

The fire spread rapidly and the whole of the ship's fire fighting resources were brought into operation by the ship's officers.

About half an hour after the outbreak occurred a number of refugees jumped over the side of the ship. The Master ordered the boats to be lowered with women and children and made fast alongside. The fire had by this time spread to the whole of the midships section and the engine room had to be abandoned. Those remaining on board were confined to the fore and aft of the ship—the Chief Officer being in charge of one section and the Master the other. Communication between the two sections was impossible because amidships was a blazing furnace.

About three hours after the outbreak occurred an aircraft carrier took off the refugees and the crew.

Later she was taken in tow with the Master and some of the crew on board. The vessel, however, listed heavily to port and the party on board were taken off. The list increased and the "Empire Patrol" capsized and sank.

The Master was responsible for all the fire fighting operations of the ship. It was due to his leadership and organisation that the loss of life was so small. He also did his utmost to save the vessel.

The Chief Officer and the Senior Second Engineer Officer ably supported the Master throughout.

Awarded the British Empire Medal (Civil Division):—

Leslie MATTHEWS, Company Officer, No. 4 (Yorkshire) Fire Force, National Fire Service.

John UTLEY, Leading Fireman, No. 4 (Yorkshire) Fire Force, National Fire Service.

An aircraft crashed in Tockwith and several houses were immediately enveloped

by fire. One house was burning furiously and a woman was trapped in a bedroom. Company Officer Matthews and Leading Fireman Utley mounted a ladder and, although the bedroom was a blazing inferno, without the slightest hesitation they entered the building. Utley located the occupant who was partially covered by debris. She was released and passed to Matthews who carried her to safety. Utley was so exhausted that he had to be assisted down the ladder. Both Company Officer Matthews and Leading Fireman Utley displayed exceptional bravery.

KING'S COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT.

Miss Eliane Sophie PLEWMAN (deceased), Women's Transport Service (First Aid Nursing Yeomanry).

For services in France during the enemy occupation.

Harry SAGAR, Police Constable, West Riding of Yorkshire Constabulary.

For services when an aircraft crashed and set fire to dwelling houses.

Reginald Ivor LELEU, Second Officer, m.v. "Empire Patrol" (Prince Line Ltd.).

For services when a fire broke out in a ship at sea.

The announcement relative to George ROBERTSON on page 333 of Gazette No. 37412, dated 9th January 1946 is hereby cancelled, the award to him of the B.E.M. having been already announced in Gazette No. 37122, dated 15th June, 1945.

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