

## John Watson Warrant Number 566

### Private Life

John Watson was born in 1860 and baptised 1<sup>st</sup> April 1860 in Southery, Norfolk. His parents were Thomas Watson, a farm bailiff and Charlotte (nee Easton). He is recorded as living in Southery in both the 1871 and 1881 censuses and according to the 1881 census was unemployed.

He married Harriet Tungay on the 13<sup>th</sup> December 1883, with whom he had four children. Thomas (1884) and Florence (1889) both died during their first year. Alice born in 1885 died in 1906 and Margaret born 1887 died in 1973. Harriet died at the family home in Witchford during 1894, after having spent some time in the Norfolk asylum. John then married Mary Sewell in 1895, with whom he had a daughter Evelyn in 1897.

Following his retirement in 1914 he went on to be the landlord of the Black Horse, on Black Horse Drove in Littleport. Being a keen fisherman the proximity to the 'drain' was clearly convenient. He remained at the Black Horse for 13 years and during that time was immersed in public life as a water bailiff for the Great Ouse Drainage Board, a member of St. John's Ambulance and served on the Littleport UDC and Isle of Ely County Council.

Following his time in Littleport he moved back to the Wisbech area and spent his final years in Leverington, now a suburb of Wisbech. His funeral report, in the local press, mentions that he died 'after a long and painful illness' on 24th October 1931. He is buried in the Mount Pleasant Cemetery in Wisbech.

### Police Career

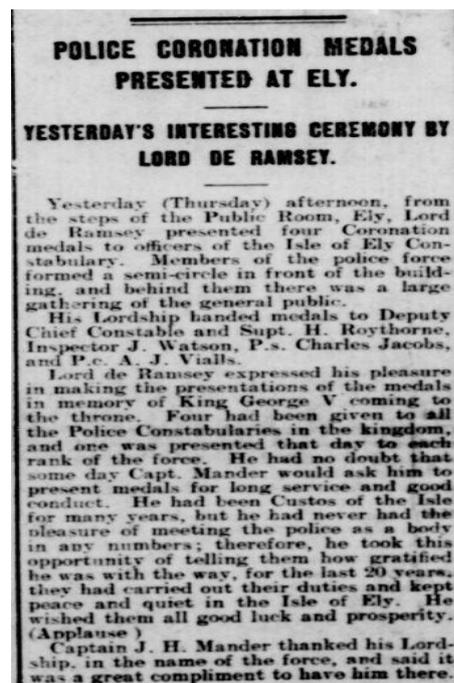
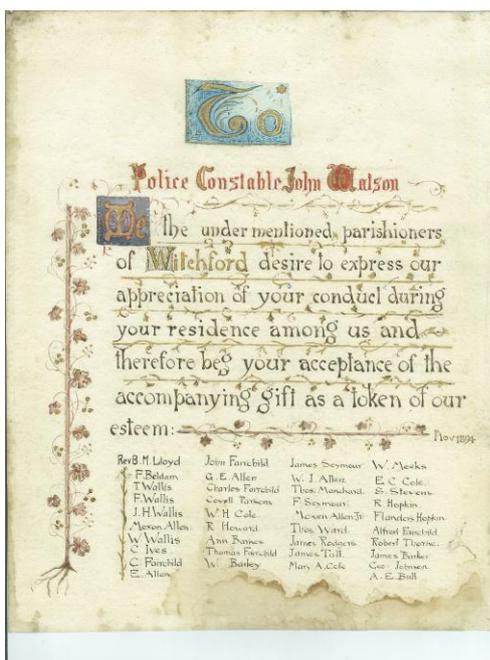
References to his career are shown below, as obtained from The General Order Books of Ely Constabulary.

Date	Rank	Location	Page Reference
6.3.1882	3 <sup>rd</sup> Class PC (Reserve)	Ely	111
13.11.1882	3 <sup>rd</sup> Class PC	Whittlesey	115
16.4.1883	2 <sup>nd</sup> Class PC	Whittlesey	118
23.7.1883	2 <sup>nd</sup> Class PC	Thorney	120
10.12.1883	2 <sup>nd</sup> Class PC	Whittlesey	122
17.5.1886	2 <sup>nd</sup> Class PC	Mepal	130
3.8.1891	1 <sup>st</sup> Class PC	Mepal	149
27.10.1891	1 <sup>st</sup> Class PC	Witchford	151
7.9.1894	1 <sup>st</sup> Class PC	Littleport	168
17.7.1895	Sergeant	Wisbech St Mary	176
4.10.1897	Sergeant	Wisbech	185
7.11.1902	Sergeant	Wisbech	239
4.2.1907	Inspector	Ely	272
14.3.1908	Inspector	Whittlesey	289
18.12.1913	Inspector	Whittlesey	372
30.3.1914	Inspector	Whittlesey	379
6.4.1914	Pensioned		

The photograph, below shows him, during his time as an Inspector crossing the Whittlesey Wash during floods.



As with all careers there were high points and low points. The low point was probably in December 1913 when he was 'Severely cautioned for not keeping proper supervision in his Division'; probably leading to his decision to retire. A high point was probably being thanked by the parishioners of Witchford, during his time as a 1<sup>st</sup> Class PC. According to the Cambridge Independent Press, who reported on the presentation ceremony he received a large walnut writing desk, an incandescent lamp and a framed citation. Another high point would have been his receipt of a Coronation Medal. See below.



He was also mentioned in a number of reports by the Cambridge Independent, Ely Chronicle and Cambridgeshire Times in matters relating to his police work, as well as representing the Isle of Ely police in cricket and the tug of war team at the police sports days.

He gave notice of his intention to retire in January 1914 and it was recorded on the 30<sup>th</sup> March in the General Order Book (General Order 55) as follows. "Inspector J Watson, stationed at Whittlesea, gave notice under the Police Act 1890, of his desire to retire from the force, service 32 years. The Standing Order Committee at a meeting held at March on 21<sup>st</sup> January last, granted him a pension of £73.6.8., being two thirds of his annual pay of £110.00. He will be struck off the strength of the force from the 6<sup>th</sup> proximo".

**SVR 19.02.26**