



Lt. Col. R.B. Mayne, D.S.O. (3 Bars)
Officer De La Légion D'Honneur
Croix De Guerre

COLONEL PADDY - THE MAN WHO DARED

By Patrick Marrinan

11th January 2015 marked the centenary of the birth of one of the most decorated British soldiers of World War II.

Lieutenant Colonel Robert Blair "Paddy" Mayne was a British Army soldier, solicitor, Ireland Rugby Union International, Irish Universities Heavyweight Champion, Polar Explorer and a founding member of the Special Air Service (SAS).

Blair Mayne was the type of action hero that you would think you would only find in fiction and that many young boys would dream to be. He received the Distinguished Service Order with three bars, one of only seven British servicemen to receive that award four times during World War II. Mayne pioneered the use of military Jeeps to conduct surprise hit-and-run raids, particularly on enemy airfields. By the end of the war it was claimed that he had personally destroyed 130 aircraft.

Despite his many daring acts of bravery behind enemy lines, he was never awarded the military's highest honour, the Victoria Cross.

There have been campaigns for the VC to be awarded posthumously, so far without success. Derek Harkness helped set up the Blair Mayne Association in Newtownards.

"It was a hell of an injustice," he said. "Blair Mayne deserved his VC, but for a brigadier who had the wrong glasses on when he read the citation and said that wasn't a single act of bravery needed to get the Victoria Cross. It didn't need to be a single act, it was a signal act of bravery. I believe that's how Blair Mayne didn't get the VC."

Colonel Paddy is the classic story of Blair Mayne, late commanding officer of the first Special Air Service Regiment and a legend in his own lifetime. This, the original biography of Lieutenant Colonel Robert Blair Mayne, DSO (3 Bars), Légion d'Honneur, Croix De Guerre and 'Colonel Paddy' to his contemporaries, is a lively account of his life and wartime exploits with the SAS.

As an Air-Commando, he became the scourge of the Nazis across North Africa, Italy, France, the Netherlands and Germany, while leading the most daredevil and dangerous regiment in the British Army. Such was his reputation that Hitler ordered that he was to be shot on sight.

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The personification of Irish courage and a man who commanded remarkable loyalty from his men, 'Colonel Paddy' remains one of the most decorated soldiers in the history of the British Army.

The original biography by Patrick Marrinan is back in print, printed by GPS and available at www.colourpoint.co.uk