

drove it as fast as he could back towards the furnaces. When the leaking metal reached the water there was a violent explosion and metal flew in all directions. The glass window of the engine was shattered and there were further explosions. There was grave danger of a serious explosion from the oil fuel carried by the locomotive and to prevent this, Ashton descended from the cab to uncouple the locomotive from the metal ladles. A final explosion blew him off his feet. By this time his clothing was alight and he suffered burns on the head, back and right leg. When confronted by a dangerous situation requiring speedy decision and action, Mr. Ashton acted with coolness and courage.

James Edward BARRETT, Warder, Department of Prisons, New South Wales.

Three dangerous life prisoners at the Goulburn Training Centre attempted to break out by erecting an improvised ladder over the prison wall. On being seen by Warder Barrett who fired a shot at them from his revolver they immediately retreated with the Warder in pursuit. During the chase within the perimeter walls of the centre the prisoners fired a steel arrow from a crossbow which penetrated through the Warder's left thigh. Although wounded and in pain he continued to follow the prisoners who again attempted to scale the wall but were forced back by Barrett's harassing tactics. The prisoners continued to fire arrows from the shelter of a building and before they were finally overpowered by police and other warders Barrett was again wounded in the right elbow.

Eric William BRETTELL, Constable, Staffordshire County Police. (Burton upon Trent.)

The police were called to a house where a man in possession of a shot gun was threatening anyone who approached. When the police entered the house they saw the man at the top of the staircase with a gun. A shot was fired and pellets entered the hall where the police were standing. Every possible effort was made to persuade the man to give up the gun, but he refused and threatened any police officer who came near the stairs. There were three young children in one of the bedrooms, and any drastic measures would have endangered their health and possibly their lives. After nearly four hours of this state of siege Constable Brettell risked going up the stairs and sat on the top step talking to the man who had the gun trained on him the whole of the time. When the man's attention was diverted the Constable took the only opportunity he had to grab the barrel of the gun, snatch it from the man and run downstairs. The man then produced a sheath knife but he was eventually overpowered and taken into custody.

Gareth James SCANLON, Painter, London W.11.

A serious fire occurred in a four-storeyed terraced dwelling house, let off in separate rooms to a number of tenants. The fire originated when one of the occupants was lighting a paraffin stove in his room. Mr. Scanlon from

the house immediately opposite ran out to see if he could help. Flames and smoke were coming from all the windows and people were standing at the windows screaming for help. Some had started to jump to the ground. Scanlon got on to a first floor window ledge and a young girl climbed out of a second floor window and lowered herself so that he could take hold of her and hand her down to another man standing by. He then saw a woman standing on a ledge below a window on the third floor. From the third floor window of the house next door Scanlon climbed on to a shelf which ran between the houses and reaching for the woman guided her along the shelf. While remaining on the shelf himself he then helped to lift her through the window. The shelf was only eight inches wide and some thirty feet above the ground. Had he slipped, or fallen from his perilous perch serious injury and possibly death would have resulted.

Bryan John SHOVELLER, Fireman, Kent Fire Brigade. (Sittingbourne.)

A boy fell into a disused well and the Fire Brigade was called on to assist in his rescue. The well was about 325 feet deep with a diameter of about 3 feet reducing to about 2 feet 6 inches at the bottom. Tests showed that the air in the well was unbreathable below 150 feet. Fireman Shoveller volunteered to descend. Wearing breathing apparatus he was lowered into the well and on reaching the bottom found that the boy was dead, his badly mutilated body entangled in timber and metal debris. Owing to the narrowness of the well it was necessary to haul up the boy's body ahead of the fireman. This was a slow and difficult operation during which there was a danger that the line would break as a result of rubbing on the brick sides of the well, and that in the cramped conditions the fireman's breathing apparatus might be knocked off. Fireman Shoveller calmly and efficiently carried out an arduous and unpleasant task under conditions of great danger of which he was fully aware but which he accepted without hesitation.

*Queen's Commendation for brave conduct :*

Andrew ADAMSON, Constable, Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary. (Stranraer.)

For rescuing a woman who had fallen into Stranraer harbour.

Robert William Francis GOODALL, Fireman, Manchester Fire Brigade.

For rescuing a man from a burning house.

Dennis SCOTT, Sergeant, Cheshire Constabulary. (Northwich.)

Harry William Morrow ASCROFT, Detective Constable, Cheshire Constabulary. (Northwich.)

Douglas Joseph McCASKILL, Constable, Cheshire Constabulary. (Northwich.)

For services when arresting an armed man.

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