

of his shipmates, a very high sense of duty in his courageous attempt to save his ship, swift decisive thinking under stress and above all quite exceptional leadership.

CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS
OF KNIGHTHOOD

St. James's Palace, London S.W.1.
3rd October 1972.

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

Acting Leading Marine Engineering Mechanic Donald Patrick BECKETT, P.083664

Leading Marine Engineering Mechanic Robert Charles CROXON, P.083266

M.E.M. BECKETT was in the accommodation space of H.M.S. ARTEMIS at approximately 1905 on 1st July when C.P.O. GUEST, who had seen from the casing that the submarine was flooding aft and sinking, came down to warn ratings on board to get out. The other ratings with BECKETT immediately evacuated the submarine through the forward hatch but he, unhesitatingly, went aft with GUEST to assist in trying to restrict the flooding. In the engineroom he met L.M.E.M. CROXON who, while filling the submarine's external and emergency fuel tanks with water, had realised the situation and entered the submarine, without hesitation, via the engineroom hatch to try and reach the after bulkhead door to shut it and restrict the flooding to the after torpedo compartment. Flooding was already too far advanced for him to get at that door. He therefore turned to the next bulkhead door forward. Together they tried to shut the after engineroom door, despite a risk of electrocution from shore supply leads which were rigged through it and which finally prevented them shutting it. At this time water was swirling well up their legs.

CROXON, BECKETT and GUEST then struggled forward against the bow up angle of the deck. CROXON and BECKETT, after four attempts, shut the after accommodation space door "up hill" and secured it while GUEST checked that there was no one else in the accommodation space. All three men moved rapidly into the forward torpedo stowage compartment. At this point M.E.M. RALPHS, who had already escaped, shut the forward hatch, cutting off the full bore of water pouring down it. These last three men on board almost certainly could not have climbed the ladder against this water pressure. CROXON and BECKETT at GUEST's order immediately shut the last bulkhead door behind them thus preserving an air filled compartment, and an environment from which they could effect escape.

They then sealed off the bulkhead and prepared the compartment correctly for their escape through the forward escape hatch. However escape did not follow until some ten hours later during which, despite increasing air pressure, thickening atmosphere and exhaustion BECKETT and CROXON remained calm, steady and sensible. Though they were in touch with progress in the rescue operations, they knew a list on the submarine could make their escape hazardous and none of them could be sure that they would get out alive.

The courageous attempt of BECKETT and CROXON with GUEST to save the ship by shutting doors and hatches, and thus restricting the flooding to the two after compartments, was carried out in semi-darkness, in the face of heavy flooding both from aft and from above and in the clear knowledge that delay in evacuating the submarine might cost them their lives.

Both BECKETT and CROXON displayed a most commendable concern for their shipmates and their exemplary conduct was in keeping with the best traditions of the Service.

Marine Engineering Mechanic Ian Stuart RALPHS, P.097609

M.E.M. RALPHS had been casing sentry during the last dog watch on 1st July. At about 1845 he was temporarily relieved to act as a guide for three young Sea Cadets who had asked to look round the submarine. He was with them in the forward torpedo compartment at about 1905 when C.P.O. GUEST, who had seen from the casing that the submarine was flooding aft and sinking, came below, ordered RALPHS to get the Sea Cadets ashore, and

himself rushed aft to warn others, necessarily leaving RALPHS to cope on his own.

This he did immediately, getting the boys up the ladder and handing them off the casing, to another rating standing on the ship's ballast tanks and on to the catamaran. GUEST's order coupled with RALPHS immediate and effective reaction to it almost certainly saved the Sea Cadets' lives.

RALPHS then returned to the forward torpedo loading hatch. He had seen other ratings escape through it but as the submarine sank and a full bore of water poured through it he realised that the only hope for anyone remaining on board was that they might be able to secure an air filled compartment in which to wait for escape. He promptly shut the hatch and, being unable to secure the clips, stood on it to keep it shut, the submarine sinking beneath him. This decision was an incredibly difficult one for a young junior rate to make, since he must have realised he was cutting off the last means of immediate escape for ratings still below. He made it entirely on his own initiative and it was the right decision—to which three ratings, C.P.O. GUEST, L.M.E.M. CROXON and M.E.M. BECKETT, owe their lives. They could not have climbed the ladder against the weight of water coming down the forward hatch but they were able to shut a bulkhead door behind them and finally escaped some ten hours later.

Only when the pressure of water above the hatch kept it shut did RALPHS leave the submarine to swim to safety.

RALPHS immediately grasped the urgency of the order to get the Sea Cadets ashore and obeyed it swiftly and successfully. He then displayed exemplary initiative and quite exceptional presence of mind in his prompt and decisive action in shutting the hatch. His conduct, exceptional presence of mind, and deep concern for his shipmates were in the best traditions of the Service.

ROYAL NAVY

Vice Admiral Sir John ROXBURGH, K.C.B., C.B.E., D.S.O., D.S.C. and Bar, placed on Retired List. 3rd Oct. 1972.

Rear Admiral J. E. POPE, promoted Vice Admiral with seny. 3rd Oct. 1972.

Capt. P. MASLEN, M.V.O., placed on Retired List. 30th Sep. 1972.

Cdrs. placed on Retired List on dates stated:

A. P. FASSNIDGE, O.B.E. 29th Sep. 1972.

G. D. Van SOMEREN, M.I.Mech.E., A.M.I.Mar.E. 3rd Oct. 1972.

Cdr. J. M. W. MORGAN, placed on Retired List (own request). 11th Sep. 1972.

Instr. Cdr. G. G. TORDOFF, B.Sc., to be placed on Retired List. 9th Oct. 1972.

Lt. Cdrs. placed on Retired List on dates stated:

R. G. H. READ. 23rd Sep. 1972.

R. DUNN. 27th Sep. 1972.

N. R. AULD, M. B. CRAGG, O.B.E. 29th Sep. 1972.

Lt. Cdrs. placed on Retired List (own request) on dates stated:

W. S. B. ANDERSON. 9th Sep. 1972.

A. J. S. FIDDES, M. V. MIDDLETON. 16th Sep. 1972.

Lt. Cdr. (Emerg'y) A. H. MILNES, Commission to be terminated. 24th Sep. 1972.

Engr. Lt. Cdr. F. N. AYLING, placed on Retired List. 30th Sep. 1972.

Instr. Lt. Cdrs. placed on Retired List on dates stated:

T. W. PINNEY, B.Sc., M.I.E.R.E., H. D. M. WHITEHEAD. 29th Sep. 1972.

B. T. GROZIER, B.Sc. 30th Sep. 1972.

K. SWIFT, B.Sc. 1st Oct. 1972.

Instr. Lt. Cdr. H. R. TERRY, B.Sc., to be placed on Retired List. 9th Oct. 1972.

Surgn. Lt. Cdr. P. R. S. BRINSDEN, M.B., B.S., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.Obst. R.C.O.G., (S.S.C.) transferred to Permanent List 2nd July 1972 in rank of Surgn Lt. Cdr. with seny. 25th Jun. 1972.

Surgn. Lt. Cdr. (D) K. GREEN, B.D.S., placed on Emerg'y List on completion of Short Service Commission for period of 4 years. 2nd Oct. 1972.