



Victoria Cross Recipient Daniel Marcus William Beak

Daniel Marcus William Beak (VC, DSO, MC & Bar) - Major General, Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve (Drake Battalion, Royal Naval Division). He was born on 27th July 1891 at 42 Kent Road, St. Denys, Southampton, Hampshire. 1901 saw the family still in Southampton but, by 1911 they were living in Fisherton, Salisbury where he was a student. In 1915 he joined the RNVR as a rating, soon becoming a Petty Officer.

In 1916 he was a temporary Sub Lieutenant in the Royal Naval Division, Drake Battalion. In 1919 he was still in the Drake Battalion, but as a Temporary Commander VC, DSO. MC

He received both his MC and its Bar in France in 1917. Mentioned in Despatches in May 1918, he was awarded the DSO in July of the same year. The Victoria Cross was awarded for his service at Logeast Wood, France between 21st August and 4th September 1918.

The Citation Reads:-

T/Comdr. Daniel Marcus William Beak, D.S.O., M.C., R.N.V.R.

“For most conspicuous bravery, courageous leadership and devotion to duty during a prolonged period of operations.

He led his men in attack, and, despite heavy machine-gun fire, four enemy positions were captured. His skilful and fearless leadership resulted in the complete success of this operation and enabled other battalions to reach their objectives.

Four days later, though dazed by a shell fragment, in the absence of the brigade commander, he reorganised the whole brigade under extremely heavy gun fire and led his men with splendid courage to their objective.

An attack having been held up, he rushed forward, accompanied by only one runner, and succeeded in breaking up a nest of machine guns, personally bringing back nine or ten prisoners. His fearless example instilled courage and confidence in his men, who then quickly resumed the advance under his leadership.

On a subsequent occasion he displayed great courage and powers of leadership in attack, and his initiative, coupled with the confidence with which he inspired all ranks, not only enabled his own and a neighbouring unit to advance, but contributed very materially to the success of the Naval Division in these operations.”

Daniel Beak was invested with his Victoria Cross by King George V at Valenciennes, France, on 6th December 1918.

In 1921 he was granted a Captain's Commission in the Royal Scots Fusiliers and subsequently was posted, with promotions, to the King's and South Lancashire Regiments. Acting Brigadier by 1940 he was again Mentioned in Despatches. He retired as Major General in 1945.

He married Matilda Catherine Frances Ritchie Wallace on 5th September 1923. They had two sons - Marcus 1927 and Peter 1929 - both born in Portsmouth. Matilda died in Hawkley, Hampshire 3rd June 1930.

General Beak died at Princess Margaret Hospital, Swindon on 3rd May 1967 aged 75, following a long illness, and was buried on the 9th May 1967 at Brookwood Cemetery, Woking, Surrey.

Medal entitlement of Major General Daniel Beak
Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve

- Victoria Cross
- Distinguished Service Order (DSO)
- Military Cross (MC) & Bar
- 1914-15 Star
- British War Medal (1914-20)
- Victory Medal (1914-19) + MiD Oakleaf
- 1939-45 Star
- Africa Star + clasp "8th Army"
- War Medal (1939-45) + MiD Oakleaf
- King George V Silver Jubilee Medal (1935)
- King George VI Coronation Medal (1937)
- Queen Elizabeth II Coronation Medal (1953)



According to family history General Beak wished his gravesite to be unmarked.