

South East London News.

GRENADES? 1st FLOOR, SIR



"Dick see what I've just dug up in this pile of old rubbish Lamb left behind." Higgs our new neighbor was leaning across the fence showing Dad something he had found buried under the remains of the old shed that used to be at the back of his garden.

"That looks real to me better be careful how you handle it, better get the police it's a live grenade".

Carefully Dick and Mr. Higgs put the grenade down and retreated to the safety of their front rooms.

While clearing shrubbery in the garden of his home at Harland Road, Lee, Mr. Walter Higgs unearthed an Army hand grenade with his pick. The police were called and took it away. But an hour later Mr. Higgs had to call them again, as with his shovel he had uncovered another grenade and a shell nose.

A sergeant and private from the Royal Ordnance Corp told Mr. Higgs that the grenades and shell nose were alive. Mr. Higgs is hardware department manager at a Lewisham store.



After a agonizing wait a local bobby arrived looked at the offending grenade and declared it to be a dummy practice weapon and threw it in the saddle-bag on his bike and rode off to the police station at Lee Green.

The army evacuated the area around the Police station whilst a bomb disposal crew made the device safe about an hour later.



Later that afternoon Mr. Higgs was calling out again. "Dick I've just found another one better get onto the army this time this is getting serious." "This isn't funny I've just dug up a shell this side of the fence as well". Dick had joined the hunt for weapons in his garden near where the first grenade had been found.

This time the army evacuated the area and did a proper sweep of the two gardens before declaring the area safe.

It turned out that Mr. Lamb our quiet inoffensive neighbor had been stock piling arms from the Arsenal where he worked during the war. After the war he had to dispose of them so he buried them in his back garden and built a garden shed over the stash.

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"Dave! Look, at what I've just found?" John was hanging over the back fence looking at something in the rubbish stack there.
"What is it?" I asked.
"It's some kind of bomb by the look of it?" John was holding a small tin he had opened it to look inside.
What we saw was a small bundle of sticks of some kind of explosives, a mass of wires and a battery.
Having put it down carefully, we sheepishly went indoors.
"Your quiet what you up?" Mum called out from the front room.
"We've found some more explosives Mum better get the police". John sensibly replied.
The response was less casual this time they must have had memories of the Grenade incident a few years earlier.



Bomb disposal experts declared the bomb safe as it's was not connected to any form of detonator.

It was commercial explosive stolen from a quarry they had been looking for it for some weeks.



We had to carry on as if nothing had happened whilst a couple of plain clothed policemen stayed in our back room observing the tin which they had emptied and put back on the rubbish. The hope was that whoever put it there would return.

Later that day sure enough whilst Mum was in the garden two men appeared and started looking for the tin and talking to each other about its contents.

Mum made a hasty retreat and the Police appeared in force from every direction.



"Mum someone at the door for you".

"Mrs. Smith are these the gentlemen you saw in the garden?"

A police officer was standing at the front door with the two men Mum had seen in the garden by the rubbish.

"Yes that them".

"Let me introduce you to detective Tom Brown and his partner Garry Jones. We had our wires crossed on this one the CID already had the area under surveillance."



Later we got the whole story the explosives was part of some stolen from a quarry some of which had been used in an attempt to blow the safe at Lee Railway Station fortunately it had failed to detonate. If it had there was enough to blow the station up completely.

The local gang who had tried this where having some kind of feud among themselves and one of their members had just come out of prison having served time for man slaughter. Unfortunately for him he had killed his father in law and the rest of the family didn't think his prison sentence was long enough. They had devised a number of little schemes to frame him and get him back inside.

This person had moved into the house at the back of us, thus the explosives planted to link him to the Station raid.

