



## Lieutenant General Sir Philip Neame VC, KBE, CB, DSO, KstJ



Philip Neame was born on 12 December 1888 in Faversham in the County of Kent. He received his education at Cheltenham College, and the British Army's Royal Military Academy at Woolwich, Kent. In July 1908 Neame received his first commission as a second lieutenant into the Royal Engineers. He was promoted to lieutenant in August 1910 with the 15th Field Company.



Neame went off to serve his country during the Great War and during the First Battle of Ypres in October 1914, he experienced first hand in the trenches the inferiority of the British issue hand-grenades compared to their German equivalent, and he set about creating an alternative, the sappers improvising rudimentary but effective hand grenades made from empty jam tins filled with scrap metal, with the charge being created using gun-cotton, and a cord-fuse projecting from the end of the tin, requiring ignition by flame.



Neame was 26 years old when the following deed took place, for which he received the Victoria Cross, his citation read:-

*"On 19 December 1914 at Neuve Chapelle, France, Lieutenant Neame, in the face of very heavy fire, engaged the Germans in a single-handed bombing attack, killing and wounding a number of them. He was able to check the enemy advance for three-quarters of an hour and to rescue all the wounded whom it was possible to move".*



His career continued at a regular pace concluding the Great War at the rank of Major, he had also received a number of additional awards and decorations. He was also a member of Great Britain's 1924 Olympic Running Deer team at Paris and is the only Victoria Cross recipient who has ever won an Olympic Gold Medal. The Running Deer competition was one of the shooting events at the games. It involved teams of four (firing single shots), where a moving target simulated the animal.



In June 1932 Neame was promoted full colonel and became a General Staff Officer 1 in the Waziristan District in India. In 1933 he was badly mauled by a tigress whilst hunting in India, he believed he had shot it. However the tiger was only wounded and it lay in wait and ambushed him, Neame ended up wrestling with the tiger and managed to kill it.



He continued and served in WW2 as well, first becoming the General Officer Commanding British Forces in Palestine and Trans-Jordan in the acting rank of lieutenant-general from 1940 ~ 1941 and later as Military Governor of Cyrenaica.

He served as Lieutenant Governor of Guernsey from 1945 to 1953. He was also a Freemason and was initiated into Old Cheltonian Lodge No 3223 meeting at Great Queen Street.

Neame died at Selling in Kent, on 28 April 1978 in his 89th year. His body was buried in the graveyard of the St. Mary the Virgin Church, in Selling. His medals and awards are held by the Imperial War Museum, in London, England.

