

An H.E. bomb blew an A.F.S. Fire Tender into the front garden of a Police Office, pinning two firemen underneath. They were fatally injured. The explosion also fractured and ignited a gas main, setting on fire nearby trees and hedges. The trailer pump attached to the tender was blown some distance and three other firemen killed.

These P.L.A. Police Officers were quickly on the scene and made frantic endeavours to release the trapped firemen; their efforts were unavailing as it was impossible to move the tender which eventually had to be lifted by crane. Enemy aircraft were overhead and bombs and A.A. shrapnel were falling throughout the rescue operation which was not abandoned until it was established that the trapped firemen were dead. Acting Inspector Boniface also volunteered during an intense air raid to assist firemen to recover the body of an A.F.S. fireman from under burning debris. The area was brightly illuminated by big fires, and was therefore a good target for enemy aircraft overhead.

Frederick Charles Clouder, Crane Driver, Southern Railway, Southampton Docks.

Just after bombs had been dropped in Southampton, Clouder volunteered to assist in removing a wounded soldier from the roof of the Cold Store. This was burning fiercely and A.A. shells standing there were exploding from the heat on the roof. He ran to a crane and guided a rope sling looped on to the crane hood which was placed on the Cold Store roof. The soldier was placed in the sling and Clouder lowered him to the ground.

As the raid was still in progress Clouder showed great presence of mind and courage in carrying out this operation in spite of flames and smoke as well as exploding A.A. shells.

George William Cooper, Horse Foreman, Great Western Railway, Poplar.

During a heavy air raid on a dock, Foreman Cooper, although off duty at the time, made his way to the stables through heavy gunfire and bombing from enemy planes. Although big fires were raging in all directions and getting worse as time progressed, Cooper remained at the stables and, with the assistance of three men, extinguished several incendiary bombs which fell through the stable roof.

It appeared almost certain that the stables would be involved in the fire, and orders were then received to evacuate immediately the thirty-six horses stabled therein. Cooper, who had taken the initiative from the start, had already prepared the horses for removal and had smashed down the gates leading to the premises of the Port of London Authority to make an emergency exit; the railway bridge under which the horses would otherwise have had to be led was on fire and seemed likely to collapse. Later, however, the fire on the bridge was got under partial control and all the animals were led underneath and tied up to trucks on the coal siding for the night.

Until the horses were found stabling accommodation elsewhere, Cooper and his three men remained on duty, the night period being covered by the men in shifts.

The combined efforts of Cooper and his three men saved the thirty-six horses and stable premises from destruction.

Harry George Thomas	} Gas, Light and Coke Company, London.
Gardiner, Fitter.	
Ernest Frederick Baker, Fitter.	

Harry Drew, Employee of O. C. Summers, Public Works Contractor.

A very heavy bomb, falling immediately behind a passage, overturned a 15 ft. wall, lifted part of the wall, the covered way and four of the men in it, and flung them into a disused gasholder tank 35 ft. deep and 190 ft. in diameter, containing 7 ft. of water and deposits of debris, timber and old piping.

In the dark, cries were heard from the tank, and other men, standing by in the dug-outs, immediately volunteered to go to the rescue. The only way down into the tank was by a disused scaffold which stopped 10 ft. short of the water. A loose ladder began where the scaffold ended near a bank of partly submerged debris. Hazardous as the ascent would have been in daylight, in the darkness and dust it was extremely dangerous. Nevertheless, Fitters H. Gardiner and E. Baker immediately climbed down the staging and found a man lying on a piece of corrugated iron partly in the water. A fitter followed with a rope and between them they helped the casualty to the surface and took him to hospital. Further cries being heard, Gardiner and Baker once more made the difficult descent. Drew joined them, with others. A further search was made in the dust and darkness, which resulted in the discovery of a Mains Department employee, who lay seriously injured at the water's edge and pinned down by a piece of girder. Drew removed the girder weighing several hundred-weights—no small feat in itself—secured the man and brought him to where highly efficient first aid work was performed in the most difficult circumstances by the Gate-keeper.

Special tackle had to be arranged to secure and raise the injured man.

During the whole incident there was a heavy barrage, with falling shrapnel and enemy planes constantly overhead.

Timothy Higgins,	} Gas Light and Coke Co., London.
Retort Stoker.	
Walter Alfred Still,	
Scrub Yard Attendant.	

During an enemy air raid a bomb fell on a large oil tank standing within a few yards of an important and valuable plant. The bomb had nearly burnt its way through the top of the tank when W. Still, a scrub yard attendant, realised the situation, and, hurrying up to the tank, seized a shovel and mounted to the top. He raced across the top, although it was 75 ft. wide, slippery and domed, picked up the bomb on his shovel, recrossed the top and climbed down to the ground, where he extinguished the bomb. All this was done during the height of the raid with gun flashes and burning bombs as the only illumination. But for Still's prompt action the damage would have been very much more extensive and the plant would have been wrecked.