

in darkness and the whole of the after-part of the ship was soon enveloped in flames. Nothing could be done to save her and the Master led some of the crew to the fore deck where they were able to launch one of the boats. By concentrated efforts, the occupants pulled clear of the danger area and a search was made for survivors. Shortly afterwards the boat was picked up.

The Master displayed great courage in this tremendous ordeal. Although badly injured he retained control and, but for his skill and judgment, it is probable that more lives would have been lost.

Captain William Douglas Shields, Master.

The ship sailed in a convoy which was subjected to heavy submarine and air attack. A spirited defence was put up and during engagements with enemy aircraft one of the attacking planes was probably destroyed by the vessel. She reached port safely and performed particularly valuable services in northern waters. On many occasions during this period she was subjected to heavy air attacks.

Captain Shields displayed great courage and skill throughout this long, difficult and dangerous voyage, the success of which was undoubtedly due to his excellent leadership, efficiency and good organisation.

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

Captain William Laidler, Master.

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

Bertie King, Esq., Chief Radio Officer.

The ship, sailing in convoy, was torpedoed in darkness. She sustained serious damage and the engines were stopped. As the ship was sinking rapidly by the stern, abandonment was ordered and this was successfully carried out in spite of adverse weather conditions.

The Master acted with courage and determination throughout. It was entirely due to his coolness, excellent judgment and organisation that the vessel was successfully abandoned in the heavy weather conditions with such small loss of life. He remained on board to the last in an effort to save his ship and only left as she went down.

The Chief Radio Officer displayed outstanding courage and devotion to duty, remaining on board until the end.

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

Captain George Johnston Law, Master.

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

Ronald Atkinson, Esq., Third Engineer Officer.

The ship was attacked by enemy aircraft and, although a spirited defence, in which all guns were in action, was put up, she received a direct hit, which caused severe damage and flooding. Every effort was made to save the vessel, the crew working continuously for

24 hours nursing her along at reduced speed. In spite of their efforts however, she began to sink and abandonment was ordered.

The Master displayed great courage and determination in his efforts to save the ship and it was due to his excellent organisation and leadership that the vessel was abandoned without the loss of a single life.

The Third Engineer Officer showed courage and devotion to duty of a high order, remaining on duty in the engine-room while the vessel was under attack and carrying out his duties to the last in circumstances of great difficulty and danger. By his courage and efficiency he set a fine example to the engine-room staff.

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

Captain Thomas Edric Cooper Earl, Master.

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

Gordon Edward Hugh Hopkins, Esq., Chief Officer.

Maurice George Brookfield, Esq., Second Officer.

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

Ellie Bux X Zafir Ali, Seacunny.

The ship, sailing alone, was torpedoed. Extensive damage was caused and, as she was sinking, abandonment was ordered. Although one of the boats was destroyed by the explosion and another was up-ended in the heavy weather, the crew got away successfully in the remaining boats and all eventually reached safety without the loss of a single life.

After ensuring that all those on board were got away, the Master took charge of one of the boats. The voyage was arduous but, although many of the occupants were suffering from exposure and exhaustion, all were brought to safety. The boat was within one day's sail of port when, after sixteen days, it was picked up. Captain Earl displayed great courage and skill throughout and it was due to his excellent organisation that all the persons on board were able to abandon ship without casualty.

Seacunny Ellie Bux X Zafir Ali was of great assistance to the Master during the boat voyage, his courage and cheerfulness setting a fine example to the others in the boat.

The Chief Officer was in charge of the second boat and showed courage and leadership of a high order. The boat made a voyage of 14 days and was navigated by Mr. Hopkins, unaided, to port. It was entirely due to his skill and leadership that the occupants reached safety.

The Second Officer took charge of the third boat. After a varied and adventurous voyage which lasted ten days, a landfall was made. The landing place, however, was uninhabited and Mr. Brookfield, provisioning his party with stores and gear from the boat, marched them for three days across the desert to a small habitation where he was able to get another boat in which they made a voyage of five days to a nearby port.