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CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD.

St. James's Palace, S.W.1.

25th July, 1944.

The KING has been graciously pleased to award the GEORGE CROSS to:—

Benjamin Gimbert, Driver (March), London and North Eastern Railway Company.

James William Nightall (deceased), Fireman (March), London and North Eastern Railway Company.

As an ammunition train was pulling into a station in Cambridgeshire, the driver, Gimbert, discovered that the wagon next to the engine was on fire. He immediately drew Nightall's attention to the fire and brought the train to a standstill. By the time the train had stopped the whole of the truck was enveloped in flames and, realising the danger, the driver instructed the fireman to try to uncouple the truck immediately behind the blazing vehicle. Without the slightest hesitation Nightall, although he knew that the truck contained explosives, uncoupled the vehicle and rejoined his driver on the footplate.

The blazing van was close to the station buildings and was obviously liable to endanger life in the village. The driver and fireman realised that it was essential to separate the truck from the remainder of the train and run it into the open. Driver Gimbert set the engine in motion and as he approached a signal box he warned the signalman to stop any trains which were likely to be involved and indicated what he intended to do. Almost immediately the vehicle blew up. Nightall was killed and Gimbert was very severely injured.

Gimbert and Nightall were fully aware of the contents of the wagon which was on fire and displayed outstanding courage and resource in endeavouring to isolate it. When they discovered that the wagon was on fire they could easily have left the train and

sought shelter, but realising that if they did not remove the burning vehicle the whole of the train, which consisted of 51 wagons of explosives, would have blown up, they risked their lives in order to minimise the effect of the fire. There is no doubt that if the whole train had been involved, as it would have been but for the gallant action of the men concerned, there would have been serious loss of life and property.

CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD.

St. James's Palace, S.W.1.

25th July, 1944.

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

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

Leslie Eros Clayton, Chief Officer, Merchant Navy.

The ship was sailing in convoy in the North Atlantic when an aircraft engaged in patrol duties was seen to crash into the sea.

The Chief Officer displayed exceptional courage in a fine rescue effort. He was in charge of a boat which was immediately lowered from the vessel. One of the airmen was seen to be trapped in the aircraft's structure and unable to free himself. Mr. Clayton immediately dived overboard and succeeded in releasing him. As a result of this brave action, which undoubtedly saved the airman's life, Mr. Clayton suffered from exposure and had to be taken to hospital on the ship's arrival in port.