

Frank Kirby VC

Military Career

Enlisted 8 August 1892 as a Sapper in the Royal Engineers (reg no. 698) at St George's Barracks, London.

Transferred to the Mounted Detachment, Royal Engineers, Aldershot, in August 1893.

Appointed Lance Corporal in August 1895, then promoted to Second Corporal in April 1898.

Transferred to 'G' Company, Royal Engineers, St Mary's Barracks, Chatham in August 1898, then re-joined the Mounted Detachment at Aldershot in October 1899 and promoted to full Corporal in November 1899.

Sent to South Africa with the Mounted Detachment, Royal Engineers, in November 1899 and served in the South African Campaign (Boer War) until December 1901.

Mentioned in Despatches several times and took part in blowing up the Bloemfontein Railway in March 1900, for which he was awarded the **DCM** (Distinguished Conduct Medal) in June 1900.

For his actions in June 1900, during a raid north of Kronstadt under General Hunter Weston, he was awarded the **VC** (Victoria Cross) in October 1900.

Promoted in the field, direct from Corporal to Troop Sergeant Major, in April 1901.

Transferred from South Africa to Home Establishment in December 1901 and posted to the 60th Company, Royal Engineers, Aldershot as Company Sergeant Major.

Transferred to the School of Military Engineering at Brompton Barracks, Chatham in January 1902 as a Probationary Field Work Instructor, then promoted to Quarter Master Sergeant Field Work Instructor in October 1902.

Appointed Regimental Sergeant Major in December 1906 and served at the School of Military Engineering until 1908, then as Sergeant Major, Training Battalion, 1908 – 1910 before returning to the School of Military Engineering until April 1911.

In April 1911 he was gazetted with an honorary commission as a Lieutenant, appointed a Quartermaster, and posted to the newly formed Air Battalion of the Royal Engineers at Farnborough.

He transferred to the Royal Flying Corps in May 1912 and helped to form the Central Flying School, Upavon, where he was promoted to Equipment Officer with the temporary rank of Captain in September 1914.

Proceeded to France in March 1916 and commanded No.3 Army Aircraft Park, Royal Flying Corps, at Trevent. He was appointed temporary Major in April 1916 and was given his full Captaincy in the field in January 1917.

Posted from France to Home Establishment in January 1917 and became Commanding Office at the No.1 Stores Depot at Greenwich (now Kidbrooke). Appointed Temporary Lieutenant Colonel in January 1917 and posted to the Air Ministry as Inspector of Stores Depots in August 1917.

Promoted to the Substantive Rank of Major for services in connection with the war in January 1918.

The Royal Flying Corps became the Royal Air Force on 1 April 1918, at which time he achieved the Substantive Rank of Lieutenant Colonel. Appointed Temporary Colonel to command the Technical Corps, RAF, in August 1918.

Appointed Officer of the British Empire (**OBE**) in January 1919.

Reverted to his Substantive Rank of Lieutenant Colonel in May 1919, following the Armistice, and was posted to Headquarters, South Eastern Area, in June 1919 as Quartermaster General.

On 1 August 1919 the Royal Air Force introduced its own rank titles to replace the previous Army ranks so Lieutenant Colonel became Wing Commander and Colonel became Group Captain.

His final posting, in February 1926, was to command No.4 Stores Depot, RAF, at Ickenham

He was appointed a Commander of the British Empire (**CBE**) in 1926, and retired in December 1926 with the rank of Group Captain (Colonel).