

**CENTRAL CHANCERY OF
THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD**

St. James's Palace, London S.W.1.
27th January 1970.

The QUEEN has been graciously pleased, on the advice of Her Majesty's Australian Ministers, to approve the award of the George Medal to the under-mentioned:

(To be dated 22nd January 1970)

Lieutenant Robert James BURNS, Royal Australian Navy.

For exceptionally brave conduct and gallantry in saving life at sea following the collision between H.M.A.S. Melbourne and the American destroyer U.S.S. Frank E. Evans on 3rd June 1969.

After the call to emergency stations at 0315 following the collision on 3rd June 1969, Lieutenant Burns, proceeded to the quarterdeck and on arrival sighted an American sailor struggling in the water and calling for help. At this time H.M.A.S. Melbourne was still moving through the water and, without knowledge of the rescue organisation which was later to come into being, he immediately and without hesitation dived some 20 feet into the water to render assistance.

After supporting the man, who was both injured and exhausted, he towed him to one of the life rafts which had been launched from H.M.A.S. Melbourne. After lifting the sailor into the raft, he tended to his injuries and then returned once more to the water to swim some 200 yards to a second survivor who was calling for assistance. He towed him to another liferaft, some distance away and rendered first aid. Hearing further cries in the darkness he left the raft and carried out a further search in the sea endeavouring to ensure that no one had been overlooked, but could find no one.

Lieutenant Burns acted with great courage in diving from a moving ship at night and without any regard to his personal safety or own recovery. His brave conduct and gallant actions undoubtedly saved the lives of two American sailors and served as an outstanding example to others in H.M.A.S. Melbourne carrying out rescue operations.

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St. James's Palace, London S.W.1.
27th January 1970.

The QUEEN has been graciously pleased, on the advice of Her Majesty's Australian Ministers, to approve the award of the British Empire Medal for Gallantry (Military Division) to the undermentioned:

(To be dated 22nd January 1970)

Petty Officer Engineering Mechanic Nelson Howard HEARD, R51515, Royal Australian Navy.

For gallantry in rescue operations at sea following the collision between H.M.A.S. Melbourne and the American destroyer U.S.S. Frank E. Evans on 3rd June 1969.

Following the collision at 0315 on 3rd June 1969, Petty Officer Heard, with complete disregard for his own safety, jumped from H.M.A.S. Melbourne into the water and towed liferafts to the after section of the U.S.S. Frank E. Evans, which was considered to be in danger of exploding. By so doing, his example and leadership inspired other members of the aircraft carrier to enter the water and perform similar outstanding acts of gallantry.

Petty Officer Heard's actions after the initial impact and throughout the rescue operations were highly commendable and a fine example to all. His leadership contributed materially to the fine team effort of H.M.A.S. Melbourne's ship's company and to the success of the rescue operations overall.

Able Seaman Patrick John RICHARDSON, R65743, Royal Australian Navy.

For gallantry in saving life at sea following the collision between H.M.A.S. Melbourne and the American destroyer U.S.S. Frank E. Evans on 3rd June 1969.

After the call to emergency stations at 0315 following the collision on 3rd June 1969, Able Seaman Richardson led four other sailors into the water to release two liferafts floating near the port after ladder bay. After freeing the rafts, this group, led by

Richardson, towed them several hundred yards towards the area where the forward section of the U.S.S. Frank E. Evans had sunk some minutes previously. There, he sighted an American sailor who was in an exhausted condition and in need of assistance. He swam to his aid, calmed him, and then supporting him swam back to one of the rafts. Subsequently he assisted in the rescue of another survivor.

His distinguished conduct saved the life of at least one man and his actions at a critical time served as an outstanding example to those who followed him.

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St. James's Palace, London S.W.1.
3rd February 1970.

The QUEEN has been graciously pleased to approve the award of the British Empire Medal for Gallantry (Military Division) to the undermentioned:

N4262076 Senior Aircraftman John Richard YATES, Royal Air Force Regiment.

On the 29th July 1969, Senior Aircraftman Yates was in charge of the Domestic Fire Crew at Royal Air Force, Wildenrath, which was called to a fire in the Blacksmith's shop, M.P.B.W., at 0902 hours. The fire had started when rubber hose lines connected to an oxyacetylene apparatus in use had ruptured. Gas escaping from the acetylene cylinder was ignited and the broken hose lines quickly burnt away. When the Domestic Fire Crew arrived at the site of the fire some three minutes after the sounding of the alarm the fire had been burning for seven minutes. Senior Aircraftman Yates quickly assessed the problem and promptly ordered the eight personnel in the immediate vicinity to evacuate the area. Then, assisted by one fireman, who at all times was protected by the wall of the building, he sprayed the apparatus with water to lower its temperature, thus lessening the chance of hot spots forming and reducing the possibility of the acetylene cylinder exploding. It is, however, inadvisable to extinguish this type of fire with water or foam compound without also closing the outlet valves on the gas cylinders. The valve on the oxygen cylinder had already been closed. Senior Aircraftman Yates decided that, as the leader of the Fire Crew, it was his responsibility to attempt to close the outlet valve on the acetylene cylinder, even though he was aware that the cylinder might explode. He entered the building, and, with his hands protected by asbestos gloves, he attempted to close the valve. Initially he was unsuccessful but, after struggling with the valve for about two minutes, he eventually managed to close it and the fire was extinguished. Senior Aircraftman Yates displayed commendable courage in extinguishing the fire. He was well aware of the dangers which confronted him, yet, with total disregard for his own safety, he approached the burning cylinder and successfully arrested the fire. By his prompt, cool and courageous action and correct decisions, he prevented a dangerous situation from developing into a serious accident, which could have resulted in death or injury to a number of airmen. If the acetylene cylinder had exploded, the linked oxygen cylinder could have exploded also, the building would have been extensively damaged and there would have been a grave risk of immediately adjacent buildings catching fire. Senior Aircraftman Yates' devotion to duty was in keeping with the highest traditions of the Service.

CROWN OFFICE

House of Lords, London S.W.1.
24th January 1970.

The QUEEN has been pleased by Letters Patent under the Great Seal bearing date the 24th day of January 1970, to appoint Colonel His Honour Judge Ralph Kilner Brown, O.B.E., T.D., lately Recorder of Liverpool, to be one of the Justices of Her Majesty's High Court of Justice.

24th January 1970.

The QUEEN has been pleased by Warrant under Her Royal Sign Manual dated the 24th day of January 1970, to appoint Rudolph Lyons, Esquire, Q.C., to be Recorder of Liverpool.