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MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD

St. James's Palace, London S.W.1.

12th November 1968.

The QUEEN has been graciously pleased to give orders for the following appointments to the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire:

To be Additional Members of the Military Division of the said Most Excellent Order for Gallantry:

Major Clifton Melville JEFFERIES (426259), Royal Army Ordnance Corps.

Responding to a call for technical assistance in disposing of a quantity of explosives, Major Jefferies, the Senior Ammunition Technical Officer, Headquarters Western Command, reported to the Nuclear Power Station at Trawsfynydd, on 20th May 1968, accompanied by Warrant Officer Wood, an Ammunition Technician.

On arrival Major Jefferies was informed that a quantity of explosives identified as polar ammonol had been located in a bore hole in a large rock beneath power lines carrying 275,000 volts into the National Grid. The rock was at the bottom of a water-filled trench, the explosive was in an advanced state of decomposition and the amount of explosive was assessed as being two pounds. It was however, known that it must have been in this position for some six years.

It was clearly not possible to remove the explosive by conventional means due to the confined space, the close proximity of buildings and complete disruption of the electricity supply in the overhead power lines which would result from any demolition.

Major Jeffries decided that the only way to remove the explosive was by hand, using improvised methods. He fully appreciated that any electric detonators in the bore hole might be fired due to induction from the current in the overhead wires. He also appreciated that it would not be possible to use protective gloves and that headache and vomiting would occur in handling the explosives with bare hands.

In spite of the very considerable risks involved, Major Jefferies, working in shifts with Warrant Officer Wood, succeeded in removing the explosives without incident. The work took approximately five hours and the team finally removed from the seven-foot bore hole a total of six pounds of explosive together with associated electric detonators and wiring.

Undoubtedly Major Jefferies was operating under extremely hazardous and dangerous conditions with

little accurate information and with the certain knowledge that a mistake might at any moment detonate the decomposed explosive resulting in the loss of his own life, the certain destruction of the power lines and extensive damage to nearby buildings. It was due to his personal courage, careful planning, coolness and resource that the operation was entirely successful.

10596503 Warrant Officer Class (1) Frederick William WOOD, Royal Army Ordnance Corps.

On 20th May 1968, Warrant Officer Wood, an Ammunition Technician, attached to Headquarters Western Command, accompanied Major C. M. Jefferies, Senior Ammunition Technical Officer at Command Headquarters, to the Nuclear Power Station, Trawsfynydd, where certain explosives had been discovered.

The explosives, estimated to be approximately two pounds of polar ammonol, were located in a bore hole in a rock at the bottom of a water-filled trench beneath power lines carrying 275,000 volts into the National Grid. It seemed that they had been in the bore hole for approximately six years and they were in an advanced state of decomposition and thus were extremely sensitive.

It was not possible to destroy the explosives conventionally, *in situ*, without also destroying the power lines and causing damage to nearby buildings. At the same time manual removal involved the risk that any electric detonators might be fired by induction of current from the overhead cables. It also involved an inherent risk of explosion in the moving of decomposing polar ammonol.

It was decided to remove the explosives by hand, but because of the delicate nature of the work it was not possible to use protective gloves, thus headache and vomiting were expected, and experienced, by both Major Jefferies and Warrant Officer Wood, who worked in shifts and alone under very difficult conditions to effect the clearance.

The work was completed in approximately five hours and a total of six pounds of polar ammonol together with associated electric detonators and wiring was finally removed from the seven-foot bore hole. During the periods when he was working on the task Warrant Officer Wood showed courage, coolness and resource of a high order. It was an operation where any mistake could have detonated the extremely volatile explosive and he was fully aware of the risks he was taking and the results of any miscalculation.