What a man... Adrian Carton de Wiart!

What kind of man fights in 4 wars spanning over 4 decades, sustaining
injuries that result in the self-amputation of two fingers, the loss of one
hand, an eye, and a lung; has his plane shot down, lives in captivity for
over 7 months and despite all of the above fondly reminisces that frankly I
had enjoyed the war.

The kind of man that is Adrian Carton de Wiart. The life of the ultra-wealthy Belgian Aristocracy that he was born into, clearly wasn't the life young Adrian wanted; which is probably why he ran away from his Catholic boarding school, and like so many Great War heroes start out, headed straight to the nearest British Army recruitment office.

Here he would go through the late 1800 equivalent of convincing the
recruitment officer his name was McLovin which bought Adrian a ticket to his first war The Second Boer war. Here McLovin would lead Bayonet charges against Boer Kommandos and get shot in the groin and lung substantial injuries that got him sent back to Britain where he finally came clean his name wasn't McLovin. He then would commission as an actual officer in the British army until the war ended in 1902. From here he went to Oxford University, married an Austrian Countess whom he had 2 daughters with, and lived as an Aristocrat.
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This life of privilege however, was never the life Adrian wanted; but
luckily for him, the dawn of a new age of war fighting was near.
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At the outbreak of WW1 Adrian spared no time in ditching his wife and
daughters (just going up the road for some cigarettes sketch but much
posher) to immediately re-enlist back into the British army. Due to his
previous experiences of combat, he was assigned to the East Africa Camel
Corps. This rather bizarre-sounding unit of old school desert fighters were
actually more Ally than the passage-way between two large houses. Tasked with quelling a rebellion in British Somaliland, led by who the British
Dubbed the Mad Mullah (Mohammad Bin Abdullah, who castrated his own fighters for cowardice) De Wiart would essentially lead Camelback Commando raids against enemy positions; and it was here while scaling the walls of enemy forts with a revolver and committing multiple acts of badassery that he would get shot in the face twice, losing his eye and part of his ear. Only in the eyes (or eye) of a triple hard bastard could this be taken as good news, but bearing in mind Adrian was the kind of man that celebrated life-changing injuries and disastrous news with copious amounts of wine, it comes as no surprise that this news was music to his ears (or ear). As this news in being sent home and given a glass eye - which he drunkenly threw out of a taxi window and opted for the pirate option of an eye patch – also resulted in him getting a ticket to France, where the most brutal war in history was waging, and where Adrian assessed the real action was.
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After arriving in France, Adrian would have his hand shattered by German
artillery during the Second Battle of Ypres. Worried he would miss out on
any action by the injury getting infected he went to a field hospital to get
two of the fingers amputated. The doctors refused, so the one-eyed Commander amputated them himself, which didn't matter too much because later on in the year the whole hand needed to be amputated; Just in time for the battle of the Somme, where there were reports from the men of a one-handed Commander wearing an eye patch pulling grenade pins out with his teeth and personally delivering them to Germans of the Western front.

Later on, in 1916 the Pirate Commander was leading the 8th Gloucestershire Regiment in a Bayonet charge during the Battle of Boiselle when 3 other unit commanders were killed. Adrian then took charge of all 4 Units Running up and down the lines barking orders, successfully holding off the German bullets whizzed past his eye patch. For this, he
was awarded the Victoria Cross, an award he humbly made no mention of in his memoirs, claiming it had been won by the 8th Glosters, for every man has done as much as I have.

Adrian went on to fight through the rest of the war. In total, he got
shot/blown up 8 separate times whilst leading infantry into battle including
what should have been a fatal gunshot wound to the back of the head. When asked about his time during the bloodiest war in human history he replied, frankly I enjoyed the war.

In 1920, Adrian was sent to Poland to help advice the crown. His time here
was pretty average really. He survived 2 plane crashes, he ran a gun
smuggling ring to bring weapons into Poland to help fight the communists,
participated in a duel against Carl Gustav (future overall leader of Finnish
forces in WW2), shot his way out of Warsaw on an express train as a band of Cossack Cavalrymen tried to arrest and execute him. Aside from the above Adrian would spend his time hunting ducks with one arm and a shotgun on his rather large estate on the Polish border.

However, Adrian's Duck hunting days were numbered, as Europe yet again was about to be plunged into times of War.

When the Nazis invaded Poland in 1939 and blew up Adrian's estate there was only one thing for it. Whilst getting strafed by German Stukas he made his way out of Poland; and despite being a British/Belgian man with one hand and an eye patch, travelled through Romania on a fake passport (Probably under the name McLovin) to finally reach British soil again. Here, yet again he would reveal to British authorities his name wasn't McLovin and re-enlist in the British army; and now with his retirement on the back-burner, alongside his Austrian Countess wife and two daughters, he would lead British Commando raids against the fascist invaders of Europe.

In 1940 Adrian would lead a Raid into Norway, to re-take Trondheim from the Nazis. Things didn't really go to plan, and when the promised naval/air
support and reinforcements never showed up it was time for De Wiart and his merry band of lunatics to do a runner. Chased by German ski troops through the snowy mountains of Norway, whilst being strafed by the Luftwaffe and shelled by German destroyers this band of warriors actually made it back to an extraction point with the Royal Navy to get back to England.  Just intime For Adrian's 60th Birthday.

In 1941, appointed by Winston Churchill himself, General Adrian Carton de
Wiart would lead the British mission in Yugoslavia. Unfortunately for the
General and his RAF Crew the plane decided to wrap its tits in and nosedive into the Mediterranean ocean. Helping an injured comrade the 60-year-old General along with his RAF crew swam to shore. A Libyan shore. A Libyan shore that was unfortunately held by fascists of the Italian variety. Adrian was thrown into captivity into the POW camp at Vincigliata Castle. With not a single duck given since 1899 he proceeded to dig an escape tunnel over a 7-month period, which he and 6 others would use to escape their fascist captors. Unfortunately, it turned out that being a one-handed 60-year-old wearing an eye patch, as well as being distinctively British with a slight Belgian undertone.  Well, clearly, he was swiftly recaptured. Fortunately, the Italians had decided they wanted to switch sides, and in war, what better bargaining chip than a General?

aving been back on British soil less than a month Adrian was sent to China
as the special envoy to the Chinese leader. During this final four-year
period, he would survive yet another plane crash. On his way back to Britain and actual retirement he stopped off in Rangoon, where he drunkenly fell down some stairs and broke his back.

Adrian Carton de Wiart would go on to write up his life story in his
memoirs, hilariously titled a Happy Odyssey. Winston Churchill even
wrote the foreword for it. In the entire Book there is literally not a
single mention or even reference to the fact that he had an Austrian
Countess wife and two daughters.

Adrian would finally pass away in 1963, at the age of 83, having spent his
final years fishing and in peace.

 From: Thomas F Kane