

three feet the man pulled his left hand out of his hip pocket and pointed a pistol directly at the Officer. Constable Stacklock did not hesitate in the face of this threat but immediately drew his truncheon, jumped at the man and struck him on the left wrist. He then closed with him and held him against a wall while he summoned assistance by using his personal radio. When assistance arrived the man was arrested.

Harold John SNELLING, Station Officer, London Fire Brigade.

Ian Malcolm RICHARDS, Fireman, London Fire Brigade.

The Fire Brigade was called to a fire involving an oil storage tank of about 120,000 gallons capacity, which was in the course of demolition. During the course of the fire-fighting operations a violent explosion occurred resulting in five firemen and one workman being killed. At the time of the explosion Station Officer Snelling and Fireman Richards were standing on a pathway close to the base of the tank. The force of the explosion blew Snelling into an adjacent dyke containing a mixture of oil and water in which he was completely submerged. Fireman Richards was also thrown off the pathway but was able to cling to the dyke wall and was partially immersed in the oily mixture. Fireman Richards called for assistance and a workman threw a length of hose to Snelling, who was able to pull himself out. He then passed the hose to Richards, holding on to the end, whilst Richards climbed back on to the pathway. Snelling was told that a man had fallen into the tank. Although suffering from shock and covered with oil which was affecting their eyes Snelling and Richards climbed the external ladder to the top of the 35-foot high tank. This ladder at the top had broken away from the side of the tank and was in an extremely unsafe condition. They found that the top of the tank had been completely blown off and that a body of a fireman was lying at the bottom of the tank. Snelling instructed Richards to fetch lines and breathing apparatus but without waiting for this equipment himself Snelling climbed down an internal steel ladder into the tank. When Fireman Richards returned with the breathing apparatus the Station Officer was already in the tank and Richards abandoned the apparatus and as quickly as he could joined Snelling inside the tank. The base of the tank was covered by an oily sludge which was two or three feet deep in places, the atmosphere was hot and humid and dangerous fumes were present. The fireman was partially submerged in the sludge. They freed the body from some piping and then carried it to a dry area from which they hoped it could be raised by lines. Unfortunately the man was found to be dead. By now both men were suffering from the effects of the fumes and the Divisional Officer realising that they might be overcome ordered them out of the tank. On reaching the outside air both men collapsed and were taken to hospital. Although both Station Officer Snelling and Fireman Richards were suffering from shock and the effects of the explosion they did not hesitate to climb unsafe ladders and to descend into a fume laden tank to assist their comrade and throughout the operation they acted without regard for their own safety.

William Frank WHEATLEY, Sergeant, Sussex Constabulary.

Christopher Charles COOPER, Constable, Sussex Constabulary.

Following a domestic dispute a youth armed himself with an automatic pistol, threatened to commit suicide, ran off to a copse and hid among the shrubs and trees. Sergeant Wheatley with Constable Cooper and other officers went to the copse. A shot was heard and the Sergeant saw a man waving a pistol about in his right hand. Wheatley drew near to the man and told him to put the gun down but he refused and threatened to kill the Sergeant if he came any nearer. Wheatley continued his approach and when about 10 yards away the man fired the pistol. The officer dived backwards and the man ran off. Constable Cooper then joined the Sergeant and they chased the man across a road. He was still waving the pistol about and threatening the officers. Constable Cooper was about 15 yards from the man when the pistol was fired again. The man then stood with his back to a fence pointing the pistol at Wheatley and Cooper. The officers walked towards him and he again fired the pistol. Wheatley and Cooper then rushed at him, grabbed hold of his hand holding the pistol and took it from him. The man was then secured.

#### *Queen's Commendation for Brave Conduct*

Harold Edwin ARMSTRONG, Constable, Cumbria Constabulary.

For arresting an emotionally disturbed man, armed with a loaded rifle.

Stanley BAKER, Labourer, Southampton.

For services when two men armed with knives attacked another.

Frederick COVILL (deceased), Factory Maintenance Engineer, Braintree, Essex.

David Kenneth SIMONS, Engineering Apprentice, Latchingdon, near Chelmsford, Essex.

Christopher John TOWNSEND, Commis Chef, Tooting, London S.W.17.

For services when a girl was rescued from drowning in a rough sea.

George Henry FURSMAN, Detective Sergeant 1st Class, Queensland Police Force.

For services when a man armed with a loaded rifle resisted arrest.

Brian Thomas HARDY, Sergeant, Lincolnshire Constabulary.

John SIDDALL, Constable, Lincolnshire Constabulary.

For arresting a drunken youth armed with a pistol.

John Howard PARSONS, M.B., Ch.B., Lewis Hospital, Stornoway, Isle of Lewis.

For services as a member of a casualty evacuation mission carried out by helicopter 80 miles north of Stornoway.