

*Whitehall, 11th June 1919.*

His Majesty the KING has been pleased to award the Edward Medal to Maruti Vithoba and Krishna Parbati under the following circumstances:—

On the 2nd February 1918 a masonry tank 9 feet square by 12½ deep at the Simplex Mills in Bombay was being cleaned out by six Hindu workmen by means of buckets lowered through a manhole, when one of the men fell through the manhole into the tank and was at once rendered unconscious by poisonous gas. One of the other men went to his assistance, and immediately lost consciousness. The other four all attempted to rescue the two unconscious men, and were all likewise overcome. Maruti Vithoba then volunteered to rescue the men, and was lowered by a rope; he endeavoured to save one who appeared still living; but, before he could do so, was overpowered by the fumes, and had to be pulled out. Krishna Parbati at once volunteered to make a further attempt, and had nearly completed fastening a rope round one of the victims when he also had to be pulled out in an unconscious state. The six bodies were eventually recovered by the Fire Brigade, who were wearing smoke helmets; one was still living, but died a few minutes after being rescued.

In view of the fact that it was obvious that the gas was highly poisonous and its action extremely rapid, Maruti Vithoba and Krishna Parbati undoubtedly risked their lives in endeavouring to save the lives of others.

Also to John Joseph Nevin and Alfred Horn.

On the 22nd July 1918 two miners were buried by a fall of ground in the Margaret Iron Ore Mine, Frizington, Cumberland. The fall swept out all the timber and left exposed a dangerous roof, in parts 20 feet high and fully 20 feet wide, from which masses of rock were liable to fall at any moment. As the place could not be made safe by means of timber in any reasonable time, several men took the risk of working under the exposed and dangerous roof in order to release the two imprisoned miners who were buried amongst a mixed mass of timber, stone, and iron ore, while others stood on the fall and watched the roof, thereby inspiring confidence amongst the men engaged immediately underneath. The actual danger the rescuers ran was that of being trapped by a fall of ground from what was known to be a dangerous roof. Fortunately no fall took place during the work, which lasted about 1¾ hour, or the rescuers could hardly have escaped injury. One of the men rescued succumbed afterwards to his injuries.

Eight men were engaged in the work of rescue. Horn and Nevin specially distinguished themselves.

Also to Michael Fogarty and Frank Duller.

On the 12th July 1918, Fogarty and another miner named Fred Joga were blasting in the Mount Morgan Mine, Brisbane. Having inserted the charges, Joga lit the fuzes, the last of which, however, did not light properly; Fogarty had already gone to a place of safety, but Joga remained behind attempting to light the last fuze. Fogarty was not aware of this

until the first charge exploded. He then at once called to Duller, and both men went back to the face, where, as they knew, two charges were still unexploded, to rescue Joga. They found him about six feet from the face, and just succeeded in dragging him clear when the second charge exploded. Joga, unfortunately, died from the injuries he had received by the explosion of the first charge. Both men undoubtedly risked their lives in the attempt to save Joga's life.

Also to Richard Edward Finch, Manager of the Park Lane Colliery, Wigan.

On the 29th January 1919, at 4.30 p.m., two men named Shaw and Rimmer were replacing some timber near a self-acting haulage rope. The roof crashed down over their heads, burying both men. Nothing was done to rescue them until Finch arrived at 5 p.m. He shouted, and Shaw answered in a feeble voice. Finch crept over the fallen bars and was able to touch him. By dint of effort he was able to scrape the dirt from Shaw's mouth and saved him from suffocation. He called for volunteers to assist in digging out the men, and three men came to his assistance. Stones and dirt continued to fall from the roof, and on several occasions Finch ordered his assistants back; though during the whole time he himself continued his exertions. Shaw was rescued at 5.30 p.m. Finch then endeavoured to rescue Rimmer, but he was found to be dead. His body was recovered at 6.30 p.m. Finch underwent great danger, and took risks no one else was willing to take.

Also to John M'Cube, a drawer at the Stanrigg Colliery, Airdrie, aged 17.

On the 9th July 1918 there was an inrush of moss into the workings. M'Cube, with two other drawers and three miners, was at the bottom of number 3 shaft when they were told that the moss had broken in. The two other boys and the three men at once ascended the shaft and escaped. M'Cube, however, knowing that there were men at the face who might be cut off, returned for a quarter of a mile and warned the men. He and the men he had warned were ultimately collected and raised by another shaft. When he returned to the face, M'Cube did not know where the break had occurred, or whether the moss might not at any moment fill the workings through which he returned, as in fact it soon afterwards did. He faced a grave and unknown danger, which might have been fatal, in order to enable others to escape.

Also to Harry Denny.

On the 27th March 1919, Joseph Reynolds, a foreman in Messrs. Josiah Guest & Sons' foundry at West Bromwich, while superintending the filling of a series of pig-iron moulds, stumbled and fell on to the still molten metal. No one was near, but Denny, a labourer, hearing his cries, ran up and tried to pull him away by his clothes, but these were burned through and came away in his hands. Denny then thrust his arms into the molten metal under Reynolds, caught him round the body, and lifted him clear. He then ran for assistance. Unfortunately Reynolds was so seriously injured that he died a few days afterwards.