

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

Henry BRENNAN, Constable, Royal Ulster Constabulary, Coleraine, Co. Londonderry.

The police were called to investigate the theft of a pedal cycle. A man was seen turning into an entry leading to a wall in which were a number of doors affording access to the rear of some houses. Constable Brennan climbed on to this wall and with the aid of his torch began an examination of the enclosed yards down below. He had only gone a short distance when he was suddenly confronted by a man wearing a mask and pointing a gun at him. The man told him to get down off the wall or he would shoot. The Constable did as he was told and meanwhile the gunman came through the doorway and was waiting as he alighted. He had the gun pointed at the Constable's back and as the Constable moved forward the gunman moved with him. He told Constable Brennan to throw down his torch and the Constable complied but as he did so he swung round and grappled with the gunman striking him with his baton on the hand in which he held the gun. In the ensuing struggle both fell to the ground and the gunman was eventually overpowered and disarmed.

Robert GARNER, Civil Engineering Plant Inspector, St. Albans.

A 35 ton motor earth scraper powered by two 400 h.p. engines had been left overnight in a yard some 50 yards from main office buildings. The driver started the vehicle's engines whilst the gears were still engaged. After being left overnight the machine takes several minutes to build up an operational pressure and, in order to save time, the driver then wedged the throttle open by means of a heavy piece of metal. He then went away from the machine leaving it to warm up. As pressure built up the vehicle set off unattended and accelerated towards the main office block. Mr. Garner's attention was drawn to the sound of the machine and he ran towards it but, before he could do anything it crashed through the wall of the single storey part of the office block in which two men were working. One of these men was injured. The machine continued to plough into the building towards the two-storey block where 14 people were working. Mr. Garner reached the machine and, at great risk of being killed climbed aboard using the treads on the moving wheels as a foothold. He then reached the controls and brought the machine to a halt. Mr. Garner ignored all the dangers which must have been very plain to him. He not only risked being struck by tons of falling masonry in trying to reach the machine, but had he slipped he would have been crushed by the wheels which are 7 feet in diameter, or by the body of the machine. Had it not been for Mr. Garner's prompt and gallant action the whole of the office block would have been demolished and almost certainly lives would have been lost.

Robert Park GILES, Detective Sergeant (First Grade), South Australian Police Force.

Three prisoners escaped from a Training Centre, held up a man in his home, stole money, rifles, food, petrol and a motor car and abducted the man's daughter and forced her to accompany them. Information was subsequently received

that the vehicle and escapees were headed north towards Queensland. The stolen vehicle was sighted from the air and Sergeant Giles took command of the operations. A roadblock was set up and information from the plane advised that the escapees were approaching from 12 miles away. The Police party commenced to advance on foot towards a rise and when the vehicle came over the rise, Sergeant Giles, who was about 50 yards away, in open country, sprinted towards the car. On seeing the Police party the driver stopped and reversed. Giles fired a shot over the vehicle and it stopped again. A rifle was seen to change hands in the front seat and a shot was fired. Giles moved in rapidly with a view to crowding the escapees and in an effort to create confusion. The driver's side door opened and Giles fired shots to the front and underneath the car. One of the men then appeared, armed with a rifle and ran to the rear. Giles called upon him to drop his rifle. He dropped it on the ground and put his hands up. Other police then walked to the vehicle and the three escapees were handcuffed. The courage, initiative and resourcefulness displayed by Detective Sergeant Giles, played a major part in the successful arrest of the three fugitives.

Gerald Noel PURNELL, Lorry Driver, Plymstock, Plymouth.

Mr. Purnell was driving an 8 ton lorry and was rounding a sharp right hand bend when a motor car entered the bend from the opposite direction. The car continued in a straight course across the bend, struck the front of the lorry and immediately burst into flames. Very heavy rain made driving conditions difficult. There were three adults and two children in the car and all were injured and three were rendered unconscious. Following the collision the immediate concern was the rescue of the five occupants from the burning car and Mr. Purnell with help from two other drivers set out to accomplish this task. Neither of the front doors to the car could be opened and the rear doors were locked from the inside. By persuading one of the children to unlock the rear door, the rescuers were able to remove the three passengers from the rear seat and, with considerable difficulty, the driver and passenger from the front of car by pulling them over the seats into the rear of the vehicle. Meanwhile the fire was rapidly spreading from the front towards the rear of the vehicle to the extent that the driver and front seat passenger were burnt before they could be removed. The hair of one of the women was on fire and Mr. Purnell extinguished the flames from her hair with his bare hands. As a result he sustained minor burns to his own hands. The whole of the vehicle, apart from the metal shell was completely destroyed by fire. The successful rescue of the five occupants was primarily due to the cool and efficient way in which Mr. Purnell not only organised the manpower available but entered the burning car on several occasions to remove the casualties.

Queen's Commendation for Brave Conduct

Phillip John BRIDGES, Constable 1st Class, New South Wales Police Force.

For arresting a mentally disturbed man armed with a loaded shotgun.