



**SUPPLEMENT**  
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FRIDAY, 19 DECEMBER, 1941

**CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD.**

*St. James's Palace, S.W.1.  
19th December, 1941.*

The KING has been graciously pleased to give orders for the following awards of the George Medal and of the British Empire Medal and for the publication in the London Gazette of the names of the persons specially shown below as having received an expression of Commendation for their brave conduct in Civil Defence:—

*Awarded the George Medal:—*

John Lappin, Section Officer, Liverpool Auxiliary Fire Service (now National Fire Service).

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

Noel Landau, Section Officer, Liverpool Auxiliary Fire Service (now National Fire Service).

Henry Hodge, Auxiliary Fireman, Liverpool Auxiliary Fire Service (now National Fire Service).

James Roach, Auxiliary Fireman, Liverpool Auxiliary Fire Service (now National Fire Service).

Enemy action caused a serious fire at a Dock in which a ship containing a quantity of explosive was berthed.

The ship and large sheds alongside were burning furiously and bombs continued to fall all around. With full knowledge of the tremendous risk involved, an A.F.S. crew, under the leadership of Section Officer Lappin, fought the shed fires in a gallant but vain effort to reach and save the blazing ship.

The ship eventually exploded causing many deaths, but the Section Officer rallied the men

under his command and, although on the verge of collapse from fatigue, he continued to hold the situation.

Lappin displayed a fine example of courage and devotion to duty and led his men without any regard for his own safety.

Section Officer Landau, who showed bravery and unyielding devotion to duty, courageously obeyed all commands in the most nerve testing circumstances. Although he knew there would be a second explosion, Landau stayed on and attended to the removal of the dead and injured, personally rescuing many of the wounded and organising their removal to hospital in improvised ambulances.

Hodge, who turned out although he should have been resting, showed great devotion to duty and his courage inspired his colleagues to continue with their dangerous task.

Roach was several times thrown over by blast from bombs, but he continued at his post throughout the night, working indefatigably until when the explosion occurred he was injured by blast and flying debris.

*Awarded the George Medal:—*

John Samuel Mercer, Pressureman, The Liverpool Gas Company.

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

James Edmund Hayes, Leader, Works Fire Brigade, The Liverpool Gas Company.

During an air raid a large gas holder received a direct hit through the crown, which was almost completely stripped off, and the gas immediately caught fire.

Mercer, who was about thirty-five yards away, received a severe shock. With utter disregard for his own safety and in the face of

terrific heat from the flames, he forced his way into the Valve House, only fifteen feet from the blazing holder. With great presence of mind, he closed and opened valves, thus isolating the damaged holder.

By directing jets of water on the fire and beating the flames down, Hayes prevented the flames setting fire to plant nearby. The courage and promptitude with which Mercer and Hayes dealt with the situation saved much valuable property from destruction.

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

William James Basterfield, Member, Civil Defence Rescue Service, Barrow-in-Furness.

John Butler Smith, Member, Civil Defence Rescue Service, Barrow-in-Furness.

A man was trapped in the ruins of a building demolished by a H.E. bomb. Basterfield and Smith alternately working in a confined space, tunnelled through the wreckage, at the same time supporting the debris with their backs to prevent it falling on the casualty.

After three hours work in dangerous conditions they were able to release the man. Basterfield and Smith showed courage without regard for their own safety.

Miss Sheila Rosemary Bentley, Company Officer, London Fire Force, National Fire Service.

Company Officer Bentley has been on duty during nearly all the air-attacks on London and has at all times displayed great efficiency and devotion to duty.

On one occasion when a Fire Station was almost entirely demolished by a bomb, she was on duty in the control room in the basement. The normal exit was blocked with debris but an emergency exit proved to be clear. After the Company Officer had assured herself that none of the women auxiliaries was injured she led them, notwithstanding heavy enemy activity, a distance of about one quarter of a mile to the secondary control station and in a very short time the service was being fully operated.

William Broadbent, Foreman, Civil Defence Rescue Service, Manchester.

A H.E. bomb completely demolished two houses, and ten people were trapped in a small space between the upper and lower floors which had sandwiched together.

A Rescue Party, led by Broadbent, began tunnelling in three different directions. Two people were rescued from one tunnel, and four from another. The third tunnel proved extremely difficult to drive, as obstructions were constantly encountered. Eventually these were overcome and the remaining casualties were released.

The rescuers were in constant danger of further settling of the debris which would have blocked the tunnels and from coal gas that was escaping from fractured mains nearby.

The success of the operation was largely due to the courageous leadership of Broadbent.

William Charles Denton, Service Foreman, South Metropolitan Gas Company.

As a result of enemy action a gas pipe in the basement of a wrecked building was broken and the escaping gas ignited.

Despite the presence of a time-bomb, Denton made several attempts to cut off the main each side of the blaze but without success. He then got into the demolished building, removed sufficient rubble to expose the pipe, got the flames under control and ultimately capped the service.

Denton showed courage and devotion to duty.

George Frederick Hewlett Goble, Messenger, Civil Defence Wardens Service, Portsmouth.

During an air raid Goble was continuously employed for two hours dealing with incendiary bombs and taking messages.

When a H.E. bomb wrecked houses and shops, Goble was knocked down by the blast of the explosion. He searched the wreckage, found a woman and a girl and, by crawling under the debris managed to extricate two more people.

Goble showed coolness and initiative and continued throughout the night to help in rescue work.

Nellie, Mrs. Mason, Section Officer, London Fire Force, National Fire Service.

Section Officer Mason has been present at her post, even reporting for duty when on leave, on practically every occasion when enemy attack has necessitated action at her station.

On three occasions when H.E. bombs exploded within a few yards of the Watchroom, Section Officer Mason set an example of cool courage to the women auxiliaries under her, and as a result, the control room continued to function with all possible efficiency.

William Davidson Riley, Supervisor, Petroleum Board Depot.

Enemy action caused a fire at a Petroleum Depot. Two small tanks blazed fiercely and the flames licked the side of one of the main tanks.

Whilst water was played on this tank to cool it, Mr. Riley, without thought for his own safety, climbed a ladder to the top of the tank and shut off valves to prevent the escape of gas which was being generated by the heat.

Riley showed great courage, being fully aware that the damaged tank was liable to explode. By his action valuable property was saved from destruction.

Reginald Alexander Smith, Electrician and Standby Man, Leiston District, East Suffolk Electricity Distribution Company Limited.

Albert Henry Watkins, Electrician and Standby Man, Leiston District, East Suffolk Electricity Distribution Company Limited.

During an air raid electricity mains were damaged and broken telephone wires which were in contact with the live power wires hampered the activities of a Rescue Squad.

Although warned of the presence of time-bombs Watkins and Smith set to work to make all safe. They could have rendered everything dead by withdrawing the fuses at the substation, but this would have deprived the First Aid Post of light. At great risk to themselves they cut away the live wires, thereby maintaining the supply of electricity necessary for the treatment of casualties.

Both men showed courage and devotion to duty.

William Tully, Member, Civil Defence Rescue Service, Bootle.

People were trapped in the cellars of two houses demolished by H.E. bombs.

Although the remaining portions of the buildings were liable to collapse Tully wormed his way through a small hole in the debris and reached three persons whom he extricated. He then tunnelled a way to an adjoining cellar where other people were trapped.

After over ten hours work he succeeded in recovering all the casualties. During this time although he suffered from the effects of coal gas, he persisted with his efforts. Tully showed courage and determination.

Richard Bonser Wilde, Leader, Reserve Rescue Party, Civil Defence Decontamination Service, Bootle.

A H.E. bomb partly demolished a building, and adjoining premises caught fire.

Under the leadership of Wilde, debris was cleared from the entrance to the basement, which was being used as a shelter, and seven people were rescued. Although warned that the building was liable to collapse Wilde would not leave until he had searched the premises and ascertained that all persons had been rescued.

Wilde showed courage and devotion to duty.

#### COMMENDATIONS.

Those named below have been Commended for brave conduct in Civil Defence:—

Fred Bailey, Member, Civil Defence Rescue Service, Manchester.

John Arthur Boulton, Fireman, London Midland and Scottish Railway.

William Burns, Foreman, Civil Defence Rescue Service, Newcastle.

John Drury, Messenger, Civil Defence Wardens Service, Tynemouth.

William George Gruitt, Service Layer, South Metropolitan Gas Company.

Thomas James Moody, Acting Mains Ganger, South Metropolitan Gas Company.

Albert Edward Peisley, Deputy Foreman, Civil Defence Rescue Service, Manchester.

Edward David Price, Police Constable, Swansea Police Force.

Thomas Alfred Pulham, Motor Cycle Messenger, South Metropolitan Gas Company.

Richard John Richards, M.M., Acting Mains Ganger, South Metropolitan Gas Company.

Alexander Robertson, Driver, Civil Defence Rescue Service, Manchester.

Anthony Smith, Deputy Foreman, Civil Defence Rescue Service, Manchester.

Henry Swindells, Member, Civil Defence Rescue Service, Manchester.

John Richard Unwin, B.E.M., District Officer, London Fire Force, National Fire Service.

Benjamin Woolfenden, Member, Civil Defence Rescue Service, Manchester.

The Christian name of Albert Shipton, Chargeman Carriage and Wagon Examiner, Southern Railway, is as now described and not as stated in Gazette Supplement No. 35359, dated 28th November, 1941, page 6823.

#### CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD.

*St. James's Palace, S.W.1.*

*19th December, 1941.*

The KING has been graciously pleased to give orders for the undermentioned award and for the publication in the London Gazette of the name of the individual specially shown below as having received an expression of Commendation for brave conduct.

#### *Awarded the George Medal:—*

Edward Ashcroft, Process Worker, Royal Ordnance Factory, Ministry of Supply.

When an explosion occurred in a factory the door of a filling cubicle was blown open and a wall of fire flashed across from the cubicle to the edge of the shop. Mr. Ashcroft immediately attacked the fire with two buckets of water which were close at hand.

Water was then passed to him by a human chain from a tap at the edge of the shop into the cubicle. He had to stand close to the machine which still contained explosive but, regardless of his own safety, he persisted until all the flames were extinguished.

Ashcroft showed great courage and prevented a further explosion.

#### COMMENDATION.

The individual named below has been Commended for his brave conduct when attempting to rescue the pilot of a crashed and burning aircraft:—

Charles John Smith, Farm Bailiff, Churchstanton, Somerset.

#### LONDON

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