

Still working down into the debris, the officers, at great risk to themselves, and now assisted by a Superintendent, eventually extricated a woman. She died on the way to hospital. Digging still further, they came to an unconscious woman who was pinned by a block of brickwork. A rope was tied to this and passed to the A.R.P. workers and police outside, who pulled one end of the block up to an angle of 45 degrees and held it in that position until the three officers had crawled underneath and freed the woman. With great difficulty two of the officers lifted the unconscious woman from the hole in which she was lying and placed her on a stretcher. She eventually recovered.

P.C. Burgoyne then re-entered the opening and continued to dig until he came to other victims. During the whole time this work was being carried out, enemy aircraft were overhead and anti-aircraft fire was incessant.

Arthur Walter Curtis, Leader A.R.P. Rescue Party, Croydon.

Thomas William Ingram, Labourer A.R.P. Rescue Party, Croydon.

Following the explosion of a very large bomb, a detached house completely collapsed. The walls were composed of concrete about 18 inches in thickness, and the whole of the debris fell on to, and heaped over, the floor joists above the basement shelter under the house.

Six people had been sheltering in two compartments, one at the front and one at the rear of the building. Huge pieces of concrete were supported only by the joists which, it was obvious, were likely to collapse.

It was evident to the Leader, Mr. Curtis, that if the people trapped in the basement were to be rescued, there was no time for the ordinary methods of dealing with such a position, and that great risks would have to be taken.

Curtis called for a volunteer to assist him, as only two people could work at one time. Every member of the squad stepped forward, and T. W. Ingram, labourer, was selected because of his small stature.

Curtis and Ingram then proceeded to tunnel their way through the debris in constant danger of their lives, as the pieces of loose concrete above them were of such a size that had they fallen the men would have been crushed.

In due course these two men were able to rescue three persons from the front portion of the basement. They worked with entire disregard for their personal safety.

Ivor Thomas Davies, Engine Driver, Great Western Railway, Birkenhead.

Frank Reginald Newns, Engine Fireman, Great Western Railway, Birkenhead.

Driver Davies and Fireman Newns were working on shunting engines when serious fires were caused by enemy action involving Railway and Dock Warehouse properties.

A large number of incendiary bombs fell, some amongst a train-load of ammunition and various trucks containing petrol in tins.

With complete disregard for their own safety, Davies and Newns helped to operate

a stirrup pump which was directed on a burning wagon containing aerial bombs. When these were sufficiently cool, they levered them apart and removed the incendiaries.

Throughout these operations, which were carried out during a severe enemy attack, Davies and Newns showed a very high degree of courage, and their prompt action undoubtedly eliminated the risk of heavy explosions.

William Henry Daysh, Member of Works A.R.P. Party, Portsmouth.

On an air raid alarm being given Daysh took up his post together with the Foreman Carpenter. Some stores received a direct hit by H.E. and incendiary bombs, and there was an immediate, fierce fire. The other man was seriously injured, and rendered unconscious by injuries from which he died later in the same day. Daysh received less severe injuries, but remained with his fellow workman endeavouring to get him out of the burning building. Finding he could not move him single-handed, he left the building to obtain further help. The first floor, however, was on the point of collapsing and inflammable material on which the carpenter was lying was beginning to burn. Daysh re-entered the building and carried on with his efforts to save the injured man. More debris fell trapping him by the leg, but he continued his efforts. In the meantime the Fire Party had arrived on the scene and had to extricate both men. Daysh said nothing about his own injuries. Although he had once got clear of the burning building himself, he re-entered it knowing that conditions were much worse, rather than abandon his workmate. Daysh sustained broken bones in the left foot and lacerations.

William Edward Douglas, Station Sergeant, Metropolitan Police.

When a number of bombs were dropped, Douglas, who was off duty at his home, heard them fall, and quickly made his way to the scene. Upon his arrival, he was informed that a man and two girls were trapped beneath the debris of a house, which was completely wrecked. Lying on top of what had been the ground floor was the ceiling, and, on this, the first floor and top part of the house was resting.

Douglas found a small gap at the back of the premises beneath the ceiling and immediately commenced worming his way underneath towards the entombed people. By handing out pieces of brickwork, timber and furniture, he was eventually able to reach a spot which had formerly been the ground floor back room. There, with the aid of a torch, he found two young girls pinned down by brickwork and furniture. Although still lying flat he was able to free one of the girls, enabling her to crawl out of the wreckage to safety. The Sergeant continued working inside for another thirty or forty minutes, and with the aid of people working from the outside, the second girl was dragged to safety through the top of the wreckage of the house. The Sergeant then found the man, but he was dead, having been crushed and suffocated. Douglas then crawled out, after working strenuously inside the confined space for over an hour.