

BOOK SHELF
Reviews of recently published
Books
(BOOK 17)

AN INSPECTOR RECALLS

By Graham Satchwell Reviewed by JOHN CRAIG

There are many features of this book that I found very interesting, not the least of which is the timing of its publication that coincided with the recent Inquest verdict on the 96 that died at the Hillsborough Disaster that has raised many questions about the culture that pervades the UK police service.

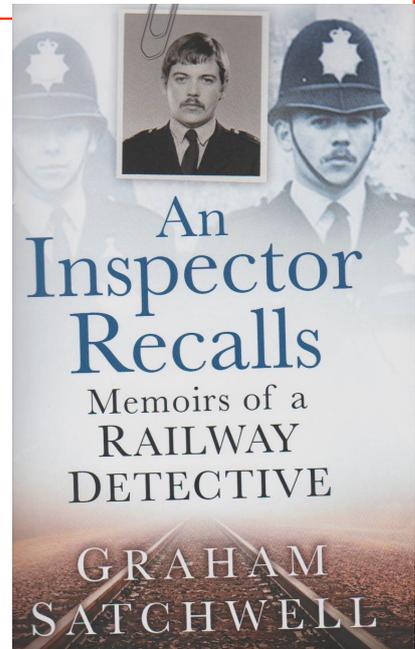
Graham Satchwell was born in Birmingham and served from 1968 to 1999. He served in the British Transport Police rising to the rank of Detective Superintendent.

Graham's career provided him with many challenges and brought him into contact with some of the country's most notorious criminals. Graham also took a leading role in the police investigation into the Southall Rail Disaster.

I was surprised by how open and honest the author was in penning his memoirs. The legal advisors to the publishers must have

been kept very busy editing the text to avoid some of those Graham mentions being defamed by name. I couldn't help getting the impression that Graham was using the book to settle scores with some with whom he had crossed swords (or truncheons) during his service. He seems to have encountered few police officers of very senior rank, including a few chief constables, that impressed him.

There are multiple mentions of police corruption that left me in no doubt that if the police service was so riddled with corruption during the period that Graham served, there is little wonder at the accusations now being made against South Yorkshire Constabulary regarding the Hillsborough Disaster and the 'Battle of Orgreave' during the NUM strike. Although retired police officers that have written short reviews of the book on the dust cover are emphasising that police culture as described is long gone I wonder if this really is the case. Indeed, many of the ex-police reviewers are stating that the author is describing times to which they wish the service could return! All I can say is that things must be pretty bad now if that is true.



I suspect that some ex-coppers will say that Graham has been too honest but that just made his memoirs all the more interesting to me. It is certainly a 'warts and all' account of a thirty year career filled with incident some of which those that recognise themselves in the book will wish that Graham had treated them more kindly.

This book is a really good read that I heartily recommend. It is published by The History Press with an ISBN 978-0-7509-6640-5