

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

James Hunter Andrew Mackie, Esq., Chief Officer.

The ship took part in a vital operation throughout which she was exposed to the hazards of surface, submarine and air attack. For the last four days she fought off a series of determined air attacks and on the last day she was torpedoed and flooding started in the holds. In spite of this and of the fact that the main engines were badly shaken, the Master, the Chief Engineer and the Chief Officer, with a volunteer party set to work to control the flooding and repair the damage. By this time the ship had drifted to within three miles of an enemy position. In spite of difficulty, the engines were re-started and a speed of fourteen knots achieved until, out of range of enemy guns, steam could be reduced and the strain on bulkheads eased. A final air attack was made when the ship had almost reached safety. The guns were manned once more, and the enemy was driven off.

It was due to the courage, resource and leadership of the Master and his Officers that the valuable ship was brought at last to safety.

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

Captain George Welbourne Stephenson, Master.

*Awarded the British Empire Medal (Civil Division):—*

Alexander Cairns, Gunlayer.

At dawn a U-boat was sighted about 500 feet away, crossing the bow of the ship. The Master at once ordered fire to be opened. Although they had had no warning, all guns' crews were closed up. A rapid and accurate fire probably hit the U-boat. The enemy was forced to dive and was not seen again.

The success of the operation was largely due to the Master's skilful seamanship and the accuracy of the gunner.

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

William Herbert Bowles, Esq., Second Engineer.

The ship was sailing alone when she was attacked by a German seaplane. The enemy made eight runs but so skilfully was the vessel handled that all the bombs missed. Second Engineer Bowles, who was experienced in such attacks, saved the ship by his steady resolution, at once fulfilling every order from the bridge.

Captain Arthur Alfred Lawrence, Master.

An air attack was made on a ship which was hit and sunk. Captain Lawrence sent a boat with volunteers to pick up survivors. Two attacks were then made on his ship and the engines were put out of action.

The Master was hit by a bomb splinter which shattered his left elbow. He continued in charge and when a motor boat approached ordered his crew into it but stayed on board with three volunteers. Another attack was made and the Master was again wounded.

A tug arrived and he arranged for her to tow the ship to port. The Master showed courage and devotion to duty and in spite of his severe injuries stood fast until the ship was safely berthed.

*Awarded the British Empire Medal (Civil Division):—*

Abdul Hadi, Deck Serang.

The ship was in dock during an air-raid and many incendiary bombs fell on her and among cargo in a shed alongside. An Officer led parties of men to deal with fires in the shed and on board the steamer berthed ahead of the ship to prevent the fire in that vessel from spreading. The Lascar crew behaved excellently throughout and this was due to the control and prowess of the Deck Serang, Abdul Hadi, who was always first on deck and ready to perform any duty.

William Garbutt Magrs, Boatswain.

The ship was torpedoed in a gale. A very heavy sea was running. Orders were given to lower the lee boat and to embark 26 of the crew in her. The boat was lowered and the men had got in, the Boatswain being the last, when a second and third torpedo struck the ship, and the blast swamped and capsized the boat. Only eight men were able to scramble on to her keel and three of these were washed away by the heavy seas.

The plight of the survivors was grim. They were too few to right the boat, they had no food or water, and were constantly swept by the waves. On the second day one of the men died. On the fourth day the apprentice became delirious, and on the fifth he jumped into the sea three times and each time was only rescued with the greatest difficulty. Later he threw off his life-saving waistcoat, jumped off the boat again and was drowned. The remaining three were picked up on the fifth day by a Destroyer.

The Boatswain was the senior of the survivors. He showed courage, enterprise and resource both in the lowering of the boat and in his efforts to right it, and to rescue the apprentice who had lost his reason.

William Mussell, Chief Engineman.

Bombs from an enemy aircraft caused much damage in the engine-room. One broke two discharge castings away from the ship's side below the water line. The Chief Engineman climbed up on to the top of a drain tank, pressed the life-saving waistcoat he was wearing into the after hole and plugged the forward hole with clothes. Plugs were cut and passed down and he drove them in. More bombs were dropped and did further damage, the reversing wheel came off its shaft. Mr. Mussell got the order to stop, carried it out and then fitted the reversing wheel.

A fourth attack was made with machine guns and the winch steam pipe was pierced, filling the engine-room with steam.

Full steam ahead was ordered, and obeyed. The cranks were picking up water but the Chief Engineman kept the leaks under control. By climbing a ladder in the stokehold he found the escape of steam and stopped it. The courage and enterprise of the Chief Engineman enabled the ship to make port under her own steam.