

Haig's Trench Watch and other lots sold at auction

A gold pocket watch used in the trenches of the First World War by General Douglas Haig has fetched more than £3,500 at auction in Edinburgh.

Haig was presented with the 18 carat timepiece by Leopold de Rothschild in 1915, after he became commander of the First Army.

Haig, who was born in Charlotte Square, Edinburgh, in 1861, would later be appointed Field-Marshal Commander-in-Chief of the Forces and granted an Earldom.

The split second open face chronograph pocket watch, made in 1906, was later passed down to his son George, the artist and 2nd Earl Haig.

It went under the hammer at Bonhams auctioneers in Edinburgh, where it was bought by a private UK collector bidding online, for £3584.

The historic pocket watch featured a white enamel dial with black Roman numerals, black chronograph hands, subsidiary dials at 6 and 12 for running seconds and 60 minute recording.

Its green leather box with initials "D.H" was inscribed: "Presented by Mr. Leopold de Rothschild to General Haig in 1915 for the location of hostile artillery and has been in use for one year in the First Army trenches."

Many of Field-Marshal Haig's possessions are in the national collection. The pocket watch was kept in the family and was part of a collection of over 80 objects belonging to his son George, the late 2nd Earl, who died in 2009 and his wife, the Countess.

The items, which went under the hammer following the Countess' death earlier this year, aged 85, made a total of £216,000 across two sales, one held in London.

Charles Graham-Campbell, director of Bonhams in Edinburgh, said: "This was Field-Marshal Haig's watch, which he was given by Leopold Rothschild in 1915.

"Haig was a general at this time, highly regarded by the establishment. He carried this pocket watch in the trenches in the First World War. There was strong bidding."

Other lots included items given to the young George when he was page of honour to King George VI at his coronation in 1937.

A set of cufflinks featuring the royal insignia presented to the page boy by King George, together with a handwritten letter from the monarch at Buckingham Palace, made £5,760, while Haig's page boy's sword fetched £1024.

Jewellery that belonged to the Countess included an elegant pair of 19th century diamond pendant earrings that was sold for £35,840.

Graham-Campbell added: "The collection of the late Earl and Countess Haig included numerous fascinating items and attracted international interest."

George Alexander Eugene Douglas Haig, 2nd Earl Haig, succeeded to the earldom of Haig aged nine in 1928 following the death of his father, Douglas, Field Marshal the 1st Earl Haig.

During World War II, Haig was held as a prisoner of war at

Colditz. He later became an artist. He died in 2009, aged 91.
Gerolama, Countess Haig, died in April this year, aged 85.



Haig gold pocket watch sold for £3584



George, 2nd Earl Haig King George VI coronation cufflinks sold for £5760



]George, 2nd Earl Haig George VI Coronation Page Boy's sword
sold for over £1000



Countess Haig 19th Century diamond pendant earrings sold for £35,840.jpg AN ELEGANT PAIR OF 19TH CENTURY DIAMOND PENDANT EARRINGS, WHICH FETCHED £35,840 AT AUCTION.