



SUPPLEMENT

TO

The London Gazette

Of FRIDAY, the 14th of NOVEMBER, 1941

Published by Authority

Registered as a newspaper

TUESDAY, 18 NOVEMBER, 1941

CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD.

*St. James's Palace, S.W.1.
18th November, 1941.*

The KING has been graciously pleased to give orders for the undermentioned appointments to the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, for the following awards of the British Empire Medal and for the publication in the London Gazette of the names of Officers and Men of the Merchant Navy specially shown below as having received an expression of Commendation for their brave conduct.

To be Additional Officers of the Civil Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire:—

Captain William John Cloke, Master.

The Master saw about a mile away an aircraft flying directly at the ship. He jumped to the gun and trained it on the enemy who was by now half-a-mile away and a perfect target. He fired a full belt. The enemy swerved to starboard and just cleared the stern, dropping one bomb before he came down in the sea. The Master's prompt action and good shooting saved the ship and destroyed the enemy.

Captain George William Pountney, Master.

Captain Pountney has a record of gallant service in Mediterranean waters. By day and night his command, escorted and unescorted, has been many times attacked from the air. In the Greek campaign she bore her cargoes mainly unescorted. On one

occasion she was heavily attacked by two flights of dive-bombers which made her their chief target. She was badly damaged but, by ceaseless pumping, she was able to join a convoy the same day, and made within two knots of her full speed. Master and crew accepted all risk as their normal lot, although their freight was such that even one tracer bullet through the unprotected wooden hatch-covers might have blown it up.

To be an Additional Officer of the Civil Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire:—

Captain John Kerr, Master.

Awarded the British Empire Medal (Civil Division):—

Donald MacNeil, Boatswain.

The ship was torpedoed in mid-ocean and settled by the head. The crew got away in two life-boats, the Master and three Officers staying on board in hopes of salvaging the vessel. A second torpedo struck her and, as there was no longer hope of saving her, they left in the second boat which had kept near. The next morning they decided to make for land but, during the following night, the two boats became separated. The starboard boat was picked up after nine days but the port boat, under the Master, sailed 1,200 miles in nineteen days before being picked up.

Captain Kerr's qualities of leadership and good seamanship saved the lives of the twenty-one persons in the boat. He was greatly helped by Boatswain MacNeil, who showed skill in handling the boat under sail in the rough weather.