

The fire was brought under control within two hours. Ross displayed the greatest courage and resource, and was an inspiration to his men.

*Awarded the Medal of the Civil Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, for Meritorious Service:—*

Donald Roy Abbs, Sub-Officer, Tottenham Fire Brigade.

Whilst assigned to the fires at the docks Sub-Officer Abbs was instrumental in getting a number of pumps to work which had been temporarily out of action owing to severe bombing. Delayed action bombs near fires which he has attended have in no way discouraged this Officer. He imparts confidence to all men under his command by his coolness and daring.

William Herbert Atkin, Leader, A.R.P. Rescue Party, Bristol.

During an air raid a direct hit occurred on a shop and dwelling-house, completely demolishing them.

Upon the arrival of the Rescue Party the cries of two trapped persons were heard from under the debris, and, as the removal of this from the top was inadvisable, Party Leader Atkin at once began work to break an opening from the cellar of an adjoining house through a 20-inch wall.

In spite of the cellar being full of escaping coal gas, the Party, by working in relays, succeeded in making an opening large enough to remove obstacles and rescue two persons alive.

Atkin directed the operations in the gas-laden atmosphere and finally collapsed from coal-gas poisoning.

It was due to his good leadership that the rescues were effected.

William Arthur Bedman, M.M., Commissionaire, Corporation Transport Department, Southampton.

Bedman volunteered to act as Fire Watcher throughout the night of an intensive air raid. He saw the attack on the town develop, and he left his home, which was in a safe area, making his way through the raid to his office by bicycle. There he found five employees in the shelter. When fire from adjacent buildings had set the Office ablaze Bedman took charge, and, in spite of many difficulties, conducted the occupants safely from the building. He returned to the back of the offices where three buses had been parked, and arranged for two to be moved to safety by corporation drivers. There is no doubt that by his courage, coolness and leadership Bedman was instrumental in getting five persons safely from the building and in saving two buses from damage. These actions took place under heavy bombing and shell-fire.

William Norman John Beesley, Temporary Acting Storehouse Assistant, Southampton.

During an enemy air raid the roof of a building was set on fire and a large area was soon blazing.

High explosive bombs were falling at the same time, but Beesley, who was in charge

of a Fire Party, brought a trailer pump outside the burning building, and attacked the fire from the best position. When water began to fail he hauled his pump more than half a mile over rough ground to a place where water could be pumped from a water-course.

His enterprise and courage were remarkable throughout the fire fighting, and it was largely due to his work that the fire did not spread to other buildings.

Jennie Burnham, Mrs. Cameron, Welfare Officer, Women's Voluntary Services, Kirby Muxloe, Leicester.

Clarence Frederick Russell, A.R.P. Warden, Kirby Muxloe, Leicester.

When a large bomb was dropped in the middle of a village Warden Russell was the first on the scene. He succeeded in rescuing a man who had been badly injured and trapped in a house very close to the burst of the bomb. He managed to get an early report to the Report Post and generally gave the Services a very good start in their work. This probably contributed to the excellent way in which they dealt with the incident.

Mrs. Cameron worked magnificently to provide shelter and food for the homeless. During the night, other H.E. bombs were dropped in the village, fires were raging and aeroplanes were constantly overhead. The occasion was one which called for courage, calmness and efficiency, and Mrs. Cameron displayed all these in a marked degree.

Henry Cox, Member, A.R.P. Rescue Party, Bristol.

A direct hit by an H.E. bomb completely demolished a four-storied house.

The cries of a woman were heard from under the debris in the middle of the basement floor. Her head was located about nine feet below the top. Cox worked his way down through a small opening in the wreckage and found the woman buried to her neck.

At great risk to himself, and whilst bombing was still in progress, he proceeded to remove the debris surrounding the woman, loading it into a bucket lowered by the Rescue Party.

This he continued to do for nearly two hours. Eventually he lifted the woman sufficiently to enable her to be rescued.

Alfred James Harris, Leader, A.R.P. Rescue and Demolition Squad, Leicester.

A number of persons were trapped in a demolished building. A volunteer squad under the leadership of Harris rescued twenty casualties and worked continuously for more than ten hours until exhausted. It was undoubtedly due to Harris's splendid leadership and personal disregard of danger that his squad was so successful in its efforts.

Harold William Heptinstall, Deputy Chief Officer, Thurrock Fire Brigade.

Following an enemy air raid a large fire broke out. Deputy Chief Officer Heptinstall handled the incident in a magnificent manner. It was largely owing to his bravery and fine leadership that the fire which at one time assumed alarming proportions, was extinguished.