Reference code: GB165-0534
Title: Robert Ball Collection
Name of creator: Ball, Robert (1919-1987) Palestine Policeman
Dates of creation of material: 1944-1987
Level of description: Fonds
Extent: 3 boxes

Biographical history: Ball, Robert (1919-1987)
Born 21 April 1919 in Warminster, Wiltshire. Second son of John Ball, a grocer’s clerk, and Maud Mary Ball, formerly Burr. Baptised at Holy Trinity Church, Shaftesbury, Dorset on 16 May 1919 – then living at West View, Bimport Shaftesbury. Shortly after the death of Maud Ball [ca 1924] John Ball remarried. Elder brother [John Stephen, born ca 1907] had already left home. Robert Ball was educated in Shaftesbury until the age of 14 [1933] when he was signed up for Boys Service with the King’s Royal Rifles and was a member of Military Band – he had a natural gift to play by ear and could copy any tune. He completed his education on Boys Service and was awarded Second Class certificate in 1933 and First Class certificate in 1934. He was as initially sent to India, then based in Burma until 1938 when he was sent to Egypt as part of King’s Royal Rifle. Remained in Egypt during WWII until about 1943 when he was part of military escort taking German prisoners to the USA. Details of the trip are patchy but he left Africa from Durban, the ship calling in Buenos Aires, Rio de Janeiro and Trinidad before depositing prisoners in New York. He returned to UK in 1944 as part of convey crossing Atlantic and joined Palestine Police as constable, later promoted to sergeant [Foreign Office Exit Permit no 281994 valid for departure prior to 12 July 1944]. Offered second tour of duty but opted to join Bermuda Police Force in 1948, sailing on SS Bayano. [Fyffes Banana boat built 1915, scrapped 1956]. He settled in Bermuda and rose through colonial police ranks retiring as Chief Inspector in 1971. He returned to the UK in 1974, initially to Isle of Man, finally settling in Compton Dundon, Somerset. Awarded 7 medals: 5 military [General Service, 1339/45 Star, Africa Star 8th Army, Defence Medal, 139/35 War medal] and 2 colonial police [Queen’s Colonial Police gallantry Medal [1965] and Meritorious Service]. Married Jean McNeill 1950. 1 daughter. Died 16 March 1987.

Scope and content: Papers, photographs and artefacts relating to Robert Ball’s service in the Palestine Police and the Bermuda Police, including his Palestine Police employment contract, passport, Christmas dinner menu, portraiture photographs, a photo album of
purchased photos of Palestine with one photograph of Lebanon, view-master reels of Palestine, his Palestine Police service record and certificate of discharge. The material relating to his service in the Bermuda Police includes his employment contract, passports, correspondence, a police notebook, drunk driver questions, as well as artefacts including a pith helmet, epaulettes, service ribbons, police tie and whistle. There are also Palestine Police reunion photographs, Overseas Pensioners’ Association papers and an obituary for Robert Ball.

System of arrangement:
1. Palestine Police Service
2. Bermuda Police Service
3. Palestine Police Reunion
4. Overseas Pensioners’ Association
5. Obituary

Access conditions: Open. Access to the police notebook 1969 (2/4) is subject to the provisions of the data protection act.

Language of material: English

Conditions governing reproduction: No restrictions on copying or quotation other than statutory regulations and preservation concerns

Custodial history: In the possession of Robert Ball and his family

Immediate source of acquisition: Received as a gift from Hilary Thompson, May-June 2011. Additional material (1/11, 2/2-2/6, 5) received as a gift from Hilary Thompson on 5 Oct 2018

Related Units of Description:

In MEC Archive
For other Palestine Police papers and photographs please see the Guide to collections relating to the Palestine Police

Finding aids: In Guide; Handlist

Archivist’s note: Fonds, series and item level description created by Ala Tayebi-Jazayeri on 13 June 2018 and revised by Debbie Usher 10 Oct 2018. Biographical information from the papers in the collection and from information provided by Hilary Thompson.
SERIES, FILE AND ITEM LEVEL DESCRIPTION OF THE ROBERT BALL COLLECTION

1 Palestine Police Service 1944-1949 28 items

Papers and photographs relating to Robert Ball’s Palestine Police Service.

System of arrangement:

1/1 Palestine Police Employment Contract
1/2 Passport
1/3 Christmas Dinner
1/4 The Palestine Police Association
1/5 Photographs of Robert Ball and Jack Clifton
1/6 Photograph Album
1/7 View-Master Reels
1/8 Press-Cutting
1/9 Service Record
1/10 Certificate of Discharge
1/11 Know your mines pamphlet

1/1 Palestine Police Employment Contract 1 Apr 1944 2 items


1/2 Passport 12 April 1944 1 booklet

Robert Ball’s British passport.

1/3 Christmas Dinner 25 Dec 1945 3 items

Christmas dinner menu, place card and photograph.

1/3/1 Dinner Menu 25 Dec 1945 1 booklet

Printed Christmas dinner menu for the Western Police station, Boutagy House.

1/3/2 Place Card [25 Dec 1945] 1 item
Christmas dinner place card for Robert Ball.

1/3/3 Christmas Dinner Photograph
A photograph of the Christmas dinner of the Western Police Station, Boutagy House.

1/4 The Palestine Police Association
Palestine Police Association membership book and a receipt for 10 Palestinian Pounds for membership.

1/4/1 Membership Book
Printed membership book for ‘The Palestine Police Association’.

1/4/2 Receipt
Receipt for 10 Palestinian pounds for ‘The Palestine Police Association’.

1/5 Photographs of Robert Ball and Jack Clifton
Admin Hist: Jack Clifton also served in the Palestine Police.

1/5/1 Studio portrait of Robert Ball in Haifa
Not dated c1940s

1/5/2 Studio portrait of Robert Ball in Haifa
Not dated c1940s

1/5/3 Studio portrait of Robert Ball in Haifa
Not dated c1940s

1/5/4 Studio portrait of Robert Ball in Haifa
Not dated c1940s

1/5/5 Studio portrait of Robert Ball in Haifa
Not dated c1940s

1/5/6 Passport size studio portrait of Robert Ball
Not dated c1940s

1/5/7 Photograph of Robert Ball in police uniform by a doorway
Not dated c1940s
1/5/8 Studio portrait of Jack Clifton signed ‘your sincere friend Jack’ with a date stamp on the back 5 Jan 1939

1/5/9 Studio portrait of Jack Clifton signed ‘to Bob with sincere wishes ?lot[s] good luck Jack Feb 1940’

1/6 Photograph Album

Photograph album mainly consisting of professional photographs of Palestine that Robert Ball purchased and one photograph of Beirut in Lebanon. The photographs includes images of Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Tel Aviv, Haifa and Galilee.

The images include the Mount of Olives, Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Damascus Gate, The Stations of the Cross on the Via Dolorosa, Calvary, Hospice of St. John, altar of Stabat Mater, Jerusalem’s King David Hotel, Allenby Square, the Palestine Museum, Rachel’s Tomb, Church of Nativity, the Church of Annunciation, the village of Cana, some scenes of everyday life and people, Jaffa’s King George Avenue, Ramleh, Andromeda Rock, Mugrabi Theatre, Ben Yehuda Street, River Jordan Allenby Bridge, Jericho, the Lake of Tiberias, Lido Terrace, aerial view of Degania, Haifa’s Khayat Square, Armon Cinema, Mar Elias Monastery.

Also includes 2 photographs of Robert Ball’s place of residence in Palestine.

Captions are original

1a My Humble Abode
1b [My Humble Abode] duplicate of 1a
2 Jerusalem: The Mt of Olives
3 Jerusalem: The Citadel
4 Jerusalem: The Rock Moriah
5 Jerusalem: Temple Area
6 Jerusalem: Church of the Holy Sepulchre
7 Jerusalem: The Crusader Bells
8 Jerusalem: The Tomb
9 Jerusalem: Arch of Ecce Homo
10 Jerusalem: Way Dolorosa
11 Jerusalem: The Wailing Wall
12 Jerusalem: Garden of Gethsemane
13 Jerusalem: Damascus Gate
14 The Stations of the Cross on the Via Dolorosa: (1) The Roman Praetorium
15 The Stations of the Cross on the Via Dolorosa: (2) Near the Ecce Homo
16 The Stations of the Cross on the Via Dolorosa: (3) Near the Latin Armenian Hospice
17 The Stations of the Cross on the Via Dolorosa: (4) The Meeting Place
18 The Stations of the Cross on the Via Dolorosa: (5) Simon takes the Cross
19 The Stations of the Cross on the Via Dolorosa: (6) House of St Veronica
20 The Stations of the Cross on the Via Dolorosa: (7) Porto Judicaria
21 The Stations of the Cross on the Via Dolorosa: (8) Hospice of St. John
22 The Stations of the Cross on the Via Dolorosa: (9) Coptic Monastery
23 The Stations of the Cross on the Via Dolorosa: (10) Calvary - Chapel of Disrobing
24 The Stations of the Cross on the Via Dolorosa: (11) Calvary - Chapel of Nailing
25 The Stations of the Cross on the Via Dolorosa: (12) Calvary - Chapel of Raising
26 The Stations of the Cross on the Via Dolorosa: (13) Altar of the Stabat Mater
27 The Stations of the Cross on the Via Dolorosa: (14) The Tomb
28 Jerusalem: Central Jerusalem
29 Jerusalem: Y.M.C.A Building
30 Jerusalem: King David Hotel
31 Jerusalem: Zion Circle
32 Jerusalem: Allenby Square
33 Jerusalem: Princess Mary Avenue
34 Jerusalem: General Post Office
35 Jerusalem: Julian’s Way
36 Jerusalem: The Residency
37 Jerusalem: The Palestine Museum
38 Jerusalem: The Jewish Agency
39 Jerusalem: King George Avenue
40 Bethlehem: Shepherd’s Field
41 Bethlehem: Rachel’s Tomb
42 Bethlehem: The Water Carrier
44 Bethlehem: Bethlehem Bells
44 Bethlehem: The Church of Nativity
45 Bethlehem: The Grotto
46 Bethlehem: The Manger
47 Bethlehem: The Nave
48 Bethlehem: A Judean Home
49 Bethlehem: Street Scene
50 Bethlehem: At Prayer
Bethlehem: The Mother of Pearl Worker
Nazareth: Nazareth
Nazareth: The Vegetable Market
Nazareth: Oh! Fair Nazarene
Nazareth: The Virgins Fount
Nazareth: The Grotto of Annunciation
Nazareth: Animal Market
Nazareth: The Church of Annunciation
Nazareth: Chapel of the Carpenter Shop
Sharon Plain
Church of Transfiguration
Cana Village
Mt. Tabor
Ploughing
Harvesting
Threshing
Winnowing
Grinding the Wheat
An Eastern Beauty
Jewelled Lady
To the Well
The Shepherd
The Spinner
The Water Carrier
Homeward Bound
A Cluster
The Orange Grove
Loaded Trees
Gathering
Irrigation
Cleaning and Sorting
Packing
Irrigation Canals
By Camel
then Lighter
then River
to the Consumer
Jaffa: Market Square
Jaffa: King George Avenue
Jaffa: Tabitha’s Well
Jaffa: House of Simon the Tanner
Ramleh
Interior - St. George’s Church
Lydda - St. George’s Church
The Tower of the ‘Forty Martyrs’
Plain of Sharon
Jaffa from the Sea
Andromeda Rocks
The Sea Front
Tel Aviv: The Promenade
Tel Aviv: The Beach
Tel Aviv: Rothschild Boulevard
Tel Aviv: Allenby Street
Tel Aviv: Mugrabi Theatre
Tel Aviv: Colony Circle
Tel Aviv: Dizzengoff [Dizengoff] Circle
Tel Aviv: Carmel Street
Tel Aviv: Ben Yehuda St.
Tel Aviv: Yaarkon [Yarkon] River
Tel Aviv: The Cascades
Tel Aviv: Camel Caravans fording the river
River Jordan. Allenby Bridge
The Dead Sea
River Jordan. Place of Baptism
115 Bouyancy [Buoyancy]
116 Jericho
117 Mount of Temptation
118 St. George Convent
119 Elisha’s Fountain
120 Good Samaritan’s Inn
121 The Lake of Tiberias
122 The lake Front
123 Old Tiberias
124 Dagania [Degania] Settlement
125 Tiberias: Towards Mt. Hermon
126 Tiberias: Lido Terrace
127 Tiberias: Tiberias from the Lake
128 Tiberias: The Lido
129 Tiberias - The Old
130 Aerial view of Dagania [Degania]
131 Tiberias – The New
132 The Hot Springs
133 Haifa: Haifa from Mt. Carmel
134 Haifa: Herzl St. Haifa
135 Haifa: The Kingsway
136 Haifa: Khayat Square
137 Haifa: Armon Cinema
138 Haifa: Technical Colledge [College]
139 Haifa: Bath [Bat] Galim Swimming Pool
140 Haifa: The Casino
141 Haifa: From the North Beach
142 Haifa: The Fisherman
143 Haifa: Panarama [Panorama]
144 Haifa: The end of a perfect day
145 The Monastery at Mar Elias: In Memorium
146 The Monastery at Mar Elias: The Open Air Service
147 The Monastery at Mar Elias: Inside the Monastery
148 The Monastery at Mar Elias: The Monastery
149 The Pigeon Rocks - Beyrouth [Beirut] - Lebanon

1/7 View-Master Reels
Not dated 6 view-master reels of Palestine that Robert Ball purchased. The view-master reels consisting of images of Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Jaffa, Haifa and Acre.

1/7/1 View-master reel labelled ‘4002 Street Scenes in Old Jerusalem Palestine’ c1940s containing the following images:
1 Inside the Damascus gate
2 Cobbler shop
3 Goatskin water bag carrier
4 Roasting beans
5 An Arab and performing monkey
6 A soft drink vendor
7 Coffee and Hubble Bubble Pipe

1/7/2 View-master reel labelled ‘4004 Moslem temple area’ containing the following images:
1 Dome of Rock area
2 The judgment area
3 Dome of the Chain
4 Dome of Rock and Jebusite spring
5 Ancient steps and the dome
6 Inside the Aksa mosque
7 The rock of the Abraham

Not dated c1940s
6 view-master reels
1 view-master reel
1 view-master reel
1/7/3  View-master reel labelled ‘4008 Tel Aviv Israel’ containing the following images: Not dated 1 view-master reel
   1 Tel Aviv from Jaffa
   2 Allenby street
   3 Ocean Boulevard
   4 Zena Disengoff square [Zina Dizengoff]
   5 Allenby square
   6 London square
   7 Sunset from Tel Aviv
   Not dated c1940s

1/7/4  View-master reel labelled ‘4010 Jaffa Israel’ containing the following images: Not dated 1 view-master reel
       1 Jaffa
       2 King George street
       3 Jaffa mosque
       4 The market place
       5 Boat building in the old town
       6 Repairing the nets
       7 Harbour Scene
       Not dated c1940s

1/7/5  View-master reel labelled ‘4012 Region of Haifa Israel’ containing the following images: Not dated 1 view-master reel
       1 Haifa and the bay
       2 Mount Carmel
       3 Old town of Acre
       4 Crusader castle ruins at Atlit
       5 Roman harbour ruins at Caesarea
       6 Ruins of Herod’s palace
       7 The Caesarea minaret
       Not dated c1940s

1/7/6  View-master reel labelled ‘4013 Acre Palestine’ containing the following images: Not dated 1 view-master reel
       1 Acre and the bay
       Not dated c1940s
2 The Acre gate
3 The mosque
4 A Roman aqueduct
5 16th century Market street
6 Repairing the nets
7 Minaret call to prayer

1/8 Press Cutting
Parade magazine cutting showing a view of Haifa.

1/9 Service Record
Printed booklet of the record of service for Robert Ball including his education, promotions, reductions, certificates, qualifications and medical history.

1/10 Certificate of Discharge
Printed Palestine Police certificate of discharge.

1/11 Know your mines pamphlet
British training pamphlet ‘Know your mines’ giving golden rules for dealing with mines and descriptions of British, American, German and Italian mines and switches and rules for marking and recording minefields.

2 Bermuda Police Service
Papers and artefacts relating to Robert Ball’s Bermuda Police Service.

System of arrangement:
2/1 Bermuda Police Employment Contract
2/2 Government of Bermuda Passports
2/3 Correspondence
2/4 Police notebook
2/5 Drink driver questions
2/6 Bermuda Police Uniform Artefacts

2/1 Bermuda Police Employment Contract
Bermuda police contract of employment for Robert Ball with accompanying envelope and a with compliments slip.

2/2 Government of Bermuda Passports
1954-1970
2 items

2/2/1 British passport issued by the Government of Bermuda on 25 Jun 1954
1954-1956
1 item

2/2/2 British passport issued by the Government of Bermuda on 3 Jul 1965
1965-1970
1 item

2/3 Correspondence
1957-1966
4 sheets, 1 envelope
Correspondence relating to Robert Ball’s service in the Bermuda Police and his award of the Colonial Police Medal for gallantry and his honour in the New Year’s Honours list.

2/3/1 Letter from C. Vail Zuill (Assistant Manager of the Bank of Bermuda) to Sgt R. Ball thanking him ‘for the prompt and efficient work’ during ‘the time our Manager and staff at our Branch in Somerset were locked in the vault’ during a robbery.
14 Jun 1957
1 sheet

2/3/2 Letter from the Commissioner of Police to Inspector Robert Ball informing him that he had been awarded the Colonial Police Medal for gallantry.
29 Dec 1965
1 sheet
2/3/3  Letter with envelope from Lord Martonmere (Governor of Bermuda) to Inspector Ball sending him congratulations on being awarded the Colonial Police Medal for Gallantry.

1 Jan 1966  1 sheet, 1 envelope

2/3/4  Letter from the Attorney General Bermuda to Inspector Robert Ball congratulating him on ‘your well deserved honour announced in the New Year’s Honours List.

4 Jan 1966  1 sheet

2/4  Police Notebook  1969  1 booklet

Police notebook including witness statements and notes on incidents that Robert Ball attended.

Access: Please note that access to the police notebook is subject to the provisions of the data protection act.

2/5  Drunk Driver Questions  Not dated  1 sheet

Form entitled ‘Report on Drunk Driver’ giving questions to ask when dealing with a drunk driver.

2/6  Bermuda Police Uniform Artefacts  c1950s-1960s  20 items

Artefacts from Robert Ball’s service in the Bermuda Police including a pith helmet, epaulettes, service ribbons, police tie and whistle.

2/6/1  Pith Helmet  2 items

White pith helmet with detachable spike

2/6/2  Epaulettes  4 items

Bermuda Police Uniform epaulettes

2/6/3  Service Ribbons  12 items

2 metal service ribbons and small box with 12 ribbons. The box is labelled ‘G.S.M [General Service Medal] and clasp
Palestine 1945-48’ but does not hold the service medal.

Note: It is not clear if the service ribbons are from the Palestine Police or the Bermuda Police. Although the other artefacts are from the Bermuda Police.

2/6/4 Bermuda Police Tie 1 item
2/6/5 Police whistle 1 item

Metropolitan police whistle on a cord.

3 Palestine Police Reunion c1964 2 items

Photographs of the Palestine Police reunion in Bermuda.

Admin Hist: Robert Ball was not the only Palestine Policeman who travelled to Bermuda to join the Bermuda Police after the end of the Palestine Mandate. He travelled with David Gill and also his Palestine Police colleagues Jack Lawton and Doug Hebbard joined the Bermuda Police and travelled to Bermuda on the same ship as Robert Ball.

3/1 Group photograph of Palestine Police veterans’ reunion, possibly in a pub. The people in the photograph may possibly include Jack Lawton and Doug Hebbard.

3/2 Group photograph of Palestine Police veterans’ reunion taken in a car park. The people in the photograph may possibly include Jack Lawton and Doug Hebbard.

4 Overseas Service Pensioners’ Association 1977-1980 3 items

Papers relating to Robert Ball’s life membership of the Overseas Service Pensioners’ Association.

4/1 Printed booklet ‘Overseas Service Pensioners’ Association Constitution and Rules Effective 9th June 1977’. 9 Jun 1977 1 booklet

4/2 Receipt for £40 for life membership for the ‘Overseas Service Pensioners’ Association paid by R. Ball. 5 Jun 1980 1 item
4/3 Life membership card of the ‘Overseas Service Pensioner’s Association. Not dated 1 item

5 Obituary 1987 1 item
Palestine Police Old Comrades Association newsletter no 148 September 1987 which includes an obituary for Robert Ball on page 69.