

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

David BALDWIN, Station Fire Officer, Air Transport Auxiliary.

John Joseph William Collins THOMPSON, Skilled Rigger, Air Transport Auxiliary.

An aircraft crashed on landing and burst into flames. Despite the fire and the bombs on board, which subsequently exploded, the crew, five of whom were seriously injured in the crash, were extricated.

Tenders and equipment were immediately on the spot under the leadership of Fire Officer Baldwin. They were able to keep the intensive fire under control and particularly from parts of the aircraft where unexploded bombs could be seen.

Thompson showed courage in entering the aircraft soon after the crash with the intention of extricating victims, but he was injured in so doing and had to be helped from the wreckage.

Third Officer Gulson, on being informed that there were still some injured crew on board, climbed into the fuselage through the cockpit escape hatch, in spite of the fact that the starboard wing was by this time a mass of flames. He found one of the crew unconscious on the floor beside the pilot's seat and, with great difficulty, managed to drag this man through the pilot's escape hatch and lower him to the ground. He was then joined by Second Officer Lees and they entered the blazing aircraft but as the fuselage was full of smoke and they were unable to see anyone, they came out again. When told that another member of the crew was still in the aircraft in the rest bay of the fuselage, Gulson and Lees immediately re-entered the machine to search. The missing man was located, huddled up against the rear spar and, after a struggle over the front spar and through the flames, Gulson and Lees were able to pull him through the cockpit hatch and lower him to the ground.

First Officer Cotter gave invaluable help in getting the rear gunner out of his turret, which had become jammed. The man was unconscious, lying partly in the turret and partly in the rear of the fuselage. While others worked on the turret from outside, Cotter, finding that the turret could not be swung back, entered the fuselage, after forcing the normal entrance. The starboard wing was blazing fiercely and the heat was so intense that the starboard elevator burst into flames. It was then found necessary to remove the gunner's flying equipment before those outside could extricate him safely.

When the entire crew of the crashed aircraft had been removed to safety, Baldwin withdrew the fire tenders and crews and, after the bombs had exploded and the debris settled, he returned to the remains of the aircraft to make sure that there were no further unexploded bombs or ammunition. Having satisfied himself that this was the case, he then made arrangements for damping down and finally extinguishing the flames.

Lees, Cotter and Gulson showed great courage without thought for their own safety and by their determination saved the lives of two persons.

Baldwin showed great devotion to duty and his prompt and efficient leadership made possible the rescue work.

*Awarded the British Empire Medal (Civil Division).*

Ashrof ALI, Cultivator of Goppe Village Tract, Buthidaung Township, Akyab District, Burma.

Sultan AHMED, Headman of Goppe Village Tract, Buthidaung Township, Akyab District, Burma.

When the Japanese occupied Goppe Village, Ashrof Ali and Sultan Ahmed, acting independently, gave warning to the Civil Affairs Officer, which resulted in arrangements being made for the repulse of the enemy. To give the warning, they had run across open fields and across a river in full view of the enemy. With complete disregard of the danger, Ashrof Ali and Sultan Ahmed risked their lives.

Albert Graham BAKER, Ironstone Labourer, Sproxtton, Leicestershire.

Fred MEADS, Ironstone Labourer, Skillington, Nr. Grantham.

An aircraft, carrying a crew of nine and fully laden with bombs, crashed in a field. Five members of the crew were thrown clear by force of impact but the other four were trapped in the wreckage.

Baker and Meads hurried to the scene of the crash and Baker forced his way through a hole in the wrecked plane. He was followed by Meads and they found one of the airmen with two bombs lying across his body and another airman pinned down by a bomb across the lower part of his body. They removed the bombs and, with help, extricated the injured men and carried them to safety.

Baker and Meads showed courage without regard for their own safety.

John DAGG, Shepherd, Kirknewton, Northumberland.

Frank MOSCROP, Shepherd, Kirknewton, Northumberland.

An aircraft crashed and caught fire. Search parties were organised and Dagg and Moscrop set out in what they thought to be the most likely direction. After a strenuous climb in heavy snow a dog located four of the crew sheltering in a crevice. The airmen were unable to tell what had happened to the remaining members of the crew, but warned the men about approaching the wreckage which was on fire and loaded with bombs. A search was made for the missing members of the crew, but without success. Two of the airmen were slightly injured and Dagg rendered what first aid he could and, as all were barefooted, he helped to wrap their feet in material recovered from a parachute. The descent was then attempted, but by this time a blizzard was blowing which rendered visibility practically nil. It proved a difficult task and it was only through dogged perseverance, patience and tenacity of purpose that the rescuers were able to get the four men to safety. Despite their exhausted condition after some seven hours struggle against severe elements, Dagg and Moscrop immediately prepared to make a further search but, owing to the blizzard, the party had to abandon the