

BRIEF HISTORY: Written by Mike Breading

My father PC 583 George Breading joined Essex Constabulary in late 1948 and was posted after initial training at Eynsham Hall to Hornchurch. As I understand Essex did not issue cycles but gave a cycle allowance which inspired my father to purchase a Raleigh cycle from a cycle shop at 192 High Street, Hornchurch, Essex.

My father was stationed at Hornchurch for two years, and during this time this cycle was used for beat duties and general private transport! I can recall my father telling me that during a house move within the Hornchurch division, he actually used his cycle to move boxes, suitcases and various household items from one Police house to another!

My mother recalls my father telling her that after one particular night duty which in those days was a 14-day shift, he fell asleep whilst on his cycle and fell off on to the pavement! It is unsure if he was cycling or stationary!

In 1950 my father was posted to Newport near Saffron Walden on a rural beat, which consisted of one sergeant and one Constable, and this cycle would have been used on a daily basis, except when he had to cycle from Newport to Saffron Walden to pick up the area car for relief duties.

In 1957 another posting sent us on our way to Brentwood, and again the cycle was used on occasions for beat duties, but mainly my father's duties consisted of area car driving

In 1961 my father was promoted to sergeant Ps 99 and dispatched to Clacton-on Sea, and this time the cycle became his daily commuter to and from the Police station.

In 1963 another post was on the horizon, and off we moved to the Grays division, where I can recall my father again commuting to and from Grays nick on his cycle until his retirement in 1976. I do remember that some repairs/refurbishment were carried out to this cycle whilst at Grays, but it was during the 1960's when I was in my late teen's and motorbikes and the likes have taken up my recollection of this period! Yes, memory fades here! But saying that, this cycle is very memorable because of the double cross bar and being a large imposing bike, and when you consider my father was 6ft 3 inches tall and weighed 18 and a half stone, he was not a bobby to mess with and a sturdy cycle was called for.

My mother and father retired to Maylandsea in 1990 where he occasionally cycled to the local shops, but in 2001 due to my father's illness they moved to Canvey to be closer to family, but he sadly passed away only three weeks after the move.

Before moving to Canvey my father gave his cycle to a neighbour and a very good friend Ted Smith and that was the last the family heard or saw of this remarkable cycle, until only just recently when I came across a photo on our club forum of a double cross bar Raleigh cycle, I thought to myself strange my father had a cycle just like that and thought no more of it! However, when contact was made by the Smith family from Maylandsea to my mother that the Cycle had been given to collector in Southampton by the name of Alan Clack well you could have knocked me down with a feather!

I have since spoken to Alan and relayed our family delight that my father's cycle is now in good hands, especially in the knowledge that a member of PCUK will show this cycle for all to see. My father would have been proud and delighted!