

THE VICTORY OF GONDAR MEDAL

THE VICTORY OF GONDAR MEDAL, first issued by the Ethiopian Crown on November 15, 2021 (6 ጥር 2014), commemorates the 80th anniversary of the final battle, in 1941, to liberate Ethiopia from Italian occupation.

The Medal was struck for the Crown by Cleave & Company, in London. It shows Gondar Castle [*Fasil Ghebbi* (ፋሲል ግቢ)] with the words, in Amharic, “Victory of Gondar 1934” (የጎንደር ድል 1934 ዓ.ም; 1934 being the Ethiopian calendar year of the battle). The reverse shows the British Lion and the Ethiopian *Moa Anbessa* (Conquering Lion of Judah), and the words “Victory of Gondar 1941” in English around the base. The red riband is edged on the left with the Ethiopian rainbow and on the right with the British tricolour.

We are gathered tonight, November 17, 2023, at this special dinner in London, at the Cavalry and Guards Club, to honour the sacrifices of those involved. The dinner and the medal recognises Ethiopians who suffered under the invasion and occupation from 1935 to 1941, and the valour of those who fought in this, the Second Italian-Ethiopian War.

The campaign brought the first liberation in World War II of territory occupied by Axis forces. It paved the way for the victory of the Free World, and the longest period of relative peace and growth in modern history. Thus, the Italian invasion of Ethiopia began World War II, though many refused at the time to heed the warning of it, or recognise that Ethiopia was the first Allied combatant nation to engage in the defence of liberty.

The medal commemorates how so many Ethiopian and Eritrean People came together, overcoming lingering regional and cultural differences, to preserve the 3,500-year-old Ethiopian and Solomonic entity.

The campaign — which became part of the Allied East Africa Campaign — saw the British Government rise to the defence of His Imperial Majesty Emperor Haile Selassie I of Ethiopia and the Ethiopian People.

The British initiative began with the creation of Mission 101 in October 1939 to support the Ethiopian insurrection in Gojjam and to train and support Ethiopian resistance forces, even before Italy was formally at war with Britain. This was the first wartime operation of the UK's Special Operations Executive (SOE), and linked with the Ethiopian *Arbegnoch* (አርበኞች, Patriots) who fought to achieve the return of the Emperor and to end Italian occupation. Mission 101, which became Gideon Force, established, in 1940-41, Operational Centres with British and Australian military intelligence specialists working with the Patriots.

Ethiopian and British Empire Forces fought a large, entrenched Italian force, which resisted tenaciously. Post-war Italian leaders have apologised for atrocities committed during the fascist occupation. As a result, the Gondar Medal is also a lasting and solemn symbol of reconciliation and friendship between all of the warring parties. So, too, is the Holy Trinity Cathedral, built by the Emperor to honour the sacrifices of the war.



The Second Commemorative *Victory of Gondar Dinner* የጎንደር ንራት ድል



HOLY TRINITY CATHEDRAL

Marking the 82nd Anniversary *of the Liberation of Ethiopia*

The Cavalry and Guards Club, Piccadilly, London
November 17, 2023

Under the Patronage of

HIS IMPERIAL HIGHNESS PRINCE ERMIAS SAHLE-SELASSIE HAILE-SELASSIE
PRESIDENT OF THE CROWN COUNCIL OF ETHIOPIA

The Victory of Gondar

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November 27, 1941

Dedicated to the Memory of those who fought and died to Free Ethiopia, creating the first Allied Victory of World War II. In remembrance of those gallant Ethiopian Patriots, and members of the Armed Forces of Ethiopia, the United Kingdom, and the Commonwealth. Five years of the strenuously-resisted Italian occupation of Ethiopia were over with the final battle at Gondar, and Ethiopians were reunited with their beloved Emperor and leader, His Imperial Majesty Haile Selassie I.

ኅዳር 18 ቀን 1934 ዓ.ም

ሀገራቸውን ከጣልያን ነጻ ለማውጣት ለተዋግቷት ለሞቱት ኢትዮጵያውያን እንደዚሁም የሁለተኛው የዓለም ጦርነትን የመጀመሪያ ድል ለሕብረት ሃይሎች ላበሰረው የጎንደር ድል መታሰቢያ ይሁን፡፡ በጀግንነት የተዋደቁትን የኢትዮጵያ አርበኞችና የጦር ሐይሎች እንደዚሁም ከኢትዮጵያውያን ጎን በመቆም የተዋደቁትን የታላቋ ብሪታንያንና በእሷ ግዛት ጥላ ስር ያሉ ሀገራት ጀግኞችን እናስባለን፡፡ የኢትዮጵያን በጣልያን ሓይል መያዝና መውደቅ በመቃወም ለ5 አመታት የጠነከረ የመከላከል ትግል ተደርጎ ያከተመው በጎንደር በተደረገው ጦርነትና ድል ነው፡፡ ስለሆነም ኢትዮጵያውያን ከሚወዷቸው ንጉሠ ነገሥታቸውና መሪያቸው ከግርግዩ ቀዳማዊ ኃይለ ሥላሴ ጋር እንደገና ለመገናኘት ችሉ፡፡

This Monument was made possible by the generosity of the Lord Ashcroft KCMG PC, Viscount Gondar; Prof. Theodore Vestal; Daniel Stephenson; Lij Sisay Befekadu; Gregory Copley AM, Marquess of Tana; Maj. Gen. Oliver Peacock, Marquess of Debre Berhan; and Edward Hilary Davis.

Unveiled on the 82nd anniversary of the final battle by His Imperial Highness the Prince Ermias Sahle-Selassie Haile-Selassie, President of the Crown Council of Ethiopia, with the Right Honourable Lord Ashcroft, Viscount Gondar.

በቋቋቸው አመት የመጨረሻ ጦርነት ድል መታሰቢያ ቀን፣ የጎንደር ኪስኩዎንት የሆኑት ከቡርካታቸው ሱርድ አክኪርናት በተገኘበት፣ በልዑልነታቸው ለድል አርግደን ሳህለ/ሳህሌ ኃይለ/ሥላሴ የኢትዮጵያ ዘወር ምክርቤት ጥሪዘዳንት ተመረቀ፡፡

The Victory of Gondar Memorial Plaque was installed at St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle in November 2023.

PRINCIPAL SPONSOR OF THE VICTORY OF GONDAR MEMORIAL

His Excellency The Lord Ashcroft, KCMG, PC, GCHT, Viscount Gondar

SPONSORS OF THE VICTORY OF GONDAR MEMORIAL

Their Excellencies the Most Honourable the Marquess of Debre-Berhan, Major General Bitwoded Oliver Peacock, GCHT*, GCEM, CSS and the Marchioness of Debre-Berhan, Catherine Peacock, GCEM, GCEL, CQS

Daniel Stephenson, KCSE

His Excellency the late Prof. Theodore Vestal, GCSE

Nicholas Melillo, KCSE

Lij Sisay Befekadu

Their Excellencies the Most Honourable the Marquess of Tana, Major General Gregory R. Copley, AM, GCHT*, GCEL, RML, FRCGS, SFSS, FRNS and the Marchioness of Tana, Pamela Copley, GCEL, GCSE, RML, Agafari to the Crown.

His Excellency Edward Hilary Davis, GCEM, CSE, RML

AND WITH PROFOUND THANKS TO
His Excellency the Most Honourable the Marquess of Reading, GCEM



HIS IMPERIAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE ERMIAS SAHLE-SELASSIE HAILE-SELASSIE

The Victory of Gondar Dinner

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THE DINNER

Heritage Tomato Salad
with Buffalo Mozzarella and Kalamata Olives with Basil Salad, Sun-Blushed Tomato Dressing

DEMITASSE SOUP

Chilled Cucumber and Mint with Roasted Red Peppers

MAINS

Breast of Duck with a Plum and Red Wine Sauce
Boulangier Potatoes, Pea Purée, Pea Shoots

PUDDING Profiteroles

with Tonka Bean and Hazelnut Custard
served with a Warm Mint-Infused Chocolate Sauce

followed by Coffee, Tea, and Mints

Vegan options pre-arranged

THE PROGRAMME

A CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME: THE AGAFARI
WELCOMING COMMENTS: THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIETY
REMARKS DURING DESSERT: HIH THE PRINCE ERMIAS

THE TOASTS

DURING THE SERVICE OF COFFEE AND TEA