

terrific heat from the flames, he forced his way into the Valve House, only fifteen feet from the blazing holder. With great presence of mind, he closed and opened valves, thus isolating the damaged holder.

By directing jets of water on the fire and beating the flames down, Hayes prevented the flames setting fire to plant nearby. The courage and promptitude with which Mercer and Hayes dealt with the situation saved much valuable property from destruction.

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

William James Basterfield, Member, Civil Defence Rescue Service, Barrow-in-Furness.

John Butler Smith, Member, Civil Defence Rescue Service, Barrow-in-Furness.

A man was trapped in the ruins of a building demolished by a H.E. bomb. Basterfield and Smith alternately working in a confined space, tunnelled through the wreckage, at the same time supporting the debris with their backs to prevent it falling on the casualty.

After three hours work in dangerous conditions they were able to release the man. Basterfield and Smith showed courage without regard for their own safety.

Miss Sheila Rosemary Bentley, Company Officer, London Fire Force, National Fire Service.

Company Officer Bentley has been on duty during nearly all the air-attacks on London and has at all times displayed great efficiency and devotion to duty.

On one occasion when a Fire Station was almost entirely demolished by a bomb, she was on duty in the control room in the basement. The normal exit was blocked with debris but an emergency exit proved to be clear. After the Company Officer had assured herself that none of the women auxiliaries was injured she led them, notwithstanding heavy enemy activity, a distance of about one quarter of a mile to the secondary control station and in a very short time the service was being fully operated.

William Broadbent, Foreman, Civil Defence Rescue Service, Manchester.

A H.E. bomb completely demolished two houses, and ten people were trapped in a small space between the upper and lower floors which had sandwiched together.

A Rescue Party, led by Broadbent, began tunnelling in three different directions. Two people were rescued from one tunnel, and four from another. The third tunnel proved extremely difficult to drive, as obstructions were constantly encountered. Eventually these were overcome and the remaining casualties were released.

The rescuers were in constant danger of further settling of the debris which would have blocked the tunnels and from coal gas that was escaping from fractured mains nearby.

The success of the operation was largely due to the courageous leadership of Broadbent.

William Charles Denton, Service Foreman, South Metropolitan Gas Company.

As a result of enemy action a gas pipe in the basement of a wrecked building was broken and the escaping gas ignited.

Despite the presence of a time-bomb, Denton made several attempts to cut off the main each side of the blaze but without success. He then got into the demolished building, removed sufficient rubble to expose the pipe, got the flames under control and ultimately capped the service.

Denton showed courage and devotion to duty.

George Frederick Hewlett Goble, Messenger, Civil Defence Wardens Service, Portsmouth.

During an air raid Goble was continuously employed for two hours dealing with incendiary bombs and taking messages.

When a H.E. bomb wrecked houses and shops, Goble was knocked down by the blast of the explosion. He searched the wreckage, found a woman and a girl and, by crawling under the debris managed to extricate two more people.

Goble showed coolness and initiative and continued throughout the night to help in rescue work.

Nellie, Mrs. Mason, Section Officer, London Fire Force, National Fire Service.

Section Officer Mason has been present at her post, even reporting for duty when on leave, on practically every occasion when enemy attack has necessitated action at her station.

On three occasions when H.E. bombs exploded within a few yards of the Watchroom, Section Officer Mason set an example of cool courage to the women auxiliaries under her, and as a result, the control room continued to function with all possible efficiency.

William Davidson Riley, Supervisor, Petroleum Board Depot.

Enemy action caused a fire at a Petroleum Depot. Two small tanks blazed fiercely and the flames licked the side of one of the main tanks.

Whilst water was played on this tank to cool it, Mr. Riley, without thought for his own safety, climbed a ladder to the top of the tank and shut off valves to prevent the escape of gas which was being generated by the heat.

Riley showed great courage, being fully aware that the damaged tank was liable to explode. By his action valuable property was saved from destruction.

Reginald Alexander Smith, Electrician and Standby Man, Leiston District, East Suffolk Electricity Distribution Company Limited.

Albert Henry Watkins, Electrician and Standby Man, Leiston District, East Suffolk Electricity Distribution Company Limited.

During an air raid electricity mains were damaged and broken telephone wires which were in contact with the live power wires hampered the activities of a Rescue Squad.

Although warned of the presence of time-bombs Watkins and Smith set to work to make all safe. They could have rendered everything dead by withdrawing the fuses at the substation, but this would have deprived the First Aid Post of light. At great risk to themselves they cut away the live wires, thereby maintaining the supply of electricity necessary for the treatment of casualties.

Both men showed courage and devotion to duty.