

WASC 2133

Letter from
Mrs. Wendy Bailey
re Arrest of
men with
Cigarettes and
Matches 3.5.1953

39 Gilpins Gallop
Stanstead Abbots
Herts
SG12 8BA

27 AUG 2009

24 August 2009

The Royal Gunpowder Mills
Beaulieu Drive
Waltham Abbey
Essex
EN9 1JY

27-11-2009
Handed to Liz Went
for reply

Dear Sirs

Last week I brought my two children to the gunpowder mills, which we found very enjoyable and interesting.

It got me thinking about a story my granddad had told me regarding the gunpowder mill when he was a policeman in the 1950's.

My granddad, Daniel Hanson told me he was on duty on 3 May 1953 when he had cause to investigate a break in at the gunpowder mill. He arrived and found four men had forced their way into the mill and had cigarettes and matches with them. My granddad arrested all the men and received a commendation for his "alertness on duty which resulted in the arrest of four persons who were found on enclosed premises for an unlawful purpose."

I have enclosed photocopies of his commendation and the newspaper cutting with the headline "You Might Have Blown Up Town" and also a copy of his report, which I believe relates to this incident, and wondered if you would like to include this story in the history of the mill at some point during the tour. My parents have all the original paperwork.

I hope you find this of interest and if you would like any further information please don't hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

Mrs Wendy Bailey

No. A/22/1 (W.D.C.).

WAR DEPARTMENT CONSTABULARY.

COMMENDATION.

STATION.	RANK.	No.	NAME.	REMARKS.
Waltham Abbey.	P.C.	L. 518	HANSON, D.	Commended by the Chief Constable War Department Constabulary, for "his alertness on duty which resulted in the arrest of four persons who were found on enclosed premises for an unlawful purpose".

B. To be entered on Record of Service cards.

15th June, 1953.

C. F. Oliver
CHIEF CONSTABLE.

'YOU MIGHT HAVE BLOWN UP TOWN'

FOUR youths who appeared at Chingford today were told by Dr. H. Winch, the chairman: "If you had struck a match in this particular building you might have blown the town sky-high."

Hugh Russell, 18, of White Hart Lane, Tottenham; Henry Lane, 16, of High-road, Tottenham; and two juveniles pleaded not guilty to being found in the grand magazine at the Waltham Abbey powder factory for an unlawful purpose on June 6.

War Department Constable Hanson said the lads had cigarettes and matches. There was a considerable amount of explosives in the building and if the boys had struck a match the results would have been extremely serious.

Russell and Lane were each fined 23, and the two juveniles 11 each.

I report that at 6-15 A.M. 3rd May 1953 at North
Site at Grand Magazine building NO. #231. I found
double doors facing South open. I examined the
doors and found them to have been forced open. I
then went inside and carried out a thorough
search. I found the doors of the inner building
were secure and no apparent attempt had been
made to enter these doors. But 60ft of copper lighting
tape from around the building was missing, and
the two exterior lamps were broken and partly
wrenched from their fixings. I ~~contacted Mr. Smith~~
~~the Temperature Recorder at 6-27 AM. He arrived~~
~~at 6-30 PM. He opened the Door to the Magazine and~~
~~and he said that something was off at~~
order and after I checked that there had been
no interference here, the doors were locked by
Mr. Smith. I then secured the left hand
Double door by bolting it, and fixed the other
door by using a piece of wood to hold
it secure because the lock was partly ripped
off and would not work. The building was
now secure at 6-45 AM. I informed B.W.D.
Foreman of damage to lock, and and the
lighting at 7-0.

PC. L 518 P/Hanson