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**CENTRAL CHANCERY OF
THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD**

St. James's Palace, London S.W.1
2nd July 1993

The QUEEN has been graciously pleased to approve the following awards of The George Medal, The Bar to the Queen's Gallantry 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

David BURNS, Firefighter, West Midlands Fire Service.

Awarded the Queen's Gallantry Medal

David SCOTT, Firefighter, West Midlands Fire Service.

On Monday, 27th July 1992, at approximately 3.20 p.m. a fire broke out in a flat on the ninth floor of a twenty storey block. The fire service was summoned and four firefighters, wearing breathing apparatus, entered the flat.

Shortly after entering the flat, there was a rapid development of the fire possibly caused by the ignition of toxic fumes and an inrush of air from a bedroom window. A flashover of fire occurred giving rise to a vortex of flame, likened to a jet engine exhaust, which funnelled from the bedroom into the entrance lobby of the flat and across the landing to a ventilation outlet. In the deteriorating conditions, one of the firefighters was forced to leave rapidly in a distressed condition with minor burns. Firefighter Burns was knocked to

the floor outside the entrance door to the flat by the blast from the flashover and vortex. Two other firefighters standing in the hallway of the flat became disorientated in the whirlwind of smoke and fire. Both were forced to the floor and one, weakened by the blast, called out to Firefighter Burns for assistance. Without hesitation he entered the flat, located his colleague and lifted him to relative safety. Meanwhile as Firefighter Scott and another officer were preparing to enter the flat to rescue their remaining trapped colleague, a technical problem arose with the officer's breathing apparatus and he therefore looked to Firefighter Burns to accompany him in the rescue attempt.

Despite having experienced the extreme intensity of the fire and well aware of the conditions they were likely to meet, Firefighter Burns did not hesitate to return to the flat with Firefighter Scott. The two officers found their trapped colleague in a collapsed state. Although by now the intensity of the fire had eased, his breathing apparatus set was so hot that neither rescuers could touch it despite wearing fireproof gloves. Notwithstanding the heat and its effect, both officers managed to rescue their colleague, still wearing his breathing apparatus, which made their rescue all the more difficult. Their colleague, suffering 60 per cent. burns, subsequently died.

Firefighter Burns displayed gallantry of a very high order when, without regard to his own safety, by himself he rescued a colleague from a burning flat, when the fire was at its most intense, undoubtedly saving his life. Aware of the conditions and the intensity of the fire and the risk to life, he unhesitatingly returned to the flat a second time and,