

General Service Medal (GSM). The Lost Years

On behalf of all of our Gloucestershire Aden Veterans, we welcome visitors to our website both those who served in Aden their families and those who are interested in British Military History. Our aim to refresh the memories of all three services which formed, and retains an unusual close link to each other complete with our inter-service banter. We all found ourselves in what was in the past described as a punishment posting in hell.

That hell did subside over the years since our occupation in 1839 even threw both World Wars. Aden like so many British occupied territories grew up and prospered alongside its internal problems especially between those in Crown Colonies and the tribes living in the mountains alongside the Yemen Border who still lived the life of poverty.

Although help and government finance's became available to help the tribesmen it was few and far between, encouraging outside interference from Yemen, Egypt and Russia, especially to the young educated Adeni who began to embrace the ways of the trade unions, wanted the life of power and prosperity right away.

In the middle 1950s the unrest began to increase as Aden itself became one of the most important ports in the world. In the beginning of the 1960s life in the colony began to stabilise, the unrest and the increase of the shipping trade as a busy port of call eased the tension.

Unfortunately up country with the help of outside intervention the unrest continued with troops living and operating in active service conditions which continued from June 1960 right through to April 1964 when British troops were deployed in their thousands up in the mountain along the Yemen Border.

With the reluctance of the British Government to commit itself to a long term future for Aden, British Troops finally withdrew from Aden in 1967. The outcome of that withdrawal led to civil war and ruin. Since that withdrawal it was felt by many that the Adeni had been let down. A firmer approach could have led to prosperity for the Aden People.

Closer to home, troops who served in Aden up country during the years 1960-to 1964, many who were killed and injured, serving in condition similar to India's North West Frontier, were told their service did not comply with the laid down criteria of "Risk, Rigor and Harm's Way".

To this day, that service has still not been recognised, and a deputation to local Members of Parliament sadly is being ignored.

Readers of our website, families and service members both active and retired, make your voice heard to your local MP, and insist those who served in Aden up country have that service recognised before it is too late.

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