The Hungarian Bravery Medal "A Magyar Vítézségi Erem" was instituted by Admiral Horthy von Nagybanya, the Royal Administrator of the Kingdom of Hungary, on April 14, 1939. The medal was originally intended for enlisted personnel of the Hungarian Armed Forces, Gendarmerie, and other Security Forces, also under certain circumstances for civilians and foreign military personnel of enlisted rank. It was to be awarded for valuable services rendered thru personal bravery or self-sacrifice in the face of the enemy.

On September 12, 1942, a further class was added, i.e. the Hungarian Golden Bravery Medal of Officers. This class was to be awarded only for accomplished and authenticated feats of arms (military exploits) or deeds in the face of the enemy, which showed a very high grade of manly self-sacrifice and personal valor. The charter of this medal is part of the statutes of the Hungarian Order of Merit.

Under Horthy the Golden Bravery Medal for Officers was awarded to two officers, the first time on June 2, 1943, to Captain Tibor Massanyi, who later died as a Major in the war against the Soviet Union. Under Minister President Szalassi five more Hungarian officers were decorated with this high bravery award, and also as the only foreigner the German battle-flyer Colonel Hans-Ulrich Rudel (This officer was the only recipient of the Golden Oakleaves with Swords and Brilliants to the Knights Cross of the Iron Cross in World War II).
The classes were as follows:

1. The Golden Bravery Medal, 40 mm diameter
2. The Large Silver Bravery Medal,
3. The Small Silver Bravery Medal,
4. The Bronze Bravery Medal.

The medals show on the obverse the bust of Horthy in admirals uniform facing right, surrounded by the circular inscription .VITEZ.NAGYBANYALHORTHY.MIKLOS, MAGYARORSZAG.KORMANYZOJA. (Nikolaus Horthy Vitez von Nagybenya, Regent of the Hungarian Kingdom). The name of the engraver .BERAN.L. is found under the colors heraldic symbolized, topped by the Crown of St. Stephen. Behind this two crossed swords and a laurel twig. At the bottom appears the word VITEZSEGERT (For Bravery).

The ribbon of the medal is the so-called “War Ribbon”, 40 mm wide, watered, red with 1,5 mm wide green and white side stripes.

If this medal is awarded again, a 5 mm wide plain clasp (bar) of the metal as the awarded medal is attached to the ribbon.

The Golden Bravery Medal for Officers differentiated from the Golden Bravery Medal proper only by a ribbon appurtenance in the form of the Hungarian Holy Crown with Crossed Swords surrounded by laurel. For each repeated award a 5 mm wide gold plated plain clasp (bar) again was attached to the ribbon in addition to the above mentioned emblem.

All classes of the Bravery Medal could be worn simultaneously, and even after promotion to the officers or warrant officers rank. The medals were worn on the left side above the pocket on a triangular folded ribbon.

Dr. K. G. Klietmann – Berlin

(translated by Walter P. Huber)

Letters To The Editor

I hurry to call your attention to the caption below the picture on page 5 of February issue, “The Jewel-like Badge of the Order of Dannebrog, Denmark.” This is quite wrong, as the picture shows the badge belonging to the Order of Elephant, Denmark has only two orders which are still being granted: 1. The Order of Elephant, one class only, and 2. The Order of Dannebrog, four classes.

I (also) wonder how is it possible for a collector to have a badge of a Danish order in his collection, as the insignia of all Danish orders should be transmitted to Copenhagen on the death of the holder, and this has always been taken very strictly.

Paul Ohm Hieronymussen

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In the February issue I noticed a photo of "The White Elephant Order" of Denmark (page 5).
This is a separate order and not the jewel badge of the Dannebrog order.
The White Elephant Order was established in 1462 and renewed by King Christian V on the 1st of December 1693.
It is equivalent to the Order of the Garter and is reserved only for Royalty or 'V.I.P.'s."

H. A. Beusokamp

This is in reply to Mr. Sawicki's inquiry on the Austrian medal published in the December 1955 issue of the MEDAL COLLECTOR.
This medal was issued by the Imperial and Royal Ministry of Agriculture as a State Award for Merits in Horse Breeding from 1890 to 1915. It was minted in bronze and was not intended for wear. Apparently the suspension ring and loop pictured were added unofficially.
The OBVERSE bears the laureated head of the Emperor Franz Josef to the right. The designer's name J. TAUTENHAYN appears below the neck. The surrounding inscription reads: FRANC. JOS.I.D.G.AUSTRIAE.IMPERATOR.HUNGARIAE.REX (Franz Josef I, By the Grace of God Emperor of Austria, King of Hungary).
The REVERSE shows within a laurel wreath the inscription which awards the piece. The language in the photograph is in Ruthenian, but inscriptions exist in the following languages: German, Bohemian, Slovenian, Croatian, Hungarian, Polish, Roumanian, Italian and of course Ruthenian.
If any more information is required it may be received from Dr. Klietmann.

Dr. Klietmann