



**SUPPLEMENT**  
TO  
**The London Gazette**

*Of FRIDAY, the 7th of MAY, 1943*

**Published by Authority**

*Registered as a newspaper*

**TUESDAY, 11 MAY, 1943**

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

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

*11th May, 1943.*

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

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

Captain John Henry Biggs, Master.

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

John Cavendish William Last, Esq., Chief Officer.

George James MacLennan, Esq., Chief Engineer Officer.

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

Jack Simpson, Esq., Supernumerary Fourth Engineer Officer.

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

Albert John Clark, Winchman.

Christopher Herbert Goodall, Steward.

Thomas Robert St. Clair McKibbin, Cadet.

The ship was torpedoed in darkness and sustained considerable damage. As a precautionary measure boats were lowered and the passengers and the majority of the crew taken off. Although temporary repairs were carried out and the ship was taken in tow by another vessel, it became necessary to

transfer the remainder of those on board, with the exception of a number of key personnel, to vessels which were standing by. Shortly afterwards, a serious fire broke out which, despite heroic efforts on the part of the crew, spread rapidly and was soon out of control. The Master and others remaining on board were forced to leave the ship. Efforts to tow the vessel were continued but they proved unavailing and shortly afterwards she sank.

The Master displayed great courage, coolness and sound judgment throughout. He made determined efforts to save his ship and it was due to his excellent leadership and organisation that only seven lives were lost.

The Chief Officer showed courage and devotion to duty. He quickly organised parties to do vital repairs and to carry out towing operations. His leadership and example contributed greatly to the successful abandonment of the vessel.

After the ship was hit, the Chief Engineer Officer went to the engine-room which was flooded with oil and water. With assistance, he rescued a fireman who was trapped under the gratings. He then found a large number of men whose exit from one of the lower decks had been blocked by the explosion and led them up on deck via the engine-room. But for his courage and resource the loss of life might have been much greater.

Mr. Simpson was conspicuous throughout by his devotion to duty. He was on watch in the boiler-room and, although injured by the explosion, he remained at his post until ordered to abandon ship. Before leaving he closed down the boilers. Later, he jumped overboard from a motor lifeboat and helped to clear the propeller which had been fouled by a rope.

Steward Goodall behaved with great gallantry when his boat became waterlogged and he was washed into the sea. In the water, he collected nine persons and kept