

CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS  
OF KNIGHTHOOD,*St. James's Palace, S.W.1.**2nd May, 1944.*

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 received an expression of Commendation for brave conduct when rendering services to the Forces in Italy.

## KING'S COMMENDATIONS.

Frank GALE, British Resident in Naples.  
Georgina Skinner, Mrs. GALE, British Resident in Naples.

CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS  
OF KNIGHTHOOD,*St. James's Palace, S.W.1.**11th December, 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 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 William George Stewart HEWISON, Master, s.s. "Samsylarna" (Sir R. Ropner & Company).

The s.s. "Samsylarna," sailing in convoy from New York to India was attacked by enemy aircraft. A torpedo struck the afterpeak tank and the steering gear was put out of action. The engine-room flooded and the ship settled rapidly by the stern. Orders were given to abandon ship, the crew being picked up later by an escort vessel. The following morning the Master reboarded with a skeleton crew, and two unsuccessful attempts were made to tow the ship. Later a tug arrived and the "Samsylarna," awash from the engine-room to the stern, was towed 31 miles to Benghazi and beached. Captain Hewison handled the situation with courage and coolness throughout. By his skill and determination he succeeded in saving his badly damaged ship and a valuable cargo.

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

Henry SCURR, Esq., Second Officer, s.s. "Sambridge" (Thos. & Jno. Brocklebank, Ltd.).

The s.s. "Sambridge," sailing alone, was attacked by the enemy. Two torpedoes hit the ship and completely wrecked the engine and chart rooms. In addition, the ship was

set on fire and within two minutes the whole of the midships section was burning fiercely. Abandonment was ordered and rafts and boats were got away with most of the crew although some were badly injured. The survivors were picked up shortly afterwards.

The Second Officer showed outstanding courage and devotion to duty. After the ship had been sunk the submarine, which was Japanese, surfaced, approached one of the boats and demanded the whereabouts of the Master, Chief Officer and Chief Engineer. Answers to these questions were evasive, but Second Officer Scurr, realising the danger to his senior officers, volunteered to go on board the submarine. He was taken prisoner and so sacrificed his freedom and chances of safety.

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

Alfred Ernest FRY, Sailor, s.s. "Afric Star" (Blue Star Line, Ltd.).

Thomas Daisley LYNCH, Able Seaman, s.s. "Stanpark" (Stanhope Steam Ship Company Ltd.).

Roderick James MERRETT, Able Seaman, s.s. "Barneveld."

The s.s. "Portland" was captured by the Germans and, with a prize crew on board, was used to transport 327 prisoners to Bordeaux.

A small group of prisoners led by Fry, determined to regain control of the ship and bring her into a British port. Their plans were, however, frustrated. Subsequently an attempt was made to set the cargo on fire in the hope that the smoke would be seen by British naval craft. The enemy, however, succeeded in putting out the fire, but not before considerable damage had been done to the ship and cargo. Subsequently, at Hamburg the Germans sentenced Fry to death and his assistants to long terms of imprisonment on charges of mutiny and arson. The three men were subsequently repatriated and are now in this country.

Fry was the chief ringleader and displayed courage and determination in pursuing the project of liberation by forceful measures.

Lynch played a prominent part in planning and preparing for the attempted mutiny and fire.

Merrett willingly participated in the execution of the plans and assisted Fry in the final preparations for starting the fire.

## KING'S COMMENDATIONS.

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

Captain John BLEWETT, Master, s.s. "Samarina" (Westcott & Laurence Line Ltd.).

Samuel Rascoe GUDGEON, Esq., Chief Officer, s.s. "Samsylarna" (Sir R. Ropner & Company).

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