



## FOURTH SUPPLEMENT

TO

# The London Gazette

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TUESDAY, 1 SEPTEMBER, 1942

### CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD.

*St. James's Palace, S.W.1,  
1st September, 1942.*

The KING has been graciously pleased to give orders for the undermentioned appointments to the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, for the following awards of the British Empire Medal, in the Merchant Navy, and for the publication in the London Gazette of the names of those specially shown below as having received an expression of Commendation for their brave conduct:—

*To be an Additional Officer of the Civil Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire:—*

Captain John Bissett Smith, Master.

The ship was attacked from the air and set on fire. The water service pipe line was broken and the fire parties could not get water to the seat of the fire. They fought the flames with all available portable extinguishers, but the fires rapidly spread out of control. The ship was then anchored and abandoned.

The Master showed outstanding powers of leadership and organisation in trying to save his ship and in getting away all on board without panic or confusion.

*To be An Additional Officer of the Civil Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire:—*

Captain Harold William Harper, Master.

*To be Additional Members of the Civil Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire:—*

Thomas William Cawley Rylance, Esq., Chief Officer.

Thomas Reginald Jackson, Esq., Second Officer.

Thomas Moodie, Esq., Third Officer.

The ship was torpedoed and at once settled by the head. The Master stopped the engines

and ordered the Officers to get the boats away and stand by to pick up the rafts.

There were four big rafts and some twenty-five small buoyant floats. About twelve men climbed on each raft and others sat on the small floats. The Master and the Chief Officer stayed on board to try to save a man who had been wounded by the explosion. Before they could do anything a second torpedo hit the ship and she sank a minute later. As she sank, those left on board got away on a Carley float, and were picked up by the Second Officer's boat. The Chief Officer was put into his own boat and the Master went to his. As there were so many rafts and the boats were overcrowded, the Master decided to keep together and had the rafts lashed one to another. About every four hours he changed the men over from raft to boat so that all could have a spell in the boats. They were picked up after two days, having suffered much from excessive heat by day and great cold at night. It was largely due to the Master's powers of command and organisation that the only lives lost were of those killed by the explosion. He was ably seconded by the Chief, Second and Third Officers.

*To be an Additional Officer of the Civil Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire:—*

Captain Frank Edom Pearson, Master.

*To be Additional Members of the Civil Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire:—*

Richard Duncan Sadler, Esq., Chief Officer.

Robert Ashby Todd, Esq., Second Officer.

John Russell Peebles, Esq., Second Engineer Officer.

Leslie Argyle Webb, Esq., Fourth Engineer Officer.

The ship was bombed in Tobruk harbour and set on fire.

The Second Engineer took charge of the work of relighting the boiler fires and raised steam to get the ship under way. The Fourth Engineer worked with him in the stokehold, and later did outstanding work with a Naval salvage party. The Chief Officer and the Second Officer helped the Second Engineer to raise steam. They also gave much help to the Naval party.

It is due to the courage and devotion to duty of the Master and his Officers that the ship was saved, repaired, and sailed to Alexandria.

*To be an Additional Officer of the Civil Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire:—*

Captain Herbert Percival, Master.

*To be an Additional Member of the Civil Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire:—*

Randall William James Hetherington, Esq., Chief Officer.

The ship was attacked by aircraft, some dive bombing and some bombing from high levels. The Master showed great skill in avoiding bombs by using full helm after the bombers had squared up and started to dive. After 45 minutes a bomb, which burst close by, put the steering gear out of action and the ship had to be stopped to avoid running ashore. Through the good work of the Chief Officer a rapid change over was made to the after steering position and the ship was under way again at full speed when more dive bombers attacked. Some were driven off by the ship's guns and, though others pressed their attack, the vessel was not hit.

The ship was saved by the courage, skill and leadership of the Master and the Chief Officer both of whom were imperturbable throughout.

*To be an Additional Officer of the Civil Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire:—*

Captain William George Todman, Master.

*To be an Additional Member of the Civil Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire:—*

Cecil Palmer, Esq., Chief Radio Officer.

The ship was attacked by two submarines. She was torpedoed and, after a grim struggle, sunk by gunfire. The Master showed great courage and leadership throughout. He fought his ship with great skill, undeterred in the face of heavy fire, and his organisation in getting away the crew was outstanding.

The Chief Radio Officer, with great devotion to duty, remained at his post under heavy gunfire, sending out distress messages. The survivors were picked up the same day by a vessel despatched to search in response to the messages sent.

*To be Additional Members of the Civil Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire:—*

Norah Mary Brown, Passenger (Senior Nursing Sister, Colonial Nursing Service).

The ship was torpedoed and sank in eight minutes. Four boats were lowered, all on board getting safely away. Two boats with engines towed the others to a neutral port, which was reached in five days.

One of the passengers, Nurse Brown, showed great devotion in tending three Engineer Officers who had been severely burned in an accident on board a few days before. Two of them died, but her devoted care of the third during the boat journey saved his life.

Stephen O'Keefe, Esq., Second Officer.

The ship was attacked at the entrance to Tobruk harbour by eight dive bombers. The armament was in charge of the Second Officer. He had his guns' crews at the alert and he himself took the Port Hotchkiss on the bridge. The enemy was driven off by cool and accurate fire and all their bombs missed. The efficiency of the ship's shooting was largely due to the intensive training given by the Second Officer and his example was an inspiration to all.

James Robert Petrie, Esq., Chief Officer.

Reginald William Arthur Cliff, Esq., Second Officer.

The ship was torpedoed and set on fire and had to be abandoned. The Second Officer climbed along outside the rails of the burning deck to reach a damaged and waterlogged life-boat and brought her to the fore part of the vessel where twenty-one men were taken off. The Chief Officer then took charge and it was due to his coolness and good leadership that the boat was kept afloat though it was almost filled with water. The twenty-three survivors were picked up after one and a half hours.

Eric Frank Phillips Pointon, Esq., Third Officer.

During a Japanese air raid on an Eastern harbour, a ship was hit. The Master of another ship sent his Third Officer to find out if help was required. He was told that the magazine had been burst open by the explosion and was on fire. Mr. Pointon at once went in and dragged some cordite cases out on deck away from the flames. Although later others helped in putting out the fire, it was the Third Officer's unhesitating courage which prevented a serious loss.

Evan Rowlands, Esq., Second Officer.

The ship was torpedoed. The Second Officer took charge of the starboard boat with 32 men in it and lay off the ship. The submarine then came to the surface, torpedoed the ship again and she sank in ten minutes.

Only the Second Officer had any experience in the handling of a boat but they managed to run before the wind in the direction of land. The boat was leaking and seas were continually breaking over the sides so that the men had to pump and bale with buckets. They sailed for three days before being picked up. It was bitterly cold and all suffered badly from frost bite. The survivors owe their lives to the Second Officer's skill and leadership.

*To be an Additional Member of the Civil Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire:—*

Wilfred Parkinson, Esq., First Radio Officer.

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

Harold Cedrick Thurston, Apprentice.

The ship was torpedoed and settled by the bow until the fore deck was awash but, as

she did not appear to be sinking, the Master decided to proceed. Two hours later she was struck by a second torpedo. Two boats were lowered, one was swamped, but the other got away. Twenty-two of the crew remained on board with the Master. The First Radio Officer at once sent out a message and, although the ship had taken a heavy list, remained at his post. His calm bearing set a fine example. The following day three Destroyers were sighted. One, by using a Carley float, took off all who remained on board.

The Apprentice showed great enterprise in recovering the Master's sextant and chronometer from the chart room, which was full of gas, and in helping to fix the position. When the Carley float was carrying some Chinese sailors to the Destroyer, a line broke. Thurston jumped on to the float, and secured the line, making the work of rescue much easier.

#### COMMENDATIONS.

Those named below have been Commended for brave conduct when their ships encountered enemy ships, aircraft, submarines or mines:—

Brian Henry Bromfield, Cadet.

Captain Robert Hyde Cairns, Master.

Captain William Norman Collins (deceased), Master.

David Davies, Esq., Third Officer.

George Eagleton, Ordinary Seaman.

Arthur Morgan Evans, Esq., Chief Engineer Officer.

Captain Benjamin Thomas Evans, Master.

Captain John Osman Evans, Master.

William Frame, Esq., Chief Engineer Officer.

John Edward Frankland, Esq., Second Officer.

Bernard Gallagher, Boatswain.

Jack Hicken, Esq., Chief Officer.

Thomas Innes, Esq., Third Officer.

Captain Arthur James Knell, Master.

George McCallum, Chief Steward.

Robert McLaren, Storekeeper.

John Manson, Esq., Fourth Engineer Officer.

Clifford Arthur Moreland, Esq., Third Officer.

Peter Smith Morrison, Esq., Second Officer.

Jack Stafford Petley, Esq., Fifth Engineer Officer.

Alexander Fletcher Reaveley, Esq., Second Engineer Officer.

Ronald Maxwell Scanes, Esq., Radio Officer.

Captain Percy Douglas Seear, Master.

Captain James Sloan (deceased), Master.

Donald Mowatt Steven, Esq., Chief Officer.

Howard Thomas, Esq., Chief Officer.

Edward Thoms, Esq., Chief Engineer Officer.

#### LONDON

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