

THE EXCEPTIONAL KING'S POLICE MEDAL GROUP TO AN AMERICAN METROPOLITAN POLICE CONSTABLE WHO WAS SHOT AT WATERLOO STATION IN 1918 WHILST ATTEMPTING TO ARREST A CANADIAN INFANTRY PRIVATE WHO HAD RECENTLY DESERTED, THE MEDALS COMPLETE WITH THE CONSTABLES CIGARETTE CASE WHICH WAS HIT BY A BULLET DURING THE STRUGGLE



KING'S POLICE MEDAL, G.V.R., 1ST ISSUE, WITH GALLANTRY RIBBON 'WILLIAM WILLIAMS, COST. METROPOLITAN POLICE.', IN CASE OF ISSUE, WITH PIN FOR WEAR, CORONATION 1911, METROPOLITAN POLICE 'P.C. W. WILLIAMS' WITH PIN FOR WEAR. WITH A SILVER CIGARETTE CASE ENGRAVED 'W.E.W.', HALLMARKED BIRMINGHAM 1909, THE CASE DAMAGED WITH A BULLET HOLE.

K.P.M. *London Gazette* 1 January 1920. The Original citation reading:

"Constable Richardson and Williams were sent to Waterloo Railway Station on 20th September 1918 to meet a train and arrest a man who Surrey Police wanted for housebreaking. When confronted, the man resisted arrest violently and produced an automatic pistol. He shot and disabled Constable Richardson. Constable Williams then closed with him and endeavoured to get the pistol, but the man shot him in the thigh. Constable Williams closed with him again but was thrown down and could not rise; the prisoner ran away. Sergeant Bird and Constable Riches had by this time arrived and chased the man through several streets, finally coming upon him in a wash-house, where they arrested him. The pistol was found in the wash-house still containing five live cartridges."

William Evan Williams was born Pennsylvania, United States of America, on 15 June 1885 and joined Metropolitan Police on 11 September 1905. Initially serving as a Constable of T Division, due to a

boundary alteration, he briefly joined B Division on 3 March 1909, before joining L Division on 10 November that year, Police number 333L.

On 20 September 1918, Constables Williams and Richardson, in plain clothes, went to Waterloo Railway Station to arrest a suspect wanted by Surrey Police. The man resisted arrest and produced Colt automatic pistol and shot Constable Richardson in the knee. Constable Williams then attempted to take the pistol from the prisoner's hand, but he managed to free his arm and shot Williams point blank in the thigh. Williams again caught hold of the prisoner and the struggle continued until Williams fell to the ground and the prisoner started to run. Williams managed to get up and managed to pursue him for 2 or 3 yards before falling to the ground again and blew his whistle for assistance. Sergeant Bird and Constable Riches then arrived on the scene and after a long chase arrested the man.

The arrested man, Private Milford Granger of the 8th Reserved Battalion, Canadian Infantry, who had deserted three weeks previous to his arrest. He was charged with attempted murder and sentenced to 5 years Penal Servitude in December 1918.

Constable Williams resigned from the police on 26 November 1919, presumably after recovering from his wounds. This after 14 years' service and aged 34

On his pension record under 'Particular mark, defect or infirmity', is noted "*Scar from bullet wound – left thigh, slight lump*" and under 'If injured in the Service..'; "*bullet wound left thigh*"

It also notes he was married to Alice Jane Williams and lived at 118 York Road, Lambeth, SE1



THE SILVER CIGARETTE CASE

The silver cigarette case is engraved with Williams initials 'WEW' and has a bullet hole through it. Bullet has penetrated though one side of the case but has left indentation on the other without going through which suggests this was one of the other shots fired, not the one that hit his thigh, the case saving him from another wound. It is of course also possible the bullet ricocheted off the case into Williams's thigh. Perhaps further details will have appeared in a newspaper or such of the day as it is likely that the bullet hitting this cigarette case either prevented another wound or slowed down the bullet if it was a ricochet.



AN EXCITING CHASE

SOLDIER'S MAD ACT.

POLICE OFFICERS SHOT.

An affray and an exciting chase outside Waterloo Station, London, in which two plain-clothes constables were shot in the legs by a Canadian soldier, had a sequel at Tower Bridge Police Court on September 27, when Milford Grauger, 18½, who had been an absentee from his regiment for three weeks, was charged with attempted murder. A Canadian by birth, he had been in the army for over a year, and had seen service in France. A telephone message had been received from the Guildford police that a man whose description they forwarded was wanted for an alleged offence, and Constables William Williams and George Richardson, in plain clothes, awaited the man's arrival at Waterloo Station. They met Grauger, who was in civilian attire, at the gate of No. 9 platform, as he left a train, and he accompanied them as far as an exit of the station, when he raised an objection to being taken into custody on suspicion, exclaiming, "I want to see your authority." At the same moment he stepped back a few paces, and drawing an automatic pistol from his hip pocket, fired at the legs of the constables. Then he bolted down the slope towards Waterloo-road. A corporal of the Military Police immediately gave chase, and a Military Police sergeant also raised the alarm at another point.

I'm Finished.

Grauger raced his hardest, keeping up the advantage which his start had given him. He turned to the left into York-street, and cut across into Lambeth-square, which has but this one approach. Finding himself held up he crossed the square and ran through the open doorway of a house, stumbling along the passage, then descending half a dozen stairs and entering the back yard, which is flanked by 7-ft. walls. He scaled the wall to his left, tearing away a water pipe in his attempt to gain a footing; he crossed a similar yard at the rear of another house, and negotiated a second wall, and in the yard of a third house he fell foul of a clothes line and floundered into a tub of water. Eventually he found all further chance of escape was cut off by a number of soldiers and policemen, and on being rearrested he said, "I'm finished."

The accused, a stalwart and powerfully-built young man, was wearing a light sporting coat. When searched at Kennington-road police-station he was found to have, besides about £12, a curious assortment of articles, including three watches, a fourpenny piece, three foreign coins, a British Empire Union badge, a belt containing six live and one spent cartridges, and a pair of handcuffs. At the

belt containing six live and one spent cartridges, and a pair of handcuffs. At the railway-station he threw away an attache case, and in it were found, besides other articles, an antique bayonet, an antique pistol, five metal watches, and five metal chains.

Detective-Inspector Storey said he saw the accused at Cannon-row police-station, and told him he was going to charge him with the attempted murder of Constables Williams and Richardson by shooting at them with an automatic pistol. The prisoner replied, "It was an accident. I didn't mean to shoot him." When the charge was read over to him he again said, "I didn't mean to shoot him." In reply to the magistrate, the inspector said that both constables were wounded and in hospital. One of them was shot through the knee and the other in the thigh. The injuries sustained by one of them were somewhat dangerous. Prisoner, who had no questions to ask, was remanded for a week.

Statement by Grauger.

In a "statement" made to the police, prisoner expressed a desire to tell the truth about the affair. After stating that he had deserted from Witley camp about three weeks ago, he said that on the morning of his arrest he went into a cottage just outside Guildford, and having received permission to wash himself he stole some food. He explained that he was not in uniform at the time, as he had bought civilian clothes a week previously, and that he had the automatic pistol, having purchased it from a soldier who had just returned from France. Proceeding, he said:—

"When I left the cottage where I got the food I walked to the railway-station and left by train, about 12 o'clock, for London, and arrived at Waterloo station about 2 o'clock. When I was leaving the station I was stopped by two men, who I thought were constables. One of them said to me, 'We are looking for you, as 'we want you.' I asked them to show me their cards, but they did not do so. There were two soldiers hanging on to the constables, and they (the police officers) threw me down. As I fell the revolver came out of my right hip pocket. I think, as it struck the ground, the trigger was forced back. I picked it up and it went off three or four times. One of the officers fell down. I afterwards saw them both lying on the floor. I think one of them got up and ran after me. I held the revolver in my hand all the time. I ran down out of the station into a road and through the hallway of a house into the back garden, and got into a shed. I then threw the revolver into the corner of the shed. A cigarette case and a policeman's warrant card I threw into a tub of water outside the shed. I was not there above ten minutes before I heard someone outside. I then came out and gave myself up to a sergeant of police. I am very sorry that this has occurred."

The rest of the statement referred to the various articles found in his possession, concerning which the police are making enquiries.

ATTEMPTED MURDER.

PLUCKY POLICEMAN'S DRAMATIC STRUGGLE AT WATERLOO STATION.

At Tower Bridge Police Court, Milford Granger, eighteen, private in the Canadian Infantry, was charged on remand with attempting to murder Police-constable George Richardson, 190 L division, and Police-constable William Williams, 333 L, by shooting them with an automatic pistol at Waterloo Station on September 20. The injured constables were now able to attend the court.

Police-constable Williams, who walked with the aid of two sticks, said that he and the other constable, acting under directions, went to Waterloo Station in plain clothes. Prisoner arrived by a train from Guildford, and he said to him, "We are police officers, and you answer the description of a man wanted by the Surrey police." Prisoner asked, "What for?" and he replied, "Housebreaking." He caught hold of prisoner's right arm, and the other constable held him by the left arm, and they walked toward the exit to Lowermarsh. On reaching the doorway the prisoner said, "Show me your warrant cards." He was about to produce his card, when prisoner became violent. They struggled, and prisoner was thrown to the ground. Two soldiers were passing, and prisoner shouted, "Look, boys; can't you get these away from me?" We called out, "We are police officers," but one of the soldiers caught hold of his right arm and pulled him away. This enabled prisoner to get up, and prisoner then said, "I will do the two of you in rather than you shall take me." Prisoner produced an automatic pistol from his right-hand jacket pocket and commenced firing. He heard six or seven shots fired, and saw Police-constable Richardson fall about the time of the second or third shot. He closed with prisoner, and tried to take the pistol away. He forced his right arm downwards, but prisoner managed to free it, and then fired point-blank at him. The bullet struck him in the left thigh, but he again caught hold of prisoner, and the struggle was continued. He fell to the ground, but managed to get up, and ran two or three yards after prisoner, who was then running down the railway approach towards Westminster Bridge-road, before he fell again. He shouted to a railway constable and blew his whistle.

Asked if he wished to question the constable, prisoner said, "No, sir; I can't remember."

Police-constable Richardson said he was struck by a bullet in the left leg, near the knee, and he fell to the ground. Finding he was unable to get up he blew his whistle for assistance. He next saw his colleague fall. While he was waiting to be taken to the hospital a man handed him three spent cartridges.

Committed for trial.



From The Morning Advertiser 12 December 1918:

months with hard labour.

WATERLOO SHOOTING CASE.

Five Years for Canadian.

Before Mr. Justice Rowlatt, at the Old Bailey yesterday, Milford Granger, 18, a private in the Canadian Infantry, was indicted for feloniously shooting at Police-constables George Richardson and William Williams, of the L. division Metropolitan Police, with an automatic service pistol, at Waterloo station, on Sept. 20, with intent to avoid lawful apprehension. The accused pleaded not guilty.

Police-constable Williams, who hobbled into court on two sticks, repeated the circumstances of the shooting. He had, he said, been in hospital for eight weeks on account of his injuries.

Prisoner, in the witness-box, describing the shooting, said:—"I lost my temper; I lost all control of myself. I never fired at either of the police officers; it was accidental."

Counsel.—Did you pull the trigger intentionally?—No.

Continuing, he said he believed that only two shots were fired. He purchased the pistol from a soldier, wishing to take it back to Canada. A soldier supplied him with cartridges. He repeated his statement that the affair was entirely accidental. "I had no intention of doing anybody any harm," said prisoner.

Dr. Griffiths, of Brixton Prison, said he had had the accused under observation. He considered him to be a mental deficient. He was wholly illiterate, and could neither read nor write.

The jury found prisoner guilty of shooting with intent to do grievous bodily harm.

Mr. Justice Rowlatt passed sentence of five years' penal servitude.

Approximately 417 GVR 1st type King's Police Medals for gallantry were awarded to British and Irish Police constabularies and Fire Brigades before the 2nd type came into being in 1933. A total of 226 Medals were awarded to the Metropolitan Police between 1910 and 1940; GVR, 1st and 2nd types and GVIR 1st type, 63 for cases that involved firearms.



Condition NEF, with copy research (digital).

A superb early Metropolitan Police gallantry group that came from the family by decent