

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

John Henry ALDRIDGE, Detective Sergeant, 1st Class, New South Wales Police Force.

Norman Harold MIJCH, Detective Sergeant, 1st Class, New South Wales Police Force.

Albert Harold CHUCK, Sergeant, 2nd Class, New South Wales Police Force.

Three dangerous criminals who had embarked on a series of crimes were surprised whilst attempting to hold up a post office but escaped after firing at a policeman.

Following information that an attempt would be made on the strong-room of the Taronga Zoological Park, the police took up positions in a building. When the three criminals approached they were called upon to surrender. One man fired through the window, wounding a detective and although fire was returned the offenders made good their escape.

Later in the evening the police went to premises in North Sydney, where the three men were believed to be. Two of the criminals emerged from the back door and fired at Aldridge and Chuck, who, out of consideration for the children who were in the house, did not return fire but were able to prevail upon the men to surrender.

As the search of other premises continued the third man came out of the front door of a house nearby and fired directly at the police. A running gun fight occurred and he ran down the street and crossed vacant land and back yards and forced his way into the rear of the upper storey of a house. Mijch entered the building and went to the foot of a staircase, where he called the criminal to surrender and throw his weapons down the stairs. He threw an automatic pistol down and Mijch moved to go up the stairs. As he did so the man fired a shot at him. Mijch fired back and one of the bullets wounded his assailant who was then secured.

Aldridge, Chuck and Mijch displayed courage of a high standard and great devotion to duty in effecting the arrest of these armed and desperate men.

Thomas INCE, Linesman, Electricity Department, Kingstown, St. Vincent, Windward Islands.

Ince and other workmen were waiting for some high tension lines to be isolated before starting work on an electrical transformer when one of the men, thinking the current was off, climbed a ladder and grasped one of the wires. He was rendered unconscious and collapsed on to a stay wire. Ince immediately ran up the ladder and cut the wire with insulated pliers. He then supported the man until help arrived and the current was switched off.

Ince showed great presence of mind and a total disregard of his own safety since, had he touched or fallen on to the live wire which was dangling around him, the consequences would probably have proved fatal.

Gurusamy RAGAVADOSS, Railway Locomotive Driver, Federation of Malaya.

Driver Ragavadoss was the Engine Driver of a night goods train which was attacked

by bandits 13 miles north of Johore Bahru. Although he was wounded in the right shoulder Ragavadoss refused to leave his post and ordered his Fireman to lie on the footplate whilst he drove his train forward to the next station to make a report. He then continued a further 5 miles to a station where his wound was dressed. He was advised to go to hospital, but continued to drive his train forward, through areas where bandit attack might have occurred, for a further 35 miles until he reached a station where a relief Engine Driver was available to take over the train.

Driver Ragavadoss showed great courage and devotion to duty throughout the period.

Norman James SHEPHERD, Scale Fitter, Sneinton, Nottingham.

A girl who was bathing at a point on the coast at Mablethorpe where a large outfall tunnel enters the sea, was dragged out to sea by a receding wave and was unable to get back to the shore. Realising she was being carried further out, she called for help. At the time the tide was coming in strongly and was creating a very strong and dangerous current into the mouth of the tunnel in which the most powerful swimmer could not survive. In addition a strong wind was blowing in from the sea towards the tunnel so that there was a considerable swell and heavy breakers.

One man swam out to save the girl but was struck by a large wave and carried out to sea. Shepherd entered the sea after this attempt had failed and swam to the girl, who was now about 75 yards from the beach. Despite her struggles he kept her afloat until a boat reached them and they were taken aboard. The action of Shepherd in attempting the rescue, knowing that one life had probably been lost already in a similar attempt, displayed high courage.

Robert WRIGHT, Lorry Driver, W. & J. R. Watson Ltd. (Airdrie).

Four men were in a tunnel which was being driven under a hill in order to lead the water from the Menzion Burn into the Talla Reservoir, when an earth slip occurred and the whole of the earth above the tunnel roof fell in, trapping the four men.

Wright saw the earth fall, gave the alarm, and immediately began rescue operations. One of the men was near the entrance to the excavation and was quickly released. Wright could then see another man who was pinned down by the timber and weight of earth. Wright climbed in among the timber and cleared away soil which was blocking the man's mouth and nostrils. Further trickles of soil continued and Wright remained with the man, screening his face from the small falls of earth. For more than two hours he sustained the trapped man and throughout this time there was imminent danger of a further collapse of the sides of the excavation which rose vertically about 15 feet above the two men. Wright was well aware that a further fall might occur any time and that in his position he was in great danger of being trapped himself but, with great courage, he remained with the injured man until they were both released.