The late Captain Harry Sherwood Ranken, V.C., M.R.C.P., R.A.M.C.

The Victoria Cross was awarded to Captain Ranken for tending wounded in the trenches under fire on 19/20th September, 1914 and continuing to do so after his thigh and leg had been shattered.

On Tuesday, 26th January, 1967 in the ante-room of the Headquarter Mess before a large and distinguished audience of officers of all seniorities, serving and retired, Mr. Alan C. Ranken (brother) presented to the Royal Army Medical Corps the Victoria Cross, 1914 Star, British War and Victory medals and the French Legion of Honour awarded posthumously to Captain Ranken. His name appeared in the first list of V.C. awards of World War I.

Born on 3rd September, 1883 in Glasgow Harry Ranken qualified there in 1905 and took the M.R.C.P. (London) in 1910. Commissioned on 30th January, 1909 he was on the first junior course held at Millbank and took all before him being awarded the De Chaumont, Tulloch Memorial, Ronald Martin, Marshall Webb and Herbert prizes. Service in Egypt from 1911-14 included work with the Sudan sleeping sickness commission and forecast a bright future for him in tropical medicine. He left for France in August 1914 there to die of wounds on 24th September while M.O. to the 1st Bn. The Kings Royal Rifle Corps.

Sir Robert Drew in accepting the V.C. and medals on behalf of the R.A.M.C. assured Mr. Ranken of the appreciation of the Royal Army Medical Corps of the gift which would join other memorials of gallantry and devotion to duty which were to be seen in the V.C. Room of the Headquarter Mess. He reminded his audience and particularly the junior officers that the end of the regimental system when regiments had their own doctors as one of themselves did not mean that a unique position of confidence and trust was not open to the Unit M.O. nowadays through the exercise of his professional skill and personality. Quite recently two regiments had asked to retain the services of an R.A.M.C. officer whom they referred to as their doctor.

Captain Ranken had been a man apart whose shining example came down to his successors who would be reminded of him and his service to the Army.

Mr. Alan Ranken thanked the Director General for his references to his brother. As regards the V.C. he regretted it leaving his family but appreciated that in passing over to the R.A.M.C. its influence had been increased and it would be in better custody.

Brigadier Sir John Smyth V.C., M.C. President of the Victoria Cross and George Cross Association referred to the privilege of being present on one more occasion to honour the memory of a non combatant holder of the V.C. of which so many were R.A.M.C.

Amongst those present were Major Generals A. Sachs and P. F. Palmer (Colonels Commandant R.A.M.C.), Lieutenant Generals Sir Frederick Harris and Sir Alexander Drummond, Major Generals R. E. Barnsley, W. Tyndall and R. D. Cameron. Colonel C. V. Macnamara, Lieutenant Colonel J. A. C. Kidd, Major F. H. M. Chapman and many serving officers including the Deputy Director General (Major General J. P. Douglas), the D.D.M.S. Eastern Command (Major General A. MacLennon), D.D.M.S. Scottish Command (Brigadier A. F. H. Keatinge) and the Directors of Surgery, Medicine, Pathology, Army Health and Psychiatry (Major Generals Stephen, Morrison and Sayers and Brigadiers Smart and McGhie).