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TUESDAY, 16TH FEBRUARY 1971

CENTRAL CHANCERY OF  
 THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD

St. James's Palace, London S.W.1.  
 16th February 1971

The QUEEN has been graciously pleased to approve the following awards of the British Empire Medal and for the publication in the *London Gazette* of the names of those specially shown below as having received an expression of Commendation for Brave Conduct.

*Awarded the British Empire Medal for Gallantry  
 (Civil Division)*

James Herbert FORSTER, Shaftsmen, Bedlington  
 "A" Colliery, National Coal Board, North-  
 umberland.

A cage carrying several steel arch girders and one man was being lowered from an intermediate level 300 feet below ground and some 450 feet from the bottom of a mineshaft. The arches broke loose and the cage was jammed after travelling some 40 feet. Mr. Forster who had stayed behind at the intermediate level, immediately signalled "emergency stop" and called out to the man in the cage. On hearing nothing but groans he realised that something was seriously wrong, and forthwith climbed down the shaft into the cage. He released the trapped man and succeeded in re-fixing the arches after 45 minutes so that the cage could be raised. The man was then brought to the surface but was found to be dead. The descent involved climbing down damp and greasy wooden baulks, set at 6 feet intervals against the sides of the 13 feet diameter shaft, by clinging to the greased steel guide attached to them. Mr. Forster had no light other than his cap lamp and had he slipped he would have fallen 400 feet to the shaft bottom. He was aware that the only alternative methods of releasing his colleague would have taken some considerable time. In deciding to descend the shaft at once

he showed courage and a total disregard for his own safety.

Stanley George PRESLAND, Principal Prison Officer, New South Wales Department of Corrective Services.

It was suspected that a prisoner in the maximum security section at a prison had a firearm hidden in his cell. The prisoner, who was of big physique and strength, had a long history of demonstrated violence and was serving a life of penal servitude following conviction for a brutal crime. He was feared by other inmates and in separate incidents had badly wounded an officer at another prison and had been involved in an abortive escape plan involving high explosives. Principal Prison Officer Presland, unarmed, went to the third landing of the block in which the prisoner's cell was located. After positioning officers on the second landing and adjoining areas he moved to the cell alone and, after a talk with the prisoner, persuaded him to come to the door, which was open. As Presland moved to close the cell door the prisoner dashed into the cell and produced a firearm, with which he threatened the officer. In the face of great personal physical danger and risk to his own life, Presland immediately closed with his armed assailant. Although struck about the head he managed to gain possession of the weapon and to force the prisoner into a position so that the door could be closed. Shortly afterwards two reports were heard and when the door was opened the prisoner was lying on the floor with extensive head injuries, which proved to be fatal. A later examination of the cell produced other weapons and firearms manufactured by the deceased, which in his possession most certainly could have led to casualties and possibly deaths. By refusing to surrender to the prisoner, a murderer with a long history of violence, Mr. Presland displayed courage and devotion to duty of a very high order.

Thomas Madgin PRICE, Auxiliary Coastguard in Charge, Portreath, H.M. Coastguard.

Some people were stranded on the 300 feet high cliffs at the south side of Portreath. The weather at the time was misty, overcast and raining; the tide was in the second hour of flood and the sea was rough. On arrival at the scene the Rescue Company was met by Mr. Price who advised that two youths were stranded on a ledge about 100 feet up from the foreshore, while two more youths had been cut off by the tide. A search was made and the two youths on the ledge were quickly located, but it was considered safe to leave them until the plight could be judged of the other two youths cut off by the tide. After a further search they were sighted stranded on a rock which was already awash although it was still four hours from high tide. The rescue party made its way about 150 feet down a sheer grassy slope, rendered very slippery by the continual rain and set up the rescue equipment. Mr. Price was then lowered down the cliff face taking with him a spare line and harness. When about 30 feet above the shore he encountered an overhang caused by the erosion of the cliff foot by the sea. As there was no way of getting around it Mr. Price asked to be lowered and was let down, dangling on his cliff line, into the sea. He made his way to the rock on which the two youths were stranded, who by now were up to their waists in water, and managed to clamber on to it. He fastened one youth to the spare line and the other to his own, but during this operation several times all three were washed off the rock into the sea. On one occasion while getting back on to the rock, Mr. Price's foot was trapped in a cleft in the rock and it was only by wrenching the sole off his boot that he was able to free himself. Owing to the difficult conditions under which the cliff top team were working, only one person at a time could be pulled up, so after one youth had been hauled to safety, the line was thrown down again, but as it landed some distance from the rock, Mr. Price had to plunge into the sea to recover it. The second youth was then hauled up. Finally, with the sea by now up to his chest, after nearly one hour of constant effort during which he was often buffeted by the sea against the cliff face, Mr. Price was hauled to the cliff top. There is little doubt that, but for the courage, resource and complete disregard for his own safety shown by Mr. Price, the two youths could easily have lost their lives.

*Queen's Commendation for Brave Conduct*  
David Blair BONAR, Foreman Plater, Scott Lithgow Drydocks Ltd.

Thomas HARKINS, Chargehand Caulker, Scott Lithgow Drydocks Ltd.

Alistair John Telford STOREY, Third Officer, Tanker "Llangorse", Evan Thomas Radcliffe and Co. Ltd.

For rescuing a man from a ballast tank following a violent explosion and fire.

David Lester Nicholls HUTCHINS, Chief Superintendent, Dunbartonshire Constabulary.

Allan George MCKINLAY, Superintendent, Dunbartonshire Constabulary.

For arresting a man armed with a loaded revolver.

Archibald Ronald IRVING, Chief Inspector, Hertfordshire Constabulary.

Donald Albert SAUNDERS, Constable, Hertfordshire Constabulary.

For arresting a man armed with a loaded shotgun.

Leslie David LYONS, Company Director, Oxted, Surrey.

David Roy PUGH, Industrial Chemist, Harlow Essex.

For chasing, tackling and detaining a man, armed with an axe, who had attacked another man.

James Angus MONTGOMERY, Sergeant, Nottinghamshire Combined Constabulary.

Graham Clayton DAVIES, Constable, Nottinghamshire Combined Constabulary.

David Harold PARKER, Constable, Nottinghamshire Combined Constabulary.

Roy Keith WELLS, lately Constable, Nottinghamshire Combined Constabulary.

For services when arresting two violent armed criminals.

Robert Donaldson ROBERTSON, Sergeant 3rd Class, New South Wales Police Force.

William John WILSON, Constable 1st Class, New South Wales Police Force.

For arresting a man armed with a loaded rifle.

Hilda Frances, Mrs. WRIGHT, Experimental Worker Grade IV, Ministry of Aviation Supply.

For services when a fire occurred in a workshop of a Solid Propellant Laboratory.