

possession of a sawn-off automatic rifle and two sticks of gelignite fused with electric detonators. When thirty-five miles out of Brisbane the passenger demanded to see the Captain of the aircraft. First Officer Bennett, the co-pilot of the aircraft, approached the passenger who immediately pointed the rifle at Bennett's chest. The sticks of gelignite were joined together and resting on the adjacent seat; the wires fused to them were held by the passenger only a few inches from the terminals of a battery which was in the ash tray on the arm rest of the seat. The passenger threatened to blow up the aircraft unless Brisbane was by-passed and demanded that the plane be diverted to Singapore. After some discussion on the possibility of flying to Darwin the passenger reiterated that the plane was not to land at Brisbane, and stated that if the crew did not meet his demand he would blow up the airliner. On the pretence of checking on the fuel Bennett returned to the cockpit. Following instructions to disarm the passenger at all costs, he went back to the cabin followed shortly after by a Trans Australia Airlines pilot who was travelling as a passenger and who had been made aware of the situation. This man positioned himself behind the back of the passenger's seat. The passenger was momentarily distracted by this and Bennett immediately grappled with him and wrenched the wiring of the gelignite from his grasp. A bullet was fired but fortunately missed Bennett and passed through the ceiling of the aircraft. At this point the man behind the gunman's seat used the handle of a fire-axe as a cudgel. The passenger was thus

subdued and disarmed and the aircraft landed safely at Brisbane.

*Awarded the British Empire Medal for Gallantry
(Civil Division):*

Loyal Donald BURGESS, Constable, Northern Territory Police Force, Darwin.

A man was involved in an argument with other residents of a boarding-house and a fight followed during which he received cuts about the face. He seized a rifle and ammunition, loaded the rifle and walked towards the Police Station. Burgess, who was at the Station, went to the front door and saw the man approaching with the rifle. The Constable walked out into the street, unarmed, met the man on the footpath and asked him to hand over the rifle. The man stepped back a pace, pointed the rifle at the Constable's throat and thrust it towards him with his finger on the trigger. The rifle was loaded and cocked. The Constable knew this but stood his ground calmly for several minutes trying to persuade the man, who was talking hysterically, to hand over the gun. Suddenly the man shouted something, brought the rifle to his shoulder and pointed it past Burgess in the direction of two other persons. The Constable immediately seized the rifle and forced the muzzle towards the ground where it discharged, the bullet striking the footpath. There was a struggle for possession of the rifle and another Constable arrived on the scene. The two Constables were successful in disarming and arresting the man after a fierce struggle in which windows in the Police Station were smashed.

LONDON

Printed and published by HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE: 1960

Price Sixpence net