



# Personal Stories



*from* World War II

Harold lance WW2  
Palestine Police

Charles and Harriet Vincent lived in a semi detached bungalow, built under the Land Court Scheme, on Gunville Road not far from St Johns Church. They had 5 children, 4 girls and one boy. Their daughter Louisa married Edmund lance and settled in Winterslow. Louisa and Edmund had 3 boys, George born in 1907, Harold born in 1909 and Hedley born in 1911, also a daughter Selina born in 1917.

Hedley, having served an engineering apprenticeship in Salisbury, started a garage in Middleton Road in Winterslow.

George left home to join the Royal Marines when he was 18 serving till 1946 on such capital ships as the Repulse and aircraft-carrier Courageous

Harold also volunteered for service during the interwar period serving with the Coldstream Guards for 3 years before returning to Winterslow. As a builder he was involved in building the first houses in Firs Road, but decided in 1939 to join the Palestine Police as Great Britain had been given the mandate by the League of Nations. The Palestine Police carried out all the normal duties, but in addition had a peace-keeping role in respect of maintaining order between the Jewish and Arab peoples.

The British were often attacked by terrorists with both Jewish and Arab groups claiming they were not maintaining neutrality and favouring the other side. Harold enlisted in 1938 in response to a government recruiting campaign being an ideal candidate due to his previous military experience. Harold kept in touch with the family by letter and sent pictures of his time in the country and Jerusalem.

The family received notification of Harold's death from the Inspector-General of the Palestine Police.

"On 7th May 1939, Constable Lance, who was stationed at Athlit Detention Camp, went with a party of five other British police to the beach near Athlit Colony to bathe. The sea was very rough and while swimming in a depth of about 4 feet a patch of drifting sand was encountered and the party made for shore when it was observed Constable



Haifa Cemetery

Lance was missing. He was then seen to be in difficulties and three of his companions endeavoured to reach him, but were unable to do so owing to the roughness of the sea. Another had gone for help to other British police from Haifa who were in the vicinity with a party of naval ratings. Endeavours were made to locate Constable Lance and he was found washed up on the beach about half an hour later. Artificial respiration was immediately applied and medical aid summoned from the colony, but he could not be revived. The body was conveyed to Haifa hospital that afternoon".

The funeral took place at 3pm on 8th May, at the New Protestant Cemetery, Haifa with full police honours.

Mick Brown

Acknowledgement: Norman Thorne. Wikipedia.