Surrey Constabulary History
'An in depth history of policing in Surrey'

April 2024
www.surrey-constabulary.com

Editor Robert Bartlett MA (Cantab) CF
938at938@gmail.com

Surrey Constabulary History 112

PC Colin Giddings Surrey Constabulary

Additional research by Jean Pelham, Henry Pelham, Jenny Tuffs and Robert Simonson of the Surrey History Centre.

Contents

Dorking Magistrate's Court – on the right former home for local superintendent Car Registered late 1970s. Many a Traffic officer's hours were spent in the company of Mrs Dubison How dare you assault one of my constables – you will go to prison for six months!) and Mr. Gordon Clark.

Michael Massey who died in February 2024. Receiving his Long Service and Good Conduct Medal

Chief Superintendent David Eades presenting Michael with his retirement certificate.

Death in February 2024 of former Superintendent Brian Richardson, Surrey Constabulary

Peter Wickens: I was saddened to learn of the death of Brian Richardson. We were cadets together and were in the same class at Sandgate in September 1961. Our instructor was PS Jack Packham and in the same class were other former cadets Peter Stevens (deceased), Nick Brent (died 2022) and David Shepherd (dog handler deceased), David Stark (died 2015, (same course different class), George Mooney (same course different class), Bernie Burrell who left after a few months. The survivers list is getting shorter! For the record, I think Brian's collar number was 728. I went to Graham Charman's funeral last week - we were also Cadets together and I played a lot of football and cricket with him over the years. This was a well-attended funeral. I also went to the funeral of retired PC 771 Norman Ratcliffe earlier this month at Aldershot. Casper was there - smart as ever, but otherwise I was the only other police representative. He had served Surrey for 30 years, mostly on Farnham Division and I must say I felt disappointed with the very low attendance.

Six ex-Surrey Constabulary cadets in the same class would have been a record. Four achieved superintending rank.

Sandgate 1961

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1985

SURREY CONSTABULARY

EASTERN DIVISION

DEPUTY DIV. COMMANDER
SUPERINTENDENT
T.D. SAUNDERS

DIVISIONAL COMMANDER
CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT
E.W. HUGHES

ADMINISTRATION
CHIEF INSPECTOR
J.W. HOYLE

CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION DEPT

DET. SUPERINTENDENT
K.A. PORTLOCK

DET. CHIEF INSPECTOR
J. MILNER

REIGATE SUB-DIVISION

SUPERINTENDENT
B.E. RICHARDSON

CHIEF INSPECTOR
J. SAIT

DORKING SUB-DIVISION

SUPERINTENDENT
M. O'BYRNE

CHIEF INSPECTOR
A. CRAWFORD

CATERHAM SUB-DIVISION

SUPERINTENDENT
N.J. BRENT

CHIEF INSPECTOR
K.G. LANGRIDGE

LEATHERHEAD

CHIEF INSPECTOR
C.N. CASEY

HORLEY

INSPECTOR
P. DEVEREUX

OXTED

INSPECTOR
F.P. JOYCE

From left to right, Mr. David Williams, Brian Richardson and his lovely wife, Sue, with Mr. Peter Sharpe on the right, at Reigate for Brian's retirement 'do' on Thursday, 26th September. His farewell gift from friends and colleagues was a print of David Shepherd's 'Lions'.

Photo by Simon Bird

2010 CID Reunion

A Westminster Constable but not Metropolitan Police

Peter Kennison late Metropolitan Police. This is a Cabinet card photograph circa 1907 of what is believed to be a constable by F. W. Clark of Forest Gate. The belt buckle says City of Westminster with a portcullis in the middle. There are no collar/shoulder numbers or whistle and chain. Not a Metropolitan Police officer but possibly employed by what is now the City of Westminster. Have you any suggestions?

The Elizabeth Emblem

A new award for UK emergency service workers who die in the line of duty has been announced, after a campaign by the father of a murdered police officer. Named after the late Queen, the Elizabeth Emblem will be given to the families of public servants.

The award is the civilian equivalent of the Elizabeth Cross, which recognises members of the UK armed forces who have died in action or due to a terrorist attack.

The Elizabeth Emblem can be retrospectively awarded; eligible nominations will be for deaths which occurred on or after 1 January 1948 or have taken place in Palestine between 27 September 1945 and 31 December 1947, which mirrors the eligibility of the Elizabeth Cross.

Family members of police officers, firefighters and other public servants who have died in public service will be recognised by a new emblem the Elizabeth Emblem. It is a national form of recognition conferred by His Majesty The King and awarded to next of kin

The design of the Emblem incorporates a rosemary wreath, a traditional symbol of remembrance, which surrounds the Tudor Crown. It is inscribed with ‘For A Life Given In Service’, and will have the name of the person for whom it is in memoriam inscribed on the reverse of the Emblem. It will include a pin to allow the award to be worn on clothing by the next of kin of the deceased.

Recipients of The Elizabeth Emblem will receive their award from a senior representative such as a Chief Constable, Chief Fire Officer or His Majesty’s Lord Lieutenant

The difference between Surrey and the Metropolitan Police

John Bartlett

I read the entry by Colin Campbell and it got me thinking of the difference between Surrey and the Met. In previous submissions I have recalled some good and some bad aspects of the attitude towards the traffic crews in Surrey . One of which was the loss of a weekend rest days to be replaced by a Tuesday or Wednesday coupled with being allocated an annual leave slot in April , with two young children. Most traffic officers did go on patrol and work . A point that I carried with me on transfer was the attitude adopted by the CID who many times found it difficult to lower themselves to talk to us. I do not recall ever getting 'A well done ' correction Ron Underwood did utter those words when we stopped a team of Australian shop lifters. Support from the CID with a copy of PG's did not materialise and we let them go for want of evidence. Having transferred to the Met to walk the beat I became aware of how many officers were doing nothing more than carrying a uniform . I made myself busy and was frequently attending the Magistrates Court with a prisoner. I was pulled to one side by a sergeant who referred to my activities and explained that I would in all probability witness a difference to. way things were dealt with. I took the hint. I was quickly put an an assessment day at the driving school based in Hendon. Whilst they mocked where I had been trained , Chelmsford and Maidstone they gave me a Class One much to the disbelief of other offices taking the test. I was not very popular with many of the advanced drivers as I went out looking for work whilst they sat in a driver's room just in case they were needed. The Unit Commander called me into his office and referred to my entries in the charge book. As a result, we devised a system that the allocated driver would be presented with a list of PC's who had asked to be on the crew as operator. One was picked and moved down to the bottom the list. One PC got into the car at the start of a late turn and opened a book on his lap. I questioned what he thought he was doing ,his reply 'I always read ' He chose the former of two choices , close the book or we will return to the station and find something else to do. Seldom did you ever have a decent comment from the CID when you brought in a good job. Exactly the same as in Surrey.

What it did tell me that whilst by reputation the Met was superior in reality they were not , except a number of really switched on people who have made NSY famous.

As a D/I I made it quite clear to my officers that they would treat the uniform colleagues with respect and if a well done was on offer that they would share it. After all they were all second-hand uniform officers.

INSPECTOR'S COURSE 1/80

Police Headquarters, Mount Browne, Guildford.

10.11.1980 – 5.12.1980

P. FLYNN Insp. HO | *A.P. HICKMAN* Insp. GK | *D.G. DODD* Insp. AW | *C.A. GARDNER* Insp. FD | *C. STANBURY* Insp. HO | *E.J. SHERWOOD* Insp. HT | *D.J. VIGAR* Insp. BD

R.S. HUSSEY D/Insp. R.C.S. | *P.P. CROSSAN* D/Insp. HC | *C.R. BARHAM* Insp. GD | *B.R. KENDALL* Insp. AW | *C.P. FARMER* Insp. GD | *R.W. CHAPMAN* Insp. HO | *D.J. SHORT* D/Insp. CD | *R.K. HAWKINS* D/Insp. HC

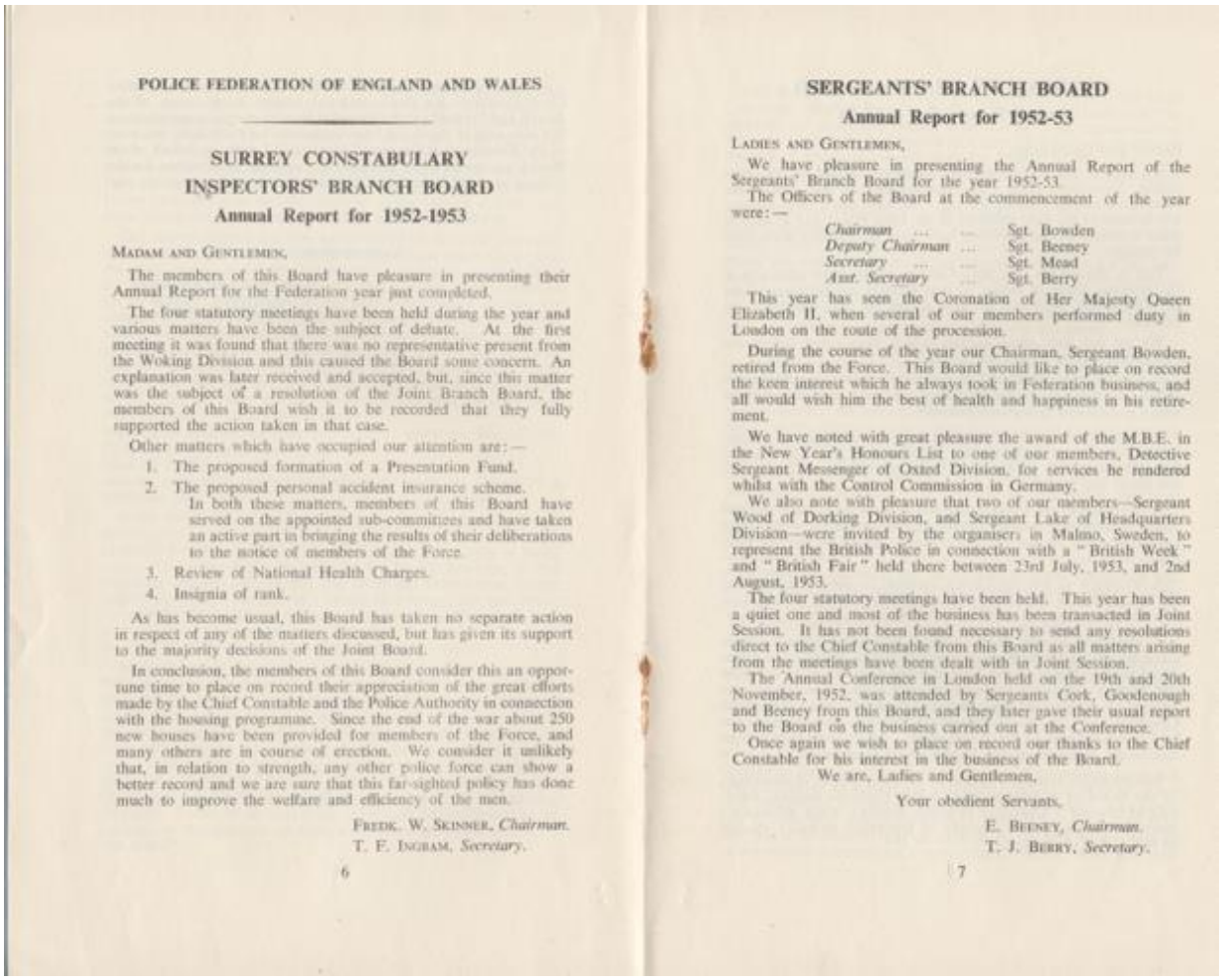
M. MORLEY Insp. AD (Asst. Director) | *M. JAMES* Insp. CA (Asst. Director) | *D.S. EADES* Ch. Supt. HA | *P.J. MATTHEWS* Chief Constable CVO. OBE. QPM. | *C. ATKINS* Assistant Chief Constable 'A' | *R.J. WATFORD* C/Insp. BD (Director) | *P. DURSTON* Insp. BC

Godstone Traffic about 1980 – Range Rover registered 1977

Special Constabulary Insignia

Arm Band First World War

Detective Sergeant Messenger MBE



POLICE FEDERATION OF ENGLAND AND WALES

SURREY CONSTABULARY
INSPECTORS' BRANCH BOARD
Annual Report for 1952-1953

MADAM AND GENTLEMEN,

The members of this Board have pleasure in presenting their Annual Report for the Federation year just completed.

The four statutory meetings have been held during the year and various matters have been the subject of debate. At the first meeting it was found that there was no representative present from the Woking Division and this caused the Board some concern. An explanation was later received and accepted, but, since this matter was the subject of a resolution of the Joint Branch Board, the members of this Board wish it to be recorded that they fully supported the action taken in that case.

Other matters which have occupied our attention are:—

1. The proposed formation of a Presentation Fund.
2. The proposed personal accident insurance scheme.
   In both these matters, members of this Board have served on the appointed sub-committees and have taken an active part in bringing the results of their deliberations to the notice of members of the Force.
3. Review of National Health Charges.
4. Insignia of rank.

As has become usual, this Board has taken no separate action in respect of any of the matters discussed, but has given its support to the majority decisions of the Joint Board.

In conclusion, the members of this Board consider this an opportune time to place on record their appreciation of the great efforts made by the Chief Constable and the Police Authority in connection with the housing programme. Since the end of the war about 250 new houses have been provided for members of the Force, and many others are in course of erection. We consider it unlikely that, in relation to strength, any other police force can show a better record and we are sure that this far-sighted policy has done much to improve the welfare and efficiency of the men.

FREDK. W. SKINNER, *Chairman.*
T. F. INGRAM, *Secretary.*

6

SERGEANTS' BRANCH BOARD
Annual Report for 1952-53

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

We have pleasure in presenting the Annual Report of the Sergeants' Branch Board for the year 1952-53.

The Officers of the Board at the commencement of the year were:—

Chairman	Sgt. Bowden
Deputy Chairman ...	Sgt. Beeney
Secretary	Sgt. Mead
Asst. Secretary ...	Sgt. Berry

This year has seen the Coronation of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, when several of our members performed duty in London on the route of the procession.

During the course of the year our Chairman, Sergeant Bowden, retired from the Force. This Board would like to place on record the keen interest which he always took in Federation business, and all would wish him the best of health and happiness in his retirement.

We have noted with great pleasure the award of the M.B.E. in the New Year's Honours List to one of our members, Detective Sergeant Messenger of Oxted Division, for services he rendered whilst with the Control Commission in Germany.

We also note with pleasure that two of our members—Sergeant Wood of Dorking Division, and Sergeant Lake of Headquarters Division—were invited by the organisers in Malmo, Sweden, to represent the British Police in connection with a "British Week" and "British Fair" held there between 23rd July, 1953, and 2nd August, 1953.

The four statutory meetings have been held. This year has been a quiet one and most of the business has been transacted in Joint Session. It has not been found necessary to send any resolutions direct to the Chief Constable from this Board as all matters arising from the meetings have been dealt with in Joint Session.

The Annual Conference in London held on the 19th and 20th November, 1952, was attended by Sergeants Cork, Goodenough and Beeney from this Board, and they later gave their usual report to the Board on the business carried out at the Conference.

Once again we wish to place on record our thanks to the Chief Constable for his interest in the business of the Board.

We are, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servants,

E. BEENEY, *Chairman.*
T. J. BERRY, *Secretary.*

7

ment.

We have noted with great pleasure the award of the M.B.E. in the New Year's Honours List to one of our members, Detective Sergeant Messenger of Oxted Division, for services he rendered whilst with the Control Commission in Germany.

We also note with pleasure that two of our members—Sergeant

Frederick Arthur MESSENGER, Esq., lately Public Safety Officer, Grade II, Schleswig Holstein, Control Commission for Germany (British Element).

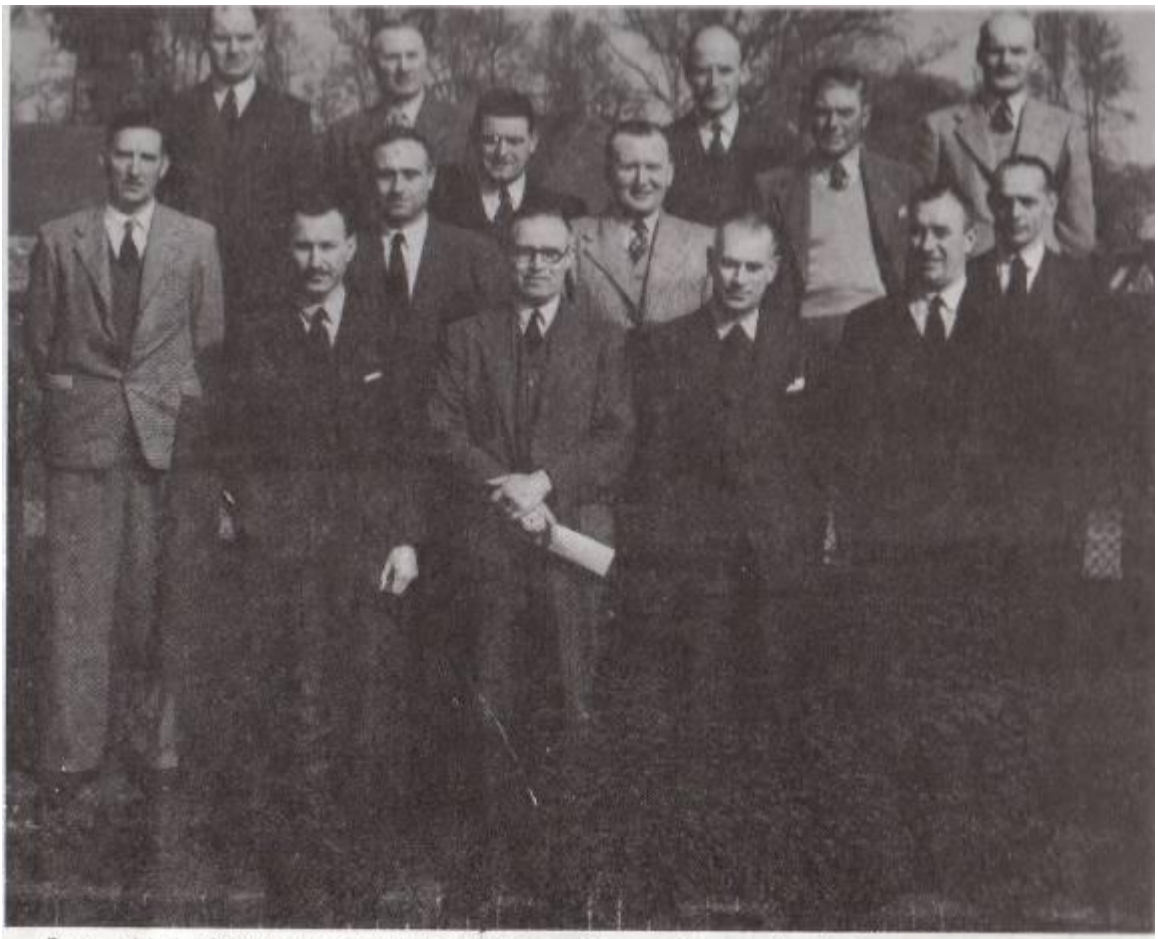
SUPPLEMENT TO The London Gazette OF TUESDAY, 30th December 1952
To be Ordinary Officers of the Civil Division 'of the said Most Excellent Order.

https://irishconstabulary.com/the-control-commission-for-germany-the-british-civ-t3666-s15.html

Retirement of Assistant Chief Constable Harold Back

Surrey Advertiser 16 July 1955 – 1955 just a chief constable and assistant chief constable. When a deputy chief constable was first appointed it was a rank below assistant.

Mr. Harold N Back MBE of Guildford who joined the Surrey Constabulary as a constable in 1919, became assistant chief constable in 1941 and retires today (Saturday), received the Queen's Police Medal (awarded in the Birthday Honours list) on Wednesday evening. It was added to his already long row of medals by the Lord Lieutenant of Surrey by General Sir Robert Haining at the Constabulary Headquarters, Mount Browne, Guildford at a parade of 75 representing all ranks.



Date – April, 1952, at Police H.Q. Mount Browne. Course of instruction for Sergeants.
1st Row: P.S. Sellwood, D.C.C. H. N. Back, P.S. Pentecost, P.S. Armstrong. 2nd Row: P.S. Staples, P.S. Covingdon, P.S. Austin, P.S. Pithers. 3rd Row: P.S. Hansford, P.S. Govey. P.S. Mousley, P.S. Meredith, P.S. Higgins, P.S. Parsons.
Photo submitted by ex-P.S. Harold Staples. Names from ex-Inspector John Lucas.

General Haining also presented good conduct medals to 22 uniformed and plain clothes officers of the force.

The ceremony was witnessed by members of the Surrey Standing Joint Committee and their wives and senior officials of the County Council including Mr. WW Ruff 9the clerk). Superintendent EF Hall, Mr. Back's successor was present and also Mrs Back and their son.

Before the presentations the Lord Lieutenant accompanied by Sir John Wenham (chairman of the county council). ACC Willway, Mr. J Simpson Chief Constable and Mr. Back inspected the parade. Sir John Wenham on behalf of the Standing Joint Committee expressed the great regret felt at the impending retirement of the Assistant Chief Constable. Many of them, said Sir John, had known and worked with Mr. Back for many years. Sometimes the more sensational newspapers and unscrupulous counsel said hard things about the police but anyone who had come into contact with Mr. Back would have nothing but kindly, warmest and happiest feelings towards him. We are grateful for the great work he has performed and are sorry the time has come when he feels he should seek a rather easier life. We wish him many happy years in his retirement, and we shall not lose touch with him" concluded Sir John.

The CC read the citation as follows: "Mr. Back joined the Surrey Constabulary in 1919. He was promoted to sergeant in 1926, inspector in 1930 and superintendent in 1935. In 1941 he was appointed Assistant Chief Constable of Surrey and was in total charge of the force during the illness of the former Chief Constable in 1946 when he carried out his duties in an exemplary manner. Throughout his service Mr. Back has shown the greatest devotion to duty and an exceptional capacity for organisation. He has unstintingly given everything in himself towards improving the efficiency of the force to which he belongs. In 1947 owing to ill health resulting in part from the strain of overwork during the war and from his increased responsibilities during the illness of the former Chief Constable he had the consent of the Surrey Standing Joint Committee to retire before the statutory age of 60. He agreed however to carry on so as to give the new Chief Constable the benefit of his long experience of police work and administration in the Surrey Force. Mr. Back has always given sterling service and his assistance to his chief constable has been invaluable. Throughout his police career he has shown great diligence and conscientiousness and devotion not only to his own force but to the police service in general."

Medals for long service and good conduct were presented to, (uniformed) Superintendent HG Drake (headquarters), Chief Inspector HJ Holland (Godalming), Inspector ET Chivers (Farnham) WJ Ezzard (Guildford), H Plumb (Chertsey), Sergeants GE Capelin (Reigate), WJ Croxton (Holmwood), R McBrien (Godstone) RE Nicholas (Dorking) MS Pratten (Chertsey), A/Sgt AH Cooke (Farnham), PCs FV Collins (Normandy) EE Erwin (Reigate) RG Godman (Send), JW Hunt (Headquarters), JF Locke (Ashtead), AH Morse (Redhill), KC Rolfe (Seale), WJ Strudwick (Redhill).

Plain clothes officers: Inspectors FE Shoobridge (Farnham) VJ Skinner (headquarters), Police Sergeant H Cooper (Egham).

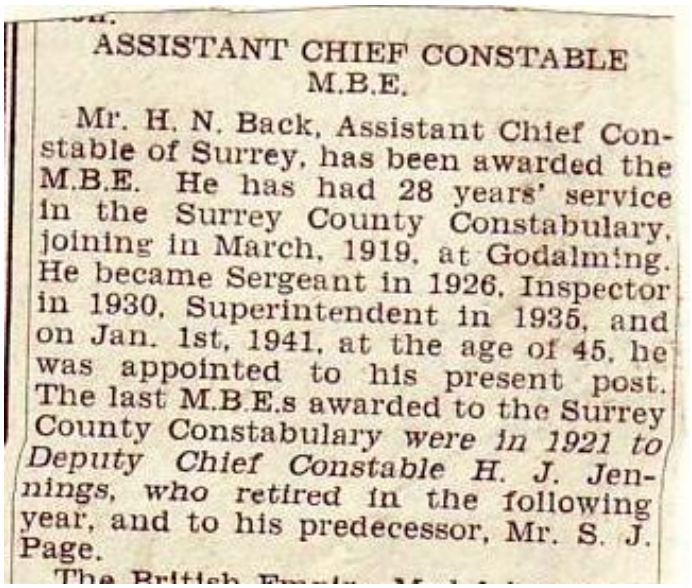
1931 August 29: Surrey Advertiser: Surrey Constabulary" Inspector H Back is appointed chief clerk at HQ at Guildford and PC Andrews is promoted sergeant and appointed assistant clerk there.

1941 January 11 Surrey Advertiser Assistant Chief retiring. Mr. W H Bird, Assistant Chief Constable of Surrey is retiring on pension and Supt H N Back has been appointed in his place.

Mr. Bird became Deputy Chief Constable on August 3rd 1931 and in 1939 the title was altered to Assistant Chief Constable.

1941 February 1 Surrey Advertiser - Police- The Standing Joint Committee have expressed regret that ill health has caused the retirement of Supt W H Bird from the post of Assistant Chief Constable. The appointment of Supt H N Back as deputy (sic) chief constable at £700 a year rising to £850 with £150 a year car allowance was confirmed.

1947 June 14 Assistant Chief Constable MBE



ASSISTANT CHIEF CONSTABLE M.B.E.

Mr. H. N. Back, Assistant Chief Constable of Surrey, has been awarded the M.B.E. He has had 28 years' service in the Surrey County Constabulary, joining in March, 1919, at Godalming. He became Sergeant in 1926, Inspector in 1930, Superintendent in 1935, and on Jan. 1st, 1941, at the age of 45, he was appointed to his present post. The last M.B.E.s awarded to the Surrey County Constabulary *were in 1921 to Deputy Chief Constable H. J. Jennings, who retired* in the following year, and to his predecessor, Mr. S. J. Page.

Inspector Lionel Norman Head
King's Commendation for Brave Conduct
Surrey Constabulary

1903 - 1982 Haywards Heath, Sussex

Parents: Father Thomas Edwin Head
Mother Caroline Ethel Head nee West

<u>1911 Census</u> address 17 Peartree Road, Adlestone, Surrey
Thomas E Head aged 41 Coach Maker. Caroline E Head aged 41
Phyllis Ethel Head daughter aged 15 dressmaker.
E.S Charles Head son aged 13 at school Lionel Norman Head son aged 7.

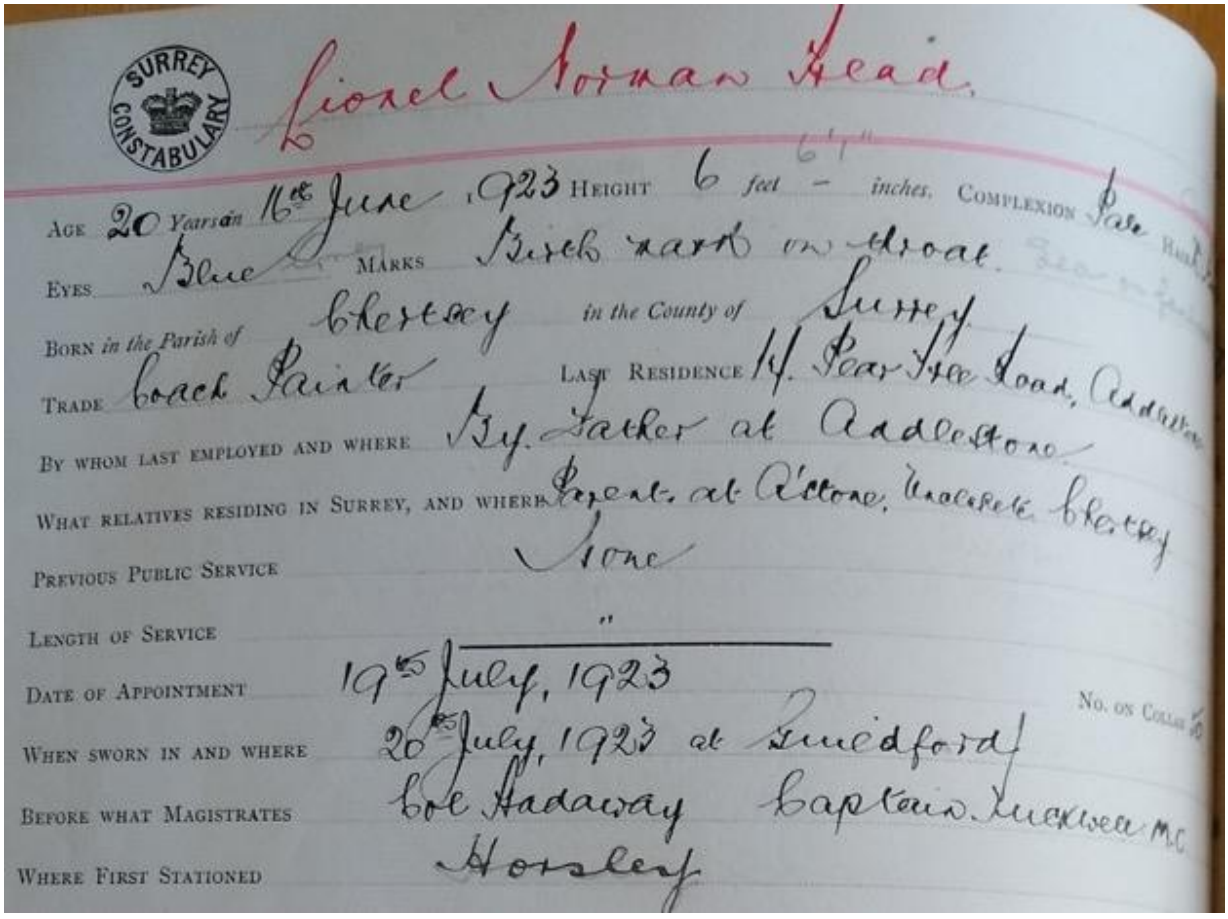
1921 Census address 17 Peartree Road, Addlestone, Surrey
Thomas E Head aged 51 Coach Maker own account. Caroline E Head aged 51 Home duties. Lionel Norman Head aged 18 Coach Painter

Married : 19 June 1924 aged 26 single occupation Police Constable
To Gwendoline Box aged 25 single address 7 Tannery Cottages, Gomshall, Surrey

1939 Register 3 Police Cottages, Rectory Lane, Byfleet, Woking, Lionel Norman Head aged 36 occupation Police Sergeant. Gwendoline Head wife 36 Domestic duties.

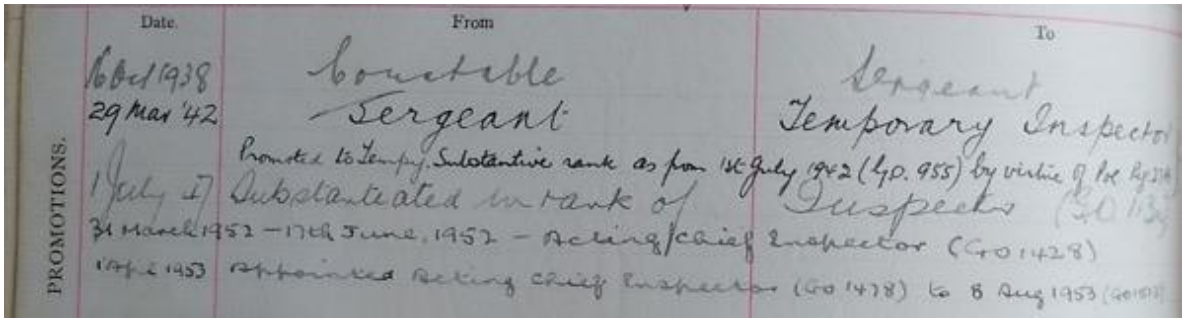
From the Surrey Advertiser – dated 16 July 1917 we can see that 18 students won a scholarship to Nautical School Tenable at Liskeard Training School – at the time Lionel N Head was at St Paul's C of E school Addlestone.

Electoral Rolls
1924 Maysleith, Merrow Road, Guildford
1930/1934/1936/1937 Living at 2 Police House, Caterham, Surrey
1930/31/1932 Living Shrubbery Cottages, Guildford
1933 Chertsey
1944 acting Police Inspector - address 36 Park Road, Godalming, Surrey.


SURREY CONSTABULARY

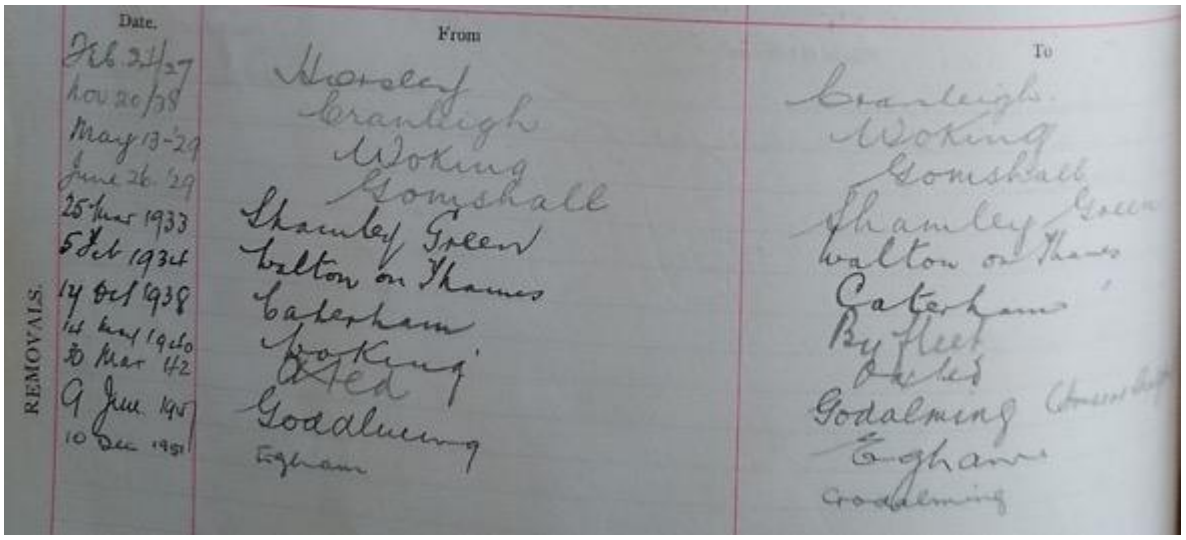
Lionel Norman Head.

AGE 20 Years on 16th June 1923 HEIGHT 6 feet – inches. COMPLEXION Fair
EYES Blue MARKS Birth mark on throat.
BORN in the Parish of Chertsey in the County of Surrey
TRADE Coach Painter LAST RESIDENCE With Father 2 Pear Tree Road, Addlestone
BY WHOM LAST EMPLOYED AND WHERE Self. Father at Addlestone
WHAT RELATIVES RESIDING IN SURREY, AND WHERE Parents at Addlestone, Uncles Chertsey
PREVIOUS PUBLIC SERVICE None
LENGTH OF SERVICE "
DATE OF APPOINTMENT 19th July, 1923
WHEN SWORN IN AND WHERE 26th July, 1923 at Guildford
BEFORE WHAT MAGISTRATES Col Hadaway Captain Luckwell M.C.
WHERE FIRST STATIONED Horsley



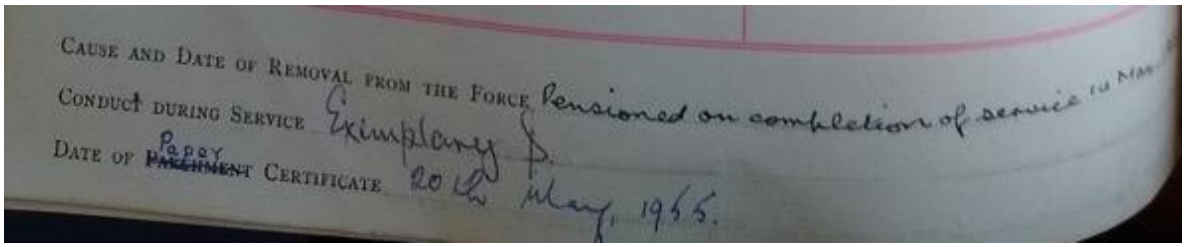
PROMOTIONS.

Date.	From	To
6 Oct 1938	Constable	Sergeant
29 Mar '42	Sergeant	Temporary Inspector
	Promoted to Temp. Substantive rank as from 1st July 1942 (Gp. 955) by virtue of the Act	
1 July 47	Substantiated in rank of	Inspector (GO 1328)
31 March 1952 – 17th June, 1952 – Acting Chief Inspector (GO 1428)		
19th June 1953	appointed acting chief Inspector (GO 1478) to 8 Aug 1953 (GO 1513)	



REMOVALS.

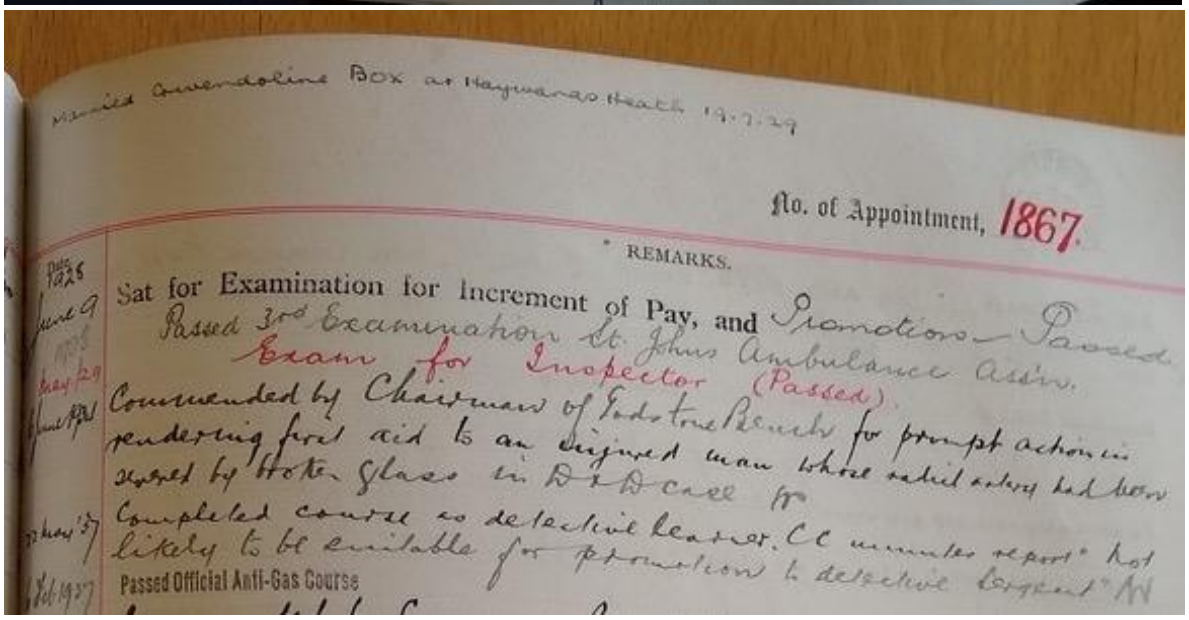
Date.	From	To
Feb 24/27	Horsley	Cranleigh
Nov 20/38	Cranleigh	Woking
May 13-29	Woking	Gomshall
June 26. '29	Gomshall	Shamley Green
25 June 1933	Shamley Green	Walton on Thames
5 Oct 1934	Walton on Thames	Caterham
14 Oct 1938	Caterham	By Fleet
15 Sept 1940	Woking	Dated
30 Mar '42	Dated	Godalming (Chief Insp)
9 June 45	Godalming	Eghams
10 Dec 1951	Egham	Godalming



CAUSE AND DATE OF REMOVAL FROM THE FORCE Pensioned on completion of service 10 May

CONDUCT DURING SERVICE Exemplary P.

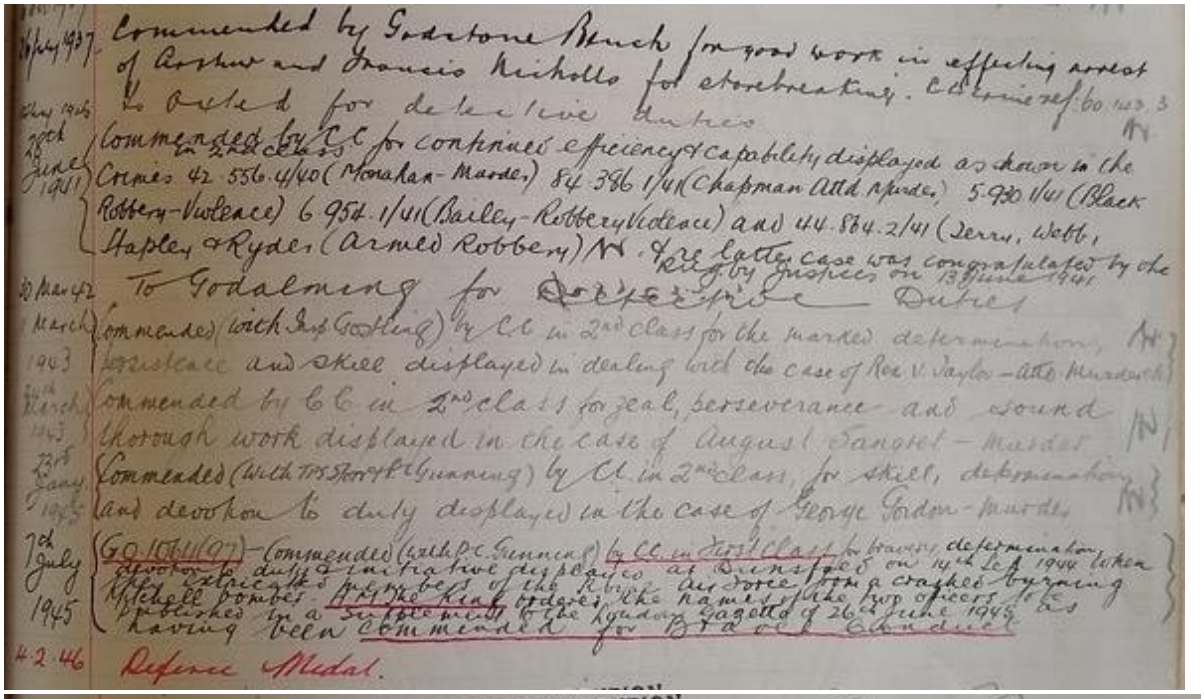
DATE OF ~~PARCHMENT~~ CERTIFICATE Copy 20th May, 1955.



Married Gwendoline Box at Haywards Heath 19.7.29

No. of Appointment, 1867.

Date.	REMARKS.
1926	Sat for Examination for Increment of Pay, and Promotion – Passed
June 9	Passed 3rd Examination St. Johns Ambulance Assn.
1926	Exam for Inspector (Passed)
May 29	Commended by Chairman of Todstone Bench for prompt action in
June 1926	rendering first aid to an injured man whose radial artery had been
	severed by broken glass in D.D. case
27 Nov '37	Completed course as detective learner. CC minutes report not
4 Feb 1937	likely to be suitable for promotion to detective sergeant" AH
	Passed Official Anti-Gas Course



From Robert Simonson Surrey History Centre March 2024. Details for Lionel Head from the appointments book (ref. 9152/1/2/1/4)

Jenny Tuffs March 2024: I found the following in Surrey Advertiser 30th April 1955 - Court Tribute to Inspector Head. Retiring from Police. It mentions that he is retiring after a distinguished career. This is Inspector Lionel Norman Head.

I looked on Ancestry and found a photo that includes him when he was a lot younger (he was born in 1903) but feel it could be the same person. He is the one with the stripy jacket.

West Sussex Gazette 12 July 1945

GALLANTRY AMID BOMBS

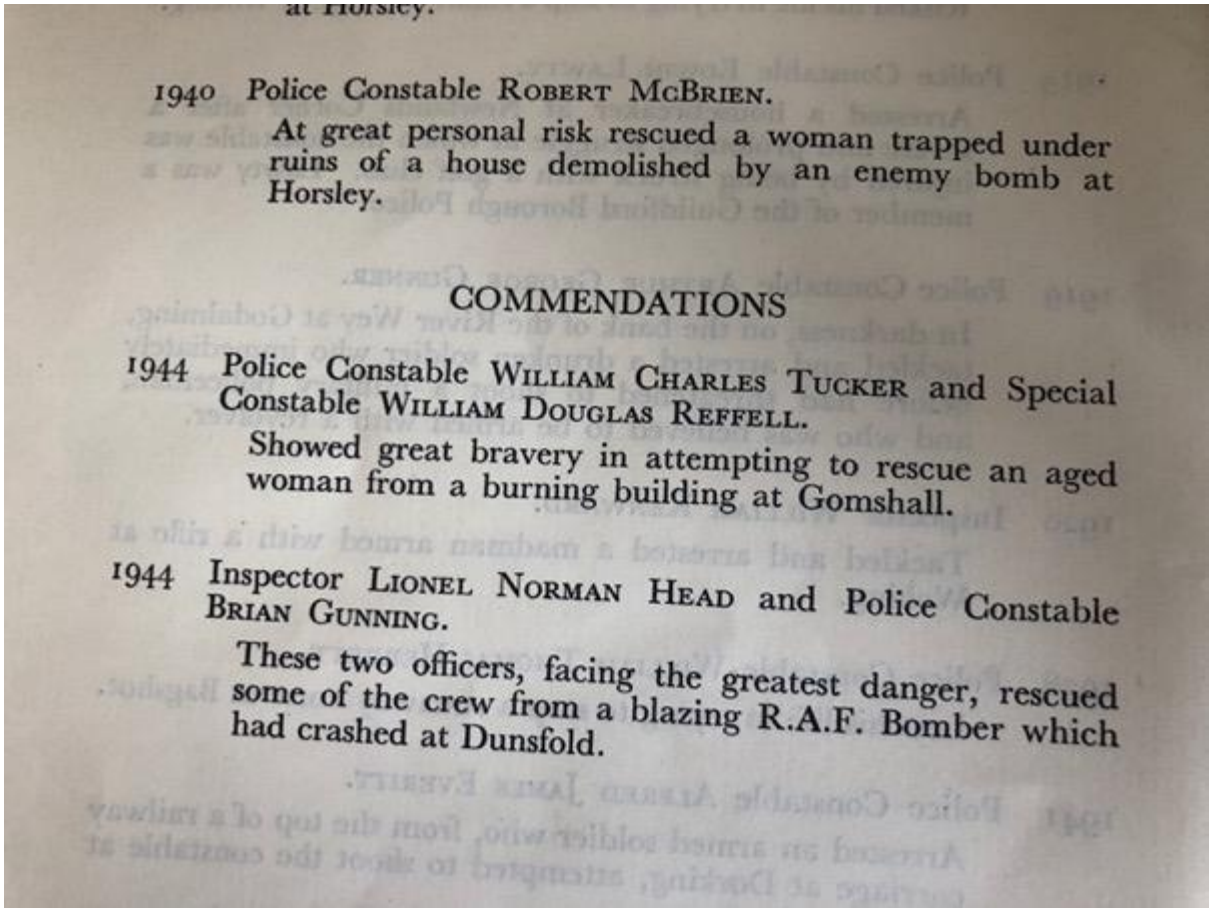
Insp. L. Head and Det.-constable B. Gunning, Surrey Police Force, of Godalming, and Cpl. R. M. Renmant, 5th Surrey Battalion Home Guard, of Dunsfold, have had awards of Commendation by the King for bravery in rescue work when a bomber crashed at Long House Meadow, Dunsfold, last September. The aircraft hit trees and a house, one engine dropped in flames, and the 'plane dived to earth, most of the crew being trapped. The two police officers and Cpl. Renmant, a farmer, were first on the scene. Several 500lb. bombs were scattered around, and one protruded from the starboard side of the aircraft. Ignoring the danger from the bombs, the police and Home Guard rescued the crew, but it took the local N.F.S. 45 minutes using pulley ropes to lift the machine and extricate the pilot. One of the crew was killed in the crash. Good work in first aid to the injured airmen was done by the Misses Slayter, leaders of the Dunsfold Red Cross Women's Detachment. In recognition of the detachment's services on this and other occasions during the war the award has been made of the Red Cross distinguished services certificate.

5th Supplement to The London Gazette 22nd June 1945, page 3335. COMMENDATIONS. Those named below have been Commended for brave conduct:— When aircraft crashed and caught fire. (Was recommended for a BEM)

Brian GUNNING, Constable. Surrey Joint Police Force.

Lionel Norman HEAD, Inspector, Surrey Joint Police Force

Ronald Maurice REMNANT, Farmer, Dunsfold, Surrey.[1]



1940 Police Constable ROBERT MCBRIEN.
At great personal risk rescued a woman trapped under ruins of a house demolished by an enemy bomb at Horsley.

COMMENDATIONS

1944 Police Constable WILLIAM CHARLES TUCKER and Special Constable WILLIAM DOUGLAS REFFELL.
Showed great bravery in attempting to rescue an aged woman from a burning building at Gomshall.

1944 Inspector LIONEL NORMAN HEAD and Police Constable BRIAN GUNNING.
These two officers, facing the greatest danger, rescued some of the crew from a blazing R.A.F. Bomber which had crashed at Dunsfold.

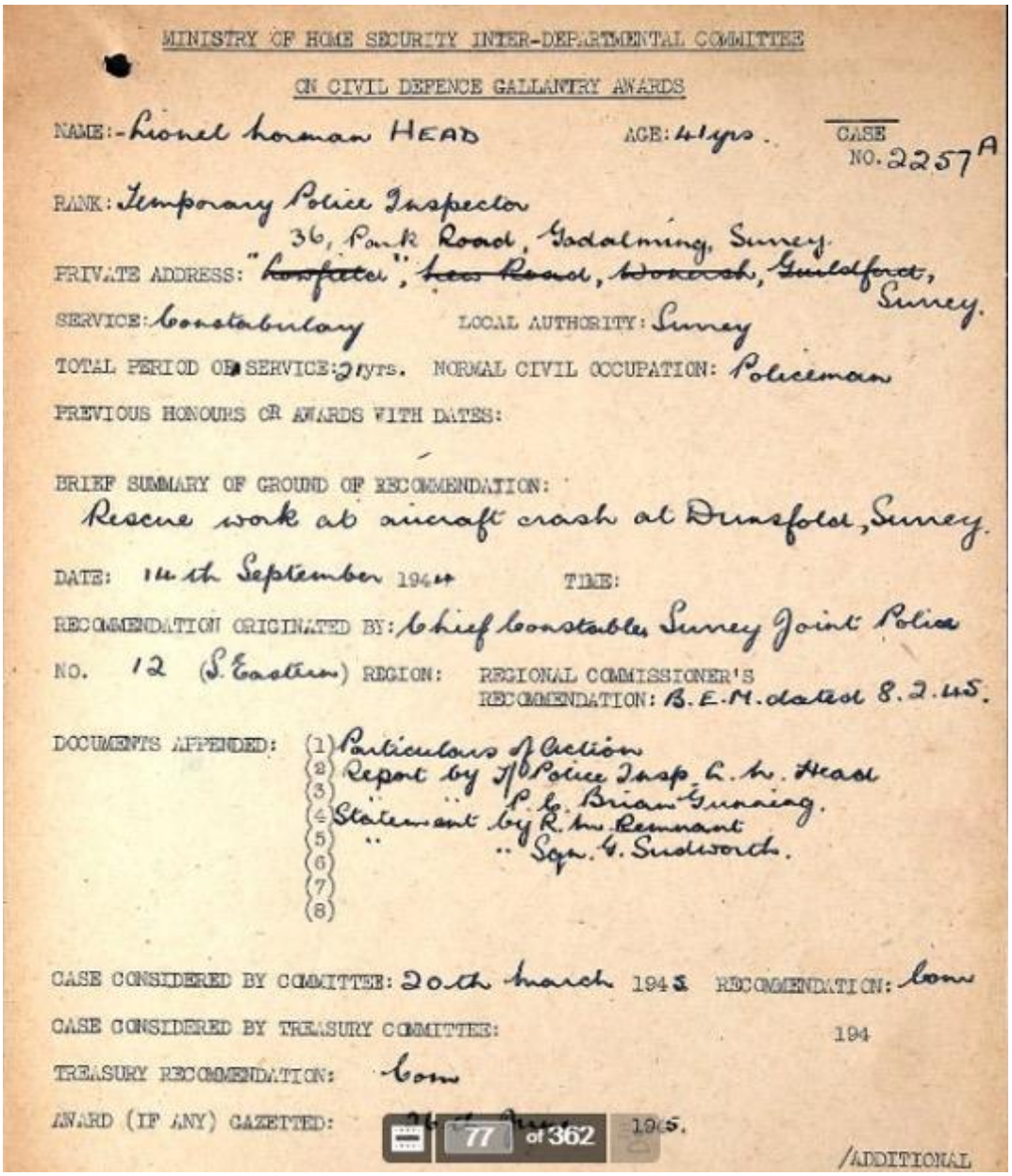
PC McBrien was awarded the BEM for brave conduct and Tucker, Reffell, Head and Gunning were awarded the King's Commendation. [2]

The Second World War commendations from the King though entered in Durrant's history of the Surrey Constabulary were not, it is believed, on display with other such post war awards. Nor is there a reference in Gerry Middleton-Stewart's Pictorial History 1851-2001. If you work at HQ maybe you could check and let the editor know if there is any reference to these wartime awards.

1 https://www.thegazette.co.uk/London/issue/37149/supplement/1
2 Superintendent Durrant 1951 book

Inspector Lionel Norman Head and PC Brian Gunning were commended for facing the greatest danger, rescued some of the crew from a blazing RAF bomber, which had crashed at Dunsfold.

Brian Gunning who worked with PC Storr out of Godalming was involved in at least two very serious incidents.



MINISTRY OF HOME SECURITY INTER-DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE

ON CIVIL DEFENCE GALLANTRY AWARDS

NAME:- Lionel Norman HEAD AGE: 41yrs. CASE NO. 2257A

RANK: Temporary Police Inspector

PRIVATE ADDRESS: 36, Park Road, Godalming, Surrey.

SERVICE: Constabulary LOCAL AUTHORITY: Surrey

TOTAL PERIOD OF SERVICE: 21yrs. NORMAL CIVIL OCCUPATION: Policeman

PREVIOUS HONOURS OR AWARDS WITH DATES:

BRIEF SUMMARY OF GROUND OF RECOMMENDATION:

Rescue work at aircraft crash at Dunsfold, Surrey.

DATE: 14th September 1944 TIME:

RECOMMENDATION ORIGINATED BY: Chief Constable, Surrey Joint Police

NO. 12 (S.Eastern) REGION: REGIONAL COMMISSIONER'S RECOMMENDATION: B.E.M. dated 8.2.45.

DOCUMENTS APPENDED:
(1) Particulars of Action
(2) Report by A/Police Insp. L.N. Head
(3) " " P.C. Brian Gunning.
(4) Statement by R.W. Remnant
(5) " " Sgn. A. Sudworth.
(6)
(7)
(8)

CASE CONSIDERED BY COMMITTEE: 20th March 1945 RECOMMENDATION: Bom

CASE CONSIDERED BY TREASURY COMMITTEE: 194

TREASURY RECOMMENDATION: Bom

AWARD (IF ANY) GAZETTED: 1945.

77 of 362

/ADDITIONAL

World War Two Civil Defence Gallantry Awards 1940-1949

1944 September: On a night in September 1944 a Mitchell bomber of Number 180 Squadron, lost power during take-off crashing near Dunsfold village. [3] Gunning and Storr were quickly on the scene and extricated members of the RAF from the crashed Mitchell bomber. Gunning

3 Paul. M. McCue, Dunsfold: Surrey's Most Secret Airfield, page 166, (Walton, 1991).

and Storr showed no regard for their own lives as the ground was littered with burning debris and the bomber's fuel tanks still full. Gunning was later commended by the chief constable for bravery, determination, devotion to duty and initiative displayed at Dunsfold that night. By 1945, this feat of bravery had come to the notice of King George V who ordered the names of the two officers to be publicized in the London Gazette of 26thJune 1945 as having been commended for brave conduct. PC Gunning also received praise from the Air Ministry, the Home Secretary, and the then Prime Minister Winston Churchill himself. [4]

A further incident involving great courage took place at Godalming police station.

1944 April 12: On duty at Godalming Police Station on 12th April 1944, PC Gunning and TPS Storr were attempting to control a male prisoner who was in possession of a "Mills" hand grenade. The prisoner had attempted to pull the pin and the two police officers had reason to believe he had, but they closed on him, secured the grenade and Gunning replaced the pin. Both were commended by the chief constable in the first class for their bravery and devotion to duty, qualities the pair would continue to demonstrate. A native of Westbury, Gloucester Brian Gunning had been a sales representative for Baker & Co in Bristol. He was first stationed in Dorking, later moving to Mayford, Cranleigh, and Esher on to Godalming in January 1941.

Edward Storr was born in the parish of Worplesdon, Surrey and lived and worked with his father on Lawford's Farm near Guildford. Storr joined Surrey Constabulary on 9th September 1928, beginning his long service in Woking. Whilst in Leatherhead, PC Storr became temporary sergeant, prompted no doubt by his commendation from the chief constable for his endeavour in preventing a prisoner's escape from custody. He had a long and violent struggle with the prisoner, an armed soldier, who threatened to shoot him. [5] By 1942, Sgt Storr arrived in Godalming and became paired with PC Gunning. [6] (Gunning was superintendent Dorking Division in the mid 1960s)

Chief Constable Joseph Simpson

Robert Simonson Surrey History Centre: These two photographs relating to Sir Joseph Simpson, which we have just received from the Met Police Museum (our ref. 10580). They are stamped 14 May 1955 on the back, but there is no other information about the event taking place or who the other man is, but maybe your researchers can find out!

4 Air Ministry Letter 25th June 1945, Surrey Police Museum, Home Office Letter 25th June 1945, Surrey Police Museum, Kings Order signed by Winston Churchill, Surrey Police Museum. Luke Franklin research' Gunning Service Record, page 2092. 5th Supplement to The London Gazette 22nd June 1945, page 3335, (HMSO,1945).

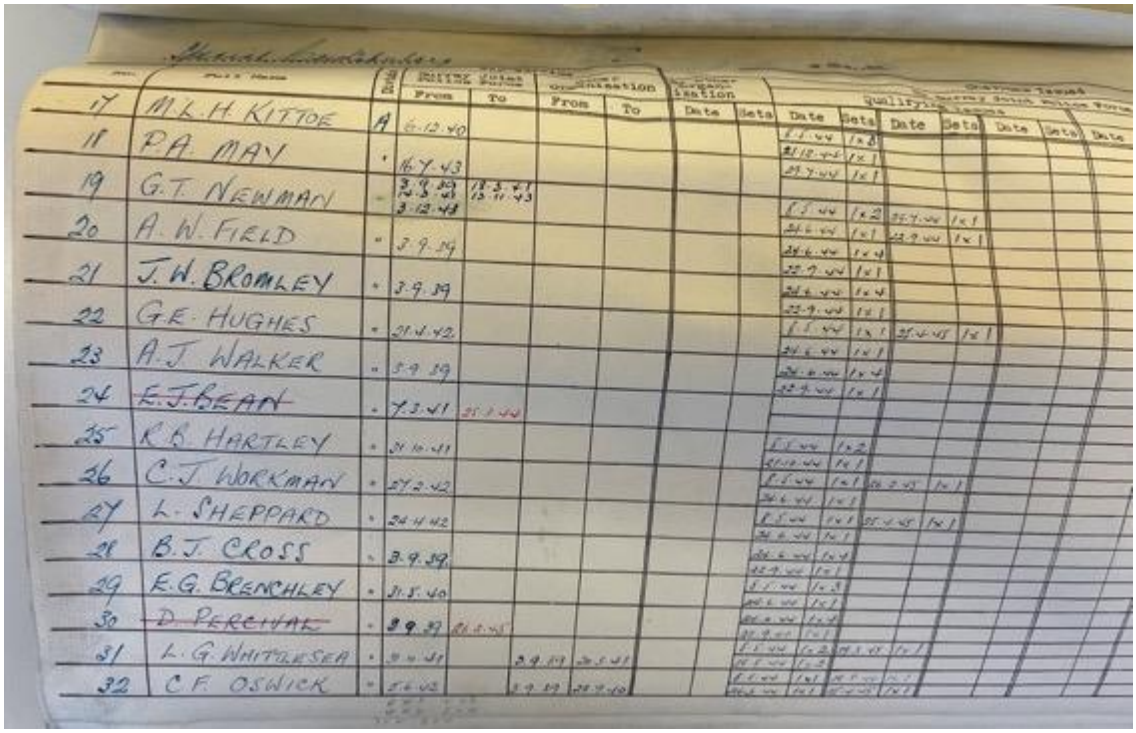
6 Edward Storr Police Service Record Defaulters Book 1911-1931, pg1964, History Centre Woking (later known as Storr Service Record). Also, Luke Franklin Journal Police History Society January 2011

The recipient does not have the look of a 1950s police officer. A search has been made of newspapers for the date without success. Have you any ideas?

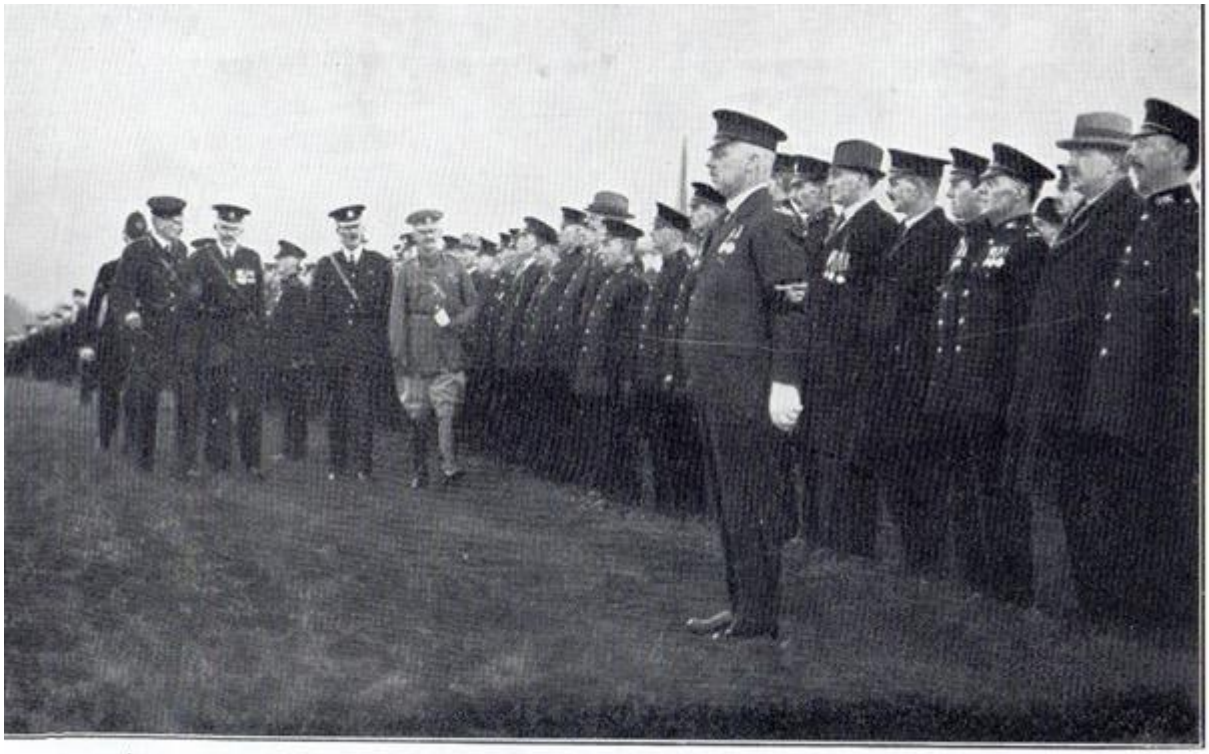
Surrey Special Constabulary

Richard Callaghan: Royal Military Police Museum: Do you have anything on Special Constables? The chap I'm looking for is Mark Timothy Hill (MFP No P9465 during the FWW), who was living in Egham in 1939. His main occupation as a coal and corn merchant. Sadly, the scan of the 1939 Register cuts part of his SP entry off, but it confirms Surrey Constabulary No 7???

Response: It is believed there are no substantial holdings of Surrey Special Constabulary papers. However recently Mick Weyland found CC 98.8.6 which appears to be a list of eligibility for the Defence Medal. However beyond length of service there is no detail.



Jean Pelham: The only references I can find are three applications for military exemptions from his civilian job in Virginia Water November 1916 - January 1917 - March 1917. He then pops up at Special Constables medal ceremony at Ranmore Common in July 1936 (among 100s)



Inspection of Surrey Special Constabulary at Ranmore Common, 1926, by the Lord-Lieutenant, Lord Ashcombe, accompanied by Captain Sant and Captain Tuckwell

This parade is ten years earlier, but little will have changed.

There is not a lot of information on Mark Timothy Hill

Born 7th April 1888
Married 19th December 1914 to Winifred Hilda Nolan - cannot find any children.
Died 25th November 1970

Occupation – Various dates a Manager for a Coal & Corn Merchants

1939 Register - Richard is correct the number has been cut off and the nearest I got was 76

Military Foot Police, with numbers P9465 and 31260.

Surrey Special Constabulary Badges [7]

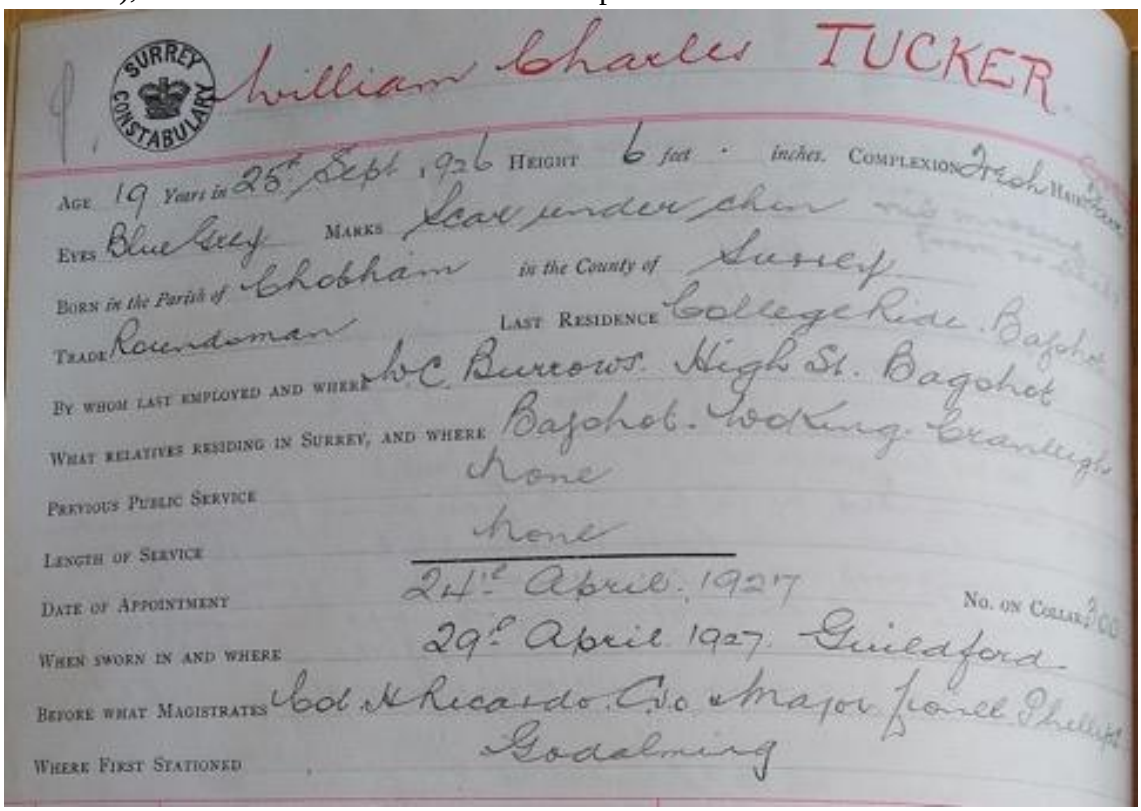
7 Tony Colman

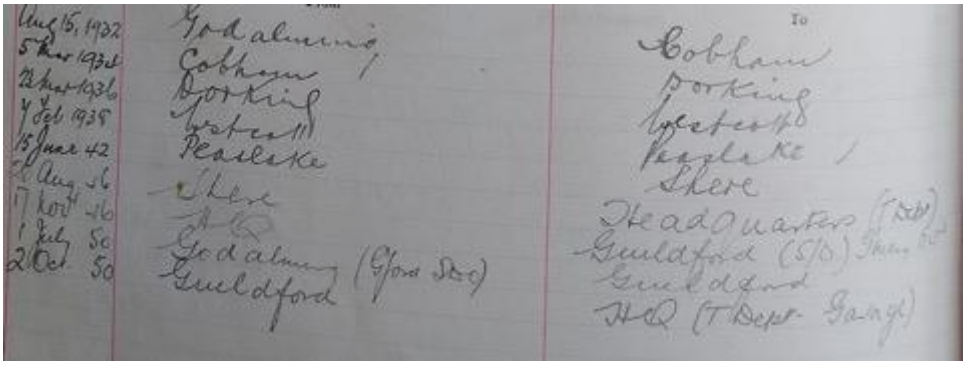
PC 300 William Charles Tucker
Special Constable William Douglas Reffell
Kings Commendation for Brave Conduct
Second World War, Gomshall

Additional research by Jenny Tuffs, Jean Pelham, Henry Pelham and Robert Simonson. Documents from Surrey History centre and Ancestry World War II Civil Defence Gallantry Awards, 1940-1949

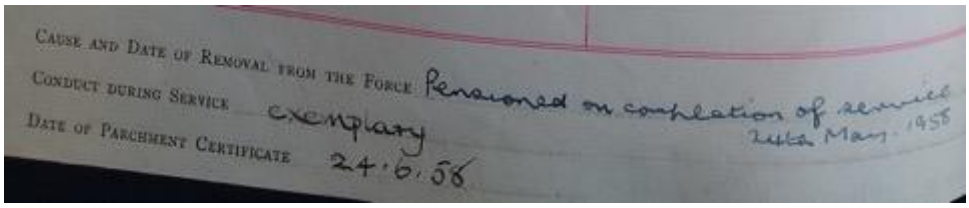
Robert Simonson: Below are the entries for William Charles Tucker from the Surrey Constabulary appointments book (ref. 9152/1/2/1/4). There is a file at the Archives described as 'Defence medal recommendations' (ref. CC98/8/6) and it seems to be a record of war service chevrons issued by Surrey Joint Police Force to regular and special constables in 1944 and 1945. The form has the appearance of something left over from the First World War.

There are a few hundred names of Specials (surnames and initials), but oddly I could not see William Douglas Reffell among them. Sections of the book have dividers labelled A-E (names of divisions), but surnames for all letters of the alphabet occur in each section.





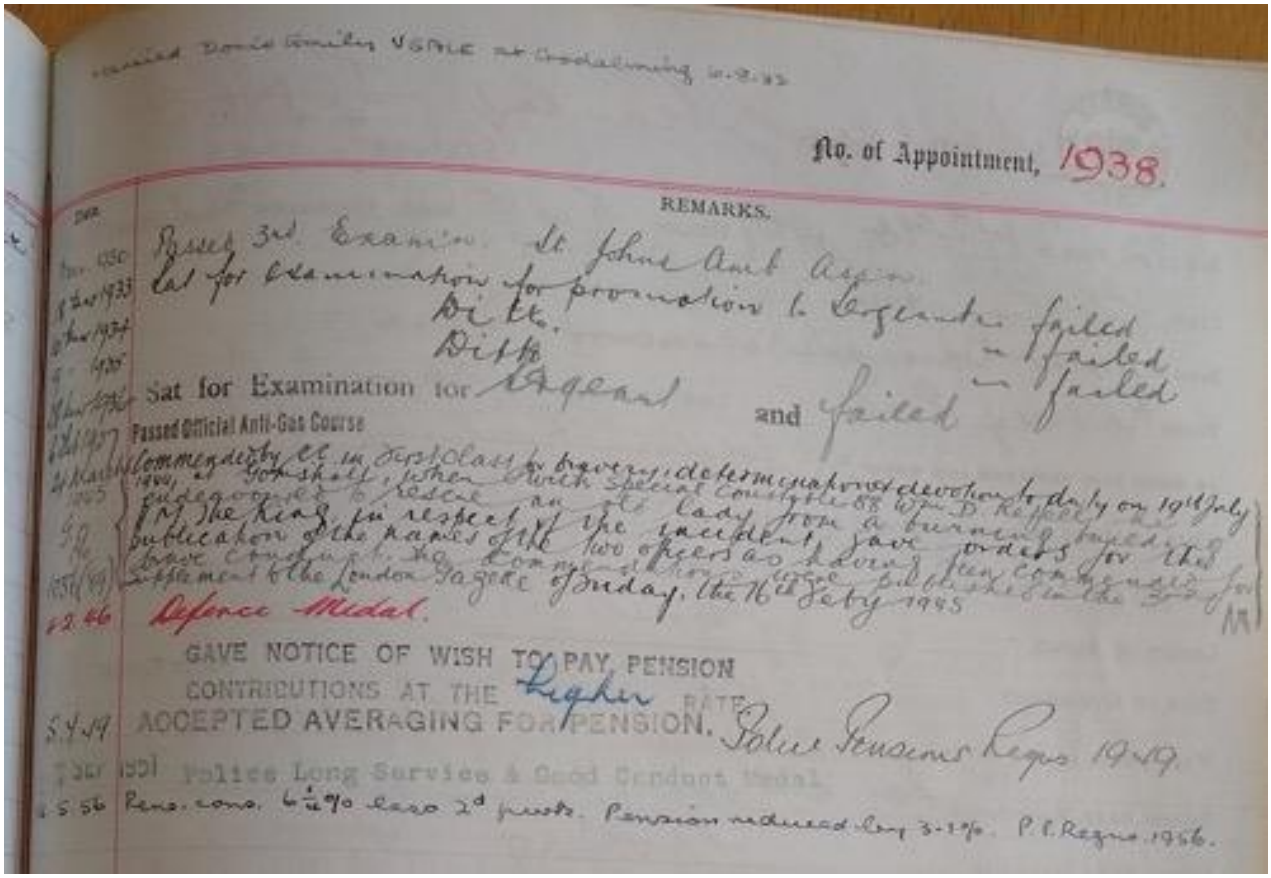
		To
Aug 15, 1932	Godalming	Cobham
5 Mar 1935	Cobham /	Dorking
12 Mar 1936	Dorking	Westcott
4 Feb 1938	Westcott	Peaslake /
15 June 42	Peaslake	Shere
Aug 46	Shere	Headquarters (T Dept)
17 Nov 46	HQ	Guildford (S/D) [illegible]
1 July 50	Godalming (G'ford Div)	Guildford
2 Oct 50	Guildford	HQ (T Dept - Garage)



Cause and Date of Removal from the Force Pensioned on completion of service 24th May 1958

Conduct during Service exemplary

Date of Parchment Certificate 24.6.58



married Doris Emily VSALE at Godalming [illegible]

No. of Appointment, 1938.

REMARKS.

1930 Passed 3rd Examin. St John Amb Assn.

18 Jan 1933 Sat for examination for promotion to Sergeant – failed

Mar 1934 Ditto – failed

1935 Ditto – failed

Jan 1936 Sat for Examination for Sergeant and failed

Feb 1937 Passed Official Anti-Gas Course

21 March 1945 Commended by CC in First Class for bravery, determination and devotion to duty on 19th July 1944, at Gomshall, when with Special Constable 88 Wm D. Reffell he endeavoured to rescue an old lady from a burning building. H.M. The King in respect of the incident, gave orders for the publication of the names of the two officers as having been commended for brave conduct. The commendations were published in the 3rd supplement to the London Gazette of Friday, the 16th Feby 1945

.2.46 Defence Medal.

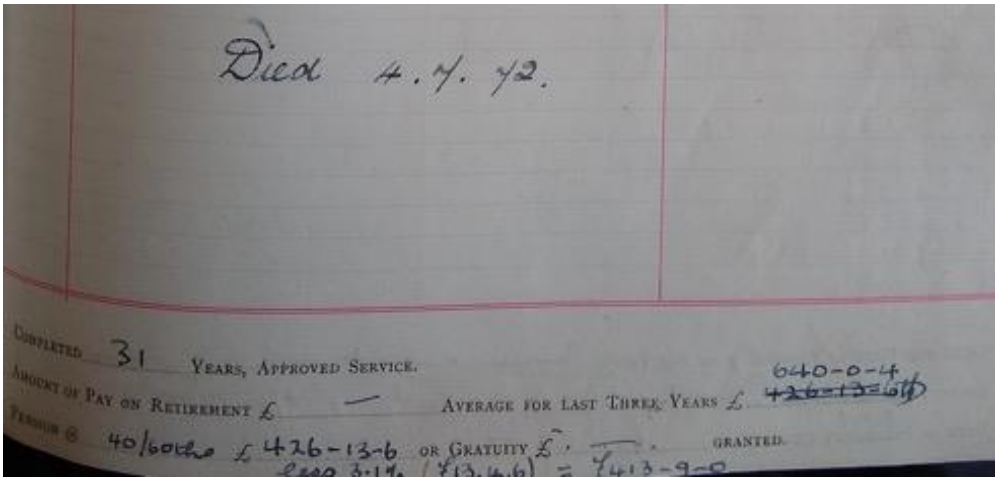
GAVE NOTICE OF WISH TO PAY PENSION CONTRIBUTIONS AT THE higher RATE.

5.4.49 ACCEPTED AVERAGING FOR PENSION. Police Pensions Regs 1949.

Sep 1951 Police Long Service & Good Conduct Medal

.5.56 Pens. cons. 6¼% less 2d pts. Pension reduced by 3-1%. P.P. Regns. 1956.

29



William Charles Tucker

1907 Bagshot – 1972 Godalming

Parents: Father Thomas Tucker
Mother Ellen Tucker

1911 CENSUS Living College Road, Bagshot, Surrey
Living with parents Thomas Tucker aged 33 and Ellen Tucker aged 29.
Son George aged 6.
Son Edward aged 4.
Son – William Charles aged 3.
Daughter Lillian Ivy 14 months

1921 CENSUS Living College Road, Bagshot, Surrey
Living with parents Thomas Tucker aged 43 and Ellen Tucker aged 39.
Sons George Thomas aged 16, Edward James aged 14 **William Charles aged 13** Alec Henry aged 9.
Daughter Lillian Ivy aged 11

Married 6th August 1932 to Doris Emily Veale 26 at Godalming, Surrey
William Charles Tucker's age is shown as 24 occupation Police Constable

1939 Register living Police Cottage, Peaslake, Guildford William Charles Tucker Police Constable.
Doris Emily Veale – wife

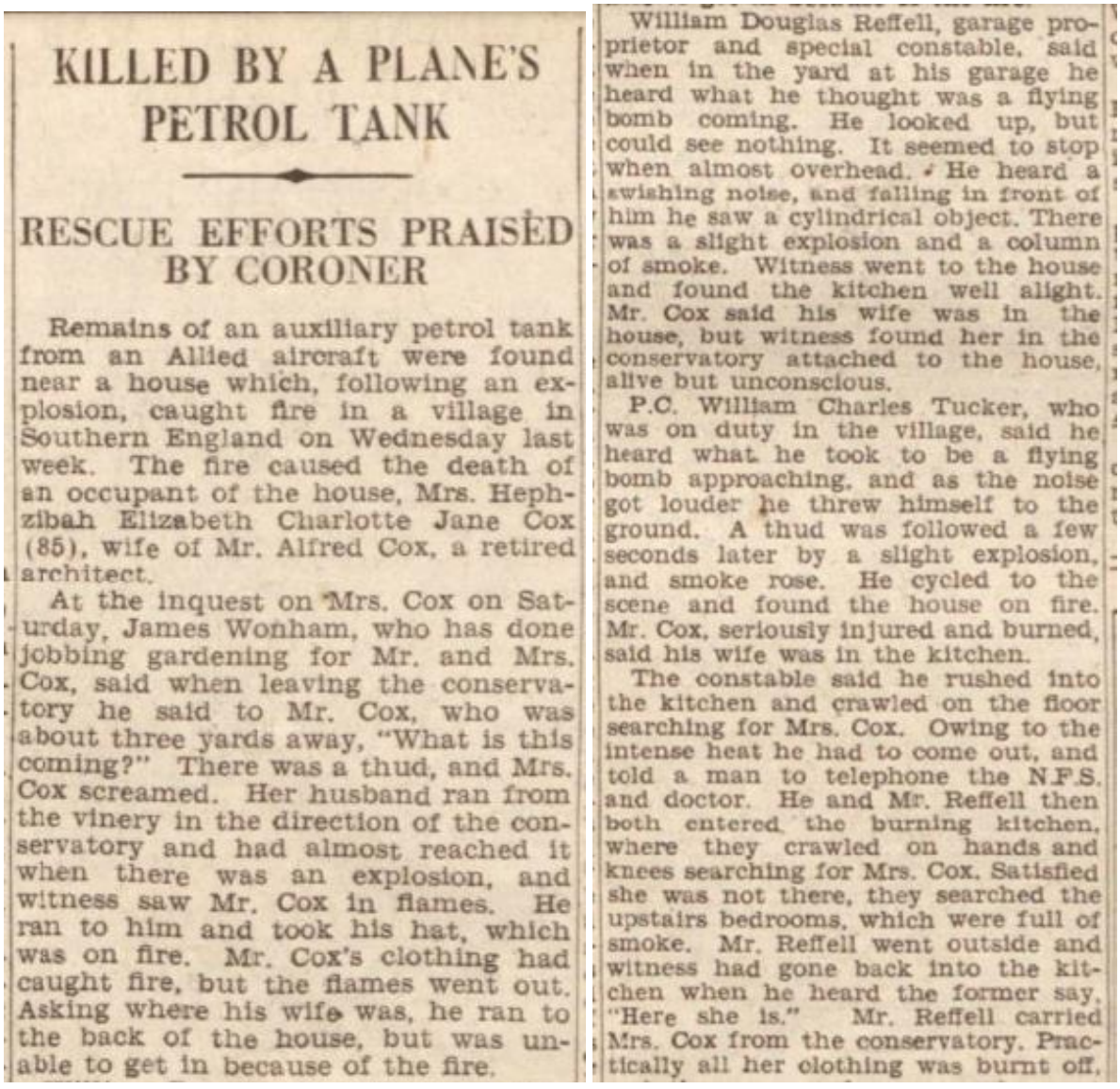
Electoral Rolls

1945 – 2 Police House, Shere, Guildford
1948 – Leapale Road, Guildford
1951- Chertsey
1953/1954 – Leapale Road, Guildford
1961 – Wolseley Road, Farnham

Died 1972 – Shackstead Lane, Godalming. Probate London.

William Charles Tucker, along with Special Constable William Douglas Reffell was award a Civil Defence Gallantry Award for Rescue work when a petrol tank fell from an aircraft and caught fire at "Holme", Dorking Road, Gomshall, at Midday on the 19th July 1944.

Surrey Advertiser 29th July 1944



KILLED BY A PLANE'S PETROL TANK

RESCUE EFFORTS PRAISED BY CORONER

Remains of an auxiliary petrol tank from an Allied aircraft were found near a house which, following an explosion, caught fire in a village in Southern England on Wednesday last week. The fire caused the death of an occupant of the house, Mrs. Hephzibah Elizabeth Charlotte Jane Cox (85), wife of Mr. Alfred Cox, a retired architect.

At the inquest on Mrs. Cox on Saturday, James Wonham, who has done jobbing gardening for Mr. and Mrs. Cox, said when leaving the conservatory he said to Mr. Cox, who was about three yards away, "What is this coming?" There was a thud, and Mrs. Cox screamed. Her husband ran from the vinery in the direction of the conservatory and had almost reached it when there was an explosion, and witness saw Mr. Cox in flames. He ran to him and took his hat, which was on fire. Mr. Cox's clothing had caught fire, but the flames went out. Asking where his wife was, he ran to the back of the house, but was unable to get in because of the fire.

William Douglas Reffell, garage proprietor and special constable, said when in the yard at his garage he heard what he thought was a flying bomb coming. He looked up, but could see nothing. It seemed to stop when almost overhead. He heard a swishing noise, and falling in front of him he saw a cylindrical object. There was a slight explosion and a column of smoke. Witness went to the house and found the kitchen well alight. Mr. Cox said his wife was in the house, but witness found her in the conservatory attached to the house, alive but unconscious.

P.C. William Charles Tucker, who was on duty in the village, said he heard what he took to be a flying bomb approaching, and as the noise got louder he threw himself to the ground. A thud was followed a few seconds later by a slight explosion, and smoke rose. He cycled to the scene and found the house on fire. Mr. Cox, seriously injured and burned, said his wife was in the kitchen.

The constable said he rushed into the kitchen and crawled on the floor searching for Mrs. Cox. Owing to the intense heat he had to come out, and told a man to telephone the N.F.S. and doctor. He and Mr. Reffell then both entered the burning kitchen, where they crawled on hands and knees searching for Mrs. Cox. Satisfied she was not there, they searched the upstairs bedrooms, which were full of smoke. Mr. Reffell went outside and witness had gone back into the kitchen when he heard the former say, "Here she is." Mr. Reffell carried Mrs. Cox from the conservatory. Practically all her clothing was burnt off.

and there was a head wound.

The Rev. H. J. Colclough, son-in-law of Mrs. Cox, said he thought the police acted very expeditiously.

The Coroner said he felt that himself. For P.C. Tucker, in difficult circumstances of smoke, fire and flame, to repeatedly search the kitchen, where he thought Mrs. Cox was, was very commendable; and Mr. Reffell was likewise to be commended on the way he acted. The Coroner hoped the police superintendent would make a note of what he thought of P.C. Tucker's action.

Flying Officer W. J. R. C. Tuft, R.A.F., who made an inspection soon after the fire, said on a bank at the side of the house he found the remains of an Allied over-load petrol tank. It had come off an Allied plane, and witness thought it might have been fairly full. Impact would cause the petrol to ignite.

Recalled Mr. Reffell said just before he heard an aeroplane about and noticed that the engine was not firing properly.

A pathologist said he thought when the explosion took place Mrs. Cox struck her head on the iron pillar of the conservatory and fell unconscious. She was unconscious when the flames reached her. The cause of death was external superficial burns of the body when lying unconscious from a head injury.

"Accidental death" was the verdict.

MINISTRY OF HOME SECURITY INTER-DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE

ON CIVIL DEFENCE GALLANTRY AWARDS

NAME:- William Douglas REFFELL AGE: 58 yrs. CASE NO. 2237 B.

RANK: Special Constable

PRIVATE ADDRESS: The School House, Wotton, Nr. Dorking

SERVICE: Special Constabulary LOCAL AUTHORITY: Surrey

TOTAL PERIOD OF SERVICE: 5 yrs. NORMAL CIVIL OCCUPATION:

PREVIOUS HONOURS OR AWARDS WITH DATES:

BRIEF SUMMARY OF GROUND OF RECOMMENDATION:

As for 2237 A

DATE: 19th July 1944 TIME: Thursday

RECOMMENDATION ORIGINATED BY: Chief Constable, Surrey Joint Police Force

NO. 12 (S. Eastern) REGION: REGIONAL COMMISSIONER'S RECOMMENDATION: B.E.M. dated 5.10.44.

DOCUMENTS APPENDED: (1) (2) (3) (4) As for 2237 A. (5) (6) (7) (8)

CASE CONSIDERED BY COMMITTEE: 19th January 1945 RECOMMENDATION: Com.

CASE CONSIDERED BY TREASURY COMMITTEE: 194

TREASURY RECOMMENDATION: Com.

AWARD (IF ANY) GAZETTED: 20th February 1945.

/ADDITIONAL

MINISTRY OF HOME SECURITY INTER-DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE

ON CIVIL DEFENCE GALLANTRY AWARDS

NAME:- William Charles TUCKER AGE:37yrs. CASE NO. 2237/A.

RANK: Police Constable

PRIVATE ADDRESS: The Police Cottage, Shere, Guildford, Surrey

SERVICE: Police LOCAL AUTHORITY: Surrey

TOTAL PERIOD OF SERVICE: 17yrs. NORMAL CIVIL OCCUPATION: Policeman

PREVIOUS HONOURS OR AWARDS WITH DATES:

BRIEF SUMMARY OF GROUND OF RECOMMENDATION:
Rescue work when a petrol tank fell and caught fire at "Holme" Dorking Rd., Gomshall.

DATE: 19th July 1944 TIME: Midday

RECOMMENDATION ORIGINATED BY: Chief Constable, Surrey Joint Police Force

NO. 12 (S. Eastern) REGION: REGIONAL COMMISSIONER'S RECOMMENDATION: B.E.M. dated 5.12.44

DOCUMENTS APPENDED:
(1) Particulars of Action
(2) Statement by Police Constable W.C. Tucker
(3) " " Special Constable W.D. Riffell
(4) " " James Wonham
(5) " " Supt. R. Webb.
(6)
(7)
(8)

CASE CONSIDERED BY COMMITTEE: 19th January 1945. RECOMMENDATION: Com.

CASE CONSIDERED BY TREASURY COMMITTEE: 194

TREASURY RECOMMENDATION: Com

AWARD (IF ANY) GAZETTED: 20th February 1945.

/ADDITIONAL

CASE 2237A

William Charles TUCKER - 37 years

Police Constable
The Police Cottage, Shere, Guildford, Surrey
Police Service - 17 years

Local Authority - Surrey

Civil Occupation - Policeman

Rescue work when a petrol tank fell and caught fire at "Holme", Dorking Road, Gomshall, at Midday on 18th July, 1944.

Recommended by - Chief Constable, Surrey Joint Police Force

No. 12 (South-Eastern) Regional Commissioner recommends - B.E.M. dated 5.12.44.

Documents (1) Particulars of Action
(2) Statement by Police Constable W.C. Tucker
(3) " " Special Constable W.D. Reffell
(4) " " James Worhan
(5) " " Supt. R. Webb.
(6) " " Vivian J. Skinner

CASE CONSIDERED BY COMMITTEE: 19/1/ 1945 RECOMMENDATION: Com

TREASURY RECOMMENDATION: 22 JAN 1945 Com GAZETTED: 194 .

CASE 2237B (A)

William Douglas REFFELL - 58 yrs.

Special Constable

The School House, Wotton, Nr. Dorking.

Special Constabulary Service - 5 years

Local Authority - Surrey

Ground of Recommendation - As for 2237A

Recommended by Chief Constable, Surrey Joint Police Force.

No. 12 (South-Eastern) Regional Commissioner recommends - B.E.M. dated 5.12.44.

Documents - As for 2237A

CASE CONSIDERED BY COMMITTEE: 19/1/ 1945. RECOMMENDATION: Com.

TREASURY RECOMMENDATION: Com GAZETTED: 194 .

19th February, 19.

Sir,

I am directed by the Secretary of State to inform you that His Majesty The King has been graciously pleased to give orders for the publication of the names of Police Constable W.C. Tucker and Special Constable W.D. Reffell as having received an expression of Commendation for their services.

The notice will appear in a Supplement to the London Gazette on the evening of Tuesday, 20th February, 1945.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,

(sgd.) W. B. Vince.

19th February, 1945

Sir,

I am directed by the Secretary of State to inform you that the Chief Constable of Surrey drew his attention to your gallant conduct on 19th July, 1944 when despite intense heat and burning debris, you rescued an elderly lady from the ruins of a house in Dorking Road, Gomshall.

Mr. Herbert Morrison felt that your courage and devotion to duty were deserving of high praise and he took steps to bring the matter to the notice of His Majesty The King, who was graciously pleased to give orders for the publication of your name as having received an expression of Commendation for your services.

The notice will appear in a list to be published as a Supplement to the London Gazette on the evening of 20th February, 1945.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,

(Sgd) A. MAXWELL

Police Constable William C. Tucker.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE ON CIVIL DEFENCE GALLANTRY AWARDS

POLICE

1 Rank Police Constable No. 300.
(If a woman state whether Mrs. or Miss)

2 Full Christian Names William Charles
(Block capitals)

3 Surname Tucker.
(Block capitals)

4 Home Address The Police Cottage,
Shere,
Guildford, Surrey.

To be completed and returned immediately.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE ON CIVIL DEFENCE GALLANTRY AWARDS

POLICE

1 Rank Special Constable.
(If a woman state whether Mrs. or Miss)

2 Full Christian Names William Douglas
(Block capitals)

3 Surname Reffell.
(Block capitals)

4 Home Address The School House, Wotton,
Nr. Dorking, Surrey.

To be completed and returned immediately.

17FEB45- 59

TUNBRIDGE WELLS FROM HOME SECURITY

S E C R E T

FOLLOWING FOR MR. CHAPMAN AND FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE REGIONAL COMMISSIONER FROM MISS EMMERSON.

GALLANTRY AWARDS AS SET OUT BELOW WILL APPEAR IN LONDON GAZETTE SUPPLEMENT ON THE EVENING OF 20TH FEBRUARY, 1945.

COMMENDATION. W.D. REFFELL AND W.C. TUCKER.

HOME OFFICE WILL NOTIFY REFFELL AND TUCKER AND CHIEF CONSTABLE.

TOO 1148

HS 1156 HS MJK BB

TW RD TV INV

ND

Miss Emmerson

Baker

Particulars of Action

At 13.00 p.m. on the 19th July, 1944 a petrol tank fell from an allied aeroplane into the yard at the back of the house known as "Holme", Goudhall. The tank fell approximately 5½ yards from the greenhouse door and approximately 2 yards from the back door, the actual spot being shown with an "X" in the photograph marked "A". All concerned were under the impression that the object falling from the sky was a "Fly" bomb, and there was in fact an explosion following the impact of the tank with the ground. After the impact it seems fumes from the petrol entered the kitchen of the house and ignited, and the fire that followed was very fierce, though short, and the police officers had no reason to think it was other than a substantial one.

Police Constable Tucker was quickly in attendance and he was told that Mrs. Hephzibah Cox, aged 84, was in the kitchen of the house, into which he at once went to search for her. The intense heat however drove him out, but later both he and Special Constable Reffell entered the kitchen and crawled on their hands and knees searching for the old lady. Not finding her there they searched the upstairs bedrooms, which were full of smoke. Reffell then went outside and Tucker back into the kitchen. Shortly afterwards Mrs. Cox was found in the conservatory very badly burned, and the two policemen removed her to a place of safety where she died.

It is difficult to assess the amount of danger to which the two policemen were exposed. The fire was very fierce for a time but was extinguished chiefly with foam extinguishers without the aid of the National Fire Service. Neither officer suffered any injury from fire, but S.C. Reffell sustained a small cut on the palm of his right hand when he forced the conservatory door to rescue Mrs. Cox. No damage by fire was caused to the clothing of S.C. Reffell, and only a scorching of the right shoulder of the tunic was caused to the uniform of P.C. Tucker.

In view however of the circumstances leading up to the incident, such as the belief of Tucker that a flying bomb was coming down, the explosion, the finding in the yard of what he thought was an oil bomb, and then his entering into the blazing kitchen, I respectfully submit that P.C. Tucker showed bravery, determination and initiative and acted in a very gallant manner worthy of consideration for an award of one of the decorations for acts of gallantry during the war which have been instituted by Command of H.M. The King. P.C. Tucker was absent from duty suffering from pneumonia and pleurisy and complications for 13 months between the period 30th December, 1942 and 2nd February, 1944, and serious consideration had to be given to whether he was fit for further police service, and having regard to these facts, which show that he is less fitted to withstand respiratory difficulties than the average constable, I feel that he acted without consideration for his own physical welfar and showed a degree of devotion to duty and self-negation which, having regard to his bodily weakness, make him worthy of the attention of the Authorities. Tucker's chances of incurring serious personal injury were considerable; he must have known the risk he was running and his act was quite definitely beyond his ordinary duty.

Whilst I do not think the action of S.C. Reffell was quite so commendable as that of P.C. Tucker inasmuch as his state of health is more robust, and he did not go into the blazing room until after Tucker had been in once and come out again, nevertheless as all the other circumstances apply in like manner to him I respectfully suggest that he too showed bravery and admirable initiative in assisting the constable, and in so doing revealed a devotion to duty and self-negation worthy of the attention of the Authorities, and I have no hesitation in submitting that the degree of gallantry shown by Reffell makes him also worthy of consideration for an award of one of the decorations for acts of gallantry during the war which have been instituted by Command of H.M. The King.

(Signed) G. Nicholson. Major.

Chief Constable of Surrey
Joint Police.

Copy of Statement by Police Constable William Charles Tucker.

With reference to the incident and subsequent fire at "Holme", Dorking Road, Gomshall, on Wednesday the 19th July, 1944, I beg to report the courageous action of Special Constable William Douglas REFFELL.

Mr. Reffell was the third person to arrive at the scene and together, we made another search of the kitchen, where we were given to understand this is where Mrs. Cox would be found. Satisfying ourselves, she was not there, we made a search of the upstairs rooms, this was difficult, owing to dense smoke and fumes, not finding her there, we came downstairs and Mr. Reffell went outside, as he was almost overcome by heat, smoke and fumes. I continued to search the remaining downstairs rooms and it was whilst I was making a third search of the kitchen, that I heard Mr. Reffell shout, "Here she is" and asked for Help. I made for the direction from which I heard Mr. Reffell shout and got to the Conservatory, in time to see Mr. Reffell and another, carrying Mrs. Cox to the lawn, where she was left in the care of First Aid personnel.

We again returned to the inside of the house to tackle the fire and with many helpers, this was successfully done and Mr. Reffell left shortly after the arrival of the Fire Brigade.

(Signed) William C. Tucker.

P.C. No.300.

Copy of Statement by Special Constable William Douglas REFFELL.

At 12 mid-day on Wednesday the 19th July, 1944, I was standing in my premises (outside) when I heard what appeared to me to be a Flying Bomb, coming from an easterly direction. When I was looking up I was unable to see the machine owing to haze, but the sound of the engine stopped when it appeared to be overhead and I did not hear it restart again. I expected to see an Aircraft or Flying Bomb fall in a northerly direction but heard in front of me a swishing noise and saw a cylindrical object fall in an easterly direction on that side of the Railway embankment.

I realised that this object had fallen within 300 yards from where I stood. There was a pause for some seconds, when there was a minor explosion and a column of black smoke shot up and as smoke continued to rise, I realised that the object had caused a fire. I hurried along the main road in that direction and found a fire was burning at "HOLME", Dorking Road, Gomshall, the residence of Mr. & Mrs. COX.

On the way I was passed by P.C. Tucker and when I reached the house, I heard Mr. Cox say that his wife was inside he was too badly injured to render any help.

At this time, the kitchen and scullery part of the house was well alight and full of smoke and in company with P.C. Tucker we first searched the kitchen thoroughly, this was difficult as there was no light there, other than flames. We then went upstairs to all the rooms, which were full of dense smoke but no trace could be found of Mrs. COX. I left P.C. Tucker searching the other rooms downstairs whilst I went outside to the seat of the fire. I glanced into the damaged Conservatory, which was burning well at the North end. I was horrified to see the body of a woman lying across, west to east, of the Conservatory floor about half way in. The door was locked so I smashed through, calling for assistance and with help of a Mr. Hawkins we removed Mrs. Cox out on to the lawn, terribly burnt and injured, in an unconscious condition.

Mrs. COX, when I found her, was lying doubled up on her left side and her outside clothing burnt off and she herself partly covered with debris. Nurse Heather was then on the scene and attended to both Mr. and Mrs. Cox.

Together with the assistance of P.C. Tucker and other helpers, the fire was got under control before the arrival of the Fire Brigade.

(Signed) William Douglas Neffell.

I was working at "Holme" Gomshall, the residence of Mr. Cox, this morning, starting at 9 a.m. During the morning I had been carrying pot tomato plants from the Vinery to the Conservatory, Mr. Cox was handing me the plants from the Vinery to take to the Conservatory, whilst Mrs. Cox was inside the Conservatory, watering her flower plants.

At about mid-day, I was returning from the Conservatory to the Vinery, which is a distance of twenty yards and when about three yards from Mr. Cox, I said to him, "Whats this coming" having heard the sound of a train coming from the sky. At that moment, I heard a thud and then heard Mrs. Cox scream. Mr. Cox ran in the direction of the Conservatory and when he had almost reached it, there was an explosion and I saw Mr. Cox in flames. I ran to him and took his hat from his head, which was on fire, his other clothing had caught fire but had gone out. I could see that he was badly injured. He kept asking where his wife was and he ran to the rear of the house but owing to the fire, he was unable to get into the house, he came back round the front where P.C. Tucker arrived and took charge.

I stayed with Mr. Cox until Nurse Heather arrived and attended him, I then left for my home as I had suffered shock and scorching to my left forearm.

(Signed) J. Vonham.

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I stayed with Mr. Cox until Nurse Heather arrived and attended him, I then left for my home as I had suffered shock and scorching to my left forearm .

(Signed) J. Wenham.

Copy of Statement by R. WEBB.

I beg to report, and bring to your notice, the gallant and commendable conduct of Police Constable No.300 William Charles Tucker, when an auxiliary petrol tank fell from an aircraft, on to a house at Gomshall, on 19th July, 1944.

The facts of the case, as known to me, are as follows -

At 19.10 p.m., on 19th July, 1944, P.C. Tucker was on duty on the Dorking Road, Gomshall, when he heard something falling from the sky and almost immediately he saw smoke and flames coming from a house known as "Holme", Dorking Road, Gomshall, the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Cox.

P.C. Tucker immediately went to the house, where he saw Mr. Cox, who was badly injured, just outside the house. He made him as comfortable as possible and Tucker was told that Mrs. Cox was in the kitchen, which was on fire from burning petrol. Tucker at once went into this room but was unable to find Mrs. Cox and was driven out by the smoke and heat. In spite of this, he went to the room again on two occasions but without success, on the first occasion being joined by Special Constable W.D. Reffell, who assisted Tucker to search all the other rooms in the house but without finding Mrs. Cox. Special Constable Reffell then went outside and P.C. Tucker continued the search in the house, S.C. Reffell eventually finding Mrs. Cox in the greenhouse at the side of the house and, with the assistance of Tucker, who was moved to a place of safety.

I saw the kitchen where the incident took place, some time afterwards, and by appearances I should say the fire for the time was very bad. Apart from P.C. Tucker's action in attempting to rescue Mrs. Cox, he did, with the assistance of S.C. Reffell and some other persons, take steps to get the fire under control. In this, he thought quickly, and utilised the fire extinguishers which were attached to the Fire Post, a short distance from the house. A very good example of "Incident Control", in fact, the fire, with the exception of a gas-main, was put out before the N.F.S. arrived.

Unfortunately, and in spite of all the efforts which were made, Mrs. Cox died shortly after being rescued. The cause of the fire being an auxiliary petrol tank which fell from an Allied aircraft.

(Signed) R. Webb. Superintendent.

Copy of Statement by Temporary Sergeant Vivian J. SKIDMORE.

I beg to report that on the 28th July, 1944, I visited the above address to photograph damage caused by fire from an exploded petrol tank, dropped by an aeroplane, and submit the following observations.

1 Photograph "A". The tank fell to the west of the building, about 8 feet from the house, making a crater about 6 feet in diameter and 2 feet deep. It landed in what appeared to have been a concrete yard, the surface of which was about 3 inches thick. The crater can be seen in the foreground of the photograph. It will be observed that all woodwork and trees were scorched and blackened, and there was evidence of the use of a patent fire extinguisher. The house was not seriously damaged structurally, with the exception of the roof of the outhouse, and the glass of the greenhouse. A strong smell of petrol still lingered in the vicinity.

2 Photograph "B". This was taken about 30 feet from the spot where the tank fell which can be seen by the square brick pillar, beyond the greenhouse wall, which stands on the edge of the crater (see photograph "A"). This photograph shows the other aspect of the greenhouse from which the deceased was taken. Most of the foliage on the shrubs on the left of the picture had disappeared, all the remainder were brown and lifeless, as were the bushes to the rear of the camera.

3 Photograph "C". This shows the inside of the kitchen which is situated approximately at the rear of the outhouse (see photograph "A"). Here again there is no extensive fire damage, although it was obvious that a fire had occurred in [illegible] from the blackened and cracked ceiling and walls.

PW/HC/HE

CIVIL DEFENCE

OFFICE OF THE REGIONAL COMMISSIONER

Telephone No.: TUNBRIDGE WELLS 3320
Telegrams: EMREGCOM, TUNBRIDGE WELLS

SOUTH EASTERN REGIONAL OFFICE,
BREDBURY,
MOUNT EPHRAIM,
TUNBRIDGE WE

Your Ref.

Ref. 12/GEN/526/136

5th December 1944.

Dear Miss Clark,

You spoke to me on the phone about the cases put forward by the Chief Constable of Surrey for gallantry awards, and of which we had no copies.

The Regional Commissioner has now (at this late date only) had the opportunity of seeing copies of the reports made to the Home Office and is of the view that both Police Constable William Charles Tucker and Special Constable William Douglas Reffell of the Surrey Joint Force should be considered for the award of the British Empire Medal.

Yours sincerely,

P.W.H. Chapman

Personal Assistant to
Regional Commissioner.

Miss J.O. Clark,
Ministry of Home Security,
Whitehall, S.W.1.

World War Two

Police Auxiliary Messengers[8]

Robert Bartlett. Additional research by Jenny Tuffs

Police Auxiliary Messengers (PAMS) were operational in the UK during World War Two. Lads aged 14 (some say 15) but under eighteen with their own bikes were employed by local police forces with the primary role of taking messages during and after air raids if telephone communication was not practicable. In Surrey they were certainly active in the Reigate Borough Police and Guildford Borough Police areas.

The police during World War Two. Police had a crucial role as part of the civil defence arrangements during World War Two. In addition to their normal duties, they were responsible for enforcement of the blackout restrictions, monitoring enemy aliens, finding and arresting deserters, and dealing with drunken servicemen.9 They also attended all air raid incidents and depending on local civil defence arrangements would co-ordinate the response to a bombing. Most forces set up new sub-stations throughout their area.10 At the outbreak of War working in the police was not regarded as a reserved occupation, although this changed in 1940, and many young constables joined the military voluntarily or were conscripted; many constables were ex-servicemen with reserve commitments and were called immediately. Police were subject to a freeze on recruiting enhancing their numbers by recalling police pensioners and by increasing the number of special constables (mainly men in reserved occupations). These were

8 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Police_Auxiliary_Messengers#:~:text=The%20PAMs%2C%20as%20they%20were,or%20tin%20helmets%20during%20raids.
9 British Civilian Life – Civil Defence and Home Guard – Wearcam.org
10 Memories of Thomas Renton Gordon – document deposited at South Tyneside Local History Library

supplemented by War Reserve Police who were men over the age of conscription but who were not doing work that was considered essential for the war effort.

Police Auxiliary Messenger Service - Formation

The Home Office had foreseen that communications would become difficult in the event of an air raid when it was likely that telephone communications would be cut either by wires coming down, by a power failure or where a telephone link could not be established. Civil Defence committees set up their own messenger services in 1939, in some cases pressing entire troops of Boy Scouts into service. This enthusiasm had to be tempered at the prospect of boys, and in some cases girls, of 14 out riding bikes with bombs flying around. A UK wide scheme was then set up in 1941 for volunteers over 18 – those under 18 were used post raid only. 11 The Police however needed their own messengers and from 1940 they took on lads below the age of 18, with their own bikes, (some forces recruited at the age of 14 or 15, others at 16). The PAMs, as they were universally called, were to act as messengers during and after raids. They were issued with uniforms – army surplus dyed black - and wore berets, or tin helmets during raids. They were employed full-time although it is thought that some Police Authorities also took on volunteer PAMs who only worked when the sirens went off.12

1939 16th June Dorking and Leatherhead Advertiser - National Service Campaign. From the beginning of the National Service Campaign in January up to the middle of May the figures for the Auxiliary Police Service were -Establishment 254,000, strength at mid-May 234.800, (76,300 enrolled since January) leaving a further requirement of 30,000.

1941 May: Boy "Police Messengers." The Guildford Borough Police enrolled twelve boys who used their own cycles and were issued with a uniform of blue dungarees, steel or fibre helmets and an arm band "Police Messenger". 13

Guildford Borough Police initially issued dungarees and armband

11 Put That Light Out – Britain's civil defence services at War – (1939 – 1945) Mike Brown – Sutton Publishing Ltd. - 1999
12 BBC The Peoples War – the Police Auxiliary Messenger Service – the PAMs
13 They Guarded Guildford by Richard Ford Surrey 1969 internal publication Surrey Constabulary

During the early part of the war in Guildford Bert Hacker, later a career constable in the Surrey Constabulary, was a boy messenger14when aged 15 undertaking voluntary duties on two evenings a week and on some weekends. He had a uniform similar to army Service Dress but dark blue with a belted tunic. There was an oval cloth badge over the left pocket with "PAMS" thereon. Also, the boys were issued with peaked caps, tin helmets and used their own cycles. Duties consisted of standing by at police stations and ARP posts to carry messages in the event of normal methods of communication being put out of action.

Bert on the day he received his Long Service Medal

1941 26th September Surrey Mirror Meeting of Reigate Town Council - Uniforms for Messengers. Subject to approval of the Home Office, authority was given for the expenditure of £191 for provision of 30 uniforms for members of the Special Constabulary Motor Cycle Corps and Police Boy Messengers.

1941 31st May Surrey Advertiser At a meeting of Guildford Town Council it was noted that twelve boy cyclists had been enrolled to act as police messengers if communications break down.

PAMS wore a more modern and smart uniform than the police (button up to the collar) with a collar and tie and a jacket recognisable to a later generation of Police Cadets.

14 Biographical note from Mr Hacker

This is Messenger Bridger of the Reigate Borough Messenger Service. It seems Bert Hacker of Guildford wore a similar uniform15

From this press report setting out the huge voluntary hours served in just one borough during a busy stage of the war with many attacks from the air. The PAMS played their part throughout. 1942 January 30: Surrey Mirror: 100,994 Hours Work without Pay: Special Constables in the Borough of Reigate put in 100,994 hours of duty during 1941 equivalent to over thirty years' work on an eight-hour day basis, those at Reigate doing 53,735 hours and at Redhill 47,259 hours. In addition, the police bicycle messengers who have been under the charge of Chief Special Constable Capt. CJ Sutton, have done 6541 hours of duty 2316 at Reigate and 4225 at Redhill. The strength of the force is over 150 despite the fact that 14 members joined HM Forces and four were transferred for full-time duty with the Police War Reserve. Reigate's total was made up of 38,447 by the foot section, 11,607 mobile section, 3681 by motor-cyclists. At Redhill the foot section did 42,996 hours and mobile 4,293. The so called "foot sloggers" duties are from 7pm until 11 in all areas and at police action posts two are on duty from 11pm, until 6 am daily. All ranks assist in the night duty. Practically all are equipped with complete uniform, tunic, trousers, Macintosh and cap and by the end of the month overcoats.

Throughout the "blitz" period. The average number of specials on duty at any one time was 38. Member gave evidence in 46 cases before the magistrates.

Motorcyclists are on duty every evening as are messengers. These are lads aged 15-18 with all expected to turn out in the event of an air raid. They meet once a month for gymnasium and another evening attend practical lectures and exercises, first aid, telephonic communication, ARP and Fire Services, map reading, stirrup pump, drill and fifth column activities.

Superintendent Beacher16 gave the following statistics:

Hours worked by Special 78,822 from September 1939 to December 1940; 100.994 hours in 1941; 85,770 1942; 120,431 1943.

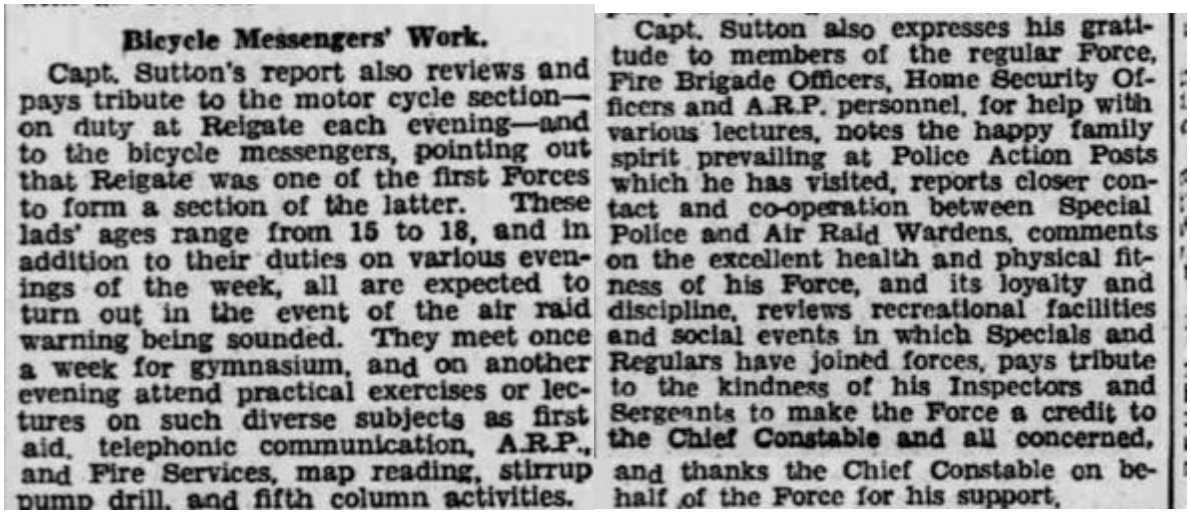
Hours worked by Police Messengers: 6541 in 1941; 6690 1942, 5,239 194317

Captain Sutton a member of the Special Constabulary since 1926 when they guarded railway trucks now handed over command of the special constabulary to a distinguished soldier Colonel Waley. Captain Sutton praised the messengers during the war and thought that would be an admirable thing if a special constable's cadet organisation were founded.18 (There is no

15 redhill-reigate-history.co.uk/
16 This was Chief Constable Beacher but 1943 wartime merger with county and Guildford Borough Police
17 Unknown and undated newspaper cutting obviously post war passed to Robert Bartlett by Tony Collman.
18 Unknown and undated newspaper cutting obviously post war passed to Robert Bartlett by Tony Collman.

mention of Police Cadets in Surrey Newspapers until 1955 when they were asking for recruits.)19

January 30, 1942, Surrey Mirror



Bicycle Messengers' Work.

Capt. Sutton's report also reviews and pays tribute to the motor cycle section—on duty at Reigate each evening—and to the bicycle messengers, pointing out that Reigate was one of the first Forces to form a section of the latter. These lads' ages range from 15 to 18, and in addition to their duties on various evenings of the week, all are expected to turn out in the event of the air raid warning being sounded. They meet once a week for gymnasium, and on another evening attend practical exercises or lectures on such diverse subjects as first aid, telephonic communication, A.R.P., and Fire Services, map reading, stirrup pump drill, and fifth column activities.

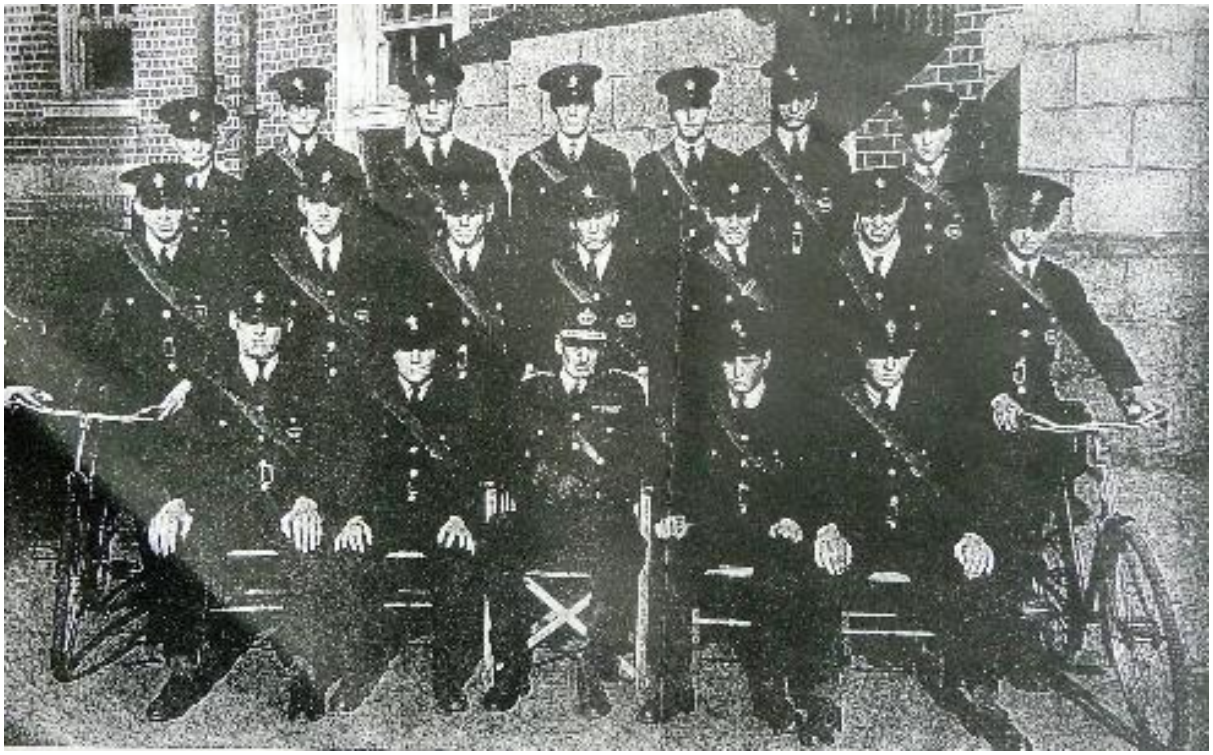
Capt. Sutton also expresses his gratitude to members of the regular Force, Fire Brigade Officers, Home Security Officers and A.R.P. personnel, for help with various lectures, notes the happy family spirit prevailing at Police Action Posts which he has visited, reports closer contact and co-operation between Special Police and Air Raid Wardens, comments on the excellent health and physical fitness of his Force, and its loyalty and discipline, reviews recreational facilities and social events in which Specials and Regulars have joined forces, pays tribute to the kindness of his Inspectors and Sergeants to make the Force a credit to the Chief Constable and all concerned, and thanks the Chief Constable on behalf of the Force for his support.

In a comment on the report, the Chief Constable congratulates the Special Constabulary on its general efficiency, and adds, "I would have been compelled to have a much stronger whole-time paid Police Force if it had not been for the voluntary service of the Special Police; therefore, a considerable saving has been achieved. I appreciate the co-operation and ever-ready assistance given at all times to the regular and auxiliary Police."

1942 30th January Surrey Mirror During 1941 the Police Bicycle Messengers under the charge of Cpt C J Sutton did 6,541 hours of duty in the Borough of Reigate- 2,316 at Reigate and 4,225 at Redhill

1942 7th March Surrey Advertiser – Chertsey- Cadets of the Chertsey Squadron A.T.C. are to receive flying instruction at an R.A.F. Station tomorrow. Members enrolled as Police Messengers are instructed to parade in the morning at Headquarters, when PS Booley is to give a lecture. (Joseph William Booley who later became an Inspector.)

19 From Jenny Tuffs March 2023



Reigate Borough Police Messengers – believed Captain Sutton head of special constables for the Borough.

Jimmy Bridger I was a police messenger at the town hall, Reigate, during the war - you had to join something then - with Inspector Ted Ayres. Mr Solomons from Reigate Tailors was also a police messenger. They had a canteen and Ted would often get me and the other boys a jacket potato. I was not in the Home Guard; I was a messenger boy for the police. The uniforms badges say 'PAMS' - Police Auxiliary Messenger Service. It was run by Captain Sutton who lived in a house called 'Elmsfield' in Clarendon Road, Redhill. I used to be on the switchboard.

Our action post for the police messengers was at the top of Redstone Hill in a lodge about where Chanctonbury Chase is. I was on duty with Walter Pendered when an air raid was on. Walter and I walked out the back and were standing by Redstone Hollow - there are houses in it now - and we saw a doodlebug coming. It was night and we could hear it and see the red glow from its exhaust. We wondered where it was going when suddenly it spun round - someone said it hit a Barrage balloon cable, but I don't know whether it did or not. Down it went; it nearly knocked us off our feet up there, it was a hell of a bang. The phone was going and I was told to report to the action post in Earlswood Road. I jumped on my bike and sped down Redstone Hollow. I saw an air raid warden coming along and asked where the action post was. He said it was by the waxworks. I told him he was joking. I didn't mind biking a little way, but I wasn't going to London. I didn't know there was a waxworks in Earlswood where they made wax for various uses. Anyway, once I realised where the action post was, I was one of the first messengers there.

As a messenger I went all over the place, to Redhill police station, Reigate police station - there were very few phones in those days people just didn't have them in their homes. Look at the Redhill 'phone numbers, mine at Latty's was 955, Linters was 950, John Roberts shop was 90, they were all under two thousand, and the telephone area was quite large. So, I would get given messages and I would take them wherever was necessary. Several times I went to St. John's School; I never knew why I had to go there. [20]

Walter Pendered was in the police. Lots of local trades' people joined the police. There were WRs (war reserves), TCs (temporary constables) and PCs, (police constables). I think Walter was a WR. All were like extra policeman. Each had his own job to do and all had to do nights as well. Many of the local trade's people joined. It was easier than the Home Guard. I could have gone into the air cadets, army cadets or sea cadets, but as Captain Sutton was a customer in our shop, I thought I'd join the police service as a messenger. A bonus was that it had a smarter uniform. [21]

Reigate 2211 was the 'phone number for Reigate Joint Police Force on the switchboard at Reigate. Of course, it was all disbanded at the end of the war. I've got a letter thanking me for my service and saying that I would be welcome back to continue with my duties, unpaid of course, any time you feel like it. I've a good mind to take the letter down to the police station now and say that I've come back to have a go at the switchboard**.** [22]

Training PAMs were given a basic training in first aid and in the use of stirrup pumps. They had to know where all the civil defence and Police out-stations were – they would often be riding their bikes at night in the black out and would not always be able to see such street signs as there were; during or after an air raid, streets could be blocked with rubble and debris.23

PAMs at work From the first-hand account of those who served as PAMs it seems that in some areas where there was little enemy bombing, e.g. Oxfordshire, that PAMS were used as extra pairs of hands to make up for lack of manpower particularly in the headquarters offices.24 In areas targeted by the enemy the PAMs filled their primary role of taking messages during air raids but would also help the rescue services when needed. This was clearly the case in Coventry where PAMs proved their worth during the heavy bombing raids. George Frederick Barratt of the Coventry PAMs was awarded a British Empire Medal in June 1941 – his citation reads "Police Messenger Barratt, who was in the lower corridor of a building when it received a direct hit from a H.E. bomb, was blown by the blast for some distance. When he recovered he immediately made his way to report to the Main A.R.P. Control Centre and was sent out with a message. On the way he was blown off his cycle by blast. He remounted and continued his journey but ran into some broken telephone wires and sustained injuries to his neck. He

20 redhill-reigate-history.co.uk/bridger (No longer active)
21 redhill-reigate-history.co.uk/bridger (No longer active)
22 redhill-reigate-history.co.uk/bridger (No longer active)
23 BBC The Peoples War – the Police Auxiliary Messenger Service – the PAMs
24 Fred's Memories – Episodes in my life – Police duties – Fredsmemories.wordpress.com

delivered the message and returned with the reply. First aid treatment was obtained for him and although he was badly shaken again he went out through the rain of falling bombs to deliver other vital messages." [25] Another Coventry PAMs' citation for the B.E.M. reads: "Howard George Miles, Police Messenger, Police auxiliary Messenger Service, Coventry. During a severe enemy air attack Police Messenger Miles rendered great assistance by delivering urgent and important messages. He dealt with many incendiary bombs and, at grave risk to himself, helped to rescue a baby who was trapped in the wreckage of a house. Miles showed courage and devotion to duty." [26]

1942 11 July Surrey Advertiser Woking County School Air Training Corps has well over 100 cadets. The training syllabus keeps the boys busy, but a rapid increase in numerical strength is testimony to the enthusiasm of the cadets, some of whom are joining the Fleet Air Arm and Royal Air Force at the end of the summer term. Cadets form the entire Woking Police messenger service and others are Home Guard and Civil Defence Messengers.

1942 3rd October Surrey Advertiser West Horsley – At a meeting at West Horsley Village Hall convened by the Invasion Committee volunteers were asked to become messengers. The Police agreeing to accept and train young persons from the age of 16 as Police Auxiliary Messengers.

1943 5th February Surrey Mirror In his Annual report at Reigate, the Chief of the Borough Special Police, Captain C.J. Sutton mentioned there were 18 Police cycle messengers with ages ranging from 15-18 who were described as 'keen and smart' but the section was continually changing its personnel owing to lads leaving the borough or being called up to the Forces. During the year 55 lectures had been given to the messengers and practical exercises carried out.

1943 31ST July Surrey Advertiser Among those attending a Youth Rally at Leatherhead were members of the Police Auxiliary Messenger Service (Commanding Officer H J Prickett)

Discontinuation of the service

During War time, Police officers and their auxiliary support were not allowed to resign. In June 1945, in response to a question in the House Sir D Somervell, Secretary of State for the Home Department announced the discontinuation of this restriction on PAMs: "Yes, Sir. I am glad to say that the war-time restrictions on the liberty to resign of part-time special constables and part-time members of the Women's Auxiliary Police Corps and the police auxiliary messenger service will come to an end on the 1st July."27 This effectively resulted in the disbandment of

25 London Gazette -20 June 1941 p 3491
26 London Gazette – 20 June 1941 p3493
27 Hansard - HC Deb 14 June 1945 vol 411 cc1757-81757

the Police Auxiliary Messenger Service and its replacement in the next decade with Police Cadets.

The photo shows His Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary with Southampton County Borough Police Chief Constable Frederick Tarry, inspecting young lads who had volunteered to act as Messengers.

1945 12th January Surrey Mirror

POLICE PRE-SERVICE CORPS

FORESHADOWED IN LETTER OF THANKS TO BOROUGH P.A.M.S.

The establishment of a junior pre-Service organisation that shall be to the Police Force what the A.T.C. is to the R.A.F., or the Sea Cadet Corps to the Royal Navy, is a possibility mentioned in a letter which Supt. W. H. Beacher, of the Reigate Borough Division of the Surrey Joint Police Forces, has sent to all members of the Police Auxiliary Messengers Service following its disbandment on January 1st.

After expressing his admiration for and appreciation of the services the P.A.M.S. rendered to the country and its war effort, and referring to their courage and efficiency, the Superintendent adds:—"We are not saying 'good-bye,' as we wish you to continue to keep in touch with us and perform week-end duties on the central switchboard (if you so desire) for the time being in civilian clothes, as your uniform, equipment and accoutrements, etc., must be handed in . . .

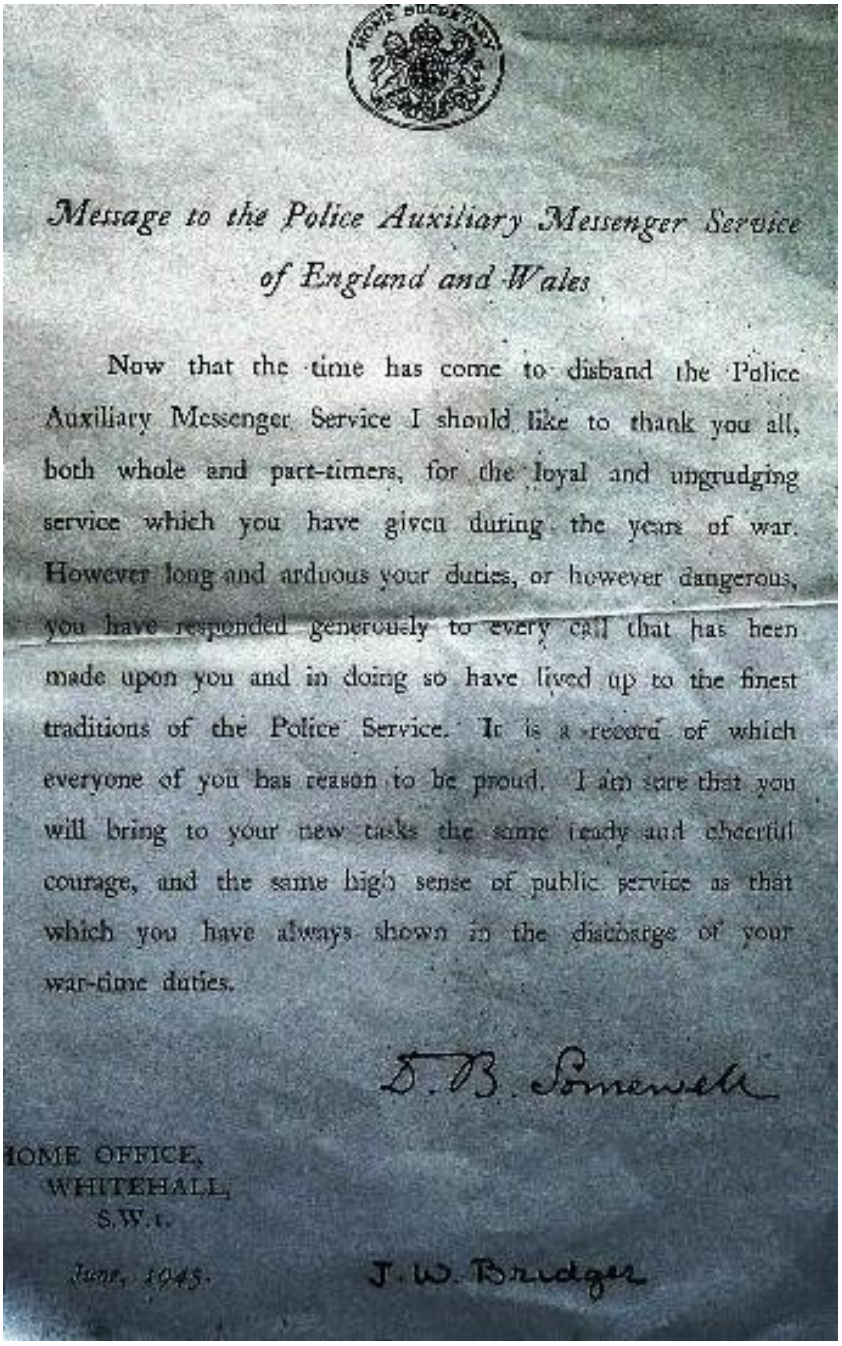
We shall be happy to retain your voluntary services and so hold your interest. In the near future there is a possibility that some form of Police Cadet Corps will be formed. It is under consideration, and will offer opportunity for your reinstatement and resuming duties with the police. I take this opportunity of wishing you the very best of good wishes and good luck for the New Year, and with these greetings I associate the Chief Constable, Capt. Sutton and officers."

The Borough P.A.M.S. was established early in 1941 and was one of the first groups to be formed in the Southern Counties. The authorised strength was 24, and there were 23 members at the time of disbanding. They were under the supervision of Capt. C. J. Sutton (then Head Special Constable and now Divisional Leader), and were allocated to Reigate and Redhill Police Stations and each action station, acting as messengers and co-operating with the Civil Defence Services. Altogether 57 youths have been recruited into the unit, and many of them have passed on into various branches of H.M. Forces.

1948 24th September Surrey Mirror. At the Reigate Special Constabulary Dinner, Captain Sutton, Chief of the Borough Special Police, said that long before the county began to get busy they had police messengers who did great work and he believed it would be an admirable thing if a Special Constable Cadet organization was founded.

1992 22nd July Leatherhead Advertiser Yesterday's Advertiser. Fifty Years ago - Many people saw for the first time at the Savings Fair the newly created and uniformed Messenger Service which is run in conjunction with the Police Auxiliary Messenger Service in connection with the local Civil Defence Services. Mr. H G Prickett* is the organiser and chief officer of the force and he tells me he is very pleased with the performance the members of the service put up on the day. Apart from routine exercises the members have never before been called upon for duties. On the fair day they had a number to perform, the most important was four outriders who escorted Lady Snowden's car to the ground.

*Mr Prickett was the manager of the Crescent Cinema Leatherhead during the war years.



Message to the Police Auxiliary Messenger Service of England and Wales

Now that the time has come to disband the Police Auxiliary Messenger Service I should like to thank you all, both whole and part-timers, for the loyal and ungrudging service which you have given during the years of war. However long and arduous your duties, or however dangerous, you have responded generously to every call that has been made upon you and in doing so have lived up to the finest traditions of the Police Service. It is a record of which everyone of you has reason to be proud. I am sure that you will bring to your new tasks the same ready and cheerful courage, and the same high sense of public service as that which you have always shown in the discharge of your war-time duties.

D. B. Somervell

HOME OFFICE,
WHITEHALL,
S.W.1.

June, 1945.

J. W. Bridger

Messenger Bridger June 1945

1954 December 17 Surrey Mirror- Sudden death of Captain Sutton

SUDDEN DEATH OF CAPT. C. J. SUTTON

A life of usefulness in varied spheres has been terminated by the sudden death on Wednesday morning of Capt. C. J. Sutton, of Elmfield, Clarendon-road, Redhill. While on his way to London to carry on his honorary work at the office of Officers' Association in Belgrave-square, he had a heart seizure in the train before it reached Merstham. He was lifted from the compartment on to the platform at that station, and found to be dead. For some years he had suffered from gastric trouble, but it was not known that there was any cardiac complication, and so sudden a death was completely unexpected. He was 68 years of age.

As a young man Capt. Sutton emigrated to Canada, and after working on the land in that Dominion for a while he felt the call to enter the Anglican priesthood, and entered St. John's College in Ontario to prepare for ordination. His college career was interrupted by the outbreak of the 1914-18 war, and he joined the Canadian Army as a cavalryman, afterwards transferring to the Royal Engineers and gaining a commission. After service in France, in the course of which he earned mention in dispatches, he ended his military career with the rank of Captain.

Settling down in this country after the war, Capt. Sutton did not pursue his pre-war project of becoming a clergyman, but threw himself actively into Church work in a lay capacity. For a number of years he was on the staff of the Young Men's Christian Association in Great Russell-street, being especially concerned with work among emigrants, and thereafter he became emigration officer for the Boy Scouts' Association at their headquarters in Buckingham Palace-road. Meanwhile, as long ago as 1926, he had become a Special Constable in the Borough of Reigate, and when the 1939-45 war broke out he was released from his appointment in London to become Chief Special Constable for the Borough. This responsible office he held throughout the war. In recent years he had undertaken the duties of an honorary representative of the Officers' Association, attending at its London office on three or four days each week.

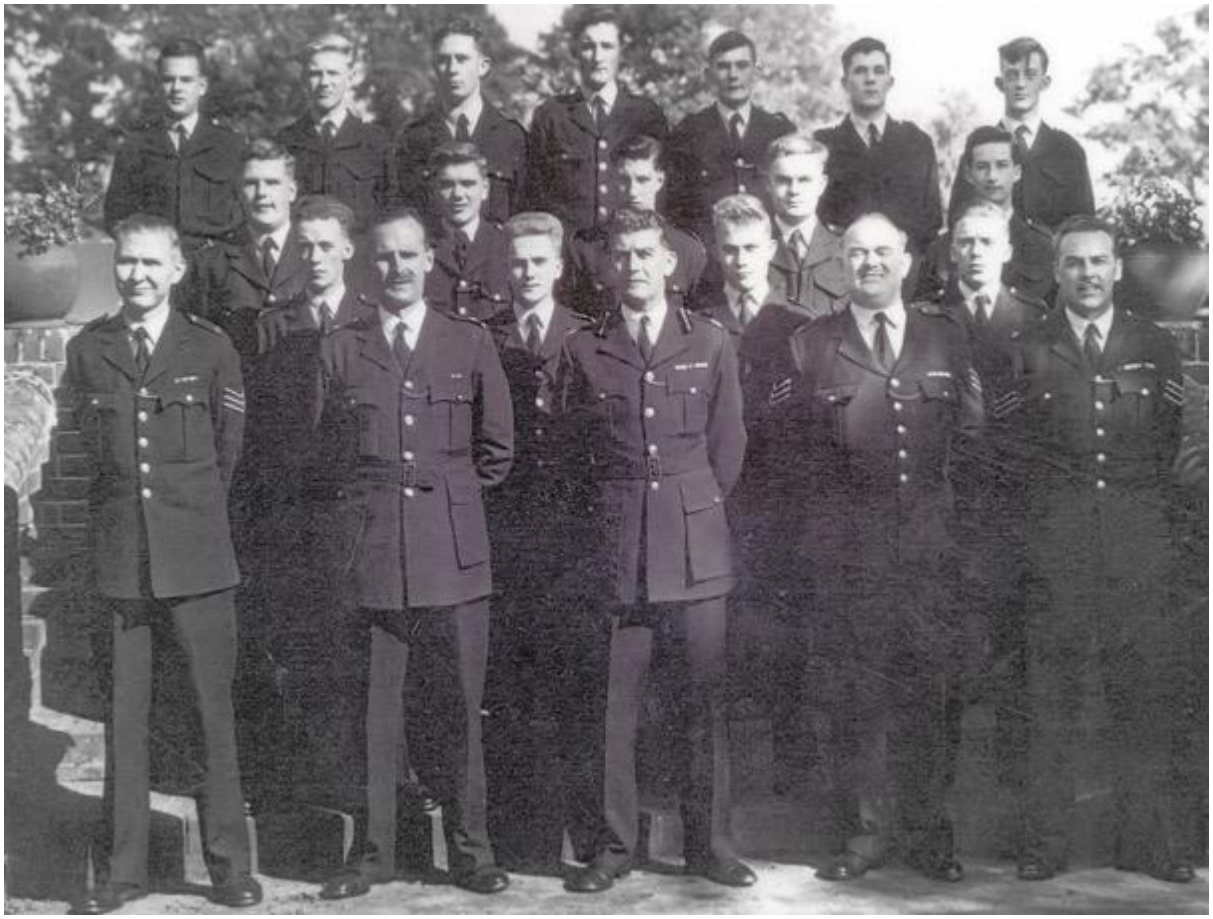
Capt. Sutton found an outlet for his deep religious feeling and his strong desire to influence others for good as a Diocesan lay reader, and in this capacity was a welcome visitor to many of the Churches in the Reigate district and elsewhere in Southwark Diocese. When not so engaged, he was regular in attendance at St. Matthew's, Redhill, and spent much of his leisure time in ministering as a kind of lay chaplain to the residents at St. Anne's, Redhill. A keen cricketer in his day, he was for many years Chairman of the Redhill C.C., and latterly its President. He willingly lent a helping hand to the younger members, and his work for the club was highly valued. He was a Freemason of many years standing, and officiated as Chaplain to the Royal Albert Edward Lodge, of which he was a Past Master.

Capt. Sutton married a daughter of Dr. W. D. Hasam, his wife being a cousin of a former curate at St. John's, Redhill, who afterwards became Bishop of Warrington. A. W.V.S. worker during the late war, and an accomplished artist, Mrs. Sutton died early in 1949. There are two sons of the marriage.

Cadets 1955 First course at HQ shared with Berkshire and Reading Borough

Tony Forward

This was the first training course for police cadets in Surrey. It was residential at Mount Browne for four weeks started on 6th September1955. It was the idea of the then CC, Joseph Simpson for boys who had left school at 16 with GCE O' levels. (School leaving age was 15) There were 10 Surrey boys, 7 from Royal Berkshire Constabulary and one from Reading Borough Police. Surrey cadet uniform included a battle-dress blouse but they could not find one long enough for me, so I had a PC's tunic (middle back row.)



RBC or RBP Royal Berkshire or Reading Borough

Back row left to right: **Clive Warren** (resigned as a PC but later worked on police staff at Farnham Police Station), **Geoffrey Todd** (retired as Supt Thames Valley Police), **? RBC**, **Anthony (Tony) Forward** (retired as C/Supt), **Bailiss RBC**, **Roger Marks** (did not make it to PC), **Cronin** (did not make it to PC).

3rd row l to r: 'Doughy' **Baker** RBP, **? RBC**, **? RBC**, **Peter Devereaux** (retired as Insp), **?** Surrey but resigned.

2nd row l to r: **Brian Hopkins** (retired as DCI), ? RBC, **Robert Watford** (retired as Supt Met), **Robert (Bob) Sinden** (resigned as Sgt Ash).

Front row: **Sgt Douglas Hayball** (after retirement took holy orders), **Insp Jack Gower** (i/c Training. Retired as C/I Oxted), **ACC Ernest Hall**, **Sgt 'Taffy' Williams** (drill instructor), **Sgt Richard (Dick) Noad** (retired as Insp).

Police Sergeant Robert Brendan McBrien
BEM for Bravery
World War Two

Additional research by Jean and Henry Pelham and Jenny Tuffs

At great personal risk rescued a woman trapped under ruins of a house demolished by an enemy bomb at Horsley28

Robert Brendan McBrien
1912 Scarriff, Ireland -1986 Eastbourne, Sussex

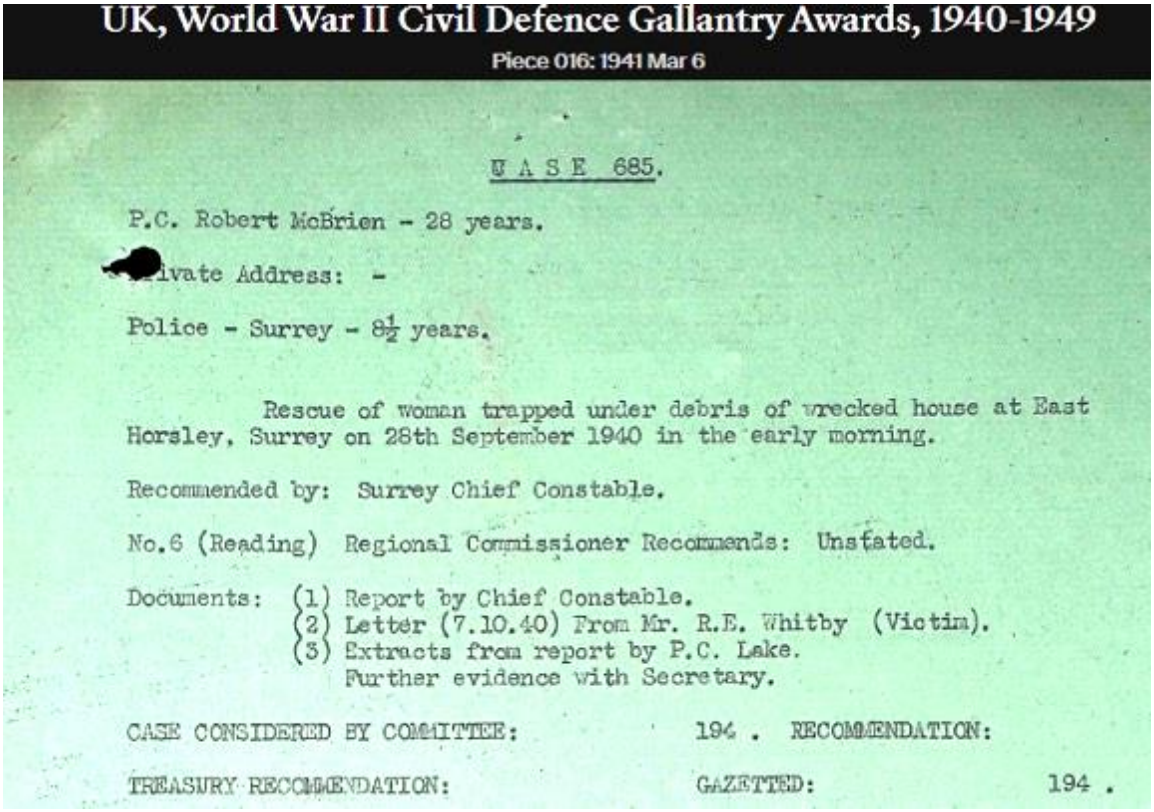
1939 Register Living Police Cottage, West Clandon, Guildford, Surrey
Living with Wife Winifred. Robert McBrien's occupation Police Constable aged 27.

Married in 1937 to Winifred E.M Simpson

Electoral Rolls

1934 2 Holly Cottage, Chertsey
1936 Council Cottages, Reigate, Surrey
1938 Police Station, Guildford, with Winifred
1945 Cleveland Close, Chertsey, with Winifred

Joined Surrey Constabulary aged 20 in 1932 retired September 1963


UK, World War II Civil Defence Gallantry Awards, 1940-1949
Piece 016: 1941 Mar 6

CASE 685.

P.C. Robert McBrien - 28 years.

Private Address: -

Police - Surrey - 8½ years.

Rescue of woman trapped under debris of wrecked house at East Horsley, Surrey on 28th September 1940 in the early morning.

Recommended by: Surrey Chief Constable.

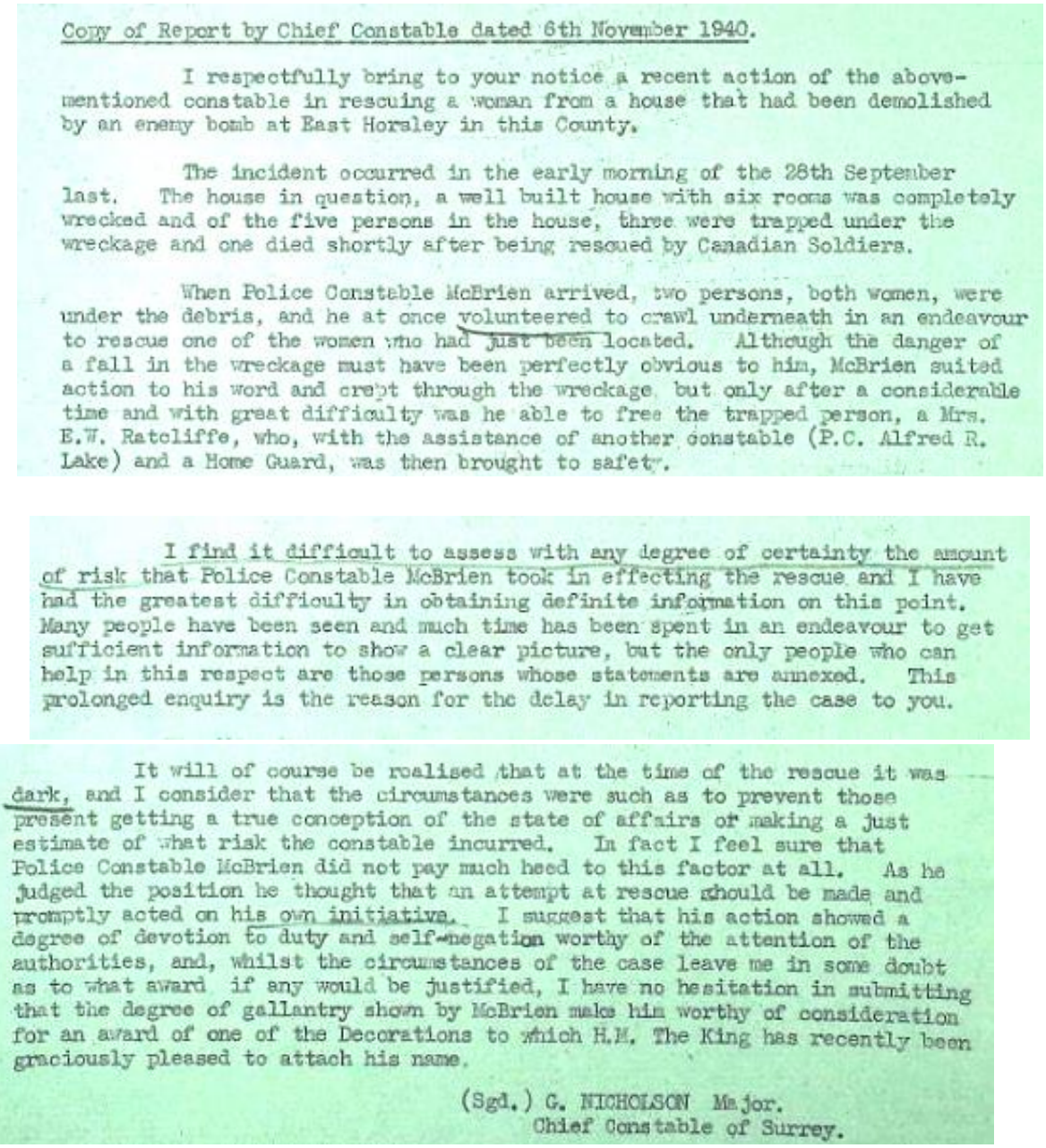
No.6 (Reading) Regional Commissioner Recommends: Unstated.

Documents: (1) Report by Chief Constable.
(2) Letter (7.10.40) From Mr. R.E. Whitby (Victim).
(3) Extracts from report by P.C. Lake.
Further evidence with Secretary.

CASE CONSIDERED BY COMMITTEE: 194 . RECOMMENDATION:

TREASURY RECOMMENDATION: GAZETTED: 194 .

28 A Hundred Years of the Surrey Constabulary Superintendent Durrant 1951 page 84



Copy of Report by Chief Constable dated 6th November 1940.

I respectfully bring to your notice a recent action of the above-mentioned constable in rescuing a woman from a house that had been demolished by an enemy bomb at East Horsley in this County.

The incident occurred in the early morning of the 28th September last. The house in question, a well built house with six rooms was completely wrecked and of the five persons in the house, three were trapped under the wreckage and one died shortly after being rescued by Canadian Soldiers.

When Police Constable McBrien arrived, two persons, both women, were under the debris, and he at once volunteered to crawl underneath in an endeavour to rescue one of the women who had just been located. Although the danger of a fall in the wreckage must have been perfectly obvious to him, McBrien suited action to his word and crept through the wreckage, but only after a considerable time and with great difficulty was he able to free the trapped person, a Mrs. E.W. Ratcliffe, who, with the assistance of another constable (P.C. Alfred R. Lake) and a Home Guard, was then brought to safety.

I find it difficult to assess with any degree of certainty the amount of risk that Police Constable McBrien took in effecting the rescue and I have had the greatest difficulty in obtaining definite information on this point. Many people have been seen and much time has been spent in an endeavour to get sufficient information to show a clear picture, but the only people who can help in this respect are those persons whose statements are annexed. This prolonged enquiry is the reason for the delay in reporting the case to you.

It will of course be realised that at the time of the rescue it was dark, and I consider that the circumstances were such as to prevent those present getting a true conception of the state of affairs or making a just estimate of what risk the constable incurred. In fact I feel sure that Police Constable McBrien did not pay much heed to this factor at all. As he judged the position he thought that an attempt at rescue should be made and promptly acted on his own initiative. I suggest that his action showed a degree of devotion to duty and self-negation worthy of the attention of the authorities, and, whilst the circumstances of the case leave me in some doubt as to what award if any would be justified, I have no hesitation in submitting that the degree of gallantry shown by McBrien make him worthy of consideration for an award of one of the Decorations to which H.M. The King has recently been graciously pleased to attach his name.

(Sgd.) G. NICHOLSON Major.
Chief Constable of Surrey.

Wartime commendations from the King

PC McBrien was awarded the British Empire Medal for Gallantry which ranked below the George Medal. (Page 84 Surrey Constabulary 1851-1951 Superintendent Durrant)

Surrey Mirror 4 October 1963

DAY OF VILLAGE POLICEMAN GONE

It is unlikely that Godstone will have a replacement for PS Robert ("Paddy") McBrien, who retired from the police last month.

Mr H. Rutherford, chief constable of Surrey, said in a letter to the parish council that the old system of village sergeants was disappearing and in order to give adequate supervision they would work from one station, in Godstone's case, Oxted.

Commented Coun M. Selby: "The old idea of the old village sergeant who knew everything and everyone is gone. Sgt McBrien had rather an old fashioned idea of service which doesn't exist any longer—sad, but true."