Tribulations of a Village Policeman's Wife

Vivien Edwards 2018

Policeman weds bank clerk

THE wedding took place at St. Peter's Church, Hambledon, on Saturday of Mr. Denis Anthony Edwards, younger son of Mr. and Mrs. J. Edwards of 8 Hydestile Cottages, Hambledon, and Miss Vivien Mary Hiscott, eldest daughter of Mr. Basil Hiscott, of Cloud Cottage, Busbridge Lane, Godalming.

The bridegroom is a police constable at Guildford and the bride is a bank clerk at Barclays Bank, Godalming.

The service was conducted by the Rev. C. E. Elton (Rector of Hambledon) and the organist was Mr. D. Titheridge.

Given away by her father the bride wore a straight full-length gown of white crystal givrine with a long train falling from the shoulders. Her short veil was held in place by a headdress of roses and she carried a bouquet of blue carnations and white bridal gladioli and lilies-of-the-valley. The bride was attended by her younger twin sisters, the Misses June and Patricia Hiscott, who wore straight full-length gowns of hyacinth-blue crystal givrine with white accessories and carried posies of white roses.

The best man was Mr. Colin Edwards (bridegroom's elder brother) and the ushers were Mr. A. G. Blackman and Mr. I. Durrant.

After a reception at the village hall, Hambledon, the couple left for a honeymoon in Cornwall.

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So I had passed. Who knew that, before we could get married, Den had to apply for my family and I to undergo "screening" by the Police service for my suitability, honesty and integrity? I can't imagine that being acceptable in these enlightened times! Den and I were married in September 1965, and at the time he was serving Surrey Constabulary as a constable on the beat, and as a Divisional motorcyclist, in Guildford. (Remember back in the day when it was an everyday occurrence to see a copper, wearing the familiar helmet, walking round chatting to people, giving directions, keeping an eye?). Just before Christmas 1965 Den was offered a post as village police officer in Effingham, near Leatherhead, and it came with a Police House, rent-free. So it was that two weeks before Christmas we moved our meagre possessions, packed in a small hired van, from our rented flat in to a three-bedroom house with a large garden, and a blue enamelled sign by the front door, which read POLICE in white lettering. It had small-paned metal casement windows, which we found out had been over-painted for so many years that none of them could be closed properly, and so there was always plenty of fresh air blowing through the house! It was not unknown after a while to find people peering over the front fence or wandering around our front garden looking at the flowers; for some reason they seemed to think our home was public property because it had the blue sign on the wall. In a very short time we had planted a climbing rose underneath it, and by the time we moved on, the sign was completely hidden by the foliage!

Surrey Constabulary Triumph Speed Twin

The house was quite large, not unattractive, with good sized gardens to the front and back, surrounded on three sides by wooden fencing, and along the roadside to the front by a very ugly chain link fence. We planted a lovely Albertine rose in front of this, and by the time we left the fence was entirely obscured by the foliage. At the back of the house was a wooden garden shed, and adjoining the kitchen wall were three small brick built units housing a

wood store, outside toilet and storage space (very useful for the pram later on!), with a coal bunker opposite the back door, and two posts strung with a very grubby washing line along the back garden path. Den's bicycle was housed in the shed in the back garden, and he sometimes brought home the Section's Triumph 500cc Speedtwin motorbike while he was on meal-break, much to the delight later on of the children, of course; the radio, lights and two-tones were great attractions! The motorcycle was later replaced by the infamous scooters or "noddy bikes", which everyone hated riding and on which the police radio very quickly and regularly drained the battery; luckily they didn't last long.

PC Boyles in 1966

Indoors there was a large lounge with a usable open fireplace, a dining room, (which had been the office), in which the chimney had been blocked off. A large kitchen contained a Belfast sink with a filthy wooden draining board, an elderly gas cooker and a small solid fuel boiler. Off the kitchen was the bathroom, with a large, claw-footed, cast iron bath and a washbasin, and a larder cupboard with a concrete shelf. Upstairs there were three good-sized bedrooms, one of which contained a hot tank, no storage cupboards anywhere, but then, perhaps fortunately, at that stage we had very few possessions. My Dad had a lovely large Formica-topped kitchen table made for us at the factory where he worked, and Den's parents found us four assorted kitchen chairs. My sister-in-law very kindly, and expertly, made curtains for all the windows, and with the bed, wardrobes and dining suite we had bought and stored before our marriage, and the settee and chair we purchased, we managed to at least make it habitable. We spent the first winter making lots of hand-hooked rugs, and even a stair carpet, which eventually improved the feel of the house; the sergeant kindly arranged for the draining board to be replaced, and before too long the gas cooker had been condemned and replaced. After our first, freezing

winter in the house, when all the windows, were covered inside with frost patterns every morning, the old boiler gave way to a huge, new installation, which also ran radiators - luxury! Ours was one of the first police houses to have central heating, so we considered ourselves very lucky, even if it did cost a small fortune to keep it going! I soon found that my stiletto heels made small round holes in the downstairs floorboards. Apparently the house had needed to be underpinned prior to us moving in, and presumably this had caused damp to rot the boards. It was decided that the floorboards must come up, and they were replaced by concrete floors covered with vinyl tiles, which improved the look and were certainly much easier to clean!

We were in the village during the later Cold War years, and when we moved in we found in the shed a large metal contraption with a winding handle. This proved to be the village air raid siren and, as part of the civil defences and the dreaded four minute warning, several times a year on appointed days at specific times, Den was required to take the siren out of the shed, into the centre of the crossroads, wind the handle for two minutes and thus give due warning to all the locals that an air raid could be about to happen. Discretion being the better part of doing what you're told, Den chose to stay in the back garden for this exercise, so it was an extremely loud and disturbing experience for the children and the chickens. The police house was also equipped with a large brown bakelite box on the hall windowsill, which was connected to the telephone line. Again at certain pre-ordained times during the year, one of us had to be available to stand by this machine, which would spring to life and emit a series of bleeps, buzzes and random words, phrases and numbers; all

had to be carefully listened to and recorded so that the powers that be were satisfied that we were prepared and practiced to receive news of potential disaster. I wasn't ever asked to wind the siren, but several times I spent a tedious fifteen minutes noting down apparently meaningless messages from the machine; thankfully, it was all phased out a couple of years before we moved.

Effingham was then a large village astride the A246 between Guildford and Leatherhead. Within it's boundary were two pubs, a parade of small shops, a separate newsagent, a large church, a village hall, a secondary school, two primary schools, a golf course, a convent, a distribution warehouse for the local dairies, a small engineering works, a nursery site growing tomatoes and cucumbers, a gypsy encampment and, at the far end of the village, a railway station serving the commuter line from Guildford to London. There were large, impressive houses along leafy lanes, rows of modern-built houses and bungalows, a medium sized council estate, and a considerable acreage of farmland and unspoilt countryside. The Police house was set at a crossroads, opposite one of the primary schools and the engineering works and, most importantly, next door to one of the pubs, The Plough. There were two 'bus routes running between Guildford and Leatherhead, one conveniently calling at our crossroads. I was still working at Barclays bank in Godalming, on the other side of Guildford, when we moved, which necessitated catching a 'bus to Guildford, running across the river bridge to the south side and catching another 'bus to Godalming, a journey which could take up to two hours, (and back again at night, of course).

In due course, I was able to give up work at the bank to become a full-time wife and mother. Den worked a variety of shifts at Effingham; He had one long weekend off a month, (Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday), and the alternate Sundays, with other weekdays fitted in. The shift patterns varied; 8-4, 9-5,10-6 days, 2-10, 10-6 nights and sometimes split shifts of 9-1and 6-10. He was able to arrange the shifts so that he could play football and cricket (he still played for Surrey Police at that time), as it was Force policy that it was beneficial for officers to keep fit and active by playing sport when possible. Of course, no allowance was made for public holidays, such as Christmas or Easter, so we became quite used to Den having to work at such times. Fortunately, one of his colleagues at the Horsley section, Jock, was a Scot who liked to return to his native land to visit family and friends for New Year, and was very accommodating when it came to swapping shifts over Christmas; the trouble was, he was somewhat outnumbered by colleagues who preferred to have Christmas off.

For some of the time we were at Effingham, there was a special constable, the owner of a shop in Bookham, who used to join the regulars on some evening patrols in the car. He was a pleasant enough chap, and I saw him fairly often when he came in with Den on meal break- I remember he was very partial to homemade cheese scones and shortbread, so I often cooked a batch if I knew he was coming round. One evening when he was out with Den, his shop was raided by the police from Leatherhead, searching for stolen goods; I never heard if anything was found, but I don't remember seeing him much after that.

Not long after we'd moved in we started receiving lots of mail for the previous occupant, most of which seemed to be the dreaded red final demands. We

forwarded them on when we could, but Den answered a knock at the door one day to a rather officious looking man, who turned out to be a debt collector. Apparently our predecessor had bought a large and expensive cooker on hire purchase, and had failed to keep up the payments, or notify the company of his change of address. The man at our door was intent on re-possessing the cooker, but when we showed him the rather sad and dated one in the kitchen, he finally accepted that we were not responsible for the debt, and went away. Obviously not all police officers were honest!

Early one morning we were woken by a scraping and banging noise outside our bedroom window. Den leapt out of bed and peered through the curtains, only to come face to face with a grinning chap up on a ladder, merrily painting the outside of the window frames. Den opened the window, nearly launching the man off his perch, and demanded to know what on earth he was doing; it turned out that the outside of our house was due to be repainted, and as the firm undertaking the work had nearly finished redecorating the school across the road, they thought they would make a start on their next job. Den pointed out to the man on the ladder that the window frames hadn't even been rubbed down, and also that it was pouring with rain. 'That's OK', he said, 'I'm using waterproof paint'! After we got everything sorted out, the decorators were with us for two weeks, and I was allowed to choose the colours for the inside rooms. The old green casements were painted white, the front and back doors were a nice shade of blue, and I was allowed to choose the colours for the inside rooms. It all looked much better when it was finished, but I'm not sure that either the painters or Den were impressed by my choice for the bathroom- off white on the walls, and a beautiful 'Dubarry pink' for the bath!

From our first weeks in the village, we were the recipients of much generosity from several local residents. An important part of Den's duties was the signing of stock registers for the farmers, and during the dreadful months of the foot and mouth outbreak, Den had to go out regularly to the various farms to sign movement licences authorising the livestock going for slaughter. We were frequently presented with gifts of joints of meat, eggs, bottles of homemade wine and garden produce; it was probably against the rules to accept these, even back then, and could have been misconstrued as some form of bribery, I suppose, but it was an accepted part of friendly appreciation between residents and local police, and would have caused much offence had it been refused. Den worked on one of the pig farms for quite a while, helping out in his spare time and sometimes took our children down with him to see the new piglets, they loved it. It was strictly forbidden for police officers to have second jobs, of course, but as police pay was pretty poor at that time, the remuneration received occasionally, in the form of half a pig, was very welcome. Before too long we had to buy a freezer, as we couldn't eat all the bounty that came our way. In those days this was quite a new idea, and the only ones available for purchase were commercial chest units, so this huge appliance was delivered to our home and the only place that we could fit it was underneath the stairwell.

About a quarter of a mile from the police house was the entrance to a large nursery, Mizens, where they grew tomatoes and cucumbers commercially in huge greenhouses. When Den was on night duty, he used to call in there to chat to the night watchman to ensure all was well, and to have a cup of tea – have I mentioned that tea stops were very, very important? Mr Illingworth, as his

name suggests, was a true Yorkshireman, a friendly chap who welcomed someone to talk to during the long night hours, and it became a regular stop for Den on his rounds. Many was the time he would arrive home on a winter morning with a bag of tomatoes hanging from the handlebars of his bike, concealed by his folded cape, or in the summer, on his head secured under his helmet. I'm not sure that was why the helmets were held securely in place by a chinstrap, but it was certainly effective! Cucumbers were a little more tricky, but the long truncheon pocket in his uniform trousers proved to be just the right length!

In the late 1960's into the early 70's, the I.R.A was becoming something of a threat to various notable people in this country. One of the media moguls lived near to our village at Headley Court, near Leatherhead (now known as a Centre for rehabilitation for injured service personnel) and had received threats. Every night a local P.C. and a dog handler were sent out to patrol round the grounds, and one night Den was over there, meeting up with the dog handler that night, Lofty Juniper, who had a large Doberman Police dog. They parked up, and sat in one of the vehicles playing cribbage, while the dog was allowed to roam free; as Lofty said, if there's anyone about, the dog will let us know! In the wee small hours their game was interrupted by screams, and howls and barking from the dog, so Den and Lofty followed the noise to find a terrified man pinned to a tree by the dog. It turned out that he was the son of the gardener at Headley Court, who was serving in the army and had come home on leave to visit his parents. The terrified chap was freed from the dog's attentions and allowed on his way, and though Lofty and Den found it quite an amusing episode, I'm sure the poor young man would have disagreed.

There were a series of burglaries from the very big houses situated around Wentworth Golf Course, a short distance away, and an operation was planned to try to intercept those responsible. Den was sent to join the group one night, with his sandwiches and flask, and my portable radio for company; the area was to be swamped with police officers, dropped off around the perimeter of the course, which was basically a huge wooded area with houses along it's boundaries. It was pitch black, no lights anywhere, none of them knew where they were, and it was impossible either to move without getting completely lost, or to make contact with the nearest colleague. No one, unsurprisingly, was apprehended and the whole exercise was very badly planned and totally pointless - and my radio got trodden on and broken!

I took driving lessons while we were at Effingham, and though I can't say I ever enjoyed driving, or was very confident, it was convenient to be able to get myself and the children in to the shops at Chobham, where there was a supermarket, and to visit my father who lived near Esher, just off the A3. I had my one and only "bump" in the car while driving over to Horsley to visit the wife of a colleague. I drove in to the space in front of the garages belonging to the police houses there, and tried to turn in a circle, totally misjudging the amount of room I needed, and drove, albeit slowly and gently, into the front of one of the garages. I made enough noise to bring my friend and her policeman husband rushing out to see what had happened, and as they kindly stifled their giggles at my predicament, he unscrewed the damaged front light from my poor Beetle and placed it on the front seat. I was mortified, even more so at having to drive back home and down through our village with the car in such a

state, but apparently no one noticed. Den was sufficiently shocked not to shout at me, and I arranged to take the car to the garage next day for repairs. I remember very well that it cost me £30, which was a lot of money back then, but I didn't repeat my error. I did drive after that, but never felt very comfortable doing so, and some years later decided that I wasn't cut out for life behind the wheel, and gave up for good.

There was some lovely countryside around Effingham, and we spent as much time as we could out and about, particularly after the children came along. I spent many happy hours pushing our big "proper" pram along to Bookham, about three quarters of a mile away, to the shops there, and with its big wheels and springs it was easy going. When Nicola was old enough for a pushchair, before Tony came along, we trundled around somewhere nearly every day. There were reports coming through of a "flasher" in the woods near the rugby ground, and Den thought it would be a good idea if we took family walks round there to see if we could find him. We did catch a brief glimpse of a little man in a raincoat in amongst the trees, but he ran off before Den could speak to him, so whether or not that was the offender, we never knew. The 'flasher' was eventually apprehended, thankfully, and we had no more trouble of that sort.

One of the first events of out life in the village was the funeral of the oldest and most important resident of the Gypsy family, Old Albert Smith. I do not use the term "gypsy" in any prejudicial way, for they were real gypsies. They weren't "tinkers", not having any detectable Irish blood, and they weren't "travellers", as their lovely caravans were decidedly static. At some point during the war, the family had acquired a couple of plots of land on which Old Albert and his son, young Albert, had put their caravans, and Henry, his second son, had built a bungalow. (Young Albert had two sons, Albert and Henry, and his brother Henry had two sons called Henry and Albert - are you keeping up?) Anyway, Old Albert had just died and traditionally the entire far-flung family, together with friends and acquaintances, gathered for the ritual burning of the deceased man's caravan. All day, a stream of cars, vans and trucks passed the Police house en route to the site, and eventually a plume of smoke rose from the end of the lane as the caravan was fired. I was fascinated- who would have thought that such a thing could happen in the commuter heartlands of Surrey in the 1960's? I got to know young Albert (by that time he was Old Albert- the king is dead, long live the king), a little over the years, and rogue as he might have been at times as far as Den was concerned, he was always polite and kind to me and our children. The wives of Albert and Henry came to the house quite frequently to ask me to make clothes for their small children, and we got along very well. Den often had cause to visit their homes on official business, and was always offered tea in the finest bone china cups; he was impressed by the immaculate and beautiful homes they kept.

Early one morning shortly after we moved in we were woken by a loud rumbling noise from the side of the house; Albert's truck was parked in the pub car park next to our side fence, and Albert was heaving a large load of logs over into out garden. He topped the heap off with a Christmas tree, being just a week before Christmas. He didn't want payment for any of it, and we didn't enquire too closely where it had all come from, but it was a truly kind thought which was much appreciated- and a good way to start a relationship with the

new copper!

Albert had a way with him; there was no doubt about it. The landlord of the pub next door, Harold, bought himself a pair of peacocks. Beautiful, exotic and expensive creatures, they surely were, but somewhat unnerving when they sat in the low branches of the tree by our mutual fence, watching as I hung out my washing, and extremely noisy when they communicated by their curious cries. One day when Den was at home, off duty, Harold knocked at our door to say he had just seen Albert putting one of the peacocks into his lorry, and driving off up the road with it. Den got out his trusty bike, pedalled up the lane to Albert's caravan and confronted him with Harold's accusation. Albert, knowing full well whose bird it was, said as convincingly as he could that he didn't know where it had come from, thought it was a stray, and was just doing his civic duty by rescuing it! He would, of course, he said, have brought it straight round to the Police house had he known Den was at home. Den gave him a few well-chosen words of advice, and we later learned from Harold that the bird had indeed been returned safe and sound, and Albert had been rewarded for his altruism with the gift of a fiver! There were many minor offences laid at Albert's door over the years (such as cow-licks going missing from the farmers' fields, scrap metal vanishing from Alf's yard) but many potential problems could, in those times, be sorted out quickly by a quiet word in the right ear and a little judicious advice; that was village policing. The landlord of the other pub in the village, The Earl Haig, complained to Den about trouble he had of an evening with the younger gypsies and other lads being rowdy and badly behaved in his pub. Den told him that if he refused to serve them, as he was fully entitled to do, there would be no more trouble, and when he took Den's advice that solved the problem- though it may have moved it on elsewhere! A little while after we had moved from Effingham, Den was contacted with reference to an incident near Dorking involving, it was thought, one of Albert's sons. There was some puzzlement over his identity, and it was suspected he had given false details, but no one there knew Albert's offspring well enough to be sure. When Den arrived there, he knew straight away who the miscreant was, and realised that he had given his brother's name instead of his own. The lad gave a sheepish grin when he saw Den turn up, and said 'It had to be you- no one else would have rumbled me'.

The pub next door to us, The Plough had recently been owned by Mr and Mrs Handley and featured as "Jim's Inn" in an early advertising programme on ITV, with their son, Jimmy Handley acting as Landlord and host. Jimmy's parents sold up and moved to the cottage across the road from our house, and were lovely neighbours to us while we were there. I worked as a cleaner for Mrs Handley for some time, and often took our baby daughter Nicola across with me, where she slept in her pram under the apple trees in their garden. Mr Handley had been a silversmith, and gave our son a beautiful silver serviette ring he'd made.

Mrs Handley probably also saved our son's life; Tony was a placid baby, but he disliked lying awake upstairs in his cot when he awoke from his afternoon nap. He became very adept at jiggling the cot around on the floorboards, alerting me to the fact that he was awake, and one day he managed to shuffle the cot across the room to the window, climb out of the cot onto the windowsill, where he stood waving to the passing cars.

Luckily Mrs Handley spotted him from across the road and 'phoned me to let me know.

During our time in Effingham, The Plough was owned by Harold and Vera. I went to work as a cleaner for Harold after Nicola was born, and of course at that time, most customers of a pub smoked. Every surface seemed to be permanently covered with a thin, greasy brown film of nicotine, and the place always smelt of cigarette smoke, despite Vera's best efforts at airing the place. It wasn't particularly hard work, though I hated cleaning the copper-topped tables in the saloon bar, which had to be done with diluted vinegar on a cloth, and an awful lot of elbow grease; Harold always cleaned out the men's toilets for me, for which I was very grateful. I was later asked if I would be able to help out in the pub behind the bar, and I was happy to do so whenever Den was available to look after the children. It was pleasant enough, except on a Sunday lunchtime, which I only worked occasionally, when it was really busy and the saloon bar was filled with what today would be called 'hooray Henrys', few of whom seemed to have much in the way of manners. I always preferred the public bar, where all the locals drank pints of brown and mild or mild and bitter; I got quite good at pulling the old-fashioned pump handles, some of which were beautifully decorated with farming and hunting scenes, for the mild, 'cooking' bitter and best bitter. The till was, of course, quite old fashioned compared to today's gleaming machines, and all the adding up and change due had to be worked out in one's head, or if it was a really big order, on a scrap of paper- though it was sometimes hard to find a pen amid the lemon slices and jars of cocktail cherries. I'm sure my capabilities in mental arithmetic improved a whole lot during that time- and I learned to make a mean snowball. We served bags of crisps but not much more, until Vera decided we should branch out and offer sandwiches. These were to be made by whoever was serving in the bar, in a small back room with no wash-hand basin, on a cramped table with a slightly grubby wooden surface, and no fridge to store the sandwich fillings in. I was shown how to fill a sandwich, putting most of the filling in the centre of the slice of bread so that, when cut and arranged on the plate cut sides up, the sandwich appeared far better filled than it really was! It left me with a lifelong

distrust of pub sandwiches! Harold always insisted on escorting me back to my front door after closing time, even though we only lived next door, but he was a true gentleman, and I became very fond of him.

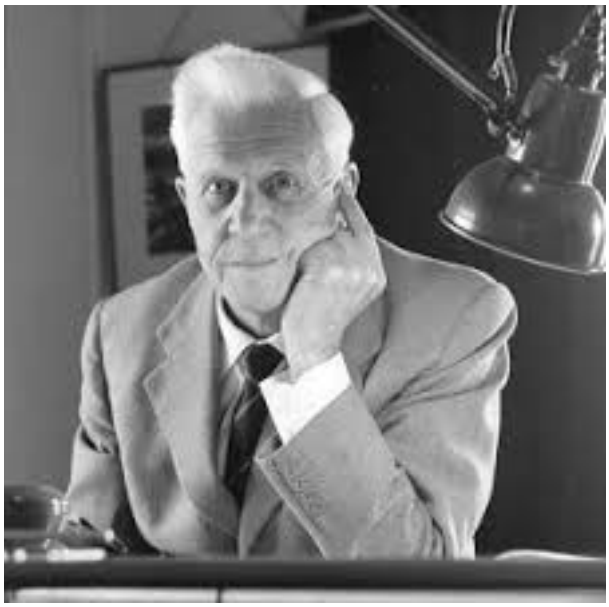
At the same time, I went to work for two retired gentlemen who lived in a lovely, if austere and Spartan house down near the common. They were brothers, and always known as "The Colonel" and "The Major". When I answered their advertisement for domestic help, I was invited down for an interview, and, not unreasonably, asked for references. I offered my time at the bank as all I had, though I didn't think it was particularly relevant, but when I then gave my address, they went into raptures- the policeman's wife, well, of course that would be just fine! I worked for them very happily for some years, their military training and experience made them very neat and tidy and it was easy to keep their home clean.

Another employer was a really lovely lady who lived at East Horsley. She was the daughter in law of the Chief Cashier of the Bank of England (his signature appeared on all the bank notes) and had a son of similar age to Nicola. We became good friends, and I enjoyed working in her lovely home. Den worked for her in her garden for a while, and she was a very generous employer, giving me some lovely gifts when I finally left. I have to say that all my employers around Effingham were kind enough to allow me to fit in my working hours with Den's duties, as obviously most of the time I had the children to look after, and though I'm sure it wasn't always convenient for them, it was much appreciated by me as I enjoyed getting out of the house and seeing them all every week.

I worked for a very short few months as the cleaner at the Village Hall. I worked hard for a couple of weeks, cleaning up what I thought was a rather grubby hall, toilets etc., and was slightly nonplussed to receive a call from, presumably, the chairman of the hall committee to tell me that the Sunday school had made a complaint that they had found the hall had been left dirty after a wedding reception held there on the previous evening. Since no one had informed me of the Saturday event, I said that I was sorry, but hadn't known. I was told somewhat sharply, that I was expected to clean the hall after every event held there, which was certainly not my understanding of my job. I said I'd do my best, but since the hall was quite well used by many groups, it became impossible for me to keep up with it all, and I gave notice a couple of months later.

Resident in the village at that time was Sir Barnes Wallis of Dambusters fame, and his wife would often ride her bicycle down to bring apples or tomatoes from her garden, to tell us they were going away for a while and ask if Den would keep an eye on their property. One of the duties of a village 'copper' was to make a note of empty properties in the area, and visit them to check doors and windows were secure, and that all was well; my part in that was to take down the details given at the door or over the 'phone, write them on the special forms and pass them on to Den for action. It was a service that was well used and much appreciated, and gave both of us opportunities to meet many of the folks of the village. Sir Barnes Wallis and his wife were lovely people, modest and unassuming, and Den was very thrilled to be invited into their home during one of his rounds to see their amazing collection of models of aircraft etc. from

his long and illustrious career.



Sir Barnes Wallis

One dear man, Dr Sutton, came to our door often with bowls of beautiful strawberries from his garden together with a pot of cream, or sometimes a bottle of Drambuie, "for your wife" as he was always very careful to say! He also brought me copies of the poems he wrote, and would have a cup of tea sitting at our kitchen table as I read them. One wonderful evening he took us both in his exquisite, leather upholstered Rover to see a play at the Sybil Thorndike theatre in Leatherhead, a real treat and a great kindness. When he decided he would no longer drive, he offered to sell us his car; we would have loved to have bought it, but the expense involved in keeping such a big car on the road was beyond our means.

Mr Anderson, who lived with his wife just down along the road to the station, was a connoisseur of Scotch Whiskey, new blends of which he had delivered regularly from his native land. If he saw Den on duty riding his bicycle past his house, he would quite often call out that a new bottle had arrived, and would the constable care to call in to try a dram? Well, of course the constable would, and did, and I still blame Mr Anderson entirely for Den's subsequent liking for whisky!

Then there were Sid and Heddi, who lived up on the council estate and made vast quantities of very good, extremely potent home made wine from an assortment of fruit, vegetables and grains. Den became a regular visitor there on his rounds, generally for a cup of tea or coffee, but was always offered a sample of their most recently matured brew, and sometimes a bottle to bring home. One Christmas day on duty, the folks along Den's beat were so generous with their seasonal goodwill that he had to be brought home by his sergeant in the area car at lunchtime as he wasn't in a fit state to ride his bike! With advice from Sid we started making our own wines, and soon had rows of demijohns bubbling merrily away in the kitchen, fermenting happily. It's amazing how many different wines can be made, and soon we had quite a lot of bottles laid down in racks above the kitchen cabinet, maturing nicely. One day the elderflower wine, which we had obviously bottled too soon, got ambitions to

become elderflower champagne, and one by one the corks shot out of the bottles above our heads, the contents spreading all over the kitchen. The mess was appalling, but the smell was wonderful; just a shame that we had lost so much drinkable loveliness. The only wine we ever made that we just couldn't drink was pea-pod, and even after five years maturing, it still tasted like stewed pea-pods - quite disgusting! We started to give the strained fruit and vegetables from the wine making to our chickens to peck around at, but after we discovered them one day wandering unsteadily around their pen in a semi-drunken state, happily cheeping away to each other, we had to give that idea up. Luckily it didn't affect their eggs.

Several people in the village kept chickens, and we were often the recipients of gifts of eggs. One elderly gentleman, Mr Hughes, who lived quite near to us, had a smallholding, and was kind enough to bring me a box of eggs one day; in the course of conversation I said that I would one day like to have some chickens in the garden, as I thought it would be fun for the children. Before I could think any more about it. He had disappeared, arriving back soon after with a large wooden chicken house on the back of his truck, which we manhandled into the back garden, some wire netting and stakes to make a pen, and the promise to return soon with five chickens and a rooster. A few days later, with the pen made up and ready, he arrived with the promised livestock, Rhode Island Reds crossed Light Sussex, a gorgeous Maran cockerel and a bale of straw. The chickens soon settled in and started laying, and gave us many eggs and much pleasure until we eventually had to move away from the village.

Maran Cockerel

After a time, Fred, the Maran cockerel, was making so much noise that we were receiving heavy, if veiled hints from the neighbours that he wasn't altogether a welcome addition to the neighbourhood, so unfortunately we had to ask Mr Hughes to dispose of him. I hadn't quite expected that he would come and wring Fred's neck right there in our back garden, but he did, and then handed me back the still warm carcase. I braved the plucking and drawing of poor Fred (with advice from my mother-in-law) and duly cooked the bird, but none of us could eat any of the meat, and I think the dog ate very well for the next few days! Our kind benefactor eventually took the three elderly feathered survivors back before we moved, together with the chicken house. We were so

sad to hear 'on the grapevine' that a short while after we had left, Mr Hughes had a heart attack at the wheel of his truck, and died in the subsequent accident.

Near us lived the caretaker of the secondary school, and while chatting to Den one day he said that part of his job was to look after the school's indoor swimming pool, which he would be happy to open up for us out of school hours so we could have some swimming sessions. He had taught many people to swim over the years, and it was agreed that we would take the children so that I could teach Nicola to swim, Tony could learn to play safely in the water, and Den would have swimming lessons. We enjoyed many happy hours in the heated pool, our daughter became a confident swimmer, Tony splashed happily around in his inflatable armbands, but sadly Den never did learn to swim- except straight to the bottom of the pool!

The nearby small convent housed a group of nuns who ran a smallholding to supply the Motherhouse, some distance away, with fresh produce. Behind the main building was a huge garden and orchard, and down along our lane they had a small farm managed by a kindly Irishman called Michael, who we got to know quite well. When one of the cows was having trouble calving one evening, Michael came across to ask Den to go and help; after some considerable time, with the two of them heaving on ropes tied around the calf's leg, a huge bull calf was born, but sadly it didn't survive it's dramatic entry into the world. After that, Michael would bring over a small churn of creamy milk from the cows for the children, and suggested that we could buy a couple of calves, which he would rear at the farm for us, and we could take the children down whenever they wanted to see them. Eventually he would take them to market and give us a percentage of the price they fetched. It was a lovely idea, and soon two dear little calves appeared down there (Buttercup and Daisy, of course). We spent a lot of time with them as the children came to love being at the farm, and we helped out with chores when we could. Michael also told us to help ourselves to fallen apples from the convent orchard, which we did sometimes; unfortunately I think he forgot to tell the nuns of his (their) largesse, and we had a rather embarrassing meeting with one of them one day in the orchard, when I'm sure she thought we were "scrumping"!

Bingo was a terrier of assorted varieties, and lived quite happily with his owner, Alf Galloway, at the cafe near the main road through the village. He was also the Don Juan of the canine population of Effingham, and spent a great deal of his time roaming the lanes and fields around our village seeking out bitches in season whose owners had been careless enough to leave them outside the shops, in their gardens, off the lead on walks - you get the picture. Bingo was a tireless Romeo, and a very successful one at that; it was amazing how many puppies born in our area had a striking resemblance to the wandering one, and there were some very strange crossbreeds around. Today, the age of labradoodles and cockerpoos, that would seem to be quite a popular idea, but back then it caused a lot of annoyance. Now, between Den's duty roster, limited funds and two small children, we didn't very often go out of the village for much more than a weekly shopping foray to Leatherhead. On rare occasions we managed a day out, and went to visit Den's parents who lived some 20 miles away. After one such outing we arrived home in the evening, having been out since about nine o'clock that morning, to find a resigned Bingo

sitting by our side gate, tied to the post by a length of rope and out of sight of any passer-by. A note was pinned to the gate, to the effect that someone (anonymous) had found the dog wandering and brought it to the Police house as 'a place of safety'; as no one was at home, the dog had been left for Den to deal with on his return. It had been a hot day, there was no food or water left for the poor dog, and we had no idea how long he had been tied up. Whoever had left him had obviously not stopped to think that we might be out all day, or even away on holiday (rare, but it did occasionally happen), and equally obviously, they didn't care. We gave Bingo a drink, released him from his tether and he trotted off home quite happily. Den had a word with Alf at a later date, but, as he pointed out, boys will be boys! We did acquire one of Bingo's offspring eventually, as a companion for the children and a reason to get them out and about for walks. She was much loved, and we had great fun with her, but unfortunately she became very protective of the children, and took great exception to the baby sitters who we occasionally employed while we went out for an evening. Several times we came home to find that Binky hadn't allowed the babysitters to get into the kitchen to eat the supper I had left for them, and on one dreadful occasion she actually bit one of them. Sadly it wasn't possible for a dog, which could be aggressive to live at a Police house, so I had the heart-breaking job of taking her to the nearby Vet so he could find her a new home.

Both our children were born while we were at Effingham, Nicola at Mount Alvernia hospital in Guildford, which was run by nursing nuns, and Tony at home. The night before Nicola arrived, Den was on night shift, and when he came in for his meal break at 2am. I said I thought it was time for me to go in to the hospital. Den drove me in our car to Mount Alvernia, left me in the care of the nuns and drove home to go back on duty. I actually slept reasonably well for the rest of the night, Den went to bed when he came off shift at 6am, and rang the hospital when he woke up at midday to be told that his daughter had been born.

There was no official office at our Police house that was some five miles away at West Horsley. The blue Police sign by our front door obviously gave people the impression that someone official would be available there all the time, and our telephone number was listed in the 'phone book as The Police House Effingham, so we were very easily contactable. I was happy, (usually, unless I was in the middle of bathing the baby or baking) to take messages, pass on important information, give directions, etc., but anything much more than that was beyond my remit, though it was sometimes difficult to convince our callers of that. In fact, a local resident called one afternoon to report that he would shortly be going on holiday, and to give all the appropriate information at great length. Though Den was at home, and Nicola was down at the end of the garden with her grandparents, who happened to be over with us for the day, I was upstairs at the time giving birth to our son. Our caller was very upset when Den tried to explain the situation and politely declined to take his details at that particular moment, and only 'got the message' when the midwife rushed down the stairs to ask for more towels and hot water! Our son was born shortly afterwards, but the caller never did come back.

One night when Den was on duty, the 'phone rang at about two in the morning, and since this was an extremely unusual occurrence, I immediately thought

that something dreadful had happened to Den or a member of our families. I answered the 'phone, somewhat sleepily, to a reporter from the Daily Mail, calling to enquire about alleged sightings in our area of 'The Surrey Puma'. This was referencing a large, cat-like animal, which had reportedly been seen in several areas of rural Surrey, photographed from some distance by enthusiastic 'believers' and dubiously identified as a puma by 'experts'. No-one with any common sense gave any credence to the stories, which came up in the local press on slow news weeks, and in my sleepy state I wasn't very impressed at being woken up and asked for information which I didn't have anyway. I can't remember my exact response; it was probably fairly sharp, though I hope reasonably polite, but at least my comments didn't make the front page of the Daily Mail- as far as I'm aware.

I took a call one afternoon from a very excited gentleman who told me he needed to contact the police urgently to report the sighting of a rare wild animal down on the common. Den was on duty somewhere in the area, as I explained, but my caller insisted he needed the police straight away; he had rushed home from the common to call, but would be going straight back to watch over his sighting (no mobile 'phones, remember). All I could do was to take the details and try to contact someone at the office in West Horsley to pass them on to Den when he made his next point. When I'd requested details of the caller, the location and the sighting, I had to ask him to repeat himself; he was apparently quite certain that he'd been face to face with a large penguin, possibly an Emperor? At this point I was sure I had a joker on the end of the line, or at the very least someone who had spent a little too long having lunch in the pub, but I made a note of everything he said, thanked him, and called the office. Luckily the sergeant was there to take my call, so though I felt a complete idiot, I tried not to giggle as I repeated the information to him. Apart from almost being able to hear his eyebrows rising, I detected no intimation of doubt from him, and left it with him. When Den got home, it turned out that there had indeed been a penguin wandering around on Effingham Common; it had escaped from the home of a local resident who kept a private collection of exotic animals in the grounds of his property nearby. At that time there was no regulation of individuals keeping such animals, but it occurred to me that it was, perhaps, fortunate that the escapee was a mild mannered penguin and not a large and ferocious carnivore!

In those days there were hostels for the homeless in most large towns, and Effingham was on a regular route between the ones at Guildford and Leatherhead. Since the "gentlemen of the road" were only allowed a couple of nights at each centre, some of them walked frequently backwards and forwards between them, and it was quite common for them to call in on us to ask for a drink and a slice of bread to keep them going along their way. Most were polite and friendly, many being ex-servicemen who had suffered trauma and loss through the war; we always tried to give them a cup of tea and a sandwich. Unfortunately, there were always one or two who took advantage and used us as an easy touch, and some were not so honest in their intentions towards our residents. One of these unfortunate men lived in the village for quite a while, making his home in a hole in the ground under a hedge. He was quite harmless, if a little anti-social, and was known as Turnip. Den kept an eye on him, making the occasional visit to check that he was all right, particularly in the winter months. One day Turnip just moved on; we never did know where he

went, or what happened to him.

One snowy Christmas day, Den was on early shift, and received a call to go over to Clandon Park, home of Lord Onslow and his family, just outside Guildford; the alarm had gone off, and attendance was required straight away. Den drove out to Clandon, and by the time he arrived it had been ascertained that one of the Onslow's many guests had wandered into an out-of-bounds area and inadvertently triggered the alarm. In the midst of the entire family and their many houseguests, Den was cordially welcomed and invited to a seasonal glass of sherry. He was about to accept with alacrity when a large number of police officers, many of senior rank, arrived to deal with the by now silent alarm, so much to Den's chagrin, he was told to return to his rural rounds minus his glass of sherry.

Clandon Park

I took a telephone call one day from a lady who sounded in a state of absolute panic. I tried to calm her enough for her to tell me what she was so worried about, and eventually she was able to say that her daughter had gone out for a bicycle ride some time earlier that afternoon, and despite strict instructions to be out no longer than an hour, an hour and a half had passed since she left home. It was rare, though not unheard of for children to go missing in our area, and they usually turned up safe, well, and hungry having been playing with friends and forgotten the time. However, it's obviously of great concern when such a thing happens, so I started to take down a detailed description of the child and the bike so I could pass it all on quickly to the office. The lady on the 'phone was only too eager to give me every detail that might help, and painted a long and involved picture of her daughter. As she paused for breath, I asked what I hoped would be my final question, which was to check the age of he child- which, as it turned out, was 48! When I had recovered from the shock, I suggested to the caller that she should wait another half an hour and then call me back to let me know whether or not the daughter had returned home, at which time I would pass everything over to the sergeant for action as necessary. This was clearly not what she had hoped for, and our conversation continued for some further ten minutes, at which point she dissolved into tears of relief, as it turned out, as her missing offspring returned home. I had a few words with the daughter, who apologised for troubling me, explaining, as I had already guessed, that her mother was of a nervous disposition and rather over-protective. I felt grateful for the outcome- how dreadful it could have been if a young child had been involved.

Over a period of time I got several irate calls from a lady called Miss Savill, who lived down a lane on the outskirts of the village. She accused her next-door neighbour, Dr Underwood, of various things at different times, including stealing her cats and their kittens. Now Dr Underwood was a perfectly respectable man who lived in quite a large house surrounded on all sides by a high wooden fence, with locked gates into the property. He was a naturist, and frequently had many houseguests of the same persuasion, as he was perfectly entitled to do, and they enjoyed sunbathing in his garden in the better weather, behind the high fences and trees. Miss Savill was a well-spoken but very straight-laced lady who had obviously got to hear of his nefarious 'activities' and had taken strong exception to them. The last call I got from her said that she had been changing a light bulb when she had seen naked people wandering about next door. On enquiry it transpired that, in order to change the light bulb, she had needed to stand on steps in her bedroom, and it was from this vantage point that she had been so offended. I think it was suggested that, next time she needed that light bulb changed, she ask someone else to do it for her.

There was an incident in the village, when Den was at home one day having his meal break. A mother rang the office to say that her young daughter had just come home for lunch from her private school in tears and with her clothes ripped, saying that she had been pulled onto the common and assaulted by two boys from the local secondary school. Frank, the officer who took the call, went straight round to see her and the girl was able to give a good description to him. He thought he knew who one of the boys might be, and Frank and Den went to the school and interviewed the lad in the presence of the Headmaster; the boy admitted the assault and gave the name of the other offender, and the case later went to Court at Guildford, with a guilty plea. This was another case in which the local knowledge of the officers in the area contributed to a swift and satisfactory outcome to a most unpleasant episode.

Sometimes our home necessarily played temporary host to miscreants. Den arrived home in the middle of a shift one day with a young teenage girl, a runaway from Borstal who he'd found wandering round the village. She was, not surprisingly, somewhat sulky and uncooperative (what would be called stroppy now) but when she had a cup of tea and a slice of cake she relaxed enough to play with our baby son, and even talk quite pleasantly to us while she waited for an official to come to collect her and return her to Borstal.

One of our local lads had committed a series of thefts locally, though not in our village, and was wanted for arrest on warrant. Despite many attempts by Leatherhead C.I.D. officers, he had managed to evade police clutches, and Den was asked to assist. He knew the lad quite well, and also the parents, who lived in our village, so he went round to see them. He was fairly certain that Paul was hiding out upstairs when he arrived, but he chatted to the parents and convinced them, loudly, that it would be best for Paul if he gave himself up; it was inevitable that he would be caught at some stage. Later that evening a call came through at home from Paul, asking for twenty-four hours grace to say goodbye to his girlfriend, after which he would surrender himself to Den. Thus it was that the next evening Paul arrived on our doorstep, as arranged, and came in for a cup of tea, while Den rang a very surprised C.I.D. to tell them they could come and collect him. Paul was very polite and friendly, and had

even brought a selection of handbags for me to look at, in case I wanted to buy one from him "at a very advantageous price"! I have no doubt they were of somewhat dubious origin, but it was a kind thought (I think). Den later received profuse thanks from Paul's parents, who had clearly been very worried about their son's activities, and after serving his sentence, Paul turned his life around and settled down as an honest citizen.

It was part of Den's role as village policeman to get to know as many people in the community as possible, and at that time he played football for the local village team, duties permitting. He thus became acquainted with, indeed friends with, many of the younger men and sometimes their families. We went to several of the social occasions organised in the village, which helped me to get to know their various wives and girlfriends. I'm not sure what some of them expected a policeman's wife to be like, but one of the nicest comments I received at that time was "well, you're quite ordinary really, aren't you?" On one occasion when we were at a Football club dance at the Village Hall, one of the men attending drank too much and started to get aggressive. Though Den was obviously off duty, someone came over to tell him that he might need to take some action shortly to prevent a fight, which would have somewhat ruined our evening, and could have turned nasty. As he moved to go across to the bar to intervene in the impending trouble, two of the lads, Pete and Divvy stopped him, saying there was nothing to worry about; it had all been "taken care of". They wouldn't say by whom or how, but they were determined his evening shouldn't be spoiled- good friends to have. The lads were very friendly, and we had cause to appreciate them late one night when we heard a loud banging on our door. On opening it we found several locals outside holding a terrified chap in a non-too gentle grip. It transpired he had manage to reverse his car into ours as he tried to leave the pub next door (Harold kindly allowed us to park our VW on his car park next to our side fence). The lads had seen what had happened, dragged the driver from his car and insisted, none too gently that he should come round under escort to confess to the local copper, whose car he had hit. We would never have known what had happened without our bunch of "guardian angels". As it had all happened on private property, we wouldn't have had any right to make a claim anyway, but the chap was so scared by the whole situation, he quickly offered to pay for any necessary repairs, and did so. I'm not sure he ever frequented that pub again, though.

On the main road there was school crossing patrol from the council estate across to the primary and secondary schools, manned by a very pleasant older lady. She was very efficient, with her uniform and "lollipop" but she always steadfastly refused to wear her hat. She complained on several occasions that vehicles sometimes refused to stop for her, and when Den went up to talk to her, he told her that unless she wore the full official uniform, hat included, her directions to motorists could not be enforced. Unfortunately she never did wear her hat, but continued to get the children safely across the road for many more years, unhelpful drivers notwithstanding.

The Harry Secombe pro-celebrity Classic golf tournaments came to the golf club at Effingham, and Den was given the job of doing traffic duty up on the main road. Apparently at one point, he got a bit over enthusiastic, and someone followed his insistently waving arm into the car park when they really wanted to carry on along the main road, and mentioned it to the organisers. It was

given out over the loudspeaker at the event, 'would someone please go and tell the officer doing traffic duty outside that some motorists are allowed to make their way on to Guildford as not everyone wants to come in to the golf tournament'!

One Sunday in September 1968 we had arranged to take the children over to Hambledon to visit Den's parents, and although the forecast was for rain, we set off early to make the most of Den's day off. We went, as usual, through the back roads and over the river at Shalford, noticing that the water was already extremely high and almost over the riverbanks; this wasn't particularly unusual, as that area is very low lying. It poured with rain all day, and as the children were still young and Den had to go in to work the next morning, we decided to leave a bit earlier than we normally would to get home in good time. Den thought it would be prudent to avoid the back roads, so we went via Godalming, and between Farncombe and Peasemarsh found the main road awash with water. Our little VW Beetle was under-sealed, so Den eased it slowly through the water, past a car that had driven fast into the water and become stranded, and we carried on in some trepidation to Guildford, knowing that once we got across the river there, we could get home safely on the higher ground. Although the road through Peasemarsh was almost overcome by the river water, we were fortunate that we made it through before the river burst its banks at Guildford. In the early hours of the following morning Den received a 'phone call summoning him to Guildford to assist in coping with the flooding. The River Wey had risen high above its banks, and the lower parts of Guildford were flooding badly. He was tasked to go to the Gas Works, in the middle of the flooded area of the town, because the authorities were afraid that it would flood. The turbines ran continuously to produce what was then known as 'town gas' and if overcome with water there was serious risk of real danger and long-term damage. The 'phone lines were down in many areas, so Den was given a basic walkie-talkie radio, and told to monitor the flood waters. He was able to walk in through shallow water to the site, but after standing all night in the rising, muddy, smelly river water the rain eased, and he was brought out by boat, through Millbank, where the 'bus station normally was, and up North Street to safe ground. He was out all night, and came home extremely damp and cold, but apart from a very soggy uniform, not much the worse for wear. Many areas of Surrey were flooded at that time, including Leatherhead, where the bridge across the River Mole was washed away, and East Molsely, where hundreds of lovely riverside properties were ruined; flood prevention works were soon undertaken to try to prevent a repeat of the problem.

Fortunately, the really serious events were few and far between, but there were two occasions, which have stayed in my memory when I would really, rather they had not. One Christmas Eve Den was late returning home from duty, but as this was not an unusual occurrence, I'd learned not to fret too much. As time wore on, however, I did get worried; eventually he arrived back looking really upset. Apparently late in the evening there had been a really bad accident between two cars on the main road at Horsley, several people had been injured, and the Fire Brigade had cut one, a little girl, from the wreckage. She had been rushed to the hospital at Guildford by ambulance, and Den had followed with the distraught parents. Her injuries had been extremely serious, and Den told me of her screams as she was wheeled down the hospital corridor and examined in the accident and emergency department. I don't remember the

outcome for that poor little girl, but I know that for months Den was haunted at night by those screams; he's now forgotten the incident, having witnessed so many similar dreadful things in the course of his service - an aspect of the job that, perhaps fortunately, not many people are aware of.

The very worst event during our time at Effingham involved a young university student, who had come home for the vacation to his mother's house in the village. His parents were separated, and his mother away on holiday- whether the lad had come home unexpectedly, I'm not sure, but he was alone in the house at the time. Den's colleague, Pete, went round there on a routine house check, as the property was on the unoccupied list, and discovered a shocking scene. The lad had blown his head off in the living room, using his father's shotgun. Pete called the sergeant, who went straight over there, and he then called Den to go down and assist. The mother had to be located wherever she was on holiday, and told the terrible news, and the father was contacted. By the time Den got there, the body had been removed, but the mess in the room was indescribable. The three of them started to try to clean things up as much as possible, so that it wasn't too awful when the parents arrived; the furniture and walls were spattered with blood and brains, but the ceiling was the worst affected area. I knew nothing of all this until Den eventually arrived home, looking grim and exhausted, his uniform splashed with red and grey detritus. The grisly scene took two days work for them to clear as best they could, scraping wallpaper off and washing down the ceiling and the furniture; this was not part of their job, but was done to save the family from walking into a totally hellish scene. A couple of days after the mother arrived back home, the sergeant informed the team that she had put in a complaint that the police officers attending had damaged her furniture, ruined her wallpaper and ceiling and had drunk a couple of glasses of her whisky! I always wondered if this gave some clue as to why she was estranged from her husband, and her poor young son had taken his own life in such a way. These days, with no local police checking unoccupied properties, the mother would have walked in to that scene, just as it was, on her return from holiday.

The most exciting incident during our time in the village was a heist! The Metropolitan police had received a detailed tip-off that an armed robbery was planned by a London gang at the warehouse of Cow and Gate dairies, which just happened to be about 50 yards up the road from our police house. The warehouse supplied all the local milk deliveries with groceries, and presumably a substantial amount of cash was kept on site as well. A member of the Gate's family lived near the warehouse, and he and the staff were informed, and primed as to what might happen and how to react if necessary. The local C.I.D. decided to base their operations in our house, with various officers deployed in cars and on foot, patrolling the area to check on the progress of the perpetrators and take down car numbers in case they were of interest as evidence. Den was tasked with arranging with the churchwarden, George, to allow access to two officers onto the top of the church tower, being a good vantage point, though they were warned not to touch the cables that would start the clock chimes into action, thus possibly alerting the criminals. At one point a female officer asked if she could take Nicola for a walk in the pram up the village past the dairy, to see what was happening- and I still can't believe that I agreed! Walkie-talkies (no mobiles then) were used, and eventually the call came through that the robbery was in progress; there were

police, plain clothed and uniformed, appearing out of nowhere, running every which way, and shortly one of the robbers came tearing round the corner, past our house and up the lane. Den and a colleague took off after him, and chased him quite a way before he ran out of puff and gave himself up to them. They came back clutching him triumphantly, and handed him over; all the would-be robbers were caught, no one got hurt, nothing was stolen, and it was the talk of the village for weeks. In fact, it all made such an impression that a short while later a call came through to say that a masked man had been seen in a car near the church acting suspiciously. When Den went to investigate, it turned out to be the vicar in his bee-keeping gear.

We spent a very happy seven years at Effingham, but Den felt he wanted to widen his service experience. The M25 was being built, in stages, and a new Traffic Centre opened at Godstone to service that section. Den applied to the Traffic Department, and after undergoing an Advanced Police driving course, he was offered a post at Godstone, along with a brand new house on a small estate of police properties. So it was that we moved from Effingham, having made many friends and been privileged to enjoy a way of life that has now long since gone. Den later received a very nice letter from the Clerk of the Parish Council, thanking him for all his good work in the village. I didn't! In the course of Den's service after that time, I was no longer involved in any policing activities, and village "coppers" were sadly pretty much phased out over the next two or three years.

Police Houses at Godstone

Long Service Medal about 1983 Rear Brian Richardson, Dave Stone, Dave Morris, Clive Hanks, Denni Edwards, Young, Mick Binckes, Front Derek Cadey, Deputy Chief Constable John Smith Chairman PA, Chief Constable Brian Hayes, Mick Poole and unknown

The Traffic Man