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CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD

St. James's Palace, London S.W.1
20th December 1991

The QUEEN has been graciously pleased to approve the following awards of The Queen's Gallantry Medal and for the publication in the *London Gazette* of the names of those shown below as having received an expression of Commendation for Brave Conduct and Commendation for Valuable Service in the Air:

Awarded the Queen's Gallantry Medal

Albert Edward HOWARD
LATELY CUSTODIAN
SECURITY EXPRESS LIMITED

At approximately 9.45 a.m. on 28th May 1987, two security guards arrived at a bank to make a cash delivery. One of the guards, the driver, remained with the van, while Mr. Howard, the Custodian, entered the bank carrying three cash bags.

As Mr. Howard delivered two of the bags to a cashier in the bank, he was approached by a man who tried to snatch the third bag from his grasp. Mr. Howard, determined not to release the bag, struggled with the robber. During the struggle the robber produced a pistol and pushed it forcefully against Mr. Howard's mouth. Despite this, Mr. Howard continued to struggle with the robber in the confined space of the bank's reception area. He got the better of the suspect and proceeded to drag him outside onto the bank's forecourt to give himself more space. At this point a second man, also brandishing a handgun, approached the struggling pair demanding that Mr. Howard release his accomplice. Mr. Howard continued to retain his hold on the first man. The second man hit Mr. Howard across the back of his neck, which caused him to release his hold. As the two men took off, the second man turned and fired a shot at close range at Mr. Howard who felt a burning sensation under his right arm. Despite being shot at, Mr. Howard gave chase and followed the men along the road. He then became aware of an approaching car driven forcefully and bearing down upon him from behind. He instinctively threw himself out of the way as the car brushed against his legs. It was driven deliberately at him to effect the getaway of the two offenders who were picked up by their accomplice and sped away. Mr. Howard was later found to have been uninjured by the bullet,

which had penetrated his shirt and had ricocheted off his breast pocket containing his wallet. After a lengthy police enquiry the suspects were arrested and convicted of a number of serious crimes.

Mr. Howard displayed gallantry of a high order when, with total disregard for his own safety, he attempted to prevent two armed men from robbing him of money he was delivering to a bank, during the course of which he was shot at and almost run over by a car driven by an accomplice as he gave chase.

Ronald Leslie O'BRIEN, Chief Instructor, Peterborough Parachute Centre.

On 27th April 1991 a Parachute Instructor made a free-fall descent from a Skyvan aeroplane carrying a passenger who had no previous parachuting experience. The descent was to be filmed by the Chief Instructor, Ronald O'Brien, wearing a helmet mounted with a stills and video camera.

Soon after they jumped from the aeroplane, the Parachute Instructor released the drogue to the main parachute which helps to stabilise and reduce the rate of descent. Instead of a normal deployment, the bridal cord became wrapped around the Instructor's neck. Despite desperate attempts to free the cord, the Instructor quickly lost consciousness as the cord tightened. The passenger was unaware of the danger and in any case powerless to help, as they rotated fast during the descent. Mr. O'Brien, who had left the aircraft at the same time, became aware as he began to film that the pair were in desperate trouble. He closed upon them, stopped the rotation, which was made more difficult by their considerable instability, and pulled their reserve ripcord. He then successfully deployed his own parachute at a point below the normal safe opening height. The Parachute Instructor and his passenger landed safely.

Mr. O'Brien displayed gallantry of a high order when, with total disregard for his own safety, he saved the lives of two parachutists who were out of control during a free-fall descent, by closing upon them to deploy their reserve ripcord, leaving himself time to release his own parachute only at a point below the normal safe opening height.

George PORTER, Plant Operator, Vernons Plant Hire.

On 10th February 1990 at 10.15 a.m., contractors were excavating a site to replace sewers. During the excavation an unexploded German bomb, dropped during the second world war, was located in

the wall of a trench at a depth of 12 feet. Adjacent roads were closed, houses within the vicinity evacuated and the Army Bomb Disposal Team called.

As the bomb was assessed as weighing approximately 1,000 kilogrammes, the Bomb Disposal Team requested assistance from the Royal Engineers. Work continued through the night to neutralise the fuse without removing the bomb but due to the inclement weather the trench was becoming unstable and in danger of collapse. As a consequence it was decided to attempt to remove the bomb by means of a mechanical digger. The only qualified driver was Mr. Porter, who had been part of the team laying the original sewer. Early on Sunday, 11th February he was contacted at his home and agreed to assist. The whole site was cleared with the exception of Mr. Porter and Army personnel. Fully aware of the dangers involved, he performed the delicate and extremely dangerous task of lifting the bomb from the trench with a mechanical digger and placing it above ground in a position where the Bomb Disposal Team could work on its disarmament. Mr. Porter returned later to move the mechanical digger to a position that would act as a shield should the bomb explode. The fuse was subsequently removed from the casing and the bomb was rendered safe by means of a controlled explosion.

Mr. Porter, with total disregard for his own safety, volunteered to move, with the aid of a mechanical digger, an unexploded bomb which could not safely be defused where it had lain for nearly fifty years and which could have exploded if jarred or knocked whilst being moved. His brave action allowed the bomb to be moved to a place where it could be defused in relative safety.

Queen's Commendation for Brave Conduct

Edwin Thomas CORK, Constable, Kent County Constabulary.

For services in overpowering and disarming a man with a gun following a robbery from a building society.

Alistair Charles GORDON, Commander, HM Customs Cutter Venturous.

Alistair Gordon SOUTAR, Second Engineer, HM Customs Cutter Venturous.

Colin William MCAUSLAN, Second in Command, HM Customs Cutter Venturous.

For services in rescuing four men, and assisting a fifth, whose boat had overturned in heavy seas.

Michael George JESSOP, Constable, Sussex Police.

For services in disarming and arresting a man with a gun, who, to avoid arrest, threatened to shoot the officer, following a robbery at a general store.

Michael Edward PHILLIPS, Constable, Northamptonshire Police.

For services in overpowering and disarming a man with a gun who had threatened to shoot Constable Phillips and several other police officers, who had arrived at a petrol station to arrest two men following an earlier suspicious incident.

John Robert PRIESTLY, Reserve Constable, Royal Ulster Constabulary.

For Bravery in Northern Ireland.

Michael James WILSON, Constable, Royal Ulster Constabulary.

For Bravery in Northern Ireland.

Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service in the Air

John Edward HEWARD, Purser, British Airways.

Nigel OGDEN, Steward, British Airways.

Simon ROGERS, Steward, British Airways.

For services in saving the Captain of a British Airways aircraft, by holding onto him when he was partially sucked out of the cockpit, following decompression after the windscreen blew out in flight. The three officers were in danger themselves through the effect of the slipstream.

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