



SUPPLEMENT

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TUESDAY, 3 DECEMBER, 1940

CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD.

*St. James's Palace, S.W.1.
3rd December, 1940.*

The KING has been graciously pleased to approve the award of the GEORGE CROSS to:—

Arthur Douglas Merriman, Part-time Experimental Officer, Directorate of Scientific Research, Ministry of Supply.

For conspicuous bravery in connection with bomb disposal.

CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD.

*St. James's Palace, S.W.1.
3rd December, 1940.*

The KING has been graciously pleased to give orders for the undermentioned appointment to the Fifth Class of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, for the following awards, and for the publication in the London Gazette of the names shown below as having received an expression of Commendation for their brave conduct.

To be an Additional Member of the Civil Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire.

Charles Philip McDuell, Fire Brigade Superintendent.

Several serious fires were caused by enemy action on oil depots, wharves and factories,

At one time there were as many as eight distinct fires burning at once.

Superintendent McDuell attended throughout both nights. He showed conspicuous ability and leadership, particularly in organising water supplies.

Awarded the George Medal.

William Thomas Beeson, Officer in Charge, Works Fire Brigade.	} London.
Lewis Philip Fisher, Fireman, Works Fire Brigade.	

On the occasion of an Air Raid on a Factory a high explosive bomb struck a hangar where inflammables were stored. Fire broke out and Beeson got his brigade to work immediately. He at once perceived that the chief danger lay in a stock of metallic sodium which was burning and which precluded the use of water. As rain had rendered the supply of sand wet, he used a nearby load of dry cement to blanket the burning metal. The situation was complicated by burning liquid inflammables and clouds of fumes from a ton of chemical scattered by the bomb. Moreover, the explosion had thrown two large 500 lb. cylinders of compressed ammonia gas into the seat of the fire, thus constituting a dangerous explosion risk. One of these cylinders did in fact explode and flung burning sodium metal in all directions, besides producing a temporary gas attack. Mr. Beeson was burnt about the face but was saved from further serious injury by the prompt and energetic

action of Fireman L. Fisher. Fisher rendered invaluable assistance. Without counting the risk to himself he was foremost among the men in tackling the fire under instructions from Beeson. When the burning sodium metal and liquid inflammables caused the explosion of the cylinder of ammonia Fisher found that several men had been injured. He got them all single-handed to the nearest underground shelter, whilst the First Aid Party were summoned, and then assisted in their removal. He immediately returned to his fire-fighting duty and helped very materially in bringing the fire under final control. His fearlessness, cheerfulness and devotion to duty were beyond praise.

Alfred Blythe, First Aid Party Driver.	} Birkenhead.
Michael Martin, Officer in Charge,	
First Aid Party Depot.	

During an air raid a house was demolished burying several people. Martin was the leader of a First Aid Party and Blythe the driver of the First Aid Party car; Walter Lambert and John H. Roberts being members of a Rescue Party. All these four men were instrumental in bringing out alive several persons from the ruins. The first two men at very grave personal risk repeatedly went below burning debris to rescue trapped persons. It was necessary to turn hoses on them to keep them from being burnt, and they were overcome by gas fumes in addition.

Martin was the self-appointed leader and never shrank from danger. Blythe was crushed during the operations and he himself had to be rescued but insisted on carrying on after release.

Charles Ernest Burridge, Gasholder repairer.	} South Metropolitan Gas Company.
Francis Richard Cox, Gasholder repairer.	

In blackout conditions these two men on their own initiative ascended a large Gasholder for 90 ft. and dealt with a hole made by a time bomb which had penetrated the crown of the holder. The hole on examination proved to be twenty-one inches in diameter, and gas was issuing under pressure.

By their prompt action only a small amount of gas was lost, and more serious danger was possibly averted. The task was undertaken of their own free will, without thought of personal danger from falling shrapnel, and with hostile planes bombing in the vicinity.

In addition to the danger from the unexploded bomb, there was further risk owing to the poisonous nature of the unburnt escaping gas, and the possibility of this gas becoming ignited.

Percy George Garon, M.C., Fire Brigade Chief Officer.

Sydney Arthur Wright, Section Officer, Auxiliary Fire Service.

Several serious fires were caused by enemy action on oil depots, wharves and factories. The fire was localised to two oil tanks which were blazing furiously. Near these were a number of full tanks, not on fire, which were protected by being kept cool with water. One tank sprang a leak and allowed a large quantity of oil to escape. This formed a

pool of oil and water round the tank about 18 ins. deep. Another tank which was blazing furiously, burst near the top and poured out blazing oil. The only way to check this rush of fire was to turn a drencher branchpipe into the blazing pool. The officer in charge at this point gave orders for a drencher branchpipe to be carried over and Wright immediately dashed forward and faced the blazing oil. Although the fire was raging within two feet of him, he was not deterred from persisting in his efforts to get a branch free from the branch holder to which it was securely tied, and turn it over into the pond round the tank so driving the fire back.

If this had not been successfully carried out, some five additional oil tanks, of a total capacity of about 20,000 tons of oil, would have become involved.

As District Officer Mr. Garon was, when present, in general charge of the operations for the extinction of the fires. He displayed conspicuous bravery and leadership which inspired the greatest confidence in all the officers and men present. His action at more than one point definitely prevented the fires from involving other premises and he handled the various serious situations excellently throughout a very long and strenuous time.

Cyril Alfred Reeves, Auxiliary Fireman,
Auxiliary Fire Service.

On the occasion of the serious fires which were caused by enemy action on oil depots, wharves and factories, Reeves entered a retort house. Petrol was flooded on the floor and a "flashback" occurred, igniting the petrol vapour. Another auxiliary fireman became entangled in a chain and was in imminent danger of being burned to death. Reeves remained to assist in releasing the trapped man. He was surrounded by flames and showed great bravery in making the attempt to release his comrade.

Awarded the Medal of the Civil Division of the Order of the British Empire for Meritorious Service.

George William Francis Bigwood, Fog Signal Driver, Trinity House Light-Vessel Service.

During an Enemy raid a Convent was badly damaged by a bomb.

A short time after the explosion a party from Trinity House s.s. Vestal, and the Royal Sovereign Light-Vessel, began rescue work and at great risk brought to safety 28 of the 30 Sisters of Mercy who were in the Convent.

Two missing Sisters were buried under the wreckage. Forcing a way through the debris the rescuers found one Sister trapped under a large beam: the other Nun had been killed outright.

Mr. Bigwood, after helping to bring seven persons to safety, forced his way to the side of the trapped Sister and cleared the wreckage from round her head and arms, passing it piece by piece to Horn who was standing on a beam above. Bigwood then gave her morphia. With chain blocks and ropes the joists and beams were then raised and after three hours of dangerous work the Sister was released and taken to Hospital.

Winifred Mary Eustace, Woman Auxiliary, Women's Auxiliary Fire Service.

Millicent Pennington, Section Officer, Women's Auxiliary Fire Service.

During the several serious fires which were caused by enemy action on oil depots, wharves and factories, Section Officer Pennington and Woman Auxiliary Eustace attended with the canteen van for twelve hours each night; and carried out their work under heavy bombardment with outstanding coolness, thus exercising an extremely good effect on all hands during their brief rest period. The canteen van in which they were working was hit by splinters.

Commendations.

Those named below have been brought to notice for brave conduct in connection with Civil Defence.

Edward George Baldock, Employee of the Gas Light and Coke Company.

Albert Edward Cross, Fireman, Works A.R.P. Services, Woolwich.

James Fitzpatrick, Labourer, Messrs. Maw, Son and Sons.

Thomas Forrow (deceased), Station Officer, Fire Brigade.

Norman Stanley Hook, Messenger, Royal Air Force Station.

Cyril Frederick Horn, Temporary Second Officer, Trinity House Steam and Motor Vessel Services.

Henry John Howes, Jnr., Labourer, Messrs. Press and Sons, contractors to the Gas Light and Coke Company.

Walter Lambert, Member of Rescue Party, A.R.P. Services, Birkenhead.

John Lee, St. Margaret's, Middlesex.

Percy Lightbourne, First Aid Attendant, Works A.R.P. Services, Woolwich.

Alfred Ernest Mace, A.R.P. Officer, Works A.R.P. Services, Woolwich.

John H. Roberts, Member of Rescue Party, A.R.P. Services, Birkenhead.

John Jeffrey Trevelyan Scott, Police Constable, Glamorgan Constabulary.

Thomas Slow, Boiler House Attendant, Messrs. Maw, Son and Sons.

Harold James Worton, Stock Keeper, Messrs. Maw, Son and Sons.

Commendation.

The undermentioned has been brought to notice for services in rescuing an airman from a crashed aircraft.

Charles Turnbull, of Guardbridge, near Leuchars.

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