



Henry James Hand

Henry James Hand was born in 1848 and baptised at St. Martin's Church, Bremhill on 30th July 1848. He was the son of James and Mary Hand, his father was according to the 1851 census a blacksmith born in Bremhill and his mother was from Wotton-Under-Edge, Gloucestershire. He had a brother Edward who was born in Tytherton Lucas in 1850 where the family were living at the time of the 1851 census.

By 1861 the family had moved back to Bremhill where James was employed as a Sawyer. Henry James was 12 years old and working as an Agricultural Labourer. Edward was in school and two further children had been born, Frank in 1853 who was also in school and Arthur aged 1 year. Both younger children were born in Bremhill.

In 1869, aged 22, Henry James had moved to Brecon, Wales and married Elizabeth Evans aged 19 at St. John the Evangelist Church in Brecon. It would appear that Henry James lied about his age as he would only have been 20 years old.

The 1871 census reveals that the couple were living in St. Mary's Parish, Watton, Breconshire and Henry James was recorded as unemployed. It also suggests that Elizabeth was from Herefordshire. Where Emily Kate, their daughter had been born in 1870.

Between 1871 and the census in 1881 Henry James had joined the Police Force in Breconshire and was listed in the census as a Police Constable. It would appear that they were living in a police house reserved for the Lower Division of Breconshire Police at 1 John Street, St. Mary's, Brecon. Emily Kate was now at school aged 11 and is joined by her brother Henry James aged 8 born in 1873 in Brecon. It is now recorded that both Elizabeth and daughter Emily were born in Peterstow, Herefordshire.

1891 finds the family living in a police house attached to the police station at Lower Vaynor Road, Vaynor, Merthyr Tydfil, Glamorganshire and Henry James had been promoted to the rank of Sergeant. Emily Kate had married William Lewis Berryman in 1890 at Merthyr and was no longer living with her parents. Henry James, Jnr. was not listed either however we do know that he followed his father into the police force. Another child, a son Francis Herbert had been born in Talgarth, Breconshire in 1885. He was listed as a scholar.

In 1901 The family had returned to the Police Station in St. Mary's Brecon with Henry James still with the rank of Police Sergeant. Francis Herbert was now working as a clerk for the Midland Railway aged 15.

At the time of the 1911 census the family had moved again, this time to Brynmawr, Breconshire (later Monmouthshire) where they resided at 155 Worcester Street. Henry James had once more gained promotion to that of Police Superintendent. Elizabeth accompanied him to his new appointment. There seems to be no definitive record for younger son Francis Herbert for 1911.

However there is an entry with initial only of F. H. H. aged 26 as a patient in a mental asylum in Maidstone, Kent, he was described as a Police Constable and had been in the asylum for 2 years could this possibly be Francis Herbert having followed into his father's footsteps too. This must be regarded as pure speculations as the census does not record a birth place or full names. Henry James, Snr., retired as Deputy Chief Constable of Breconshire in January Jan 1918, when he was awarded the King's Police Medal. (See Newspaper Report Below).

Henry James Hand was buried on 12th August 1926 aged 78

KING'S MEDALLIST

Ex D.C.C. Hand

Decorated By Lord Glanusk At Brecon

There was an interesting ceremony at the Guild Hall, Brecon, on Tuesday morning, when Col. Lord Glanusk, C.B., D.S.O., as Lord Lieutenant of Breconshire, decorated Ex-Deputy Chief Constable Hand, of Brynmawr, with the King's Police Medal, the award of which was announced earlier in the year. The High Sheriff (Mr. David Powell), acting as deputy for the Mayor Brecon, presided over the gathering, and amongst those present were the Hon. C. Hore-Ruthven (acting chief constable) and Mrs. Hore-Ruthven, Miss Cole-Hamilton, Major H. M. W. Bridgeman, R.A.M.C. (who came with Lord Glanusk), Deputy Chief Constable and Mrs. Steven Jones, the Rev. J. Simon (formerly vicar of Brynmawr and an old friend of Mr. Hand), Messrs. J. E. Moore-Gwyn (acting chairman of the Standing Joint Committee), H. F. W. Harries (clerk to the Standing Joint Committee), C. W. Best (county surveyor), D. Jones (Pytindu), James Morgan, William Williams, H. C. Rich, Evan Morgan, J. C. B. Morris &c. A number of police and special constables were also in attendance.

The Deputy Clerk to the Borough Justices (Mr. W. Jones-Williams) read a telegram from the Mayor, stating that he much regretted his unavoidable absence, and congratulating Ex-D.C.C. Hand upon receiving the greatest honour the King had to bestow.

The High Sheriff remarked that they would all agree that their gathering that morning was a pleasing departure from the business usually transacted at that court; they did not often have such a pleasant function and the presence of ladies gracing the proceedings at the Police Court of Brecon. The occasion was a unique one in their history, and they were all very pleased to find that the services of their old friend, Mr Hand, had been appreciated by the King. Some of them remembered Mr. Hand for many years, and knew the impartial and tactful way in which he had dealt with his work throughout his career. (Applause).

Lord Glanusk, who had a cordial reception, thanked the Deputy Mayor for affording him that opportunity, as His Majesty's representative in the county, of making the presentation to one of Breconshire's most loyal and devoted servants. The King was one of the hardest working men in England at the present time, and he had, through the Registrar of the King's Police Medal, written to him (Lord Glanusk) saying that he was reluctantly obliged to delegate the duty to his lieutenants, as

he had not time to go round to every county and present those medals. The King's Police Medal was a very special thing. There was only a very limited number presented to the United Kingdom every year, and he was told that morning - although he could not vouch for the truth of it - that Mr Hand's medal was the only one presented in Wales during the present year. (Applause). It was a decoration which was not earned simply by long service: it was given only to those who had exhibited conspicuous devotion to duty during the time they had been in the Police Force. They had all known Ex-Deputy Chief Constable Hand for a very long time, and they had all appreciated his services to the county and it was with the very greatest pleasure that he gave him the King's recognition of his long service. He joined the Force in 1871, and when he retired this year he had 46 years and eight months' service to his credit. During his Police career he was stationed at Brecon, Talgarth, Cefn, and Brynmawr, and he was the first officer to occupy the present police station at Brecon. That was a record they would all be proud to have earned. They were very grateful for his services to the county. His fairness and devotion to duty, and the conscientious way always prepared his cases, both as applying to the Police and public, had been a by-word for a great number of years.

(Applause). Addressing Mr. Hand, his lordship said: I have very great pleasure in decorating you with the medal which his Majesty has thought fit - and rightly so - to award you and congratulate you most sincerely. (Applause). Having pinned the decoration to Mr. Hand's breast, his lordship concluded by saying: I hope you will live very long to wear it, and set an example to younger members of the Force in Breconshire. (Renewed applause).

The High Sheriff, on behalf of all present, congratulated Lord Glanusk on looking so remarkably well, and assured him they were all very glad to see him amongst them once again. (Applause).

The Brecon County Times, Thursday, 23 May 23 1918

A reference in the newspaper article below indicates that Henry James Sen.'s son, also Henry James, was a superintendent in the Breconshire Police Force in 1912.

BRECONSHIRE POLICE INSPECTION AT CRICKHOWELL.

Presentation of Long Service Medals.

Gift to Departing Chief Constable

On Friday last Mr. L. Dunning, Government inspector, late Chief Constable of Liverpool, held an inspection of the Breconshire Police Force at Crickhowell, when 48 officers and men, out of a total strength of 58, paraded.



Before going to Crickhowell Mr. Dunning inspected the Brecon station and examined the books of the Constabulary Headquarters Office. He found everything in good order and expressed himself as well pleased with all he saw. He then proceeded to Crickhowell to inspect the A (Brecon) and B (Brynmawr) divisions. The two divisions paraded under Superintendent Hand, and marched to the Square in front of the Bear Hotel for the inspection. Lord Glanusk, Lord Lieutenant of the county and chairman of the Standing Joint Committee, and Mr. A. S. Williams, chief constable, were present.

Immediately following the inspection Lord Glanusk, wearing his uniform as Lord Lieutenant of the county, presented long service medals to Deputy-chief constable Henry Hand, of Brynmawr (who has completed 41 years' service), Police sergeant Price, of Brynmawr, and ex-Police sergeant Jarratt, of Ystradgynlais (who have each completed 31 years' service).

His Lordship said it was the first time that the Coronation medal, or a medal of any sort had been awarded to any provincial police. He took that opportunity, on behalf of the county, of expressing

appreciation of the good work done by the county police force. His lordship also referred to the pending departure of Mr. A. S. Williams (chief constable), who is about to take up a similar office in West Sussex. He very much regretted that they were about to lose Mr. Williams' valuable services.

A group photograph was then taken by Mr. R. H. Stevens, of Crickhowell, and Lord Glanusk, the Chief Constable, Captain Lindsey, M.V.O. (chief constable of Glamorganshire) and the Government Inspector were included.

The Chief Constable afterwards entertained a few friends and the police to dinner at the Bear Hotel, and Superintendent Hand, on behalf of the police, presented him with a silver coffee pot as a token of their esteem for him, and to mark his promotion to the office of Chief Constable of West Sussex. The coffee pot bears a suitable inscription.

The Brecon County Times, Thursday, 22 August 1912