



SUPPLEMENT TO

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THURSDAY, 25TH MAY 1989

**CENTRAL CHANCERY OF  
THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD**

St. James's Palace, London S.W.1  
25th May 1989

The QUEEN has been graciously pleased to approve the following awards of The George Medal and The Queen's Gallantry Medal and for the publication in the *London Gazette* of the names of those shown below as having received an expression of Commendation for Brave Conduct:

**Awarded the George Medal**

Colin James TOWNSLEY (deceased), Station Officer,  
London Fire and Civil Defence Authority.

On Wednesday, 18th November 1987, at approximately 7.30 p.m. a fire was reported at King's Cross Underground Station on an escalator connecting the Underground ticket hall to the Piccadilly Line platforms. At 7.36 p.m., units from the London Fire Brigade were summoned to attend the fire.

A team of fire officers, led by Station Officer Townsley, arrived at 7.42 p.m. There was no sign of fire at street level and the fire officers entered the station to make an initial investigation. The fire was observed about one-third of the way down the right-hand side escalator. Station Officer Townsley immediately ordered his firemen to return to the fire appliance to equip themselves with breathing apparatus sets and a fire hose. To safeguard the public, Station Officer Townsley remained near the top of the escalators. At approximately 7.45 p.m., there was a sudden and dramatic increase in temperature, a build-up of dense acrid smoke, and fire flashed over the concourse

ceiling. Within seconds the concourse was plunged into total darkness. Panic ensued as passengers rushed for the exit points. Station Officer Townsley remained within the booking hall area to assist as best he could those seeking to escape until he was overcome by toxic fumes. He was found lying on the floor close to a badly burned woman. He was taken by ambulance to hospital where he was certified dead on arrival.

Station Officer Townsley, with total disregard for his own safety, had remained within the concourse without breathing apparatus to assist passengers to escape until he was overcome by intense smoke and heat. He displayed selfless devotion to duty and gallantry of a high order when faced with conditions of extreme danger.

**Awarded the Queen's Gallantry Medal**

Robert Edward MOULTON, Fireman, London Fire and Civil Defence Authority.

Fireman Moulton, together with two colleagues, was instructed by his Station Officer, when the fire had been located, to return to the fire appliance, which was parked near a subway entrance to equip himself with breathing apparatus and a fire hose. Whilst he was engaged in running out several hose lines and rigging himself in breathing apparatus, dense, acrid smoke began to pour from the subway entrance. On entering the subway, Fireman Moulton and his two colleagues were confronted by a surge of intense heat and smoke. They were forced to penetrate the subway crawling on their stomachs under cover of a jet's spray. They managed to recover a badly burned woman and carry her back to street level where they tried to revive her without success. Fireman Moulton and his colleagues then re-entered the subway. Again, they were forced to crawl on their stomachs because of the heat. Moving

past his colleagues Fireman Moulton crawled ahead, disappearing into the intense heat and smoke. At this point he found Station Officer Townsley on the floor. He crawled back past his colleagues to seek the assistance of two other firemen and, with them, carried Station Officer Townsley to street level. Fireman Moulton and another fireman sought to revive Station Officer Townsley until an ambulance crew and a doctor took over. Although at this point physically and mentally exhausted, Fireman Moulton once more entered the station and became involved in search and rescue activities until he was withdrawn.

Fireman Moulton, working to the limits of his endurance, displayed devotion to duty and gallantry of a high order by repeatedly penetrating the intense heat and smoke, by locating, rescuing and attempting to resuscitate two victims of the fire, and by returning to help with yet further search and rescue work until ordered to withdraw.

**Terry Alan BEBBINGTON, Constable, British Transport Police.**

Constable Bebbington was on duty in a staff security cubicle in the booking hall area when the fire was first observed. He summoned the Fire Brigade by means of his radio. After liaising with three other police officers attending, leaving one to meet the Fire Brigade at street level and the other two to assist passengers to leave by various exits, he made his way down to the Piccadilly Line platforms to assist with the redirection of passengers below. He was joined by a fireman. Constable Bebbington assisted in the evacuation of passengers from the platforms and then returned to the burning escalator to help the fireman (who had been prevented by the flashover from returning to the surface to equip himself with a hose and breathing equipment). Obtaining a platform hose, the fireman, assisted by Constable Bebbington, made his way up the escalator to attempt to extinguish the flames, which now enveloped the whole of the shaft. Fluorescent tubes were bursting overhead, fabric was dropping from the ceiling and at one time a long metal handrail shot down with extreme force. Constable Bebbington, not trained, clothed or equipped for these extreme conditions, remained constantly with the fireman. Three times they made their way up the burning escalator only to retreat when the smoke and heat became intolerable. Side panels from the escalator were removed in an endeavour to reach the fire source. When in due course the fire was brought under control, Constable Bebbington was instructed to leave the scene to attend hospital for treatment for smoke inhalation.

Constable Bebbington, though untrained and unequipped for fighting fires, displayed devotion to duty and gallantry of a high order in assisting a fireman in his attempts, in dangerous and intolerable conditions, to bring the seat of the fire under control.

**Stephen Terence HANSON, Constable, British Transport Police.**

Constable Hanson, together with a colleague, made his way to the concourse on the top of the Piccadilly Line escalators upon hearing news of the fire on a radio transmission. His colleague went to the platforms below. Constable Hanson remained at the top of the escalators, assisting with passenger flow and

evacuation from the booking hall. To avoid the fire on the Piccadilly Line escalators, a constant and heavy flow of passengers was now ascending the Victoria Line escalators, which led directly into the booking hall. The temperature increased and acrid smoke developed making the evacuation of passengers on the Victoria Line escalators now very urgent. Constable Hanson remained, urging the passengers on. A sudden flashover occurred and the heat and combustion knocked Constable Hanson to the ground. The ceiling of the ticket hall was engulfed in flames, swirling down to floor level. Constable Hanson crawled across to the escalator shouting instructions to those passengers still ascending. In making his own escape he collided with a glass panel causing extensive injuries to his right hand. By now the heat was so intense, the skin on his hands began to melt. On reaching a corridor, he continued shouting instructions to passengers to follow him. Running blindly, he was found by another constable and led to safety. He was then conveyed to hospital and detained for the treatment of extensive burns to both hands and face, an additional injury to his right hand and smoke inhalation.

Constable Hanson displayed devotion to duty and gallantry of a high order by remaining in conditions of extreme danger to direct the evacuation of passengers, and then attempting to lead them to safety, sustaining severe burns and injury in the process.

**Samuel Maurice BOONE, Constable, Royal Ulster Constabulary.**

**William Thomas CARLIDGE, Sergeant, Royal Ulster Constabulary.**

**David CROOKS, Constable, Royal Ulster Constabulary.**

**Simon William EDENS, Sergeant, Royal Ulster Constabulary.**

**David Paul HUMPHRIES, Constable, Royal Ulster Constabulary.**

**Simon Irwin HUTCHINSON, Constable, Royal Ulster Constabulary.**

For Bravery in Northern Ireland.

#### **Queen's Commendation for Brave Conduct**

**Patrick Michael BALFE, Constable, British Transport Police.**

Following an outbreak of fire at King's Cross Underground Station, for services in assisting a fireman in dangerous and intolerable conditions and in evacuating passengers from the smoke-laden booking hall and platforms.

**Stewart BUTTON, Temporary Leading Fireman, London Fire and Civil Defence Authority.**

For services in assisting to fight a fire which had spread to the concourse of the King's Cross Underground booking hall from the Piccadilly Line escalators, for helping passengers who had collapsed to safety, for recovering a badly burned woman and for repeatedly penetrating the intense heat and smoke to engage in rescue work and fire fighting duties.

**Julian Mark DIXON**, Constable, British Transport Police.

Following an outbreak of fire at King's Cross Underground Station, for services in evacuating passengers from the booking hall, for re-entering a smoke-filled subway without regard to personal safety and for assisting a severely burned and injured constable to safety.

**John EDGAR**, Fireman, London Fire and Civil Defence Authority.

For services in assisting to fight a fire which had spread to the concourse of the King's Cross Underground booking hall from the Piccadilly Line escalators, for helping passengers who had collapsed to safety, for recovering a badly burned woman and for repeatedly penetrating the intense heat and smoke to engage in rescue work and fire fighting duties until withdrawn and removed to hospital for treatment of burns.

**Paul Henry HALE**, Fireman, London Fire and Civil Defence Authority.

For services in assisting to fight a fire which had spread to the concourse of the King's Cross Underground booking hall from the Piccadilly Line escalators, working to the limits of his endurance and to the point of collapse, and for rescuing a badly burned passenger.

**Kenneth John Leonard KERBEY**, Constable, British Transport Police.

Following an outbreak of fire at King's Cross Underground Station, for services in evacuating passengers from the smoke-filled booking hall and platforms, and in helping fight the fire on the Piccadilly Line escalators in dangerous and intolerable conditions.

**Richard KUKIELKA**, Constable, British Transport Police.

Following an outbreak of fire at King's Cross Underground Station, for services in evacuating passengers from the smoke-filled booking hall and platforms, for helping a colleague to evacuate a badly burned passenger and for re-entering the station to give further assistance.

**Graham Phillip MARTLAND**, Constable, British Transport Police.

Following the outbreak of fire at King's Cross Underground Station, for services in evacuating passengers from the smoke-laden booking hall and platforms, for helping a badly burned passenger to safety, and re-entering the station to give further assistance.

**Anthony David PALMER**, Company Director.

Following an outbreak of fire at King's Cross Underground Station, for services leading to the rescue of two passengers, one of whom was badly burned, for rendering first aid, and for attempting to rescue other passengers from a smoke-laden and intensely hot stairwell.

**Vernon Ronald TREFRY**, Sub-Officer, London Fire and Civil Defence Authority.

For services in leading and organising fire crews to fight an outbreak of fire on the King's Cross Underground booking hall concourse and Piccadilly Line escalators, working to the limits of his endurance and to the point of collapse.

**John WOOD**, Relief Leading Railman, London Regional Transport.

Following an outbreak of fire at King's Cross Underground Station, for services in assisting with the evacuation of passengers from the foot of the Piccadilly Line escalators, and from the Underground platforms, in intolerable and dangerous conditions.

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