

Château Bauduc & the Beardwoods

My Mother and Father, Sheila and Peter Beardwood (right), loved their wine and were members of The Winetasters. They toured Europe and sampled many wines at many a Château. They visited Château Bauduc and my mother's 'go to' wine became the Château Bauduc (white) as it was a really good wine for the price and she always raved about it. The wine is actually on the wine list of Gordon Ramsey and Rick Stein restaurants.

When my Mother passed away in 2010 we 'inherited' a couple of bottles and, as we also like them, we have continued to buy a dozen direct from the Château every so often.

Twenty odd years ago an Englishman, Gavin Quinney, left London, bought the Château and he has been very active in continuing the traditions and standards. From a blog he wrote on his website I found out that his great uncle was a man called Noel Chavasse who was one of very few people who had been awarded the Victoria Cross twice!

This rang a bell with me! Noel Godfrey Chavasse was born in Oxford in 1884 and was the son of the Right Reverend Francis Chavasse. He arrived in Liverpool in 1900 after his father was appointed Bishop of Liverpool. Noel attended Liverpool College, where he excelled at sport – he actually represented Great Britain in the 400 metres at the Olympics in 1908!



After training to become a doctor, he joined the British Army as a medical officer, where he was attached to the 1/10th Battalion of the King's (Liverpool) Regiment. Although he wasn't a frontline soldier, Noel Chavasse (left) was responsible for some of the bravest and most unselfish acts of the entire four-year conflict and became the most decorated soldier of the war for his actions.

My Grandfather Eddie (below), (on my Father's side) was a foot soldier in the same regiment and during action at Passchendaele was blown up by a grenade and left on the field, presumed dead.

His body was in a pile of other bodies on the battle field and Noel Chavasse apparently spotted his body twitching and carried him from the battlefield to safety and subsequent repatriation.

So, I added to the blog and emailed Gavin about the connection and what a small world it actually is. So without his great uncle's intervention I would not be writing this now or indeed buying his wine!

As a footnote, the very moment Gavin received my message he was being visited by the son of one of my Mum and Dad's friends from the Winetasters (a certain Mr Price I gather) who is also now a buyer (of wine)!

A final nice touch is that Noel Chavasse's father said to him, post conflict: *Once upon a time you were known as being the son of the Bishop of Liverpool but now I am known as the being the father of Noel Chavasse.*

Nick Beardwood

