

Suez Crisis – A Paratrooper remembered

Cyprus was in the throes of the Emergency when the Suez Crisis arose in 1956. The scale of the EOKA conflict and its impact on the medical services in the RAF and Army hospitals on Cyprus during the Cyprus Emergency of 1955 – 1959 are perhaps better appreciated when one realises that during the Suez operation of November 1956 more British troops died at the hands of EOKA in Cyprus than in fighting Nasser's troops. There had been 174 separate bomb attacks on British military targets on the island since the beginning of August that year when military planning for Suez commenced (one of which severely damaged the Akrotiri runway and delayed the Suez invasion by two weeks).ⁱ There were 23 deaths in Cyprus in November alone, one more than the total number of fatalities during the Suez operation.ⁱⁱ

There is one burial in Wayne's Keep Cemetery relating to the Suez Crisis, that of 23 year old **Corporal John Michael Wood**, Parachute Regiment, who was wounded at Port Said and died in Cyprus the next day, on 6 November 1956. He is buried in Plot 23, Row C.



Corporal John Michael Wood,ⁱⁱⁱ Parachute Regiment, wounded at Port Said

ⁱ O'Malley, Brendan and Craig, Ian (1999), *The Cyprus Conspiracy: America, Espionage and the Turkish Invasion*. (London and New York: I. B. Tauris), p. 43.

ⁱⁱ www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-11743727

ⁱⁱⁱ The full name, regimental number and date of birth and death of all service personnel who were killed on duty or by terrorist activity after the Second World War can be obtained by consulting the Roll of Honour on the website of the Armed Forces Memorial, <http://afm.updated.dev.vccpdigital.net/roll-of-honour.asp>

The text above is an extract from Chapter 12 '*Two cemeteries in one - Nicosia War Cemetery (1940-1947) & Wayne's Keep Military Cemetery (1879, 1948-1960)*' in '*Who was Sapper Brown? Remembering British Military Burials in Cyprus*', by David Vassallo (2013).

Published online at <http://online.flipbuilder.com/cwao/smzp/mobile/index.html#p=1>

Corporal John Wood is mentioned anonymously (as the first operative case of the Suez Campaign, the patient with an open chest wound) in the article by Paul Parker and Norman Kirby, '*Operation Musketeer- The Suez Crisis 1956*' J R Army Med Corps 2008;154(4): 231-235.