

= Ernest Radcliffe Bond =

Ernest Radcliffe Bond , OBE , QPM , (1 March 1919 ? 20 November 2003) , also called Commander X , was a British soldier , and later policeman famous for his service in the Metropolitan Police Service . He married the 23 @-@ year @-@ old Mabel Laming at 16 , and they remained together until Mabel 's death in 1992 .

Bond experienced the Fraud Squad , the Flying Squad , the Murder Squad , and became the first commander of the newly formed Bomb Squad (later the Anti @-@ Terrorist Branch , now merged into Counter Terrorism Command) . His notable achievements in the bomb squad were negotiating the rise of The Angry Brigade , eventually jailing several members . The other major event he negotiated as commander with the Bomb Squad was the Balcombe Street siege , in which two people were taken hostage by four Irish Republican Army members , who demanded a plane to Ireland . Bond , answering the demands , refused saying that the police " are not going to make any deals " . The gunmen surrendered , the event a success for police with no casualties on either side .

= = Early life = =

Ernest Radcliffe Bond was born on 1 March 1919 in Barrow @-@ in @-@ Furness , where he lived in a " close @-@ knit community " at 58 John Street . His father , William Edward Bond , was a shipyard worker , and his mother was Annie Elizabeth Bond née Radcliffe . Bond was an apprentice French polisher after he left school .

= = Military career = =

Bond joined the British Army on 16 September 1935 , entering the 2nd battalion of the Scots Guards . His objective was to fight in any short engagement that he could , and then to become a police officer . He was sent to Palestine to help with the Arab Revolt . However , his plan was scuppered by the outbreak of World War II , and he stayed with his battalion , serving first in Norway as a sergeant . After a short time in No. 8 (Guards) Commando , where he served in a group of units under Robert Laycock 's command fighting in the Middle East in 1941 , by that time Bond had been promoted to the rank of sergeant . The unit was disbanded , and he journeyed to North Africa with his original battalion in the Scots Guards , fighting in the Eighth Army .

In 1941 , still in North Africa , Bond joined " L " Detachment in the Special Service Brigade , which became David Stirling 's Special Air Service . Bond was part of a parachute training mission in Kabrit , Egypt , against the airfields of Gazala and Tmimi . The conditions were " atrocious " , and his aeroplane crashed in desert . He became a prisoner of war for the remainder of the conflict .

He was reported to have spent four years in jail in his military career .

= = Police career = =

When Bond was released from his imprisonment by the Axis , he was demobilised in 1946 and entered the Metropolitan Police with the warrant number 128434 , realising his pre @-@ war ambition . He was ' on the beat ' for 2 years , working in Lambeth with ' M ' division . His division became ' E ' division , patrolling Holborn , when he decided to enter the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) in 1948 . He experienced another promotion in 1957 , to become a Detective Sergeant ; " he began to develop a reputation for his discerning skill as a detective . " Bond rapidly experienced both the Fraud Squad and the Flying Squad ; and in 1963 joined the Murder Squad at the rank of Detective Inspector .

Bond joined the Bomb Squad , newly formed in January 1971 due to concern over The Angry Brigade . Bond became the unit 's first commander on 23 June 1971 , being promoted to that position in 1969 . The unit served at Tintagel House , and Bond 's name was theoretically meant to be kept secret and he should be called ' Commander X ' , so that he was not bombed , but

journalists have since claimed to have known his name within days of his appointment . The press lauded Commander X as a " mystery supremo to hunt down the Angry Brigade . " The Angry Brigade was a new political group ; " a small group [around 200] of leftwing radicals and anarchists , " who claimed responsibility for about 20 small bombings which began on 20 November 1970 , with the bombing of a BBC van . At its formation , the Bomb Squad comprised around 30 men , one third from CID , the rest from Special Branch . The Angry Brigade 's decline came in 1971 , when various conspirators were arrested . At the 1971 ? 72 trial , the nine conspirators were denied bail at Clerkenwell Court after Bond opposed the move , and the judge , J Purcell , " remanded all nine in custody for a week . " There were concerns that the police had " over @-@ reached themselves . " The Angry Brigade member John Barker later said that " the police framed a guilty man , " and Bond was called an " old @-@ fashioned plod " by a defendant . He told the Purcell that " I am quite certain that , sooner or later , we would have had somebody killed . " Due to his success , in 1972 he was awarded the Queen 's Police Medal and promoted to Deputy Assistant Commissioner (Operations) .

The Irish Republican Army (IRA) also had a bombing campaign ongoing , and in December 1975 Bond " saturated " the centre of London with plainclothes police officers . Four IRA members took two people hostage in Balcombe Street , following a police chase which involved a shoot out on 7 December . The terrorists called the police , in a call which was routed to Bond ; who refused their demands of a plane to fly to Ireland , proclaiming that

" They are not going anywhere and they are not getting any plane to Ireland . We are not going to make any deals at all . "

The gunmen gave up on 12 December , their surrender sparking fears of reprisals , after what Bond called a " rather humiliating episode , " Bond " masterminded " the operation to regain the hostages . He retired the following year , in 1976 , and received the Order of the British Empire in the New Year 's honours list . Upon his retirement in February 1976 , he had served in the police for 30 years , full of " exemplary conduct . " In his time , Bond received 12 Commissioner 's Commendations and 7 for " courage , diligence and determination in the course of investigations . "

= = Personal life = =

Bond married the 23 @-@ year @-@ old Mabel Phoebe Isabell née Laming on 29 October 1935 , the daughter of a dock worker , Alfred Thomas Laming (Bond was 16 at the time) . They had two sons and two daughters together , who all survived both Ernest and Mabel . When Bond had retired , he indulged his interests in decorating and gardening , and remained a Freemason . Mabel died in 1992 , and on 20 November 2003 , Ernest died of prostate cancer in Welling ; in his home .