regroup.

The bravery of the 2nd battalion was recognised by the French government and thus they received the Croix de Guerre. The decoration was received posthumously by most soldiers: only about 40 men in total survived.

It is worth mentioning, that your grandfather also served in the 2nd battalion, only 26 years later.



Today the ribbon bar is worn by The Rifles, which is the modern successor of the Devonshire regiment.



“A staged photo showing insignia worn by the 2nd, 8th and 12th Battalions circa 1944” Notice that the ribbon bar worn on the arm of the 2nd Battalions Lance Corporal looks very similar to the Croix de Guerre. Even though the photo is staged, it might suggest that your grandfather also wore the same ribbon bar while serving in the 2nd Battalion. But this is merely speculation; a non-staged picture of a soldier from the 2nd battalion or (even better) of your grandfather wearing the Croix de Guerre would be needed for definitive proof.

More reading:

Air Cadets uniform dress and appearance regulations:

<https://www.115atc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Dress-Regs-website.pdf>

The Rifles Museums Facebook post about the Croix de Guerre:

<https://www.facebook.com/TheRiflesMuseum/posts/heritage-of-the-rifles-croix-de-guerrein-the-rifles-an-honorific-medal-is-worn-o/3408920359130480/>

About the Third Battle of the Aisne:

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

The source of the staged photo showing insignia worn by the 2nd, 8th and 12th Battalions:

<https://www.facebook.com/153038564890104/photos/a.155067548020539/1000029150191037/?type=3>

The Wartime Memories Project. I couldn't access this websites information due to mandatory subscription. The price isn't too much (25 £ / year), so might be worth checking it out.

<https://wartimememoriesproject.com/ww2/allied/battalion.php?pid=916>