

THE COVENTRY BLITZ, NOVEMBER 1940

This Year of Grace 2015, as well as being the seventieth anniversary of VE Day, is also the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Coventry Blitz, which took place on the night of Thursday/Friday 14/15 November 1940. It was during this raid, that Special Constable 125 Brandon Moss of the Coventry City Special Constabulary won the first ever George Cross to be awarded to a member of the police service. The Citation appeared in the *London Gazette* of Friday 13 December 1940 p7017 :



Special Constable Moss was on duty when a house was completely demolished by a high explosive bomb burying three occupants. He led a rescue party into the building under extremely dangerous conditions because of collapsing debris and leaking gas. Conditions became more critical but Moss carried on alone, and managed to clear a space and the three people were rescued. Other people were buried in an adjoining building, and Moss again led the rescue. He worked unceasingly for over seven hours in falling debris, which enabled one more person to be rescued alive, and four bodies to be recovered. This took place during the continuing air-raid, with an unexploded bomb only twenty yards away.

This contemporary illustration is from the magazine *Heroic Deeds of the War*, and is reproduced with thanks from the website 'British police on-line museum' : www.pmcc-club.co.uk

This photograph showing HM King George VI visiting Coventry a few days after the raid, is reproduced with thanks from the website www.forum.historiccoventry.co.uk It shows clearly the Chief Constable of Coventry City, Stanley Hector, accompanying the King. The role of the Coventry City Chief Constable has tended to be overlooked, with scant knowledge of his personal details. No longer :



HECTOR, Stanley Albert

[1] Chief Constable Tunbridge Wells Borough 1921-1927

[2] Chief Constable Coventry City 1927-1946

Awarded : i) OBE LG 4 June 1934 p3565 ii) KPM LG 1 January 1941 p42

Career : Oxford City Police 1911/1914 (PC 1911) - Army 1914/1919 (Somerset Light Infantry, Sgt 1914; 2nd Bn Dorset Regt; Lt 1915; 1/7 Gurkha Rifles; Capt) - Lancaster Borough Police 1919/1921 (Pc 1919; PS 1920; Insp 1921) - [1] - [2] - Retired

b. Wednesday 26 Oct 1892, Crocombe, Shepton Mallet, Somerset

m. 1919 Shepton Mallet, Emily Ranger-strutt

d. Saturday 28 Oct 1978, Weston-Super-Mare