

The debris was burning with pockets of escaping gas continually exploding. Several times the Fire Service had to play upon the flames which were threatening the rescue workers. The work of tunnelling was very difficult, as, owing to the amount of debris, it was impossible to get at the source of the fire which was being fed by escaping gas.

It was mainly due to Meiklejohn, in co-operation with Steele and Lowe, that four persons were got out alive and without serious injury.

*Awarded the Medal of the Civil Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, for Meritorious Service:—*

Ernest Adams, Assistant Commandant, Croydon A.R.P. Stretcher Party.

Herbert Gibbs, Section Officer, A.R.P. Stretcher Party, Croydon.

Some persons were trapped in a house, the whole of which had collapsed after receiving a direct hit from a H.E. bomb. Whilst the rescue party were digging a tunnel through the house, Gibbs and Adams built a bridge over the debris to facilitate the removal of the casualties. They then went down the tunnel and, with the aid of the rescue party, removed some furniture which had fallen on top of a man, and gradually lifted him out. This required the greatest care as the slightest mistake might have caused the house to fall in on them. The operation took over seven hours.

Adams and Gibbs exposed themselves to great danger and set a fine example to the men.

Thomas Alker, Police Sergeant, Manchester City Police.

During a heavy air raid some works premises were set on fire. Sergeant Alker organised a party of men, and, while A.F.S. units fought the flames, he arranged for the removal of a large number of motor tyres from the burning building. At the same incident a fire was discovered near to an ammunition store, and Sergeant Alker, showing a total disregard of danger to himself, went on the roof of a tool shed and extinguished the flames, thereby saving the ammunition.

Jim Allen, Technical Assistant, South Metropolitan Gas Company.

Allen was the A.R.P. Control Officer at a gas works when a bomb fell on a gas purifier. In spite of the danger from escaping gas he isolated the damaged plant and extinguished the fire. An added danger was the possibility of an explosion. Mr. Allen carried out his duties efficiently and his coolness was a source of inspiration to those working under him.

Charles Bigland, Constable, Salford Fire Brigade.

During an air raid Constable Bigland was one of a detachment sent to a gas works, where an incendiary bomb had penetrated the top of a gasometer, causing a tongue of flame which was acting as a beacon to enemy aircraft.

A hose was placed into position at the side of the gasometer which was then between sixty

and seventy feet in height. Bigland immediately climbed up a steel ladder to the top, lay flat on his stomach and remained in that position until he had succeeded in subduing the flame with a powerful jet. Employees of the gas works then sealed the hole with a steel plate and clay.

Bigland's fearless action set a magnificent example to others working with him.

John James Bryant, Foreman, Gas Light and Coke Company.

When a large works was set on fire by enemy bombardment, Bryant volunteered to shut off the supply of gas.

Arriving at the factory he found it had been burnt to the ground but, instead of returning to his headquarters, he remained in the area and visited other buildings, doing all that he could to save them. Bryant, who is nearly sixty years of age, persisted in his efforts for over thirty-six hours and showed great courage and devotion to duty in extremely dangerous conditions.

Clifford Budsworth, A.R.P. Warden, Salford.

Budsworth has shown courage and coolness throughout the enemy air raids on Salford. On more than one occasion he has rescued people trapped in demolished houses and has successfully tackled many fires caused by incendiary bombs. His behaviour has been an inspiration to his fellow wardens.

Nathan Dantzig, Leader, First Aid Party, Salford.

Leader Dantzig was in charge of First Aid Parties during an air raid. Hearing cries for help, he raised the remaining portion of a damaged Anderson shelter and commenced digging with his bare hands. The first person he recovered was dead, but, undaunted, he carried on tunnelling, regardless of the danger to himself from falling debris and high explosive bombs. Dantzig worked untiringly and rescued four people. During the periods of danger his calmness and efficient leadership had a reassuring effect on his men.

William George, Police Constable, Manchester City Police.

During an enemy air raid P.C. George went to several places where unexploded time bombs had fallen. He displayed a calm devotion to duty, making thorough investigations and arranging for the evacuation of persons within the danger areas. At one such incident the bomb exploded and the Constable was blown against a wall by the blast. Despite the shock, he refused to go off duty and gave valuable help at other incidents.

William Thomas Lee, Driver, Gas Light and Coke Co.

During a very heavy air raid, a large gas main was hit and set on fire. Volunteers from the gas company set out to close the valves.

Lee, as the driver of the van, displayed great courage and skill in getting through to the scene of the fire. It was necessary to drive through streets with burning buildings on either side, over rubble and shattered glass, and around bomb craters. When returning, a bomb dropped in front of the van and Lee was rendered unconscious. He was rescued by the Police but, on recovering, immediately returned to his headquarters and reported for duty.