

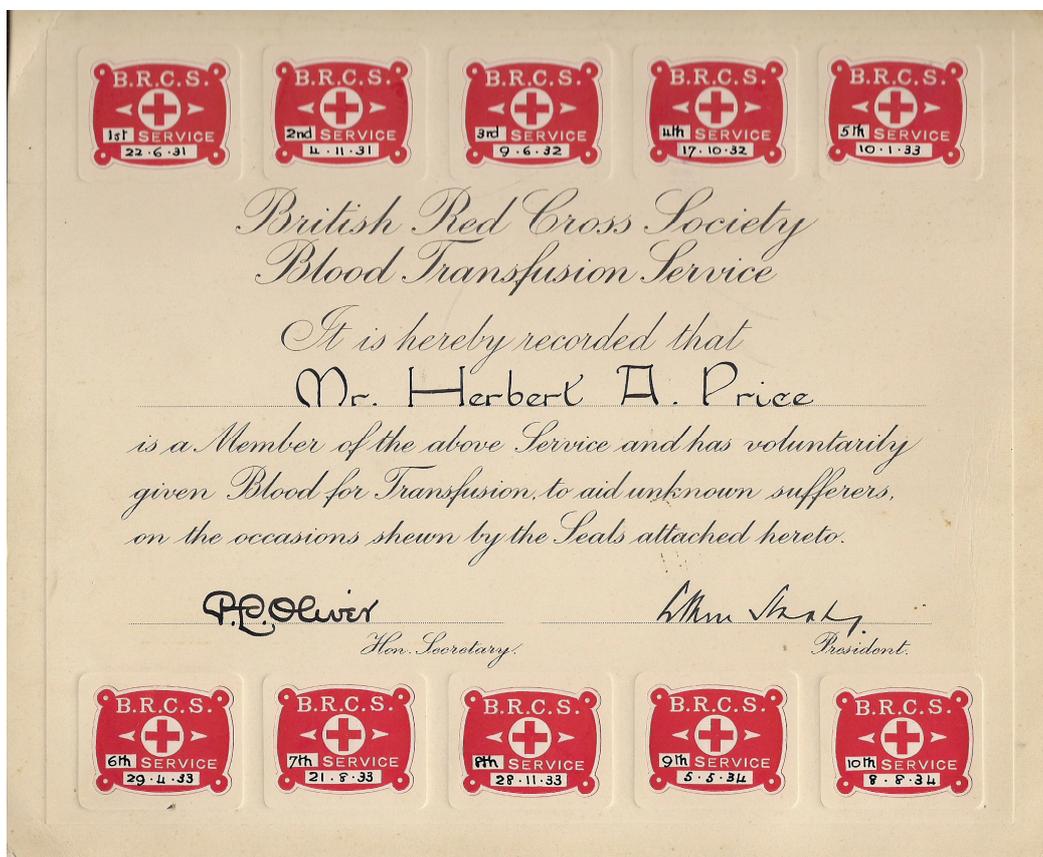
DONATING BLOOD IN ENGLAND IN THE 1930s

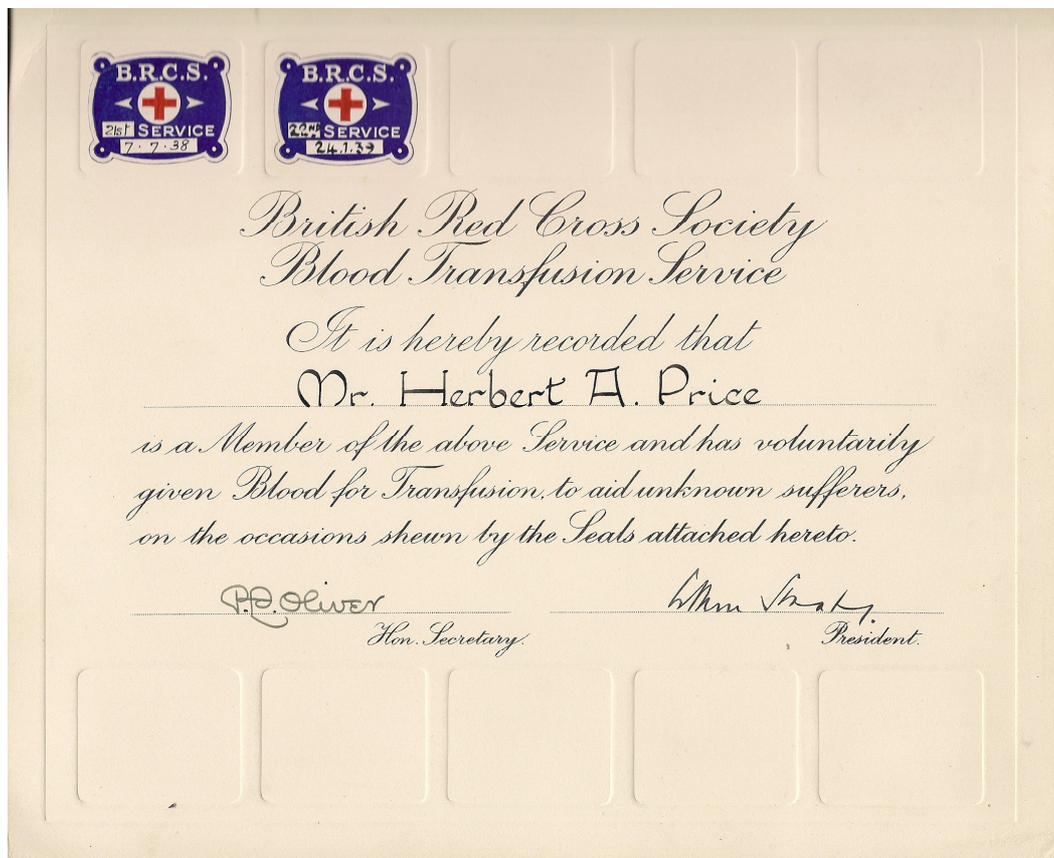
A version of this document, written by Phil Learoyd, was originally provided as a hand-out at the British Blood Transfusion Society Annual Meeting of 2012

Letters and blood donation certificates for Mr Herbert Price were originally donated by members of Mr Price's family to Mr Peter Holt, who at that time was the Laboratory Manager of the Bristol Blood Transfusion Centre. Mr Holt subsequently donated them to the British Blood Transfusion Society for archiving. The donated material consisted of three blood donation certificates, a letter, a typed note regarding the use of his 20th donation, and his blood donor card, used during the period 1947 to 1953.

The blood donation certificates were issued to blood donors by the British Red Cross Society and each one allowed for ten separate 'stickers' to be attached that provided the space to manually document the number and date of each donation given. Three such certificates (listed below) identify that Mr Herbert Price first donated blood on the 22nd June 1931 and gave his twenty-second donation on the 24th January 1939 (the 'sticker' for his thirteenth donation has been lost over time).

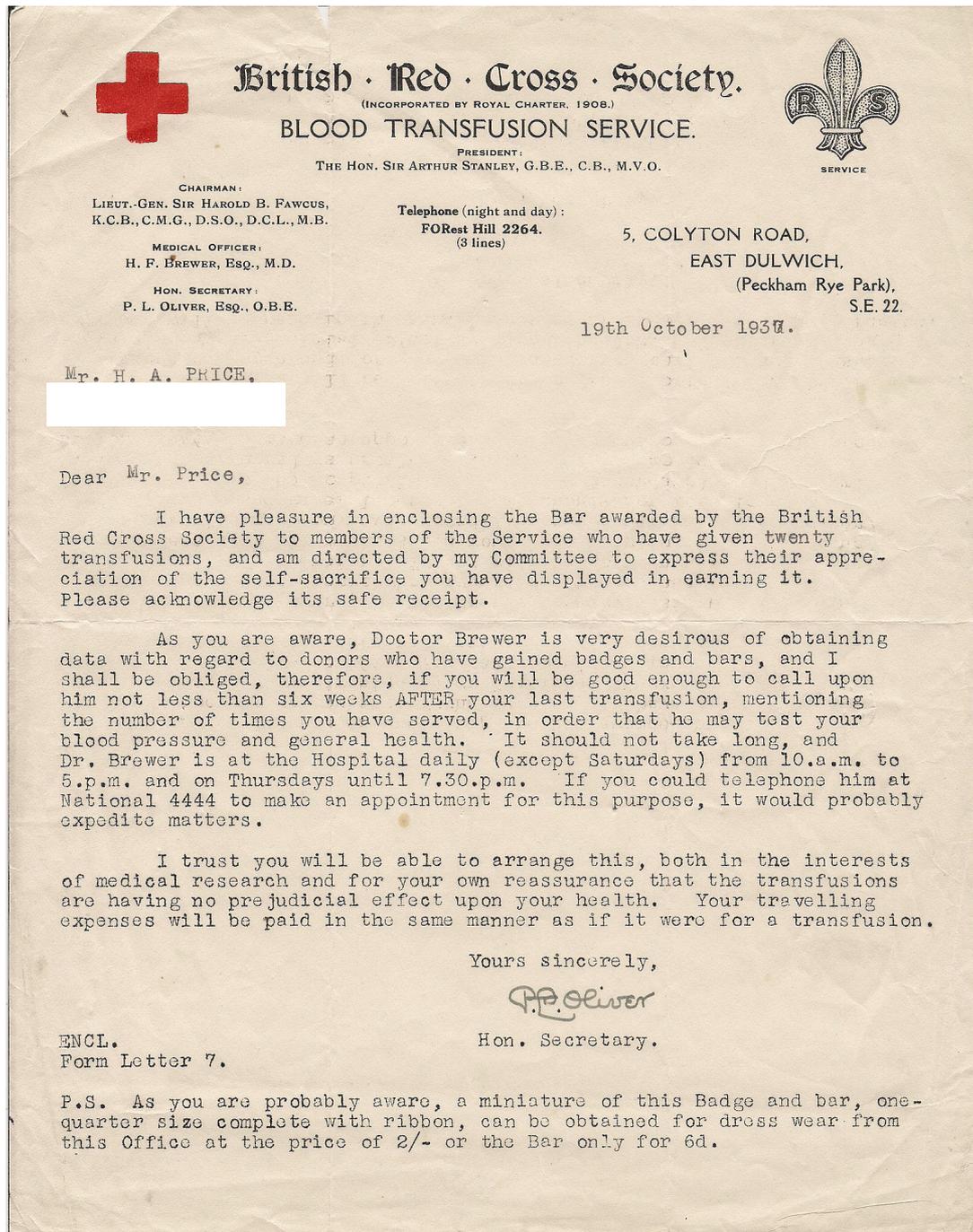
The first ten donations were given between 22nd June 1931 and 8th August 1934, the second ten between 20th November 1934 and 28th September 1937. Each certificate is signed by the Honorary Secretary whose signature can be clearly identified to be 'P.L. Oliver', i.e. Percy Lane Oliver, and by the President of the London branch of the Red Cross, who was at the time Sir Arthur Stanley.





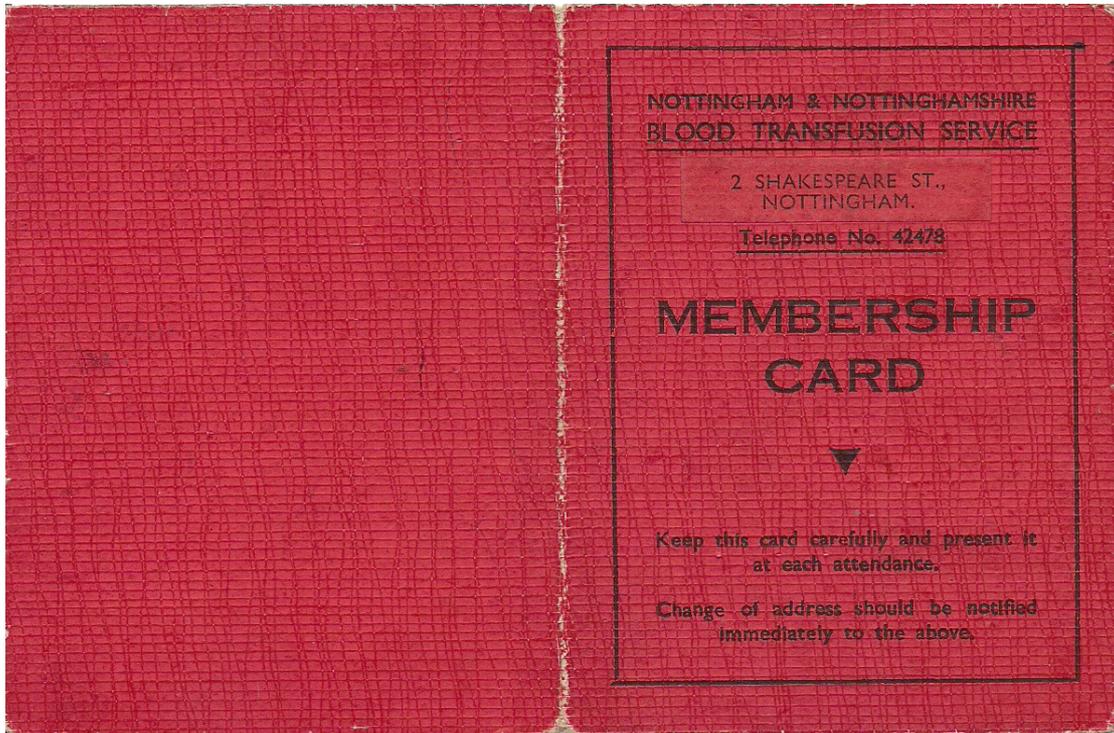
British Red Cross blood donation certificates for Mr Herbert A Price documenting the twenty-two blood donations given by him between 1931 and 1939

The certificate 'stickers' show that Mr Price donated blood on four occasions in 1933 (i.e. 10th January, 29th April, 21st August and 28th November), on three occasions in 1934 and 1935 and on four occasions in 1936 (i.e. 7th February, 16th March, 21st September and 30th December). Presumably as a result of the large number of donations given over a four year period, Mr Price received a letter dated 19th October 1937 from Percy Lane Oliver (reproduced below) requesting that he arranges to see a Dr Brewer to check his 'blood pressure and general health in the interests of medical research and to reassure him that the transfusions [donations] are having no prejudicial effect on his health'. At the time, Mr Price was living in the Tottenham area of North London.



Original letter from Percy Lane Oliver to Mr Herbert A Price dated 19th October 1937

The collection of documents relating to Mr Price also includes a 'Blood Transfusion Service Membership Card', which identifies that he gave a further twelve blood donations between February 1947 and November 1953. At this time, Mr Price was living in Nottingham. The card confirms his blood group to be 'A II' (i.e. using two nomenclatures) and that he was 'Rh +ve', hand written onto the card – he was grouped at the 'Regional laboratory' on the 5th February 1947. The volume of each donation is identified to be '420 cc'.



Number.....

Mr. Herbert Price,
[REDACTED]
Nottingham.

is enrolled as a

GROUP A II Rh+ve

Voluntary BLOOD DONOR

Date Grouped 5. 2. 47.

at Regional Lab:ty R.G. & B.S.

Donor's Signature H. Price

BLOOD DONATIONS			
Date	PLACE TAKEN	Amount	Entd. by
4. 2. 47.	Chilwell O.D.	420cc	H.H.G.
27. 11. 47	" "	"	H.H.G.
20. 5. 48	" "	"	H.H.G.
23. 11. 48	" "	"	H.H.G.
25. 5. 49	" "	"	H.H.G.
22. 11. 49	" "	"	H.H.G.
23. 5. 50	" "	"	H.H.G.
21. 11. 50	" "	"	H.H.G.
22. 5. 51	" "	"	H.H.G.
13. 11. 51	" "	"	H.H.G.
20. 5. 53	" "	"	H.H.G.
10/11/53	" "	"	H.H.G.

The blood donor card of Mr Herbert Price documenting 12 donations between 4th February 1947 and 10th November 1953

The letter sent to Mr Price on the 19th September 1937 (see above) identifies that enclosed 'Bar awarded by the British Red Cross Society to members of the Service who have given twenty transfusions'. These medals were provided by the British Red Cross Society – Blood Transfusion Service and incorporated a white ribbon with red strips together with a round bronze medal, the front of which has the Red Cross emblem and states BLOOD TRANSFUSION SERVICE - BRITISH RED CROSS SOCIETY. The reverse of the medal was engraved with the blood donor's name. These medals were therefore a forerunner of the blood donation badges issued subsequently by the National Blood Transfusion Service in the UK. Interestingly, a post-script in the letter states that 'a miniature of this badge and bar, one quarter size complete with ribbon can be obtained for dress wear'.



An example of the British Red Cross Society Blood Transfusion Service blood donor medal together with 20th, 30th and 40th service donation bars