



THIRD SUPPLEMENT  
TO  
**The London Gazette**

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TUESDAY, 5 DECEMBER, 1944

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

*St. James's Palace, S.W.1,  
5th December, 1944.*

The KING has been graciously pleased to give orders for the undermentioned appointments to the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire and for the following award of the British Empire Medal, in the Merchant Navy.

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

Captain Harold Pickering, Master.

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

Robert Leonard Stephenson, Esq., Chief Officer.

Rena Howard Wright, Esq., Second Officer.

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

Donald MacNeil, Quartermaster.

A hospital ship left the Normandy Beaches with patients on board, some of whom were stretcher cases. An hour after sailing, heavy explosions severely damaged the vessel. All the life-boats and one of the water-ambulances were smashed and the two large rafts were hurled overboard. It was realised immediately that the ship could not be saved and orders for abandonment were given, the patients being put into the remaining water-ambulances. Fifteen minutes later the ship rolled over and sank, those left on board being forced to take to the water. All survivors who could be seen were rescued shortly afterwards.

The Master displayed outstanding courage and coolness throughout. The many badly wounded patients on board were his first concern and it was due to his excellent organisa-

tion and leadership that nearly all were saved in the short time before the ship sank.

The Chief Officer showed great courage and devotion to duty. He supervised the loading and lowering of the water-ambulances and was instrumental in saving a large number of patients. He did not take to the water until the ship turned on her beam ends. Later he assisted a Nursing Sister to reach a raft.

The Second Officer worked coolly and courageously, helping to clear away and lower the port water-ambulances. The explosion brought down both the main and emergency wireless aerials but, without hesitation, although the ship had a dangerous list, Mr. Wright climbed the fore rigging and strung up an emergency aerial, thus enabling a distress message to be sent. He was forced to take to the water as the ship sank and then did valuable work assisting survivors for whom he continued to do all in his power on board the rescue craft.

The Quartermaster displayed courage and selfless devotion to duty. He suffered severe head wounds when the explosions occurred but, although in a state of collapse, he took charge of one of the ambulances. He continued to work the engine, steering and manœuvring the boat to pick up survivors from the water, although at times, he nearly lost consciousness.

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

*St. James's Palace, S.W.1,  
5th December, 1944.*

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 George Medal and of the British Empire Medal, and for the publication in the London Gazette of