

Awarded the George Medal:—

Daniel John Collins, Police Sergeant, Liverpool City Police Force.

A shop, with house quarters above, was demolished by a bomb. The occupier's wife and two children were trapped in the cellar by a large quantity of debris.

Sergeant Collins began tunnelling and after strenuous efforts reached the casualties. Portions of the building were continually falling, there was an escape of coal gas and the wreckage was on fire. In spite of these dangers, the Sergeant redoubled his efforts and, with other help, the three persons were eventually released.

Collins' excellent work, performed with total disregard of his own safety, was instrumental in saving three lives.

Ernest Lewis Playford, } Civil Defence
Leader, } Rescue Service,
John Bradley, Member, } Bermondsey.

A building was demolished by a bomb. The basement collapsed and a Post Warden was trapped in the debris.

A Rescue Party led by Playford began digging and the trapped Warden was found ten feet beneath the debris. The work was rendered highly dangerous by the fact that a wall of an adjoining church hall was liable to collapse. Suddenly the wall started to fall. Bradley and Playford, who were in the excavation, made no move to leave the entombed man and Playford made a bridge with his body to protect the head of the Warden. The wall fell across the casualty and the two rescuers and they were buried under the mass of bricks and rubble. Rescue squads made frantic efforts to release them and Playford and Bradley were brought out severely injured. The Warden also was eventually rescued alive.

Benjamin Clive Ralph Stevens, Sector Warden, Civil Defence Wardens Service, Hampstead.

The ground floor of a house was blown away and the upper part collapsed. Stevens climbed over rubble and succeeded in pulling loose sufficient pieces of lath to enable him to crawl through into a cavity in the wreckage. The roof had collapsed and was supported by a bed in which a woman was lying pinned down by the rubble which had fallen on and around her.

The whole house constituted a mass of debris which throughout the rescue was in a state of subsidence but Stevens managed to extricate the woman and her husband. He displayed outstanding courage and risked his life to effect their release.

Awarded the George Medal:—

Arthur Charles Aldridge French, } London Fire
Station Officer, } Brigade (now
George Frederick Watling, } National Fire
Station Officer, } Service).

Awarded the British Empire Medal (Civil Division):—

John Richard Stanley Adlam, Station Officer, London Fire Brigade (now National Fire Service).

Alfred Robert Blanchard, Auxiliary Fireman, London Auxiliary Fire Service (now National Fire Service).

Enemy action caused severe fires on a railway bridge and surrounding property.

Station Officers French and Watling were in charge of fire crews and under their direction the men worked bravely to save the bridge. A heavy time bomb was dropped within a few yards of where the firemen were working but although the two Station Officers and each of the members of the crew fully realised the danger to which they were exposed, they did not hesitate to tackle the fire which was within fifteen yards of the bomb.

The Station Officers displayed bold and fearless leadership and Adlam and Blanchard, with the rest of the crews, showed continued courage and persistence over a period of more than four hours and successfully prevented the flames from reaching the bomb, thus saving an important railway bridge and station.

Awarded the George Medal:—

Bernard Ireland, Stretcher Bearer, Civil Defence Stretcher Party Service, Willesden.

Awarded the British Empire Medal (Civil Division):—

Frederick William Ernest Palmer, Leader, Civil Defence Rescue Service, Willesden.

Bombs damaged a building, the underground boiler room of which was used as an air raid shelter. A Rescue Party, led by Mr. Palmer, began the work of extricating the occupants. Mr. Ireland, who was off duty, went down into the boiler room and brought out a man who had been rendered unconscious by coal gas. He then returned and rescued a woman. There was a strong concentration of coal gas in the boiler room, and hot water to a depth of a foot. Notwithstanding this Ireland again went back and was instrumental in bringing out another casualty. On reaching the open air he was overcome by the effects of the gas. Recovering, he once again went into the wrecked compartment to make sure that no other person remained.

Members of the Rescue Party suffered from gas poisoning and five of them, including Leader Palmer, collapsed and were taken to hospital. Palmer, however, recovered consciousness on arrival and demanded to be taken back as he remembered that two members of his Squad were last seen in the boiler house. When he returned he found that his men had been taken to hospital.

Palmer then organised a search for the recovery of two persons still believed to be entombed.

Awarded the British Empire Medal (Civil Division):—

Robert Frederick Cowles, M.M., Post Warden, Civil Defence Wardens Service, Battersea.

Mr. Cowles has been on duty at every major incident in his area and has set an example to those working with him.

He has never hesitated to enter any damaged building to reach a casualty and render such first aid as possible. By reason of his local knowledge, Warden Cowles has been able to guide the rescuers to the actual room or spot in wrecked premises where victims were likely to be found.

Cowles has shown complete disregard of his own safety and has been instrumental in saving many lives.