

Constable William Tutton

From time to time a police officer stands head and shoulders above his colleagues for a variety of reasons – usually simply public perception of the individual by virtue of public service after they have left the police. Bill Tutton was that man of his era. William Tutton was born on the 7th November 1904 at Barry, South Wales.

He joined the Metropolitan Police, aged 20 years, on the 4th May 1925 and was initially stationed in the East end of London at Shoreditch.

On the 18th February 1927, with promotion in mind, he sat the educational examination then in force and passed it, but when the day of the second, competitive, examination dawned, he was unable to sit the exam as his daughter was sick. He moved to Waltham Abbey before arranging to resit the examination and didn't bother again with the exam.

In 1932, he moved to live at 42 Honey Lane and transferred into the town police station with the number 765N. In 1933, on the transfer of divisions, he retained his old number, becoming 765J.

Few stories of him have survived the years, one newspaper mention dated 1936 has him appearing at coroners court following a fatal motor accident on Quinton Hill and a commendation from 1952:-

"At Waltham Abbey on 14.12.52 P.C.'s 426J Bayford and 765J Tutton saw 2 youths each in possession of a .22 rifle and decided to question them. The P.C.'s not being satisfied with their explanation given took the youths to Waltham Abbey and there they admitted stealing the firearms from North Weald Aerodrome. They were both handed over to the Essex police and charged accordingly. From further enquires by the Essex police and the C.I.D. at Stoke Newington a search warrant was obtained and at the home addresses of the two prisoners more firearms and ammunition were discovered."

The weapons and ammunition were concerned in a store break-in and larceny at a War Department Range at RAF North Weald.



He was often to be seen in the station Recreation Room in the rear station yard playing his children, three girls, at snooker, up to and beyond retirement.

Nearing the end of his service, along with a select few of his colleagues he was awarded the Police Queen Elizabeth II Coronation Medal to wear at the event on the 2nd June 1953. As he was not to remain in service for a great deal longer it is uncertain whether he ever had an opportunity to wear it at a subsequent event requiring No.1 Dress and medals.

He retired on the 8th May 1955, having served 30 years, a period of service still fairly unusual for the period, and went on to work at Hazelmere Motors and at the Powder Mills but it was away from work that he came to the fore.

Having left the police his profile was raised considerably as he took up politics on behalf of the Conservative Party.

He served the Town Ward on the Waltham Holy Cross Urban District Council between 1956 and 1962 becoming Chairman of the WH+UDC in the year 1960-61. From 1874 to 1974 the WH+UDC was the primary local authority in the town.

In addition he joined a great number of organisations once the constraints of the service were cast off; he was a member of Larsens Bowls Club for many years, a school governor, a member of The Abbeyfield (Waltham Abbey) Society, and the Hospitals League of Friends.

He was taken ill in the street in January 1975, and died. He was buried in the Sewardstone Road Cemetery following a service in the Abbey Church attended by serving and former policemen, council members and family.

