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TUESDAY, 18 SEPTEMBER, 1945

**CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS  
OF KNIGHTHOOD,**

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

*18th September, 1945.*

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 George Medal and 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 Officer of the Civil Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire:—*

Laurence George GALE, Superintendent, Royal Ordnance Factory, Kirkby.

*Awarded the George Medal:—*

Richard Arthur Samuel BYWATER, G.C., Factory Development Officer, Royal Ordnance Factory, Kirkby.

William Ernest DENNY, Assistant Superintendent, Royal Ordnance Factory, Kirkby.

Roy Thomas William EDWARDS, Agent for Thos. Bates & Son, Ltd., Demolition Contractors.

William Louis FITZMAURICE, M.B.E., Chief Technical Assistant, Royal Ordnance Factory, Kirkby.

Ronald Donald FORBES, Leading Fireman, Works Fire Brigade, Royal Ordnance Factory, Kirkby.

James Shanks MURDOCH, B.E.M., Shop Manager, Royal Ordnance Factory, Kirkby.

William James PANTON, B.E.M., Foreman, Royal Ordnance Factory, Kirkby.

Mark Victor ROWLING, B.E.M., Shop Manager, Royal Ordnance Factory, Kirkby.

William TOPPING, Fireman, Works Fire Brigade, Royal Ordnance Factory, Kirkby.

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

Albert Edward BYRON, Senior Leading Fireman, Works Fire Brigade, Royal Ordnance Factory, Kirkby.

John Alfred CHRISTIAN, Fireman, Works Fire Brigade, Royal Ordnance Factory, Kirkby.

Henry HANKIN, Fireman, Works Fire Brigade, Royal Ordnance Factory, Kirkby.

An explosion occurred at the Royal Ordnance Factory, Kirkby, during the filling of highly dangerous ammunition. The night was exceptionally dark, there was no moon, and it was raining heavily. The major explosion was followed by others. Almost all lights were extinguished and soon the only illumination in and around the shattered bomb strewn building was given by the fires which broke out. The morale of the Factory staff was superb. All the operatives were aware of the dangerous nature of the work and immediately the noise of the explosion was heard, rescuers ran from all the near-by buildings. Girl operatives, who had made their escape from the building, returned to bring out their injured friends. The Factory Fire Brigade were on the spot within a matter of minutes and ran their hose into the building. Whilst the fires blazed and bombs continued to explode, the injured were brought out and desperate attempts made to release a trapped man. They continued until the Assistant Superintendent, who was in charge in the absence on leave of the Superintendent, ordered everyone to leave the building and take shelter behind the mounds. The responsibility laid upon Mr. Denny was heavy, but his decision was justified, as in a few minutes another explosion brought down more wreckage. It was nearly day-break when a pile of bombs in their wooden crates, crushed beneath the fallen roof, was

seen to be on fire and out of reach of the firemen's hose. The fire was gaining and, had it taken hold, the consequences would have been disastrous over a wide area of the Factory.

Mr. Denny entered the building alone. He sought some way of getting at the flames and having found this, came out and explained the position to Forbes and Topping. Without hesitation the two men volunteered to enter the building and tackle the fire from within at the proposed angle and range. The three men cautiously groped their way into the wrecked building. Standing among the damaged ammunition, which the rush of water was sufficient to disturb, with consequent risk of detonation, they brought the fire under control and completely extinguished it.

Byron, Christian and Hankin took their hose into another part of the wrecked building. They showed devotion to duty and voluntarily exposed themselves to the danger of death or serious injury.

Mr. Gale, who was on leave when the explosion occurred, returned immediately. A preliminary survey was made and a scheme, evolved by the Superintendent. It was carried successfully into effect mainly through his initiative and leadership. He organised and thoroughly tested the safety precautions, was present a considerable part of every day when work was in progress and no fresh step was taken until he had personally assured himself that the methods were as safe as his knowledge and ingenuity could make them. By his coolness, ability, courage and inspiring leadership, Mr. Gale completed a unique and terrifying salvage task without a single casualty.

Bywater, Edwards, Fitzmaurice, Murdoch, Panton and Rowling formed the team of volunteers who cleared the wrecked building. In a task presenting vast problems they displayed courage and co-operation of the highest order. The ammunition which had caused the accident was anti-personnel and anti-disturbance, and the fused time-bombs, scattered over and under the debris, made clearance nearly impossible by detonating without warning and in an absolutely unpredictable manner. A constant risk was the movement of wreckage and any one member of the team could, by ignorance, negligence or a moment's carelessness endanger the lives of the others. The high standard of the team work at Kirkby is shown by the fact that during the clearance operations there was no casualty.

All members of the team, under the leadership of Mr. Gale and Mr. Denny, showed high courage and devotion to duty in volunteering for and carrying through over a period of three months, so arduous, unpleasant and dangerous a task.

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

Miss Lise M. de BAISSAC, First Aid Nursing Yeomanry.

Miss Jacqueline NEARNE, First Aid Nursing Yeomanry.

For services in France during the enemy occupation.

Miss Jane WALKER, British Resident in Warsaw.

For services to members of British and Allied Forces in Poland.

*Awarded the George Medal:—*

Mohamed SHAFFI (since deceased), Guide, Dodan Village, Maungdaw Area. (Award dated 16th September, 1944).

For services in connection with the Burma Campaign, 16th November, 1943, to 15th May, 1944.

Thomas Harold STAINTON, Locomotive Driver (Selby), London and North Eastern Railway Company.

Stainton was working a goods train which consisted of 47 wagons, the twelve nearest the engine containing bombs. He noticed that one of the sheets covering a loaded wagon was on fire. The train ran into a line set aside for its reception in the Goods Yard and when nearly stopped, Stainton instructed the fireman to stop the train while he got off the engine and ran towards the wagon which was on fire. When the train came to a stand-still Stainton uncoupled the first 7 wagons from the burning wagon, got back to his engine and immediately drew the front portion ahead.

A small explosion occurred shortly after and was followed by a major explosion which caused considerable damage to the permanent way.

Stainton's courageous and prompt action, without regard for his personal safety, probably averted a much more serious explosion.

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

Miss Harriette Evelyn BENDY, Member, Christian Contemplative Charity, Burton Mere, Dorsetshire.

When an aircraft crashed in a field, Miss Bendy, an elderly woman, noticed an airman stumbling round the burning machine and from his actions she realised that the pilot was still in the wreckage. Finding a gap in the barbed wire fence, Miss Bendy ran to the aircraft and tried to pull out the pilot who was held fast by the foot. With help, Miss Bendy succeeded in releasing the trapped man and dragged him clear. Whilst so doing the wreckage was burning furiously and Verey cartridges were exploding. She then stopped a passing car and with assistance lifted the helpless man over a wall and into the car.

Miss Bendy, by her prompt and fearless action, was instrumental in saving the pilot's life.

Miss Jean HERRING, Member, Women's Land Army, Bury St. Edmunds.

Claude Frederick PALFREY, Public Service Vehicle Driver, Stradishall, Nr. Newmarket, Suffolk.

An aircraft crashed in a field alongside a road, and immediately burst into flames. Palfrey, who was driving a bus along the road as the aircraft came down, pulled up on the grass verge to avoid a collision with one of its wings. He and Miss Herring, a passenger, ran to the scene of the crash and between them rescued two of the crew who were pinned underneath the front part of

the wreckage which was burning furiously. R.A.F. assistance had by then arrived, and Miss Herring, who was suffering from shock, was led away. Palfrey continued to assist in rescue efforts until it was clear his help was no longer needed.

Miss Herring and Palfrey showed courage without regard for their own safety.

Mrs. Sophie Janinata Apolska MEESON, British Resident in Budapest.

For services to members of the British Forces in Hungary.

Peter PRITCHARD, Company Officer, National Fire Service (Assistant Fire Officer, Ministry of War Transport, Mediterranean Area).

A ship which was discharging bombs at Bari blew up with a great explosion.

Among the damaged ships was the Italian s.s. "Lucia C" which was carrying petrol. Fire at once broke out in this ship and volunteer parties were formed to try to save her and her company.

Mr. Pritchard boarded the vessel and took charge of operations. Under his direction the fire was kept under control until the vessel could be beached and allowed to burn out.

Mr. Pritchard showed courage and devotion to duty without regard for his own safety.

#### KING'S COMMENDATIONS.

Those named below have been Commended for brave conduct.

When aircraft crashed and caught fire:—

Levi ROGERS, Jobbing Gardener, Burton, Bradstock, Dorset.

When rescuing an American airman from the sea:—

John P. de la HAYE, St. Brelade, Jersey.

When rescuing children from a burning house:—

William KEAY, Constable, Perthshire and Kinross-shire Constabulary.

When engaged in rescue work in Antwerp:—

Thomas James PARKINSON (deceased), Group Sergeant, Civil Defence Reserve, 242, No. 1 Overseas Column.

When an ammunition train caught fire:—

Thomas Henry POPPLEWELL, Class III Yard Inspector (Gascoigne Wood), London and North Eastern Railway Company.

John TALBOT, Locomotive Fireman (Selby), London and North Eastern Railway Company.

When explosions occurred at the Royal Ordnance Factory, Kirkby:—

Patrick Stephen BYRNE, Employee of Thos. Bates & Son, Ltd., Demolition Contractors.

Anthony CARTER, Senior Overlooker.

Miss Margaret COONEY, Process Worker.

Robert Henry DONEVAN (deceased), Danger Building Visitor.

Miss Thora Tracie HADDEN, Process Worker.

Miss Doris Kathleen HINTON, Junior Overlooker.

Phyllis Mrs. KNIGHT, Senior Overlooker.

Benjamin MYNETT, Gang Leader, Thos. Bates & Son, Ltd., Demolition Contractors.

Leon PEDLEY, Foreman.

Miss Marjorie PENLINGTON, Process Worker.

William VERNON, Works Fire Brigade Officer.

#### CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD,

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

*18th September, 1945.*

The KING has been graciously pleased on the advice of His Majesty's Australian Ministers to give orders for the undermentioned awards of the British Empire Medal for services to the Forces in connection with military operations in the South-West Pacific Area.

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

MACKELLI (since deceased), Lemakot, Kavieng, New Ireland. (Award dated 14th September, 1944.)

Alan Fogo SCOTT, Representative, Young Men's Christian Association, (attached 8 Australian Infantry Brigade).

#### CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD,

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

*18th September, 1945.*

The KING has been graciously pleased to give orders for the publication in the London Gazette of the names of the persons specially shown below as having been granted a King's Commendation for their brave conduct in Civil Defence:—

Cyril BLEAZARD, Engineer, Ilford.

Leslie George HILL-COTTINGHAM, Sergeant, "K" Division, Metropolitan Police.

David DUNDAS, Constable, "K" Division, Metropolitan Police.

Clarence Leonard DYSON, Constable, "K" Division, Metropolitan Police.

Edward Raymond GOODGE, Constable, "K" Division, Metropolitan Police.

Richard SALEY, Station Sergeant, "K" Division, Metropolitan Police.

Arthur TROLOPE, Constable, "K" Division, Metropolitan Police.

#### CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD,

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

*18th September, 1945.*

The KING has been graciously pleased to give orders for the undermentioned appointment to the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, 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 David RANKINE, Master, s.s. "Conakrian" (Elmina Line).

The s.s. "Conakrian," sailing in convoy, struck a mine. She was severely damaged and took a considerable list to starboard.

Water was speedily rising in the flooded compartments and distress signals were sent out. Tugs took the ship in tow and she was finally docked after seven days. Twice during the voyage the vessel grounded on sandbanks but on each occasion she was refloated with the help of salvage tugs.

Captain Rankine showed great courage throughout and handled the situation with outstanding skill.

#### KING'S COMMENDATIONS.

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

Captain Norman HALLIDAY, Master, s.s.  
" Stanridge " (Stanhope Steamship Company Ltd.).

Francis John CROFT, Esq., Chief Officer, s.s.  
" Conakrian " (Elmina Ltd.).

LONDON

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