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

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www.surrey-constabulary.com
Editor Robert Bartlett
938@938.me.uk

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The Murder of PC Choat

The funeral was held in in Surrey in 1910 of PC Choat of the City of London Police who hailed from Byfleet where his parents were living at the time of his murder. A ceremony was held for three murdered officers at St Paul's Cathedral in the City.

1910 December 24: Houndsditch Murders: Three More Detentions: In connection with the Houndsditch Murders three men were detained last evening by police. No charge was made against either of the men detained on Thursday. The body of the man Gardstein found in the house in Grove Street has now been removed to the City mortuary and placed in a special chamber for the preservation of bodies by the use of formalin. Funeral of Constable Choat: The remains were laid to rest in Byfleet Churchyard yesterday afternoon of Constable Choat one of the officers shot in the Houndsditch tragedy. Detachments of the City, Metropolitan Police and Surrey police and firemen from the town and villages took part in the mournful procession, which included the police band playing the funeral march. The deceased was buried beside the grave of his mother who was interred only sixteen days before. There were one hundred and fifty wreaths including one from the Lord and Lady Mayoress.[1]

On the16th December 1910, mysterious sounds of hammering were heard coming from Mr Harris' empty jeweller's shop at 119 Houndsditch at the boundary of the City of London. When Max Weil, a fancy goods dealer who lived over his shop next door, returned home after ten that night, he discovered his wife and servant girl agitated by the noises coming from the other side of the wall. On further investigation, he confirmed that Mr Harris had gone home long ago, because the jeweller's steel gate was locked from the outside, and peering through the window he saw the electric light that always burned in the backroom, illuminating the iron safe rumoured to contain the Tsar's crown jewels. Everything was as usual – apart from the unexplained hammering.

Although it was a cold night, Weil walked over to Bishopsgate where he fetched Constable Walter Piper and when they listened together outside the shop, they heard what Piper later described as *"drilling, sawing and breaking away of brickwork."* He walked around to Exchange Buildings, the cul-de-sac at the rear, to investigate. When Constable Piper knocked at 11 Exchange Buildings – where gaslight glowed above the folding shutter – the door was opened at once and in a manner so furtive that the Constable chose to play innocent, asking, *"Is the missus in?"*

"She has gone out," replied the unknown man who answered the door, shaking his head for emphasis. Deeply suspicious now, Piper shrugged it off. *"Right, I will call*

[1] 1910 December 24: The Scotsman

back," he said, walking away and deducing that a heist was under way. Going to seek back-up, Piper saw a man lurking in the gloom at the entrance to Exchange Buildings, but when the Constable approached, the figure sloped away silently. In Houndsditch, Piper met Constables Walter Choat and Ernest Woodhams, and they took positions outside the jeweller's shop and at the entrance to Exchange Buildings, while he went to seek assistance from Bishopsgate Police Station.

On his way to the Station, Piper encountered Sergeant Robert Bentley accompanied by two Constables in plain clothes, James Martin and Arthur Strongman. Piper introduced Sergeant Bentley to Max Weil who had sounded the alarm, and Weil took the Sergeant into his counting house to listen to the hammering through the wall. When the Sergeant emerged into Houndsditch again, he met two Sergeants, Bryant and Tucker, sent from Chief Inspector Hayes at Bishopsgate Police Station to convey the message that he had suspicions of some foreigners living in Exchange Buildings.

At once, Bentley went round and knocked again on the door of 11 Exchange Buildings where Constable Piper had called earlier. "Have you been working or knocking about inside?" he asked when the door opened, but received no reply from the man at the door. "Don't you understand English?" Bentley continued, again without answer. "Do you have anyone that can? Fetch them down." he insisted, but the man simply let the door swing shut. Persevering, Bentley boldly pushed open the door and walked inside to discover an empty room with a fire burning in the grate, and a cup of tea, and bread and paste upon the table. As Sergeant Bryant stepped into the doorway behind him, both men realised they were being watched from the stairs, but they could not see the watcher's face, only his legs.

"Is anybody working in there?" repeated Bentley. "No," came the reply from the man on the stairs. "Anybody in the back?" asked Bentley. "No," came the reply again. "Can I have a look in the back?" enquired Bentley. "Yes," came the reply this time. "Show us the way," requested Bentley. "In there," said the man on the stairs, pointing toward the yard door, and Bentley took a step in that direction.

The door flew open and another man entered quickly with a pistol aimed at Bentley. Meanwhile, the man on the stairs shot Bentley with a bullet that passed through his helmet and flew out through the shutter. Then the man who had come through the yard door also shot Bentley, twice at point blank range through the shoulder and through the neck. As Bentley fell backwards to collapse dying in the doorway, Bryant, who stood behind him, escaped into the street, where he fell down and lost consciousness due to bullet wounds. Outside, Constable Woodhams, who all this time had been stationed at the entrance to Exchange Buildings, ran to assist on hearing the firing, and also fell to the ground unconscious when a bullet shattered his thigh bone.

Remembered: The three policemen killed (from left to right) Sergeant Robert Bentley, 36, Sergeant Charles Tucker, 46, and Pc Walter Charles Choat, 34[2]

Constable Strongman and Sergeant Tucker saw Woodhams fall, and they saw a hand holding a pistol appear from the door, and a pale young man with a moustache and dark curly hair emerge in a suit, firing continuously. Tucker was shot twice, in the hip and the heart. Then in the darkness, the gang ran towards the entrance of Exchange Buildings, firing indiscriminately as they made their escape. Taking refuge, James Martin, a plain clothes Constable, leapt inside the house opposite, placing a hand across the mouth of sixteen-year-old Bessie Jacobs, who lived there, terrified and vulnerable in her nightdress. "Don't scream. I'm a detective!" he assured her, "I'll protect your mother and I'll protect you."

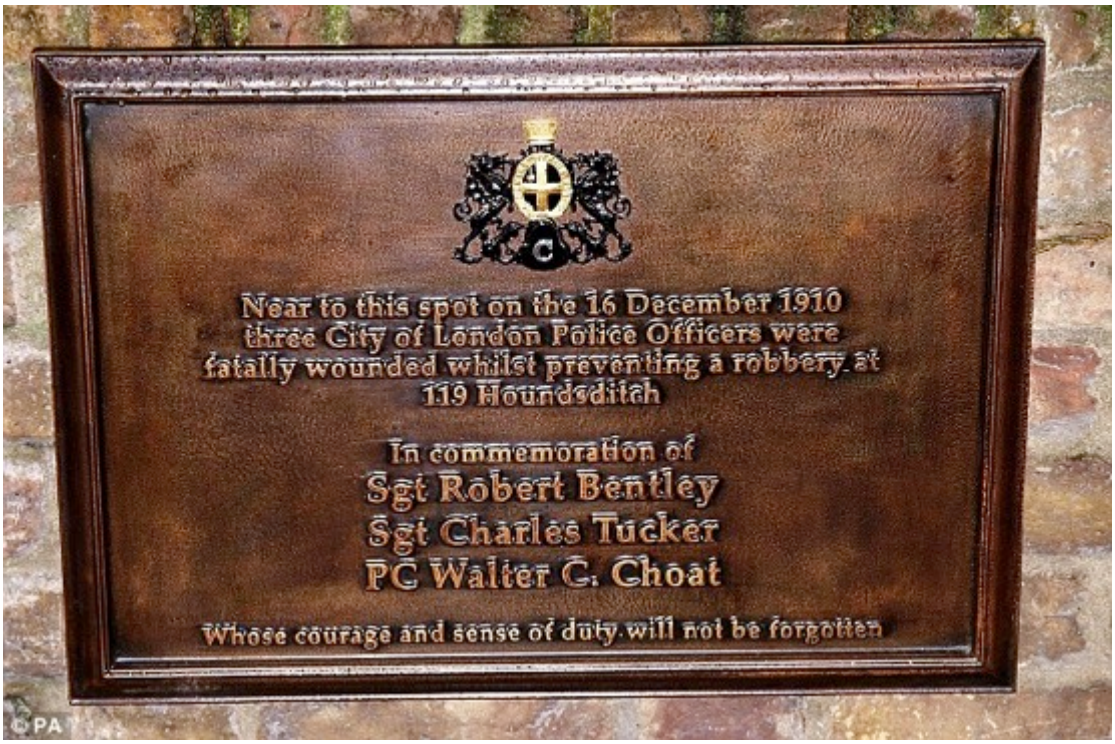
Constable Walter Choat, a publican's son who came from a huge family of about 24 children, had been stationed at the end of the cul de sac, and saw a gunman running through the shadows.[3] Choat was a tall man of six feet four inches, had the courage to grab one of the fugitives by the wrist, attempting to seize his gun. Yet as a consequence, Choat was shot in the leg repeatedly, before the rest of the gang turned their weapons upon him too. But such was his tenacity of spirit – even after receiving five more bullets – that he only released his grip when the gang kicked or punched him in the face to free their comrade. And as he fell backwards, a bullet fired by one of the gang yet intended for the Constable, hit the fugitive in the back. Two of his fellows dragged him away to vanish into the night, but he was already mortally wounded.

Once the firing stopped, the inhabitants of Exchange Buildings came out from their houses to discover carnage in the darkness. Some fell over the bodies of the dead and dying policemen. A passing motor car in Houndsditch was requisitioned to race

[2] http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1339367/Foreign-terrorists-bloodshed-East-London-street-100-years-ago-week-chilling-parallels-Britain-today.html
[3] http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/siege-of-sidney-street-how-the-dramatic-stand-off-changed-british-police-politics-and-the-media-2154651.html

Sergeant Tucker to the Royal London Hospital in Whitechapel, but it was in vain, because he was already dead when examined at 11.50pm by Dr Rainey in the receiving room. Then Dr Rainey turned his attention to Constable Choat who arrived on a stretcher, and remained conscious in spite of nine bullet wounds – although had no memory of the events of the night – and died subsequently at 5:20am. Sergeant Bentley was carried to St Bartholomew's Hospital where he died at 7:30am next morning. The heist was foiled but three officers were killed and two crippled for life on a single night, and it remains the worst incident for casualties ever suffered by the British police.

The funeral of PC Choat at Byfleet December 1910



Burglary at Abinger 1848

(Note the dates as published are incorrect)

William Munday (27) and George Fain (22) were charged with burglariously entering the dwelling house of George Elmes, at Abinger, and stealing a variety of grocery articles.

Mr Robinson appeared for the prosecution and Mr Channock for the defence

Mary King, wife of Jarman King, and daughter of prosecutor, fastened up her father's shop on the night of the 18th March (This should probably read 9 March); next morning she saw the shop had been broken open during the night, and some cheese and tea stolen. Identified the cheese produced.

Cross-examined – Was the last in the shop on Wednesday night

The husband of the last witness deposed to coming down on Thursday morning at 5 o'clock and saw a hole in the window large enough for a man to get into or out.

Superintendent Biddlecombe (Godalming Borough Police) On the 10th March examined the tracks near the shop; compared the prisoner's shoes with the tracks, and they corresponded. (He produced the shoes, and showed several marked particulars in the nailing of the shoes, by which they could be identified with the tracks. The impression was traceable with a few intervals from Abinger to Guildford, by a

circuitous route, being two or three miles longer than the common road. About halfway the two persons were joined by a third person. Witness examined prosecutor's premises – the bolt of the shutter was cut round, the lead from the panes had also been cut, some glass removed – and two bars had been wrenched out. On the window frame were marks of blood, and there were also marks on Munday's clothes, and one of his fingers had recently been cut. On Fane (Note: previously in same piece spelt Fain) a knife was found broken at the tip. The cuts in the lead work were exactly the size of the top of the knife.

Cross-examined: Did not put the shoes in the tracks but made parallel impressions. The way to the prosecutor's shop was through a small orchard.

Two witnesses Truel and Saxby gave evidence as to the track. On the Monday morning following, went to the wood where the tracks went in, and he saw the hounds, and Col. Sumner gave him a bundle, which contained in a red handkerchief. He found the cheese now produced and which Mrs King identified.

Colonel Sumner deposed that he was hunting on Monday 10 March (Note: Again the dates do not agree) and on finding hounds drawn towards the wood on Hawkhurst downs he went in and found under a heather bush some things tied in a red handkerchief. He gave them to Saxby.

A labourer named Sherlock deposed that on the Thursday morning in question at about half-past seven he saw the two prisoners with another man pass Scotland Farm, which is in the course of the track spoken of. Two of them had bundles.

Police Constables High and Williams gave evidence of approaching the prisoners at the Rose and crown, Guildford. (Note: Most likely members of the Guildford Borough Police as the Surrey Constabulary not yet formed.)

Scotman of the Rose and Crown deposed that prisoners lodged at his house. On Wednesday 9th of March in the forenoon they let the house and did not return till Thursday morning.

The principal point in Mr Charnock's address was the fallacy of the evidence depending on footmarks. The prisoners were found guilty and were sentenced to ten years transportation.[4]

[4] From Mrs. Jean Pelham descendant of Inspector Donaldson, March 2016

Burglary at Betchworth 1850

Before the Surrey Constabulary was formed

George Sawyers was charged with burglariously entering into the dwelling house of Isaline Ann Marie Secretan, at Betchworth and stealing therein various articles

Mr Bagley prosecuted and Mr Charnock defended the prisoner.

Prosecutrix stated that on the 11th February she retired to bed about 10 0'clock. She awoke at half past one and saw a ladder placed against her house, a man raised the window and entered her room, and another followed him. She went towards the window and tried to push them down, but did not succeed. When they got into the room they pulled down the window. She broke a pane of glass to arouse the neighbours. They struck a light and threatened to kill her if she made a noise. One was armed with a stick the other with a bar of iron. The one with the stick struck her several times on the head. They asked her for money, but she made no answer. They then went into the passage and took up a painting box, then went off with the box down the ladder. When they lighted the candle she caught a look of of one of them and believed the prisoner at the bar was one of them. They left behind them a cap, the stick, the iron bar and some Lucifer matches. They lighted a piece of wax candle and dropt some of the wax along the passage.

Cross-examined – Was very much frightened. The burglary lasted about ten minutes altogether. It was about 19 days later that the prisoner was brought to her to identify. She did not speak positively then, nor did she when the police constable put the cap on his head.

Eliza French, wife of the landlord of the Rose and Crown, Dorking deposed that the prisoner with two others was at her house on the 9th and 10th February. Overheard one of them say, "We must have some Lucifer matches for this business." Prisoner was there when this was said. One of them had a piece of iron, but she did not think she could swear it. (Iron produced) Would not swear that was the iron, but it was very much like it. Had never seen the prisoner before the 9th.

Cross-examined – Prisoner was taken into custody at her house when in bed. Couldn't swear that it was the prisoner who spoke about the lucifers. It was one of the three.

Wm Donaldson, police constable, (also known as Inspector Donaldson in charge of the Dorking police and later murdered as a member of the Surrey Constabulary) at Dorking, deposed that on receiving information of the burglary he went to the house of the prosecutrix. He described the state in which he found the premises, and stated that he received from Miss Secretan a cap, a piece of iron, and a stick, which the

burglars left behind. When he arrested the prisoner he "chaffed him about the gals" (laughter) He denied all knowledge of the robbery.

Cross-examined – Did not tell Miss Sacratan he'd got *the man,* he said a man. he put a cap on prisoner's head, and a black kerchief around his neck, for prosecutrix to see when before the magistrates. There was a reward of £15 for a conviction in this case.

John Clark deposed he saw the prisoner at Mrs French's on Sunday and Monday before the football day. Two other were with him. Heard one of the two ask for some lucifers at the bar. Prisoner was not within hearing at the time.

Thomas Peter lives at Betchworth was arouse don the morning of the 11th February by screams of murder from Miss Secretan's house. He knew nothing of the prisoner.

A prisoner named Mann deposed that he found a box behind a hedge on the morning after the robbery. The box was the one taken from the house of the prosecutrix.

His Lordship said that the last three witnesses might as well have been at home. They had not deposed a single fact that threw any light upon the house.

The learned counsel for the defence characterised the evidence adduced to prove the guilt of the prisoner as the most meagre that was ever brought into a court of justice to support a prosecution. The jury returned a verdict of not guilty.[5] [6]

Burglary and attempted Arson, Ripley 1848

Dorking Burglary and attempting to set Premises on Fire: Daniel Benvill, better known at Dorking as "Civil John" who has lodged at the Rose and Crown public house in this town for nearly four years and was by craft a hawker of cutlery or any other goods he might turn to a profitable account, was brought before Charles Barclay Esq., magistrate, on Monday in custody of the police officer Donaldson. (Inspector Donaldson was the head of the small Dorking Police force). It appeared that Donaldson having been informed on the previous Saturday that a robbery had been committed on the premises of Mr Greenfield, general shopkeeper, Ripley, in this county late on Tuesday night or early Wednesday morning the 25th or 26th ult., went without delay to the Rose and Crown and enquired if "Civil John" was within? The answer was in the affirmative and "Civil John" came forth and was asked by the officer whether he had goods of such description in his possession. The prisoner replied he had and Donaldson was conducted to the prisoner's bedroom, which was over a wooden house detached from his house.

[5] From Mrs. Jean Pelham descendant of Inspector Donaldson, March 2016
[6] Sussex Advertiser 2 April 1850

Donaldson soon with his lynx eye, espied a lot of goods in his bedroom, and on further search in a shed below he found his dog cart full of goods, of the whole of which he took possession and secured the prisoner, who with the goods he conveyed to his own establishment, and immediately wrote a letter to Mr Greenfield of Ripley, setting the circumstances, and Mr Greenfield with his son and shop man, came over to Dorking on Monday, to see whether the goods were his property; and on their being produced at Messrs. Hart's office, the prosecutor swore that they were his property, and his evidence as to identity was corroborated by his shop man.

The goods consisted of jackets, waistcoats and trowsers, (sic) boots and shoes and various of other articles. Other goods had also been stolen which were not found on the prisoner, viz, one piece of Irish linen, three pair of diapers, a pair of blue cloth trousers, a man's jacket, and a black velveteen jacket &c; the whole amounting on a rough calculation of £50.

The thieves effected an entrance by boring holes round the thin edge of the lower panel of the shop door, with a centre bit. A considerable quantity of the stock was found strewed in all directions, and to the horror of Mr Greenfielld, he found that a large quantity of papers and other things had been burnt, apparently for the purpose of setting the whole premises on fire.

The prisoner stated that on Wednesday morning the 28th ult., as he was going with his dog and cart towards Abinger he met a man with a horse and cart, who pulled up and asked him if would buy a lot of goods, which he said he would sell cheap as he said he was going out of the trade. After a little parley, "Civil John" purchased the whole for ten pounds, five pounds of which he said he borrowed that morning off Mrs French the landlady at the Rose and Crown. The man drove towards Dorking and some time afterwards he followed. Mrs French who was present said he wanted to borrow £5 off her on Wednesday night, but she did not lend it to him until the following morning.

The prisoner was committed to Horsemonger-lane gaol to be tried at the assizes in March next.[7] [8]

Sussex Burglars 1843

Where there are houses there are burglars and that was certainly the case in the 1800s as it has ever been. The Isaac's Gang were not parochial and committed crime throughout Surrey and Sussex and possibly in other counties. It is difficult to be exact

[7] From Mrs. Jean Pelham descendant of Inspector Donaldson, March 2016
[8] South Eastern Gazette 8th February1848

about the timing of the gang coming together and if other burglars who appeared before the courts were a part of that organisation. If they were convicted they were sentenced usually to transportation and this took them out of the frame. The gang during the late 1840s may therefore be those remaining members, never arrested or convicted of burglary with former members now languishing on a hulk or in a hot climate. There may have never been a constant membership and there probably was a hard core who recruited help as and when it was needed for a particular task. In addition to the burglars there were the receivers, often women, and those who would convey stolen goods into London for selling to a fence.

Lewes Thursday August 3 1843 the newspapers report an Assize case against a team of burglars. Details on the individuals are sparse, and there is nothing to suggest they were a part of a larger gang. However their modus operandi was similar to that undertaken by the Isaac's Gang. If nothing else it is easy to see why householders of this period were in fear of violent burglary. Before the court were:

William Roser, 30, shoemaker, George Turner 26, Daniel Foster, 30, Samuel Merricks, 40 and Henry Sinnock 30, labourers were charged with having on the 25 March at Eastbourne, burglariously broken and entered the dwelling house of Frances Wildman and stolen one gold watch, value £5, one gold chain value £4, one eye-glass value £1.5s three gold seals value£1.10s, one wine strainer value £1 10s, one gold pencil case value £1, one mustard pot value £1, one miniature portrait set in gold value £1, one pair of scissors value 6d, two purses value 1s, eight sovereigns, one half sovereign and 24s, the goods and monies of the said Miss Francis Wildman.[9]

The victim lived in South Terrace in Eastbourne where between one and two o'clock Saturday morning 25 March someone on the stairs disturbed Miss Wildman's sleep. She called out but no one responded. Miss Wildman had gone to bed at 11 o'clock when the house was secured. The dining room door opposite her sleeping-room was locked. Her door burst open and she saw two disguised men with more behind them. A rush light was used. She screamed out and rang the bell and the two men immediately rushed into the room and pushed her on the bed putting a pillow over her head whilst someone else held her feet and both hands. She screamed as loud as he could before receiving a blow to her head from a small stick, which bent upon receiving the blow. She said, "Pray don't hurt me." No answer was made and she was not struck again. Miss Wildman saw one of the men break open a writing desk and a hair trunk examining all the things. The same man then opened the drawers and examined the contents. There was a watch lying in a watchcase in the drawers.

A servant came into the room and the man who had been holding Miss Wildman's feet scuffled with her. A further servant came into the room. The burglars asked for money, as they needed it to pay their rent. The men soon left. A servant was able to

[9] The Standard August 5 1843

identify one of the robbers, as was Miss Wildman's brother who saw the men leaving down the stairs. Mr Wildman climbed out of a window and raised the alarm with neighbours. He then received a violent blow to the head.

One of the prisoners Roser gave full details of the burglary to the court in exchange for a free pardon and a part of the £150 reward. Roser had previous convictions but denied previous serious offences though this was found to be unlikely during an extended examination of his life and criminal activities.

The men were found guilty and transported for the remainder of their natural lives. There was a further indictment against Roser, Turner and Foster in which case Sinnock gave Queen's Evidence, for burglary at the dwelling house of John Mann when cash and gold was stolen.[10]

Further along the south coast in Brighton lived another gang of burglars who would go out into the countryside to commit crime. They were a gang the local police had not come to know but the chance recognition by a witness led to one of the men and the criminal gang unravelled. [11]

Detection of the Sussex Burglars

These three men appear to be burglars and receiver heavily involved in burglary in and around Brighton. Their undoing was a burglary at a farm in Newick the property of Mr Hampshire from where food and provisions were stolen, including a dozen-port wine, two hares and seven wild rabbits. A man called Patching from Brighton was seen close to the crime and police went to his house and searched it finding some of the stolen property and other items from burglaries at Berching and from the Reverend Staveley at Falmer. Patching was missing but his mistress was there and suggested police search the premises of a man named Burgess who ran a greengrocer's shop. Here the police found a significant quantity of stolen property from seven or eight burglaries. Burgess like Patching had flown! The search of the shop led onto a third house belonging to Longhurst, which was also searched and knives and more property recovered. None of the wanted men were thought to have any previous criminal convictions but of course there were no centralised records to refer to.[12]

This team of burglars were very active in 1845 and possibly a part of a larger grouping of criminals. It is known that around Godalming alone at this time there had

[10] The Standard August 5 1843

[11] In 1838 members who were recruited to make up the first fully professional Police Force were based at the New Town Hall and replaced the watchmen. The Force consisted of a Chief Constable, two Superintendents, a night Constable, three Inspectors and twenty-four Constables. The Force soon started to grow and in 1854 comprised of ten Officers and fifty-one Constables and in that year came under the control of the 'Watch' Committee of the newly formed Brighton Borough Council.

[12] Hampshire Telegraph and Sussex Chronicle February 8 1845

been about a dozen burglaries and it may be that these people were seen to be suspects for the crimes, which justifies Biddlecome the head constable of the borough's involvement in their pursuit and capture.

The hunt for the so called Sussex burglars caused considerable excitement in Lewes particularly when news broke on the 12 March of their arrest in Hampshire by Biddlecombe. Described in the newspapers as "this active officer's[13] exertions led to the arrests."

The three individuals named Patching, Burgess and Longhurst accused of committing several burglaries in different parts of Sussex had made off from Brighton and were subsequently detained in the village of North Wanborough, Hampshire after a close pursuit of five days. It is not known if these men were associated with the Isaac's Gang but the leader of the Isaac's Gang lived in or near Reading and of all the places they could go these burglars on the run from the police went first to Reading before travelling across Hampshire where they were finally arrested.

The newspapers reported: The head constable[14] Mr Biddlecombe for four days rode about the country accompanied by two armed and mounted assistants, sometimes hearing of the men and sometimes losing all trace of them. On Friday morning he came onto the neighbourhood of Reading and a village about four miles from that town, on the road to Basingstoke, he learned of three men, still pretending to be smugglers had been there the previous day, and were dispensing some brandy as before; they had taken the road for Basingstoke and thither in all haste he pursued them. On arriving at Basingstoke he found he found that they had been there on the previous evening and on further enquiry that they had slept there and changed their clothes, quitting the town that (Friday) morning about nine o'clock – they still kept to their assumed character of smugglers. All this was highly satisfactory, but strange to say no clue could be obtained as to what road they had taken on leaving the town.

Fortunately for Mr Biddlecombe this time took the right direction for on proceeding about 12 miles on the road to Alton he found he found that the soi-disant [15] smugglers were only about three hours ahead of him. Biddlecombe at once called in his assistants whom he had from time to time during the pursuit despatched by different roads always fixing some central point as a rendezvous. All three set out in hot pursuit for Alton. At a village called North Wanborough the joyful information was obtained that the long sought for party was only about half an hour in advance. On the pursuers sped and speedily caught sight of the three men near a public house known as the Golden Pot about three miles from Alton. The chief constable now cautioned his assistants to keep the men closely in view and determined when turning of the high road himself, and by taking a circuitous route, getting before the burglars, leaving

[13] Over the years a term frequently used to describe him
[14] Godalming Police
[15] Self-styled; so-called

instructions with his two men to close up upon them, as soon as they saw him advancing in the opposite direction. This movement was quickly effected and by this stratagem the burglars were safely apprehended.

When secured and handcuffed, Biddlecombe called them by their several names and informed them of the charges against them. They each of them carried a bundle and the great proportion of the missing property belonging to Mr Sparkes and Mr Abbott was found in their possession as well some nine or ten shillings in silver, and a small quantity of eatables. They were dressed in long smock frocks, buttoning before and appeared to have disposed of little of the property taken on the previous Saturday night, except the wine and spirits. They were all three armed with long knives and they had been aware of the charges against them or the mission of the officer they would doubtless of used them to the danger of him and his assistants. They had no firearms in their possession. The chief constable at once procured a vehicle and conveyed his prisoners to Godalming where they arrived with them late Friday evening.

After appearing before the local magistrate the prisoners were conveyed in handcuffs from Godalming by cart to Guildford, coach to Redhill before taking the train to Brighton followed by transfer to a fly for the final part of the journey to Lewes. [16]
They were examined before the Lewes magistrates on Monday and remanded for further examination till Thursday[17]

[16] The Times
[17] The Morning Chronicle Wednesday March 12 1845 – abridged from the Surrey Advertiser

THE SUSSEX BURGLARS.—Considerable excitement has prevailed in the town of Lewes in the last 24 hours, in consequence of information having been received at an early hour on Sunday morning that the three individuals connected with the Sussex burglaries—Patching, Burgess, and Longhurst—had been captured in Hampshire by Mr. Biddlecombe, chief officer of police at Godalming, after five days' hard chase. Immediately on receipt of the information we lost no time in conveying it to the proper authorities, and this morning's post enabled us to lay before the same parties a full account of the proceedings adopted by Biddlecombe, the active officer by whose exertions the burglars were secured, accompanied by the information that the burglars would arrive at Lewes in custody of their capter this (Monday) afternoon. In accordance with this information, about half-past 5 this afternoon, Biddlecombe with his assistant arrived in charge of the prisoners, whom he lodged safely in the station-house. At the moment we write they are before the magistrate, Mr. H. Blackman. The prisoners left Godalming this morning early. They were conveyed, handcuffed, in carts to Guildford, thence by the coach which runs to Red Hill, where they were placed in a railway carriage, and brought by train to Brighton. On arriving at Brighton they were at once placed in a fly, and driven without loss of time to Lewes. Their conduct since their capture has been perfectly quiet, and on the whole they appear little affected by their situation. This remark does not apply, however, to the prisoner Longhurst, who, since the news of his wife's death, has materially altered his demeanour. To use the expression of the officer, he appeared considerably "cut up" by the melancholy intelligence.—*Sussex Advertiser.*

PRUDENT.—On Monday last Mr. Samuel Dumbell

The Times (London, England), Wednesday, March 12, 1845

On March the 19th 1845 the men were found guilty of burglary and transported for ten years. There is some variation in the reports on the sentencing of women members of the gang with no explanation of their role, Jane Burgess and Ann Hounsell varying between 18 months and two years hard labour. Biddlecombe was commended by the judge for showing great zeal and activity in the case and was rewarded twenty shillings in addition to his expenses and the two constables who assisted him in the pursuit of the prisoners should each receive five shillings.[18] Biddlecombe is likely to have received rewards amounting to a considerable proportion of his annual income from sources other than the court.

A further press report contains more detail of the ploy used by Biddlecombe to make the arrests. There is also a reference to links with a large number of burglaries.

There was considerable interest created by the fact that the prisoners were supposed to have been connected with a great number of burglaries that have been committed in the county of Surrey. Was this a reference to being a part of a larger grouping? The term Isaac's gang has been invented by the writer of this piece and so at the time there may have been no recognition of the coming together of so many nasty criminals. The circumstances of this particular case presented nothing uncommon, except the mode of their capture. A constable named Biddlecombe was on their traces; and after travelling in pursuit of them over a very great extent of country succeeded in coming

[18] The Morning Post (London, England), Thursday, March 20, 1845

up with the prisoners at Alton, in Hampshire; and as he was at this time alone, they would have probably got away had he not adroitly hit upon the following expedient to disarm their suspicion. He told them on coming up with them that he was an officer and that a farmer a short distance off had sent him after them on suspicion of stealing some fowls the night before. The prisoners said they could easily prove their innocence of this charge for they had slept in Basingstoke. The officer then said they could no doubt easily prove this to the satisfaction of the complainant if they would go back with him, and for "forms sake" they had better have on the handcuffs. The prisoners consented and very quickly allowed the officer to handcuff them, and he told them the real nature of the charges against them. [19]

Inspector Donaldson Memorial Plaque

From Kevin Morris

Haslemere has a new plaque. On Saturday 12th March 2016 a new plaque was unveiled on the Haslemere Town Hall in the High Street. This new blue plaque paid for jointly by the Haslemere Town Council and the Haslemere Society, commemorates the sad events of the 29th July 1855 when Inspector William Donaldson was murdered during a riot.

I am pleased to say that I met up with Inspector Donaldson's Great Great Grandson, Henry Pelhim who was there with his wife Jean, daughter Lesley Boniface and his Son Stephen and his Wife Jo. It was lovely to see them all and to chat about what is known of the events that night.

It was a time when Haslemere was hosting large numbers of Navies who were building the railway from London to Portsmouth. Not perhaps too surprisingly these men worked hard and played hard which usually involved the consumption of large volumes of alcoholic beverages. On the fateful night Inspector Donaldson and a constable had attempted to close the White Horse Hotel where many of these workers had been drinking and wanted to continue doing so. A violent altercation erupted and one individual was arrested. Not happy with this many of the prisoner's co-workers armed themselves with all manner of offensive weapons and set out to free him from the lock up which, at that time, formed part of the ground floor of the Town Hall. A riot ensued. It was during this rioting that Inspector Donaldson was struck over the head an injury from which he

[19] The Derby Mercury Wednesday March 26 1845

was to die at 3am. He was the first Surrey Constabulary Officer killed in the course of his duty bu sadly not the last.

Haslemere hold a ceremony on the last Sunday in July each year to remember Inspector Donaldson and this year they decided to commemorate the event further with the new plaque and very impressive it is too.

Left to right Mrs Lesley Boniface, Henry Pelham, Superintendent Duncan Greenhalgh and Stephen Pelhim

The old plaque is still in place but no one was sure if it will remain there or be removed now. What was interesting is that Henry is writing his version of that evenings events. I will not steal his thunder but will leave him to explain how views of that evening differ. Suffice it to say Henry's version is more graphic than I remember it being told with far more detail about the Town after the riot than I, and others, will be used to hearing. I look forward to reading his story. Henry introduced his wife as "My historian" so I feel it is only right to point out that it is clearly a family matter and one where the next generation are as interested as Henry is. Similarly, and again no big surprise, Henry said he is often in contact with Bob Bartlett and they swap snippets of information about the riot and murder keeping each other as up to date with findings as possible.

One final item of interest, which I feel Henry will not mind me sharing, is that the original plaque, along with others quotes William's age as 44 years. Henry assures me that is not correct. William was in fact 47 when he died. The discrepancy comes about

because William lied when he applied to the Metropolitan Police before joining Surrey.

Chief Superintendent William Biddlecombe
No 1 Surrey Constabulary

William Biddlecombe served in the Isle of Wight Constabulary and Southampton Police before joining Hampshire on 18th March 1840. His combined service in IOW and Southampton was 4 years. [20] He then became the Chief Constable of Godalming Borough Police with two constables where he established a formidable reputation as a police officer. When the Surrey Constabulary was formed in 1851 Biddlecombe is the first name in the register of those who served being appointed as a chief superintendent.

Two cases have been found from Biddlecombe's time in the Southampton Police in 1840. He was a brave man.

Charles Reeves aged 24 as indicted for assaulting PC Biddlecombe on the night 29 November. The prisoner was making a great disturbance at a house in Mount Street; Biddlecombe was called in to suppress the disturbance, when the prisoner made several stabs at him with a knife and retreated upstairs; he was followed by Biddlecombe and the prisoner having obtained a poker and was in the act of striking the policeman when he was struck down and taken into custody. Two witnesses Brice and Scorey corroborated the policeman's evidence and the jury having found the prisoner guilty the Recorder in consideration of the violent blow, which had received sentenced him to six weeks imprisonment with hard labour.[21]

George Hookey, Charles Morgan and Henry Meatcher were indicted for assaulting PC Biddlecombe in the execution of his duty. From the evidence of Biddlecombe and other witnesses, it appeared that the prosecutor was called in by the landlord of the Ship and Anchor to quell a disturbance, in which he succeeded; some time afterwards the above parties with others came out and Morgan knocked a sailor down for which Biddlecombe attempted to take him into custody. The mob then rushed upon him, and the defendants were the most conspicuous in maltreating him.
Verdict- Guilty

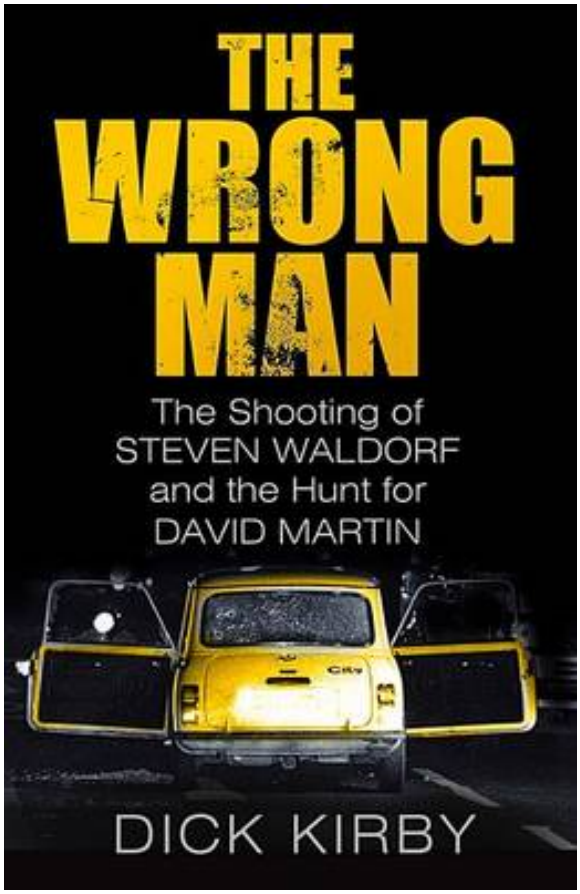
From it appearing that Morgan was the worst of the three and having at a subsequent time uttered threats, he was sentenced to six months imprisonment, and at the expiration of that time to be further imprisoned until he could find two sureties of £25 each, and himself in £50 to keep the peace for twelve months towards Biddlecombe.

[20] Clifford Williams Hampshire Constabulary 8 June 2011 – email to author
[21] Hampshire Advertiser and Salisbury Guardian Saturday January 4 1840

Meatcher and Hookey were sentenced to four months imprisonment and hard labour. [22]

The Wrong Man

Dick Kirby
History Press
ISBN: 9780750964135
Published: 03-02-2016



Background: David Ralph Martin was a cross-dressing criminal who carried out a string of sophisticated offences in the 1970s and '80s. A prolific burglar, car thief, fraudster and gunman, he possessed a deep loathing of anyone in authority. In addition, he was a master of disguise and a veritable Houdini when it came to escaping from prison. After shooting a policeman during a botched burglary, he escaped from court on Christmas Eve, 1982. When police believed him to be in a yellow Mini in the Earls Court area with his girlfriend, they opened fire, only to discover they had shot an entirely innocent man - a 26-year-old film editor named Steven Waldorf. The investigation became a cause celebre at the time, and was

[22] Hampshire Advertiser and Salisbury Guardian Saturday January 4 1840

subsequently taken over by Scotland Yard's Flying Squad, of which the author was a member.

One of the biggest manhunts in the history of the Metropolitan Police ensued, before Martin was finally arrested after dramatically fleeing down the tracks between two Underground stations. Author Dick Kirby reveals for the first time the inside story of the hunt for 'the most dangerous man in London', whose eventual arrest brought to an end one of the most contentious investigations in Met history.

Consequences of the shooting: In addition to the impact the shooting was to have on a number of lives what followed was considerable institutional change. For the first time the police use of firearms became the subject of extensive public and political discussion. In the House of Commons the Home Secretary, William Whitelaw, was asked by Roy Hatersley the Shadow Home Secretary to ‘understand that the nation-wide concern that has been expressed about last Friday's tragedy involves not simply the shooting of one innocent man but the practices and procedures that made that tragedy possible? I therefore ask the Home Secretary to understand that the House, like the country, expects an inquiry into the regulations governing the issue of firearms to police officers and ... that he must tell us how he ... proposes to remedy the problems that allowed it to happen in the first place?’

Roy Hattersley added the shooting raised "the most fundamental questions" about police procedures. "It causes the greatest concern about both the methods of identification of suspects and the basis on which decisions are taken to open fire on targets which appear to offer no threat to life or personal safety"

Mr. Whitelaw promised a sweeping review of these guidelines would be made as part of the investigation.

This is the most important case in the history of the development of the police use of firearms. As a direct result of the shooting the selection, training and deployment of armed police across the UK was standardised and professionalised.

The guidelines formed the first chapter of the new national Manual of Guidance on Police Use of Firearms intended as a public reassurance. This guidance reinforced endlessly during training, for the proper use of a firearm says: "Every police officer to whom a weapon is issued must be strictly warned that it is to be used only in cases of absolute necessity, i.e., if the person he is protecting is attacked by a person with a firearm or other deadly weapon. Otherwise to reasonably protect himself or give protection, then he may resort to firearms as a means of defence."

Change continued with Assistant Commissioner Geoffrey Dear chairing a national working party published in November 1984 covering selection and training which

was adopted though some of the recommendation could not be immediately implemented.

The Book: Dick Kirby knows his stuff! A career detective serving in key posts in London, at the heart of countering top end criminality. His career took him to the Flying Squad during the halcyon days of few regulations and even fewer rules. Catching villains was all. And David Martin was a very dangerous man that needed to be stopped. He was but he then escaped and caused more danger and heartache. Dick goes deeply into the background of Martin and his crimes and this gives an understanding of the police on the night when Steven Waldorf was shot. Police officers past and present will understand the concern when approaching a dangerous man. Add to that a firearm. Add to that the fact that the suspect has shot police officers. From today's incredibly high standards for armed police with considerable emphasis on judgemental training, one can sympathise with the two officers as they were drawn into opening fire.

This is an essential read for all those authorised firearm's officers across the country that no doubt learnt of the case during their initial training. For all serving and retired officers the book is atmospheric of those hectic days and dangerous days for both uniform officers and detectives in London. For the general reader Dick manages to get inside policing portraying the commitment, pressures and long hours along with the sensitive areas of informants and the gathering of intelligence. It was of its time. This is an history book and Dick brings that history alive

Fifth Column, by Mike Hollow

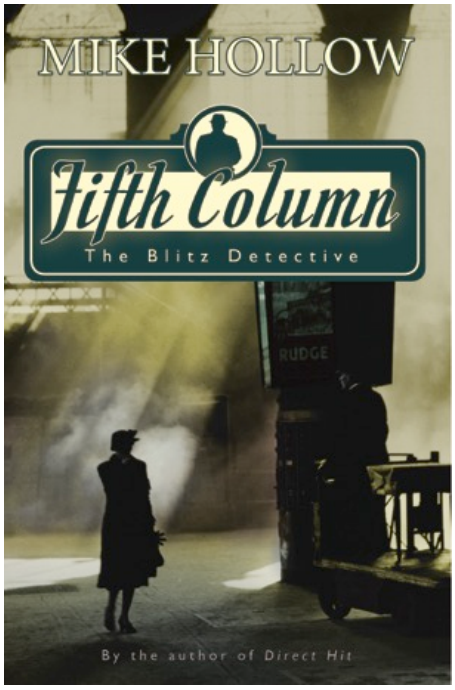
Fifth Column, the second in the Blitz Detective series of novels by Mike Hollow, was published by Lion Fiction on 18 March.

Like Direct Hit, the first in the series, the new book is set in the Essex County Borough of West Ham in the autumn of 1940, just as the Blitz is starting. A street of small terraced houses in Canning Town has been hit in an air raid overnight, and the body of a young woman is found amidst the debris. But she has no connection to the houses or the street, nor can her identity be established. Nor was it the bomb that killed her.

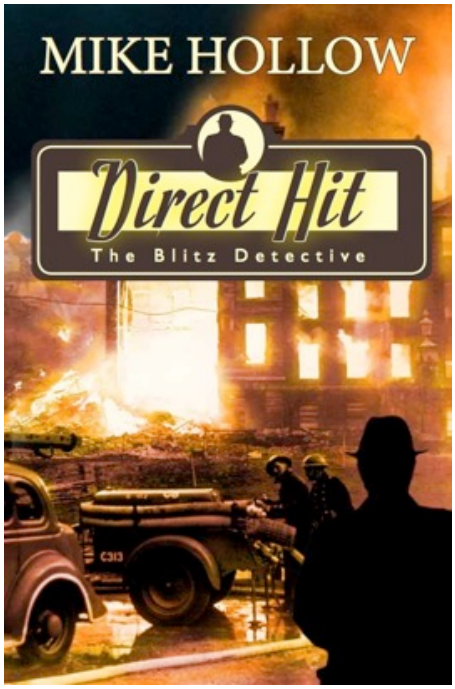
Detective Inspector John Jago of the Metropolitan Police (K Division) investigates as the bombs continue to fall.

"The realistic and honest tones ensure that this isn't a romanticised foray into the past, yet the story is completely engaging. Mike Hollow describes the ravaged streets so vividly it feels as though you're standing next to a blasted pile of debris, covered in white plaster dust. I found myself completely immersed in this tale; the folk and

surroundings of West Ham and Canning Town come to life. This series promises to keep delivering, and I can't wait for the next instalment." (LoveReading.co.uk)



Fifth Column and Direct Hit are both available from Waterstones, Amazon and other booksellers for £7.99.



Inspector's Course March 1982

John Walters, Tony Jackson, Deputy Chief Constable John Smith, Chief Constable Peter Matthews, ? , Mick James, Kevin Steer 2nd row: ?, Dave Spratt, Dickie Dunford, Con O'Kelly, Jock Erskine, ?, Dick Poulton, 3rd row: Keith Evans, Bryan Aldon, ?, Steve Batley

Police Officers Prepare for Gas Attack 1941

Tuesday is to be "prepare for gas" day for Surrey policemen. Beginning this week, each police officer on duty at any time between midnight on Monday and midnight on Tuesday will carry his respirator at the alert position, he will carry on his back his valise containing anti-gas clothing and he will wear his steal helmet.

For the half hours between 1030 and 11am, 2.30 and 3pm, and 1130pm and midnight on Tuesday each officer will wear his gas mask whatever duty he is performing, traffic control, patrolling, driving police vehicles etc. Thus by example are the police preaching to the public the virtue of being prepared.[23]

[23] The Dorking Advertiser 17 March 2016 Yesteryear column

1936: Training for war commenced many years before hostilities broke out. From 1936 four hundred and twenty five officers undertook intensive anti-gas training lasting a week. The Special Constabulary being trained in anti-gas measures and in practical police work followed this.

1937: The Chief Constable Guildford Borough attended a war duties anti-gas course in Gloucestershire and he was authorised to purchase 60 pocket first aid kits at a cost of £3.15s to be stored in readiness for air raids.[24]

1938 December 16: General Order 888 Chief Constable's Office: Care of Service Respirator: This Order includes that the respirator has to be taken from its haversack at least once a month and either worn for a period of half an hour or allowed to stay outside the haversack for two hours. Superintendents were required at each monthly pay parade to give the men half an hour on various exercises wearing their respirators all the time. Once a quarter the respirator was to be examined by the Divisional Anti-gas Sergeant. Each respirator was to be disinfected every six months and Superintendents must take steps to see that this is done and certify that this has happened. [25]

[24] They Guarded Guildford by Richard Ford Surrey 1969 internal publication Surrey Constabulary
[25] From Surrey Police Federation files

1938 Police War Reserve and First Police Reserve established made up entirely of fit retired officers was enrolled. Much secret planning was undertaken and upon the outbreak of war the Surrey Constabulary was well prepared.[26]

1938 anti gas course included three Chief Constables of Reigate, Guildford and County

1940 at the gas school at Artington

1939 at the Section House entrance at the back of the old Surrey Constabulary HQ

[26] Durrant Surrey Constabulary 1851-1951 page 58

Metropolitan Police

INSPECTING WRECKAGE: Soldiers looking at a German Heinkel III which was shot down and crashed at Chobham. It had strayed from a mission in the East End and dumped its bombs, with one of them destroying a house in Bookham. It was then caught in the searchlights of 460 Battery Royal Artillery at Weybridge and brought down. The crew were all captured and interrogated

Surrey constable in hard-hat with gas mask and a Special at a crash in Chobham

Tranquil Dale Siege - 1966

From Mike Waldron retired chief superintendent Metropolitan Police firearms

To be found in the Police Firearm's Officers Museum in Charteris, Cambridgeshire

The Tranquil Dale Siege in Betchworth, Surrey, on 28 July 1966 began with Constable Palmer seeing 28-year-old Anthony Ernest Saunders with a bolt-action 12-bore shotgun near the local railway station at about 5.10 in the afternoon. He asked to see his gun licence but was threatened with being shot and he telephoned for assistance. A search was mounted but from his description Detective Constable Brian Cane suggested that it may be Saunders and with Chief Inspector Arthur Smith he went to No. 12 Tranquil Dale.

Saunders' father opened the door and said that his son was upstairs. As they started to go up they saw Saunders at the top with the shotgun and a sword. He threatened the officers and fired a shot over their heads, telling them that 'if you don't get out I will shoot again'. Other officers including dogs and handlers arrived and deployed around the house. Saunders was seen walking around inside and at one point came to an upstairs window and shouted: 'Go away all of you, I can hit you from here'. Smith spoke on the telephone to an Assistant Chief Constable in Surrey and got authority to send for tear gas equipment, which at the time consisted of hand-thrown grenades and millboard containers each with 2oz of CS, which could be fired from a Webley 1.5 inch flare pistol.

At 6.30 Smith managed to talk to Saunders but it soon became clear that he was mentally deranged. His doctor, Dr. Ledger, was sent for and his sister, Mrs Oram, also arrived. During the course

of the evening the situation seemed to calm down as the doctor and the sister tried to talk Saunders into voluntarily going to hospital. So much so that at about 8.30 the tear-gas equipment was returned to the force HQ. At about 10 o'clock Dr. Frendenberg, the medical superintendent of Netherne psychiatric hospital together with a mental health officer and six male nurses arrived. Saunders, who had secured himself in a bedroom, still refused to leave and the two doctors agreed that action was needed to resolve the situation. The gas equipment was again called for and at about 12.15 the following morning three attempts were made to fire tear gas using the Webley pistol into the bedroom through the window from outside. The first container hit the window and glanced off into the next garden. The second hit the base of the window frame and again glanced off. The third hit the window breaking the glass but failed to enter the room. Only three cartridges had been brought and a further supply was sent for. At about 1.30 a further attempt was made but this time the container attached itself to the window frame about two-thirds of the way up the window. It hung there for a few seconds and dropped to the ground although CS from it made its way into the house.

The noise of the shots and the wafts of CS entering his room persuaded Saunders to let Ledger go up to see him. Ten minutes later the doctor came back down with the bolt from the shotgun. At about 2.30 in the morning Saunders was taken to Netherne and later transferred to Broadmoor.

http://www.pfoa.co.uk/

Bolt Action shotgun

Note from Joff Clement on an Old Woking shooting

1983 August 31: The Firearms Support Team were called to a house in Woking where a man had shot his fifteen year old daughter and attempted to kill his wife and another child. After a four-hour siege the team made an entry and found the offender having committed suicide.[27]

Joff Clement: Bob Bonilla and myself were called to the address at about 5.45 am as we were about to start an early shift. Inspector Walters rushed in the briefing room and turned us out for a 'domestic'. Before we had gathered our equipment it had turned into a shooting. As authorized firearm's officers Bob and I were on site before 6am with Bob covering the rear of the property and me at the front. By the time that the FST came to relieve us several hours had passed. They were at Woking Police Station studying plans of the maisonettes prior to their attendance and entry. The photograph shows Bob and me emerging from the property having secured the premises after the body was found. The astonished look on my face was as a result of leaving the property to be greeted by many press with cameras and flashguns, because someone had allowed them enter the inner cordon so we did not expect to see anyone directly outside the door. [28]

A newspaper reported: A four-hour armed siege ended yesterday when a man killed himself after shooting and critically wounding his fifteen-year-old daughter in a maisonette in Priors Croft, off the High Street in Old Woking. Twelve marksmen from Surreys' Firearms Support Team took up strategic positions as senior officers tried to make contact with Mr Frost with a loud hailer. There was no response and after a loud bang, police entered and found Frost lying dead.[29]

Alan Bridgman: Imagine then my surprise, when in about May 1983 I had just finished my first night duty of a week's night roster, and returned home at 0630, to find the phone ringing. On the phone was Control Room PC Barry Sullivan, who said, "Hello Al, you are called out to Woking nick for a FST job. Attend immediately." I said words to the effect "You must be joking. I've just finished my first night, and am completely knackered." Barry replied, "Sorry about that, but Mr Wayland wants everyone there." I briefly pondered the application of the FST principle of fitness to handle a firearm, to the instruction for all FST members to attend and picked up my "hurry-up" bag of FST kit, and set off for Woking on my trusty 750 Kawasaki. Riding a fast bike through very cold morning air is a good way to banish tiredness, at least temporarily. I arrived at Woking as the last man to arrive, collected and loaded my 9mm automatic, strapped on my holster over my blue overalls, and walked to the waiting force minibus to join Inspector Wayland and the rest of the heavily armed

[27] Annual Report 1983
[28] Email from Joff Clement to Robert Bartlett 24 March 2016
[29] 1983 September 1: The Times

FST. There was only one vacant seat, at the steering wheel. I politely asked whether the leader would like me to drive and drove off. The job was to attend a house where the male occupant had threatened his wife, and shot his daughter, and then barricaded himself inside his 2nd floor flat.

That turned out to be my first and last operational job for FST, since I contracted hepatitis as part of our unflinching service to Joe Public, and the four-month sick-leave ended my membership of the team. I kept a close eye on FST operations for the rest of my service, and was keen to support a team of closely trained specialists.

Joff Clement: In the photo (Courtesy of the Daily Mirror) is Joff Clement and PC Bob Bonilla both armed and also is Inspector Walters and PC Shaun Amey.

Roger Davies ex Pc 111 Carmarthenshire & Cardiganshire then Dyfed-Powys: I thought you might like to have this photo. One was PC Terry M Bleasdale Surrey far left middle row and PC I A (Fred) Page kneeling centre front.
Class 4 Training School Bridgend, South Wales March 1964

A MANSION at Mount Browne, near Guildford, is the new nerve centre for Surrey police activities. Here woman Police Inspector Mackenzie demonstrates the use of plaster casts of footprints.

Inspector Mackenzie in 1949 instructing recruits at Mount Browne
As found on EBay by Tony Collman

Inspector Mackenzie meeting King George VI after receiving The Defence Medal.

Special Constable Reigate Borough Police – note the two stripes and the on duty band. As seen on EBay

1975 Long Service Medal Rear: Danny Shaw, Archie Scott, Roland Perry, David Dalrympole, Alan Sauze Front Larry Rhimes, Roy Wakefield, Dave Harding, Fred Berryman, Frank Kennison

Peter Matthews Roland Perry, David Dalrymple, Larry Rhimes and Frank Kennison 1975 Long Service Medal

OFFBEAT VISITS

THE NEWSPAPER FOR THE MEN & WOMEN OF THE SURREY CONSTABULARY

FRENSHAM OFFICE ON 'OPENING DAY'

The section 'line-up' at the Ponds – left to right: Alec Budd, Charlie Wallis, John Powell, Mike Smith, Derek Radley, and David Bowden.

On the 1st of April, Frensham office re-opened after a fourteen year period of closure. This now means that a Sergeant and five constables will be operating from the Frensham office at Peakfields.

The newly arrived sergeant in charge is David Bowden, 32 years of age, who has now moved to Frensham. He has served at Guildford and on Traffic department. In 1975 he was seconded to the training centre at Ashford where he remained until this appointment.

The five constables are not strangers to the residents of the Frensham area, for nearly all of them have been working in the neighbourhood during the closure of the office.

Alec Budd is the local constable working from Churt and has been working that area since 1961. Derek Radley is the local constable for Wrecclesham and Lower Bourne, he lives in Rowledge and has been working this area for 9 years. Michael Smith will be the Seale and Sands area man and he has been working in the Frensham district since 1970. John Powell will be the Tilford area man as he has already worked that area for the past 5 years. William Wallis – the most senior member and due to retire shortly, has worked in the area for 24 years.

The Frensham Section officers – Sergeant Bowden talks to ex Police Sergeant John Mahoney. Mr. Mahoney was the Sergeant in charge of the office when it closed in 1963.

Photos by Bramley Hall

Charlie Wallis and David Bowden take a walk around the village.

Getting aquainted with the local shopkeepers.

* * *

Down at the Ponds checking over one of the boats.

John Mahoney chats with Charlie Wallis and Derek Radley.

Getting the office 'ship-shape'.

1977 – Does anyone police Frensham now?

Godstone Traffic Dave Charlesworth, Hamish McDougall, Y441GNJ Tiptronic Volvo
Back RowAlec Lenton, Bob Hazeel, Eric Thomas, Michael Johnston, Lee Tinson, Martin Keel, Not Recognised, Dave Vale
Middle Row Steve Corner, Dave Pratt, Steve Sandford, Andy Mead, Lance Beynon, Mark Grix, Graham Collins, Tony Collman, Duncan Brown, Graham Crane, Andy Howard-Smith, Tony Richardson, Mark Blount,
Front Row TPS Alison Adams, APS Stephen Green?? Not sure mental block, Insp Dick Joyce, PS Roy Orr, PS Gerry Phillips, PS Gerry Hardie
By the motorbike Stuart Read, Christopher Neale-Picard

PC557 Donaldson 1958

Ray Elliott Cranleigh 1966

PC Ritchings

PC John Shorten on his bicycle with his cape on and riding past the Horley police station in 1981

1983
Back row - Don Woodhams, Des Flanders, Tony Grey, David Stewart, David Harding, Eric Hughes
Front row - Frank Trussler, John Hoddinot, John Smith Brian Hayes, Chris Atkins, Gerry Atfield David Eades

Family History

John Molyneaux: Whilst browsing the local papers to see what my relatives had got up to, I came across this article about my Uncle Tom, which shows we weren't all delinquents. I also found another incident, involving the Salvation Army, his great-grandfather and a distant cousin. [30]

Unknown Little Girl Molested - Dorking 1926

"You acted the part of an Englishman most thoroughly", was the comment of the Chairman of the Dorking Justices, when a young man recounted how he dealt with a youth whom he found interfering with a little girl in Hampstead Lane, on August 24th.

[30] Email to Robert Bartlett 7 April 2016

Accused was a youth of 17, Cecil Charles Harris Weeks, a student at King's School, Worcester, and the offence alleged was that he assaulted an unknown little girl about six years. Mr H. C. Lee Steere (Chairman) and other magistrates adjudicated.

Young Man's Prompt Action

Thomas Charles Molyneux, radio engineer, of Hampstead-lane, Dorking, said about 5.10 p.m. on August 24th, he was at work in his workshop when he heard a girl cry out, "Oh, you are hurting me." He went to the garden fence, which abutted on Hampstead-lane, and saw a little girl, not more than six, in the arms of a young fellow, whom he now recognised as accused. He saw him push the girl against the bank and molest her. He jumped over the fence and accused released the child, who ran away. Witness went on to say that he went up to the accused and hit him in the mouth and threatened, if he did not clear off, to kill him. Accused begged him to forgive him. He (witness) thought he knew the girl and went to see the parents, but found he was mistaken. The offence occurred out of sight of any cottage windows.

Asked by the clerk if he had any questions to put to the witness, accused said, "It is all correct."

Sequel To Cycle Ride

Inspector Nash said that, after making enquiries, he met defendant in South-street on August 26th.He told defendant he was a police inspector, and defendant replied, "I think I know what you want me for". Later he said, "I am very sorry. I know it was very wrong of me to do it." In a statement which accused made to him, he said "I was riding my bicycle, and when I was near the Nower gate, the girl asked me to give her a ride, which I did. She got off and we walked up the hill a little way, when it happened. A man came along and struck me in the mouth with his fist and loosened my two front teeth." At the police station the accused asked, "Cannot you let me apologise to the little girl and the man who struck me?" When he was charged accused said he should like to apologise, and that he was sorry it happened.

Superintendent J. H. Tamplin told the justices that he had been unable to trace the little girl concerned, and he hoped she was too young to take any notice of what had happened. Accused elected to be tried summarily, and pleaded guilty. He had nothing further to say.

Defendant Cautioned

The magistrates then retired, and on their return, the Chairman, addressing defendant, said he had been brought before them on a very serious charge, and he knew very well it was a wicked thing for him to do. He was sorry to hear he had no parents in England. Owing to his youth, and to the fact that he had his future before him, the

magistrates had decided to let him go under the First Offenders' Act. He warned him, however, that this charge would be recorded against him.

Addressing Molyneux, the Chairman thanked him very much for coming forward and giving evidence in this unpleasant case. "You acted the part of an Englishman most thoroughly," concluded Mr Lee Steere. [31]

The Salvation Army – 1889 Dorking

Before the Bench of Magistrates, at the Public Hall on Saturday, six Salvationists, named Henry Stemp of Flint Hill, Mark Garman, Deepdene Lodge, Alexander E. King, Fergus Thompson, Holmwood, Frederick Smith, Leslie Road, Sydney Townsend, Pixham Lane, together with Thomas Molyneux, Dene Street, who is not a member of the Army, were charged with unlawfully obstructing the passage of a certain highway, Dene Street, on Sunday the 7th ult.

Mr. H. J. Chaldecott appeared for Molyneux, who pleaded not guilty, and Mr. J. Barrington Matthews, . . . appeared for the other defendants [who] also pleaded not guilty.

Superintendent Lambert laid the information and P.C. Marshall of Dorking tendered evidence in support of this. Marshall said that on the day named at about half-past two in the afternoon, he was on duty in Dene Street. He saw a crowd of persons collected together at the bottom of Heath Hill. The whole of the road and the footpath on the hillside were completely blocked and on the other side of the road the footpath was partially blocked. He went in to the middle of the crowd and found the defendants, with the exception of Molyneux, taking part in a Salvation Army service. Molyneux had a large hand bell, and this he was ringing vehemently. At this point several of the onlookers were pushed into the ring, and witness thereupon said if he saw that done again he would arrest the offender. Turning round to Molyneux he asked him to desist in ringing the bell and go away, to which the defendant replied, "Why don't you shift them?" meaning the Army, " I have asked them to shift and they won't go". Witness replied "that is a matter for me." Then turning to the other defendants he told them they were causing an obstruction, and asked them to move. Defendant Thompson said "if we are doing anything wrong take our names," and the constable replied that that was what he should do if they remained there. The singing was again resumed, and Molyneux again played an accompaniment to the same on the bell. Witness accordingly took the names of the offenders. About 10 minutes after, when a second contingent of the band appeared on the scene a general move was made.

[31] Surrey Mirror and County Post September 3rd 1926

In reply to Mr. Matthews, witness said he had singled out these seven defendants because they were taking a principal part in the obstruction. He had been in Dorking three or four months and had not interfered with them before. He proceeded to request the principal offenders to move on, but it was impossible to move the whole crowd at once (This statement was loudly applauded by the persons in Court, but the bench quickly subdued the plaudits, and threatened to clear the Court if the interruptions occurred again). – The obstruction was caused in the widest part of the street. He did not caution the defendants individually, but gave the caution in a voice that all could hear.

Henry Dobinson, a carpenter, living at 3, Mouint Pleasant, said he saw the crowd already spoken of by the previous witness, and endeavoured to pass through it. Whilst doing so Police Constable Marshall asked the defendants to "move on". He stayed to see whether they obeyed this mandate of the "man in blue". They did not and the defendants, remained there for about 10 minutes longer. He could have got through the crowd by "elbowing". He did not see any person trying to pass through with a perambulator.

In reply to Mr. Chaldecott he said he heard a bell ringing, but he did not know who was ringing it.

Mr Matthews submitted that there was no case for him to answer. The defendants had been charged with obstructing the highway, and refusing to move. The constable had himself admitted that he did not caution the defendants individually, and on this account, as they were never really cautioned he could not therefore bring a charge against them for wilful obstruction. If anyone was wilfully obstructing the passage of the highway it was the constable's duty to say "you are obstructing the thoroughfare" and then if they refused to move he would be liable for the consequences. He argued that there was no case against his clients.

The Bench asked him to proceed with his case.

Accordingly he called the defendant Thompson. He wore the brilliantly coloured Guernsey of the Army; on the breast of which was inscribed the appalling sentence "The wages of sin is death." He said there were eight members of the Army in the crowd at the time mentioned. When they arrived in Dene Street, there were only two or three people "about". Soon after that a crowd assembled, and in his opinion the principal cause of this assembling was the bell ringing by Molyneux. The constable did not come to him and request him to "move on". He did not remember ever seeing Mr. Marshall at any particular meeting before this present one. A man called "Hopper", who hawks fish for Mr. Washbourne, drove through the street during the meeting in a pony-cart and was in no way inconvenienced by the crowd. He did not even check the pace at which he was driving.

Sydney Townsend, a platelayer on the London, Brighton and South Coast Railway, said he was one of the "soldiers" who went up Dene Street on the Sunday afternoon. He heard two bells ringing. They sounded like "town crier's bells," and he was of the opinion that this noise caused the crowd that subsequently assembled.

Mr. Chaldecott said the case with regard to Molyneux was this. He lived in a cottage close to the part of the street in which those persons had met for some weeks for the purpose of conducting services. He (Molyneux), like many other workingmen, had been very much annoyed by the services of the Salvationists outside his house. On the Sunday mentioned he went outside and remonstrated with them, and eventually asked them to go away. Finding they would not he provided himself with a bell with a view of promoting their dispersal. He was only just outside his own gate, and therefore he ought not to be convicted of the charge brought against him.
He called George Sandford, a billposter, who lives at 23, Dene Street. On the Sunday mentioned he heard Molyneux ask the Salvation Army assembled there to go away, as they were a nuisance to him. They did not go, so Molyneux fetched two bells, and commenced ringing them. Then some of the crowd took them away from him (Molyneux) and continued this campanological entertainment for some time. Molyneux himself was not ringing all the time the police constable was in the street. He was sure, too, that the constable did not speak to Molyneux. But there was a person named Woodman there, and he told the policeman – pointing to Molyneux's son, a member of the Army – "You have not got Molyneux there." Consequently the policeman took his name, but now they had Molyneux the elder instead.

William Stambridge, a labourer, living on Heath Hill, gave evidence in support of Molyneux's defence, and William Weston, labourer, of Leslie Road, also gave similar evidence.

In response to the Bench, Superintendent Lambert said he had nothing to say against the men.
The Chairman, then addressing the defendants, King, Thompson, Garman, Stemp, Smith and Townsend, said the Court convicts you of obstructing the highway, I think it is right that I should make some remarks on this case. The organisation to which you belong has received, quite rightly, full protection from this Court and from the guardians of public law and order. That protection will be vouchsafed to you so far as we are concerned as long as you obey the laws of the land. In this instance you have disobeyed, not only a very legitimate, but a very reasonable law, and have got yourselves in the wrong, you will have to pay a fine of 5s. Molyneux's is much the same case as the other. The introduction of the bell militates very much against the peaceable Sunday you admire. You are also fined 5s. The costs are remitted.

Mr. Matthews – May I ask what is the alternative

The Chairman – seven days imprisonment.

Molyneux paid the fine, but with the exception of Garman, the Salvationists refused to do so, and were therefore removed in custody.

The fife and drum band of the Army was quickly called together, and when the "martyrs" were removed from the Police Court to the Police Station, the band attended them, and cheered them on their way with song.

Again, later in the afternoon when they were taken to the Railway Station the band turned out, and preceded them through the High Street. They were taken to Wandsworth and safely lodged in the gaol, but through the generosity of Sir Arthur Cotton they were released on Monday from their bondage. Mr J, Sandford, the town crier, was commissioned to proceed to Wandsworth, and there pay the fines that were required for their liberty. These amounted to 13/5d each. Soon after the money was paid, the men were set outside the prison gates, and during the afternoon they were again in Dorking. During the evening they paraded the town with the rest of the corps, and afterwards gave their "Experiences" at the meeting held in the Public Hall. [32]

Arthur Patrick Swain
A Surrey Detective

Born 16 May 1927

A message from a member to say that Mr Paddy Swain was confined to a care home but would welcome visitors had the editor digging out a piece written by Paddy for the history website. It is reproduced and is yet another reminder though we grow old, we had a youth, and when young we gave a great deal.

Read Paddy Swain's story then write your own life and let me have a copy.

From notes made by "Paddy Swain" and transcribed by Robert Bartlett in June 2009

Born of English father and an Irish Mother a brother and I were educated at the Salesian Roman Catholic College, Chertsey in Surrey. I left at the age of sixteen to be employed as an un-established Clerk at Weybridge police station. This was the war years (1943) and I was also a Cycle messenger. My private interests were membership of the Air defence Cadet Corps, Brooklands Squadron, later to become the Air Training Corps. My father owned his own business as a greengrocer and fruiterer and I used to help in his shop in Addlestone as did my mother. Our home

[32] Extract from the Dorking Advertiser, Saturday, 11 May 1889

was behind and above the shop. My father was a special constable eventually to be appointed inspector.

Paddy on the left with Bob Cozens an old friend at Old Comrades day 2007

I was conscripted into the army at the age of eighteen and after initial training at Maidstone Barracks I was transferred into the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry and trained with them at Colchester. This was 1945 at the time of VE Day but the war with Japan was still being fought. Our unit was ordered to Cairo in Egypt and I was promoted lance corporal. It was planned that our unit would be redeployed to Greece but when in Cairo I was approached by a senior officer who was aware I had been attached to the police and asked if I would transfer to the Military Provost. I would be promoted to the rank of sergeant so I agreed. The international situation dictated that we were to leave Cairo but remain in Egypt in the Canal Zone and Provost Unit then transferred to Fayid on the canal. I was placed on the staff of Lieutenant Colonel Scott and as many people were coming to the end of their war service conscription in 1945 I was promoted Warrant Officer Class 2. I served until my conscription was drawing to a close (1948) and Colonel Scott asked if I was willing to join the regular army with a quartermaster's commission as a Lieutenant. I declined, thanking him for the offer, but I had plans to join the Metropolitan Police on my release from the army. I returned to the UK by sea as were all trooping movements, and enjoyable it was. On this trip the liner was full of former members of the Palestine Police as they withdrew from the country.

I joined the Metropolitan Police in 1948 and trained at Peel House in Victoria, being sworn in and posted to "A" Division, Cannon Row. It was usual for tall PCs to get this posting and as I was six feet three inches, this was not unexpected. I lived in the section house in Ambrosden Avenue, Victoria looking onto Westminster Roman Catholic cathedral – good for a young catholic lad! My room was opposite the Cathedral hall, which had perfect acoustics with many great orchestras and choirs rehearsing there. At Cannon Row duties were almost full time on guard or protection posts for long hours with short beats and a return to the post. We were armed with .38 revolvers tucked beneath our jacket flap. Some of the posts were standing outside

Number 10 Downing Street, the Foreign Office, and Buckingham Palace etc. We were there because Jewish terrorist groups from Israel were active in the country and had been responsible for a number of bombings and assassination threats. After a year I had enough and resigned from the Metropolitan Police and was firstly employed by a very large firm in Covent Garden (Fruit and veg.) as an assistant to the transport manager. This was a temporary move as I had applied to join the Surrey Constabulary being accepted in December 1950, with my twelve months in the Metropolitan Police counting towards my pension.

My training was accepted and I was immediately posted to Leatherhead. I was a keen motorcyclist and had my own Norton 500cc. I performed beat duties in Leatherhead and Ashtead, followed by divisional motorcycle duties at Reigate and Horley for several years before moving to Traffic at Burpham again as a motorcyclist. It was now 1956 when I gave up my freedom becoming engaged to a catholic Margaret Angela Stewart from Curling Vale in Onslow Village, Guildford. We set a date for some eighteen months ahead, however in the mean time volunteers were called forward to serve in a police unit in Cyprus. The appeal was directed to all the UK police forces and I with several other constables from Surrey volunteered, with constables being offered the rank of sergeant in Cyprus. Mr Ted Post a sergeant in a Sussex force was promoted Inspector to be in charge of our volunteers as well as a number from other forces. (Ted Post was to become DCC in Surrey). It was considered too dangerous for wives to be allowed to accompany their husbands and Margaret when told what I had done, faced the situation bravely agreeing to get married on the 4 August 1956. Bomber brown the motorcyclist from Burpham Traffic made the wedding cake! I made over to Bomber my new model Norton motor cycle which in due course I was to re-claim after he had enjoyed its use for two years.

A short honeymoon followed and after a few days our newly formed unit flew to Cyprus. My action may well be viewed as cruel to dear Margaret but what followed after a few weeks on her part set the seal on a firm and successful marriage. It is too much to report on the full situation we found ourselves in Cyprus other than to say we faced grave risks, which to be fair we were well aware of before we left home. The main concern was the Greek terrorist organisation E.O.K.A. under the leadership of General Grivas. The Cyprus police force consisted of both Greek and Turkish officers and the British Bobby was there as it was suspected that EOKA had infiltrated the force. Within two to three weeks we suffered a great tragedy. Three of our Unit, not Surrey officers, when off duty decided to enter the city of Nicosia to shop for a camera in Ledra Street, known as murder mile. Two were shot dead and the third survived the attack by the terrorist Nicos Sampson who was arrested much later in the Trudos Mountains and sentenced to death. The punishment was not carried out as he benefitted from an amnesty. At this time I was posted to Famagusta with other officers.

Margaret meanwhile had obtained a contract to work as a secretary in Nicosia. She flew out meeting on the plane the daughter of the District Commissioner for Famagusta whose secretary had returned to the UK. The daughter spoke with her father and Margaret was appointed his secretary and we were back together given she was in Nicosia and I was many miles away. The whole scheme was her idea and I had no knowledge of her plans.

Imagine her torment and that of other families when the English press the following morning carried photos on their front pages and reporting that the two bodies lying in the road were those of recently arrived police sergeants before the next of kin had been informed.

I was contracted to remain Cyprus for two years and that was enough for me. Margaret was expecting our first child and was released from her contract and we flew back together to England.

I reported to HQ and the DCC allowed me to choose what I would like to do next and I chose CID and was posted to Godalming to replace Maurice Jackman who was moved to Guildford. We move to the police house Maurice vacated on Holloway Hill, Godalming.

My police career now really started. It was very exciting because at every stage and every rank I was a poor delegator. I had to get involved, particularly when the Metropolitan Police District was involved. For much of my career I was working

close to the county boundary or "border" and what now follows is a brief resume of that career up to my retirement. I was very happy at Leatherhead, and after a CID attachment, a short spell on motor-cycle duties I returned to CID. After failing more than one I passed my sergeant's exam and then the Inspector's examination. After a number of years I became a detective sergeant transferring to Oxted where I worked under several excellent Detective Inspectors including John Over who one day was to become Chief Constable of Gwent. By now Margaret and I had three sons, and so imagine studying for exams, being a poor delegator and having Croydon on our door step. I was a very busy man! John Over stepped in: "Paddy you are not delegating enough. I'll take the bells over night and you must study more!" Eventually I passed the exam, top place in Surrey.

It was about this time that Surrey was sending officers to be a part of Metropolitan Police squads. I was sent to Southwark Crime Squad and what an experience that was! As part of my attachment I worked with Nipper Read from Tintagel House on the embankment by the Thames during the Kray investigations and arrests. At this time I was told I had passed the Inspector's exam and the Metropolitan Police officers joined me in a great celebration followed by many thick heads. I returned to Oxted and promotion to Detective Inspector soon followed. I was then sent on a course at the Police College where I was very happy indeed. At the end Sir Peter Mathews telephoned me at the College one of the rare occasions I spoke with him. He always addressed me the same way: "Is that Paddy Swain, the left kicker? (A term for a Roman Catholic) I have been persuaded that you could lead a crime Squad. I'm promoting you chief inspector."

I became the Detective Chief Inspector in charge of the newly formed Crime Squad based at Walton on Thames Police Station. The Squad, in addition to several Surrey CID officers comprised CID from Kent, Sussex, Hampshire and one from the Metropolitan Police, Peter Woodmore, George Medal, a former Flying Squad officer who is now deceased. I knew Peter before when we served in Cyprus. His role was to report to his Commander, Roy York. I will not comment on this liaison other than to say that Peter was totally loyal to our cause. With DI Stan Cox as my deputy (we served together in Cyprus) a great policeman and deputy we ran a very successful Crime Squad. At one time Stan Cox was in charge of a major operation based on information I had been given by a criminal. The information concerned a team of criminals we had been watching and the informant gave me the time and place for us to be in position. Stan was there with his team and saw the criminals putting obviously empty suitcases into vehicles and leave. In the early hours of that morning they returned with heavy suitcases and went into a house. This all happened in the Metropolitan Police District. Stan and his team maintained a watch on the house for several hours until a car with two prosperous looking gentlemen turned up and went into the house. After a short delay the Team crashed into the house where all the criminals were together including the prosperous men, the receivers together with suitcases full of gold and silver objects. The receivers had scales and were weighing

the spoils from a mansion house burglary in Bedfordshire. The men were all convicted and imprisoned

After I left CID I served as a deputy to a number of Superintendents at Addlestone where I now lived in my own house. I was very happy, having had enough of CID work and after about eight or ten years, I had a visit from the ACC, Chris Rowe. He told me that the Chief Constable wanted me to return to Caterham and wanted to see me in his office. I declined the offer. Rowe annoyed me with his attitude – I deserved better. I did not get the meeting with Sir Peter however when I was due to retire he remembered me, and in fact did me a favour. John Maskell former ACC Surrey and deputy head at the Police College had retired and appointed consultant on security matter with Unilever. (This was a position normally taken by retired senior met officers) John wanted to form a team of investigating officers and approached Sir Peter who recommended me. I was approached by John who said the role was to be advertised and recommended I applied which I did as did many others, and after interview I was given the job. John explained that Unilever were suffering large losses in the distribution of frozen foods and asked how I would approach the matter to which I suggested forming an under-cover operation. I was to have my office in the Birds Eye/Walls offices at Walton on Thames where I formed a mini crime squad concentrating our actions on four large distribution centres in the London area. We were equipped with car-to-car radios, a wireless equipped motorcycle and an observation van. I had recruited four ex police officers and we worked very closely with officers of the Metropolitan Police and Crime Squads. We were very successful in reducing losses and I was upgraded from Company Security officer to Corporate Security manager. Our security team was increased and I recruited ex-police officers in the West Country, the Midlands and Scotland.

I remained in this position for some nine years and after the distribution sector of the business was sold I retired early with a Unilever pension and a very considerable financial handshake for having to leave early!