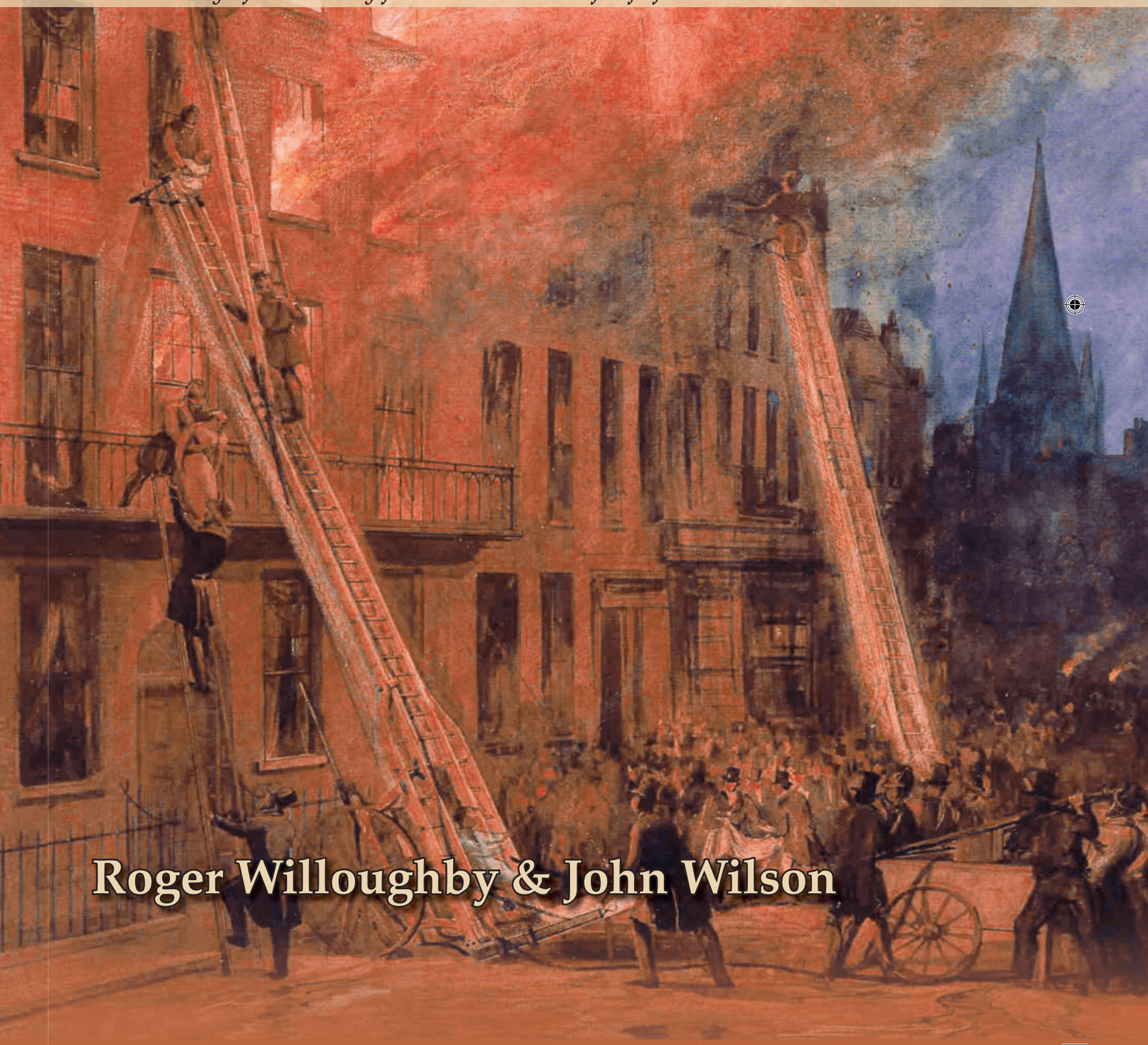
Saved *from the* Flames

A History of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire and its Awards



Roger Willoughby & John Wilson

X. That the transactions of the Society shall be recorded, and a list kept of cases where life has been preserved from Fire, specifying the time and place, and names of person or persons saved, and of those instrumental in saving the same, with the medals, or pecuniary rewards awarded by the Committee. Record of Transactions.

XI. That rewards shall be bestowed in proportion to the exertions of the persons meriting the same; but the Society's medal shall be awarded only to those who shall have personally rescued life from Fire. Rewards, Medal, &c.

XII. That the pecuniary rewards granted by the Committee shall be immediately paid over to the parties to whom they shall have been awarded; but where the Society's medals are awarded, the same shall be bestowed at the ensuing General Meeting Payment of pecuniary Rewards.

XIII. That as soon as any Fire Escape Station shall be formed, or arrangement made for the preservation of Life from Fire, notice thereof shall be forwarded to the Commissioners of Police, with a request that such officers and men in their service, as may be employed in the district, may be directed to give the earliest possible alarm to the Conductor of the Escape ~~of the same~~ at such station Notice of New Fire Escape Station to be forwarded to the Commissioners of Police, &c.

XIV. That it be in the power of the Committee, ~~at one of their General Meetings, or~~ at a Special Meeting, to alter, amend, and add to any of the foregoing Orders or Rules, and Bye Laws ~~of~~ & calls for the purpose & provided 14 days notice thereof be given to Members — Alteration of, or addition to "Laws."

~~Jaques and Son, Printers, 39, Keating street, Brunswick square.~~

John Ware
April 25th/45

Oct. 29 1846 ~~PROPOSED~~ ADDITION TO "BYE LAWS,"

~~To be considered~~ Passed at *General Court, October 29th, pursuant to Notice, July 30th.*

"That no Accounts shall be presented for payment at a General Court, unless previously ~~audited by~~ submitted to the Rotary Committee."

"That no Motion affecting the Society's Funds shall be entertained at a General Court, unless ~~recommended by the Rotary Committee; and then, if required by any two Members present,~~ 7 days notice shall be previously given to be agreed to except provided for in Rule 8 shall be subject to the Confirmation of the next Court."

GENERAL ORDERS AND BYE LAWS

OF THE

ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE.

I. That the sole object of this Society shall be the Preservation of Life from Fire:— Object.

1st. By maintaining an organised body of men, instructed in, and provided with, Public Fire Escapes, the same to be stationed in different parts of the Metropolis, so as to be promptly on the spot in case of Fire. Means of carrying out the Object of the Society.

2nd. By examining into, and ascertaining the merits of, ~~the different~~ such Inventions, as from time to time may be presented to the Society's notice, adopting for the Society's use such Escapes as shall be capable of being externally applied in the most ready and efficacious manner; and recommending for individuals such Escapes as shall appear the best to be kept in dwelling-houses, for use in the absence of external aid.

3rd. By diffusing information ~~in every way~~ relative to the best methods of insuring the safety of persons in danger.

4th. By bestowing rewards, at the discretion of the Society, on such persons as shall ~~at any time~~ distinguish themselves by their endeavours to save life from Fire. with especial reference to those cases occurring in the Metropolis or its Environs

II. That the business of the Society shall be conducted by a President, Vice-Presidents, a Treasurer, a Committee of not less than Twenty, and a Secretary. Officers.

III. That Members of the Society shall ~~be~~ consist of Members.

1st. Donors of Ten Guineas and upwards, at one time, or Subscribers of One Guinea and upwards, annually who will be entitled to 3 Votes

2nd. Donors of Five Guineas at one time, or Subscribers of Ten Shillings annually who will be entitled to 2 Votes

3rd. Donors of Two Guineas at one time, or Subscribers of Five Shillings annually who will be entitled to one vote

IV. That a Report of the Society's Transactions, and of the condition of the machinery, with an audited statement of the Accounts, shall be annually made, published, and circulated among the Subscribers; and that a General Meeting of the Subscribers shall be assembled by the Committee, at intervals of never longer than two years. Report, Cash Account, and General Meeting of the Subscribers.

V. That the Committee shall be elected at the General Meeting, with power to add to their number; and all the Officers and Servants of the Society shall be appointed by, receive their instructions from, and hold their situations during the pleasure of the Committee. Election of Committee.

VI. That the Committee, or any Twenty Members of the Society, shall have the power to summon an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Society, on giving fourteen days' notice ~~to~~ in writing to the Secretary, ~~and~~ in three of the public papers, ~~and~~ stating the objects for which it is convened. Special General Meeting of Subscribers. & who shall advertise the

VII. That a General Meeting of the Committee shall be held Quarterly, ~~viz.~~ on the first or second days, in the months of January, April, July, and October, five to form a quorum, when a Rotary Committee of three shall be agreed on for each of the ensuing three months. Quarterly Meetings of Committee.

VIII. That each Rotary Committee shall meet ~~on the first~~ at Noon Place, and if necessary, ~~on the third or fourth Tuesdays~~ Thursday in their respective months, to examine the Cash and Collector's Accounts, receive reports of the Conductors, and authorize repairs of the Fire Escapes, ~~&~~ and when necessary, direct the Secretary to summon a General Meeting of the Committee. Rotary Committee.

IX. That the Secretary shall have the power to summon an extra Meeting of the Rotary Committee of the month whenever necessary, and that he shall also have the power of suspending or fining any of the Conductors for misconduct, ~~provided~~ the same shall be always reported at the next Meeting of the Rotary Committee. Meetings of Rotary Committee.

* Parish Engines are exempted from this Order

SAVED FROM THE FLAMES



THE ROYAL SOCIETY'S FIRE ESCAPE.

1 SAVING LIFE.
2 AIDING THE BRIGADE.

SAVED FROM THE FLAMES

A HISTORY OF THE SOCIETY
FOR THE PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE
AND ITS AWARDS

BY
ROGER WILLOUGHBY
&
JOHN WILSON

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FOREWORD

Earlier accounts of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire certainly exist. None of them however presents the circumstances of its formation, or the motivations of those involved, in quite the fascinating detail achieved here by Roger Willoughby and John Wilson. They document the general history of fire fighting and fire rescues. They follow the moves of various philanthropists to form a society aimed at protecting people from the fires that were relatively commonplace in overcrowded London during the early nineteenth century. Then the authors plot the progress of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire and describe how the Society sponsored the pioneering development of fire fighting equipment. They tell how the Society provided escape ladders and ladder 'Conductors', at first in London and later in other big cities in Victorian Britain.

The authors' account is inhabited by some of the biggest names in the land: Queen Victoria was the Society's Patron; the Duke of Wellington was a sometime President and Vice President; various Lord Mayors of London occupied the President's seat; Captain George Manby (inventor of the rocket line for shipwreck rescues and also of a form of portable fire extinguisher) was an early Vice President. Aldermen and Members of Parliament abound in the lists of the Society's officers. To these Willoughby and Wilson add the wide cast of characters and Society employees, who worked as conductors, propelling the wheeled, extending ladders to fires far and wide in their endeavour to rescue those in distress.

Nothing is taken for granted from earlier accounts. The authors have evidently spent many hundreds of hours researching the sometimes controversial history of the Society, its progress and the activities of those who worked on its behalf. The published and unpublished sources of their research are copiously referenced in this authoritative book. Their story leads on to the formation of public fire brigades, to some of which the Society donated its fire rescue equipment. At this watershed in its history the Society retained its objective of recognising the brave deeds of those who rescued people from fires. It had always made awards of medals, money, testimonials or certificates (with watches being later granted) and, having passed on to public brigades the practicalities of fire rescues, the Society continued to seek funds to enable it to make awards to the deserving brave.

This continues to be the primary role of the Society in 2012. The Society's list of cases is approaching 27,000, all of them involving nominations of people who have acted to rescue others from fire. Many of those nominees have received awards, mostly in the form of certificates or testimonials, while some have been given a Society medal for exceptional bravery. This is where Willoughby and Wilson particularly concentrate their interest. Among the highly informative material in this book, Section III is a catalogue of all known recipients of the Society's medals and watches, together with often comprehensive details about the awe inspiring circumstances of the rescues.

The medals awarded today are inscribed 'DUTY AND HONOR' and the archaic spelling of 'honor' without the 'u', together with the date 1843, reproduce the inscription and design of the medal the Society adopted in the 1850s. The emphasis on 'duty' anachronistically follows the pattern established when the Society made awards to ladder Conductors in its own employment.

Today, however, the Society makes awards to recognise spontaneous acts of heroism motivated by a sense of humanity rather than a sense of duty. Professional members of the fire and police services knowingly expose themselves to life-threatening situations and they indeed act bravely to save lives but in doing so they are acting in the course of duty. The Society only makes awards to members of the fire or police services who perform acts of heroism beyond what might be expected in the course of duty or who involve themselves in acting to save lives when they are 'off duty'. The Society's awards thus recognise acts of bravery 'above and beyond the call of duty' notwithstanding the wording of the medal!

Submissions made by the police and fire service authorities today mostly arise in respect of domestic fires and road vehicle fires. There has been a drop in the number of submissions made in recent years, which – to some extent – reflects the welcome decline in the incidence of domestic fires (from a peak of 72,500 in 1997 to approximately 50,000 at the present time). The decline in the number of road vehicle fires is even more significant (from a peak of 102,000 in 2001 to around 50,000 today).

Awards have been made to individuals who have acted to rescue arsonists or people attempting suicide from the fires they have caused. In some cases a rescuer's attempts are resisted by a person under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or a disturbed mental state and this increases the danger to which the rescuer is exposed. The occasional case of a person attempting suicide by dousing himself or herself with petrol and setting themselves on fire poses a very serious danger to a rescuer - the last thing that person consciously wants is to be 'rescued'.

Very often, acts of bravery by members of the public are spontaneously or impetuously performed and are without consideration for their own personal safety. These 'have a go' actions of today's heroes can run counter to official 'Health and Safety' conscious advice to 'leave it to the professionals'.

Without doubt, modern technology and safety consciousness will result in the incidence of fires continuing to decline and the Society may experience an associated decline in the number of submissions for awards. But the quality of heroism among the general population, which Roger Willoughby and John Wilson comprehensively and uniquely record in this book, will surely continue, and the awards made by the Society, even if fewer in number, will honour such acts of bravery. The Society is very grateful to the authors for researching the Society's history and then writing this fine book.

Mike Gale
Honorary Secretary
on behalf of the Trustees of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire
February 2012

Other books by the same authors

Roger Willoughby

A Military History of the University of Dublin and its OTC 1910-1922 (1989)
Masud Khan: the Myth and the Reality (2004)
For God and the Empire (2012)

John Wilson

The Queen's South Africa Medal to the Royal Navy and the Royal Marines (1983)
The China War Service Medal to the Royal Navy and the Royal Marines (1985)
Angels in Blue Jackets (1985)
The Africa General Service Medal to the Royal Navy and the Royal Marines (1990)
The 1914 Star to the Royal Navy and the Royal Marines (1993)
The Naval General Service Medal, 1915 – 1922 to the Royal Navy and Royal Marines (1995)
The Order of Industrial Heroism (2000)

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During the seven years it has taken to research and write *Saved from the Flames* we have been greatly assisted by numerous individuals and institutions. The book would have been a far lesser creation without these important and generous contributions. Of the institutions, three have been particularly significant: firstly, the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire itself, its Secretary, Mike Gale and previously Vic Rance and Ted Gledhill, and Trustees, Allan Bridgewater and Tony Ratcliffe; secondly, the Guildhall Library and its manuscripts department, which formerly housed the bulk of the Society's surviving archives; and thirdly, the London Metropolitan Archives, who took over the management of the latter files in 2010 (the LMA also house the London County Council records on the Fire Brigade Department and the Royal Humane Society archives).

The early papers of George Manby are held by the Special Collections and University Archives of the Wichita State University, while his correspondence (some 200 letters) with Dawson Turner is held by the Wren Library at Trinity College, University of Cambridge. Our thanks to those institutions for their co-operation in accessing their holdings and particularly to Adam Green, the Assistant Archivist at Trinity College. We appreciate the co-operation of Alice Lubrecht of the State Library of Pennsylvania for facilitating access to important material in that institution. Thanks also to Jane Rugg, Acting Curator of the London Fire Brigade Museum, for her assistance in accessing that museum's library, archives and collections. Similar thanks go to Rebecca Short and the library of the Royal Society of Arts, Carolyn Wilson of the National Library of Scotland, Richard Cowley of the Northamptonshire Police, Jim Talbot and the Museum of Policing in Cheshire, Christine Wilde of the Greater Manchester Police Museum, John Parkinson at Calke Abbey, Derbyshire, Mary Rhodes of the Sheffield Local Studies Library, Helen MacDonald of the Carnegie Hero Fund Trust, Andrew Dulley of the West Glamorgan Archive Service, and the staff at the Fire & Police Museum, Sheffield. We are grateful to Neil Paterson, Paul Dew and Phil Barnes, Warden of The Met Collection for facilitating research into the careers of the many members of the Metropolitan Police who received the Society's awards. In addition, the British Library, The National Archives, Kew, the Rare Collections Library of the State Library of Pennsylvania, Harrisburg, PA, and the Bibliothèque Nationale de France have been important sources of additional material and we are pleased to acknowledge use of materials in their keeping.

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Family members have actively contributed to the development of the present book. Mary Mielnicki and Kristofer Lanko liaised with the staff in the Department of Special Collections at Pennsylvania State Library and photographed important material that would have been otherwise inaccessible. Alison Willoughby translated key French source material. Fiona Hanoman undertook the diligent typing of early research material. Alan Slator patiently constructed the image representing Samuel Wood's silver medal and bars. Special thanks goes to Sara Willoughby for undertaking the arduous work of compiling the index, a task she pursued despite the competing demands of motherhood, study and moving house.

The final shape of the book owes much to the painstaking formatting, editing and design skills of Sharon Faulkner, who has devoted innumerable hours to get the book ready for press. The generosity of her contribution, done from interest and friendship, as well as that of her staff and colleagues at the Reading based company Fine Images, is acknowledged and very much appreciated.

Finally, our thanks go to John and Phil Mussell and the staff at Token Publishing who have supported us in completing this work, have steered the book through the press and brought it out to wide public attention. Any mistakes and shortcomings in the present book rest with the authors. We welcome readers' comments and further information, particularly on the history of the Society, the events that gave rise to their bestowal of medals and other forms of public recognition, and on the psycho-social, cultural and political aspects of these small but poignant memorials.

Roger Willoughby and John Wilson
February 2012

This book is dedicated to

Lily Ella Andrews

Joseph Ralph Andrews

Tristan James Clark

Fiona Catherine Hanoman

and

Oliver William Wilson

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SECTION I
THE SOCIETY, ITS ORIGINS AND HISTORY

1: FIRE-FIGHTING AND FIRE RESCUES

Fire-fighting in England was traditionally organised on a very piecemeal basis. Following the Great Fire of London in 1666, the continuing inadequacy of such arrangements prompted the government to pass an Act of Parliament in 1707: this made local parishes in the capital responsible for maintaining access to the water mains, through stopcocks and water plugs, and supplying a large engine, a hand engine, and a leather hose-pipe for local use. This equipment was supplemented under an Act of 1774 by three ladders per parish, which were intended to assist people in escaping from burning buildings. The deployment and use of such equipment fell to local constables and other willing individuals, often on an ad hoc basis and typically with very variable results. The factors thus hampering fire-fighting in London included the sheer size of the capital, the rudimentary nature of available equipment, limited funding and dedicated staff, and various organisational issues. London had a population of some two million inhabitants by the beginning of the nineteenth century and was growing rapidly. Buildings tended to be tightly packed together and, although the majority were constructed of stone or brick, many contained large amounts of timber both internally and externally. The water supply was poor, with wooden water mains in the streets being only gradually replaced in the beginning of the nineteenth century by metal pipes. The water supply in some London districts was still obtained from wells during this period. The mains supply itself was intermittent and water pressure was often low, all of which hindered attempts to fight fires.

Fire insurance companies, established from 1680, contributed equipment to key localities and also established their own fire brigades. Their primary aim was to minimise damage to property rather than saving lives. Nevertheless, contrary to popular opinion, these insurance brigades would typically attempt to extinguish all fires they were called to and saved many lives in the process.[1] By 1814 several insurance companies had combined to form a joint fire control in London, which by 1825 was moderately effective. However, it was not until January 1833 that a single London fire brigade, made up of the principal insurance brigades, was organised under the title of the London Fire Engine Establishment. At its formation it had about 80 firemen under the command of the pioneering Edinburgh fire-chief James Braidwood (1800-1861) and an annual budget of £8,000. This establishment, as will be discussed, continued to operate until 1866 when it transferred the whole of its apparatus to the Metropolitan Board of Works (itself superseded by the London County Council in 1889). Outside London, arrangements were left to the local parishes and other authorities, some of which developed significant brigades, of which Edinburgh had led the way in 1824 with a municipal brigade.

The London Fire Engine Establishment was an important organisational improvement, though the scale of the fires it faced was significant. This is evident from an 1835 report in *The Times*, which noted that:

> On a careful review made yesterday of the returns made from the twelve metropolitan stations to the head office since the 31 July, a period of 20 days, they exhibit an astounding list, after omitting mere fires in chimneys, and such minor accidents, of no less than 108 distinct houses or warehouses in London or its immediate environs that had been on fire in the full sense of the word, within this brief period. Of these, no less than 39 were destroyed, 26 greatly damaged, many of these requiring large outlay before they can be made habitable, and 43 that have been slightly damaged. The value of the property sacrificed must be immense; perhaps a quarter of a million sterling would be a moderate estimate.[2]

Indeed, fires within the capital were increasing in prevalence. Considering statistics from 1833 to 1849, the engineer William Baddeley (1808-1867) reported that the total number of calls for the fire brigade rose from 592 to 1,003 per annum during this period; buildings damaged slightly by fires rose from 292 to 582, those seriously damaged from 135 to 228, though the figures for those totally

---

[1] For a good discussion of the insurance brigades see B Wright *Insurance Fire Brigades 1680-1929*: *The Birth of the British Fire Service*, Chalford: Tempus, 2008.

[2] *The Times*, 21 August 1835, p. 4.

destroyed remained relatively constant, being 31 in 1833 and 28 in 1849. Where causation could be identified (and leaving aside chimney fires), Baddeley's report catalogued the most common primary causes as deriving from accidents with candles (25%), defective flues (11%), gas (7%), defective stoves (5.5%) and drying linen (4.5%).[3]

Inevitably, loss of life and injury due to fires became a major cause for concern: 57 fatalities were reported in the five years ending 1837 in London alone and many more people were injured or exposed to serious risk. With the London Fire Engine Establishment – funded by the insurance companies – focussed primarily on limiting property damage, it was left to others to promote schemes for saving those endangered by fires. Charitable or philanthropic schemes were by this time a well-established tradition in health, education, social and religious spheres. Lifesaving institutions included the Royal Humane Society, established in 1774, which encouraged lifesaving particularly from rivers, and the Royal National Institution for the Preservation of Life from Shipwreck (known more simply as the RNLI from 1854), established in 1824, which promoted coastal rescues. None, however, specifically focussed on encouraging rescues from fires, though a number of notable individuals were beginning to do so.

The most significant of these was George William Manby (1765-1854), FRS, who had famously invented a mortar to fire a rope from the shore to stranded ships, the forerunner of the breeches buoy apparatus. He was motivated to develop his invention after witnessing various shipwrecks off Yarmouth and in particular the wreck of HMS *Snipe* on 18 February 1807, which occurred just 60 yards off shore and resulted in the deaths of about 67 men. Manby's invention was taken up by the Admiralty and a series of mortar stations were established around the coasts.[4]

Following this invention, Manby's attention was drawn to the danger of fires when he witnessed a blaze in Edinburgh in January 1813. This broke out on the fifth floor of a building and rapidly spread, the available fire engines being unable to reach the seat of the fire. Returning to London, Manby was encouraged by the Right Hon George Rose to develop a means of tackling such outbreaks. He first designed a portable fire extinguisher, describing this in a pamphlet *Considerations on Destructive Fires, and the Means of Prevention in Future*, initially printed in July 1816. In this, Manby argued that the insurance companies should continue to organise fire-fighting 'because…they are the chief sufferers' and urged them to sponsor his proposals. Manby specifically argued that:

> …a small quantity of water well directed, and early applied, will accomplish what, probably, no quantity would effect at a later period. This has excited my attempts to provide some portable and efficient means by which the anxious and often important interval of DELAY would be obviated, and the fire OPPOSED on the FIRST ALARM. To attain this object, I propose to apply a small quantity of fluid, in a most EFFICACIOUS manner, from a PORTABLE Machine, (on a principle very long known in science), requiring the simplest management, and constructed with as little expense as possible, that it may be within the means of purchase by numbers, in the hope that many houses will be furnished with it, and at least those, under whose roof combustible materials are lodged, or property which no insurance can replace, as papers, books, pictures and other valuables. This machine is to be kept always charged, and when slung across the body of a servant or watchman, is easily carried to any part of the building on fire, however difficult to access. On opening the stop-cock, the pressure of condensed air instantly propels a stream of water with considerable force, that may easily be directed with the most exact precision on the part in combustion, a circumstance extremely important, when the incipient fire is not within reach of efforts by the hand, and when the air, heated by the flames, prevents approach to cast water upon it by common means…
>
> A portable chest or box containing other engines, charged with water impregnated by a solution of an ingredient best adapted to extinguish fire, will be an appendage, that when the first engine has expended its store of antiphlogistic liquid, a supply of others in succession may keep up a constant discharge…until regular engines and plenty of assistance arrive, should the fire not be entirely subdued by these first efforts.'[5]

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[3] *Report by the General Board of Health on the Supply of Water to the Metropolis: Appendix I*, London: HMSO, 1850, pp. 197-8.

[4] For further details on Manby's life and career see K Walthew's *From Rock and Tempest: the Life of Captain George William Manby*, London: Bles, 1971, and more briefly see the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004, volume 36, pp. 389-390.

[5] G W Manby 'Considerations on destructive fires, and the means of prevention in future', London: W Calvert, 1816.

The so-called antiphlogistic liquid consisted of a solution of 'pearl-ash, or the potash of commerce', in water, which when applied 'will penetrate and fill the pores of the burning substances', preventing their re-ignition. Manby went on to develop a 'fire-cart', designed to transport a set of his extinguishers to a fire and demonstrated this in March 1819. He described the event to his Yarmouth friend, the banker, naturalist and antiquary, Dawson Turner (1775-1858)[6] thus:

> Yesterday before the Mayor and several other gentlemen and persons, I exhibited my fire-cart containing the means to gain immediate and powerful assistance to arrest if not totally extinguish conflagrations before engines can arrive and begin to act: and I have the satisfaction to say that it was much approved. It affords me much gratification to say, Mr Paget was present and took much interest in the plan…I have addressed the Mayor on the subject of an association being formed for the preservation of property…from fire, and he intimated his intention to call a meeting to take the same into consideration.[7]

Whether either of these inventions were taken up and produced in significant numbers is doubtful, though they did contribute to increasing awareness of the danger of fire and the need for more effective fire-fighting and rescue measures.

As Manby sought to develop equipment to extinguish fires, others were focussing more exclusively on how to extricate people who found themselves trapped in burning buildings. A plethora of fire-escape designs had been proposed at various times during the first half of the nineteenth century. Commenting on these designs (which fell into three basic categories: ladders, portable escapes and carriage escapes), Herbert declared in 1849 that:

> Perhaps few subjects have more extensively engaged public attention, or exercised so much ingenuity, as the best mode for rescuing individuals from death by fire. Notwithstanding the varied talents that have been directed to this object, it is a singular fact, that no invention has yet been produced so universally efficient as to supersede all others, or to induce the belief that the limits of perfection have been attained.[8]

In an attempt to sift these designs and establish a more co-ordinated approach to saving lives from fires, one group of Londoners, apparently headed by John Hudson as its Secretary, began to organise themselves. In doing this, they associated themselves with Manby. In October 1828, they held a meeting at 18 Aldermanbury to form a *Society for the Prevention of Loss of Life by Fire*. It was proposed to divide London into districts of a square mile, in each of which a mobile fire-escape apparatus and staff to operate it should be stationed. A committee was formed, £50 was subscribed and hopes were expressed that the Lord Mayor would chair their next meeting. By the following January a deputation had met with the Home Secretary, Sir Robert Peel (1788-1850) to seek recognition of the Society in the Metropolitan Police Bill that was due to be introduced into parliament. Noting this at their next meeting on January 1829, the newly formed Society's then chairman, a Mr Pepys, and the members appointed a committee to canvass

---

[6] See also the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004, volume 55, pp. 607-8.

[7] G W Manby to Dawson Turner, letter dated 16 March 1819, Wren Library, Trinity College, Cambridge, reference O.13.17 (this correspondence cited hereafter as Manby-Turner).

[8] L Herbert (1849) *The Engineer's and Mechanic's Encyclopaedia*, London: Thomas Kelly.

the level of support that they might expect from the insurance companies.[9] The next month, the Society – now styled the *Society for Preventing Loss of Life by Fire* – was able to stage a display of fire-escape equipment and outline its objects. In reporting the meeting, *The Times* noted that:

> A Society recently formed under this title, yesterday exhibited at 18 Aldermanbury a great variety of curious models and inventions and specimens of machines intended to facilitate escape from the danger of fire. The objects of this Society, yet in its infancy, are: (1) to rescue persons in danger of perishing by fire, (2) to reward those who may render meritorious service and whose exertions may save life, (3) to render assistance in preventing annoyance and confusion at fires. It has long been a matter of wonder, that in the mode of constructing houses in this crowded metropolis, little regard is paid to the danger attending fire. Cases in sufficient abundance occur every year, calculated to show the necessity that builders should never neglect to afford means of safety, either by establishing a mode of communication through the top of houses, or otherwise. If so essential a requisite were made an indispensable rule in all building, especially those of a small description, human ingenuity would not be called upon to exercise its powers for the invention of external contrivances (which, however well combined, must in a more or less degree be precarious) in order to supply the want of a sure and almost infallible mode of salvation. In some houses, indeed, double staircases, and easy issue from the roofs, do afford security to the inmates; but this case is by no means so general as it ought to be, and in the greater number of buildings certain destruction awaits the unfortunate beings who may be surprised in the middle of the night by the progress of the devouring element below. To obviate as much as possible the occurrence of similar misfortunes is the praiseworthy object of this Society; and it deserves not only the commendations, but also the zealous support of the whole community. The exhibitions yesterday consisted of a variety of very ingenious modes and machines of safety, too numerous to be detailed here. There were models of variously contrived ladders and other machines, fit to be kept in the parish depositaries and at fire-offices; there were also inventions or ropes, so managed as to afford an easy mode of descent from any part of a house on fire. These are already fit for use, and may be purchased at moderate prices by every housekeeper. The mode of using them is simple, and their utility is great. This was repeatedly illustrated yesterday by persons and children being made to descend from the second and third stories of the house into the yard adjoining it. On the part of Captain Manby, who is at Yarmouth, a Mr Atkinson explained to the meeting a variety of inventions connected with the views of the Society, which showed that the solicitude of the captain for the safety of his fellow creatures continues unabated. The meeting was as numerous as could conveniently gain admission, and was composed of persons of both sexes of great apparent respectability.[10]

Though the fire-escape designs attracted attention in the press, being particularly the focus of a series of articles in the *Mechanics' Magazine*, the initial efforts by the fledgling society appear to have met with only limited success. There was no recognition of the Society or its objects in Peel's Bill and the Lord Mayor does not appear to have chaired any of its recorded meetings. Nevertheless, Hudson and his allies persevered with their efforts.

In June 1829 a Mr S Fletcher wrote an open letter to the Lord Mayor, asking him to sponsor a fire-escape he had designed, using selected extracts from the Society's publicity material in his petition. Fletcher's design involved a ladder and platform fixed on a three-wheeled carriage, a series of which he suggested should be stationed around London, funded jointly by a levy on the insurance companies and a 'public society'.[11] Hudson quickly disassociated the Society and its officers from Fletcher's untested design and proposals, suggesting his use of the Society's literature was misleading and any evaluation of an escape's merits was unrealistic on the basis of plans or models alone.[12]

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[9] *The Morning Chronicle*, Wednesday 14 January 1829.

[10] *The Times*, Friday 20 February 1829, p. 3. See also the series of articles describing the designs in the *Mechanics' Magazine*, Saturday 14 March 1829, pp. 66-8, Saturday 21 March 1829, p. 83, Saturday 23 March 1829, pp. 101-3, and Saturday 4 April 1829, pp. 113-6.

[11] *The Morning Chronicle*, Saturday 4 July 1829.

[12] *The Morning Chronicle*, Tuesday 7 July 1829.



Science Museum / SSPL

Captain George William Manby

Hudson was no stranger to such matters, being noted by Herbert as having designed at least one portable escape.[13] The Society itself actively attempted to test several proposed escapes. Thus, in April 1830, trials of these various fire-escapes were conducted by the Society at Charing Cross, with limited success.

The press reported that 'There was nothing in any of the plans (with one exception) calculated to produce any useful result to persons whose retreat by ordinary means is cut off from the upper apartments of a burning house'. The exception related to a type of fire-escape ladder surmounted with a gantry, which could be raised using a windlass to the third or fourth floor of a burning building: 'This machine is simple in its construction, is as easily moved from place to place as a fire-engine, and we have little doubt that with a little practice in those who manage it and a few improvements…it will be found of the utmost value'.[14] Unsurprisingly, subsequent public support appears to have dwindled, as did press coverage, and the organisation became quickly moribund.

Probably influenced by Hudson and the Society for Preventing Loss of Life by Fire, one of the most interesting designers was a onetime wigmaker and hairdresser, turned miniaturist and successful portrait painter, Abraham Wivell (1786-1849).[15] Having grown up in penury and having pursued various trades, he achieved considerable success painting British politicians, lawyers and the nobility.

In 1825 he was commissioned to draw a bust of Shakespeare that had been installed in the local church at Stratford-on-Avon. This influenced Wivell to write and illustrate *An inquiry into the history, authenticity, and characteristics of the Shakespeare portraits*, which he self-published in 1827. Though later seen as an important study, its contemporary reception was reportedly controversial due to the doubts he cast over the authenticity of many revered portraits that claimed to be of Shakespeare. An ambitious print-run and poor sales resulted in Wivell having to dispose of assets as he struggled to pay his printer. Clearly a significant emotional and financial blow, the latter was only partly offset by now inheriting his uncle Abram Wivell's furnished house in Camden Town and an annuity of £100 for life. It was in this context that he 'took to scheming – dreaming, some of his friends said'.[16] Thus, 1828 saw Wivell's interests turn to designing fire-escapes, perhaps one way of addressing his own recent metaphorical 'burning'.

His fire-escape schemes began simply enough. His first such design consisted of a rope which was to be secured inside a room on the top floor of a house, with a belt which people could secure around themselves and the rope in turn, using this to descend from the building. Wivell demonstrated his first escape to the public on Tuesday 4 August 1829 at 14 Great Titchfield Street, London.

> The device …consists of a few rods, which joined together in the manner of a fishing rod, and some belts and ropes, which are elevated by this contrivance to the windows from which the inmates of the house on fire are desirous to escape. Mr Wivell, on the evening in question, at ten minutes after six o'clock, raised the ropes etc to the attic, when, one of the ropes having been fixed to the railing of the opposite house, six persons each put on the belt, and descended by it in perfect safety – the entire operation taking up four and a half minutes only…The inventor says that the entire apparatus will not cost much above three guineas and the plan is for a certain number of watchmen in every parish to be provided with it, and on the alarm of fire, as one man can easily carry the whole, fix the rope, and raise the belts, time which is so invaluable on these occasions would not be lost, but the inmates could be rescued from peril in a few minutes after the alarm had been raised...[17]

[13] Luke Herbert *The Engineer's and Mechanic's Encyclopaedia*, London: Thomas Kelly, 1849.
[14] *The Derby Mercury*, Wednesday 28 April 1830.
[15] For a brief introduction to his life see the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004, volume 59, pp. 916-7.
[16] *Birmingham Daily Post*, Monday 15 December 1862.
[17] *The Examiner*, Sunday 9 August 1829, p. 503.



Science Museum / SSPL

Abraham Wivell

Wivell would apparently be frequently seen trying this device out, climbing out of his house and down to the street below. In addition to his demonstration that August, Wivell began giving talks on fire-escapes during this year, which he illustrated with models and plans of escape equipment.[18] More elaborate designs followed, his plan for a wheeled escape using extendable ladders (of which more later) becoming the leading model in actual use.[19]

Meanwhile, Manby was persevering with his own efforts. Writing from 24 Arundel Street, Strand, to Dawson Turner on 6 November 1830, he began to publicise proposals for a fire brigade, or 'fire police'. Having drafted a lecture on the subject, Manby sent this to his printer, encouraged by the response he had received from various friends and associates on the draft. He hoped to be able to deliver the 'lecture at some public institution' and to secure an introduction to the King to highlight his ideas. Then, anticipating that Turner might expect his return to Yarmouth, where his post and Mrs Manby awaited him, Manby noted some of his own motivation thus 'You will naturally say, this appears as if I had no intention for the present to return home, certainly not. I have a great stake, and never was there a happier moment for such play to attain honour, fame and

[18] *Gentleman's Magazine*, August 1849, p. 215.

[19] *Mechanics' Magazine*, 17 June 1837, pp. 162-3; *Birmingham Daily Post*, Monday 15 December 1862.

rewards'.[20] Three weeks later he was able to send Turner 'moist from the press, the first copy of my public appeal, or more properly my endeavour by a systematic arranged plan, to lessen the dreadful calamity attendant on fires; with a view if possible to get it as generally established, as that for saving shipwrecked seamen'.[21] Despite his hopes, the take up of Manby's proposals at this point was limited at best and it was only after a disastrous fire that the ideas would re-emerge.

On 16 and 17 October 1834 most of the Palace of Westminster was burned down, an event which unsurprisingly attracted huge public attention. George Manby was in London at the time and witnessed the blaze at first hand. He was in fact knocked over by one of the fire engines as he made his way to the scene and dislocated his knee, the effects of which injury continued to trouble him into 1835. Seizing the opportunity to raise his views on the fire-fighters, Manby met with Colonel Charles Rowan (*c*.1782-1852), Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, on 21 October 1834:

> …and had much conversation with him on the subject of the recent fire; and [I] stated to him my determination to bring the subject of my petition presented by Sir Edward Codrington on the meeting of the next session…although Col Rowan did not advise it (probably for the delicacy of his situation) he admitted in the strongest terms the great want of union among the persons in direction of the fire-engines; I told him that such was the general opinion, and the public will suffer from rival jealousy until a systematic and well organised fire police is established and placed under the control and direction of regular commanders, to direct and engage the operations of the fire insurance companies.'[22]

Over the next three months Manby developed his ideas, initially in a pamphlet he published on 1 January 1835.[23] Addressing this plan for a fire-police to Colonel Rowan, Manby highlighted the destruction of the Houses of Parliament and other fires that were a regular occurrence in London, before proposing that a fire-police should be organised on similar lines to the Metropolitan Police. Seeking Rowan's endorsement of the plan, Manby considered similar services abroad (including the USA, particularly in Boston, and France). Going on to outline his own fire engine equipment (which included his 'antiphlogistic fluid', extinguishers, 'elastic safety sheets…for the preservation of persons who might leap from windows, parapets, or battlements, and also a gun to effect communication with persons in these situations, in a similar manner as in relief to shipwreck, and for saving them by different means'), Manby proposed his fire-police should constitute a separate 'National Corps…to be termed "THE TRUE BRITISH FIREMEN", for the preservation of life and property from fire'. The organisation would be hierarchically arranged and have its own system of honours and awards. The latter would consist of:

> Pecuniary rewards to be given for any remarkable act of good conduct or civic enterprise, in proportion to the service performed, will, I trust, insure the hearty co-operation of the present fire-men; and to invite persons of respectability to enrol themselves to assist in this work of humanity, I would suggest a decorative badge, (similar to the Legion of Honour, in France) should be awarded to those who particularly distinguish themselves; and for acts of extraordinary heroism in saving the life of another, a civic wreath.[24]

The service, Manby suggested, could be funded by money from fire salvage and in his conclusion argued that sailors should be recruited to staff the fire police, as they 'are best suited to be to extinguish fires and save human life'. Manby lost no time in bringing his proposals to the attention of Winthrop Mackworth Praed (1802-1839), at the Board of Control, requesting that he discuss them with the Duke of Wellington.[25] These overtures, however, failed to produce immediate results. Nevertheless, they were in synchrony with the concerns of others and this confluence would shortly bear fruit.

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[20] Manby-Turner, 6 November 1830, O.14.6

[21] Manby-Turner, 26 November 1830. O.14.6

[22] Manby-Turner, 22 October 1834, O.14.13

[23] G W Manby *Plan for the Establishment of a Metropolitan Fire Police*, Great Yarmouth: Frederick Skill, 1835.

[24] Manby-Turner, 22 January 1835, O.14.14.

[25] *Ibid*.

2: THE INITIAL FORMATION OF THE SOCIETY

Prominent among those concerned with fire safety and the provision of fire-escapes was of course Abraham Wivell. Following a fire at Chinnock & Son's premises on Tottenham Court Road on 1 December 1835 in which five people died, residents in one area of St Pancras held several public meetings, the initial one being at the Fitzroy Coffee House in Charlotte Street on Friday 18 December. Considerable interest was generated and they formed the *Fire Association of the South-Western District of St Pancras*. This group aimed to equip itself with a fire-engine and several fire-escapes, which would operate in that district. At the initial meeting, people from other areas of London spoke of initiating similar schemes in their districts and several suggested 'petitioning Parliament for the establishment of a system of fire police, whose duty it would be to attend with fire-escapes at every fire'.[26] Wivell attended at least two of their meetings.[27] After a review of numerous submitted fire-escape designs, the Association selected those by Ford and Merryweather for its use.[28] Though he had intended to enter this design competition, Wivell was concerned about the available display space and in the end had not submitted his designs. The creation of this Association, which was effective for some years, was a spur to Wivell's efforts as well as an inspiring pilot model for others in the development of a more extensive scheme.

For his part, Wivell became more energised in his efforts and organised a public meeting, which he advertised through posters and financed himself.[29] Holding the meeting at Lawson's premises in Gower Street on Wednesday 30 December 1835, Wivell argued for the formation of a '*fire brigade* as well as *escapes* to be distributed over the metropolis',[30] envisaging this new corps being attached to the Metropolitan Police. At the same time he exhibited and demonstrated various model fire-escapes,[31] including ropes and other devices for escaping from buildings. Wivell also discussed tactical issues in attempting fire rescues, such as the need for caution in forcing open doors of burning buildings due to the risks of oxygenating the fire. Wivell's meeting was well attended and his ideas were favourably received. Several of those who attended were sufficiently motivated to want to take the ideas forward, resolutions were passed to this effect, and a further meeting was proposed.[32]

This next meeting was held in the same rooms on Friday 8 January 1836 and a committee was formed to organise 'the general introduction of fire-escapes in the metropolis'.[33] Wivell again spoke and advanced his views on organising a system of fire-escapes. A collection was made among those present to defray the setting-up costs and it was announced that a public meeting would be held to formally launch the society in the near future. Wivell became part of this initial committee, though others assumed dominance within it. He was, a friend later recollected, merely 'appointed to collect the money [at the meeting], out of which he was voted the expense of his escape, and a gratuity of ten pounds for himself'.[34]

Despite this experience of being marginalised, Wivell went on to publish the lecture he had previously delivered, which was again noted in the press, *The Times* commenting that:

> We fear, however, that the foresight and caution of individuals cannot generally be relied on to provide against a contingent and remote calamity, and we should therefore rejoice to see the establishment of an efficient fire-police, directed to the preservation of life as well as property, and provided with the best means of accomplishing these important objects, especially the former. Surely this ought to

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[26] *The Morning Post*, Saturday 19 December 1835.

[27] *Mechanics' Magazine*, Saturday 15 July 1837, p. 227.

[28] *Mechanics' Magazine*, Saturday 6 February 1836, p. 360 and Saturday 11 March 1837, p. 450.

[29] *Mechanics Magazine*, Saturday 8 April 1837, p. 11.

[30] *Mechanics' Magazine*, Saturday 15 July 1837, p. 227.

[31] One of Wivell's models may be seen in the Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery (accession number 1943F28), while others may be seen in the Science Museum, London,
see www.scienceandsociety.co.uk/results.asp?image=10306273&wwwflag=2&imagepos=9

[32] *The Times*, Thursday 31 December 1835, p. 5 and *the Morning Post*, Monday, 31 December 1835.

[33] *The Morning Post*, Saturday 9 January 1836.

[34] 'The fire escape', in *The Leisure Hour*, 20 September 1860, p. 601.

> be a public, if not a national, care. If no better mode presents itself, the institution of a Humane Society for the Preservation of Life from Fire would be a public blessing.[35]

Such publicity undoubtedly promoted the concepts Wivell and the initial committee were seeking to inaugurate. Wivell's role as an escape designer, however, appeared to some to be potentially in conflict with participating as a member of the committee. In an attempt to counter such a perception, Wivell – through the advice of friends – resigned from the committee, as he stated 'to prevent it's being imputed to the Society, that they were favouring me more than any other mechanic'.[36] One of his critics, H Jenkins, had claimed that Wivell's ambition had been had been to establish the society to promote his own inventions, this being frustrated by members of the initial committee who 'were not disposed to form a society for the purpose of furthering the views of any particular inventor, and Mr Wivell's name was at a very early period struck out of the printed prospectus'.[37] Jenkins does not appear to have been associated with the society at this time and in view of subsequent events, Wivell's account of this period appears the more likely.

Following these events, the *Society for the Protection of Life from Fire* was formed at the inaugural public meeting that the initial committee had announced in January 1836. This founding meeting was held in the London Coffee House on 22 March 1836. The Lord Mayor addressed the assembly, noting that 14 people had died in fires in the capital during the previous year and declaring that the proposed society was intended to reduce such loss of life. The meeting was then addressed by the Secretary of the London Hibernian Society and Minister of Bedford Chapel, Bloomsbury, the Rev Henry Hughes, AM,[38] and ended with an outline of the purposed terms of reference.[39]

With the Rev Hughes appointed as Honorary Secretary and William Spring (*c*.1796-1852) as its Secretary, the nascent Society began to operate out of the latter's London office at 48 Great Portland Street. The choice of Spring as Secretary, however, was both curious and catastrophic. Described as a plumber and glazier, dealer and chapman, Spring had been declared bankrupt in November 1834 and ordered to surrender himself to a commissioner of the Court of Bankruptcy.[40] His financial problems were to continue and in October 1835 he had appeared in the bankruptcy court to award a dividend to his creditors.[41] By 1836, Spring was clearly still struggling with debt and his appointment as the Society's Secretary appears to have been just one of several jobs he took on to supplement his income. While such facts might suggest that Spring was a less than ideal candidate for the post, his actual appointment inevitably raises questions about the judgement and competence of the others involved in initially establishing the Society. The situation was ripe for disaster.

Nevertheless, during the three months after its inauguration, the Society appeared to get off to a good start. Spring and the committee began planning for the future. Subscribers were sought, fundraising efforts commenced, the existence of the Society was advertised, and consideration began to be given to fire-escape designs. Unsurprisingly, Manby quickly became associated with the nascent Society's deliberations in this area and was appointed a Vice President. Society committee members met on 4 May 1836 to consider a wide range of submitted escape designs. Manby joined them and afterwards noted that:

> …the committee expressing their high opinion of my services and considering that no one was so much enabled to carry their design into effect, I was required to take the chair. How I performed the duties you may perhaps see in print… There were upwards of 40 candidates who brought with them models of apparatus for the rescue of life from the flames; [of the evident shortcomings] …many [were] objectionable [due to] …not possessing the qualities of portability, promptness of application,…and of small expense,…I intimated to the committee what would particularly govern my selection, and 2 or 3 …had the qualities named. And I have been further requested to perform a lecture [at] the end of the

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[35] *The Times*, Saturday 16 January 1836, p. 5.

[36] *Mechanics' Magazine*, Saturday 15 July 1837, p. 228.

[37] *Ibid*., Saturday 17 June 1837, p. 164.

[38] Henry Hughes (*c*.1807-1852) was the eldest son of Henry Hughes, of Northampton. Educated at Trinity College, Oxford (BA, 1829; MA, 1833), he was ordained and served as a curate at Great Linford, Bucks, and was then Minister at Bedford Chapel, Bloomsbury, before going on to become the incumbent of All Saints Church, Gordon Square from 1842 until his death (J Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses*, Oxford: Parker & Co., 1888, volume 2, p. 706).

[39] *The Times*, Wednesday 23 March 1836.

[40] *London Gazette*, 14 November 1834, p. 2038; *The Newcastle Courant*, Saturday 22 November 1834.

[41] *London Gazette*, 15 September 1835, p. 1750.

> month on the subject and for [marking the] founding [of]… an institution so important to the services of humanity. I have not time to enter more into the proceedings, but it shall be an imperishable monument to my name.[42]

Whether the designs considered included any by Wivell on this occasion is not explicitly clear, though it may be that his was only examined on a subsequent occasion. Wivell later noted that 'The Society having advertised for escapes, the *model* of my *ladders* was the *last* inspected by their committee, and the *last* adopted, solely on account of the *expense* being more than the Society had the means to defray, which occasioned other escapes of *minor* importance to take the lead'.[43] By 31 March the following year, Wivell's escape would be prominently exhibited by the Society, alongside the apparently initially adopted yet more rudimentary designs of Ford and Merryweather.

Among the other issues attended to during this period were ways in which the Society might recognise bravery and distinguished conduct in saving lives from fire. To that end, testimonials were designed and a silver medal was commissioned and produced by Benjamin Wyon. Whether Wyon was the medal's designer as well as its engraver is unclear however; one account attributes the actual design to Abraham Wivell.[44] The medal had 'Society for the Protection of Life from Fire 1836' around the circumference, with the Eye of Providence (otherwise termed the all-seeing eye) in the centre surrounded by rays of light, with the motto 'Vigilo' (I watch) on a scroll underneath. The reverse had a laurel wreath with space inside this for details about the recipient and the circumstances of the award to be engraved. The design clearly has both classical and religious references. Whether the choice of Eye of Providence as a central element in the design relates also to an influence of Freemasonry on the Society is less certain, although religious sentiment was clearly a powerful motivating factor for many of those involved.

Alongside the design and manufacture of these awards, several instances of bravery were considered. Spring had sought recommendations for these from the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Charles Rowan, and he duly forwarded them to the Society on 6 June. On the basis of these and other reports a number of individuals were selected to receive medals and testimonials. Medals were thus approved for four policemen; the first going to John Forward for bravery on 18 May 1836 at a fire at 86 New Gravel Lane, Shadwell, while the remaining three went to George Avery, David Lock and Joseph Weed, for their actions during a fire at Bateman's Row and New Inn Square, Shoreditch, on 25 May 1836. Testimonials were granted to five people – a Mr and Mrs Blachford, a Mr Blower, and two brothers named Binche – for saved several lives from a fire in Fenchurch Street on 23 April 1836. Remarkably, the testimonials and medals were ready for the first recipients by the time of the Society's next public meeting, eight days after the receipt of Rowan's reports.

Before that meeting, Manby was busy. Wanting recognition and financial reward for his substantial past contributions, Manby (who was in considerable debt at this stage) linked his own personal ambitions to those he held for the Society. He met with the committee on Wednesday 8 June to finalise arrangements for the following week's meeting, part of which he was to chair. Flattered by the encouragement he received, Manby privately confided to Dawson Turner 'I have strong reason to think that the day is very, very near at hand that my services will be no longer over looked, not only [in] a pecuniary way'.[45] He began canvassing support to have the Society designated a Royal Society. Seeking access to William IV, Manby met with Sir Hussey Vivian (1775-1842), the Master Guard, on Monday 13 June in the hope that he would promote his petition for recognition to the King.

The following day, on 14 June 1836, the Society held a public meeting in the Lowther Rooms, in King William Street, which *The Times* reported under the headline 'Society for the Protection of Life from Fire', as follows:

> A very numerous and respectable meeting of the Members and Patrons of this Society was held yesterday at the Lowther Rooms. The Lord Mayor was to have presided but was unable to attend in consequence of his presence having been required elsewhere as Conservator of the Thames. The business of the morning commenced with a letter to that effect from His Lordship being read by the Secretary, Mr Spring. The Rev H Hughes was then called to the chair and the business proceeded.

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[42] Manby-Turner, 5 May 1836, O.14.16.

[43] *Mechanics' Magazine*, Saturday 15 July 1837, p. 228.

[44] 'The fire escape', in *The Leisure Hour*, 20 September 1860, p. 602.

[45] Manby-Turner, 12 June 1836, O.14.16.

Mr Hughes regretted that the Chief Magistrate of the City was unable to attend because his attendance would add éclat to the proceedings. Fortunately, however, the cause they were met to support required not the association of particular names; it was the cause of charity and could advocate itself; it had a paramount claim upon all there assembled. They were, moreover, met that day to have a lecture on the best mode of escaping from fire from an individual celebrated for his exertions in the aid of suffering humanity: he alluded to Captain Manby who had distinguished himself by the exertion of his energies to save human life and remove human sufferings. Many years ago he had distinguished himself by the invention of the life-boat; he had since devoted his talent to rescue his fellow creatures from a destructive element, and was entitled to the gratitude and regard of all present. Mr Hughes then called upon the Secretary to read the report.

Mr Spring read a letter from Mr Wilks, MP, regretting that business prevented him from being present, and expressing his cordial co-operation with the Society. The report was then read, which detailed the establishment, the progress and the objects of the Society, the rules and regulations, all which was received with applause from the Company.

Mr Hughes then called upon Mr Manby to deliver his lecture, and the Captain read from a written paper a very interesting account of what had been done by himself and others in aid of persons in jeopardy from their houses being on fire, and their retreat cut off by any means but those of escape from the windows, etc. He concluded by an eloquent exhortation to the Company to support the views of the Society. He was about to present a petition to His Majesty to request him to become the President of the Society and he was sure he would not refuse the sanction of his name to the cause of humanity.

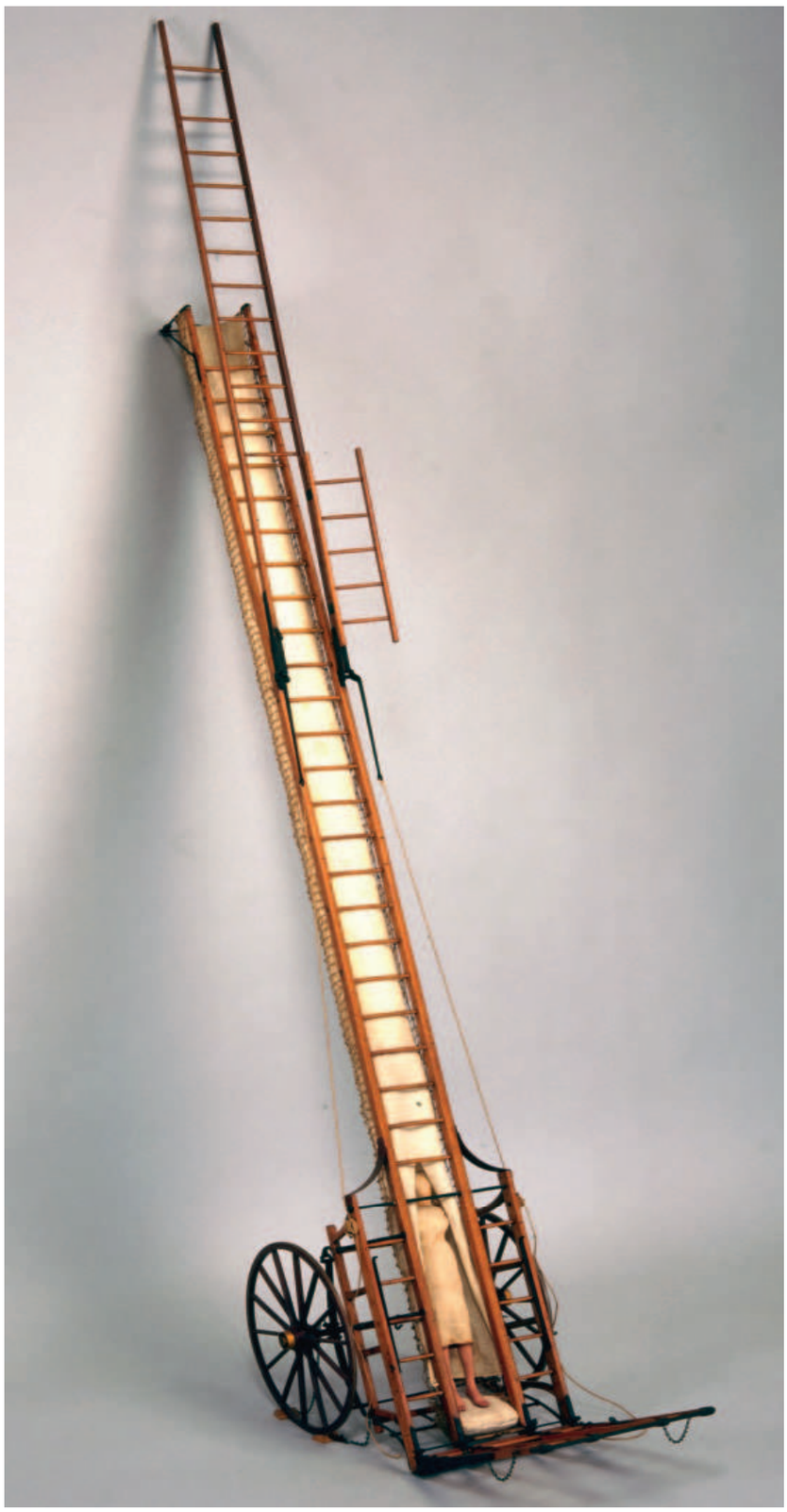
The models of Mr Ford and Mr Wivell of apparatus for escaping from houses on fire were then exhibited by their respective inventors and their nature explained. They were both simple in their construction, and united portability and cheapness.

Mr Hughes then begged leave to propose that Captain Manby should take the chair, as the medals and testimonials distributed from his hands would be enhanced in value as coming from so distinguished an individual. Captain Manby then took the Chair and distributed medals and testimonials to the following persons: to Messrs H G Binks, G Binks, Blanchford [*sic*] and Brewer [*sic*] – testimonials elegantly printed in gold letters on vellum, and sealed with the seal of the Society; to John Forward, David Lock, Sergeant Avery, and Joseph Weed, of the Metropolitan Police, silver medals for their exertions in saving the lives of seven persons at great personal risk to themselves.

Mr Hughes, after the distribution of rewards, moved in a very eloquent speech, the thanks of the meeting to Captain Manby for his services that day, and for his services in the cause of humanity during a long and useful life. Mr Dixon seconded the motion, which was carried with acclamation. Captain Manby returned thanks. The Rev S Ramsay then moved the thanks of the meeting to the Rev Mr Hughes. Mr Waugh seconded the motion, which was immediately carried with acclamation. Mr Hughes returned thanks. The Secretary then said, before the meeting separated, he hoped they would be liberal in their contributions to the funds of the establishment; he would state that it was from annual subscribers that the greatest assistance could be rendered, and the smallness of the sum which rendered every subscriber a member was, he presumed, within the reach of everyone.

The company then commenced a very handsome subscription, and about three o'clock the meeting broke up. In the street a large crowd was assembled to see an apparatus fastened to the outside of the building in which the meeting was held.[46]

[46] *The Times*, Wednesday 15 June 1836, p. 4.



Wavell's model of one of his fire escapes

After the meeting, Manby wrote how he had been 'called upon to take the chair for presenting the rewards of medals to those who had saved lives from fire; an event so unexpected that it filled me with apprehension I should ill discharge the duty, but the applause I received lead me to a belief that I succeeded'. He was similarly buoyed up the meeting's response to his lecture. He was, he declared 'greeted in a way I never before heard, and I thought the eulogies of [four] different persons on it and the services I had performed was expressed in such eloquent and flattering terms that it would be impossible not to be humbly excited by them'.[47]

Thus encouraged, Manby now approached the King's Private Secretary, Sir Herbert Taylor (1775-1839) at a Levée on 15 June, delivering a note that he wished 'to present a petition, praying His Majesty to become the Patron of a Society formed for the rescue of life from houses in flames; and conferring on it the title The Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire'.[48] Taylor agreed to raise the matter with the King and allowed Manby to leave 'as fast as I could with a thankful feeling that I was not desired to kneel down'! Continuing his efforts (and despite having received a severe contusion on one side of his face on Saturday afternoon 18 June 1836 when he was hit by a phaeton in the Strand), Manby hoped to be able to meet His Royal Highness The Prince of Orange on 21 June and again at the Levée the following day.[49] Despite receiving encouragement from such approaches, actual preferment was slow in coming for both Manby and the Society, and it would be almost two years before these and subsequent approaches would bear fruit. Ignoring the fact that his petition was merely under consideration, Manby began during this time to refer to the Society as the Royal Society, including in correspondence to Sir Robert Peel and Lord John Russell. A letter from Palace officials censuring him for this did little to inhibit Manby's behaviour.[50]

In another sphere, Wivell was continuing his own work. In October 1836 he staged an exhibition of his fire-escapes in Edward Street, Hampstead Road. This brought out a small crowd to witness a 'host of dirty boys' being employed to demonstrate the escape slides. The traffic chaos caused, the supposed complexity of the equipment, and the carnival atmosphere, which 'had something ludicrous in it' according to *The Times*, appeared – to them – to be 'unlikely to reward the exertions of Mr Wivell, or to increase the real popularity of his invention'.[51] Despite such stinging publicity, Wivell did manage to reach agreement with a group of residents around Regent's Park to provide them with an escape. They subscribed £30 and Wivell arranged for the escape to be stationed at Robert Street, Regent's Park. Over the next several months Wivell and the Society had a considerable rapprochement. The Society agreed to incorporate Wivell's Robert Street fire-escape station into their own establishment, reimbursing Wivell £18 for the remainder of the one-year lease on its site.[52] This transaction attracted some criticism, particularly from Jenkins, who claimed the Society had paid Wivell £50,[53] and still more vociferously from William Baddeley, who aired his views in *The Mechanics' Magazine* in a series of letters – with some response from Wivell – beginning in 1837.[54] A prominent engineer and regular writer on that subject, Baddeley was responsible for designing among other things a fire engine in 1833, detachable wheels to assist raising ladders over obstructions in 1834, a prototype bicycle in 1839, a patent canvas used by the fire brigade, and a patent hose reel.[55] His tone and attitude on fire-fighting and engineering subjects frequently appeared proprietorial and arrogant however, and Wivell, who could be regarded as a maverick and gifted amateur in this field, seems to have annoyed him. Despite such public acrimony, it was probably around this time that Wivell was appointed as the Society's Superintendent of Fire-Escapes, was given a green uniform together with an annual salary of £100, and was requested to supply several more escapes.[56]

In developing its public profile, the Society had by the beginning of 1837 secured Marques Cholmondeley as their main patron and the Lord Mayor as its president.[57] The first Annual Meeting of the Society was held in the afternoon of Friday 31 March 1837 at the New Argyll Rooms, Regent Street, the Chair being taken by Manby, as a Vice President, in the absence of the Lord Mayor. The *Morning Chronicle* reported this meeting as follows:

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[47] Manby-Turner, 14 June 1836, O.14.16.

[48] *Ibid*; see also *The Times*, Wednesday 15 June 1836; *The Morning Chronicle*, Thursday 16 June 1836; *The Age*, Sunday, 19 June 1836; and *North Wales Chronicle*, Tuesday 21 June 1836.

[49] Manby-Turner, 20 June 1836, O.14.16.

[50] K Walthew *From Rock and Tempest: the Life of Captain George William Manby*, London: Bles, 1971, p. 114.

[51] *The Times*, Saturday 29 October 1836, p. 5.

[52] *Mechanics' Magazine*, Saturday 15 July 1837, p. 228.

[53] H Jenkins, letter dated 18 May 1837, *The Mechanics' Magazine*, 1837, vol. 27, pp. 163-4.

[54] See *The Mechanics' Magazine*, 1837, vol. 27, pp. 11, 73, 88, 161-3, 203, 227, 310, 345 and 380.

[55] See for example *The Mechanics' Magazine*, 1835, vol. 22, pp. 113-116 and 184-5.

[56] *Gentleman's Magazine*, August 1849, p. 215 and 'The fire escape', in *The Leisure Hour*, 20 September 1860, pp. 601-2.

[57] *The Times*, Saturday 1 July 1837, p. 2.

> Mr Spring, the Secretary, read the report of the Committee, which congratulated the members on the present condition of the Society. Its objects were not only the distribution of medals to those who, at the risk of their lives, distinguished themselves in rescuing individuals from fire, but in providing ready means of escape when such casualties occurred. Since the last meeting the six following stations were provided with fire-escapes by the Society: Robert Street, Regent's Park; Great Portland Street; Regent Street; Adelaide Place, near St Martin's Church; the Strand and Holborn; and keys had not only been given to all the police in the district but also left with the nearest publican and baker, as being the most readily accessible at all hours of the night.
>
> The Society had also met the countenance of the Commissioners of Police, The Board of Ordnance, and the Commissioners of Woods and Forest, who gave every facility for the promotion of its views. When the funds had increased sufficiently it was intended to offer rewards for the best constructed machine, so as to insure the attention of mechanical and scientific men to the subject; as also a premium in that case where the first fire-escape should be brought into operation. The report further announced the claims of three individuals who were recommended for the medals of the Society for this year, and concluded with an earnest appeal to the public to co-operate with the committee and aid in the extension of its views.
>
> Mr Broughton, police magistrate of Worship Street, proposed the first resolution for the adoption of the report, expressing his cordial approbation of the objects of the Society. It was surprising that London, which had so long boasted a kindred Society for the preservation of human life from drowning should have hitherto remained destitute of one to provide against a calamity, if possible, still more appalling. The resolution having been proposed and carried, the Secretary read the following announcements, which were in each case verified by the superintendent of the division. The candidates [James Tilt, PC Bradley, and PC Robert Patriot] on being presented with the medal, were appropriately addressed by the chairman... Resolutions were proposed by J Hardy, MP, Rev Henry Hughes, AM, John Wilks, MP, Rev Bryant Burgess, AM,[58] etc. The terms of subscription are but small; and it was stated by the Secretary that when a sufficient sum was collected in one district, the Society would place a fire-escape there, which would be readily available to the inhabitants. Before and after the meeting an exhibition of fire-escapes took place outside the house, which attracted a large concourse of persons. [59]

Wivell was one of those present (though whether he had quite yet assumed his new role as Superintendent of Fire-Escapes is unclear) and demonstrated his escape, as did Ford and Merryweather. All three escapes were depicted in the Society's subsequently issued *First Annual Report*. With Baddeley disputing the conclusions of the demonstration, Wivell in response highlighted how his escape – unlike the others – allowed access to the highest windows in the building and was the most rapidly deployed.[60]

Following the meeting, efforts continued to publicise the Society and engage prominent figures, whose support might yield dividends in terms of status and money. Thus for example, a deputation from the Society met with Baron De Berenger seeking his backing: what the outcome was is unclear, though he was listed as a member of the Society, and Manby and the committee convened on Monday evening 24 April 1837 at their regular meeting place, All Souls and Trinity Infant School at 49 Great Portland Street, to hear their deputation's report.[61] The following month, a melancholy event afforded an opportunity to promote the Society's objectives. John Matthews, a 50 year old man, perished in a fire at the Wheatsheaf Public House in Holywell Street on Thursday 25 May 1837. Following this, Wivell attended his inquest on to hear the evidence and publicise the Society. Announcing that the Society was to confer an award on Joseph Ives for rescuing a woman from a third floor window at this same fire, Wivell went on to say he intended to recommend a new escape station be established near the scene of the tragedy.[62]

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[58] *Bryant Burgess, a son of Hugh Burgess, of Marylebone, was educated at Exeter College, Oxford (BA, 1808; MA, 1811) and following his ordination became Rector of St Benet's, Gracechurch Street, London (J Foster, Alumni Oxonienses, Oxford: Parker & Co., 1888, volume 1, p. 192).*
[59] *Morning Chronicle, Saturday 1 April 1837.*
[60] *Mechanics' Magazine, Saturday 15 July 1837, p. 228.*
[61] *Manby-Turner, 20 April 1837, O.14.18.*
[62] *The Times, Tuesday 30 May 1837, p. 3.*

Limited finances hindered the Society's operations and various efforts were made to increase subscriptions. The Rev Hughes preached a sermon for the Society on 5 July 1837, beginning at 7pm at the Church of St Clement Danes, in the Strand.[6] In September that year the Society sought to exploit a fatal fire that had recently taken place in the Strand to prompt subscriptions from the public. Advertising in the *Morning Chronicle*, the Society declared that they were 'confident had the plan of the Society been in operation (which they have not been able to carry out for want of funds), viz, to have an effective body of men to manage the fire-escapes, in all probability the three individuals who lost their lives by the late fire might have been saved'.[7] Given that the Society had an escape stationed in the Strand, it appears from this and the previous account of the Annual Meeting on 31 March 1837, that this and perhaps all of the Society's escape stations were not staffed regularly, if at all, during this period. This situation was one the Society clearly needed to address and over the next two years was partially successful in. By June 1839 the Society was able to claim it had 11 conductors plus a superintendent operating 19 escapes.

These interrelated financial, staffing and structural difficulties were further exposed during this period when parts of the press suggested the Society, in tandem with other charities, lacked effective management, and more particularly in this case had a poor safety record. Focussing on the latter, the *Figaro in London*, noted that:

> We have frequently been forced to expose the continued and distressing failures of the Society… We never doubted the goodness of the intention, but giving full credit to the members for this, yet putting on the debtor side the numerous accidents and (plainly speaking) *mulls* that have occurred, the balance is fearfully against the society. If a statistical account were drawn up of the numerous head-breakings and leg-crushings, and nose-flattenings that have been caused by the dangling of the safety apparatus uselessly at the windows of a house where there is no fire, and if on the credit of the Society the *maximum of lives saved* were to be returned, we fear we should be obliged to see the annoying fact before us, that where *no lives* have been saved, *one hundred* heads have been broken. Notwithstanding this the Society *means* well, and the guinea subscriptions could not be better bestowed, if the Society would only get into the knack of doing a slight degree more good than of mischief.[8]

No substantial evidence of the supposed injuries was produced and the criticisms of safety remain largely uncorroborated. However, with at least some escapes being used by untrained individuals, accidents would be inevitable. One tragic case from this period did attract considerable publicity in the press and may have influenced the *Figaro*'s claims. This concerned the death of a 17-year-old drummer, Charles Wood, of the Grenadier Guards, who had died in April 1838 following a fall from a fire-escape built by Moses Merryweather under the direction of Manby. Manby attended the inquest and attempted to suggest that young Wood's death was due to 'the incautiousness of the poor boy in not understanding the nature of the apparatus'. The jury's verdict, however, was apparently one of 'accidental death, attributable to the insecurity of the apparatus'.[9] The overall impression was of increasing public concerns over the Society and its operations.

On a more optimistic note, the Duchess of Kent agreed to become a vice-patron to the Society in March 1838,[10] shortly after which another event occurred which had a great impact upon the Society. They at last gained the monarch's patronage. Manby's efforts to secure this from William IV had ended when the King died on 20 June 1837. However, with the accession of Queen Victoria, Manby's aspirations had a measure of success. Prior to her coronation, Queen Victoria agreed to become the Society's patroness. The preliminary announcement came in the Second Annual Meeting in April 1838, by which time Spring and the Society had moved their offices to 18 Charlotte Street, Bloomsbury. The advance publicity for that meeting simply noted the Society would be presenting

[6] *The Times*, Saturday 1 July 1837, p. 2.
[7] *The Morning Chronicle*, Friday 22 September 1837.
[8] *Figaro in London*, April 1838, p. 64. This notice contrasted with a contemporaneous piece in *The Literary Gazette and Journal of Belles Lettres* which noted the Society was 'taking active measures to extend its usefulness…[and] we think it evident that this association may be eminently useful in the preservation of human life, and that it well deserves the public patronage' (April 1838, p. 252).
[9] *The Morning Chronicle*, Tuesday 24 April 1838 and Wednesday 25 April 1838.
[10] *Freeman's Journal*, Tuesday 6 March 1838.

'upwards of 20 silver medals…to those praiseworthy individuals who, at the risk of their own lives, have saved the lives of several persons…from death by fire'.[1] The meeting, held at Freemasons' Tavern, Great Queen Street, on 27 April 1838, was chaired by Society Vice-President, Charles John Shore (1796-1885), who was better known as 2nd Baron Teignmouth, MP. Spring announced that Queen Victoria had the Society under her 'Royal patronage' and the additional support received had enabled them to increase their escape stations to 16, which were stationed from Regent's Park to Whitechapel. The annual subscriptions for the preceding year had amounted to £400.10s.6d, with a further £328.13s.6d being received in donations. The Society's expenditure over this period was £631. Lord Teignmouth paid tribute to Manby and presented him with the Society's silver medal to huge applause from those attending.[2] In returning thanks, Manby noted that his first lifesaving experience was from a fire. Lord Teignmouth then presented silver medals to over 20 other recipients, before Manby assumed the chair of the meeting for its final business.[3]



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Captain Manby's Society for the Protection of Life from Fire Silver Medal

In November that year it appears the formalities with the Queen's patronage were finalised. Manby now presided at a special meeting of the committee on Wednesday 21 November 1838 when it was announced that the Queen was also subscribing ten guineas a year to the Society.[4] He then drew up 'a letter of thanks for the Queen becoming Patroness of that Society, and her gracious intimation of an annual donation towards its support'.[5] That same month a deputation headed by Manby, in his capacity as a Vice-President of the Society, accompanied by R Chapman and William Spring, met with the Lord Mayor of London. The Lord Mayor agreed to become the Society's president for the forthcoming year.[6] He also agreed to become a subscriber and sponsor a sermon to support the Society. Describing the meeting, Manby wrote how 'of all the distinguished

[1] *The Times*, Wednesday 25 April 1838, p. 3.
[2] Manby's medal was a specially prepared version of the Society's medal, in frosted silver and mounted within lunettes and a gold frame with a suspension loop.
[3] The report in *The Times* (28 Apr 1838, p. 5) says 21 medals were to be presented, but then lists 22 recipients in addition to Captain Manby. It may be that not all the recipients could attend the meeting to receive their awards. However, other sources note a slightly differing list of recipients (noted later in section III).
[4] *The Morning Chronicle*, Thursday 22 November 1838; *The Times*, Friday, 23 November 1838, p. 4.
[5] Manby-Turner, 28 November 1838, O.14.21.
[6] *The Times*, Thursday 29 November 1838, p. 6.

receptions I have ever received, never has one equated this memorable day that of…[the Lord Mayor's] expressions of approbation for the services I had rendered'.[74]

The following year, 1839, saw the Society exploit Queen Victoria's patronage and simultaneously descend into deeper financial crisis, spurred on by acrimony and mismanagement. The difficulties emerged first. In April, John Evans, who had acted as an accountant and subscriptions canvasser for the Society the previous year (1838), was brought to trial in the Insolvent Debtors Court. Evans was withholding an undisclosed sum of money he had collected for the Society, as well as their account books, and a silver medal he had been given to (in some way) help elicit subscriptions. He suggested to the Court that the Society was a 'bubble' and as such he refused to return their books, though later went on to say 'I have no objection to give them up to a committee of the Society, but not to Spring, nor yet to the Secretary'. The Court ordered him to surrender the books and provide an account of all his receipts.[75] Whether Evans subsequently complied with this judgement is uncertain, though his trial provided a glimpse of the Society's descent into crisis.

It is likely that William Spring's ongoing personal financial problems seriously undermined his effectiveness as Society Secretary during this time. He had, while based at Great Portland Street, been called to the Court of Bankruptcy on 15 July 1837 to receive proof of his debts.[76] Over the ensuing years Spring's situation only worsened and by 1843 he was imprisoned for debt in the Debtors Prison for London and Middlesex in Whitecross Street.[77] Leading up to that point he had attempted to perform multiple jobs and had a succession of addresses, as he presumably moved both home and office pursued by his creditors. The Society's operating base thus also repeatedly changed during this period. The instability of this is illustrated in one court order, thus:

> The following prisoners…to be brought up before the court…in Portugal Street… on Monday the 9th day of October 1843: …William Spring, formerly of 83 Great Portland Street, Oxford Street, then of 48 Great Portland Street aforesaid, then of 34 Mornington Place, Hampstead Road, plumber, painter, glazier, paper hanger, house decorator, house agent, and Secretary to the Society for Protection of Life from Fire, whose offices were at 48 Great Portland Street aforesaid, and subsequently at 18 Charlotte Street, Bloomsbury, then of Hartland Terrace, Camden Town, then of 33 Mornington Place aforesaid, and late of 33 Mornington Place aforesaid, all in Middlesex, plumber, painter, glazier, paper hanger, house decorator, house agent, and verger, and collector of All Saints Church, Gordon Square, St Pancras, Middlesex.[78]

The impact of this on the Society, its day-to-day operations, and its public image was disastrous and by early to mid 1839 Spring's position in the Society – and indeed the Society itself – was unravelling.

At the Society's General Meeting, held on 30 May 1839 at the Freemasons' Hall, the internal conflicts became public.[79] Presided over by Lord Teignmouth, MP, he informed the meeting that the Queen was now the Society's patroness and benefactor and that the Society had significant encouraged and promoted the design of improved escape equipment. Spring then began to read the annual report, noting that a line of 19 fire-escapes, staffed by 11 conductors and a superintendent, had been established across key points in London and in the past year these had arrived at fires on 160 occasions before other services and had saved families on two occasions. The financial position was serious however and Spring noted that while income totalled £1,621, expenditure was £1,734 and the Society remained £170 in debt. He appealed to the public for further support with this and to extend the Society's escape network. Captain Manby then recommended the report be adopted and he was seconded by the Reverend Hughes. At this point James Hanley, a former committee member, tried to raise a question, to which Lord Teignmouth responded that he could not do so until after all the other business had been transacted. Others complained loudly that Hanley should be heard. Lord Teignmouth refused and threatened to leave the meeting. Amid shouting from the floor about the Society's accounts, a truce was agreed while the awards were presented by Lord Teignmouth to Sergeant Lister, Richard Lacknane, and Robert Loder. Hanley then rose again to question the committee, prompting Lord Teignmouth, Manby

[74] Manby-Turner, 28 November 1838, O.14.21.

[75] *The Morning Chronicle*, Saturday 20 April 1839. A further note on Evans' case appeared in the *London Gazette*, 7 May 1839, p. 965.

[76] *London Gazette*, 4 July 1837, p. 1702.

[77] *London Gazette*, 18 July 1843, p. 2460.

[78] *London Gazette*, 15 September 1843, p. 3089.

[79] *The Times*, Friday 10 May 1839, p. 3.

and the Reverend Hughes to walk out of the meeting amid hissing and hooting. After some confusion, John Hardy (1773-1855), one time MP for Bradford, took the chair in a more conciliatory fashion and Henry Dison, who had been the acting treasurer the previous year, raised the complaints that he, Hanley and others had about the committee. Arguing that the fire-escape network was very patchy and not networked as the Annual Report had suggested, Dison's main questions concerned the state of the Society's accounts.

The level of debt in March 1839 had been between £300 and £400, which appeared at odds with the £170 Spring was now claiming it was. Defending the Society, Spring said the accounts had been audited, though were unsigned, that the debt had been reduced through public donations, and the insufficiency of the escape network was known to the committee but that it was as comprehensive as could be achieved given the available resources. Extending an olive branch to Dison, Hanley, and the others, Spring said he would be pleased to see them return to the committee. Charles Ridley, who was also a committee member, supported the Dison faction and after heated debate an agreed sub-committee was appointed to clarify matters and the meeting was finally adjourned.[80]



National Maritime Museum

Captain G W Manby FRS

[80] *The Morning Post*, Friday 31 May 1839, p. 2.

Three weeks later, on Thursday 20 June, the meeting was reconvened, with Lord Teignmouth again in the chair and Manby in attendance. In the intervening time, an attempt had been made to reorganise the Society's management and the adoption of the title 'Royal' re-emphasised, which was used as a veneer to stabilise the institution. In describing the meeting, *The Era* noted that the Society's annual report was read, which stated that the Queen was now patron, and a subscriber of 10 guineas annually; *hence the Society would henceforward nominate itself 'Royal'* [emphasis added].

During the last year the Society had added three new fire-escapes to their stock. They had now a line of 19 escapes through the metropolis, which were worked by 11 conductors and a superintendent. These men had arrived at 160 fires before any other aid, and they saved four persons through their escapes. It had been joined by the parishes of St Olave Southwark, and St George in the East. For the year ending 21 March, the receipts had been £1740.13s. Amongst the expenses were £342.7s.2d for new fire-escapes and the repairs to old ones; for the conductors and superintendent, £635.11s.2d; for the Secretary and his assistant, £170.15s; for rent, £49.15s; for advertising and printing, about £100; for medals, £25; for pecuniary rewards, £6.10s. A balance of £4.10s.3d remained. The report was adopted. A committee composed of the late opponents was agreed to, thanks were cordially voted to the noble chairman, and the meeting separated.[81]

Financial and staffing problems were evident in this report. More extraordinary was the Society's decision to apparently proclaim itself 'Royal'. Patronage itself did not confer such an entitlement, though Society members may have been under the mistaken impression that it did. It seems perhaps more likely that the crisis within the Society motivated members to construct this new identity, like the Emperor's new clothes, turning a blind eye at the same time to Court procedure and etiquette.

Aside from its rebranding, committee members were replaced and William Spring appears to have resigned or more likely been removed from his post as the Society Secretary at this time. Shortly afterwards, a sub-committee was established to recruit a replacement and they advertised thus:

> SECRETARY WANTED, for a rising society, a gentleman, who writes a good and expeditious hand, a perfect accountant, of good address and persevering and business-like habits, and if he has some knowledge of law it would be desirable. He would be required to give up the whole of his time to the interest of the institution. The salary is £130 per annum. Testimonials to be sent, post paid, directed to the sub-committee of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, 18 Charlotte Street, Bloomsbury, on or before the 4th of July next. Security to the amount of £500 will be required.[82]

What the response was to this advertisement is unclear, though the stipulation of £500 security being required from the successful applicant underlines both the Society's probable apprehensiveness about employing yet another officer who was insolvent and its own pressing need for liquidity.

In the midst of this upheaval Wivell was recognised for his fire-escape designs by the Society of Arts, which now awarded him its silver medal. The fire-escape plans were described in detail in the Society's *Transactions* in 1838.[83] The following year, on Monday 10 June 1839, the Duke of Sussex presented Wivell with the silver medal.[84] No doubt spurred on by this, Wivell continued to make further developments to lifesaving and fire-fighting equipment for the Society, exhibiting a water-cart and fire-ladder to the public on Monday 7 October that year. Wivell proposed that 69 of these should be deployed across London alongside fire-escapes to provide a rapid first response to fires, with funding to come from a rate levied on each household. In reporting the demonstration, it was noted that there had been over 1,000 fires in London during 1838 and 1839, at nearly 300 of which the Society's escapes had served. However, all was not well and it was reported that 'The society not having met with the encouragement it deserved, its funds are now completely exhausted'.[85]

Wivell's rival and the Society's chief critic at the time, William Baddeley now resumed his campaign in the pages of the *Mechanics' Magazine*. Beginning by promoting his business colleague Moses Merryweather's fire-escape ladders, which he claimed had been instrumental in saving almost 12 lives at a recent fire in the Strand, he went on to state that 'Attention to this subject on the part of London parishes, is more needful than ever, since the failure and breaking up of that

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[81] *The Era*, Sunday 23 June 1839.

[82] *The Times*, Friday 28 June 1839, p. 2.

[83] *Transactions of the Society of Arts*, 1838, pp. 27-274.

[84] *The Morning Chronicle*, Tuesday 11 June 1839.

[85] *The Charter*, Sunday 13 October 1839.

precious piece of *humbug* – the "Fire-escape Society"'.[86] In responding to Baddeley, Wivell debunked Baddeley's claim about the role the Merryweather ladders had played, noting that the individuals had been rescued by Constables R T Lock and T Carter, of F division, who had climbed the stairs in the burning property in the Strand on 3 September, getting the occupants safely out onto the roof before the ladders in question had arrived. He then acknowledged that:

> …there has been some differences of opinion in the Committee relative to the best plan to be adopted, since the last annual meeting of subscribers. Upon a strict examination of their accounts, they deemed it expedient, in consequence of a *deficiency of funds*, to dispense with the services of some of their fire-escape conductors, until they should be provided with machines constructed on a new principle to accompany their established escapes, as a first security for the lives of the public.[87]

Wivell went on to outline his new proposals, and his water cart design, arguing that 'It is a fact well known, that the want of a few buckets of water at the commencement of a fire, has frequently caused the destruction of properties to an incredible amount'.[88] Baddeley's reply sought to lampoon Wivell, claiming he seemed to have not heard of leather hoses, which could be more effective than the water cart and that the latter appeared an inferior version of pre-existing designs by Michael Rough and Manby. Turning his attention to the Society, he then quotes and endorses a correspondent in a previous issue of the magazine who wrote 'It is a great pity, that a society for such an excellent purpose, which has been so nobly patronised, and so liberally supported should suffer from incompetence or want of responsibility on the part of its officials'.[89] With this, the magazine's editor – who had excised 'paragraphs imputing unworthy motives to each other' from both men's letters – called a halt to the increasingly personalised debate.[90]

Efforts to raise money to finance the Society's operations continued. The Society had petitioned the Court of Common Council in September, 'complaining of distress'.[91] Then, in an apparent effort to highlight the Society's importance and need for financial support, the new Secretary addressed an inquest in November 1839, following a fatal fire in Widegate Street, thus:

> A gentleman, who we understand to be the secretary, addressed the jury, and said that he had the honour of appearing before them as the representative of the Royal Humane Society for the Preservation of Human Life from Fire. He only lamented that such was the state of the funds of the society that they were obliged a month ago, to give up their life-preserving machine. They were £300 in debt, and until they could augment their funds their humane objects were frustrated; they require funds to support eleven men, at £1 a week. The society had divided London into sixty-nine districts, and it required the co-operation of the humane to carry out the objects contemplated by them.[92]

Such efforts met with only limited success and, although some of Wivell's new water carts were built and put into service with the Society, its operations dwindled during 1840 and 1841.

Alternative schemes began to be aired, including some by key figures associated with the Society. In July 1840, for example, George Manby and Baddeley wrote to City Police Commissioner Daniel Whittle Harvey (1786-1863) and the Lord Mayor of London, recommending the formation of a fire-police force, equipped with extendable ladders and four to six portable fire extinguishers, all carried on a light carriage, as a type of rapid response unit to assist in saving lives and extinguishing fires.[93] Then, the police and London Fire Brigade proposed to London Corporation in October 1840 that a system of escapes using sliding ladders developed by a Mr Gregory, transported on Wivell's water-carts, should be established at 20 sites across the City, the whole to be staffed by the police.[94] The cost of the equipment was estimated at £300-£400.

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[86] *Mechanics' Magazine*, Saturday 19 October 1839, pp. 47-8.
[87] *Mechanics' Magazine*, Saturday 9 November 1839, p. 85.
[88] *Ibid*.
[89] *Ibid*., p. 87.
[90] *Ibid*.
[91] *The Morning Chronicle*, Monday 30 September 1839.
[92] *The Morning Chronicle*, Thursday 21 November 1839.
[93] *The Era*, Sunday 12 July 1840.
[94] *The Era*, Sunday 25 October 1840, p. 5 and *The Times*, Thursday 22 October 1840, p. 7.

In January 1841 a conductor was seriously injured falling through the escape's canvas, having attended a fire in Bloomsbury.[95] Around this time, Wivell resigned his post following a dispute with some new members of the Society's management committee. The cause of this is unclear, though the preceding accident and the Society's precarious financial situation may have been factors. By April that year he had moved to live in Birmingham, Wivell and his wife Harriet residing initially in Edgbaston with their niece, 15-year-old Sophia Tilbury. Here he resumed his painting career alongside continued work on fire-escape design.[96]

In May that year, the Society's conductors extinguished a fire in a ginger-beer manufacturer's premises at Clarendon Grove with help from locals to considerable acclaim,[97] doing the same in August at a fire at 19 Francis Street. The Society's Tottenham Court Road escape and water-cart attended the latter fire, extinguishing the flames before the fire brigade's arrival. This was the nineteenth time since February of that year that the Society's conductors had 'the satisfaction of affording effectual aid where one of the most serious calamities which can transpire has overtaken the inhabitants of the metropolis'.[98]

In February 1842 the Society vacated its then office at 24 Percy Street, requesting subscriptions be sent instead to a Mr Wood at 6 Great Russell Street, Bloomsbury, pending the opening of a new office.[99] It appears likely that this move was due to the Society's ever deepening financial crisis and with this their capacity to operate any coherent service at this time was minimal.

The Society nevertheless staggered on. In March 1843 disagreements within the committee resulted in an actual split within the Society. The Secretary at the time, a Mr Williams, headed one faction, which was based at 26 Charlotte Street, Bloomsbury Square, with a handful of members. The larger faction moved to 66 Albany Street, Regent's Park, and claimed and used the remaining fire-escapes. Both groups claimed the right to the name of the Society and professed identical aims, all of which probably resulted in considerable public consternation. The situation deteriorated into farce in June 1843 when Conductors Bond and Wilkes were arrested for removing a brass plate engraved with the words 'Office of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire' from the door of 26 Charlotte Street and taking it back to the Albany Street group. Brought to trial in Clerkenwell on 21 June before Judge Combe, Williams claimed to be responsible for the Society's property, while Charles Ridley claimed the Albany Street group was the legitimate Society, being supported in this assertion by the then treasurer, Mr Francis, one of the collectors, Mr Anderson, and a Mr Thomas. Which of them had title to the plate was unclear and Combe threw out the case, ordering the plate to be returned 'to those from whom it was taken'.[100] This was the nadir of the Society's fortunes.

Elsewhere in London, however, a number of fire-escapes were being operated with far more efficiency by local parishes and other voluntary groups. One of these, the St James's Society, had been running since 1840 and by 1843 had five stations in the parish, while a similar society in St Pancras, operating since 1835, had several others. In reporting on the former's annual report, *The Era* commented that:

> A general society might be formed by a general appeal to the community, so as to furnish these fire-escapes throughout the entire range of our bills of mortality, and we are persuaded that a strong and energetic appeal, by men of known weight and influence, would meet with a willing response, and with the same generosity which supports and endows our hospitals would be exerted on behalf of the high purpose under advocacy. It should be borne in mind, too…, that those working the fire-escapes as the primary duty would be found to be infrequently invaluable in the extinction of fire at its first breaking out, and in co-operating with, or preceding the fire-brigades by the greater celerity of their comparatively unimpeded movement, prove themselves invaluable in the rescue of property from the encroaching flames…[101]

The comments were not quite as campaigning as they seemed, as – in another part of London – just such a move was taking place and indeed was being reported in the same issue of *The Era*.

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[95] *The Examiner*, Sunday 10 January 1841.

[96] *Gentleman's Magazine*, August 1849, p. 215; 1841 English census. Curiously, William Baddeley was also in Birmingham when the census was taken that year.

[97] *The Times*, Monday 3 May 1841, p. 4.

[98] *The Times*, Saturday 28 August 1841, p. 6.

[99] *The Morning Chronicle*, Thursday 3 February 1842.

[100] *The Morning Post*, Thursday 22 June 1843.

[101] *The Era*, Sunday 1 October 1843.

3: REORGANISATION OF THE SOCIETY

Several philanthropic men who were concerned about the risk to life posed by fires in London had begun to liaise with a view to reforming the Society. Chief among the group were three men: Sampson Low, senior (1797-1886), his son Sampson Low, junior (1822-1871), and John George Henry Pownall (*c*.1792-1880). These were indeed 'men of known weight and influence', and they in turn gathered other able figures into the project over the years ahead.

These included the Master of the Stationers' Company and law publisher Joshua Whitehead Butterworth (1817-1895), insurance company manager Edward Baylis (1791-1861), Alderman and one-time Lord Mayor Thomas Quested Finnis (1801-1883), Deputy and long-time member of the City of London Corporation Thomas Jefferson Holt (*c*.1804-1861), Deputy Thomas Lott (*c*.1804-1869), one-time chairman of Middlesex magistrates Henry Morris Kemshead, JP, DL (*c*.1792-1878), banker Henry Blanshard (*c*.1820-1870), the pious banker and notorious fraudster Sir John Dean Paul (1802-1868), judge Thomas Henry Baylis (1817-1908), and many others.

Considering Sampson Low, senior, first, he was a prominent London publisher, who had established a bookshop, stationers, and circulating library in 42 Lamb's Conduit Street in 1819, which he operated until its sale in 1849. Running his publishing business from offices at 169 Fleet Street, then 47 Ludgate Hill from 1852 (later moving to 14 Ludgate Hill), Low gave the Society office space in these same addresses. He became the senior member of the Society's committee and clearly influenced several others in the publishing world to join the Society. Serving on its committee and as a trustee, Low's input went beyond this and in his efforts to ensure efficiency he could be found 'often going out at night to see that the men were attending to their duties properly, and his vigilance resulted in the saving of many lives'.[102] Low, senior, had various philanthropic interests in addition to the Society, establishing for example a number of day and Sunday schools for children of the poor.[103] His son, Sampson Low, junior, suffered from delicate health and was described as 'a great invalid'. Despite this, he took a considerable interest in his father's publishing business (though was, especially in his latter years, only able to visit its offices occasionally due to his infirmities). The future author of *The Charities of London: Comprehending the Benevolent, Educational and Religious Institutions* (first published in 1850), Low junior was noted as a 'conscientious and hard worker'. In due course, it would be acknowledged that the 'Society owed its existence and its continued prosperity to [his] zeal and efficiency'.[104] With addresses at Ludgate Hill and Great James Street, Low's life exemplified an evangelical spirit that also motivated others in the Society (a feature common among most humane societies of this period, most notably the Royal Humane Society).[105] Writing of various humane societies in London, Sampson Low reveals some of his own social and religious motivations when he remarked that:

> Very many of the ills of human life, no one can deny, are incident to want of care and common precautionary measures…That much may be done, under the blessing of God, for the saving of human life from the casualties of domestic and every-day life, is abundantly evidenced by the details of such as have had years to test their usefulness; and that much will be effected, both for safety and comfort of the lower classes especially, there is great reason to hope.[106]

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[102] *The New York Times*, Wednesday 18 April 1886, p. 3.

[103] For further details see the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, volume 34, 2004, pp. 554-5.

[104] *Daily News*, Wednesday 8 March 1871, p. 4.

[105] For a good discussion of the role of religious sentiment in the Royal Humane Society see C P Barclay *Heroes of Peace: The Royal Humane Society and the Award of Medals in Britain 1774-1914*, University of York, 2009, unpublished PhD thesis available online at: http://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk.

[106] S Low, *The Charities of London: Comprehending the Benevolent, Educational and Religious Institutions*, London: Sampson Low, 1850, p. 81.



National Library of Scotland

Sampson Low, Senior

It is likely that Low's marriage to Eliza Harriet Black, daughter of the Rev Robert Black, on 2 June 1853 both expressed and reinforced this tradition.[107]

The third of the key figures in the Society's reformation, Henry Pownall, was a well-known magistrate, having chaired the Middlesex bench for 26 years. Active in religious movements such as the Bible Society and the Church Missionary Society.

Pownall had also supported the Anti-Slavery Society and in 1829 proposed at a public meeting chaired by William Wilberforce, in Freemasons' Hall, that the children born to slaves in British dominions should be declared legally free. Having stood unsuccessfully as a Conservative parliamentary candidate in 1834 and 1837, Pownall would subsequently devote himself in his spare time to public philanthropic work.[108]

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[107] *The Ipswich Journal*, Saturday 4 June 1853; The Lows had a son, born on 2 December 1858 at their home at 12 Grove Terrace, Kentish Town, naming him Sampson.

[108] *The Pall Mall Gazette*, Friday 9 April 1880; *The Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*, Friday 14 May 1880; *The Times*, Wednesday 28 April 1880, p. 13; F Boase, *Modern English Biography*, volume 2, London: Frank Cass & Co, 1965, p. 1,615.

These men and others met on Tuesday 26 September 1843 in the Freemasons Tavern to organise a rescue effort. Pownall chaired the meeting and emphasised the importance of the Society's original aims, particularly the creation of a chain of local fire-escapes. Concurring with Pownall, Sampson Low related how the Cole family were saved from a fire at 6 Calthorpe Street in June that year by one of the Society's escapes, which had arrived on the scene half an hour before the fire engine.

It was claimed that the Society had 'suspended its operations since 1840' and Low said its state was due to 'pecuniary difficulties and some misunderstanding between the officers of the original Society'. Low was elected Secretary on a temporary basis and 15 people formed a committee that aimed to restore the Society.[109] Their mission was spelled out in the following resolution, which was carried unanimously:

> That this Meeting being fully satisfied with the paramount utility of a Society for the Protection of Life from Fire feel deep regret that the 'Royal Society' has lost much of the requisite support through various untoward circumstances and therefore consider it necessary to elect a Provisional Committee whose duty it shall be to endeavour by every means in its power to reinstate the Society in the good opinion of the Public and that the Committee have power to investigate the present circumstances of the Society and to report thereon at a General Meeting to be held in the month of March next.[110]

Following this meeting, the fire-escape sites (which had dwindled to six) and the Society's other property was transferred to Low and his provisional committee in return for £120, which was then used by the remnants of the previous committee to meet some of their outstanding financial commitments. Other creditors subsequently emerged and complained of further unpaid debts. The new committee (perhaps mindful of adverse publicity) adopted a conciliatory stance towards the creditors, arguing that – while not bound by the actions of the previous committee, which they clearly wanted to distinguish themselves from – they would consider such claims as might be referred.[111]

An arguably more ambivalent attitude was evinced at the same meeting and subsequently towards Abraham Wivell. He had continued to improve his fire-escape designs and supervised their manufacture in Birmingham. He supplied his latest improved escape to the Society in May 1844.[112] In October that year he unsuccessfully requested a £5 royalty from the Society for an escape they had manufactured apparently based on his designs.[113] The following year he contacted the Society again, this time enquiring whether the Society would honour a promise the previous committee had made to present him with a medal for his various fire-escape inventions. The Secretary was directed to inform Wivell 'that the Committee could not be bound by any of the engagements of the old committee but that any application he [might] make and the grounds for such application, must be addressed in full to the present committee, and the same would then be taken into consideration by them'.[114] Given the precedent of Manby (and the subsequent liberal stance towards honorary awards to other committee members), as well as Wivell's very substantial efforts towards the aims of the Society, his claim for recognition seems modest. Whether the Society granted him a medal however remains unclear. Six weeks after this application, Wivell attended one of the Society's committee meetings and outlined his latest model escape. This personal appearance was clearly more effective as the committee now agreed that 'some remuneration should be voted [to] Mr Wivell on the building of every such machine'.[115] An inspection report of Wivell's new escape by Henry Wright concluded that it was 'a very good one indeed, and all the alterations…were very great improvements; indeed he [Wright] could not imagine a better planned machine for general purposes'.[116] Purchasing this latest escape for £50, the Society agreed to pay Wivell a royalty of £5 for each new escape they made using his designs.[117] For Wivell and his family, as will be seen later, this belated recognition would prove to be partial at best.

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[109] *The Era*, Sunday 1 October 1843; *The Morning Chronicle*, Sunday 1 October 1843.

[110] P Cahill *The Society for the Protection of Life from Fire: Established 1836, Centenary Year 1936*. London: SPLF [unpublished, *c*.1965].

[111] General Committee Meeting, 20 June 1845.

[112] Committee Meeting, 15 April and 21 May 1844.

[113] Committee Meeting, 1 October 1844.

[114] General Committee Meeting, 20 June 1845.

[115] Rotary Committee, 1 August 1845.

[116] Rotary Committee, 1 September 1845.

[117] Rotary Committee, 17 September 1845.



National Portrait Gallery, London

Henry Pownell Esq

The first year of its operations saw the reorganised Society established in Low's office in Lamb's Conduit Street. A new permanent committee was formed and met for the first time on 2 April 1844. Sampson Low, junior, was appointed as Secretary at a salary of £50 per annum and Dr Charles Ridley,[118] who appears to have been on the former committee of the Society in at least 1839, was appointed as its Honorary Surgeon. Over 80 fires were attended by the Society's conductors from March 1844 to March 1845 and several lives saved. Two changes were made to the Society's medal: the word 'Royal' was inserted into the title and the date '1844' was substituted for the previously used '1836'. The modification of the title to include 'Royal' clearly added status. The change of date however is the most interesting, symbolically excising the original foundations of the Society in 1836, removing the new committee from that perceived failure, and creating an image of a new organisation. Why 1844 was chosen rather than 1843 when the reorganisation actually began is unclear, though it may reflect the time when the permanent committee first met.

The First Annual Meeting of the Society (under its new management) was held in the afternoon of Thursday 10 April 1845 at the Freemasons' Tavern. Henry Pownall again chaired the meeting, which extolled the values and ideas of the Society and publicised its achievements over the past year. During the course of the meeting a number of medals were presented, the first such award going to Joseph Hepworth for his bravery at a fire on 16 April 1844 in Clerkenwell. Afterwards, the conductors and their escapes were reviewed by the committee in Lincoln's Inn Fields.[119] At a General Meeting held four days later, three people were appointed Collectors of the Society, 'the said Collectors to receive as Commission, 15 per cent on all sums collected by them and 5 per cent on all sums paid to the Bankers, Treasurer or Secretary'. Through such means, the Society succeeded in generating an income of about £800 contributed by some 1,500 Subscribers during the first year following the reconstruction. These subscribers became members of the Society, the level of their subscriptions determining their category of membership.

It is evident from this that the Lows, together with the new committee, pursued the Society's objectives energetically, the Society being re-established on a strong foundation and the succeeding years witnessed its rapid growth and development. Following the reorganisation, the key objectives were detailed as follows:

> 1) To establish and maintain trained personnel (i.e. the Conductors) who would be instructed in and placed in charge of public fire-escapes, which were to be stationed in different parts of London, in order to be readily available in case of fire.
> 2) To evaluate various fire-escape designs and adopt the best of these for the Society's use.
> 3) To publicise information which would promote the best methods of insuring the safety of persons in danger from fire.
> 4) To confer awards on those who distinguish themselves in their attempts to save life from fire, particularly where such actions occur in or around London.

These appear substantially to be a restatement of the aims and objectives of the Society as it was in 1836, though the emphasis on training and quality was arguably higher. The training and improvement in the efficiency of conductors, and promotion of their public profile as popular heroes, would become an increasingly evident Society marketing strategy as they sought to consolidate their local grass-roots support and expand their operations.

This profile was augmented by the high visibility of fire-escapes and their conductors. The latter were provided with a uniform consisting of a cap with the initials of the Society painted on the front from 18 June 1844, which was shortly afterwards followed by a coat, with trousers being provided to conductors after 12 months service. From 1851 a helmet with bronze fittings and a chin chain was introduced. This uniform was essentially part of and allied to a disciplinary regime. The monitoring and enforcement of the latter was supported by the appointment of a part-time Superintendent – a Mr Spencer – on a salary of £15 per annum. His task was 'to visit each station during the night, twice a week at irregular intervals'. In due course this role was rebranded as an Inspector. The system was further described by Baddeley thus:

> At each of these places a fire-escape is stationed nightly, attended by a conductor who is well experienced in its use. The conductor is dressed in a neat brown

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[118] Born in Leicestershire in about 1806 the son of James Ridley, Charles Ridley became a licensed apothecary in 1829 and medical doctor (MRCS England) in 1830. He lived at 6 Charlotte Street, Bloomsbury, London, appearing there in 1851 with his wife Caroline Martha Ann (née Sheppard, who he married on 25 July 1843) and later in 1861 a second wife Sarah. He died on 3 January 1868 (St Giles [London] Register District, Jan-March 1868, vol. 1b, p. 306) and his burial took place on 9 January at Kensal Green All Souls Cemetery. He left effects valued at £8,000 in his will (National Probate Calendar, 1861-1941).

[119] *The Morning Chronicle*, Wednesday 9 April 1845.

> uniform with cap and buttons; he is equipped with a belt, axe, crowbar, etc, and it is his duty to attend all fires in his neighbourhood upon the first alarm being given to him. The conductors are visited at uncertain periods throughout the night by their inspectors, and also by other officers of the society. Any breach of discipline is severely punished, and inebriety subjects the offender to instant dismissal.[120]

Baddeley's reference to 'inebriety' among the conductors pointed to an ongoing issue. Drinking was widespread in the culture at the time. The Society's hierarchy however was keen on temperance among its conductors. Difficulties arose for them in judging the level of intoxication among conductors. One conductor, for instance, Thomas Wood, having been disciplined for fighting with a fellow conductor in 1844, was subsequently reported by Low, junior, 'for being the worse for liquor while on duty the evening of 18th inst, but as the evidence did not appear conclusive as to his having been unfit for duty, he was merely reprimanded but was informed at the same time by the Chairman that upon the next report made against him for his conduct, he would be discharged'.[121] Such cases were not unusual and in 1856 the committee considered relocating escape stations as far as possible from pubs.[122]

The regulations governing the conductors had developed over time. In April 1844 Conductor Joseph Dolby was dismissed from his post for misconduct. At the same time the committee began to draw up an explicit set of regulations governing conductors and guidance for the public to aid rescue work.[123] The initial list of 14 rules and regulations were clarified and augmented over the ensuing years and by 1864 they numbered 18 (see the final endpapers for the former and appendix III for the latter). This combination of heightened profile and stringent enforcement of discipline would gradually begin to have an effect on the success of the Society and its public image.

The local nature of the fire-escape stations and their attendant conductors, supported by parish contributions and donations from local subscribers, gave the organisation a necessary visibility within their communities. This was important in sustaining and expanding the organisation. It was even more important in the actual operation of the fire-escapes themselves. A very rapid arrival at fires was essential where lives were at risk. Achieving this depended on conductors receiving prompt notification about fires and being able to call upon public assistance in running with the wheeled escape to the scene. Policemen were preferred assistants in such cases but ordinary members of the public contributed substantially to these roles. Such active participation was encouraged by the offer of a series of monetary rewards. The final scale of these was as follows:

> 1) To the person giving the call at a fire-escape station, whereby the Conductor is enabled to save life (persons 'calling' to assist the conductor) – 5s.0d
> 2) If it enables the conductor to arrive before an engine – 2s.6d
> 3) If after an engine – 1s.6d
> 4) To the second and third persons assisting the conductor, each 1s.0d.'

Such a regime was clearly effective and numerous accounts report escapes arriving in advance of the fire engines. The possibility of rewards probably also contributed to the popular enthusiasm for the Society and the increasing status of the conductors as heroes. The necessity of an efficient service was highlighted by events at a fatal fire that occurred at Raggett's Hotel in Dover Street, Piccadilly, on 27 May 1845.[124] One of the Society's conductors apparently made a bungling effort to raise the fire-escape to the windows at which it was needed, the mishandling of which may have contributed to the death toll. The same day as the newspapers carried news of the inquests, the Society – perhaps in an effort to mitigate damage to its reputation – published guidelines for the public to assist them in escaping from burning buildings.[125] The Society then held a special meeting to consider how such loss of life might be prevented in future. Chaired by Pownall, the committee argued that further escapes staffed by efficient conductors were needed throughout the city, with the government being urged to alternatively compel parishes to fund these, to directly fund the Society or, most radically, to take over its rescue functions. The unnamed conductor who had attended the Raggett's Hotel fire was noted at the meeting as having been

[120] *Mechanics' Magazine*, Saturday 10 April 1847, p. 349.
[121] General Meeting, 20 June 1845.
[122] Quarterly General Meeting, 25 July 1856.
[123] Committee Meetings, 15 April and 23 May 1844.
[124] For an account of this fire see *The Examiner*, 31 May 1845, p. 348.
[125] *Lloyd's Weekly London Newspaper*, Sunday 1 June 1845.

dismissed.[126] Following such publicity, the Corporation of the City of London made a grant of £200 to the Society to provide a further six escapes, which were completed and sited across the City by September 1846. This brought the Society's escape stations to 21, distributed across one third of London. They had, by then, saved some 19 lives since 1844.[127]

The expansion of the reorganised Society may be partly attributed to the ability of its various officers and the confidence they generated. The leading day to day officers of the Society by 1850 were Low, junior, (the Secretary) and Sir John Dean Paul, Bart, (who acted as its Treasurer), the latter being part of Strahan, Paul and Bates bank at 217 Strand.[128] Paul was also a member of the Society's Management Committee, while his company acted as the Society's bankers. He was apparently a pious man, prominent in religious circles at the time. As will be discussed later, there was more to Sir John Paul than met the eye. Nor were all of the officers easy individuals.

Among the more challenging, the Society's one-time arch critic and rival of the unfortunate Wivell, William Baddeley was – in about 1846 – appointed as a superintendent or inspector with the Society. Living at 29 Alfred Street, Islington, Baddeley was given responsibility for supervising the East District, while the previously mentioned Mr Spencer, residing at 7 Great Portland Street, occupied the same position for the West District. With his appointment, Baddeley's criticism ceased and he instead became an enthusiastic exponent of the reformed Society. In 1847 he thus described the Society as 'decidedly a *popular* and *public* institution; its performances within the limits of which subscriptions have hitherto permitted its extension, have been most gratifying. Let us hope that the demonstration of usefulness already afforded, will induce the extension and permanent establishment of so humane and benevolent a society'.[129]

Baddeley, however, continued to be an argumentative and partisan man and had difficult relations with various people including James Braidwood and his fire brigade staff. Noting one such episode in his diary, Braidwood recorded how he had 'called at Mr Merryweather, told him that I did not admire Mr Baddeley's writing in the *Mechanics' Magazine* and that it was believed to be done at least with Mr Merryweather's consent, also that Mr Baddeley spoke in an unpleasant and taunting way to the men in charge of the steam engine, that if he continued to do so I would not be answerable for the consequences'.[130] Such an attitude was in contrast to the usually harmonious and co-operative relations that existed between the Society's conductors and the fire-brigade.[131]

Year after year the Society's fire-escape provision and their operations in London from the 1844 re-establishment showed a steady development resulting in an increasing numbers of lives saved. These developments are summarised in the table below.[132]

During this period the Society attempted to lobby not only parishes and London authorities, but it also approached the government to develop fire protection, several committee members and members of the public for instance meeting with officials from the Home Office on 20 June 1848.[133]

Criticism of the Society remained sporadic, though this was generally strongly challenged by its officers. For example, in December 1848, *The Examiner* asserted in an editorial that people should make their own escape plans in case of fire, especially through improved emergency access through neighbouring properties either over the roof or along balconies, that the Society escapes

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[126] *The Examiner*, Saturday 7 June 1845, p. 362.

[127] *The Era*, Sunday 6 September 1846, p. 14; *London Journal*, October 1846, p. 74.

[128] S Low, *The Charities of London*, London: Sampson Low, 1850, p. 85.

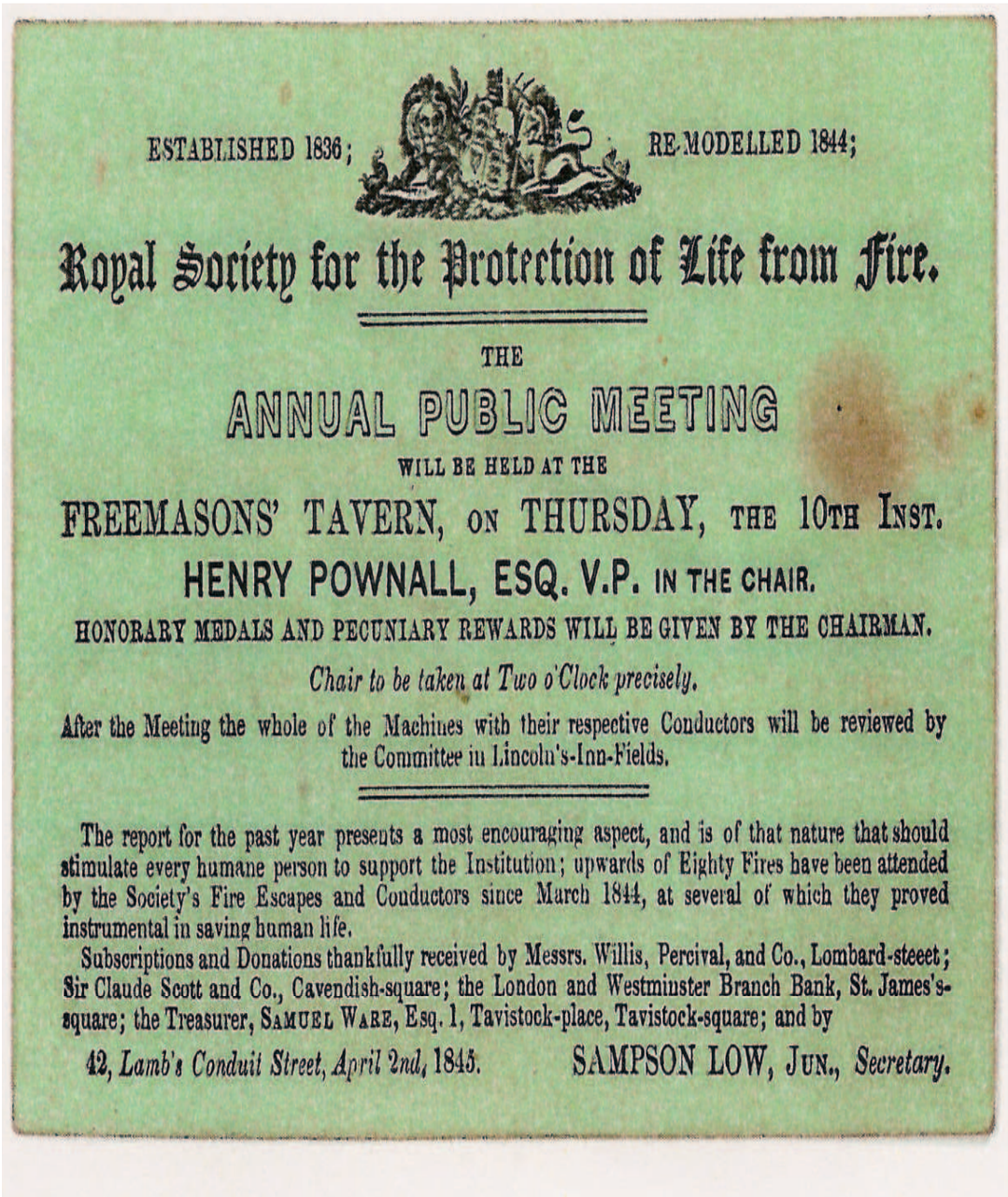
[129] *Mechanics' Magazine*, Saturday 10 April 1847, p. 350.

[130] B Henham, *True Hero: The Life and Times of James Braidwood, Father of the British Fire Service*. Romford: Braidwood Books, 2000, p. 166. Baddeley and Merryweather were business associates, with Merryweather producing some of his colleague's designs, such as the farmer's fire engine.

[131] *Ibid*., p. 128. An unusual exception occurred in 1853 when Braidwood complained about Conductor Thomas Bell who, he claimed, caused unnecessary damage to shutters before the fire brigade arrived at the fire.

[132] Data derived from various sources including Low, *The Charities of London*, p. 85; *The Morning Chronicle*, Friday 30 June 1854; *The Times*, Saturday 6 January 1855, p. 8; *The Morning Chronicle*, Monday 30 June 1856; *The Morning Chronicle*, Wednesday 24 June 1857; *Daily News*, Wednesday 6 January 1858; *North Wales Chronicle*, Saturday 15 January 1859; *Daily News*, Saturday 23 June 1860; *The Times*, Wednesday 3 July 1861, p. 10; *The Times*, Tuesday 19 January 1864, p. 8; *The Times*, Thursday 4 January 1866, p. 11; *Penny Illustrated Newspaper*, Saturday 11 August 1866; *Daily News*, 10 August 1867.

[133] *The Times*, Wednesday 21 June 1848, p. 6.



ESTABLISHED 1836; RE-MODELLED 1844;

Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire.

THE

ANNUAL PUBLIC MEETING

WILL BE HELD AT THE

FREEMASONS' TAVERN, ON THURSDAY, THE 10TH INST.

HENRY POWNALL, ESQ. V.P. IN THE CHAIR.

HONORARY MEDALS AND PECUNIARY REWARDS WILL BE GIVEN BY THE CHAIRMAN.

Chair to be taken at Two o'Clock precisely.

After the Meeting the whole of the Machines with their respective Conductors will be reviewed by the Committee in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields.

The report for the past year presents a most encouraging aspect, and is of that nature that should stimulate every humane person to support the Institution; upwards of Eighty Fires have been attended by the Society's Fire Escapes and Conductors since March 1844, at several of which they proved instrumental in saving human life.

Subscriptions and Donations thankfully received by Messrs. Willis, Percival, and Co., Lombard-steeet; Sir Claude Scott and Co., Cavendish-square; the London and Westminster Branch Bank, St. James's-square; the Treasurer, SAMUEL WARE, Esq. 1, Tavistock-place, Tavistock-square; and by

42, Lamb's Conduit Street, April 2nd, 1845. SAMPSON LOW, JUN., *Secretary.*

Admission ticket for the Society's 1843 Annual Meeting

Year ending	Income	Stations	Conductors (& Supernumaries)	Inspectors	Fires attended	Lives saved
1845	£1,128	11	6	1	116	13
1846	-	15	-	2	96	7
1847	£1,719	21	-	2	139	11
1848	£1,826	25	-	2	197	17
1849	£1,999	26	-	2	223	31
1850	£2,077	28	-	2	198	10
1851	£2,222	30	-	2	226	36
1852	£3,174	34	*nearly* 40	2	253	25
1853	£3,665	40	-	2	265	46
1854	£3,172	40	-	2	328	28
1855	-	43	-	2	354	41
1856	£3,894	45	-	2	368	59
1857	£4,724	50	60	2	390	70
1858	-	62	60 (+ *several* s'num)	3	545	61
1859	£6,950	70	-	4	482	60
1860	£7,280	72	-	4	524	94
1861	£7,338	73	76	4	507	61
1862	£7,842	75	79 (+ 4 s'num)	4	658	95
1863	-	81	84 (+ 6 s'num)	4	613	67
1864	£9,429	85	88 (+ 7 s'num)	5	629	72
1865	-	85	89 (+ 6 s'num)	5	712	68
1866	£9,294	85	89 (+ 6 s'num)	5	695	78
1867	£8,761	85	89 (+ 6 s'num)	5	781	100
Total	-	-	-	-	**9,299**	**1,150**

***Table 1*: Expansion of the Society between 1844 and 1867**

were useless, and they 'would do well to make a bonfire of their gimcrack engine'.[134] Taking up this criticism, Low discussed two cases the newspaper had cited, noting that in one nobody was in danger and thus the escape did not need to be raised, while at the second the fatalities were due to the location of the fire 'at the back of a badly arranged house', which trapped the occupants within. Low then noted various public commendations the Society had received for its efforts and emphasised the record of 65 lives it had saved since 1843.[135]

Abraham Wivell now briefly returned to London to demonstrate an improved escape design at the London Gasworks at Vauxhall on Tuesday 15 August 1848. At the event a Mr Phillips began with a demonstration of his 'Fire Annihilator' (a type of fire extinguisher) to the Home Secretary Sir George Grey (1799-1882) and other members of the government. Wivell then showed how the fire-escape, initially illustrating its utility in assisting people to escape from burning buildings and then how it could be also used by firemen as a platform from which they could more effectively direct their hoses at fires.[136] Despite this demonstration appearing promising, Wivell failed to gain substantial backing and returned to Birmingham where, the following year, on 29 March 1849, he died from chronic bronchitis.[137]

His death notice in the *Liverpool Mercury* recorded him as 'Mr Abraham Wivell, artist and inventor of fire-escapes adopted by the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire'.[138] Following this, Wivell's wife Harriet approached the Society seeking some financial assistance, particularly in the light of her late husband's inventions.[139] This resulted in the Secretary highlighting at the next committee meeting that as an interim measure he had secured £5 for Mrs Wivell as a premium payable on a single escape that had been ordered by Sweden.[140] This was augmented at the end of July with a further £5, paid 'with the distinct understanding that it is only as a gratuity, and that its continuance upon the building of future "fire-escapes" must not be

[134] *The Examiner*, 9 December 1848, p. 786.
[135] *Ibid*., p. 835.
[136] *The Era*, Sunday 20 August 1848, p. 7; *The Standard*, Wednesday 16 August 1848.
[137] *Gentleman's Magazine*, August 1849, p. 215.
[138] *Liverpool Mercury*, Friday 13 April 1849; see also his obituary in the *Art Journal*, July 1849, pp. 205-6 (this being subsequently reproduced in *Gentleman's Magazine*, August 1849, pp. 213-215).
[139] Rotary Committee Minutes, 23 May 1849.
[140] Rotary Committee Minutes, 11 July 1849.

expected'.[141] The accounts for 1850-51 show Mrs Wivell receiving a £5 gratuity following the building of one escape.[142] This was not quite the end of the story for the unhappy Wivell family. Wivell's eldest son, Abraham Wivell, junior, tried to pursue a career as an artist and later photographer to support the family and was noted as having some talent. By January 1863, however, he was also in difficulties and was made bankrupt.[143] He died in December 1867. Harriet Wivell struggled on and in 1868, being 'in much reduced circumstances', again petitioned the Society for assistance. Her plea was met with a donation of £20, with the proviso that 'this must be understood as a final grant'.[144] By 1871 her situation appears to have improved slightly as she was then living at 7 King Edward's Place, Ladywood, Birmingham, with two of her daughters and one domestic servant. Harriet Wivell died on 6 March 1885 of 'natural decay'.[145]

As part of its remit the Society sought occasionally to test new equipment that might be of use to its conductors. One such piece of apparatus was a smoke mask, developed by two members of the Society, Conductor Robinson and Brigadier Siems. They demonstrated this to members of the committee in March 1849, remaining in a smoke filled room for 10 minutes. The sub-committee present agreed the mask would be of considerable benefit to its conductors and recommended its adoption to the general committee as soon as the inventors were able to have them manufactured.[146] The fate of this particular smoke mask is unclear, though such devices were reputedly unpopular with some conductors.

Nevertheless, the idea would re-emerge in 1862 when another version would be tested. That year, representatives from the Society attended trials in Millwall of a respirator developed by a Mr Bradbrook. In March Mr Gordon, one of the Society's inspectors, and four conductors, Samuel Wood, Edward Preston, Horton, and Edward Cooke, together with William Roberts and his sons, inventors of a self-propelled steam fire-engine, tested the new breathing apparatus in a smoke chamber. They remained in the iron fire-proof room for over 13 minutes, surrounded by smoke and toxic fumes. Impressed by the results, the Society ordered several respirators for conductors to use.[147]

Other styles of fire-escapes were also considered. Among those tested, that by David Davies (1818-1890), a Great Western Railway carriage builder, was commended and one such escape was stationed by the Society at the obelisk at Blackfriars Road in June 1848 and attracted some public interest.[148] This was apparently the third escape Davis had designed. This escape, capable of being used to a height of 42 feet, consisted of a single strong ladder, braced on its underside with wire ropes. On the front of the ladder a sliding balcony is fitted, which is moved up and down with the aid of a windlass operated from the sides of the carriage (with lever-brakes and rubber buffers providing added security against the balcony's uncontrolled descent). A supplemental ladder was stored underneath the main ladder and this could be fitted to the balcony so that access could be gained to third floors.

This escape was used in the rescue of the Clare family in August 1848. A fire broke out in the lower part of their property in Friar Street, Blackfriars Road. Clare, his wife and child were rescued by Conductor Thomas Wood just as they were preparing to jump from an upper window. Wood was awarded a Testimonial and half a sovereign for his efforts.[149]

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[141] General Quarterly Meeting Minutes, 30 July 1849.

[142] *Fifteenth Annual Report of the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire*, 1851, p. 18.

[143] *London Gazette*, 16 January 1863, p. 312.

[144] Quarterly General Meeting Minutes, 23 October 1868.

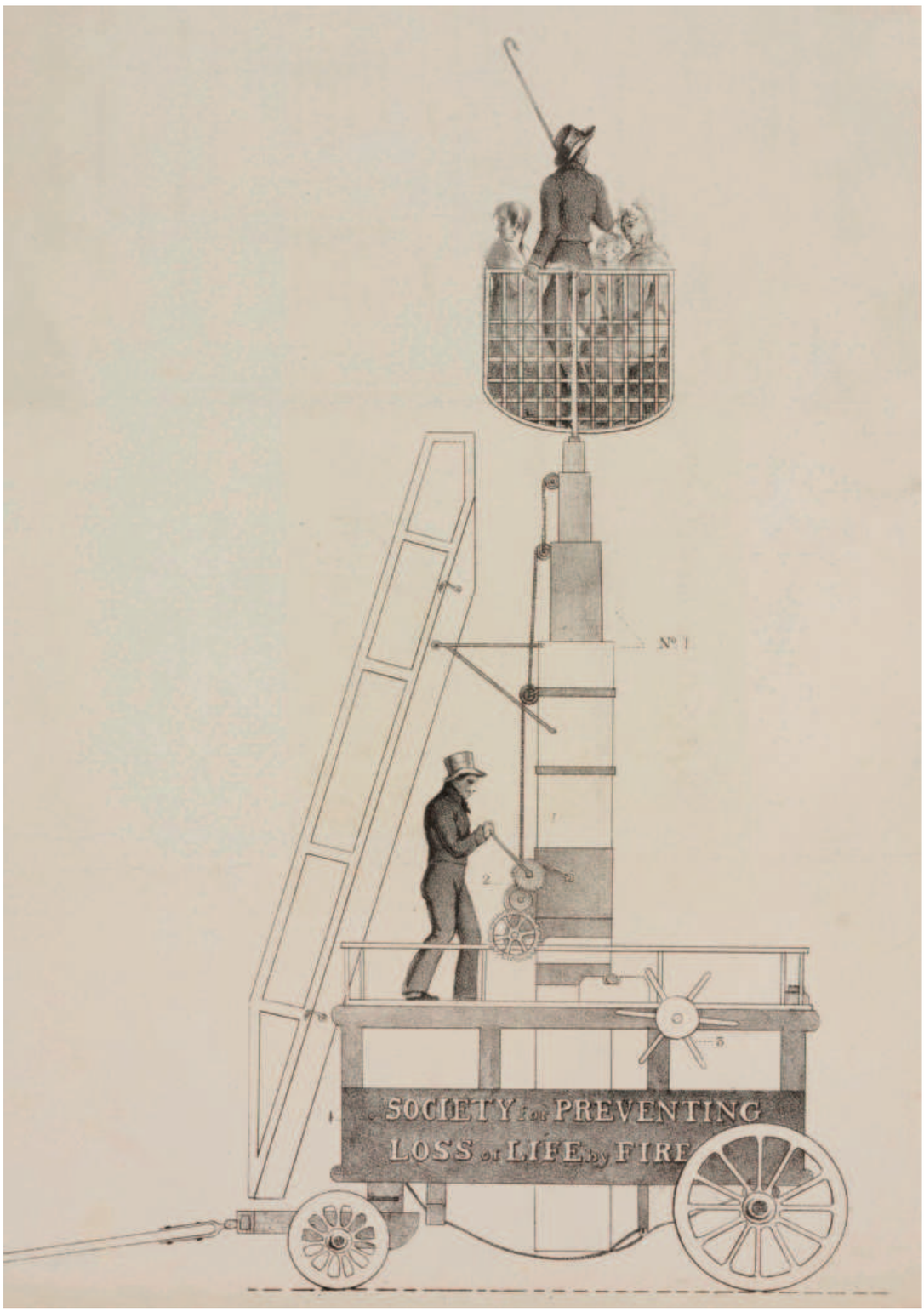
[145] Bob Freeman, email to RW dated 17 July 2009.

[146] *The Literary Gazette and Journal of Belles Lettres,* March 1849, pp. 241-2.

[147] *Birmingham Daily Post*, Tuesday 11 March 1862.

[148] It was for example depicted in the *Illustrated London News*, 17 February 1849, and *The Lady's Newspaper*, in 1851.

[149] *Illustrated London News*, 17 February 1849; *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper*, Sunday 20 May 1849.



John Hudson's Fire Escape Design c1830



Wivell's Fire Escape



Davies's fire escape, stationed by the Society at the Obelisk, Blackfriars Road

4: THE GREATEST CONDUCTOR

Samuel John ('James') Wood (1826-1890) joined the Society as a conductor in about 1850, being stationed in the recently established Whitechapel station. Over the next 17 years he would become the best known and most decorated conductor in the Society.

Born on 11 March 1826 and baptised in St Giles, Cripplegate, on 5 September the following year, Samuel Wood was the son of brass founder Samuel George Wood and his wife Mary, the family home being in New Court, Cripplegate.[150] Wood's father died in 1838, leaving him, his sisters Eliza and Mary, and brother James, to be raised by his mother, who now made ends meet working as a bonnet maker. By this point the family were living in Milton Street, Cripplegate. Described later as being an athletic, intelligent, and modest Londoner, Wood became a supernumerary conductor with the Society and on 24 January 1850 – having been passed as fit by the Society's Surgeon – he was appointed as a Conductor. He was to serve his first year on probationary basis, as was usual with new recruits. Wood soon proved to be a brave and capable conductor when, together with Fireman Goddard, he rescued a woman and two children from a fire in Theobalds Road (case 1,056). The Rotary Committee meeting on 24 March 1850, considered the report of the incident and recommended that each man was to be presented with a 'certificate on vellum'. In fact, at the subsequent General Committee Meeting held on 26 April 1850, it was recorded that, '...a Testimonial was voted to Fire Escape Conductor Wood No.4, with the addition of half a sovereign in consequence of fresh confirmation of the degree of credit attached to him....'

The following year saw Wood still living at home with his mother and younger brother James (a 17 year old whale bone cutter). He was soon in action saving life. Together with Conductor Long and PC Barber (92H), Wood was awarded a Testimonial (case 1,214)[151]. Just a few months later he rescued an elderly couple – Mr and Mrs John Atkins – from a fire at 41 Fashion Street, Spitalfields, that started at 4am on 19 March. Finding the husband collapsed in a room on the upper floor, Wood learned from him that his 70 year old wife was in the loft. Climbing onto the roof, Wood smashed his way through the tiles and eventually managed to drag the woman out and get her safely to the ground. The Society awarded Wood its silver medal for his efforts that morning, the award being presented to him at the Anniversary Meeting in May 1851 (see case 1,314 for further details).

Over the next year Wood attended several other fires, saving seven people from a fire at 12 Tyssen Street, Bethnal Green, on 21 November 1851 during which he was assisted by two constables, Henry Hudson and Thomas Barnes. He received a Testimonial from the Society for this.[152] He then gained a further Testimonial 'for the prompt and efficient services he rendered at several fires during last year, both in assisting to extinguish the fire and securing the safety of the inmates'.[153] It was a dramatic start to his career as a conductor and far more was to follow.

Despite Wood's reputed modesty, the press took considerable interest in his rescues and feats of bravery. Hitherto, press reports of fire rescues in the 1830s and into the 1840s had often provided scant detail on the rescuers and their actions, though the coverage increased during the 1840s and subsequently as public interest in everyday sensation, if not heroism, grew. Wood's actions thus coincided with a particular historical moment, when wider cross sections of the public were hungry for heroes. His picture appeared in *Cassell's Illustrated Family Paper* in 1857 and the accompany article was taken up by the media and reprinted in other papers.[154] Wood would acknowledge to their reporter a catalogue of rescues which included saving:

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[150] St Giles, Cripplegate, baptism register, 1827, p. 174 (entry 8,499), London Metropolitan Archives and www.ancestry.co.uk.

[151] QGM 16 January 185

[152] QGM 29 January 1852, case 1,516; *Morning Post*, Saturday 26 June 1852, p. 3; the Society's *Sixteenth Annual Report*, 1852, p. 21 (case 1,516). The constables received a reward of half a sovereign each for their help. PC Hudson later assisted Wood in another rescue in 1854 for which he received a Testimonial and half a sovereign from the Society (see case 2,218).

[153] QGM 29 April 1852.

[154] *Cassells Illustrated Family Paper*, 5 December 1857, p. 8.



National Library of Scotland

Conductor Samuel Wood with his dog 'Bill'

> …ten people one night up in Colchester Street, and five another night in the same street, and four in Somerset Street, and three others in the Whitechapel Road, and seven women and two children in Ticehurst Street, and two people in Little Haley Street, and five more in the Whitechapel Road again, four more another time in the same place, and three more on another occasion, and four in Blackchurch Lane [*sic*], and two another time, and six another time.[155]

By then the inhabitants of Whitechapel had presented him with a silver watch and £20, while the Society had conferred their silver and bronze medals, as well as several testimonials and monetary awards on him. Wood was presented with the watch and community subscription at the 1854 Society annual meeting in recognition of his efforts at a fire at 1 Colchester Street, Whitechapel, on 29 April 1854. The rescue, described by a *New York Daily Times* reporter, was indeed dramatic:

> On his arrival the fire was raging throughout the back of the house, and smoke issuing from every window; upon entering the first floor room, part of which was on fire, he discovered five persons almost insensible from the excessive heat; he immediately descended the ladder with a woman on his shoulders, and holding a child by its nightclothes in his mouth; again ascended, re-entered the room, and having enabled the father to escape, had scarcely descended, with a child under each arm, when the whole building became enveloped in flames, rendering it impossible to attempt a rescue of the remainder of the unfortunate inmates.[156]

This particular rescue would become one of the most celebrated of Wood's achievements, for which the Society granted him a Testimonial on Vellum for his actions on this occasion (case 2,364, but see also case 2,218),[157] these being conferred on him at the same ceremony as the awards from the Whitechapel community, while a 'distinguished clergyman' gave him a bible at the same event.

Further distinctions would follow. Thus, in 1858 he received a clasp to his silver medal for bravery in a rescue at Spectacle Alley. The following year he received a further clasp and testimonial for saving six people from a fire in the High Street and others in Leman Street. He had also received a gold medal from the inhabitants of Whitechapel by this time. The end of 1859 saw him save further lives in a fire in the High Street on 6 December, in recognition of which he was awarded another clasp and testimonial at the 1860 awards ceremony. In 1861 he received another silver clasp and £2 for saving five people from a fire in Spectacle Alley. Further silver clasps were awarded in 1862 and 1864 for rescues from fires in Church Lane and Leman Street. Wood thus collected six clasps to his silver medal over the years, leaving aside his Society bronze medal, numerous testimonials, private gold medal, and other presentation pieces. (Details on all his medal rescues are given in section III.) In addition to these awards Wood was also the recipient of testimonials from the Society at various times. The 1865 Society annual meeting, for instance, saw him receive three testimonials, one of which, as Sampson Low junior told the meeting, was for Wood's having 'saved an immense destruction, both of life and property, by jumping [15 feet] down into the basement of a building, to turn off the supply of gas, at the risk of his own life'.[158] This incident had taken place on 26 February 1865 at Defries & Co's premises in Houndsditch, where a gasometer was in danger of exploding.

Wood was habitually accompanied to work by a terrier named Bill, which he had inherited in about 1852 from another conductor who had died in the service. Bill would bark at the first sign of a fire, then run ahead announcing Wood's approach. When the escape was in place, Bill would run up the canvas chute as Wood climbed the ladder and as Wood entered a building with his helmet over his eyes, shouting to locate any people, Bill would also dash in barking in search of those in trouble. It was dangerous work for Bill, just as it was for Wood, and over the years Bill sustained his share of injuries; he was run over three times and lost much of his coat as a result of falling into a tub of boiling water in the 1851 fire at 41 Fashion Street.[159] Like Wood, Bill's behaviour attracted public attention and on one occasion he was presented with a collar, on which was inscribed 'I am the fire-escape man's dog, my name is Bill. When "fire" is called I am never

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[155] *Glasgow Herald*, Wednesday 7 April 1858.

[156] *New York Daily Times*, 16 August 1854; the account is actually derived verbatim from the Society's *Eighteenth Annual Report, 1853-4* (1854, p. 22); see also F Mundell *Stories of the Lifeboat and the Fire Brigade*, London: Sunday School Union, 1894, pp. 59-60.

[157] It was suggested by at least one newspaper that Wood's testimonial for this rescue would have been accompanied by a monetary award from the Society had he not received the gifts from the people of Whitechapel (*New York Daily Times*, 16 August 1854).

[158] *The City Press*, Saturday 15 July 1865, p. 6.

[159] F Mundell *Stories of the Lifeboat and the Fire Brigade*, London: Sunday School Union, 1894, pp. 61-62.

still. I bark for my master, all danger brave, to bring the escape – human life to save'.[160] Some commentators, such as Mundell, went so far as to attribute much of Wood's success to Bill.[161] Wood's fame led to envy from some in Whitechapel and foul play was suspected when later Bill was found dead, having been apparently poisoned. A £20 reward failed to elicit the culprit.

Wood married Mary Hemming on 16 June 1862 in South Hackney Parish Church and they went on to live in Havelock Road, Silk Street, and then Waterloo Building, Bethnal Green among other addresses. Together they had at least five children, Mary (*c*. 1860), Louisa (*c*. 1863), Ann Jane (*c*. 1864), Samuel James (*c*. 1866), and Clara (*c*. 1869). Family responsibilities did not appear to diminish Wood's efforts.

Being a conductor was a hazardous occupation in many ways and Wood's career illustrates this well. His health began to suffer during this period. In October 1859 he was reported as being seriously ill and his doctor advised him to leave London for several weeks recuperation, a view supported by the Society's surgeon, Dr Ridley. The Committee granted him three pounds to support his recuperation.[162]

Returning to work, Wood nearly died in December that year. Attending a fire at 124 High Street, Whitechapel, in the early hours of Tuesday morning, 6 December, Wood was greeted with shrieks from the residents who had gathered and were trapped in a second floor front room. Wood coolly mounted the escape and brought all 11 people down to safety. Having succeeded in this, Wood was overcome by the smoke and fumes and collapsed unconscious in the burning building. He was lucky on this occasion as another conductor, Edward Cooke, now arrived on the scene. Cooke went after him into the blaze and through what the Society Minute Book terms his 'intrepid and persevering conduct' he managed to carry Wood out. Once outside in the fresh air, it was half an hour before Wood regained full consciousness and was able to leave the scene. It had been a close run thing for Wood. The Society proposed awarding him a savings book with £5 for his efforts, though in the end he was granted a silver bar and testimonial. Edward Cooke, the man who had saved Wood's life, received the Society's silver medal (see cases 5,447 and 5,544).

These were the occupational hazards the conductors faced. Two years later, in December 1861, Wood's general health was noted as 'improved', though Dr Ridley cautioned that he was at 'risk of brain disease if subject to continued excitement'. One option might have been a transfer to a quieter station, one less stressful than Whitechapel. Discussing the surgeon's opinion with Wood, Sampson Low told the Committee that Wood 'could not be induced to relinquish his present station of his own choice and preferred taking the risk – to use his own words "anything else would make him miserable"'.[163] London at the time was clearly an unhealthy environment, with disease, pollution, and poor sanitation being widespread risks to public health. The conductors had the additional health hazards of constant night-shifts with limited protection from the elements and acute exposure to fires with their attendant toxic smoke and other dangers. With even higher morbidity in Whitechapel and a higher frequency of fires there, it is probable that these factors impacted on Wood's health. Emotionally, being a conductor was stressful and while this would have contributed to Wood's state, he also appears to have been somewhat addicted to the accompanying excitement of the role.

Wood was clearly a psychologically driven individual and his feats became part of popular folklore. The writer Robert Ballantyne celebrated Wood's feats in his 1867 book *Fighting the Flames*, while in 1893 he would write thus:

> There was a man in the London Brigade who deserves special notice—*viz*. Conductor Samuel Wood. Wood had been many years in the service, and had, in the course of his career, saved no fewer than 168 lives…I have had some correspondence with Conductor Wood, whose broad breast was covered with medals and clasps won in the service of the F.E. Society. At one fire he rushed up the escape before it was properly pitched, and caught in his arms a man named Middleton as he was in the act of jumping from a window…At another time, on arriving at a fire, he found that the family thought all had escaped, 'but,' wrote the conductor to me, 'they soon missed the old grandmother. I immediately broke the shop door open and passed through to the first-floor landing, where I discovered the old lady lying insensible. I placed her on my back, and crawled back to the door, and I am happy to say she is alive now and doing well!.[164]

[160] *Glasgow Herald*, Wednesday 7 April 1858.
[161] F Mundell *Stories of the Lifeboat and the Fire Brigade*, London: Sunday School Union, 1894, p. 58.
[162] RC, 19 October 1859.
[163] RC, 24 December 1861.
[164] R M Ballantyne *Personal Reminiscences in Book Making*, London: James Nisbet & Co., 1893.



R M Ballantyne – 'Fighting the Flames'

Conductor Wood at the Colchester Street fire on 29 April 1854



National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

'The rescue' by John Everett Millais (1855)

It is evident from this that Wood gained great personal satisfaction from his work and took a keen and sometimes wry interest in people.

Wood transferred to the Metropolitan Fire Brigade in 1867 and by 1871 the Woods were living at the Amhurst Road Fire Station. Wood remained with the brigade until 1880. Following his retirement, Wood lived at 10 Wilmott Street, Bethnal Green and latterly at 109 Wilmott Street. By 1881 three of his children were working, Mary and Ann as shirt collar makers and Samuel junior as a warehouse boy.[165] Wood himself later supplemented his pension by working as a caretaker for the Whitechapel District Board at Baker's Row Recreation Ground.

Samuel Wood died in the beginning of 1890 and was buried in Bow Cemetery on 12 January that year, his obituary noting he had saved 183 lives.[166] His fame was such that newspapers across the world mentioned his passing.[167]



Roger Willoughby

Today, Samuel Wood's grave lies lost in the undergrowth of Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park, which since 2001 has been a local nature reserve within the borough

[165] 1881 English census.
[166] *The Illustrated Police News*, Saturday 18 January 1890; *Belfast News-Letter*, Thursday 16 January 1890, p. 3; Bethnal Green Register District, Jan-March 1890, vol. 1c, p. 184; Wood was buried in consecrated ground in the cemetery in grave number C973 (LMA ref: CTHO/1/55).
[167] See e.g. the *Southland Times*, Wednesday 19 March 1890, p. 2.

5: THE YEARS OF GROWTH

The period from Samuel Wood's greatest achievements, roughly 1850 to the early 1860s, saw the Society's operations, particularly its fire-escape organisation, develop substantially: from 28 stations in 1850 to 72 by 1860, with commensurate expansion of its subscriber base, funding, and staff. This was a flourishing period, which would be marked with one significant scandal.

The decade began in 1850 with the Society deciding to revamp its medal design. The medal was to be smaller, capable of being suspended from a ribbon and would have a different obverse and reverse from the previous type. The obverse this time would show a man carrying an apparently unconscious woman away from a stylised building fire, with the motto 'Actions are our's results are god's' around the upper half of the circumference. The reverse would retain the garland of oak leaves, added to which now were the name of the society 'Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire', the date '1843', and a crown. The use of '1843' on this design, rather than 1844 as appeared on the previous version or 1836 as on the first type is interesting; while still not reflecting the actual date of the Society's founding, it does more accurately indicate the date of its reorganisation. Achieving the new design proved less than straightforward and it would be over two years before the actual medals were ready for distribution (as will be detailed later in Section II).

The following year saw the 1851 Great Exhibition held in the Crystal Palace, in Hyde Park, London. Among the various inventions placed before the judging panels was one by Baddeley for a farmer's portable fire-engine and force-pump, displayed at stand 409, for which he was granted an award. His occasional business partner, Moses Merryweather (1791-1872), of 63 Long Acre, London, had a large display of fire engines, garden engines, escapes, firemen's helmets, and tools on display nearby at stand 401.[168]

During the 1850s annual or bi-annual General Meetings were held by the Society at various London addresses such as the Guildhall, the Mansion House and the Society of Arts, chaired generally by the Lord Mayor of London. On some occasions the meetings were presided over by other prominent individuals. Thus the Duke of Wellington occupied the Chair at the Annual Meeting of Subscribers held in the Council Room of the Society of Arts on 27 June 1856 and gave a donation of £50 to the Society's Funds. In describing the conductors at one such meeting during this period, a *New York Daily Times* reporter wrote that they were 'a brave-looking class of men – just the fellows to do battle with the fiery element – [with] their stout arms and intrepid appearance'.[169] The conductors' uniform appears to have changed by this time, the same reporter noting it as consisting of a blue shirt, a dark olive coat and pants, trimmed with red, and a matching fatigue cap, while a helmet was worn on duty.[170] Distribution of the Society's medals and testimonials, at least to London based recipients, tended to form a significant part of these meetings. Monetary awards were distributed on a more *ad hoc* and informal basis.

On several occasions medals and other commemorative gifts and tokens were conferred by other groups on the Society's conductors. These types of awards to Samuel Wood have already been noted. Among the various other specially prepared medals groups of local residents had produced, one silver medal went to Conductor Arkyll recognising his actions at a fire in 1859 (see case 5,002); it was inscribed 'Presented to Joseph Arkell by Mr E. Bodger of Hatton Garden for his intrepid conduct in rescuing 26 lives at a fire at Mr Kitchen, Leather Lane, March 25th, 1859'.

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[168] *Official Catalogue of the Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations 1851,* London: Spicer Bros & W Clowes, 1851, pp. 35-6.

[169] *New York Daily Times*, 16 August 1854.

[170] *Ibid*.



Dix Noonan Webb

Conductor Joseph Arkell's privately awarded medal for the Hatton Garden Fire

Another, granted together with two guineas, went to Conductor Tordoff by residents of Blackfriars Road, in recognition of 'his laudable conduct in rescuing nine lives at 16½ Blackfriars-road on the 9th December [1860]'.[171]

A third silver medal went to Conductor Cotterell in 1865 which was reportedly inscribed 'Presented by the inhabitants of Westminster to James Cotterell, conductor of the Horseferry-road fire-escape, for his great exertions in rescuing 173 persons from the school-room in Great Peter-street, Westminster, at the accident which occurred on January the 26th, 1865'.[172] Such awards were occasionally distributed at the Society's annual meetings, though other occasions were sometimes utilised.

A further example is the medal given in 1867 to Conductor George Hardway, No.46, by the inhabitants of Stepney 'for his past Energetic Services.' Hardway's life story is the epitome of the Society's ideal conductor. As a young man, Hardway was a boy sailor on the training ship HMS *Worcester* and gained the Marine Society's Reward of Merit. He subsequently served in the Indian Marine ship *Ajdaha.* After leaving the navy he was employed – as were many sailors and construction workers – by the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, winning the Society's silver medal in 1863 (see case 7,761) and was one of the conductors who transferred to the Metropolitan Fire Brigade in 1867, subsequently receiving their long service and good conduct medal.[173]

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[171] The Morning Chronicle, 29 January 1861.

[172] *Lloyd's Weekly London Newspaper*, 12 March 1865.

[173] Hardway's group of four medals were sold by Messrs Dix Noonan Webb in December 2010. Hardway had also been awarded the Society's medal 'for intrepidity in rescuing Life' at Ratcliff (London) on 26 January 1863 (Case 7761); this medal was not with the medals sold by DNW, though it is known to exist.



Dix Noonan Webb

George Hardway's medal group

Mid way through the decade a banking scandal emerged. The Society's bankers, Strahan, Paul and Bates, ceased trading on 11 June 1855 and when their creditors met on 26 June it transpired that the bank's assets – including securities belonging to Lord Palmerston, the Earl of Carnarvon, the Duke of Rutland, Lord John Manners, and a variety of charitable and religious institutions – had been misappropriated to fund the lifestyles of the principals. Sir John Dean Paul, the Society's Treasurer, was found to be the lead in this fraud and he and his two partners were committed on 13 September 1855 and later sentenced to 14 years transportation.[174]

The extent of the Society's financial loss in this fraud was apparently small. Following the news of the collapse emerging, the Society's Rotary Committee met on 19 June and went over all the accounts. While the 1854-5 accounts tallied with the balance sheet from the auditors, the succeeding balance for the period 1 April to 18 June amounted to £77.13s.7d, while the bank account suggested they were £4.19s in credit. The loss sustained by the Society thus ranged somewhere between these two figures, depending on how much (if any) of the £77 was held by them as cash-in-hand. The office of bankers and treasurer were declared open and it was decided to approach the Bank of England for an account. The latter was in place within days. One of the Society's Vice Presidents, Charles James Bevan, agreed to act as the treasurer as from 27 July 1855, the Lord Mayor having first declined the post. Bevan was in due course succeeded in the 1860s by Robert Hanbury, MP. Perhaps unsurprisingly, very little publicity attended the Society's Annual Meeting in the Guildhall on Monday 9 July that year.[175] Twelve months later, when they met for the next such meeting on Friday 27 June 1856 in the Society of Arts, Low read out the treasurer's balance sheet, which showed the Society apparently in a reasonably sound position.[176]

The events, however, must have been unnerving for the Society, particularly given its early history and the considerable efforts it had made since 1843 to build a reputation of managerial efficiency and financial prudence.

During the year of the Strahan, Paul and Bates collapse, 1855, Baddeley was continuing his usual compilation of statistics on fires in London. For 1855, he added a list of fires where the Society's conductors had actually saved lives, publishing his results in the *Mechanics' Magazine*. Curiously, the overall total he here quotes is at variance with the Society statistics (as detailed in Table 1 previously).

While parts of the capital, particularly in the suburbs, still remained sparsely served by fire-escapes, their availability outside London was poor. In an attempt to address this, the Society began to encourage the formation of local societies in the larger provincial towns and cities. As part of this strategy, in which they were apparently influenced by the Royal Humane Society, the committee came in 1857-8 'to the resolution of granting rewards to actors in all cases of heroism in connexion with the objects of the Society, which might be authentically brought to their notice'.[177]

[174] *Daily News*, Monday 14 September 1868.
[175] *The Standard*, Tuesday 10 July 1855.
[176] *The Morning Chronicle*, Monday 30 June 1856; *The Morning Post*, Monday 30 June 1856, p. 6.
[177] *The Era*, Sunday 3 July 1859.

Medal awards were thus made at this stage for acts in Ireland (Mee), Plymouth (Welch), Manchester (James Hayes and Robert Bagshaw), and France (Jacques Fosse). In Dublin, a similar society was established. Founded in 1860 following a serious fire in Kildare Street, the Royal Irish Society for the Protection of Life from Fire adopted the London Society's regulations. The Irish Society began by purchasing four escapes from Moses Merryweather, who was the London Society's escape manufacturer at this time.

These were further inspected and approved by London Society staff before their dispatch. The Society would continue to operate in Dublin until October 1862, when its functions were taken over by Dublin Corporation.[178] Elsewhere, in Liverpool the local Shipwreck & Humane Society would consider rescues from fires, but it would not be until 1883 that they established their own dedicated 'fire' medal.

Date	Place	Conductor	Lives saved
31 Jan	37 St John St,. Clerkenwell	Sunshine	5
4 Feb	12 Hart St, Grosvenor Square	Brown	2
9 Feb	33 Barbican, City	Cook	2
7 Mar	2 Clipstone St, Fitzroy Square	Moore / Whatley	2
14 Mar	8 Salisbury Court, Fleet Street	Stevens	2
23 Mar	46 Princes St, Leicester Square	Welford	2
27 Mar	10 Lamb St, Spitalfields	Warren	3
20 Apr	14 Park Place, Kennington Cross	Bagster	2
8 May	21 Kennington Green	Bagster	3
1 Jun	26 Hoxton Market	Barton	1
8 Jun	40 Turville St, Bethnal Green	Barton	4
11 Jun	95 High St, Shoreditch	Barton	2
14 Aug	16 Hemmings Row, St Martin's La.	Gould	2
21 Aug	62 Old Street Road	Barton	1
26 Aug	7 Triangle, Kennington Cross	Ball	3
9 Oct	143 High Street, Shoreditch	Barton	5
17 Oct	14 Gren St, Blackfriars Road	Perkins	2
28 Oct	12 York Road, Kong's Cross	Stanning	7
7 Nov	163 Bishopsgate St.	Warren	6
28 Nov	130 High St, Southwark	Barton	8
9 Dec	21 Thornhill Place, Caledonian Rd.	Stanning	3
12 Dec	25 Alfred Place, Newington Causeway	Simmens	2
20 Dec	25 Mint St, Southwark	Hall	6
30 Dec	31 Brick Lane, Spitalfields	Wood	1
Total			**77**

***Table 2*: Lives saved by the Society's conductors in 1855**[179]

This period also saw the Society begin to disseminate with greater prominence advice to the general public on (a) fire safety, (b) extinguishing burning clothing, and (c) first-aid for burns; printed advice on these matters was circulated by the Society and Low drew the information sheets to the attention of the press.[180]

In such efforts to further the aims of the Society, the welfare of its own staff was not forgotten. A Provident Fund was set up in 1853 to assist conductors who became ill. Each man subscribed one shilling a month to this, to which the Society made further occasional contributions. Similar amounts were contributed to a superannuation fund, which was established on 1 January 1860. Encouragement towards exemplary religious and moral behaviour, as well as temperance, had formed a central pillar of the Society's ethos from its earliest days. Wages were paid in a school house rather than a pub. Clergymen and other 'visitors' were employed to preach to the conductors and visit them on an individual basis to promote their religious knowledge. A lending library was established and visitors were to superintend the loan of books to the conductors.

[178] *The Freeman's Journal*, Tuesday 4 December 1860 and Wednesday 15 October 1862; see also T Geraghty & T Whitehead, *The Dublin Fire Brigade*, 2004, pp. 27-31.
[179] W Baddeley: 'London Fires in 1855', *Mechanics' Magazine*, Saturday 16 February 1856, p. 149.
[180] *New York Daily Times*, 16 August 1854; *Handbook for Emergencies*, London, 1861, p. 11; *Daily News*, Thursday 5 February 1863.

This culture was supported by organised communal day-trips, designed probably to reward and encourage the conductors, build cohesion within the Society, and publicise their worth to potential contributors and society at large. One such event in 1858 was described thus:

> FIRE ESCAPE CONDUCTORS' ANNUAL FETE: On Tuesday the conductors of the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire went for their annual excursion into the country. They marched in procession from the office in Ludgate Hill, with a capital band and splendid banners, to the Waterloo station, and then proceeded to West Molesey, near Hampton Court, where excellent games were provided for their amusement. At two o'clock they all sat down to a splendid dinner provided for them by the committee. The chair was taken by the secretary, Mr Sampson Low, jun, who was supported by the Rev Thomas Nolan, BD, incumbent of Regent Square church; Mr Baylis, magistrate for the county; [and] Mr Charlier, of the Royal Humane Society. After dinner several toasts were drunk and responded to. The men then separated; some for boating excursions, cricket, and various other games. At six o'clock they all sat down to a good tea, and returned to London by the quarter past seven train, in time for each to be at their stations by the proper hour, and delighted with their day's pleasure.[181]

The publicity these excursions attracted undoubtedly benefitted the Society and encouraged the esprit de corps of its staff. Within the context of the nineteenth century, they also typified the development of organised leisure and the rise of seaside resorts, made more accessible by the expansion of the railway network. These and other features were evident in the August 1861 conductors' excursion to Brighton. The trip was reported by the *Morning Chronicle* thus:

> The annual treat of the fire-escape conductors forming the brigade of this useful and extensive institution, took place yesterday, the managing members of the committee, with Mr Sampson Low, jun, the secretary, Mr Lowe [*sic*], sen, Mr Deputy Holt, Mr Cole, Mr Baylis, Captain Baylis, with Inspectors Baddeley, Spencer, Gordon, and Havant were also present. The men mustered, with their fine amateur brass band, under the direction of Mr Wood, the bandmaster, in Monument Yard, City, where after forming into procession, the men marched with military precision over London Bridge to the London terminus of the Brighton Railway. The company having entered a special train proceeded direct to Brighton, and then marched through the town, the band playing and the flags of the Society floating in the air, to the Royal Brunswick Cricket Ground.
>
> The men having been regaled with lunch, they next amused themselves at cricket, and some matches were well played. Others, including the Secretary, took sailing excursions on the sea. In the evening the whole party sat down to dinner in a spacious marquee, erected on the cricket ground. The men having done ample justice to the good things provided, their chair was taken by Mr Baylis, an old friend of the Society, who spoke in high terms of the great services rendered by the conductors, during the existence of the Society, in saving so many human lives as they had been, under God, instrumental in accomplishing.
>
> The Rev H M Wagner, the vicar of Brighton, made a most feeling address to the men. He was rejoiced to hear of the great good, under Providence, they had already achieved, and he welcomed them to Brighton. He was glad to see such a noble body of men present.
>
> Mr Deputy Holt, CC, said the attendance of the conductors perfectly astonished him. The Society having grown, owing to good management, from a molehill to, comparatively speaking, a small mountain. Large as it was at present it was not large enough to meet the requirements of the public, and as fast as funds rolled in the stations would be augmented, so that no part of London, or even the suburbs, would be left unprotected.
>
> Mr Low proposed the continued health of the conductors, their wives, and families. The Chairman then alluded to the fact of one conductor (Samuel Wood) having saved 130 lives at fires since he had been stationed in Whitechapel. The arrangements were managed most efficiently by the before-named officers.[182]

[181] *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper*, Sunday 4 July 1858.
[182] *The Morning Chronicle*, Tuesday 6 August 1861.



Royal Society of Arts

A Society fire escape in use at a fire

The Society's band, which these accounts note, had been formed by several conductors during the mid-1850s, with instruments they provided themselves. Its efforts were supported by the management committee. The band performed regularly at various parades and events in London, such as the Lord Mayor's show, as well as playing on Monday afternoons in Victoria Park, all of which served to publicise the Society and bolster the affiliation of members.

One of the largest and most memorable occasions it performed at was the funeral of James Braidwood, Superintendent of the London Fire Brigade. Braidwood was killed while directing fire-fighting operations at the Tooley Street fire on 22 June 1861. His funeral attracted huge crowds, the Society being represented in the formal procession not only by the band, but also by Low, his father, and the conductors, the latter walking four abreast.[183]



Guildhall Art Gallery

The Tooley Street Fire, 22 June 1861

[183] *The Times*, Monday 1 July 1861, p. 12; *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper*, Sunday 30 June 1861

6: FAREWELL TO THE CONDUCTORS

The Tooley Street fire and its aftermath marked a watershed in the history of fire-fighting and the Society. It had caused an estimated £2,000,000 of damage and served to highlight the inadequacy of the existing fire-fighting capabilities within London. With such rising losses and the cost of funding the insurance brigades themselves mounting, it was becoming clear that fire-fighting in London needed to change. Raised premiums only fuelled further complaints, particularly as only one third of properties were actually insured; despite this, the brigades attempted to now attend all fires. Unsurprisingly, the insurance companies sought to relinquish their fire brigade provision and informed the government of this intention. A House of Commons Select Committee was established to consider fire protection in London and after hearing considerable evidence published their findings in 1862.[184]

The report made clear that, despite its efficiency, the existing fire-fighting establishment was insufficient. Ensuing negotiations resulted in the government agreeing in 1864 to establish an official fire brigade service for London and they introduced the Metropolitan Fire Brigade Bill in 1865. This was to have profound implications for the Society and its functions. When the Bill came before the House of Commons for its second reading on 25 May 1865, the Under Secretary to the Home Department, Thomas George Baring, MP, stated that:

> It was proposed to give the Metropolitan Board of Works power to make arrangements for having fire-escapes. [The Home Secretary] believed that the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire deserved every credit for the manner in which they have placed fire-escapes in every part of the metropolis. It was far from the object of the Government to interfere in any way with them by the present Bill. Still, it was a work which probably could be more efficiently and economically carried out in connection with the fire brigade. Therefore it would have been satisfactory to the Government if they could at the same time have placed fire-escapes under the same management as the brigade, and thus have relieved a volunteer society from the performance of this duty. Unfortunately the £50,000 a year was only sufficient for the maintenance of an efficient fire brigade, and insufficient to make fire-escapes part of the system. However, the rateable value of property in the metropolis would of course increase, and possibly the number of insurances would increase in consequence of recent legislation, and, therefore, it might be in the power of the Metropolitan Board of Works, in a few years time, to take fire-escapes under their charge. This being so, power was given by Bill to the Metropolitan Board of Works to purchase or take, in such form as they might agree with the Royal Society, their plant and staff of fire-escapes. He proposed, also, to insert a proviso to enable parishes—as he believed it was the wish of many of them to do so—to continue their contributions in aid of the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire. It would be necessary to add certain words at the end of Clause 30 to enable this to be done.[185]

The Bill was passed in 1865 and under it the Metropolitan Board of Works was to take responsibility for fire-fighting in London from 1 January 1866.

Despite the Bill and subsequent Act's recognition of the Society and its valuable services, reports of the proposals raised concerns over the continuity of contributions to the Society, a matter Sampson Low raised with the press in June 1865 in an effort to sustain the necessary subscription base.[186] However, the Society realised that they would be placed at a serious disadvantage. Even if subscriptions from the general public remained constant (an unlikely scenario), the Society would be left without a claim on local parishes for the financial contributions they made to the Society and would also lack any authority for police assistance. In such circumstances, it was clear both

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[184] House of Commons (1862). *Report from the Select Committee on Fires in the Metropolis with the proceedings of the Committee, minutes of evidence,* London: HMSO.

[185] *Hansard House of Commons Debates*, 25 May 1865, vol. 179 cc828-41.

[186] *The Times*, Thursday 1 June 1865, p. 10.

that the Society's operating capacity would suffer and that there would be obvious advantages in combining the fire-escapes with the fire brigade. The inevitability of change was clear.

The Society therefore informed the government that they were willing to recommend the transfer of the Society's staff, appliances and funds to the Metropolitan Board of Works on certain conditions. The two key conditions were that they would take over the Society's employees, or compensate those whose services were not required, and that they should endow a perpetual Life Rescue Reward Fund.[187] By January 1867 the Metropolitan Board of Works were able to notify the Society that they were in a position to take over the work of the Society's fire-escapes. In response to the Board's request for details about the extent and nature of the Society's fire-escape establishment, the Society responded that they then had 85 escape stations, organised at roughly half-mile intervals across the city. The inventory of each station included a fire-escape (claimed to be complete and in good working order), a conductor's watch-box, and various pieces of equipment such as a crowbar, adze, rattle, lamp, and bucket. Some Day Stations, where the escapes and watch-boxes were put away, had gates that had been fitted by the Society. In addition, there were five reserve fire-escapes, available when others were being repaired. The Society further noted that each conductor has been provided with coats, jerseys, tarpaulin overcoats, helmets, belts, and half the cost of their fire boots. The cost of this equipment amounted to somewhat over £9,000, its upkeep requiring an annual expenditure of about £1,400. Much of the latter work had been undertaken for the past four years by the fire-escape manufacturer George Clarke, for a fixed fee of £14 per escape, with new escapes being supplied at a cost of £90 each.

Considering the escape staff, this unsurprisingly had not expanded since the peak reached in 1866, remaining at 100 men: five inspectors, 89 conductors on full pay, and six supernumeraries. The inspectors were thought unlikely to transfer to the fire brigade and their redundancy was to be in line with their salary (ranging between £65 and £100) and length of service. The most prominent of the inspectors at this time was William Baddeley and 1867 saw him now retire due to ill health before the transfer took effect, the committee awarding him £200 in consideration of his past services. He died later on 31 March that year.[188] Most of the conductors, by contrast with the inspectors, were thought likely to transfer to the Board. With an average age of 31 (ranging from 21 to 52), and height of nearly five feet nine inches tall, the Society described them as having 'been carefully selected for good character, intelligence, and general adaptation to their duties, physically and morally'. The Society's submitted summary of their salaries and lengths of service is given in Table 3.

Length of service	Conductors	Weekly salary
10-22 years	16	£1.5.0
6-10 years	16	£1.4.0
3-6 years	20	£1.2.0
1-3 years	14	£1.1.0
Under 15 months	23	£1.0.0

***Table 3*: Conductors' salaries and length of service in 1867**[189]

The annual running cost of the fire-escape organisation (wages, equipment and other expenses) was declared at £9,011, of which at this time one-third was funded by parishes and the remainder by public contributions.

A number of meetings were held to discuss the proposed transfer, evidence was given to a government Select Committee on Fire Protection in May 1867,[190] and finally agreement was reached that the Metropolitan Board of Works would take responsibility for the protection of life from fire within London as from 1 July 1867. The arrangements were put before a Special General Court of the Society, comprised of its vice-presidents, committee members and parish churchwardens. Held on Tuesday 18 June in the offices at Ludgate Hill, the proposals were formally approved.[191] The Board would pay the Society £2,500 and to incorporate 67 of the

[187] *Report of the Metropolitan Board of Works, 1866-7*, House of Commons, 7 December 1867, p. 35.

[188] *Pall Mall Gazette*, Thursday 4 April 1867. *See also* J Timbs *The Year-Book of Facts in Science and Art*, London: Lockwood, 1868, pp. 281-2; Baddeley's death certificate can be found under GRO reference: Islington Register District, April-June 1867, vol. 1b, p. 175.

[189] The apparent overlap between the various periods of service should be here noted; whether these represent transition points on the salary scale or other issues is unclear.

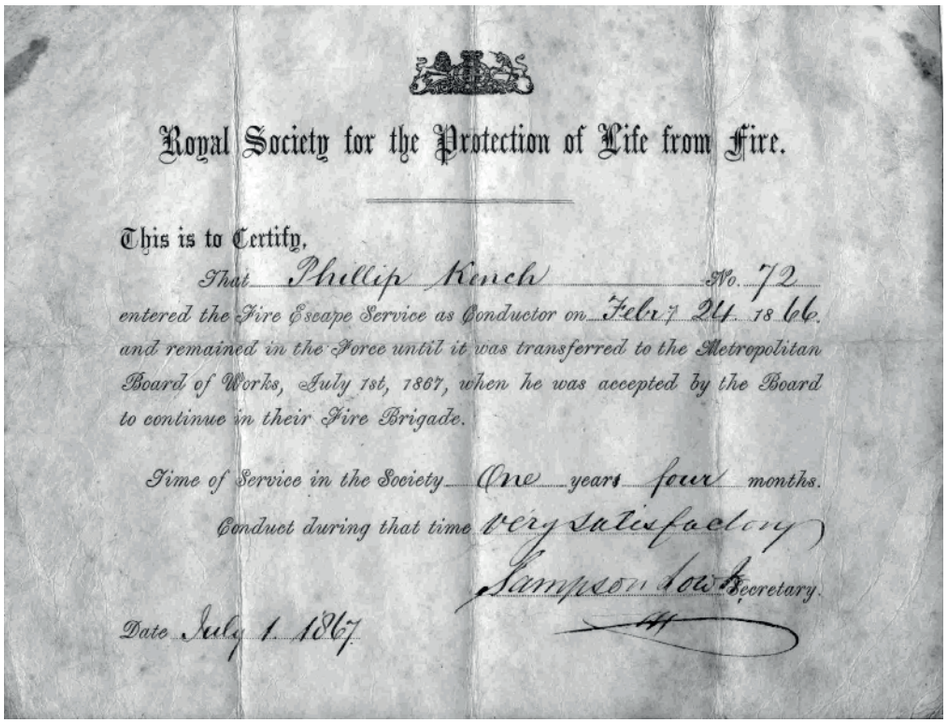
[190] *Report from the Select Committee on Fire Protection*, House of Commons 25 July 1867.

[191] *The Times*, Thursday 13 June 1867, p. 8.

Society's conductors into the Metropolitan Fire Brigade at agreed rates of pay as from 1 July 1867.[192]

For its part, the Society would transfer to the Board all their fire-escapes, stations and equipment, together with all the conductors' outstanding pay and related entitlements due up to that date (totalling £1,085). The Society thus received £1,412 from the Board, which the Society then utilised – together with part of its reserve fund (of £5,174) – to compensate those officers and staff who were not transferred to the Board. A farewell fete was arranged for the conductors and their wives.

Among those compensated, the committee did not neglect themselves and their honorary staff. They thus agreed to present a piece of silver 'or something similar' to the Society's Honorary Surgeon, Dr Charles Ridley, 'in respect of long and efficient service rendered by him' and to the Reverend Thomas Nolan 'in recognition of his zealous, kind and disinterested service during nearly 18 years' as well as to other chaplains 'who have taken the weekly address to the conductors'.



Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire.

This is to Certify,

That Phillip Kinch No. 72

entered the Fire Escape Service as Conductor on Febr 24 18 66.

and remained in the Force until it was transferred to the Metropolitan Board of Works, July 1st, 1867, when he was accepted by the Board to continue in their Fire Brigade.

Time of Service in the Society One years four months.

Conduct during that time very satisfactory

Sampson Low Secretary.

Date July 1 1867

London Fire Brigade Museum

Transfer Certificate of Phillip Kinch

The Society's anniversary meeting this year was held at London's Guildhall on Friday 9 August 1867, at which the Lord Mayor, the Right Hon Sir Thomas Gabriel (1811-1891), presided. The turn-out at this particular anniversary meeting, unsurprisingly, was relatively small. The Lord Mayor 'preached the funeral sermon', as he described it. Statistics on the Society's achievements since its re-establishment in 1843 were reviewed at length. Thus the meeting was reminded how the Society's fire-escape establishment had grown to 100 men, who operated 85 escape stations and who had attended 8,518 fires, saving 1,050 lives (up to the end of 1866). These developments had been funded by 17,500 subscribers (built up from an original 400).

The financial arrangements connected with the transfer, together with existing reserves, left the Society in a healthy position financially and they were thus able to establish a Life Rescue Reward Fund of £2,000, with an additional £300 set aside for any expenses connected with the Fund's administration. The Fund was intended 'to secure in perpetuity the means of rewarding brave effort to save human life from fire, to be annually bestowed as heretofore or as may otherwise hereafter be agreed upon'.

[192] *The Times*, Monday 1 July 1867, p. 10.

The office of the Secretary had been disbanded as a result of the changes in the Society and Sampson Low, junior, and two clerks had been given compensation packages. After these and other disbursements, the meeting was informed that the Society still had a further £1,025 in hand as a reserve fund. It was proposed and agreed then that 500 guineas from this be granted to Low in recognition of his work over the past 24 years and that the balance be appropriated by the committee to augment the compensation packages to other Society officers. The Lord Mayor then presented a selection of some 40 awards – rather hurriedly by one account – to their recipients.[193]

Depleted of its most tangible elements, the Society now ruminated on these past glories as it also attempted to take stock for the future. On 17 October a sub-committee, chaired by Butterworth, decided to grant committee members silver medals to commemorate their own participation in the Society and the 'attainment of the Society's main object: the establishment of the fire-escape system in the Metropolis'.[194] The inscriptions on these were to include the name of the member, the date he joined and the date of the transfer of the force to the Board.

We, the undersigned, your fellow members of the Committee of Management of the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, desire to express our hearty congratulations to you on the attainment of the main object we have had so long in view, in promoting the operations of our Society, viz, the thorough and complete and permanent establishment of London Fire Escape Stations; by the satisfactory amalgamation of our Force with that of the London Fire Brigade, from the first day of July last.

A celebratory dinner was planned at the same time and a framed congratulatory address on vellum was to be given to the Senior Member of the Committee, Sampson Low, senior. This 'ornamentally written' testimonial, signed by everyone on the committee, declared:

> Those amongst us who joined you earliest at the first association of our Committee—now twenty-four years since—can recall the many struggles of first existence, and remember how much they were encouraged to persevere in raising the character and extent of operations of the then infant Institution, by your enthusiasm and zealous exertions; you and they stimulated others, and for many years now the majority of us have worked together in promoting the Society's objects, much of our success together lying in the friendly feeling and united action thus engendered. In remembrance, therefore, of our long co-operation together, the esteem in which we hold you, and your position as our Senior Member we gladly avail ourselves of the opportunity afforded us by the successful termination of part of our duties, to join in this Address to you.
>
> We feel sure that it will ever be a source of pleasure to you, as it will be to us, the remembrance that we had so active a part together in organising that division of the future Fire-Brigade of the Metropolis to whom is entrusted the Protection of Life from Fire; that we only relinquished the control of our brave force when its organisation was completed, and at its greatest point of efficiency; and that we did so voluntarily, in order to secure the continuance as a part of, and add to the efficiency of, the whole Metropolitan Brigade as one public body. It is most gratifying to recall the immense service rendered by our Fire-Escapes and Brigade whilst under our management, being the means, as they were, under Providence, of rescuing upwards of 1,100 lives from fire. And it is also very pleasant to believe that the Society's influence for good in the same cause will be continued by the arrangements that we have made for its permanent Reward Fund. Whether we still meet together to aid in the distribution of this fund or not, the object that it promotes will always be dear to us, and it will long continue one of our pleasantest memories that we were members together of the Committee of the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire.
>
> With best wishes for your health and happiness,
>
> We remain, dear Sir,
>
> Yours very truly,
>
> Thomas Q Finnis, Alderman, Treasurer, Henry Pownall, VP, Joshua Butterworth, William Woods, Thomas Lott, Deputy, Robert Obbard, Vincent Yardley, Thos Weedon, R L Middlemist, T Henry Baylis, A M Perkins, C W Cooke, George King, Joseph Surr, James L Shuter, W A H Hows and J H Saunders

[193] *Pall Mall Gazette*, Monday, 12 August 1865; *Daily News*, 10 August 1867.

[194] Sub-committee meeting minutes 7 October 1867.



The Lord Mayor at Guildhall presenting awards for Saving Life from Fire (1867)

Illustrated London News SPLF Archive

It was clearly the end of an era for the Society. When this testimonial to Low, senior,[195] and the various awards to his colleagues on the committee were actually presented is unclear. The planned dinner might have been a likely occasion, though holding this was deferred until the conclusion of other negotiations with the Royal Humane Society, to which we will turn in the next chapter.[196]

And what became of the escapes and their conductors following their transfer to the Brigade? The escapes continued to be based for a considerable time in the same locations, frequently in church-yards, being brought out to street stations in the evenings ready for duty and returning to store in the church-yards the following morning. Over the ensuing years the number of such stations would gradually expand. Of the conductors, 22 were not taken onto the Brigade's staff, while for the 67 that were transferred their working conditions deteriorated. They were no longer free during the daytime as they had been when employed by the Society, but were now required to perform station duty during the morning. In the afternoon they could rest, if the circumstances permitted. These extra duties were partly offset by the night shift being now deemed a sleeping (rather than an alert) watch; conductors were provided with a blanket, though proper rest was limited.[197] The rewards and formal recognition they would receive for their work – particularly from the Society – were also to decline, as will be considered in the next chapter.

[195] See the *Publishers' Circular*, 1 May 1886, pp. 432-3.

[196] Details of the dinner itself are not recorded in the subsequent minutes.

[197] G V Blackstone, *A History of the British Fire Service*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1957, p. 177.

7: TRYING TO REGROUP

The latter years of the 1860s and the 1870s saw the Society struggling to adjust to the loss of its largest public role. Without the conductors, how was it to define itself and its mission?

During the discussions on the Society's future and its residual assets, two committee members – George King and Robert Law Middlemist – at a Special General Meeting of the Society held on 25 June 1867 had proposed liaising with the Royal Humane Society about the possibility of merging their reward schemes.[198] A sub-committee consisting of King, Middlemist, Thomas Weedon, and Joshua Butterworth, together with the secretary and treasurer, was formed to undertake the negotiations.

Following initial exploratory correspondence in July between Sampson Low, junior, and the RHS Secretary, Lambton Young, representatives of the two organisations met at the RHS offices in Trafalgar Square on 16 August 1867. Though discussions were superficially cordial, the RHS representatives decided they needed the views of a General Meeting of their own Society before proceeding further. Both societies sought legal advice as they considered the merits of an amalgamation. Low raised the matter again in writing with the Royal Humane Society, though their committee prevaricated, wanting a formal clarification from the SPLF treasurer, Alderman Finnis, before taking further action.[199]

By 15 November 1867, on which date the Society held a General Meeting of Committee, they noted that it appeared that 'the Committee of the Royal Humane Society still seemed disinclined to an Act of Incorporation'.[200] The Royal Humane Society committee met on 20 November 1867 and decided that 'whilst highly appreciating the feelings which have induced the offer, regret that both on account of the legal difficulties which present themselves to carrying it into effect, as well as for other considerations, they feel compelled to decline its acceptance'.[201] The matter thus came to an end, the Society's Sub-Committee recommending on 30 December 1867 that 'the Society do remain as a separate and independent Society' and that it should concentrate on the second, third, and fourth objects contemplated in rule 1 and that object one of that rule be changed to omit ref to the 'Metropolis', allowing escapes to be distributed more widely when funds allow.[202] A circular was issued to the subscribers advising them of the changes and encouraging them to continue their support of the Society. A copy of this circular was sent to Major Biddulph who in turn advised the Society that Queen Victoria would be pleased, at least for the present, to continue her annual subscription of £10.10.

On 24 April 1868 the Society made it clear that it would not be establishing fire-escape stations or any organised fire-escape force outside London. Instead, the Society would provide advice and contribute to meeting the manufacturing costs of fire-escapes outside London. A Secretary was appointed (at an annual salary of £100 plus expenses) to visit the various towns and cities to promote the establishment of public fire-escapes by voluntary contribution or otherwise.

The first escape established under these new regulations was placed at Brentford on 21 January 1869. In the succeeding years up to 1881 the Society, often in response to requests received and sometimes at their own instigation, gave a total of 71 fire-escapes for use in provincial towns. The following is a list of those escapes arranged according to the year they were placed in commission:

1869	Brentford, Canterbury, Lowestoft, Highgate, Wimbledon, Warwick, Gravesend and Kingston.
1870	Worthing, Dartford, Watford, Chatham, Twickenham, Ipswich, Colchester, Maidstone, Beckenham, Norwich, Windsor, Uxbridge and Maidenhead.
1871	Maldon, St. Albans, Luton, Sudbury, Staines and Newbury.
1872	Reading, Henley, Hitchin, Epsom and High Wycombe.
1873	Sevenoaks, Salisbury, Devizes, Chippenham, Marlborough, Wilts and Rugby.

[198] Special General Meeting, 25 June 1867, RSPLF Minute Book, no. 2.

[199] Royal Humane Society Minute Book 1864-69, p. 205 (LMA ref: LMA/4517/A/01/01/013).

[200] General Meeting of Committee, 15 November 1867, RSPLF Minute Book, no. 2.

[201] Royal Humane Society Minute Book 1864-69, pp. 214-5 (LMA ref: LMA/4517/A/01/01/013).

[202] Sub-Committee Meeting, 30 December 1867, RSPLF Minute Book, no. 2.

1874 Winchester, Southampton, Tenby and Deal.
1875 Bournemouth and Eton.
1876 Lichfield, Crewe and Ventnor.
1877 Glastonbury, Bognor, Wells (Somerset), Wrexham, Ilfracombe, Truro and Harrow.
1878 Harwich and Twickenham (second escape).
1879 Tottenham, Margate, Bridgwater, Sandown (Isle of Wight), Ramsgate, Northwich, Stourbridge, Crediton, Maidstone (second escape).
1880 Wokingham, Yeovil, Bromsgrove, Peterborough, Newport (Isle of Wight), Llandudno.
1881 Buxton.

The Society's inspectors visited these outlying stations to test the efficiency of the escape conductors, the best of whom who proved able to get their escapes ready and run a quarter of a mile with them in two and a half minutes.[203]

Throughout these years the other objectives of the Society were kept constantly in mind. New inventions were tested from time to time and existing methods reviewed. An example of this was the reaction to a fatal fire in October 1871 when Fireman Joseph Andrew Ford, of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, lost his life after rescuing five persons. Whilst descending the fire-escape he was enveloped in flames and smoke. After struggling in the wire netting that reinforced the escape's canvas chute, Ford fell to the ground where he died from burns and other injuries. He was posthumously awarded the Society's silver medal. Subsequently, Ford's death prompted a significant redesign of the fire-escape equipment.[204]

In 1871 the Society's latest fire-escapes was exhibited at the International Exhibition in London. Then, in 1876 George Watlington Cooke, who had been a member of the Society's Management Committee since at least 1866 and was now its Secretary, represented the Society at the Bruxelles Exhibition. The Society's escape equipment won a diploma and first class medal at that event, which ended with Cooke presenting their fire-escape to the city of Bruxelles, for which gift the Society received thanks from the city council and the King of the Belgians. Cooke was perhaps the most active and prominent member of the Society during this time and would in due course be elected as the first Treasurer by the 1881 Trustees under their governance and would continue as such until 1893 when he retired due to ill health.

On a number of occasions the Society's funds were increased by legacies from wills, whilst the collectors' efforts continued to provide valuable income, as did the annual subscriptions. In addition, the Society received donations from the various town councils and other bodies who had been in receipt of one of the Society's fire-escapes. Even though the Society's income was much less than before its transfer of fire-escapes to the Metropolitan Board of Works, it was more than sufficient for its current needs. This allowed a second Reserve Fund to be established, which by 1878 amounted to £5,000, this being in addition to the Reward Fund established in 1867.

The Society now occasionally faced criticism over decisions about rewards and questions about eligibility. The first such case followed soon after the transfer of the escape establishment to the MFB. The *Daily Telegraph* took up the case of William Lyons, who they claimed had behaved heroically at a fire in Cannon Street Road on 21 August 1867. He deserved appropriate recognition by the Society. Investigations by the *Pall Mall Gazette*, using the Society's records of the events, revealed a very different story; of Lyons and a colleague drunkenly barging past police into the house when everyone there was safe, their entry fanning the flames and aggravating the spread of the fire.[205]

Later, the Society for the Protection of Cruelty to Animals recommended an award be made for rescuing several horses from being burned to death. In this case the Secretary replied that the rewards granted by the Society applied only to the rescue of human life.[206]

[203] *The Times*, Monday 14 November 1870, p. 5.
[204] For a discussion of tests on revised designs see *The Times*, Saturday 3 August 1872, p. 5.
[205] *Pall Mall Gazette*, Tuesday 17 December 1867.
[206] Rotary Committee meeting, 3 March 1869.



Guildhall Art Gallery

Alderman Rt. Hon. Thomas Quested Finnis

Other cases proved more difficult. One such was that of James Ingham, of Rochdale Road, Manchester and late of The Grapes Inn, Underbank, Stockport. He was awarded the Society's silver medal at a General Meeting of Subscribers on 13 June 1871 by the Lord Mayor for allegedly saving 43 people from a fire (see case 11,862). Evidence subsequently emerged that his claim was unfounded. The Society's minutes reported:

> The correspondence, with copy of the evidence taken before the Watch Committee of the Borough of Stockport, in the case of the medal awarded to James Ingham, of Rochdale Road, Manchester, having been read, and considered, it was resolved unanimously that although the Committee do not consider it desirable to prosecute the several parties implicated, they cannot abstain from expressing their deep regret at the fraud which has been committed and require the immediate return of the medal. The Committee regret exceedingly that any of the individuals employed by the Borough authorities should have committed themselves in the way stated in the evidence – they must however leave them in the hands of the Authorities. In all cases of provincial reward the Society relies upon the official reports of the local public functionaries as evidence of the bona fides of the claims for reward sent to the Committee. This fraud therefore is a heavy blow to the scope of the Society's operations as far as the presentation of Rewards, for if declarations made by the Superintendent of a Borough Fire Brigade and by Inspectors of the Police are not to be relied upon, the Society can grant Rewards only in localities where after a personal investigation made by their own staff they have satisfied themselves of the genuineness and loyalty of all the parties to a Memorial.[207]

Copies of the above Resolution were sent to the Mayors of Stockport and Manchester and others localities. Another case from this period was that of Samuel Fordham who was originally voted a silver medal and £5 for assisting in the rescue of an elderly woman from a fire at Old Castle Street, Bethnal Green (see case 11,863). In his case, the Society discovered his claim was unsubstantiated before the medal was issued and the award was cancelled. The impact of these cases, in combination with a dispute with the Metropolitan Board of Works (to be discussed next), seems to have had a radical effect on the frequency of medal awards by the Society during the remainder of the 1870s, the number of such awards granted being significantly diminished (no medal awards for example being approved in 1874-5 or 1877-9).[208] This trend continued, to a lesser extent, into the 1880s.

The disagreement with the Metropolitan Board of Works arose over recommendations for awards to the Metropolitan Fire Brigade. Captain Eyre Massey Shaw (1830-1908), the Superintendent of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, proposed on 26 May 1868 that the Brigade should have its own distinctive 'badge of merit' and on 17 December that year several designs were considered by the Fire Brigade Committee. None were considered suitable and the Brigade's architect, Edward Cresy, was instructed to produce a design. In the meantime, the Society every six months was soliciting lists of those individuals who had saved lives from fires and Shaw routinely forwarded these to the Society for them to reward. The Society, quite naturally, reserved the right to investigate submissions for its own awards itself and to determine what type of award it considered suitable. As a consequence, not all recommendations resulted in awards (by 1876, of 137 such cases put forward by Shaw, 60 received rewards from the Society). Several firemen apparently complained about this in 1871 and a deputation from the Society met with the Fire Brigade Committee to discuss matters, the apparent outcome of which was a determination to better meet Shaw's recommendations. There were further grumblings from several firemen in 1872 and in 1874 the Fire Brigade Committee instructed Shaw to submit his periodic lists of recommendations ranked according to merit so that the Society could discern Shaw's judgements on these.[209] However, the Board of Works then apparently declined the Society's awards for MFB staff as from February 1874.[210] The breakdown of relations between the two bodies seems particularly unfortunate given their shared purposes, intertwined histories and the fine conductors that they each successively employed.

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[207] Quarterly General Meeting, 28 July 1871.

[208] SpC minutes dated 12 July 1872 noted that 'The following cases having undergone minute investigation by two Members of the Committee, the said rewards as annexed were agreed to'. The annex mentioned however is not extant within the currently surviving archives. Whether it contained any medal awards is unknown.

[209] *Report from the Select Committee on the Metropolitan Fire Brigade*, House of Commons, 20 July 1876.

[210] *The Times*, Friday 11 July 1884, p. 9.

The proposal for a Metropolitan Fire Brigade badge of merit had during this time been forgotten, Cresy's death in 1870 no doubt contributing to this process. In July 1877 this idea re-emerged when the Board agreed to institute its own medals for the MFB, to recognise both long service and bravery. Designed by a Mr Waldeck of the Engineer's Drawing Department, the medal was not ready for issue until 1881, 19 being distributed on 6 May that year. The Board's action caused some friction with the Society, perhaps seeing this as encroaching on 'their' territory. A presentation by the Duke of Cambridge of further medals to the Metropolitan Fire Brigade on Thursday 3 July 1884 attracted some publicity in *The Times* that probably surprised the Society. The Duke asked about several other medals a few of the men were wearing and *The Times* reported that they:

> …were those given by a society which has long since ceased to exist, the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, which discharged the double duty of providing fire-escapes and of rewarding the men who distinguished themselves in rescuing life from fire. The work of the society in respect of providing fire-escapes and of recognizing bravery and long service was absorbed by the Metropolitan Boards…[211]

The Society's Secretary, George Cooke, wrote to *The Times* to correct this report, pointing out that 'We continue to grant rewards in the shape of medals, testimonials, and money to authentic and deserving cases in any part of the world'.[212] The Society further wrote to Queen Victoria about the Board's decision.[213] Copies of the correspondence however do not appear to have survived and it thus remains a matter of conjecture as to the Society's precise views on the matter. Up to April 1897, the Board had issued some 47 awards for gallantry, the first medals being back-dated to November 1877.[214] It was not until the turn of the century that medal awards to firemen again began to be made by the Society, though members of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade remained conspicuous by their absence from the lists of medals granted.

During this dip in the frequency of its medal awards, the Society sought to extend the recognition and practical help it could offer. Thus, in 1876 they amended their remit for awards. This now involved:

> …bestowing rewards at the discretion of the Society either by the gift of medals, testimonials or sums of money to persons who have specially distinguished themselves or received injury while engaged in the rescue of life from fire and by making grants to the parents, widows or children of such persons whose death may have resulted from their endeavours to rescue such lives.[215]

This decision was likely to have been influenced by various factors including Fireman Ford's death, the breakdown in relations with the Metropolitan Board of Works, and the positive financial situation of the Society.

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[211] *The Times*, Friday 4 July 1884, p. 8

[212] *The Times*, Friday 11 July 1884, p. 9.

[213] Trustees Meeting, 25 September 1884.

[214] *LSARS Journal*, 1989, 7: 30; R J Scarlett 'The Metropolitan Fire Brigade Silver Medal for Bravery', *LSARS Journal*, 1989, 7: 39-46; W Fevyer 'Silver Medal for Bravery of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade 1877-1897…', *LSARS Journal*, 19: 4-43.

[215] P Cahill *The Society for the Protection of Life from Fire: Established 1836, Centenary Year 1936*. London: SPLF [unpublished, *c*.1965].

8: MAKING A MODERN HUMANE SOCIETY

It is clear from the Society's minutes that there was a move around the end of the 1870s and the beginning of the 1880s to review the Society's position and perhaps move it in a different direction. One contributory factor to this was a concern that was felt about the Society's assets being now much in excess of their expenditure. The Society's solicitors recommended that no further subscriptions should be solicited and subscribers were notified of this.

Another factor related to changes brought about by the reform of local authorities that would have a significant impact upon the role of the Society in the future. In view of such apprehensions, the Trustees and the Committee of the Society approached the Charity Commissioners for the appointment of new Trustees and the establishment of a new scheme for the future administration of the Society.

The Board of Charity Commissioners were in agreement with the Society and the latter's funds now came under the Official Trustees, the income thereafter becoming the revenue to maintain the Society's remaining activities. Outside subscriptions were discontinued (including that given by Queen Victoria) and all equipment in the provincial towns was gifted to the local authorities.

On 25 November 1881 the Board of Charity Commissioners for England and Wales issued an Official Order embodying these suggestions and establishing a scheme for the future regulation of the Society. The existing Trustees, Sampson Low, Joshua Butterworth, and Thomas Finnis, stepped down. The funds of the Society were vested in the Official Trustees of Charitable Funds and ten new Trustees were appointed. The initial appointees under this scheme were:

1. Ebenezer Clarke - Emperor Fire and Life Assurance Companies
2. George Watlington Cooke – West of England Fire and Life Insurance Co.
3. William Henry Hore - London Assurance Corporation
4. David Marshall Lang - Commercial Union Assurance Company
5. William Holmes Postans - Norwich Equitable Fire Assurance Society
6. George Powell - Norwich and London Accident Insurance Association
7. Bernard Edward Ratliffe - County Fire Office
8. Richard Ray - Atlas Fire and Life Assurance Company
9. David Goudie Simpson - Scottish Provincial Assurance Company
10. William Hutchinson Spille - Azienda Insurance Company

The composition of the trustee body from this point onwards drew primarily on representatives from the insurance industry. The income from the Society's funds was to be used by the new Trustees to promote the Society's now primary aim: 'the protection of life from fire, by the grant of rewards for saving life from fire to persons who shall have distinguished themselves, or received injury while engaged in the rescue of life from fire, either by the gift of medals, testimonials or sums of money, or by the grant of money to the parents, widows or children of such persons whose deaths may have resulted from their endeavours to save life from fire'.

This change in the Society's status had a significant impact upon the Society's structure. It was considered no longer necessary to have paid employees or a permanent office and its infrastructure.[1] The Society's Committee Meeting of 13 January 1882 described in some detail what property was to be retained. Among the records the Society then held, the following were to be preserved:

Subscription Book – 1 January 1872 to 1881
Ledger – January 1864 to 1881
Cash Book – October 1869 to 1881
Reward Report Book regarding cases of saving life – 1869 to 1881
Minute Books – 1843 to 1882
Provincial Station Books – 1869 to 1882
Ledger Books – 1875 to 1882

[1] The Society's committees originally met at a variety of locations in the City, before having a succession of bases on Ludgate Hill in the 1850s and 1860s. From 1868-73 they were based at Clifford's Inn Passage, Fleet Street; 1873-82 at 66 Ludgate Hill; 1882-1961 at 20 and then 26 New Bridge Street and from 1961 to at least 1976 at Chichester House, High Holborn.

Annual Reports (bound volumes) – 1843 to 1867
Annual Reports (the subsequent years to be also bound and retained – 1867 to 1881
Receipts for Accounts (7 years) – 1874 to 1881
Balance Sheets – 1867 to 1881
Correspondence with the Metropolitan Board of Works upon transfer of Escapes to that Board
Society's Journals – 1861 to 1868 (to Mr Powell)

Apart from these, all remaining records were to be burned under the supervision of the Secretary. The model of the Society's fire-escape was to be offered to the South Kensington Museum and Wivell's diagram of the original fire-escape to the City Library. Comparing the above list with what has survived to this day (see details of the Society's archives in Appendix V), it is evident that substantial further weeding – or loss through other means – of these surviving historical records was to occur in the years ahead. This is a particularly unfortunate and indeed ironic feature of an institution, one of whose primary purposes has been and is to *recognise* those who save the lives of others from fire.

The first meeting of Trustees under the Order of the Charity Commission was held on 20 January 1882. This was followed on 1 June 1882 and 7 June 1883 by the distribution of awards at public meetings held at 11 Queen Street, Cheapside, for that purpose. These are the last recorded public meetings held by the Society.

The following year, in 1884, the Society gained a little publicity and its educative aims were furthered when ex-committee member judge Thomas Henry Baylis (1817-1908) published his book *Fire Hints* (which went to a second edition in 1901).[217]

The day-to-day life of the Society following its 1881-2 reorganisation under the Charity Commissioners became a generally more streamlined affair. The era of the conductors, inspectors and other staff had gone. So too had the sponsoring of fire-escapes in the provinces and the early concerns about funding and the very viability of the Society. Press coverage of the Society itself began to dwindle, though newspaper reports of awards granted would continue well into the twentieth century. The story of the Society from this time onwards becomes predominantly the stories of the individuals whose bravery it recognised through its various awards (the principal awards being here documented in section III).

In 1892 the Society's medal was again redesigned. This time it depicted a man supporting an unconscious woman, with two young girls standing nearby, the trio having been presumably rescued from the blazing house that forms the backdrop to the scene.

The reverse has the words 'The Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire' around the outside, inside of which is a wreath of oak leaves surrounding the motto 'Duty and Honor'. The new design (which will be further discussed in section II) was submitted by the Society to Queen Victoria for her approval, particularly of the new motto. Thus, writing to Sir Henry Frederick Ponsonby, GCB (1825-1895), the Queen's Private Secretary, the Trustees expressed their 'hope that her Majesty will consider the new motto…to be more ennobling, practical and instructive'.[218] Her Majesty quickly concurred and the new design, which was as well as it appeared to be already in production and the first awards probably made.

Despite such approval, the status of the medals and whether service recipients might wear them in uniform was uncertain. In 1899, for example, Major Archer Crawley raised this point with the Trustees when acknowledging the awards made to Lieutenant Maxwell Earle and Sergeant-Major Fletcher. The Trustees in turn discussed it at their meeting on 16 February that year. Over a decade later the question was still being raised. Thus, at the Trustees' Meeting of 26 May 1910 a letter was read from Major Savona, RMA, Malta (case 15,244) suggesting that the Society should obtain from the War Office official recognition of the medal granted by the Society so as to enable soldiers and sailors to wear the medal on the right breast (in the same fashion as the medals of the Royal Humane Society).[219] The Society replied that it was under consideration but no further reference to this can be found in the minutes.

[217] Baylis was the author of various other books including *The Temple Church and Chapel of St Ann, Rights, Duties, and Relations of Domestic Servants and their Masters and Mistresses*. For more details see *Who Was Who 1897-1916*, London: A & C Black, 1920, p. 48.
[218] Trustees Meeting, 17 November 1892.
[219] See also TNA ref: HO 144/971/B36366.

In May 1918 Sergeant Henry Smith, who had received the Society's medal for his efforts to save the life of the pilot of a crashed aircraft in November 1917 (case 15,722), brought the question up yet again.[220] However, it is clear from contemporary accounts, such as that relating to Private Thomas Ellison (case 14,526), that the medal was typically presented to soldiers by their officers during formal parades, and photographic evidence shows soldiers wearing the Society's medals in uniform, the case of Sergeant-Major William Fletcher being a good example (case 14,683). The medal was very widely worn in uniform by police officers of various forces. The reign of Queen Victoria marked the heyday of the Society and it was unsurprising that the committee presented her with an illuminated testimonial during the 1897 Diamond Jubilee celebrations. Her death on 22 January 1901 and the ascension to the throne of Edward VII brought about a significant – and painful – change to the Society's corporate image. Correspondence between the Society and the Privy Purse made it plain that Edward VII was unwilling to become the patron of the Society.[221] The Home Office had sought the private views of various stakeholders over this decision and these were uniformly unfavourable. The Lord Mayor of London had written of the Society that: 'there really appears to be little, if any, reason for its existence so far as London is concerned and none, I venture to think, for His Majesty's Patronage being accorded to it'.[222] Mr Gonne, Clerk to the LCC, was similarly negative, as was a Councillor Wells.

At a Meeting of the Trustees on 28 November 1901 the Treasurer read out the correspondence between Alderman Sir Frederick Thomas Edridge, JP (1843-1921) and the Secretary of State for the Home Department. It was felt by some of the members present that the decision conveyed in the letter from the Privy Purse dated 5 July 1901 should be regarded as final, but as Coutts Fyfe (*c*.1852-1902), General Manager of the Westminster Fire Office, had agreed to attempt to get the decision rescinded, the Trustees left the matter in his hands. He was to take what further action he considered advisable, doing so independently and not as the representative of the Trustees as a body.

The matter was still not resolved at the 25 March 1902 meeting of the Trustees where Coutts Fyfe moved that the matter be again deferred for further consideration and that the distribution of the awards granted at this meeting should not be made until he had received further advice from Captain the Honourable Arthur Somerset who had given the Trustees great assistance in their efforts to induce the King to reconsider his decision.

However, the persistence of Fyfe and the Society was not to be rewarded. The following letter was read out at the meeting of the Trustees on 22 May 1902:

> General the Right Hon. Sir Dighton Probyn
> Sandringham,
> Norfolk
> Feb 23rd 1902
>
> Dear Captain Somerset
>
> I am much obliged for your letter of the 2nd with various enclosures regarding the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire in which you are taking such a kind interest.
>
> I have referred the question of the King giving his patronage to your Society again to His Majesty and am commanded in reply to say very much what I wrote on the 5th of July last, that, though wishing all success to your Society, HM does not feel justified in giving his patronage to it as yet.
>
> I am very sorry indeed not to be able to reply this second time more favourably than in my letter of July 5th to the Secretary, but HM feels bound to adhere to the decision then given to you.
>
> Believe me, yours truly
>
> D M Probyn

[220] Trustees Meeting, 30 May 1918.
[221] Trustees Meeting, 28 November 1901.
[222] M Green (Lord Mayor of London) to the Under Secretary of State at the Home Office, 7 June 1901, TNA ref: HO 144/971/B36366.



The National Archives

The Society's commemorative address presented to Queen Victoria during the 1897 Diamond Jubilee

With this, the Trustees formally recorded their regret at the King's decision, by which they lost their Royal patronage and use the title 'Royal'. The Trustees then agreed that the Society was to be henceforth styled 'The Society for the Protection of Life from Fire'. The Secretary, George Cooke, contacted the Lord Chamberlain's Office enquiring if the Society needed to also remove the Royal Crown.[223] The response was unequivocal: it would be 'improper' to continue with its use. The crown and the word 'Royal' were to be omitted from medals, testimonials, certificates and all other documentation emanating from the Society. These modifications were quickly implemented, with medals using the revised title being ready within months of the decision. This latest variation to the Society's medal was to remain in force for the next sixty-two years.

In 1911, when King George V ascended the throne, the wish for the Society to be a Royal one re-emerged. The loss of both Royal patronage and the use of Royal in the Society's title in 1902 – only some nine years earlier – had clearly been a painful wound for the Society and hopes of reversing this situation emerged with the demise of King Edward. The Trustees discussed the matter at the earliest opportunity and 'It was unanimously agreed to proceed with efforts to obtain the Royal Warrant in view of the fact that the original Royal Warrant (which could not be found when application was made in 1901) has now come to light'.[224] The actual document, it transpired, was a very brief letter from Lord John Russell, dated Whitehall 13 November 1837, in which Russell confirmed Queen Victoria's agreement to become the Society's patroness.[225] It made no reference whatsoever to the use of the title 'Royal', something the then committee overlooked as they continued with their assumption that its use was entailed by the Queen's patronage.

The matter was put in the hands of the Society's Treasurer and he, together with Lord Sandhurst, made the case for use of the title Royal to the Home Office. Discussions at the Home Office were distinctly cool towards the proposal.[226] They saw no change in the Society's public profile since 1901 that might justify the contemporary grant of the title and having now seen the Society's evidence for its former use the Home Office was clear that the Society had illegitimately utilised it during the whole of Queen Victoria's reign. The Treasurer reported the situation to a Trustee Meeting in October 1911, the minutes of which recorded that:

> …the Home Office intimated to Lord Sandhurst that the Home Secretary [Winston Churchill] could not recommend the King to accede to the application. The Home Secretary furthermore indicated that the Society were not quite right in thinking that Queen Victoria had given them a title to use the term 'Royal', as what she did was to become a Patroness, a circumstance which did not carry the title with it. The Trustees present therefore unanimously agreed an expression of thanks to the Treasurer for what he has done on the Society's behalf.[227]

Rebuffed once again, the Society gave up its efforts to obtain use of the title 'Royal' for the present time. The idea, however, would resurface later in the century.

The outbreak of World War I in August 1914 did not lead to a radical change in the Society's activities or the patterns of awards granted. Several cases did nevertheless reflect the conflict. One such case was that of a hairdresser, Henry Harms. He received a certificate and cheque for £1.1s from the Society for his bravery at a fire in 1915 (case 15,604), though was subsequently interned as an alien – having been born in Germany. His awards were returned to the Society, with a recommendation from a British army Major that they be forwarded to his wife who was living in Hackney. The Society agreed 'subject to the police having no objection'.[228]

Two awards were made that related to enemy raids on the home front. Both were silver medals. The first went to Alfred West who on 31 May 1915 saved two women from a fire in Stoke Newington that was caused by a Zeppelin raid (case 15,613). The second award came two years later. It went to Police Sergeant James Kemp for saving a woman from a fire on 7 July 1917 in Bartholomew Close that had been caused by an air raid by Gotha bombers (case 15,707). Five awards were made for rescues in France and Belgium by military personnel, two of which interestingly went to US Army Air Service officers for rescues from burning and crashed aircraft, with a third USAAS officer gaining the award for a similar rescue in Scotland (see cases 15,757, 15,760 and 15,748 respectively). One award was granted for Mudros (case 15,637).

These awards for saving life in the European theatre were not the first such cases recognised by the Society outside of the United Kingdom. Indeed, the geographical scope of the

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[223] G Cooke to the Lord Chamberlain's Office, 10 June 1902, TNA ref: HO 144/971/B36366.

[224] Trustees' Meeting, 19 January 1911.

[225] See TNA ref: HO 144/971/B36366.

[226] *Ibid*.

[227] Trustees' Meeting, 12 October 1911.

[228] Trustees' Meeting, 28 October 1915; *see also* Trustees' Meeting, 20 May 1915 for the original award.

Society's award activities had changed over the years, just as its escape activities had. Earlier, during the nineteenth century, the award scheme was explicitly extended beyond London and at times awards were made in cases where no discernable links existed with the then British Empire. Thus, for example, a silver medal was given to Jacques Fosse in 1859 for a rescue in France, a testimonial and three guineas was granted to John B Snyder of the Philadelphia Lunatic Asylum for helping to save the inmates (678 patients) there from a fire in 1885 in which 22 died,[229] and 14 silver medals went to Parisians for their rescue efforts at the famous Bazar de la Charite fire in Paris on 4 May 1897 (case 14,635).

These occasional awards continued into the twentieth century, for instance with the silver medal granted to Edward Bell for his brave efforts at a fire at South Porcupine Mining Camp in Ontario, Canada (case 15,395). Within the British Isles, awards for rescues in Ireland were relatively common up to 1922. Following partition of the country awards for Northern Ireland continued as previously. A relatively small number of awards continued to be granted for rescues in the Irish Free State. These ceased following the country being declared a Republic in 1949 and leaving the Commonwealth. The Society formally confirmed this position in 1964 when the Chief Fire Officer of Cork Corporation enquired if the Society would accept cases that he might refer: the Trustees 'regretted that they were unable to extend their operations to Eire'.[230] In 1964 and 1972 the trustees had minuted that the activities of the Society should be restricted to the UK. This decision was reaffirmed by the trustees in July 1992 when they were approached by the National Council of Voluntary Organisations, in the Cayman Islands, about the possibility of making an award to a Miss Jammie Holness.

Unlike the First World War, World War II had a profound effect on the Society's activities. With extensive bombing across the United Kingdom, the Society soon had to consider what action they should take in respect of fires originating through such action. One such case came before the committee in January 1941 and precipitated the decision. The Society was aware of government 'guidelines' which stated that official provision was made for state awards to be made in eligible cases. In fact the government positively discouraged awards being made by Societies and Companies in these circumstances, so it is not surprising that the Society readily acquiesced to this requirement, particularly as they also felt: 'that the limited resources of the Society would be inadequate to provide for the large numbers of such cases which are deserving of recognition'.[231] Therefore, it was determined that: 'applications for such awards in respect of rescues from fires originating through enemy action should not be deemed eligible for award by this Society'.[232]

Another consequence of war was the need to conserve materials and the Society made their contribution by discontinuing the publication of their annual report in 1941. Publication of the Annual Report was not considered again until a Trustees Meeting on 22 March 1946, when it was decided that, subject to cost, publication should be resumed but in a modified form because of the increased cost involved. One year later the decision was made to publish the annual report in an abbreviated form and circulated more widely. The need for economies with materials further impacted the Society when they were informed by the Board of Trade that they could no longer issue a license for the manufacture of bronze medals. It was decided in January 1943 that, where these were to be awarded, a silver clasp and ribbon only should be issued to the recipient, who would be asked to apply for the medal following the cessation of hostilities.[233] The end of the war did not bring an immediate resumption of medal production and it was not until the autumn of 1947 that medals were ready again for distribution.[234]

Another interesting decision made in 1945, although not war related, was the question of the granting of awards to grandparents in respect of efforts made to rescue their grandchildren from fire. Whilst it was felt that close examination of the circumstances was desirable, it was decided that there was no objection in principle to awards being made in such cases.

During this period, and particularly after World War II, the Society's finances were coming under increasing pressure. Income was falling and costs were rising. Although there is no explicit note to the effect, it can be readily seen that the number of awards being made was decreasing. This was particularly marked in respect of medals, the award of which ceased in 1964. Thereafter only certificates and small monetary awards were to be made for the next two decades. However, even the Society's certificates were not immune from economy measures. At the meeting on 20

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[229] *The Times*, Saturday 26 September 1885, p. 7.

[230] MB(8), Ms 34980/8.

[231] Case 17,415 – Trustees' Meeting, 17 January 1941.

[232] MB(7), Ms 34980/7.

[233] Trustee's Meeting, 22 January 1943.

[234] See for example the case of W O'Dell (case 17,552): the Society Secretary, G E Tattersall wrote to him on 3 November 1947 enclosing the bronze medal he had been awarded in July 1944. The Secretary at the same time enclosed the 'silver plate which was attached to the clasp in case you wish to retain same'.

October 1965 a decision was made to reduce the costs of their printing, writing and framing and by February 1966 this had been translated into action. A slightly smaller certificate was introduced, prepared more cheaply by the Group Supply Department of the Commercial Union rather than a specialist printer, framed in plastic and with plastic glass, was agreed, all of which produced a useful 33% cost saving.

Despite such cutbacks, by 1974 the Society was at perhaps its lowest ebb. The Society's income was negligible though fund raising efforts had been ongoing for some time. Several of the Society's key stakeholder insurance companies seem to have questioned the viability of the Society as an independent charity. In June a representative of the companies approached the Royal Humane Society to discuss whether that society might be willing to absorb the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire. Considering the overture at its July 1974 meeting, the RHS Committee responded that: 'In view of the extra work this might entail, it had been made clear to the Insurance Companies' representative that, while the Royal Humane Society was in principle in favour of such a proposition, it could not be contemplated without a guaranteed additional income of £4000 to £5000 per annum'.[235] The idea was not pursued any further, probably due to the Society's impecuniousness.

Two years later, after the resignation of several Society members, a new Honorary Secretary was appointed. Edward (Ted) Henry Gledhill (1920-2005) was the Secretary of the Fire Protection Association at the time of his appointment, which was to date from 1 May 1976, and he was granted a nominal salary of £30 a year.[236] During the time he held the Secretaryship the Society began to restore its fortunes and public profile. In July 1976 Gledhill and the Committee considered revising the design of the Society's certificates and their various forms, though in the end it was agreed to make only minor alterations to the address.[237] More ambitious moves were to take place in 1980. At the Trustees' Meeting on 18 November that year one of the trustees, W C Harris, tabled correspondence with Lord Adeane which suggested that if the Home Office was suitably approached consent might be given for the Society to again style itself the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire. The trustees agreed that this matter should be pursued through W C Harris and C D Woodward, Director of the Fire Protection Association. By the 17 March 1981 meeting It appeared that the initial response was encouraging and it was now agreed that a letter be written to the Home Secretary, William Whitelaw, MP, pursuing the point and enclosing an official submission giving the background details of the Society and its formation. The trustees present agreed that they would revise W C Harris' draft and that P Cahill would prepare the final document for forwarding by the Treasurer to the Home Office. This was achieved on 16 April and when the trustees next met on 21 July the Home Office response indicated that the application would entail fairly extensive investigation that would take some time to complete. Though the trustees pursued this, by their meeting on 24 November 1981 they were notified that the Home Office had refused the application. Further enquiries resulted in Mr Dugdale reporting to the Trustees' Meeting on 23 March 1982 that he had been advised that it was very rare indeed for a grant to be made and that no matter how the submission had been constructed the outcome would have been the same. The trustees agreed that the matter should be left in abeyance for the time being. To date, it does not appear to have been formally raised again.

The question of issuing medals re-emerged in 1982. Collector and historian A G Stone donated a blank bronze medal of the Society in 1980, which had sparked off some debate as to what to do with it. At their meeting on 3 August 1982 the re-introduction of medals was considered but rejected. Six months later, on 29 March 1983, further consideration was given to the possibility. Ted Gledhill and the Treasurer were asked to look into this and relatedly whether the insurance companies might reimburse the cost. By the 26 July 1983 meeting it was agreed to award medals in exceptional cases. Gledhill was instructed to place an order with Colborne Pearson Trophies of Trowbridge, Wiltshire, for a die and an initial run of 100 medals, costing about £500 and £800 respectively.

By 6 December 1983 the medals had been struck though had not yet been delivered, despite assurances that they would be ready by the end of November. Despite this, the trustees approved the award a bronze medal, a cheque for £10 and a certificate to 11-year-old Bradley James Rudgley, and a bronze medal and certificate each to John Douglas Swann, Alan William Halse and George James Gibbs. By their 27 March 1984 meeting the trustees were able to examine specimens of the medal, comment being made regarding the spelling of 'Honor'. However, the Treasurer confirmed that this was the original spelling and Gledhill confirmed that the original medals were struck in that fashion. The medals employed a uniface design similar to the reverse of fifth type medal, but were not intended to be worn.

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[235] Royal Humane Society Committee Minutes, 2 July 1974.

[236] Ordinary Meeting of Trustees, 6 April 1976.

[237] Minutes File, Ms 34,980/9.

The possibility of issuing the medal in silver was raised for discussion in November 1985, though it was not until the 24 March 1987 meeting that the trustees agreed that in future a silver medal could be awarded for exceptional bravery. The first (and to date only) such award was approved by the trustees on 26 March 1991 to Andrew Hazell in 1991 (case 25,027). Funding for the production of the medals was sought, following the initial trustees' idea, from the various insurance companies.

The companies proved supportive of the new initiative and by March 1986 the Society's appeal had resulted in donations amounting to £5,800, enough to secure the manufacture of the medals and fund the awards scheme for several years. The financial foundations however did not coincide with substantial submissions for the awards during this period and in 1997 and 1998 the decline in submissions resulted in efforts to raise the Society's profile. New publicity material and a leaflet emphasising modern rescues rather than historical achievements were produced and circulated.

In July 1996 Ted Gledhill was appointed a full trustee. He had been an honorary trustee since November 1992, and this substantive appointment was notable, as no Secretary had ever been invited to be a trustee since the Charity Commissioners' Order of reorganisation of the Society in 1881.

When Ted Gledhill retired as the Society's Secretary in 2002, he had served in that role for over 28 years, the longest serving incumbent of the office in the Society's history. To mark his outstanding service, Allan Bridgewater, CBE, the Chief Executive of Norwich Union and a trustee of the Society, presented him with one of the Society's medals in silver at the trustee meeting held at the Royal and Sun Alliance offices at 88 St James's Street, London, SW1, on 19 November 2002.

The medal, an original third type award as issued from 1851 to 1891, was engraved with 'E. H. GLEDHILL' in the exergue on the obverse and 'Presented by the trustees in appreciation for his unerring commitment and contribution to the society as secretary over 28 years' on the reverse. This award represented a continuity of over 150 years of occasional honorary awards since the first such medals (which were also of this type) were distributed to the committee of 1851. This was not the end of Ted Gledhill's involvement with the Society; he continued to act as a trustee until 15 July 2004.

By 2011 supplies of the Society's type six medal were running low. The Trustees have as a result of this been considering revising the design of the medal and re-instituting the use of a suspender to make it wearable again. The outcome of these deliberations is as yet unknown.



SPLF Archive

Secretary Ted Gledhill receives the Society's silver medal from Allan Bridgewater



Medal awarded to Ted Gledhill (reverse)

SECTION II
THE RECOGNITION OF BRAVERY

1: THE SOCIETY'S AWARDS

In seeking to recognise courageous actions by its conductors and others who have attempted to save lives from fires, the Society has granted awards since its inception in 1836. Awards initially took the form of testimonials and certificates of various types, silver (and subsequently bronze) medals, and money, this potential repertoire being augmented by watches, which were granted between 1883 and 1964.

The relationship between these various awards during the Society's history has been less than straightforward. Most bravery awards granted by governments or other humane societies (e.g. the Royal Humane Society or the Royal National Lifeboat Institution) may be roughly classified according to the level of bravery displayed or the risk the recipient incurred in performing the deed. Thus, for example, the RNLI gold medal is awarded for outstanding bravery, often involving very considerable risk to the recipient's life in performing the act, while that Institution's silver and bronze medals and testimonials are available to recognise cases that, though meritorious, involve correspondingly less bravery and risk to the recipient's life. The RHS introduced a bronze medal in 1836, thus refining their hierarchy of awards (chiefly silver medals, testimonials and pecuniary grants) and in May 1837 sought to codify the gradations and relations between these awards.[238] Formal State medallic recognition of acts of bravery exhibited by British subjects was only established later. Thus, in 1854 the Sea Gallantry Medal in silver and bronze was created, while for the armed services the Victoria Cross and Distinguished Conduct Medal (for the army) or Conspicuous Gallantry Medal (for the RN), all three of which were established between 1854 and 1856, offered the beginnings of a similarly graded system of awards.

During the nineteenth century at least, this pattern was somewhat compromised, with issues of rank and social class at times superseding more objective criteria for awards on the basis of bravery and risk. Thus, members of the gentry, officers, and such like, would have privileged access to such awards. They would generally have a higher public profile, receive greater publicity for any acts, be better positioned to be recommended by themselves or by literate and socially influential associates to award-making bodies, and so on. Once the particular body had the acts drawn to their attention, those with greater social standing would still be more likely to get a medal or similar honorary award for participating in a rescue, while their more working class associates, who were similarly involved, might be granted a pecuniary award or lower level honorary reward. Similar considerations can be discerned in the patterns of awards made by the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire.

The typical hierarchy of the Society's awards began with its silver medal as its first level award, to be granted for very significant acts of bravery in saving life. Its (later instituted) bronze medal constituted a second level award, granted where the recipient was exposed to less danger. Testimonials, sub-divided into various classes, and certificates, for the majority of the time constituted third level awards, with pecuniary grants often accompanying these or independently constituting a fourth level award possibility. Within this hierarchy of awards, the granting of watches appeared to recognise acts within levels one and two, as will be discussed later. Variations within this pattern exist, with for example Testimonials and money being sometimes granted in lieu of a second medal before 1856 and thus can be regarded as equivalent recognition. Sometimes the Society granted a combination of awards to certain recipients, giving for example a bronze medal *together with* varying sums of money or certificates of different kinds. These additional rewards appear to have been attempts to augment the level of recognition granted to a rescuer, perhaps from the standard typically associated with the bronze medal up towards the standard of the silver medal. In other cases however, the Society adopted a more idiosyncratic approach, for example leaving the choice of award to the recipient.

An early case was that of Conductor Boozey, about whom: 'The Committee gave their unqualified approval of the prompt and cool behaviour Conductor Boozey displayed at a fire in Edward Street, Foley Place, where with the assistance of PS Smith E11 and PC 189E, seven or eight persons were rescued by means of the Escape Ladder, and for several of whom there was direct testimony to prove that they must otherwise have perished'.[239] The Minutes record that Boozey had the choice of a silver medal or 30 shillings, but fail to note his decision. That his name does not appear in the list of medal recipients who received their awards at the subsequent Annual Meeting

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238 Further discussed in R Willoughby's 'A Royal Humane Society Miscellany', *LSARS Journal*, 2012, 73: 1-17.

239 RSPLF MB(1) – RC 28 December 1846 and RC 19 January 1847, case 309.

is suggestive[240]. William Baddeley, however, notes the outcome, in his 'London fires in 1846'. Baddeley reported the events thus:

> Thursday December 24, 3.45am: A fire broke out in the house of Mr Banfield, cabinet-maker, No. 20 Edward Street, Foley Place. At the time of the outbreak there were nine persons asleep in the house, comprising the families of Mr Banfield and of a lodger named Hatchwell. On being roused, the utmost confusion prevailed, the flames having cut off the retreat of the inmates. On hearing the alarm of fire, Conductor Boosey [*sic*], with the Royal Society's fire-escape from Great Portland Street, proceeded to the spot; placing his machine in front of the burning building, he gallantly ascended, and brought down in perfect safety five persons and an infant; three others (all that remained) were rescued from the back of the house by means of his short ladder. A cabinet-maker's workshop adjoining the dwelling was destroyed, and the back and front kitchens of [the] dwelling house burned out, staircase burned away, and part of roof off, as well as considerable damage to the rest of the building and contents. Conductor Boosey's conduct was highly applauded, and he received a *pecuniary reward* [emphasis added] from the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, as well as several presents from inhabitants of the vicinity of his station. But for his exertions the consequences would have been most disastrous.[241]

A more recent (twentieth century) case was that of Daniel Divers.[242] He was recommended to receive a certificate *or* a silver medal plus £5 5s, the choice between these being apparently given to Divers. In this case Divers seems to have chosen the medal and money.

The case of Captain Sam Buck was slightly different.[243] He had rescued Nellie Caldwell from a fire in South Elmsall on 9 July 1921. Buck was granted a pecuniary award of £3.3s.0d and a certificate by the Society and applied to them to be allowed to: 'expend a part of the money awarded to him on a medal'. The Society agreed that he could have a bronze medal if he were to pay its cost price of £1.7s.0d. He is noted in the *Annual Report* (1923) as receiving only his original award and it is thus here assumed that he did not proceed with the proposed transaction.[244]

[240] *Morning Chronicle*, 28 April 1847
[241] *Mechanics' Magazine*, Saturday 10 April 1847, p. 345
[242] SPLF case 16,016, in 1924.
[243] SPLF case 15,891, in 1921.
[244] Ms 34980/6, MB(6)

2: MEDALS

Previous studies of the medals awarded by the Society identified six distinct types, leaving aside minor variations in the design of the suspensions.[245] These distinct types, however, are not always clearly differentiated in the Society archives and this has hindered consideration of the overall awards profile. In the present section we use a combination of the Society Minutes, its Annual Reports, medal registers and details of known medals to discuss each issue and establish the tentative transition points between issues and thus the approximate numbers of each type awarded. In addition to this, we offer a current estimate of those medals known to collectors according to the varying types.

[245] E H Gledhill 'The Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire', *LSARS Journal*, 1993, 19: 51-56; E H Gledhill 'The Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire – A Commemorative Medal', *LSARS Journal*, 1994, 20: 60-61; Gould, R W 'Medals of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire', *LSARS Journal*, 1989, 5: 3-13; R W Gould 'Noticeboard', *LSARS Journal*, 1990, 8: 40-43; R W Gould 'Society for the Protection of Life from Fire: the Missing Medals', *LSARS Journal*, 1991, 12: 38-43; R W Gould 'Medals of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire', *LSARS Journal*, 1992, 16: 32-46; M Payne 'The Society for the Protection of Life from Fire – Its Archives', *LSARS Journal*, 2004, 52: 35-38; V Rance 'The Society for the Protection of Life from Fire – Recent Awards', *LSARS Journal*, 2005, 55: 25-31.

Type I Medal



Type I medal awarded to Police Constable Edward Francis Lipscombe

Description

Obverse	'SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE · 1836 ·' around the circumference, with the Eye of Providence in the centre surrounded by rays of light, with the motto 'VIGILO' (I watch) on a scroll underneath
Reverse	A laurel wreath, with a plain centre for engraving thereon details of the recipient and act
Diameter	52mm
Composition	Silver
Suspension	Ball and circular or oval swivelling ring suspension; sometimes without suspension
Ribbon buckle	None so far has been identified
Bars	None
Naming	Engraved on the reverse in various styles
Ribbon	Plain scarlet
Cases	None seen
Designer	Abraham Wivell is credited with the design by one source, though Benjamin Wyon's signature ('B. WYON') is on the exergue on the obverse
Manufacturer	Benjamin Wyon

The Society awarded its first (type I) silver medal in 1836 to John Forward, issue of this type medal continuing at least up to and including 1840 when the medal to Edward Lipscombe was granted for bravery at a fire on 14 May that year. This appears to be the last medal of this type. No further medals appear to have been awarded until those presented in 1845, discussed below. Aside from the specific medals granted for lifesaving, the Society awarded one honorary medal of this type to Captain Manby for his 'valuable services'. The latter award, in frosted silver and glazed within a gold frame, is omitted from the calculation of medals awarded which is reported later.

Type II Medal



Type II medal awarded to Police Constable Charles Smith

Description

Obverse	'ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE · 1844 ·' around the circumference, with the Eye of Providence in the centre surrounded by rays of light, with the motto 'VIGILO' (I watch) on a scroll underneath
Reverse	A laurel wreath, with a plain centre for engraving thereon details of the recipient and act
Diameter	52mm
Composition	Silver
Suspension	Sometimes issued without suspension (see for example the medal to Joseph Hepworth). Also seen with a ball and circular or oval swivelling ring suspension
Ribbon buckle	None so far has been identified
Bars	None issued during the period this type II medal was awarded, though one recipient (Hutchings) of a type II medal gained a bar in 1862
Naming	Engraved on the reverse in various styles
Ribbon	Plain scarlet
Cases	One case has been seen. This is in burgundy leather, 70mm square and 10mm deep, with spring catch, silk and velvet lined with recess for the medal (*without* suspension); the outside is plain; the manufacturer's details ('B. WYON, MEDALLIST & Chief Engraver of Her Majesty's SEALS, 287 Regent Street') are on the silk lined inside lid
Designer	Abraham Wivell is credited with the design by one source, though Benjamin Wyon's signature ('B. WYON') is on the obverse exergue
Manufacturer	Benjamin Wyon

Queen Victoria became the Society's patron in 1838 and the following year the Society *assumed* the style 'Royal' in its title. A new die was prepared by Benjamin Wyon during early 1845 and estimates sought for producing medals in gold, silver and bronze. The new die incorporated the date 1844, instead of 1836 as on the first type medal, and the die's final approval was deferred at the Society committee meeting on 25 March that year pending insertion of the word 'Royal' into the title thereon. When this change actually came into effect is unclear, though it is presumed the medal was available and issued from mid 1845. The first awards for this year were those to Joseph Hepworth, Conductor John Sunshine, William Cockerell, Lewis Bray and Edward Jefferies, all dating from the April 1845 committee meeting. The type II medal to Bray (for services at a fire in

August 1844) is known and suggests that this batch of awards marked the introduction of the new design. This issue appears to have continued up to and including the award to Conductor Wilson (case 734, approved in the committee meeting of 31 January 1849).



Case for the Type II medal with case and medal in-situ

Type III Medal



Type III bronze medal awarded to J J Evans



Type III silver medal awarded to Conductor Edward Dunk

Description

Obverse	A man carrying an apparently unconscious woman (both part draped) away from a stylized building fire and ladder, with the motto 'ACTIONS ARE OUR'S RESULTS ARE GOD'S' around the upper half of the circumference
Reverse	A garland of oak leaves, with 'ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE', the date '1843', and a crown. A plain centre for engraving thereon the details of the recipient and act
Diameter	44mm
Composition	Silver or bronze
Suspension	Straight bar swivelling suspension
Ribbon buckle	Various styles seen, mainly in silver with two or three prongs
Bars	In silver only, slip-on type with ornate border of oak leaves with acorns, the centre plain for engraving of the details
Naming	Engraved on the reverse in various styles
Ribbon	Plain scarlet
Cases	Black leather bound case with spring catch, silk and velvet lined with recess for medal; the outer lid is edged with a gold line but is otherwise plain; manufacturer's details ('Wyon, 287 Regent Street, London') are on the silk lined inside lid
Designer	S M Nixon, though Benjamin Wyon's signature ('BENJ. WYON. SC.') is on the exergue on the obverse
Manufacturer	Benjamin Wyon



Case for the Type III medal

The Society committee proposed modifying the type II design at its meeting on 24 January 1850. Benjamin Wyon was asked to submit a design, though his initial estimate was regarded as too expensive.[246] By 26 April however Wyon submitted an estimate of £21 for a design and new die, arguing that if the size of the medal was reduced the subsequent unit cost would be significantly reduced.[247] Subsequent negotiations with Wyon proved difficult and in December the Society decided on an open competition, offering five guineas for the best design and motto. Advertising in *The Times*, the specification – to be submitted by 14 January 1851 – stipulated that 'the design [is] to comprise not more than two or at most three figures; the motto either in English or Latin'.[248] In January 1851 it was announced that 59 designs had been submitted and that of S M Nixon, from Hampstead, was awarded the prize.[249] Subsequently, an agreement was reached on 28 January 1851 with Wyon to produce a new die for the medals.[250]

Lengthy negotiations, cracked dies, and concern over costs delayed the arrival of the type III medal until May 1852. During this time Wyon had on 15 April 1851 offered to supply medals from the old (type II) die at his own expense for the planned public awards presentation on 9 May that year and suggested that these medals could be subsequently exchanged by the recipients for the new type when it was ready, an offer which the Society accepted. The committee noted at its meeting on 1 June 1852 the arrival of the medals and that they were 'delivering the same to the parties to whom they were awarded'.[251]

It appears that the type III medal was available for distribution from June 1852 and issued retrospectively to cases dating back to those first discussed by the Society in October 1849. Bronze medals were introduced from this time also, the first such medals going to committee members and others associated with the Society, while PC Gardner (case 1,249), Thomas Moore (case 1,256), and Gideon Crocker (case 1,257) were the first of twelve recipients granted the medal in bronze for bravery included within the April 1851 cohort.

Twenty-one silver and bronze medals were awarded or approved in April and May 1851, beginning with the silver medal to Conductor George Clarke (case 952). Two medals from this initial group are so far known to survive, the silver medal to George Low, (case 1,350, first discussed at the committee of 15 April 1851) for bravery on 3 April 1851, and the bronze medal to Sergeant Sanderson, (case 1,328, committee of 28 April 1851) for bravery on 12 March 1851. Both of these are type III medals. The large number of awards during April 1851 suggests that a backlog of cases was then being dealt with following the decision on the new pattern medal.

It is assumed here for the purposes of enumeration that October 1849 marks the (retrospective) introduction by the Society of the type III medal. However, the proposal by Wyon that medals presented between 15 April 1851 and the arrival of the new pattern medals in May 1852 could utilise the type II die and that these be subsequently exchanged for the new versions gives rise to various interesting questions and possibilities. If these 'transitional' period medals were issued unnamed, which would have made economic sense for Wyon, it is possible that some of what might otherwise be considered type II 'specimens' are in fact surviving awards actually presented during this transitional period. There is the clear possibility that one or more of these type II medals were not exchanged, thus adding to the overall total of type II awards and reducing that of the type III issues. It is also possible that some recipients may have been issued a replacement type III medal without having returned the temporary (type II) medal they had originally received. Further, it is intriguing to wonder whether some of the recipients of the newly introduced (type III) bronze medals during this transition period had been originally issued temporary type II medals in bronze. If this were so, then these would represent the only type II bronzes ever awarded.

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[246] GCM 30 January 1850.

[247] GCM 26 April 1850: using a smaller medal would produce cost savings of four to five shillings per medal with a further seven shillings being saved due to the briefer engraving on each medal (engraving on type II medals costing in the region of 10 shillings each).

[248] *The Times*, Tuesday 31 December 1850, p. 4.

[249] *Art Journal*, March 1851, p. 99 stated that the prize was 50 guineas; probably an error.

[250] SpGM 28 January 1851.

[251] RC 1 June 1852.

Type III Commemorative Awards

Among the type III awards were several honorary or commemorative presentations.[252] A number of bronze medals were thus given to the Society Vice-presidents, committee members and the Honorary Surgeon in 1852.[253]



Commemorative medal awarded to T J Holt Esq 1851

Then, in 1867 seven silver medals were given to Society committee members.[254] The most recent such award was of a single silver medal, which was awarded to Ted Gledhill in 2002. These honorary awards, though both very interesting and scarce, are omitted from the present enumeration of medals granted. Those known to survive are listed separately in appendix I.

The end of the type III medals probably came with the (known) award of the bronze medal to Walter Marsh for bravery on 10 January 1891 (case 14,326, approved at the committee on 12 February 1891). This was the final medal granted in 1891.

[252] R W Gould 'Medals of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire', *LSARS Journal*, 1992, 16: 32-46.
[253] RC – 1 June 1852; The precise number of such honorary awards is not noted, though the *Fifteenth Annual Report of the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire* (London, 1851, pp. 6-7) lists 28 people on the Society's Committee of Management, added to which it details 13 Vice-Presidents. Adding the Honorary Surgeon to this number gives 42 candidates for these commemorative issues. It seems possible that other Society officers, such as the Secretary, the 3 Collectors and 2 Inspectors who are also listed in the *Annual Report* may have been included in this distribution of these awards.
[254] E H Gledhill 'The Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire', *LSARS Journal*, 1993, 19: 51-56; E H Gledhill 'The Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire – A Commemorative Medal', *LSARS Journal*, 1994, 20: 60-61.

Type IV Medal



Type IV bronze medal awarded to Police Sergeant Francis Coulter



Type IV silver medal awarded to Bernard McCann

Description

Obverse	A man supporting an unconscious woman, with two young girls standing nearby, the trio having been presumably rescued from the blazing buildings that form the backdrop to the scene
Reverse	A garland of oak leaves circling the motto 'DUTY AND HONOR', with 'ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE' and the date '1843' around the outside
Diameter	41.5mm
Composition	Silver or bronze
Suspension	Swivelling straight bar suspension. On bronze medals many of these suspensions are in silver (Gould, 1992, suggests 5% of bronze medals have bronze suspensions)
Ribbon buckle	Top brooch buckle, generally in silver with two prongs

Bars	None awarded during this period
Naming	Engraved on the rim, mainly in upright capitals
Ribbon	Plain scarlet
Cases	Leather bound case with spring catch, velvet lined with recess for medal; crowned monogram of the RSPLF on the lid in gold; manufacturer's details inside lid
Designer	John Pinches, 27 Oxendon Street, London (from 1892-1903)
Manufacturer	John Pinches



Case for the Type IV medal

The Society trustees recommended on 10 December 1891 that the motto 'Duty and Honor' should be adopted. Following enquiries at the British Museum and various medallists about designing a new medal, tenders for a revised design incorporating this motto were subsequently invited, with up to £10 being offered for a new design.[255] The committee approved a design by John Pinches, of 27 Oxendon Street, Haymarket, on 12 May 1892 and a payment of five guineas was authorised to him and another of three guineas to Allan Wyon for a drawing he supplied.[256] The design was submitted to the Queen in October 1892 and she promptly approved this on 9 October that year. An illustration of the new design was published the following week in *The Graphic*.[257]

The first award (a silver medal) of 1892 is to Police Sergeant William Reynolds (case 14,374), initially approved by the committee on 12 May 1892 and presented on 18 August 1892. Some four medals were either granted or presented then, including the silver medal to Arthur Smith for bravery in Belfast on 19 June 1892. Smith's medal (case 14,384, approved at the committee meeting on 18 August 1892) is known to exist and is a type IV award. It appears therefore that the awards from that granted to Smith onwards (and very probably from Reynolds onwards) are all type IV issues and that these were issued in advance of receiving the Queen's views. The known type IV medal to J L Emerson, for bravery on 4 March 1891, is somewhat anomalous in this chronology, being approved by the Society after a considerable delay on 7 December 1893 (case 14,456).

[255] Trustees Meeting, 11 February 1892.
[256] Trustees Meeting, 12 May 1892.
[257] *The Graphic*, 5 November 1892, p. 559.

Type V Medal



Type V bronze medal awarded to Police Sergeant Edward Ayers.
The ribbon carries the 'bar' issued in lieu of this bronze medal during WWII.



Type V silver medal awarded to Police Constable Herbert W Woodward

Description

Obverse	A man supporting an unconscious woman, with two young girls standing nearby, the trio having been presumably rescued from the blazing buildings that form the backdrop to the scene
Reverse	A garland of oak leaves circling the motto 'DUTY AND HONOR', with 'SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE' and the date '1843' around the outside
Diameter	41.5mm
Composition	Silver or bronze

Suspension	Swivelling straight bar suspension, generally with double claws or pin On bronze medals many of these suspensions are in silver (Gould, 1992, suggests 5% of bronze medals have bronze suspensions)
Ribbon buckle	Top brooch buckle, generally in silver without prongs
Bars	Plain, slip-on type, with the name of recipient, the place and date of the rescue usually engraved on the obverse
Naming	Engraved on the rim, generally in upright capitals
Ribbon	Plain scarlet
Cases	Leather bound case with spring catch, velvet lined with recess for medal; monogram of the SPLF on the lid in gold; manufacturer's details, variously recorded inside lid (a 1934 example records them as 'John Pinches London')
Designer	John Pinches
Manufacturer	John Pinches, at 21 Albert Embankment, London (from 1903-1958), then at 1 St Luke Avenue, SW4 (1959-*aft*.1966).



Case for the Type V medal

Following the death of Queen Victoria, Edward VII declined to become the Society's patron and they ceased to use Royal in their title as from 5 July 1901. However, the Society sought to have its case reconsidered during the latter part of the year. Distribution of awards agreed at the committee meeting on 25 March 1902 was postponed pending the final outcome of these negotiations. Finally, on 22 May 1902 the Society accepted the need to surrender the word 'Royal' from its title and ordered future medals, testimonials, and other materials to reflect the modified title. The penultimate medal approved in 1901 is the known type IV silver medal to George Ward (case 14,855, approved at the committee meeting of 28 November 1901). The first medal approved in 1902 is the silver medal to Ernest Sissons, (case 14,860, approved at the committee meeting of 20 February 1902). Two further medals were approved at that meeting, a bronze medal to Neal McLaughlin and a silver medal to Bernard Doyle (cases 14,863 and 14,867 respectively). The next award was granted at the committee meeting of 25 March 1902, this being the silver medal to Frank Blowers (case 14,877, for bravery on 2 February 1902).

The Society's suspension of presentations *from this date* and the subsequent adoption of the type V die, showing the modified Society's title, would appear to be from the award to Blowers onwards, with those to Sissons, McLaughlin and Doyle being the final type IV issues.

In terms of surviving medals from this period, the next known medal is the silver type V issue to Thomas Tucker, for bravery on 7 February 1902 (case 14,881, approved at the committee meeting of 22 May 1902). This is three medals after that to Sissons and immediately follows that to Blower; further confirmation of the transition point between the type IV and V issues will depend on new sightings of medals within this window.

During World War II government restrictions on the use of metals resulted in the temporary cessation of the manufacture of the Society's bronze medals. From January 1943 the Society issued a silver clasp and ribbon in lieu of the bronze medal. Along with this 'wartime bar', recipients were given written instructions enabling them to apply for the medal following the end of the war (see case 17,520).[258] The production of the Society's bronze medal resumed in the autumn of 1947.[259] During the period of WWII the Society issued approximately 12 silver medals (these apparently being unaffected by the Board of Trade restrictions) and 92 bronze medals, 38 of the latter being issued in the period 1943 to the end of 1945. A further 15 bronze awards were granted up to June 1947, after which date (and by the time the next awards were made) the medal was again in manufacture. It appears probable that the number of these 'wartime bars' thus granted ranges between 38 (January 1943 to December 1945) and 53 (January 1943 to June 1947). They were intended to be returned to the Society in exchange for the medal, though at least some recipients were given them along with the medals by the Society. The bars are plain silver, 10.5mm high by 37mm wide, with the recipient's rank (if applicable), name, the place and date of the rescue typically engraved in plain upright capitals in three lines. The reverse has a band at the top through which the ribbon goes and a hook fitting used apparently to prevent the bar sliding down the ribbon. It is not known whether all recipients of these 'wartime bars' exchanged them for their medals.

The end of the type V issue came in 1963 when the Society ceased making awards of medals due to limited finances. The final award from this period was to Norman Kelly (case 18,952) for bravery in a fire in Antrim on 19 November 1962.

Type VI Medal



Type VI bronze medal awarded to Alan Ainsworth

Description

Obverse	A garland of oak leaves circling the motto 'DUTY AND HONOR', with 'SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE' and the date '1843' around the outside
Reverse	Plain, apart from circlet of stylised laurel leaves within which the recipient's name and details can be engraved
Diameter	40.2mm
Composition	Silver or bronze
Suspension	None
Ribbon buckle	Not applicable
Bars	Not applicable
Naming	Engraved on the reverse, mainly in plain upright capitals
Ribbon	Not applicable
Cases	Self-hinged plastic, the lower half black and the top half transparent; overall dimensions 65 x 65 x 15mm; inside, the medal rests on a pad of green sponge

[258] Trustee's Meeting, 22 January 1943.

[259] See for example the case of W O'Dell (case 17,552): the Society Secretary, G E Tattersall wrote to him on 3 November 1947 enclosing the bronze medal he had been awarded in July 1944. The Secretary at the same time enclosed the 'silver plate which was attached to the clasp in case you wish to retain same'.

Designer	Probably designed by Colborne Pearson Trophies, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, adapting the type IV and V reverse design
Manufacturer	Colborne Pearson Trophies

The type VI medal issue commenced for actions performed in 1983 with the award of primarily bronze medals.[260]

The Society agreed the reintroduction of medals at its committee meeting on 26 July that year and authorised their manufacture by Colborne Pearson Trophies, of Trowbridge, Wiltshire. By 6 December several medals had apparently been struck, though it was not until 27 March 1984 that the committee were able to examine specimens.

The first award was given to Bradley Rudgley. The final medal included in the present calculations is that to Michael Higgs (case 26,829) awarded for bravery in February 2009.

As of November 2011 the Society have been considering revising the design of this medal, thus perhaps issuing in what will become a type VII medal. Details of the new design are as yet unknown, although it has been proposed that the revised medal will be once again issued with a suspender for wearing.

Numbers Awarded

Using the cut off points discussed above, the numbers of each type of medal were collated from the details recorded in section III. Leaving aside previously discussed issues surrounding the numbers awarded within each particular type, it should be noted that the surviving Society archives on occasion differ as to the award actually granted, or omit known or probable cases. Thus, it appears *possible* that a very small number of further awards may have been made, without their being shown in surviving records, and that awards here ranked as medals (or watches) were ultimately either not granted or were altered to monetary or certificate awards. Quantifying such potentialities is not possible with any accuracy.

A further issue relates to replacement medals requested from time to time by recipients who had lost their original medals. Seven such applications were noted in the records,[261] though it is unclear whether the Society finally issued replacement medals to all such claimants. These probable duplicates have been omitted from the current calculations.

Given this state of our present knowledge, the data concerning numbers awarded of each of the six medal types has been summarised in the following table (Table 4).

TYPE	SILVER	BARS	BRONZE	BARS	UNSPEC	TOTALS
I (1836-1842)	38	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	38
II (1843-1849)	27	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	27
III (1849-1891)	159[262]	14	51	0	3[263]	227
IV (1892-1902)	58	0	72	0	0	130
V (1902-1963)	284[264]	7[265]	689[266]	4	0	984
VI (1983-2011)	1	0	125	0	0	126
TOTALS	567	21	937	4	3	1,532

***Table 4*: Summary of SPLF medals & bars awarded according to type**

[260] V Rance 'The Society for the Protection of Life from Fire – Recent Awards', *LSARS Journal*, 2005, 55: 25-31.

[261] The following recipients are *known* to have applied for replacements (with year of original award and application for replacement in brackets): Conductor Arnold – silver (1862: 1867), Thomas Brown – silver (1881: 1885), William Field – bronze (1899: 1910), William Neate – silver (1895: 1915), Anthony Scroope – bronze (1900: 1922), Thomas Welford – silver and bar (1852 and bar 1863: 1863), and James Wright – bronze (1940: 1968).

[262] This includes a *hypothesised* silver medal to Conductor Clarke for bravery at a fire in Soho on 26 December 1862 (case 7,672); this award is not specifically mentioned in surviving records, though a medal for this fire is known to have been awarded to Clarke's colleague Joseph Witham.

[263] The awards to William Maguire (1881, case 13,024), Inspector Dennis Hayer (1871, no case number given), and George Nash (1871, no case number given) are specified as 'medals', though whether they were silver or bronze was unstated. The pattern of contiguous awards suggests that the majority of these are likely to have been silver medals.

[264] This figure includes two silver medals awarded to Breaks, the second medal being apparently issued in error where a silver bar would have been the appropriate award. Breaks subsequently also earned two silver bars.

[265] This figure includes one silver bar to a recipient of a bronze medal: William Croxall received a bronze medal (case 14782) in 1900 and a silver bar (case 15037) to it in 1905.

[266] This figure includes a second bronze medal (rather than a bar) awarded in 1910 (case 15,292) to James Burns, he having already been awarded a bronze medal in 1896 (case 14,596), and a supposed (though unconfirmed) bronze medal to Sam Buck (case 15,891).

Bars and Second Awards

1st Type Bar



1st Type bar awarded to Conductor George Low (showing method of attachment)



1st Type bar awarded to Conductor William Isles (showing method of attachment)

Description

Obverse	Rectangular, hand-worked with raised oak foliage border
Reverse	Plain
Dimensions	42mm x 14mm
Composition	Silver
Attachment style	Varied, slip-on, with a thin back-strap, or with fixings attached to the suspender have been noted
Naming	Generally in sloping serif lettering, with initial letters capitalised, the naming beginning with 'For Rescuing Life', followed by the date of the rescue and its case number
Manufacturer	Presumably the same as supplied the medals

The 1st type bar was awarded between 1856 and 1866

2nd Type Bar



2nd Type bar (obverse) awarded to Police Constable Frederick Morris



2nd Type bar (reverse) awarded to Police Constable Frederick Morris

Description

Obverse	Rectangular, plain
Reverse	Plain
Dimensions	36mm x 11.5mm
Composition	Silver and bronze
Attachment style	Slip on, with thin back-strap
Naming	Generally in straight non-serif capitals, with the recipient's name (including initials), the place of the rescue and its date
Manufacturer	Presumably the same as supplied the medals

The 2nd type bar was awarded between 1905 and 1939.

Bars, as a recognition of a second medal award, were authorised by the Society at its meeting on 31 October 1856, before which time alternative awards such as testimonials or money might be granted to those who performed subsequent acts of bravery.

One such case was that of Conductor Myers who, having previously received the Society's silver medal (see case 1,094), was granted a Testimonial and 20 shillings for rescuing five people from a fire at the Cleveland Arms, 23 Montague Street, Portman Square, on 26 October 1851 (case 1,490). The Society's *Sixteenth Annual Report* records that: 'Myers has previously obtained the Society's Silver Medallion, or it would have been awarded him in this case'.[267] Another, somewhat different, instance of this relates to Conductor Thomas Welford. He had received the Society's silver medal in 1852 (case 1,536). Voted a further silver medal in 1855 (case 2,800), Welford declined this requesting a testimonial and £1 instead, arguing that he 'had already gained the medal'. The committee agreed to his request. In other cases this pattern was not followed and a second medal might be awarded in recognition of a further act of bravery.[268] The first actual *silver* bar, appears to have been awarded to Conductor Joseph Warren for his bravery on 16 November 1857 in rescuing three people from a fire in Sun Street, Bishopsgate Street (case 4,152). In total, 11 first bars in silver appear to have been awarded. In one of these cases, that of William Isles who gained his medal in 1862, there appears to be no surviving record of the original award in the

[267] *Sixteenth Annual Report of the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire* (1852, p.20).

[268] One such case was that of Conductor Richard Christianson who received his first silver medal in 1849 (an unnumbered case) and a second silver medal in 1856 (case 3,152).

available Minute Books, though its existence is known from the Annual Report, a newspaper report, and the actual survival of the medal: he received his bar in 1865. Apart from one such bar apparently awarded to a bronze medal recipient (Croxall), all others were to recipients of originally silver medals. The recipients, with the case numbers and dates of award, were as follows:

- Archibald Booth, medal case 16,290 (in 1928), bar case 16,809 (in 1933)
- Herbert Burrows, medal case 15,691 (in 1917), bar case 15,710 (in 1917)
- William Croxall, bronze medal case 14,782 (in 1900), silver bar case15,037
- (in 1905)
- Conductor Hutchings, medal case 431 (in 1847), bar case 7,439 (in 1862)
- Conductor Isles, medal case 7,310 (in 1862), bar case 9,242 (in 1865)
- Conductor Low, medal case 1,350 (in 1851), bar case 5,216 (in 1859)
- Frank Richards, medal case 16,950 (in 1934), bar case 17,090 (in 1936)
- Conductor Shaw, medal case 9,639 (in 1865), bar case 10,715 (in 1866)
- Conductor Warren, medal case 2,807 (in 1855), bar case 4,152 (in 1858)
- Conductor Welford, medal case 1,536 (in 1852), bar case 8,056 (in 1863)
- Frederick Windebank, medal case 15,443 (in 1913), bar case 16,389 (in 1929)

It is apparent from this that no type I medal winners were awarded silver bars, while type II, III, IV, and V medal winners received one, five, one, and four first bars respectively. Two silver medallists appear to have gained second bars, though one of these was to the recipient of a *second* silver medal, thus representing four silver awards. Second bars were awarded to:

- Thomas Breaks, medal case 16,127 (in 1926), second medal case 16,290 (in 1928), first bar case 16,521 (in 1930), second bar case 16,809 (in 1933)
- William Rickell, medal case 5,826 (in 1860), first bar case 8,801 (in 1864),second bar case 10,314 (in 1866)

One recipient, Conductor Samuel Wood, gained six silver bars and also received a bronze medal. Wood gained his first silver medal as case 1,314 (in 1851), the bronze medal as case 2,218 (in 1854), a first bar as case 4,165 (in 1858), a second as case 4,897 (in 1859), a third as case 5,544 (in 1860), a fourth as case 6,476 and 6,496 (in 1861), a fifth as case 6,920 (in 1862) and a sixth as case 8,821 (in 1864).

In addition to silver bars to mark second awards, there were at least two cases (subsequent to the institution of bars in October 1856) of recipients being (apparently inadvertently) granted a second silver medal for a subsequent act of bravery: the first such recipient was Daniel Sloan, who was awarded his first silver medal as case 15,745 (in 1918) and a second silver medal as case 16,566 (in 1931), while the second recipient was George Bainbridge, who received his first silver medal as case 17,166 (in 1937) and his second as case 17,403 (in 1940).

The first actual *bronze* bar to a bronze medal appears to have been awarded in 1932, after which a further three bars were granted. All were single bars. They were to:

- James Cockroft, medal case 16,500 (in 1930), first bar case 16,737 (in 1932)
- Frederick H Morris, medal case 16,539 (in 1930) and bar case 16,776 (in 1933)
- Herbert Scott, medal case 16,568 (in 1930) and bar case 16,811 (in 1933)
- Thomas Wilson, medal case 16,781 (in 1933) and bar case 17,307 (in 1939)

Apart from these, there is at least one instance of a bronze medal recipient gaining a second bronze medal, this being the case of James Burns. He had received the initial bronze medal for bravery in Londonderry on 18 June 1896 (case 14,596) and a further bronze medal for actions at a fire in Ballyjamesduff on 15 May 1910 (case 15,292). Clearly such second awards were at this period made in error.

In addition to bars and second medals of the same class (silver or bronze), a small number of recipients gained both silver and bronze medals. Among the cases of this type noted were those of Conductor Thomas Field who received the bronze medal in 1852 (case 1,505) and the silver medal later that same year (case 1,810); Conductor Samuel Wood whose bronze and multiple silver awards are noted earlier; Engineer William J Tothill who won the bronze medal in Newport in 1894 (case 14,533) and the silver there in 1905 (case 15,041); and Fireman Daniel J Collins who won a silver medal in Cardiff in 1919 (case 15,792) and later a bronze medal there in 1937 (case 17,166).

Multiple Awards from Different Bodies for a Single Act

Occasionally, individuals who have performed acts of courage in lifesaving have received several awards from different bodies for a single act. This is commonest in maritime rescues, one well known instance being the rescue of the crew of the *Bradboyne* on 6 February 1920, with several rescuers ending up receiving the Sea Gallantry Medal from the government, Lloyd's Medal for Saving Life at Sea, the Liverpool Shipwreck and Humane Society Marine Medal, and the Shipwrecked Fishermen and Mariners Royal Benevolent Society medal. Similar examples occurred following the wrecks of the *Gallina* in 1899, the *Delhi* in 1911, the *Volturno* in 1913, the *Volumnia* in 1929, and the *Usworth* in 1934 among numerous others.

Such multiple awards were less common for land based lifesaving episodes, though they did occur. This is most notable in the case of the Society's awards following the introduction of the King's Police Medal. Between 1909 and early 1943 there appear to be 32 instances of recipients of the Society's medals also receiving the KPM for the same act. This pattern ceased later in 1943. The Society subsequently only made provisional awards to those it knew were recommended for state or what it considered were other high ranking lifesaving medals (such as the Carnegie Hero Fund Trust) and if the latter awards were confirmed then the Society withdrew its own provisional award. An early example of this was the case of Constable John Thompson Neilson, of the Dundee Police. He distinguished himself on 4 December 1943, saving three people from a burning tenement building in Cray Street, Broughty Ferry. The Society approved the award of its bronze medal to Neilson, but made this subject to his *not* being awarded the King's Police Medal.[269] In this case Neilson did receive the KPM and thus missed out on the Society's bronze medal.[270] Other cases of multiple awards that have been observed (with the number of instances given in brackets) involve the Albert Medal (4), Empire Gallantry Medal (1), Royal Humane Society medal (3), the Carnegie Hero Fund Trust certificate (3), Liverpool Shipwreck and Humane Society medal (7), Liverpool Corporation Lifesaving Medal (1), and Ally Sloper's Medal of Valour (1). Undoubtedly, other instances exist that have not so far come to our attention.

Survival Rates

Considering the contemporary survival rates of the SPLF medals is difficult and essentially imprecise, being dependent on sightings of medals through catalogues, known collections, family hands, and other such sources. The numbers known at the present time are likely to represent *only a proportion* of those actually existing, this being increasingly true the more contemporary an award is (as it will have both greater chances of survival and have had less time to percolate into museums or private collections). While some currently known medals may be lost again over time (through theft, accident, deliberate destruction, etc), it is probable that further medals will continue to surface and that these will swell the overall numbers known. The emergence of such hitherto unrecorded surviving medals may relate to all SPLF medal types, though in our view this is likely to be particularly marked with relation to more recent issues (types V and VI). Table 5 summarises the actual number of such medals known to exist, classified again according to type and with the currently known survival rates being given in brackets. Unnamed and honorary awards (e.g. to committee members) are excluded.

TYPE	SILVER	BARS	BRONZE	BARS	TOTALS
I (1836-1842)	6 (16%)	N/A	N/A	N/A	6 (16%)
II (1843-1849)	4 (15%)	N/A	N/A	N/A	4 (15%)
III (1849-1891)	35 (22%)	2 (14%)	10 (20%)	0	47 (21%)
IV (1892-1902)	11 (19%)	0	9 (12%)	0	20 (15%)
V (1902-1963)	48 (17%)	3 (43%)	63 (9%)	1 (25%)	115 (12%)
VI (1983-2011)	0	N/A	2 (2%)	N/A	2 (2%)
TOTALS	104 (18%)	5 (24%)	84 (9%)	1 (25%)	194 (12%)

***Table 5*: Summary of SPLF medals currently known to collectors to exist with the percentage of the particular issue represented in brackets**

Considering the above statistics, a number of comments may be made. The medals may be safely regarded as varying between uncommon (say for the type V awards, with 115 known) to very rare (say for the type II awards, with 4 known). Bronze examples of all types consistently appear to

[269] MB(7) – Ordinary Meeting of the Trustees, Friday 28 July 1944.
[270] See TNA reference HO 45/19814 and the *London Gazette*, 1 January 1945.

have a lower survival rate than silver awards. Leaving aside the type VI medals, the overall survival rates appear relatively low when compared to those for some nineteenth century campaign and long service awards.

In the classic, though now somewhat dated, works by Kenneth Douglas-Morris for example, he notes survival rates of 25-30% for Army of India Medals to the navy, 26% for Naval General Service Medals with bar Trafalgar, 26% for Anchor type Navy LS&GC Medals, and up to 54% of New Zealand War Medal to the navy. By contrast, Douglas-Morris suggested the survival rates for the First China War Medal were as low as 8% and 7% for impressed Crimea Medals to RN recipients.[271]

Whether the Society's medals have been less prized by their recipients than relatively common campaign medals is unlikely. Speculatively, as civilian gallantry awards, more of these medals may actually have been retained by the families of recipients. After all, the actions that led to these awards would be more likely to have both a local character and be intimately familiar to other family members.

And what if they have not been retained in families? It is likely that the low public profile of the Society has contributed to these medals being unfamiliar to the majority of collectors as well as the public. This factor may have contributed to limited interest in them in years past and thus fostered fewer opportunities for their conservation. It will be interesting to observe how many more of these awards emerge in the future.

[271] See for instance K J Douglas-Morris *Naval Medals 1793-1856*, London, 1987, especially pp. 492-4.

3: WATCHES

The SPLF for a period of over 70 years awarded watches to certain recipients (typically children, young women and occasionally young workmen). These watches appear to have been roughly equivalent to the Society's medal awards, though distinguishing whether a particular award was equivalent to a silver or a bronze medal is a very tentative exercise.

The first inscribed watch was issued in 1883 (to Rhys Smith, for a fire on 25 April 1882, case 13,073) and the practice continued until 1964 when the last known watch was presented to Kevin B White (case 19,143). From 1883 to 1899 only 12 watches were granted, with a further 14 being conferred between 1900 and the end of 1910. They became more commonly awarded during and after the World War I, though during World War II no watches were granted from the end of 1941 until 1946, presumably due to very limited availability. In total, 171 silver watches, together with a single gold watch (this going to Staff Nurse Minnie Byrne, for bravery on 1 January 1920 in a fire following an explosion in Leeds: case 15,818), were awarded.

The pattern of watches and types of inscription used on them presumably varied considerably over these decades. Early watches presented by the Society would have been of the pocket watch variety. Wristwatches had been initially introduced in about 1880, though they were not widespread. In 1911 the Santos wristwatch was introduced and the First World War saw the widespread adoption of the wristwatch, which by 1920 was the dominant model. By 1923 it is clear that wristwatches were being given by the Society (see case 15,968 11-year-old Hilda May Barker who received a 'silver wristlet watch' from the Society for trying to saving her sister that year).

The authors have as yet made no sightings of watches of any type given by the Society.

4: TESTIMONIALS AND CERTIFICATES

Throughout its existence the Society has issued testimonial and certificates of various kinds, both as separate rewards and in association with other awards such as medals, watches and sums of money. Surviving documentation in the archives does not reveal a clear picture of their history or how they were classified.

At times the terms testimonial and certificate are used interchangeably in the minutes. When they are clearly distinguished from each other, the sub-classifications that at times existed are often not articulated. Despite such uncertainties, the Society's Minute Books do indicate a number of changes to their award structure over the years and these are discussed below.

The Society's testimonials and certificates generally represent intermediate level awards, ranking between medals and monetary awards. However, even this simple classification has its anomalies.

For instance, before the authorisation of bars to its medals in 1856, the Society granted testimonials (and/or money) to recipients of medals who performed subsequent acts of bravery (see the cases of Conductors Myers and Welford discussed earlier).

A century later, when medals ceased to be issued during the period 1963 to 1983, certificates formed the principal reward, covering acts that previously would have been recognised by medals.

Testimonials

The Society's *First Annual Report* in 1837 notes the first five testimonials awarded. All went for services at a fire in Fenchurch Street, London, which began at about 4.15am on 23 April 1836. The recipients were a Mr and Mrs Blachford, who had rescued a family of six, and a Mr Blower and two brothers named Binche, who together had saved two maids. The testimonials were described as being 'the thanks of the Society, printed in Gold, on Vellum' and were presented at the public meeting in the Lowther Rooms on 14 June 1836 by Captain George Manby.

Testimonials continued to be awarded for over the next 80 years. Descriptions of them varied over time. With early awards, this seems to reflect the individual handcrafted nature of each testimonial, the expense lavished on the production process of each reflecting variations within the range of acts being recognised. Thus, higher levels of bravery attracted more expensive and elaborate testimonials. They could thus apparently be given on parchment or vellum, could be 'plain' or 'illuminated', and for many years testimonial were also noted as first, second or third class.

Quite how these classes related to parchment, vellum or illumination is not specified. As a working hypothesis it may be that the first class testimonial was illuminated and on vellum, the second-class testimonial was not illuminated but on vellum, and the third class testimonial was not illuminated and on parchment.

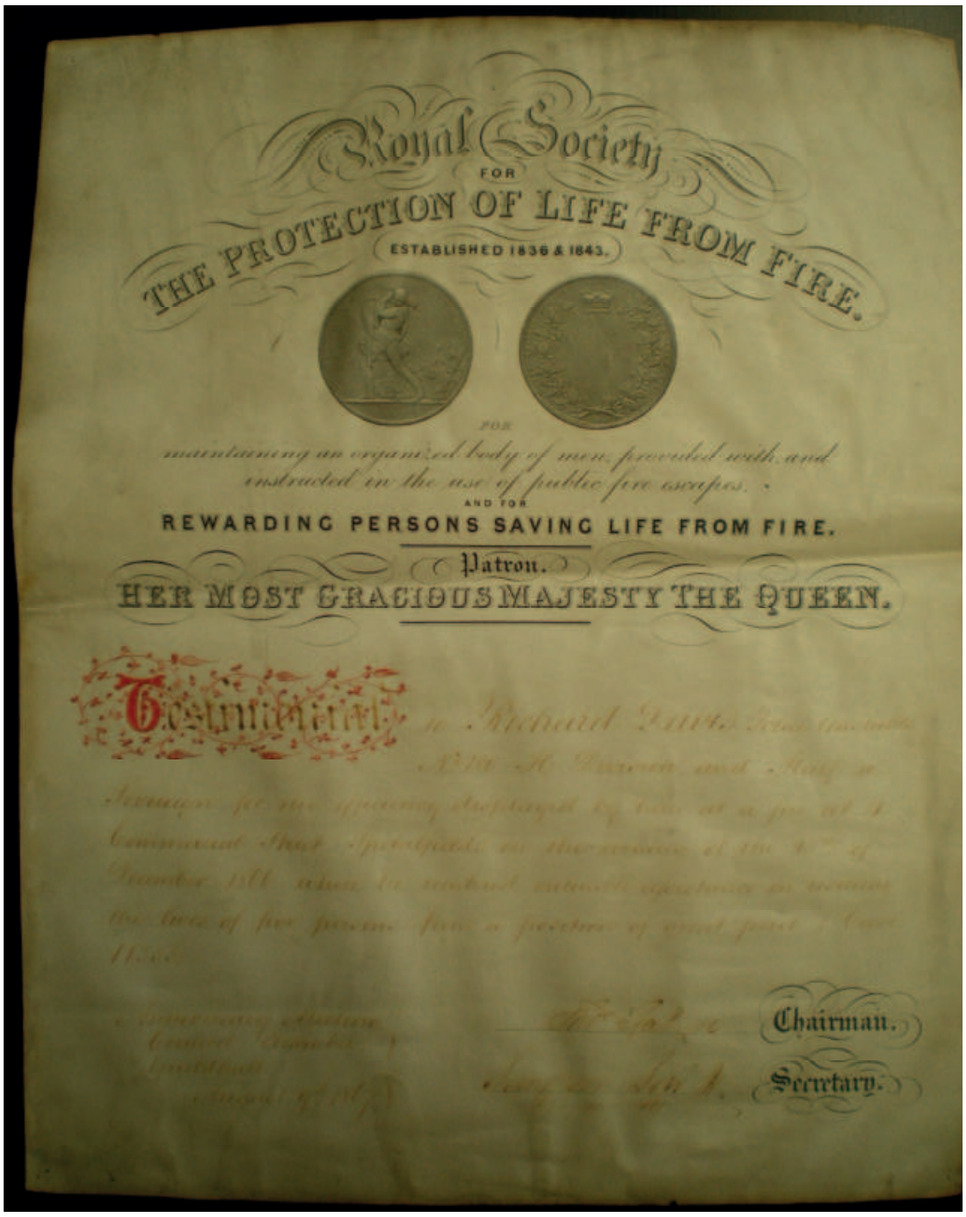
While it's clear from the above that the earliest testimonials were on vellum, examples on parchment were awarded from at least 1845. Thus, the first surviving Society Minute Book (1844-1862) records the grant of a testimonial at the General Meeting on 1 April 1845 to Conductor Robinson for his conduct at a fire at Grays Inn Lane (case 47) and to Conductor Weed for his services at a fire in St John Street (case 85), both of which were presented at the Society's next public meeting. Both recipients had previously been awarded sums of money for these rescues. From April 1848 the minutes first mention the award of a 'certificate' and a 'certificate on vellum' (case 576) and similar mentions continued for approximately the next year. In these cases it appears that the terms 'certificate' and 'testimonial' were being used interchangeably during this period – there is no independent evidence that two awards types were given.

Throughout the remainder of this minute book a number of testimonials are recorded as being awarded, and occasionally further details are given or reference to such details are noted as being included on the testimonial itself. One example of the latter notes: 'Case 6,975 – Testimonial to Conductor Summers. The case [details] being included on the testimonial'. In the second Minute Book (1862–1872) a further example of special wording on testimonials is noted with respect to one granted to Samuel Wood (case 7,825). It was to: 'specially record…the service of [a] Bradbrookes

respirator in this case, to the wearing of which alone was the reason the Conductor was able to enter the room and save a man quite insensible from the smoke'.

There continue to be numerous awards of testimonials and a number of these give further details about the award, such as case: '7,947, 34 St Martin Lane – Testimonial and 20/- to George Searle for his intrepidity in extinguishing the flames around the person of a young woman and thusly saving her life'. It appears that these (and often further) details were inscribed on the testimonials, though only an examination of surviving testimonials can confirm the precise details.

From at least the 1860s the Society attempted to construct a hierarchical arrangement of its testimonials. Thus, first and second class testimonials began to be noted in the minutes during this period. The Rotary Committee meeting of 13 August 1862 makes the first mention of a first class testimonial, this being awarded to Charles Strudwick (Foreman of the Ealing Fire Brigade). Implicitly, there were thus also at least second class testimonials available at this time within the Society's repertoire of awards.



Testimonial awarded to Police Constable Richard Davis

The example on the previous page, awarded to PC Richard Davis for his efficiency at a fire, is an example from this period – probably a 2nd class award.

Also of interest in this Minute Book is case 10,451 – Kensal New Town – 'Testimonial specially framed to Mr Jordan', the specification of framing here possibly indicating a higher grade reward. In January 1875 the Secretary was asked to review the rewards granted by the Society and consider whether any further degree of award could be added to those already instituted and what improvements could be made in order more effectively rank or class the testimonials.[272]

First, second and third class testimonials began to be now noted (Minute Book 3: 1872-1882) and those granted in 1875 were described as having been 'exceedingly well merited'.[273] Perhaps one of the most famous cases occurred at the end of that same year, when the training ship *Goliath* caught fire on 22 December 1875, off Grays, in Essex: this resulted in the award of a first class testimonial to Captain Bouchier (see case 12,021).

The Minute Books now note 'Testimonial on vellum' and 'Testimonial on vellum (1st class)', indicating that first class testimonials were distinguished at least in part by being issued on vellum. Other case entries (for example, in Minute Book 4: 1882–1904) use various terms to denote testimonials then awarded. These include 'Testimonial', 'Illuminated Testimonial', '1st Class Testimonial', '2nd Class Testimonial', and 'Illuminated Testimonial on vellum' (case 14,963). It seems likely that the illuminated testimonial on vellum corresponded to the first class award, while second class awards were either illuminated perhaps on parchment or unilluminated vellums, and unilluminated versions, probably on parchment, represented third class awards. Confirmation of this schema will depend on future sightings of extant testimonials.

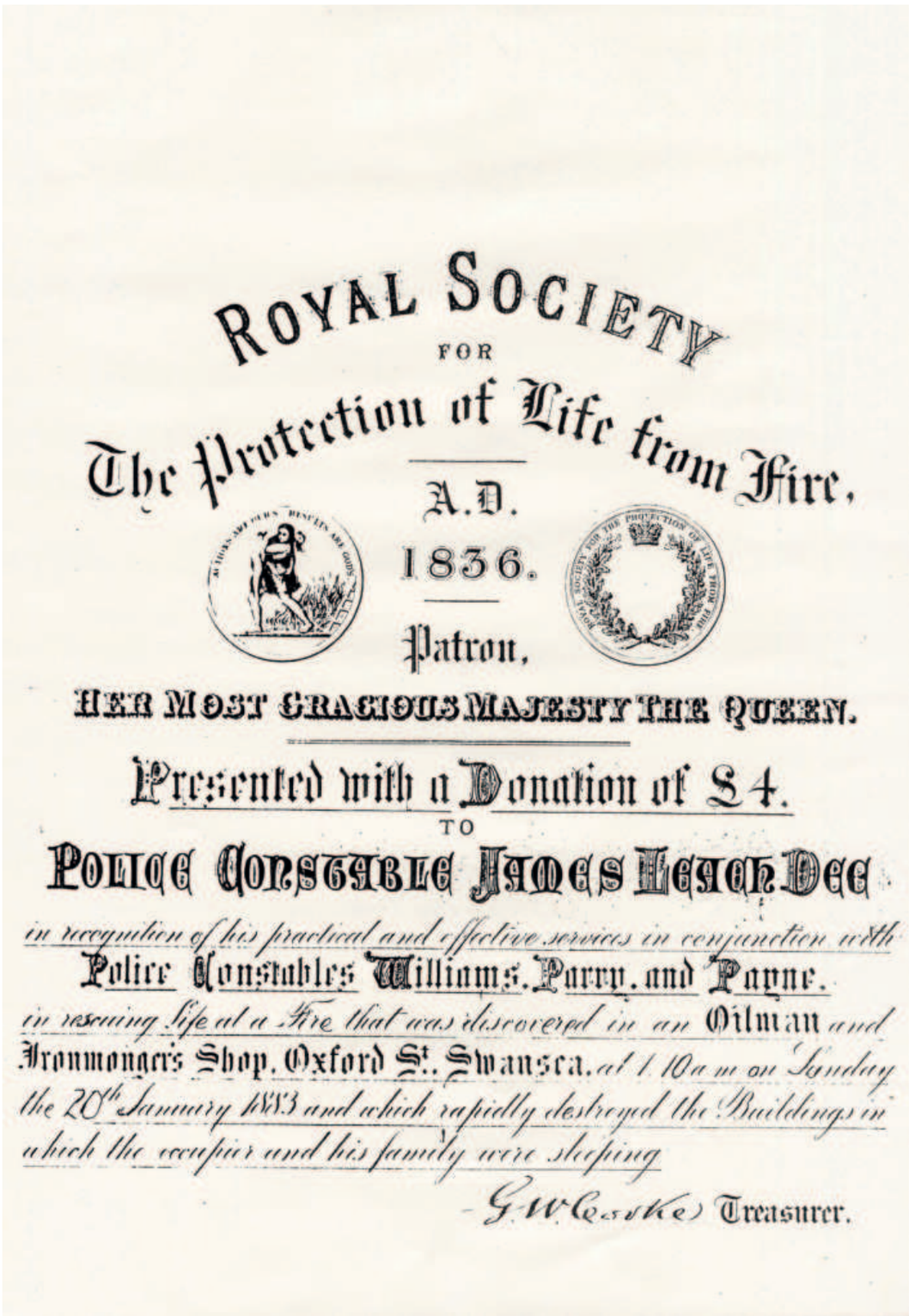
The illustration of the award to James Leach Dee (see above), who received the Albert Medal for the same actions, is interesting. His award, and that to three other constables, is recorded in the minutes of the Trustee's Meeting of 1 March 1883 as a 'testimonial' (case 13,085). The illustration has been taken from an extant photocopy of the original document; the present whereabouts of the original are unknown.

Minute Book 5 (1905–1919) records small numbers of 'Illuminated Testimonials' and 'Illuminated Testimonials on vellum', no doubt for rescues deemed to demonstrate higher degrees of bravery than cases for which certificates were then being increasingly issued. Interestingly, there are no mentions of just 'testimonials' and it may be that during this period testimonials had become restricted to two classes or perhaps even a single class, probably equivalent to the former first class testimonial (illuminated and on vellum). The last recorded testimonial issued, an illuminated one (case 15,770), was granted in 1919 (Minute Book 6: 1919–1931). The Illuminated Testimonial to Nurse Cope (case 15,570) is a fine example of such an award.

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[272] Quarterly General Meeting, 22 January 1875.

[273] *The Times*, Monday 26 July 1875, p. 10; this tripartite classification of first, second and third class testimonials is complicated this year by the Rotary Committee meeting of 13 December 1875 referring now to 'certificates'. There is however no independent evidence to indicate that these are different awards to the testimonials. It appears that the terms 'certificate' and 'testimonial' were being here used interchangeably.



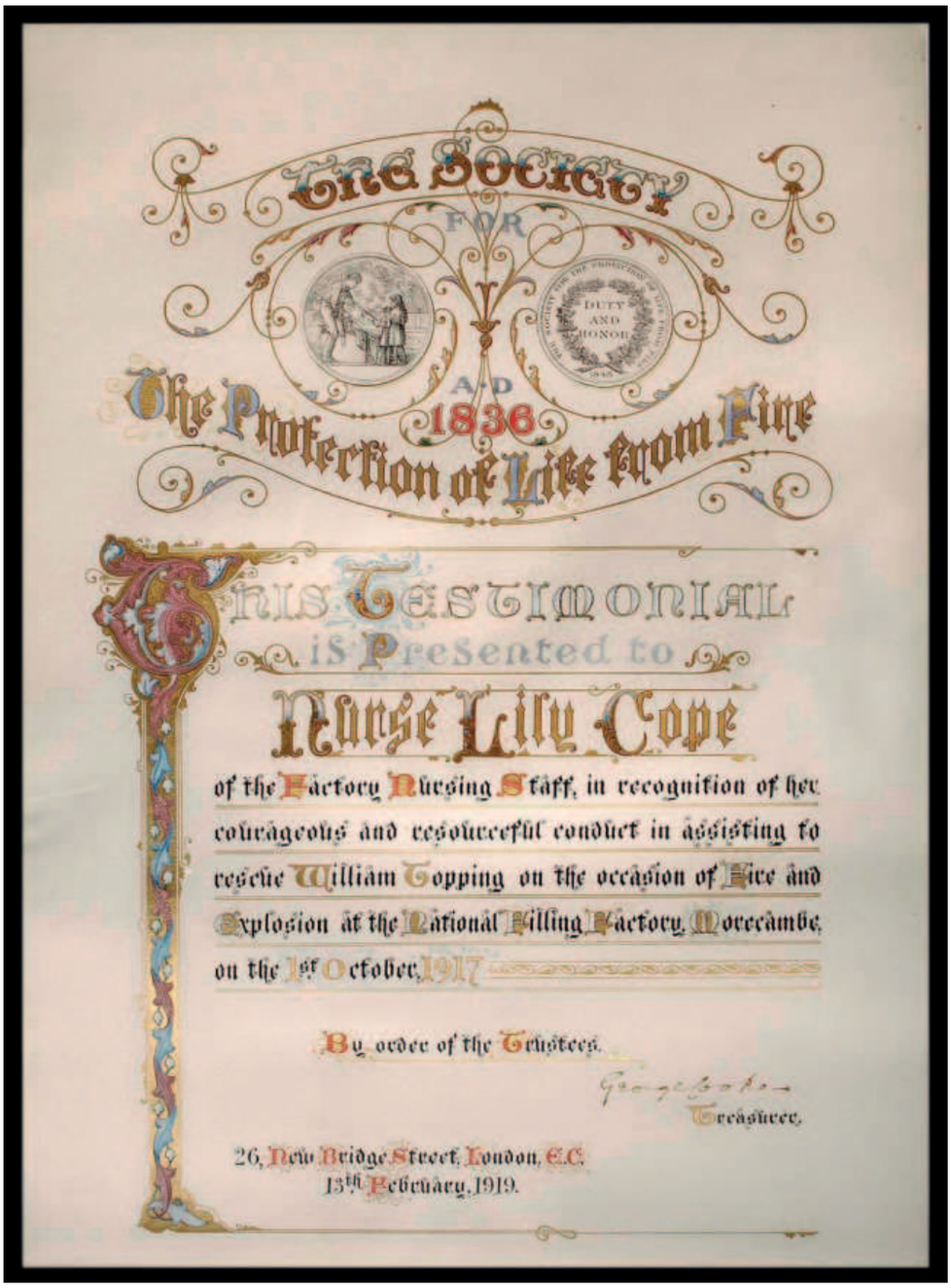
ROYAL SOCIETY
FOR
The Protection of Life from Fire,
A.D.
1836.
Patron,
HER MOST GRACIOUS MAJESTY THE QUEEN.

Presented with a Donation of £4.
TO
POLICE CONSTABLE JAMES LEACH DEE

in recognition of his practical and effective services in conjunction with
Police Constables Williams. Parry. and Payne.
in rescuing Life at a Fire that was discovered in an Oilman *and*
Ironmonger's Shop. Oxford St.. Swansea. *at 1 10 a m on Sunday*
the 20th January 1833 and which rapidly destroyed the Buildings in
which the occupier and his family were sleeping

G W Cooke Treasurer.

Testimonial awarded to Police Constable James Leach Dee



Illuminated Testimonial awarded to Nurse Lilly Cope

Certificates

Certificates were introduced in 1885 and these were awarded for some time in parallel with, though ranking below, testimonials. The certificates were in due course issued in two types: illuminated (coloured) and 'plain', the latter being the junior award. Case 14,059 is the first in this Minute Book to record the issue of a certificate.

From this case onwards certificates (both with and without monetary awards) became by far the most frequent award given. The following example to Henry Richard Short shows the design which was to be used for the next 100 years.


The Royal Society
for the Protection of Life from Fire.
PATRON THE QUEEN.
This Certificate in addition to a Gift of Money
is Awarded to
Henry Richard Short
in testimony of prompt and efficient aid rendered
by him at a Fire on the 31st day of August 1896
at 25 Glynn Street, Vauxhall.
20, NEW BRIDGE STREET, E.C.
29th Octr: 1896
BY ORDER OF THE TRUSTEES.
Secretary.

Certificate awarded to Henry Richard Short

Minute Book 5: (1905–1919) records for the first time the issue of illuminated and coloured certificates in addition to just 'certificate'. It is unclear whether there is any difference between coloured and illuminated certificates; certainly there is nothing in the Society's minutes that would help resolve this difference in description.

Fortunately, the illuminated certificate to Miss M J Henley (case 15,276) has survived and should a 'Coloured certificate' become known, this matter should be resolved. Note that the certificate is the same design as that to Henry Richard Short, the only difference being the colouring of selected words.

Minute Book 6 (1919–1931) records certificates as the most prevalent award of this overall type, though a smaller number of illuminated certificates continued to be issued. As with other award categories, there were times when a choice or element of negotiation was evidently possible for recipients over the potential grant of certificates or an alternative award. One such instance recorded in this Minute Book is case 15,828 (28 October 1920), which records the award of a certificate and £4.4s to A Purves but with the additional annotation 'or a silver watch'. The Annual Report in this case confirms that the award given was a silver watch. Other examples of this are known, and in all instances the final decision appears to be detailed in the relevant Annual Report.



The Society
for the Protection of Life from Fire.

This Certificate
is Awarded to
Miss M J Henley.

in testimony of prompt and efficient aid rendered by her at a Fire on the 28th day of January 1910 at Newbury.

26, New Bridge Street, E.C.
26th May, 1910.

BY ORDER OF THE TRUSTEES

Secretary

Illuminated Certificate awarded to Miss M J Henley



The Society
for the Protection of Life from Fire.

This Certificate

is Awarded to
Staff Nurse Margaret McCutcheon

in testimony of distinguished conduct while engaged in the rescue of life at a Fire on the 25th day of April 1951 at Western Ophthalmic Hospital, Marylebone Road London

26, New Bridge Street,
London, E.C.4
19th December 1951

By Order of the Trustees

Secretary

Cerrtificate awarded to Staff Nurse Margaret McCutcheon

In Minute Book 7 (1932–1956) the award of illuminated certificates became scarce, with the final such award being made to Jasper Allen on 22 March 1946 (case 17,622). Minute Book 8 (1956–1974) continues with the award of certificates. From the surviving certificate to Staff Nurse McCutcheon (case 18,401) (illustrated previously) it is immediately apparent that from a design perspective very little, apart from the Society's address, had changed since the 1890s. However, the quality of the certificates had definitely deteriorated. Whereas early certificates were produced commercially, by the 1940s these were produced at low cost to the Society by an insurance company, with a resultant decline in quality.

After medal and watch awards were discontinued in 1964, certificates became the principal rewards given by the Society. They thus came to encompass life saving acts of a higher degree of bravery than had previously been the case (i.e. in lieu of silver and bronze medal awards). A example of this being the award of a certificate to Peter Bevan in who had been awarded the Queen's Gallantry Medal for the rescue of a colleague at the British Steel Corporation's East Moor Works in Cardiff on 11th February 1975. In Minute Book 9 (1974–1998) the award and costs of certificates (and frames) was often recorded. In 1976 consideration was given to revising the design of the certificate but it was decided to retain the current version.

In 1982 consideration was again given to revising the certificate, but: 'after careful consideration of the certificates issued by some other societies, the Trustees agreed that the framed certificate issued by the Society was satisfactory. Minor changes were, however, suggested to the format and it was left to the Treasurer and the immediate past Treasurer to approve the proofs submitted to them by the Secretary[274]'.

The issue of certificates as the Society's highest level of award continued until 1983 when medals were reintroduced. From 1983 onwards the certificate would be awarded either as a single award, or together with a medal award.

The illustration of the certificate (following page) awarded in 1986 to Alan Ainsworth (case 24,062), who also received the Society's bronze medal, is clearly different in design from the example illustrated earlier to Staff Nurse McCutcheon in 1956. It is unclear whether these changes were inaugurated under the 'minor changes' mentioned in 1982. An examination of extant certificates for the period 1956 to 1986 will clarify this more precisely. The Society's Minute Books after 1998 (which are still retained by the Society) confirm that the same style of certificate (as awarded to Ainsworth) is awarded either alone, or together with a medal.



The Society for the Protection of Life from Fire

Established 1836

This Certificate

is Awarded to

ALAN AINSWORTH

in testimony of distinguished conduct while engaged in the rescue of life from Fire on the 3rd day of July 19 86 at Flat E 20 Barcombe Avenue, Streatham, London, SW2

140 Aldersgate Street
London
EC1A 4HX

25 November 19 86

By Order of the Trustees

Certificate awarded to Alan Ainsworth

[274] Committee Meeting, 3 August 1982

Testimonials and Certificates: numbers awarded

No figures survive within the Society's archives summarising the number of testimonials and certificates issued. In an attempt to illustrate the numbers of such awards we have counted those noted in the Minute Books every decade from 1850 to 2000. These figures are summarised in the following table. The total number of these awards given by the Society during the 16 years that we have sampled totalled 1601, and assuming an even pattern of distribution this would suggest that the total number of awards would be approximately 16,000 during this time period.

	Testimonials			Certificates		
	Not Classified	Illuminated	Coloured	Not Classified	Illuminated	Coloured
1850	18					
1860	47					
1870	72					
1880	7					
1890	1	5		24	5	
1900	1	3		56	1	
1910		1		43	11	3
1920				38		1
1930				57	5	
1940				30	1	
1950				32		
1960				123		
1970				378		
1980				320		
1990				214		
2000				104		

***Table 6*: Summary of numbers of Testimonials and Certificates issued (sample per decade)**

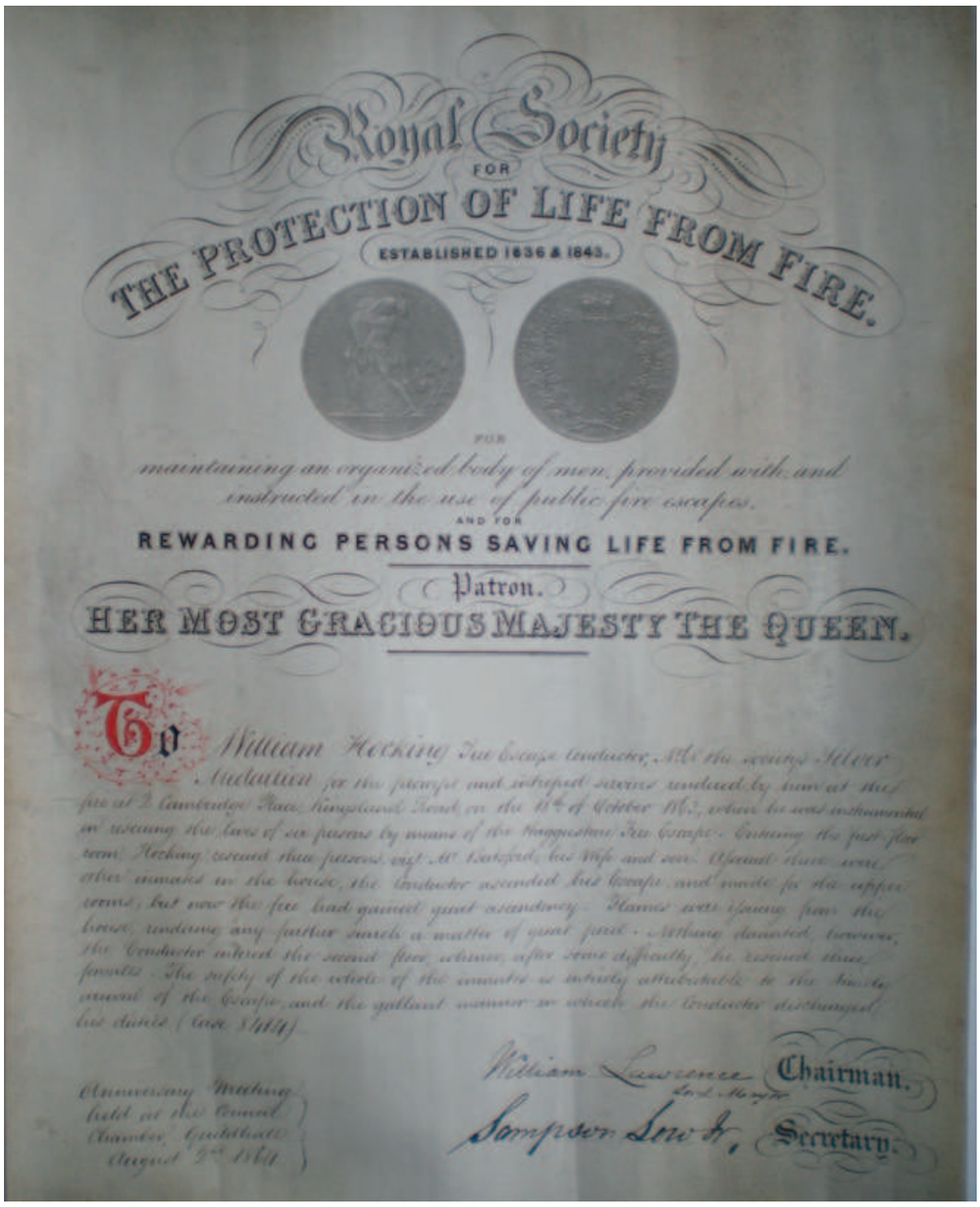
Award Certificates

There is another class of certificates to consider – those that were not given as an award in their own right, but as an accompaniment to a medal, essentially award certificates. The earliest known surviving of these certificates, dating from January 1859, was granted to Robert Gould (case 5,153). Other surviving examples are to William Hocking (case 8,414) for October 1863 (illustrated on following page together with its rolled leather case, which is embossed: 'Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire 1864'), Captain Walter (case 12,021) for 1875, and George Smoker (case 13,015) for July 1880. The latter certificate survives in a contemporary glazed frame.

These certificates all note the award of a 'Silver Medallion' to the recipient and follow with a description of the rescue for which the medallion was awarded. In each case the Society's minutes record the award of the medal but make no reference to an accompanying testimonial or certificate. As the example shows, these certificates contain a wealth of information about the rescue, which far exceeds that recorded in the Society's Minute Book.

The testimonial (illustrated later) to Frederick Walter is a particularly splendid example, which gives considerable detail of the rescue for which he received his award. His award of a silver medal is noted at the Special General Committee Meeting of 28 January 1876, in Minute Book 3.

Award certificates are unknown to the authors for the Type IV and V medals, but with the introduction of the Type VI medal, as mentioned above, the same type of certificate was given both as an award certificate and as a 'stand alone' certificate.


Royal Society
FOR
THE PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE.
ESTABLISHED 1836 & 1843.
FOR
maintaining an organized body of men, provided with and instructed in the use of public fire escapes,
AND FOR
REWARDING PERSONS SAVING LIFE FROM FIRE.
Patron.
HER MOST GRACIOUS MAJESTY THE QUEEN.
To William Hocking
William Lawrence Chairman.
Lord Mayor
Sampson Low Jr. Secretary.

Medal award certificate given to William Hocking



Rolled leather cover for Hocking's certificate


ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE
Protection of Life from Fire
ESTABLISHED 1836 & 1843
for maintaining an organized body of men provided with and instructed in the use of Public Fire Escapes and for
Rewarding Persons saving Life from Fire
PATRON
HER MOST GRACIOUS MAJESTY THE QUEEN
by Committee award the Society's Medal
TO
FREDERICK WALTER Captain. R.N.
of the Training Ship "Arethusa" in testimony of his laudable and heroic conduct on the morning of the 22nd December 1875 during the burning of the Training Ship "Goliath" moored off Grays Essex when at great personal risk he saved the life of Captain Bouchier R.N Commander of that Ship
Additional to this brave action Captain Walter was instrumental in conjunction with the following Officers acting under him viz:
Thomas Buckell Joseph Phillips John Cook Henry Adams
in rescuing them danger at least, I have never withstanding the delay caused by their having to row a distance of nearly three miles to the burning Ship
PRESENTED AT THE
Annual Meeting Council Chamber
Guildhall July 4th 1876
Chairman
Treasurer

Medal award certificate presented to Captain Frederick Walter RN

5: PECUNIARY AWARDS

The practice of granting pecuniary awards dates from the early days of the Society. Other societies, such as the RHS and RNLI, made similar grants and it is likely that their experience informed the Society. The RHS appears to have initially considered that honorary awards (such as medals or testimonials) would best appeal to middle and upper class recipients, while the working classes would prefer pecuniary recognition. By the 1830s this presumption was breaking down as it became clear that many working class recipients actually wanted similar (honorary) recognition to that bestowed on their middle and upper class neighbours.

The introduction of the RHS bronze medal in 1836-7 was in part a recognition of this desire, as well as it allowing that society a broader graded range of awards with which to recognise differing degrees of bravery. Awards of money for the RHS from that time onwards generally constituted fourth level awards, below silver medals, bronze medals, and testimonials of various sorts. However, they also constituted charitable support and recognition of the financially strained life circumstances of certain recipients that were regarded as deserving.

The Society's *First Annual Report* in 1837 notes only honorary rewards. However, pecuniary rewards soon began to make an appearance, with the first documentary evidence of them coming in the report of the Society's activities during 1838-39. It was thus noted that during the year ending 21 March 1839 the Society had issued pecuniary rewards totalling a mere £6.10s, this being in contrast to the significantly higher sum spent on medals (£25).[275] The extent of such rewards at this time is likely to have been partly influenced by the Society's poor financial position.

With the reformation of the Society in 1843 pecuniary rewards became considerably more common and between the 1840s and 1860s typically ranged from 10 to 20 shillings and were given either as standalone awards or would accompany medals and testimonials. In the mid 1850s several conductors received more substantial monetary awards. At the 1856 Annual Festival John Barton, for example, received a Savings Book with £5 to his credit, as well as two testimonials, each accompanied with one sovereign.[276] Following a fire on 6 December 1859, Samuel Wood was recommended for a similar reward of a Savings Book and £5 (case 5,447), this award being in conjunction with the grant of a silver medal to Conductor Edward Cooke who had rescued Wood. Wood's eventual reward in this case however was a silver bar and testimonial (case 5,544).

The Society attempted to distribute pecuniary awards on a more systematic basis around this time, arguing that decisions on such awards should be held over until the end of the year 'in instances where the same Conductor has a second case of saving life'. This would allow the conductor's actions to '…be considered in connection with his general conduct during that time, and such Reward awarded him as the Committee may deem fit'.[277] The notion of conduct that is raised here illustrates certain aspects of the social climate that influenced the Society's attitude to giving money as rewards at this time.

The Society was considerably influenced by religious views of the time. Allied to this, notions of temperance were in vogue, as was a philosophy of self-help and self-reliance, all of which the Society officers (who included several clerics and prominent religious men) sought to impress on their staff. Savings were encouraged rather than spending. Wages to the conductors were distributed in school halls rather than pubs. The Society was relatively cautious about the widespread use of money as rewards during this time. One exception to this was with respect to rewarding members of the public who notified conductors about a fire and assisted them in bringing the escapes to the scene of the fire. In such cases the Society offered a fixed schedule of rewards (of between one and five shillings, as discussed earlier in Section I) for such assistance.

For saving life by contrast, by October 1856 the Society was proposing to grant a testimonial on its own for an initial act that did not merit a medal. Subsequent acts that year could be considered cumulatively at the end of the year for a monetary award.

The level of pecuniary awards varied over time and in accordance with other factors, such as the degree of bravery exhibited, whether injuries were sustained, and the number of people

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[275] *The Era*, Sunday 23 June 1839.

[276] *The Morning Post*, Monday 30 June 1856, p. 6.

[277] RC 23 October 1856.

saved. Their prevalence, whether granted as stand-alone awards or in association with testimonials or medals, also fluctuated.

This is evident from an examination of those noted in Section III. Thus, by the 1870s the frequency of such awards accompanying medals had somewhat diminished, though they then became more frequent in the period from 1880 through to 1920. These awards typically ranged from £1 to £5. Exceptionally, higher amounts are occasionally observed having been awarded: the highest pecuniary award thus seen that accompanied a medal occurred early in this period, when 20 guineas was awarded to John Scott along with a silver medal in 1884 (case 14,020). From 1920 until the 1960s the frequency of such pecuniary awards accompanying medals and certificates is approximately 5 to 10% of the total numbers of such awards.

Since 1983, with the resumption of the issue of medals, only two cases of pecuniary awards accompanying medals have been observed: £10 was given to 11-year-old Bradley Rudgley (case 23,339) in 1983 and £25 to S D Hamill in 1994 (case 25,547). The Society's policy on pecuniary awards in the twenty-first century seems to confine them to payments of £50, in cases of exceptional conduct, to young people aged under 16.

SECTION III
ROLL OF PRINCIPAL AWARDS

ROLL OF PRINCIPAL AWARDS

(MEDALS & WATCHES)

This section contains details of all the cases that are known which resulted in the Society granting either medals in silver and bronze or watches to the leading participants in a rescue. Given the weeding the Society's archives have suffered over the years, records of some awards (particularly in the period before 1844) are missing or data is incomplete (as may be observed for instance with many awards made during World War Two and since 1983). In reconstructing the present roll, and despite our best efforts consulting numerous other sources to address gaps in the original records, some award recipients may have gone undetected.

The main entries are arranged here according to the case numbers originally allocated to them by the Society. In some instances, particularly in the early years of the Society's existence, no case number was allocated or the number is unknown: in such circumstances the case is placed in its appropriate chronological location. Each entry is *generally* arranged as follows: case number (if known), rank, forename(s), surname, *sometimes* the recipient's occupation (typically if given in the Society Minutes, etc), and type of award. Following this headline, details from the Society's archives are given, where these survive. In a number of cases, where Society records exist they contain the names of recipients and a reference to an award being granted, without giving any details about the circumstances leading to it. In such cases this is here noted as 'No details'. Then, accounts of the fires, rescues and presentations as reported in contemporary newspapers and other sources are reproduced. In a small number of cases additional notes on the recipients are then included. Finally, information on known surviving awards and occasional miscellaneous details is given.

Abbreviations

A/Psgt = Acting Police Sergeant; AUS = Australian Serviceman; CGM = Committee General Meeting; CI = Chief Inspector; CO – Chief Officer; Cpl = Corporal; Cpt = Captain; DC = Detective Constable; DepCC = Deputy Chief Constable; Engr = Engineer; FBO = Fire Brigade Officer; FBS = Fire Brigade Superintendent; FC = Fire Constable; FltL = Flight Lieutenant; GM = General Meeting; HC = Head Constable; Insp = Inspector; L/Cpl = Lance Corporal; Lt = Lieutenant; MB = Minute Book (with volume number given subsequently in parenthesis); PC = Police Constable; PF = Police Fireman; PFS = Police Fire Sergeant; PGM = Public General Meeting; PI = Police Inspector; PrC = Probationary Constable; PS = Police Sergeant; PSgt = Police Sergeant; RC = Rotary Committee; RIC = Royal Irish Constabulary; SC = Special Constable; Sgt = Sergeant; SgtM = Sergeant Major; SpCM = Special Committee Meeting; SqnL = Squadron Leader; Sup = Superintendent; TM = Trustees' Meeting; USA = American Serviceman.

[Unnumbered]: PC (181) John Forward: Silver medal

Details: The *First Annual Report* of the Society (1837, pp. 17-8) records that: 'K or Stepney Division, 3 June 1836, Report: About 3 o'clock in the morning of the 18th ult., PC 181 John Forward, in going round his beat, discovered an unusual light in the first floor front room at the house of Mr Morgan, 86 New Gravel Lane, Shadwell; finding that the light increased, felt convinced that the house was on fire, instantly burst open the door, rushed up stairs and discovered the room in a blaze; he ran towards the bed, where he found a man and woman, fast asleep – he pulled them out, and conveyed them downstairs, and returned and threw the bed, furniture, and other articles which were on fire, out at the window; ultimately procured water, and succeeded in extinguishing the flames; in doing so, he had his hands scorched in several places; and had it not been for his timely assistance, there is not the least doubt but that the house would have been completely destroyed, and the inmates probably perished. The parish engine arrived, but its assistance was not wanted'. The presentation took place at the Society's meeting on 14 June 1836 and was noted by *The Times* (15 June 1836) thus: 'To John Forward…of the Metropolitan Police - silver medal…for [his] exertions in saving…lives… at great personal risk'.

Note: John Forward was appointed a police constable with the Metropolitan Police on 18 February 1831 and was pensioned on 7 March 1846 (TNA ref: MEPO 2/Index).

[Unnumbered]: PSgt (G5) George Avery: Silver medal
PC (G130) David Lock: Silver medal
PC (144G) Joseph Weed: Silver medal

Details: The *First Annual Report* of the Society (1837, p. 18) records that: 'G, or Finsbury, 4th June 1836, Report. On the night of the 25 ult., a fire broke out at the timber yard of Mr Roberts, which from the combustible nature of the materials, extended in a few minutes to the neighbouring houses. PC David Lock, 130G, occupied one of the houses (16 Bateman's Row) that was first ignited. Lock had left his own house to render assistance at the fire, and his house was in flames before he was aware of it: as soon as he knew it, he rushed through the flames, and brought out *his own* two children. Soon as he had secured his own children, he returned (in company with Serjeant Avery, G5) to Mrs Elvins, No. 6, and rescued a servant girl, with more difficulty than he had in saving his own children. Serjeant Avery, G5, made his way through the flames to the bedroom of Mrs Elvins, a very infirm old woman, brought her through the fire, and carried her safely to his own house in the same row. The same Serjeant also rescued a child of Alexander Webb's, at 2 New Inn Square, and had scarcely succeeded when the roof fell. PC Joseph Webb, 114G [*sic*], also saved the lives of two children belonging to Mr Welsby, 9 New Inn Square, who were in the second floor, and brought them through a dense smoke, scarcely a second before the room was in flames. (Signed) J Dixon, *Superintendent*'. *The Times* (26 May 1836) 'About half-past 10 o'clock last night an alarming and extensive fire broke out on the premises of Mr Roberts, timber-merchants, Bateman's Row, Shoreditch. Immediately upon the alarm being given, the small parish engines arrived, and in about a quarter of an hour were followed by those of the London fire establishment from their various stations. The fire commenced in the timber-yard, and in a few minutes, the whole of the extensive premises were one entire mass of flames. The fire then communicated to the adjoining houses in New Inn Square and Bateman's Row. Four houses in the latter were entirely consumed, and, as far as it was possible to ascertain, 16 or 17 very seriously damaged. A large number of the police of the G, H, and N divisions were immediately upon the spot, and rendered very great and praiseworthy assistance in removing the property of the poor people in the neighbourhood. Two elderly ladies, both of whom were bedridden, were carried out in safety by the police, and one of them, G130, at the imminent risk of his own life, went into the house of a Mr Lock, which at the time was burning furiously, and brought out a child, which it was considered impossible to save. We are happy to say that there were no lives lost. A very fine Newfoundland dog on the premises of Mr Roberts was burnt'. This report is followed up in the *Times* (15 June 1836) thus: 'To John Forward, David Lock, Sergeant Avery and Joseph Weed, of the Metropolitan Police - silver medals for their exertions in saving the lives of seven persons, at great personal risk to themselves'.

Note: George Avery was appointed a police constable on 7 October 1830 and promoted to sergeant on 17 October 1834 (TNA ref: MEPO 2/Index, MEPO 7/4). Joseph William Weed was appointed a police constable with the Metropolitan Police on 12 September 1833 (TNA ref: MEPO 2/Index). See also *The Morning Chronicle* (Friday 10 January 1845).

Medal inscribed: 'To P.C. David Lock G130 who at the risk of his own Life rescued from Death three persons at a Fire 9 and 10 Bateman Row 25th May 1836.' Lock's medal is in the British Museum collection.

[Unnumbered]: James Tilt, Gaoler, Worship Street Police Office: Silver medal

Details: The *First Annual Report* of the Society (1837, pp. 20-2) records that: 'Public Office, Worship Street, 10 November 1836. Sir, It is with diffidence I make the following statement, which, I trust, will come under the benevolent consideration of the Society, instituted for the Protection of human Life from Fire. During the last week a destructive fire raged with fury in the City Road. One of the Metropolitan Police, Joseph Weed, G114, who has had a Silver Medal bestowed upon him by your Society for saving the lives of two children, was present upon that occasion. Inspired, probably by the reward of his former conduct, he was one of the foremost in saving property from the devouring element. At first he was successful, and his courage led him into a perilous situation; the flames were raging on the premises of Mr Brookes, who had carried on the business of a coachmaker, when Weed rushed from the front of the building to a counting house behind, which the flames were about to encompass. He opened the door and entered, when the door closed upon him: he felt for a handle and could find none, and he found the door fast. In the mean time the fire burst the squares of glass around him, and a second would have decided his fate – when James Tilt, an Officer of this Establishment, who had seen weed enter and the door close, and the flames encircle the place, sprung forward, at the risk of his own life, and, with the force of his foot burst open the door, when the Police Constable fell into his arms, and was borne by Tilt in safety to the street. Well might he exclaim as he did, when brought to himself – "O Tilt, you have saved my life!" After reading this account it will be for the Society to consider, whether they can with propriety confer on Tilt any mark of their benevolent approbation. I have advised both these men to attend personally, and they are ready to give any information the Society may require. I have the honour to be, Sir, Your most obedient Servant, Robert Bayles, *Sessions Clerk*'. Corroboration was then printed in the form of the following letter: 'Police Station, Clerkenwell, January 17th 1837. Sir, I beg to acquaint you that I have made a careful investigation into the circumstance of Police Constable Weed, 114G, and find that when he was engaged at the fire of Messrs Brookes and Son, 1 and 2 Commercial Place, City Road, on the night of the 9th of November last – that when he was removing some books and papers from the iron safe in the counting house the door closed and the office was filled with smoke: he was not aware of the danger until the windows of the counting house were bursting in with flames, and then endeavoured to get out but could not find the door; and had it not been for the timely assistance of Mr Tilt (an officer of the Worship Street Office) bursting in the door, no doubt he would have perished. The above was witnessed by Police Constable Brown, 88G. I am, Sir, Your obedient Servant, G Murray, *Superintendent*'. Tilt received his medal on 11 March 1837 at the Society's Annual Meeting, the *Morning Chronicle* (1 April 1837) noting how he: 'Saved the life of Police Constable Weed, 144G, the same officer who last year received a medal for saving the lives of several children. In his anxiety to remove the furniture from the counting-house of the premises, 2 Commercial Place, City Road, at the late destructive fire, the door closed, and he only knew of his danger by the flames rushing in at the windows, when in his moment of desperate anxiety Tilt went forward, at imminent risk to himself, and opened the door'.

Note: James Tilt appears on the 1841 English census as a 37 year old, working as an 'Usher Police Court Worship St' and living at Durham Street, Bethnal Green.

[Unnumbered]: PC (G165) William Bradley: Silver medal

Details: The *First Annual Report* of the Society (1837, pp. 22-4) records that: 'Sheweth, that on the morning of the 9th of October 1836, about half-past 1 o'clock, I met two women and a man in Pear Tree Court, Clerkenwell, who stated that a girl was in a fit in some house in the court; I went down to the house, No. 16 in the court, and heard cries and groans, as if some person was stifling: the street door being open, I knocked at the parlour door, but no one answered; I found smoke issuing from the room, the parlour shutter being open I pushed up the sash, and found there was fire in the room: I sprung my rattle, and went into the room, but found the smoke so strong, I went back, and burst open the parlour door, and found the room on fire, and the deceased, Louisa Masters, on the floor burning; I tore off the clothes from her, and carried her to a neighbour's house: I then returned, and found a child about three months old, burning on the floor near the

bed; I put it into my coat, and took it to the same house; and returned, and found a boy about four years old, standing on the bed – I took him to the house. (The parents all this time being out drinking.) I then called for some water, which was supplied in a few minutes, and succeeded in putting it out; I then went on the first floor, and found the room full of smoke, and a man, and a man and woman just come home. I then went up to the second floor – six children were in the room, the parents were out – this room was full of smoke. I then took the girl and child to the hospital, where she shortly after died. Police Constable, Wm Bradley, G165, 20 Skinner Street, Clerkenwell'. Then the Report printed the following note from the coroner: 'It appeared to me by the evidence on the inquest that the Police Constable, William Bradley, behaved exceedingly well, and rendered important service on the occasion above mentioned in saving the children. Wm Payne, *Coroner of London*. 8th Nov 1836. Sarah Masters, Joseph Hardy, 26 Pear Tree Court, William Turner, 45 Pear Tree Court.' A further note by Bradley was then included: 'G, or Finsbury Division. March 9th 1836. Report. About half-past 1 o'clock am on the 9th of Oct 1836, Police Constable William Bradley, G165, was on duty in Clerkenwell Close, and saw a little boy who said he wanted a PC to go to his sister who was in a fit. The PC repaired to the spot, and hearing the groans of children in the house, which was locked; and receiving no answer, burst open the door, and found the room full of smoke: a girl, about 15 years of age, was laying near the fire place, burning; she was carried out into a neighbour's house: the PC then returned, at the risk of his own life, and found two other children in the same room, one of which was burning – they were also conveyed to a neighbour's house: this was done previous to the engines arriving. The persons around wished the PC not to re-enter the house; he did return, and, with the assistance of the neighbours, who, handing him water, succeeding in extinguishing the fire, which was confined to that room only; and had it not been for the timely assistance of the PC, two other children in the room must have been burnt. The parents of the children did not return home until two hours after the fire had taken place. Both of them were in a state of intoxication. The children were conveyed to St Bartholomew's Hospital, where one of them died. W Bradley, G165. The above statement I believe to be correct. G Murray, *Superintendent*.' Bradley received his medal on 11 March 1837 at the Society's Annual Meeting, the *Morning Chronicle* (1 April 1837) noting that: 'On the 19th October (1836) rescued three children from a fire which broke out in a room at 16 Pear Tree Court, Clerkenwell Close, and afterwards extinguished the flames. One of the children was so severely injured that it died a few days afterwards'.

[Unnumbered]: PC (G211) Robert Pattrick: Silver medal

Details: The *First Annual Report* of the Society (1837, pp. 24-5) records that: 'G, or Finsbury Division, March 11, 1837. On the morning of the 26th July 1836, a fire took place at 10 Featherstone Street, St Luke's, at a quarter past 3 o'clock am. PC Robert Pattrick, G211, entered the house, and found the first floor burning, and found a man and woman, who fortunately got out of the house without injury. The PC proceeded up stairs to the second floor (the fire had then reached there), but it was not occupied by any one; from thence he went to the attics, in one of which he found a child sleeping, and removed it through the window on to the roof of the house; and then returned (the fire still raging) into another attic, and found Mr and Mrs Price asleep in bed; they were aroused, and the PC succeeded in getting Mrs Price through the same window as he did the child, at great personal risk as the fire had then reached the attic, and the stairs leading to them being entirely consumed; immediately afterwards the roof fell in, and had it not been for timely interference of PC, three lives must have been lost. Robert Pattrick, PC, G211. I have made enquiry into the above statement, and find it to be perfectly correct; and that he succeeded in saving the lives of three individuals, before the arrival of the engines, at great personal risk. G Murray, *Superintendent*. Pattrick received his medal on 11 March 1837 at the Society's Annual Meeting, the *Morning Chronicle* (1 April 1837) noting how: 'Police Constable Robert Patriot [*sic*], G211, on the 26th July [1836], at Featherstone Street, Old Street, discovered a fire, and alarmed a woman, who made her escape unharmed. He then proceeded upstairs to the attic, where he found a child sleeping, which he drew out of the window, and placed on an adjoining roof. In the other attic, the parents and another child were lying fast asleep, the latter of whom he removed in the same manner, and subsequently the mother, immediately after which the roof fell in'.

Note: Robert Pattrick was appointed a police constable with the Metropolitan Police on 29 October 1835 (TNA ref: MEPO 2/Index).

[Unnumbered]: Richard Young: Silver medal and Vellum Certificate
William Jones: Silver medal
John Foot: Silver medal
PSgt William Terry: Silver medal
George Carr: Silver medal
Nathaniel Anderson: Silver medal
William Gonk: Silver medal
John White: Silver medal
Henry George Greeves: Silver medal
William Whitcher: Silver medal
John Foster: Silver medal

Details: The *Second Annual Report* of the Society (1838, pp. 15-21) records the events at length and described the presentations in London to Young, Jones, Foot and Terry. The *Annual Report* notes a further six medals were issued for these events, the medals being given to Young who was to organise the presentations in Southampton, the names of these latter recipients being *implied* in the report by Young. The account begins with Young's statement, thus: 'I, Richard Young, of Hill, in the parish of Millbrook, in the county of Southampton, was at the fire of Messrs King and Witt's stores in Southampton, on the night of the 7th of November last, about five minutes after the fire was discovered, my first endeavour was to knock down a shed in order to cut off the communication between the general store and the iron store, where the fire was then raging; finding it out of my power to do so, I cheered on the people to follow me, and with their aid removed a great quantity of the combustibles, such as gunpowder, turpentine, varnish, oil, etc and having removed all within reach, I was about to quit the store with a piece of lead pipe on my shoulder, when a dreadful explosion took place, which induced several persons to rush out before me, who were knocked down outside by the falling of part of the front wall, which was blown out, I made my way over their bodies through a shower of bricks until I fell; but not being seriously injured, I soon regained my legs; by this time a second and third explosion had taken place, which blew the interior of the large general store into one liquid flame; seeing several of my brave companions partly buried in the ruins in front of the store, some killed on the spot, and others screaming for help, I ran back to their rescue, but before I could render them any aid, the three following persons, viz. Cooksey, the grocer's son, Charles Edney, and Henry Marshall, rushed out of the store enveloped in flames; I caught them in my arms as they came out, carried them to the gutter where I rolled them, and so extinguished the fire (the two latter are since dead). I then went to my poor half-buried, mutilated, and wasting companions, about eleven in number, and with the assistance of William Gonk, Nathaniel Anderson, and William Terry, extricated Charles Tanner, who died a few days after; the cries of the poor fellows who were then wasting before an immense fire beggars description, and in the intense heat, with the ruins falling around me, I made two attempts to extricate George Bell and J Thompson, who were buried up to their waists; I gave these men the preference, because they had been working near me just before the explosion. I failed in the attempt; the heat was so extreme, I was driven from the spot. After the second attempt I ran to the man at the branch-pipe of the engine to beg him to play the engine over me while I made another trial, but my request was refused; and before I could get back to the spot another portion of the front wall fell upon them, and they were all buried from my sight, in the face of the horrid and lingering death they were previously enduring, it was a melancholy satisfaction to feel that their sufferings had terminated; at about this time I was driven to a state of mad desperation, and prepared to perish, and then it was I exposed myself to the greatest danger. The fire was now at its utmost rage, all those within the building had ceased to live, and those buried outside could not be approached to within twenty feet of the spot, the houses on the opposite side of the street, at a distance of fifty feet were partially on fire; to save life under such circumstances was out of the question, so I assisted in removing the cargoes of turpentine and other goods from the middle of the street to a place of greater safety; when these goods were all removed, I procured refreshment for the men at the engines, and with the aid of 5*l* thus expended, I obtained a promise from them to play the engines over me when I made the next attempt, which I did the moment I saw the fire had a little exhausted itself, and so doing I called on the people "for volunteers to assist in saving lives", but out of the many hundreds who must have heard me, I did not observe that more than the few following persons responded to the call for at least ten minutes after I had got back to the spot already mentioned, where I had seen so many buried, viz. William Jones, George Carr, Nathaniel Anderson, William Gonk, John White, John Foot, William Terry, Serjeant of Police, Henry George Greeves, and William Whitcher, whose humanity and bravery is deserving of the highest praise. I was not on the ruins many seconds before I heard the groans from three poor fellows beneath, I marked the spots, divided my companions accordingly, and after a short time extricated

Thomas Cooksey and J Thompson alive, and George Bell and another dead, Bell was alive until about two minutes before I got his mouth clear, and I was astonished to find he was dead when I had got him to the Fountain Tap, where I carried him and Cooksey on shutters; had a medical man been present to have inflated his lungs, I think it was possible to have restored him, as he was not much burnt. In the absence of one I covered Cooksey's dreadful burns with flour, gave him refreshment, and sent him a doctor; I then returned to the ruins, where I remained until Royal and Selwood, and all the others in that part were got out; four o'clock had now arrived, the strength of the fire was exhausted, and finding myself in a similar state, saturated with perspiration and water from the engines on a frosty night, and the report that I had perished having become universal, I began to think of my home, where I went to show myself alive and comparatively unhurt, and after changing my clothes I returned to the fire, at which I remained throughout that day; and the three following days I was engaged from daylight until dark, at the request of the Coroner, superintending and working with my own hands in the burning ruins of the Store, searching for the remains of those who were then missing, all of whom I found in a most mutilated state, and although without arms, legs, and some without heads, I succeeded in identifying each to the satisfactions of their relations, during these three days I was in constant danger of my life from the falling walls. The Mayor's letter (who it seems had his eye upon me throughout the night of the fire, and also during those three days), goes far to corroborate the above statement, and I, therefore, subjoin a copy of it, and also copies of letters from John Fleming, esq, MP, and the present Mayor, John Lobb, esq, upon the suggestion of the former gentleman, that my name should be mentioned in the address about to be presented to Her Majesty upon the subject. In conclusion, I beg most respectfully to state, that the secret and self-approbation which I feel at having had the nerve in the hour of almost unparalleled horror and frightful danger, to do my duty, and thereby contribute to the saving of the lives of my fellow-men, is to me a great and glorious reward. I have the honour to be, My Lords and Gentlemen, Your most obedient servant, Richard Young. Spring Cottage, Southampton, 6th January 1838…'. The fire was extensively reported in the press, *The Times* (4 December 1837) noting: 'THE LATE CALAMITY AT SOUTHAMPTON – The premises where this catastrophe happened consist of a large brick store, about 60 feet square, comprising four floors besides the basement, and containing a very large stock of turpentine, oils, resin, wax and gunpowder, and other inflammable materials. Adjoining this large store, and connected with it by a kind of room over an iron shed, is a smaller store, under part of which is a stable. It was in this smaller store that the fire was first discovered issuing from the roof. At this time it might have been extinguished by a few buckets of water, but it could only be reached by the engines, and great delay was experienced in getting a supply of water, as is always the case in county towns, and too often, indeed, in London itself. One of the partners of the firm, who lives close by, was instantly aroused, and proceeding to the top floor of the large store, with the assistance of several persons removed all the gunpowder, consisting of about 190lbs. This danger now being generally known to be averted, a large number of persons, principally tradesmen and respectable mechanics, volunteered their services to remove as much as possible of the turpentine, oil, etc, from the premises, jointly apprehending the consequences to the neighbourhood should such dangerous materials be offered for the extension of the flames. While engaged in this praiseworthy office, several carboys of turpentine were accidentally broken, spreading, as is its well known property, over the whole floor, and saturating the lower garments of many who were employed in its removal. At this time several engines were actively at work, but, alas! Too late, for the flames had already communicated to the upper floors of the large store. It does not distinctly appear whether the persons engaged below on the ground floor, as above related, were aware of the dangerous proximity of the fire; indeed, it is not to be wondered at, the catastrophe which followed seems to have erased the recollection of preceding circumstances from the minds of most of them. It appears, however, to be pretty distinctly ascertained that the second and third floors at least were in flames some time before the occurrence of the melancholy catastrophe. Suddenly some red-hot materials fell through the apertures in the floor through which goods were hoisted up; a fragment in flame followed, and the whole floor was instantly in a blaze, the flames ascending to the ceiling, and reverberating to the floor again. Several explosions followed, caused it is supposed by the bursting of the carboys of turpentine, and in a few seconds the whole front wall of the building fell into the street. Several persons were literally blown through the open door into the street, others were seen running wildly about with blazing garments, and were necessarily rolled in the kennel to

extinguish the flames, and several it was evident were buried under the wall; while of the number whose fate was evidently sealed in the burning building, all shuddered to conjecture. As soon as the ruins could be approached, workmen were set on, and six bodies were dug from the mass of brickwork in front; a seventh, a young man named Sellwood, clerk at the Bank, whose cries for help were heard three hours before he could be released, survived a few days, to expire in horrible tortures. A day or two necessarily elapsed before workmen could be safely employed in the interior, when nine dead bodies in all were found, three of them being burnt to a cinder, so as to be utterly unrecognisable, and the two others being known only by the contents of their pockets and other extraneous indicia. Eight more sufferers have since died in agonies which would almost lead their friends to wish that they had met the quicker fate of those who were pent in the building. Some of these survived nearly a fortnight; and it is apprehended that the melancholy list is not yet complete, as four others still lie in a dangerous state. One person moreover died from the effects of fright, and one of the widows has been deprived of her reason. By this calamity, which casts into shade all previous catastrophes of the kind, at least 70 individuals, including survivors, widows, and children of deceased, and two or three utterly maimed for life, are left dependent on the benevolence of the inhabitants of Southampton, whose property they risked their lives to save…'. Subsequently, this was followed up by *The Times* (28 Apr 1838, p. 5) which noted 11 recipients thus: 'SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE…Mr Spring next read a paper from Mr Richard Young, giving a detail of the circumstances attending the late melancholy fire at Southampton, on the 9th September. A silver medal, together with the thanks of the society on vellum, was presented to this gentleman; and silver medals also to William Jones, John Foote [*sic*], and Police-Sergeant Terry, who aided his exertions on the above occasion. It was stated that on the above melancholy occasion 15 persons perished; eight had since died, and several remained maimed, whose final recovery was doubtful, whilst the lives of 12 individuals had been preserved through the exertions of the above, together with seven [*sic*] others, to who medals were likewise awarded, whose names were George Carr, Walter [*sic*] Anderson, William York [*sic*], John Foster, John White, Henry George Graves [*sic*], and William Whitcher'. In the *Hampshire Telegraph* (Monday 14 May 1838) *only 10 recipients were noted*, these being Richard Young, W Jones, Police Sgt W Terry, G Carr, W Gould, John Foot, N Anderson, John White, W Witcher and H G Greeves. *No mention was there made of York or Foster, though W Gould is there noted as a recipient.* 'William York' and 'W Gould' are probably typographical errors for 'William Gonk'. Though not mentioned in the *Annual Report*, Foster is here included as a further *possible* recipient. See also: 'A complete narrative of the calamitous fire which took place at Southampton, Nov. 7 1837. Also a full report of the inquest', (Southampton University); *Disaster I Southampton - A compilation of extracts from newspapers produced as a computer printout by the compiler in 1970* (Southampton University); and the *Hampshire Advertiser* (11 Nov, 18 Nov and 25 Nov 1837 and 5 May 1838).

Medal inscribed: 'To William Jones who (aided by others at the risk of their own lives) rescued several individuals from death by fire at Messers King and Witts stores (Southampton 7th November 1837).'

Medal inscribed 'To Hy. Geor. Greeves who (aided by others at the risk of their own lives) rescued several individuals from death by fire at Messers King and Witts stores Southampton 7th November 1837.' Note: *The Times* records his name as 'Henry George Graves', though the *Hampshire Telegraph* (Monday 14 May 1838) notes him as 'H G Greeves'.

Medal inscribed: 'To John White who (aided by others at the risk of their own lives) rescued several individuals from death by fire at Messers King and Witts stores (Southampton 7th November 1837).'

[Unnumbered]: PSgt Joseph Daniel Ives: Silver medal
W H Elliott: Silver medal

Details: The *Second Annual Report* of the Society (1838, pp. 21-2) records that: 'Mr Spring then read the following statement made to the committee by Mr J Pavey, of 47 Holywell Street, Strand, relative to the fire that recently took place at the adjoining house: On Thursday morning last, May 25th, 1837, about six o'clock, I was alarmed by the cry of fire, and found that the Wheatsheaf public house, the next door, No. 46, was in flames. I immediately alarmed the inmates in my house, and when I went out, I saw a woman (who afterwards, I found, was Eleanor Mahoney, the servant-maid) standing on the outside of the third floor window, and hanging by the brick-work, the room being on fire – some persons were

below, in the street, holding a blanket in order to receive her when she fell; but had she fallen, the projection of the shop front must have greatly injured her. At this moment I observed Mr W H Elliott and Mr J D Ives, lodgers in my house, at the imminent risk of their own lives, stretching themselves out of the window, and having got hold of the girl's hand, swung her towards them, and eventually got her into the room. Mr J Pavey gave it as his opinion that the girl must have been very much injured, if not killed, had it not been for the conduct of Mr Elliott and Mr Ives. The Secretary, Mr Chairman, and Mr Wivell, all of whom attended the coroner's inquest which was held upon a person who was burnt to death at the above-named fire, stated that Mr Pavey's account agreed in every respect with the statement that they had heard given in evidence before the coroner. The Noble Chairman [Lord Teignmouth, MP] then presented the medals to Mr Elliott and Mr Ives, who returned thanks'. *The Times* (28 Apr 1838, p. 5) notes the recipients as 'Richard [*sic*] Elliott' and 'Daniel Joes' [*sic*], the awards being: 'For saving the life of a female at the fatal fire in Holywell Street'. Daniel Joes however appears to be a misprint for Joseph Daniel Ives. In a report of the 29 May 1837 inquest on 50-year-old John Matthews who died in the Holywell Street fire, it was reported that 'Mr Wivell said, he attended as a representative from the Humane Society for the Protection of Life from Fire [*sic*], for the purpose of making known its objects, which were the provision of fire-escapes in different districts of the metropolis, so as to be immediately available in case of emergency; as well as the distribution of rewards to those persons who distinguish themselves by saving the lives of others at the risk of their own. The committee has already made some progress in appointing public fire-escapes in several districts in the metropolis, and it was his intention to propose the establishment of a similar association for the purpose in the vicinity of Holywell Street, where this calamitous occurrence took place. As an instance of the latter object the case of Joseph Ives, of the Thames Police office, who had at imminent danger saved the life of the servant girl, by removing her from a third floor window to the public house, would be recommended for reward. Robert Tozer, a fireman belonging to the London Fire Establishment, Bed-fordbury, said he was employed as one of the engineers. In passing down Holywell Street on Thursday morning at 12 minutes after 6 o'clock to make the usual report, he perceived smoke issuing from the chimney of the Wheatsheaf public house. He thought it was a chimney on fire. He had a young man with him, whom he sent back for the engine, and he made his way to the door, which he broke open with his poleaxe. He then saw the servant girl [Mahoney] at the window of the third floor. Witness got into the house and tried to ascend the stairs, but he was impeded by a body of fire on the first floor. There was no fire down stairs. The staircase was on fire, and he could get no further. He made a desperate noise with his poleaxe in order to arouse the inmates. He saw Mr and Mrs Houghton. They were both dressed. They both escaped by ladders raised to the second floor for the purpose, but the landlady was so much alarmed that she fell about eight feet. The servant when she appeared at the window was not dressed. Mrs Houghton had her shawl and bonnet on, and her husband had a sort of sash line round his body. Witness did not know how the servant got out. The lodgers got out by the back way. The premises were so completely burnt as to leave no trace of the manner in which the fire had originated. He was of the opinion that the fire must have been burning for hours before he saw it. There was not even any smoke on the ground floor, so that the fire must have originated on the first or second floor…' (*The Times*, Tuesday 30 May 1837, p. 3). The awards were reported in *The Morning Chronicle* (Monday 19 June 1837) thus: '…At the last meeting of the Society the silver medal was awarded to Joseph Daniel Ives, of the Thames Police, and W H Elliott, for their praiseworthy conduct (at the risk of their lives) in saving the life of Ellen Mahony at the destructive fire in Holywell Street, Strand'.

Note: Joseph Ives appears on the 1841 Census living in Lambeth, being noted as aged 41 and as an Inspector with the Thames Police. He was then living with wife Mary (42), and children Ann (11) and Joseph (7). Nobody named Daniel Joes appears on that census.

[Unnumbered]: Jacob Pope: Silver medal

Details: The *Second Annual Report* of the Society (1838, pp. 21-2) records that: 'Mr Spring then read a statement of the admirable conduct of a young man of the name of Jacob Pope, in the employment of Messrs Curling, Young, and Co, shipbuilders, at Limehouse, at a fire in High Street, Poplar. The statement was to the following effect: "In passing down High Street, Poplar, Pope observed flames issuing from a house, and immediately gave the alarm by knocking at the door of the

turncock, who lives near the spot; and then, without waiting for assistance, seized a piece of wood and broke open the door of the burning house. On entering, he found the heat of the flames and the density of the smoke so over-powering that he was compelled to quit the place, and two men arriving at the moment with a ladder, he attempted to reach the upper story from the outside; the ladder, however, was too short for that purpose, and was raised on the shoulders of the people in the street, who by this time began to assemble on the spot in great numbers. The young man succeeded in effecting his entrance by one of the upper windows, and immediately re-appeared, bearing in his arms a child whom he carried to the street; he again ascended the ladder, saved the life of a second child, and climbing a third time, saved an infant from the flames, at the imminent risk of his own life, for the heat was so great, that the people, who had up to this moment supported the ladder, suddenly quitted their hold, and Pope was precipitated to the ground from the height of twelve feet, having the infant in his arms – the child was fortunately unhurt. By this time the parish ladders had arrived, and a policeman having ascended to the upper room, he succeeded in getting the proprietor of the house, together with his wife, to the ground in safety. Pope, notwithstanding some slight injuries he had received in his fall, followed the policeman, and saved some furniture and two cash boxes, which he placed in the hands of Inspector Symonds, of the K division of the police, and having been the first to enter, and the last to quit the burning dwelling, he narrowly escaped with his own life, by descending the ladder just before the flames had reached him. This young man, who nearly became the victim of his own courage, has thus by his praiseworthy exertions rescued a whole family from a frightful death". Subjoined to the statement was the following corroborative testimonial: "I consider that if it had not been for the quick arrival of Jacob Pope, and the assistance of a short ladder, the lives of myself, my wife, and five children, would have been sacrificed to the flames, he having rescued three of my children with the said ladder. [Signed] Henry George Fraas, 11th Jan 1838". There were also subjoined corroborative testimonials from Mr Thomas Fisher, Agent of the Sun Fire Office, and from Mr J Symonds, one of the Inspectors of the Metropolitan Police; and appended the following from Alderman Copeland: "My Dear Sir, If ever there was a case to be rewarded, I think that to which the enclosed Memorial refers is the one. I pray you to attend to it. Yours truly, W T Copeland". The Noble Chairman [Lord Teignmouth, MP] said he had great pleasure in presenting Jacob Pope with the medal of the Society'. The award was briefly noted in *The Times* (28 Apr 1838, p. 5): 'For rescuing three children at a fire at Poplar'.

[Unnumbered]: PC (178G) Charles Cherry: Silver medal

Details: The *Second Annual Report* of the Society (1838, pp. 21-2) records that: 'Mr Spring then read a statement of Police Constable Charles Cherry, of the G Division, No. 178, relating to a fire which broke out at the house of Mr Bailey, tailor, No. 16 Frederick Place, Goswell Street Road, on the morning of the 24th November 1837, consuming property to the value of £200. "The inmates of the house were aroused by Police Constable Cherry, the fire at that time making rapid progress at the lower part of the building. After some time had elapsed, it was found that a female about eighteen years of age (Miss Rigby) was missing, and it was supposed that she had returned upstairs. At that time all aid from the front was prevented by the rapid progress of the flames upwards. The police constable (Cherry) went round to the back of the premises, and succeeded in scaling a very high wall, and climbed up a water-spout (at the risk of his life), and got in at the back window; and on the stairs he found the young female lying in a state of insensibility. He immediately caught her up in his arms, and rushed downstairs, through the dense smoke and fire, by which means her life was saved". The medal was then presented by his Lordship [Lord Teignmouth, MP] to Police Constable Cherry'. The award was noted in *The Times* (28 Apr 1838, p. 5): 'For saving the life of a female at Limehouse'.

[Unnumbered]: James Robinson: Silver medal

Details: The *Second Annual Report* of the Society (1838, pp. 24-5) records that: 'Mr Spring read the evidence of James Robinson, a glassblower, taken on oath at the inquest on the bodies of Honora Sweeney and her two children, who were burnt to death at the fire in Gravel Lane in February last. The evidence was as follows: "James Robinson, a glassblower, said he occupied a front room on the [first] floor. He went to bed with his family, consisting of a wife and two children, on Wednesday night at nine o'clock. He was awoke by his wife about half-past twelve o'clock. He was awoke by his wife about half-past twelve o'clock, she caught hold of the hair of his head, and said, 'Jem, Jem, the

house is on fire'. He jumped out of his bed and opened the window, when he saw flames coming out of the roof of the shop. He immediately returned to his bedside, and snatched up one of his children, with which he ran downstairs followed by his wife with the other child. As he came through the passage the wainscoting was on fire. After placing his wife and family in safety, he returned to the house for the purpose of rendering assistance to Mrs Sweeney and her family, who occupied the back room on the second floor. When he reached his own room the flames were coming through the flooring, and he found himself soon afterwards surrounded by fire. He was compelled to retreat into the back room and throw himself out of the window into the yard, a height of about fifteen feet – his fall was broken by a water butt, which severely injured him. When he got upon his feet he heard a noise from a window above, which proceeded from Mrs Sweeney. He called out to her and she immediately came to the window, and exclaimed 'Is that you, Jem Robinson?' to which he replied it was, and told her that the only way to save herself and family was to throw her children out of the window and jump after them. He had scarcely uttered the words when a woman, named Ryan, fell from a window upon him, and knocked him down. As soon as he got up again, Mrs Sweeney said 'For God's sake, save my children'. He picked up a pillow at his feet and held it up, calling out to Mrs Sweeney to throw out her children. She threw one out, and it fell upon the pillow and rolled off again on to the stone pavement of the yard. He put the child away, and called out to Mrs Sweeney to throw the others out. He heard her calling out in a faint voice 'Oh! Johnny, Johnny, come here, come here, dear, we shall all be burnt'. The children were running about the house amidst the flames, calling out 'Mother, mother'. The poor woman called out 'Oh God, save me! Oh, Lord, save me! Have mercy on my soul, we shall be burnt'. He stopped in the yard for some time, but saw Mrs Sweeney no more. He got away over a wall with Mary Ryan and one of the children. He thought the fire originated among the rags". The Coroner and Jury said the conduct of Robinson was highly praiseworthy and entered into a subscription for his relief. The money was handed to him in the room. The following letter from the Coroner was annexed: "Godalming, Surrey, 12th Feb 1838. Gentlemen, At the inquest held by me this day, I cannot express in sufficient terms the heartfelt pleasure and satisfaction I derived, and in which I am sure every one of the jurors most fully participated on hearing the evidence of James Robinson (confirmed, as it was, by other testimony), one of the unfortunate inmates of the house lately burnt in Gravel Lane. His humane conduct, and heroic exertions in the endeavour to save poor Mrs Sweeney and her infant children, (after escaping himself with his own family from the house), and in which bold attempt his life was nearly sacrificed, is beyond all praise. I do, therefore, with sincere pleasure recommend this poor fellow, now almost in a disabled and destitute condition, to the consideration of your most excellent and benevolent Institution, as a person eminently deserving your support and assistance. I have the honour to be, Gentlemen, Your very obedient servant, Henry Wood, One of the Coroners for Surrey". The medal was then presented to James Robinson by the Noble Chairman [Lord Teignmouth, MP]. The fire was reported in *The Times* (9 February 1838) thus: 'DREADFUL FIRE AND LOSS OF LIFE – Yesterday morning, just before 1 o'clock, a fire broke out in the house of a marine store dealer, a Mrs Parke, situated between Charlotte Street and George Street, Gravel Lane, Southwark. The flames were first seen in the shop by the police, who raised an immediate alarm, but unfortunately not in time to allow all the inmates of the house (26 in number) to escape, and we regret to state that a widow, named Margaret Sweeney, and two of her children, perished in the flames, and another of her children soon afterwards died in Guy's Hospital from the injuries received in being thrown from the window of an upper apartment by its unfortunate mother … A glassblower named James Robinson, his wife and two children, occupied the front room on the first floor, and they had a very narrow escape. The following account of the disastrous conflagration has been furnished to us by Robinson, a very intelligent mechanic, who has lost all he possessed. He states that he was awoke at 1 o'clock by a noise underneath him, apparently the cries and moans of Mrs Parke's children. He immediately jumped out of bed and opened the window, and then saw flames issuing from the shop. He aroused his wife, and snatched up one of his children. His wife took up the other in her arms, and they both rushed down stairs, ran along the passage, and escaped into the street. As he came through the passage, which was separated from the shop by a partition, he was nearly suffocated by the smoke, and the partition was on fire. As soon as he had deposited his wife and children in a place of safety, he returned through the smoke to his room, with the intention of getting some of his property and assisting the other inmates. On reaching his apartment he discovered that

the floor was on fire, and was compelled to retreat. He was on his way down stairs when the flames and smoke ascended in a dense volume, and forced him back. He was almost rendered insensible; his shirt ignited, and the fire had actually scorched him, which brought him to his recollection, when he rushed through the back room on the first floor and leaped from the window into the yard. He fell across the water-butt, and, rebounding, fell upon the stones. The fall stunned him, and he was most severely bruised, but, recovering his senses, he saw Mrs Sweeney at the window of the second floor, overlooking the yard with a child in her arms. He managed with some difficulty to raise himself, and picked up a pillow, which he firmly believes Mrs Sweeney had previously thrown out to throw the child upon. He raised the pillow in his arms, and called out, "Throw your children out," and held his arms in a position to catch them. Mrs Sweeney, who appeared much terrified, replied, "I will. I will; I'll throw them all out – for God's sake save them". Just at that moment a female, who he afterwards ascertained to be Mary Ryan, threw herself out from the first floor window. She fell heavily upon him, and knocked him down. Mrs Sweeney held her child in her arms until he rose, and then threw it from her into his arms, but he was so weak he could not hold it, and the child fell out of his arms on to the stones. He held out his arms to receive another, and saw Mrs Sweeney leave the window, and heard he calling to her children. She appeared at the window again without the children, when the smoke overpowered her, and she fell over the window-ledge, with her arms stretched out in a supplicating attitude. There the poor creature remained until the flames reached her, and she was burnt alive. He heard the little children running about the house screaming dreadfully, and calling out: "Mother, mother"; their cries were soon stifled by the ravages of the fire, and they shared the fate of their parent. He remained in the yard for the purpose of assisting Mrs Sweeney and her children as long as he was able, but was at length forced by the intense heat to retreat. He climbed over a wall eight feet high with Mary Ryan and Mrs Sweeney's child in his arms, and succeeded in reaching the yard of the Hope public-house, where he was so exhausted that he could proceed no further. The sufferings of Robinson were extreme; he was unable to leave his bed all day. He is in a most deplorable and starving condition, the spine of his back is injured by the fall, his whole frame is terribly shattered, and he is also burnt. Robinson believes the fire was caused by the ignition of gas in the shop, and he states that some months back the house took fire from that cause, but it was extinguished without any material damage'. Subsequently, the award was noted in *The Times* (28 April 1838, p. 5) 'For his exertions at a fire in Gravel Lane, Southwark'. For further details see also *The Times* (10 February and 13 February 1838).

[Unnumbered]: Goddard, Fire Brigade: Silver medal

Details: The *Second Annual Report* of the Society (1838, pp. 23-4) records that: 'Mr Spring read a letter from Mr Baddely, of Wellington Street, Blackfriars Road, in the conduct of a fireman of the name of Goddard, at a fire which broke out in the house of Mr Mansfield, No. 5 Bermondsey Street on the 9th August 1837, was very highly eulogized "Goddard (writes Mr Baddely) dashed through the flames into the dense smoke with which the room was filled, and by the help of Providence was fortunate enough to catch hold of two young children with which he repassed the flames; and on his reaching his comrades on the landing, both himself and the children were in a state of exhaustion. The children are a little burned, but not seriously. This is the most heroic case of the kind that ever came under my observation, and such a one as the Society cannot [let] pass unnoticed". Attached to Mr Baddely's letter were corroborative testimonials from Mr Braidwood, Superintendent of the Fire Brigade. The medal was then presented to Goddard by the Noble Chairman [Lord Teignmouth, MP]'. Further details appeared in *The Times* (9 August 1837) thus: 'INTREPID CONDUCT OF ONE OF THE FIRE BRIGADE – Yesterday forenoon, between the hours of 11 and 12, considerable excitement was created by a sudden and alarming fire breaking out on the premises of Mr Mansell, tinman and brazier, No. 5 Bermondsey Street, Southwark, near London & Greenwich Railway. The shop and parlour are occupied by the individual just named, but the upper part is tenanted by five or six families, who are of the poorest class. The fire broke out on the third storey, which is occupied by a man named Eaves and his family; but on the discovery of the fire, the children (three in number, the eldest six years) were alone in the apartments. The fire was perceived by the eldest, who directly gave the alarm. The landlord made several unsuccessful attempts to extinguish it. The engines were then sent for, and some soon arrived, and as they were about to commence playing on the burning part, the little child

who had at first given the alarm ran into the street screaming out that his two little brothers were above in the burning room. The flame and smoke were then seen bursting forth, and all hopes of saving the children were given up, when a young man, named Goddard, one of the fire brigade, drawing his helmet over his face, rushed up stairs, through the flames, and succeeded in reaching the room. The greatest anxiety was felt for the result of his humane and daring attempt. In a few moments this anxiety was relieved by the sight of Goddard returning with the two little children in his arms. They were apparently lifeless, but after a short exposure to the open air, they recovered. Goddard stated that he found them stretched apparently dead on a mattress in the centre of the room. The covering of the mattress was on fire, and such was the density of the smoke and the proximity of the flame, that had they remained there two minutes longer they must have perished. The feelings of the parents on having their little ones restored under such circumstances may be much more easily imagined than described. Too much praise cannot be given to the humanity and intrepidity of this young man. The arrival of several other engines soon brought the fire under, but not before the room in which it broke out, and another room and part of the roof, were destroyed'. The award was subsequently briefly noted in *The Times* (28 April 1838, p. 5) 'For saving the lives of two children'. See also *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* (Sunday 3 December 1843 and 27 January 1850).

[Unnumbered]: Thomas Loader, Fire Brigade: Silver medal

Details: The *Second Annual Report* of the Society (1838, p. 26) records that: 'Mr Spring next read the following letter relative to the fire which took place at Mr Flack's, on the 6th of February last…"Gentlemen, I beg leave to submit to your consideration the very great and competent services which were rendered by Thomas Loader of the Fire Brigade, stationed in Wellclose Square, at the unfortunate fire which took place at my house on Tuesday the 6th of February last. Independently of the great activity displayed generally by Mr Loader during the progress of the fire, too much praise cannot be given to him for the promptitude which he exhibited in procuring the ladders whereby the inmates of my house were enabled to escape, when, but for his assistance they would most probably have all perished, for in consequence of the rapidity with which the flames spread, all retreat was cut off from the lower part of the house, when Mr Loader, having procured the ladders, and placed them against the wall of a cooperage situate at the rear of my house, proceeded, at the imminent risk of his own life, in rescuing nine persons, by assisting them over the roof of the cooperage and thence down the ladders, and thus was the means of saving the lives of so many of his fellow-creatures, who but for his timely aid would in all probability have perished. I am, gentlemen, Your very obedient servant, Richard Flack". The letter was accompanied by a testimonial from several respectable inhabitants of the vicinity, confirmatory of Mr Flack's statement. Loader's exertions were stated to have been highly efficient and praiseworthy on that occasion. The medal having been presented to Thomas Loader, he returned thanks'. A report of the fire itself appeared in *The Times* (7 February 1838), thus: 'Yesterday morning, at half-past 5 o'clock, Police Sergeant Carr, H17, while going his usual round, observed a flare of light in the cellar of Mr Richard Flack, the Brown Bear public house, in Leman Street, Goodman's Fields, and on partially raising the outside flap, and looking in, he perceived the whole place in flame. At the instant police-constables H145 and H146 came up, and with their truncheons knocked at the door and the window-shutters as loud as they possibly could, but it was some time before they could awake the inmates, 12 in number. At length three of the lodgers made their way down stairs and into the passage, but all their efforts to undo the fastenings of the front door were unavailing. The policemen outside finding this, and that the flames were fast approaching them, and also all means of retreat cut off, by great efforts forced open the door and released them from their perilous situation. By this time the flames had gained considerable ascendancy, and had reached the club-room and first-floor rooms, and the house being an old fashioned one, built principally of wood, it was found that its entire destruction was inevitable, and considerable fears were entertained for the safety of Mr and Mrs Flack, three children, and servants, who slept on the second and third floors, but they were fortunately got to the roof, and escaped by passing along the parapet to the next houses. So narrow was their escape and pressing their danger that they had to fly in their nightdress, and Mr Flack had not even time to carry away his cash-box, which contained the receipts of several days. In a very short time the entire house was one mass of flame, and the efforts of the firemen to prevent its total destruction were unavailing. It was speedily gutted… The cause of the fire remains unknown'. More specific details of the rescue were

noted by *The Morning Chronicle* (Wednesday 7 February 1838) thus: 'At half-past six o'clock yesterday morning a fire broke out at the Brown Bear public house, Leman Street, Goodman's Fields, which totally destroyed the house and stock, as well as the cooperage at the rear. This, like the previous fire, was discovered by a police constable. An alarm was immediately given and several engines arrived in quick succession, but owing to a short supply of water it was found impossible to stop the progress of the flames. While the premises were thus enveloped in one body of fire it was ascertained that an infant child had been left in bed by the parents. Loader, one of the men belonging to the brigade, immediately entered the room by means of a ladder and succeeded in rescuing the infant from being burnt to death. The poor child on being taken out of bed clung round Loader's neck and held him firm until it was placed out of danger. The fire originated in the tap-room, and is supposed to have occurred by some tobacco ashes falling on the floor from a pipe of one of the customers. The building and stock are insured in the Sun Fire Office'. Subsequently, the award was noted in *The Times* (28 April 1838, p. 5) 'For rescuing nine persons at the fire of Mr Flack's, Brown Bear, Leman Street, Whitechapel'. The recipient is variously referred to a 'Loader' and 'Loder'; the 1841 census confirms 'Thomas Loader' was a fireman, aged 55, living at Mary Ann Street, St George's, Tower Hamlets.

[Unnumbered]: Thomas Overton, Fire Brigade: Silver medal
Thomas Loader, Fire Brigade: Silver medal

Details: The *Second Annual Report* of the Society (1838, pp. 26-7) records that: 'Mr Spring read the following information of Thomas Overton, of the Fire Brigade, relative to a fire in Goodman's Fields: "1838 – I was called to a fire in Leman Street, Goodman's Fields, at Messrs Collyer and Wilson's, wholesale wine, ale, and porter sellers. When I arrived there, I found the cellar on fire, but, from the intense smoke, could not then enter. I was informed there was a man in the cellar; I then entered, and Loader followed, but could not find him. I went to the foot of the stairs, to breathe. We went round the cellar a second time, on our hands and knees; I then found him behind a porter butt. I then called Loader, who was also in the cellar, who assisted me in getting the man out of the cellar. We then carried him to Mr Graves's, surgeon, assisted by other firemen. I then held him in my arms while the others rubbed him, he being apparently dead. In about two hours, signs of life appeared; after which we took him to his own residence in Lambeth Street. [Signed] Thomas Overton". Subjoined was a letter from Mr Wilson, in which the conduct of Loader and Overton was highly spoken of. The Noble Chairman then presented the medals to Overton and Loader. This was the second presentation to Loader, who was loudly applauded'. The award was noted in *The Times* (28 April 1838, p. 5) thus: 'For their exertions at a fire in the same neighbourhood' (Whitechapel)

[Unnumbered]: PC (112N) William Harris: Silver medal
Thomas Easom, Plasterer: Silver medal

Details: The *Second Annual Report* of the Society (1838, p. 27) records that: 'Mr Spring next read the evidence of Thomas Easom, a labourer, residing at 15 Paradise Place, Islington; who deposed that he knew the deceased, who resided with their parents in Paradise Place. Their father was a manufacturer of fireworks. Witness was awakened on Sunday morning, about five o'clock, by a knocking at the window-shutters, and a cry of "Fire!" He immediately got up, and proceeded to where the fire was, which was at Mr Cockerell's. When he arrived, he saw the flames coming out at one of the upper windows, at which Mr Cockerell the elder was. Witness went up the ladder, and endeavoured to assist him out, but was obliged to descend from fear of suffocation. Witness again went up the ladder, accompanied by a policeman, William Harris, No. 112N; and, with the assistance of the latter, he got Mr Cockerell out of the window, but they unfortunately let him fall. Before that, he (witness) saw John Cockerell, one of the deceased, lying on a bed under the same window. After the father had been got out, witness got hold of John Cockerell, but was obliged to descend the ladder, in almost a state of suffocation. His hair was much burned. Witness saw one of the younger brothers, Henry Cockerell, on the same bed, and they both appeared to be quite insensible. His Lordship [Lord Teignmouth, MP] then presented the medals of the Society to Thomas Easom, and William Harris, police constable 112N'. Rather differently, *The Times* (28 April 1838, p. 5) notes the awards as being: 'For having removed a large barrel of gunpowder', though notes Easom apparently incorrectly as 'Easton'. The *Morning Chronicle* (Wednesday 25 April 1838) gave details of the events thus: 'THE LATE DISASTROUS FIRE AT ISLINGTON. Yesterday morning an inquest was taken by Mr Stirling, the coroner for Middlesex, and a jury, at the King's Head Tavern, Lower road, Islington, on the bodies

of Elijah Cockerell, aged 21, Henry Cockerell, aged 17, and John Glenn, aged 38, who perished in the fire which broke out on the premises of Mr Cockerell, sen., fire-work manufacturer, in Paradise Row, Lower Road, Islington. The jury on being sworn, proceeded to view the bodies, which had been deposited in the vaults under Islington church. As might be expected, they presented a heart sickening appearance, and no features of the unfortunate persons could be recognised. Thomas Easom stated that he was a plasterer, and resided at No. 15 Paradise Place. On Sunday morning, about five o'clock, he heard a knocking at the shutters of his house, and a cry of "fire!" in the street; on going out he saw the smoke issuing from the windows of the upper apartments; Mr Cockerell, sen., was at the window, and a ladder was raised against it; a policeman was at the top, endeavouring to save Mr Cockerell, and he succeeded in getting him on the ladder, in descending which Mr Cockerell fell with considerable violence on the ground; after he had been picked up and removed, witness ascended the ladder, and ascertained that some other persons were in the house; on looking in at the window he saw two persons lying on a bed under the window; they appeared to have been suffocated, and he believed they were dead; he caught hold of the hands of one man, John Glenn, and attempted to drag him out, but was soon obliged to let go, in consequence of the great heat and smoke that issued from the windows; indeed he was so overcome that he fell to the ground. When he got up he could plainly see the flames bursting through the partition of the room where the deceased persons slept, and this was followed by several explosions. Mr Spring, the secretary of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, observed that he attended on behalf of the Society, and he should feel it his duty to call a special meeting of the members, for the purpose of rewarding the persons who exerted themselves to save life at the fire. George Cockerell, brother of the deceased persons, who appeared in very ill health, stated that he was a painter by trade, and lived with his parents and brothers at the house No. 4 Barley Mow, Paradise Row; the deceased John Glenn was his half-brother; he was deaf and of imbecile mind, and not capable of taking care of himself; Elijah Cockerell was a cabinet maker, and Henry Cockerell was a carver and gilder; his father was an artist in fireworks; witness was the last person that retired to rest on Saturday night about twenty past twelve, and before he did so, as was his usual custom, he went over the house, and found everything safe; John Glenn and his two brothers slept in a room on the first floor, over the one in which the witness slept on the ground floor; his father slept with his brothers in the same room, and his mother and sister in a separate apartment on the first floor; his sister had only come to pass the night with the family, and did not usually reside in the house; to the best of his recollection it was about five minutes after five o'clock on Sunday morning that he was awoke by a loud explosion, and he instantly jumped out of bed, and on looking out of the window saw a cloud of smoke issuing from the house; he rushed out of the room and unlocked the street door, when he observed smoke issuing from an apartment on the story where his parents and brothers slept; there was a ladder in the garden, which he seized, and raised it against the window of his mother's apartment; in doing so he broke a pane of glass, which he believed aroused his mother and sister, who instantly pushed up the sash; at that period he observed that the back part of the room was on fire; his sister was the first person to descend the ladder, and in coming down slipped and fell to the ground, but did not hurt herself; he then went up the ladder and assisted his mother in descending; he next attempted to raise the ladder against the apartment where his father and brothers slept, but was so exhausted that he was unable to do so; a few minutes afterwards a policeman of the N division, No. 112, arrived, and placed the ladder to the window and went up; witness followed him; the window was opened by his father, and witness and the policeman dragged him out of the room on to the ladder, but he fell with great violence on the ground; while they were attending to his father, Easom went up the ladder, and he also fell; several persons came to their assistance, but the flames were so great that it was impossible to get near the apartment; some of them rushed into the lower part of the house, and brought furniture out; the house was soon consumed…William Harris, policeman, No. 112N, gave evidence at great length, which confirmed that of the first witness. He said that he was on duty in Paradise Row the whole of Sunday night, and saw no one near the premises destroyed; had there been any one he should have certainly observed him. Several other witnesses were examined, and their evidence confirmed the testimony above given. They also stated there was a great deficiency of water, and that the burnt remains of the suffers were found soon after the fire was extinguished. The jury, after a short charge form the coroner, who believed there was no reason to suppose the premises had been wilfully set on fire, returned the following

verdict – "That the deceased persons, Elijah Cockerell, Henry Cockerell, and John Glenn, were accidentally burnt to death at the destruction of some premises by fire in Paradise Row, in the parish of St Mary, Islington, on the morning of the 22nd of April". The coroner and jury complimented Mr George Cockerell, the witness Easom, and the policeman Harris, for the intrepidity they displayed in attempting to save three men'. In reporting the inquest *The Times* (Wednesday 25 April 1838, p. 7) notes the second recipient as 'Ensom'. For further details of the fire see *Jackson's Oxford Journal* (Saturday, 28 April 1838) and the *Morning Chronicle* (Monday 23 April 1838), which records the name of the surviving brother who took part in the rescue efforts as 'James' (rather than George) Cockerell. The spelling of Thomas Easom's surname is also noted as 'Ensom' and 'Easton' in the various sources.

[Unnumbered]: PSgt (10E) Lister: Silver medal

Details: *The Morning Post* (Friday 31 May 1839, p. 2) reports the presentation of this award by Lord Teignmouth thus: 'The Chairman then placed the silver medal round the neck of Sergeant Lister, No. 10 of the E division of police, as a reward for his intrepid humanity in rescuing several persons of the name Smith from a house in flames in Pancras Street, Tottenham Court Road, on the 19th of September last [1838]. The sergeant rushed up stairs through the flames when no one else durst follow, and hurried the Smiths down in safety. On receiving the medal he made a short gallant speech to the effect that the smiles of the ladies was the most valuable reward he could receive. (Cheers and smiles from all the ladies)'.

[Unnumbered]: Richard Lacknane: Silver medal

Details: *The Morning Post* (Friday 31 May 1839, p. 2) reports the presentation of this award by Lord Teignmouth thus: 'Richard Lacknane received the next medal, for saving a child named Maria Burns, in Horace Street, Marylebone, on the 9th of January last [1839]'.

[Unnumbered]: Fireman (62) Robert Loder: Silver medal

Details: *The Morning Post* (Friday 31 May 1839, p. 2) reports the presentation of this award by Lord Teignmouth thus: 'The next medal was given to Robert Loder, No. 62 of the fire brigade, for his services in saving several lives at the late awful fire in Bucklersbury'.

[Unnumbered]: PSgt J Carter: Silver medal
PC J Lock: Silver medal

Details: The *Third Annual Report* of the Society (1840, p. 15) records that: 'The Chairman [John Hardy] then presented silver medals to Police Sergeant J Carter, F [Division], and J Lock, Turnkey at the House of Correction, late in the police force, for saving life at a fire in the Strand, in October last'. There is disagreement about the initials of the two recipients involved, as can be seen in the following. On 31 October 1839 the Society's Superintendent Abraham Wivell wrote in response to claims by William Baddeley about this fire, which had occurred in the Strand on 3 October 1839: 'The lives were saved from that fire by R T Lock and T Carter, of the F division of the police, who made their way up the stairs of the adjoining house, No. 273, and to the roof of the house on fire, into the window of which they entered, and they there assisted the lodgers to the roof, which was the only means they had to escape…' (*Mechanics Magazine*, Saturday 9 November 1839, p. 85). See also *Mechanics Magazine* (Saturday 19 October 1839, p. 48).

[Unnumbered]: Police Inspector James Covington: Silver medal
PC (141C) William Drane: Silver medal
PC (A65) Edward Francis Lipscombe: Silver medal
PC (A163) William Kemball: Silver medal

Details: The *Third Annual Report* of the Society (1840, p. 15) records that: 'The Chairman [John Hardy] also presented silver medals to Police Inspector J Covington, C [Division], Police Constables W Drane, 141C, W Kemble, 163A, and E Lipscombe, 63A, for being instrumental in saving life at a fire which took place in Marylebone Street, in May last'. *The Times* (18 May 1840, p. 6) reports more details of the events: 'THE LATE DESTRUCTIVE FIRE AND LOSS OF LIFE IN MARYLEBONE STREET, REGENT STREET – Saturday afternoon, at 4 o'clock, a jury consisting of the churchwardens and 14 of the principal inhabitants of St James', Westminster, was empanelled before Mr Higgs, deputy-coroner, in the board-room of the workhouse of that parish, Poland Street, Oxford Street, to investigate the circumstances attendant on the deaths of Mr John Marr, cashier to the United Kingdom Insurance Company, Waterloo Place, aged 46 years, and Mr Joseph Cowley, clerk to Messrs Stulz and Co., Clifford Street, Bond Street, aged 35

years, who were burnt in the destructive fire which occurred on the night of Wednesday last at the house of Mr Adam Clark, cheese-monger, 33 Marylebone Street, Regent Street…[PC William Green gave evidence about having discovered the fire at 32 Marylebone Street at 12.50am while on his beat. He raised the alarm and then obtained further assistance from the police station.] William Kemble [was] examined – I am a police constable, A163. I was in the company of the last witness [PC Samuel Goodchild]. When I got to the house I knocked at the door violently, but no one answered. I think it would have awakened any one if they had been sleeping on the ground floor. I then knocked at the next house, towards Air Street, and on the door being opened I ran upstairs into the dining room, and on opening the window saw a person on the leads of the burning house, who had got down by means of a sheet, whom I assisted into the house I was in. I then saw another person standing on the top of the house, near the parapet, and ran up to the top of the house and through a trapdoor on to the roof, and assisted him through. I asked him if there were any other persons in the house. He said yes, and I ran down to the window again, and held out a bed quilt, but saw nothing of any other person. James Covington examined. I am inspector of the C division. On the morning in question I received information, while at the station house in Vine Street, from…Constable Green, about a quarter past 1 o'clock, that there was a fire in Marylebone Street. I ran directly to the house. The lower part appeared to me to be all in flames. I went into the next house, No. 32, and up to the attic, and found there a constable of the A division, who was calling a manta the window of the adjoining house. I endeavoured to draw the man's attention by throwing a blanket towards him. He, however, got out of the window, standing on a small piece of cornice, and holding on the window frames, and got along until he reached the window at which I was. I and a constable took hold of him as soon as we could reach him, and dragged him in at our window. He was dressed all but one shoe and his hat. Had we not assisted him, he must have fallen into the street. I then ran downstairs, and assisted in knocking a hole through a wall which divides the front area of No. 32 from that of No. 33, and we dragged a boy through who was in the area of No. 33. He was only slightly bruised. Constable Drane, C, No. 141, assisted me… The man who escaped by the window got out of the middle one, and managed to get past the other window; but there was then a break between the cornice of that house and the one I was in, at which moment we got hold of him, and saved him. Edward Francis Lipscombe [was] examined – I am a police constable, A65. I was with Goodchild when we saw the smoke. The doors of the house were closed, but suddenly, I found the shop-door open, and I went in with others. The flames were then running round the shop and parlour…I consider the fire must have originated on the shop floor. I assisted Covington in getting the man in at the window. When the fire burst out at the windows it appeared to come out all at once. I heard persons screaming in the house. The turncock did not appear to know where to find the plug, and he would not let us have the irons for us to try. Saw none of the inmates of No. 32...The jury further said that their best thanks were eminently due to the police employed at the late fire in Marylebone Street, for their meritorious exertions in the preservation of three human lives, who would most probably have perished in the flames; and to both them and the firemen, for their prompt services and efficient attention'.



PC William Kemball's medal

Medal inscribed: 'To Edd. F. Lipscombe PC A65 who at the risk of his own Life saved from Death by Fire a person at Marylebone St, May 14th 1840.'

Medal inscribed: 'To William Kemball PC A163 who at the risk of his own Life saved from Death by Fire a person at Marylebone St, May 14th 1840.

[Unnumbered]: Edward Booth: Silver medal

Details: The voting of this award initially was noted in the *Manchester Times* (Saturday 21 November 1840) thus: 'PRESENTATION OF A VALUABLE SILVER MEDAL – Mr

Edward Booth, surgeon, late a pupil of King's College, London, residing at No. 19 Salisbury Street, Strand, who at great peril to himself, rescued nine persons from the flames, who must have otherwise perished on the night of the 14th of April last, has received the reward of a silver medal from the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire. It is to be regretted that their funds will not enable them to present medals of gold. It appears that the most heroic conduct was displayed by this young gentleman. Being engaged at his studies till midnight he was able promptly to render such assistance as to entitle him not only to the small token of encouragement given by the Royal Society in such interesting cases, but also to the lasting gratitude of the family he saved (a Mr Robertson, 7 Salisbury Street), and the admiration of the public. Instead of matters of such moment being passed over with silent indifference, it would not be too much if a magnificent temple were erected at the public expense, and such deeds as those achieved by Mr Booth recorded in a tablet of gold. – *Morning Herald* of the 12th inst. Mr Booth is the son of the Rev E Booth, of Tyldesly, in this county'. Whether this account relates to the voting and announcement of the award or to its presentation in 1840 is unclear. However, the MB(1) SGM 12 May 1848, QGM 31 July 1848 and RC 3 October 1848 notes that: 'An application from Mr Edward Booth of Glasgow forwarded to the Lord Mayor as Chairman of the Public Meeting was read, requesting the presentation of the Society's silver medal, as voted to him so long back as 1840 for saving life at a fire in Salisbury Street, Strand. This case was well considered and it was resolved "that provided upon further enquiry the R.C. are satisfied with the correctness of Mr Booth's statement – the original vote of the old Committee in 1840 in this instance be confirmed. Dr Wilson of St George's Hospital was contacted as Mr Booth's reference but no reply received by Special Committee Meeting of 12th May 1848. However the award was confirmed at the Quarterly General Meeting'. These 1848 minutes appear to suggest this was not a request for a replacement medal but rather for a medal the Society had inadvertently failed to present following their initial decision.

42: Mr Joseph Hepworth: Medal

Details: MB (1) – RC 23 April 1844, GM 23 May 1844 and PGM 10 April 1845: 'A fire had occurred in Rosamond Street, Clerkenwell on the 16th instant, which but for the activity and intrepidity of the Police and a gentlemen named Hepworth would have resulted in a lamentable loss of life. Police Sergeant] G13 Chas Clarke and PC 149 Chas Penn appeared before the committee, the Sergeant stated the fire was first discovered by the PC who drew his attention to it and then by his directions went for the Engines the P.S. with the assistance of a gentleman passing at the time (Mr Hepworth of 23 Ironmonger Lane) obtained an entrance into the house and with much difficulty and risk they conjointly carried out six individuals. The Sergeant had barely succeeded in reaching the street with the last person in his arms before the



Joseph Hepworth's Type II silver medal (reverse)

staircase down which he had come fell in. Resolved that this Rota (Rotary Committee) formerly recommend that a reward be awarded to the Constable and Sergeant and also the expediency of presenting the Society's medal to Hepworth Esq as a mark of esteem for his intrepid conduct'.

Medal inscribed: 'Presented 10th April 1845 TO JOSEPH HEPWORTH ESQR for his intrepid exertions AT A FIRE 5 Upper Rosamon Street, Clerkenwell, April 16th 1844 when at the RISK OF HIS OWN LIFE he assisted in saving FIVE of his fellow creatures'. This medal, in its case of issue, remains in family possession (2011).

[Unnumbered]: Conductor John F Sunshine: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) - GM 1 April 1845 and PGM 10 April 1845: 'For his intrepid conduct in saving life from fire while in the service of the Society'. Years later, Sunshine was retrospectively one of those singled out by T R Threlfall in his series 'The heroes of labour' thus: 'We have referred to the fact that the

metropolitan firemen have, as a rule, been sailors. Probably no more striking illustration of the wisdom of such a choice could be given than that of Conductor Sunshine, who performed one of the bravest and most marvellous feats ever recorded in the history of fires. Although the incident occurred fully 46 years ago, it has lost none of its thrilling interest. When the engine arrived at the burning house, in Hatton Garden, London, a man was seen sitting upon the window-sill of the second storey, while from a window above a man was hanging by his hands. Sunshine quickly rescued the first, and then ascended to the other individual, who, by this time, sorely needed help. The top rung, however, of the ladder only reached to the second floor, and Sunshine found he could just touch the feet of the suspended man by balancing himself on the topmost point of the ladder, but when the fireman called the latter he received no answer, and then found to his amazement that the man was deaf and dumb. Undaunted by this fact, Sunshine tapped the poor fellow's feet, and he thereupon released his grasp, falling into the conductor's arms. The slightest slip, or a momentary hesitation, would have brought both to the ground, either maimed or killed, but the conductor, fixing himself firmly, allowed the deaf and dumb man to slip between himself and the wall until he obtained a firm footing upon the ladder, whence he descended into the arms of the onlookers' (*Manchester Times*, Friday 5 December 1890).

Born in Vauxhall, Surrey, in about 1813, John Sunshine served as a conductor with the Society for 24 years. He is recorded living at 16 Model Buildings, St Pancras, by 1851, along with his wife J Sarah (39), and children Sarah Ann (8), John F (5), Jane (3), William (2), and baby Joseph (8 months). Conductor Sunshine died in 1866 (St Pancras Register District, July-Sept 1866, vol. 1b, p. 46), the Society minutes noting he 'was the only one remaining Conductor of the six who had charge of the escapes when the present committee undertook the Society's management…'.

101: PC (259N) Edward Jefferies: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) – GM 1 April 1845 and PGM 10 April 1845: 'At the risk of his own life rescued seven individuals from the flames at a fire at Mr Hudds, High Street, Islington'.

103: PC (105P) Lewis Bray: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) – GM 1 April 1845 GM and PGM 10 April 1845: For his exertions at a fire at the Ship and Bluecoat Boy, Walworth, whereby the lives of four persons were rescued from the flames'.

Medal inscribed: 'Presented 10th April, 1845, To Lewis Bray, P.C. 105.P, For his intrepid conduct at a Fire at the Ship and Blue Coat Boy, Walworth Road, 29th Aug, 1844, Where by his Exertions, the lives of Four persons were preserved.'

105: PC (108L) William Cockerell: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) - GM 1 April 1845: 'For his intrepidity at a fire at Mr Calloway's 3 Westminster Road, Lambeth, where he was instrumental in saving two individuals at the risk of his own life'.

[Unnumbered]: Conductor (No. 10) W Carey: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) – RC 21 July 1846: 'Conductors Carey and Sunshine with the Royal Exchange and Hatton Garden Machine were very early in their arrival at the fire in Newgate Street, the former, who arrived rather in advance, succeeded in rescuing Mr and Mrs Armer from the 2nd floor. It appears certain from the evidence of the moments later they must both have perished, but a young man lost his life. The silver medal to be awarded with an inscription commemorative of the great activity displayed by him in assisting at the same fire (as Sunshine) where he proved the means of saving two human beings from death'. The award was announced in *The Morning Chronicle* (28 April 1847): 'Meeting of the subscribers of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire - The Chairman awarded the prizes with appropriate and eloquent addresses to the following individuals: …silver medal to W Casey [*sic*], No. 10, for rescuing two persons from fire in [76] Newgate Street, [on Sunday 19] July 1846'. In his 'London fires in 1846', William Baddeley reported the events thus: 'Sunday July 19, 3.30am: A fire broke out in the lower part of the Commercial Coffee House, 76 Newgate Street, occupied by Mr W Fenn. An alarm was immediately given by the police, and almost directly afterwards a body fell heavily from one of the upper windows in Bath Street, which proved to be that of a young man named Alfred Cookson, aged 24, who lodged in the house. Mr Fenn effected his escape by crawling along the shores, which extended across Bath Street, into the opposite house. Shortly afterwards two persons

appeared at the second floor window in Newgate Street imploring help. The police and others begged them to wait until proper assistance arrived, and in a few minutes the Royal Society's fire-escape, accompanied by Conductor Carey, came up from the Royal Exchange station. Placing his machine against the building, Carey ascended to the relief of those above, and safely brought down a man and a woman, amid the cheers of the assembled crowd. Fire-escapes from Hatton Garden and Bridge Street closely followed the first, and a report having been spread that another person was still in the house, Conductor Sunshine ascended, and although at first beaten back by the smoke, he ultimately accomplished a search of every room, and pronounced them tenantless. The Brigade, parish, and West of England engines were promptly on the spot, and the fire soon mastered. Mr Cookson was carried to St Bartholomew's Hospital, where he shortly after expired. At the coroner's inquest, before Mr Payne, the surgeon's evidence went to prove that the deceased had not sustained any serious injury from his fall, but had died from the effects of severe burns…The jury complimented Mr Braidwood "for his vigilance upon this occasion" and expressed their great satisfaction at the prompt attendance and meritorious exertions of the conductors of the Royal Society's fire-escapes "but for whose exertions two more lives must have been sacrificed!"…The Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire awarded Conductor Carey their silver medal for his excellent conduct in this affair, and pecuniary compensation was given him by some of the neighbours' (*Mechanics Magazine*, Saturday 10 April 1847, p. 343). See also *The Times* (Tuesday 21 July 1846, p. 8).

350: George Best: Silver medal and one sovereign
Henry Taylor: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) - SGM 26 February 1847 and 26 March 1847: 'Evidence of the gallant behaviour of a youth name George Best in risking his own life to save that of his fellow creature at a fire at Mr Grover in High Street, Brentford, on the night of the 17th was confirmed to be as stated in *The Times* of the 19th respectively, with the addition that Henry Taylor was instrumental in the second degree, with Best, in saving the person endangered'. The presentation was noted in *The Morning Chronicle* (28 April 1847) thus: 'Meeting of the subscribers of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire - The Chairman awarded the prizes with appropriate and eloquent addresses to the following individuals: …a silver medal and one pound were also awarded to a young man named Best, who most heroically rescued a whole family named Grover, at Brentford, rushing three consecutive times into the house, and every time bearing members of the family in his arms, and finally falling exhausted and bleeding at the threshold. Best after receiving the medal was loudly cheered'.

356: John Daley: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) RC 26 March 1847: 'For rescue from a fire at Brownlow Street, Drury Lane'. The presentation was noted in *The Morning Chronicle* (28 April 1847) thus: 'Meeting of the subscribers of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire - The Chairman awarded the prizes with appropriate and eloquent addresses to the following individuals:…John Daly received the Society's silver medal for the presence of mind, courage, and strength that he so notably displayed in rescuing a female under similar circumstances at a fire in Drury Lane'.

351: PC (48C) John Fisher: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) – RC 26 March 1847: 'For his gallant conduct on the 26th May 1845 at the unfortunate and lamentable fire at Raggett's Hotel, where at the hazard of his own life, he rushed through the fire and brought out Mrs King, a lady staying at the hotel'. The presentation was noted in *The Morning Chronicle* (28 April 1847) thus: 'Meeting of the subscribers of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire - The Chairman awarded the prizes with appropriate and eloquent addresses to the following individuals: To John Fisher, 48C, the first silver medal [of the meeting], for rescuing Mrs Devonshire [*sic*] at Raggett's Hotel'.

354: PSgt (City 58) Adam Shelford: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) – RC 26 March 1847: 'For his intrepid and persevering exertions at a fire at Smithfield Bars on 31st August 1846, where he was the means of rescuing the lives of Mr and Mrs Cooper and four children'. The presentation was noted in *The Morning Chronicle* (28 April 1847) thus: 'Meeting of the subscribers of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire - The Chairman awarded the prizes with appropriate and eloquent addresses to the following individuals: …silver medal to Shelford, City police 58, for most courageously rescuing six persons from the flames, at a fire in Smithfield Bars'.

431: Conductor Robert Hutchings: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) – RC 24 August 1847 QGM 29 October 1847: 'For his very praiseworthy exertions in saving life from fire at Great Barlow Street. By his early arrival was the means of saving the lives of a mother and four children, one of whom was a paralytic'. The Society's *Twelfth Annual Report, 1847-8* (1848, p. 10) notes that the award thus: 'To Fire-Escape Conductor Robert Hutchings, No. 13, the Society's silver medal, for the promptitude with which he attended with the Fire-escape, and the great exertions he used at the fire [at] 2 Great Barlow Street, Marylebone, August 15, 1847, when he rescued thereby the lives of Mary Compton and her four children from the flames (one of whom was a paralytic). Also, to Mary Cromer, for her heroic and intrepid behaviour at the same fire, the sum of £1 and a certificate on vellum recording the fact of her bringing a little child out of the room on fire at the great risk of her own life; for, as she rushed out and gave the child to its mother, her own nightdress and hair were on fire; and Police Constable 96D Charles Chamberlain came to her assistance just in time to save her from falling down on the landing. The injuries she received then entailed a long confinement, and even now form an obstacle to her obtaining a livelihood. Also, to the Police Constable Chamberlain, 96D, for his prompt exertions at the same fire, half a sovereign and a certificate (case 431)'. Further details appeared in the *Preston Chronicle and Lancashire Advertiser* (21 August 1847) thus: 'FIVE LIVES SAVED BY THE FIRE ESCAPE. The efficiency and importance of the machine used by the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire were fully exemplified on Saturday night last. A fire occurred in a house No. 2 Great Barlow Street, High Street, Marylebone. All means of escape, excepting by the windows, were cut off, as the staircase and lower part of the premises were in flames, and the inmates were obliged to crowd to the windows to avoid suffocation. Cries were heard for assistance from the second floor, when the conductor of the machine, Robert Hutchins, arrived with it in front of the house, and succeeded in ascending and rescuing a mother and four children (one of them paralytic) from their perilous situation' (see also *Lloyd's Weekly London newspaper*, Sunday 22 August 1847). The recipient's surname is variously spelt as Hutchins and Hutchings in the Society's Minutes; he appears as Hutchings on the 1851 census in Marylebone, born in about 1826.

461: Conductor Frederick Brown: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) – RC 8 October 1847 and QGM 29 October 1847: 'For his very praiseworthy exertions in saving life from fire at 17 Lower Seymour Street'. The Society's *Twelfth Annual Report, 1847-8* (1848, p. 10) notes the award thus: 'To Fire-Escape Conductor Frederick Brown, No. 5, the Society's silver medal for the very persevering exertions with which he entered a house (17 Lower Seymour Street) when on fire, September 27, 1847, and finally succeeded in rescuing a lady named Pochin, bringing her down the Fire-Escape (case 461)'. See also *The Morning Chronicle* (Friday 6 February 1852).

543: Conductor Thorn: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) RC 25 February 1848: 'For rescue at a fire in Red Lion Court whereby the lives of four persons were rescued from the flames'. This appears to be the same fire as that reported below (case 545), though Thorn is not mentioned in the surviving *Annual Report*.

545: Conductor Thomas Fewster: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) RC 25 February 1848 and QGM 5 April 1848 QGM: 'Whereby the lives of four persons were rescued from the flames at a fire at Red Lion Court'. The Society's *Twelfth Annual Report, 1847-8* (1848, p. 11) notes the award thus: 'Fire-Escape Conductor Fewster, No. 3, the Society's silver medal for the great exertions he used in saving the lives of Mr Hoare, his two daughters, and a servant, all of whom he brought down the Fire-Escape in his arms. The house was entirely gutted; but, by the exertions used, no lives were lost (case 543)' and also adds that 'City Police Constables Hack and MacDonald, 316 and 371' received half a sovereign, as did Conductor Robinson 'for the great promptitude displayed by their early arrival at the fire, Red Lion Court, Fleet Street, February 22, 1848'. In reporting the fire *The Times* (Wednesday 23 February 1848, p. 6) noted: 'LIVES SAVED FROM FIRE: A fire broke out yesterday morning shortly after 1 o'clock on the premises of Mr Hoare, the Red Lion Tavern, Red Lion Court, Fleet Street, which threatened the lives of most of the inmates, and, but for the attendance of the fire-escapes of the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, scarcely any one would have been rescued. At the time of the outbreak the whole of the inmates were in their beds asleep, and were roused with

much difficulty; but the fire, owing to the large quantity of spirits in the building, was rushing up the staircase with such fury that no one was able to descend. Two persons managed to get into the jumping sheets of the police, which were promptly on the spot. Mr Hoare, the landlord, was brought down from the second floor by the Royal Society's escape from New Bridge Street, the conductor being Thomas Fewster; also his two daughters, Charlotte and Caroline, together with Elizabeth Robinson, the barmaid. The escape arrived just in time, as the house was enveloped in flames, and was eventually completely gutted. The greatest praise is due to the Society both at this and other fires, and it is greatly to be lamented that the public do not extend its fire-escape stations. The number now supported by it is 24, each attended throughout the night by a conductor'. See also 'The Society for the Protection of Life from Fire and its Work', *Fire and Water*, October 1910, p. 123, and case 543 above.

559: Conductor Haines: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) RC 20 March 1848 and QGM 5 April 1848: 'Due to his prompt attendance and exertion the lives of Mr and Mrs Hill were saved at a fire at Goswell Road. It appeared they were rescued from the greatest danger by him and both brought down the canvas'. The Society's *Twelfth Annual Report, 1847-8* (1848, p. 11) notes the award thus: 'The Society's silver medal to Fire-Escape Conductor Joseph Kaines [*sic*], No. 18, for his prompt attendance with the Fire-Escape and great exertions at a fire at 94 Goswell Road, March 14, 1848, when he succeeded in bringing Mr and Mrs Hill down the Escape from the second floor, after their escape had been entirely cut off in consequence of the staircase being on fire (case 559)'.

575: Luke Pretyman: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) – RC 25 February 1848 and QGM 5 April 1848: 'For his courageous intrepidity and heroic courage in saving the life of a young woman in his employ (Messrs Rixon and Pretyman) at 29 Poultry'. The Society's *Twelfth Annual Report, 1847-8* (1848, pp. 9-10) further notes the award thus: 'To Mr Luke Pretyman, of 29 Poultry, the Society's silver medal, in testimony of high approval of his heroic conduct, January 27, 1848, when, at a fire on his premises, he, at the risk of his life and at great personal injury succeeded in saving the life of a young woman, who must otherwise have perished (case 575)'. The presentation was noted in *Lloyd's Weekly London Newspaper* (23 April 1848) thus: 'The Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire – On Wednesday, a general meeting of this society was held in the council chamber, Guildhall, for the purpose of hearing the report of the committee for the past year, and distributing medals and rewards…Mr Luke Prettyman, of 49 Poultry, was presented with a silver medal, for rescuing the life of his servant at the risk of his own'. There are differences in spelling of the recipient's surname and the address in Poultry. There was a man of this name christened on 26 September 1816 at Walworth, Surrey, who then appears on the 1841 census in Lambeth, his surname given as 'Prettyman'.

581: George Abbott: Silver medal and 10s
George Abbott, snr: Silver medal and 10s

Details: MB(1) QGM 5 April 1848: 'For their persevering and heroic exertions at a fire at Turkey Street, Enfield'. The Society's *Twelfth Annual Report, 1847-8* (1848, p. 11) notes the award(s) thus: 'The Society's silver medal to George Abbott and George Abbott, junr, conjointly, also half a sovereign each, for their persevering and courageous conduct as displayed on the night of the 8th Dec[ember] 1847, when, regardless of the danger, they rescued the life of a Mrs Ryan from a fire in Turkey Street, Enfield (case 581)'. The wording here seems to imply that the Abbotts were granted a *single* medal. The presentation was noted in *Lloyd's Weekly London Newspaper* (23 April 1848) and this suggests two medals were awarded thus: 'The Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire – On Wednesday, a general meeting of this society was held in the council chamber, Guildhall, for the purpose of hearing the report of the committee for the past year, and distributing medals and rewards… George Abbott, snr and George Abbot, jnr, were presented each with a silver medal for saving the life of Mrs Ryan at Enfield'.

600: Conductor (6) Frederick Chapman: Silver medal and one sovereign
PC (240G) Charles Smith: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) SGM 12 May 1848 and QGM 31 July 1848. The minutes of the 12 May meeting recorded that with respect to the fire at 68 Holborn 'Charles Smith, 240G, and Frederick Chapman, Fire Conductor No. 6, were examined by the Committee separately. It appeared from the evidence that Conductor Sunshine first arrived at the fire with the Hatton Garden Escape and rescued the life of Mrs C Corp. While bringing her

down the canvas Chapman, arrived…[with] the Bridge Street Escape (even before the Farringdon Street Engine). Hearing there were inmates at the back of the house, he with the assistance of PC Smith entered the next house with his short ladder, and they together succeeded in getting onto the back leads through the skylight at end of Mr Lloyd's shop. From there, with some difficulty, they got over the roofs of two buildings and a wall, having now been encouraged on by cries of several persons for help. By dint of great perseverance they ultimately placed the ladder against the back second floor of No. 68 where several persons were. Conductor Chapman brought the first down who proved to be Mrs Winter, with whom he made the best of his way back over the roof, followed by the other parties. The fire at this time was coming through the roofs over which they were only able to come by using the ladder to tread across upon. Both witnesses assured the Committee that they had hardly all got clear over onto Mr Lloyd's leads, before the whole of the premises where they had been fell in. Ordered 'that this Committee are of the opinion the conduct of the Conductors Chapman & Sunshine and PC Smith and also the 2 City Policemen are strongly deserving of reward etc. (Further testimony sought from the rescued). A Communication was read from the parties saved at this fire recommending the Fire-Escape Conductors for reward also the constable assisting them. It was signed also by 15 householders on Holborn Hill stating that had it not been for the Fire-Escapes several lives must have been lost. Resolved that agreeable to the merits of the several persons concerned in saving the lives at that fire the following rewards be voted: To Conductor Sunshine, one sovereign and a certificate on vellum; Conductor Chapman – silver medal & one sovereign; PC Smith 240 G – silver medal'. The awards are documented in *The Times* (15 May 1849) thus: 'ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF LIFE ANNUAL MEETING - Fire-escape conductor Chapman, No. 6 in the service; PC Smith, 240 G, and conductor Sunshine, No. 1, for exertions in saving several lives at the fire on Holborn Hill; Chapman, the Society's silver medal (exceedingly well executed, and weighing nearly two ounces) and a sovereign; Smith, the silver medal; and Sunshine, a framed testimonial and a sovereign'. See also *Lloyd's Weekly London News* (20 May 1849), *The Daily News* (15 May 1849, p. 6), and *LSARS Journal*, 50: 70-80.

Chapman was later noted for bravery at another fire by *The Times* (Saturday 6 January 1855, p. 8), which reported that: '…at a fire in Drury Lane, on Sunday fortnight, rushed through the flames and brought three persons down his escape, saving himself only by sliding down the guide ropes of the escape'. Years later, Chapman was retrospectively singled out by T R Threlfall in his series 'The heroes of labour' for many rescues in the 1850s and in particular saving five people from a fire at Tottenham Court Road (*Manchester Times*, Friday 5 December 1890).

Medal inscribed: 'Presented at the Anniversary Meeting May 14, 1849. The Rt. Hon. The Lord Mayor Sir James Duke, M.P., in the chair to Frederick Chapman, Fire Escape Conductor No. 6, for his very intrepid & persevering exertions in saving the lives of five persons at the fire on the Holborn Hill May 5, 1848'.

Medal inscribed: 'Presented at the Anniversary Meeting May 14, 1849. The Rt. Hon. The Lord Mayor Sir James Duke, M.P., in the chair to Charles Smith, 240 G. Div. for his persevering & intrepid conduct at the fire on the Holborn Hill May 5, 1848 where by the valuable assistance rendered to the Society's fire escape conductors the lives of six persons were rescued'.

[Unnumbered]: PC (344S) William Trafford: Silver medal and 20s

Details: MB(1) RC 3 July 1848 and QGM 3 July 1848: 'Having at the risk of his own life been the means of saving several persons from the burning premises 61 College Place, Camden Town at about 2 o'clock in the morning of 9th of June. Committee having been satisfied as to the facts recommended that for his extraordinary intrepidity and praiseworthy exertions he be presented with the Society's Silver Medal and 20s'. Trafford's bravery was noted by *The Times* (Saturday 17 June 1848, p. 6) thus: 'EXTRAORDINARY PRESER-VATION OF LIFE: During the last two or three days the respectable inhabitants of Camden Town have been actively engaged in preparing and procuring signatures to a memorial to the Commissioners of the Metropolitan Police and to the Royal Society for the Preservation of Life from Fire, on behalf of William Trafford, police-constable, 344S, on account of the extraordinary and praiseworthy acts of intrepidity he performed on the morning of the 9th inst[ant], in saving the lives of nine persons, who but for his single-handed exertions must have perished in the destructive fire which occurred at 61 College Place. It appears from the memorials that the

fire broke out shortly after 2 o'clock in the first floor front room, and that on Trafford's arrival he found the flames coming through the first and second floor windows, and two men in their night clothes were observed clinging from the cills of the second-floor windows. Regardless of the con-sequences to himself, the constable called upon the poor creatures to drop into his arms and he would break their fall. They did so almost simultaneously, but the interposition of the arms and body of Trafford between the men and the pavement caused one to alight in safety without the slightest injury, and the other with but a slight injury to his back. Notwithstanding the shock sustained by Trafford by the falling of the two men upon him, he having been informed that there were some women and children in the upper apartments, he burst open the street door, and, at the risk of his own life (the flames at this time having frightfully increased), he rushed three times through a dense and suffocating smoke, and brought down four children and one woman from the first, and two women (the wives of the men alluded to) from the second floor. This was all accomplished before any engine arrived. The house was completely gutted, and although all the above circumstances were known to the fire brigade, the generous feelings of that body did not extend sufficiently far to give an intimation of the facts to the reporter who reported the fire, lest it might tend to throw their exertions into the shade. It is stated that the policeman Trafford received some slight injury, and there is but one feeling on the part of the inhabitants, and that is that such a praiseworthy example to the police generally ought not to go unpublished and unrewarded'. The consequences of Trafford's actions however were mixed, as although recognised by the press, the Society and others for his bravery, the injuries he sustained resulted in his unemployment. His case thus came to public attention in *The Daily News* (2 November 1849, p. 7) as follows: 'MERITORIOUS CONDUCT AND ITS REWARD – In the course of the examination of a female who was charged with having committed a felony, a man named William Trafford, who was attending the justice-room upon other business, gave a turn to the case by stating, that he had some time ago, when in the metropolitan police, apprehended the prisoner and given evidence against her. Alderman Carden desired to be informed why the witness, who appeared to be an able-bodied and vigorous man, was not still a member of the metropolitan police? Trafford said his connection with the metropolitan police was broken off in consequence of a spinal injury which he had sustained in his efforts to save several persons from the flames of a burning house in College Place, Camden Town, on the night of June 9, 1848. Upon that occasion two persons who were screaming for help in the top story of the house had, at his desire, dropped from the windows upon him. They escaped without much injury, but the tremendous shock of such a weight falling from such a height had inflicted an injury upon him which for some time considerably disabled him, and his retirement from the duties of policeman necessarily followed. He had upon the same occasion saved five other lives. He felt high gratification at having been made the instrument providentially of preventing the loss of so many of his fellow creatures, but his own strength and constitution had been almost sacrificed in the attempt. Alderman Carden: You have of course a certificate of good conduct during your service in the police force? Trafford: I have, my lord; and I received a donation of £20 as a reward for my exertions, and a sovereign and a silver medal from the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire; but my long illness, and the demands of a wife and two children, and the debt contracted in consequence of my inability to go to any active employment, swallowed up the whole amount in a short time, and I am now without the means of support. Alderman Carden: Your case is indeed a very affecting one, and I shall endeavour to assist a man who so willingly hazarded his own life to save the lives of others; and undertook so desperate an experiment as that which you have described, and by which you received so serious a hurt. I have no doubt that the Lord Mayor, for whom I sit, will agree with me that the claims of such a man ought not to be disregarded; and I dare say the circumstances of your case will meet the benevolent notice of persons able to give you such employment as will not tax your strength. The ex-metropolitan policeman gratefully acknowledged the interest taken in his case by the alderman, and handed in his medal, and the printed account of the proceedings at the last anniversary of the institution of the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire. Alderman Carden read the inscription upon the medal, which was as follows: "Presented at the anniversary meeting of the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, May 14, 1849, Sir James Duke in the chair, to Wm. Trafford, for his heroic and praiseworthy conduct at a fire at 61 College-place, Camden-town, June 9, 1848, where by his own unaided and extraordinary exertions, the lives of seven persons were saved". In the printed report of the proceedings, the fact that Trafford's

receiving two persons who dropped from the garret windows was stated; and Mr Fraser, the churchwarden of St Pancras, added his testimony in the following certificate, which the alderman likewise read: "On June the 9th 1848, William Trafford, constable in S division of police, succeeded in saving the lives of several individuals, but in his praiseworthy exertions he received injuries which compelled him to resign his situation in the police. He has since recovered his health, and is now in want of a situation. It will therefore be an act of justice in any gentleman or public company having the power, to procure for him a situation at their disposal"'. What became of William Trafford subsequently is unclear. One possible sighting occurs on the 1871 English census, which includes a William Trafford, aged 54, who is described as an 'invalid', married to Mary, a washer-woman, and living at 102 George's Road, Islington, where they had two boarders living with them. This same man appears to have died later that same year (Islington Register District, Oct-Dec 1871, vol. 1b, p. 206). See also*: Lloyd's Weekly London News* (20 May 1849 and 4 November 1849, p. 6), *The Daily News* (15 May 1849, p. 6) and *The Morning Chronicle* (1 December 1849, p. 1).

[Unnumbered]: Conductor (No. 9) Richard Christianson: Silver medallion

Details: This award is not recorded in the Minutes. However, it was announced in *Lloyd's Weekly London News* (Sunday 20 May 1849, p. 6) thus: 'PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE…and the medal was also awarded to Conductor Christianson, No. 9, now ill in hospital. The medal is to be forwarded to him'. Christianson later received a second silver medal: see case 3,152. See also *The Times* (Thursday 1 April 1858, p. 10), the *Penny Illustrated Paper* (Saturday 2 September 1865), and *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* (Sunday 17 December 1865 and 6 May 1866) for further mentions of this conductor.

725: Anne Cullen: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) – RC 12 December 1848, RC 9 January 1849 and QGM 31 January 1849: This rescue was for a fire in Gray's Inn Lane, 'For her praiseworthy and brave conduct'. Subsequently, *The Daily News* (15 May 1849, p. 6) reported: 'THE ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTETION OF LIFE FROM FIRE – His Lordship (the Lord Mayor) also presented the society's silver medal to Anne Cullen, a young woman under 15 years of age, for her heroic and praiseworthy conduct at the fire at 112 Gray's Inn Lane, on the night of 30th Nov., when, at great personal risk, she succeeded in saving two little children of Mrs Powell, one of the inmates'. See also *Lloyd's Weekly London News* (20 May 1849).

734: Conductor (No. 15) Wilson, St John Street Escape: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) – RC 9 January 1849 and QGM 31 January 1849: This rescue was for a fire at 3 High Street, Islington, 'For having prompt attendance and judicious conduct at this fire whereby, the lives of five persons were saved'. See also *Lloyd's Weekly London News* (20 May 1849), *The Times* (Tuesday 15 May 1849, p. 7) and *The Daily News* (15 May 1849, p. 6).

952: Conductor George Clarke: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) - RC 25 October 1849 and QGM 31 October 1849: 'For his very prompt attendance and praiseworthy exertions at the fire 12 Shouldham Street on 7th October'. The Society's *Fifteenth Annual Report* (1851, p. 19) records the circumstances thus: 'To George Clarke, the Society's Silver Medallion…for his prompt and efficient services … on … October 7, 1849 at a fire at Mr Bex's, 12 Shouldham Street, Edgware Road. The Conductor greatly distinguished himself by his prompt attendance with the Fire-Escape, and timely rescue of a father and mother, two children and a female servant, all from the second floor window, in their night dresses; another half-minute must have proved too late, and the testimony of the spectators clearly shows that the safety of the whole of them was, under Divine providence, solely to be attributed to the prompt attendance and efficient conduct of the Fireman. Communications certifying the above received by the Secretary from Samuel Bex, No. 12, Elizabeth Merriman, No. 11, and J Leedham, No. 14 Shouldham Street…'. The presentation of the award was announced in *The Morning Chronicle* (10 May 1851) thus: 'ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE – Anniversary Meeting. The names of the individuals whose promptitude, integrity, or persevering exertions in saving human life from fire during the past year had entitled them to this acknowledgement, were as follows:- George Clarke, the society's silver medallion; also a testimonial on vellum for his prompt and efficient services on two occasions, whilst in the society's service as conductor at Paddington station'.

1,093: Conductor (No. 25) John Clements: Silver medallion

Details: MB(1) – RC 6 June 1850 and QGM 31 July 1850: No details of rescue. The Society's *Fifteenth Annual Report* (1851, pp. 19-20) records the circumstances thus: 'To John Clements, Fire-Escape Conductor 23, the Society's Silver Medallion…for his prompt and efficient services … on …April 27 [when] the Conductor with the Bishopsgate Fire-Escape, attended a fire, quarter after 5am, on the premises of Mr Best at 210 Shoreditch, immediately followed by Conductor Johnson, with the St Luke's Escape. The fire was raging in the first floor, and the utmost consternation prevailing in consequence of several persons being in the upper rooms unable to escape; after considerable exertion, and encountering much smoke and flame, the Conductor brought eight persons safely down the Escape, chiefly from the third floor. The names of the persons saved were Thomas Delapre, wife and four children, George Brand, barman to Mr Best, and James Hall, potman. Brand's conduct was excellent, rendering the greatest assistance in securing the safety of the other inmates before attempting to escape from the burning premises himself. Copy of letter from Mr Best to the Secretary: "Sir, I have to return you my grateful thanks for the prompt attendance of your Fire-Escape, and the great exertions used by the man conducting the same; he was the means of saving eight lives, for whom, except through his means, there remained no way of escape. Henry Best". Mr Delapre wrote to the Committee: "Gentlemen, I beg to return to you my grateful acknowledgements for the vast benefit I have received from one of your Escapes, having myself, wife, and four children, been this day saved from the fire at the house, 210 Shoreditch, in the occupation of Mr Best, entirely by the instrumentality of its Conductor; there was no other means of escape for us, and the attention we received throughout I feel extremely grateful for. Your most obedient servant, Thomas Delapre"'. (George Brand received a Testimonial from the Society for his actions). The presentation of the award was announced in *The Morning Chronicle* (10 May 1851) thus: 'ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE – Anniversary Meeting. The names of the individuals whose promptitude, integrity, or persevering exertions in saving human life from fire during the past year had entitled them to this acknowledgement, were as follows:-…John Clements, fire-escape conductor, No. 23, the society's silver medallion; also a testimonial on vellum, and 10s for his prompt, and efficient services on two occasions'. Conductor Clement's number is variously recorded as 25 in Rotary Committee Minutes, 21 in the Minutes of the Quarterly General Meeting and 23 in the *Morning Chronicle's* report. See also *The Times* (Tuesday 15 May 1849, p. 7).

1,094: Conductor (No. 31) Isaac Myers: Silver medallion

Details: MB(1) – RC 6 June 1850 and QGM 31 July 1850: No details of rescue. The Society's *Fifteenth Annual Report* (1851, pp. 20-21) records the circumstances thus: 'To Fire-Escape Conductor Myers, No. 22, the Society's Medallion in Silver, for the promptitude and intrepidity displayed by him at a fire at the Fountain Inn, Foster Lane, half past two am, April 28; also to Police Sergeant Shelford, 58 City Force, a Testimonial on Vellum; previous year gained the Medallion). [Myers] arrived with the Cheapside Escape within three minutes of the alarm. There was great excitement and confusion, it being generally reported that from six to eight persons were in the house unable to escape, and from the rush of fire, the destruction of all appeared inevitable. Without a moment's loss of time the Conductor ascended to the second floor, and broke open to the window pointed out to him, with his hatchet; it was as much as he could do to stand against the volume of smoke that poured out, but he finally succeeded in discovering three persons in the room, quite unable to assist themselves. After the most praiseworthy exertions, he brought them down the Escape, not, however, before two of them had been much burnt. The persons saved were Frederick Sutton, the landlord, his son William H Sutton, and daughter, Mary Ann Sutton. The Police sergeant not only rescued a youth from the roof, but rendered effectual assistance to the Society's Fire-Escape Conductor, in the preservation of the other inmates. The following extract from a communication from one of the sufferers evidences the character of the services rendered, and the credit due to the very active exertions displayed: "I myself went down the stairs through the fire and am severely burnt; and I can safely say that had one minute more elapsed, those rescued by your Escape would all have perished, for the flames had entered the room before they were got out. My sister, who never left the room, was very much burnt, and my father so nearly suffocated that he has been scarcely able to speak since; two dogs in the next room were suffocated. I consider the activity and humanity of the Conductor deserves the highest

commendation, and that without his timely and able assistance the lives of my relatives, without the shadow of a doubt, would have been sacrificed. I remain, Gentlemen, your obedient servant, Frederick H Sutton"'. The presentation of the award was announced in *The Morning Chronicle* (10 May 1851) thus: 'ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE – Anniversary Meeting. The names of the individuals whose promptitude, integrity, or persevering exertions in saving human life from fire during the past year had entitled them to this acknowledgement, were as follows:-…Fire-escape conductor Myers, No. 22, the society's medallion in silver, for the promptitude and intrepidity displayed by him at a fire at the Fountain Inn, Foster Lane, half-past two am, April 28'.

Note: Conductor Myers is noted as No. 31 in the Society's Minutes and No. 22 in the *Morning Chronicle's* report. See also the *Daily News* (Saturday 26 June 1852). Myers subsequently received a Testimonial and 20 shillings (case 1490) for bravery in rescuing five people from a fire at the Cleveland Arms, 23 Montague Street, Portman Square, on 26 October 1851. The Society's *Sixteenth Annual Report* (1852, p. 20) records further details of this rescue and adds that: 'Myers has previously obtained the Society's Silver Medallion, or it would have been awarded him in this case'.

1,125: Engineer William Wilkinson, London Fire Brigade: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) – QGM 28 April 1851: No details (listed as case 1,327, though under the above number in the *AR*). The Society's *Fifteenth Annual Report* (1851, p. 22) records the circumstances thus: 'To William Wilkinson, in the London Fire Brigade, the Society's Silver Medallion; and to Police Sergeant John Leonard, 76, City Force, the Testimonial on Vellum, for their prompt and very determined exertions in rescuing three children from suffocation at a fire [at] 8 Great St Thomas the Apostle, June 21, 1850, when, the ground floor being on fire, and the premises enveloped in smoke, they would have inevitably been suffocated, but for the intrepidity of Wilkinson and his assistant. Certified by Inspector Duddy'. The presentation of the award was announced in *The Morning Chronicle* (10 May 1851) thus: 'ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE – Anniversary Meeting. The names of the individuals whose promptitude, integrity, or persevering exertions in saving human life from fire during the past year had entitled them to this acknowledgement, were as follows:-…William Wilkinson, in the London Fire Brigade, the society's silver medallion, Police-Sergeant John Leonard, 76, City Force, the testimonial on vellum, for their prompt and very determined exertions in rescuing three children from suffocation at a fire, 8 Great St. Thomas the Apostle, June 21, 1850, when, the ground floor being on fire, and the premises enveloped in smoke, they would have inevitably been suffocated, but for the intrepidity of Wilkinson and his assistant'. The Minutes record Wilkinson as being 'of Watling Street.

1,200: John Mitchell, Labourer: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) CM 26 October 1850 and 16 January 1851: This rescue was for a fire at Marazion, Cornwall. The Society's *Fifteenth Annual Report* (1851, p. 22) records the circumstances thus: 'To John Mitchell, labourer, Marazion, Cornwall, the Society's Silver Medallion, for his intrepidity at a fire at Marazion, September 14, 1850, when he succeeded in rescuing four children, who must otherwise have perished; the flames were playing through the flooring of the room where the children were in bed, and no person could be found to enter the room but Mitchell. Certified by Humphrey Mackworth Praed, and others'. The presentation of the award occurred at the Society's Anniversary Meeting in May 1851, details being reported in *The Morning Chronicle* (10 May 1851).

1,249: PC (672 City) Gardner: Bronze medal

Details: MB(1) – QGM 28 April 1851: No details of rescue. The Society's *Fifteenth Annual Report* (1851, p. 22) records the circumstances thus: 'To Police Constable Gardner, 672, City Force, the Society's Medal in Bronze, for alarming the inmates of the house, 117 Minories, whilst on fire, December 21, 1850, and aiding them to escape by the trap-door of the next house, whilst the lower part of the premises was enveloped in flames. Certified by Inspector Marchant'. The presentation of the award took place at the Society's Anniversary Meeting in May 1851, this being reported in *The Morning Chronicle* (10 May 1851).

1,254: James Hall, Painter's workman: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) - RC18 December 1850 and QGM 16 January 1851 (noted as case 1,253 here, though under the above number in the *AR*): 'For saving lives at Penzance, Cornwall'. The presentation of the award was announced in *The Morning Chronicle* (10 May

1851) thus: 'ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE – Anniversary Meeting. The names of the individuals whose promptitude, integrity, or persevering exertions in saving human life from fire during the past year had entitled them to this acknowledgement, were as follows:-…To James Hall, painter's workman, of Penzance, Cornwall, the society's silver medallion, for his intrepid conduct at a large fire, October 1, 1850, when, at imminent risk to his own life, he rescued three children'. The Society's *Fifteenth Annual Report* (1851, p. 23) adds that: 'The fire was surrounding them whilst asleep, and extended so rapidly that the other portion of the family were obliged to escape in a state of nudity. Certified by George Davies, Commander, RN'.

1,256: PC (231M) Thomas Moore: Bronze medal and 10s

Details: MB(1) – QGM 28 April 1851 and QGM 28 April 1851: No details of rescue. The presentation of the award was announced in *The Morning Chronicle* (10 May 1851) thus: 'ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE – Anniversary Meeting. The names of the individuals whose promptitude, integrity, or persevering exertions in saving human life from fire during the past year had entitled them to this acknowledgement, were as follows:-…Police Constable Thomas Moore, 231M, the Society's silver medallion and 10s, for his praiseworthy conduct at a fire in Salisbury Lane, Bermondsey, Surrey, December 18, 1850. The house was entirely consumed. Two of the inmates escaped by being aroused; the third, the landlady (Mrs Crittenden), was taken from the roof of the outbuilding by the constable in a state of great distress'. See also the Society's *Fifteenth Annual Report* (1851, p. 23).

1,257: PC (68C) Gideon Crocker: Bronze medallion

Details: This award is not recorded in the Minutes. The presentation of the award was announced in *The Morning Chronicle* (10 May 1851) thus: 'ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE – Anniversary Meeting. The names of the individuals whose promptitude, integrity, or persevering exertions in saving human life from fire during the past year had entitled them to this acknowledgement, were as follows:… Police Constable Gideon Crocker, 68C, the society's bronze medallion, for his meritorious exertions at a fire, 13 Little Windmill Street, Westminster, May 5, 1850'. The Society's *Fifteenth Annual Report* (1851, p. 23) adds that: 'He was mainly instrumental in aiding the escape of the whole family, consisting of eight persons; the interior of the house, with property, was destroyed; and the persons rescued state that, but for the exertions of the police constable, they could not have escaped without serious injury. Certified by M Greathead, and others'.

1,262: Edward Nokes, Cellarman: Silver medal and £2

Details: MB(1) – RC 27 February 1851 and QGM 28 April 1851: 'This rescue was for a fire in St Marin's Lane'. The presentation of the award was announced in *The Morning Chronicle* (10 May 1851) thus: 'ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE – Anniversary Meeting. The names of the individuals whose promptitude, integrity, or persevering exertions in saving human life from fire during the past year had entitled them to this acknowledgement, were as follows:-…To Edward Nokes, cellarman, in the service of Mr Caunt, the society's silver medallion, and the sum of £2, for his intrepid and distinguished exertions at a fire at the Coach and Horses, in St Martin's Lane, January 15, 1851'. The Society's *Fifteenth Annual Report* (1851, p. 23) adds that: 'This young man, at the greatest risk of his own life, succeeded in conveying the eldest and youngest children of the landlord across the room to the window, whilst the flames were darting around them, and amidst the densest smoke succeeded in effecting the safety of Mrs Caunt, her cousin, the nurse, barmaid, and potman; his exertions were of the most intrepid and persevering character, and it was only in the hope [that] the poor children, who were burnt, had been rescued, that he relinquished attempting to regain an entrance into the room. Nokes lost all his wearing apparel, and is represented as much in want. Certified by J W Marshall, and others'

1,274: Conductor (No. 2) William Robinson: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) RC 27 February 1851 and QGM 28 April 1851: 'This rescue was for a fire in the Strand'. The presentation of the award was announced in *The Morning Chronicle* (10 May 1851) thus: 'ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE – Anniversary Meeting. The names of the individuals whose promptitude, integrity, or persevering exertions in saving human life from fire during the past year had entitled them to this

acknowledgement, were as follows:-…To Fire-escape Conductor William Robinson, No. 2, the society's silver medallion, for his intrepid conduct and perilous exertion at a fire, at 263 Strand, February 5, 1851'. The Society's *Fifteenth Annual Report* (1851, p. 24) adds that: 'The Conductor's attention was drawn to the house, by observing from his station a narrow flame of fire, curling round the window-frame, accompanied by smoke. He immediately raised the alarm, by springing his rattle, and with the assistance afforded, succeeded very promptly in pitching the Escape against the window; he immediately effected an entrance through the attic window, and there found Mr and Mrs White endeavouring to escape through the trap door on the roof; this however was found impracticable, on account of the difficulty of egress for Mrs White, who is far advanced in pregnancy, and from the table, upon which they were standing, giving way. The Conductor, perceiving there was no time to lose, immediately took up Mrs White in his arms, and descended the upper ladder of his Escape – a feat which, at the height of forty feet from the ground, may be considered one of great peril, and only to be accomplished by extreme self-possession. Mr White states "Gentlemen, I must bear my testimony to the efficient and prompt services of your Conductor of the St Clement's Escape, without whose valuable assistance, both myself and Mrs White might have lost our lives". Robinson's Testimonial, [was] signed by six of the adjoining householders'.

1,314: Conductor (No. 20) Samuel Wood: Silver medallion

Details: MB(1) – CM 15 April 1851 and QGM 28 April 1851: 'For prompt attendance with his "Escape" and rescue of five aged persons who would otherwise have perished'. The presentation of the award was announced in *The Morning Chronicle* (10 May 1851) thus: 'ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE – Anniversary Meeting. The names of the individuals whose promptitude, integrity, or persevering exertions in saving human life from fire during the past year had entitled them to this acknowledgement, were as follows:-…To Fire-escape Conductor Wood, No. 20, the society's silver medallion, for his prompt and very determined exertions; and a testimonial on vellum to Police-constable James Griffin, 77H, for the efficient assistance he rendered him'. Adding to this, the Society's *Fifteenth Annual Report* (1851, pp. 24-25) notes that: 'The Conductor, with the Whitechapel Escape, attended a fire upon the premises of Mr Charles Lauer, Skindresser, No. 41 Fashion Street, Spitalfields, about 4 o'clock am, March 19, 1851. The flames had obtained such an ascendency, as completely to cut off the escape of two aged persons in the upper part of the house; the Conductor immediately raised his Escape against the burning premises, and effected an entrance in the top room, where he found Mr Atkins, aged 68, extended on the floor in an insensible state, and nearly suffocated; he succeeded in passing him down the Escape, when he moaned out "Oh save my poor wife!" when the Conductor learning she was in a loft above the room he had been in, he immediately got on to the roof, and broke through the tiles to gain access; with much difficulty he finally succeeded in dragging the poor woman through the aperture, and brought her in safety to the ground. Her age is 70, and there exists not the slightest doubt, but for the exertions of the Conductor, both husband and wife must have perished. Their gratitude for the services rendered is very genuine, and is thus expressed in a letter to the Committee, since the occurrence: "I cannot help but acknowledge my gratitude and thanks for the preservance of my life and my wife's life; the man found me almost stifled; he could not find me only by my moaning; and when he got me in the Fire-escape, I cried out for my wife. He asked me where she was, I told him she was in the loft next the tiles; then he got on the top, and took off the tiles, and got her out on his back, and carried her to the Fire-Escape, and put her in, and saved her life. So through the mercy of God, and the wonderful skill of the men, we are saved. Your humble servant, John Atkins"'. See also F Mundell *Stories of the Lifeboat and the Fire Brigade*, London: Sunday School Union, 1894, pp. 60-62.

1,317: Conductor Edward Rigby: Silver medallion

Details: MB(1) – CM 15 April 1851 and QGM 28 April 1851: 'For his prompt attendance with the "Escape" and the rescue of Mr and Mrs Steel'. The presentation of the award was announced in *The Morning Chronicle* (10 May 1851) thus: 'ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE – Anniversary Meeting. The names of the individuals whose promptitude, integrity, or persevering exertions in saving human life from fire during the past year had entitled them to this acknowledgement, were as follows:-…Fire-escape Conductor Edward Rigby, the society's silver medallion, for his prompt and persevering exertions; and likewise a testimonial on vellum and 10s. to Police Constable Hale'. Adding to these

details, the Society's *Fifteenth Annual Report* (1851, p. 25) notes that: 'The Conductor, referred to, with the Bishopsgate Escape, attended a fire at 3am on the premises of Mr Thompson, baker, 64 Sun Street, Bishopsgate, [on] March 22, 1851. Upon his arrival, he found that in consequence of the flames having possession of the shop, passage, and stairs, the escape of Mr and Mrs Steel was entirely cut off. He succeeded in rescuing them from their bedroom on the first floor, and afterwards, at considerable risk, searched every part of the house for a child, supposed to have been left behind, but who it was afterwards found had been removed. Great praise is considered due to the Conductor, and some idea may be obtained of the determined perseverance required, by the fact, of three lamps handed to him, one after the other, being extinguished by the density of the smoke. [The following note was received from the saved couple] "This is to certify that myself and wife were rescued from the late fire in Sun Street, through the courage and intrepidity of the Fire-Escape man (Rigby), to whom we shall always be grateful, as also to your valuable institution; and remain, your obedient servants, James and Louisa Steel"'.

1,328: PSgt (70) Alexander Sanderson: Bronze medal
PC 665 Lewis Notley: Bronze medal
Mr Nathan Abraham: Bronze medal

Details: MB(1) QGM 28 April 1851: No details of rescue. The Society's *Fifteenth Annual Report* (1851, p. 25) records the circumstances thus: 'To Police-Sergeant Sanderson, 70 City Force; to Police-constable Notley, 665, and Nathan Abraham, of Stoney Lane, Houndsditch, each the society's bronze medallion, for their very praiseworthy exertions, (March 12, 1851) in securing the safety of Mr and Mrs Joseph, and four children, whilst their premises [at] 51 Petticoat Lane were on fire, and themselves in great danger of suffocation. Certified by Inspector M'Lean'. The presentation of the awards at the Society's Anniversary Meeting in May 1851 was reported in *The Morning Chronicle* (10 May 1851).

Medal inscribed: 'To Police Sergeant Sanderson (70 City), 12th March 1851 (Case 1328)'. The extant medal has no suspension.

Medal inscribed: 'To Nathn Abraham London 12th March 1851 (Case 1398)' (item number A676097 Science Museum, London).

1,329: PC (207G) Richard Witheridge: Bronze medal

Details: MB(1) – QGM 28 April 1851: No details of rescue. The Society's *Fifteenth Annual Report* (1851, p. 25) records the circumstances thus: 'To Police Constable Richard Witheridge 207 G, the Society's Bronze Medallion, for his promptitude in obtaining ladders, and securing the safety of the inmates, from a fire at Mr Dempsey's, [at] 120 High Street, Shoreditch, [on] March 1, 1851. Certified by George Martin, Superintendent.' The presentation of the award took place at the Society's Anniversary Meeting in May 1851 and was reported in *The Morning Chronicle* (10 May 1851).

1,330: PC (55K) John Merriman: Bronze medal and 20s

Details: MB(1) – QGM 28 April 1851: No details of rescue. The Society's *Fifteenth Annual Report* (1851, p. 26) records the circumstances thus: 'To Police Constable John Merriman 55 K, the Society's Medal in Bronze, and the sum of 20s, for his promptitude and intrepid conduct at a fire, 50 Jamaica Street, Stepney, [on] May 18, 1850, when he was remarkably quick in effecting an entrance, and rushing to the assistance of a poor youth enveloped in flames. With some difficulty he succeeded in extinguishing them, but not until after severely injuring himself. The boy ultimately recovered. Certified by C H Marquard, Superintendent'. The recipient is noted as 'John Morrison' in the Society Minutes, but as 'Merriman' in the finally published *Annual Report*. The presentation of the award took place at the Society's Anniversary Meeting in May 1851 and was reported in *The Morning Chronicle* (10 May 1851), where the recipient is again given as 'Morrison'. Merriman appears to be the recipient's correct surname: he appears as such on the 1851 census as a 31-year-old Leicestershire born police constable, living at 5 Terrace Place, Mile End, with his wife, Mary Wilson, and four children.

1,331: Mary Thorn: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) – QGM 28 April 1851: No details of rescue. The Society's *Fifteenth Annual Report* (1851, p. 26) records the circumstances thus: 'To Mary Thorn, widow, the Society's Silver Medallion, for her highly praiseworthy conduct, December 3rd, 1850, at a fire at No. 2 Henry Street, Stepney, when, at imminent danger to her own life, she rushed forward to the aid of a nursery girl and infant, who were enveloped in flames, and must without her assistance, have perished; they, as well as herself, were

severely burnt, but ultimately recovered. Certified by C H Marquard, Superintendent K'. The presentation of the award took place at the Society's Anniversary Meeting in May 1851 and was reported in *The Morning Chronicle* (10 May 1851).

1,332: PC (37K) Charles Hennisett: Bronze medal
PC (194K) John Body: Bronze medal

Details: MB(1) – QGM 28 April 1851: No details of rescue. The Society's *Fifteenth Annual Report* (1851, p. 26) records the circumstances thus: 'To Police-Sergeant 37, Charles Hennisett, and Police-Constable 194, John Body, K Division, each the Society's Medal in Bronze, for their vigilance and prompt assistance in effecting the escape of two persons from a house on fire, [at] 57 Three Colt Street, Limehouse, [on] March 31, 1851'. The presentation of the awards took place at the Society's Anniversary Meeting in May 1851, details being reported in *The Morning Chronicle* (10 May 1851).

1,333: PSgt (40K) Henry Gould: Bronze medal
PC (275K) Robert Needes: Bronze medal

Details: MB(1) – QGM 28 April 1851: No details of rescue. The Society's *Fifteenth Annual Report* (1851, p. 26) records the circumstances thus: 'To Police-Sergeant 40, Henry Gould, and Police Constable 275, Robert Needes, each the Society's Medal in Bronze, for their vigilance in discovering the fire, [at] 1 and 2 Crown Terrace, Mile End Road, [on] March 20, 1851, and their prompt and efficient service rendered thereat, whereby, conjointly they succeeded in affording safety to three persons in danger of suffocation. Certified by C H Marquard, Superintendent K'. The presentation of the awards took place at the Society's Anniversary Meeting in May 1851, details being reported in *The Morning Chronicle* (10 May 1851).

Medal inscribed: 'To Robert Needes P.C.257.K 20th March 1851. (Case 1333)'.

1,334: PC (220P) Crowe: Bronze medal
Mr Flathman: Silver medallion

Details: MB(1) – QGM 28 April 1851: No details of rescue. The Society's *Fifteenth Annual Report* (1851, p. 26) records the circumstances thus: 'To Mr Flathman, the Society's Silver Medallion, and to Police Constable Crowe, 220P, the Society's Medal in Bronze, for their very intrepid and persevering exertions at a fire at 25 Southampton Street, Camberwell, to save the life of Mrs Clark, lodging in the same house. [It was certified that] "They were several times repulsed from the room by the density of the smoke; and it was not until they had covered their faces with handkerchiefs that they succeeded in rescuing her from the flames. She died a few days afterwards from the effects. Certified, Jno. Robinson, Superintendent"'. The presentation of the awards took place at the Society's Anniversary Meeting in May 1851, details being reported in *The Morning Chronicle* (10 May 1851). The award to Mr Flathman is not recorded in the Minutes. See also *Reynolds's Newspaper* (Sunday 2 March 1851).

1,350: Conductor (No. 13) George Low: Silver medallion

Details: MB(1) – CM 15 April 1851 and QGM 28 April 1851: 'For his prompt attendance and personal exertions in rescuing Mr Silverlock and family'. The Society's *Fifteenth Annual Report* (1851, pp. 26-7) records the circumstances thus: 'To Fire-Escape Conductor G Low, No. 13, the Society's Silver Medallion, for the great promptitude displayed by him in attending, and the efficient services he rendered on the morning of the 3rd of April, 1851, at the fire on the premises of Messrs Gordon and Son, Rood Lane, Fenchurch Street. Upon his arrival he found that the fire had obtained complete possession of the premises, so that there appeared little probability of gaining access, and there were no less than four persons at the third floor window, where escape was cut off. The Conductor immediately raised his Escape, and succeeded in bringing the whole party to the ground in safety. The persons saved were Mr and Mrs Silverlock, their sister, and nephew. The following testimonials were endorsed upon the Conductor's certificate: "The Conductor acted in a prompt and zealous manner, and saved four lives. [signed] John Silverlock". "I was present when the Fire-escape arrived, and saw four persons brought down the upper ladder by the Conductor, to whom, I must say, too much praise cannot be given, for the lives of these persons were most assuredly preserved thereby. [signed] John Titchener, 145 Fenchurch Street". "The conduct of the Fire-Escape man, I am able, from personal observation, to say, was most praiseworthy; he was promptly on the spot, and saved four lives. [signed] J Todhunter, Police Inspector"'. The presentation of the award took place at the Society's Anniversary Meeting in May 1851, details being reported in *The Morning Chronicle* (10 May 1851).

Medal inscribed: 'To George Low, F.E. Condr. 13, for prompt and efficient services 3rd April 1851 Case 1350'.

1,351: John Jordan: Bronze medallion and 20s

Details: MB(1) – CM 15 April 1851 and QGM 28 April 1851: 'For his intrepid conduct in extinguishing the flames round a poor woman (a Pole) whose clothes had caught fire, whereby he sustained great injury himself'. The Society's *Fifteenth Annual Report* (1851, p. 27) records the circumstances thus: 'To John Jordan, 13 Brunswick Street, St John's Street Road, the Society's Bronze Medallion and 20s, for his humane and intrepid exertions, [on] April 1st, 1851, at Selby's Buildings, Clerkenwell, where, at imminent peril to his own life, and with considerable personal injury, he succeeded in extinguishing the flames around the person of Mrs Pyske, whose clothes had accidentally caught fire; without such assistance she must inevitably have perished, the other person in the room being paralysed with fear. Certified by W Huxtable, and others'. This award is not recorded in the Minutes. The presentation of the award took place at the Society's Anniversary Meeting in May 1851, details being reported in *The Morning Chronicle* (10 May 1851).

1,352: George Bramstone: Bronze medallion and 10s

Details: MB(1) – CM 15 April 1851 and QGM 28 April 1851: 'For his meritorious and persevering exertions in saving the life of a poor idiot from suffocation'. The Society's *Fifteenth Annual Report* (1851, p. 27) records the circumstances thus: 'To George Bramstone, 1 Little Woodstock Street, Marylebone, the Society's Bronze Medallion and the sum of 10s, for his very intrepid exertions in saving a poor idiot boy from suffocation by smoke, whose rescue had been previously attempted by another person, but relinquished, owing to the great heat and smoke. Certified by James Hetherington, and others'. The presentation of the award took place at the Society's Anniversary Meeting in May 1851, details being reported in *The Morning Chronicle* (10 May 1851).

Medal inscribed: 'To George Bramstone, London, 2nd April 1851 (Case 1352)'.

[Unnumbered]: John Stock, London Fire Brigade: Bronze medallion

Details: The presentation of the award was announced in *The Morning Chronicle* (10 May 1851) thus: 'ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE – Anniversary Meeting. The names of the individuals whose promptitude, integrity, or persevering exertions in saving human life from fire during the past year had entitled them to this acknowledgement, were as follows:-…To John Stock, in the London Fire Brigade, Jeffery-square station, the society's bronze medallion, for the prompt and efficient services rendered by him at a fire, 2 Somerset Street, Aldgate, March 2, 1851; when he was mainly instrumental in securing the safety of a mother and child'. The award to John Stock is not found in the Society's Minutes and is not in the *Fifteenth Annual Report* or the *Sixteenth Annual Report* (which stops listing rewards at case 1,352 and starts at case 1,358 respectively).

1,376: PSgt Joel King: Bronze medal and 10s

Details: MB(1) – QGM 12 November 1851: This rescue was for a fire in Love Lane. The Society's *Sixteenth Annual Report* (1852, p. 19) records the circumstances thus: 'To Joel King, the Society's Medallion in Bronze, and half a sovereign, for his humane and successful assistance in extricating Elizabeth Chambers from the back windows of the Rose and Crown public house, Love Lane, Lower Thames Street, during the disastrous and fatal fire, May 18, 1851, when, but for her own extraordinary exertions and subsequent aid rendered by Joel King, she must have shared the sad fate of the other inmates. (Signed) John Wrightson, 41 Botolph Lane, and others'. The presentation was reported in *The Morning Chronicle* (26 June 1852) thus: 'THE ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE. The anniversary meeting of this society was held yesterday in the council chamber, Guildhall; the Right Hon The Lord Mayor in the chair…The Lord Mayor then presented the awards voted by the committee to those who had distinguished themselves by their exertions in the preservation of life from fire:- Police-Sergeant Joel King, medallion in bronze and 10s…'. The *Daily News* (Saturday 26 June 1852) noted the award was for: 'saving a woman from the Rose and Crown public-house, in Love Lane, Lower Thames Street'. See also *The Morning Post* (26 June 1852).

1,442: PSgt John Cooper: Bronze medal

Details: MB(1) – QGM 12 November 1851: This rescue was for a fire in Drury Lane. The Society's *Sixteenth Annual Report* (1852, p. 19) records the circumstances thus: 'To John Cooper, of 173 Drury Lane, London, the

Society's Medallion in Bronze, and half a sovereign, for the judgement he displayed, and the humane and efficient services he rendered two persons in enabling them to escape from the premises, 160 Drury Lane, whilst on fire, 25th August 1851. Certified by James Appleton, 174 Drury Lane, and others'. The presentation was reported in *The Morning Chronicle* (26 June 1852) thus: 'THE ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE. The anniversary meeting of this society was held yesterday in the council chamber, Guildhall; the Right Hon. The Lord Mayor in the chair…The Lord Mayor then presented the awards voted by the committee to those who had distinguished themselves by their exertions in the preservation of life from fire:-…Police-Sergeant John Cooper, medallion in bronze and 10s…'. See also *The Morning Post* (26 June 1852).

1,497: William Joseph Gavin: Bronze medal and 10s
PC (190H) Lawrence Burgess: Bronze medal and 10s

Details: MB(1) – QGM 12 November 1851: This rescue was for a fire at Hare Marsh Lane, Bethnal Green. The Society's *Sixteenth Annual Report* (1852, p. 20) records the circumstances thus: 'To William Joseph Gavin, of 4 Wood Street, Hare Street, Bethnal Green, and Lawrence Burgess, PC 190 H Division, each the Society's Medallion in Bronze and half a sovereign. A little before 12 o'clock on Saturday night, May 3, 1851, Gavin was standing at the gates of the goods warehouse of the Eastern Counties Railway, where he is employed as night watchman and gatekeeper, and speaking to the policeman, when an alarm of fire was raised in the house, No. 6, Hare Marsh, Brick Lane, nearly opposite. They both rushed across, and upon being told there were some children in a room by themselves, hastened up the stairs; the door was fastened, and the smoke escaping most densely from underneath; hearing the stifled cry of a child, they burst the door open, and attempted to enter, but were repulsed by the smoke, and must have given it up but for the crying of the children almost maddening them to try again, and they eventually succeeded in bringing out three children, whose little bed of straw upon which they had been left had taken fire; they were all quite powerless when rescued, and continued so for some time after being brought to the air, but ultimately recovered; their parents came in soon after sadly intoxicated. [Signed] George Wooff, 43 John Street, Bethnal Green, and others'. The presentation was reported in *The Morning Post* (26 June 1852) thus: 'To William Joseph Gavin, of 4 Wood Street, Hare Street, Bethnal Green, and Lawrence Burgess, PC 190 H Division, each the society's medallion in bronze and half-a-sovereign, who saved three children from a fire in Hare Marsh, Brick Lane, on the 3rd May 1851'. By contrast, *The Morning Chronicle* (26 June 1852) noted the presentation thus: 'THE ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE. The anniversary meeting of this society was held yesterday in the council chamber, Guildhall; the Right Hon The Lord Mayor in the chair…The Lord Mayor then presented the awards voted by the committee to those who had distinguished themselves by their exertions in the preservation of life from fire:-…W G Gairn [*sic*], medallion in bronze and 10s., Police Constable L Burgess, 190H, medallion in bronze and 10s...'.

1,505: Conductor Thomas Field: Bronze medal and 10s

Details: MB(1) – QGM 12 November 1851 and QGM 29 January 1852: This rescue was for a fire in Mint Street, on 6 November. The Society's *Sixteenth Annual Report* (1852, p. 21) records the circumstances thus: 'To Fire-Escape Conductor Thos Field, No. 22 in the Society's service, the Medallion in Bronze, and half a sovereign, for his prompt attendance with the Fire-Escape, at a fire [at] 22 Mint Street, Borough, at half-past one in the morning of November 6, 1851, whereby the lives of Mr and Mrs Court and son were most timely rescued. (Signed) Nathaniel Nicholls, Renter Warden, St George's, Southwark. The following certificate was also received at the time, signed by the three persons who were brought down the escape. "We have to return you our hearty and grateful thanks for the prompt attendance of your Fire-Escape, and also the great exertions used by the Fireman who conducted the same; he has been the means of saving three lives, for whom, except through his means, there remained no way of escape, which we feel very grateful for. John Court, John Court junior, Mary Court"'. The presentation was reported in *The Morning Chronicle* (26 June 1852) thus: 'THE ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE. The anniversary meeting of this society was held yesterday in the council chamber, Guildhall; the Right Hon The Lord Mayor in the chair…The Lord Mayor then presented the awards voted by the committee to those who had distinguished themselves by their exertions in the preservation of life from fire:-…J [*sic*] Field, medallion in bronze and 10s…'. The *Daily News* (Saturday 26 June

1852) noted the recipient as 'Thomas Field'. See also *The Morning Post* (26 June 1852) and case 1810 for a subsequent medal award to Field.

1,536: Conductor (No. 32) Thomas Welford: Silver medallion

Details: MB(1) – RC 20 January 1852 and QGM 29 January 1852: This rescue was for a fire in Tottenham Street. The Minutes Book records that the award was, 'subject to (the) opinion of the Members of Committee enquiring into the case'. The Society's *Sixteenth Annual Report* (1852, p. 21) records the circumstances thus: 'To Thomas Welford, Fire-Escape Conductor, No. 28, in the Society's service, the Silver Medallion, for his prompt attendance with Fire-Escape, and very intrepid and persevering exertions at a fire on the premises, 28 Tottenham Street, on the night of Monday the 8th of December 1851, when at great risk to his own life, he succeeded in rescuing a little child. He had ascended the Escape to the room where it was asserted the child was, and having entered, groped about on his hands and knees until nearly overcome by the smoke; he was about to save himself, when he heard a choking sound under the bed, and reaching under [with] his hand, encountered a child's clothes; upon drawing them towards him, he found a poor little fellow in the agonies of what seemed death; with much difficulty he found the window, and brought the child down the Escape, where he was received with much cheering, and the child ultimately recovered. (Signed) Thomas Fielder, 24 Tottenham Street'. The presentation was reported in *The Morning Chronicle* (26 June 1852) thus: 'THE ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE. The anniversary meeting of this society was held yesterday in the council chamber, Guildhall; the Right Hon. The Lord Mayor in the chair. The Lord Mayor then presented the awards voted by the committee to those who had distinguished themselves by their exertions in the preservation of life from fire:…T. Welford, silver medallion…'. See also *The Morning Post* (26 June 1852). Welford subsequently lost this medal in a robbery in 1863. The Minutes of the Quarterly General Meeting on 24 July 1863 record that 'Conductor Welford's application to be allowed to have a new medal in lieu of the sovereign voted to him – in con-sequence of having lost his original medal through a robbery at his lodgings some months back – in consequence of Welford's general good conduct, the full credit given to his statement and the extreme merit of the last case of his saving life for which a clasp to his medal was awarded, his present application ordered to be granted'.

Subsequently, Welford was voted a second silver medal (MB(1) – RC 23 April 1855 and QGM 26 April 1855: as case 2,800, though also recorded as 2,801) for a rescue from a fire at 46 Princes Street, Leicester Square, on 23 March 1855 when he saved two lives. The vote of the medal was noted as being 'subject to confirmation on receipt of report', this decision being confirmed at the meeting on 26 April 1855. However, in June 1855 Welford asked to be instead given a Testimonial and £1 as 'he had already gained the medal', his request being granted by the committee.

See also case 8,056 for the award of a silver bar to Welford. He received a testimonial for bravery at a fire at 51 Aldersgate Street on 6 December 1853 (RC, 25 January 1854, which further notes him being reprimanded and fined 3 shillings for being absent from his station on another occasion). See also *The Morning Chronicle* (Friday 30 June 1854) for a testimonial award and *The Examiner* (Saturday 25 September 1858) and *Reynolds's Newspaper* (Sunday 26 September 1858) for details of a further rescue.

1,549: PC (162H) David Jones: Bronze medal

Details: MB(1) – QGM 29 April 1852: This rescue was for a fire at 11 Crown Court, St Georges in East, 'For prompt and efficient exertions'. The Society's *Sixteenth Annual Report* (1852, p. 22) records the circumstances thus: 'To David Jones, PC162H, the Society's Bronze Medallion (the second reward of the year), and to Philip Bradley, PC 137H, half a sovereign, and a Testimonial on Vellum, for the prompt assistance rendered by them to the inmates of 11 Crown Court, St George's, whilst on fire, Dec. 20th, 1851, when, by their conjoint efforts, the safety of four persons was secured. (Signed) James Steed, Superintendent H Division'. The presentation was reported in *The Morning Chronicle* (26 June 1852) thus: 'THE ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE. The anniversary meeting of this society was held yesterday in the council chamber, Guildhall; the Right Hon The Lord Mayor in the chair…The Lord Mayor then presented the awards voted by the committee to those who had distinguished themselves by their exertions in the preservation of life from fire:-…Police Constable D Jones (162H), bronze medallion…'. See also *The Morning Post* (26 June 1852).

1,559: PC (156H) William Paine: Bronze medal and 10s

Details: MB(1) – QGM 29 April 1852: This rescue was for a fire at Glasshouse Street, Whitechapel, 'For efficient exertions'. The Society's *Sixteenth Annual Report* (1852, p. 22) records the circumstances thus: 'To William Paine, PC 156H, the Society's Bronze Medallion, and half a sovereign, for the prompt and efficient services rendered by him in saving five persons from a house on fire, Glasshouse Street, Mint, at five o'clock, on the morning of January 2nd 1852. (Signed) James Steed, Superintendent H Division'. The presentation was reported in *The Morning Chronicle* (26 June 1852) thus: 'THE ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE. The anniversary meeting of this society was held yesterday in the council chamber, Guildhall; the Right Hon. The Lord Mayor in the chair…The Lord Mayor then presented the awards voted by the committee to those who had distinguished themselves by their exertions in the preservation of life from fire:-…Police Constable W Paine 156H, bronze medallion and 10s…'. See also *The Morning Post* (26 June 1852).

1,563: PC (111H) W Brown: Bronze medal and 10s

Details: MB(1) – QGM 29 April 1852: This rescue was for a fire at 22 Fashion Street, 'For prompt and efficient exertions'. The Society's *Sixteenth Annual Report* (1852, p. 22) records the circumstances thus: 'To W Brown, PC 111H, the Society's Bronze Medallion, and half a sovereign, for the prompt and efficient aid rendered to the inmates of a house on fire, 22 Fashion Street, Spitalfields, at five o'clock, on the morning of January 8th 1852, whereby the lives of five persons were preserved. (Signed) James Steed, Superintendent H Division'. The presentation was reported in *The Morning Chronicle* (26 June 1852) thus: 'THE ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE. The anniversary meeting of this society was held yesterday in the council chamber, Guildhall; the Right Hon. The Lord Mayor in the chair…The Lord Mayor then presented the awards voted by the committee to those who had distinguished themselves by their exertions in the preservation of life from fire:-…Police-constable W Brown, 111H, bronze medallion and 10s…'. See also *The Morning Post* (26 June 1852).

1,565: James Connor: Bronze medallion and one sovereign

Details: MB(1) – RC 20 January 1852 and QGM 29 January 1852: This rescue was for a fire at George Street. The Society's *Sixteenth Annual Report* (1852, p. 22) records the circumstances thus: 'To James Connor, the Society's Medallion in Bronze, and one sovereign, for his humane and very intrepid exertions in saving the life of Jane Yates from fire at 6 Foley Place, on the night of the 10th of January 1852, whereby he sustained personal injury, and was compelled to become an inmate of Middlesex Hospital from a disabled wrist. (Signed) Thomas Baldock, 20 George Street'. The presentation was reported in *The Morning Chronicle* (26 June 1852) thus: 'THE ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE. The anniversary meeting of this society was held yesterday in the council chamber, Guildhall; the Right Hon. The Lord Mayor in the chair…The Lord Mayor then presented the awards voted by the committee to those who had distinguished themselves by their exertions in the preservation of life from fire:-…James Connor, bronze medallion and 10s…'. See also *The Morning Post* (26 June 1852).

1,592: PC (38L) Daniel Maher: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) – QGM 29 April 1852: This rescue was for a fire in Broadwall, Lambeth, 'For his intrepid conduct'. The Society's *Sixteenth Annual Report* (1852, p. 23) records the circumstances thus: 'To Daniel Maher, PC 38L, the Society's Medallion in Silver, for his intrepid and persevering exertions in saving the life of Mrs Elizabeth Tucker from suffocation at a fire at the saw Mills, Broadwall, Lambeth, on the 5th February 1852. It was not until the third attempt that the constable was successful in reaching the room, and carrying her down stairs out of danger. (Signed) James Evans, Superintendent L Division'. The presentation was reported in *The Morning Post* (26 June 1852) thus: 'THE ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE. The annual meeting of the friends and supporters of this useful institution was held in the council chamber, Guildhall…His lordship [the Lord Mayor] then proceeded to deliver the rewards of the society as follows:-… Daniel Maher, PC 38L, the society's medallion in silver, for his intrepid exertions, in saving the life of Mrs Elizabeth Tucker from suffocation, at a fire at the Saw-Mills, Broadwall, Lambeth, on the 5th February, 1852'. He is erroneously noted as 'Daniel Baker' in *The Morning Chronicle* (Saturday 26 June 1852).

1,600: PC (623 City) Reedy: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) – QGM 29 April 1852: This rescue was for a fire at 65 Skinner Street, 'For his persevering exertions'. The Society's *Sixteenth Annual Report* (1852, p. 23) records the circumstances thus: 'To PC Reedy, 623 City Force, the Society's Silver Medallion, for his vigilance in discovering, and prompt and efficient exertions in saving from the fire, at 65 Skinner Street, Bishopsgate, the lives of Mr and Mrs Hinksman, and their three children, at 2 o'clock on the morning of February 12, 1852'. The presentation was reported in *The Morning Chronicle* (26 June 1852) thus: 'THE ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE. The anniversary meeting of this society was held yesterday in the council chamber, Guildhall; the Right Hon. The Lord Mayor in the chair…The Lord Mayor then presented the awards voted by the committee to those who had distinguished themselves by their exertions in the preservation of life from fire:-…Police-constable Reedy, 623 City, silver medallion…'. The *Daily News* (Saturday 26 June 1852) noted the recipient as 'P E Reedy, constable 23 City force'; the 1851 census notes a Constable John Reedy (born *c*.1826 in Ireland) based at the St Giles Cripplegate Police Station. See also *The Morning Post* (26 June 1852).

1,624: PC (81G) John Busbridge: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) – QGM 29 April 1852: This rescue was for a fire at 7 City Road, 'For praiseworthy conduct'. The Society's *Sixteenth Annual Report* (1852, p. 23) records the circumstances thus: 'To John Busbridge, PC 81G, the Society's Silver Medallion, for his prompt and efficient exertions in rescuing the lives of Mrs Levy and two children, niece and servant – five persons – from the fire at the Red Lion, 7 City Road, at 4 o'clock, on the morning of the 11th March. (Signed) G Martin, Superintendent G Division'. The, the presentation was reported in *The Morning Chronicle* (26 June 1852) thus: 'THE ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE. The anniversary meeting of this society was held yesterday in the council chamber, Guildhall; the Right Hon. The Lord Mayor in the chair…The Lord Mayor then presented the awards voted by the committee to those who had distinguished themselves by their exertions in the preservation of life from fire:-…Police Constable T [*sic*] Busbridge 81G, silver medallion…'. See also *The Morning Post* (26 June 1852).

1,635: PC (215K) Henry Barber: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) – QGM 29 April 1852: This rescue was for a fire at Cannons Road, 'For his intrepid and determined conduct'. The Society's *Sixteenth Annual Report* (1852, p. 24) records the circumstances thus: 'To Henry Barber, 215K, the Society's Silver Medallion, for his intrepid and persevering exertions in rescuing the life of a child during the fire at 25 Cannon Street Road, on the night of the 25th of March. He had secured the safety of the mother, and three of her children, when the fourth was missed; and, at her entreaty, he ventured to attempt the ascent of the stairs to the second floor, where it was supposed the child was. He was beat back the first time by the smoke and heat, but gallantly persevered, and ultimately succeeded in reaching the child, and escaping with it over the shop-leads into the next house, and safely returning it to its mother. (Signed) C H Marquord, Superintendent K Division'. The presentation was reported in *The Morning Chronicle* (26 June 1852) thus: 'THE ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE. The anniversary meeting of this society was held yesterday in the council chamber, Guildhall; the Right Hon The Lord Mayor in the chair...The Lord Mayor then presented the awards voted by the committee to those who had distinguished themselves by their exertions in the preservation of life from fire:-…Police Constable H Barber 215K, silver medallion'. See also *The Morning Post* (26 June 1852).

1,652: Charles Biggs: Silver medallion and 20s
Robert Oefield: Bronze medallion and 10s

Details: MB(1) – RC 8 April 1852 and QGM 29 April 1852: 'To Mr Charles Biggs for his praiseworthy conduct and intrepid exertions and to Robert Oefield for assisting in a second degree at Moor Street, Soho fire on 2nd April'. The Society's *Sixteenth Annual Report* (1852, p. 24) records the circumstances thus: 'To Charles Biggs, of 12 Moor Street, Soho, the Society's Silver Medallion, and one sovereign; and to Robert Oefield, the Bronze Medallion, and half a sovereign. During the lamentable fire at 14 Moor Street, Soho, on the morning of April 2, 1852, Mr Biggs greatly distinguished himself in his exertions to save three of the inmates, and hazarded his own safety for them; and Oefield likewise afforded very important aid in seconding him. The former, although suffering from rheumatism at the time, seeing from his window the confusion and excitement prevailing, got out upon the leads of his own

house, and proceeded along to the house on fire, where Mrs Oakley, his neighbour, was in the act of dropping her child into the street from the window above him. He caught the child from its mother, and handed it to Oakley [*perhaps a typographical error for Oefield*?], who was on the lamp-post; and then assisted to break Mrs Oakley's fall, by which means she escaped with but slight injury. A first-floor ladder was now handed up to Mr Briggs, to endeavour to reach the next floor, from the window-sill of which (3rd floor) a young man of the name of Dipple was hanging; and he held the ladder in such a manner, supporting its weight upon his thighs, with his back planted against the house, as enabled Dipple to reach its top round and to descend to the leads, where he was. Had it not been for such assistance,
the young man must have fallen into the street. One death resulted from this fire – that of a Frenchman similarly circumstanced, who sustained severe injuries in leaping from the window, and shortly after died in the hospital. Signed by Thomas Burt, 38 Church Street, Soho, and others.' A footnote added that the Society had since gained support to establish a fire-escape in the locality. The presentation was reported in *The Morning Chronicle* (26 June 1852) thus: 'THE ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE. The anniversary meeting of this society was held yesterday in the council chamber, Guildhall; the Right Hon. The Lord Mayor in the chair…The Lord Mayor then presented the awards voted by the committee to those who had distinguished themselves by their exertions in the preservation of life from fire:- …Charles Biggs, silver medallion and £1, R. Orfield [*sic*], bronze medallion and 10s…'. Further, though rather conflicting details of the circumstances leading to the award were given in *The Times* (3 April 1852) thus: 'CALAMITOUS FIRE. Yesterday (Friday) morning, at a few minutes before 4 o'clock, the neighbourhood of Soho Square was visited by a most calamitous fire, which, besides destroying a considerable amount of property, will, it is feared, be attended with fatal consequences to not fewer than five human beings. The fire was discovered by a police-constable of the C division, who, in passing along his beat in Moor-street, perceived smoke issuing from the premises in the occupation of Mr Benjamin F Oakley, a dealer in fish. The officer, knowing that several families resided in the house, made an attempt to arouse them. He saw the flames, rushing up the staircase. By repeatedly knocking at the street door and springing his rattle he eventually aroused the residents. The poor creatures immediately jumped out of their beds and made for the staircase, but the flames were ascending so furiously towards the upper part of the house that only a few persons were enabled to reach the street by the usual means. At length several persons made their appearance at the windows of the second and third floors. Having opened the sashes, they cried out to those below to assist them, when volumes of smoke poured over their heads, clearly indicating that, in their excitement, they had neglected to close the doors of their apartments, and if they remained where they were they must all be suffocated. At that time, owing to some neglect, the Royal Society's fire-escapes had not been sent for by the police; if such had been done, it is quite probable that all the inmates might have been rescued in safety. As it was, however, the unfortunate persons, on finding that the fire was entered their rooms, agreed, as the last expedient, to jump out of window. Mr and Mrs Oakey, having snatched up their child – a boy of about four years of age – threw him out, and not being caught by the bystanders he fell upon the stone pavement below. The mother and father of the child next made a precipitate retreat from the same window, and fell with a terrific crash on the ground. Two more men and a young woman also jumped from another window on the same floor. One man was comparatively uninjured, but the other and also the poor woman were grievously wounded. The police and other having picked the sufferers up they were removed to Charing-Cross Hospital, where they remained last night in a very precarious condition. Plenty of water was soon procured, from which the engines were immediately set to work, and vast torrents were thrown upon and into the burning buildings; but, in spite of the exertions of all present a considerable time elapsed before the flames could be subdued. The following is a list of the unfortunate sufferers:- Mr Benjamin F Oakley, aged 30, by trade a book binder, and proprietor of the premises destroyed, Mrs Matilda Oakey, aged 22, wife of the former, Frederick Benjamin Oakey, aged four years, son of the above, Ellen Coughlin, aged 20, a lodger in the house, Alexander Corgadini, aged 40, also a lodger. The five sufferers have had everything done that humanity or surgical skill could devise for them by Mr Dalton, the house surgeon of the hospital, but it is feared that his exertions will be of little avail…The Royal Society's escapes attended as soon as called, but too late to be of any assistance'. See also *The Morning Post* (26 June 1852).

Medal inscribed: 'To Robert Oefield, London 2nd April 1852 (Case 1652)'.

1,705: Conductor S B Weaver: Bronze medallion and 10s

Details: MB(1) – QGM 29 July 1852: This rescue was for a fire at 21 Nassau Street. Further details of the events however have not been located.

An apparently earlier fire very nearby at 15 Nassau Street on 13 April 1852 resulted in Weaver gaining a Testimonial and half a sovereign. The Society's *Sixteenth Annual Report* (1852, p. 25) records this award of a testimonial and half a sovereign to Weaver (as case 1,659), though perhaps the best report of the events appears in The *Star and National Trades' Journal* (Saturday 17 April 1852), which described the fire and rescue thus: 'On Tuesday morning the inhabitants of Nassau Street, Middlesex Hospital, were most painfully excited. It appears that a police constable perceived dense bodies of smoke pouring forth from the basement floor of the premises occupied by Mr Charles Lansfield, a carpenter. He succeeded in arousing the inmates, consisting of no fewer than nineteen persons. Those who were in the lower portion of the premises, upon opening their doors, found smoke pouring up the stairs so furiously that if they remained another minute they would unquestionably have perished. Thirteen persons, however, succeeded, at great risk, to gain the street, but six who were in the second floor, on reaching the stairs, were driven back by the hot smoke. Having again entered their apartment they made their appearance at the front windows, and besought the spectators to fetch a ladder and rescue them. They were informed by the police that the escapes of the Royal Society had been sent for, and that they would arrive in a few seconds; at the same time they were urged to remain where they were until they arrived. The dense smoke however began to pour into their room in such bodies that suffocation appeared certain. One woman then got to the sill of the window with an infant in her arms, and was just in the act of jumping out with the child (four other women were screaming at the same window), when the Royal Society's fire-escape reached the house. The conductor (Weaver) having placed the machine in front of the house, mounted and succeeded in saving the lives of six persons. The engines having been set to work, the firemen succeeded in extinguishing the fire. Unfortunately the sufferers were not insured. The cause of the fire is unknown'. See also the *Liverpool Mercury* (Friday 16 April 1852), *The Morning Post* (26 June 1852), and the *Daily News* (Saturday 26 June 1852), which noted him as 'escape conductor S B Weaver. This man has been instrumental in saving six lives in the district previously'.

1,810: Conductor Thomas Field: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) - 11 November 1852 and QGM 31 January 1853: 'For his exertions (prompt and intrepid conduct) at the fire in Webber Street, Blackfriars Road, 29th October, where he was the means of saving the lives of two persons'. See also the *Daily News* (Saturday 26 June 1852) and case 1505 for an earlier medal award to Field.

1,826: Henry Hayward: Bronze medal and 10s

Details: MB(1) RC 27 January 1853 and QGM 31 January 1853: This rescue was for a fire at 78 Lombard Street. 'Rescuing six persons from the roof of a house. For his promptitude and presence of mind in aiding the escape of six persons from fire'.

1,846: Joseph Groves: Bronze medal and 20s

Details: MB(1) RC 27 January 1853 and QGM 31 January 1853: This rescue was for a fire at 7 Newgate Street. 'For exertions in rescuing six persons. For his promptitude and presence of mind in aiding five persons to escape from fire'.

1,852: Henry Thompson: Bronze medal and 10s

Details: MB(1) QGM 9 September 1852 and RC 14 October 1852: 'For his exertions at the fire in the Ship Tavern, Old Gravel Lane'.

1,853: George Waldron: Silver medal and 20s

Details: MB(1) – RC 14 October 1852: 'By his courage and promptitude was instrumental in saving the lives of two children to escape the fire in 15 Middlesex Street, Somers Town'.

Medal inscribed: 'To Mr George Waldron, for intrepid and efficient exertions 12 September 1852 (Case 1853)'

1,855: William Moroney: Bronze medal and 10s

Details: MB(1) QGM 31 January 1853:

'For his praiseworthy exertions in rescuing two persons from fire (Lillington Street)'.

1,861: PC (263D) Berry Carman: Bronze medal

Details: MB(1) RC 27 January 1853 and QGM 31 January 1853: 'For the efficient assistance he rendered at a fire at 12 Manchester Street' [on Sunday 2 January 1853]. The Rotary Committee recorded the award as a bronze medal but the minutes of the Quarterly General Meeting noted the reward as a testimonial and 10s. However, the medal to Carman is extant.

Medal inscribed: 'To Berry Carman, PC 163D, for efficient services 2 January 1853 (Case 1861).'

1,903: PSgt (91 City) Elias Miller: Silver medallion

Details: MB(1) – QGM 4 May 1853: 'For his intrepidity and judgement at the fire at Messrs Pawsons, St. Paul's Church Yard'. The fire was reported in the *Morning Chronicle* (Friday 25 February 1853) thus: 'A fire involving vast destruction of property broke out yesterday morning shortly before two o'clock, in the extensive range of premises belonging to Messrs Pawson and Co, warehousemen, of St Paul's Church Yard. The outbreak was discovered simultaneously by two policemen, one of them being on duty in Cheapside, and the other at the corner of Great Carter Lane and Paul's Chain. They both observed smoke issuing from the roof of Messrs Pawson's warehouse, and hastening to the back entrance in Great Carter Lane, they rang the bell violently, and at length succeeded in arousing the inmates to a sense of their danger. Messrs Pawson have no less than 300 young men in their employ, one third of whom sleep in the house. The dormitory, library, and sitting rooms are all at the top of the house, and on the same floor is the kitchen and culinary establishment. The fire seems to have originated in the latter part of the building, and when the inmates were aroused, the flames had gained considerable ascendancy, all the passages being full of dense smoke. The greatest alarm prevailed for some time after the discovery, and, but for the providential means of escape afforded by an outlet on to the roof, and thence over the adjoining houses, there is no doubt loss of life would have taken place. Mr Pawson and his brother-in-law and partner, Mr Etherton, were both sleeping upon the premises, and they had only just time to escape in their trousers. The former displayed great presence of mind under the trying circumstances, and would not leave the premises until he had satisfied himself that all the inmates (including the housekeeper and four female servants) were safe. The upper portion of the premises is almost entirely destroyed and a very costly quantity of lace and Coventry ribbons are burnt. The whole stock is also considerably damaged by water…'

Medal inscribed: 'To Elias Miller, P.S. 91 City Force, for intrepid and persevering exertions, 24 February, 1853' (Sotheby's, 10 December 1975, lot 50, £60).

2,119: John Pallis: Silver medallion

Details*: MB(1) – RC 21 October 1853 and QGM 31 October 1853*: 'For his praiseworthy and courageous exertions at a fire in Patrick Street, Waterford on 19th July 1853, when he succeeded in saving the life of a woman'. The Society's *Eighteenth Annual Report, 1853-4* (1854, p. 16) further notes that Pallis: 'was the means of saving a woman, Johannah Sullivan, by ascending a ladder supported upon some of the bystanders' shoulders; but not being then of sufficient length to reach the window, it was with great difficulty that he gained an entrance into the room, where he found the poor woman lying in a senseless state, and, after much exertion, and at considerable risk to his own life, he brought her down the ladder'. The award was announced in *The Morning Chronicle* (Friday 30 June 1854).

Medal inscribed: 'John Pallis, for intrepid conduct, July 19th, 1853 (Case 2119)'.

2,195: Fireman (No 57) Alfred Tozer, London Fire Brigade: Silver medallion

Details: MB(1) – RC 25 January 1854 and QGM 27 January 1854: 'For his praiseworthy and courageous exertions at the fire in Upper Thames Street on 23rd December 1853'. The Society's *Eighteenth Annual Report, 1853-4* (1854, p. 17) further notes that the award was: 'for the courageous exertions displayed by him during an extensive fire in Huggin's Lane, Upper Thames Street, December 26th, 1853. Tozer hearing screams for help, made his way to the top of one of the houses on fire, and found three persons about to precipitate themselves on to the pavement. He succeeded in getting one of them on to his back; and, dragging the others by their arms, descended the staircase, narrowly escaping the flames, which had so surrounded them, as to burn part of the loose clothing they had thrown round them'. The

award was announced in *The Morning Chronicle* (Friday 30 June 1854).

Note: Coming from a fire-fighting family, Tozer served during the Crimean War at Scutari with a volunteer crew from the London Fire Engine Establishment. He was thus noted in *The Trewman's Exeter Flying Post* (25 January 1855) thus: 'LONDON FIREMAN SENT TO THE EAST. Turkish cities are peculiarly liable to accidents by fire, and yet the experience of Turkish citizens appears to have taught them little, either in the way of preventing the evil, or encountering it. It is a wise step, therefore, to send to our hospital in Scutari two of the London fire brigade men. A great many volunteered for the service, and the two selected are named Tozer and Lappidge. Their pay is to be two guineas a week each, with rations, lodgings and a free passage out. Should they not like their situation, they are to have a free passage home, and are to be reinstated in the brigade. Tozer has already obtained the silver medal of the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, for having saved a number of lives at great risk of losing his own, at a fire in Thames Street, City' (see also *The Manchester Examiner and Times*, 20 January 1855). His career is described by Wright (2008, pp. 63-64), who notes among details that he was the first fireman in the London Fire Engine Establishment to receive the SPLF silver medal, for saving two lives. The former claim appears incorrect, given for example the earlier award to William Wilkinson. See also Blackstone (1957).

2,208: Henry Ratcliffe: Silver medallion and £5
Abraham Taylor: Silver medallion and £5

Details: MB(1) – RC 4 April 1854, RC28 April 1854 and QGM 28 April 1854: 'This rescue was for a fire on 3rd January 1854 at Messrs Kelsall's Mills in Rochdale. Praiseworthy and courageous conduct by whose combined exertions the lives of eighteen persons were saved from almost certain death by fire, and who also displayed such great self possession and indifference to their own safety on this occasion. Also awarded £5'. The Minutes also recorded that 'Mayor of Rochdale [was] to decide if expenses are to be defrayed or otherwise for visiting London at the time of the presentation of medals by the Lord Mayor'. The Society's *Eighteenth Annual Report, 1853-4* (1854, pp. 17-8) further notes that the awards were: 'in testimony to their heroic conduct, and cool determination and judgement shown by them in rescuing several persons from almost certain death, at the fire which took place on the premises of Messrs Kelsall, Cotton Mills, Rochdale, January 3, 1854. The discovery was made about seven o'clock, whilst the operatives were at work, by one of the men engaged in the lower part of the building, who instantly gave the alarm; but hardly had the unfortunate persons employed in the upper rooms been made aware of their danger, than the flames, as if by magic, burst up the stairs – the only means by which they could have hoped to escape. At this critical moment, Ratcliffe and Taylor, two of the operatives, with great presence of mind, seized on a teagle-rope, of comparatively thin cotton material, by means of which they lowered, from a height of 50 feet, 18 persons, remaining in the room until all had been got out in safety. Their conduct cannot be better described than in their own simple language – these statements being more than confirmed by the Testimonials received from their employers and other friends. Henry Ratcliffe says: "The fire at Messrs J & R Kelsall's Mill, Duncan Street, Rochdale, broke out at about seven o'clock on Tuesday morning, the 3rd January, 1854. I was spinning on my mule in the attic on fifth floor when I first saw the smoke of the fire. I went to the staircase and found it impossible to get down – then gave the alarm to the rest of the people working in the room – fetched my coat and cap out of the wheel gate, and put them on – then went to the teagle-rope at the west end of the room – found several parties descending by the rope, and seeing it impossible to get down there in consequence of the crush, I went to the east end of the room, and then returned again to the west end, to see if any chance of escape, but still found a sufficient number all claiming to go down the rope. The children, 12 or 13 in number, all clustered round me. We attempted to get down the staircase again, but were all thrown down by the force of the flames. I then recollected that there was a cotton twist band (in a box in the room), rather less than half-an-inch diameter – obtained this – some of the children put up the skylight. I then tied the band or cotton rope to a part of the machinery, and threw the other end through the skylight, over the parapet wall of the roof of the mill into the street. I then got all the children on to the roof, and left the room last. I then lifted each child over the parapet, and assisted them to secure themselves to the cotton rope, by wrapping their pinafores round the rope, and sliding down; a person in the street held the rope to keep it steady. I descended last, when all the children were safe, and in going down the rope, it was burned, and I fell the height of 2 stories, or nearly 8 yards, and

sustained considerable injury in my back in consequence, and my hands are likewise cut by the rope. The portion of the roof at the west end had fallen in, when I had six children yet to let down. Henry Ratcliffe". Abraham Taylor says: "I am a power-loom weaver, and worked in the fourth floor of Messrs J & R Kelsall's Mill. I was about to begin weaving, when some of the weavers shouted out the factory was on fire. I went for my coat, then I and the other weavers in that room ran to the staircase. I opened the door, and saw the flames ascending from below. I said 'We cannot get [out] this way, we must go some other way'. I and the other weavers ran down the alley or passage between the looms to the second window, and began to break the window frame. I cried out to those in the street, they put us some ladders up, but I saw they could render us no assistance. I looked round and saw a piece of flannel and tied it round the end of the loom to make it secure. I took an iron weight and broke the window frame in pieces to get a way out. I then put the piece out, and said, we can descend one at a time; they began to descend quickly. Hannah Ambler said 'Abraham, let me go down'. I assisted her up over the broken frame – she appeared to be sick – she slid down to the window stone, let go her hold of the piece, and fell into the street – she was killed by the fall – she might be the fifth or sixth, and there were three of us left. I left the room last – the fire spreading so rapidly I was obliged to leave my coat and apron; before I left the room, nearly one-half of it was burned, and of course was quite filled with smoke. Abraham Taylor". Mr Henry Kelsall writes: "Rochdale, 27th January 1854. We appointed a sub-committee of inquiry into every case of the four persons said to have been useful in saving others, the result of which you will see to be most praiseworthy as to Ratcliffe and Taylor, and being on the premises from a few minutes after the fire began, I was witness to their exertions during all the time, especially Ratcliffe, who, being on the roof with his company, were in a more perilous position, and the crowd providing beds, etc, at the bottom, more especially required advice and aid. As to the other persons, Duckworth and Lord, said to have rendered some aid to those in danger, which they did, yet it was not to that extent, nor of that nature, nor so disinterested and self-sacrificing, to justify the sub-committee in recom-mending them to your notice for medals or rewards. I however enclose you the report made by the committee as to what these two did, Duckworth and Lord. You will observe by these reports, that both these two left the fourth story, by the teagle rope, rather early, leaving several children and young persons to follow by the same rope as best they could, and not, like Ratcliffe and Taylor, remaining till they had got all others safely away. Your committee, however, will do what they think proper. Enclosed is a short length of the cotton rope by which Ratcliffe and twelve others descended from the roof to the street, about 56 feet. Yours respectfully, Henry Kelsall, Chairman of the Relief Committee for the 36 persons (operatives) who suffered personal injury by the fire'. The awards were announced in *The Morning Chronicle* (Friday 30 June 1854).

2,218: Conductor Samuel Wood: Bronze medallion and 10s

Details: MB(1) – RC 25 January 1854 and QGM 27 January 1854: The initial meeting noted the award was 'for the promptitude and judgement displayed by him at the fire in Colchester Street, Whitechapel on January 11, 1854 and the efficient services he rendered thereat', with it being further noted on the 27 January meeting that 'He was the means of saving ten lives'. In reporting the events, *The Times* (Thursday 12 January 1854, p. 8) described how: 'Yesterday morning, shortly before 4 o'clock, a fire broke out on the premises belonging to Mr N Brassatt, a German lodging house proprietor, 1 Colchester Street, Leman Street, Whitechapel, which was nearly attended with a most fearful sacrifice of human life. The discovery was made by Police Constable 78, of the H Division, who sprung his rattle, and after repeatedly knocking at the door, succeeded in arousing the proprietor of the house, who set about waking the various lodgers. They made an attempt to descend by the stairs, but the density of the smoke forced them to retreat, when two male lodgers made their appearance at the first floor window and jumped out. Fortunately, they were caught by the constable on duty, and received no injury. At that moment Samuel Wood, the conductor of the Royal Society's fire-escape, arrived with his machine from the Whitechapel station, when he beheld four children screaming at one of the front windows, with their parents, the father having been ill for some time. At the windows of the floor above were four male lodgers hanging by their hands from the window sills. The conductor lost no time in adjusting the apparatus in front of the building, and succeeded in rescuing the four men, and then went up again and brought down the four children, their father and mother. By the time the residents were extricated, the parish engine arrived, and was followed by two others of the London

establishment, from the Jeffrey and Wellclose Squares stations..... The parish engineer and the firemen of the brigade went to work in admirable style, and fortunately succeeded in confining the flames to the lower part of the premises'. While the minutes are clear on the award of the bronze medal to Wood, the Society's *Eighteenth Annual Report, 1853-4* (1854, p. 19) notes that he received a 'Testimonial' rather than a bronze medal for these events and notes that: 'Upon his arrival at the fire, he found the lower part of the house in flames, and smoke issuing from the second floor. He immediately placed his Escape, and took them from their perilous situation. Having got his short ladder, he entered the first floor, where there was another family, consisting of husband, wife, and four children. These he got out with the assistance of police constable Henry Hudson, 70H: to whom the Committee likewise award a Testimonial and half-a-sovereign, for the efficient assistance thus rendered by him'. Whether the original decision regarding a bronze medal was revised or whether the *Annual Report* is in error is unclear. Later, on 29 April, Wood was involved in another rescue at the same premises, for which he received a Testimonial on Vellum from the Society (case 2,364). The details of this latter rescue were recounted when the Society's report was delivered, *The Times* (Saturday 6 January 1855, p. 8) noting that: 'Among the most remarkable of these …[rescues] is the behaviour of Conductor Samuel Wood, No. 11, at a fire in Colchester Street, Whitechapel, where, at the risk of his own life, he rescued five persons. In his last descent down the ladder he bore one person on his back, and held a child in his mouth by its clothing, just as the flooring fell in'. For further details of this rescue see the Society's *Eighteenth Annual Report, 1853-4* (1854, p. 22).

2,236: Fireman George Cooper: Silver medallion

Details: MB(1) – RC 28 April 1854: 'This rescue was for a fire at 18 New Street, Covent Garden on 18 January 1854'. The Society's *Eighteenth Annual Report, 1853-4* (1854, p. 20, which records the case number as 2,233) further notes that: 'George Cooper, fireman of Chandos Street Station, the Society's Silver Medallion; and Adam Briggs, Supernumerary in the Society's Service, a Testimonial on Vellum and half-a-sovereign. A fire broke out at a quarter before ten o'clock, January 18th, at 16 New Street, Covent Garden, in a lodging-house. Cooper, on his arrival, being informed there were some children in the house, rushed up stairs, and found two on the first floor. Whilst bringing these down, he heard a stifled cry, "Oh, save me!" upon which he returned, and, after groping about for some time, he discovered another child, whom he likewise placed in safety. Briggs afforded very great assistance to several persons who had taken refuge on the roof. Having ascended with the short ladders, he placed them in such a position as to enable the parties to descend on to the roof of the adjoining house'. The award was announced in *The Morning Chronicle* (Friday 30 June 1854).

2,324: PC (314P) Isaac Butterfield: Silver medallion

Details: MB(1) – Sub C 26 May 1854: No details of rescue. The Society's *Eighteenth Annual Report, 1853-4* (1854, p. 20) notes the award was: 'for his intrepid conduct at the fire in Park Place, Walworth, November 24th, 1853; when, at imminent risk to his own life, he rescued two children from the greatest danger, and also greatly assisted in the escape of the other inmates'. The award was announced in *The Morning Chronicle* (Friday 30 June 1854).

2,325: PC (118H) James Lucas: Silver medallion

Details: MB(1) – Sub C 26 May 1854: No details of rescue. The Society's *Eighteenth Annual Report, 1853-4* (1854, pp. 20-1) notes the award was: 'for his courageous exertions at a fire in 3 Queen Street, Tower Hill, November 5th, 1853. The fire was occasioned by an explosion of fireworks originating in the shop. The Constable being told there were some children in the house, rushed up stairs and brought one from the front second floor; and, upon being told there was still a child missing, he returned through the smoke, at the hazard of his own life, and searched about until he found the other child in the same room'. The award was announced in *The Morning Chronicle* (Friday 30 June 1854).

2,567: Conductor John Barton: Silver medallion

Details: MB(1) - 27 October 1854: 'For his great exertions and courage conducted generally at this fire'. The recipient was probably John Francis Barton: see *The Morning Chronicle* (Friday 13 March 1857, p. 8). At the anniversary meeting of the Society on Friday 27 June 1856 Barton was noted thus: 'The recipient of the greatest number of reward will be seen to have been John Barton, fire-escape conductor, No. 25, who received the "savings bank book, with £5 to

his credit", for saving the lives of eight persons at one fire, five persons at a second fire, and for nearly, at a third fire, losing his own life in endeavouring to save that of another person; and two testimonials and two sovereigns were given to him for saving four lives at a fourth fire, three lives at a fifth fire, and eight lives at a sixth fire; so that he had been the means of saving no less than 28 human lives. It is unnecessary to say that this brave man was loudly cheered by the meeting'. (*The Morning Post*, Monday 30 June 1856, p. 6).

2,623: Conductor (No. 37) Seymour: Bronze medal and 10s

Details: MB(1) – RC 23 April 1855 and QGM 26 April 1855: 'This rescue was for a fire at Lambeth Hill, City'. The Minutes note that the award is made to the late Conductor Seymour.

2,671: PC (135D) Thomas Hill: Silver medallion

Details: MB(1) – RC 25 January 1855 and QGM 26 January 1855: 'In consequence of his extraordinary exertions to save four persons'.

2,767: Conductor (No. 32) Thomas Moore: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) – RC 23 April 1855 and QGM 26 April 1855: This rescue was for a fire at 2 Clipstone Street.

Medal inscribed: 'To Thomas Moore. Fire Escape Condr. No.32 for intrepid exertions. Case 2767'.

2,807: Conductor (No. 21) Joseph Warren: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) – RC 23 April 1855 and QGM 26 April 1855: This rescue was for a fire in Lambeth. See also the *Morning Chronicle* (Saturday 10 November 1855), while the *New York Daily Times* (16 August 1854) gives an account of an earlier rescue for which he had received the Society's testimonial.

3,152: Conductor (No. 9) Richard Christianson: Silver medallion

Details: MB(1) - 24 April 1856 and QGM 25 April 1856: This rescue was for a fire at 53 Princes Street, Leicester Square. 'For great exertions in rescuing seven persons'. The presentation was made at the Society's anniversary meeting at the Society of Arts by the Duke of Wellington on Friday 27 June 1856 (*The Morning Chronicle*, Monday 30 June 1856); the latter source gives the recipient's first name and notes his number as '5'. The Minutes Book (Quarterly General Meeting, 25 April 1856) records the case number as 3182.

3,186: Police Inspector (K Div) Andrew Gernon: Silver medallion

Details: MB(1) – RC 16 June 1856: No details, the award being unnumbered in the records. The presentation was made at the Society's anniversary meeting at the Society of Arts by the Duke of Wellington on Friday 27 June 1856 (*The Morning Chronicle*, Monday 30 June 1856); the latter report noted the recipient's first name and notes him as belonging to 'H Division'.

Medal inscribed: 'To Andrew Gernon Inspector of H Div. of Police for Intrepid conduct. Case 3186'.

Note: Andrew Gernon was promoted to Inspector on 11 February 1854 and remained with H Division (TNA ref: MEPO 2/Index, MEPO 2/26).

3,298: Lockman John Bennett, London Docks: Silver medallion

Details: MB(1) – QGM 25 April 1856: This rescue was for a fire at 104 Wapping High Street. The presentation was made at the Society's anniversary meeting at the Society of Arts by the Duke of Wellington on Friday 27 June 1856 (*The Morning Chronicle*, Monday 30 June 1856); the latter source says Bennett was the 'lockman at the Wapping entrance of the London docks'.

3,343: PC (82H) William Brown: Silver medallion

Details: MB(1) 25 April 1856: This rescue was for a fire at 60 Back Church Lane: 'The Society's Silver Medallion to Police Constable 82H who in effecting the escape of the inmates nearly lost his own life, also a Testimonial to F E Conductor Wood for his prompt arrival at the same fire with his FE whereby the life of the constable was saved. Also a Testimonial to John Bentley Arch for his exertions at the fire'. Later, the Society, in RC 16 June 1856, record the police cases recommended for awards, among which is: 'H Div 82 William Brown, Silver Medal'. A fire was noted in the press occurring on Thursday 10 April 1856 at Harris Yard, Back Church Lane, the outbreak being discovered by a (unnamed) constable from H Division, with Conductor Wood attending, though no mention was made of any specific rescue

(*Daily News*, Friday 11 April 1856 and *Morning Chronicle*, Friday 11 April 1856). A subsequent report in *The Morning Chronicle* (Wednesday 30 April 1856) appears to document this same fire, though the newspaper's publication date and the implied date of the fire do not tally with the previous account. This account notes that: 'Yesterday (Tuesday) morning at an early hour the immediate neighbourhood of Back Church Lane, Whitechapel, was greatly alarmed in consequence of a tremendous explosion of gas taking place on the premises belonging to Mary Arch, chandler, carrying on business at No. 106, in the aforementioned thoroughfare. Police Constable William Brown, No. 82 of the H division, having heard the explosion, ran into the house, and rescued a woman, and having again entered to see whether any others were in the place,…all of a sudden another explosion ensued, and the stairs were blown down, and he was unable to get out until the escape conductor of the Royal Society arrived. Samuel Wood, the conductor, having run his machine to the spot, raised it in front of the premises, and happily succeeded in bringing the police officer down his escape, who, otherwise, would have had to jump into the street as a reward for his praiseworthy exertions. The occupier, who is a serious loser, it is understood, was not insured'. The presentation was made at the Society's anniversary meeting at the Society of Arts by the Duke of Wellington on Friday 27 June 1856 (*The Morning Chronicle*, Monday 30 June 1856).

Medal inscribed: 'To William Brown PC 82 [H] Div for Intrepid Conduct. Case 3343'.

3,378: PC (219H) Samuel Richardson: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) – RC 17 June 1857: No details of rescue. The award was announced in *The Morning Chronicle* (Wednesday 24 June 1857) 'for rescuing a woman from what appeared inevitable death', with the presentation being made at the Guildhall on Monday 22 June 1857.

3,413: Conductor (No. 30) George Lewis: Silver medallion

Details: MB(1) – RC 17 July 1856 and QGM 25 July 1856: This rescue was for a fire at 22 Upper Caton Street. 'In attending this fire Conductor Lewis displayed great promptitude and succeeded in rescuing the whole of the inmates, a father, a mother and three children from the attic window of the 4th story. The flames were entering the room as he got up and there was not a moment to lose he handed the children to the police who followed him up the ladder sent them further down before him and carried the poor woman down in his arms. Upon his arriving at the bottom there was hysteria and he was compelled to carry her across the road to the house opposite to her'. The Minutes give further details of the crowd taking the Escape and it crashing to the ground causing it considerable damage. The award was announced in *The Morning Chronicle* (Wednesday 24 June 1857) 'for saving five lives', with the presentation being made at the Guildhall on Monday 22 June 1857.

3,561: Richard Malpass: Silver medallion and 'handsomely framed' Testimonial.

Details: MB(1) – QGM 31 October 1856: This rescue was for a fire in Eldon Street, Finsbury. 'For the intrepidity with which he risked his life to rescue an aged female. Malpass was presented with a purse of 25 sovereigns by the inhabitants as a testimonial, otherwise the Committee would have voted him a pecuniary award'. Two eye-witnesses brought the circumstances to public attention in the letters columns of *The Times* (Thursday 23 October 1856, p. 11 and Friday 24 October 1856, p. 4). Sampson Low then noted Malpass' conduct in a letter published under the headline 'ELDON STREET FIRE' in the *Daily News* (Tuesday 28 October 1856) thus: 'The Committee of the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire have been much gratified by the ready desire evinced by several of the inhabitants of Finsbury to reward Richard Malpass, the young man who, on the evening of Tuesday last, displayed such heroic conduct in the rescue of an aged female at the above fire. Too much praise can hardly be bestowed on him who risks his own life to save that of fellow creatures. The bystanders are said to have stood amazed with fear when Malpas ascended the ladder, comprised of two short pieces hastily lashed together, and the universal applause and admiration fully testified the imminent risk he had incurred in effecting his noble deed. Such laudable conduct will certainly not be allowed to pass unrewarded by the committee of this Society, one of their principal objects being to encourage brave exertions in saving life from fire…'. The award was announced in *The Morning Chronicle* (Wednesday 24 June 1857) as to 'R Malpas jun, iron-safe maker, of Long Alley, Moorfields, for saving by an act of the most intrepid bravery an aged woman of 67', with the presentation being made at the Guildhall on Monday 22 June 1857.

3,661: Conductor (No. 4) James McComb: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) – RC 26 January 1857 and QGM 30 January 1857: 'A report of this (rescue) was read confirming the account in *The Times* of this day (26 January 1857) – the greatest credit was due to Conductor McComb but for whose promptitude, efficiency and praiseworthy exertions at a fire at 2 Minories, on 25th January 1856, the lives of seven persons would have been lost'. The award was announced in *The Morning Chronicle* (Wednesday 24 June 1857) 'for saving seven lives', with the presentation being made at the Guildhall on Monday 22 June 1857. An account of an apparently earlier and similar rescue was reported in *The Morning Chronicle* (Wednesday 30 April 1856) noted: 'A fire of a serious character also took place in the premises belonging to Mr J Chapman, eating house keeper, situate at…91 Leadenhall Street, City. The discovery was made by Police Officer No. 54 of the City force, who in passing the building discovered smoke pouring from the cellar, and at the time was ascending the staircase with such fury as to prevent anyone from passing down. No fewer than seven persons appeared at the second floor, and screamed in an awful manner, when the conductor raised his machine, and happily succeeded in bringing down in safety no fewer than seven persons, consisting of Mr Chapman, the proprietor, his wife, his daughters, namely Amelia, Eliza, and Emma, as well as the two female servants, named Ann Murray and Sarah Jane Dunning. Not the least means of getting out of the house remained, except with the aid of the fire-escape, and had it not been for conductor McComb, the whole of the seven inmates must have perished. The engines of the London Brigade from Jeffrey Square, Wellclose Square, Watling Street, Holborn, and Farringdon Street, as well as the West of England office, were early in attendance, and a powerful supply of water being obtained from the mains in the neighbourhood, the firemen went to work in first rate style, but the fire could not be extinguished until a serious amount of damage was done, which will fall on the Globe Fire office'.

3,671: G N Shayler: Silver medal with details of case on vellum.

Details: MB(1) – RC 25 March 1857 and QGM 24 April 1857: This rescue was for a fire in West Street, Golden Square. The award was announced in *The Morning Chronicle* (Wednesday 24 June 1857) as to 'G N Shayler, of 23 King Street, Regent Street, for saving a mother and three children from what seemed certain death', with the presentation being made at the Guildhall on Monday 22 June 1857.

Note: The recipient was possibly 'George Nathanael Shayler', a tailor, who married Martha Eliza Rogers on 27 November 1848 in St Mary Newington, London.

3,712: Conductor (No. 25) George Harmsworth: Silver medal with details of case on vellum.

Details: MB(1) – RC 25 March 1857: This rescue was for a fire in the Essex Tavern, Aldgate. The award was announced in *The Morning Chronicle* (Wednesday 24 June 1857) 'for saving five lives', with the presentation being made at the Guildhall on Monday 22 June 1857. See also the *Daily News* (Monday 29 May 1854) for a further mention of this conductor's bravery on a previous occasion. Later, *The Times* (Tuesday 8 March 1870, p. 4) published the following appeal by the Rev John Going, Vicar of St Paul's, Walworth: 'Sir, A poor neighbour of mine, after 14 years spent in the toilsome and perilous occupation of a fire-escape conductor, is now, with his sick wife, in a state of destitution. His name is George Harmsworth. He received four medals [*sic*] at various times from the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, by which he was employed. One of these – the Society's silver medallion – is stated to have been presented to him "for the intrepidity displayed, and prompt and efficient services rendered by him, at a fire at the Essex Tavern, 41 Aldgate Street, when he rescued, by means of the fire-escape, the lives of five persons from inevitable destruction; one of these thus saved by him he brought down under peculiar circumstances of peril to himself, but without a moment's hesitation at incurring the danger apparent to him". This is signed by the late Lord Mayor Finnis, as Chairman of the Society, and four similar testimonials for his services in the preservation of life are signed, in behalf of the Society, by Aldermen Wire, Carden, Moon, and Finnis. I can testify that he bears an excellent character in this neighbourhood. Respectable tradesmen in the Walworth Road (which was his post of service for many years) tell me they have known him for the last 10 years, and described him to me as a steady, industrious man, and always ready at his post. A certificate from the Society above referred to, dated last November, states that he served the Society for nearly 14 years, "during which time his conduct was exemplary, and testifying to the

praiseworthy and efficient services rendered by him in the rescue of human life from fire". He resigned his position in 1866, hence it is that he has no claim on the Society. He had saved a considerable sum of money while in their employ, and fancied he could do better for himself in a little business; but he is a plain, simple-hearted fellow, and being ignorant of the business he undertook soon lost every shilling he had saved; he has actually been obliged to pawn the medals he won at the peril of his life. I trust your benevolent readers will enable me to buy an annuity for the poor fellow, so as to save him and his poor sick wife from the workhouse. It does not seem a proper home for a brave fellow like him to have to end his days in'. See also *The Times* (Monday 19 December 1864, p. 5 and Wednesday, 21 December 1864, p. 9) for details of this conductor at another fire.

Medal inscribed: 'George Harmsworth, F.E. Condr. No.25, for prompt and efficient service, March 2nd 1857. Case 3712'.

Three other privately produced medals to George Harmsworth (minus the previously noted SPLF medal) formed part of the D J Denham collection, viz., Metropolitan Police medal, engraved 'For discovering the body of Willm. Wilson of their Force who was drowned 14 Novr. 1858', another presented by the inhabitants of Walworth, engraved 'In rescuing from fire Miss Hall, 2 June 1861', and another with Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire on it and engraved 'For his bravery in endeavouring to save the life of Mrs Durrant, by which he nearly lost his own life, 17 December 1864', this in gilt, glazed, with foliate frame (*LSARS Journal*, June 1991,12: 79).

3,776: Bartley Holmwood: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) – RC 17 June 1857: No details of rescue. Holmwood was recorded as a resident of Brighton. The award was announced in *The Morning Chronicle* (Wednesday 24 June 1857) for 'rescuing the lives of an aged couple and a girl', with the presentation being made at the Guildhall on Monday 22 June 1857.

4,109: Sub Constable Alexander Mee, Ferrybank Station, Waterford: Silver medallion

Details: MB(1) – CM 16 November 1857 and QGM 29 January 1858: 'For the praiseworthy and heroic conduct displayed by him at a fire which occurred on the Quay, Waterford on the 22nd Oct. ult. when he rescued a Miss Boyle, from imminent death by fire'. The Society's *Twenty-Second Annual Report* (1858, p. 21) records the circumstances thus: 'To Alexander Mee, Sub-Constable, Ferrybank Station, Waterford, The Society's Silver Medallion, for the intrepid and devoted conduct displayed by him in rescuing the life of Mary Boyle at a Fire on the premises adjoining the house of her father George Boyle, Shoemaker, on the Quay, Waterford, October 22nd, 1857. The details of the case are best given in the words of the memorial, addressed to the Society by several residents of the city: "We, the undersigned citizens of Waterford, feel much pleasure in bringing under your notice the gallant conduct of Sub-Constable Alexander Mee, of the Ferrybank Station, near this city, at a disastrous fire that took place in Waterford, on the night of the 22nd inst. The drapery establishment of Mr Curtiss, on the Quay, having taken fire, when the bressimoor supporting the front of the house was consumed, the house fell, bringing with it the adjoining house, occupied by Mr Boyle, in which were the members of his family, and several other persons, who fortunately escaped, with the exception of one man, who was killed by the falling of the house., A young woman, a daughter of Mr Boyle, clung to a corner of one of the upper floors that remained attached to the end wall, in a most perilous position, when Sub-Constable Mee unhesitant-ingly, and at the hazard of his life, mounted the burning pile, seized the young woman in his arms, and rescued her from death, which appeared inevitable. Such heroic conduct we think our duty to bring under the notice of your Society, with the view of having the Policeman awarded some mark of its approbation. Edward B Hoare, *Dean of Waterford*, Robert Bell, *Archdeacon of Waterford*, and others. Waterford, *October 30th, 1857*"'.

Medal inscribed: 'To Alexr Mee Sub Constable for noble and efficient conduct 22nd Octr 1857. Case 4109'. Mee also received the Crimea Medal, both of which remain in the family possession.

[Unnumbered]: Conductor J Reynolds: Bronze medal

Details: This award is not recorded in the Minutes, the Society's *Twenty-Second Annual Report* (1858) or other sources examined.

Medal inscribed: 'J. Reynolds, Fire Escape Conductor. Saving Life. Shoreditch 1857' (as described in *LSARS Journal*, October 1988, 4: 52; the engraved text as here recorded

appears discrepant with other awards from this period).

4,152: Conductor Joseph Warren: Clasp to silver medal and 20s

Details: MB(1) – QGM 29 January 1858: This rescue was for events during a fire on 16 November 1857 in Sun Street, Bishopsgate Street. The Society's *Twenty-Second Annual Report* (1858, p. 22) records the circumstances thus: 'To Joseph Warren, Fire-Escape Conductor, No. 16, in the Society's service, a Silver Clasp to the Medallion already gained by him, recording this additional instance of his intrepid and efficient conduct, besides a Sovereign, for his exertions at a Fire, at 7, Sun-street, Bishopsgate, November, 16th, 1857, when, at considerable personal risk, he rescued Henry Spearman, aged 61, and his son, and John Wilson. He found all three persons on the third floor nearly suffocated. The elder of the three has been a paralytic seven years, and was as helpless as a baby, and had not the Conductor been a very powerful man, it would have been impossible to have brought him down the Escape in safety. He accomplished it effectually, however, assisting as well the other two persons to descend, who were also in an exhausted state'. The *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* (Sunday 22 November 1857) reported the events thus: 'THREE LIVES SAVED BY THE FIRE ESCAPE: On Monday morning, a fire broke out in the premises belonging to Messrs Maud and Beck, china, glass, and earthenware warehousemen, situate in Sun Street, Bishopsgate. The back warehouse on the ground floor was burnt out, and the contents destroyed, and very considerable damage done to the storeroom in front. Fortunately the sufferers were insured in the Sun fire-office. Upon the arrival of Warren, the conductor, with the Bishopsgate Royal Society's escape at Messrs Maud and Beck's premises. He found three persons at the third floor window crying piteously for help, one a man over sixty years of age, and paralysed for seven years. The smoke at this time was so dense that they were nearly suffocated, and must have perished had they remained in the premises five minutes longer. Warren raised his escape, and having ascended to the top window he entered the rooms, and brought down in safety the aged man named Sparman, his son, and a man of the name of Wilson. Upon reaching the ground the conductor was loudly cheered by the neighbours Apart from this rescue, Warren would attend other fires and was noted as rendering good service, one example in the *Morning Chronicle* (Friday 2 October 1857) reporting that: 'Yesterday morning about three o'clock a fire that caused considerable alarm, and was attended with a great loss of property, happened in the premises belonging to Messrs J Blackborne and Sons, mat and bag dealers, carrying on business in One Swan Yard, Bishopsgate Street Without. At the time of the outbreak a number of horses and poultry were in the contiguous building. Warren, the conductor of the Royal Society's fire-escape, being called, broke open three doors, and succeeded in saving four valuable horses and 60 fowls. The engines of the parish and four of the London Brigade attended, and a good supply of water having been procured, the firemen went to work, but they were unable to get the flames extinguished until the warehouses and all they contained were destroyed. The sufferer was insured in the Phoenix Fire-office'. See also the *Morning Chronicle* (Saturday, 10 November 1855).

4,165: Conductor Samuel Wood: Clasp to silver medal and 20s

Details: MB(1) – QGM 30 April 1858: This rescue was for a fire at 2 Spectacle Alley, Whitechapel. The Society's *Twenty-Second Annual Report* (1858, p. 22) records the circumstances thus: 'To Samuel Wood, Fire-Escape Conductor, No. 11, in the Society's service, a Clasp to his Silver Medal, with One Sovereign, for his intrepid conduct at a Fire, 2, Spectacle-alley, Whitechapel, at half-past 12 on the morning of the 21st November, 1857, when, at the imminent risk of his own life, he persevered, through flames and smoke, in searching for, and eventually bringing down in safety, the whole of the inmates of the house, - a mother and three children and servant, and another mother with child in arms; in all, seven persons. Much of his work was undertaken when the smoke prevented him seeing anything before him; and as he found the last person on the ground floor, the flames burst through the partition from the shop, and had all but cut off his retreat. The Police Inspector on duty at the fire reported that he never expected to see the Conductor come out alive. Also, a Testimonial on Vellum to Police Constable P Dunaway, 129 H, for the efficient assistance rendered by him to the Conductor in this case'.

4,277: Stoker William Welch, HMS *Valorous*: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) – RC 21 April 1858 and QGM 30 April 1858: This rescue was for a fire at 91 King Street West, Plymouth. The Society's *Twenty-Second Annual Report* (1858, pp. 23-4)

records the circumstances thus: 'To William Welch, Stoker on board H.M.'s Steam Gunboat "Valorous," the Society's Silver Medallion, for intrepid and humane exertions at a Fire on the premises of Mr Joy, 91, King Street, West, Plymouth, on the evening of the 15th of January, 1858, when, at great risk to himself, he climbed up into a room on Fire, from which a mother and six children were unable to escape, and lowered them one by one, as they had been aroused from their beds; a very few minutes after Welch descended, the roof fell in'. The medal was to be presented through the Directors of the West of England Office at Exeter. A note of the award appeared in the *Trewman's Exeter Flying Post or Plymouth and Cornish Advertiser* (Thursday, 8 July 1858) thus: 'THE REWARD OF HEROISM: It will, no doubt, be in the remembrance of many of our readers, that at the disastrous fire which took place on Mr Jay's premises in King street, Plymouth, on the night of the 15th January last, a stoker belonging to HM Steam-Ship *Valorous*, at great risk to himself, climbed into a room which was enveloped in flames, and from which he took a mother and six children, who would most probably have been burnt to death had not timely aid been afforded them. He rescued them amidst the cheers of the bystanders, one by one in their night dresses, as they had been aroused from their beds, and a few minutes after Welch had descended from his perilous situation the entire roof fell in, carrying the whole of the interior of the building with it. The circumstances were immediately after the occurrence represented to the Royal Society for Protection of Life from Fire, by Mr W Marshall, the agent for the West of England Insurance Company, that gentleman having been present at the fire on the trying occasion…A few days since, Mr Marshall, being in London, attended by request a meeting of the Society, at which the Lord Mayor presided. The conduct of the man, it appeared, had duly received the consideration of the Committee, and the Society's elegant and chastely executed silver medal, together with the particulars written on vellum, bearing the official seal and signature of Robert W Carden, chairman, and Sampson Low, junr, secretary, was handed to Mr Marshall by the Lord Mayor, after some suitable observations, to present Welch, who is at sea, on board the above named vessel, attending on the *Agamemnon* laying the Atlantic Telegraph Cable, and who up to this time is not aware of the honour bestowed on him. The medal bears the following inscription: "To William Welch, for noble and efficient conduct, 16th January 1858". – *Plymouth Herald*'.

4,343: PC (216G) Emanuel Bailey: Silver medallion

Details: MB(1) – SpGM 18 May 1858: No details of rescue. The Society's *Twenty-Second Annual Report* (1858, p. 24) records the circumstances thus: 'To Emanuel Bailey, Police Constable, 216 G, the Society's Silver Medallion, for his intrepid and efficient conduct at a Fire, No. 7, Little James-street, Gray's Inn-lane, on the evening of the 20th February, 1858, when, by his presence of mind and personal exertions, the lives of two children were rescued from the flames. Their parents being from home at the time, there would have been no means of escape for the children'.

4,365: Conductor William Eilbeck: Silver medal and Testimonial on vellum

Details: MB(1) – QGM 30 April 1858: This rescue was for a fire at 1 Sandy Row, Bishopsgate. The Society's *Twenty-Second Annual Report* (1858, p. 24) records the circumstances thus: 'To William Eilbeck, Fire-Escape Conductor, No.59, in the Society's service, the Society's Silver Medallion, for his intrepid and persevering exertions at a Fire at 1, Sandy's Row, Bishopsgate, at half-past 12 on the morning of the 4th of March, 1858, when, at great risk, he succeeded in carrying out Mrs. Levy and her two daughters. Also, to Police Constable SAMUEL COLLINS, 49 H, a Testimonial on Vellum, for the very efficient assistance rendered by him to the Conductor when overcome by his exertions'. The rescue was briefly noted in *The Morning Chronicle* (Friday 5 March 1858) thus: '…Another fire happened in the premises of Mr Benjamin Levy, a furrier, of 1 Sandy's Row, Bishopsgate. At the time of the outbreak the inmates were fast asleep in their beds. Police Constable Collins, 49 of the H Division, who discovered the fire, sent off for the Royal Society's fire-escapes and engines, and upon the former arriving, Eilbeck, the conductor of the Bishopsgate Street escape, rushed up stairs and brought down three persons, viz, Mrs Levy and two other children, and Police Constable Collins rescued two others from the first floor. The engines of the brigade from several stations and that of the West of England office were as early as possible on the spot, and a good supply of the East London Company's water having been procured, the firemen took advantage of the same by setting their engines to work, but the men were unable to get the fire out until the premises and their contents were consumed, and the adjoining premises damaged. The sufferer was insured in the

Sun Fire Office. The origin of this fire is…unknown'. For further mentions of Eilbeck see *The Morning Chronicle* (Saturday 1 October 1859), which notes the inquest on the death of his brother John, a fireman who was killed fighting a blaze at Tottenham Court Road in September 1859, and for further rescues he effected see the *Birmingham Daily Post* (Thursday 18 March 1858), *The Morning Chronicle* (Monday 2 January 1860), *The Era* (Sunday 11 March 1860 and 22 September 1861) and *The Caledonian Mercury* (Monday 9 September 1861). Eilbeck retired from the Society in 1862 due to ill health, being given a gratuity of £12 by the committee (RC 5 September 1862).

4,452: L/Corporal Paul Murphy: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) – SpGM 18 May 1858: No details of rescue. The Society's *Twenty-Second Annual Report* (1858, p. 26) records the circumstances thus: 'To PAUL MURPHY, Lance Corporal of the 36th Regiment, the Society's Silver Medallion, for his intrepid exertions at a fire in Church-street, Twickenham, on the 21st of April, 1858, when, entirely regardless of himself, and intent on saving the life of a mother and her little boy, he rushed through the flames, and brought them both out in his arms. His devoted conduct unfortunately served but to prolong life a few hours , as both the poor woman, Caroline Reason, and her little boy, aged four years, died during the ensuing day at St. Georges Hospital'.

4,521: James Hayes: Silver medallion

Details: MB(1) – RC 22 July 1858 and QGM 30 July 1858: This rescue was for a fire in Deansgate Street, Manchester. The Society's *Twenty-Third Annual Report 1858-9* (1859, p 18) described the award thus: 'To James Hayes, of 12 Warwick Street, Manchester, the Society's Silver Medallion, for the prompt and very great personal exertions displayed by him at a fire which occurred at 156 Deansgate Street, June 3rd, 1858, when, at considerable risk to himself, he succeeded in saving the lives of six of his fellow-creatures. The house referred to is three stories high, and at the time of the fire there were sleeping on the premises Mr and Mrs Johnson, with their child, who occupied a back room. Mr. William Johnson in one of the front rooms, and in another front room Miss Morris and Miss Lowden. About a quarter to two o'clock the latter was awakened by finding the room full of smoke. They gave an alarm to the other inmates, and attempted to descend the staircase. Being unable to do so on account of the dense smoke and heat, they all retreated to Mr Johnson's room. Mr Johnson and his brother broke the windows, and called loudly for assistance. At this critical moment James Hayes, alarmed by their cries, hastened to procure a ladder, which, having fortunately obtained, he placed against the house; but it was of insufficient length to reach the third-floor room (35 feet). To overcome this difficulty, Hayes, who is a very powerful man, volunteered to have the ladder placed upon his shoulders, which was done, whilst several of the bystanders assisted to support him. By this means the ladder was brought within reach of the endangered persons, all of whom were thus enabled to descend to safety'. The award was announced in *The Morning Chronicle* (Monday 1 November 1858) as 'for intrepidity displayed by him…on the 3rd June, when by his exertions six persons were rescued from imminent peril'. The subsequent presentation was reported in *The Era* (3 July 1859): 'The Lord Mayor then proceeded to confer the rewards of the society upon those who, by their courage and humanity, had been instrumental in saving the lives of their fellow creatures. The following received silver medals:- Mr James Hayes, of Manchester, for saving six persons…'.

4,613: Henry Mortis: Bronze medal

Details: MB(1) – SCM 14 September 1858 and QGM 29 October 1858: This rescue was for a fire at 9 Valentine Terrace, Blackheath. The Minutes Book (Special Committee Meeting 14 September 1858) recommended a Silver Medal, but the subsequent Quarterly General Meeting (29 October 1858) recorded the award as a Bronze Medal. The Society's *Twenty-Third Annual Report 1858-9* (1859, p 20) described the award thus: 'To Mr Henry Mortis, of Blackheath, the Society's Bronze Medallion, for the prompt and praiseworthy conduct displayed by him at a fire which took place at 9 Valentine Terrace, Blackheath, on the evening of the 29th of July 1858, when he was instrumental in rescuing the life of Miss J Barr. Mr Mortis, whilst passing the house, heard the alarm of fire. Having effected an entrance, he rushed up the staircase to the third-floor bed-room, part of which was then in flames. He found Miss Barr lying on the floor quite helpless, and brought her down stairs in safety'. The award of the bronze medal was announced in *The Morning Chronicle* (Monday 1 November 1858) as being: 'for saving the life of a female at a fire at 9 Valentine Terrace, Blackheath, July 29'. The subsequent presentation was reported in The *Era* (3 July

1859) thus: 'The Lord Mayor then proceeded to confer the rewards of the society upon those who, by their courage and humanity, had been instrumental in saving the lives of their fellow creatures. The following received bronze medals:-…Mr Henry Morris [*sic*], for saving a lady at Blackheath…'.

4,675: Robert Winstone: Bronze medal and 20s

Details: MB(1) – QGM 29 October 1858: This rescue was for a fire in Mint Street, Boro'. The Minutes Book states that a Silver Medal and 20s were recommended but that the final decision would be 'as deemed best by the Members of Committee seeing him'. The Society's *Twenty-Third Annual Report 1858-9* (1859, pp 20-1) described the award thus: 'To Robert Winstone, a Bronze Medallion and one sovereign, for his efficient and praiseworthy conduct at a fire which occurred at half-past ten o'clock on the evening of September 6th, 1858, at 10 Mint Street, Southwark. The fire commenced in the lower part of the house, and so rapid was its progress, that, even before the inmates were made sensible of their danger, the shop over which they were sleeping was one mass of flames. Winstone, hearing there were some persons in this room, courageously rushed up the staircase, and, having roused Mr Hamblen and his wife, brought them out'. The presentation was reported in *The Era* (3 July 1859) thus: 'The Lord Mayor then proceeded to confer the rewards of the society upon those who, by their courage and humanity, had been instrumental in saving the lives of their fellow creatures. The following received bronze [*sic*] medals: Mr Robert Winstone, for saving a man and his wife in Mint Street, Southwark'.

4,748: Conductor (No 17) James Newall: Silver medallion

Details: MB(1) – RC 2 December 1858, QGM 28 January 1859 and QGM 29 April 1859 QGM: 'For his exertions in rescuing five lives from fire at 63 Islington Green, 1 November 1858'. The Society's *Twenty-Third Annual Report 1858-9* (1859, pp 21-2) described the award thus: 'To James Newell, Fire-Escape Conductor, No 17, in the Society's service, the Silver Medallion, for his prompt attendance and very efficient and persevering exertions at the fire at 63 Islington Green, at a quarter to two o'clock on the morning of November 1st, 1858, whereby the lives of five persons were rescued. On the Conductor's arrival, the fire had obtained complete possession of the lower part of the house, and cut off all means of egress by the staircase. He placed the fire-escape against the house, without a moment's loss of time, and ascended; so dense, however, was the smoke, that he was unable to discern in which room the inmates had taken refuge from the flames. At a venture, he forced his way into the second-floor window, and entered the room, where he found Mr and Mrs Smith, two children, and a servant maid. He took them all down, one after the other, in his arms, except Mr Smith, whom he assisted into the canvass, by which he descended in safety. The premises being old, they were speedily enveloped in flames, the two adjoining houses being destroyed as well. The following is a letter from Mr Smith, referring to this preservation of himself and family: "Gentlemen, I Beg to express my grateful thanks for the opportune and efficient services rendered to myself and family (five persons) by your Fire-Escape Conductor, James Newell, on Monday morning last, when, but for his exertions, we must all have perished in the fire, which destroyed my own and two adjoining premises. When he opened the attic window, he found us in the room incapable of making the slightest effort for our own preservation; and we attribute the saving of our lives (under God) entirely to his prompt and meritorious exertions. I remain Gentlemen, Your obedient Servant, Joseph Wood Smith"'. The fire and rescue was mentioned in *The Times* (3 November 1858), the apparently inaccurate reporting of which resulted in their publishing the following the next day (4 November 1858): 'The Late Destructive Fire at Islington. Sir, The account contained in your paper of yesterday states that the above fire broke out on the premises of Mr Holden, the toy and basket maker, and that Conductor Newall succeeded in rescuing Mr and Mrs Smith, two children and the servant girl from the adjoining house, which was then taking fire; permit me, however, to inform you that they were rescued from the same house in which the fire originated, the lower part of which was in flames when they were brought down the fire-escape. This is important as it tends to show the imminent peril to which their lives were exposed, whereas if taken from the house adjoining that where the fire commenced, the danger would have been but comparatively slight. I am, Sir, your obedient servant, Sampson Low, Jnr., Secretary, Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire'. The Rotary Committee's initial recommendation was for a silver medallion, but they also considered the views of Churchwarden Elsom who considered that a bronze medallion would be a suitable award. He thought that Newall's

report of his actions had been overstated (i.e. five persons had been saved not six) and he was only doing his duty. He had also received a subscription from the local inhabitants. The Committee considered that Newell had done his duty with promptitude, efficiency and great success so they confirmed their original recommendation for a silver medallion. The presentation was reported in *The Era* (3 July 1859) thus: 'The Lord Mayor then proceeded to confer the rewards of the society upon those who, by their courage and humanity, had been instrumental in saving the lives of their fellow creatures. The following received silver medals:… James Newall, escape conductor No. 17, Islington Green station, for saving five persons. (The inhabitants of Islington presented this man with a silver watch and £14)'. Newall also received a separate Testimonial from the Society at this awards ceremony, for good work at another rescue and previously had received at least one other testimonial (case 3724).

4,897 and 4,918: Conductor (No. 11) Samuel Wood: Silver clasp and Testimonial

Details: MB(1) – RC February 12 1859: '57 High Street, Whitechapel. Attended by Conductor Wood at 5.20am; the house was thoroughly on fire almost as soon as it was discovered. The Conductor succeeded in saving six persons from the second and third floors all in the extremest peril, and then made two very courageous but unsuccessful efforts to save the two poor female servants from the back; the Conductor was overpowered by the flames and very narrowly escaped with his life'. The Society's *Twenty-Third Annual Report 1858-9* (1859, pp 23-5) described the award thus: 'Case 4918: To Samuel Wood, Fire-Escape Conductor, No 11, a second Clasp to his Silver Medal, commemorative of the intrepidity and perseverance displayed by him at the fire on the premises of Mr James Walton, Tea Dealer, of 57 High Street, Whitechapel, shortly after five o'clock am, on February 12th, 1859, when, entirely by his promptitude and personal exertions, as many as six of the inmates were rescued from the flames. The fire appears to have been discovered by Police Constable No 160 H, who immediately called out to the conductor. Assistance was at once obtained, and the conductor reached the fire within one minute after the alarm. Notwithstanding, however, the short space of time that had elapsed, the fire, which commenced in the first-floor back room, had, when the conductor arrived, taken complete possession of the staircase and the lower part of the house. Upon ascending to the second floor, the conductor found three persons, viz., Charles Palmer, aged 22, Thomas Webster, aged 23, and George Smith, aged 26, all of whom were brought down the canvass in safety: he then raised his upper ladder, and rescued three more, named Henry Pinckney, aged 25, William Manley, aged 16, and George Sawyer, aged 26, who were preparing to get on to the window sill. The youth, Manley, whilst being brought down the ladder, said, "Wood, save the poor servants." The conductor regained the third-floor front, and courageously entered the room. Whilst endeavouring to turn the lock of the door leading to the adjoining room, the fire forced open the door, which fell upon him: to this Wood's escape may be attributed, inasmuch as it sheltered him from the flames. With great difficulty he managed to crawl to the window and regain the fire-escape, which scarcely, however, had he descended, than the flames shot from the whole of the front windows of the building. The conductor then scaled the roof of the adjoining house, and attempted, by means of his short ladder, to effect an entrance at the back of the dwelling, but the fire compelled him to retreat. The two female servants that were lost slept in the third-floor back room. Upon being aroused they evidenced the most thoughtful consideration by giving the alarm to the three young men that were sleeping in the front room on the same floor. They then went back to their own room to put on some clothes, and there is no doubt became overpowered by the heated smoke and flames. The following was received by Conductor Wood from the persons rescued: "We beg to heartily thank you for your wonderful exertions during the late lamentable fire, feeling, as we do, that were it not for your timely assistance, we must have fallen victims to it, and shall for ever think that, under Providence, you were the means of saving our lives, and our gratitude is forever due to you. We cannot conclude without adding our testimony to the noble efforts made by you to save the lives of the unfortunate females, and fully believe in the utter impossibility of success." Also, to Mr William Upson, of 47 High Street, a Testimonial on Vellum, conveying the thanks of the Society to him for the prompt and efficient aid rendered by him to the conductor in securing the safety of the rescued persons. Also, to Mr Walter Abbott, a Testimonial, for the successful exertions made by him to arouse the other inmates at the first outbreak, to which may be attributed their eventual rescue by the Fire-Escape. *The inhabitants of Whitechapel Parish evidenced their high appreciation of the services rendered by Conductor Wood in this case, by presenting him*

with a handsome Gold Medal, accompanied with a Purse of Ten Guineas; also an amount of £10 was presented to him at the "Salutation" Tavern, Newgate Street, including £3 sent from Dowager Lady Willoughby'. In a report of the fire *The Morning Chronicle* – (Wednesday, 16 February 1859) related the following: 'THE LATE FIRE AND LOSS OF LIFE IN WHITECHAPEL… Samuel Wood said that he was a conductor to the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire. On Saturday morning last a police-officer called out, saying, "Sam, bring your escape, for here is a fire". He went immediately with his machine, and rescued six persons. He next tried to get to the room in which the deceased were, but the fire was coming out like jets of gas. He tried to open the door, when it fell upon him, and he was obliged to crawl on his hands and knees, and get down the ladder of his escape, head foremost, the upper part of the machine being on fire at the time. Not more than four or five minutes elapsed from the time he was called to the time he had succeeded in saving the lives of the six persons, and had the other two gone to the front room he could have saved them also…The jury, after consulting, returned a verdict, "That the deceased were accidentally burnt to death in the fire, but how the fire was occasioned there was no evidence to prove". And added "That the greatest praise was due to Samuel Wood, the Royal Society's conductor for his extraordinary exertions rendered upon the melancholy occasion. Mr Sampson Low said that no man was more deserving of the Victoria medal than Wood was, and the man would, he was certain, meet with some reward. A subscription has been already set on foot by the inhabitants for the conductor'. The Society then decided, see MB(1) – RC 8 March 1859: 'that great praise is due to Conductors Wood, Hall and Michelin for their intrepid and faithful discharge of the duties that devolved upon them at these fires, at which entirely by their prompt and active exertions under Providence, the lives of 13 persons were rescued from destruction'. The recommendation by the Rotary Committee was for a Silver Clasp, but this was changed at the subsequent Quarterly General Meeting to a Testimonial only. This was, however, not the end of the story. A further fire, noted by the Society in MB(1) – QGM 29 April 1859, resulted in a silver clasp, thus: 'This rescue was for a fire at 17 Leman Street, Whitechapel. Testimonial recording the Committee's high opinion of Wood's conduct on both occasions [i.e. cases 4918 and 4897] especially the latter [i.e. 4918] on which he risked his own life with the greatest intrepidity'. The presentation for the conjoined cases was described in *The Era* (3 July 1859) thus: 'The Lord Mayor then proceeded to confer the rewards of the society upon those who, by their courage and humanity, had been instrumental in saving the lives of their fellow creatures. The following received silver medals:… Samuel Wood, escape conductor, No. 11, Whitechapel Church station, for saving six persons. (This officer on a previous occasion received the society's silver medal, and has also received a gold medal from the inhabitants of Whitechapel)'. See also the *Birmingham Daily Post* (Monday 14 February 1859).

4,937: Robert Bagshaw, jnr: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) – RC 7 April 1859 and QGM 29 April 1859: 'This rescue was for a fire in Edge Street, Manchester. For his intrepid exertions in saving the life of a child, at great personal risk'. The Society's *Twenty-Third Annual Report 1858-9* (1859, p 25) described the award thus: 'Mr Robert Bagshaw, of Manchester, the Society's Silver Medallion, for his intrepid and generous conduct at a fire at 21 Edge Street, Shade Hill, Manchester, on the 24th of February 1859, when, by great personal exertions, and at the risk of his own life, he rescued a little child from flame and suffocation. The following is from one of the witnesses of the occurrence: "Several men then mounted the ladders to rescue the third child, which still remained in the room; but they were driven back by the smoke, which issued in dense volumes from the window. After a few moments of dreadful suspense, Mr Bagshaw, jun., stepped forward from the crowd, ascended the ladders, and entered the room. He searched for the child, but could not find it, although he heard it crying. Repeatedly he came back to the window for a fresh supply of air, and then turned back into the room to renew his search. After groping about on his hands and knees upon the floor for some time, he came in contact with the child, which he carried to the window, and handed to the men who were waiting on the ladder. He then descended himself, almost suffocated."' The presentation was described in *The Era* (3 July 1859) thus: 'The Lord Mayor then proceeded to confer the rewards of the Society upon those who, by their courage and humanity, had been instrumental in saving the lives of their fellow creatures. The following received silver medals: …Mr Robert Bagshaw, of Manchester, for saving a child'. The medal was passed to the Mayor of Manchester for presentation.

4,940: Conductor (No. 49) John Hall: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) - February 26 1859: '30 Great James Street, Lisson Grove. Attended by Fire-Escape Conductor Hall at 1am. The flames had obtained perfect incendiary of the premises before he arrived. Several persons were at the second floor window imploring assistance; the Conductor rushed up the ladder, put one child in the canvas, took Mrs Reeves, the mother, and another child in his arms and was half way down the ladder with them when the shop blind ran out and one tremendous flame encircled the Escape, causing the person at the lever to desert it. This shook off the Conductor with his burden, who were fortunately not much hurt, but the poor child in the canvas got its arm or leg over the round of the ladder and was prevented descent, by which means it was badly burnt by the surrounding flames and subsequently died in the Hospital. The whole front of the house was now enveloped in flame and the Conductor was wholly defeated in his efforts to reach the window again, so that five persons perished in this most distressing fire. For his intrepid conduct in saving the lives of Mrs Reeves and child and exertions made to save other members of the family; also ordered that his full wages be continued to him until he had fully recovered the use of his hand and able to resume duty'. The award is then noted in MB(1) – RC 8 March 1859, RC 7 April 1859 and QGM 29 April 1859: 'That great praise is due to Conductors Wood, Hall and Michelin for their intrepid and faithful discharge of the duties that devolved upon them at these fires, at which entirely by their prompt and active exertions under Providence, the lives of 13 persons were rescued from destruction'. The Society's *Twenty-Third Annual Report 1858-9* (1859, pp 25-6) described the award thus: 'To John Hall, Fire-Escape Conductor, No 49, the Society's Silver Medallion, for his intrepid conduct at a Fire at 30 Great James Street, Lisson Grove, on the 26th of February 1859, when, by his promptitude and personal exertions, the lives of three persons were rescued; and but for an untoward accident beyond his control, the remainder of the inmates would have been saved in the same manner. On the conductor's arrival at the fire, which was within six minutes after the first alarm, he found the whole of the lower part of the house in flames: he immediately ran his escape up to the second-floor window, where several persons were crying for help, and brought out Mrs Reeves and two of her children. The children were placed in the canvas; but one poor child, becoming frightened, clung to the rungs of the ladder, and was so much burnt from the surrounding flame, that she subsequently died in hospital; the other was rescued in safety. The conductor was obliged to carry Mrs Reeves down in his arms, and, whilst so doing, the shop shutters were forced out by the flames, and the sun blind, becoming detached, fell against the escape in one sheet of flame. The flames induced those in charge of the escape lever to retreat, the escape slid out, and the conductor, whose hands were already much burnt, fell off the ladder with Mrs Reeves in his arms; the latter but slightly injured. The whole front of the house was now enveloped in fire, and the conductor's efforts to regain the second floor were unavailable. The evidence of eye-witnesses warrants the assertion that, but for the sudden outburst of fire caused by the falling shop shutters, the conductor would have succeeded in rescuing the remainder of the family. Also, to Richard Ellsom and to George Warren, each a Testimonial on Vellum and half-a-sovereign, for the efficient assistance rendered by them in securing the safety of another of the inmates. Also, in the same case, a Testimonial on Vellum and one sovereign to Police Constable Peter Hobbs, 261 D, for the intrepidity displayed by him in his efforts to assist the Fire-Escape Conductor and the other endangered persons'. The presentation was described in *The Era* (3 July 1859) thus: 'The Lord Mayor then proceeded to confer the rewards of the society upon those who, by their courage and humanity, had been instrumental in saving the lives of their fellow creatures. The following received silver medals:…John Hall, escape conductor No. 49, Lisson Grove station, for saving three persons'.

4,959: Conductor (No. 14) Henry Michelin: Silver medallion

Details: MB(1) – RC 8 March 1859, RC 7 April 1859 and QGM 29 April 1859: 'That great praise is due to Conductors Wood, Hall and Michelin for their intrepid and faithful discharge of the duties that devolved upon them at these fires, at which entirely by their prompt and active exertions under Providence, the lives of 13 persons were rescued from destruction'. Then, in MB(1) - March 6 1859: 'Great Portland Street, Horse and Groom Public House. Conductor Michelin attended at 3 am. The house was thoroughly on fire, the Conductor pitched his Escape at the front second floor and brought out in safety four persons, the wainscoting of the room being on fire at the time. The Conductor then extracted from the lower part of the house a man who had leaped

from an upper room through the sky light, by this time flames were issuing from every part of the house and it was impossible to get to the back rooms from whence this man had jumped. A female servant, a lodger and a pot boy were afterwards discovered to have been burnt. At this fire the Escape ladders and canvas were much burnt but not effecting its efficiency in any way, had it been entirely of iron it would not have enabled anyone to gain access to the back room on fire'. The Society's *Twenty-Third Annual Report 1858-9* (1859, pp 26-7) described the award thus: 'To Henry Michelin, Fire-Escape Conductor, No 14, the Society's Silver Medal, for his prompt and efficient services at a fire at the "Horse and Groom" public-house, Great Portland Street, on the morning of the 6th March 1859, when the lives of five persons were rescued from otherwise inevitable death. The conductor was alarmed by the springing of the rattles of the Police. In less than two minutes the conductor conveyed his escape to the fire, and had pitched it against the second-floor window. He ascended, and rescued Mr Price (the landlord), his wife, and two children, from the front room, the wainscoting [sic] of which was then on fire; he then raised his upper ladder, and was in the act of ascending to the third floor, when a Police Constable, hearing the groans of a man on the basement, cried out to the Conductor, "Help – they are all in the bar." Michelin, then took the crowbar, and, having forced an entrance, dragged out a man who had fallen through a skylight from the upper room. By the time this was done, flames were issuing from all the windows, rendering it impossible to make any efforts to rescue those who still remained in the upper part of the house. Amongst the communications received by the Secretary relative to this fire, are the following: From Mr Brent, the Deputy Coroner for Middlesex: "This is to state, that at the inquest on the bodies of the persons dead at the fire at 128 Great Portland Street, the jury unanimously acknowledged with approbation the conduct of Henry Michelin, Fire-Escape Conductor, at the fire in question". "Sir George Smart feels it his duty to express his opinion of the good conduct of Henry Michelin, the Conductor of the Fire-escape stationed at Great Portland Street, at the fire at 3 o'clock on Sunday morning, March 6th, at 128 Great Portland Street. Sir George Smart was seriously ill at the time, and Lady Smart was up with him, and heard the first alarm of fire given, and can testify that not a moment was lost in Michelin bringing the escape; indeed, she thought it almost incredible that it could be brought so quickly, and so many persons saved in so short a time. Sir George Smart can conscientiously avow that had it been his *own house* which was on fire, he should have been perfectly dissatisfied with the promptitude of Michelin's exertions; therefore he had great pleasure in bearing his testimony to the brave shown and to the efforts made upon the occasion by the Conductor." "*103 Great Portland Street.* Sir, As an eye-witness, and residing immediately opposite the scene of the late fire in this street, I beg to state my full admiration of the courage displayed by the fireman in charge of the escape ladder at the chapel corner, close by. I beg you to excuse these few lines: I write to give praise where it ought to be rendered, and trust that the Conductor may be well rewarded for his bravery. I am, Sir, Your obedient Servant. B Bathurst, RA"'. The presentation was described in *The Era* (3 July 1859) thus: 'The Lord Mayor then proceeded to confer the rewards of the society upon those who, by their courage and humanity, had been instrumental in saving the lives of their fellow creatures. The following received silver medals:…Henry Michelin, escape conductor No 14, Great Portland Street station, for saving five persons'.

5,002: Conductor (No 19) Joseph Arkyll: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) – QGM 29 April 1859: 'This rescue was for a fire at 93 Leather Lane'. The Society's *Twenty-Third Annual Report 1858-9* (1859, p 28) described the award thus: 'To Joseph Arkyll, Fire-Escape Conductor, No. 19, the Society's Silver Medallion, for the promptitude and efficiency displayed by him at a fire on the premises of Mr Kitchen, at the corner of Leather Lane (No 93) and 24 Greville Street, on the morning of the 25th March 1859, when, by great exertions, and the exercise of considerable judgement, both on the part of the conductor and the police constables assisting him, the safety of the whole of the numerous inmates was secured, being brought down from the second and third floors by the fire-escape and the ladders attached. The house is what may be termed a double one, and was let out to different families; and at the time of the fire, there were sleeping on the premises no less than twenty-eight persons. Upon being roused, and made conscious of their danger, they at once attempted to descend the staircase, but the fire, having broke out under the stairs, rendered this impossible: only three persons succeeded in getting out, the others, after unsuccessfully attempting to effect their escape by this means, were obliged to take refuge in the front rooms. The fire, had, by this time, assumed a threatening appearance. Cries for help were heard to proceed from

nearly every window in the house, but the bystanders were unable to render any assistance. At this critical moment, Conductor Arkyll arrived with his escape, and several constables being on the spot, efficient and simultaneously assistance was given at all parts, the two ladders and jumping-sheet, attached to the escape, being immediately put into use. The result was, that by the combined exertions of the fire-escape conductor, and four police constables, the whole twenty-five persons were enabled to escape in safety. Also, the sum of two sovereigns to Police Constable Thomas Jones, 165G, for giving the first alarm to the conductor, and great personal assistance; and the sum of three sovereigns between the other constables assisting, with a Testimonial on Vellum, expressing the thanks of the Society, to be hung up in the Station House of the Division'. A brief account of the rescue appeared in the *Daily News* (Saturday 26 March 1859) thus: 'PRESERVATION OF TWENTY-FOUR LIVES FROM FIRE: A fire occurred in the metropolis yesterday, which would, in all probability have been attended with the loss of 24 lives, had it not been for the prompt arrival of a fire-escape. It appears that police-constable No. 165G ran to the conductor's station in Hatton Garden, and informed the man that a fire had taken place in a large double house occupied by Mr Kitchen, a cheesemonger, etc, situate at the corner of Greville Street, Leather Lane. The escape of the Royal Society was immediately taken to the spot, when a scene that can with difficulty be described presented itself. Out of each window issued volumes of black smoke which obscured the front of the building, and the loud cries for help from 25 persons clearly indicated that no time was to be lost to effect their rescue, for the lower part of the premises and the staircase were burning like a furnace. The conductor (Arkell) at once placed his escape in front of the house, and brought from the first floor seven persons, who were safely landed below. The jumping sheet attached to the escape was next taken off and held by the police, when five or six persons were thrown from the second floor, and were received in the sheet without receiving any material injury. The remainder of the unfortunate persons were taken from the third floor and passed down the escape save one man who managed to get upon the roof and pass through an adjoining house. The engines of the neighbouring brewery, that of the parish, and several others of the London brigade, were remarkably early in their attendance, and a good supply of water having been obtained the firemen went to work in their usual intrepid manner, but they were unable to get the mastery until the lower part of the house was burnt out and the upper part seriously injured. Unfortunately most of the sufferers were uninsured'. Subsequently, the Society's minutes of 7 April 1859 note that the sum of £5 should be shared among four police constables who assisted in the rescue, one of whom had also called the escape. The reward for Arkyll was deferred pending further investigation, '.... as to whether the exertions required of him were such as entitled him to a silver medal'. These enquiries were satisfactory, the minutes of the next meeting on 29 April 1859 confirming that Arkyll should be awarded the Society's silver medal and that each of the four policemen concerned was to receive a testimonial on vellum. The presentation was described in *The Era* (3 July 1859) thus: 'The Lord Mayor then proceeded to confer the rewards of the society upon those who, by their courage and humanity, had been instrumental in saving the lives of their fellow creatures. The following received silver medals: Joseph Arkyll, escape conductor No. 19, Leather Lane station, for saving twenty-five persons'. In addition to this, Arkyll also received a privately produced silver medal from a Mr E Bodger, of Hatton Garden, this being engraved 'Presented to Joseph Arkell by Mr E. Bodger of Hatton Garden for his intrepid conduct in rescuing 26 lives at a fire at Mr Kitchen, Leather Lane, March 25th, 1859': see DNW auction catalogue, 25 September 2008, lot 117 for further details.

5,015: PSgt (46S) Robert Gould: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) – RC 14 June 1859: 'This rescue was for a fire in Kentish Town'. The Society's *Twenty-Third Annual Report 1858-9* (1859, p 29) described the award thus: 'To Robert Gould, Police Sergeant 46S, the Society's Silver Medallion, for intrepidity at a fire at the "Bull and Last" public-house, Highgate Rise, Kentish Town, which occurred at a quarter-past two am, on the 26th of January 1859, when, at risk of his own life, he rushed up the stairs to search for two of the inmates who had been left behind. Having found and aroused them, he assisted them to escape, just as the flames reached the room in which they had been asleep. Also, a Testimonial on Vellum to James Kelly, Police Constable 71, for his vigilance in early discovering the fire, and thus enabling the other inmates all to escape before the fire had obtained the possession of the stairs'. The SPLF archives (Ms 34984) includes an unattributed article, which notes: 'A Worthy Cause – The Society for the Protection of Life

from Fire: The Society's Silver Medallion is herewith presented to Robert Gould Police Sergeant 46S for intrepidity at a fire at the Ball and Post public house. Highgate Rise, Kentish Town, which occurred on the 26th January 1859 when at risk of his own life he rushed up the stairs to search for two of the inmates who had been left behind. Having found and aroused them he assisted them to escape, just as the flames reached the room in which they had been asleep (case 5015)'. The presentation was described in *The Era* (3 July 1859) thus: 'The Lord Mayor then proceeded to confer the rewards of the Society upon those who, by their courage and humanity, had been instrumental in saving the lives of their fellow creatures. The following received silver medals: …Robert Gould, 46S, for saving two persons'.

Medal inscribed "To Robert Gould P.S. 46 S Div For Intrepid Exertion 26th Jan 1959 Case 5015"

5,041: Jacques Fosse: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) – RC and SpC 24 June 1859: 'After hearing confirmatory evidence through the Royal Humane Society it was resolved that the Society's silver medal be presented to Mr Fosse although the case strictly considered is beyond the Society's ordinary limits. The Committee desiring to testify their approbation of the great exertions displayed by Mr Fosse in the cause of saving human life, twice from fire'. The Society's *Twenty-Third Annual Report 1858-9* (1859, pp 29-30) described the award thus: 'To M Jacques Fosse, the Society's Silver Medallion, for intrepid conduct in entering a house on fire in the Grande Rue, a Beaucaire, France, at six o'clock on the morning of the 7th of June 1857, when, at great personal risk, he succeeded in rescuing the life of a poor woman; also, for like intrepid conduct in saving a youth from suffocation from a burning rafter some years previously; - Presented by the Committee, in this case beyond the limits ordinarily observed by them to testify their admiration for one who appears, from official documents before them, to have made it his great aim to rescue persons from danger at every opportunity afforded him, regardless of personal risks to himself. The gentleman has had awarded him, during the last twenty years, the following decorations, *viz*,:- four silver medals, three gold medals, the Prix Montyon, and the Cross of the Legion of Honour, for saving the lives of about eighty persons at different times from fire and water. The following is a copy of a communication from the Mayor of Beaucaire: "*Acts of Rescue accomplished by M Jacques Fosse, Chevalier of the Legion of Honour and Merchant of Beaucaire (Départ. du Garde).* I should say that Jacques Fosse was but ten years old when he gave the greatest proofs of his courage and self-denial in saving the life of young Chaffin, aged 18, who was near being drowned in the River Rhone. From that time to the present not one year has elapsed that he has no saved several persons from a similar death. It would require an especial work to describe all his sublime actions of devotion – four medals of the second class, three of the first class in gold, the Prize Medal of Montyon, and the Cross of the Legion of Honour, all are monuments of his glory which say more than writing. Nevertheless, as we are called upon to certify in an authentic manner the humane acts of this generous citizen, we assert that he has saved from the waves of the Rhone more than sixty persons, who owe their lives to him; and it is impossible to enumerate all who, during the great inundation in 1836, were rescued from death by his manly intrepidity: during eight days and nights he never ceased rescuing the unfortunate inundated. A village of 1,800 persons, immersed to the first floor in the water, all owed their safety to Fosse alone. Always great, generous, and devoted in the cause of humanity, he gave additional proof of his courage in going to assist Folcher, a labouring blacksmith, aged 17, who, on the 5th of August, had become entangled under a burning rafter, and was nearly suffocated, and for which act we have signed this paper, wishing to assist him in obtaining his rights. We, the Mayor of the town of Beaucaire, certify that the above account is perfectly true and correct. (signed) The Mayor J Germain."' Jacques Fosse had been previously referred to the RHS. Their case book notes that Mr Folcher (19) had fallen into the water at Beaucaire, in France, on 5 August 1858. Fosse jumped in, swam to Folcher and managed to save him. It was noted at the time that with this rescue Fosse had saved 'nearly 80 lives'. The Mayor's recommendation is noted in Young (1872, pp. 223-4). The Royal Humane Society initially considered the case at its committee on 22 September 1858, following which their General Court on 12 January 1859 approved the award of its silver medal to Fosse. He was presented with this at the RHS Annual Festival that summer (RHS case 16207). The presentation of the SPLF medal was described in *The Era* (3 July 1859) thus: 'The Lord Mayor then proceeded to confer the rewards of the society upon those who, by their courage and humanity, had been instrumental in saving the lives of their

fellow creatures. The following received silver medals: M Jacques Fosse Beaucaire, France, for saving several persons at different times'. 'See also *LSARS Journal* (29 [1997]: 48-51)

5,120: Captain William Vesey Munnings, 24th Regiment: Silver medallion

Details: MB(1) – RC 19 October 1859 and QGM 28 October 1859: 'This rescue was for saving three children from a fire on the Troopship *Eastern Monarch* off Spithead', the recipient's surname being incorrectly noted as 'Manning'. Built at Dundee in 1856, the 1844 ton full-rigged *Eastern Monarch* was owned by Somes Brothers of London and traded regularly between Dundee and India. Early in 1859, as she was loading cargo at Karachi, she was chartered by the Indian government to also bring home a large contingent of sick and wounded troops in the aftermath of the Indian Mutiny, some of whom were accompanied by their wives and children. After a cramped but otherwise uneventful voyage, the *Eastern Monarch* arrived at Spithead in the early hours of 3 June 1859 with almost 500 people aboard, including 352 invalid soldiers, 30 women and 53 children. At 2.30am, about an hour after the vessel had dropped anchor, a loud explosion was heard closely followed by billowing smoke and flame. With the ship's ports all open for ventilation, the initial fire spread rapidly; despite the valiant efforts of the officers and crew however, the blaze could not be brought under control and the ship was soon ablaze from stem to stern. Thanks to discipline amongst those on board, there was no panic and the passengers and crew were ferried ashore by two sailing barges, *Providence* and *Petrel*, which came alongside, as did boats from HMS *Falcon* and HMS *Flying Fish*, both of which were anchored nearby. The prompt actions of the rescue craft saved all but eight persons but the ship herself was totally destroyed, it was believed, by the spontaneous combustion of a quantity of saltpetre amongst her cargo. The events were extensively reported at the time; for further details see the *Daily News* (Saturday 4 June 1859), the *Hampshire Telegraph and Sussex Chronicle* (Saturday 4 June 1859), and *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* (Sunday 12 June 1859).

Note: William Munnings (*c*.1830-1883) was commissioned Ensign by purchase in the 67th Regiment on 10 March 1848. Transferring into the 24th Regiment the following year, he was promoted Lieutenant on 1 February 1850 (again by purchase) and gained his captaincy on 17 April 1858. He served peripherally during the Indian Mutiny, gaining that campaign medal without bars. In *Hart's New Army List* (1861, p. 177) it notes that Munnings 'was on board the ship Eastern Monarch when burnt at Spithead on 3rd June 1859; was mentioned in Lt Col Allen's dispatch, and received a letter from Captain Morris, bearing testimony to his coolness and judgment on this trying occasion'. After then serving as the regiment's Instructor of Musketry (1864-67), he was promoted Major on 8 June 1870 and retired on 1 October that same year.

5,216: Conductor George Low: Clasp to medal and testimonial on vellum

Details: MB(1) – QGM 22 July 1859: 'This rescue was for a fire at the Anchor Dining Room, Cheapside'. Low's actions on this occasion resulted in an addition award from the local inhabitants, the presentation of which the *Daily News* (Tuesday 27 September 1859) recorded thus: 'VALOUR REWARDED: Yesterday a public meeting of the inhabitants of the ward of Cheap was held in the vestry room of Bow church, presided over by the Rev M Vine, the vicar of the parish, for the purpose of presenting a gold medal and a purse of £16 to James [*sic*] Low, the conductor of one of the fire-escapes belonging to the Royal Society for the Preservation of Life from Fire, in reward of his intrepidity and gallantry on the occasion of a recent fire at the Anchor dining-rooms, Cheapside, when under divine providence he was the means of rescuing Mr Roberts, the proprietor, and thirteen other persons, from death. The room was crowded to excess, as the greatest interest was felt in the proceedings. The reverend chairman having pointed out the advantages which result from such displays of public gratitude as that in which they were engaged to those who confer benefits upon society, and passed a high eulogism upon the organisation and discipline of the servants of the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, called upon Mr Bennett, of Cheapside, who addressed the meeting in explanation of the occurrence which had given rise to the occasion which had brought them together. The meeting was also addressed by Mr Roberts himself, Mr Sampson Lowe [*sic*], the Secretary of the Society, Mr Deputy Lott, and other gentlemen, who spoke of the usefulness, the good service, and the claims of the Society'. See also *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* (Sunday 2 October 1859) and *The Morning Chronicle* (Monday 9 January 1860).

Clasp inscribed: 'For Rescuing Life 18th July 1859. Case 5216'.

5,447: Conductor Edward Cooke: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) – RC 7 December 1859 and QGM 27 January 1860: On 6th December 1859, at 124 High Street, Whitechapel, 'FE Conductor Samuel Wood had again greatly distinguished himself – saving the whole of the inmates - 11 in number - by great personal exertions; he was at length overpowered by the smoke and would have been lost himself but for the intrepid and persevering conduct of Conductor Cooke who brought him out quite insensible; it was half an hour before he was brought to and enabled to leave. Recommended that Conductor Wood receive a Savings Book with £5' [see case 5,544 for the probable actual award to Wood for these events]. See also the *Daily News* (Wednesday 7 December 1859). For a further mention of Cook see *The Morning Chronicle* (Thursday 15 April 1858) and the *Birmingham Daily Post* (Thursday 18 March 1858).

Medal inscribed: 'To Edward Cook, F.E, Condr. No.25, for prompt and efficient services, Decr 6, 1859. Case 5447.' (ex Whittaker Collection).

5,500: William Slattery: Silver medallion

Details: MB(1) - 27 January 1860: 'For intrepidity and efficient exertions at a fire in Manchester'. The Society's Minutes Book records that the medal was to be sent to the Mayor for presentation. The rescue was noted, among other places, in *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* (Sunday 27 November 1859) thus: 'A BRAVE BOY: About eight o'clock on Sunday evening, a room in a house situated in Spinnig [*sic*] Field, Deansgate, Manchester, was discovered to be on fire by a little fellow, nine years of age, named William Slattery, who, with great intrepidity, rescued its occupants, Andrew and Charlotte Conway, the one three years and the other fourteen months old. It appears that the mother of the three children had only left the house a short time before, in search of her husband, who had been out all day drinking. In her absence the children are supposed to have set fire to some things in the room. The flames were extinguished by the neighbours; but the eldest child has received such injuries that it is not expected to recover'.

5,544: Conductor Samuel Wood: Silver bar to medal and testimonial

Details: MB(1) – QGM 27 April 1860: No details of rescue. The rescue was described in *The Morning Chronicle* (Wednesday 7 December 1859) thus: 'Great fire at Whitechapel – rescue of eleven persons: Yesterday morning, between one and two, a destructive fire happened on the extensive premises of Mr Lewis Jacobs, wholesale boot and shoe maker, 124 High Street, Whitechapel. The fire was discovered by a policeman, who instantly raised the alarm and despatched a message for assistance. The escape promptly arrived, but not too soon, for the inhabitants of the house, eleven in number, had collected in the front room on the second floor, and were shrieking for help. Conductor Wood, acting with great coolness, ascended into the building and assisted them all to escape. His exertions in doing this, however, were so great that he was thoroughly exhausted, and obliged to yield his place to a second conductor. Engines had arrived while this was going on, and by dint of great exertions on the part of the firemen the flames were at length extinguished'. The second conductor was probably Edward Cooke, who in fact rescued Wood who had collapsed due to smoke inhalation: see case 5,447 above. The presentation from the Lord Mayor at the Guildhall on 22 June was announced in the *Daily News* (Saturday 23 June 1860) thus: 'The brave fellow Wood, whose name has so frequently been before the public for saving lives at fires, was most enthusiastically cheered, and received a third clasp to his silver medal for his exertions at the great fire in Whitechapel on December 6, 1859, and also a testimonial on vellum'.

5,660 and 5,679: Conductor (No. 26) Edward Paine: Silver medallion and one sovereign

Details: MB(1) – RC 26 April 1860 and QGM 27 April 1860: 'Rescues at a fire on 30th March 1860 at 159 Drury Lane and a subsequent fire at Upper Wellington Street on 6th April 1860. Recommended as a result of these two fires attended by Conductor Paine within one week at which he saved together 13 lives. In either case the slightest delay or remissness on his part would have been fatal – the whole were saved from the greatest peril and although in the last case one unfortunate inmate perished this arose from no deficiency on the part of the Conductor, but from his being called to another part of the building at the time and being assured that everyone was out of the house'. See also *The Times* (3 July 1861, p. 10).

Medal inscribed: 'To Edward Paine, F.E. Condr. No. 26, for prompt and efficient services. March 30, April 6, 1860. Cases 5660-5679'.

5,826: Conductor (No. 50) William Rickell: Silver medallion

Details: MB(1) – QGM 27 July 1860: 'This rescue was for a fire at 17 Roadside, Mile End' . See also *The Times* (3 July 1861, p. 10), *The Morning Chronicle* (Wednesday 3 July 1861), the *Daily News* (Wednesday 3 July 1861; which records the recipient as 'Rickett'), the *Penny Illustrated Newspaper* (Saturday 11 August 1866), *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* (Sunday 4 February 1866), and the *Caledonian Mercury* (Tuesday 7 August 1866), the latter two reporting how on 1 February 1866 Rickell was saved by Police Inspector James Griffin, who in turn received the Society's silver medal for his actions.

6,085: Robert Crabtree, Sailor: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) - RC 14 December 1860 and QGM 25 January 1861: 'For rescuing two children at the imminent peril of his own life and during a momentarily expected explosion of gun powder at Orford Hill, Norwich'. In reporting the fire *The Times* (6 December 1860) described: 'THE FATAL GUNPOWDER EXPLOSION AT NORWICH…The conduct of a sailor named Crabtree, who rescued two helpless children of Mrs Dady from the burning premises, has excited universal admiration. The gallant fellow, who is a native of Hull, has been presented with £2, by the magistrates and £5.5s. subscribed for him by a few other persons who witnessed his daring courage. On receiving his well merited reward from the hands of the Mayor he expressed his thanks, and added, "But I didn't do it for the money," a remark which raised him still higher in the opinion of the Bench'. The presentation was subsequently described in *The Morning Chronicle* (29 January 1861) thus: 'The society's silver medallion to Robert Crabtree, a sailor (of Hull), for his noble and intrepid conduct at a fire which broke out on the premises of Mr Morrison, gun maker, of Norwich, the 10th December, 1860, when he rescued the lives of two children from certain destruction. The conflagration was raging, when someone said that there were two children in the first floor. Crabtree then climbed up the front of the house by the water-spout, dashed in the window, and groped about in the smoke, which almost blinded and suffocated him, till he found the bed in which one of the children was asleep. Whilst he was in the house a second explosion occurred, but luckily without injuring him. He then found the other child, and dropped them both into the arms of the crowd below'. See also *'Norfolk Annals, Vol II, 1851-1900', Charles Mackie* (Norwich, 1901), *The Morning Chronicle* (Wednesday 3 July 1861), and *The Times* (4 July 1860, 6 July 1860, 4 December 1860 and 3 July 1861).

6,401: John Halstead: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) – RC 5 June 1861: 'This rescue was for a fire at Lambeth Walk'. See also *The Times* (3 July 1861).

6,422: John Mulvey: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) – RC 5 June 1861: 'This rescue was for a fire at Carrick on Shannon'. See also *The Times* (3 July 1861).

[Unnumbered]: James Larkin, Barge Builder: Silver medallion
Thomas Maxtell, Waterman: Silver medallion

Details: MB(1) – RC 28 June 1861: This rescue was for the famous fire at Tooley Street. The presentations were subsequently described in *The Times* (3 July 1861) thus: 'The Society's silver medal to James Larkin, a barge builder, and to Thomas Maxtell, a waterman, for intrepid and humane exertions at the great wharf fire at London Bridge [on] June 22, 1861, when, at the peril of their own lives, they ventured in a small boat to pull to the rescue of the occupant of another boat surrounded by flame of the most threatening kind, and succeeded, after the attempt had been abandoned by others as one of self-destruction, in dragging him out of his own burning boat into theirs, in which they eventually escaped'. See also *Reynolds's Newspaper* (7 July 1861). The *Daily News* (Wednesday 3 July 1861) records the recipients as 'James Jackson and Thomas Maxtell'.

6,476 and 6,495: Conductor Samuel Wood: A silver clasp to medal and the sum of £2

Details: MB(1) – QGM 26 July 1861: No details of rescue. The Society's *Twenty-Sixth Annual Report, 1861-2* (1862, p. 22) recorded the award as follows: 'To Samuel Wood, Fire-Escape Conductor No. 10 in the Society's service, an additional clasp to his silver medal and two sovereigns for great promptitude and courageous exertions at two fires on the 17th and 23rd June 1861, respectively. The first occurred shortly after twelve o'clock at 63 Church Lane, Whitechapel. The conductor was very early on the spot with his Fire-Escape, and whilst the flames were issuing from the basement, he ascended to the second floor, and brought out Mr Henry Rosenburg and his son, whose escape by the stairs was entirely cut off. The

second fire occurred at 94 High Street, Whitechapel, at twenty-five minutes to two am. The conductor on his arrival found the whole of the lower part of the premises in flames, and persons at two different windows on the second floor calling for help. With the greatest judgement and exertion he succeeded in bringing them all down the Fire-Escape – namely, from the first window, Nicholas Collings, landlord, aged 35; his partner, John Harris, aged 27; and Ann Jones, barmaid, aged 25; and then shifting his ladders to the second window, he brought out two young women. By this time the whole premises were enveloped in flames; and whilst in the act of scaling the roof to obtain access into a back window to search for the potman, who was missing, some large casks of spirit exploded and the roof fell in, the conductor recovering his own position on the Escape with great difficulty. The poor potman was afterwards discovered to have been suffocated, and at the inquest on his remains the Coroner and Jury expressed their high sense of Conductor Wood's praiseworthy exertions. The Senior Warden of Whitechapel, in commenting on this case, adds: "I find these statements quite correct, and the conductor's behaviour to have been deserving of great praise and a reward", and the District Inspector says: "The whole of the persons rescued state that it would have been impossible to have got out of the house by any other means than the Fire-Escape, which arrived two or three minutes after the fire was discovered". Also a Testimonial on Vellum and a half-a-sovereign to William Rahelly, Police Constable, 53 H Division, for the valuable assistance rendered by him to Conductor Wood at the first-mentioned fire'.

6,492: Thomas Wilson, Boatman: Silver medal and £2.10s

Details: MB(1) – RC 24 Jul 1861: This rescue was for the famous fire at Tooley Street. The Society's *Twenty-Sixth Annual Report, 1861-2* (1862, pp. 23-4) recorded the award as follows: 'To Thomas Wilson, of No. 4 Finch Street, St George's-in-the-East, the Society's silver medal and the sum of £2.10s for the intrepid and disinterested exertions at the Great Wharf fire, Tooley Street, June 23rd 1861, when at the hazard of his own life and sacrifice of his property, the boat in which he was at the time, he rescued the lives of two men. The following statement has been authenticated: "The two men were in a skiff on the river, and, approaching too near to the fire, they were drawn into the floating mass of flame; witnessing this, and hearing their cries for help, Wilson, who was in his own boat, pulled towards them, and dragged one of them out of their boat, which had caught fire, into his. In doing so, however, it also drifted into the flames and quickly ignited. Losing all control over it, he jumped overboard on the clear side of the boat, with one of the men, and swam with him to the shore, the other man reaching a barge by means of the second boat, from which he was eventually taken". This case combining merits that bring it within the scope of the Royal Humane Society, the two Societies united in voting Wilson £5 for the purchase of a new boat, as it was found to be his chief means of subsistence. Recommended by Francis Williams, 56 High Street, Wapping; J Pugh, 27½ Wapping Wall; C Gosheron, 42 Wapping Wall, eye witnesses. "Thomas Wilson acted with great courage. Neither the Thames Police, nor any other boat, would go near the burning vessel to rescue the men on the skiff, neither of whom could swim" *Extract from Inspector's Report*'. The Rotary Committee Minutes noted the negotiations with the RHS, namely that the Society agreed to contribute '£2.10 towards the purchase of a boat to replace the boat he lost in saving two men, provided the Royal Humane Society contribute the same sum – the case coming equally within their rules' (Quarterly General Meeting - 26 July 1861). The RHS agreed to match this amount, which they noted was 'for saving two men, whose boat was drawn into the flames at the great fire in Tooley Street on the 23rd of June'. The Minutes Book records the case number as 6492 (6450). The award was reported in *The Penny Illustrated Paper* (Saturday 12 July 1862, p. 18), which noted Wilson was 'a waterman, of 4 Finch Street, St George's-in-the-East'. See also *The Times* (22 August 1861, p. 10).

6,650: Supernumerary Conductor Stephen Tapsell: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) – RC 18 September 1861 and QGM 25 October 1861: This rescue was for a fire at Kent Street, Boro'. The Society's *Twenty-Sixth Annual Report, 1861-2* (1862, pp. 26-7) recorded the award as follows: 'To Stephen Tapsell, Fire-Escape Conductor No. 77 in the Society's service, the silver medallion, awarded for his intrepid and persevering efforts to save life at the fire on the premises of Mr Green, brushmaker, 8 Kent Street, Southwark, at five minutes past one o'clock on the morning of the 29th of August 1861, when, entirely by his promptitude and personal exertions, the lives of four of the inmates were rescued from the flames. "The conductor, who does duty at the St George's Church Station, Southwark, was called at three minutes past one o'clock. On his arrival, finding that the whole of the

lower part of the house was on fire, the conductor immediately placed his Escape at the second floor, and, having ascended, rescued Mrs Green and her infant child, both of whom were brought down the canvas: he then re-entered the second floor, and whilst endeavouring to get to the back part of the house, was met by a young man named Henry Waggoner, aged 17 years, who had apparently attempted to escape by the staircase, as the fire had ignited part of his clothing; with the greatest difficulty the conductor succeeded in rescuing the poor fellow from the flames. It being now reported that persons still missing were in one of the back rooms, the conductor, regardless of all personal danger, again ascended his Escape, and was about to enter the second-floor room when his attention was called by the bystanders to a man who had been seen on the roof, unable to escape. The fire was at this period making rapid progress, and the conductor, seeing that not a moment was to be lost, clambered from the top ends of the main ladder on to the parapet, and, with the assistance of Conductor Dunk, who had just then arrived, this person was also rescued. Notwithstanding these intrepid exertions of Conductor Tapsell, two lives were lost in the building, viz., Mr Green, the proprietor, and one of his children, Frances Green, aged two years and six months, and the young man, Henry Waggoner, also died the following day at the hospital, from the effects of the burns"'. The award was noted in *The Penny Illustrated Paper* (Saturday 12 July 1862, p. 18). See *The Ipswich Journal* (Saturday 16 May 1863) and *The Times* (Monday 21 March 1864, p. 9) for details of further rescues Tapsell was involved in and the *Daily News* (Saturday 25 May 1889) for a report of Tapsell receiving the long service medal from the Princess of Wales following his transfer to the Metropolitan Fire Brigade.

6,667: James Burgess: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) – RC 12 June 1862: The Society's *Twenty-Sixth Annual Report, 1861-2* (1862, p. 23) recorded the award as follows: 'The Society's Testimonial on Vellum to each of the following Constables: Maurice Lane, 397K; William Hall, 425K; and William Freeston, 135K, for the prompt and serviceable aid rendered by them in securing the safety of several of the inmates at a fire at 4 Stepney Causeway, Ratcliff, at about six am on September 2nd, 1861. Also, the Society's silver medal to a young lad, aged 12 years, named James Burgess, for the intrepidity and presence of mind with which he behaved at the same fire, as evidenced at the inquest on the body of one poor woman who perished. The following facts were borne out by the evidence: " The fire referred to broke out in the kitchen. Shortly after six in the morning, it was discovered by Mrs Burgess, the landlady, who managed with some difficulty to arouse her lodgers. She then carried one of her children downstairs into the street; but there was no possibility of returning, as the smoke and flame were ascending the staircase. Three females, named Rogers, were brought down from the first floor window by the policeman. The lad, James Burgess, was at this time in the second floor front, with two of his younger brothers, and an elderly lady in the back room. It was impossible to get down stairs. There was a very small trapdoor in the ceiling of the front room leading to the roof, but no steps or ladder could reach it, and the ceiling rather lofty, and dense volumes of smoke and flame ascending. The boy closed the door, piled up boxes and books upon a chair, managed to reach the hole and raise himself up, and with great difficulty dragged his two little brothers after him, and got safely onto the next roof; he then returned, and called loudly for the poor old lady to come and he would help her; but she had made her way down stairs as far as the first floor, where she fell and perished in the flames. I was greatly impressed by the heroic conduct of this youth while giving his evidence before the Coroner, and I am of the opinion that had it not been for the coolness and courage he displayed, they all must have perished. Fire-Escape Conductor Hardway arrived directly after the children were rescued, and endeavoured to fight his way through the smoke and heat into the back room, but the flames forced him to return. He then made for the back of the house, but the flames were pouring through the windows, and all hopes of rescuing the old lady were gone, and her body was afterwards found in the ruins. I have much pleasure in recommending this as a genuine case of rescue. The lad (James Burgess) will be thirteen years of age next birthday. He is residing with his mother at No. 16 Mercer's Terrace"'. The award to Burgess was noted in *The Penny Illustrated Paper* (Saturday 12 July 1862, p. 18).

6,826: PSgt John Curtis Piller: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) – RC 12 June 1862: This rescue was for a fire at Mile End. The Society's *Twenty-Sixth Annual Report, 1861-2* (1862, pp. 28-9) recorded the award as follows: 'To John Curtis Piller, Police Sergeant, 13 K Division, the Society's silver medallion, for the intrepid and very valuable services rendered by him in saving the life of Fire-Escape Conductor William Rickell, at a fire at 20

Crown Row, Mile End Road, Stepney, on the morning of the 17th November 1861, when at great personal risk, and ultimately sustaining severe injury, the Sergeant succeeded in giving assistance to the conductor, who had entered the premises, and been overpowered by the smoke. At the moment of reaching the conductor, and whilst dragging him to the window, the ladder slipped from under Sergeant Piller, precipitating him to the ground, notwithstanding which he secured the safety of the conductor; subsequently being conveyed himself to the London Hospital, where he was compelled to remain an inmate for a fortnight, and was incapacitated from duty for a longer period'. The fire may be that described in the *Daily News* (Monday 18 November 1861). The award was noted in *The Penny Illustrated Paper* (Saturday 12 July 1862), which added Piller was serving with K Division. *The Morning Chronicle* (Thursday 14 January 1858) has an account by Piller of his involvement in a murder case.

Medal inscribed: 'To John Curtis Piller, Police Sergeant 13 R Div., for intrepidity in Saving Life, Novr. 17 1861. Case 6826'. Additionally engraved on the edge: 'Sergt. John Curtiss Piller. K. Divn M.P.'

6,920: Conductor Samuel Wood: Clasp to Medal and 20s

Details: MB(1) – QGM 24 January 1862: This rescue was for a fire at 81 Church Lane. The Society's *Twenty-Sixth Annual Report, 1861-2* (1862, p. 30) recorded the award as being in recognition of Wood's actions at two fires, now noted as cases 6919 and 6966, and gave the following details: 'To Samuel Wood, Fire-Escape Conductor No. 10 in the Society's service, an additional clasp to his silver medal and one sovereign, to record the approbation of the Society with the efficient services rendered by him at two fires, at which, entirely by the alacrity of his attendance, and the judgement displayed in the management of his Fire-Escape, he proved the means of rescuing three lives. Case 6919 [was a] fire at 81 Church Lane, Whitechapel, at twenty minutes past one o'clock on the morning of the 2nd of January, 1862. Immediately on the outbreak of this fire, which took place in the lower part of the house, Mr Middleton, who was the only inmate, appeared at the second-floor window, calling loudly for help, and was in the act of jumping into the street, when the Fire-Escape arrived. The conductor, seeing how imminent the danger was, rushed up the ladder, whilst his assistants were pitching it against the house, and, just as he got up to Mr Middleton, the latter, in extreme terror, leaped on to the Escape, and had not the conductor fortunately had hold of the guy ropes, both must have fallen to the ground; as it was, he descended with him in his arms in safety. Case 6966 [was a] fire at 30A Brick Lane, Spitalfields, at forty minutes past one o'clock on the 25th January, 1862. Conductor Wood, on arrival at the fire, found the shop and kitchen on fire, and the flames issuing from the parlour shutters. Being informed that the inmates slept on the first floor, he immediately ascended to their assistance. He found John Finch and his wife endeavouring to arouse themselves, but nearly overcome with the smoke, besides which the former, from his being lame, was unable to help himself. Eventually the conductor succeeded in getting them both out in safety, the conductor himself suffering severely for hours after from the suffocating smoke'. The award was probably that noted in *The Penny Illustrated Paper* (Saturday 12 July 1862, p. 18).

6,934: PC Bernard Hussey: Silver medal

Details: MB(1) – RC 12 June 1862: This rescue was for a fire at Old Ford Road. The Society's *Twenty-Sixth Annual Report, 1861-2* (1862, pp. 30-1) recorded the award as follows: 'To Bernard Hussey, Police Constable, 370 K Division, the Society's silver medallion, for intrepid and very persevering exertions in saving the life of Mr J A Hinton, the landlord of the "Sir C Napier" in the Old Ford Road, Bethnal Green. The escape of this person from the second floor was entirely cut off during a fire on the premises at twelve o'clock, January 8th, 1862, and no means at hand of rendering him assistance. The constable brought a short ladder, raised it to the narrow lead of the shop, and ascended as high as enabled him to reach the window, into which he raised himself. Entering the window, he discovered the landlord quite insensible from the smoke: with some difficulty, he lowered him from the window on to the lead, and from thence to the first-floor window of the next house, where, upon restoratives being administered, he was eventually recovered. The Inspector states "A very deserving case, and Mr Hinton says that, but for the constable's exertions, he must have perished"'. The award was noted in *The Penny Illustrated Paper* (Saturday 12 July 1862, p. 18).

7,310: Conductor (47) William Isles: Silver Medal

Details: There is no note of this award in the Minutes. The Society's *Twenty-Sixth Annual Report, 1861-2* (1862, p. 34), however,

recorded the award as follows: 'To William Isles, Fire-Escape Conductor No. 47 in the Society's service, the silver medallion, for his intrepid and efficient services at a fire at 257 Bethnal Green Road, at half-past one o'clock am on the 28th May 1862. These premises were occupied by Mr Perraton, a chandler and general dealer. The fire was discovered by a civilian, who immediately ran for the Fire-escape, and Conductor Isles, within two or three minutes, had it pitched against the house. He found the shop was on fire, and the flames and smoke reaching the first floor; the inmates on this floor had managed to make their escape over the roof of a small outhouse at the back. Conductor Isles directly entered the second-floor window, where he found Mr Perraton and his family asleep. Isles aroused them, carried five children down the main ladder, and passed the parents, Mr and Mrs Perraton, down the canvass. Mr Perraton's mother, aged 65 years, was yet to be brought down: she wanted to dress herself, but the flames were now entering the room, and a minute's delay would have been fatal, and Conductor Isles had to carry her down the ladder, though she offered some opposition. They had scarcely reached the bottom of the Escape, when the flames issued out of the windows of the room they had just left, and directly after the roof fell in. Conductor Isles was much exhausted. The Inspector reports in investigating this case: "I have seen Mrs Perraton the elder, who, with tears in her eyes, thanked God that Conductor Isles had brought her down as he did. I have also seen the other branches of the family, and they express themselves truly grateful for their deliverance, which they attribute solely to the prompt arrival of the Escape, and the energy and determination displayed by the conductor". Mr Joseph Barrett, of 246 Bethnal Green Road, writes: "Gentlemen, I live exactly opposite the premises 257 Bethnal Green Road, which was destroyed by fire on the morning of the 28th of May last, and witnessed the exertions of William Isles, the Conductor of the Fire-Escape, through whose perseverance the lives of eight inmates were saved, or they must have inevitably perished in the flames"'. The award was also noted in *The Penny Illustrated Paper* (Saturday 12 July 1862, p. 18). Isles appears to have been born in Kingston, Berkshire sometime between 1831 and 1834. In 1861 he was living with his wife Sarah and family in Bethnal Green, and was noted as being employed as a 'Fire-Escape Conductor'. By 1871 he was living at 13 Welldone Square, Whitechapel, and was noted as then working with the Salvage Corps. For further mention of Isles see *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* (Sunday 27 November 1864, 28 May 1865, and 30 July 1865), the final of which editions includes the following report: 'Two certificates were received the same morning, signed by Charles Meish and C Butler, of 132 Hackney Road, stating that Escape Conductor Isles had saved, at a fire that took place in that thoroughfare, the wife of the first named and two of his children, and also the wife and two children of the second named, as well as an old lady. The whole of the premises in which the disaster commenced were destroyed, and the next building was considerably damaged by fire, water, and hasty removal'.

Medal inscribed: 'To William Isles, F.E. Cond. No. 47 for intrepidity in saving life 28th May 1862. Case No. 7310'.

7327: James O'Brien: Silver medal

Details: MB(2) – QGM 24 October 1862. This rescue was for a fire at Bishopsgate Without.

7,411: Conductor Charles B Arnold: Silver medal

Details: MB(2) – RC 5 September 1862 and QGM 24 October 1862: 'For valuable services in rescuing two lives attended in Piccadilly with great risk to himself'. The fire is noted as having occurred on 31 July 1862 at 17 Piccadilly, the two people being 'saved from what appeared inevitable death, and at great risk to the Conductor' (Nadal, 2006, p. 63). Arnold was later called to give evidence in court over the disputed insurance claim that followed the fire, the report noting that: '…Arnold, the conductor of the fire-escape at St James's Church, nearly opposite the plaintiff's shop, found the plaintiff's brother holding on by the sill of the third floor window. He brought him down safely, and then went up again. He found the plaintiff lying in the gutter of the roof in an insensible state. He had only his night shirt on. Witness said to him: "For God's sake come on" and the only answer he got from him was, "I am a ruined man". After the fire he was sent for, and he went to Mr Eilcart's, who questioned him as to the state he found the inmates. Mr Eilcart asked witness if he could swear the plaintiff had no clothes on underneath his shirt. He told him he would not swear he had not a flannel shirt on, because he did not examine him closely enough for that…'. Arnold's medal was subsequently stolen and he applied to the Society for a replacement. The Minutes Book, Rotary Committee Meeting, 25 June 1867, records that: 'Conductor Arnold's application for a cast of the Medal awarded to him by the Committee... which he stated to have [lost]

amongst other property stolen from his house. Determined that, provided the Conductor gave satisfactory proof of the robbery and was willing to defray the expense or part thereof connected with the resupply of the Medal, the same be allowed such arrangement being in conformity with the custom observed in the Government Departments'. See also the *Penny Illustrated Newspaper* (Saturday 11 August 1866).

7,439: Conductor (11) George Elsden: Silver medal and 20s
Conductor Robert Hutchings: Clasp and 20s

Details: MB(2) – RC 5 September 1862 and QGM 24 October 1862: In considering the fire at 9 Great Cumberland Street on 15 August 1862, the Society noted they had received 'numerous testimonials' regarding the services of the conductors involved and quoted the following one from Brownlow Maitland, from 41 Montagu Square, dated 20 August 1862: 'Sir, on behalf of the surviving members of the family of the late Mr Barrett, who were rescued by the Fire-Escape men from the fire at his house 9 Gt Cumberland St on the 15th inst, I beg leave to express their thanks for the praiseworthy exertions of the Conductors who were instrumental in assisting them to escape and to enclose a cheque for £10 to be placed if the Directors think fit to the funds of the Society'. A report of the events was given in *The Times* (16 August 1862) thus: 'Yesterday morning, between 1 and 2 o'clock, a dreadful fire broke out in one of the lofty mansions in Cumberland Street, Hyde Park, belonging to Mr S W Barrett. The house stands nearly opposite the Marble Arch...At the time the fire broke out there were more than a dozen persons sleeping in the house. They consisted of Mr and Mrs Barrett, their children, governess, lady's maid, nurse, general servants, and butler…About 12 o'clock...a light was seen in the kitchen by a police constable who was passing. On closer examination he found that the house was on fire. He instantly sprang his rattle and rang the bell. In a few moments the front door was unbolted and opened by a person in his nightdress, who turned out to be Mr Barrett. He was only there a moment, for he reclosed the door and bolted it, and was not again seen alive. Shortly afterwards, piercing screams issued forth from the top part of the house, and loud cries of "Fire! Fire!" "Help! Help" from the upper windows. The flames had seized upon the whole of the staircase, thus cutting off all means of retreat by the regular way. The only chance left depended upon the early arrival of the Royal Society's fire-escape. Fortunately, Conductor Elsden arrived with his escape in two minutes after hearing the call, and was quickly followed by Conductor Hutchings with another of the Royal Society's escapes. Upon getting in front of the building they could see the smoke rolling from nearly every part of it, and at several of the windows were women and children screaming frantically for help. Elsden placed his machine in front of the house, and at risk of his own life entered the different rooms, and brought down in rapid succession a little child, four women, and an old gentleman. While he was so engaged the other conductor, hearing screams proceeding from the next house, pitched his machine against it, and having passed through some of the rooms... found the governess of Mr Barrett's family there almost stifled with smoke. He at once brought her down the escape and also three other persons. As the escape conductors were engaged in front, John Parsons ...procured a ladder ...and placed it against the back of the burning house. He managed by its means to save the lives of Mrs Barrett, her infant, and nurse. From her recent confinement Mrs Barrett was little able to exert herself…Loud cries were then made for the conductors to enter building and rescue Mr Barrett and his two children, who were still inside. The conductors both made for the first floor, but the flames were rolling out and curling round the window tops with such fury that they were fairly driven back .... All hopes of saving the three persons known to have been left behind in the building were therefore at an end, loud piteous screams were heard, apparently proceeding from some portion of the ground floor. Here an attempt was made to enter but without success, and in a few minutes the screams ceased... It then became manifest that these three unhappy persons had perished…It then became evident that the unfortunate gentleman, after closing the door, ran up the staircase to his daughter's bedroom, and, getting her in his arms, returned to the front door to escape into the street. In his fright he had forgotten that he had bolted it, and had fallen in his struggle to get it open... the other daughter, aged 4 years...was found in her cot in her bedroom, which was unburnt. She appeared to have died from suffocation…'. An account of the Society's decision was reproduced in their *Annual Report* of 1862 (the details extracted by J Lawson Whalley and reported in his collection catalogue): 'Voted the Society's Silver Medallion and one sovereign to Fire-Escape Conductor George Elsden for his intrepid and efficient conduct at a fire that occurred on the night of the 15th August at the house of J N Barrett Esq, 9 Great Cumberland Street, London. He was early

on the spot with his escape, just as a young woman came to the second floor window. Elsden ascended the escape, and received from her a little girl; immediately after lowering her, he descended with the young woman, surrounded at the time with smoke they could see nothing, and had great difficulty in making their way down. Shortly after the flames from the window rushed forth. The Conductor then had his attention directed to screams at the back from whence he rescued from a position of utmost peril, the French governess. Six servants and a little child were rescued by another escape, Mrs Barrett, her infant and nurse were rescued by other means. Mr Barrett and his eldest daughter perished in attempting to gain the street door'. Elsden was recognised by the Society on at least two other occasions. According to MB(1) – QGM 29 April 1852 (case 1656) Elsden received a testimonial and 10s for a rescue from a fire at Whitecross Street, 'for his prompt attendance and efficient services'. The Minutes Book omits to record the award recommended to this recipient. This appears to have been an error in writing the Minutes of the Quarterly General Meeting of 29 April 1852. However, the Society's *Sixteenth Annual Report* (1852, p. 25) records this award of a testimonial and half a sovereign to Elsden as does the report of the anniversary meeting of the Society in *The Morning Chronicle* (26 June 1852). He was later given a testimonial for bravery at another fire: see the report of the Society's Annual Meeting in the Egyptian Hall, Mansion House, on Monday 6 August 1866 (*Penny Illustrated Newspaper*, Saturday 11 August 1866), perhaps for a rescue he had performed in July 1865 at 434 West Strand (*The Times* (Wednesday 5 July 1865, p. 14).

Medal inscribed: 'To George Elsden F.E. Condr No.11, for Intrepidity in Rescuing Life. August 15 1862. Case 7439.'

7,604: Conductor (24) Adam Briggs: Silver medal

Details: MB(2) – RC 18 November 1862, RC 25 March 1863 and QGM 24 April 1863: 'This rescue was for a fire at 4 Dean Street, Finsbury where several persons were rescued by Briggs and the Finsbury Fire-escape'. This fire was on 17 November 1862 and was apparently attended by Briggs, with the Finsbury escape, and Conductor Steer, with the Bishopsgate Street escape, their efforts resulting in the rescue of 10 people.

Medal inscribed: 'To Adam Briggs F.E. Condr. No.24 for intrepidity in rescuing life. November 17, 1862. Case 7064'

7,672: Conductor Clarke: Silver medal
Conductor (25) Joseph Witham: Silver medal
PSgt (20C) Allen: Silver medal

Details: MB(2) – QGM 23 January 1863: The award to *Clarke* is noted thus: 'This rescue was for a fire on 26 December 1862 at 6 Portland Street, Soho, two people being rescued by means of the escape and after great exertions and at severe personal injuries to Conductor Clarke, of the Dean Street, Soho, fire-escape'. A surviving extract from the 1862-63 Annual Report notes that Clarke, with the Dean Street, Soho, escape, attended the fire at 6 Portland Street and rescued two people 'by means of the escape, after great exertions, and at severe personal injuries to the conductor'. The award to Allen is noted subsequently in RC 22 May 1863, though without details of his actions. In a lengthy report of the fire, the *Birmingham Daily Post* (Monday December 1862) quoted Sampson Low's investigation into the events thus: '…it appears that conductor Clark was called about half-past eleven o'clock by several persons who came running up at the same time, and informed him that a fire had broken out. He immediately started with his escape, and reached the scene in one minute and a half. He then found the fire coming out of the front shop, and the shutters down. He placed his escape to reach the second floor, as a man implored him to do so to save his three children, stating that they were the only children in the house. Having adjusted his escape against the second floor, three or four men rushed up, and Clarke had to climb over their backs, and fell once. The conductor rushed into the room, with the fire burning round him, and between them they saved two children, apparently suffocated. Clark next dashed through the flames, and by nearly losing his own life, managed to save another child, but, in doing so, he was terribly burnt on the hands. These children were apparently between the ages of one and five years. By this time the house was fully on fire, when Inspector Spencer arrived, and also conductor Robinson with the Soho escape, just as Clarke was bringing down the third child''. The Minute Book (Rotary Committee Meeting 21 January 1863) records 'Conductor Clarke made an application to be allowed full pay whilst suffering from the effects of his exertions at the fire in Portland Street (case 7,672). He sustained an injury from burns on his hand whilst bringing out one of the children and had been allowed a fortnight off duty in consequence by the Secretary – but he applied for a third week – Granted'. Although the Minutes Book makes no mention of an award to Witham, a medal

to him is extant and clearly identifies his rescue as case 7,672. What part he took in the proceedings is unclear.

Medal inscribed: 'To Joseph Witham, F.E. Condr No.25, for intrepidity in rescuing life December 26, 1862. Case 7672'.

7,761: Conductor (46) George Hardway: Silver medal

Details: MB(2) 17 April 1863: This rescue was for a fire at the Phoenix Music Hall, Ratcliff. According to *The Times* (Tuesday 19 January 1864, p. 8) the fire occurred on 17 February 1863 and four lives were saved. For further mentions of Hardway see section one of the present book, case 6,667 above, and also the *North Wales Chronicle* (Saturday 7 September 1861), *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* (Sunday 6 October 1861) and *Jackson's Oxford Journal* (Saturday 12 October 1861).

Medal inscribed: 'To George Hardway, F.E. Condr. No, 46 for intrepidity in rescuing Life, Jany. 25 1863. Case 7761'.

8,056: Conductor (No. 19) Thomas Welford: Silver bar and £1

Details: MB(2) – RC 22 May 1863: The minutes record that 'Conductor Welford was awarded with a clasp to the silver medal previously presented and one sovereign'. Welford subsequently requested a replacement medal for his earlier award (see case 1,536) that had been stolen and utilised this sovereign to fund its purchase (QGM, 24 July 1863).

8,178: Porter Byron Burgess: Silver medal and 20s

Details: MB(2) – QGM 30 October 1863: This rescue was for a fire at Hayes Street, Soho. The Society's *Annual Report 1863-4* (1864, pp. 21-22) detailed the award thus: 'To Byron Burgess, porter in the service of Mr Napier, the Society's silver medallion and one sovereign, for the intrepid and laudable conduct displayed by him on the occasion of a fire which occurred at 9 Hayes Court, Soho, at 3 o'clock on the morning of the 5th of July 1863, when at imminent personal risk, he rescued the lives of three persons, viz, Mr Smith, his wife, and Miss Phillips. It appears that, whilst the other lodgers were escaping and removing their furniture, Burgess, with commendable disinterestedness, devoted himself to the rescue of the three persons whose escape had been cut off by the flames. Standing on a narrow ledge outside the front window, he received them in his arms, (one of them a cripple, and another 75 years of age) and passed them down to persons in the street'.

8,314: Conductor William Hocking: Silver medal

Details: MB(2) – QGM 30 October 1863: This rescue was for a fire at Cambridge Place, Kingsland Road. The surviving award certificate that accompanied his medal records the circumstances thus: 'William Hocking Fire-Escape Conductor, No. 68 the Society's Silver Medallion for the prompt and intrepid services rendered by him at the fire at 2 Cambridge Place, Kingsland Road. On the 18th of October 1863, when he was instrumental in securing the lives of six persons by means of the Haggerstone Fire-escape. Entering the first floor room, Hocking rescued three persons, viz. Mr Batsford, his wife and son. Assured there were other inmates in the house, the Conductor ascended his Escape and made for the upper rooms, but now the fire had gained great ascendancy. Flames were issuing from the house, rendering any further search a matter of great peril. Nothing daunted, however, the Conductor entered the second floor, hence, after some difficulty, he rescued three females. The safety of the whole of the inmates is entirely attributable to the timely arrival of the Escape, and the gallant manner in which the Conductor discharged his duties (case 8,414 [*sic*])'. This account is also printed, with only slight variation, in the Society's *Annual Report 1863-4* (1864, pp. 24-25), where the case number is again given as 8,414. The fire was briefly noted in *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* (Sunday 25 October 1863). See also the Society's *Annual Report 1863-4* (1864, pp. 24-25).

8,345: Hannah Makepeace: Silver medal

Details: MB(2) – RC 30 May 1864: This rescue was for a fire at Twycross, Leicestershire. The Society's *Annual Report 1863-4* (1864, p. 25, which notes the case number as 8,445) detailed the award thus: 'To Hannah Makepeace, an aged woman, the Society's silver medallion, for her humane exertions and presence of mind on the occasion of an accident by fire at the house of Harcourt Clare, esq, Twycross, near Atherstone, Leicestershire, at eight o'clock on the morning of October 30th, 1863. It appears that Mary Hagg, aged 18, acting as housemaid in the service of Mr Clare, having finished dressing the two eldest children, in stooping down ignited her clothing. The fire at once caught the children's hair; fortunately, Hannah Makepeace was near, and succeeded

in arresting the danger; or two of the children would, doubtless, have been lost. Meantime the young woman, finding herself on fire, rushed down a long flight of stairs into the kitchen, and frantically seizing another female servant, both were in imminent danger of being burned to death, when Hannah, who had immediately followed her, with great courage and energy, threw the nurse on the floor, thereby saving the life of the other servant. Mary Hagg was, however, so severely injured, that, notwithstanding the attention and medical cure afforded her by the family of Mr Clare, she died from the effects of the burns. Edward Faux, esq., resident in the neighbourhood, and the first person on the spot after the fire, states – "Hannah Makepeace's conduct is beyond all praise. Being so deaf, it is a marvel how she could have acted with such promptitude and forethought. She doubtless saved the nurse girl from being burnt to death on the spot, as well as the cook, whom the girl on fire had got fast hold of, and was pulling about the kitchen; she must also be considered to have preserved the lives of the two youngest children"'.

8,801: Conductor William Rickell: Bar to medal

Details: MB(2) – RC 30 May 1864: This rescue was for a fire at 170 Mile End Road. The Society's *Annual Report 1863-4* (1864, p. 30) detailed the award thus: 'To William Rickell, Fire-Escape Conductor, No. 40, in the Society's service, a Clasp to his Silver Medallion, for his intrepid and efficient services at a fire at 170 Mile End Road, on the evening of the 7th of April 1864. Notwithstanding the promptitude with which the Escape arrived, the fire had taken such hold of the shop as to prevent all egress by the staircase. The Conductor immediately entered the house, and rescued Mr Bartlett and his wife, also an aged widow and her two daughters, lodgers in the same house. Great credit is likewise due to the Conductor for his courageous and persevering exertions in searching for a child reported to have been in the house. Mr Churchwarden Newton, of Mile End, states: "It appears that Rickell was promptly on the spot, brought down five persons out of the upper rooms of the house, and displayed great courage and presence of mind in discharging his duties. All who witnessed his conduct on the occasion speak in very high terms of his exertions." Copy of letter received by the Secretary: "170 Mile End Road, April 14th 1864. Gentlemen, I beg most respectfully to render my humble thanks for the rescue of my mother and two sisters from the fire which took place at the above house. I beg to state that the officer in charge of the Fire-Escape is deserving of great praise for the gallant manner in which he rescued them. I am, gentlemen, yours obediently, A. Stillwell"'.

8,802: William George Kite: Silver medal

Details: MB(2) – RC 8 July 1864: This rescue was for a fire at 6 Commercial Street. The Society's *Annual Report 1863-4* (1864, pp. 30-31) detailed the award thus: 'To William George Kite, of Commercial Street, Shoreditch, the Society's silver medallion, for intrepidity displayed by him at a fire which occurred at the premises of Mr Hale, Wholesale Chemist and Druggist, 6 Commercial Street, Shoreditch, on the afternoon of the 7th of April 1864. The following is a statement of the case authenticated by several respectable inhabitants of the neighbourhood: Upon seeing the premises on fire Mr Kite, who lives in the house adjoining, got out of his first-floor window on to a narrow ledge above, along which he walked for nearly thirty feet at considerable personal risk. He then enabled Mrs Hall to escape from the room, which was fast filling with smoke and flames. Had it not been for Mr Kite's exertions, she must have perished either by suffocation or the flames'.

8,821: Conductor Samuel Wood: Additional Bar

Details: MB(2) – RC 30 May 1864: This rescue was for a fire at 16 Leman Street, Whitechapel. The Society's *Annual Report 1863-4* (1864, p. 31) detailed the award thus: 'To Samuel Wood, Fire-Escape Conductor, No. 9, in the Society's service, an additional Bar to his Silver Medallion, for the alacrity and persevering exertions displayed by him whilst in attendance, with the Whitechapel Escape, at a fire at 16 Leman Street, at a quarter past three o'clock on the morning of the 10th of April 1864, when, at considerable risk to his own life, he rescued Mary Brown, aged 78 years, from apparently inevitable death by fire. Extract from the Inspector's report: "Conductor Wood was most promptly in attendance with the Escape, first at 51 Great Alie Street, but finding the fire there was confined to the back warehouse, he moved the Escape round to 16 Leman Street, adjoining the former premises, found that the shop was on fire, and that Mr Burch, his wife, and two children, had made their own way down the stairs with much difficulty, but ascertaining on inquiry that Mrs Mary Brown, mother of Mr Burch, an infirm

person of 73 years of age, who slept on the second floor, was still upstairs, Conductor Wood crawled up the staircase at considerable risk to himself, and found her quite overpowered with the smoke on the stairs just over the fire. He succeeded in carrying her downstairs safely. The poor woman attributes the preservation of her life entirely to the exertions of Conductor Wood"'. See also *The Standard* (Monday, 11 April 1864, p. 2).

9,034: Conductor John Rummens: Silver medal

Details: MB(2) – RC 21 October 1864 and QGM 28 October 1864: 'On 26th June 1864, three lives were saved at 37 Hampstead Road'. The medal was presented by the Lord Mayor at the Society's annual meeting in July 1865, the press announcement of which noted it was 'for efficient services, combined with intrepidity, at a fire at…37 Hampstead Road, June 26th 1864, when, at great personal peril, he entered a room of the house on fire full of suffocating smoke, and succeeded in bringing out Mrs Levy, who had sunk to the floor insensible' (*The City Press*, Saturday 15 July 1865, p. 6).

9,294: Conductor Robert Steer: Silver medal

Details: MB(2) – RC 21 October 1864: 'On 29th September 1864, eleven lives were saved entirely through the promptitude and personal exertion of Conductor Steer at 24 Artillery Lane, Bishopsgate'. The presentation of the award was announced in *The Daily News* (Saturday 15 July 1865) thus: 'Conductor Robert Steer received a silver medal, a testimonial, and one sovereign for having on two separate occasions, by his promptitude, intrepidity, and efficiency rescued at least fifteen persons'. More specific details were noted by *The City Press*, which reported the medal was 'for the intrepidity, promptitude and efficiency displayed by him at a fire on the premises [at] 24 Artillery Lane, at two am on the morning of September 29th 1864, when he succeeded in rescuing eleven persons by means of his fire-escape' (*The City Press*, Saturday 15 July 1865, p. 6). See also *The Times* (Wednesday, 3 July 1861, p. 10) and *The City Press* (Saturday 15 July 1865, p. 6) which note the award of testimonials to Steer.

9,242: Conductor William Isles: Clasp to silver medal and 20s

Details: MB(2) – QGM 28 October 1864 and QGM 27 January 1865: This rescue was for a fire at 198 Kingsland Road. The events were briefly noted in *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* (Sunday 18 September 1864) thus: 'On Monday, a fire broke out on the premises belonging to Mr Eatbread, 198 Kingsland Road. An alarm was at once given, and the inmates escaped in safety. The flames were not overcome until the whole of the valuable stock-in-trade was destroyed'. The rescue was mentioned, in the context of a rescue at a different fire by another conductor, in the *Daily News* (Saturday 17 September 1864) thus: '…These, with four other lives saved by Conductor Isles at the fire in the Kingsland Road, make ten persons saved by the Royal Society during the present week. The only good the engines do, was to prevent the flames from destroying the top floors…'. The clasp was presented by the Lord Mayor at the Society's annual meeting in July 1865, the press announcement of which noted it was 'for the prompt and very efficient services rendered by him at a fire on the premises [at] 19 [*sic*] Kingsland Road, at two o'clock am, on the morning of September 12, 1864, when he succeeded in rescuing the lives of a father and mother and two children' (*The City Press*, Saturday 15 July 1865, p. 6).



Bar to Conductor Isles's medal

Bar inscribed: 'For Rescuing Life, 12th September 1864, Case No. 9242'.

9,255: Conductor Edward Dunk: Silver medal

Details: MB(2) – QGM 28 October 1864: This rescue was for a fire at 158 High Holborn. The rescue was reported in the *Daily News* (Saturday 17 September 1864) thus: 'FIRE IN HIGH HOLBORN: Yesterday, between the hours of 2 and 3am, a fire took place in the premises belonging to Mr J Mullins, a linen draper and silk mercer, 158 High Holborn. The discovery was made by the police constable hearing a loud crackling noise in the shop. Just as the engines were ready for work a cry was raised that several persons were in the second floor. Conductor Edward Dunk immediately placed the Royal Society's escape in front of the blazing building, and

succeeded in rescuing the following persons: Joseph George Lyons, aged 45, Maria Louisa Lyons, aged 34, Eliza Lyons, aged 68, Rosa Lyons, aged 9, Joseph Lyons, aged 5, William Lyons, aged 3. These, with four other lives saved by Conductor Isles at the fire in the Kingsland Road, make ten persons saved by the Royal Society during the present week. The only good the engines do, was to prevent the flames from destroying the top floors…'. The medal was presented by the Lord Mayor at the Society's annual meeting in July 1865, the press announcement of which noted it was 'for intrepidity and efficiency at a fire [at]…158 High Holborn, on the 10th of September 1864, when, owing to his vigilance and activity with the fire-escape, it proved the means of rescuing the lives of a family of six persons' (*The City Press*, Saturday 15 July 1865, p. 6). For other references to Dunk see *The Examiner* (Saturday 12 September 1857), the *Daily News* (Thursday 27 October 1859), *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* (Sunday 26 February 1860, 1 September 1861, 13 October 1861, 29 November 1863, and 3 December 1865), *The Times* (Wednesday 3 July 1861, p. 10), and the *Penny Illustrated Paper* (Saturday 11 August 1866). For subsequent actions in saving the lives of five people from the roof of the Nag's Head Tavern, in Leather Lane, on Tuesday 28 November 1865 (see *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper*, Sunday 3 December 1865 for brief details), the Society proposed awarding Dunk a silver clasp to his medal. This was subsequently downgraded to the award of a Testimonial and one sovereign (SPLF case no. 10,431), the presentation of which by the Lord Mayor took place at the next annual meeting of the Society on Monday 6 August 1866 (*Penny Weekly Newspaper*, Saturday 11 August 1866).

Medal inscribed: 'To Edward Dunk Fire Escape Cond No 25 for intrepid exertions 16 Septr 1864 Case 9255'.

[Unnumbered]: John Hassel: Silver medal

Details: MB(2) – QGM 27 January 1865: 'For his intrepid exertions in rescuing three children in Wolverhampton, as per statement authenticated by enquiries of the Rev. J.H. Iles of Wolverhampton. The presentation of award by the Lord Mayor at the Society's annual meeting in London was announced in *The Daily News* (Saturday 15 July 1865) thus: 'John Hassel, a fishmonger, of Wolverhampton, obtained the Society's medal for having saved the lives of three children under circumstances of great daring, and also a watch and chain presented by the father of the children'. Further details were reported by *The City Press*, which noted Hassel was from Blossom's Fold, Wolverhampton, and the award was for 'intrepidity in rescuing the lives of three children [on] December 11, 1864, on the occasion of a fire at 67 Darlington Street, Wolverhampton, [at] about 7 o'clock pm. The father of the children supplemented this gift by the addition of a silver watch and chain' (Saturday 15 July 1865, p. 6).

9,402: Edmund Green: Silver medal
Alfred Vivian: Silver medal

Details: MB(2) – RC 24 February 1865, CM 23 March 1865 and QGM 28 April 1865: These awards were for rescue from a fire at the Surrey Theatre, on Westminster Bridge Road, London, on 30 January 1865. The entire building was destroyed but all lives were saved. 'The circumstances attending this fire at which although the entire building was destroyed the lives of all the persons who were in the theatre at the time were preserved by the presence of mind of the Managers and others – were discussed and it was resolved: That it be recommended to the Awards Committee to vote a Commemorative record of the fire on vellum particularising the noble exertions of those chiefly instrumental in saving life the same to be framed and presented to the Chief Manager to be hung in some conspicuous place in the theatre when rebuilt. That a silver medal be awarded to Mr Green and to Mr Vivian and that testimonials on vellum be presented to Messrs Rowella, Evans and Beckingham'. The presentation of the awards was announced in *The Daily News* (Saturday 15 July 1865) thus: 'At the burning of the Surrey Theatre, as will be recollected, many lives were saved through the presence of mind and intrepidity of persons connected with the establishment, and thus Mr Green, the acting manager, and Mr Vivian, were awarded the Society's silver medal. Mr Rowella, Mr Evans, and Mr Beckingham obtained testimonials on vellum, and a testimonial on a large scale was prepared, to be placed in a conspicuous position in the manager's room of the new building' (see also *The City Press*, Saturday 15 July 1865, p. 6).

Medal inscribed: 'To Alfred Vivian, for judicious and intrepid conduct, 30 Jany 1865 Case 9602' (Sotheby's, 3 May 1882, lot 536; now London Fire Brigade Museum collection).

Medal inscribed: 'To Edmund Green for judicious and intrepid conduct 30th Jany

1865'. Medal in the House of Commons Medal Collection.

9,639: Conductor John Shaw: Silver medal (medallion)

Details: MB(2) – RC 21 April 1865 and QGM 28 April 1865 QGM: This rescue was for a fire at 57 Great Sutton Street. The fire and rescue were reported in the *Glasgow Herald* (Thursday 16 February 1865) thus: 'On Tuesday morning, about five minutes past 1 o'clock, a fire took place at 51 Great Sutton Street, London, in the occupation of a Mrs Hudson, coffee housekeeper. It appears that a cabdriver, No. 12,140, was passing along the street and at once gave the alarm. At the second floor, as the smoke was blown away by the strong wind, Mrs Hudson, the proprietress of the house, was seen in her night dress, hanging by her hands to the window sill, and a little further off her niece, aged 16, screaming frantically for help. The fire had reached the latter, and in her excitement she jumped from the window. A man who was standing below made an attempt to catch her, but failed, and she fell upon and severely injured him. Her fall, however, was thus to some extent broken, and she received very trifling injuries. All this time Mrs Hudson was clinging to the window-sill of the house. Just as she was in the act of falling to the ground, Conductor Shaw arrived with the Royal Society's escape. He was hailed by cheers from the crowd, and the woman was told if she could wait another second she would be rescued. The fire at that time had reached her arms and shoulders, and had burnt them terribly. In spite of this she kept hold of the stonework of the window-sill, and Shaw the conductor, having placed his machine at the north side of the building, mounted the escape and seized the unfortunate woman. She called out "Oh, my poor child!" This led the conductor to imagine that the child had been left in the building, and instead of carrying Mrs Hudson down the ladder, he put her into the canvas bagging, and ascended again to the second floor, though the fire was raging furiously and the smoke was so dense as to extinguish the light in his lamp. He saw a white object in the room, which he made for. Upon reaching it, however, he found that it was only a cotton quilt. Still thinking the girl had been left behind, he repaired towards the back rooms, and there he nearly lost his life, for in trying to pass through the smoke and flame he inhaled so much of the heated vapour that before he could reach the fire-escape to get down he was seized with sickness at the window. The cheering of the crowd seemed to give him fresh vigour, and taking hold of the side of his escape, he descended in safety. By this time the Clerkenwell parish engine had arrived, under the direction of Mr Hillyard, and was followed by numerous engines of the brigade and two Shand & Mason's land steamers. Neal, the turncock of the New River Company, having previously drawn the mains of the New River Company, there was plenty of water, but the firemen were unable to get the fire extinguished until the premises were totally destroyed. It is said the sufferer was uninsured'. The medal was presented by the Lord Mayor at the Society's annual meeting in July 1865, the press announcement of which noted that it was: 'for intrepidity displayed on the occasion of a fire at 57 Great Sutton Street, Goswell Street, on the 14th February 1865, when he succeeded in saving the life of Mrs Susan Hudson, who was hanging from the window sill when he arrived' (*The City Press*, Saturday 15 July 1865, p. 6).

[Unnumbered]: Thomas Leatham: Silver medal

Details: MB(2) – RC 21 April 1865 and QGM 28 April 1865: This rescue was for a fire in Armagh, Ireland. The Minutes Book notes that at the Quarterly General Meeting on 28 April 1865 the original award, which was a Testimonial and 20 shillings, was changed to a silver medal. The medal was presented by the Lord Mayor at the Society's annual meeting in July 1865, the press announcement of which noted it was 'for intrepid and disinterested exertions to save the life of an aged lady, named Mauleeveerer [*sic*], of Armagh, whose bedclothes and curtains were on fire, on the 12th of February 1865' (*The City Press*, Saturday 15 July 1865, p. 6).

9,449: Conductor (No. 60) Edward Miller: Silver medal

Details: MB(2) – RC 19 June 1865: No details of rescue. The rescue was reported, among other places, in *The Caledonian Mercury* (Thursday 8 December 1864) thus: 'FEARFUL SCENE AT A FIRE…upon entering some gates in Mark Lane, [the constable] found one of the large establishments let out in offices on fire…From the inquiries made it appears that the only persons who slept on the premises were the housekeeper, his wife, the maid-servant, and children. They were all fast asleep in the third floor, whilst dense masses of smoke could be seen issuing from the floor beneath. The officer at once sent off for the

Royal Society fire-escapes and engines, and strove to arouse the inmates. Conductors Miller and Preston quickly attended with the Society's escapes, when they found the fire raging furiously in the second floor, and the occupants of the third floor afraid to venture down the stairs for fear of being burnt to death. Miller at once rushed up the staircase and brought down the stair in safety Mr and Mrs Carroll, the servant, and the whole of the children except one. Upon reaching the street in their night-dresses they told the conductors, in their excitement, that everyone had been rescued, but Conductor Miller, to make assurance doubly sure, again ascended the building, and upon entering the third floor back he found a boy, about five years of age, gasping for breath, and no doubt if he had been left there another minute he must have been suffocated. Miller laid hold of him and was carrying him down stairs when he became overpowered with the heat and smoke, and he fell with his living charge in his arms on the staircase. Conductor Preston at once rushed to the rescue of the two, and both were saved by his instrumentality, but they were nearly stifled by the smoke. The engines of the London Brigade, including two Shand and Mason's land steamers, arrived with all possible expedition, and plenty of the New River Company's water having been procured, the firemen, under Captain Shaw, had the land steamers got to work, and although the fire was showing a brilliant reflection, they succeeded in confining the conflagration to the second and third floors, which were destroyed, all but the books, which were safely deposited in some of the patent Reliance fire-proof safes. The property, it is understood, was insured'. The medal was presented by the Lord Mayor at the Society's annual meeting in July 1865, the press announcement of which noted it was 'for intrepid exertions in saving life at a fire on the premises [at] 20 Mark Lane, a little before one o'clock on the morning of December 6th, 1864. Also, testimonial and half a sovereign to Edward Preston, fire-escape conductor, for the efficient aid rendered by him to his fellow conductor' (*The City Press*, Saturday 15 July 1865, p. 6).
Medal inscribed: 'To Edward Miller Fire Escape Condr. No. 60 For Intrepid Exertions 6.12.1864, case 9449'.

9,547: Morris Moore: Silver medal

Details: MB(2) – RC 19 June 1865: This rescue was for a fire at 1 Sun Court, Smithfield. The medal was presented by the Lord Mayor at the Society's annual meeting in July 1865, the press announcement of which noted Moore was from '6 Holloway Court, Tower Hill' and that the medal was for 'intrepidity in saving life from fire, on the occasion of a fire at 1 Sun Court, Upper East Smithfield' (*The City Press*, Saturday 15 July 1865, p. 6).

9,774: PC (70M) John Bormann: Silver medal

Details: MB(2) – SpRM 7 July 1865: No details of rescue. The medal was presented by the Lord Mayor at the Society's annual meeting in July 1865, the press announcement of which noted it was 'for intrepidity and very determined exertions in saving life, during a fire in Revel's Row, Montagu Street, Southwark, on the 6th of March 1865, when, notwithstanding the risk to his own life, he courageously entered a room full of hot dense smoke, and first brought out a man named Edward Sturgeon, who had previously entered and been overpowered' (*The City Press*, Saturday 15 July 1865, p. 6). Sturgeon was at the same time awarded a testimonial for his own efforts.

9,875: George Carroll: Silver medal

Details: MB(2) – RC 29 September 1865 RC and QGM 3 November 1865: 'For intrepidity in rescuing the lives of a woman and six children at a fire in Bailey New Street, Waterford'. It was subsequently noted that: 'An application was made on behalf of George Carroll for his Silver Medal to be transmitted to him at once. Resolved that it could only be forwarded after the next public presentation of Medals' (Rotary Committee Meeting , 18 December 1865). The medal was presented to Carroll by the Lord Mayor at the Society's Annual Meeting in the Egyptian Hall, Mansion House, on Monday 6 August 1866 (*Penny Illustrated Newspaper*, Saturday 11 August 1866).

10,314: Conductor (No. 30) William Rickell: Clasp to Medal

Details: MB(2) – RC 13 April 1866 RC QGM 27 April 1866: This rescue was for a fire at Bull Lane, Stepney. The events were recorded in detail by the *Glasgow Herald* (Monday 2 October 1865) thus: 'EXTENSIVE FIRE AT STEPNEY: Shortly before midnight on Friday a very alarming fire, and nearly attended with fatal results to a man in his anxiety to [save] life, took place. The premises in which the disaster commenced belonged to Mrs Euvers, a linen draper, at 6 Bull Lane, Stepney. The discovery was made by Police Constable A, No. 666, by seeing smoke issuing from the lower portions of the premises, a two storey building. An instant

alarm was given, but as no one made an appearance, it was apprehended that the occupants were in their bed asleep, when a gentleman named Leckford, of 263 Mile End Rod, procured a ladder, and went in search of the supposed endangered persons. He had, however, no sooner opened the window than the flames shot up the staircase with great violence, and the flames and heated smoke completely prostrated him so as to render it impossible for the man to retreat. Conductor Rickell came up with the Royal Society's escape from the Mile End Station, and, regardless of all danger to himself, he rushed into one of the rooms, where he found a man clinging to the leg of a table, partly suffocated. By a desperate effort Rickell managed to get the man out, but he would in all probability, had he remained a minute longer in the burning building, have perished. The police had previously made several attempts to enter the building to rescue the man, but the heated smoke was so dense that they were unable. Three of the Shand, Mason & Co's land steamers, with the manual ones of the district and those of the parish, attended with all promptitude, and the firemen, by dint of great exertion, succeeded in getting the conflagration extinguished, but the whole of the stock-in-trade and the lower part of the building were totally destroyed. Fortunately at the time of the outbreak the occupants were out. The origin of the disaster is unknown'.

10,715: Conductor John Shaw: Clasp to Medal

Details: MB(2) – RC 13 April 1866 and QGM 27 April 1866. This rescue was for a fire at 12 Wilderness Row. The fire was reported in *Reynolds's Newspaper* (Sunday 18 March 1866) thus: 'On Friday evening, between three and four o'clock, a fire broke out in the premises of Mr Turner, watchmaker and jeweller, No. 12 Wilderness Row. Nearly a dozen persons were on the premises at the time that the discovery was made, and shortly afterwards the inmates of the third floor – consisting of Mrs Ferguson and her daughter, Mr Gibson, and a boy aged seven – were seen at the window, crying loudly for help. At this critical moment Conductor Shaw appeared with a fire-escape, and brought down the whole of the persons whose lives were thus endangered. The conductor then entered the back yard, and there found crouched together, and nearly suffocated with smoke, Mrs Turner, William Turner, and four children of the Turner family. The fire was not extinguished till the front and back portion of the premises were burnt out, and the basement greatly damaged'. Shaw's own account of the events was given in the Society's Annual Report and was subsequently reproduced by Ballantyne (1893) thus: 'Upon my arrival from Aldersgate Street Station, the fire had gained strong hold upon the lower portion of the building, and the smoke issuing there from was so dense and suffocating as to render all escape by the staircase quite impossible. Hearing cries for help from the upper part of the house, I placed my Fire-Escape, ascended to the third floor, whence I rescued four persons—viz. Mrs Ferguson, her two children, and a lodger named Gibson. They were all leaning against the window-sill, almost overcome. I carried each down the Escape, (a height of nearly fifty feet), in perfect safety; and afterwards entered the back part of the premises, and took five young children from a yard where they were exposed to great danger from the fire'.

10,737: Conductor Henry Douglas: Silver medal with Savings Bank Book containing £5.

Details: MB(2) – RC 13 April 1866 and QGM 27 April 1866: This rescue was for a fire at 126 St George Street, 'The Committee taking this opportunity of expressing their appreciation of the general conduct of Henry Douglas during the period (ten years) he has been in the service, and especially to mark their sympathy with him under the unfortunate illness (smallpox) from which he has during the last weeks been suffering; this illness, there is little reason to doubt, being, greatly aggravated by the peculiar exertions made by Douglas on the occasion of this fire when as many as eight lives were rescued by him'. According to *The Times* (Wednesday 21 March 1866, p. 12): 'Yesterday morning a whole family, containing nine persons, were marvellously rescue from a horrible death by the courage and perseverance of one man, a fire-escape conductor in the service of the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, one of the many humane institutions supported by voluntary contributions which abound in the metropolis. The fire occurred in one of the dead hours of the night, on the premises of Mr G Milne, mast and blockmaker, in St George's Street, St George-in-the-East, and before it could be extinguished had burnt the basement, in which materials used in his trade were stored, and a large workshop on the ground floor, severely damaging at the same time the upper part of the house, and slightly the adjoining premises of Messrs J and W Saunder, linen drapers. A contingent of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade received an alarm about 3 o'clock, and rendered all the

assistance in their power in the emergency. On the arrival of Conductor Douglas with his fire-escape from the station of St George-in-the-East the fire was burning fiercely in the lower part of the premises, which was quite hidden by a dense smoke, and several persons were known to be in the house. By means of his escape the conductor entered the second floor, and after searching both rooms without success regained the window with great difficulty. Throwing up thence another ladder he proceeded, at great peril to himself and half-suffocated, to the attics, and there found the whole family of Mr Milne, the occupier of the house, consisting of his wife and seven children, five girls and two boys, grouped together and utterly powerless to save themselves from what appeared to them inevitable death. One by one the conductor guided them down his escape, landing them all at length in safety. The cause of the fire is unknown'. Perhaps the most vivid account of the events was given by Ballantyne (1893) thus: 'On the night of the 2nd March 1866, the premises of a blockmaker named George Milne caught fire. The flames spread with great rapidity, arousing Milne and his family, which consisted of his wife and seven children. All these sought refuge in the attics. At first Milne thought he could have saved himself, but with so many little children round him he found himself utterly helpless. Not far from the spot, Henry Douglas, a fire-escape conductor, sat in his sentry-box, reading a book, perchance, or meditating, mayhap, on the wife and little ones slumbering snugly at home, while he kept watch over the sleeping city. Soon the shout of fire reached his ears. At once his cloth-cap was exchanged for the black helmet, and, in a few seconds, the escape was flying along the streets, pushed by the willing hands of policemen and passers-by. The answer to the summons was very prompt on this occasion, but the fire was burning fiercely when Conductor Douglas arrived, and the whole of the lower part of the house was so enveloped in flames and smoke that the windows could not be seen at all. Douglas therefore pitched his escape, at a venture, on what he thought would bring him to the second-floor windows, and up he went amid the cheers of the on-lookers. Entering a window, he tried to search the room, (and the cheers were hushed while the excited multitude gazed and listened with breathless anxiety—for they knew that the man was in a position of imminent danger). In a few moments he re-appeared on the escape, half suffocated. He had heard screams in the room above, and at once threw up the fly-ladder, by which he ascended to the parapet below the attic rooms. Here he discovered Milne and his family grouped together in helpless despair. We may conceive the gush of hope that must have thrilled their breasts when Conductor Douglas leaped through the smoke into the midst of them; but we can neither describe nor conceive, (unless we have heard it in similar circumstances), the tone of the deafening cheers that greeted the brave man when he re-appeared on the ladders, and, (with the aid of a policeman named John Pead), bore the whole family, one by one, in safety to the ground! For this deed Conductor Douglas received the silver medal of the Society, and Pead, the policeman, received a written testimonial and a sovereign. Subsequently, in con-sequence of Conductor Douglas's serious illness – resulting from his efforts on this occasion – the Society voted him a gratuity of 5 pounds beyond his sick allowance to mark their strong approbation of his conduct. Now in this case it is obvious that but for the fire-escape, the blockmaker and his family must have perished'. See also *The Times* (Wednesday 3 July 1861, p. 10) which notes the award of a testimonial to Douglas.

Medal inscribed: 'To Henry Douglas Fire Escape Condr for prompt and efficient service 21 March 1866. Case 10737'.

The recipient also received the Metropolitan Fire Brigade Long Service Medal, 2nd type (Henry Douglas).

10,826: Charles Earp: Silver medal

Details: MB(2) – SpC 26 July 1866 and QGM 27 July 1866: This rescue was for a fire at 197 Bishopsgate Street Without. The *Caledonian Mercury* (Tuesday 7 August 1866) reported the presentation at the Society's anniversary festival at the Mansion House thus: 'To Charles Earp, of 2 Sparrow [illegible], Minories, aged fourteen years, apprenticed to Mr H Nix, tobacconist, of 197 Bishopsgate Street Without, the Society's silver medal, for intrepid conduct during a fire on his master's premises on the 2nd of May 1866. The fire broke out very suddenly, and its progress was so quick that nothing but the generous and devoted conduct of the lad Earp prevented the loss of both his master's children. He was in the shop at the time, and as soon as he discovered the fire he rushed up the stairs to the third floor to inform the nursery maid, and assist her get the two children down the stairs. He took one in his arms, took hold of the servant's hand, who carried the youngest, and got as far as the last landing, where the smoke overcame them, Earp fell down, losing the…girl; he

and the servant maid groped about, but in the smoke they could not find their way down; he at last got to the window and opened it, when a carman drove his van on to the pavement and helped them out of the window, the man standing on the horse of his covered van to assist them. The little girl (Alice) for whom the lad made such exertions, was lost, however, aged only six years, and after the fire the body was discovered fearfully burnt, showing clearly how [terrible] the situation of the whole of the party had been. A testimonial on vellum and a half-sovereign to [illegible] Clark, the driver of the van, for his promptitude and efficient services by which the lives of Earp and the maid and child were rescued in safety…The recipients as they left the platform were loudly cheered. This was especially the case with the youth whose deed of daring is recorded here'. See also the *Penny Illustrated Newspaper* (Saturday 11 August 1866).

10,620: Police Inspector (K Div) James Griffin: Silver medal

Details: MB(2) – SpC 26 July 1866 and QGM 27 July 1866: This rescue was for a fire at Bridge Street, Stepney. The *Caledonian Mercury* (Tuesday 7 August 1866) reported the presentation at the Society's anniversary festival thus: 'To James Griffin, Inspector of the K Division of Police, a silver medal, for the… assistance rendered to Fire-Escape Conductor Rickell at a fire at the Rose and Crown public house, Bridge Street, Stepney, at one o'clock on the morning of February 1st 1866, when, but for his assistance, there is little doubt that the conductor would have perished. On the arrival of Conductor Rickell with the fire-escape, not being satisfied that all the inmates had escaped, the conductor entered the house, the upper part of which was burning fiercely. The conductor not being seen for some time, the inspector called to him, and not receiving an answer, entered the house and ascended the stairs, and saw the conductor lying on the floor quite insensible. With some difficulty the inspector reached him, and, dragging him down the staircase, carried him into the air, where he gradually recovered'. See also *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* (Sunday 4 February 1866) and Ballantyne (1893).

10,741: John Penny: Silver medal

Details: MB(2) – QGM 25 January 1867, RC 15 March 1867 and QGM 26 April 1867: This rescue was for a fire at 1 Porter Street, Leicester Square.

11,255: Cornelius Reading: Silver medal

Details: MB(2) – QGM 25 January 1867, RC 15 March 1867 and QGM 26 April 1867: This rescue was for a fire at 44 Hampstead Road. In a lengthy report of the inquest, the *Daily News* (Thursday 8 November 1866) reports Reading's own testimony thus: 'Cornelius Reading – I am a plasterer, and reside at 4 Marley Place, Hampstead Road. I knocked at the shutters about half-past 9 on Monday night, seeing the shop was on fire. I saw the servant come to the door. She said the children were at the top of the house. I rushed up to the top floor, and found one child in bed by itself. I wrapped it up and brought it down, and passed the first floor, but did not know there were any children there. I went up again to the top floor, and found another child, which I brought down and took to a haberdasher's shop opposite. I went back and found two constables at the door. They asked me if I belonged to the house, and I said "No"; and they would not admit me. I told them I had fetched two children out, and I had heard there were more upstairs; but still they refused. I went across to the haberdasher, and asked him to come with me and beg the constables to allow me to enter, but he did not do so…In my opinion there was plenty of time to have saved all the children, and more too, when the police refused me admission. It was six or eight minutes after this that the first fire-escape arrived…'.

Medal inscribed: 'To Cornelius Reading, for intrepid exertions on 5th Novr. 1866. Case 11255'. *LSARS Journal* 24, p 58 notes this medal as having been in the 'Fire Collection' during the 1980s and having been 'dipped and plated' consequent to fire damage.

11,450: Conductor Philip Kench: Silver medal

Details: MB(2) – RC 15 March 1867 and QGM 26 April 1867: This rescue was for a fire at Caroline Street, Bedford Square. The accompanying award certificate (now in the London Fire Brigade Museum collection) records 'To Philip Kench, fire escape conductor No. 72 in the Society's service the silver medal for the courage and activity displayed by him at a fire at 13 Caroline Street, Bedford Square, on the 29th of January 1867 in rescuing the life of a female from an almost inevitable death. The conductor upon entering the second floor, stepped on a female who was near the window and perfectly insensible. He picked her up and handed her to Conductor Barnett on the machine who immediately conveyed her to

the house of a surgeon, where after considerable time she revived'. The award was presented at the Anniversary meeting in the Council Chamber of the Guildhall on 9 August 1867.

11,466: Inspector James Forrest, Irish Constabulary: Silver medal

Details: MB(2) – RC 8 May 1867: This rescue was for a fire at William Street, Limerick.

Note: There is doubt about this man's details as nobody of this name is noted as serving as a RIC officer.

11,595: PC (132E) John Outred: Silver medal

Details: MB(2) – RC 25 June 1867: This rescue was for a fire at 15 Jockey's Field, Bedford Row. For mention of Constable Outred see the *Daily News* (Tuesday 13 August 1867)

[Unnumbered]; PC (241X) John Mack: Silver medal

Details: MB(2) – SpC 5 December 1867: This rescue was for a fire at 24 Westbourne Grove. The award was announced in *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* (Sunday 20 June 1869), while *The Times* (Wednesday 16 June 1869, p. 12) noted: 'Police Constable Mack, 241X, received the Society's silver medal, a testimonial on vellum, and a pecuniary reward, for saving under most trying circumstances, the [life] of Mrs Norbury, a cripple, at a fire in Westbourne Grove, in October 1867'.

[Unnumbered]: Ellen Kenney: Silver medal

Details: MB(2) – RC 20 March 1868 and QGM 24 April 1868: This rescue was for a fire at Eagle Place, Mile End. 'The rescue of the two children being chiefly attributable to the bravery of Ellen Kenney'. The Minutes Book records the original award of a Testimonial and 20 shillings which was upgraded to a silver medal. The award was announced in *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* (Sunday 20 June 1869), which notes Kenny was from '19 Lisbon Street, Cambridge Road, Mile End', while *The Times* (Wednesday 16 June 1869, p. 12) noted Kenney was: 'a girl of 18, received similar rewards for saving two little children, aged 4 and 6, at a fire in Eagle Place, Mile End, in December 1867'.

[Unnumbered]: Edmund John Heaps: Silver medal and grant of money

Details: MB(2) – RC 20 March 1868 and QGM 24 April 1868: This rescue was for a fire at Wellington Street, Aldershot. The fire was noted in *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* (Sunday 26 January 1868) thus: 'On Sunday night an alarming fire occurred on the premises of Mr Rosco, silversmith, Wellington Street, Aldershot. The inmates, a nephew of the proprietor, servant, and six children, were nearly suffocated before they could be rescued, the nephew being for nearly two hours in a state of insensibility. One of the firemen engaged was severely injured'. The award was announced in *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* (Sunday 20 June 1869), which notes Heaps was a 'carpenter, Camp Hotel, Aldershot', the award also being noted by *The Times* (Wednesday 16 June 1869, p. 12).

11,769: Fireman 4th class (261) Benjamin Howell: Silver medal

Details: MB(2) - 13 August 1868: This rescue was for a fire at 15 Chapel Street, Edgeware Road. The award was announced in *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* (Sunday 20 June 1869), while *The Times* (Wednesday 16 June 1869, p. 12) noted the award was 'for rescuing nine persons from a burning house in Chapel Street, Edgeware Road'.

Medal inscribed: 'To Benjamin Howell, Fireman No. 261, 4th Class, M.F.B., for intrepid exertions, January 22, 1868. Case 11769'.

[Unnumbered]: Labourer John Doyle: Silver medal

Details: MB(2) – RC 21 October 1868: 'For his exertions in rescuing under great personal danger the lives of Charles O'Neil and Jane O'Neil. Both children were so severely burned that they died the day following'. The award was announced in *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* (Sunday 20 June 1869), Doyle being described as a 'labourer, 1 Bath Street, Irish Town'.

Medal known: Seaby's *Coin & Medal Bulletin*, 1953, lot F7195, p. 275.

11,794: Fireman (No. 179) John Grimshaw: Silver medal
PC (82X) Charles Lewis: Silver medal

Details: MB(2) – RC 3 March 1869 and SpC 15 April 1869: This rescue was for a fatal fire on 17 January 1869 at 28 Lansdowne Crescent, Notting Hill. In reporting the inquest *The Times* (Saturday 23 January 1869) noted: 'THE FIRE AT NOTTING HILL – Last night Dr Diplock resumed an adjourned inquiry …into the cause of death of Mrs Barlee, who…lost her life in the fire which occurred at 28 Lansdowne Crescent. The fire-escape…

was stated to be so broken as to be useless at the fire. Mr Finlaison, 15 Lansdowne Crescent, a barrister, said he was at home at the time of the alarm of the fire. He went straight over to No. 27, and to the top of the house. He was assisted by Police Constable Lewis and one or two other persons. He heard screams in the back attic of No. 28, and endeavoured to reach it by the aid of a sheet. He did not succeed. He saw the failure of the fire-escape. The policeman brought the cook across the roof. He was certain that, if the escape had not broken, the deceased, dead or alive, might have been got out. A rope was thrown by one of the fire-escape men to the cook, who tied it around her waist. She was pulled to the parapet, but they could not get her over, and then the policeman Lewis went over and fetched her, with the sheet around his arm. John Grimshaw, attached to the Notting Hill Fire Station, said he attended the fire. He went on the roof of No. 27 with a rope. After two attempts to get at the woman on the next roof he saw Mr Finlaison with a rope around his waist. He told him he must not venture, and he threw the rope to the woman and pulled her right to the partition wall, and had just got her over when Lewis tied a sheet round his arm and pulled her into the garret window. Buckland, the fire-escape man, helped to pull the woman from the window by the rope. Captain Shaw said there was no evidence as to the cause of the fire. There had been some attempt to take the credit of saving the woman from Grimshaw, but the rope produced was in his hands and no one else knew how to use it. Thomas Mullins, 19 Lansdowne Crescent, said he went along the roof to the front gutter of No. 28. He took the housemaid out of the gutter where she was standing… The foreman [of the inquest jury] said they were of the opinion that death was caused by the fire…[and that] if the escape had been efficiently managed the inmates might have escaped by it. The jury also recommended Mr Finlaison, Police Constable Lewis, Grimshaw, the fireman, and the man named Mullins to the notice of the Society for the Preservation of Life from Fire. Mr Wright, the secretary of that society, was present'. The award to Grimshaw was announced in *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* (Sunday 20 June 1869), while *The Times* (Wednesday 16 June 1869, p. 12) noted both awards and that testimonials were given to Fireman Joseph Buckland, John Finlaison, and Thomas Mullens.

Medal inscribed: 'To John Grimshaw Fireman No. 179 2nd Class M.F.B. for intrepid actions. January 17 1869 Case 11,792' [*sic*], (item number A676114 Science Museum, London).

[Unnumbered]: Henry Purcell Pitcher: Silver medal

Details: MB(2) - RC 23 July 1869 and QGM 22 October 1869: 'For his exertions in saving four lives at a fire [at] 76 St. Georges Road, Southwark, on the 19th of May'. According to *The Times* (Thursday, 28 July 1870, p. 10), Mr Pitcher 'a builder in Southwark', received his award 'for a very meritorious and difficult rescue of four persons from a fire in St George's Road, in May 1869'. Born in London in June 1840, Pitcher had emigrated to the USA in 1856 and fought in the American Civil War with Wighman's Rifles, being wounded at the battle of Great Bethel. Having served subsequently with the Boston Fire Department, he returned to London in 1865. Ten years later, in 1875, he returned to America and rejoined the Boston Fire Department. For further details see A W Brayley's *A complete history of the Boston Fire Department* (Boston: John P Dale, 1889, p. 583).

[Unnumbered]: James N Budd: Silver medal
Captain James Burrington Bull: Silver medal

Details: MB(2) – RC 27 January 1870 and QGM 28 January 1870. This rescue was for a fire at Star and Garter Hotel (Tavern), Richmond. Reported extensively in the press at the time, the fire – which occurred on Wednesday 12 January 1870 – destroyed the Old Star and Garter Hotel. Two staff were trapped on the second floor and *The Times* (Friday, 14 January 1870, p. 10) reported how, in an effort to rescue them: 'Captain Bull was…the first to place the ladder against the wall of the hotel, and he was in the act of holding it while Mr Budd mounted and proceeded towards the window from which the cries for help came, when a splash of molten lead struck Captain Bull on the eye, which blinded him for a time, and so prevented him from being able any longer to hold and guide the ladder through the dense smoke. His place, however, was most fortunately promptly supplied by a policeman who arrived at the spot at this critical moment, and Mr Budd was thus enabled, at great personal risk, to carry out the gallant work…', assisting one of the men down to the ladder and then to the ground. The other man, the hotel's manager, then disappeared from the window, shortly afterwards dropping his dog down, but was himself then killed in the blaze. For further details on the fire see *The Times* (Thursday, 13

January 1870, p. 5 and Thursday 28 July 1870, p. 10). The presentation of the awards at the quarterly meeting of the Society was announced in *The Pall Mall Gazette* (Saturday, 29 January 1870) thus: 'Mr J N Budd and Captain Bull, of the 9th Surrey Rifles, for their exertions at the late fire at the Star and Garter Hotel, Richmond. Testimonials will also be presented in connection with the latter fire to the Misses Burdett, of Ancaster House, recording the presence of mind and energy displayed by them in arousing the inmates on the occasion, and thus probably saving their lives'. The Society's Minutes Book, Rotary Committee Meeting, records the names of the recipients as Butt and Ball, whereas the Quarterly General Meeting records them as Budd and Bull; the latter is correct, James Bull (*c*.1824-1905) being a prominent Richmond resident.

[Unnumbered]: Edward Craddock: Silver medal

Details: MB(2) – QGM 28 January 1870: This rescue was for a fire at 14 Noakes Buildings, Wolverhampton. The award at the quarterly meeting of the Society was announced in *The Pall Mall Gazette* (Saturday, 29 January 1870), thus: 'Edward Craddock, who, by his prompt and gallant conduct, saved the life of Martha Williams, at the fire in November last at Messrs Evans works at Wolverhampton'. See also *The Times* (Thursday, 28 July 1870, p. 10), which described Craddock as an 'iron-plate worker at Wolverhampton' and notes that three people died in the fire in question.

11,816: Fireman 3rd class (193) Francis William Boon: Silver medallion

Details: MB(2) – QGM 22 July 1870: 'This rescue was for a fire at 1 George Terrace, Lewisham Road.' According to *The Times* (Thursday, 28 July 1870, p. 10) Boon received the award for rescuing 'a little girl in Lewisham'.

Later, Boon was promoted to Engineer with the MFB, in charge of the station at Hammersmith (see *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper*, Sunday 5 March 1893) for further details

Medal inscribed 'To Francis Wm Boon. Metropolitan Fire Brigade, for intrepid exertions in Saving Life, October 14, 1869. Case11,816'.

11,831: PC (119G) Maurice O'Connor: Silver medallion
PC (9G Res) Alfred White: Silver medallion

Details: MB(2) – QGM 22 July 1870: 'This rescue was for a fire at 171 City Road, St Lukes'. In *The Times* (Thursday, 28 July 1870, p. 10) the award is noted as being 'for rescuing three persons at a fire in the City Road in March last'.

11,852: Sub-Engineer Herbert Williams: Silver medal

Details: MB(2) – RC 23 September 1870 and QGM 11 November 1870: This rescue was for a fire at Emmett Street, Limehouse. The medal was presented at a General Meeting of Subscribers on 13 June 1871 by the Lord Mayor (*The Times*, Wednesday 14 June 1871, p. 12), Williams being noted as a member of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade.

11,862: James Ingham: Silver medal

Details: MB(2) – QGM 11 November 1870: For a (supposed) rescue from a fire at Adlington Square, Stockport. The Society, at a meeting on Friday 11 November 1870, approved the award to Ingram for 'securing, by his intrepidity and presence of mind, the safety of 40 persons during a fire at a model lodging-house a few weeks since' (*The Times*, Monday 14 November 1870, p. 5). The medal was presented at a General Meeting of Subscribers on 13 June 1871 by the Lord Mayor, who noted at the time that the award to Ingram, who was from Stockport, was 'for intrepid services rendered by him in saving the lives of 43 people at a fire in that town during a night in September last' (*The Times*, Wednesday 14 June 1871, p. 12). It subsequently transpired that Ingham had misrepresented his actions and was not entitled to an award. It was in effect cancelled or revoked (see section I for a discussion of this case). There is no record of his medal having been returned to the Society.

11,863: Alfred Green: Silver medal and £5

Details: MB(2) – QGM 11 November 1870 and RC 20 January 1871: Green and a Samuel Fordham were each voted silver medals and £5 following 'Mrs Gobart (an aged woman)…[being] saved from a fire at Old Castle Street, Bethnal Green'. The committee's recommendations were noted in *The Times* (Monday 14 November 1870, p. 5). In *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* (Sunday 9 October 1870) it was reported that: 'THE FATAL FIRE IN SHOREDITCH: The inquest on the bodies of Isaac and Elizabeth Gobert, man and wife, who were burnt to death at the fire in Old Castle Street on Thursday night, was resumed at Bethnal Green on

Wednesday before Mr Richards. The fire seemed to have been expected by the neighbours. One witness, named Green, said he always kept a pickaxe, in order to break his way through the wall in case of fire. On the present occasion he made a hole, through which he succeeded in dragging seven persons. Another witness, who had been saved with difficulty, said Green had often told him not to sleep too soundly, because they would "have a warm" some day. Tar was often boiled in the timber yard…'. The award to Samuel Fordham, however, was cancelled at the Rotary Committee meeting on 20 January 1871, his part in the rescue having been 'proved upon a reinvestigation to be wholly unsub-stantiated'. The medal to Green was presented at a General Meeting of Subscribers on 13 June 1871 by the Lord Mayor (*The Times*, Wednesday 14 June 1871, p. 12), which noted Green was from 'New Street, Bethnal Green'. See also *The Times* (Friday 30 September 1870, p. 10, Saturday 1 October 1870, p. 11, Monday 3 October 1870, p. 12)

11,864: Stephen A Byrne: Silver medal

Details: MB(2) – QGM 11 November 1870: This rescue was for a fire at Liverpool Street, Bishopsgate, Byrne saving 'the life of a woman from the second floor of a house in Liverpool Street, City, by climbing up the water-spout' (*The Times*, Monday 14 November 1870, p. 5). In a lengthy account of the inquest following this fatal fire, *The Times* (Saturday 1 October 1870, p. 11) reported Byrne's testimony thus: '…Stephen Byrne was the next witness, and he was heartily cheered as he made his appearance. He said he is a messenger at the Mercantile Marine office, and about 3 o'clock on Tuesday he heard shrieks from a woman at the second floor window of the house in Liverpool Street. He thought he might save her if he went up the waterspout, and he climbed it as well as he could. He got abreast of the woman, who appeared insensible, and he pulled her by the feet. She fell, and was caught by the people below in some sheets and horse blankets. On his coming down again the spout gave way, and he fell on a wagon of wool which had been drawn up. He was not at all hurt, but he had cut his finger slightly. He had been a sailor, and had received £3 previously for saving life. Mr Dadswell, a Common Councilman, said a collection had been made in the ward for the witness, and it was the intention of the inhabitants to recommend him to the notice of the Royal Society…'. The medal was presented at a General Meeting of Subscribers on 13 June 1871 by the Lord Mayor (*The Times*, Wednesday 14 June 1871, p. 12), which noted Byrne was from 2 Arbour Street, Stepney.

[Unnumbered]: Inspector Dennis Hayer: Medal

Details: MB(2) – SpCM 9 June 1871: This rescue was for a fire at Obligation Road, Tooting. Hayer's medal was presented at a General Meeting of Subscribers on 13 June 1871 by the Lord Mayor (*The Times*, Wednesday 14 June 1871, p. 12), which noted he was in the Metropolitan Police.

[Unnumbered]: George Nash: Medal

Details: MB(2) – SpC 9 June 1871: 'This rescue was for a fire at Victoria Road, Holloway'. The Minutes Book does not record the actual award made – this appears to be an omission when writing the Minutes. The medal was presented at a General Meeting of Subscribers on 13 June 1871 by the Lord Mayor (*The Times*, Wednesday 14 June 1871, p. 12), which noted Nash was from 56 Victoria Road.

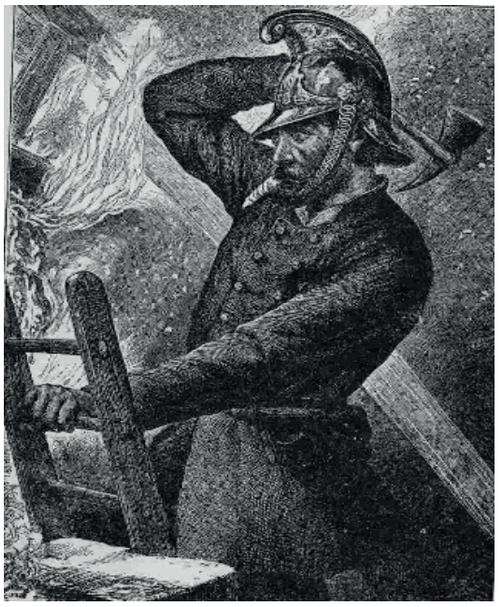
[Unnumbered]: A/PSgt (287P) Barber: Silver medal
PC (198P) W Tancock: Silver medal

Details: MB(2) – RC 20 December 1871 and QGM 26 January 1872: This rescue was for a fire on 19 October 1871 at 215 Albany Road, Camberwell. The awards were reported in the *Pall Mall Gazette* (Wednesday 31 January 1872) thus: 'Silver medal each to Police Constables Barber and Tancock who saved, under circumstances of the greatest danger, eleven lives at a fire in the Albany Road on the 19th of October last'. The recipients were noted by *The Times* (Thursday 25 January 1872, p. 10) thus: 'Mr Superintendent Gernon has received from Sir Thomas Henry the sum of £4 for Police Constable George Barker [*sic*], 287P, and £2 for Police Constable William Fancock [*sic*], 198P, as a reward from the Bow Street fund, for their great bravery in saving 11 persons from a fire at 215 Albany road, Camberwell, on the 27th of October last. Barker is considered permanently injured'.

[Unnumbered]: Mrs Emeline Ford, widow of Fireman Joseph Andrew Ford: Silver medal

Details: MB(2) – QGM 26 January 1872: 'On 7th October 1871 the lives of Mr Thompson and his wife and child were saved at a fire at Grays Inn Road. "The heroic conduct of the deceased Fireman Joseph Ford would doubtless had he survived have been taken

into most favourable consideration by the Committee and I trust that they will see fit to mark their appreciation of his conduct by presenting the Society's medal to his widow and such pecuniary assistance for her and her children as her circumstances may eventually require (Chas J Shoppee – Society's Inspector)"'.
The award was reported in the *Pall Mall Gazette* (Wednesday 31 January 1872) thus: 'In the case of the Gray's Inn Road fire, the Society's medal was voted to the widow of Fireman Ford, and it was resolved that the question of any pecuniary grant be deferred until it was known how much had been subscribed for her by the public'.



Fireman Ford at the Grey's Inn Road fire

Mrs Ford was presented with the medal by the Lord Mayor at the Society's annual meeting on Tuesday 16 July 1872, *The Times* (Wednesday 17 July 1872, p. 9) reporting that: 'The medal awarded to the fireman Ford was presented to his widow, who was led up to the table for the purpose. She was much distressed, and appeared to excite great sympathy. The Lord mayor, addressing her with some emotion, expressed his extreme regret that the humane exertions of her husband should have resulted in his death; but it would be always, he said, a satisfaction to her to remember that, although she had been deprived of a husband, his life was lost in doing his duty. These sentiments were cheered by the whole audience'. See also F Mundell *Stories of the Lifeboat and the Fire Brigade*, London: Sunday School Union, 1894, pp. 46-49, and F M Holmes *Heroes on Land and Sea*, London: S W Partridge, [*c*.1907], pp. 118-21.

A plaque to commemorate the bravery of Joseph Andrew Ford was placed in the Memorial to Heroic Self-Sacrifice in 'Postman's Park', Aldersgate Street, London. The memorial was the creation of the Victorian artist George Frederick Watts (1817-1904). See John Price *Postman's Park : G.F. Watts's Memorial to Heroic Self-Sacrifice*, Compton, Surrey: Watts Gallery, 2008.



Fireman Ford's Memorial Plaque

Note: Ford is noted on the 1871 English census living at 254 High Holborn, along with his wife Emeline E (31), daughter Emeline L (1), widowed mother-in-law Anne Harland (50) and a second cousin Ernest Godfrey (6).

[Unnumbered]: Fireman 4th class (298) William Murphy: Silver medal and £5
PSgt William Faulkner: Silver medal

Details: MB(3) – RC 23 December 1873 and QGM 23 January 1874: 'This rescue was for a fire at Great Windmill Street, Haymarket. A grant of £5 awarded as the conduct of Fireman Murphy on this occasion being of more than ordinary merit'. *The Times* (Wednesday 17 June 1874, p. 12) reported the award was: 'for a very courageous though unsuccessful attempt to save life at a fire in Great Windmill Street and another silver medal was given to Police Sergeant Faulkner, who rescued the fireman Murphy on the same occasion, after he had become insensible through the heat and smoke'.

Medal inscribed: 'William Murphy, Fireman, M.F.B., 20th October 1873.'

Medal inscribed: 'To Sergt Wm. Faulkner P.S. C. Div. for services rendered in saving life October 20 1873'.

[Unnumbered]: Mr Scott: Silver medal
Mr Purcell: Silver medal

Details: MB(3) - SGM 28 January 1876: This rescue was for a fire at High Street, Kilkenny.

12,021: Captain Frederick Walter, RN, Training Ship *Goliath*: Silver medal

Details: MB(3) – SGC 28 January 1876: The burning of the training ship *Goliath* on 22 December 1875, off Grays, in Essex, was widely reported at the time. At the time of the fire the ship had almost 500 people aboard, most of whom were young boys, housed there instead of at workhouses, to allow them to be apprenticed for the Royal Navy. Describing the fire, *The Times* (Friday, 24 December 1875, p. 8) reported: 'The ship's crew, officers, and boys were at duty at a quarter to six in the morning, scrubbing the decks. The under decks were lighted by swing petroleum lamps – the petroleum, as is usual with work house stores, being supplied by contract. At a quarter or ten minutes to eight o'clock, just as daylight was breaking on the main deck of the old man-of-war all the port holes being opened to dry the wetted decks, a boy named Lober was in the act of carrying one of the lighted lamps for the purpose of extinguishing it, when…part of it burnt his hand and he dropped it. The whole place was instantly in a blaze, for the burning fluid at once set fire to the pitched joints between the boarding, for pitch was plentifully used in the old ships, and at once she was in fireman's phrase "well alight". The fire bell rang, and so strong was the power of discipline over the minds of the boys that they all took their places at the pumps, every officer being at his place. A very short time showed that the attempts to save the vessel were useless, for the hose, by the rapidity with which the flames licked the ship, had been destroyed; in fact, the excellent ventilation of the ship led to this rapidity of destruction. Captain Bouchier gave orders then to the boys who could swim to get to land – then about 500 feet distant – and many swam ashore. All the ship's boats were almost useless, for the lowering apparatus got burnt and the boats fell into the water. Fortunately there was a barge moored close to the ship, and the little fellows, most of them being between seven and ten years of age, aided by the assistant school-master, Mr Tye, and other officers, got into this. Some twenty boys who first got into the barge, frightened by the flames and choked by the dense smoke, wanted to push off; but one of their number; a little fellow named Billy Bolton, manfully held the barge to its place, he exercising his authority as a boy mate until all who came on that side of the ship had got over the ship's side, and then a push was made for land. The barge grounded on the mud, and it was not practicable to push her out again against the running tide. At this time Captain Walters, from the *Arethusa* and the *Chichester*, with the Queen Street Refuge boys, came up with three boats. Mr Hall, the Chief Officer of the *Goliath*, had been with Captain Bouchier, in directing means for saving the boys, while Mr Fenn, the head schoolmaster, Mr Gunton, and Mr Norris, the instructors in seamanship, were assisting by endeavouring to get the boats down. There were five women on board – Mrs Bouchier, her two daughters, and two female servants. The flames in a few minutes had mounted to the upper deck, and Mr Fenn reached a boat, and persuaded Mrs Bouchier to jump from the deck of the ship, about 32 feet, into the water. She jumped, and was saved. The cook and housemaid also jumped into the water and were picked up. The two daughters came down ropes, one hand-over-hand, and the boat load was taken on shore…While Mr Fenn was helping the women to escape from death by drowning or burning, cries came from Mr Hall, who was clinging with Mr Wheeler to a boat which had been struck and was stove in. The boat was drifting out, and when attention could be paid to this stove-in boat, Mr Hail was rescued, but Mr Wheeler had disappeared. The last to leave the ship…was Captain Bouchier. He had ordered the last batch of boys to go, when they called out to him to go first. The galley of Captain Walters, of the *Arethusa* was near, and they heard Captain Bouchier reply, "That's not the way at sea, my boys", and when he again told them to go, one little workhouse boy clasped him round the neck, weepingly saying, "You'll be burnt, Captain". The captain pushed the boys off and followed himself, all being picked up by Captain Walter's galley. Just as they were about to pull off for the shore, Captain Bouchier spied a boy clinging to the "fender" of the ship, and he called to the crew to save the boy. Not a moment was to be lost, for the masts were well alight, the foreyard was dangling ready to fall, where the devoted boat's crew was, and there was the most imminent danger of the mainmast falling. Captain Walters gave the word of command and the boat's crew struck out for the dangerous spot under the bow of the vessel where the "fender" is placed, and the poor boy was saved from what a moment or two after must have been certain death to all in the boat, for the flames were so close to the boat's crew that the flannel on the captain's back was singed, and the whiskers on another's face was burnt; but they rescued the boy and pushed off just as the fare moorings broke and the ship slewed with her head down the river, presenting the other side to the wind, and a very heavy wind was blowing, and thus the flames were turned to that part of the ship which was less

touched before. Mr Fenn had been in another boat picking up the boys, and the boat he was in getting over full, he plunged into the water and swam to one of Captain Walter's boats, to assist in rescuing others. It was then found that poor Wheeler, the teacher, seeing Mr Hall trying to clear a boat in which were two boys, jumped into the boat out of the window. The boat, as stated, was stove in and drifted out, Mr Hall holding up the boys, but Mr Wheeler, not being used to the water, was, it is feared, not able to hold out…'. At one of the subsequent inquests reported in *Reynolds's Newspaper* (Sunday 2 January 1876), it was noted that: 'A letter was read from the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire asking to be furnished with the names of any who, by their bravery and presence of mind, contributed in a special degree to the rescue of others, in order that their services might be suitably recognised by the Society'. The award to Walter was noted in *The Liverpool Mercury* (2 February 1876) thus: 'The Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire have awarded their medal to Captain Walter, of the training ship *Arethusa*, for special services in rescuing several boys and others from the ship *Goliath*; and a testimonial to Captain Pourchier [*sic*], and £20 to the crews of certain boats who rendered service in saving life on the occasion of the same fire'. A Testimonial was also awarded to Captain Bouchier and 20 shillings for the crews of the boats rendering assistance to saving of life. For further details of the fire see R J Fenn *The Burning of the Goliath* (London: Shaw & Sons, 1876).

Medal inscribed: 'To Frederick Walter, Captain, R.N., for intrepidity in saving life, December 22nd, 1875. Case 12021' (without suspension);

Walter's other medals are the Maharaja of Burdwan's Medal (Captn Frederick Walter RN), the Baltic Medal (Fred. Walter, Midn., H.M.S. Imperieuse) and the China War Medal 1857-60 (unnamed), these being accompanied by the RSPLF illuminated certificate, inscribed 'To Frederick Walter Captain RN of the Training Ship "Arethusa" in testimony of his laudable and heroic conduct on the morning of the 22nd December 1875 during the burning of the Training Ship *Goliath* moored off Gray's Essex when at great personnel risk he saved the life of Captain Bouchier RN Commander of that ship. In addition to this brave action, Captain Walter was instrumental in conjunction with the following Officers acting under him, viz., Thomas Luckett, Joseph Phillips, John Cook, Henry Madams, in rescuing from danger at least 30 lives notwithstanding the delay caused by their having to row a distance of nearly three miles to the burning ship', and a Mansion House Goliath Relief Fund certificate, inscribed 'To Captain Frederick Walters RN of the Training Ship *Chichester* under whose gallant command three boats from the *Arethusa* and two from the *Chichester* proceeded a distance of three miles and saved during the fierceness of the fire no less than 30 lads. Captn. Bourchier attributed his own safety entirely to Captain Walters' efforts, which were most heroic'.

[Unnumbered]: George Charles Toghill: Silver medal

Details: MB(3) – QGM 23 April 1880: 'This rescue was for a fire on 24th December 1879 at 82 Boston Place, Marylebone (Blandford Arms)'. Subsequently, *The Times* (Thursday 25 December 1879, p. 7) noted: 'Yesterday afternoon a fire broke out at 82 Boston Place, Dorset Square, caused by linen which was being aired catching the flames, and, while a part of the house and contents were greatly damaged, Harriet Hamilton, aged 55, was severely burnt and taken to the hospital. Damage was also caused to No. 80'. Hamilton subsequently died from her injuries (*Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper*, Sunday 4 January 1880). The conferral of the award itself, at the Society's quarterly court on Tuesday 27 April 1880, was announced by *The Times* (Wednesday 28 April 1880, p. 13) thus: 'The Society's silver medal was presented to Mr G C Toghill, of the Blandford Arms, Marylebone, for the praiseworthy exertions he used on the occasion of a fire in Boston Place, Marylebone, in December last, when, at the risk of his own life, he brought an aged woman from the burning house'.

George Toghill (*c.* 1838-1893) worked as a licensed victualler at the Blandford Arms, 53 Boston Place (1881 English census). In 1881 he was fined £10 by Marylebone magistrates for mixing sugar with his beer (*The Pall Mall Gazette*, Saturday 27 August 1881).

[Unnumbered]: Alfred Waller: Silver medal

Details: MB(3) – QGM 23 April 1880: 'This rescue was for a fire on 6th February 1880 at 33 Jackson Road, Holloway'. The award was announced in *The Illustrated Police News* (7 August 1880) thus: 'PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE. The committee awarded the society's medal (in addition to previous rewards) to Mr Alfred Waller, of 10 Annette Road, Holloway, for intrepid and humane conduct displayed by him at a fire at 33

Jackson-road, Holloway, on Feb. 6 last. Waller saved three females through his courage, promptitude, and coolness, two of the women being caught by him as they threw themselves from the window. By this brave action he suffered serious personal injuries, which rendered him unable to give further assistance, and the fourth woman who jumped from the window was killed on the spot'. Waller appears on the 1881 English census at 10 Annette Road, Finsbury, London, as a 40 year old licensed victualler, married to Ellen (39), and with a daughter Ellen (7) also living with them.

13,015: George Smoker: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: MB(3) - QGM 28 January 1881 and QGM 29 July 1881: 'This rescue was for a fire at Blackheath Hill'. Further details of the circumstances relating to the award are documented on the RSPLF medal certificate, which notes: 'The Committee award to Mr George Smoker, fireman at Messrs Penn's factory, Greenwich, the Society's Silver Medal with the sum of three guineas in testimony to the intrepid and persevering exertions displayed by him in saving life on the occasion of the fire on the premises of Mr J Chesterfield, linen draper, 22 Blackheath Hill, Greenwich on the 13th of July 1880. The fire which originated in the shop spread with much rapidity rendering it a matter of great difficulty for those who were in the lower part of the house to escape. George Smoker hearing that a child was in the house ascended to the first floor window and making his way to the back rooms brought out a boy aged 3 years hearing that a little girl was still in the house he returned and after groping about for some time brought out in an insensible state Edith Chesterfield aged 7 years. All approach to the rooms by means of the staircase was cut off by the flames and the rescue of the two children was only effected at great personal danger to George Smoker whose praiseworthy conduct on the occasion is testified to by many of the Inhabitants of the neighbourhood who were present at the fire, case 13,015'. The medal was presented at the Quarterly General Meeting on 29 July 1881 by the Chairman. Smoker was also presented with a vellum certificate describing the details of the rescue. The latter is extant, although is not recorded in the Minutes (for further details see the 'Testimonials and certificates' section). See also *The Times* (Tuesday 9 August 1881, p. 5).

13,024: PC (90H) William Maguire: Medal and £2

Details: MB(3) – QGM 29 July 1881 notes the Society awarded a testimonial and £2 for saving life at a fire Leman Street. However, *Lloyd's Weekly London Newspaper* (31 July 1881) appears to suggest that Maguire may have received a medal from the Society, the report recording the award as follows: 'ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF POLICE BRAVERY. It is stated in the Police orders just issued that Police-Constable Maguire, 90 H, has received a reward of £2, in addition to a medal from the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire: he having, at the imminent risk of his own life, saved two aged persons from being burnt to death a short time since. Maguire also received a medal from the Society of St John of Jerusalem for his gallantry, and he has also been specially advanced to the rank of first-class constable'. Maguire was awarded the Order of St John Lifesaving Medal by that society on 22 February 1881, its citation reading 'For rescuing at imminent danger on 19 December 1880, two persons (Maurice Barnett and Helen Gunstone) at a fire in Leman Street, Whitechapel'. The OStJ medal was presented to PC Maguire by Sir Admund A H Lechmere, Bart, MP, on 18 March 1881 at a public meeting in the theatre of the Royal United Services Institution.

13,043: Thomas Brown: Silver medal and £2.2s

Details: MB(3) - QGM 28 October 1881 and PM I June 1882: 'This rescue was for a fire on 17th July 1881 at 34 New Road, Gravesend'. The medal was presented at a Public Meeting on 1 June 1882 (see: MB(4)). The Minutes Book (MB3), for the Committee Meeting 14 May 1885, records that Brown, from Gravesend Having applied for a duplicate medal to replace the one awarded to him by the Trustees in 1881 (Case 13042) [*sic*] which he states was completely destroyed. It was resolved that providing he can give satisfactory proof that the medal is rendered useless and is willing to defray a part of the cost of a new one, the application be granted.

13,073: Rhys Smith: Silver watch with inscription

Details: MB(4) - TM 25 October 1882: This rescue was for a fire on 25 April 1882. The medal was presented at a public meeting on 7 June 1883.

13,404: PC (452X) Arthur Daughton: Silver medal and £5
James Andrews Abbott: Silver medal
William Webber: Silver medal

Details: MB(4) - 25 October 1883: No details of rescue. However, *The Illustrated Police* News (22 March 1884) noted that: 'At a meeting of the trustees of the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, held at 20 New Bridge Street, E.C., the following rewards were presented:…For very great help rendered in rescuing the inmates of Southall Park Lunatic Asylum on the night of August 14, 1883, Police-Constable Arthur Daughton was presented with a silver medal and £5; William Webber and J A Abbott, both of Southall, a silver medal each'. The medal was presented at a Trustees Meeting on 13 March 1884.

14,020: John Scott: Silver medal and 20 guineas

Details: MB(4) - 18 September 1884: No details of rescue.

14,026: Sgt John Clarkson: Silver medal and £5

Details: MB(4) - 18 September 1884: No details of rescue.

14,062: PC (163H) William Hayward: Silver Medal and £1.1s

Details: MB (4) - 3 September 1885: No details of rescue The medal was presented at a Trustees meeting on 24 September 1885. This is briefly noted in the *Aberdeen Journal* (28 September 1885) thus: 'BRAVERY REWARDED. At a meeting of the trustees of the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, held on Thursday 24th, the following rewards were presented:- The society's silver medal to PC 163H, William Hayward, for saving the life of three persons at 47 Columbia Road, Bethnal Green…'. See also *The Times* (Saturday 26 September 1885, p. 7) and *On and Off Duty* (1888, p. 176).

14,096: Mary MacDonnald: Silver medal and £5

Details: MB(4) 11 February 1886: No details of rescue. However, the *Northern Echo* (30 April 1886) reported details thus: 'REWARD FOR BRAVERY. At West Ham Police Court yesterday, the medal of the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, was presented to Mary M'Donnell for saving the life of Frank Province, potman at the Lord Napier public-house, Canning Town, during a fire which took place there in January last. There was a prosecution for incendiarism in connection with the fire, and a conviction was obtained at the February Sessions of the Central Criminal Court'. Similarly, the *Leeds Mercury* (1 May 1886) reported that 'The Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire have presented their medal for bravery to the servant girl, Mary Macdonnell, who, in January last, at a fire in the Lord Napier public-house in Canning Town, with great courage rescued a potman from being burned to death. One or two money rewards have been previously bestowed on the brave girl; but at the West Ham Police-court on Thursday, the Police-magistrate presiding, she was publicly decorated with the society's medal'. See also the *Leeds Mercury Weekend Supplement* (1 May 1886) and *The Times* (13 February 1886 and 30 April 1886, p. 7). The recipient's surname appears as Macdonnald in the Society's Minute Book and as Macdonald, M'Donnell and Macdonnell in various newspaper accounts.

14,110: Benjamin Dutch: Silver medal

Details: MB(4) - 3 June 1886: No details of rescue. An account of the fire, which occurred at 79 Well Street, South Hackney, London, at 12.10am on Wednesday 12 May 1886, appeared in the *Daily News* (Thursday 13 May 1886) and among other details included the following account by Dutch, a 29-year-old French polisher, who lived at 28 Palace Road, Well Street: 'I was going along with my father-in-law when I saw fire in the house, and heard there were lives to be saved. I and my father entered the burning premises, and each of us saved a child. When I re-entered I met the mother. She gave me the baby and ran out. I had the baby in my arms when there was a sudden burst of flame right on me, which burned my arms, and the smoke nearly suffocated me. I tried to get downstairs, but could not, as the staircase was all on fire. I threw up the window and jumped a distance to the ground, and in falling fractured my leg'. The report notes that Dutch was subsequently admitted to the German Hospital. The medal was presented at a Trustees Meeting on 21 October 1886. See also *The Morning Post* (Tuesday, 18 May 1886, p. 3), *The Penny Illustrated Paper and Illustrated Times* (Saturday, 22 May 1886, p. 327), and the *Daily News* (Monday 14 June 1886).

14,129: Peter Whitfield: Silver medal

Details: MB(4) - 16 December 1886: No details of rescue. The award was noted by the *Birmingham Daily Post* (24 December 1886) thus: 'The trustees of the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire …have also granted a silver medal to Peter Whitfield, and money awards and testimonials to other persons who were

instrumental in rescuing life at the disastrous fire at Coburg Street, Plymouth, on November 25 last'.

14,130: George Thorne: Silver medal
George Trim: Silver medal

Details: MB(4) - 16 December 1886: No details of rescue. The award was noted by the *Birmingham Daily Post* (24 December 1886) thus: 'The trustees of the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire have awarded silver medals to two men named George Thorn and George Trimm, for saving the life of one of the residents at Hampton Court Palace on the occasion of the recent fire' on 19 November 1886. The medals were presented at a Trustees Meeting on 17 February 1887. See also *The Times* (Saturday 19 February 1887, p. 5).

14,139: Arthur Turton: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: MB(4) - 17 February 1887: No details of rescue. According to *The Morning Post* (Thursday, 25 November 1886, p. 3): 'A fire broke out in a range of shops in Eastbourne shortly after twelve o'clock on Tuesday night. A little girl named Longmann was suffocated, and Mr Hutchings, a draper, and his family were with difficulty rescued, the spread of the flames being most rapid. Two shops and their contents were destroyed, despite the efforts of the local fire brigades. The damage is estimated at about £1,500'. The 1891 English census list one man of this name living in Eastbourne, 35-year-old Arthur Turton, a married father of four, who was then employed as a rent collector.

Medal inscribed: 'Presented to Arthur Turton for his manful attempt to save life at Eastbourne on the 24th November 1886'.

14,179: Inspector George Bassett: Silver medal

Details: MB(4) - 20 October 1887: No details of rescue. Bassett's actions however did receive public recognition, *The Times* (10 November 1887) noting that: 'THE POLICE FORCE – A meeting of gentlemen in the West End was held on Tuesday night, at the Olive Branch Hotel, Crawford Street, Bryanston Square, for the purpose of presenting a testimonial to George Bassett, an Inspector of the D Division of the Metropolitan Police, in recognition of his gallant conduct in risking his own life to rescue that of a Mr Longware, a restaurant-keeper, of Harrow Road. Mr Longware was helplessly ill in bed and the house was in flames. Among the contributors to the testimonial – which consisted of a gold watch and chain, a purse of gold, and a walking stick – was Lord Charles Beresford, MP, who wrote: "Dear Mr Green, I am very sorry that a previous engagement will prevent me from being present at the dinner to be given to Inspector Bassett, when a testimonial is to be presented to him in recognition of his determined gallantry at a fire on the 4th of September. The whole community owe an enormous debt of gratitude to the police force of the kingdom, a debt which is seldom acknowledged, much less paid. Our lives and property are watched over quietly, systematically, and vigilantly, but as a rule all the thanks the police get are contained in remarks as to their inability, or on the occasion on which one of their number may have made some error or mistake. The public recognition of Inspector Bassett's gallantry reflects credit not only on himself, but upon the whole force of which he is a plucky member. It ought not to be forgotten that police-constables have often to undertake duties requiring courage, tact, and determination without any of the incentives to carry these qualities through which exist in the services. Please convey to Inspector Bassett my regret that I am unable to be present, Chs. Beresford"'. The Society's medal was presented to Bassett at a Trustees Meeting on 19 January 1888. Further recognition followed, *The Times* (30 March 1888) recording how: 'Sir James Ingram, addressing Inspector George Bassett, of the D Division (who upon his breast a medal of the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire), and Alfred Bowles, constable, 95, of the same division, said he was pleased to hand over to each of them a small cheque in recognition of the distinguished bravery which they had exhibited on the occasion of a recent fire in Molyneux Street, Edgeware Road, when they, at the risk of their own lives, endeavoured to save the inmates. It appeared that each of them on three occasions made attempts to enter the burning building, but each time were driven back by the heat and smoke. They, however, ultimately succeeded in bringing out two children, who, although alive when brought out, died in hospital shortly afterwards. During all the time he had been sitting in that court he had never had brought to his notice a case in which greater bravery had been exhibited, and he therefore felt particular pleasure in handing to them the cheques in recognition. (The value of the cheques was £5 and £4 respectively)'. See also *Report of the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis* (London: HMSO, 1887, p. 49), *The Times* (Friday 30 March 1888, p. 10), *Lloyd's*

Weekly Newspaper (17 October 1897 p. 3) and *Reynolds's Newspaper* (1 April 1888).

Medal inscribed: 'Presented to Inspector George Bassett for saving life at 4 Harrow Road, W. on 4th September 1887'. Bassett was also awarded the Jubilee Medal, 1887, Police Issue.

14,181: PSgt James Sullock: Bronze medal and £3.3s
William West: Bronze medal
George Cooper: Bronze medal and £2.2s
William Tremain: Bronze medal and £2.2s
Able Seaman William Hunt: Bronze medal

Details: MB(4) - 20 October 1887. The Theatre Royal in Exeter, at the corner of Longbrook Street and New Road North, had been rebuilt in 1886. On 5 September 1887 at around 10.30pm the fourth act of 'Romany Rye' was taking place and during this a piece of scenery caught fire and as it flared up the curtain was lowered, smoke was seen, and as the curtain billowed out the fire was revealed to the audience. There was panic as people scrambled from the theatre. In the second circle and the gallery the exit comprised a single doorway which trapped the audience. Within minutes the flames roared up to the theatre ceiling and some 186 people died; only 68 identifiable bodies were recovered. Many people were engaged in rescue efforts. Among them, William Hunt told the subsequent inquest how: 'On looking in through one of the windows he saw bodies burning. He did not attempt to get over the gallery stairs but confined his attention to the windows and passages'. Similarly, James Sullock told the inquest how he: 'helped to get the fire-escape in position against the window over the gallery entrance. On mounting the ladder and looking through the window he saw a heap of bodies lying in the staircase. He noticed a man lying with his head against the window sill. The body was jammed and the witness could not pull it out. He broke away the window with a small axe. The man was taken down over the fire-escape, and the witness went in through the window. He found bodies piled up so tightly that when he attempted to move them their skin came off in his hands. With help the bodies were cleared away. Later on he assisted in removing 20 bodies from the saloon bar and eight from the gallery refreshment room' (*The Times*, Monday 19 September 1887, p. 10). The Society's trustees approved five bronze medals, along with a number of testimonials, and 'it was resolved that the cordial thanks of the Society be given to Mr Robert John Gray, Secretary of the West of England Insurance Company for his kind co-operation with the trustees in their investigation of the relative merits of those who rendered good service in saving life on the occasion of the disastrous fire which resulted in the destruction of the Theatre Royal Exeter on the night of 5 September 1887'. The presentations were noted in *The Era* (Saturday 10 December 1887), thus: 'On Thursday afternoon, at a public meeting at Exeter the Mayor, on behalf of the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, handed certificates, bronze medals, and money rewards to several citizens who distinguished themselves by their bravery on that night of the theatre fire. First class certificates were handed to the City surveyor, Mr Donald Cameron; the Assistant Surveyor, Mr Benyon; and to Mr E H Morris; bronze medals were given to Police Sergeant Sullock, a fireman named West, and a Royal Artilleryman named Cooper, and similar medals had been awarded to William Hunt, seaman of Her Majesty's ship *Express*, and William Tremain, of the Royal Horse Artillery. One of the recipients of a money reward asked to be allowed to say a few words in testimony of the bravery of a Royal Artilleryman named Scattergood, who lost his life in attempting to save others, and stated that he would be happy to devote the money handed him to a memorial to be placed over the grave of that brave man. The medals were pinned on the breasts of recipients by the Mayoress'. See also *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* (Sunday 11 September 1887), *The Era* (Saturday 24 September 1887), W Fevyer 'The Burning of Exeter Theatre', *LSARS Journal* (1995, 24: 34-39), J Henwood *Exeter Theatre Fire, 5th September 1887: A Tragedy Waiting to Happen* (Exeter: Devon Family History Society, 2002) and D Anderson *The Exeter Theatre Fire* (Cambridge: Entertainment Technology Press, 2002).

14,212: David Buchanan, Journeyman Painter: Silver medal and £5
Mdlle. Elise Chuard: Silver medal
C W Bunting: Bronze medal and £2.2

Details: MB(4) - 28 June 1888: This rescue was for a fire at Garrould's in Edgeware Road on Wednesday 30 May 1888. A brief account of the rescue appeared in the *Ally Sloper Magazine* (16 June 1888) thus: 'At the time the fire was at its fiercest, David Buchanan placed a ladder against one of the windows, but finding it was too short, he, nothing daunted, managed, with wonderful dexterity, to climb up to the window-sill. Here he put upon his shoulders the body of a girl who had fainted, and by an exertion of extraordinary physical strength, he was enabled to regain the ladder, from whence he brought his precious burden in safety to the

ground'. Further details appeared in the lengthy inquest report published in *The Pall Mall Gazette* (Monday 4 June 1888) and in *The Penny Illustrated Paper and Illustrated Times* (Saturday 9 June 1888), the latter noting: '…The head dressmaker, a French lady, however, used most strenuous efforts to allay the extreme fright of the unfortunate creatures, and with praiseworthy presence of mind led them down a staircase by which many of them were brought to the back windows looking out on the leads at the rear of the building. Mdlle Elise Chuard [who appears incorrectly as 'Shirard' in the Society records], the principal dressmaker in question, thus clearly described her commendable presence of mind at this juncture whilst under examination at the inquest: "I have been with the firm eight years, and had several ladies – about sixty during the season – under me. Only a few slept on the premises. The factory inspector visited us. On the morning of the fire, at half-past six o'clock, I was awakened by a tremendous crash of glass. I occupied a room at the back, in the top of 154. A young lady in my bed-room asked what it was, and on looking out through the blind I saw nothing. Then I heard a crackling, and opened the door, but was at once obliged to close it again on account of the smoke. I rushed back to the window, and saw black smoke coming from the windows on the right. Then I managed to get to the front room, and found there four young ladies, whom I asked to follow me. We went downstairs, but we were unable to pass on account of the smoke. I then took them back to the front room and then went downstairs, covering my face as I went. Then I rushed back and told them to make another effort. They did so. One wanted to go back for her watch, but I would not let her. We got downstairs into the young men's bedroom, from there to the work-room, and thence on to the leads, from which we were rescued". The Coroner [said] (to the jury): "I promise to bring the conduct of this young lady before the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire"…'. The medals were presented at a Trustees Meeting on 20 September 1888. Nearly 40 years later, news of one of these medals resurfaced. The Ordinary Committee Meeting Minutes of 18 October 1927 recorded that: 'The Secretary reported that he had received a letter from James Hagger saying that he had found an old medal awarded in 1888 to one C W Bunting, and that he had replied that it was not possible to trace through the Society's papers the relations of the recipient'.

Medal inscribed: 'Presented to David Buchanan for saving life at Edgeware Rd., London on the 30th May 1888'. Also with Ally Slopers Medal of Valour, this inscribed: 'Presented to David Buchanan for his courageous conduct on the occasion of the Edgeware Road Fire, May 30th 1888'.



RSPLF medal and Ally Sloper medal awarded to David Buchanan

14,221: PC J Lane: Silver medal

Details: MB(4) - 20 September 1888: No details of rescue. The recipient was a member of the RIC.

14,226: Benjamin Thorpe: Bronze medal and £5

Details: MB(4) - 6 December 1888: No details of rescue.

14,227: PC (156) William Cowin: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: MB(4) - 6 December 1888: No details of rescue. Information of PC Cowin's bravery was found in an unattributed Liverpool newspaper (24 October 1888), which recorded: 'Fire in Falkner Street. The scene of the outbreak was No. 198 Falkner Street, a three storey tenement, the ground floor was a paint shop and it was here that the outbreak occurred, at around Midnight. The flames spread with alarming rapidity, the large quantity of oil stored in the shop, causing them to secure a destructive hold of the building, and by the time the Brigade had arrived the whole place was ablaze. It was first thought that the flats above were unoccupied, until a woman's scream was heard. The staircase was burnt through and a ladder was brought and set below the first floor window, Fireman Cowin, climbed the ladder and disregarding the flames, which were licking round the window frame and

coming up behind the skirting boards, he pushed his way in. Groping round, with the flames rushing at him in all directions, he discovered two insensible bodies on the floor, a man and woman. Lifting them one by one he carried them to the window and passed them out one at a time to his associates, Salvageman Smith and then Superintendent Long-bottom of the Salvage Corps, much to the delight of the watching crowd. The fire was quickly brought under control by the Brigade, unfortunately the man was dead at the scene and the woman died the next day in the Workhouse Hospital'. The medal's award ceremony was noted in the *Pall Mall Gazette* (26 January 1889) thus: 'Police-constable Cowin was yesterday presented by the Mayor of Liverpool with a medal and £3.3s. as a reward from the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, for bravery displayed in a burning building in Falkner-street on October 24 last'. Cowin later received the Royal Humane Society Medal and three guineas, and a special gift of £5 from an insurance company.

Note: Inspector William Cowin was born on 27 November 1858 in Westmorland. He joined the police in 1883, becoming an Auxiliary after a year and a half. He joined the Fire Brigade a year later. Promoted Sergeant on expansion of the City's boundaries in 1895, he was made Inspector in 1899, at Lark Lane Station. Pensioned on 17 February 1913, aged 54 years with 30 years service, William Cowin died on 29 January 1929.

14,280: PC (184F) Charles Deacon: Bronze medal and illuminated certificate

Details: MB(4) - 13 February 1890: No details of rescue.. The medal award was announced at a Trustees Meeting on 10 April 1890. The award was noted in *Lloyd's Weekly London Newspaper* (20 April 1890) thus: 'REWARDS FOR BRAVERY …an illuminated certificate and bronze medal to C Deacon. Police-constable 184F division, and a certificate and £2.2s to H Silver, for services rendered at 13 Gloucester Place, Hyde Park'. Later that year, the presentations were described in *The Daily News* (7 August 1890) thus: 'PRESENTATION TO POLICE OFFICERS.An interesting ceremony took place yesterday afternoon at the headquarters of the F division of Police. Paddington Green, the occasion being the presentation of engrossed addresses and medals to a sergeant and a police-constable of that division by the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire for gallant conduct in rescuing two persons from a fire at 13 Gloucester-place, Hyde Park, on the 17th November last year. The presentation was made by Sir Edward Bradford, the Chief Commissioner, assisted by Chief Constable Howard. A handsomely mounted address engrossed on vellum was presented to Police Constable Charles Deacon, 184 F, and to Sergeant Deacon, the former in addition being presented with the bronze medal of the society, and the latter with a sum of money'. See also *The Standard* (Friday 11 April 1890, p. 2).



PC William Cowin

14,283: Thomas Jones Oakley: Silver medal and £5
Henry Elliott: Silver medal and £3.3s
Charles Hipkins: Silver medal and £3.3s
George Hare: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: MB(4) - 13 February 1890: No details of rescue. The medals were presented at a Trustees Meeting on 10 April 1890. A brief report appeared in the *Lloyd's Weekly London Newspaper* (20 April 1890) thus: 'REWARDS FOR BRAVERY. At the last meeting of the trustees of the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, rewards were presented to the following persons rendering service at the terrible fire at the Forest Gate district school in January, viz:- T J Oakley, silver medal and £5; H Elliott, silver medal and £3.3s; G Hare, silver medal and £3.3s; C Hipkins, silver medal and £3.3s'. See also *The Times* (Friday 11 April 1890, p. 5) and *The Standard* (Friday 11 April 1890, p. 2).

14,284: PC (172D) Herbert Lee: Bronze medal and £1.1s
PC (188D) Thomas Oliver: Bronze medal and £1.1s

Details: MB(4) - 13 February 1890: No details of rescue.. The medals were presented at a Trustees Meeting on 10 April 1890. A brief report appeared in the *Lloyd's Weekly London Newspaper* (20 April 1890) thus: 'REWARDS FOR BRAVERY… a bronze medal and £1.1s to Police-constable H Lee, 172 D division, and a certificate and £1.1s to T Oliver, Police Constable 188 D division, for services rendered at 23 Little Marylebone Street'. The award to Police Constable Oliver was originally a Certificate and £1.1s, but was later changed to the above. See also *The Standard* (Friday 11 April 1890, p. 2).

14,285: Frederick Strickland: Bronze medal and £1.1s

Details: MB(4) - 13 February 1890: No details of rescue.. However, *The Hampshire Telegraph and Sussex Chronicle* (Saturday 18 January 1890) gave a detailed account of the inquest following this fatal fire, in which it was noted: 'On Friday the Portsmouth Coroner (T A Bramsdon, esq) held an inquest at the hospital at Landport, concerning the death of Frederick Charles Mills, aged five years and eleven months, the only child of Charles and Annie Mills, of 9 Douro Street, Southsea. On Tuesday evening Mrs Mills went [into her next door neighbour's] Mrs White, [leaving her son at home in bed asleep]. While she was there Mrs White remarked that there was no oil in the house for the lamps and Mrs Mills said "my lamp is burning. Go and get that". Mrs White accordingly went round… Soon afterwards a noise was heard from Mrs Mills' house. It was a kind of thud and it caused much alarm to Mrs Mills, who asked Mr White to run in and see what was the matter. He ran into the street and burst open the front door of the next house. Then he saw his wife and the deceased lying in the passage in flames, near the foot of the stairs. A sailor named Frederick Strickland rushed forward and caught the child up, but [the] deceased slipped through his arms. Afterwards the child was found by his mother lying in the gutter on his back, naked. He was terribly burned, and Mrs Merritt, wife of Mr G J Merritt, CC, who was passing through Douro Street with her husband at the time, kindly took him in a cab to the hospital, where he died on Wednesday. Mrs White was also taken to that institution, where she lies in a dangerous condition. Her husband said he had learned from her that she had slipped on the stairs, but that was all he could learn of how the accident happened. The Coroner said that two of the principal witnesses were unable to attend that day – Mrs White and the sailor Strickland, who was in the Royal Naval Hospital at Haslar, suffering from influenza and burns to his hand. For this reason and another which he thought it best not to refer to now, he thought it best to adjourn the inquest till Friday next'. When the inquest was reconvened, though still without Mrs White, *The Hampshire Telegraph and Sussex Chronicle* (Saturday 25 January 1890) reported that: 'It appeared that…Mrs White was bringing the deceased downstairs, when it is supposed she slipped, while carrying the child and a lamp…. Frederick Strickland, a cook on board the Royal Yacht *Osborne*, however, said that on the night of the accident he was at his mother's house, 7 Douro Street, and on hearing a noise, he went to the house, No. 9, where he saw flames in the passage. He at first took hold of the deceased child, but dropped him in the street, and gave him into the care of Mr White, after which he again went into the passage and stumbled over a woman, whose clothing was partially on fire, and which he extinguished. The woman was unconscious, and only groaned. The Coroner: There was great excitement, I suppose? Witness: Yes. Q: Do you know if any of them were worse for drink? A: No, I do not. Q: You burnt your hand? A: Yes, but it is getting on very nicely…The jury returned a verdict of accidental death, and very highly commended Strickland for his bravery on the night of the accident. The Coroner, in conveying the commendation to Strickland, said he thoroughly agreed with it'.

Medal inscribed: 'To F. Strickland for services at 9 Douro Street, Southsea. 14th January 1890'. Strickland also held the RN LS&GC Medal (Vic) (Sh. Cook F.W. Strickland, HMS Rupert).

14,290: J Lightfoot: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: MB(4) - 10 April 1890: No details of rescue. The medal was presented at a Trustees Meeting on 5 June 1890.

14,290: J J Evans: Bronze medal and £2.2s
Details: MB(4) - 10 April 1890: No details of rescue.

Medal inscribed: 'To J.J. Evans for Services at Lambeth 4th February 1890' (ex ANS collection, Sotheby's 25-26 October 2006).

14,290: F Sterling: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: MB(4) - 10 April 1890: No details of rescue. The medal was presented at a Trustees Meeting on 5 June 1890.

14,292: Colour-Sgt Ralph Slater: Bronze medal and £1.1s

Details: MB(4) - 10 April 1890. No details of rescue. The award was noted in *The Manchester Weekly Times* (7 June 1890) thus: 'RECOGNITION OF BRAVERY AT OLDHAM. At a meeting held in the Town Hall, Oldham, on Wednesday Colour-Sergeant Ralph Slater was presented with a medal from the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, and also with a guinea, the gift of the society, for rescuing two children from a house in Spencer-street, Oldham, which was on fire in February last year. The Mayor (Mr S Buckley), in making the presentation, expressed his admiration of the courageous conduct of Mr Slater, and as an earnest [expression] of his appreciation he supplemented the society's gift of a guinea with a similar amount. Mr Slater, in returning thanks, said when rescuing the children he had no thought of reward, but he only did what he considered to be his duty. He handed to the Town Clerk (Mr A Nicholson) the two guineas presented to him as a contribution to the funds of the local Deaf and Dumb Society'.

14,293: E S Tett: Silver watch

Details: MB(4) - 10 April 1890: No details of rescue. Examination of the English census records for 1881 and 1901 reveals the possible recipient as a Ernest Symes Tett (1878-1955), who was born in Milton Abbas, near Blandford, Dorset. In 1881 he was living with his family on Longclose Farm, at Milton Abbas, and was by 1901 working as a clerk and boarding at Cockmill Old Farm House, Pylle, Somerset. He later worked as a Land Agent.

14,298: Tom Holding: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: MB(4) - 5 June 1890: No details of rescue.. The medal was presented at a Trustees Meeting on 30 October 1890.

14,310: Sgt W Pallett: Silver medal
Sgt J McGregor: Silver medal
L/Cpl J A Tennant: Silver medal

Details: MB(4) - 11 December 1890: No details of rescue. The awards were in recognition of the recipients' bravery at a major fire at Wellington Barracks, London. The *Daily News* (Thursday 13 November 1890, p. 6) reported the incident thus: 'A few minutes after six o'clock last evening the members of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade stationed at Westminster were appraised of an outbreak of fire at the Wellington Barracks, Birdcage Walk, and a manual engine was at once despatched thither. On the arrival of the engineer in charge, he found that the fire was already making rapid headway at the top of the block set apart for the married men of the Guards quartered there. The telephone was therefore employed to summon aid from the various depots in the A District…In the meantime, great efforts were being made to rescue the women and children from the burning block, a work that caused much excitement and anxiety. Soldiers and firemen were busy searching the place as well as the flames and smoke would allow, and three children were brought out injured by burns and partial suffocation, namely: Alice L Pickersgill, aged two years; Elizabeth E Pickersgill, aged four; and Archibald Ernest White, five months old…Subsequently two other children were rescued…It is stated that more than an hour must have elapsed before all were rescued. The work which had been most exciting, concluded, the authorities say, with a most noble deed. Hearing shrieks of children on the top of the burning building, Pioneer Davies, of the Coldstreams, who with Sergeant Pallett, of the Scots Guards, appears to have particularly evoked the enthusiasm of their superiors for their brave acts of rescue, ascended a long ladder, and entered a top room, from whence the screams seemed to come. Finding that the voices proceeded from the rafters, he disjointed an iron bedstead and beat in the ceiling, through which he dragged himself into the presence of two little children, who in attempting to escape by the trap door had apparently crawled between the tiles and the rafters for some distance. He rescued them safely by forcing off the tiles and hauling them down the ladder. Many other incidents of brave rescues are recorded… Colour-Sergeant Wilson, of the Scots Guards, while engaged in the work of rescue, fell through the flooring, and remained unconscious till a late hour last night. Corporal Tenant, also of the Scots Guards, received injuries in a similar manner, and was unconscious for a long time…'. Three Albert Medals were awarded for the rescue efforts, to Colour Sergeant William Wilson, Colour Sergeant Henry Pickersgill, and Pioneer David Thomas Davies: see an illustration of the presentation to them in *The Graphic* (Saturday 7 February 1891, p. 148)

Medal inscribed: 'To Lnce. Corpl. J. A. Tennant, for saving life at Wellington Barracks, 12th November 1890' (A A Payne, 1911, p. 318).

14,325: PSgt (19G) James Guthrie: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1892; MB(4) - 12 February 1891: 'On 10th January 1891, James Williams, Mrs Flynn, Mrs A Hawes. George Hawes (11), Edward Hawes (5) and an infant were saved from a fire at 38 Old Street, St. Lukes (Fried Fish Shop), cause of the fire was unknown'. The medal was presented at a Trustees meeting on 30th April 1891.

14,326: Walter Marsh, Butcher: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1892; MB(4) - 12 February 1891: 'On 10th January 1891, Florence May (7), William (5) and Mabel Ambrose (2½) were saved from a fire at 462 Kinglands Road, N. (Dyer and Cleaner), cause of the fire was unknown'. The medal was presented at a Trustees Meeting on 30 April 1891.

Medal inscribed: 'To Walter Marsh, for Saving Life at Kingsland, 10th January, 1891.'

14,359: Master George Walter Taylor: Silver watch

Details: AR 1892; MB(4) - 11 February 1892: 'On 24 November 1891, Annie Moran (11) was saved from a fire at King's Street, Wexford, cause of the fire was unknown'. The award was noted in the *Freeman's Journal* (24 March 1892) thus: 'At the Wexford Petty Sessions yesterday a beautiful keyless silver watch, which had been forwarded by the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, was presented to Mr George W. Taylor, son of Mr Charles Taylor, solicitor, for having in the month of November last, at considerable risk to himself, saved the life of a child who was in imminent danger of being burned in consequence of its clothes having become ignited'.

14,374: PSgt (67K) William Reynolds: Silver medal

Details: MB(4) - 12 May 1892: No details of rescue.. The medal was presented at a Trustees Meeting on 18 August 1892.

14,378: PC (415H) Edward Ellis: Silver medal

Details: MB(4) - 18 August 1892: No details of rescue.. The medal was presented at a Trustees Meeting on 17 November 1892

14,384: Arthur Smith: Silver medal

Details: MB(4) - 18 August 1892: No details of rescue.

Medal inscribed: 'Arthur Smith, Belfast, 19th June 1892'.

14,386: Samuel Attwell: Silver medal and £10.10s

Details: MB(4) - 18 August 1892: No details of rescue.. The award was noted in the *Western Mail* (25 August 1892) thus: 'REWARD FOR GALLANTRY AT BARRY. The Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire has just been voted to Mr Samuel Attwell, a young man living at East Barry, its silver medal with a donation of ten guineas, in recognition of his courage and persistent efforts to save the life of a fellow workman at Barry Dock on the 16th of July. The medal, which will be publically presented to Attwell in the course of a week or two, was secured through the instrumentality of Mr S A Williams, shipbroker, Barry Dock'.

14,398: PC (67) W J Molton: Silver medal and £5

Details: MB(4) - 26 January 1893: No details of rescue.

14,407: James Harvey: Silver watch
Ernest Adams: Silver watch

Details: MB(4) - 26 January 1893: No details of rescue.

14,422: Inspector James Garrow: Silver medal

Details: MB(4) - 16 March 1893: No details of rescue.. The presentation was reported in *The Aberdeen Journal* (18 April 1893) thus: 'RECOGNITION OF BRAVERY. An inspector of the Perth City Police was yesterday presented with a silver medal of the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, in recognition of his bravery in rescuing an old man and woman from a burning attic in Mill Wynd on 2nd January. Recently Mr Garrow received a gold watch and chain from the citizens for his conduct. Alexander Gray, fish dealer, High Street, was at the same time presented with the society's certificate and a donation of a guinea for assistance rendered on that occasion'. See

also DNW auction catalogue 25 September 2008, lot 121, for brief career details.



Inspector James Garrow

Medal inscribed: 'James Garrow, Mill Wynd, Perth, 2nd January 1893'

14,426: Thomas Saunders: Bronze medal and £5

Details: MB(4) - 16 March 1893: No details of rescue.

14,436: Joseph Lynch: Silver medal and £2.2s.

Details: MB(4) - 1 June 1893: No details of rescue. The medal was presented at a Trustees Meeting on 26 October 1893. In reporting this, *The Times* (Saturday 28 October 1893, p. 7) noted that 'Joseph Lynch, tailor's assistant,…at great personal risk saved the life of an infant on May 12, at 28 Wych Street, Strand'.

14,437: PC (140L) George Butler: Bronze medal
PC (205L) George Cull: Bronze medal
PC (11LR) George Millman: Bronze medal

Details: MB(4) - 1 June 1893: No details of rescue. The presentations were announced in *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* (Sunday 23 July 1893) thus: 'AWARDS TO THE POLICE: At Lambeth police court, on Friday, Mr Biron presented bronze medals awarded by the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire to Constables Butler, Cull, and Millman, in recognition of their bravery at a fire in Belvedere Crescent, Lambeth. Mr Sidney Lane, a builder, also received a certificate'.

Medal inscribed: 'George Butler, Lambeth, 25th April 1893', in its case of issue (Norris Museum, Cambridgeshire).

Medal inscribed: 'George Cull Lambeth 25th April 1893' (also entitled to 1887 Jubilee Medal, with 1897 bar, 1902 and 1911 Coronation Medals).

14,442: George Buckingham: Silver watch
Andrew Johnson: Silver watch

Details: MB(4) - 26 October 1893: No details of rescue. The award was announced in *The Times* – 12 December 1893) thus: 'The Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire have granted the following awards for intrepid services...Andrew Johnson and George Buckingham, silver watches'. The awards were presented at a Trustees Meeting on 7 December 1893.

14,447: Thomas Thompson: Bronze medal

Details: MB(4) - 26 October 1893: No details of rescue. The award was announced in *The Times* (12 December 1893) thus: 'The Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire have granted the following awards for intrepid services; To Thomas Thompson, Superintendent of the Croydon Fire Brigade, the society's bronze medal'. The medal was presented at a Trustees Meeting on 7 December 1893.

14,456: Lieutenant John Lindos Emerson, Military Mounted Police: Bronze medal

Details: MB(4) - 7 December 1893: No details of rescue. The award was announced in *The Times* (12 December 1893) thus: 'The Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire have granted the following awards for intrepid services...Lieutenant J L Emerson, Provost Marshall, Curragh Camp, bronze medal'. The award was for bravery at a fire on 4 March 1891 at Harristown House, the home of the La Touche family, near Brannockstown, Co Kildare For further details see C P Fuller 'Major J L Emerson, DCM: a gentleman ranker', in *LSARS Journal* (1996, 26: 42-45).

Medal inscribed: 'John Lindos Emerson. Hanistown 4th March 1891, Kildare' (note the misspelling of Harristown on the medal, which is silver plated). Lindos also received the Distinguished Conduct Medal (VR), Egypt Medal 1882, 4 bars; Khedive's Star, Order of the Medjidie; Jubilee Medal 1897 (Royal Military Police Museum, Chichester).

14,457: Sgt William Pullen: Bronze medal

Details: MB(4) - 7 December 1893: No details of rescue. The award was announced in *The Times* (12 December 1893) thus: 'The Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire have granted the following awards for intrepid services…Sergeant Pullen, bronze medal'.

14,491: William Cull: Silver watch

Details: MB(4) - 19 July 1894: No details of rescue
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14,504: Thomas Sweet: Bronze medal and £3.3s
George Hands: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: MB(4) - 21 February 1895: No details of rescue. The award was announced in the *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* (24 February 1895) thus: 'The Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire have granted the following rewards for bravery:…T Sweet and G Hands, Homerton, bronze medal and £3.3s each'.

14,509: Inspector William Oldhamstead: Bronze medal

Details: MB(4) - 21 February 1895: No details of rescue. The award was announced in *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* (24 February 1895) thus: 'The Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire have granted the following rewards for bravery… Deputy-Inspector W Oldhamstead, City Police, Plaistow, bronze medal'. The medal was presented at a Trustees Meeting on 2 May 1895.

14,520: Alfred Driscoll, Schoolboy: Bronze medal and £3.3s
William Driscoll, Schoolboy: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1896; MB(4) - 21 February 1895: 'On 24th January 1895, Edith Driscoll (6) was saved from a fire at 5 Tower Hill, Dover (Private House), cause of the fire was unknown'. The award was announced in the *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* (24 February 1895) thus: 'The Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire have granted the following rewards for bravery:…A Driscoll and W Driscoll, Dover, bronze medal and £3.3s each'.

14,526: Private Thomas Ellison: Silver medal and £1.1s

Details: AR 1896; MB(4) - 2 May 1895: 'On 8th February 1895, William Hanley, his wife and two children were saved from a fire at 45 Lancaster Street, Belfast (Dwelling House), cause of the fire was unknown'. Noting the award, *The Times* (4 May 1895) briefly described it thus: 'Bravery Rewarded – The Trustees of the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire have granted the undermentioned awards for prompt and efficient services: Private Thomas Ellison, 2nd Dorset Regiment, now quartered at Belfast'. The presentation was noted in the *Belfast News-Letter* thus: 'On the morning of the 8th inst in Ormeau Park, after the commanding officer's parade, an interesting ceremony was witnessed, when Major C H Law presented a medal awarded by the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire to Private Ellison of the 2nd Battalion Dorset Regiment. Major Law, in making the presentation, said – Private Ellison, I have great pleasure in presenting to you a very handsome silver medals given to you by the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire on account of the gallantry of your behaviour on the 8th February last, when after all hope had been given up, you rescued a child from the flames of a fire which occurred at No. 45 Lancaster Street, in Belfast. Your gallant conduct was first reported to me by the coroner, and on my informing the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire they at their first meeting awarded you the sum of one guinea, which you have already received, and this silver medal, which I now present to you before all your comrades in the 2nd Dorset regiment. After you have left the service I hope you may live long to wear it' (Saturday 10 August 1895, p. 7).

Medal inscribed: 'Thomas Ellison, Belfast. 8th February. 1895'. Ellison (which was actually an alias for Erle J T Ellis) was also entitled to the Queen's South Africa Medal with bar Relief of Ladysmith (2,847 Private, 2nd Bn., Dorset Regiment).

14,527: Thomas H Barnett, Sexton: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1896; MB(4) - 2 May 1895: 'On 24th December 1894, Christopher Gavan (2) and Peter Gavan (10) were saved from a fire at 134 Thomas Street, Dublin (Tenement Building), cause of the fire was unknown'. The award was noted in *The Times* (4 May 1895) thus: 'Bravery Rewarded – The Trustees of the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire have granted the undermentioned awards for prompt and efficient surfaces: ...Thomas H Barnett, of Dublin, sexton, bronze medal and two guineas'.

14,533: PC Thomas Foulkes: Bronze medal and £1.1s
William John Tothill, Engineer: Bronze medal and £1.1s

Details: AR 1896; MB(4) - 2 May 1895: 'On 30th December 1894, Mrs Cradock and Miss Redford were saved from a fire at 31 Commercial Street, Newport, Monmouth. (Drapers), cause of the fire was unknown'. The fire was initially reported in the *Western Mail* (Monday 31 December 1894) and was followed up the next day by a lengthy report which noted: '…The two ladies had gone to bed at the top of the house in a room fully 50 feet from the roadway, and when they were aroused by the piercing cry of "Fire" they rushed to the front windows in their nightdresses and screamed for help. The lower part of the premises was flaring like a furnace, the lurid light of the flames lighting up all the surrounding objects, and sending showers of sparks and a suffocating cloud of smoke into the upper apartments...Police Sergeant Smith and Police Constables Hiles and Thomas Faulkes [*sic*] were quickly on the scene. The fire was gaining ground towards the spot where they sat, but just as [Miss Redford] was about to cast herself, in her desperation, from the height, Police Constable Thomas Faulkes made his way up the escape and implored her and her companion to hold on for an instant longer and he would rescue them. Faulkes is a tall man, and one of nerve, but it needed all his force of character to get those two ladies safely down. Planting one of his feet on the top rung of a short ladder…and another on the verandah, and making his foot-hold more firm by the support of Engineer Tothill buttressing him up from behind, he raised his arms as high as he could and thereby got within reach of Miss Redford's legs. He seized them and then shouted to her to "let go". She loosened her grasp from the window sill from which she had desperately decided to drop from and, with a jerk, fell into the arms of the stalwart and plucky constable, who handed her down to Tothill, and she went down to the roadway, where a kindly-disposed soldier threw off his cloak and wrapped [it] around her…The same methods were adopted for the rescue of Mrs Craddock, but, as she was a much heavier woman than Miss Redford, the danger of toppling over both Constable Faulkes and Engineer Tothill was not inconsiderable from the impact of the drop into Faulkes's arms. By a supreme effort, however, he effected the woman's physical salvation. Whatever may be his reward, the officer played a noble part in every sense in that awful scene…' (*Western Mail*, Tuesday 1 January 1895). The award was noted in *The Times* (4 May 1895) thus: 'Bravery Rewarded – The Trustees of the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire have granted the undermentioned awards for prompt and efficient surfaces: Police Constable Foulkes and Engineer Tothill, of Newport, Monmouth, bronze medal and one guinea each'. Tothill later received the Society's silver medal for a further rescue, see case 15, 041.



Scene of the fire

14,545: Miss Mary Ellen Barker, Professional Nurse: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1896; MB(4) - 26 September 1895: 'On 9th March 1895, the Dowager Countess of Morley, was saved from a fire at Whiteway Mansion, Chudleigh, Devon, cause of the fire was unknown'. In N G Gooding's *Honours and Awards to Women to 1914* (London: Savannah, 2007, pp**.** 82-83) there is mention of Nurse M E Barker and her receipt of the IGS 1895 with bar Punjab Frontier 1897-8, she having been 'shut up in the Malakand forts during the campaign, being the only woman present'...He then mentions her having the SPLF medal and that her IGS and RRC (without the SPLF medal) were sold at DNW in 2005.

14,553: PC (10GR) Henry Gregory: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1896; MB(4) - 26 September 1895: 'On 25th August 1895, Ann Slevin (30) and her three children (11 and 9 years and 18

months) were saved from a fire at 7 Northampton Street, Clerkenwell (Dwelling House), cause of the fire was unknown'. The award was noted in *The Times* (Monday, 21 October 1895, p. 4) thus: 'AN interesting function took place at Clerkenwell on Saturday, when Mr Horace Smith presented two police officers of the G Division and two civilians with awards for gallantry at a fire which occurred on August 25 at 7 Northampton Street, Clerkenwell. The Society for the Protection of Life from Fire provided a medal, certificates and money, and requested that the Clerkenwell magistrate should make the presentation. The society supplied a bronze medal and £2.2s for Police Constable Gregory, a framed certificate and £1.1s for Police Constable Batchelor, a certificate and £2.2s for John Charles Fletcher, and a certificate and £1.1s for George Page. Chief Inspector Bassett presented the two officers and two civilians to the magistrate. Mr Horace Smith, in making the presentation, said on August 25 Police Constable Batchelor and the men Fletcher and Page entered a burning building, 7 Northampton Street, and rescued Mrs Fletcher and a boy. Police Constable Gregory then entered a burning room and rescued a little child. Subsequently three other children were rescued, but, unfortunately, the woman died in hospital from the effects of the burns. A service has been rendered to the whole community by the gallantry of these four men, and it was worthy of public recognition and reward. Chief Inspector Bassett returned thanks to the magistrate on behalf of the police'. See also *The Times* (26 August 1895 and 30 August 1895).

14,558: George Bidwell, Sexton: Silver medal
Alfred Marrow, Miller: Silver medal

Details: AR 1896; MB(4) 12 December 1895: 'On 3rd 3 November 1895. Fanny Fry and Annie West were saved from a fire at Frensham Vicarage, near Farnham, cause of the fire was unknown'. The awards were announced in *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* (15 December 1895) thus: 'REWARDS FOR THE PRESERVATION OF LIFE FROM FIRE. The Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire have granted the under-mentioned awards for services rendered in the preservation of life from fire:- …George Bidwell, sexton, and Arthur Marrow, miller, both of Frensham, Surrey, the society's silver medal, in recognition of their intrepid services at Frensham vicarage on Nov. 3'.

Medal inscribed: 'George Bidwell, Frencham 3rd November 1895'

14,560: PC (517S) William Neate: Silver medal and £1.1s
PC (136S) John Colley: Bronze medal and £1.1s

Details: AR 1896; MB(4) 12 December 1895: 'On 18th October 1895, Mrs Ann Giles (42) was saved from a fire at 70 George Street, Euston Road (Let out in Tenements), cause of the fire was unknown'. The awards were announced in *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* (15 December 1895), together with a certificate and one guinea that was granted to engineer Edward Lewis for the same rescue, thus: 'for conspicuous bravery at George Street, Euston Road, on October 18'. The Society's Minutes Book (Ordinary Meeting of Trustees, 28 October 1915) records that an application had been received from PC William Neate for a replacement silver medal to take the place of one awarded to him in October 1895, case 14,560. The replacement was agreed, this presumably being a type V award in lieu of his original type IV medal.

14,572: Arthur Clement Stamberg, Doctor of Medicine: Silver Medal

Details: AR 1897; MB(4) - 27 February 1896: 'On 11th January 1896, Bertha (8), Alice (6) and Edith (4) Lowden were saved from a fire at 8 Windsor Road, St. Helier's, Jersey (Private House), cause of the fire was unknown'.

Medal known, in family group with Order of the British Empire (mil.), 1914 Star trio and MID (*Annual Bulletin: Essai de Bibliographie Jersiaise*, vol 24 (3), p. 308).

14,585: PSgt (68) Thomas Roberts: Bronze medal
PC (320) Edmund George Pittaway: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1897; MB(4) - 23 July 1896: 'On 7th May 1896, Charles Thwaites (9) and an infant were saved from a fire at 76 Trippet Lane, Sheffield (Fried Fish Shop), cause of the fire was unknown'. Roberts is noted as a PC in the Society's Minutes Book.

14,594: William Skinner, Letter Sorter: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1897; MB(4) 29 October 1896: 'On 29th August 1896, Fanny Evers (48) was saved from a fire at 127 Chatham Street, Walworth (Lodging House), cause of the fire was unknown'.

14,596: Sgt John Dobson: Bronze medal and £2.2s
PC Francis Maguire: Bronze medal and £2.2s
PC James Burns: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1897; MB(4) 29 October 1896: 'On 18th June 1896, Mrs Roden (60) was saved from a fire at Carlisle Road, Londonderry (Grocers), cause of the fire was unknown'.

14,605: PC (161D) Henry Hallam: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1897; MB(4) 18 February 1897: 'On 23rd November 1896, Madam Tallion was saved from a fire at 18 Dorset Street, Portman Square, (Lodging House) cause of the fire was unknown'. The presentation of the award was later reported in *The Times* (Wednesday, 24 March 1897, p. 4) thus: 'At Marylebone yesterday, Chief-inspector Shannon introduced to Mr Plowden, Police-constable Henry Hallam, 161D, for reward for gallantry manifested by him at a fire, which took place early on the morning of November 23, at Dorset-street, Bryanston Square, when two women lost their lives. Mr Plowden said he had been invited by the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire to present to the constable a medal in recognition of his bravery. The fire was a very serious one, and when it was at its height, and when the flames had caught the staircase, cutting off communication from the upper parts of the house, the constable forced his way through the flames and smoke to a room on the third floor and succeeded in carrying down to a place of safety a woman, who, but for his efforts, must have perished in the flames…At this very fire the constable's efforts to save life were bravely seconded by two of his companions. Mr Plowden then handed the medal to the officer, and congratulated him upon having gained so eminent a distinction…It may be mentioned that the woman rescued by Hallam subsequently died as a result of the injuries she received. Repeated and gallant attempts were made by several constables to rescue the second woman, who occupied the same room, but, owing to the heat and smoke, they were not able to succeed. At length, all other means of escape being cut off, the woman jumped out of the window. She was taken to the hospital, where she afterwards died. Hallam has been rewarded by the Commissioner and has received £10 from the special fund at Bow Street'. See also *Lloyds Weekly Newspaper* (21 February 1897 and 28 March 1897); *Reynolds Newspaper* (28 March 1897); *The Times* (24 November 1896, 18 December 1896, and 20 February 1897).

14,609: Miss Annie Pearson, Draper's Assistant: Silver medal and £2.2s



Miss Annie Pearson

Details: AR 1897; MB(4) 18 February 1897: 'On 21st November 1896 several persons were saved from a fire at 19 Kings Street, Huddersfield (Drapers), cause of the fire was unknown'. Fuller details of the fire appeared in the *Strand Magazine* (December 1897) as follows: 'Miss Pearson was employed as a mantle saleswoman by Mr Thomas Mellor, of 19 King Street, Huddersfield. About 10 o'clock on the night of November 21st, 1896, a terrible fire broke out in the shop, which not only resulted in the utter destruction of the premises and stock, but also in the death of one assistant and the serious injury of another. The origin of the fire was clear enough. One of the apprentices went into a big window to draw down the blinds before closing, and he accidentally moved a group of lighted gas-burners under a quantity of muslin that hung in the window. Soon the whole place was a blazing furnace. Miss Pearson was in the show-rooms above, with her colleagues, covering up the goods, before leaving for the night. Hearing the uproar below she ran downstairs into the street, and was then surprised to notice that the proprietor and most of the male and female assistants remained in the various departments upstairs, evidently ignorant of the awful peril they ran. By this time the premises were fairly enveloped in flames, but Miss Pearson most heroically dashed back into the burning

building and fought her way upstairs through the fire and smoke. Reaching the first floor she gave the warning to all she saw there, and she then actually ascended to the upper floors, although she was well aware that every moment rendered her own escape less probable. Miss Pearson's heroic act resulted in the escape of all except Miss Annie Wells, the principal millinery saleswoman, whose charred remains were found on the second floor. Miss S Jackson, another saleswoman, was shockingly burned, but did ultimately recover. Miss Pearson was one of the last to leave the burning building, and indeed her escape was quite miraculous, considering the fierceness and rapidity of the flames. When she first left the premises and gained the street she stood in safety and yet she deliberately went back and entered every department in the place, warning all she met and directing them as to the readiest means of escape'. The subsequent announcement of the Society's awards was printed in *The Times* (20 February 1897) thus: 'REWARDS FOR BRAVERY. The Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire has granted its silver medal with a donation of £2.2s to Miss A Pearson, draper's assistant, and to Mr Thomas Gledhill, a certificate and £2.2s in recognition of their intrepid services on November 21 at the disastrous fire in King Street, Huddersfield'. See also *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* (21 February 1897).

14,615: PSgt J Byrne: Bronze medal
PC R Clifford: Bronze medal

Details: MB(4) 13 May 1897: No details of rescue. The awards were announced in *The Belfast News-Letter* (12 August 1897) thus: 'INTERESTING PRESENTATION OF MEDALS AT CASTLEBLAYNEY. At Castleblayney Petty Sessions an interesting and unique presentation was made to Sergeant Byrne and Constable Clifford, stationed at Castleblayney, by the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire. Mr Sullivan (RM) made the presentation, and the circumstances which led up to it are these: On the morning of 11th February last, at half-past twelve o'clock, Sergeant Byrne and Constable Clifford were on duty in the town, when they discovered that a house in the possession of a man named Wm. Rea was on fire. They immediately proceeded to the burning building, where they observed Rea in the back part of the house standing in the midst of flames apparently in a stupor. At great personal risk the police rushed to the assistance of Rea, and succeeded in rescuing him from his position of peril. Rea on examination was found to be seriously burned, and, notwithstanding the best medical attention, he succumbed to his injuries a few days after the accident. An inquest was subsequently held. And the jury added a rider to their verdict eulogising the conduct of the policemen who had taken the deceased man from the building. This, taken in conjunction with representations made by Dr Wilson and Mr Henry Molloy, who were witnesses of the heroic effort of the men, had the effect of inducing the society to make the presentation. Mr Sullivan, R.M., said it was his pleasing duty, with the permission of the Inspector-General of the Royal Irish Constabulary, to present these medals. He had been informed that on this occasion the men had acted with the greatest gallantry, as the men of the force always did in times of danger. Mr Sullivan then reviewed the circumstances, after which he made the presentation. Mr Heard, D.I., replied on behalf of the police. He said that the men had run very great risk indeed, and that the only thing to be regretted in connection with the whole manner was the death of the injured man'.

14,616: PC James Morfitt: Silver medal and £2.2s.

Details: MB(4) - 13 May 1897: No details of rescue.

Note: James Morfitt appears on the 1901 English census as a Police Constable, living at 3 Dallan Street, Bradford, Yorkshire, and was noted as a 33 year old widower, with four children.

14,622: Bernard McCann: Silver medal and £5.5s

Details: MB(4) - 13 May 1897: No details of rescue. The Society approved the award of the silver medal to McCann at the Society Trustees Meeting on 13 May 1897. The events surrounding the award are described in an inquest report, the *Belfast News-Letter* relating: 'FATAL BURNING ACCIDENT. The coroner (Mr E S Finnigan) resumed in the Recorder's Court yesterday the inquiry into the circumstances attending the death of Charles Longhbridge [*sic*], who died in the Royal Hospital on the 8th inst[ant] as the result of burns received on the 25th February on the ship 131 at Messrs Workman & Clark's ship-building yard. Head-Constable Lynch watched the case for the Crown; Mr McKissack, solicitor, appeared in the interests of Messrs Workman & Clark; and Mr McIlwaine, of the firm, was also present. Daniel Donovan, brother-in-law of the deceased, gave evidence as to having visited deceased in the hospital. Deceased lived at 6

Upper Cargill Street. Robert Moffat, 14 Hanwood Street, stated that he was working with the deceased and two other men on the 25th February. The men were sent down on that afternoon to the chain-locker. Witness went down first, but he was obliged to come up again on account of a strong smell of coal tar and naptha. The foreman was also compelled to come up. Deceased and witness went down afterwards to unshackle the chain, and there were lights hanging above the deck. Witness was stooped at the chain when a flame came about him. He made a jump and fell to the bottom of the locker, and did not recover consciousness until taken to the Royal Hospital. He was burned and scorched. Witness did not know how deceased got out of the locker. To the Coroner – No lights were used in the locker, and the nearest lamp, which was a naked lamp, was three feet from the mouth of the hold. Dr Spiller said the deceased was admitted to the Royal Hospital on the 25th February. He was badly burned and almost suffocated. The cause of death was cardiac failure, producing pneumonia, caused by the burns. William Robinson, 36 Hanover Street, who is in the employment of Messrs Workman & Clark, was also examined, and stated that Joseph Deans first told him that the locker was on fire. Mr McIlwaine stated that he had been sent by the firm of Messrs Workman & Clark to give the coroner any assistance he could in arriving at the facts. Joseph Deans, 17 Parker Street, gave evidence as to seeing the deceased man and Robert Moffat in the locker. Witness saw two lighted drops fall out of a lamp overhanging the hold, and that was what caused the explosion. Moffat, recalled by the coroner, stated that the lamps were hanging three feet clear of the hold, and Robinson said the light he saw was not near the mouth of the chain-locker. Bernard McCann, 52 Hollywood Street, said he went down four times in succession before he rescued the two men in the locker. He was well exhausted when he got them up, and the two rescued men were almost dead. The coroner, in summing up, said he had seldom to investigate accidents in connection with the firm of Messrs Workman & Clark. The witness Bernard McCann deserved great credit. Very few men would have gone into a deathtrap to save other men's lives. If the jury wished he (the coroner) would bring this man's brave act under the notice of one of the societies in London in order that some recognition might be given to him for his services. The jury returned the following verdict: "That the said Charles Loughbridge, on the 8th day of March 1897, at the Royal Hospital, in the city of Belfast, came to his death from cardiac failure, producing pneumonia, caused by burns. We further find that those burns were caused by an explosion of gas in the chain-locker of the ship 131 in the course of construction at Queen's Road, Belfast. We consider that the employers of the deceased, Messrs Workman & Clark, should have taken due and proper care to prevent an explosion in a place admittedly known to be dangerous and that naked naphtha lamps should not have been used close to the opening into the chain-locker". They also added a rider requesting the coroner to bring the brave conduct of Bernard McCann under the notice of the proper authorities'(Saturday 24 April 1897,p. 7).

Medal inscribed: 'Bernard McCann, Belfast, 25th February 1897'.

14,628: PSgt (7C) John Bryans: Bronze medal and £2.2
PC (282C) Irving McVittie: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: MB(4) 13 May 1897: No details of rescue. Fortunately, a report of the awards ceremony was printed in a local newspaper. *The Liverpool Mercury* (Saturday, 19 June 1897) thus: 'HEROISM AT LIVERPOOL – THE RECENT FIRE IN PARD ROAD. The rewards first distributed were given by the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire and the Liverpool Shipwreck and Humane Society, and were as follows: Police Sergeant 7C (John Bryans) awarded a bronze medal and 2 guineas by the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, and a silver medal and 2 guineas by the Liverpool Shipwreck and Humane Society, for gallantly rescuing six persons from a house on fire, in Park Road, on the early morning of the 16th



PSgt John Bryans and PC Irving McVittie

April, 1897. Police-constable 282C (Irving M'Vitie) awarded a bronze medal and 2 guineas by the Royal Society for the

Protection of Life from Fire, and a silver medal by the Liverpool Shipwreck and Humane Society, for gallantly rescuing six persons from a house on fire, in Park Road, on the early morning of the 16th April, 1897. The Head Constable stated that Sergeant John Bryans, at two a.m. on the 16th April, saw flames issuing from the front bedroom of the shop 112 Park Road, which is occupied by Frederick William Tomkinson (who is at present at sea) and his family, the premises being used by Mrs Tomkinson as a laundry. He at once with Police Constable 282C (Irving M'Vitie), hastened to the place, and seeing Mrs Tomkinson with an infant in her arms standing on the window ledge over the shop, burst open the front door, but, owing to the smoke and heat, was unable to make his way to the stairs. Mr Cotterell, No.114, now opened his front door, and Bryans, with Joseph Heywood, going through Cotterell's shop went upstairs, and opening the bedroom window got onto the ledge, which is about 18 inches wide, by which means they rescued the woman and child, and placed them safely in Cotterell's house. Bryans then learned that four children, aged nine, six, four, and three years, were in the bedroom at the back, to which he hurried. Two ladders were obtained, and one was placed against the window. He quickly ascended, and, breaking the glass with his stick, entered the room and succeeded in carrying separately to the window from the burning bed the three elder children, aged nine, six, and four, whom he handed to Police Constable M'Vitie, who was on the ladder. Bryans was now overcome by the heat and smoke so had to be assisted from the building and down the ladder by M'Vittie. He was bleeding freely from the nostrils. As there was still another child in the house, M'Vitie ascended the ladder, entered the room, and succeeded in carrying it to the window, where Bryans, who had so far recovered as to be able to ascend the second ladder, took it from him and carried it safely into Mr Cotterell's house'.

14,635: Julyes Gaumery: Silver medal
Edouard Vauthier: Silver medal
Jean-Yves Deligeart: Silver medal
Léon Berteaux: Silver medal
Charles Glad: Silver medal
Alfred Bauduin: Silver medal
Alfred [Gustave] Dhuy: Silver medal
Jean-Baptiste-Eugène Georges: Silver medal
Mme Roch-Sauthier: Silver medal
Hippolyte-Paul: Silver medal
Louis Aubry: Silver medal
Augustuste Henns: Silver medal
Ferdinand Guérin: Silver medal
Auguste-Marchie Piquet: Silver medal



August-Marchie Pique

Details: MB(4) - 27 May 1897: No details of rescue. The awards resulted from the famous fire at the Bazar de la Charité in the rue Jean-Goujon, Paris, on 4 May 1897. The wooden building was newly opened and was thronged with 1200 mainly fashionable society women guests and shoppers perusing the 22 wooden boutiques and the cinema. At 4.30pm the cinema projector caught fire, which lead to curtains and the wooden fabric of the building quickly being set ablaze. As the people tried to escape, several were trampled underfoot. In describing the fire and rescue efforts, in The rescuer Piquet is employed by the gas company. After repeatedly rushing into the midst of the fire and saving numerous women, he modestly which the staff of the neighbouring Hotel du Palais under its proprietor Madame Roch-Sauthier took the most prominent role, the *Annales Religieuses et Littéraires du Diocèse d'Orléans* (1897, pp. 353-6) noted (translated from the original French): 'returned to his workshop and nobody would have known

about his devotion if one of his work colleagues at the time of the blaze had not recalled his exploits. Monsieur Gustave Dhuy is the foreman at the sewage company. He was in the rue Jean Goujon when the fire broke out and made his way immediately to the main entrance of the Bazar. He was initially pushed back by the people who were leaving. Getting into the middle of the crowd, he had to restrain one young woman from jumping head first onto the pavement. In the end he was able to enter into the hall, which was already in flames. A woman passed him screaming with her hair on fire. He caught her. The poor woman fought against him, saying "Leave me alone; give me back my daughter!" He grabbed her firmly and carried her out. But once in the street, the poor woman tried to escape to go back into the furnace. Other people held her back while Dhuy ran back into the fire. He was able to pull out several people, some of whom were unconscious. The last time he left the building carrying a large woman in his arms. Even though he was a fit man, he was exhausted, slipping with his burden and falling on the pavement. Monsieur Prélat, the police superintendent, picked him up and stopped him from going back into the hall. His face was burnt and he probably would not have come out of the hall alive. Monsieur Berteaux, manager of *La Croix* printers, and Monsieurs Glad and Baudoin, who worked in the printers, threw themselves into the danger, the latter two being injured; with them was Madame Roche-Sautier, of the Hotel du Palais, her chef Monsieur Gomery and his assistants, Edouard Haydt, Eugène Cauvert, Joanny, and Pothier, who vied with each other in their bravery and ingenuity in pulling victims from the ruthless scourge! Madame Mattern, a member of the French Red Cross, succeeded in escaping, thanks to her calmness and energy, from the Bazar de la Charité, where she was at the time of the disaster. This courageous woman managed to break through the wood into room 13 to the right of the Bazar, and thanks to this numerous people were saved, doing this despite her burns. Mme Surreault was yet another heroine, who in front of a small window in the Hotel du Palais, when the flames were catching at her clothes and the outstretched arms of the rescuers were there for her, she stepped aside to allow Mme de Hérédia and her daughter to get out, merely saying to her "Madame, I wouldn't want to separate a mother from her daughter: go in front of me I beg you". We cite again the brave conduct of M Roussel, who is a doctor at the hospital and a medical intern at the



Jean-Baptiste-Eugène Georges

Exposition. Having arrived at the beginning of the fire, this young man threw himself into the burning building and saved some 20 women; then, after the Bazar collapsed he returned to take up his place with the first-aid station at the Palais de l'Industrie, where for 36 hours without a break, he tended the injured. After this admirable conduct M Roussel left in a state of exhaustion.. It is important to mention, the heroic actions of cabman Eugène Georges, M Jacquin, a lieutenant in the 102nd Infantry, M Fernand de Mély, M Daniel Curret, a valet of Mme la comtesse Costa de Beauregard, a footman of Mme Greffülhe, who rewarded the devotion of this young man with a gift of 100,000 francs, while the government generously distributed gold and silver medals and honourable mentions; only one of the rescuers, cabman Eugène Georges was made a chevalier of the Legion d'Honneur…' (pp. 353-5). Some 129 people died in the fire,



Le Petit Journal

Le Petit Journal

Le Supplément illustré

SUPPLÉMENT ILLUSTRÉ

Huit pages : CINQ centimes

ABONNEMENTS

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INCENDIE DU BAZAR DE LA CHARITÉ

LE SINISTRE

including 123 women, the Duchess of Alencon being among the victims. The French government profusely rewarded those involved in the rescue efforts, with Jean-Baptiste-Eugène George receiving the Légion d'Honneur and a gold medal (first class), the latter also going to Ange-Marie Piquet, Jules Gommery, Edouard Vauthier, Madame Roche-Sautier, Monsieur Deligeart, Léon Berteaux, Charles Glad, Alfred Bauduin, Gustave Dhuys, Hippolyte-Paul Michaut, Louis Aubry, Auguste Henno, and Ferdinand Guérin among others (with spellings here as given by Huret, 1897, who records the full list of French awards). See also Louis d'Haucour's *Le Panthéon des enfants et des femmes jeunes héros et grandes héroïnes honneur et patrie, valeur et discipline*, A Fayard, 1904; D Paoli's *Il ya cent ans: Li'incenrie du Bazar de la Charité*, Paris: MDC, 1997; G Cubit 'Martyrs of charity, heroes of solidarity: Catholic and republican responses to the fire at the Bazar de la Charité, Paris, 1897', *French History*, 2007, 21: 3: 331-352; *Le Journal de la Jeunesse* (first semester, 1897); and J Huret's *La Catastrophe du Bazar de la Charité*, Paris: F Juven, [1897] (available at: http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k370290).

14,638: Charles Peter Benton: Silver medal

Details: MB(4) - 23 September 1897: No details of rescue. The award was announced in *The Times* (Tuesday 28 September 1897, p. 4), which noted Benton was from Esher.

14,641: Solomon Israel: Silver watch

Details: MB(4) - 23 September 1897: No details of rescue. According to *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* (Sunday 18 July 1897): 'MONDAY (8) – During a small fire at 30 David Mansions, New Goulson Street, Whitechapel, at 1.41pm, a little girl of three, Esther Bright, was badly burnt and had to be taken to hospital. Solomon Israel, a youth of 16, was burnt on the hands in an endeavour to extinguish the flames'. The award was announced in *The Times* (Tuesday 28 September 1897, p. 4).

14,643: PC (284) William Buckley: Bronze medal

Details: MB(4) – 23 September 1897: No details of rescue The award was announced in *The Times* (Tuesday 28 September 1897, p. 4), which noted Buckley was from Chester-le-Street. The presentation to Constable Buckley was subsequently reported in the press, an unattributed newspaper cutting describing the ceremony: BRAVE PC BUCKLEY - Before the inspection of the County Police at Gateshead yesterday, the Chief Constable (Colonel Eden) presented PC Buckley, stationed at Ouston, with a medal in recognition of his bravery and promptness at a fire at Pelton on the 19th of July, last year. The story of the rescue is as follows. On the date named dense clouds of smoke were seen issuing from a house at Pelton, and as a man named Haddon was known to be sleeping in an upper room, great fear was felt for his life. Several unsuccessful attempts were made to reach his bedroom window, and it looked as though the man's life would be lost when PC's Buckley and Bowes came on the scene. The two officers promptly procured a ladder, and placed it against the wall. Buckley ascended first, opened the window, and without taking any further precaution than removing his helmet entered the burning house. After a short time of anxious waiting he re-appeared carrying Haddon in his arms, and handed him to PC Bowes, amid the hearty applause of the crowd. There is no doubt that but for the prompt assistance of the two officers there would have been considerable damage to property as well as loss of life. The Chief Constable warmly congratulated both men on their plucky behaviour'.



PC William Buckley

Medal inscribed: 'Wm Buckley, Pelton. 19 July 1897'.

14,644: PC (169E) Joseph Dancy: Bronze medal
PC (213E) George Dowing: Bronze medal

Details: MB(4) - 23 September 1897: No details of rescue. An account of the events surrounding the award is given in *The Times* (7 August 1897) thus: 'FATAL FIRES. Shortly after 1 o'clock yesterday morning it was discovered that the premises of 113 Drury Lane, were on fire. The shop was occupied by a picture-frame manufacturer, while the upper part of the house was let to several families. Before the fire brigade arrived the police rendered substantial assistance in rescuing several of the inmates, some over adjoining roofs and others from the lower windows. In attempting to jump from a second floor window, however, Frederick Staddon, and his wife, Mary Staddon, fell heavily to the pavement, and it was found necessary to convey them to King's College Hospital. Mr Staddon's injuries were found to be slight, but his wife died a few hours after admittance to hospital. By 2 o'clock the brigade, with the assistance of a large detachment of police from Bow Street, had succeeded in mastering the flames and had effectively prevented any serious damage occurring to the adjoining premises. On the premises being searched the charred remains of a Mrs Webber and her daughter were found in the second floor back room. The cause of the outbreak is not known at present, but it is thought that one of the lodgers must have dropped a lighted match amongst some straw which is usually laying at the foot of the first flight of stairs, as that part of the building, was the first to catch fire, and escape was rendered more difficult. The following is the official report of Commander Wells:- "Called at 1.14 am to 113 Drury Lane, occupied by G Bannister, picture-frame maker; C Grote, lodger; F Staddon, lodger; G Webber, lodger; and E Bull, lodger. Name and residence of landlord unknown. Cause of fire unknown. Shop and house of 11 rooms and contents very severely damaged by fire and part of roof off. Mary Webber, aged 38 years, and Mary Webber, aged 10 years, burned to death. Frederick Staddon, aged 32 years, and Mary Venus Staddon, aged 26 years, injured by jumping from a second floor window and taken to hospital." Later in the day, Commander Wells was informed of the death of Mrs Staddon'. The awards were announced in *The Times* (Tuesday 28 September 1897, p. 4). The presentation is subsequently recorded by *The Times* (Friday, 19 November 1897, p. 6) thus: 'REWARDS TO BRAVE POLICEMEN. At Bow Street Police Court, yesterday, Superintendent Cole, of E Division introduced to the notice of Sir John Bridge Police Constables Joseph Dancey, 169E, and George Dowing, 213E, to whom medals have been awarded for their gallantry by the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire. Sir John Bridge said that he was well acquainted with the circumstances of the case. The medals were appropriately inscribed with the words "Duty and Honour" [*sic*], and there could be no doubt that these constables had both done their duty and merited the honour the society desired to confer upon them. Some months ago a fire broke out at 113 Drury Lane, and several lives were lost. It was not until the staircase was in flames that it was discovered that there were some persons in one of the upper rooms. These two brave men resolved to rescue them, and, as it was impossible to ascend direct to the room, ran up the stairs of the adjoining house, crawled along the coping between the two houses, and succeeded in pulling three persons out of the window and bringing them to the ground. He had great pleasure in handing them the medals to which he had alluded, and in adding a cheque for £10 for each man from the fund maintained at Bow Street for the reward of brave policemen'.

14,646: Alice Wedge: Silver watch

Details: MB(4) - 23 September 1897: No details of rescue. The award was announced in *The Times* (Tuesday 28 September 1897, p. 4), which noted she was from Rodington, Shrewsbury.

14,647: William Piper: Silver medal

Details: MB(4) - 23 September 1897: No details of rescue. The award was announced in *The Times* (Tuesday 28 September 1897, p. 4), which noted Piper was from Newport, Barnstaple.

Medal inscribed: 'Wm Piper, Newport Barnstaple, 4 Septr, 1897' (London Fire Brigade Museum collection).

14,650: John Spencer: Silver medal and £3.3s
Henry John Olley: Bronze medal and £2.2s
Arthur Knowler: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: MB(4) - 24 February 1898: No details of rescue.

14,657: William Hobbin: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: MB(4) - 24 February 1898: No details of rescue.

14,668: William Rook, Farm Bailiff: Silver medal and £5

Details: MB(4) - 19 May 1898: No details of rescue. The award was announced in the *Reynolds's Newspaper* (29 May 1898) thus: 'REWARDS FOR BRAVERY. The trustees of the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire have granted the following awards for meritorious services in saving life: William Rook, farm bailiff, of Mutford, Suffolk, silver medal and £5'. See also *The Morning Post* (Tuesday, 24 May 1898, p. 2).

14,669: PC Arthur Richardson: Silver medal

Details: MB(4) - 19 May 1898: No details of rescue. The award was announced in the *Reynolds's Newspaper* (29 May 1898) thus: 'REWARDS FOR BRAVERY. The trustees of the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire have granted the following awards for meritorious services in saving life .. Arthur Richardson, policeman of Bridport, silver medal'. See also *The Morning Post* (Tuesday, 24 May 1898, p. 2).

14,671: William Albert Wainscott: Silver medal
James John Driscoll: Silver medal
Alfred Henry Woolley: Silver medal

Details: MB(4) - 19 May 1898: No details of rescue. The award was announced in the *Reynolds's Newspaper* (29 May 1898) thus: 'REWARDS FOR BRAVERY. The trustees of the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire have granted the following awards for meritorious services in saving life:….William Wainscott, James Driscoll, and Alfred Richardson, members of the Kent Fire Office Brigade, a silver medal each'. See also *The Morning Post* (Tuesday, 24 May 1898, p. 2).

14,678: Henry William Harmer: Silver watch

Details: MB(4) - 13 October 1898: No details of rescue.

14,683: Sgt Major William Fletcher: Silver medal and £5.5s
Lieutenant Maxwell Earle: Silver medal



Sgt Major William Fletcher's medals

Details: MB(4) - 13 October 1898: No details of rescue. Comprehensive details on the events however are recorded in the report of M Earl, the Adjutant of the 2nd Battalion Grenadier Guards, dated 22 March 1898. Earl thus wrote: 'I have the honour to again bring to your notice the conduct of Sergt Major W Fletcher 2nd Bn Grenadier Guards during the early morning of the 13th March, 98. On the date in question I heard the fire alarm blown apparently from the west end of the barracks [at 5.31am]. It was hardly light and a considerable amount of smoke was hanging over the parade ground; it was difficult to see any distance. The men of my battalion were tumbling out of the passage quickly and quietly and forming up in their usual places. As I came round the head of the battalion I saw Sergt Major W Fletcher come round the rear of the column from the direction of his quarters. We met in the middle of the Parade. I asked him where the fire was and he answered me in the Sergeants Mess. As I knew three families lived above the Sergts Mess my first question was whether all the women and children were safe. The Sergt Major was very hoarse and was coughing a good deal from having been in the smoke. He answered me yes, but suddenly exclaimed "My God, I have not seen Mrs Rolinson". He turned round and ran thro' the battalion in the direction of the fire. As I was the first officer of my battalion on parade, I looked to see if the usual orders for fires were being carried out. I then went to the Scots Guards Parade and seeing no officer I sent the acting Drill Sergeant to warn the Metropolitan Fire Brigade and ordered the Sergt Major of the Scots Guards to break the Bye Pass. I then came to the scene of the fire and found the building and especially the narrow entrance full of very dense smoke. Sergt Major Fletcher had in the mean time dashed into the building and forced his way up the narrow stairs to the quarters occupied by Mrs Rolinson on the first floor (back). Mrs Rolinson is the wife of Drill Sergt Rolinson who is going through a course at Aldershot, but he was on leave in these barracks on the night in question, unknown to both me and Sergt Major Fletcher. The Drill Sergeant had on hearing the alarm left the quarters telling his wife to remain where she was while he went to investigate the cause of alarm, saying he would return. When he got down stairs he attempted to go up again to his wife but was beaten back by the suffocating smoke and so attempted to reach his quarters from the Scots Guards Block across the glass verandah. In the mean time Sergt Major Fletcher had forced his way to the first floor when he was overcome by the smoke, but luckily at this moment

someone gained entrance to the building from the verandah and dragged him out. I saw the Sergt Major and I thought for the moment he was dead, but he was violently sick and the cold night air revived him and he at once returned to the rescue, following…Drill Sergt Rolinson, as described above, across the verandah. Entrance was then gained at last to Mrs Rolinson's quarters and a ladder being brought it was placed against the building and the woman and three children were brought down by the Sergt Major, with assistance from below. The building then burst into flames owing in a great part to the contents of the room, where the fire was, being spirits. The verandah which Sergt Major Fletcher had crossed a moment before caught fire owing to the wood used in its construction. The woman and three children were suffering very much from smoke. They had evidently been unable to act for themselves owing to fear at the Drill Sergt not returning as he had promised. Sergt Major Fletcher was much over-come by the smoke and his white night shirt was black from the fire and smoke. It is unnecessary for me to point out that what I have described at some length takes place in a very few moments. Sergt Major Fletcher had previously taken his wife and niece who live on the top floor to a place of safety, his niece being then – and for some time afterwards – unconscious from the smoke. So on re-entering the building, he must have been well aware of [the] state the narrow staircase was in, both from smoke and fire. He never hesitated once either time he entered the burning building and I am convinced that had he not acted promptly Drill Sergeant Rolinson would have lost some of his family' (TNA ref: HO 144/425/B26562). This report, with support from the Commanding Officer and others, was used as a basis to recommend Fletcher for the Albert Medal (2nd class). After considerable debate, the recommend-dation was declined, in part because, as one civil servant noted on the file, 'gallantry is so frequently observed at fires that the medal has, with very rare exceptions, been refused', while another endorsing this added 'This does not come nearly up to the standard required for an Albert Medal. If a medal were granted in this case, the number given would have to be enormously increased' (*Ibid.*). The award by the Society was announced in *The Times* (16 November 1896) thus: 'BRAVERY REWARDED. The Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire have granted their silver medal to Lieutenant and Adjutant Maxwell Earle, of the 2nd Battalion Grenadier Guards, and a silver medal and £5.5s to Sergeant-Major William Fletcher for saving life from fire at Wellington Barracks on March 13'. Fletcher was recommended for the Albert Medal for his bravery on this occasion. See also *LSARS Journal* (37; Dec 1999; pp. 3-9); *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* (20 November 1898); *The Morning Post* (Wednesday 16 November 1898, p. 7); *The Navy and Army Illustrated* (16 November 1901); and *The Times* (18 and 25 February 1953).



Sgt Major Fletcher (standing left) in the uniform of the Dulwich College OTC, wearing his RSPLF

Medal inscribed: 'Wm Fletcher, Wellington Barracks, S.W. 13th March 1898', together with his other medals: Egypt 1882-89, 1 clasp, Suakin 1885 (6472 Sergt. W. Fletcher, 3/Grenr. Gds.); 1914-15 Star (Q.M. & Lieut. W. Fletcher, G. Gds.); British War and Victory Medals (Q.M. & Lieut.); Jubilee 1897, bronze; Army LS&GC, GVR, 1st issue (6472 S.Mjr., G. Gds.); Meritorious Service Medal, V.R. (Sgt. Maj: W. Fletcher, Gren: G'ds.); Royal Victorian Medal, Bronze, V.R., unnamed as issued; Khedive's Star 1884-6, the reverse lower point impressed '6472 3GG' and fitted with additional hook for mounting purposes (for further details see DNW, 25 September 2008, lot 299). Fletcher's named miniature is known, being sold at DNW (2

April 2003, lot 1135), inscribed: 'Wm. Fletcher, Wellington Barracks S.W. 13 March 1898.

14,684: George Rawson: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: MB(4) - 13 October 1898: No details of rescue.

14,687: PSgt (5YR) John Cronin: Bronze medal and £1.1s
PC (574Y) Henry Keeling: Bronze medal and £1.1s

Details: MB(4) - 13 October 1898: No details of rescue.

14,694: Charles Clough: Silver medal and £2

Details: MB(4) - 16 February 1899: No details of rescue. The *Daily News* (Tuesday 21 February 1899) announced the award thus: 'Chas Clough, silver medal and £2, for rescuing a woman at Lilley Place, Bury Road, Rochdale, on 30th December'.

14,695: PC (127B) Edward Ernest Christian: Silver medal and £5

Details: MB(4) - 16 February 1899: No details of rescue. The *Daily News* (Tuesday 21 February 1899) announced the award thus: 'Police Constable Ernest Edward Christian, silver medal and £5, for intrepid service at 20 Abram Street, Liverpool, on the 26th December'.

14,696: PC John West: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: MB(4) - 16 February 1899: No details of rescue. The *Daily News* (Tuesday 21 February 1899) announced the award thus: 'J West, of the Royal Irish Constabulary, silver medal and £3.3s, for endeavouring at personal risk to save a boy at Vincent Place, Cork, on the 30th December'.

14,700: HC Peter Leonard: Silver medal and £5
PSgt Thomas Blair: Silver medal and £5

Details: MB(4) - 16 February 1899: No details of rescue. The *Daily News*
(Tuesday 21 February 1899) announced the awards thus: 'Head Constable Peter Leonard and Sergeant Thos Blain, of the Royal Irish Constabulary, silver medal and £5 each, for rescuing a woman from imminent danger at Cross Street, Galway, on the 20th of November'.

14,702: Frank Fowles: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: MB(4) - 16 February 1899: No details of rescue The *Daily News* (Tuesday 21 February 1899) announced the award thus: 'Frank Fowles, bronze medal and £3.3s for services at Haberdasher Street, Hoxton, on the 7th of January'.

14,704: PC Henry Charles Barrow: Silver medal and £5

Details: MB(4) - 16 February 1899: No details of rescue. The *Daily News* (Tuesday 21 February 1899) announced the award thus: 'Police Constable Henry Charles barrow, silver medal and £5, for saving the lives of two children at Brentwood on the 28th January'.

14,709: Henry Roberts: Silver watch

Details: MB(4) - 18 May 1899: No details of rescue.

14,715: John Blundell: Silver watch and £1.1s

Details: MB(4) - 18 May 1899: No details of rescue.

14,720: PC (299C) William Field: Bronze medal

Details: MB(4) - 18 May 1899: No details of rescue. The recommendation was noted in *The Times* (28 April 1899) thus: 'At Bow-street, Superintendent Smith, of the C Division, introduced to Sir John Bridge, Police Constable William Field, 299C, who had been recommended for reward for bravery in saving life at the recent fatal fire in Soho. Sir John Bridge said the constable's conduct was worthy of the highest praise. The fire in question broke out on the second storey, and at great peril to himself he rushed up the stairs and carried down a woman who would undoubtedly have been burnt to death had it not been for his coolness and courage. After this he made another attempt to enter the burning building, but was driven back by the flames, which burnt his hair and whiskers. At the inquest on a person who was killed by jumping from one of the windows all the witnesses testified to the constable's courage, and he had much pleasure in handing him a cheque for £10'. The Minutes Book, Ordinary Meeting of the Trustees, 26 July 1910, agreed that the application for a replacement for a lost medal (case 14,720) be granted.

14,729: PC Patrick Daly: Silver medal and £5

Details: MB(4) - 19 October 1899: No details of rescue. Daly was serving with the RIC.

14,730: John Dunleary: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: MB(4) - 19 October 1899: No details of rescue.

14,731: PC Patrick Boyle: Bronze medal
PC Patrick Kelly: Bronze medal

Details: MB(4) - 19 October 1899: No details of rescue. Both recipients were serving with the RIC.

14,732: PC Alfred William Friend: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: MB(4) - 19 October 1899: No details of rescue.

14,736: PC (30) Charles Wood: Silver medal and £5.5s

Details: MB(4) - 15 February 1900: No details of rescue. The award was announced in *The Leeds Mercury* (12 May 1900) thus: 'GALLANTRY REWARDED AT BRADFORD. There was an interesting gathering at the Bradford Town Hall yesterday of the city police and others on the occasion of a presentation by the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire of a silver medal and an honorarium of £5 to Police Constable Wood, a reservist in the Coldstream Guards. The recipient who has been invalided home from South Africa, on September 28th, 1899, at Bradford Moor, saved the life of a baby boy, aged three years, at great risk from a house which was on fire. The Mayor (Mr W C Lupton) made the presentation, and Mr Edward Wilson, landlord of the Coach and Horses Inn, Bradford Moor, who assisted Wood, received a certificate from the society'.

14,749: PC (114) William John Perry: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1901; MB(4) - 15 February 1900: 'On 14th January 1900, Robert Tomlinson (73) was saved from a fire at Haydon Street, New Swindon (Private House), caused by a spirit lamp upset'.

Medal inscribed: 'William John Perry, New Swindon, 14th Jany. 1900'

14,750: PC (100J) John Weavers: Bronze medal
PC (322J) Thomas Baker: Bronze medal
PC (274J) Arthur Read: Bronze medal
PC (135J) James Elrick: Bronze medal
PSgt (20J) John Danzey: Bronze medal

Details: MB(4) -15 February 1900: No details of rescue. The following account appears in the DNW auction catalogue (20 September 2002) thus: 'Police Constables Danzey, Weavers, Baker, Read, and Elrick were each awarded the Society's bronze medal for their services at a fire at the Elephant and Castle public house in Wick Road, Hackney, on 22 December 1899, in which Constable George Funnell lost his life. The house was closed at 1.30 a.m., and at that time the occupants were Mrs Fowler (the wife of the landlord), Alice Maryon and Minnie Lewis (barmaids), and William Goodridge (a barman). Constable Thomas Baker said that he discovered the fire, and the deceased, with witness Sergeant Danzey, and Constable Read, went into the house when the barman opened the door. This caused a considerable draught and the fire immediately spread in all directions. Funnell, hearing that there were other persons in the house, disappeared through the flames and witness did not see him again until after the fire had been got under control. He was then rescued by witness [Danzey] and the other officers, but he was unconscious and badly burned. Sergeant Danzey said that the other officers were so overcome that they had to go on the sick-list. One of the men nearly fell into the fire from exhaustion'. The presentations were subsequently noted in *The Times* (23 March 1900) thus: 'At the North London Police Court, yesterday morning, Mr Fordham, on behalf of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, presented Serg John Danzey, 20J, Const. John Weavers, 100J, Const Thomas Barker, 332J, Const Arthur Reed, 274J, and Const James Elrick 135J, with bronze medals for their efforts in endeavouring to save life at a fire at the Elephant and Castle Public House, Hackneywick, on December 22. Mr Fordham, in presenting the medals, briefly narrated the circumstances, and said that when the fire broke out Serg. Danzey and Const Funnell, who were on duty in the neighbourhood, made their way into the house for the purpose of rescuing three women. They were followed by the other four constables, but all except Funnell were driven back by the fire and smoke. There was no doubt that Funnell saved the lives of the three women. The other officers, finding that he did not come back, searched in the burning building and found him insensible. Funnell died on January 2, having laid down his life for the three women, who were absolute strangers to him. He had died the

death of a truly brave man, and it was some satisfaction to know that his deed had been recognized by the public at large and that his widow and children were being very fairly provided for. The officers now before him behaved as Englishmen almost always did, and certainly as they always should do. He did not say that their behaviour was exceptional, because he believed that every policeman in the force would be glad of the opportunity of doing what they had done. The medals were then presented'. See also *The Times* (23 December 1899, 5 January 1900, and 23 March 1900), the *News of the World* (14 January 1900), the *Weekly Dispatch* (7 January and 25 March 1900) and the *Strand Magazine* (December 1900, pp. 648-9, which includes a group photograph of the recipients), while www.funnell.org includes a picture of George Stephen Funnell.



(l-r) PC Arthur Read, PC John Weavers, PSgt John Danzie, PC Thomas Baker, PC James Elrick

Medal inscribed: 'John Danzey, Hackney. 22nd Decr 1899.', in a group together with the 1887 Jubilee Medal with 1897 clasp (PC…T. Divn.) and the 1902 Coronation Medal (Met Police type) (P.S. …J. Div.)

14,755: PC Duncan McColl: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1901; MB(4) - 10 May 1900: 'On 18th October 1899, Christina Porteous (27) was saved from a fire at the Galloway Arms Hotel, Garliestown, Wigtownshire, North Britain, caused by a bursting paraffin lamp'. The award was noted in *The Glasgow Herald* (14 May 1900) thus: 'SCOTCH POLICEMAN'S BRAVERY – The Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire has just been awarded its bronze medal and two guineas to Constable Duncan M'Coll, Wigtownshire Constabulary, for his heroic conduct at Garliestown on the 18th October last. Being on duty, the constable noticed an unusual glare coming from the Galloway Arms Hotel, and on opening the door was met by dense volumes of smoke, and found Miss Porteous, daughter of the proprietor, in the lobby enveloped in flames. With the utmost promptitude he took off his jacket, and, placing it round the girl, extinguished the fire and carried her to a place of safety, but she died three days later. The fire in the hotel was shortly after got under'.

14,763: PC Anthony Scroope: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1901; MB(4) - 10 May 1900: 'On 12th February 1900 Thomas Sullivan (70) and Anastatia Ruth Sullivan (75) were saved from a fire at John Street, Waterford (Tailor's Shop). Two houses were destroyed; cause of the fire was unknown'. The recipient was serving with the RIC. The Minutes of Trustees Meeting 23 February 1922 reported that an application for a new medal had been received from Anthony Scroope to replace one lost in a fire in Quebec. The issue of a duplicate medal was authorised (this most probably being a type V issue rather than the type IV medal Scroope would have originally received).

14,768: PC (337L) George Paradine: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1901; MB(4) - 10 May 1900: 'On 21st January 1900, Clara Tilling, Edward Smith and Frederick Packenham were saved from a fire at the Railway Hotel, Elephant Road, Walworth, cause of the fire was unknown'. The presentation was noted briefly in *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* (10 June 1900) thus: 'At Kennington Lane police station, on Wednesday, a medal, awarded by the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, was presented to Police-constable George Paradine, 377 L'.

14,770: PC John J McEntyre: Bronze medal and £3.3s
PC William Henry Timmins: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1901; MB(4) - 10 May 1900: 'On 24th March 1900, Lizzie Ryan (25) and Mary Ryan (30) were saved from a fire at 18 Clanbrassil Street, Dundalk (Draper's Shop), caused by goods in contact with a gas jet'. Both recipients were serving with the RIC.

The medals to McEntyre and Timmins are known in a private collection.

14,774: Sapper Harry Ashworth, 'G' Co. Royal Engineers: Bronze medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1901; MB(4) - 10 May 1900: 'On 29th April 1900, Mrs Collier and her three children aged 7, 3 and 1 were saved from a fire at St. Mary's Barrack's, Chatham, caused by a paraffin lamp upset'.

14,777: PC William McCarron: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1901; MB(4) - 18 October 1900: 'On 25th December 1899, Maggie Girvin (8) was saved from a fire in a cottage at Castle Street, Omagh, Co. Tyrone, caused by a spark igniting the thatched roof'. The award was noted in *The Times* (20 October 1900) thus: 'The Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, at its meeting this week, made the following among other awards in cases brought to its notice from various parts of the country – bronze medal to Constable W. McCarron for rescuing a girl at Omagh in December last'. Further details appeared in *The Belfast News-Letter* (22 October 1900) thus: 'PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE – ROYAL SOCIETY AWARDS TO ULSTER CONSTABLES. …Constable W M'Canon (*sic*), Omagh, has been awarded a bronze medal for rescuing a girl from a burning house in Castle Street there in December last. M'Canon (sic) was several times beaten back by the dense smoke before reaching the room where the girl was'.

14,782: PC (392D) William Croxall: Bronze medal and £2.2s
John Robert Mitchell, jnr, Fishmonger: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1901; MB(4) - 18 October 1900: 'On 9th June 1900, Elizabeth Leslie (34), Jennie Elvin (28), Howard Smith (17) and Clifford Smith (16) were saved from a fire at 32 Gower Place, W (Occupied by a Taylor), cause of the fire was unknown'. The awards were noted in *The Times* (20 October 1900) thus: 'The Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, at its meeting this week, made the following among other awards in cases brought to its notice from various parts of the country: medal and two guineas each to Constable W Croxall, Metropolitan Police, and J R Mitchell, fishmonger, for saving life in Gower-place, Euston-road, on June 9'. See also *The Times* (23 November 1900).

14,783: PC (769 City) Herbert Stiles: Bronze medal and £1.1s

Details: AR 1901; MB(4) - 18 October 1900: 'On 28th June 1900, Jane Baker (51), Jane Baker (22) and William Smith (12) were saved from a fire at 133 Galley Walk Road, Bermondsey S.E. (Chandler's Shop), cause of the fire was unknown'. The award was noted in *The Times* (20 October 1900) thus: 'The Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, at its meeting this week, made the following among other awards in cases brought to its notice from various parts of the country – medal and one guinea to Constable A H Stiles, City Police, for saving three persons from a burning house in Rotherhithe on June 28'. Later, the conferral was described by *The Times* (Saturday, 17 November 1900, p. 13) thus: 'PRESENTATION TO A CONSTABLE: Yesterday the Lord Mayor, Mr Alderman Frank Green, presented to Police Constable Stiles, 769, City Police, a bronze medal which had been awarded to him by the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire in recognition of the distinguished courage displayed by him in rescuing two women and a lad from a burning house. The ceremony took place in the Justice Room of the Mansion House, and among those present were Sir Henry Smith, Commissioner of the City Police, and Major Wodehouse, the Assistant Commissioner. The Lord Mayor, in making the presentation, complimented Police Constable Stiles on a very great act of bravery. At about 4 o'clock on the morning of June 28 Police Constable Stiles, while passing through Gullywall Road, Rotherhithe, on his way to duty, saw smoke issuing from a shop of Mr Rapson, grocer. He broke open the door, but was driven back by heat and smoke. He obtained a ladder and entered the house through a window on the first floor, and rescued two women and a lad, whom he brought down the ladder. His actions aroused three other inmates, and they also escaped. The Commissioner of Police had suitably rewarded him and had brought his conduct to the notice of the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, who in recognition of his bravery awarded him their bronze medal and a donation of a guinea. The Lord Mayor added that on behalf of himself and the magistrates who conducted the business of that Court and the citizens it gave him great pleasure indeed to have the opportunity of commending the courageous conduct of Police Constable Stiles. The bronze medal which had been awarded to him was a decoration which was only presented for acts of singular heroism such as he had shown. His lordship then pinned the medal on the constable's breast and shook hands with him. Police Constable

Stiles was loudly cheered at the conclusion of the ceremony'.

14,784: PSgt Patrick Donohue: Bronze medal and £1.1s
PC John Hetherington: Bronze medal and £1.1s
PC James Daly: Bronze medal and £1.1s

Details: AR 1901; MB(4) - 18 October 1900: 'On 30th June 1900, Daniel (53), Rose Anne (50), William (18), John (16), Maggie (12) and Hugh McLaughlin (10), and Fanny McFadden (85) were saved from a fire at St Columb's Hall, Orchard Street, Londonderry, caused by a lighted cigar thrown on to sawdust'. The awards were noted in *The Belfast News-Letter* (22 October 1900) thus: 'PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE – ROYAL SOCIETY AWARDS TO ULSTER CONSTABLES. A bronze medal and one guinea each has been awarded to Sergeant Donohue and Constables Hetherington and Daley, Londonderry, for saving eight persons from a burning house in Orchard Street there, on 30th June. The whole place was full of smoke, and the heat was great'. See also *The Times* (20 October 1900).

14,786: PC (676) Benjamin Stafford: Silver medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1901; MB(4) - 18 October 1900: 'On 1st May 1900, James Langtry (31), Alice Langtry (30), Bridget McGhee (40), Thomas Daly (24) and James Fay (21) were saved from a fire at 57 Castle Street, Belfast (Tobacconist's Shop), cause of the fire was unknown'. The award was noted in *The Times* (20 October 1900) thus: 'The Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, at its meeting this week, made the following among other awards in cases brought to its notice from various parts of the country – Silver medal and five guineas to Constable B Stafford, Royal Irish Constabulary, for rescuing five persons from a burning house at Belfast on May 1'. Further details appeared in *The Belfast News-Letter* (22 October 1900) thus: 'PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE – ROYAL SOCIETY AWARDS TO ULSTER CONSTABLES. The Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire has awarded a silver medal and five guineas to Constable Benjamin Stafford (676), of Glengall Street Barracks, Belfast, for rescuing five persons from a burning house in Castle Street, on the early morning of the 1st May last.. The constable while on beat duty noticed that a house was on fire, and gained an entrance by a second floor window, and finding all the inmates asleep in a dense volume of smoke succeeded in rescuing them before the arrival of the fire brigade'.

14,792: PC (380G) William Errington: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1901; MB(4) 18 October 1900: 'On 15th July 1900, Thomas Bailey (30) was saved from a fire at 88 Lever Street, St. Luke's (Tobacconist Shop), cause of the fire was unknown'. The Society's decision to confer the award on Errington was duly noted in *The Times* (20 October 1900) thus: 'The Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, at its meeting this week, made the following among other awards in cases brought to its notice from various parts of the country – medal to Constable W Errington, Metropolitan Police, for saving a man and attempting, at great risk, to save a woman at Leven-street, St Luke's, on July 15'. The presentation of the award was similarly reported in *The Times* (12 November 1900): 'At Worship Street, a public presentation was made by Mr Corser to Police-Constable Errington, 595W, Mr Superintendent Hammond, G Division, attending to represent the police. Mr Corser said that he had been asked to perform a duty which was exceedingly pleasant to him – to make a presentation to a constable who had endeavoured to save the lives of others at the risk of his own. The official record of the deed showed that at 1.45 in the morning of July 20 last the officer, being on duty in Lever Street, St Luke's, discovered the shop of Thomas Bailey, a tobacconist, to be on fire. He procured a ladder which reached to the first floor only, and from there was able to assist Bailey to escape. He then returned to the house and tried to reach an upper room, where he had learnt that a woman was sleeping, but was beaten back by the flames, which scorched him and singed his eyebrows and moustache. Though the woman unfortunately perished, the constable's action was just as meritorious. In handing to the constable the bronze medal of the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, Mr Corser expressed the hope that Errington would live long to wear it, and remain in the service to which he was an ornament'. See also the *Western Mail* (Tuesday 13 November 1900).

14,793: PC J Jackson Walker: Silver medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1901; MB(4) 18 October 1900: 'On 9th July 1900, Sarah Jackson was saved from a fire at 68 Rathmore Street, Belfast (Dwelling House), cause of the fire was unknown'. Reporting the decision, *The Times* (20 October

1900) remarked that: 'The Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, at its meeting this week, made the following among other awards in cases brought to its notice from various parts of the country – silver medal and five guineas to Constable J.J. Walker, Royal Irish Constabulary, for great gallantry in taking a woman from a burning house at Belfast on July 9 – the woman died a few hours after'. Subsequently, *The Belfast News-Letter* (22 October 1900) reported: 'PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE – ROYAL SOCIETY AWARDS TO ULSTER CON-STABLES…The same society has made a similar award to Constable J.J. Walker (669) of Mountpottinger Barracks, for his gallant action in rescuing Sarah Jackson from a burning house in Rathmore Street, off Mount Street, on the 9th July. The woman was severely burned, and died a few hours after in the Royal Hospital, and at the inquest the jury commended Walker for his bravery. At great risk he searched the burning rooms to make sure that all the other inmates of the house escaped'.

14,800: PC Richard Twinem: Silver medal and £5.5s
L/Cpl James McHenry: Silver medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1901; MB(4) - 21 February 1901: 'On 20th November, John Grey (28), Minnie Grey (28), Dottie Grey (1), James Greenham (21), Lizzie Carswell (17) and Annie Boyle (28) were saved from a fire at 7 Shankill Road, Belfast (Draper's Shop), cause of the fire was unknown'. The award was noted in *The Times* (26 February 1901) thus: 'The Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire has awarded its silver medal and £5.5s each to Constable Twinem, Royal Irish Constabulary and Lance Corporal J M'Henry, 3rd Batallion, Manchester Regiment, for their conduct in saving six lives from a fire in Shankett Road, Belfast on November 20'.

14,801: Hans Scharnweber, Hotel waiter: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1901; MB(4) - 21 February 1901: 'On 3rd April 1899, Hannah Grey, her three children and Sarah Quinn were saved from a fire at 5 Royal Avenue, Belfast, cause of the fire was unknown'. The award was noted in *The Times* (Tuesday, 26 February 1901, p. 13) thus: 'The Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire has awarded…the silver medal and £3.3s to Hans Schamweber [*sic*], a waiter, now of the Mansion Hotel, Richmond, Surrey, for rescuing five persons at the Royal Avenue Hotel, Belfast. A fire had broken out in a top room of the hotel and Schamweber passed along a parapet 2 feet wide outside the fifth floor windows and was able to take two women and three children one by one to a place of safety'.

14,802: Fireman Peter Murphy: Bronze medal
Fireman Martin Higgins: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1901; MB(4) - 21 February 1901: 'On 27th November 1900, Cornelius Fleming (40), his wife (38), Cecil Fleming (9), Ivy Fleming (4), Grace Fleming (2), Julia Donovan (20) and Maggie McCarthy (18) were saved from a fire at 74 and 75 Patrick Street, Cork (Grocer and Wine and Spirit Merchant's Shop, cause of the fire was unknown'. Further details of the fire are given in *The Cork Examiner* (28 November 1900) thus: 'the most destructive (fire) witnessed in the city for the last decade' - at length. Mr Fleming was interviewed and 'He said that his wife, four children, servant and nurse, were occupants of rooms in the upper portions of Messrs Alcock's [a four story building]. About three o'clock he was wakened by the cracking and smell of fire…Mr Fleming rushed to one of the windows and raised cries of "Fire" and "Police". Some of the employees of Messrs Grant and Co were roused by the alarm and appreciating at once the gravity of the



Fireman Keatinge (seated), Fireman Peter Murphy (standing centre), Fireman Martin Higgins (standing right), Cecil, Ivy and Grace Fleming and Maggie McCarthy

situation procured a number of sheets, and with commendable promptitude and

courage, assisted by many willing hands, including some members of the Constabulary, took up a position in front of the burning building. Mr Fleming then got his wife to the window, and she jumped on to a ledge which runs above the fascia boards of the house, and from this she leaped into a sheet which those below had prepared for her. By the same process Mr Fleming reached the street. The Brigade had in the meantime arrived and…they lost no time in rescuing Mr Fleming's servants and children, who were the only other occupants of the house…Julia Donovan seemed to have lost all presence of mind and she jumped from the window of her bedroom into the street. Unquestionably she would have been killed were it not that the humane workers still held the sheets and by their alertness were successful in breaking what would have undoubtedly have otherwise been a fatal fall. She was however injured to some extent and had to be taken to the North Infirmary. But sadder still is the fact that a little boy, Leo Fleming, six years old, was missing and it is almost beyond question that the poor little fellow has perished in the flames…Maggie McCarthy…held nobly to her place and seemed to absolutely forget all consideration for herself in her desire to save the lives of the three little children under her care. Though the flames threatened to engulf the party every moment, she stood undaunted at the window and waited with marvellous courage and presence of mind for the arrival of the Brigade. When the fire-escape was put into position she handed the children down to the firemen who lined the ladder and then descended herself. It was a splendid act of heroism, and it is to be hoped that the extreme bravery of this young girl will receive prompt and adequate recognition …The children were brought down the escape by Fireman Murphy and Keatinge, both of whom worked with commendable activity…The work of Fireman Murphy, who was on night duty at Sullivan's Quay, in not alone taking the children from Maggie McCarthy as she passed them through the window, but in subsequently going into the room of flames in search of the boy who perished and remaining there for some time, has called forth general admiration. He… played the prominent part in the work of rescue, but Keatinge was also brave, so was young Higgins. The three are young men under 24, yet they have made their mark as heroes. The coolness and bravery of Margaret McCarthy in facilitating the surviving children's exit attracted much praise in the same issue and a number of those who witnessed the fire contributed to a collection for her'. The Cork Corporation Waterworks Committee minutes recorded that: 'The Chief Officer, Captain Hutson, recommended to the Waterworks Committee that "the brave conduct of Firemen Peter Murphy and Martin Higgins on the occasion of the fire at Alcock's be brought to the notice of the RSPLF" and it was resolved that the Secretary would write to the Society. The Waterworks Committee subsequently noted that they had received a "letter from the RSPLF stating that the Society's bronze medal had been awarded to Firemen Peter Murphy and Martin Higgins in recognition of their courageous and successful efforts to rescue inmates of 74 and 75 Patrick Street on the morning of 27 November last, and desiring to be informed whether the Lord Mayor would kindly present same on behalf of the Society", it being resolved that "the Lord Mayor [would] be asked to present the medals in open council"' (Cork Corporation Waterworks Committee minutes). The award approval was noted in *The Times* (26 February 1901) thus: 'The Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire – Bronze medals have been awarded to Peter Murphy and Martin Higgins, firemen, Cork, for their pluck in entering a burning building there and rescuing seven persons'.

Medal inscribed: 'Peter Murphy, Cork, 27 Nov 1900'.

14,812: John Edward Taylor: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: MB(4) - 6 June 1901: No details of rescue. The award was noted in *The Times* (Tuesday, 11 June 1901, p. 3) thus: 'The Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire has awarded a silver medal and three guineas to John E Taylor, Hadley Street, Kentish Town, for his action at a fire in Lewis Street on February 15, when he made a brave but unsuccessful attempt to save the lives of two children'.

14,827: PSgt William Daly: Bronze medal and £3.3s
PSgt Francis Coulter: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: MB(4) - 6 June 1901: No details of rescue. *The Times* (Tuesday, 11 June 1901, p. 3) noted that: 'Bronze medals and three guineas each are given to Sergeants Coulter and Daly, Royal Irish Constabulary, Belfast, for gallant action in rescuing two persons at a fire in Belfast on April 23'. The *Irish Times* reported that: 'The Royal Society for the Protection of Life From Fire has just awarded its bronze medal and three guineas each to Sergeant W Daly and F Coulter, RIC, Belfast,

for their gallant action at a fire in Ardmonlive Avenue there on April 23rd. The fire broke out in a dwelling house early in the evening, the occupants being an old woman and her daughter, both ill in bed. Sergeant Coulter forced his way in, and rescued the girl, who then said her mother was in the attic. Both constables then made their way upstairs through the suffocating smoke, and were able to save the woman, in an unconscious state. Joseph Hunter gets a certificate and two guineas for his services on the occasion' (Monday 10 June 1901, p. 6).

Medal inscribed 'Francis Coulter, Belfast 23 April 1901'.

14,828: PSgt Hugh Vaughan: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: MB(4) - 6 June 1901: No details of rescue. However, *The Times* (Tuesday, 11 June 1901, p. 3) noted that: 'A medal and three guineas to Sergeant Vaughan, Royal Irish Constabulary, for rescuing an old woman from a burning house on May 2'.

14,834: Captain Alfred Crouch, Worthing Fire Brigade: Silver medal



Captain Alfred Crouch

Details: MB(4) - 27 August 1901: No details. When Crouch's medals were sold, the following account appeared in the DNW Auction Catalogue of 2 March 2005: 'During his career he won many accolades (see below) including that of the Silver Medal of the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire. The award was for the fire which broke out in the Royal Hotel, Worthing, on 24 May 1901. The Worthing Fire Brigade being called, it was found that a Mr and Mrs J Rosher were trapped by the flames on the first floor. Captain Crouch carried the lady on his back, down the blazing staircase and out into the street to safety. Such was the blaze that the Brighton Volunteer Fire Brigade and Railway Fire Brigade had to be summoned before it could be brought under control'. See also *The Times* (25 May 1901, p. 6 and 16 September 1901, p. 11).

Medal inscribed: 'Alfred Crouch, Royal Hotel, Worthing, 24th May 1901'. Crouch was also in possession of the following medals: National Fire Brigades Union Long Service Medal (2), 2 clasps, Five Years, with 'Twenty Years' brooch bar, edge stamped '87', silver; another, 3 clasps, Five Years, edge stamped '146', bronze, with brooch bar; Worthing Volunteer Fire Brigade Medal, 3 clasps,Five Years Service, engraved six-pointed star, rev. inscribed, 'W.V.F.B. 1891, Captn. A. Crouch', with brooch bar; National Fire Brigades Union Medallion, International Fire Tournament and Exhibition, London 1893, 'For Services', 45mm., bronze, unnamed; together with a number of Foreign Fire Brigade medals and medallions, including: Fire Brigade Congress Medal 1900, obv. fireman's helmet; rev. inscribed, 'Paris 1900 Fire Brigade Congress, Life Saving, Worthing, Awarded 1st and 2nd, Captn. A. Crouch', 9ct. gold, hallmarks for Birmingham 1900; Belgium, Federation Royale des Pompiers (2), one enamelled; Belgium, Fédération de Sapeurs Pompiers Belges Medallion (2), Congress, Antwerp, 1894, 52mm., silver base metal; another, 9th Reunion, Gand, 1899, 51mm., gilt base metal; France, Société Nationale de Sauvetage Medal, gilt base metal, anchor suspension, unnamed, rosette on ribbon; Société Française de Sauvatage Medal, rev. inscribed, 'A. Crouch, 1901', silver; Fed. des Officiers de Sapeurs Pompiers, Member of Honour Badge, silver and enamel, rev. inscribed: 'Captn. Crouch, Worthing', pin-backed; these were accompanied with a portrait photo of Crouch and a presentation certificate.

14,837: PC (680T) Edwin Rutt: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: MB(4) - 27 August 1901: No details of rescue. *The Times* (16 September 1901, p. 11) noted: 'HUMANITY REWARDED – At its last meeting the Royal Society for the

Protection of Life from Fire made the following awards for bravery in saving life from fire:…bronze medal and two guineas to Constable Edward Rutt, Metropolitan Police, for gallantly risking his life in rescuing seven persons from a burning building at Askew Road, Shepherd's Bush, on May 23'.

14,843: Walter Canham: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: MB(4) - 27 August 1901: No details of rescue. *The Times* (16 September 1901, p. 11) reported the award thus: 'HUMANITY REWARDED – At its last meeting the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire made the following awards for bravery in saving life from fire:…bronze medal and two guineas to Walter Canham, postman, Soham, Cambs, for the fearless manner in which he saved two maid-servants on the occasion of a disastrous fire at the vicarage there on April 16'.

14,851: PC (90B) William Crawford: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: MB(4) - 28 November 1901: No details of rescue. The award was noted in *The Times* (Friday, 6 December 1901, p. 7) thus: 'The Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire…The bronze medal and three guineas to Constable W Crawford, Birmingham Police, for his gallant rescue of a man and woman from a burning building there on June 30. The constable ran great risk from the dense smoke, and was just in time to save the man, who was an invalided soldier from South Africa'.

14,855: George Ward: Silver medal and £5.5s

Details: MB(4) - 28 November 1901: No details of rescue. A brief account appeared in *The Times* (Friday, 6 December 1901, p. 7) thus: 'The Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire has just awarded its silver medal and five guineas to George Ward, West Hartlepool, for an act of exceptional bravery there on October 29. A man named Callaghan, employed by the South Durham Steel and Iron Company, fell into a pit 17 feet deep, in which were several ingots of fluid steel which had been drawn from a Siemen's furnace. In spite of the terrible temperature Ward lowered himself into the pit and found Callaghan between two ingots, but on taking hold of him found the flesh on his arms already giving way. Finding himself being overcome by the intense heat, Ward had to leave the pit, but returning, he succeeded in taking Callaghan out, but he died two hours later. Ward's clothing was burned to a cinder and he narrowly escaped the fate of his comrade'.

Medal inscribed: 'George Ward, West Hartlepool 29th Oct., 1901'.

14,857: Robert Arnott (13): Silver watch

Details: MB(4) - 28 November 1901: No details of rescue. The presentation was however noted in *The Times* (Friday, 6 December 1901, p. 7) thus: 'The Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire...A silver watch was given to Robert Arnott, aged 13, Edinburgh, for his plucky action, in throwing his jacket around a little girl whose clothes had taken fire there in October last. The lad had both hands severely burned, but succeeded in saving the child'.

14,860: Ernest William Sissons: Silver medal

Details: MB(4) - 20 February 1902: No details of rescue.

14,863: Neal McLaughlin: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: MB(4) - 20 February 1902: No details of rescue.

14,867: Bernard Doyle: Silver medal

Details: MB(4) - 20 February 1902: No details of rescue.

14,877: Frank Ernest Blowers, Miller: Silver medal and illuminated testimonial on vellum

Details: AR 1903; MB(4) - 25 March 1902: '*On* 2nd February 1902, March Luff (34) and Francis Stovold Richards (16) were saved from a fire at Midlington House, Droxford, Hants (Mansion), caused by a beam catching fire in a chimney'.

14,881: PC (75) Thomas Tucker: Silver medal

Details: AR 1903; MB(4) - 22 May 1902: 'On 7th February 1902, Solomon (30), Etty (27) and Lotty Zuker (3), Jacob (60) and Lewis Chavenson (20) were saved from a fire at 52 High Street, Swansea (Draper's Shop), cause of the fire was unknown'. Mills (2009) notes the rescue thus: 'On Friday the 6th February 1902, when, during a serious fire at a drapers establishment in High Street, Swansea, (next door to the Ty Melyn public house) he entered the building and ascended the stairs, only to find that there were several people in need of rescuing, including a small child.

Unable to return via the staircase, he knotted some blankets together…and passed them through a rear window, whereby, he lowered



PC Thomas Tucker

several persons (the figures range from three to five, according to the newspapers and other reports) to the yard below, before descending the sheets himself with the child strapped to his back. On his appearance into the street from the adjoining building, he was greeted, according to the press, with a barrage of cheers and clapping by the crowd of onlookers'. For further details see K Mills 'Police Constable (Fireman) Thomas "Tommy" Tucker', *LSARS Journal*, 2009, 65: 22-5.

Medal inscribed: 'Thomas Tucker, Swansea, 7th February 1902', in a pair with the Quiver Medal, this engraved 'P.C. Thomas Tucker, Swansea, 1893'.

14,883: PC Patrick Murphy: Bronze medal and £1.s
PC James Brunt: Bronze medal and £1.s

Details: AR 1903; MB(4) - 22 May 1902: 'On 17th March 1902, Kate Lynch (70) was saved from a fire at New Docks, Galway (occupied by a Provision Dealer), cause of the fire was unknown'. Both recipients were serving with the RIC.

Medal known to James Brunt.

14,884: John Lewis – Schoolboy: Silver watch

Details: AR 1903; MB(4) - 22 May 1902: 'On 1st April 1902, Laura Lewis (7) was saved from a fire at Llwyngloddaeth Farm, near Barmouth, caused by clothing catching fire'.

14,895: Thomas Dawson, Coal Miner: Bronze medal and £1.1s

Details: AR 1903; MB(4) - 24 July 1902: 'On 10th May 1902, John (30), Ann (24), Mary (4), John (3) and George Baker (1); Jane (18) and Elizabeth Hall (12) were saved from a fire at 17 Old Row, Washington, Durham (Miner's Cottage), caused by explosion of an oil lamp'.

14,897: Ernest Angus Julian Rogers, Ticket Writer: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1903; MB(4) - 24 July 1902: 'On 19th April 1902, Lilian May Denman (7) and Percival Denman (2) were saved from a fire at 423 Hackney Road, N.E. (Occupied as Ticket Writer's Sales Shop, and upper floor as Tenements), caused by an upset paraffin lamp'.

14,903: PC George McDonald: Silver medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1903; MB(4) - 6 November 1902: 'On 26th August 1902, Charles Agnew McBride (85), Cornelius McMann (9) and Thomas Wood (40) were saved from a fire at 47 Dock Street, Hull (lodging-house), cause of the fire was unknown'.

14,908: Chief Officer C J Fox, London Salvage Corps: Silver medal
H R Hillman, Foreman, London Salvage Corps: Silver medal
Charles Allison, London Salvage Corps: Silver medal
John H Shepherd, London Salvage Corps: Silver medal
William J Ball, London Salvage Corps: Silver medal

Details: AR 1903; MB(4) - 6 November 1902: 'On 10th June 1902, Alice Morrice (14) and Mabel Amos (17) were saved from a fire at 67 Queen Victoria Street, EC (General Electric Company's Warehouse and Workrooms), cause of the fire was unknown'. Chief Officer Fox is recorded as a Major in Minutes Book and a Colonel in the Annual Report, while John H Shepherd is recorded as John W Shepherd in the Minutes.

14,913: Police Fireman John Balfour Graham: Silver medal and £5.5s
Joseph Hartley, Minder: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1903; MB(4) - 19 February 1903: 'On 5th November 1902, 32 Operatives were saved from a fire at the Vernon Spinning Company's Cotton Mills, Portwood, Stockport, caused by friction of mule headstock'. In the DNW auction catalogue (20 September 2002) the following account appeared: 'At about 4 o'clock in the afternoon of November 5, 1902 (Guy Fawkes Day), a serious fire occurred at the No. 1 Vernon Mill, Portwood. The fire spread with great rapidity throughout the building and at about 5 o'clock all hope of saving the building was abandoned when three of the floors of the mill collapsed with a deafening roar, huge tongues of flame soaring high into the darkening night sky. As the fire had spread so rapidly, many of the three hundred employees were unable to make their way out of the building when the alarm was raised, and within minutes the staircases and landings were choked with a pitiful mass of struggling humanity, all trying to escape from the terrible conditions which prevailed. Whilst some of the operatives had the strength and courage to fight their way through the smoke and heat to the ground floor and safety, others found themselves forced to take refuge on the upper floors of the mill, hoping that they could escape from the inferno. Numerous stories of heroism were later related, however the feat of bravery which received the greatest acclaim was that carried out by Police Fireman John Balfour Graham. When the Brigade's newly acquired 60-foot horse drawn fire-escape arrived at the scene of the fire, it was manoeuvred into position and then fully extended in an attempt to reach the employees trapped on the upper floors of the building. Without hesitation, Fireman Graham ascended the extended ladder, then, whilst clinging precariously with his legs to the topmost part of the ladder, some sixty feet from the ground, and periodically inundated with smoke and flame issuing from the many windows of the mill, he was able to assist the operatives out of the window, some clambering down his body onto the ladder. They were then assisted by other firemen down the ladder to safety. Twenty-six operatives were rescued in this remarkable operation and as each one attained safety, loud cheers erupted from the large crowd which had assembled. Nine employees lost their lives in the disastrous fire and thirty required hospital treatment, many of the injuries being "brush" burns to hands and arms, received during their descent down the ropes'. Joseph Hartley is noted as 'John' in the Minutes Book.

Medal inscribed: 'John Balfour Graham, Stockport, 5th November 1902'. Graham was also awarded: The Fire Brigades Association Medal, in gold, engraved 'John Balfour Graham, Police Fire Brigade, Stockport. Rescuing 26 Lives by horse escape from fifth floor, Vernon Mills, Guy Fawkes Day 1902' and a gold watch from the English Church Union.

14,928: PSgt (25X) David Richards: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1904; MB(4) - 21 May 1903: 'On 21st December 1902, Sarah Jane (29), James (7), Alfred (5) and Albert Watkins (3), were saved from a fire at 89 Colville Road, Acton, cause of the fire was unknown'.

14,929: Peter Boyd, Watchman: Bronze medal and £3.3s
William Fraser, Painter: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1904; MB(4) - 21 May 1903: 'On 16th February 1903, Catherine (4), William (3) and Thomas Wilson (1½) were saved from a fire at 9 Cross Street, Perth, North Britain, cause of the fire was unknown'. In the *Peoples Journal, Perth* (21 February 1903) the following appeared: 'TRAGIC FIRE AT PERTH - TWO CHILDREN SUFFOCATED. A tragic affair, resulting in the death of two children, took place in Cross Street, Perth, on Monday. At No. 9 is a three-storey building, an attic room in which is occupied by Edward Wilson, a labourer, in the employment of Messrs Fraser & Morton, builders. His wife left the house at half-past ten o'clock in the forenoon, locking in bed three children – Katie, aged four years; Willie, three years; and Tommy, one year and five months. Before leaving she states that she put out the fire and hid the matches. She carried with her, her youngest child Maggie, who is about four months old. She first made a call on her mother in Meal Vennel. She left Maggie at that house, and then proceeded to Pitheavlis Road, where her husband was employed, with his dinner, She got home to Cross Street about twenty minutes to one o'clock, and on opening the door found the room filled with dense smoke so that she was unable to enter. She at once rushed downstairs and called for the assistance of her neighbours, which was readily given. Several ineffectual attempts were made to gain admission. Peter Boyd, a night watchman, residing at 1 Cross Street,

who was in bed, hearing of the fire, jumped out of bed and ran upstairs. He succeeded in getting into the room and pulled a mattress on the floor practically to the door along with one of the children. This child was handed over to one of the parties at the door, and Boyd again entered the house and brought out the two other children. The three were in an unconscious state. The two eldest were laid on the street and artificial respiration was resorted to by William Shaw, railway porter, residing at 7 Unity Place and John Hood, engine driver, residing at 23 Friar Street, Craigie, both members of the station ambulance corps. The youngest of the three children was during the interval taken to a house on the opposite side of the street, and after being attended to by some women showed signs of life, and was removed to the Infirmary. Doctors Paton and Macaulay arrived on the scene, and under their direction efforts were made for nearly an hour to restore animation to the other two children, but without success, and the doctors could only certify that Katie and Willie were dead. The bodies were removed to the mortuary. The damage caused to the place through the fire consists of the burning of the bed and about two square yards of the floor in front of the bed. The Fire Brigade, which turned out at once, extinguished the fire with the hand pump. Immediately after the alarm was raised a very large crowed assembled in the neighbourhood and during the afternoon the circumstances were eagerly discussed by small groups of people in Cross Street and vicinity. It is thought that the fire in the gate had not been altogether extinguished when Mrs Wilson left the house, and that the children had managed to set it up and set the bedding on fire. While all the children were found in bed, it is said that they were up and running about when their mother left'. Later the following report appeared: 'SENSATIONAL DEVELOP-MENT MOTHER CHARGED WITH CULPABLE HOMICIDE. A great sensation was caused in Perth on Wednesday when it became known that Catherine Cross or Wilson, wife of Edward Wilson, labourer, the mother of the two children who were suffocated in their house in Cross Street on Monday afternoon, had been arrested by the Perth City Police on a charge of culpable homicide. The apprehension was made in her mother's house in Guard Vennel between seven and eight o'clock on Wednesday. She was conveyed to the Police Office, and at ten o'clock was brought before Bailie Hardie at the Police Court. Mrs Wilson, who was respectably attired in black, carried her youngest child, 12 months old. She was only 22 years of age. The charge against her was as follows:- Catherine Cross or Wilson, wife of and residing with Edward Cross, labourer, 9 Cross Street, Perth, did on the 16th February 1903 lock Catherine Wilson, William Wilson, and Thomas Wilson, her three children, and residing with her, and of the respective ages of four years, three years, and a few months, into a room occupied as a dwelling-house at 9 Cross Street aforesaid by Edward Wilson, and did leave them there without any person in charge of them or any protection from the fire then burning in the grate of her room for a period of over two hours, during which period the room became ignited and filled with smoke and that said children being unable to escape. Catherine Wilson and William Wilson were suffocated, and were thus killed by this cause, while Thomas Wilson was seriously injured: or otherwise, time and place aforesaid, the said Catherine Cross or Wilson, being a person of over the age of 16 Years, did wilfully neglect and abandon the said Catherine Wilson, William Wilson, and Thomas Wilson, her children, and of whom she had the custody, charge, or care, in a manner likely to cause them unnecessary suffering and injury to their health by locking them into a room and leaving them there for a period of over two hours without any person in charge of them or any protection from the fire then burning in the grate, contrary to Section 1 of the Prevention of Cruelty to Children's Act, 1894'.

Medal inscribed: 'Peter Boyd, Perth. 16th Feby 1903'.

14,931: PC (55C) William Mead: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1904; MB(4) - 21 May 1903: 'On 22nd March 1903, Annie Davis (60) and Marguerita Kerslake (21) were saved from a fire at 31 Little Earl Street, 'Seven Dials', cause of the fire was unknown'.

14,933: Edith Garland: Silver watch and certificate

Details: AR 1904; MB(4) - 21 May 1903: 'On 21st March 1903, a baby (9 months) was saved from a fire at Hurcot, Somerton, cause of the fire was unknown'.

14,937: Police Inspector Joseph Lambert: Silver medal
PC (210Y) Francis Penny: Bronze medal
PC (222Y) Henry Lake: Bronze medal
PC (229Y) George Dowling: Bronze medal
PC (234Y) George Livermore: Bronze medal
PC (423Y) Walter Truman: Bronze medal
PC (405Y) Thomas Hughes: Bronze medal

PC (509Y) Henry Taylor: Bronze medal
PC (586Y) Edward Turton: Bronze medal
PC (762Y) Richard Beels: Bronze medal
PC (49RY) Ezra James: Bronze medal
PC (265Y) William Crouch: Bronze medal



PC Henry Lake

Details: AR 1904; MB(4) - 21 May 1903: 'On 27th January 1903, a large number of inmates were saved from a fire at London County Asylum, Colney Hatch, cause of the fire was unknown'. The presentation was noted in *The Times* (18 June 1903) thus: 'THE CONEY HATCH FIRE. At Highgate Police-court, yesterday, Mr Walter Reynolds, chairman of the Bench, presented medals to 12 members of the police force, awarded by the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire for services rendered during the progress of the recent fire at Coney Hatch Asylum. The 12 recipients included six men who were wearing the South African war medal. Sub-Inspector Lambert received a silver medal, and Constables F Penny, 210Y, H Lake, 222Y, G Dowling, 229Y, G Livermore, 234Y, W Truman, 423Y, T Hughes, 405Y, H Taylor, 509Y, E Turton, 586Y, R Beels, 762Y, E James, 49Y, and W Crouch, 265Y, all stationed at New Southgate. Each received a bronze medal'. See also *The Times* (28 January 1903, 29 January 1903, 6 February 1903 and 13 February 1903).

14,942: Ex PC and Fireman David William Miller: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1904; MB(4) - 9 October 1903: 'On 25th April 1903, Mrs Allen was saved from a fire at 6 William Street, Brighton, caused by an upset paraffin lamp'. The presentation was noted in *The Times* (Thursday, 22 October 1903, p. 9) thus: 'REWARDS FOR BRAVERY – At its meeting just held the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire made the following amongst other awards: …A medal and three guineas to David W Miller, an ex-police constable, for saving a woman and attempting to save two children who lost their lives in a fire at Nelson-street, Brighton, in July last'.

14,944: PC Joseph Farrell: Bronze medal and £2.2s
Fire Brigade Man John Jameson: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1904; MB(4) - 9 October 1903: 'On 8th June 1903, William John McCormack (62) was saved from a fire at 15 Camberwell Terrace, Belfast, caused by bedclothes being set on fire'. The presentation was noted in *The Times* (Thursday, 22 October 1903, p. 9) thus: 'REWARDS FOR BRAVERY – At its meeting just held the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire made the following amongst other awards: … A bronze medal and two guineas each to Joseph Farrell, constable, RIC, and John Jamieson, a member of the Belfast Fire Brigade, for the rescue of an old man from a burning building in Belfast on June 8. The man died from his injuries received three days later'.

14,946: Samuel Sibinda: Silver medal

Details: AR 1904; MB(4) - 9 October 1903: 'On 6th June 1903, a child (6 months) and a boy (3) were saved from a fire at Roodepoort, Transvaal, South Africa, caused by a child playing with matches'. The presentation was noted in *The Times* (Thursday, 22 October 1903, p. 9) thus: 'REWARDS FOR BRAVERY – At its meeting just held the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire made the following amongst other awards: A silver medal to Samuel Sitiuda [*sic*], a Kaffir, for his action at a fire which destroyed an entire block at Roodepoort, in the Transvaal, on June 6. After the fire had got a firm hold it became known that a boy of three years and a baby of six months were in the building, and Sitiuda [*sic*], at great risk, went in and got the boy out. Returning, he also got the baby out alive, but it died some days after'. Note the variation in the spelling of the recipient's surname.

14,947: PC (399V) Owen Holman: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1904; MB(4) - 9 October 1903: 'On 15th July 1903, Henry Alfred (25) and Ellen Farrant (20) were saved from a fire at 196 London Road, Kingston, Surrey, cause of the fire was unknown'. The presentation was noted in *The Times* (Thursday, 22 October 1903, p. 9) thus: 'REWARDS FOR BRAVERY – At its meeting just held the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire made the following amongst other awards: …A medal and three guineas to Constable Owen Holman, of the Metropolitan Police, stationed at Kingston, for gallantry at a fire on July 15. Finding a house in London-road, Kingston, on fire, the constable forced an entrance and got out a man and a woman. The man insisted on going back to recover some papers, and, as he did not return, Holman again went in and at great risk got him out a second time in an exhausted state'. Further details appeared in the *Golden Penny* (19 December 1903), at the time they granted him their own medal, as follows: '…Being on his beat, about half past ten at night, he heard the well known call for help, and on reaching the place found a man and a woman at the front window, their retreat by the stair cut off by the fire which had broken out below. Hastily trying to enter by the door, the constable was driven back by the suffocating smoke. He then procured a short ladder, and in this way was able to bring both persons to the ground. The man was no sooner got down that he remembered some papers belonging to him were in a drawer in the kitchen, and, deaf to all remonstrance's from his rescuer, he returned to try and save them. Not reappearing, Holman now got down on his hands and knees, and fought his way in. He found the man unconscious on the floor, and with much difficulty got him out, thus saving him a second time. On reaching the air Constable Holman collapsed from the effects of smoke and heat, but soon recovered. It was a brave deed and fully earned the 'Golden Penny' medal which we now have much pleasure in awarding him'.

14,953: PSgt Patrick Rourke: Silver medal
PC Michael Fahey: Silver medal

Details: AR 1904; MB(4) - 18 February 1904: 'On 23rd April 1903, Thomas Bennett (29) were saved from a fire on the schooner *Excelsior* lying at Courtmacsherry, Co Cork, Ireland, cause of the fire was unknown'. The presentation was noted in *The Times* (Saturday 27 February 1904, p. 14) thus: '…silver medals to Sergeant Rourke and Constable Fahey, RIC, Courtmacsherry, County Cork, for attempting to save the life of a sailor who was suffocated in his berth on a vessel in the harbour there in April last'.

14,960: PC (247C) Robert Russell: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1904; MB(4) - 18 February 1904. 'On 17th November 1903, Annie Simmonds (77) was saved from a fire at the Hanover Buildings, Thomas Street, Marylebone, cause of the fire was unknown'. The presentation was noted in *The Times* (Saturday 27 February 1904, p. 14) thus: 'At its meeting yesterday the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire made the following amongst other awards:…bronze medal and two guineas to Constable R Russell, Metropolitan Police, for saving a woman from a burning room in Thomas Street, Grosvenor Square, on November 17'.

14,962: Elizabeth Smith (6): Silver watch

Details: AR 1904; MB(4) - 18 February 1904: 'On 19th December 1903, Sydney Smith (17 months) was saved from a fire at 7 Prospect Place, London Road, Kettering, caused by a paraffin lamp exploding'. The presentation was noted in *The Times* (Saturday 27 February 1904, p. 14) thus: 'At its meeting yesterday the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire made the following amongst other awards:…and a suitably inscribed silver watch to Elizabeth Smith, aged six, who saved her little brother from a burning room at Kettering on December 19'.

14,964: Ernest Henry Rixon, Working Jeweller: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1905; MB4) - 18 February 1904: 'On 4th January 1904, Mary Ann Dibbens (90) was saved from a fire at 54 Wenlock Street, Hoxton, caused by sparks from a grate'. Ernest Henry Rixon noted as 'Henry' in Minutes Book. The presentation was noted in *The Times* (Saturday 27 February 1904, p. 14) thus: 'At its meeting yesterday the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire made the following amongst other awards: Silver medal and three guineas to Ernest H Rixom [*sic*], Herbert Street, Hoxton for entering a burning room in Herbert Street on January 4 and saving Mary Ann Wibbens [*sic*], a bedridden old woman of 90, who had accidentally set fire to the bedclothes…'.

14,969: Miss Louisa Martha Andrews (4½): Silver medal

Details: AR 1905; MB(4) 1 December 1904: 'On 2nd February 1904, Grace Ellen (3½),

Edwin Victor (2) and Charlotte Ester Andrews (5 weeks) were saved from a fire at 25 Hyde Lane, Battersea, caused by children playing with fire'.

14,972: PC Francis O'Donnell: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1905; MB(4) - 1 December 1904: 'On 21st February 1904, James (43) and Mary Ryan (15 months) were saved from a fire at 4 Dawson Street, Belfast, cause of the fire was unknown'.

14,973: PC (302Y) William Webb: Bronze medal and £1.1s

Details: AR 1905; MB(4) - 1 December 1904: 'On 31st March 1904, Lilly Griffin (4) was saved from a fire at 20 Scholefield Road, Upper Holloway, cause of the fire was unknown'.

14,984: Harry A Beevor, Fruiterer: Bronze medal and £3.3s
Byron Gill, Grocer: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1905; MB(4) - 1 December 1904: 'On 13th September 1904, Emma Beevor (33), Emma Wilcox (23), Harold Beevor (4) and Selina Wilcox (6 months) were saved from a fire at 3 House, 17 Court, Hodgson Street, Sheffield, caused by airing linen catching fire'.

14,986: William Searle, Plumber: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1905; MB(4) - 1 December 1904: 'On 7th October 1904, Alice Mary (3) and May Povey (5) were saved from a fire at 4 Huguenot Road, Peckham, caused by a child playing with fire'.

14,997: Walter Walker, Manufacturing Perfumer: Silver medal

Details: AR 1905; MB(5) - 23 February 1905: 'On 25th December 1904, Hannah Middleton (83) was saved from a fire at 149 High Road, Tottenham, cause of the fire was unknown'. The award was noted in *The Times* (6 March 1905, p. 7) thus: 'The Society for the Protection of Life from Fire has made several awards for saving or attempting to save life. A silver medal has been awarded to W Walker, High Road, Tottenham, for rescuing Hannah Middleton, aged 83, from a burning house on December 25. The staircase was on fire and Walker had to carry her to the top of the house and thence, at great risk, along the parapet to the next building'.

14,996: Harry Dorling Bailey, Engineer: Silver medal
Joseph Lewis Thompson, Fine Art Dealer: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1906; MB(5) - 23 February 1905. 'On 5th January 1905, Gladys (10), Victor (8) and Eric Ross (3) and Jane Wood were saved from a fire at 73 Duke's Avenue, Chiswick, cause of the fire was unknown'. The circumstances were noted in *The Times* (6 January 1905, p. 4) thus: 'A fire occurred yesterday at the home of Mr C C Ross in Dukes Avenue, Chiswick. The outbreak was discovered by Mr and Mrs Ross, at 2am. The servant and three children were awakened and all gathered in the front room, with the assistance of a family named Keen, who lived opposite and of Mr Harry Bailey, who lives next door, all the inmates reached the ground. Shortly afterwards the fire brigade arrived and the fire was quickly overcome. Mr Ross is the grandson of the late Mr John Ross, Arctic Navigator, and the union Jack hoisted by Sir John Ross at the Magnetic Pole in June 1829 was saved'. The awards were later noted in *The Times* (6 March 1905, p. 7) thus: 'The Society for the Protection of Life from Fire has made several awards for saving or attempting to save life…A silver medal has been awarded to H D Bailey, a bronze medal to J L Thompson, and a testimonial to H F Keen, of Chiswick, for their plucky action in rescuing four persons from a burning room on January 5'.

Medal inscribed: 'H.D. Bailey, Chiswick, 5th January 1905'.

15,000: Fire Brigade Captain Henry Edward Eydmann: Silver medal
Fireman Thomas Clark: Silver medal and £5

Details: AR 1906; MB(5) - 23 February 1905: 'On 18th January 1905, Eliza (59) and Emma Holman (34) were saved from a fire at 7A Devonshire Road, Chiswick, cause of the fire was unknown'. The awards were noted in *The Times* (6 March 1905, p. 7) thus: 'The Society for the Protection of Life from Fire has made several awards for saving or attempting to save life…The Society gave a silver medal to Captain H E Edymann, Chiswick Volunteer Fire Brigade, and a silver medal and £5 to Fireman Clark for their exertions in saving two women from a fire in Devonshire Road, Chiswick, in the early morning of January 18…'.

15,002: PC John Anderson: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1906; MB(5) - 23 February 1905: 'On 25th January 1905, Mary Ann Edwards (70) was saved from a fire at 186 Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, caused by a candle igniting bedding'. The award was noted in *The Times* (6 March 1905, p. 7) thus: 'The Society for the Protection of Life from Fire has made several awards for saving or attempting to save life…A silver medal and three guineas have been awarded to Police Constable J Anderson, Shrewsbury, for his gallant attempt to save an old lady from a burning room on January 25. Anderson, by crawling on his hands and knees, made his way into the room through blinding smoke, but the lady was dead when brought out'.

15,011: PC William Dance: Bronze medal and £1.1s

Details: AR 1906; MB(5) - 1 June 1905: 'On 22nd February 1905, Miss A. Meredith (25), Emily Harris (23) and Ada Bull (19), were saved from a fire at Copper's Hill, Stroud, Gloucestershire, caused by a defective flue'.

15,016: William James Darby, Boatman: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1906; MB(5) - 1 June 1905: 'On 22nd March 1905, Stanley Harrison (2 months) was saved from a fire at 11 Cephas Street, Mile End, caused by a spark from a grate'.

15,017: Charles Bramble, Warehouse-man: Bronze medal
Henry E Jordan, Bootmaker: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1906; MB(5) - 1 June 1905: 'On 15th March 1905, Marjory (7½), Doris (5) and Beatrice Harbert (3½) were saved from a fire at 117 High Street, Slough, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,020: Bertram Arthur Holmes, Labourer: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1906; MB(5) - 1 June 1905: 'On 22nd April 1905, May (11) and Grace Parkinson (3) were saved from a fire at 19 Park Road, Plumstead, caused by an upset lamp'.

15,022: PC (420X) Percy Howard: Bronze medal and £1.1s

Details: AR 1906; MB(5) 1 June 1905: 'On 11th March 1905, [Messrs] Thurley, Burton and Burton were saved from a fire at 99 Bollo Bridge Road, Acton, cause of the fire was unknown'.
The medal is extant and with the family.

15,023: Edward Mayes, Watchmaker: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1906; MB(5) - 1 June 1905: 'On 6th April 1905, Elizabeth Bartholomew (56) was saved from a fire at Lawshall's Farm, Colne Engaine, Essex, caused by a spark from a grate'.

15,024: PC (436V) John Abbott: Bronze medal
Charles J Nicholas, Stationer: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1906; MB(5) - 1 June 1905: 'On 18th April 1905, Charles (4), Dinah (3) and Violet Bryant (18 months) were saved from a fire at 11 Raynes Park Terrace, Wimbledon, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,025: Robert Charles Hall, Naval Pensioner: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1906; MB(5) - 1 June 1905: 'On 20th May 1905, three children named Lindley were saved from a fire at Edward Road, Attercliffe, Sheffield, caused by a defective flue'. The presentation was recorded by the *Daily Mirror* (Tuesday, 13 June 1905, p. 6) thus: 'Pending the arrival of the fire brigade at a burning house at Sheffield, Richard Hill [*sic*], an ex-Navy man, procured two clothes props, and climbing to the upper window,



PC John Abbott

rescued three children who were in imminent danger. He has been awarded a medal and three guineas by the Society…'.

Medal inscribed: 'R.C. Hall, Attercliffe 21st May 1905'. Also awarded China Medal 1900 (PO1Cl HMS Esk), and the Sheffield Society Medal for Recognising Bravery, silver (Robert Charles Hall, July 26th 1905).

15,028: Miss Julia Florence Burt, Schoolgirl: Silver watch and certificate

Details: AR 1906; MB(5) - 23 November 1905: 'On 29th May 1905, Robert Walker (9), Mary Ann Walker (6), Thomas Burt (12) and William Burt (7) were saved from a fire at 48 Gee Street, St. Luke's, caused by an upset lamp'. Further details of the circumstances emerged when *The Times* (12 February 1906, p. 10) published news of the presentation, thus: 'GALLANTRY REWARDED. At Worship-street Police Court on Saturday Sub-divisional-Inspector Cole, G division, brought up for presentation to the magistrate Police-Constable Walter Willis, 408G, Mr F W Russell, and a girl, aged 14, named Julia Florence Burt…The circumstances which brought them before the Court were as follows: On the night of May 20 last Police Constable Willis, when on duty in the neighbourhood of Goswell Road, heard screams of fire from Gee Street, and running there saw flames and smoke coming from the windows of the first floor of No. 48. Mr Russell had brought down a boy, and from what he had said the constable made his way up to the first floor and tried to get into the room. The flame and smoke proved, however, too much, and at the same time he heard screams from a room above. Mounting to the second floor he found a boy, nine years old, in great distress through terror, and having seized him he succeeded in getting down the back stairs through the flames and smoke. He made a second essay, but failed to get in again, and later, when the fire was extinguished, the charred body of another boy was found on the first floor. The girl Julia Burt had succeeded previously in getting an infant into safety. The magistrate, Mr Cluer, addressing these three, said that it was with great pleasure he, at the request of the secretary of the Royal [*sic*] Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, had agreed to present to them the certificates of merit for bravery which the society had awarded them...The certificates (framed), with cheques for one guinea each, were handed to Mr Russell and Police Constable Willis. Handing a similar framed certificate to the girl Julia Burt, the magistrate said it made his pleasant duty doubly pleasant to commend the ready intelligence of so young a girl, and the Society had appreciated her age by adding to the certificate a small watch...'.

15,030: Fireman (Sgt) Robert Patterson, Sunderland Borough Police Fire Brigade: Silver medal
Fireman William Henry Brumby, Sunderland Borough Police Fire Brigade: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1906; MB(5) - 23 November 1905: 'On 5th June 1905, Mrs Pattison (28) and Susan Pattison (7) were saved from a fire at 6 Hamilton Street, Monkwearmouth, Sunderland, cause of the fire was unknown'. A fuller account of the circumstances was reported in the *Newcastle Evening Chronicle* (Monday 5 June 1905) thus: 'About 3 o'clock this morning the Sunderland Fire Brigade received news that there was a fire at 6 Hamilton Street, Monkwearmouth, Sunderland. Within a few minutes of receiving the alarm, the Fire Brigade, with a fire-escape and one steamer were quickly on the scene of the conflagration. On their arrival it was found that the house, which had five rooms and was occupied by about 18 people, was in flames. Sergeant Patterson, who was in charge of the brigade asked if all the residents were out of the house, and he was told they were. Enquiries amongst those who had occupied the house revealed the fact that a Mrs Pattison and her child, who lived in the back room on the first floor, were not amongst those who had made good their escape. On hearing this, Sergeant Patterson made a determined effort to reach their room. He mounted the stairs, but although he had a fire mask, the flames drove him back, and Fireman Davidson, who accompanied him, was no more successful in his efforts. A jet was got to work on this part of the premises, and again Sgt Patterson attempted to reach the room where the Pattison's had lived. This time he succeeded, but when he got to the room he could find no one. He then went into the front room occupied by a family called Rook, and there found Mrs Pattison and her little daughter lying apparently dead. With all haste the bodies were got into the open air, and attempts were made to restore animation by artificial respiration, however it was found that the attempts were useless, and they were discontinued. The house, 6 Hamilton Street, comprised two floors and an attic, the fire originated in the room on the ground floor occupied by a family called Smith. It was George Smith who discovered the fire, he being awakened by the flames and smoke. He got out of bed, but when he tried to make his escape he found he could not open the

door. He roused Mr and Mrs Elliott, who occupied the room next to his on the ground floor, and they burst in the door, thus allowing Smith to escape with his wife and child. Smith then gave the alarm to the brigade, and tried to rouse the people remaining in the burning building, the fire having by this time got a good hold. A man named Cruickshanks, who lived in the attic with his wife and family, was awakened by the noise, and coming to the stair head to see what was the matter, he saw the flames. After rousing his wife and family, Cruickshanks took two of his children, a boy and girl, and rushing down the staircase through the flames, reached the street. He did not escape unscathed however, for all the hair was burnt off his head. Mrs Cruickshanks attempted to follow her husband with another child, but was unable to escape owing to the fierceness of the flames. She then went into the room occupied by the Rooks, on the same floor as the room she lived in. Finding escape from this room by the door was impossible, she with difficulty, owing to the dense smoke which filled the room, reached the window, and although encumbered by the child in her arms, jumped into the street, a distance of about eleven feet. In falling she broke her ankle, and was conveyed to the Monkwearmouth and Southwick Hospital, where she was found to be badly shaken also. The Rooks made their way safely through the flames, and escaped without injury. The glare of the flames also awakened the Pattison's, Mrs Pattison saw the fire through the bedroom window, and called her husband who took one of the children in his arms and went out into the passage. The fire in this part was now at its height, he supposed that his wife and other child was following him. When he gained the open air he found that his wife had not come out with him, and he went back along the passage. Fighting his way through the flames and smoke he reached his room again, here the flames were also very fierce, but notwithstanding he made a thorough search. He was unable to find any trace of his wife and child, and had to leave the room and house for his own safety. From the time Pattison left his room until their bodies were found by Sgt Patterson, nothing was seen of Mrs Pattison or her child. The names of the dead are Susan Pattison 31 years and her daughter Susan aged 7 years. The injured are Eleanor Cruickshanks 53 years, broken ankle and shock. Annie Pattison 5 years, both arms burnt and shock. George Smith 26 years, face and neck burnt and shock. The fire is supposed to have been caused by the upsetting of a paraffin lamp'. The awards were briefly noted in *The* Times (8 December 1905, p. 13) thus: 'The following awards have been made by the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire: silver medal to R Patterson and bronze medal to W H Brumby, Monkswearmouth, for saving two people from a burning house on 5 June'.

Medal inscribed: 'W.H. Brumby, Monkswearmouth. 5th June 1905'.

15,031: PC (330J) Albert Snellgrove: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1906; MB(5) - 22 February 1906: 'On 24th June 1905, Jane Seabrook (67) was saved from a fire at 30 Dalston Lane, NE, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,033: Joseph O'Leary, Plasterer: Bronze medal
PC Nicholas Dwyer: Bronze medal
PC Joseph Booth: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1906; MB(5) - 23 November 1905: 'On 27th July 1905, Lawrence O' Callaghan (65), Bridget Tobin (30), James Murphy (33), John Sweeney (28), Mary O'Callaghan (22) were saved from a fire in King Street, Fermoy, Ireland, caused by rats gnawing matches'.

Medal inscribed: 'Joseph H. Booth, Fermoy, 27th July 1905'.

15,035: William James Strudwick, Drayman: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1906; MB(5) - 23 November 1905: 'On 25th July 1905, Mrs Rose Nye (34) and George Nye (3) were saved from a fire at 54 Queen's Road, Croydon, caused by an upset lamp'. The awards were briefly noted in *The Times* (Friday 8 December 1905, p. 12) thus: 'The following awards have been made by the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire: - Silver medal and three guineas to W J Strudwick, Croydon, for his bravery at a fire in Queen's Road on July 25, when he rescued three persons and had a narrow escape in trying to save a fourth'.

15,037: PC (392D) William Croxall: Silver bar to medal and £3.3s
PC (49D) John Ireland: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1906; MB(5) – 23 November 1905: 'On 12th August 1905 a rescue was made at 42 Whitfield Street, Tottenham Court Road, cause of the fire was unknown'. The identities of the person(s) saved were not recorded. The awards were briefly noted in

The Times (Friday 8 December 1905, p. 12) thus: 'The following awards have been made by the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire: silver bar and three guineas to W Croxall and bronze medal and three guineas to J Ireland, police-constables, for their gallantry at a fire in Whitfield Street, Tottenham Court Road, on August 12'. Later, the presentations were recorded in *The Times* (Monday, January 1906, p. 9), thus: 'BRAVERY REWARDED. At Marlborough Street police court, on Saturday; Mr Kennedy, the presiding magistrate, presented two constables, Croxall, 392D, and Ireland, 49D, with a medal and bar for bravery shown by them at a fire, in Whitfield Street, on August 12, when they entered a burning building for the purpose of rescuing persons supposed to be there. Superintendent Bantick, of the D division, represented the Commissioner of Police and introduced the constables. Mr Kennedy said it gave him great pleasure to present to Constable Ireland the bronze medal of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, and a bar to be added to a medal previously won for similar conduct by Constable Croxall. This was the first time a bar had been added to a medal of the kind, and this course was taken only because it was impossible to give a second medal. He congratulated both recipients, who had taken great risks, and shown considerable gallantry. It was mentioned that the constables would also receive a small sum of money'.

15,039: James S Freeman, South African Constabulary: Silver medal

Details: AR 1906; MB(5) - 23 November 1905: 'On 30th May 1905, James Jameson was saved from a fire at the Tivoli Hotel, Klerksdorp, South Africa, caused by a candle igniting curtains'. The award was noted thus in *The Times* (Friday 8 December 1905, p. 12): 'The following awards have been made by the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire: …and silver medal to Constable J S Freeman, South African Constabulary, for saving a man from a burning building at Klerksdorp, Transvaal, on May 30'.

15,041: William Tothill, Engineer: Silver medal and £2.2s
Percy Webber, Engineer: Silver medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1906; MB(5) 23 November 1905: 'On 26th October 1905, Mrs Zipporate (44), Joseph (46), Trevor (11), Ernest (9) and Edgar Watkins (8) were saved from a fire at 122 Commercial Street, Newport, Monmouth, cause of the fire was unknown'. The award was noted thus in *The Times* (Friday 8 December 1905, p. 12): 'The following awards have been made by the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire: silver medals and two guineas each to E W Tothill and P Webber, Newport (Mon.), for saving five persons from a burning house on October 26'. Tothill had previously received the Society's bronze medal, see case 14,533.

15,042: William Norris, Shop Boy: Silver watch and £2.2s

Details: AR 1906; MB(5) 23 November 1905: 'On 15th September 1905, Louisa Brown (2) was saved from a fire at 6 Alton Street, Poplar, caused by a bogie fire in the street'. The award was noted thus in *The Times* (Friday 8 December 1905, p. 12): 'The following awards have been made by the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire: silver watch and two guineas to William Norris, shop boy, Poplar, for saving a child whose clothing had been set on fire in Alton-Street, Poplar, on September 16'.

15,046: PC (88H) Walter Funnell: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1906; MB(5) 23 November 1905: 'On 21st October 1905, Samuel Shatzman (28) was saved from a fire at 6 Steward Street, Bishopsgate, caused by a candle igniting'. The award was noted in *The Times* (12 February 1906, p. 10) thus: 'GALLANTRY REWARDED. At Worship-Street Police Court on Saturday Sub-Divisional-Inspector Cole, G Division, brought up for presentation to the magistrate Police Constable 88H. In presenting to Police-Constable Walter Funnell 88H, the bronze medal of the Society and their cheque for two guineas, Mr Cluer said that the officer had already received the society's certificate. On the occasion which had earned the present commendation the officer had rescued one man from a burning house in Stewart Street, Spitalfields (one night in October last), and had made a second essay to enter when he had himself to be rescued, overcome by smoke'. Funnell had previously received the Society's certificate and £2.2s, approved to him at a Trustee's Meeting on 18 February 1904, for bravery at a fire on 17 January 1904 in Spitalfields when he saved a 3-year-old boy Smith (case number 14966). See also the *Daily Illustrated Mirror* (23 April 1904) for a photograph of the recipient.

Medal inscribed: 'P.C. W. Funnell. 88H, Bishopsgate 21st October 1905'. This medal is accompanied by the 1897 Jubilee medal, the

1902 Coronation Medal, and the 1911 Coronation Medal, all with the Metropolitan Police reverse.

15,049: PC (682S) Francis Pinnock: Bronze medal
George Jones, Labourer: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1906; MB(5) - 22 February 1906: 'On 15th November 1905, Mary Sanders (83) was saved from a fire at 54 Seymour Street, Euston, cause of the fire was unknown'. The award ceremony was described in *The Times* (Saturday, 2 June 1906, p. 7) thus: 'At Clerkenwell Police Court, Mr Bros, on behalf of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, presented Police Constable Francis Pinnock, 682S, and George Jones, a labourer, with a medal each, and Mr Alexander Napier with an illuminated certificate, for their bravery in rescuing the occupants of a burning dwelling-house in Somers Town on November 15. The magistrate said it was satisfactory to him and to the police force to know that public recognition was to be made of the constable's meritorious conduct, on the part of the police – incidents of great courage, of kindness, and of consideration. Public servants did not expect any special reward for doing their duty and were satisfied that they had done it. If they exceeded their duty they expected to be censured. It was gratifying to know that when accidents happened there were always persons ready to risk their lives for others'.

15,050: John Finlay, Slater: Silver medal
PC James M'Courtney: Silver medal
PC John Law Spiers: Silver medal

Details: AR 1906; MB(5) - 22 February 1906: 'On 19th November 1905, 24 Inmates were saved from a fire at 39 Watson Street, Glasgow, cause of the fire was unknown'.

According to the DNW auction catalogue of 25 September 2008, lot 123, John Law Spiers was born on 18 March 1869 in East Kilbride. He served with the Scots Guards for seven years, before joining the Glasgow Police in November 1895. He spent his police career serving in the Central Division, receiving three commendations, and retired on 12 November 1925.

Medal inscribed: 'P.C. John Spiers, Glasgow, 19th Novr. 1905'.

15,051: PC (376G) George Bradstreet: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1906; MB(5) - 22 February 1906: 'On 29th November 1905, Alfred (8) and Alice Moore (3½), were saved from a fire at 39 East Road, City Road, caused by an oil stove igniting bedclothes'. The presentation was noted in *The Times* (4 June 1906) as follows: 'BRAVERY REWARDED. At Old-street, Police Court on Saturday, Subdivisional Inspector Cole, G Division, brought up by appointment and presented to the Magistrate, Police-constable Bradstreet, 376G, and Mr Stevens and Mr Westoby, both of East Road, City Road, to each of whom the magistrate made a pre-sentation on behalf of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire. The magistrate said that the incidents which gave rise to the presentations were exceptionally creditable to all three men. Mr Westoby and Mr Stevens fought their way to an upper-room in a house which was on fire in East Road, City Road, in November last, and succeeded in bringing out a child who, unfortunately, died immediately. The constable, who arrived later, learned that another child was in the room upstairs, and, though at first he was beaten back by heat and smoke, he afterwards with great courage made a more successful effort, covering his mouth with a wetted handkerchief. He rescued a child of eight years, but that child also unfortunately died. To the constable the society had awarded a bronze medal, to Mr Stevens a certificate and £1.1s, and to Mr Westoby also a certificate'. See also the *Daily Mirror* (Monday, 4 June 1906).

15,052: William Charles Crook, Decorator: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1906; MB(5) - 22 February 1906: 'On 23rd November 1905, Ellen (5), Dorothy (3) and Daisy Duce (6 months) were saved from a fire at 8 Clarendon Street, Paddington, caused by children playing with fire'.

15,056: John Jones, Mason: Silver medal

Details: AR 1906; MB(5) - 22 February 1906: 'On 14th December 1905, Stanley Rees was saved from a fire at Perrydarren, Merthyr, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,058: Harry Lord (10): Silver watch

Details: AR 1907; MB(5) - 22 February 1906: 'On 2nd January 1906, Mrs C. Lord was saved from a fire at Austwick, near Lancaster, caused by an upset paraffin lamp'.

15,060: Edwin Charles Flack, Butcher: Silver medal

Details: AR 1907; MB(5) - 22 February 1906: 'On 11th January 1906, Mary Elizabeth

Ingram (65) was saved from a fire at Borden, Kent, caused by an upset paraffin stove'.

Medal inscribed: 'Edwin C. Flack, Borden, 11th Jany. 1906'.

15,065: Coast Guard Harry Private: Bronze medal and £1.1s

Details: AR 1907; MB(5) - 5 July 1906. On 31st December 1905, Mrs Pakenham (72) was saved from a fire at Felpham, Bognor, Sussex, caused by a spark on a thatched roof.

Medal inscribed: 'Harry Private, Felpham, 31st December 1905.' Private was also in possession of the 1914-15 Star trio (Able Seaman RN) and RN LS&GC Medal, EVIIR (Boatman, HM Coast Guard).

15,068: PC (80) George Preece: Silver medal

Details: AR 1907; MB(5) - 5 July 1906: 'On 26th February 1906, William (2) and John McGrath (16 months) were saved from a fire at 34 St James' Place, Liverpool, caused by children playing with fire'. In recording the incident the *Liverpool Echo* (27 February 1906) reported that: 'An Auxiliary Fireman named Preece, 60C [*sic*], who was passing by St James Place, noticed the smoke issuing from the building, and immediately rushed to the rescue. Throwing off his helmet and overcoat, he ran to the top room of the shop, but was confronted with a closed door and other obstacles. But he would not be denied access, despite the smoke and flames coming from the room. Preece broke the panels in the door to pieces, and then burst into the room, clearing everything out of his path. He arrived in the nick of time, for, groping his way among smoke and fire, he discovered a child who was then considerably burned over the body, and would in the ordinary course, have perished in a few minutes. Lifting the little prostrate thing in his arms, he immediately made for the staircase and safely got outside. When the gallant Police Constable returned, the sudden inrush of cold air had fanned the flames, and conditions inside rapidly deteriorated, undeterred Preece groped about and probed every corner of the apartment, until at last he found another child under the sofa. This one he also carried out of the burning room, and safely deposited in helpful hands awaiting his return outside. Both children were badly burned over the body. They were immediately removed to the South Dispensary, and afterwards to the Southern Hospital. But for the heroic efforts of the Constable the two children would have been burned to death, for the room was practically gutted. The Brigade from Hatton Garden was promptly on the scene, and prevented an extension of fire damage. Constable 60C George Preece, a Fire Brigade Auxiliary, walked quietly away after his noble deed, though he was very dirty and his hair was singed and his moustache partly burnt off.'

15,070: PC James Smith: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1907; MB(5) - 5 July 1906: 'On 23rd March 1906, George Slater (70) was saved from a fire at Camden Street, Birmingham, caused by a match igniting bedding'.

15,072: Mrs Clara Jones, Nurse: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1907; MB(5) - 5 July 1906: 'On 27th March 1906, Maude (7), Edward (3½) and Alice Dorothy Bentley (1½) were saved from a fire at South Camp, Aldershot, caused by a child playing with fire'.

15,073: PC (285H) Ernest Payne: Silver medal and £1.1s

Details: AR 1907; MB(5) - 5 July 1906: 'On 8th April 1906, Mrs Fanny, Annie (12) and Louie Marks (3) and Eva Bischoffski (28), were saved from a fire at 161 Brick Lane, Spitalfields, cause of the fire was unknown'.

Medal inscribed: 'P.C. Ernest Payne 285H, 161 Brick Lane, E., 8th April 1906'.

15,080: PC William Martin Furness: Bronze medal and £1.1s
PC John William Rollinson: Bronze medal and £1.1s

Details: AR 1907; MB(5) - 5 July 1906: 'On 5th June 1906, Beatrice Philburn (30), Clara Thornley (20), Gilbert Philburn (8), Frank Thornley (22), Margaret O'Reilly (24) and Samuel Smith (18) were saved from a fire at Warrington Street, Ashton-under-Lyne, cause of the fire was unknown'. Further details appeared in the DNW auction catalogue of 20 September 2002, which drew on the *North Cheshire Herald* (9 June 1906) and the *Hyde Reporter* (June 1906). It was noted that: 'It was fortunate that Constables Furness and Rollinson were passing the Ashton Hotel, Warrington Street, at about 3.40am, and noticed water trickling underneath the front door on to the step. Suspecting something wrong they at once aroused the occupants just in the nick of time. The water, it turned out, came from the lead piping passing under the floor of the store-room to the bathroom, which, melted by the flames, allowed the water to escape

through the roof of the concert room immediately underneath, the floor of which was flooded, the water ultimately finding its way out into the street. Mrs Philburn was the first to awake on hearing the knock, and hastily arranging her attire she hurried downstairs and admitted the constables. The fumes had then found their way into the bedrooms and there was grave danger of the sleepers being asphyxiated. The Constables, greatly concerned as to their safety, at once entered, and Mrs Philburn ran across the Market Ground in alarm, and gave information to the officer in charge at the police station. The fire bells were rung, and the fire-escape at once dispatched, followed immediately by the float and a contingent of firemen, who played upon the flames by powerful jets of water from the mains in Cotton Street and Katherine Street, and after working about 60 minutes the fire was extinguished. The first thought naturally was as to the safety of the other sleepers. They were awakened by the shouts of "Fire! Fire!" and all rushed downstairs in their night attire with the exception of the little boy Gilbert Philburn, who was sleeping peacefully in a room by himself. Constables Furness and Rollinson with commendable heroism faced the fiery barrier which separated them from the boy, and, darting up the stairway, through the all-devouring mass of flames, along the corridor, Rollinson reached the room, and, snatching up the boy whilst yet asleep, he passed him to Furness, who shielded him as well as he could from the suffocating fumes by means of his thick tunic, and commenced his hazardous return to the foot of the stairs. The flames waged fiercer, and greater difficulties presented themselves, and on the return the plucky constable's moustache was almost completely burned off, and his nose and face badly scorched. The boy was also scorched about the head'. The Chief Constable of Ashton-under-Lyne forwarded to the SPLF a report of the fire together with an account of the bravery displayed by the two constables and received a reply saying that they were to receive the Society's bronze medal and £1 each (ref: Watch, Town Hall and Committee Minutes 25 June 1906 and 27 August 1906).

Medal inscribed: 'P.C. William Martin Furness, Ashton-under-Lyne, 5th June 1906'.

15,081: Alfred William Talbot, Milkman: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1907; MB(5) - 5 July 1906: 'On 22nd February 1906, Frances Burger (25) and Mr and Mrs Prescott were saved from a fire at 53 Lamb's Conduit Street, EC, caused by a defective flue'.

15,083: PC William Henry Bratten: Bronze medal and £1.1s
PC William George Johnston: Bronze medal and £1.1s

Details: AR 1907; MB(5) - 29 November 1906: 'On 16th April 1906, several people were saved from a fire at John Street, Wexford, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,085: PC William Henry Veale: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1907; MB(5) - 29 November 1906: 'On 10th July 1905, Jeanette Slater (56) was saved from a fire at Caen Street, Braunton, Devon, caused by an upset paraffin lamp'.

15,086: PC Robert Cully: Silver medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1907; MB(5) - 29 November 1906: 'On 10th July 1906, Joseph Taylor (24) and Susan Mullan (73) were saved from a fire at 18 Berry Street, Belfast, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,087: PSgt Gabriel Deadman: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1907; MB(5) - 29 November 1906: 'On 26th July 1906, Horatio Edmund, Horatio Edmund, jnr., Ada and Ada Woodman (2 months) were saved from a fire at "The Swan", Parrock Street, Gravesend, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,091: Mrs Sarah J Townsend: Bronze medal and £1.1s

Details: AR 1907; MB(5) - 29 November 1906: 'On 10th August 1906, Alice Zimmer (3) was saved from a fire at Newport Road, Aldershot, caused by children playing with matches'.

15,092: PC Harry Stock: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1907; MB(5) - 29 November 1906: 'On 19th August 1906, Edith (11), Emma (9), Bertha (8), Alice (5) and Hilda Drage (4), were saved from a fire at Bridewell Lane, Kettering, caused by curtains blown onto a candle'.

15,097: PC Michael McCarthy: Bronze medal and £2.2s
PC James Kirtley: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1907; MB(5) - 28 February 1907: 'On 13th December 1906, three men were saved from a fire at "The Angel", Catterick, Yorkshire, caused by a spark from a grate'.

Medal inscribed: 'P.C. Michael McCarthy, Catterick, 13th Decr. 1906'. McCarthy also held the QSA medal with 6 bars: 'Cape Colony', 'Orange Free State', 'Johannesburg', 'Diamond Hill', 'Belfast', and 'South Africa 1901' (7994 A. Bomb., J.B. RHA).

15,098: PC William Rigbye: Silver medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1907; MB(5) - 28 February 1907: 'On 15th December 1906, James (16) and Thomas Pring (13), were saved from a fire at 29 Little George Street, Bristol, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,100: PC (169Y) Edwin Abbott: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1907; MB(5) - 28 February 1907: 'On 23rd December 1906, Henry Collins (58) was saved from a fire at 28 Weedington Road, Kentish Town, cause of the fire was unknown'.

Note: According to the DNW auction catalogue of 25 September 2008, lot 124, Edwin Weedon was born in Portsea, Hampshire, in 1880 and went on to work as a Naval Stores Officer at Portsmouth Dockyard, before he joined the Metropolitan Police on 4 November 1901. He retired from the police in April 1919.

Medal inscribed: 'P.C. Edwin Abbott, 169Y, 28 Weedington Road, N.W., 23rd Decr. 1906'. Abbott also held the Coronation Medal 1902, Met Pol type (PC Y Div) and Coronation Medal 1911, Met Pol type (PC).

15,101: Frederick William Hulls (11): Silver watch

Details: AR 1907; MB(5) - 28 February 1907: 'On 26th December 1906, Oswald Hooper Hulls (7) was saved from a fire at 3 Plashet Road, West Ham, E, caused by a candle igniting celluloid'.

15,105: PC (715X) Frederick Stevens: Silver medal

Details: AR 1907; MB(5) - 28 February 1907: 'On 1st December 1906, Hannah Hanlon (79) was saved from a fire at 48 Clarendon Street, Harrow Road, W, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,104: PC Frederick Owen Weeden: Bronze medal and £1.1s

Details: AR 1908; MB(5) 28 February 1907: 'On 10th January 1907, Edwin Pether (55), Gertrude Hughson (32), Dorothy Hughson (8) and Andrew Hughson (15 months) were saved from a fire at 71 Southchurch Road, Southend-on-Sea, caused by an upset paraffin lamp'.

15,106: Herbert John Payne, Hotel Porter: Silver medal

Details: AR 1908; MB(5) - 28 February 1907: 'On 5th January 1907, Margaret Leonard (39), Elizabeth Bowen (25), Edward Coleman and Frederick Wing were saved for a fire at Brooks' Hotel, 33-34 Surrey Street, Strand, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,107: PC (385Y) William Hatfield: Silver medal and £1.1s

Details: AR 1908; MB(5) - 28 February 1907: 'On 9th January 1907, William Mead (22), Charles Hicks (30), Sidney Roberts (21) and Frederick Smith (32) were rescued from a fire in Lancaster Road, New Barnet, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,108: George Thomas Obeney, Seaman: Bronze medal and £1.1s

Details: AR 1908; MB(5) - 28 February 1907: 'On 3rd January 1907, Thanovitch, Nina, Dora (7), Bernard (5), Sarah (4) and Benjamin Ruyer (2) and Polly (26), Eva (3½) and Louie Boxer (2) and Leah Harris (20), were rescued from a fire at 67 Kingsland Road, E, cause of the fire was unknown'. In his *Scouting for Boys* (London: Horace Cox, 1908, p. 255), Robert Baden-Powell notes Obeney's act as Camp Fire Yarn no. 24: 'Instances of gallant rescues of people from burning houses are frequent… An instance occurred only the other day where a young sailor named George Obeney, stationed at Chatham in HMS *Andromeda*, was walking along the Kingsland Road, when he suddenly saw a house on fire, and a woman on the second storey was screaming that she had some children there who could not get out. The sailor rushed from his friends and somehow scrambled up the face of the wall till he reached the window on the first storey and broke in that window so that he could obtain room to stand. The woman at the window above was then able to lower a child so that

he could catch it, and he again passed it down to the ground. Child after child was thus handed down till he passed six of them to the ground, and finally two women, and then he, overcome by smoke himself, fell insensible, but was caught by the people below. His act was an example to you of how to do your duty AT ONCE without thinking of dangers or difficulties'.

Medal inscribed: 'George T. Obeney 67, Kingsland Rd. N. 3rd Jan. 1907'.

15,111: George Rist, Labourer: Bronze medal and £1.1s

Details: AR 1908; MB(5) - 28 February 1907: 'On 6th February 1907, Arthur Jones (3) was rescued from a fire at 12 Frederick Street, Caledonian Road, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,113: PSgt Robert Callaghan: Bronze medal and £1.1s

Details: AR 1908; MB(5) - 14 November 1907: 'On 11th February 1907, Phoebe Livingstone (90) was rescued from a fire in Tandragee, Co Armagh, caused by hay overheating in stores'.

15,119: PC Thomas Feenaghty: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1908; MB(5) - 14 November 1907: 'On 24th February 1907, two children were rescued from a fire in Ballyboffen, Co Donegal, caused by an upset paraffin lamp'.

15,120: PC (325H) James Hawkins: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1908; MB(5) - 14 November 1907: 'On 11th June 1907, Hannah (35), Abraham (7) and Jacob Ranonik (5) and Solomon (6) and Rebecca Markovity (4) were rescued from a fire at 52 Gun Street, Spitalfields, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,121: David Scannell (9): Silver watch

Details: AR 1908; MB(5) - 14 November 1907: 'On 12th June 1907, Emily (4½), Joseph (2½) and Ethel Williams (6 months) were saved from a fire at 90 Euston Street, Somers Town, caused by children playing with fire'.

15,123: PC (377M) William Crisp: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1908; MB(5) - 14 November 1907: 'On 14th July 1907, Martha, Annie (5), Elizabeth (4), Mary (3), John (2) and Thomas Jones (1 month); Annie Davis; Mary Ann, Ernest, Alice and Amy Gallagher were saved from a fire at 77 Union Road, Rotherhithe, caused by airing linen catching fire'.

15,126: Fireman James Porter: Bronze medal
Fireman Frederick Charles Dickens: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1908; MB(5) - 14 November 1907: 'On 28th July 1907, Sarah, Annie (7), Simon (3), Harry (5) and Neville Usick (7 months) were saved from a fire in Turnpike Lane, Tottenham, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,133: Miss Harriet Grant: Silver watch

Details: AR 1908; MB(5) - 14 November 1907: 'On 13th September 1907, Catherine Grant (6) was saved from a fire in Kincraig, Inverness-shire, caused by clothes igniting'.

15,134: Alfred Smith, Motor Driver: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1908; MB(5) - 14 November 1907: 'On 25th September 1907, a woman was saved from a fire at 5 Duckworth Street, Devonport, cause of the fire was unknown'.

Medal inscribed: 'Alfred Smith, Devonport, 25th Septr, 1907'.

15,136: Richard William Soams Bishop, Lifeboatman: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1908; MB(5) - 14 November 1907: 'On 12th February 1907, Mrs Wilson (70) and two Barnes children (5 and 3) were saved from a fire in the High Street, Sheringham, cause of the fire was unknown'.

Medal inscribed: 'Robert W.S. Bishop, Sheringham, 12th February 1907.'

15,138: PC James Fadden: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1908; MB(5) – 14 November 1907: 'On 10th July 1907, B. Brannigan (70), Mrs Moore (70), Sarah McKendry (45), Eliza McKendry (69) and Mrs Herrin (70) were saved from a fire at 18 Christopher Street, Belfast, caused by an upset lamp'.

15,146: PSgt (104P) Frederick Thomas Rolfe: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1908; MB(5) - 27 February 1908: 'On 15th November 1907, Thomas Grigg (65) was saved from a fire at 27A Malyons Road, Ladywell, caused by an upset lamp'.

Medal inscribed: 'Frederick Thomas Rolfe 104 P, Ladywell 15th Nov 1907', in a group with his 1902 Coronation Medal, Metropolitan Police type (PC J Div) and 1911 Coronation Medal, Metropolitan Police type (PS).

15,151: George Frederick Turnbull, Miner: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1908; MB(5) - 27 February 1908: 'On 7th December 1907, William (42), Sarah (40), William (20), Hannah (18), Robert (15), Elizabeth (13), Mary (10), Annie (8), Thomas (5) and Rhoda Willis (2) were saved from a fire at 53 Institute Row, West Sleekburn, near Morpeth, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,152: Police Inspector (Y Div) Alfred Smith: Silver medal

Details: AR 1909; MB(5) - 27 February 1908: 'On 15th January 1908, Mrs Harriet Smith (65) was saved from a fire at 111 Camden Road, Kentish Town, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,154: Hugh Geoffrey Houlder (5½): Bronze medal

Details: AR1909; MB(5) - 27 February 1908: 'On 14th January 1908, Hugh Houlder's little sister (1) was saved from a fire at Fairfield, Glenwood Avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea, caused by child falling into a fire'.

Medal inscribed: 'Geoffrey Houlder, Westcliffe On Sea, 14th January 1908'.

15,155: Arthur James Egerton Brown, Telegraph Messenger: Bronze medal and £1.1s

Details: AR 1909; MB(5) - 27 February 1908: 'On 30th January 1908, Mrs Annie Elizabeth Wynne was saved from a fire at 95 Devonshire Road, Forest Hill, caused by an escape of gas'. Further details on the events appeared in an unattributed newspaper cutting (dated, 29 August 1908), which recorded: 'A LOCAL HERO. A pleasing instance of the value of prompt and decisive action under exciting circumstances, has just received the recognition it deserves. On January 30th, a Norwood Telegraph Messenger, A J E Brown, who resides at Queen's Cottage, Queen's Road, Forest Hill, was cycling down Devonshire Road when he was startled by the loud report of an explosion. Quickly jumping off his machine, he rushed in to No. 95 from whence the sound came; and there found a lady, Mrs Wynne, with her clothing in flames, being badly burned…[and] the…room…[was] also burning. With considerable alacrity, Messenger Brown removed the burning portion's of the lady's clothing, and obtained some Vaseline with which great tact and discretion he applied to her face and arms, and remained with her until quite satisfied that everything was safe. There is little doubt, that but for the prompt appearance of young Brown, and his energetic action, the lady would have burnt to death: and subsequent inquiry brought out the fact that promptitude and resource in cases of emergency are traits of character which have before been exhibited by him. The matter having been brought to the notice of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, that society determined to award the bronze medal, together with an honorarium of one guinea to Messenger Brown. The presentation took place on Wednesday, at the Westow Street Office, the staff being mustered in the Postmaster's Room. In presenting the medal, Mr Aston said he was proud to have under his control an officer who had displayed such gallantry under difficult circumstances. But for the prompt manner in which he had acted much more serious results would have followed, and his example showed the necessity of resourceful action in such cases. Brown has proved that he possessed the power to act decisively and fearlessly at a time of great emergency, and he himself was confident that their colleague would make his mark in life, and nothing would give him (the speaker) greater pleasure to learn that Messenger Brown was forging ahead'.

15,158: PC George Scatchard: Silver medal and £2.2s

Details: AR1909; MB(5) - 10 September 1908: 'On 24th November 1906, Joseph and Mrs Butterworth, their three daughters (25, 19 and 9), an uncle and a son were saved from a fire at Hanover Square, Wyke, Bradford, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,159: Fire Brigade Joiner John Spedding: Silver medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1909; MB(5) - 10 September 1908: 'On 17th February 1908, Mrs Woodburn the Stewardess and two children (4 and 2) were saved from a fire at the Cycling Club, Strand, Barrow-in-Furness, caused by airing clothes catching fire'.

15,178: Fire Brigade Superintendent William Frost: Bronze medal

Details: AR1909; MB(5) - 10 September 1908: 'On 23rd April 1908, John Edward Lucas (64), Elizabeth Lucas (67), Alice Corian (25), Ellen (30), Walter (7), Evelyn (3) and John Coldwell (8 months) and Maggie Bennet (25) were saved from a fire at the Plough Inn, Broad Street Park, Sheffield, cause of the fire was unknown'. In reporting the fire, the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* (24 April 1908) noted how: 'A fire involving damage to the extent of probably £10,000 and attended by several thrilling rescues, occurred in Sheffield late last night. The conflagration started in the Plough Inn, Broad Street, and spread to the adjoining drapery establishment occupied by Mr E Smith, the whole square being completely destroyed. The Plough Inn, the proprietor of which is Mr John Lucas, has a frontage to Broad Street and extends backwards along Sheaf Lane some twenty yards. This rear portion of the building, which has a uniform height of two stories, comprising the smoke-room and other departments. Abutting on the far side is Smith's drapery and haberdashery warehouse, a structure of similar height but greater extent, which branches into South Street, where it joins another block. In the latter were a gunmaker's premises and a small powder magazine, which was an element to be reckoned with in the struggle with the flames. The fire manifested itself in the rear portion of the Plough. How it originated is a mystery, but it certainly had secured a firm hold ere the discovery was made. Even then flames had burst through the roof, and hissing spirals were piercing the midnight darkness. Within a few minutes from the raising of the alarm the Rockingham Street Division of the Fire Brigade were on the scene. Mr Lucas and his family, who resided on the premises, were still within the burning house, and the first efforts of Superintendent Frost and his staff were, therefore, directed towards effecting a rescue. This was right gallantly done in circumstances not altogether unattended by danger. Late as was the hour, a considerable crowd had been attracted, and when it became known that there were lives imperilled, intense excitement seized the spectators, who, however, were admirably controlled by the police, under deputy Chief Constable Barker. Altogether eight persons were in the building. The landlord, a man over 70 years of age; his wife, who is just convalescent after a severe illness; their married daughter, Mrs Coldwell, and her three children Walter (7), Evelyn (3) and Jane (eight months), and two female servants, Maggie Bennett and Alice Cordian. The inmates of the house were roused by the smoke which rolled in dense volumes through the bedrooms and threatened to suffocate them. Their retreat was absolutely cut off, and escape by the windows was out of the question save as a last resource. They were trapped. Immediately the Fire Brigade arrived, Superintendent Frost had the extension ladders detached and thrown against the bedroom windows on the second floor. Seven people, all in a state of collapse, were rescued by the firemen and carried down the ladders. The eighth, Mr Lucas, was nowhere to be found. For a quarter of an hour a search was made high and low, but without result, and fears began to be entertained concerning him, when he was discovered on the roof, whither he had become trapped by the relentless advance of the flames. Mr Lucas had a thrilling fight for life. The fire gradually closed in on him until in desperation he flung himself through a glass landing window and alighted scorched, cut, begrimed, and utterly exhausted on the roof where he was found by the searchers. He was eventually released from his terrible position, but so seriously hurt as to necessitate his immediate removal to the Royal Hospital. Thither the ambulance wagon conveyed him. The rest of the family who suffered from shock and the ill-effects of inhaling smoke were cared for in "The Industry" close by. Meantime hoses had been run out, and several lines were brought to play upon the recreation room, which was converted into a roaring furnace…'. The full size and miniature medals to Frost are known in two different UK private collections, the medals consisting of the 1911 Coronation Medal, the Sheffield Society for Recognising Bravery, and the SPLF bronze medal.

15,184: Miss A Bailey, Nurse: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1909; MB(5) - 10 September 1908: 'On 21st May 1908, Diana Rosario Campbell (3½ months) was saved from a fire at Kenfield Hall, Chartham, Kent, caused by an upset spirit lamp'.

15,187: PC John William Hodgson: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1909; MB(5) - 10 September 1908: 'On 5th July 1908, George (29), Sarah (29), Norah (7), George (6), Mary May (4), Hannah (18 months) and Edward Dunn (2 months) were saved from a fire at 20 Church Street North, Sunderland, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,195: PC (103H) Frederick Hutchins: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1910; MB(5) - 28 January 1909: 'On 25th August 1908, Mrs M H Heard, William (19), Gertrude (14), Blanche (11), Beatrice (9), Henry (6) and Lily Heard (4), were saved from a fire at the Hop Pole Beer House, 68 Sutton Street, Shadwell, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,200: PC (448D) William Harvey: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1910; MB(5) – 28 January 1909: 'On 7th October 1908, Alfred (6) and Cissy Wisbeq (4) were saved from a fire at 14 Little Carlisle Street, Marylebone, cause of the fire was unknown'. *The Times* (Thursday 24 February 1910, p. 4) reported the award ceremony thus: 'SAVING LIFE FROM FIRE. At the John Street (Edgware Road) Police Station yesterday Mr Superintendent Bantick presented Police Constable Harvey, 448D, with a bonze medal and £2.2s given by the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, in recognition of his bravery in saving two children from a burning building. The officer was on duty in Little Carlisle Street, Marylebone, about 11 o'clock at night when a woman with a baby in her arms ran up to him and told him her house was on fire and two of her children (aged three and five years) were in bed asleep. He ran into the house, and having rescued one of the children from a room on the first floor, he returned for the other. Owing to the dense smoke and the great heat he experienced great difficulty, but by crawling along the floor with a wet cloth in his mouth he eventually reached the child and brought it safely out of the house'.

15,210: PC (29) Harry Stedman: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR)1910; MB(5) - 24 February 1909: 'On 6th September 1908, Thomas Edward Cooper (60) was saved from a fire at 8 Wingfield Road, Gravesend, caused by a broken paraffin lamp'.

15,219: Miss Lilian James, Trained Nurse: Silver medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1910; MB(5) - 25 February 1909: 'On 19th November 1908, Edith Birk (18), was saved from a fire at 160 Grange Road, Ilford, Essex, caused by clothing igniting'.

Medal inscribed: 'Miss Lilian James, Ilford, 19th November 1908', this being partly erased on the extant medal.

15,220: PC Martin R Rogers: Bronze medal and £2.s
PC Peter McDonnell: Bronze medal and £2.s

Details: AR 1910; MB(5) - 25 February 1909: 'On 2nd January 1909, Leo (7) and Jack Granville (5) were saved from a fire at Lilliput Street, Belfast, caused by a candle igniting woodwork'.

15,221: PC (278P) Walter Swepson: Silver medal

Details: AR 1910; MB(5) - 25 February 1909: 'On 4th January 1909, three children named Walker were saved from a fire at Pickhurst Mead, Hayes, Kent, caused by a gas explosion'.

15,231: David Edgar Jenkins, Clerk: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1910; MB(5) - 20 January 1910: 'On 4th March 1909, Phoebe Joseph (57) and Elizabeth Davies (12) were saved from a fire at Trebanos, Glamorgan, caused by a candle igniting curtains'.

15,233: PC (333N) Donald Rose: Bronze medal and £1.1s

Details: AR 1910; MB(5) - 20 January 1910: 'On 6th April 1909, James (3) and Donald Harris (2) were saved from a fire at 384 West Green Road, Tottenham, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,235: PC Thomas M'Clane: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1910; MB(5) - 20 January 1910: 'On 25th May 1909, Mark (60) and Maggie Lyttle (50) were saved from a fire at 74 Bridge End, Belfast, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,236: PC Rosby Hoff Harrison: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1910; MB(5) - 20 January 1910: 'On 27th January 1909, Thomas (23), Mrs (20) and baby Gallagher (1); John Grady (65); Joseph Davidson (37) and Annie Armstrong (73) were saved from a fire at 204 High Street East, Sunderland, cause of the fire was unknown'. A fuller account appeared in the *Newcastle Evening Chronicle* (27 January 1909) of the rescue, thus: 'An exciting scene was witnessed at a fire which broke out at Sunderland shortly after 5 o'clock this morning. A married woman named Annie Davidson jumped from a third storey window to the ground. Fortunately her skirt

caught in a signboard and broke the force of her fall, and on being taken to the Infirmary it was found she was only suffering from contusion of the back and chest. The building at which the fire occurred was the shop and tenemented dwelling house, 204 High Street East. PC R Harrison was on duty in the vicinity when he heard a woman call, and on proceeding to the place he was informed that the back of the premises was on fire. The news was sent to Low Street Police Station and the Fire Brigade was summoned. The constable meanwhile climbed over the back yard wall and saw flames through a fanlight on the staircase. He burst open the door, and found John O'Grady, who is about 60 years of age, lying on the stair landing, he carried the man, as well as a widow named Annie Armstrong 73 years, who was also on the landing, to a front room. The other tenants, five in number, had already gone to the front of the building, they were fully dressed. The Fire Brigade arrived promptly under Superintendent Yelland, with the escape and steamer. The flames were centred round the staircase, the banister fell, but he stairs remained intact. The escape was put up to a window to rescue the inmates if necessary, and a jet was got to work. With the exception of the woman who jumped out of the window, the inmates left by means of the escape. The fire was extinguished in less than an hour. The shop is occupied by Mr Nelson, a furniture dealer, the damage is estimated at £20 to £30'.

15,244: Act. Bombardier Guiseppe Gafa, Royal Malta Artillery: Silver medal and £5.5s.

Details: AR 1910; MB(5) - 20 January 1910: 'On 6th February 1909, Victor (40) and Mary E.D. Ross (40) were saved from a fire in Malta, caused by an upset lamp'. The arrangements for the presentation of Gafa's medal by Major W Savona, Royal Malta Artillery, were noted in February 1910 and Savona raised the matter of securing permission to wear the medal in uniform (TNA ref: HO 144/971/B36366).

15,259: PSgt William Jane: Silver medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1911; MB(5) - 17 February 1910: 'On 19th January 1910, Tom Bayes, his wife and six children were saved from a fire at 55 Upper North Street, Poplar, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,260: Temperance Argent, Domestic Servant: Silver watch

Details: AR 1911; MB(5) 17 February 1910: 'On 25th September 1909, an attempt was made to save Daisy H. Heasman from a fire at Woodcroft, Sandhurst Road, Tunbridge Wells, caused by clothing igniting'. The Society's Minutes Book records that the watch was to have an inscription.

15,261: PSgt Joseph Joslin: Silver medal

Details: AR 1911; MB(5) - 17 February 1910: 'On 20th December 1909, Maud H. de la Perrelle was saved from a fire at 1 St. John's Road, Clapham Junction, cause by an electric light'. Joslin also received the KPM for this rescue and further information on this is recorded in the National Archives (file HO45/10612) and the *London Gazette* (3 January 1911), thus: 'Sergeant Joslin went to the assistance of a 15 stone woman who had fallen from a burning fire-escape at a store in Clapham, London, on 20 December 1909. At first he had to retreat owing to the intense heat, but putting a coat over his head, he returned to the woman, who was badly injured, the skin of her arms peeling off with her clothing. He dragged her away from the fire-escape, which by this time was collapsing around her. A fireman who came to their assistance was also beaten back by the heat. The Sergeant then got the woman to the opposite side of the road, and eventually, with the help of the fireman took her into a shop. Whilst awaiting the arrival of the ambulance, the Sergeant put olive oil on the woman's severely burnt arms and face. She was also suffering from a fractured left leg and cuts to her face. She was subsequently taken to Bollingbroke Hospital where she died on 22 December'. See also the following (related) case.

15,262: Clifford John Foakes, Drapers' Buyer: Silver medal
Robert Douglas Hutchings, Salesman: Bronze medal.

Details: AR 1911; MB(5) - 17 February 1910: 'On 20th December 1909, a number of assistants were saved from a fire at Messrs Arding and Hobbs at 1 St. John's Road, Clapham Junction, cause of the fire was [a presumably faulty] electric light'. In reporting the inquests into the eight victims who died in the fire, *The Times* (5 January 1910, p. 5) noted that 'Yesterday, at the Battersea Coroner's Court, Mr Troutbeck continued the inquiry with regard to the fire which took place in Messrs Arding and Hobbs's, Clapham Junction, on December 20…Evidence was called to prove the death of George Neighbour, who was employed by Messrs Arding and Hobbs as a carver and

whose body has not been recovered. This case raises the number of deaths known to have been caused by the fire to eight. John Clifford [*sic*] Foakes, a draper's buyer, said that, having been told that there was a fire on the premises; he saw that the hose was got out and water turned on. On going outside the shop he saw several firemen signalling to persons in the upper part of the premises. That was about ten minutes after he had received the alarm. He saw no fire engine or escape at that time. Re-entering the shop, he went upstairs, and in a room which he believed to be in or near the tower he saw George Neighbour assisting young women through a window, outside which there was a fire-escape. The floor around him was burning, and immediately after he had handed out a young woman the floor gave away and Neighbour fell through and was never seen again. The witness escaped by way of the iron staircase, and carried out a man named Hutchings, who was overcome by the smoke. The fire bell on the premises was rung nearly every morning, but the *employés* [*sic*] did nothing when it sounded. He thought that instructions had been given to test the bell every day. Printed instructions as to what should be done in case of fire hung on the walls, but he had not read them. He had noticed escapes on the premises. The iron doors between the sections of the buildings were shut at the time of the fire. He opened two of them and closed them again after he had passed through…'. The presentations were reported in *The Times* (Saturday, 2 April 1910, p. 21) thus: 'The Clapham Junction Fire – Mr De Grey, magistrate at the South-Western Police Court, yesterday presented Detective Sergeant Joslin, of the V Division, Clifford John Foakes, a buyer, and John Douglas Hutchins, a window dresser, in the service of Messrs Arding and Hobbs, of Clapham Junction, with the medal of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire for bravery displayed by them at the disastrous fire at Messrs Arding and Hobbs's premises. Detective Joslin had already been presented with £10 for rescuing the late Miss Delaperille from the flames. The other two men showed conspicuous activity in their efforts to save the other *employés*. Mr De Grey congratulated the three men on their bravery. He said that, although the heat was so great that even one of the firemen was driven back, the detective pluckily took hold of the woman. He was driven back, but with a coat over his head he made another attempt, and at great risk of losing his life succeeded in rescuing the woman, who unfortunately died of her injuries. Hutchings, he understood, made a gallant attempt to rescue the late George Neighbour, but, collapsing, was rescued by Foakes'. See also *The Times* (14 January 1910, p. 3) for a further note on the fire, the *Daily Mirror* (Saturday 2 April 1910, p. 13) for a note of the presentation, and *The Times* (24 October 1911, p. 4, 31 October 1911, p. 4, and 1 November 1911, p. 3) for further biographical details on Foakes.

Medal inscribed: 'Clifford John Foakes, Battersea, Decr. 20 1909'.

15,267: PC John Scully: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1911; MB(5) - 26 May 1910: 'On 19th October 1909, Mrs B. Mulholland and four children were saved from a fire in Main Street, Coalisland, cause of the fire was unknown'. Additional information, taken from an unattributed newspaper report, appears in the DNW auction catalogue of 20 September 2002, lot 126, thus: 'About 3.0am on Tuesday Constables Scully and Lynch, who were going off duty, saw dense smoke issuing from the two-storey thatched house building in the Square, Coalisland, occupied by Mr Bernard Mulholland. They aroused the sleeping inmates, consisting of Mr and Mrs Mulholland and four children, who were brought out through an upper window. The fire spread rapidly, and the hotel premises adjoining, owned by Mrs Lyttle, were involved to a slight extent, but police and civilians laboured energetically, and after a time were able to check the progress of the fire. The Roan Mill Spinning Company kindly lent their pump and hose, with the aid of which the blaze was eventually extinguished'. The award itself it noted in *The Times* (Monday 30 May 1910, p. 7) thus: 'The Society for the Protection of Life from Fire has awarded its silver medal and three guineas to John Scully of the Royal Irish Constabulary, for having saved a woman and four children from a burning house at Coalisland, County Tyrone, on October 19'.

Medal inscribed: 'John Scully, RIC Coalisland, 19th October 1909', in a group together with Visit to Ireland Medal 1900 (Constable, R.I.C.) and Visit to Ireland Medal 1903 (Constable, R.I.C.) both complete with shamrock suspension.

15,270: Miss Caroline M Millard, Ladies' Help: Silver watch

Details: AR 1911; MB(5) - 26 May 1910: 'On 7th December 1909, Ivy Bolton (5) was saved from a fire at 32 Caithness Road, West Kensington, caused by clothing igniting'.

15,273: Fireman William J Robinson: Bronze medal
Fireman Robinson Devlin: Bronze medal
Fireman John Flanagan: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1911; MB(5) - 26 May 1910: 'On 24th January 1910, Gertrude Laverty (23) was saved from a fire at 312 Woodstock Road, Belfast, cause of the fire was unknown'. A fuller account of the events was given in *Spink Circular* (No. 6, March 1997), drawing on a newspaper report, thus: 'The cause of the fire was unknown, but it probably started in the family run drapery business which occupied the ground floor of the building. At six o'clock in the morning the householder, James McLaughlin, smelt burning and, upon coming downstairs and opening the door to the shop, discovered it to be well ablaze. He rushed back upstairs and warned his wife, who snatched their youngest child and ran to the back of the house, dropping the year old baby ten feet to the pavement prior to leaping from the window herself. Mr McLaughlin ran to Laverty's door, and attempted to rouse her by kicking at it and shouting "Fire!" before running up to the attic to rescue their remaining two year-old child from the rapidly spreading flames and smoke. This baby was likewise dropped to safety from a window, after which McLaughlin, believing himself to be the last to escape jumped for his life, twisting his ankle upon landing. Upon discovering that Miss Laverty had failed to reach safety, McLaughlin attempted to go to her aid, but was beaten back by smoke and flames and suffered burns to his face and head. The fire brigade had been summoned, and upon arriving at the scene, detachments from headquarters, Albertbridge Road and Whitla Street struggled to subdue the flames. At last firemen were able to enter the still blazing building, and one of them discovered the body of Gertrude Laverty, who had apparently succumbed to smoke and fumes before she could make her escape. The two storey building was completely gutted'. The award itself was noted in *The Times* (30 May 1910) thus 'The Society for the Protection of Life from Fire has awarded medals to W J Robinson, R Devlin and J Flanaghan, members of the Belfast Fire Brigade, for having rescued a woman from a burning house on January 24'. Devlin had service in the Boer War and later served during WWI with the 1/Royal Irish Rifles and was wounded in the right buttock on 2 August 1917.

Medal inscribed: 'R. Devlin, Belfast, 24 January 1910'.

15,274: Jenkin W Howells, Collier: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1911; MB(5) - 26 May 1910: 'On 25th January 1910, Mrs Ann Howells, Miss Elizabeth Williams, Miss Jane Williams and Fred Hill were saved from a fire at 18 Glentaff Road, Troedyrhiw, cause of the fire was unknown'. The award was briefly noted in *The Times* (Monday 30 May 1910, p. 7) thus: 'The Society for the Protection of Life from Fire has awarded a silver medal and three guineas to J W Howells, of the Dowlais Ambulance Brigade, for rescuing four persons from a burning building at Troedyrhiw on January 25'.

15,279: Miss Elizabeth Froment, Scholar: Silver watch

Details: AR 1911; MB(5) - 26 May 1910: 'On 21st February 1910, Minnie Froment (3) was saved from a fire at 14 Brettenham Road East, Edmonton, caused by clothes igniting'. The award was briefly noted in *The Times* (Monday 30 May 1910, p. 7) thus: 'The Society for the Protection of Life from Fire has awarded a silver watch to Elizabeth Froment, aged 13 years, of Brettenham Road, Edmonton, for attempting to save her younger sister, whose life was lost as a result of her clothing being set on fire on February 21'. In July 1910, the Society ascertained that Elizabeth Froment's parents have been committed to prison for six months under the Children's Act and that Elizabeth herself was in the workhouse. The Trustees decided to withhold the award of the silver watch until she left the 'school' and went into service. Perhaps the workhouse school was not regarded as a suitable place to have a valuable silver watch.

15,281: PC Francis McCready: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1911; MB(5) - 26 May 1910: 'On 10th March 1910, Mrs Nunnercamp (60) was saved from a fire at Loy Hill, Cookstown, Co Tyrone, cause of the fire was unknown'. The award was briefly noted in *The Times* (Monday 30 May 1910, p. 7) thus: 'The Society for the Protection of Life from Fire has awarded a bronze medal and two guineas to F McCready, of the Royal Irish Constabulary, for the rescue of a woman from a burning house at Cookstown, County Tyrone, on March 10'.

15,283: Thomas D Scott, Postman: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1911; MB(5) - 26 May 1910: 'On 22nd March 1910, Mrs Bailie White (40) and Mrs Cahill were saved from a fire at 193 Boness Road, Grangemouth, caused by a gas explosion'. The award was briefly noted in *The Times* (Monday 30 May 1910, p. 7) thus: 'The Society for the Protection of Life from Fire has awarded a medal and two guineas to T D Scott, a postman of Grangemouth, for extinguishing on March 22 a fire caused by an explosion of gas, which threatened danger to the lives of several persons'. At the Ordinary Meeting of Trustees, 31 July 1974: 'A letter had been received by the Secretary from the Ontario Numismatic Association asking for information concerning a Bronze medal issued to a Mr Thomas D Scott in 1910. Certain information had been found in the Society's old records and this had been sent'.

Medal inscribed: 'Thomas D. Scott, Grangemouth 22nd March 1910'.

15,284: PC Herbert Muggeridge: Bronze medal and £1.1s

Details: AR 1911; MB(5) - 26 May 1910: 'On 25th March 1910, Charlotte Dockerell (69) was saved from a fire at 53 Lonsdale Road, Notting Hill, cause of the fire was unknown'. The award was briefly noted in *The Times* (Monday 30 May 1910, p. 7) thus: 'The Society for the Protection of Life from Fire has awarded a medal and one guinea to H Muggeridge, a Metropolitan Police constable, for rescuing a woman 70 years of age from a burning room at Lonsdale-road, Notting Hill, on March 25'.

15,285: PC John T Sparkes: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1911; MB(5) - 26 May 1910: 'On 27th March 1910, Elizabeth Newman (60) was saved from a fire at 80 Parsons Green Lane, Fulham, cause of the fire was unknown'. The award was briefly noted in *The Times* (30 May 1910, p. 7) thus: 'The Society for the Protection of Life from Fire has awarded a bronze medal and two guineas to J T Sparks, a constable of the Metropolitan Police, for saving a woman 60 years of age from a burning house at Parson's Green on March 10'. The recipient's surname spelt as 'Sparks' (Minutes) and 'Sparkes' in Annual Report.

Medal inscribed: 'P.C. J. T. Sparks, Fulham, 17th March 1910.'

15,290: PC George Watts: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1911; MB(5) - 26 May 1910: 'On 18th April 1910 John Butcher, wife and six children were saved from a fire at 85 City Road, Cardiff, cause of the fire was unknown'. The award was briefly noted in *The Times* (Monday 30 May 1910, p. 7) thus: 'The Society for the Protection of Life from Fire has awarded a silver medal and three guineas to George Watts, of the Cardiff City Police, on April 18'.

15,291: PSgt James Young: Silver medal and £2.2s
PC John Blennerhassett: Silver medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1911; MB(5) - 21 July 1910: 'On 7th May 1910 Miss Johanna McMahon (75) was saved from a fire at Francis Street, Kilrush, Co Clare, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,292: PSgt James Burns: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1911; MB(5) - 21 July 1910: 'On 15th May 1910, William Dawson (69) was saved from a fire at Ballyjamesduff, Co Cavan, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,293: Miss Beryl Oxenbridge (11), Scholar: Silver watch

Details: AR 1911; MB(5) - 21 July 1910: 'On 29th May 1910 Laura Oxenbridge (5) was saved from a fire at Otford, NSW, Australia, caused by clothing igniting'.

15,296: PC Thomas Bate: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1911; MB(5) - 21 July 1910: 'On 12th June 1910, Mrs Louisa Jowsey (64), James Byrne (64) and Albert Winn (64) were saved from a fire at 112 Spencer Street, Middlesbrough, caused by an overturned lamp'. The circumstances of the fire are described in the *North Eastern Daily Gazette* (13 June 1910) thus: 'A sudden outbreak of fire, which though doing comparatively little damage to household effects, resulted in loss of life, occurred early on Sunday morning at 112 Spencer Street, Middlesbrough. The victim was a widow, named Louisa Jowsey (64 years) who rented a room at the house from the occupier, James Burns. The fire broke out about one o'clock and so swiftly did the flames do their work that the occupants of the house were unaware of the tragedy that had occurred in their midst until aroused by neighbours, no cry or noise

having been heard. The alarm was given by a youth named William Hampton of Westward House who informed the police of the outbreak. In the meantime two other youths, James Cairns and Donohue residing in Spencer Street, near the scene of the fire, had noticed the flames, and with commendable promptitude had gone to the rescue. Donahue procured a ladder, and erecting it against the wall, tried to gain access to the front bedroom from which the flames were issuing. While thus engaged, PC's Bate and Hodgson appeared on the scene, and the former climbing up the ladder, hoisted the youth onto the windowsill and smashed the glass with his truncheon. The room was filled with smoke but undeterred by any apprehension or danger, the officer scrambled through the window, and found that the bed was on fire. Rolling the bed and coverings up, Bate carried them to the window, and thrust them through the aperture into the street. He turned his attention once again to the room, and discovered the woman lying behind the door. She was severely burnt about the head and body, and her nightdress was smouldering. The fire brigade, who had been promptly summoned after the alarm had been given, arrived, and two of the men conveyed Mrs Jowsey to a back room, and there applied artificial respiration, and attended to her injuries, but the task was hopeless, and the woman expired within a few minutes. The youth Cairns had devoted his energies to rousing the occupants of the house, James Burns and Albert Winn. The former was asleep in a back bedroom, and when discovered by the youth, who had made an entry through a window at the back, was much dazed by the smoke, and it was with much difficulty that he was assisted from the house. Several neighbours had by this time been attracted to the house, and they vigorously applied buckets of water, and greatly assisted the fire brigade to subdue the flames, a task which occupied about an hour and a half. The cause of the fire can only be surmised. It appears that Mrs Jowsey was in the habit of reading in bed, and obtained the light from a paraffin lamp which stood on a table by the side of the bed. It is thought that she had either upset the lamp or that it exploded, thus causing the conflagration. PC Hodgson sustained cuts to his hands while climbing into the room, and Donoghue's foot was also badly cut by falling glass'.

15,301: PSgt James Grady: Bronze medal and £1.1s
PC John A. Cantlon: Bronze medal and £1.1s

Details: AR 1911; MB(5) - 20 October 1910: 'On 7th July 1910, John (8) and Johanna Fogarty (10) were saved from a fire in Limerick Street, Roscrea, Co, Tipperary, caused by an overturned candle'.

15,307: Volunteer Fireman John Gordon Dyson: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1911; MB(5) - 20 October 1910: 'On 17th August 1910, Samuel L and Mrs L M A Green and Amy Bennett were saved from a fire at Kirkella, Sanderstead Hill East, Sanderstead, Surrey, caused by a gas explosion'.

15,308: E H Walker, Hotel Proprietor: Silver medal

Details: AR 1911; MB(5) - 20 October 1910: 'On 23rd August 1910, Miss Holder (27) and Miss E L M Walker (15) were saved from a fire at the Star Hotel, Newport, IOW, cause of the fire was unknown'. The award was briefly noted in *The Times* (31 January 1911) thus: 'BRAVERY REWARDED. The Mayor of Newport, Isle of Wight, last night presented to ex-Sergeant-Major E H Walker, late Queen's Dragoon Guards, the silver medal of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire for saving his daughter and another from the fire which destroyed his hotel last summer'.

15,318: PC Frederick Cox: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1912; MB(5) - 19 January 1911: 'On 15th November 1910, Ellen O'Shea a Charwoman was saved from a fire at 89 Eastcourt Road, Fulham, cause of the fire was unknown'. The award was briefly noted in *The Times* (25 January 1911) thus: 'REWARDS FOR BRAVERY. The Society for the Protection of Life from Fire has made the following, among other, awards:- Bronze medal and three guineas to Fred Cox, Constable, Metropolitan Police, for his action in saving a woman from a burning room at Estcourt Road, Fulham…'.

15,320: PC Harry Byford: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1912; MB(5) - 19 January 1911: 'On 11th December 1910, William Duffett (30) was saved from a fire at Manor House, Manor Road, Enfield, cause of the fire was unknown'. The award was briefly (and apparently incorrectly) noted in *The Times* (25 January 1911) thus: 'REWARDS FOR BRAVERY. The Society for the Protection of Life from Fire has made the following,

among other, awards:-; medal and two guineas to William Duffett, [*sic*] Constable, Metropolitan Police, stationed at Enfield, for saving a man and boy from a fire at the Manor House there'.

15,323: Lily Saunders (10), Scholar: Silver watch

Details: AR 1912; MB(5) - 23 March 1911: 'On 16th August 1910, Mona Saunders (3½) was saved from a fire at New Dupto Road, Garden Hill, Wollongong, NSW, caused by clothes igniting'.

15,329: William McCance, Labourer: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1912; MB(5) 23 March 1911: 'On 17th January 1911, Margaret (8) and Ellen E Laverty (9); James (7) and Mary F. Baxter (5) and Flora Richardson (7) were saved from a fire at 11 Union Street, Portadown, caused by clothing igniting'.

15,332: James Reynolds (14½), Errand Boy: Silver watch

Details: AR 1912; MB(5) - 23 March 1911: 'On 30th January 1911, Cecil Randalls (4) was saved from a fire at 7 Saxon Street, Wrexham, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,335: Lieutenant George G Everett, 67th Punjab Regiment: Silver medal

Details: AR 1912; MB(5) - 14 June 1911: 'On 8th August 1910, Havildah Pir Shah (32) was saved from a fire in the Saddar Bazaar, Multan, Punjaub, India, caused by children playing with fireworks'.

15,338: PC George Springett: Bronze medal and £2.2s
PC Michael Barry: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1912; MB(5) - 14 June 1911: 'On 4th March 1911, Mrs Mary A., Phyllis (9) and Arthur C.E. Julian (5) were saved from a fire at 5 Angel Street, Walworth, caused by a defective flue'. Springett and Barry also received the KPM for their actions and further information on the rescue is contained in the National Archives (file HO45/ 10937/202295) and the *London Gazette* (2 January 1912), thus: 'A fire occurred at 1am on 4th March 1911, at 5 Angel Street, Walworth, London, a four roomed house occupied by a labourer, Arthur Julian, his wife, and children, Phyllis aged 9, and Arthur Ernest, aged 5. The fire was first noticed by Constable Springett who blew his whistle, and, with the aid of Constable Barry, who soon arrived, began to arouse the occupants. The Constables forced the street door, but were beaten back by the flames which engulfed the passage and stairs. Arthur Julian (senior) appeared at the first floor window, and handed down his daughter to Constable Springett, who was standing on the window sill of the ground floor room. The man was then overcome by smoke, and fell out of the window to the street below. Julian then told the Constables that his wife and boy were still in the house, so Constable Springett with help from his colleague, climbed to the first floor window, and entered the smoke filled room. He found Mrs Julian unconscious on the floor, carried her to the window, and handed her to Constable Barry, and safety. However, he was overcome by smoke, and forced to leave the room. The boy was seen at the window, trying to climb out, but he fell back into the room, which was now alight. Constable Barry, standing on Springett's shoulders, pulled himself into the room, and found the boy, and got him out. Tragically the boy was so severely burnt that he died shortly afterwards. The Fire Brigade had, in the meanwhile arrived and extinguished the blaze, but not before the house was totally destroyed'.

The medal group to Barry is extant and includes the King's Police Medal, GVR, 1st issue, (Michael Barry, Const. Met. Police); Coronation Medal 1902. Met. Police (P.C., L. Div.); Coronation Medal 1911. Met. Police (P.C.); and an (unnamed) SPLF bronze medal.

15,343: PC Patrick Conlan: Bronze medal and £2.2s
PC Thomas Browne: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1912; MB(5) - 14 June 1911: 'On 21st March 1911, John (65), Patrick (5) and Thomas Finerty (8) and Annie Connolly (7) were saved from a fire in Camp Street, Oughterard, Co Galway, Ireland, caused by a child playing with fire'.

15,347: Roland Goodyear, Shop Assistant: Silver medal

Details: AR 1912; MB(5) - 14 June 1911: 'On 20th April 1911, Charlotte Crosby (16) was saved from a fire at 196 and 197 High Street West, Sunderland, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,348: PC Stephen Randall: Bronze medal and £2.2s
PC William Pell: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1912; MB(5) - 14 June 1911: 'On 28th April 1911, Esther (wife of occupier), Rachel (6), Leah (4), Annie (2) and Airie Isenberg (7 months) and Elizabeth Cooks (domestic servant) were saved from a fire at 216 Commercial Road, East, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,349: Miss Lilian Boltwood, Domestic Servant: Silver watch and £2.2s

Details: AR 1912; MB(5) - 14 June 1911: 'On 5th May 1911, James (4) and Basil Lawford (2) were saved from a fire at Mimosa, Church Gate, Cheshunt, caused by children playing with matches'. The award was then noted in *The Times* (Monday 8 May 1911, p. 6) thus: 'A GIRL'S BRAVERY AT A FIRE. The heroism of Lilly Boltwood, a domestic servant, aged 18, is to be the subject of a special police report to the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire. The girl is employed by Mr J W Lawford, a printer and stationer, of Cheshunt, and on Friday night she heard screams coming from the nursery. Rushing upstairs she found that the bed on which two little children slept was a mass of flames. Boltwood called for Mr Lawford's sister, who is known as Sister Hope, but the latter on entering the nursery, was overpowered by the smoke and fell down unconscious. Boltwood snatched one of the children from the burning bed and ran with him to another bedroom, where she extinguished the flames by rolling him in a blanket. She then rescued the second child in a similar way. She again returned to the nursery, and although badly burned about the face dragged Sister Hope from the room to a place of safety, and afterwards went to another room where an infant boy had been left in a bassinette, and removed him out of danger. When help arrived it was found that the two elder children were very badly burned. The younger aged two years, was removed to Cheshunt Cottage Hospital, where his mother is a patient. Sister Hope was also badly injured. The fire was extinguished by the police'.

15,351: M B Owen, Clerk: Silver medal

Details: AR 1912; MB(5) - 12 October 1911: 'On 6th January 1911, Blanche Chofré (16) was saved from a fire in Manilla, Philippine Islands, caused by an overturned candle'.

15,352: PSgt Richard Harvey: Bronze medal and £2.2s
PC James Clancy: Bronze medal and £2.2s
Patrick Sullivan, Ex-Soldier: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1912; MB(5) - 12 October 1911: 'On 19th May 1911, Mrs Barry (70) was saved from a fire at Bishop's Lane, Killarney, Ireland, cause of the fire was unknown'. Noted in *The Royal Irish Constabulary Magazine* (1911, vol 1, no 1, p. 32).

Medal inscribed: 'Patrick Sullivan, Killarney, 19 May 1911'.

15,353: PC M Mullins: Bronze medal and £2.2s
PC T Currane: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1912; MB(5) - 12 October 1911: 'On 16th June 1911, Mrs M Minahen (75) was saved from a fire in Main Street, Killaloe, Ireland, caused by curtains catching fire from a candle'. Noted in *The Royal Irish Constabulary Magazine* (1911, vol 1, no 1, p. 32).

15,355: Victor J Jefferies: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1912; MB(5) - 12 October 1911: 'On 7th July 1911, Mr and Mrs Jerome (63 and 59 respectively) were saved from a fire at the Wagon and Horses Inn, Wootton Bassett, caused by a match thrown down'.

15,356: PC George Lefevre: Silver medal

Details: AR 1912; MB(5) - 12 October 1911: 'On 23rd July 1911, an attempt [was made] to rescue Nathan (10) and Gertrude Rosinskey (6) at 9 Hutchison Street, Aldgate, London, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,359: PC Ernest Warwick: Bronze medal and £2.2s
Augustus H Lewington, Printer's Clerk: Silver medal

Details: AR 1912; MB(5) - 12 October 1911: 'On 22nd August 1911, George E Wilkinson, John and Mrs Marian Massey were saved from a fire at 13 Evershott Street, Camden Town, caused by a blow lamp'.

15,360: William Mallinson: Silver watch

Details: AR 1912; MB(5) - 12 October 1911: 'On 1st September 1911, Mrs Mary Wood (60) was saved from a fire at Low Green, Rawden near Leeds, caused by burning rubbish'.

15,361: PC Arthur Rendle: Bronze medal and £2.2s
PC Joseph Hills: Bronze medal and £2.2s
Arthur G Waters, Clerk: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1912; MB(5) - 12 October 1911: 'On 11th September 1911, Albert (8) and Clarence Traish (8) were saved from a fire at 38 Hilda Road, Canning Town, caused by a candle igniting a curtain'.

15,364: PC John Linnane: Bronze medal and £2.2s
PC John Randles: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1913; MB(5) - 18 January 1912: 'On 11th September 1911, Mrs Mary Hogan and eight children, Norah Nevin (19), Bridgett Murphy (18), Matthew (20) and John Ryan (16) were saved from a fire in Castle Street, Nenagh, Co Tipperary, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,366: James Lynch, Barman: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1913; MB(5) - 18 January 1912: 'On 23rd October 1911, Bernard (31) and Mrs Maguire (26) and child (1½) were saved from a fire at 23 Springfield Road, Belfast, cause of the fire was unknown'.

Medal inscribed: 'James Lynch, Belfast, 23 Oct 1911'.

15,369: Cyrus Simmons, Farm Labourer: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1913; MB(5) - 18 January 1912: 'On 13th November 1911, Mrs Sinnott (90), Mrs (67) and Mary Kearon (30) were saved from a fire at Black Hill, Glenealy, Co Wicklow, Ireland, caused by firewood igniting'.

15,377: M Crawley: Bronze medal and £2.2s
C G Lord: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: MB(5) - 18 January 1912: No details.

15,379: Police Superintendent John Valpy Thomas: Bronze medal
Fireman George W Morley: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1913; MB(5) - 25 March 1912: 'On 30th November 1911, George Davison (80) was saved from a fire at Broadbery's Yard, East Retford, Notts, cause of the fire was unknown'. See also the *Retford Times* (1 December 1911).

Medal inscribed: 'John Valpy Thomas, Retford 30.11.11'. Thomas later received the Royal Victorian Medal (GVR), awarded in 1914.

15,380: Mable Fuller, Scholar: Silver watch

Details: AR 1913; MB(5) - 25 March 1912: 'On 23rd December 1911, Noel Fuller (6) was saved from a fire at Union Hall, Co. Cork, caused by a celluloid collar igniting'.

15,384: R Horn, Machine Engineer: Silver medal and £10

Details: MB(5) - 25 March 1912: 'On 12th January 1912, all on board (59) were saved from a fire on the SS *Spondilus* in the Indian Ocean, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,391: PSgt Edmund Waters: Silver medal and £5.5s
PC Thomas Little: Bronze medal and £2.2s
PC Albert Winton: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1913; MB(5) - 25 March 1912: 'On 29th January 1912, Mrs M. Bleuford and five children were saved from a fire at 196 Mile End Road, East (London), cause of the fire was unknown'. The three officers also received the KPM and further information of the rescue is recorded In the National Archives (file HO45/ 10999/217900) and the *London Gazette* (1 January 1913), thus: 'At 12.20 am on 29 January 1912 a fire broke out at 196 Mile End Road, London. Constable Little kicked open the door of the house, and with Sergeant Waters entered a smoke filled passage. Flames were bursting through a door to the shop, where the fire had started. The officers saw a Mr Bluefarb, the occupier with his wife and friend, who had been in a back room, and while Constable Little went upstairs with Mr Bluefarb to get the children, Sergeant Waters took Mrs Bluefarb, [who was] by this time hysterical, and her friend, into a street. The Sergeant then went and searched the second floor, which appeared unoccupied, and then on the first floor heard



PSgt Edmund Waters, PC Thomas Little and PC Albert Winton

a child's voice cry out. In the back room, he found Esther, aged 5. He picked her up, but owing to the smoke and darkness, lost his way in the room. After groping about in the darkness, during which time the child became unconscious, he felt himself failing,

but managed to blow his whistle before collapsing. A Fireman managed to gain entry to the room, and passed the child out, and then, with difficulty, rescued the unconscious Sergeant. Meanwhile, Constable Little had brought out Dora, aged 9, and Phillip, aged 7. He then attempted to return, but overcome by smoke and heat, collapsed on the footway. Constable Winton, having arrived later, went into the house, and brought out Yetta, aged 10, together with the children from the first floor. This Constable again entered the house, but on reaching the top of the stairs, his lantern went out, and then he slipped and fell down the stairs in the darkness, just managing to crawl out to the street before collapsing'. PC Winton had been awarded the DCM and an MID during the War in South Africa 1899-1902.

15,392: PC Simon Malone: Bronze medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1913; MB(5) - 25 March 1912: 'On 14th February 1912, Elizabeth A Rumsey (45) was saved from a fire at 33 Balsover Street, Marylebone, caused by an upset mineral oil lamp'.
Medal inscribed: 'P.C. Simon Malone, Marylebone, 14/2/12'.

15,395: Edward Bell: Silver medal



Edward Bell's SPLF Medal and Albert Medal

Details: AR 1913; MB(5) 27 June 1912: 'On 11th July 1911, seven lives were saved from a fire at the South Porcupine Mining Camp, Copper Cliff, Ontario, Canada, caused by an outbreak of fire following a tornado'. The Society had no knowledge of Edward Bell's bravery at the fire in Ontario, until they became aware of the award to him of the Albert Medal. The Society wrote to the Home Office on 28th June 1912 as follows: 'Edward Bell, Canadian Copper Company: Referring to recent grant of the Albert Medal of the Second Class to the above, the Trustees of this Society have also in contemplation the grant of an Award, and I shall be obliged if you will allow me to peruse the narrative of this case.'



Mr Edward Bell AM

Bell's citation for the Albert Medal (2nd Class) was as follows: 'The KING has been pleased to approve of the Albert Medal of the Second Class being conferred upon Mr Edward Bell, in the employ of the Canadian Copper Company, of Copper Cliff, Ontario, Canada, for gallantry in saving life as detailed below: - On the 11th July, 1911, a disastrous forest fire broke out in the neighbourhood of the town of South Porcupine, Ontario, destroying the town and a mining camp, and the perilous position of the inhabitants was aggravated by a sudden tornado. A party, including the manager of the Dome Mines and his family and two employees of the mining company, managed with great difficulty to pass through the smoke and flames to some water barrels, but then collapsed from exhaustion, and were unable to use the water so as to keep their clothes from catching fire from the showers of sparks. Bell, notwithstanding the dense smoke, which had incapacitated the party, went to their rescue, and stood by them for nearly two hours, damping their clothes, and by this and other means preventing further injury by fire. By his courageous action he was instrumental in saving the lives of seven

persons' (*London Gazette*, 5 April 1912, p. 2496). See also TNA ref: HO 45/10678/219122 and *The Globe* [Toronto], 4 May 1912.

Medal known, dated 11 July 1912 (*sic*) in pair with Albert Medal, the latter inscribed: 'Presented in the name of His Majesty to Edward Bell for gallantry in saving life at the Township of Tisdale, Ontario on the 11th July, 1911.'

15,399: Benjamin Westell, Greengrocer: Silver medal

Details: AR 1913; MB(5) - 27 June 1912: 'On 2nd March 1912, Mrs E A Law (82) was saved from a fire in Dark Lane, Newchurch, near Manchester, caused by an upset mineral oil lamp'.

15,409: PSgt John Paterson: Bronze medal and £3.3s
Fire Constable Charles White: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1913; MB(5) - 27 June 1912: 'On 16th April 1912, Henry Brentman and two children were saved from a fire at 94 Queen Street, Portsea, cause of the fire was unknown'.

Medal inscribed: 'P.C. Charles White, Portsea, 16th April, 1912'.

15,411: PC Robert Greene: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1913; MB(5) - 27 June 1912: 'On 26th April 1912, Frances Sullivan (30) was saved from a fire at Buckingham House, Seven Sisters Road, Stoke Newington, caused by a light being thrown down'.

15,413: Fireman George Beesley: Silver medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1913; MB(5) 27 June 1912: 'On 14th May 1912, Atkinson Hartley (9 months) was saved from a fire at Colne, Lancashire, cause of the fire was unknown'. Beesley also received the KPM for the rescue and the citation is recorded in the National Archives (file HO45/ 10999/217900) and the *London Gazette* (1 January 1913) thus: 'Fireman Beesley is one of the permanent drivers of the Fire Brigade and when a call was received at the Fire Station on 14 May 1912, he drove the No.2 Steamer to the place where the fire had occurred. On arrival at the scene it was found that flames and smoke were issuing from the windows and doors of the dwelling, and immediately a cry was heard from the crowd, 'I hope they save the child!'. Fireman Beesley hearing this, at once handed over the hose he was using to another fireman, and after several fruitless attempts, in the face of almost insurmountable difficulties and continually at the risk of his own life, was able to gain access to the bedroom of the dwelling, and bring away the child, although, unfortunately, too late to save its life'.

15,420: PC Ernest Badger: Silver medal and £2.2s
PC Ernest May: Silver medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1913; MB(5) - 17 October 1912: 'On 21st August 1912, William H Lonnen (39) and Jenkin Jenkins (17) were saved from a fire at 9 Park Place, Cardiff, caused by a match being thrown down'.

15,422: PC Anthony Lee: Silver medal and £2.2s
PC Joseph Murtagh: Silver medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1914; MB(5) - 23 January 1913: 'On 2nd May 1912, Albert T W Omey [*sic*; this should read 'Twomey'] (47) and Elizabeth Regan (47) were saved from a fire at 102 Shandon Street, Cork, caused by the fusing of electric wire'. For further details see the *Cork Constitution* (2 May 1912, p. 8) and the *Cork Examiner* of the same date.

15,428: Alice E Parker, Domestic Cook: Silver medal

Details: AR 1914; MB(5) - 23 January 1913: 'On 13th November 1912, Charlotte Lower (30) was saved from a fire at 1 Madeira Terrace, Brighton, caused by clothing in contact with fire'.

15,429: David Peregrine, Scholar: Silver watch

Details: AR 1914; MB(5) - 23 January 1913: 'On 14th November 1912, Keturah Morgans (7) was saved from a fire in Bethesda Road, Tumble, Carmarthen, caused by clothing in contact with fire'.

15,434: Miss Ada Waylor, Shop Assistant: Silver medal and £10.10s

Details: AR 1914; MB(5) - 23 January 1913: 'On 2nd December 1912, eight children under 12 years were saved from a fire at 165 Battersea Rise, S.W (London), caused by curtains catching fire from the gas'.

15,437: Miss Hilda Stowe, Scholar: Silver watch

Details: AR 1914; MB(5) - 23 January 1913: 'On 24th December 1912, Thomas Kavanagh (3½) was saved from a fire at the Convent of Mercy, Brentwood' Essex, caused by children playing with matches'.

15,441: Lazarus Kaiser, Scholar: Silver watch

Details: AR 1914; MB(5) - 23 January 1913: 'On 31st December 1912, two children (6 and 4) were saved from a fire at 28 Elder Street, Spitalfields, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,443: Frederick Windebank, London Salvage Corps: Silver medal

Details: AR 1914; MB(5) - 1 May 1913: 'On 9th August 1911, Miss M S Garrett (70) was saved from a fire at the Carlton Hotel, Haymarket, caused by defective electrical installation'.

Medal inscribed: 'Frederick Windebank Carlton Hotel 9 Aug 1911', with bar (see case 16,389). In group with 1914-15 Star trio (LS, RN), Defence Medal, 1935 Jubilee Medal, RFR LS&GC (GV), Fire Brigade Exemplary Service Medal, EII (Asst Div Offr), NFBA LS&GC bronze medal with 5 and 10 year bars (these sold at Sotheby's, 10 December 1975, lot 71).

15,446: PC Peter Cleary: Bronze medal and £2.2s
William Melia, Labourer: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1914; MB(5) - 1 May 1913: 'On 25th December 1912, James Murphy (76) was saved from a fire at Maynooth, Co Kildare, caused by a candle igniting bedding'. The *Irish Times* subsequently reported the Society's decision to award both men bronze medals and two guineas each: 'for their exertions in the midst of dense suffocating smoke on 25 December last, rescuing James Murphy, an old man…who had accidentally set fire to his room in Maynooth, Co Kildare' (10 May 1913, p. 22). Later that month the same newspaper reported the local council had received formal notification of the awards, thus: 'At the monthly meeting of the Celbridge No. 1 District Council a letter was received from the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, intimating that they had awarded to Constable Peter Cleary, RIC, Maynooth, and Mr William Melia, Maynooth, each a bronze medal for bravery in effecting the rescue of a man named Murphy from a burning house at Maynooth last Christmas Eve' (*Irish Times*, Wednesday 21 May 1913, p. 8). Sergeant Cleary and William Melia were presented with their medals and two guineas each by the Chairman of the Celbridge No. 1 District Council in July 1913, the report of the ceremony also noting that 'Constable Cleary was already the holder of a medal and certificate for a rescue from drowning at Belfast' (*Weekly Irish Times*, Saturday 19 July 1913, p. 22: see below).

Medal inscribed: 'P.C. PETER CLEARY, MAYNOOTH. 25 DEC. 1912.', together with his 1903 Visit to Ireland Medal, engraved 'C. P. CLEARY. R.I.C.'

15,447: Edward Cooper, Labourer: Bronze medal and £5.5s
David Wainwright, Carter: Bronze medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1914; MB(5) - 1 May 1913: 'On 25th December 1912, four children under eleven years of age were saved from a fire at 77 Edward Street, Burslem, caused by decorations igniting'.

15,448: Maurice McKenzie, Scholar: Silver watch

Details: AR 1914; MB(5) - 1 May 1913:
'On 27th December 1912, Kathleen Taylor (5) was saved from a fire at 14 Grange Road, West Molesey, Surrey, caused by a child playing with fire'.

15,449: George Edward Bennett, Licensed Victualler and Volunteer Fireman: Silver medal

Details: AR 1914; MB(5) - 1 May 1913: 'On 28th December 1912, Gerald Whitaker (16) was saved from a fire at the Empire Cinema Palace, Chalvey Road, Slough, caused by a cigarette igniting cinematographic films'. George Edward Bennett received the Albert Medal for the same action and an account of the events is contained in the *London Gazette* (26th August 1913), thus: 'During an exhibition at the Empire Cinema Palace, Slough, some cinenatograph films, which a boy. Aged about 13 years, was rewinding, caught fire. In response to the boy's shouts an operator from the adjoining operating chamber tried without success to put out the fire waith a blanket. Mr Bennett, the proprietor, learning that the boy was in the rewinding room, at once climbed the vertical iron ladder leading to the trap-door of the room, from which volumes of flame and smoke were issuing. On entering the room he found the boy lying on the floor, and

succeeded in dragging him to the trap-door and down the ladder into the hall, and thus saved the boy's life. Mr Bennett was badly burnt.



George Edward Bennett AM, in the uniform of the Windsor Fire Brigade

15,451: Monica Novo, Scholar: Silver watch

Details: AR 1914; MB(5) - 1 May 1913: 'On 17th January 1913, Marion Novo (8) was saved from a fire at 4 Seabank Road, Fleetwood, Lancs, caused by clothing igniting'.

15,452: PC Noah Jones: Silver medal and £3.3s
PC Cornelius Fisk Goodwin: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1914; MB(5) - 1 May 1913: 'On 24th January 1913, Mrs Rachel Loufer and 3 children, Rachel Welk and child and Kate Rubenstein were saved from a fire at 254 Commercial Road, E (London), caused by arson'. Both men also received the KPM and a further account of the events is contained in the citation for that awards. The National Archives (file HO45/10941/231274) and the *London Gazette* (1 January 1914) records how: 'In the early morning of 24 January 1913, a fire broke out at a shop in Commercial Road, East London. Constable Jones arrived to find the premises well alight and full of smoke. He went in, and climbed the stairs through dense smoke to the bedroom on the first floor. There he found a woman with a babe-in-arms, and two other children. He carried



PC Noah Jones



PC Cornelius Fisk Goodwin

the children down the narrow stairs, and handed them to Constable Goodwin who had now arrived on the scene. Constable Jones returned to help the one with a small child. He took the child out
and returned with Constable Goodwin, to help the two women from the now fiercely

burning house. One woman was unconscious, and the stairs were ready to collapse in the flames. After reaching the street with the women, the two officers were too overcome with heat and smoke. The four other lodgers in the house were rescued by the Fire Brigade, although two of them subsequently died'.

The medal to Goodwin, together with his King's Police Medal and Coronation Medal, 1911, are in the collection of The Met Collection.

15,453: PC Albert Mowle: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1914; MB(5) - 1 May 1913: 'On 29th January 1913, B. Khatamaul (40) was saved from a fire at 209 London Road, Lowestoft, caused by curtains igniting'. In the *Police Review* (7 March 1913), the following account appears: 'TRIBUTE TO EAST SUFFOLK OFFICERS. At Lowestoft Borough Court on the 17th ult. Sergt. Hope and PCs Moule [*sic*] and Pearson were presented by the Mayor with gifts in recognition of their prompt conduct at a fire. The Mayor said the action of PC Moule was splendid, and but for his alertness a life would, undoubtedly, have been lost; while it might have resulted in the loss of his own life. The Mayor here read a letter from Mr B. Khatamual, in which he expressed his sincere thanks to PC Moule, Sergt. Hopes, and PC Pearson for the way in which they discharged their duty on the occasion of a fire at his premises on February 3rd. But for Moule's promptness in approaching his bedroom in the dense smoke, and waking him, he would have lost his life, for he was dazed and suffocated by the smoke, and he wished to make the officers a present as a mark of his thankfulness. The Mayor then handed a cigarette case to each officer, and the addition of a silk handkerchief to Moule'. Later, the medal presentation is recorded in the *Police Review* (19 September 1913) as follows: 'SUFFOLK, E – PC Mowle of Lowestoft has been presented with a cheque for £2.2s and the medal of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire. The Chief Constable, in asking the Mayor to make the presentation, said the fact that the Society had decided to give PC Mowle the highest award, sup-plementing it with a cheque, showed what they thought of his conduct. The circumstances were that at 3.30am on June 29th the Constable became aware of a smell of burning, and traced it to the burning house. Guided by moans – the smoke was so thick that the lamp was useless – he entered a bedroom, and opening the windows, rescued a man, and afterwards assisted in applying artificial respiration. The man was the only occupant of the house, and but for PC Mowle's action would have no doubt lost his life'.

Medal inscribed: 'PC Albert Mowle, Lowestoft, 29.1.13'. Moule also held the 1911 Coronation Medal C&B Police issue (Con. A. Mowle).

15,456: PC Sidney Welch: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1914; MB(5) - 1 May 1913: 'On 8th February 1913, Albert Collings was saved from a fire at 6 Lever Street, St. Luke's, caused by an upset mineral oil lamp'.
Medal inscribed: 'PC Sidney Welch Lever Street St Lukes 8 Feb 1913', in pair with 1911 Coronation Medal (Met Police type) (PC S. Welch).

15,458: PC Bertie Pache: Bronze medal and £3.3s.

Details: AR 1914; MB(5) - 1 May 1913: 'On 16th February 1913, Mrs H. Kerr (59) and 3 children were saved from a fire at 18 Bartholomew Square, St Luke's, caused by an upset mineral oil lamp'.

15,459: Lazarus T Barnett, Furrier: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1914; MB(5) - 1 May 1913: 'On 21st February 1913, Mrs Rachel Levy (55) was saved from a fire at 30 Elder Street, Spitalfields, caused by clothing igniting'.

15,465: Miss Alice Nepean, Scholar: Silver watch

Details: AR 1914; MB(5) - 1 May 1913: 'On 17th March 1913, W. Buller (4) was saved from a fire at East Allington School, South Devon, caused by clothing igniting'.

15,466: PC John Seldon: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1914; MB(5) - 1 May 1913: 'On 21st March 1913, George Burton, Mrs A Burton and daughter (9) and John Vaughan (72) were saved from a fire at 37 Copenhagen Street, Islington, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,468: PC Duncan McCallum: Bronze medal and £1.1s
Deputy Chief Constable John Scott: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1914; MB(5) - 1 May 1913: 'On 11th April 1913, two children under four years of age were saved from a fire at 125 South Street, Perth, caused by a child playing with matches'.

15,470: Enoch M Hebdon, Foreman Printer: Silver medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1914; MB(5) - 10 July 1913: 'On 25th November 1912, Thomas Greenwood (36) was saved from a fire at Bank Mills, East Street, Leeds, caused by a flare lamp igniting waste'.

15,473: Jesse Porter, Scholar: Silver watch

Details: AR 1914; MB(5) - 10 July 1913: 'On 3rd April 1913, Maud Porter (9) was saved from a fire at Lodge Keeper's Cottage, Sewell Lodge, Dorchester, caused by clothing igniting'.

15,477: PC John Murphy: Silver medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1914; MB(5) - 10 July 1913: 'On 30th April 1913, Elizabeth Hill (80) and Thomas Flynn (17) were saved from a fire at 150 and 152 Donegal Road, Belfast, cause of the fire was unknown'. Murphy received a Favourable Record (2nd class) for this act (*The Royal Irish Constabulary Magazine*, 1913, vol 2, no 12, p. 423).

15,481: Mrs Grace Jones, Newsagent: Silver medal and £10

Details: AR 1914; MB(5) - 10 July 1913: 'On 20th May 1913, Griffith C Parry (36) was saved from a fire in High Street, Ebenezer, Carnarvon, cause of the fire was unknown'. In reporting the events, the *Carnarvon & Denbigh Herald*, under the headline 'Fire at Ebenezer: Old Woman's Plucky Action', noted that: 'On Tuesday Morning a serious fire broke out at the home of Mrs Grace Jones, Newsagent, Ebenezer. Mrs Jones woke up at about half past one and saw smoke coming from the direction of her lodger's [Griffith Closs Parry] room. She went into the room which was alight and full of smoke and heard the man groaning. Failing to wake him she pulled him out of bed and dragged him downstairs and with the help of the village constable removed him to the Bull Inn. But for her quick action no doubt the man would have been burnt to death. His arm and head were slightly burned. The fire was soon extinguished, but serious damage had been done to the house and furniture. Mrs Jones is 75 years of age' (Friday 30 May 1913). The *Liverpool Shipwreck & Humane Society Annual Report 1913* records the award of that Society's silver (fire) medal and Certificate of Thanks to 'Mrs Grace Jones, aged 73 years, for bravely rescuing her lodger from a bedroom on fire in her cottage at Ebenezer, Carnarvon, on the 29th May 1913'.



Mrs Grace Jones (right)

Medal inscribed: 'Mrs Grace Jones, Ebenezer, 20 May 1913', known together with a Liverpool Shipwreck & Humane Society silver fire medal, this named 'To Mrs Grace Jones for gallant service at Ebenezer 29th May 1913'.

15,486: PC Peter Fleming: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1914; MB(5) - 23 October 1913: 'On 25th December 1912,. Elizabeth M Guinness (50) was saved from a fire in Camlough Village, Co Armagh, caused by an upset mineral oil lamp'.

15,492: PC John Pattle: Bronze medal and £2.2s
PC William Gould: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1914; MB(5) - 23 October 1913: 'On 27th June 1913, Mrs J Camp (30) was saved from a fire at 5 Little Chatham Place, Walworth, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,496: PC Murtha Mangan: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1914; MB(5) - 23 October 1913: 'On 25th August 1913, Mary Tunstad (71) was saved from a fire at 3 Quirkes Lane, James Street, Dublin, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,507: E W Fairman: Silver medal and £1.1s

Details: MB(5) - 22 January 1914: No details of rescue.

15,516: J Morris: Watch and inscription

Details: MB(5) - 22 January 1914: No details of rescue.

15,521: H Long: Bronze medal and £1.1s

Details: MB(5) - 22 January 1914: No details of rescue.

15,527: Miss Dorothy King: Silver watch

Details: MB(5) – 22 January 1914: No details. The award was briefly noted in *The Times* (Wednesday 28 January 1914, p. 10) thus: 'The Society for the Protection of Life from Fire has awarded a silver watch to Dorothy King for her work at the Knightsbridge fire on December 22'.

15,537: P J Sheehan: Bronze medal

Details: MB(5) - 8 May 1914: No details. The award was briefly noted in *The Times* (12 May 1914) thus: 'The principal awards made by the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire at its meeting yesterday were:…bronze medal to P J Sheehan, Superintendent, Limerick Fire Brigade, for his attempt to save an old woman of 70…'.

15,545: E Walker: Watch

Details: MB(5) - 8 May 1914: No details of rescue.

15,548: H G Paine: Silver medal
R I Burtenshaw: Bronze medal

Details: MB(5) - 8 May 1914: No details. The award was briefly noted in *The Times* (12 May 1914) thus: 'The principal awards made by the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire at its meeting yesterday were:…silver medal to H G Paine and bronze medal to R T Burtenshaw, both of the Hastings Fire Brigade, for their attempt to save two children…'.

Medal inscribed: 'H.G. Paine, Hastings, Feb. 22nd 1914'.

15,554: Superintendent David Thomas Morgans: Silver medal



Superintendent David T. Morgans

Details: MB(5) - 8 May 1914: No details. A note on the circumstances of the rescue was reported in the *Police Review* (March 1914) thus: 'Plucky rescue by Merionethshire Superintendent - Early one morning last week (17th March 1914) Supt Morgans, of Bala, entered through the window of the house of an old lady, who lived by herself. He found the house full of smoke and the old lady lying unconscious on the bedroom floor. Supt Morgans carried her into a neighbour's house through suffocating fumes that all but overcame him'. Later, the *Police Review* (31 July 1914) also noted the presentation, thus: 'Supt Morgans has been presented with the Silver Medal of the Royal Humane Society, [*sic*], for the gallant rescue which he effected at Bala. An old lady lay helpless in the upper storey of her residence, which was enveloped in flames. At great personal risk he approached her through the window, carrying her, whilst unconscious, to a place of safety'. The award was also briefly noted in *The Times* (12 May 1914) thus: 'The principal awards made by the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire at its meeting yesterday were: Silver medal to D T Morgan

[*sic*], superintendent of police, Bala, North Wales, for saving an old lady of 85 and her servant…'.

Medal inscribed: 'David T. Morgans, Bala, March 17th, 1914'. Morgans also held the Coronation Medal, 1911, County and Borough Forces issue, (Deputy Chief Constable David Thomas Morgan).

15,556: J Greene: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: MB(5) - 8 May 1914: No details. The award was briefly noted in *The Times* (12 May 1914) thus: 'The principal awards made by the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire at its meeting yesterday were:…and bronze medal and £3.3s to J Green, of the Royal Irish Constabulary, for saving two children'.

15,559: A M Houston: Watch

Details: MB(5) - 8 May 1914: No details of rescue.

15,568: PSgt Sidney G Burfield: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: MB(5) - 22 October 1914: No details. However, Burfield also received the KPM for his actions, and its citation, recorded in the National Archives (file HO45/10715/246996) and the *London Gazette* (1 January 1915) records how: 'At 11.30pm on 8 June 1913, a fire was discovered at 6 Queens Terrace, Isleworth in a four roomed cottage. When Sergeant Burfield arrived at the premises, they were well alight, with dense smoke issuing from windows and doors. On learning that a child was in the house, he went in, and upstairs to the bedroom, but returned quickly as the staircase was about to collapse. He went in again, with a wet apron over his face, and crawling on the floor reached the backroom, where, after difficulty he found the child and brought it into the street. The child died the following evening. Sergeant Burfield was burned, and suffered from smoke inhalation'. Sergeant Burfield received an award of £10 from the Carnegie Hero Fund Trust.

15,569: B A O'Reilly: Silver medal
F Mara: Silver medal

Details: MB(5) 22 October 1914: No details of rescue.

15,577: M Rickards: Watch

Details: MB(5) - 22 October 1914: No details of rescue.

15,578: R Blackmore: Silver medal and £5.5s
F Harvey: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: MB (5) - 22 October 1914: No details of rescue.

15,582: Francis W Stone, Master Butcher: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1916; MB(5) - 21 January 1915: 'On 26th September 1914, Elizabeth C. Jenkins was saved from a fire at 169 Elthorne Road, Holloway, N (London), caused by clothing igniting'.

15,585: PC Francis Fox: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1916; MB(5) - 21 January 1915: 'On 6th November 1914, Madge Briggs (20) and Edith Bruce (22) were saved from a fire at 11 Upton Street, Belfast, caused by a gas explosion'.

15,586: Gunner George Bell: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1916; MB(5) - 21 January 1915: 'On 8th November 1914, Agnes (22) and John (16 months) Tew were saved from a fire at 22 Cromwell Street, Northampton, caused by a lighted candle'.

15,587: J W Clements, Road sweeper: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1916; MB(5) - 21 January 1915: 'On 21st November 1914, Jenny (7), Cissy (3) and Stephen A (2) Lukaszewski were saved from a fire at 20 Busby Street, Bethnal Green, caused by children playing with fire'.

15,589: F Lazell, Postman: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1916; MB(5) - 21 January 1915: 'On 23rd November 1914, Mrs Pigram and child were saved from a fire at 81 Station Road, Dagenham, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,592: Arthur Manley, Errand boy: Watch and £2.2s

Details: AR 1916; MB(5) - 21 January 1915: 'On 8th December 1914, Douglas Hayes (15 months) was saved from a fire at 44 Marchion Street, Cardiff, caused by woodwork igniting'.

15,596: James Gibb, Soldier: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1916; MB(5) - 21 January 1915: 'On 9th January 1915, James Kerr (4) was saved from a fire at 4 Niddry Street, Paisley, caused by airing clothes igniting'.

15,601: Thomas Prangnell, Railway Employee: Silver watch

Details: AR 1916; MB(5) - 20 May 1915: 'On 5th February 1915, Harold F Betterbridge (3) was saved from a fire at Colden Common, Winchester, caused by clothing igniting'.

15,603: PC Angus McLeod: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1916; MB(5) 20 May 1915: 'On 9th March 1915, Hannah Gordon (68) was saved from a fire at 52 Main Street, Glasgow, caused by a dropped light'.

15,606: PC William Morgan: Bronze medal and £3.3s
Edward McDonald, Electrician: Silver medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1916; MB(5) - 20 May 1915: 'On 28th March 1915, Alexander Mitchell (30) was saved from a fire at the Birmingham Corporation Electric Supply Station, caused by the fusing of electric wires'.

15,608: Ann Reilly, Scholar: Silver watch

Details: AR 1916; MB(5) 28 October 1915: 'On 14th November 1914, Bridget Smyth (5) was saved from a fire in Church Street, Killeshandra, Ireland, caused by clothing igniting'.

15,612: James Grady, Scholar: Silver watch

Details: AR 1916; MB(5) - 28 October 1915: 'On 26th May 1915, Mary Grady (2) was saved from a fire in Gurrane, Killorglin, Kerry, caused by clothes igniting'.

15,613: Alfred G West: Silver medal and £3.3s.

Details: AR 1916; MB(5) - 28 October 1915: 'On 31st May 1915, Gladys Viner (14) and Mrs Booty were saved from a fire at 27 Nevill Road, Stoke Newington, caused by a Zeppelin raid'.

15,614: PSgt William O'Connell: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1916; MB(5) - 28 October 1915. On 4th June 1915,.Clara (33), John (10) and Horace Fazakarley (8) were saved from a fire at 118 King Edward Road, Birmingham, cause of the fire was unknown.

15,618: Fireman F Clegg: Silver medal and £2.2s
PSgt James Kenwright: Silver medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1916; MB(5) - 28 October 1915: 'On 7th July 1915,. Mrs Rutter and two children named Rutter were saved from a fire at Scotland Road, Warrington, caused by children playing with matches'.

15,621: PC George Wye: Bronze medal and £1.1s

Details: AR 1916; MB(5) - 28 October 1915: 'On 19th July 1915, Florence Papillon (70) was saved from a fire at 35 Cambridge Street, Hyde Park, W (London), caused by smoking in bed'.

15,626: May Walker, Scholar: Silver watch

Details: AR 1916; MB(5) - 28 October 1915: 'On 29th September 1915, Ada Betts was saved from a fire at Park Field, Leigh, Worcester, caused by clothes igniting'.

15,627: David E Williams, School Boy: Silver watch and £2.2s

Details: AR 1916; MB(5) - 27 January 1916: 'On 8th April 1915, Willie (11) and David E Williams (10) were saved from a fire at Glynhir Mountain, near Pontardulais, caused by a burning furze'.

15,630: Lieutenant A Deschamps-Woollard, Army Service Corps: Silver medal
L/Cpl Albert C Bird, Army Service Corps: Silver medal

Details: AR 1916; MB(5) - 27 January 1916: 'On 13th November 1915, a French Fireman was saved from a fire in Guines, France, cause of the fire was unknown'. Both recipients were recommended, unsuccessfully, for the Albert Medal.
Note: Albert Bird later gained the 1914-15 Star trio for his service during the First World War (M2/105620 Corporal, ASC).

Medal inscribed: 'Lieut. A. Deschamps Woollard, A.S.C., Guines Nov 15th 1915'. The recipient also held the 1914/15 Trio (named to Lieut A.E.H.D. Woollard).

15,631: PC Henry Bennett: Silver medal and £1.1s

Details: AR 1916; MB(5) - 27 January 1916: 'On 17th November 1915, Emma Ward (70) and Alice Lord (38) were saved from a fire at 639 Garrett Lane, Wandsworth, caused by a lighted match'.

15,632: PC F Cherrill: Silver medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1917; MB(5) - 27 January 1916: 'On 23rd November 1915, Emma Hann (35) was saved from a fire at 50 Balham Hill, London, caused by fat boiling over'.

15,634: William Adey, Engineer: Bronze medal and £1.1s

Details: AR 1917; MB(5) - 27 January 1916: 'On 2nd December 1915, Charles Gill was saved from a fire at Holdenurst Road, Bournemouth, caused by petrol being upset'.

15,636: Charles A Damary, Decorator: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1917; M(5) - 27 January 1916: 'On 27th December 1915, Elizabeth (4) and Doris Collen (3) were saved from a fire at 92 Richmond Street, Marylebone, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,637: Lieutenant E P Campbell, Royal Engineers: Silver medal

Details: AR 1917; MB(5) - 25 May 1916: 'On 10th December 1915, a Chinaman (name unknown) was saved from a fire in Mudros Bay, cause by petrol igniting'.

15,643: Dr Daniel Rees Thomas, Medical Doctor: Silver medal



Dr Daniel Rees Thomas

Details: AR 1917; MB(5) - 25 May 1916: 'On 13th March 1916, Emma Roberts (61), Ellen Revell (29) and an infant were saved from a fire in Radyr near Cardiff, caused by an exploding lamp'.



Medals of Dr Rees: Order of St John Badge of an Honorary Associate and SPLF Medal

Medal inscribed 'Dr D.R. Thomas, Taffs Well. Mar.13 1916'.

15,644: PC Ernest Toms: Bronze medal
PC William Farrow: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1917; MB(5) - 25 May 1916: 'On 6th April 1916, Lilly Agnes Racca (6) was saved from a fire at 193 Vauxhall Bridge Road, caused by a gas stove'.

15,645: PC Albert Quickenden: Silver medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1917; MB(5) - 25 May 1916: 'On 11th April 1916, six young children were saved from a fire at 143 Cottenham Road, Holloway, caused by children playing with fire'.

15,649: Miss B Williams, Shop Assistant: Silver watch and £2.2s

Details: AR 1917; MB(5) - 19 October 1916: 'On 13th January 1916, J.O. Jones (42) and J U Morris (17) were saved from a fire in Carrog near Corwen, caused by an explosion'.

15,652: PC John Moore: Silver medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1917; MB(5) - 19 October 1916: 'On 16th May 1916, George (50) and Lawrence Handel (13) were saved from a fire at 66 Seymour Place, Marylebone, caused by smoking'.

15,654: PC George Bowles: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1917; MB(5) - 19 October 1916: 'On 19th May 1916, Mrs S Dimitra (29) was saved from a fire at 127 Cleveland Street, Marylebone, caused by a candle'. Bowles also received the KPM for his actions, the National Archives (file HO45/10954/306338) and the *London Gazette* (1 January 1917) giving further details of the rescue: 'At 12.58 am on the 19 May 1916, Constable Bowles observed flames coming from the first floor bedroom window of 127 Cleveland Street, Marylebone, London, which was occupied by two Rumanians. Having directed another Constable to call the Fire Brigade, he was unsuccessful in an attempt to arouse the inmates. He then climbed onto the railings, and standing on an iron support bar, climbed onto the windowsill some 14 feet above the ground. He opened the window, entered the room, and closed the window to prevent a draft. He pulled down the burning curtains, and extinguished them. After closing the window in the next room as well, he found a semi-conscious woman, whom he wrapped in a cloak, and carried out onto the landing. He then obtained some water, and put out the fire, which was taking a hold on the bedding. The Constable then returned to the woman, who had sustained slight burns on her arm, and burns to her head, and tended her until she regained consciousness. She was eventually rescued, and taken to hospital'.

15,655: Special Constable Victor Walker: Silver medal

Details: AR 1917; MB(5) - 19 October 1916: 'On 22nd May 1916, an attempted rescue was made at 2 North Street, Westminster, cause of the fire was unknown'. The award was noted in *Punch* (14 February 1917) thus: 'A special constable has received the Silver Medal of the Society for Protection of Life from fire for his gallantry in mounting a ladder at a local fire last May and rescuing a cook…It is understood that members of the regular "force" consider that he showed some presumption in not leaving this particular task to them'.

15,658: Harry Baker, Steel Worker: Silver medal and £2.2s
Robert Allt, Steel Worker: Silver medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1917; MB(5) - 19 October 1916: 'On 13th July 1916, Thomas Kaye (57) was saved from a fire in Stocksbridge, Sheffield, caused by a furnace'.

15,659: Rowland Eardley, Works Manager: Silver medal
Charles T Lawton: Silver medal

Details: AR 1917; MB(5) - 19 October 1916: 'On 16th September 1916, five children were saved from a fire at Brown Lees, Biddulph, caused by tar boiling over'.

15,660: Sgt Fireman George Locke: Silver medal and £2.2s
Fireman Arthur H Croucher: Silver medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1917; MB(5) - 19 October 1916: 'On 27th September 1916, George (37), Bernard (13), Charles (11) and Maisey Cuthbert (6) and Elizabeth Southgate (53) were saved from a fire at 63 Marmion Road, Southsea, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,663: Albert E Wheeler, Iron Worker: Silver watch

Details: AR 1918; MB(5) - 25 January 1917: 'On 5th August 1916, Harold Peters was rescued from a fire at Shotton, near Chester, caused by a cigarette'.

15,665: Fire Superintendent Louis V Lacroix: Silver medal
Fire Engineer May Milner: Silver medal

Details: AR 1918; MB(5) - 25 January 1917: 'On 14th October 1916, Mr Broadbridge and family were saved from a fire at 19 York Place, Brighton, caused by a light being thrown down'.

15,672: PC Charles Dednum: Silver medal

Details: AR 1918; MB(5) - 24 May 1917: 'On 8th October 1916, M Abrahamovitch was saved from a fire at Frith Street, Soho, cause of the fire was unknown'. PC Dednum also received the KPM for his actions, the National Archives (file HO45/10832/326629) and the *London Gazette* (1 January 1918) note the circumstances thus: 'At 3.30 pm on 8 October 1916, a fire occurred at 58 Frith Street, Soho, the ground floor used for storage of films, and the upper storeys for dwellings. On hearing police whistles being blown, Constable Dednum

went to the house, and found dense smoke coming from the windows and door. On being informed that some residents were still inside, he placed a handkerchief over his mouth, entered the house, and crept on hands and knees along the passage to the stairs. Hearing voices, he went up to the fourth floor, where he found a man trying to get through the skylight. By this time the smoke was really dense, and poisonous fumes were coming from the burning film. Constable Dednum lifted the man through the skylight, and with difficulty followed him onto the roof. The Constable revived in the fresh air, but the man was overcome, and the Constable partially revived him, and then helped him onto the roof of the next house, down through the skylight, and out to the street. Unfortunately the man died later in hospital, and Constable Dednum was affected for several days, by the fumes'.

15,673: PSgt Robert Metcalf: Bronze medal and £1.1s
PSgt William Rose: Bronze medal and £1.1s

Details: AR 1918; MB(5) - 24 May 1917: 'On 11th December 1916, Alice Newman (41) and four children were saved from a fire at Well Street, Birmingham, caused by airing linen'.

15,674: PC Michael Connolly: Silver medal and £3.3s
PC Peter Brazie: Silver medal and £3.3s
PC Denis P O'Leary: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1918; MB(5) - 24 May 1917: 'On 23rd December 1916, Mrs R Cash (72) and family were saved from a fire in Carrick-on-Suir, caused by a paraffin lamp'. Brazie is recorded as Brazel in the Minutes.

15,676: PC Matthew Landy: Silver medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1918; MB(5) - 24 May 1917: 'On 25th January 1917, Dr H. Walker (50) was saved from a fire in Francis Road, Leyton, cause of the fire was unknown'. PC Landy also received the KPM for his actions, the National Archives (file HO45/10832/326629) and the *London Gazette* (1 January 1918) note the circumstances thus: 'On 25 January 1917 at about 9.20 pm police were informed that a doctor's house in Francis Road, Leyton was on fire, and on arrival found the premises full of smoke. The front door was forced, and groans and heavy breathing could be heard from upstairs, but although several attempts were made by the officers to mount the stairs, the volume of smoke pouring down made it impossible. Constable Landy dipped a cloth in water, put it over his mouth and nostrils, and rushed upstairs to the first floor landing, where he found the doctor on the floor. The Constable succeeded in dragging the unconscious doctor to the stairs, and carried him down, but at the foot of the stairs, the Constable collapsed, and fell into the arms of other officers. Both the doctor, and the Constable received medical attention, and recovered'.

Medal known: Landy's medals, apparently consisting of the KPM, SPLF medal, Medal of OSJJ, and the 1911 Coronation Medal were sold at Glendinnings, 19-20 July 1934, lot 330, £4 7s 6d.

15,680: William S Wood: Silver watch and certificate
George R Wood: Silver watch and certificate

Details: AR 1918; MB(5) - 24 May 1917: 'On 27th January 1917, Mrs Bennett (74) was saved from a fire in St Augustine Road, Southsea, caused by clothes igniting'.

15,682: Sydney Tolputt, School Boy: Silver watch

Details: AR 1918; MB(5) - 24 May 1917: 'On 5th February 1917, Beatrice Sutton (25) was saved from a fire in Peardon Street, South Lambeth, caused by falling on fire'.

15,684: Special Constable Alfred J Emms: Silver medal

Details: AR 1918; MB(5) - 24 May 1917: 'On 9th February 1917, Mary Gregory (93) was saved from a fire in the Apple Market, Kingston, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,689: Police Inspector George Durey: Silver medal
PC Augustus George Ralph: Silver medal

Details: AR 1918; MB(5) - 24 May 1917: 'On 12th March 1917, Mary A Hopkinson (76) was saved from a fire in Crawford Place, Marylebone, caused by a paraffin lamp. Ralph also received the KPM for his actions, the National Archives (file HO45/10832/326629) and the *London Gazette* (1 January 1918) note the circumstances thus: 'On the night of 12 March 1917 a fire occurred in one of the rooms of the Christian Union Almshouse, Crawford Place, London. Constable Ralph, who was off duty, saw flames through the window of an upper room, and after raising the alarm, entered the house, and went upstairs to the room which was on fire. He was told the occupier was

out, but being doubtful of this, he twice tried to enter the room, but was driven back by heat and smoke. He then tied a wet handkerchief round his mouth and nostrils, and threw water on the flames. He entered the room, and found an old woman lying on the floor unconscious, her clothes alight. She was a very heavy woman, but he dragged her to the door, and with assistance put out the burning clothing. Unfortunately, the woman died three days later'. PC Ralph was presented with his medal at the Marylebone Police Court in July 1917 (*The Times*, Tuesday 17 July 1917, p. 3)



Augustus George Ralph's medal group(l-r: King's Police Medal, Defence Medal, 1911 Coronation Medal, 1935 Jubilee Medal, 1937 Coronation Medal, SPLF Medal)



PC Augustus George Ralph (photo taken c1940 when he was a senior police officer)

Medal inscribed: 'George Ralph. Marylebone, 12 Mar 1917'. His other known medals are the King's Police Medal, GV Coinage Head (Gallantry) (Augustus George Ralph. 1918), Defence Medal, 1911 Coronation Medal (Met. Police), 1935 Jubilee Medal, and the 1937 Coronation
Medal; Ralph was also entitled to CBE (1941).

15,690: Fireman Harry Diplock: Silver medal

Details: AR 1918; MB(5) - 24 May 1917: 'On 18th March 1917, Miss J N Hill (86) was saved from a fire in Lascelles Terrace, Eastbourne, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,691: Superintendent Herbert Burrows, Newcastle City Police Fire Brigade: Silver medal

Details: AR 1918; MB(5) - 24 May 1917: 'On 31st March 1917, James Rippon (80) was saved from a fire in Shields Street, Newcastle-on-Tyne, caused by hot cinders'. A report on the fire appeared in the *Newcastle Evening Chronicle* (31 March 1917) thus: 'Exciting scenes were witnessed at a fire which broke out this morning at 113 Shield Street, Shieldfield, Newcastle, a large three storey house occupied by Miss Mary Rippon, who carries on business there as a dressmaker and milliner. Mr James Rippon, 80 years, father of Miss Rippon, who has been an invalid for four years, occupied a bed on the top floor, and dense volumes of smoke from the fire, which broke out in the dressmakers workroom below, quickly found their way into the old gentleman's bedroom. A crowd soon gathered after the discovery of the outbreak, and several attempts were made to rescue Mr Rippon, but owing to the density of the smoke, these were unsuccessful until the Westgate Road Fire Brigade, which had been summoned by fire alarm, arrived. On reaching the scene, Superintendent Burrow's rushed up the stairs and entered the bedroom of Mr Rippon where he found the invalid moaning in bed. With the help of other brigade men, the superintendent carried Mr Rippon to a place of safety, and a doctor who was quickly on the scene, intimated that the invalid had been seriously affected by the smoke. But for the timely arrival of the fire brigade, the old gentleman might have been suffocated. After the rescue had been effected, the fire brigade men turned their attention to the fire, which was subdued by the first aid motor pump, not however before the stock of costumes, dressings and trimmings had been considerably damaged by fire, smoke, and water'.

15,692: PC William Mackenzie: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1918; MB(5) - 24 May 1917: 'On 2nd April 1917, William Frazer (57) was saved from a fire in Castle Street, Inverness, caused by a paraffin lamp'.

15,697: Corporal Richard T Monks: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1918; MB(5) - 11 October 1917: 'On 18th June 1916, Alice Maclenan was saved from a fire at the Imperial Hotel, Liverpool, caused by a defective flue'. Further details appear in an unattributed Liverpool newspaper account (dated Sunday, 19 June 1916), thus: 'Fire at the Imperial Hotel. At 02.20 hours, a serious fire occurred at the Imperial Hotel, the residents were roused in the night, by cries of "Fire!" The fire started in one of the bedrooms, on the fourth floor, and quickly spread cutting off the escape route down the stairs, great panic ensued, two people perished jumping from the roof and two men and two women came down escapes. Six women were carried to safety, five by Firemen, and one by a Salvageman. Three people were later found dead in their rooms, one under her bed. They were Mr William McElwee, aged 30, a businessman from Gravesend, in Kent, Sarah Quinn, aged 53 years, employed as a cook, and Mary Jane Parkinson, aged 52, a chamber-maid. As the fire developed there were some thrilling scenes, piteous appeals from people trapped by the flames, and heroic acts by firemen and those who were ready to risk their lives to save others. One woman was seen to tie together several articles of bed covering, with the intention of clambering down as far as possible and then jumping to the street, and another endeavoured to reach the ground by means of a pipe, but fell some distance and seriously injured herself. In another case a gentleman endeavoured to carry the bookkeeper of the hotel, Chrissie Milne, from one of the back windows down a spout, but, it is stated, the fixture gave way and both fell to the ground. At the front of the building a man and his wife were seen at an upper window embracing before they jumped into the street, when the escape ladder appeared in front of them and they were safely conveyed to the ground. About the same spot a woman leaped from a window and sustained terrible injuries. Constable 350H Jones was seen to bring from one of the top front windows a woman who was in an exhausted state, and bearing her in his arms walk along a narrow ledge towards the fire ladder. Had he missed his footing both would have fallen a depth of fifty feet on to the footpath. Having placed her on the ladder Jones returned to the hotel window and brought out the woman's brother. There were two notable instances of presence of mind on part of representatives of both our military and naval forces. A soldier, who was in the hotel, finding the smoke was a barrier to safety tied his puttees tightly round his mouth and nostrils and was able to dash through the clouds of smoke. A sailor, who was a prisoner in one of the bedrooms, finding that the place was on fire ripped up the corridor carpets and, by an igneous method of fixing it in the windows enabled many persons to get down to a lower floor which the flames had not reached'.

15,700: William E Ward, Clerk: Silver medal and £10.10s

Details: AR 1918; MB(5) - 11 October 1917: 'On 29th April 1917, F M Clark (19) was saved from a fire in Streatham, caused by a falling aeroplane'.
Medal inscribed: 'William E. Ward, Streatham, 29 April 1917'.

15,701: Percy D Manning, Carpenter: Silver medal and £10.10s

Details: AR 1918; MB(5) - 11 October 1917: 'On 29th April 1917, G A Nicholson (20) was saved from a fire in Hounslow, caused by a falling aeroplane'. At the Ordinary Meeting of Trustees: 3 October 1972: 'Mrs Marion Brat, daughter of a Mr Manning, to whom a bronze [*sic*] medal was issued in 1917, had offered to return it to the Society, as she had no one to whom she could pass it on'. Her offer was accepted.

15,704: Herbert W Stevens, Boot Boy: Silver watch

Details: AR 1918; MB(5) - 11 October 1917: 'On 20th June 1917, Blanch Mansfield (23) was saved from a fire in Windlesham, cause by oil igniting'.

15,706: Mrs Frances Sayer, Waitress: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1918; MB(5) - 11 October 1917: 'On 7th July 1917, Frances Searle (31) was saved from a fire in Stratford, caused by a spark from a fire'.

15,707: PSgt James Kemp: Silver medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1918; MB(5) - 11 October 1917: 'On 7th July 1917, Jennie Park (21) was saved from a fire in Bartholomew Close, caused by an air raid'. The events were reported in *The Belfast News-Letter* (9 July 1917), thus: 'During the morning of 7th July 1917 a fleet of twenty to thirty Gotha bombers crossed the coast at Margate and flew towards London. With the first bomb dropping at 10.36am, the raid was described as "awe-inspiring" and "magnificent though

terrifying". British defences on this occasion were largely ineffective, with anti-aircraft batteries failing to make any impression and fighters only making contact as the Gotha's turned for home. The planes dropped 66 incendiary and 41 high explosive bombs, mainly on the City of London and adjoining boroughs to the north and east. In the City, bombs fell in St. Bartholomew's Court, Golden Lane, Finsbury, Bread Street, Cox's Court, Little Britain, Aldersgate Street, Cheapside, Whitecross and Fenchurch Streets. 58 people were killed, 193 injured and 903 buildings were damaged. The loss would have been greater but a number of bombs failed to explode. In the raid the German's admitted to the loss of one plane, the British claimed four'. The award ceremony was then described in the *Police Review* (28 September 1917), thus: 'London City Police Valour – PS James Kemp of the London City Police was on Saturday presented with an illuminated address and a gold watch and chain for rescuing a young woman under particularly dangerous conditions from the top floor of a City building which had been set alight during a recent enemy air raid. The young woman was trapped in the room owing to the door being jammed. PC Needs made a heroic effort to rescue her, but, having no instrument to force the door, had to retire, and collapsed from the heat and fumes. PS Kemp obtained an iron bar with which he smashed in the panels of the door, and dragged the unconscious woman through the aperture. He, too, was overcome by the heat and smoke, and fell with his charge down the stairs. Mr Under-Sheriff Huxtable made the presentation. A silver cruet stand was presented to PC Needs, and a cheque to Mrs Kemp'.

Medal inscribed: James Kemp, Bartholomew Close, E.C., 7 July 1917'.

15,708: PC Connell Doherty: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1918; MB(5) - 11 October 1917: 'On 19th July 1917, James Lee (57) was saved from a fire in Bray, Wicklow, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,710: Alfred Stewart, Clerk: Silver medal and £3.3s
Superintendent Herbert Burrows, Newcastle City Police Fire Brigade: Bar to medal and illuminated certificate

Details: AR 1918; MB(5) - 11 October 1917: 'On 18th August 1917, William Summers (81) and Emma Summers (79) were saved from a fire in Newcastle-on-Tyne, caused by a gas jet'. The fire and rescue was reported in the *Newcastle Evening Chronicle* (18 August 1917), thus: 'The Newcastle Fire Brigade effected a timely rescue of two old persons from a burning house at Sanitary Place, Shieldfield, Newcastle early this morning, although the aged couple, Mr William Summers 81 years, and his wife Emma Summers 79 years, had to be removed to the Infirmary, the latter suffering from burns about the body and arms. Shortly after 3 o'clock the brigade was called out, and on arrival at 8 Sanitary Place, an upper flat, discovered the back bedroom on fire. On rushing upstairs, the firemen found William Summers lying on the floor outside the bedroom door, almost overcome by smoke, and whilst being carried to a place of safety by members of the brigade, other firemen entered the bedroom, and found the man's wife on the burning bed, in an unconscious condition. She was at once carried to an adjoining house, while first aid was rendered by Superintendent Burrows, the chief of the Fire Brigade, who applied oil to the burns received by Mrs Summers. The motor ambulance from the Westgate Station was telephoned for and the aged couple were speedily removed to the infirmary, Mr Summers suffering from the effects of smoke and shock. The fire was confined to the bedding and bedroom effects, which were partially destroyed, and was extinguished in a few minutes with the hand pump. On enquiry at the Infirmary this afternoon, it was found that Mrs Summers was very ill, the condition of her husband being the same as when he was admitted to the institution, sadly both died the next day, Sunday 19th August. An inquest was held at Newcastle Infirmary on Tuesday 21st August by the Coroner Mr Appleby, evidence of identification was given by Mrs Elizabeth Mensley, a stepdaughter. Superintendent Burrows and Mr Alfred Stewart, a discharged soldier and clerk, who lives near the house, gave evidence as to the rescue. Mr Stewart had entered the house prior to the arrival of the fire brigade, and despite being overcome twice with the smoke, had managed to drag the body of Mr Summers to the stair head, after previously having thrown a topcoat over him to extinguish the flames. The jury found that Mr and Mrs Summers had died from shock, following burns, and the Coroner spoke in appreciative terms of the assistance rendered by the witness Stewart, saying such conduct he would bring before the notice of the Royal Humane Society. The Coroner also congratulated Super-intendent Burrows and his firemen upon their conduct, and particularly commented upon their early

arrival at the scene of the fire, and the promptitude displayed in seeing to the removal of Mr and Mrs Summers to the infirmary'.

15,713: PC Cornelius Doherty: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1919; MB(5) - 14 February 1918: 'On 1st August 1917, Lena (13), Christy (7) and Mary Hickey (4) were saved from a fire in Kilkenny, caused by a candle'.

15,714: Frank Brewin, Scholar: Silver watch

Details: AR 1919; MB(5) - 11 October 1917: 'On 17th August 1917, Eric (4) and Donald Sugden (2½) were saved from a fire in Shirebrook, caused by a match'.

15,718: Reginald H Wilson, London Salvage Corps: Silver medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1919; MB(5) - 11 October 1917: 'On 8th November 1917, J G Robilliard and F Gammone were saved from a fire in Little Earl Street, London, caused of the fire was unknown'. R H M Wilson was later appointed as Super-intendent of the London Salvage Corps (*The Times*, Tuesday 9 February 1937, p. 20).

15,720: Special Constable Herbert Carter: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1919; MB(5) - 11 October 1917: 'On 19th November 1917, Eliza E Hawksworth (73) was saved from a fire in Wellingborough, caused by a gas bracket'.

15,722: Ex Police Inspector Henry Smith: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1919; MB(5) - 11 October 1917: 'On 28th November 1917, Lieutenant J F C Cunningham was saved from a fire in Hounslow, caused by a falling aeroplane'. Smith also received the MSM for this rescue, that award being announced in the *London Gazette* (23 February 1918) to him as a Sergeant at the Depot of the Royal West Surrey Regiment, 'for gallantry in the performance of military duty'. The awards were noted in *The Times* (12 April 1918, p. 3). The report notes that Smith was presented with the SPLF medal, together with the MSM and £3 3s at Brentford Police Court for his efforts to save the life of Lt Cunningham, RFC, who met with an accident last November when flying at Hounslow.

Medal inscribed: 'Henry Smith, Hounslow, 28 Nov. 1917'. Also awarded the MSM (GV) named 'G-64486 A. Sgt., The Queen's R.', the 1897 Jubilee Medal, named ''P.S., T Divn.', 1902 Coronation, named 'P.S., N Div.', and the 1911 Coronation Medal, named as an 'Insp.'. See DNW auction catalogue, 25 September 2008, lot 125.

15,723: David G Evans, Scholar: Silver watch

Details: AR 1919; MB(5) - 11 October 1917: 'In December 1917, Ann Evans was saved from a fire in Cwmyglo, North Wales, caused by falling into a fire'.

15,724: Jack Rosen, Scholar: Silver watch

Details: AR 1919; MB(5) - 11 October 1917: 'On 4th December 1917, Doris E. Church (3) was saved from a fire in Pangbourne, caused by falling into a fire'.

15,728: PSgt Thomas Timms: Silver medal and £10.10s

Details: AR 1919; MB(5) - 11 October 1917: 'On 23rd December 1917, J R Wilkinson and family were saved from a fire in Redcar, caused by a beam igniting in a chimney'.

15,729: Robert J Davison, Australian Soldier: Silver medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1919; MB(5) - 11 October 1917: 'On 24th December 1917, an unknown soldier (who died) was saved from a fire in Erquinghem, France, caused by igniting petrol'.

15,730: Elsie M Buxey, Scholar: Silver watch

Details: AR 1919; MB(5) - 11 October 1917: 'On 7th January 1918, Rose H. Laidman (4) was saved from a fire in Portsmouth, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,732: John Barron, Gas Worker: Silver medal and £10.10s

Details: AR 1919; MB(5) - 11 October 1917: 'On 28th January 1918, William Edwards was saved from a fire in Cardiff, caused by falling into a fire'.

15,736: Henry W Bull, Telegraph Messenger: Silver watch

Details: AR 1919; MB(5) - 30 May 1918: 'On 12th March 1918, Elizabeth A. Gunner (72) was saved from a fire in Homerton, London, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,738: PC Hector MacPherson: Bronze medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1919; MB(5) - 30 May 1918: 'On 21st March 1918, Kathleen Jamieson (18) was saved from a fire in Acton, London, caused by a gas explosion'.

15,739: William Watson, Gas Worker: Silver medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1919; MB(5) - 30 May 1918: 'On 25th March 1918, William N Doo (62) was saved from a fire in Ponders End, Middlesex, caused by a gas jet'. The award was noted by *The Times* (Tuesday 4 June 1918, p. 3) as being for: 'gallantry at fires'. The presentation was noted in *The Times* (13 August 1918, p. 3), thus: 'William Watson of Caledonian Road, Holloway, was presented at Enfield with five guineas and the silver medal of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire for attempting to rescue a fellow workman from burning napthaline'.

Medal inscribed: 'William Watson, Ponders End, March 25 1918'.

15,740: Thomas Middleton, Labourer: Silver medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1919; MB(5) - 30 May 1918: 'On 3rd April 1918, William Parkinson (46) was saved from a fire at Litherland, caused by an explosion'.

15,744: Albert E Hutton, Ship Steward: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1919; MB(5) - 30 May 1918: 'On 13th February 1917, Alfred Woodward (44) and three sailors were saved from a fire at Lowestoft, caused by a bursting lamp'. The award was noted by *The Times* (Tuesday 4 June 1918, p. 3) as being granted to: 'Albert E Hutton, Metropolitan Police Constable, now serving in the Royal Navy, for [his] gallantry at [a] fire'.

15,745: Fire Brigade Officer Daniel D Sloan: Silver medal and £5.5s
Fireman John S Woolrich: Silver medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1919; MB(5) - 30 May 1918: 'On 16th May 1918, several children were saved from a fire in Manchester, caused by airing clothes igniting'. Later, *The Times* (Thursday, 14 November 1935, p. 11) reported Sloan's retirement thus: 'Chief Superintendent Daniel D Sloan, principal officer of the Manchester Fire Brigade, is about to retire. Mr Sloan, who is 63, gained the King's Medal for his bravery at a munitions factory fire near Morecambe during the War, and the medal of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire for his share in the rescue of two people trapped in a Manchester fire. He is a past president of the Fire Brigades Association of Great Britain, who medal for bravery he also holds'. See also case 16,566.

Medal inscribed: 'J. S. Woolrich, Manchester, April 15, 1918'.

15,748: Lieutenant L W Wheelock, USA Air Service: Silver medal and illuminated testimonial on vellum certificate.

Details: AR 1919; MB(5) - 17 October 1918: 'On 23rd April 1918, Lieutenant N.K. Berry USAAS was saved from a fire in Ayr, Scotland, caused by a falling aeroplane'. Further details of the rescue are recorded in the report of Lieut-Colonel L Rees, RAF, dated 23 April 1918, who notes that Wheelock: '…was in the Observer's seat of a Bristol fighter which was being flown by Lieut Norman Kenneth Berry, United States Air Service. The pilot started across wind, put on full rudder, turned down wind and "crashed", falling about 100 feet. The machine burst into flames about four seconds after hitting the ground. Lieut L W Wheelock had his arm broken, and crawled out of the machine. I could see him silhouetted against the flames which were by this time all over the pilot's seat. Seeing that Lieut Berry did not follow, he gallantly walked straight into the flames and hauled him out. He had to make one or two attempts before he got Lieut Berry clear. Lieut Wheelock's clothing caught fire, but he put this out, and then turned his attention to Lieut Berry whose clothing was well alight. I consider that Lieut Wheelock saved the life of Lieut Berry and I recommend him to be rewarded as his behavior deserves' (TNA ref: AIR 2/2838). The medal was sent from the Air Ministry on 2 August 1919 to the British Embassy in Washington for presentation to the recipient (TNA ref: FO 372/1296/111469).

15,750: George Millwood, Grocer: Silver medal and £3.3s
PC Charles Gubbins: Silver medal and £3.3s
PC Worthy Gay: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1919; MB(5) - 17 October 1918: 'On 26th May 1918, W H Ward (44) and four children were saved from a fire in Lambeth, caused by a candle'. The Society's Minutes are unclear as to the award of the medal to Gay, but the medal is confirmed in the Annual Report.



PC Charles Gubbins

15,752: Thomas Calderwood, Commercial Traveller: Silver medal and £10.10s

Details: AR 1919; MB(5) - 17 October 1918: 'On 23rd June 1918, Mrs McNamee (30) was saved from a fire in Kingstown, Ireland, caused by a spark from a fire'. The *Irish Times* gave a brief account of the fire, thus: 'A domestic servant whilst lighting the kitchen fire in a house in Martello Terrace, Kingstown, set fire to the sleeve of a coat draped over her shoulders. In her panic she flung the coat away across the kitchen where it fell on a bottle containing a small quantity of petrol, which also caught fire. She ran out into the street and raised an alarm. Two passers-by ran inside and extinguished the fire. Meanwhile, the girl's sister, asleep in a room off the kitchen, awoke to find her room filled with smoke. The window was barred but a Mr Calderwood who heard her cries came in through the kitchen and brought her safely out. Mr Calderwood was a commercial traveller from Belfast'.

Medal inscribed: 'Thomas Calderwood, Kingstown, 23 June 1918'.

15,753: Audrey B Jackson, Housemaid: Silver watch

Details: AR 1919; MB(5) - 17 October 1918: 'On 15th July 1918, Sarah J Ashby (47) was saved from a fire in Denham, Bucks, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,755: PC Ernest J Brooks: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1919; MB(5) - 17 October 1918: 'On 19th July 1918, Frederick Archer (35), wife and four children were saved from a fire in Takeley, Essex, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,757: Ensign John C Foster, USA Air Service: Silver medal and illuminated certificate

Details: AR 1919; MB(5) - 17 October 1918: 'On 24th July 1918, Lieutenant McCormick was saved from a fire in Dunkerque, caused by a falling aeroplane'. The Society's Minutes record the award as a silver medal and a Testimonial on Vellum. The medal was sent from the Air Ministry on 2 August 1919 to the British Embassy in Washington for presentation to the recipient (TNA ref: FO 372/1296/111469).

15,758: Joseph Markham, Discharged Soldier: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1919; MB(5) - 17 October 1918: 'On 9th September 1918, Eric E. Stockwell (2) was saved from a fire in Kilburn, caused by a gas stove'.

15,760: Lieutenant Sherwood Hubbell, USA Air Service: Silver medal and illuminated certificate

Details: AR 1919; MB(5) - 17 October 1918: 'On 14th September 1918, Lieutenant Carter and Lieutenant Levy were saved from a fire in Marchon, France, caused by a falling aeroplane'. The Society's Minutes Book records the award as a Silver Medal and a Testimonial on Vellum. The medal was sent from the Air Ministry on 2 August 1919 to the British Embassy in Washington for presentation to the recipient (TNA ref: FO 372/1296/111469).

15,764: Fireman John R Exall: Bronze medal and £1.1s
Fireman Frank W Nethercott: Bronze medal and £1.1s
Fireman William James Gorman: Bronze medal and £1.1s

Details: AR 1920; MB(5) - 13 February 1919: 'On 10th January 1919, Katherine Macarthy (82) was saved from a fire in Canning Town, cause of the fire was unknown'. The Society's Annual Report and Minute Book records John Exall's surname as Excell; he is noted as Exall in the Minutes and is confirmed as such in the *London Gazette* and on the 1901 English

census, appearing as a fireman in West Ham. Exall, Gorman and several other members of the West Ham Fire Brigade were awarded the Medal of the Order of the British Empire (*LG*, 7 July 1920, pp. 7301-7315; see also *Hansard*, 18 November 1919 for the question by William Thorne, MP for West Ham, and the reply by Edwards Shortt, MP) for bravery following perhaps another fire: 'For conspicuous courage and devotion to duty at fires at munitions factories'. See *The Times* (Friday 21 September 1917, p. 3). Fireman Gorman had reputedly been awarded the West Ham Council's Medal for Bravery previously, while Exall would receive the KPM in 1927.

Medal inscribed: 'William J Gorman Canning Town 1918 [as noted in the auction particulars]', in group with George Medal, EIIR issue (named William James Gorman OBE, BEM), Medal of the Order of the British Empire, first type (named William James Gorman), Queen's Medal for Distinguished Fire Service, EIIR first type (named Ch. Off. William J Gorman BEM Hong Kong Fire Brigade), and 1953 Coronation Medal (Stacey's Auctioneers, Rayleigh, Essex, 19 April 2010, lot 712, with lot 713 being Gorman's miniatures – these also including his OBE, War and Defence Medals, and Association of Professional Fire Brigade Officers Long Service Medal in silver, but excluding his SPLF medal).

15,767: Louisa Robson, Housekeeper: Silver medal and £10.10s

Details: AR 1920; MB(5) - 13 February 1919: 'On 14th November 1918, Thomas M (8), Frances Ann (5¼) and Elizabeth Mews (4) were saved from a fire in Newburn-on-Tyne, caused by ignition of airing clothes'.

15,773: F W Albone, Scholar: Silver watch

Details: AR 1920; MB(5) - 13 February 1919: 'On 27th December 1918, Elsie Albone (3) was saved from a fire in Ashwell, caused by a lamp'.

15,775: James Foxley, Munitions Worker: Silver medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1920; MB(6) - 22 May 1919: 'On 5th February 1919, women workers in a shell filling factory were saved from a fire in Edmonton, caused by an explosion'.

15,777: PC Samuel Hadley: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1920; MB(6) - 22 May 1919: 'On 8th February 1919, Ellen Gough and four children were saved from a fire in Birmingham, caused by a stove pipe'.

15,780: PC Donald MacRae: Silver medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1920; MB(6) – 8 March 1919: 'On 8th February 1919, Jessie MacDonald (20)was saved from a fire in Inverness, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,783: Fireman Spencer Hird: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1920; MB(6) - 22 May 1919: 'On 8th March 1919, Jessie McDonald (20) was saved from a fire in Inverness, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,785: Kenneth R Bull, School Master: Silver medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1920; MB(6) - 16 October 1919: 'On 8th February 1919, Horace Luttman was saved from a fire in Southborough; cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,786: Ernest Sidney Sharp, Timber Yard Foreman: Silver medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1920; MB(6) - 16 October 1919: 'On 28th April 1919, J C Berner and family were saved from a fire in Hove, cause of the fire was unknown'. The fire was reported in *The Times* (29 April 1919), thus: 'Children saved from Burning House – A neighbour's Bravery. At about 4.30 yesterday morning, when the storm of wind and snow was at its height, a fire was discovered in a dwelling-house in Bolsover Road, Hove, in the occupation of Mr Berner, his wife and three children. Mrs Berner was aroused by a choking smell of smoke, and opening the bedroom door, saw the staircase in flames. Her cries for help summoned a neighbour, Mr Ernest Sharpe [*sic*], who dashed through the flames and rescued one of the children. Mrs Berner carried another safely out, and Mr Sharpe, entering the building again, saved the third. Mr Berner, who suffers from paralysis, reached the front door as the staircase gave way'. Then, *The Times* (Tuesday 18 November 1919, p. 9) reported that: 'Yesterday, the Mayor of Hove publicly presented Mr Ernest Sidney Sharp with a watch and cheque for five guineas from the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire as a reward for rescuing two children and their invalid father from a burning house'. The Society's records indicate that a silver medal and £5.5s was issued, not a watch.

15,790: Willie Bramley, Tram Conductor: Silver medal and £5.5s
PC William Cunnington: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1920; MB(6) - 16 October 1919: 'On 23rd June 1919, Donald Hepworth and William Hartley were saved from a fire in Huddersfield, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,792: Fireman Frank Moger: Silver medal and £5.5s
Fireman Stanley Blake: Silver medal and £5.5s
Fireman Daniel J Collins: Silver medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1920; MB(6) - 16 October 1919: 'On 15th July 1919, Thomas W Cosser was saved from a fire in Cardiff, caused by an explosion'. The explosion occurred in the oil tanker SS *Roseleaf*, and the ship's sixth engineer Thomas Cosser had been overcome by foul gas in the ship's fore peak following the explosion.

Medal inscribed: 'Daniel Collins, Cardiff 15 July 1919', in a group with his RHS Bronze Medal (Daniel Collins, Cardiff 15 July 1919), SPLF Bronze Medal (Sgt Collins, Cardiff 21/2/37), and Cardiff City Police & Fire brigade Conspicuous Bravery Silver Medal (Fireman James Collins). Collins was also awarded the George Medal in 1940, but this is missing from this group of medals. See case 17,166 for the bronze medal award to Collins.

15,793: PC John Pulham: Silver medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1920; MB(6) - 16 October 1919: 'On 28th July 1919, Harrietta P (37) and Phyllis Ivy Thorne (7) were saved from a fire in Lee, caused by incendiarism'.

Medal inscribed: 'John Pulham, Lee, 28th July 1919', in group with 1911 Coronation (Metropolitan Police issue) and 1935 Jubilee Medals.

15,794: John H Butters, Caretaker: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1920; MB(6) - 16 October 1919: 'On 1st August 1919, Minnie Reeves and three children were saved from a fire in West Derby, caused by a lamp'.

15,795: PC Frederick Smith: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1920; MB(6) - 16 October 1919: 'On 11th August 1919, Albert E (34), Fanny (34) and Ivy Reeves (5) were saved from a fire in Birmingham, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,796: W H Shapland, Scholar: Silver watch

Details: AR 1920; MB(6) - 16 October 1919: 'On 16th August 1919, a child (3) was saved from a fire in Bampton, Devon, caused by petrol igniting'.

15,797: PC Charles Ray: Silver medal and £5.5s
John Merrell, Sailor: Silver medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1920; MB(6) - 16 October 1919: 'On 17th August 1919, Frederick A. King (58), Ellen (45) and Annie Gower (50) were saved from a fire in Acton, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,799: Walter Cleall, Labourer: Silver medal and £10.10s

Details: AR 1921; MB(6) - 12 February 1920: 'On 11th August 1919, Winifred Jones (21) was saved from a fire in Cardiff, cause of the fire was unknown'. For his actions Cleall was also awarded the Albert Medal, the *London Gazette* (30 December 1919, p. 15,988) recording its citation thus: 'On August 11th a fire broke out at the top of the Royal Hotel, Cardiff, and it was not until the sixth floor of the building was burning fiercely that one of the maids was seen to come to a window on that floor and gesticulate for help. Mr Cleall [described as a demobilised soldier from Cardiff], who was in the crowd below watching the fire, at once entered the building without a smoke helmet, and eventually succeeded in getting to the sixth floor and into a room in which he could see the girl. From the window of that room he climbed along a narrow parapet, and reached the window where the girl was. Above the ledge which afforded him a foothold was a stone balcony for a part of the intervening space, but a very dangerous corner had to be negotiated with a sheer drop to the street of fully one hundred feet. The risk of falling was very great, but he succeeded in carrying the girl along the parapet, and into the room from which he started. A portion of the roof collapsed as the girl was assisted from the room'. For further details see E Besley *For Those in Peril: Civil Decorations and Lifesaving Awards at the National Museums & Galleries of Wales*, Cardiff: National Museums & Galleries of Wales, 2004, pp. 57-64.

15,801: Robert Roberts, Collier: Silver medal and £10.10s

Details: AR 1921; MB(6) - 12 February 1920: 'On 8th October 1919, eight women were saved from a fire in Pembrey, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,804: PC Wilfred S Short: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1921; MB(6) - 12 February 1920: 'On 20th October 1919, E C Timmins and family were saved from a fire in Torquay, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,805: PC John McPherson: Silver medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1921; MB(6) - 12 February 1920: 'On 31st August 1919, four children were saved from a fire in Perth, cause of the fire was unknown'.



Walter Cleall AM – in army uniform having re-enlisted into the Welsh Guards after the incident for which he received the Albert Medal and the SPLF Medal.

15,811: James Rogerson Mann, Cotton Operative: Bronze medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1921; MB(6) - 12 February 1920: 'On 3rd December 1919, C W Baycroft (45) was saved from a fire in Bolton, caused by friction in a machine'. Mann was also awarded the Edward Medal in bronze, with 'Industry reverse' and the rescue was described in the *London Gazette*, 16th July 1920, as follows: 'At 9.30 a.m. on the 5th December 1919, a fire broke out in one of the rooms on the middle floor of a five-storey cotton mill belonging to Messrs. N. Pickering and Sons, Limited, St. John Street, Bolton. The fire spread to the floors above, and whilst engaged in fighting the fire in the top room, one of the firemen of the Bolton Fire Brigade found himself cut off from the doorway and stairs by fire and smoke. The fire escape was at the opposite end of the building, and he was cut off from that also. He broke windows and called for help from those below and it was obvious that he was in a very dangerous position and likely to be overcome unless speedily rescued. Mann, who is employed at the mill, at once tied a rope round his waist and, after getting on to a one-storey shed, climbed the nearest water-spout to the windows of the top storey where the fireman was seen. On reaching the level of the window he untied the rope and handed it to the fireman, who tied it inside the building and then descended by it. Mann descended by the water-spout, which being an old one, was liable to break away at any moment. There can be no doubt that Mann by his prompt and brave action saved the life of the fireman.

15,812: PC Samuel Andrews: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1921; MB(6) - 12 February 1920: 'On 11th December 1919, John A (40), Mrs (37), Bessie (16) and Phyllis Carpenter (15) were saved from a fire in Warrington, cause of the fire was unknown'. According to Andrews' service record (Chester Record Office and the Museum of Policing in Cheshire) Andrews (*b*.1880) joined the Warrington Borough Police on 8 July 1872. He received two commendations, both for rescuing people from fires: on 11 May 1908 he was commended by the Coroner and Jury for promptitude and common sense displayed in dealing with an outbreak of fire at 29 Lloyd Street on 10 May; and he was later commended by the Watch Committee for prompt and praiseworthy action in assisting in rescuing the occupants of 35 Winwick Street, where premises he discovered on fire on the 11 December 1919. Andrews retired on pension on 21 July 1927, though rejoined the Fire Police Reserve and served from September 1939 to June 1942.

For further details see www.blacksheepindex.co.uk

15,813: PC James Bolger: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1921; MB(6) - 12 February 1920: 'On 28th December 1919, Mary (3) and Thomas Owen (12) were saved from a fire in Birmingham, caused by igniting of airing clothes'.

15,817: Fireman (10) Thomas William Brown: Silver medal and £5.5s
Fireman Robert L Sparks: Bronze medal and £3.3s
Ralph Butcher, Stoker: Bronze medal and £3.3s

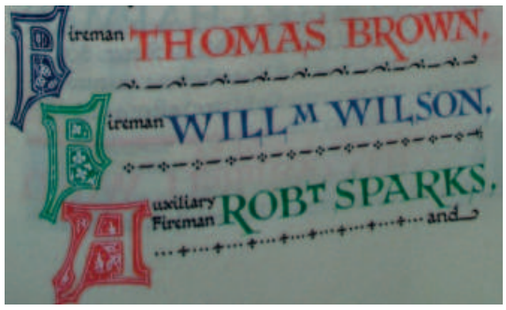
Details: AR 1921; MB(6) - 20 May 1920: 'On 23rd December 1919, 57 Persons were saved from a fire in Newcastle-on-Tyne, caused by the ignition of films'. For his part in the rescue, Fireman Brown received the Albert Medal. Its citation described how: 'A serious



Fireman Thomas William Brown

fire broke out on 23 December 1919 in the basement of Cross House, Westgate Road, Newcastle-on-Tyne, where cinematographic films were stored. The work of the Fire Brigade was performed under the most dangerous and difficult conditions, owing to the great heat, noxious fumes, and explosions caused by the burning films. Flames were already shooting across the street on one side of the building when the Brigade arrived, and it was from the windows of the upper floors that a large number of the rescues were affected. The action of Fireman Thomas William Brown in reaching the top of the building by means of a hook ladder was a notable feature of the work of rescue. A 50 foot fire-escape had been pitched on one side of the building, and Brown, having ascended the escape, fastened to a window on the fourth floor a 14 foot hook-ladder which he carried, and by this means enabled 13 persons to escape. He then threw up the hook-ladder to the main cornice above, which projected 2½ feet from the building, and with great coolness and daring ascended the parapet, where he effected the rescue of three other persons by making fast the hook-ladder in another position and attaching it to a 65 foot escape. There was the great risk of the hook slipping while the fireman was ascending the ladder some 70 feet from the ground, seeing that by reason of the overhang of the cornice the ladder was clear of the wall' (*London Gazette*, 5 October 1920, p. 9,810). According to the Newcastle City Police (file PA/NC/37/88): 'Fireman Brown, for his participation in this rescue was commended by the Watch Committee and awarded a gratuity of £5.5 for distinguished exceptional service, and advanced to Acting Station Officer number 4. He was also awarded an honorary certificate and sum of £25 by the Carnegie Hero Fund [Trust] and his name placed on their Roll of Heroes'. Similarly, Fireman Sparks, who served as a Police-Fireman (PC85A) with the Newcastle City Police and Fire Brigade, has the following on his service record: '28.5.1920 Commendation from the watch Committee and awarded a gratuity of £3.5s.0d for distinguished and exceptional services rendered by him at a fire which occurred at Cross House on the 23rd December 1919, and his pay advanced. Brown was also granted the honorary certificate and sum of £10 and name placed on their Roll of Heroes by the Carnegie Hero Fund [Trust], and awarded a bronze medal and sum of £3.3s.0d by the Society for Protection of Life from Fire in connection with the above incident' (Newcastle Police file reference PA/NC/37/793).

Note: Brown also in possession of Albert Medal (2nd class), 1914/15 Trio (PO1. RN) and RFR LS&GC Medal (PO RFR): these sold at Sotheby's, 7 November 1985, lot 758. A photograph of Brown appears in Blackstone (1957, opposite p. 320).



Extract from the Carnegie Hero Trust Fund's 'Book of Heroes'

15,818: Minnie Byrne, Staff Nurse: Gold watch

Details: AR 1921; MB(6) - 20 May 1920: 'On 1st January 1920, L C Shackleton was saved from a fire in Leeds, caused by an explosion'.

15,819: Thomas F Green, Plumber: Bronze medal and £2.2s
John Game, Labourer: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1921; MB(6) - 20 May 1920: 'On 17th January 1920, Ann Wicking (7) was saved from a fire in Grays, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,820: Daisey Munt, Nurse: Silver watch and £2.2s

Details: AR 1921; MB(6) - 20 May 1920: 'On 9th February 1920, Nellie Wilkinson (20) was saved from a fire in Denton Wheatley, caused by clothing igniting'.

15,826: PC Robert Brown: Bronze medal and £2.2s
PC Edward Selwood: Bronze medal and £2.2s
PC Frank P Jackson: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1921; MB(6) - 28 October 1920: 'On 30th April 1920, Golda Ranche (69) was saved from a fire in Richmond, caused by a candle'. Further details of the fire appeared in *The Richmond & Twickenham Times* (1 May 1920) thus: 'BURNT TO DEATH – MIDNIGHT TRADEGY IN KEW ROAD. As the result of a fire which occurred at about 1.30 yesterday morning at 133 Kew Road, Golda Ranche, a Frenchwoman, aged 68, who had resided in Richmond for many years, was burnt to death in her bedroom. It appears that while on duty in Kew Road Police Constable Brown saw volumes of smoke issuing from an upper room at 113, Kew Road. He at once raised the alarm and broke into the bedroom. Police Constable Selwood, attached to the Twickenham police force, who lives opposite, was returning home on his bicycle from duty, and he, too entered the house. He managed to get into the bedroom, and located the body of the woman, but being overcome by the smoke, had to be assisted out of the room. Members of the Richmond Fire Brigade, under Captain Tinkler, were soon at the scene of the fire. They entered the bedroom by means of a fire-escape, and at once continued to cope with the fire, which they soon extinguished. The body of Madam Ranche was found in a corner of the room, her clothes being considerably burnt. She was not very severely burnt, and it was thought that she died from shock. It was said that she was a smoker – a pipe was found in the room – and it is surmised that whilst lighting her pipe she caught some article in the room on fire. Thanks to the efforts of the firemen, the fire was prevented from spreading. The body was removed to the mortuary, and an inquest will be held in due course'. Further details also appeared in the *Thames Valley Times* (5 May 1920) thus: '…Police Constable Brown stated that at 1.25am on Friday he heard a scream, which seemed to come from a window at 133 Kew Road. He also saw sparks in the room. He ran to the fire alarm, and, in company with Police Constable Jackson, he tried to enter the room, but was overcome by smoke. He, however, opened the window to let out the smoke. Police Constable Selwood, attached to the Twickenham Police, said he was cycling home to Richmond on Friday morning. He went into the house, and, putting a sheet round his mouth, he entered the bedroom. He felt something hard in the room, but lost his way….A lad named Jackson, who assisted to put out the fire, said he thought the two police constables did very well indeed; in fact, they could not have done more...'. See also the *Richmond Herald* (1 May 1920) and the *Richmond & Twickenham Times* (18 December 1920).

Medal inscribed: 'Robert Brown, Richmond 30.4.20'.

15,828: Agnes Purves, Domestic Servant: Silver watch

Details: AR 1921; MB(6) - 28 October 1920: 'On 31st May 1920, Jessie E Hollis-Hallett (3) was saved from a fire in Edinburgh, caused by matches'. The recommendation in the Society's Minutes Book is a certificate and four guineas or a silver watch; the Annual Report shows the award as a silver watch.

15,829: PC Adam Horrocks: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1921; MB(6) - 28 October 1920: 'On 13th June 1920, Annie Simpson (60) was saved from a fire in Mile End Road, caused by a defective flue'.

15,831: Samuel Yandell, School Boy: Silver watch

Details: AR 1921; MB(6) - 28 October 1920: 'On 15th July 1920, a woman and three children were saved from a fire in Taunton, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,836: PC Charles Hancock: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1921; MB(6) - 28 October 1920: 'On 25th September 1920, Maisie Hellewell (7) was saved from a fire in Kentish Town, cause of the fire was unknown'. The award ceremony was noted in *The Times* (Monday 10 January 1921, p. 7) thus: 'Police Constable Charles Hancock was presented at Marylebone Police Court on Saturday with the bronze medal of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire and a cheque, for rescuing a little girl from the second floor of a burning building in Kentish Town'.

15,837: Detective Constable John Algar: Silver medal and £5.5s
Probationary Constable Thomas Freeman: Silver medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1921; MB(6) - 28 October 1920: 'On 14th October 1920, Dorcas (50), Gertrude (26), William (21), Dorcas (17), Edith (13) and Victor Smith (3) were saved from a fire in Birmingham, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,838: Herbert Livesey, Motor Mechanic: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1922; MB(6) - 17 February 1921: 'On 22nd March 1920, Joseph Livesey (18) was saved from a fire in Bolton, caused by petrol igniting'.

15,840: James Duffy, Postman: Silver medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1922; MB(6) - 17 February 1921: 'On 28th August 1920, D Anderson (20) and Patrick Savage (25) were saved from a fire in Dundalk, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,842: Edith Vaughan, Nursemaid: Silver watch

Details: AR 1922; MB(6) - 17 February 1921: 'On 16th December 1920, Cissie Gasson (21) was saved from a fire in Leyton, caused by a spark from a fire'.

15,843: PC Maurice Wallis: Silver medal and £5.5s
PC Joseph Topley: Silver medal and £3.3s
Frederick A Foster, Warehouseman: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1922; MB(6) - 17 February 1921: 'On 21st January 1921, Mary Howard (87), Emma James (81) and Kate Davies (82) were saved from a fire in Peckham, caused by a defective flue'. Brief details of the fire appeared in the DNW auction catalogue of 20 September 2002, which noted that: 'the fire broke out at The Retreat, described as a private home for aged and infirm ladies, in Queen's Road, Peckham. During the incident a gas explosion injured three firemen, but the eighteen inmates were all safely evacuated'. A fuller description appeared in *The Times* (22 January 1921) thus: 'FIRE AT OLD LADIES HOME – BRAVE RESCUES BY BOYS. An outbreak of fire, which caused much excitement, occurred last night, at the Retreat, Queen's Road, Peckham. The home, which is kept by Miss Distant, adjoins the Peckham Collegiate School and Convent, and it was feared that the school, in which a number of children are boarded, might become involved. The 18 inmates of The Retreat, all over 60 years of age, and several over 70, were safely removed from the burning building, and the efforts of the Fire Brigade, favoured by the direction in which the wind was blowing, preventing the spread of the fire to the convent. While the firemen were at work an explosion of gas occurred, and two firemen, W Ingham of Queen's Road Station and W Bird of New Cross Station, were overcome by coal-gas fumes, while another, Fireman, A H Shaw, was removed from the scene suffering from a sprained shoulder-blade. The Retreat is situated in a cul-de-sac and is approached from Queen's Road by a narrow lane some 200 yards in length. Its awkward position made the work of the firemen difficult, and it was necessary to divert the tramway and other vehicular traffic, a circumstance which caused inconvenience to the public for several hours. The outbreak, which occurred on the upper floor – the house being one of two stories – is believed to have originated in a defective chimney. Most of the old ladies had retired to bed when the alarm was raised, and their safe removal was due to the prompt action of a police-constable and three boys of 16 years of age, who, after having summoned the fire brigade, immediately set to work to get the

inmates out of the building. They were removed in the first place to the Convent, and later a number of them were taken to adjoining houses, where they were accommodated for the night. The whole of the upper floor of the building was gutted, and the damage is considerable. The names of the boys, who acted with great courage are Cyril Marshal, Percy Gardiner, and L Spear. Mr Evan Cook, a neighbour, also assisted in the rescue work'.

Medal inscribed: 'Maurice Wallis, Peckham, 21-1-21'. Wallis also held the Coronation Medal, 1911, Met. Police issue (PC M. Wallis).

Medal inscribed: 'Joseph Topley, Peckham, 21.1.21'. Topley also held the Coronation Medal, 1911, Met. Police issue (PC J. Topley).

15,845: Donald A Brown, Foreman, Ordnance Depot: Silver medal

Details: AR 1922; MB(6) - 9 August 1921: 'On 7th January 1919, several men and women were saved from a fire in Woolwich, caused by an explosion'.

15,847: Peter Wareham, Scholar: Silver watch
Vera Stenner, Wardsmaid: Silver watch

Details: AR 1922; MB(6) - 9 August 1921: 'On 28th February 1921, John H Gaywood (9) was saved from a fire in Crondall Heath, caused by playing with fire'.

15,848: PC William C Lay: Bronze medal and £3.3s
Thomas H Effingham, Milkman: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1922; MB(6) - 9 August 1921: 'On 11th March 1921, John Dowling (72) was saved from a fire in Poplar, caused by a spark from a fire'.

15,849: Police Inspector Sydney G Smith: Silver medal and £5.5s
PC Alfred Harris: Silver medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1922; MB(6) - 9 August 1921: 'On 13th May 1921, Mary Ann Ballinger (38) was saved from a fire in Hereford, caused by a candle'.

15,869: Skipper Edward Jenkerson: Silver medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1922; MB(6) - 23 February 1922: 'On 16th January 1922, F Jefferson, W Fretwurst, R Segdell, L Dresscher, H Binder, P Rechert, M Brandt, D Delfts, E Westphalen and H Looft were saved from a fire in Lowestoft, caused by an explosion of benzene'.

15,872: Philip Halford, Farm Worker: Silver medal

Details: AR 1922; MB(6) -23 February 1922: 'On 25th November 1921, Gwendolen M Temple-West (30) was saved from a fire in Hawkinge, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,877: PSgt Tate: Silver medal and £10.10s.

Details: AR 1923; MB(6) - 1 June 1922: 'On 22nd March 1922, Amy (38) and Howard R I Knowlson (2) were saved from a fire in Rishton, caused by a defective fireplace'.

15,888: Bugler Walter E Phippen: Bronze medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1923; MB(6) - 12 October 1922: 'On 5th July 1922, Bridget A Mellon (5) was saved from a fire in Strabane, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,891: Captain Sam Buck: Bronze medal

Details: MB(6) – 21 February 1924: Buck was originally awarded a Certificate and £3.3.0 for lifesaving efforts, though the circumstances surrounding the award are not stated in the surviving records. Buck applied to the Society 'to be allowed to expend a part of the money awarded to him on a medal. The Secretary was instructed to inform Captain Buck that one of the Society's regular Bronze Medals should be sent to him if he cared to pay the cost of same - £1.7.0'. Whether Buck went ahead with this is not stated in the Minutes or the Annual Report and his award is here presumed, though currently unconfirmed.

15,899: Senior 2nd Engineer James C Corrigan: Silver medal and £10.10s

Details: AR 1923; MB(6) - 12 October 1922: 'On 11th August 1922, a rescue was made from a fire on the SS *Adriatic* at sea, caused by an explosion of gas in the hold'. Further details are noted in *The Times* (Thursday, 19 October 1922, p. 15) announcement of the award: 'HEROISM IN THE R.M.S. *ADRIATIC* – At its meeting yesterday the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire made a large number of awards for saving or attempting to save life, including the following:- Silver medal and ten guineas to James C Corrigan, senior second engineer in the R.M.S. *Adriatic*, for his gallantry in saving

life on the occasion of an explosion in No. 2 hold of that vessel when on a voyage from Liverpool to New York on August 11'. The identities of the person(s) saved were not recorded.

15,905: Squadron Leader Charles Curtis Darley, RAF: Silver medal and £10.10s

Details: AR 1923; MB(6) - 12 October 1922 and MB(8) - 11 April 1962: 'On 28th September 1919, Darley attempted to rescue his brother from a blazing Vickers-Vimy bomber from a fire at Lake Braciano, Italy, caused by an aeroplane accident'. Darley received the Albert Medal for this rescue, that award being announced in *The Times* (Wednesday 26 July 1922, p. 7) thus: 'The King has awarded the Albert medal to Squadron-Leader Charles Curtis Darley, of the Royal Air Force, in recognition of his gallantry in endeavouring to save life. On the night of September 27, 1919, a Vickers-Vimy aeroplane, piloted by Captain Cecil Hill Darley, brother of Squadron-Leader (then Flight- Lieutenant) Darley, who was acting as navigation officer, made a forced landing by Lake Bracciano, some twenty miles north of Rome, when on a flight from England to Egypt. On the following morning, in taking off, the aeroplane failed to clear a telegraph pole, and crashed, immediately bursting into flames. Squadron-Leader Darley was thrown clear, but at once rushed to the blazing



Squadron Leader Charles C. Darley

wreckage and displayed very conspicuous bravery and devotion in persistent, but unavailing, attempts to rescue his brother, who was pinned in the pilot's seat. His efforts to release his brother were only brought to an end by his collapse. He received such severe burns that he was a patient in hospital for over eighteen months' (see also the *London Gazette*, 24 July 1922). The Society's decision was announced in *The Times* (Thursday, 19 October 1922, p. 15). Details of the rescue are given in MB(8) – when, some 43 years after his gallantry, an appeal was made to the SPLF for funds to help a 'SPLF hero' who was severely ill and required financial support. See *The Times* (Wednesday 13 June 1962, p. 12) for Darley's obituary.

15,907: PC Henry Worth: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1924; MB(6) – 23 February 1923: 'On 2nd September 1922, M S Marcusfeld (76) and Eliza Green (58) were saved from a fire in Oldham, caused by a tablecloth igniting'.

15,912: James Nash, retired boarding house keeper: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1924; MB(6) – 23 February 1923: 'On 28th October 1922, Phyllis J Brockman (2½) and Patrick Sowden (8 months) were saved from a fire in Canterbury, caused by airing clothes igniting'.

15,913: Ronald Crawford, Scholar: Silver watch

Details: AR 1924; MB(6) – 23 February 1923: 'On 28th October 1922, Martha Crawford (9) was saved from a fire in Liverpool, caused by clothing igniting'.

15,921: PSgt Patrick Smith: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1924; MB(6) – 23 February 1923: 'On 10th December 1922, Emmet (7) and Sadie McGarry (7) were saved from a fire in Dublin, caused by incendiaries'.

15,924: PC Stephen Hudson: Bronze medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1924; MB(6) - 23 February 1923: 'On 15th December 1922, Elizabeth (39), James (14), Ernest (7) and Reginald (4) Cullen were saved from a fire in Denton, Lancs, cause of the fire was unknown'. Hudson also received the KPM and further details of the events are contained in the National Archives (file HO45/12639) and the *London Gazette* (1 January 1925) thus: 'At 11.50 pm on 14

December 1922, a fire occurred at 15 Ashton Road, Denton. Constable Hudson heard the cry of 'Fire!' and ran and gave the alarm before he returned to the scene, where he heard that there were three children in the bedrooms. He immediately entered the burning house through a window, and brought out the children one by one, having taken one of the children from the arms of his mother, Mrs Cullen, on the landing. Mrs Cullen had previously taken one of the children out of the bedroom, but had been overcome by smoke, and had been unable to get further than the landing. After he had taken the children out, Constable Hudson returned to the interior of the house, and found Mrs Cullen, and took her to a window from which she was taken down to safety by ladder. Constable Hudson then collapsed on the window sill, and had to be assisted down to the ground'.

15,929: William Henry Tyson: Silver watch

Details: AR 1924; MB(6) - 23 February 1923: 'Daniel F (12) and Winifred R (10) Tyson were saved from a fire in Mayland, caused by a spark from a fire'. The date of the incident was not recorded'.



PC Stephen Hudson

15,930: Fireman James H T Glover: Silver medal

Details: AR 1924; MB(6) - 8 May 1923: 'On 27th November 1921, Police Constables Powell and Taylor were saved from a fire in Edmonton, cause of the fire was unknown'.

15,933: Police Inspector Charles William Gould: Bronze medal and £3.3s
PSgt John Le Fevre: Bronze medal and £3.3s
PC Bertie Prior: Bronze medal and £3.3s
PSgt Thomas Henry Hawtin: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1924; MB(6) - 8 May 1923: 'On 28th December 1922, Aubrey A (11) and Iris M (9) Mills were saved from a fire in Portsmouth, caused by a candle in contact with bandages etc'.

Unnumbered: Fireman William Peachey, Tottenham Fire Brigade: Silver medal and 5 guineas

Details: No mention of this award appears in surviving Society archives, though *The Times* (Tuesday, 15 May 1923, p. 11) records William Peachey as receiving these awards. Peachey and another fireman, Raymond John Law, gained the King's Police Medal for their rescue efforts at this fire. Details of the events are contained in the National Archives (file HO45 /15646/88771), with the award itself briefly noted in the *London Gazette* (1 January 1923, p. 12), thus: 'On the night of 27 November 1920, Constable Powell and Taylor saw smoke coming from over the door of a furniture shop in Edmonton. On being informed that there were children in the premises, they forced the door, and proceeded to search the first and second floors. The officers were eventually cut off by the fire on the lower floor. On the arrival of the fire brigade, Constable Powell was seen at an upper window, and Fireman Peachey went up a fire-escape, and lifted Constable Powell through a narrow window, and carried him down to the ground. This was a very difficult feat, owing to the intense heat, and the fact that the badly burned constable was struggling in pain. Fireman Law and a companion learned that Constable Taylor was still inside the building, so they searched the upper rooms, filled with dense smoke, and flames, until they found Constable Taylor lying practically unconscious in a corner. The fireman lifted the constable, a heavy man, through a window, and Fireman Law took the full weight of the unconscious man on his shoulders as he brought him safely to ground'. Constables Samuel Taylor, Harry Powell, and James Hancon for their services at this fire received an award of 3 guineas each from the

Society (case no. 15,864) and Powell and Taylor received the KPM from the government (*LG*, 30 December 1921). See also *The Times* (Tuesday 2 January 1923, p. 6).

15,949: PC Percival Miller: Bronze medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1924; MB(6) - 8 May 1923: 'On 2nd March 1923, Jessie (37) and Nathan (13 months) Block were saved from a fire in Bethnal Green, caused by a spark from a fire'. See also *The Times* (Tuesday, 15 May 1923, p. 11).

15,961: Spiridon Maiboroda, Seaman: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1924; MB(6) - 2 October 1923 and 21 February 1924: 'On 7th May 1923, Ann Burrell (69) and James Cole (8) were saved from a fire in South Shields, caused by a lighted candle falling onto bedclothes'. The minutes further record that: 'The Secretary reported that the correct name of the recipient in this case was Spiridon Maiboroda and that he had altered the name on the medal accordingly'.

15,967: James Oswald Ayres, Clerk: Bronze medal and £5.5s
Walter Thomas Jackson, Clerk: Bronze medal and £5.5s
Captain Percy Gordon Sharp: Bronze medal and £5.5s
Alfred Percy Thorpe, Orderly: Bronze medal and £5.5s
Robert Wallace Bradley, Clerk: Bronze medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1924; MB(6) – 2 October 1923: 'On 13th June 1923, A L Bolstridge (29), William Cocksill (29), Frank Baignton (30), Jno T Swinbourne (32), Chas Attwood (31), William Bettesby (29), Thomas Hills (32), Joseph Russell (48), Alex Carless (26) and Frank Halward (43) were saved from a fire in Birmingham, caused by floor polish igniting'. Further details of the events are given in *DNW Auction Catalogue*, 30 June 1994, lot 55, 'Eye witnesses tell of many heroic incidents in which Orderly Thorpe, a Balsall Heath man, and Pensioner Ashton, of Small Heath, were concerned. They were seen going in and out of the burning building [Ministry of Pensions Hospital (Highbury), Birmingham] until, like others, they were beaten back by the flames'. An unattributed source notes that: 'Several of the rescuers were injured in the attempt to extract 15 patients, who because of spinal injuries were unable to move from their beds as the fire engulfed the army hut which was their ward. Two of these unfortunates died in the blaze'. In announcing the awards, *The Times* (Saturday, 6 October 1923, p.7) reported: 'AWARDS FOR SAVING LIFE FROM FIRE. The Society for the Protection of Life from Fire yesterday made a number of awards including the following:- Bronze medals and five guineas each to James O Ayres, W T Jackson, Percy G Sharp, Alfred T Thorpe, and R W Bradley, all of Birmingham, for saving and attempting to save life on the occasion of the fire whereby the open air ward of the Highbury Ministry of Pensions Hospital, was destroyed on June 13'. The presentations were made to these recipients by the Lord Mayor of Birmingham on Wednesday 5 December 1923 (*The Times*, Thursday 6 December 1923, p. 14).

Medal inscribed: 'Alfred Percy Thorpe, Birmingham, 13 June 1923'.

Medal inscribed: 'James Oswald Ayres, Birmingham 13 June 1923'.

15,968: Hilda May Barker (11), Schoolgirl: Silver watch

Details: AR 1924; MB(6) - 2 October 1923: 'On 29th June 1923, Alice E Barker (4) was saved from a fire in Hull, caused by matches igniting under a mattress'. The presentation was noted in *The Times* (Tuesday 11 December 1923, p. 16) thus: 'HULL CHILDREN'S BRAVERY…A silver wristlet watch from the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire was presented to Hilda Baker, aged 11. She acted pluckily in trying to save the life of her younger sister, whose nightdress caught fire. The child died from her burns'.

15,972: PC (383H) James William Hague: Silver medal and £5.5s
PC (385H) John Newby: Silver medal and £5.5s
Police Inspector Frederick H Buckley: Silver medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1924; MB(6) - 2 October 1923: 'On 14th July 1923, Mr and Mrs Gabriel and daughter were saved from a fire in Liverpool, cause of the fire was unknown'. In recording the incident the *Liverpool Echo* (16 July 1906) reported the events thus: 'Saturday 14th July 1923: The White Star Building Rescues. At 03.30 hours a rescue took place, which is acknowledged as one of the most daring rescues, the Brigade had seen. The scene of the fire was the White Star Offices in James Street, from where the tragic news of the loss of the 'Titanic' had been announced. Lightening had hit the roof of the Offices and started a fire. The alarm was raised by the Caretaker of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Building at Mann Island, who saw the lighting strike, and

telephoned the Brigade and then the White Star Building and awoke the Caretaker, Joseph Gabriel. His wife and their 26-year-old daughter were the only occupants of the building, and their rooms were in the roof space, which were lit by dormer windows. When Gabriel, discovered the fire he roused the rest of his family and they vainly attempted to make their way downstairs. But found the staircase well alight, and they retreated into a bedroom where they became trapped. The clouds of smoke and tongues of flames, which had barred their way, could be heard roaring outside the room. Their only hope of escape lay by the roof. The caretaker climbed on to the roof via one of the dormer bedroom windows and blew a police whistle to attract attention; meanwhile the flames began to spread and were soon coming through the roof. This forced him to again take shelter in the relative safety of the bedroom, which sheltered his wife and daughter, where they awaited the worst. No.'s 6 and 9 petrol motors and the electric escape from Central Fire Station, responded. On arrival it was found that the fire had obtained a good hold on the premises from the fifth floor upwards on the east and staircase end, and the fire had also travelled down the lift shafts and was observable at the street level on the ground floor. The services of the whole of the staff from Central Fire Station were requisitioned, also the engines and staff from Essex Street and Kildonan Road; the staff off duty at the same time were sent for. The Brigade on arrival in the street below was alerted by a passer-by, to the plight of the caretaker and his family. The largest ladder the Brigade possessed at that time, a wooden turntable ladder, was only capable of reaching 84 feet at its greatest extension, which fell two storeys short, of the storey in which the caretaker and his family were trapped. Entrance to the building was being affected by means of the electric escape on the West Side and by other escapes on various floors at a lower level, and the fire fought back. The position of the keeper and his family called for serious consideration, as it was obvious that their only means of egress was involved in fire. Two firemen, Newby and Hague, followed by Inspector Buckley ran up the electric escape carrying with them, ropes and another ladder. By fixing this ladder to the end of the turntable ladder they were able to gain access to the building. The trio rapidly made their way through the building they found a dormer window at the lower edge of the roof. The problem for the firemen was how to get the Gabriel's out of the bedroom, over an acutely slanting roof, to their position. Newby solved the difficulty by getting out of the window and on to the roof tiles. Scrambling on to the roof of the lower dormer window he threw a line, which was caught by Mr Gabriel, who tied it securely in the bedroom. Newby hauled himself to the upper window, sat aside the sill, and prepared the family for their perilous descent. In the meantime Hague performed an equally brave act by getting out of the lower window and lying "spread-eagled" on the roof at the bottom end of the line, his object being to receive the Gabriel's one by one as they were slid down by Newby. Inspector Buckley's part was to sit astride the sill of the lower dormer window and help the rescued people into the room. When all were in the room Hague and Newby gave their tunics to the women, who were in their night clothes, from this lower point they were able to head for a stone staircase, which was not affected by the fire. Even then the heat was severe enough to scorch the face and arms of the daughter. The banisters of the staircase were on fire and one of the firemen had to carry Miss Gabriel down the stairs. Despite falling beams and debris, they all safely arrived in the street, much to the relief of the huge number of spectators who had gathered. As they emerged, they were narrowly missed by a large piece of masonry, which fell from the front of the building. Mrs Gabriel later said to waiting reporters "We never expected to leave the building alive and that we are here is only due to the gallantry of the Firemen. We cannot speak too highly of their courage. At one time we had given ourselves up for lost'. News of the awards appeared in *The Times* (Saturday, 6 October 1923, p. 7) thus: 'AWARDS FOR SAVING LIFE FROM FIRE. The Society for the Protection of Life from Fire yesterday made a number of awards including the following: Silver medals and five guineas each to Constables J W Hague and John Newby and Inspector F H Buckley, of the Liverpool City Police, for saving three persons from the tenth storey on the occasion of the destruction of the White Star Buildings, James Street, Liverpool, on July 14'. Further details of the rescues themselves were recorded by the Liverpool Shipwreck and Humane Society, who also granted awards for these events, in their *85th Annual Report*, thus: 'Silver Medal and Illuminated Certificate of Thanks each to Inspector Frank Buckley, PC 385H (John Newby) and PC 383H (James William Hague), for most gallantly rescuing three persons cut off in building on fire in James Street, on July 14th. At 3.30 am on the 14th July, word was received at the Central Fire Station of a fire in the White Star Offices, James Street, and Nos. 6 and 9 petrol motors and the electric escape were at once turned out. Upon arrival it was found that the fire had obtained a good hold on the premises from the fifth floor upwards on the east and staircase end, and the fire had

also travelled down the lift shafts and was observable at the street level on the ground floor. The services of the whole of the staff from the Central Fire Station were requisitioned, also engines and staff from Essex Street and Kildonan Road; the staff off duty at the same time were sent for. Entrance to the building was effected by means of the 85 ft, turntable escape on the west side of the 80 foot balcony, and by other escapes on the various floors at a lower level, and the fire fought back. The position of the keeper and his family who lives on the top floor in the apex of the building about 100 to 110 feet up, called for serious consideration, as their only means of ingress and egress was involved in the fire. The whole staff who worked so admirably were to be highly commended, especially, Inspector Buckley and Constables Newby and Hague, who carried out the rescue of the keeper and his family under very dangerous circumstances upon a very acute sloping roof. The three officers named were each awarded £5 and the Merit Decoration by the Liverpool Watch Committee'.

Medal inscribed: 'James William Hague, Liverpool. 14 July 1923'. Hague also held the Liverpool Shipwreck & Humane Society Silver Fire Medal (To P.C. 353 H. James Wm. Hague For Gallant Service. 14th July 1923).

15,984: Olive Gibson, Schoolgirl: Silver watch

Details: AR 1925; MB(6) - 21 February 1924: 'On 28th August 1923, Edith Gibson (19) was saved from a fire in Callow Green, Chesterfield, caused by clothing igniting'.

15,989: Marian Edith Stephens, Schoolgirl: Silver watch

Details: AR 1925; MB(6) - 21 February 1924: 'On 22nd October 1923, John (6) and Marjorie (4) Garland were saved from a fire in Pontypool, caused by a falling candle'.

15,990: Norah Hall, Schoolgirl: Silver watch

Details: AR 1925; MB(6) - 21 February 1924: 'On 8th November 1923, Edna (6), Arthur (5), Eileen (4), David (3) and Elsie (2) Hall were saved from a fire in Grimsby, caused by an overheated flue'.

16,009: Firemaster James S Weir: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1925; MB(6) - 19 June 1924: 'On 29th December 1923, Nookoo Meah and Chowdhury were saved from a fire on the SS *Mongalore*, in Dundee, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,014: Rosina M Williams (18): Silver watch
Fireman Albert Bennett: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1925; MB(6) - 19 June 1924: 'On 8th February 1924, Philip H (5 months) and Patricia Ladbrook (3) were saved from a fire in Lee, caused by a defective fireplace'. The award was noted in *The Times* (Thursday, 11 September 1924, p. 9) thus: 'Two presentations were made at Lee Green Police Station yesterday on behalf of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire. Rosina Williams, aged 16, was given a silver wristlet watch for her courageous action in rescuing a child from a burning room in Dacre Square, and Fireman Bennett was given the society's bronze medal and a cheque for three guineas for bringing out another small child'.

16,015: Nancy Stables: Silver watch
Police Inspector Edward J Swaits: Silver medal and £2.2s
PSgt Joseph Mayor: Bronze medal and £2.2s
PC Adam Gerrard: Bronze medal and £2.2s
PC Thomas Aldred: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1925; MB(6) - 19 June 1924: 'On 15th February 1924, John (47), Nancy (47), John (18), Nancy (15), Norah (9), Ethel (5) and Ann (1) Stables and Ellen Wilmott (27) were saved from a fire in Fleetwood, caused by a broken lamp'.

16,016: Daniel Divers, Labourer: Silver medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1925; MB(6) - 19 June 1924: 'On 23rd February 1924, Elizabeth (24), Elizabeth (4) and Richard (2) Kilday were saved from a fire in Glasgow, caused by lighted paper being dropped'. The Society Minute Book shows the original recommendation was for a certificate or a silver medal and five guineas – which ever was preferred by the recipient. The Annual Report shows that a silver medal and five guineas were awarded.

Medal inscribed: 'Daniel Divers, Glasgow, 24th Feb. 1924'.

16,017: PC John Turner: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1925; MB(6) - 19 June 1924: 'On 28th February 1924, Florence (40) and Kathleen (14) Dickinson were saved from a fire in Twickenham, caused by clothing igniting'.

16,018: PC Arthur Jolley: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1925; MB(6) - 19 June 1924: 'On 23rd April 1924, John G Phillips (59) was saved from a fire in Ashford, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,020: PC Henry Thornton: Bronze medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1925; MB(6) - 19 June 1924: 'On 16th May 1924, William (72), Ellen (67) and John (67) Neal. Nellie (17) and Harry (14) Foskett; Jane (40), Fanny (33), Victor (7) and Joseph (5) Fox were saved from a fire in Birmingham, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,025: John Lester, Waiter: Silver medal and £10.10s
Fireman Frederick Warrington: Silver medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1925; MB(6) - 14 October 1924: 'On 20th June 1924, Madamoiselle L'Oiseau (30) was saved from a fire in Harrogate, cause of the fire was unknown'. The awards were noted in *The Times* (Saturday, 18 October 1924, p. 9) thus: 'REWARDS FOR BRAVERY AT FIRES. The Society for the Protection of Life from Fire yesterday made a number of awards for brave action in saving life, the principal being as follows: Silver medal and ten guineas to John Lester, waiter, and silver medal and five guineas to Frederick Warrington, fireman, of the Harrogate Fire Brigade, who, by their united effort saved the life of a French maid on the occasion of the destruction of the Hotel Majestic, Harrogate, on June 20. The girl was on the seventh storey, from which her rescuers got her out on the roof, and thence to a place of safety'.

16,026: Flight Sgt Jackson Sydney Brett, RAF: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1925; MB(6) - 14 October 1924: 'On 2nd July 1924, seven passengers were saved from a fire in an aeroplane over Bircham Newton Aerodrome, Norfolk, caused by a defect in a petrol pipe'. The circumstances were noted in *The Times* (26 August 1924), thus: 'AN AIRMAN'S PLUCK. Official orders at Bircham Newton Aerodrome, Norfolk, from which Air Force units are operating in important manoeuvres, record a deed of courage by Flight-Sergeant Jackson Brett, RAF, when the aeroplane, on which he was a passenger, caught fire at a height of 5,000 ft. above the ground. The aeroplane was one of the troop-carrying machines, which at the time of the incident, was carrying seven people besides the pilot on an ordinary routine flight. When the machine had reached 5,000 feet, a slight leak developed in one of the petrol feed pipes, and almost immediately flames burst out near the carburettor. Sergeant Brett, realizing the danger, at once seized the chemical fire extinguisher, and climbed out of the cabin of the machine on to one of the wings. Keeping hold on one of the struts, he began to spray the liquid from the extinguisher on the flames over the edge of the wing, and "carried on" while the pilot, Flight Lieutenant Perry Keene, "banked" down carefully so as not to cause a spread of the flames. By the time the machine had got down to 2,000 feet the fire had been extinguished, and Sergeant Brett climbed back into the cabin of the machine. A perfect landing was made, Sergeant Brett's pluck was undoubtedly the means of saving the lives of his seven comrades'. See also *Flight Magazine* (23 October 1924) and *The Times* (Saturday, 18 October 1924, p. 9).

Brett's extant medal group (albeit missing the SPLF medal) is known in a private collection and includes the Air Force Medal, GVR, 1st type (240216 Sjt. J.S. Brett, R.A.F.); British War Medal 1914-20 (F.40216 A.M. 1 R.N.); Defence and War Medals; RAF LS&GC Medal, coinage bust (240216 F/Sgt. R.A.F.).

16,029: PSgt John Jones: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1925; MB(6) - 14 October 1924: 'On 1st August 1924, Ralph Ainscough (34) was saved from a fire in Wigan, caused by turpentine igniting'.

16,033: Harold A R Dudley, Schoolboy: Silver watch

Details: AR 1925; MB(6) - 14 October 1924: 'On 21st August 1924, May Lappage (16), Alfred J Griffin (17) and Harold A R Dudley (14) were saved from a fire in Tipton, caused by an explosion'.

16,036: PC Wesley A Southall: Silver medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1925; MB(6) - 14 October 1924:

'On 30th August 1924, John T (29) and Francis E Tibbits (30); Ethel Aucott (16), Wm Fantham (16), Clara Rollason (39), Joseph Rogers (18), Mary A Harvey (16) and Walter Smith (27) were saved from a fire in Nuneaton, caused by petrol igniting'. Another rescuer, Herbert J Rollason, Miner (deceased), is recorded as having received a posthumous Illuminated Certificate in both the Society's Minutes Book and the Annual Report.

16,051: Thomas Henry Wales, Seaman: Bronze medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1926; MB(6) - 18 February 1925: 'On 25th October 1924, Catherine Anderson (25), Dorothy Murray (26), Ina Robertson (20) and Chrissie Cairney (20) were saved from a fire in the Queen's Hotel, Oban, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,057: Thomas William Knott, Auxiliary Postman: Bronze medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1926; MB(6) - 18 February 1925: 'On 13th December 1924, Caroline Allen (72) was saved from a fire in Dalston, caused by clothing igniting'.

16,059: Transmission Officer William McLelland, Mercantile Marine: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1926; MB(6) - 18 February 1925: 'On 5th January 1924, Charles Mitchell (87) was saved from a fire in Glasgow, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,068: PC Percy Bruce Cummings: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1926; MB(6) - 18 February 1925: 'On 17th December 1924, Annie and Margaret Towns were saved from a fire in Middlesbrough, cause of the fire was unknown'. The events were noted in the *North Eastern Daily Gazette* (18 December 1924) thus: 'An early morning rescue from a "fiery furnace" in Middlesbrough today. Hearing shrieks from an upper window of the premises in Linthorpe Road, owned by D Vane, High St, Stockton, and occupied by Mrs Towns and her daughter, PC Cummings ran to the place and discovered an outbreak of fire. He sent for the Fire Brigade, the premises were well alight, immediately two hydrants were at work and after an hour the fire was subdued. Chief Officer Smith received an injury to his right hand. The damage to the house was in the hundreds of pounds'.

16,069: Inspector Daniel Devine Sloane: Silver medal
Fireman James Livesey: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1926; MB(6) - 18 February 1925: 'On 31st January 1925, Adam Forshaw (50) was saved from a fire in Manchester, caused by a lighted taper'. The award was briefly noted later in *The Times* (14 November 1936, p. 11), thus: 'Chief Superintendent Daniel D Sloan, principal officer of the Manchester Fire Brigade, is about to retire. Mr Sloan, who is 63, gained the King's Medal for his bravery at a munitions factory fire near Morcambe during the War, and the medal of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire for his share in the rescue of two people trapped in a Manchester fire. He is a past president of the Fire Brigades Association of Great Britain, whose medal for bravery he also holds'.

16,074: Violet Poole, Schoolgirl: Silver watch

Details: AR 1926; MB(6) - 16 June 1925: 'On 25th February 1925, Frederick Poole (3) was saved from a fire in Stockwell, caused by an upset lamp'.

16,076: PC John Skeet: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1925; MB(6) - 16 June 1925: 'On 17th March 1925, Harriet (58), Amanda (21), Beatrice (19) and Lily (9) Hainsworth were saved from a fire in Leeds, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,079: Freda Shepherd, Schoolgirl: Silver watch

Details: AR 1925; MB(6) - 16 June 1925: 'On 30th March 1925, John Shepherd (4) was saved from a fire in Frizinghall, Bradford, caused by clothing igniting'.

16,083: Fire Brigade Officer Frederick C West: Silver medal
Fireman Sidney K Ellis: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1925; MB(6) - 16 June 1925: 'On 13th April 1925, Mrs C F Twyford (73) was saved from a fire in Ramsgate, caused by a candle'. The award was briefly noted later in *The Times* (Saturday, 5 December 1925, p. 9), thus: 'AWARDS FOR RESCUES AT FIRES. The Society for the Protection of Life from Fire at its meeting on Thursday made the following awards:- Silver Medal to Frederick C West and Bronze Medal to Sidney K Ellis, both of Ramsgate Fire Brigade, for their

attempt to save a woman of 73 who was suffocated owing to a fire in Hartfield Road, Ramsgate, on April 13'.

The medal to West is known to survive.

The medal to Ellis, together with his NFBA LS&GC bronze and silver medals, were sold at Sotheby's on 10 December 1975, lot 61, EF, £24.

16,087: PSgt William P Peter: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1925; MB(6) - 16 June 1925: 'On 25th April 1925, Jas Connaughton (50) was saved from a fire in Walshaw, caused by a dropped match'. Sergeant Peter also received the KPM for his actions, the National Archives (file HO45/12307) and the *London Gazette* (1 January 1926) note the circumstances thus: 'On 25 April 1925 a fire occurred in a house in Walshaw near Bury, and when police arrived, the occupier a Mr Connaughton, was at the front bedroom window. A Constable obtained a ladder and after breaking the window tried to get the occupier out through the gap, by which time he was unconscious. The windows were only 12 inches wide, so the Constable descended the ladder to get something to break the



PSgt William P Peter

window mullion frame. In the meantime the Fire Brigade had arrived, and one of the firemen broke the mullion. Then a fireman, and Sergeant Peter went up the ladder, but the fireman was overcome by smoke and heat in the room, and Sergeant Peter lifted him out of the window and down to the ground, and then returned to the bedroom, and dragged Connaughton to the window, and handed him out to the rescuers below, before descending the ladder himself. Connaughton died on the way to hospital'.

16,090: Ernest Harrison, Schoolboy: Silver watch

Details: AR 1926; MB(6) - 16 June 1925: 'On 10th May 1925, Frederick C Dunn, wife and eight children under 14 years was saved from a fire in Jarrow, caused by the beam under a hearth igniting'.

16,094: Ellen Rose Curtis, Daily Help: Silver watch

Details: AR 1926; MB(6) - 24 November 1925: 'On 4th 4 February 1925, W. Barrett (64), Albert (14), Margaret (10), Ellen (7), Phyllis (4) and Ronald Curtis (18 months) were saved from a fire in Oxford, caused by a live coal from grate'.

16,101: PC Albert Blake: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1926; MB(6) - 24 November 1925: 'On 9th July 1925, Isabel Bennett (68) was saved from a fire in Ebury Bridge Road, SW (London), caused by bedding igniting'. The Warwick & Warwick catalogue for the 14 December 2011 sale quotes a newspaper cutting thus: 'An interesting ceremony at the Gerald Road police-station yesterday afternoon was the presentation by Superintendent Bacchus, of the B Division, Metropolitan Police, of a bronze medal to Police Constable Albert Blake, of the Cannon Row station, A Division, and a framed certificate and cheque for £3 3s to Mr Frank R Barlow, awarded by the Society For The Protection of Life From Fire. On the night of July 9th the mother of Mr Barlow accidentally set light to her nightdress, and was gallantly rescued from her room by her son at 31 Ebury Bridge Road, Pimlico. He removed her to the landing, and then rushing back to the room, endeavoured to extinguish the flames. His retreat was cut off, and he had to escape by a window. Meantime PC Blake, who lives close by, had been attracted, and he removed Mrs Barlow to safety. Unfortunately Mrs Barlow dies as a result of the injuries she sustained'. The award was briefly noted later in *The Times* (Saturday, 5 December 1925, p. 9), thus: 'AWARDS FOR RESCUES AT FIRES. The Society for the Protection of Life from Fire at its meeting on Thursday made the following awards:- Bronze Medal to Albert Blake, constable, Metropolitan Police,

and Certificate and three guineas to Frank R Barlow, the latter for saving his mother from a burning room in Ebury Bridge Road, Westminster, on July 9, and the former for saving Barlow who re-entered the burning house'.

Medal inscribed: 'Albert Blake, Ebury Bridge Rd., S.W. 9 July 1925' (as reported in the auction catalogue), this being in its case of issue and sold together with his British War and Victory Medals (named: '514640 Pte A.J. Blake 14-Lond Rd.'), and Defence Medal, together with related items and ephemera were offered for sale at Warwick & Warwick auctioneers, 14 December 2011, lot 216.

16,106: PC Robert Scott Barrowman: Silver medal and £2.2s



PC Robert Scott Barrowman

Details: AR 1926; MB(6) - 24 November 1925: 'On 13th September 1925, Mrs Halliday (54) was saved from a fire in Irvine, Ayrshire, caused by a lighted candle'. Scott also received the KPM for his actions, the National Archives (file HO45/12307) and the *London Gazette* (1 January 1926) note the circumstances thus: 'On 13 September 1925 a fire occurred in a house trapping several people. When Constable Barrowman arrived, flames were shooting through the roof. With the assistance of some civilians, Constable Barrowman forced his way in, and began searching for the persons trapped by the flames, most of whom were rescued. Forced by the heat and flames to return to the street, the Constable was then informed by a woman that her mother was still in the blazing building. He immediately re-entered the house, crawling around on his hands and knees until he found a woman unconscious under a bed He carried her to a landing and assisted her to safety. Immediately after the woman had been carried out, the ceiling collapsed in the room where she had been'. The award was briefly noted later in *The Times* (Saturday, 5 December 1925, p. 9), thus: 'AWARDS FOR RESCUES AT FIRES. The Society for the Protection of Life from Fire at its meeting on Thursday made the following awards:- Silver medal and two guineas to Robert S Barrowman, Ayrshire Police, for saving a woman from a burning house in Irvine on September 13'.

16,123: Captain J H Cole, SS *Benalder*: Silver medal

Details: AR 1927; MB(6) - 11 March 1926: 'On 19th August 1925, James Goldie (33) was saved from a fire on the SS *Benalder*, caused by the overheating of bunker coal'. The SS *Benalder*, under the command of Captain J H Cole, DSC, suffered a serious fire in one of its coal bunkers while en route from China to Britain. Chief Engineer Hughes and Second Engineer Goldie went below to fight the fire, but were overcome by fumes. Captain Cole went below twice and managed to rescue both men. For his bravery he additionally received the RHS bronze medal. He had received the DSC and the Lloyds Medal for Meritorious Services in silver during the First World War. For further details of the rescue see the following link: merchantnavyofficers.com/benline.html

16,124: Roy Gunter, Schoolboy: Silver watch

Details: AR 1927; MB(6) - 11 March 1926: 'On 15th July 1925, Frank Davies (11) was saved from a fire in Cwmbran, caused by spontaneous combustion'.

16,127: Chief Officer Thomas Breaks, Fire Brigade: Silver medal
Fireman John William Law: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1927; MB(6) - 11 March 1926: 'On 11th November 1925, Frederick B. Brook (70) was saved from a fire in Sheffield, cause of the fire was unknown'. The rescue was noted in the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* (12 November 1925, p. 4) thus: 'A gallant rescue by the Superintendent and a fireman of the Sheffield Brigade of an old man trapped in a burning building in Pearl Street, Sheffield, early yesterday morning proved unavailing, for the victim died a few hours later in the Royal Hospital. His wife was saved by neighbours with a ladder. The dead man is Frederick Brook of 105 Pearl Street. The Brigade were

summoned at 5.5am and on turning out with two engines and an ambulance, they found a grocery and general goods shop in flames. On their arrival Mrs Brook, who had been sleeping in a room over the shop, was being assisted down a ladder by neighbours. Though uninjured herself, she feared the fate of her husband, who was over 70 years old, and who for some time had been in bad health. On learning that there was a man in the burning building, Supt T Breaks and Fireman JW Law at once entered in search of him. After a good deal of difficulty owing to the smoke and the intensity of the flames, they discovered Mr Brook. Apparently he had been asleep in a chair close to the counter, but when rescued he had fallen to the floor. His clothing was completely enveloped in flames, and in the work of rescuing him Supt Breaks and Fireman Law had their faces badly scorched and the latter sustained more serious burns to his hand. They pluckily stuck to their task and succeeded in getting Mr Brook out of the burning building, and had him dispatched in the ambulance to the Royal Infirmary. He was in a precarious condition when he arrived there, and died about one o'clock. Accounting for her husband's presence in the shop at such an early hour, Mrs Brook he had been suffering from bronchitis and could obtain very little rest in bed. It was his custom therefore to sit up a good deal at night-time, and try to obtain rest by the fireside. The fire was confined to the shop. Supt Breaks paid testimony to the good sense of the neighbours who had seen to the rescue of the unfortunate woman. In addition to getting a ladder speedily, he said, they very properly kept all possible doors and windows closed, and thereby preventing the spread of the fire to the windows. Undoubtedly their actions prevented the whole house from being devoured'. At the Ordinary Meeting of Trustees, on 11 April 1962, it was reported that the subject of the BBC TV programme *This is your life* was ex-Superintendent Tom Breaks (81) of the Sheffield Fire Brigade, who was awarded among other awards four silver awards by the SPLF (1926, 1928, 1930 and 1933). For further details on Breaks see Keith Mills 'A profile of Thomas Breaks', *LSARS Journal* (forthcoming).

Medal known: Thomas Breaks' SPLF medals, bars and other awards are in the Fire & Police Museum, Sheffield.

16,134: PC Arthur Rogers: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1927; MB(6) - 11 March 1926: 'On 6th December 1925, Thomas (55), John (14), Bernard (4), Thomas (18), Mary (10) and Edith Graham (16) were saved from a fire in Birmingham, caused by clothes airing'.

16,138: Charles Neal: Silver watch

Details: AR 1927; MB(6) - 11 March 1926: 'On 24th December 1925, Rose (5), Robert (3) and Thomas Henry Baker (1) were saved from a fire in Derby, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,145: PC (647) William Elborn: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1927; MB(6) - 11 March 1926: 'On 16th January 1926, Samuel (11) and Walter Russon (8) were saved from a fire in Southall, caused by a lamp exploding'.

16,157: PC Sidney Clark: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1927; MB(6) - 22 June 1926: 'On 22nd March 1926, George (40), Marie L Six (38) and George Six (9) and Margaret Chenut (27) were saved from a fire in Leytonstone, caused by an explosion'.



PC William Elborn

16,158: PC Robert P Heslup: Bronze medal and £1.1s

Details: AR 1927; MB(6) - 22 June 1926: 'On 24th March 1926, Walter (73), Evangeline (73) and May Hirst (19); Walter Aspin (56) and

George Whiteley (62) were saved from a fire in Leeds, caused by a hot cinder'.

16,161: James Sawyer, Blind Person: Bronze medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1927; MB(6) - 22 June 1926: 'On 3rd April 1926, Harry Burge (77) was saved from a fire in Bath, caused by clothing igniting'.

16,162: Edwin Nelson Lee, Brush-maker: Silver watch

Details: AR 1927; MB(6) - 22 June 1926: 'On 19th April 1926, Beatrice (2) and Vera Ada Morgan (8 months) were saved from a fire in Birmingham, caused by the back draft of chimney'.

16,167: Rose Drayton: Silver medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1927; MB(6) - 2 November 1926: 'On 21st March 1926, Ena Drayton (18) was saved from a fire in Grimsby, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,168: John Macleod, Foreman Labourer: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1927; MB(6) - 2 November 1926: 'On 8th April 1926, Duncan Livingston (65) and Alex Short (45) were saved from a fire in Port Glasgow, caused by a gas explosion'.

16,171: Andrew Mowbray, Postman: Silver medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1927; MB(6) - 2 November 1926: 'On 14th June 1926, Rosa (15) and
Beatrice Moses (14) and Mary E. Cook (21) were saved from a fire in South Shields, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,177: Alfred Wallace, Schoolboy: Silver watch

Details: AR 1927; MB(6) - 2 November 1926: 'On 18th August 1926, Arthur Wallace (3) was saved from a fire in Nunhead, caused by petrol igniting'.

16,178: Betty Doris Rattey, Schoolgirl: Silver watch

Details: AR 1927; MB(6) - 2 November 1926: 'On 19th August 1926, Daphne (6) and Mavis Rattey (4) were saved from a fire in Thornton Heath, caused by a lighted candle falling on clothes'.

16,182: William Gardener, Caretaker: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1927; MB(6) - 2 November 1926: 'On 14th September 1926, Rose (50) and William Scales (12) and Florence Empetage (30) were saved from a fire in Gillingham, caused by a defective flue'.

16,183: David Farmborough, School-boy: Silver watch

Details: AR 1927; MB(6) - 2 November 1926: 'On 26th September 1926, Ernest Farmborough (14 months) was saved from a fire in Treorchy, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,191: PC William Marshall: Silver medal and £3.3s PC Duncan Dunn: Bronze medal and £2.2s



(l r) PC William Marshall & PC Duncan-Dunn

Details: AR 1927; MB(6) - 15 May 1927: 'On 12th November 1926, Betty Fox was saved from a fire in Newman Street, W (London), cause of the fire was unknown'. Dunn and Marshall also received the KPM for their actions, the National Archives (file HO45/19452) and the *London Gazette* (1 January 1928) note the circumstances thus: 'Early on the morning of 12 November 1926 a

fire occurred at a flat in Newman Street, London, in which four persons were sleeping. Three of the occupants escaped through a window onto the roof, but the fourth, a woman, became hysterical as she clung to the window sill, with her feet resting on the guttering, some 70 feet above the street. Constables Dunn and Marshall, who were off duty and in plain clothes rushed up to the top of the building, but were unable to get into the flat owing to the flames. However they opened a window off the staircase, and Constable Marshall got out and stood on the guttering, and whilst Constable Dunn held him, he edged his way along to the woman. As he caught her, she fainted, and Constable Marshall took her full weight as he was pulled slowly and carefully back by Constable Dunn. Eventually, the two Constables were able to get the woman to safety. During the whole of the rescue, both Constables were in imminent danger of falling to their deaths'.

16,196: PC Arthur Edgington: Bronze medal
PC Thomas Furness: Bronze medal
PC Thomas Smith: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1927; MB(6) - 15 May 1927: 'On 8th December 1926, Emilie Morgan (41) was saved from a fire in North Kensington, cause of the fire was unknown'. The award was noted in *The Times* (Monday, 2 May 1927, p. 16) thus: 'BRAVE POLICE CONSTABLE. Bronze medals of the Royal [*sic*] Society for the Protection of Life from Fire were presented on Saturday at the Marylebone Police Court to three constables of the "X" Division, Metropolitan Police, in recognition of their bravery in rescuing the wife of Mr T Morgan, draper, 229 Portobello Road, W, and her two children, from a fire which broke out in the shop on the night of December 8 last. The recipients were Police Constable Thos Smith, Police Constable Edgington, and Police Constable Furness. In making the presentation, Mr Hay Halkett said that it was a brave act to save a person from the water, but, it was braver to enter a burning building to save life'. The presentation was recorded by the *Daily Mirror* (Monday, 2 May 1927, p. 19) thus: 'Modest heroes: For entering a burning linen draper's shop to save the lives of the shopkeeper, his wife and two children, three police officers – Smith, Edginton [*sic*] and Furness – were each presented at Marylebone Police Court on Saturday with the bronze medal of the Society… Mr Hay Halkett, the magistrate, said that so formal were the reports of the incident made by the officers that but for a letter from the shopkeeper no notice would have been taken of their splendid services'.

16,198: Station Officer Herbert Brice, Fire Brigade: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1927; MB(6) - 15 May 1927: 'On 11th December 1926, Gertrude Brumby (4) was saved from a fire in Manchester, caused by a spark from a fire'.

16,200: Mabel Smith, Schoolgirl: Silver watch

Details: AR 1927; MB(6) - 15 May 1927: 'On 20th December 1926, Mrs (36), Robert (11), Agnes (7), Margaret (4), Sidney (1) and Baby Smith (1 months) were saved from a fire in Wymondham, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,201: Edith Boulderstone, General Help: Silver watch

Details: AR 1927; MB(6) - 15 May 1927: 'On 24th December 1926, Daphne Boulderstone (7) was saved from a fire in North Finchley, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,202: John Marks, Schoolboy: Silver watch

Details: AR 1927; MB(6) - 15 May 1927: 'On 28th December 1926, Mrs Abel (82) was saved from a fire in Medstead, caused by lighted paper falling from a fire'.

16,212: PC Norman Arter: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1928; MB(6) - 15 May 1927: 'On 26th January 1927, John White (81) was saved from a fire at 47 Cornwall Road, Lambeth, caused by an overturned oil stove'.

16,214: Fireman M Conway: Silver medal

Details: AR 1928; MB(6) - 15 May 1927: 'On 28th January 1927, Mary Ann Champion (81) was saved from a fire at 107 Nutley Lane, Reigate, caused by a lighted candle'.

The medal to Conway is known to exist.

16,218: James Bowen, Schoolboy: Silver watch

Details: AR 1928; MB(6) - 15 May 1927: 'On 13th February 1927, Evelyn (6) and Rosie Bowen (2) were saved from a fire at Dalkins Yard, Middlesbrough, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,221: Leonard Moores, Schoolboy: Silver watch
Nellie Moores, Schoolgirl: Silver watch

Details: AR 1928; MB(6) - 15 May 1927:

'On 28th February 1927, Elsie (2) and Frederick Moores (3) were saved from a fire at 20 Cliffe Lane, Great Harwood, caused by a lighted candle'. The presentation was recorded by the *Daily Mirror* (Friday, 8 April 1927, p. 12) thus: 'Nellie Moores, aged thirteen, of Great Harwood,…found a bed in which two infants were sleeping on fire. Failing to put out the flames with water, she aroused her brother – Leonard, aged 12. Together they carried the babies downstairs to safety. They have each been presented with a silver watch by the National Society for the Protection of Life from Fire [*sic*]. The presentation was made by the Blackburn County Bench'. Pictures of both recipients appear with the above notice.

16,226: Robert Stannard King, Dock Goods Checker: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1928; MB(6) - 28 June 1927: 'On 16th March 1927, Michael (4) and Francis O'Neill (3) were saved from a fire at 33 Standish Road, Liverpool, caused by an overturned paraffin lamp'. A lengthier account of the events appears in the press (an unattributed cutting), thus: '16 March 1927: Rescues Standish Street. A daring rescue took place at No.33 Standish Street, a dwelling house; of two young boys who sadly both later died in hospital. A lighted oil lamp was swinging from the ceiling of the bedroom, where two boys, Francis and Michael O'Neill and their older brother where sleeping, it fell and flooded the room with liquid flame. The bed became a mass of flames. Thomas O'Neill, the six-year-old brother of the dead children, showed great presence of mind. He tried to waken his brothers but failed, and pulled the bedclothes



Liverpool Medal for Heroism awarded to King for the same incident for which he received the SPLF medal

off. He then rushed out and gave the alarm. Three civilians came to the rescue: Charles Harvey, Harry Graham and Robert King. All fought their way though the smoke and flames to the bedroom, where they came across the boys mother who was partly overcome by the smoke. She was carried out and Mr King forced his way into the bedroom and grabbed one of the boys. On his way out he tripped and Graham entered the room and pulled him clear. In the meantime the Brigade arrived from Hatton Garden under Inspector Wynn, and Sergeant 43H Harry Smith, fought his way upstairs into the burning bedroom and rescued the other boy'. The *Liverpool Echo* (18 March 1927) reported the inquest thus: 'A thrilling story of courageous efforts to save the lives of the two children, Michael and Francis Joseph O'Neill, who received fatal injuries in the fire at 33 Standish Street, Liverpool, on Wednesday, was told in the Liverpool Coroner's Court today. Robert S King, goods checker at the docks, said that about 8.45pm he heard his wife crying out: "Oh, my God! The room's on fire next door". He ran out, and hear Mrs O'Neill's voice saying, "My children are in the room. Will no one save them?" Rushing at once upstairs he tried to enter the blazing room, but flames and smoke drove him out. He seized clothes from a line on the landing, wrapped them round his face, and made his way to the burning bed. Francis was apparently dead. King saw Michael crying, picked him up and made for the door, but collapsed. He recovered consciousness in the street. The Coroner said "You seem to have done very well". "I only did what any man would have done", King replied. Henry Graham, another neighbour, told how he carried first Michael, then King from danger'. The Liverpool Shipwreck & Humane Society awarded Silver Medals and Votes of Thanks to Inspector William Wynn, Sergeant 43H Harry Smith and Robert Stannard King. Bronze Fire Medals and Votes of Thanks were awarded to Henry Graham and Charles Joseph Harvey. Robert King was also awarded the Liverpool Medal for Heroism (this only being sold by DNW, 18 September 1998, lot 455).

16,227: Eluned Jones (5): Silver watch

Details: AR 1928; MB(6) - 28 June 1927: 'On 25th March 1927, Ellen Jones (37) was saved from a fire in Gardd y Wrach, Llannor, Pwllheli, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,228: Arthur Chesmer, Schoolboy: Silver watch

Details: AR 1928; MB(6) - 28 June 1927: 'On 5th April 1927, Mrs (39), Kitty (16), David (6), Henry (4) and Arthur Chesmer (15) were saved from a fire in a cottage near The Woodlands, Cheltenham, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,231: Violet Maude Aldridge, Tailoress: Silver watch

Details: AR 1928; MB(6) - 28 June 1927: 'On 21st April 1927, William W J Aldridge (3) was saved from a fire at 58 Beale Road, Bow, E (London), caused by a lighted candle'.

16,234: Thomas Lancaster, Wool-comber: Silver medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1928; MB(6) - 28 June 1927: 'On 25th April 1927, Walter (36) and Mabel Clayton (30); Tom Mawson (50) and Thomas Lancaster (37) were saved from a fire at 83 Kensington Street, Bradford, caused by clothing igniting'.

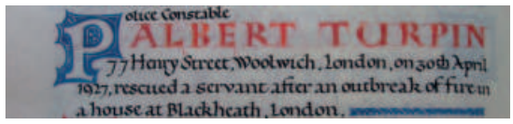
16,235: PC Albert Turpin: Silver medal and £5.5s



PC Albert Turpin

Details: AR 1928; MB(6) - 28 June 1927: 'On 30th April 1927, Victoria Bright (18) was saved from a fire at 96 Shooters Hill Road, Blackheath, cause of the fire was unknown'. Turpin also received the KPM for his actions, the National Archives (file HO45/19452) and the *London Gazette* (1 January 1928) note the circumstances thus: 'On 30 April 1927, a serious fire occurred at Shooters Hill Road, Blackheath. A servant girl who was sleeping in a second floor bedroom immediately above the fire, escaped onto a verandah roof. Constable Turpin, who had been called to the fire, arrived just as she was about to jump some 35 feet to the ground. He told her to stay where she was, and then rushed into the house, up the stairs, and guided by her cries, found her in a state of collapse. The Constable put her over his shoulder, and descended the stairs through the dense smoke, feeling his way down the burning banisters, until nearly at the bottom, when the stairs collapsed. Both of them fell to the bottom of the stairs, but were removed by the Fire Brigade'.

Constable Turpin was also awarded £10 and a framed certificate from the Carnegie Hero Fund Trust.



Extract from Carnegie Hero Fund Trust's 'Book of Heroes'.

16,238: William Alfred Smith, Theatre Call Boy: Silver watch

Details: AR 1928; MB(6) - 28 June 1927: 'On 13th May 1927, Miss Swallow was saved from a fire at the Garrick Theatre, WC (London), cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,241: John Hunter, Cinema Operator: Silver medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1928; MB(6) - 28 June 1927: 'On 10th June 1927, a rescue was made from a fire at the General Electric Theatre, Newport Road, Middlesbrough, caused by a defective film'. The identities of the person(s) saved were not recorded. A note on the events is given in the *North Eastern Daily Gazette* (11 June 1927) thus: 'During the screening of one of the subsidiary features of the matinee programme at the Grand Electrical Theatre yesterday, the film took fire. The safety apparatus came promptly into operation and the fire was confined to the box. There was no suggestion of panic. The audience was asked to leave quietly and within a few seconds the building was evacuated. Two reels of film were destroyed and the projectors more or less seriously damaged. John Hunter of Gladstone Street suffered slight scorching and shock'.

16,248: James F Carter, Schoolboy: Silver watch

Details: AR 1928; M(6) - 18 October 1927: 'On 22nd June 1927, Mrs and Doris W Quiddington (6) were saved from a fire at Moonlight Villa, Victoria Road, South Woodham, caused by the explosion of a methylated spirit stove'.

16,254: PC John Stanley Kitt Bennett: Bronze medal and £2.2s
PC William Morgan: Bronze medal and £2.2s
PC James Carter: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1928; MB(6) - 18 October 1927: 'On 27th July 1927, Wallace J (45), Kathleen (31), William (6), and Betty Westcott (9 months) and Martha Rixson (67) were saved from a fire at 75 Plashet Road, Upton Manor, cause of the fire was unknown'.

Medal inscribed: John Bennett, Upton Manor, E. 27-7-27'. Bennett also held the 1937 Coronation Medal (Roll shows awarded to PC John Bennett, Met. Police).

16,262: PC David H Allan: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1928; MB(6) - 18 October 1927: 'On 29th September 1927, Jane Rosie (78) and Catherine Walls (80) were saved from a fire in Back Road, St. Margaret's Hope, Orkney, cause of the fire was unknown'. See also *The Orcadian* (6 October 1927).

16,268: Miles Bennett, Schoolboy: Silver watch

Details: AR 1928; MB(6) - 16 February 1928: 'On 17th October 1927, Freda Bennett (6) was saved from a fire at 164 Dantzic Street, Manchester, cause of the fire was unknown'. The award was noted in the *Police Gazette & Parade Gossip* (23 March 1928), thus: 'BRAVERY RECOGNISED BY POLICE: The Man-chester Police have recognised the bravery shown at a fire by a lad named Miles Bennett by arranging for the public presentation of a silver watch awarded by the Society for the Protection of life from Fire. After bringing out his two sisters at considerable risk to himself, the boy remembered that in the house there were a cat and two kittens, so he broke a window and brought them all out alive'.

16,269: PC Andrew Fairbairn: Silver medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1928; MB(6) - 16 February 1928: 'On 29th October 1927, Philip Silverman (16) was saved from a fire in Meadow Road, Leeds, caused by a gas explosion'.

16,270: Leonard Allen, Hotel Proprietor: Silver medal

Details: AR 1928; MB(6) - 16 February 1928: 'On 30th October 1927, Lilly, Peggy (5), Albert (3) and Sylvia Morritt (6 months) were saved from a fire at 32 Dale Street, Mansfield, caused by a spark from a kitchen fire'.

Medal inscribed: 'Leonard Allen, Mansfield 30.10.27'.

16,272: Charles G Hanks, Manager, Confectioners: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1928; MB(6) - 16 February 1928: 'On 5th November 1927, Ernest (12) and Hilda Peckham (9) were saved from a fire at 1 Cobley's Court, Smythen Street, Exeter, caused by a spark from a fire grate'.

16,277: PC Sidney Hardy: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1928; MB(6) - 16 February 1928: 'On 5th December 1927, James Gordon (19) and Albert Melhuish (40) were saved from a fire at 25 Farringdon Road, EC (London), caused by overheating of a coffee roasting machine'.

16,278: John Pearson, Errand Boy: Silver watch

Details: AR 1928; MB(6) - 16 February 1928: 'On 6th December 1927, William N (5), Emma J R (3) and Joseph Baldwin (20 months) were saved from a fire at 7 Monk Street, Birkenhead, caused by a child playing with lighted paper'.

16,279: Eileen Watson, Millinery Apprentice: Silver watch

Details: AR 1928; MB(6) - 16 February 1928: 'On 8th December 1927, Joan (5), Donald (4) and Kathleen Watson (2) were saved from a fire at 12 Powis Buildings, Macklin Street, WC2 (London), caused by a child playing with lighted paper'.

16,281: PSgt Joseph T Bromage: Bronze medal and £5.5s
PC Albert Glazzard: Bronze medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1928; MB(6) - 16 February 1928: 'On 16th December 1927, Bessie Winser (33) was saved from a fire at Stoke Edith Park, near Hereford, caused by an overheating flue'.

16,282: PC James A Brooks: Bronze medal and £5.5s

Details: AR 1928; MB(6) - 16 February 1928: 'On 31st December 1927, Mrs (72) and Miss Knuckey; Mrs Shergold; James and Mrs

White and Mrs Pelling (71) were saved from a fire at 21A London Road, Southampton, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,290: Engine Driver T Stennett, Fire Brigade: Bronze medal and £3.3s
Superintendent Tom Breaks, Fire Brigade: Silver medal
Fireman Archibald Booth: Silver medal

Details: AR 1929; MB(6) - 17 April 1928: 'On 30th January 1928, T C Smith (54) was saved from a fire in Lumley Street, Sheffield, caused by the burning paper igniting a water tower'. An account in the *Sheffield Telegraph* (31 January 1928, p. 8) reported the incident thus: 'An employee of the Sheffield Corporation at the Lumley Street refuse destructor, Sheffield, had a thrilling experience yesterday afternoon, when a large quantity of waste paper stacked in the yard prior to being burnt in the incinerator caught fire. A quantity of paper was blown into the bottom of the water tower, and the man Mr T C Smith, of 79 Limbrick Road, Hillsborough, Sheffield, who is a charge hand at the destructor, entered the building in the hope of preventing some bricklayer's templates which were stored there from catching fire. The wind blew a large quantity of the burning paper against the door-way which was the only exit [and] Smith found that he could not get out. Dense clouds of smoke were being emitted by the burning paper and the bottom of the tower was quickly filled with fumes which became so dense that Smith was compelled to climb to the first floor and later on to the second floor. The smoke continued to rush into the tower, and as a last resort Smith climbed a ladder into the room containing the water tank. As the smoke became thicker every minute he was forced to get into the tank itself. He was able to stand in the water with his head clear, but he was compelled to dip his head …repeatedly into the water, the fumes being so pungent…A colleague of Smith's, realising that he was in peril, dashed over to the burning paper, onto which large quantities of water had been thrown. [However], the smoke made the interior of the tower so dark that the would be rescuer was unable to find the steps leading above, and had to beat a hasty retreat. The Sheffield Fire Brigade was [called, but] before its arrival Mr Stennatt, of 18 Greaves Street, … managed to enter the building, … reach the water tank and pull Smith out, just as he was on the verge of unconsciousness. Putting him over his shoulder, Stennatt managed to get Smith onto the second floor, where Supt Breaks and Fireman Booth dashed into the building and rescued the men. Smith was practically unconscious and Stennatt was also affected by the fumes, although they quickly recovered. Smith was taken to hospital. The firemen were uninjured. The brigade quickly extinguished the fire, little damage being done'. The latter account appears to raise doubts over Stennett being a member of the Fire Brigade at the time of the incident.

Medal known: Thomas Breaks' SPLF medals, bars and other awards are in the Fire & Police Museum, Sheffield.

16,291: Ella Fraser: Silver watch and £3.3s

Details: AR 1929; MB(6) - 17 April 1928: 'On 19th February 1928, Emma (14), Georgina (11), Edith (9) and William Fraser (7) were saved from a fire at 3 Lotland Place, Inverness, caused by live coals falling from a fire'.

16,295: PC Harold Walker: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1929; MB(6) - 17 April 1928: 'On 19th March 1928, Phoebe Limer (10) was saved from a fire in a van at the rear of the Conservative Club, Swadlincote, Derbyshire, caused by a defective flue pipe'.

16,310: Chief Officer William Woods - Fire Brigade: Silver medal
Fireman Cecil Smoothy: Bronze medal
Fireman Herbert Rushton: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1929; MB(6) - 17 July 1928: 'On 16th December 1927, Alfred (4) and Edward G Allaway (2) were saved from a fire at 16 Albion Road, Twickenham, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,317: PC Ernest James Townsend: Bronze medal and £2.2s
PC John Leslie Green: Bronze medal and £2.2s
PC George B P Kent: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1929; MB(6) - 17 July 1928: 'On 25th April 1928, William H. Simmonds (35) and Miss Lilly Field (20) were saved from a fire in Hertfield Road, Edmonton, cause by the collision of motor vehicles'.

16,318: PC John Allen: Bronze medal and £1.1s
John Henry Allen, Commissionaire: Bronze medal and £1.1s

Details: AR 1929; MB(6) - 17 July 1928: 'On 25th April 1928, Cecil John Webb (22) was

saved from a fire in Green Lanes, Harringay, caused by petrol igniting'. The awards were then noted in *The Times* (Saturday, 1 September 1928, p. 9) thus: 'AWARDS FOR SAVING LIFE FROM FIRE. Bronze medals and cheques for a guinea each from the Royal Society for the Protection of life from Fire were presented at Tottenham Police Court on Thursday by Alderman Cornish to Police Constable John Allen and Mr John Henry Allen, of Avenell Road, Highbury (who are not related), for rescuing Mr C J Webb, of Bounds Green Road, Wood Green, from his burning motor-cycle in Green-Lanes, Haringey, on April 25. Mr Webb was having his cycle refilled with petrol outside the Haringey Greyhound Racecourse when the machine burst into flames. The constable and Mr Allen, hearing his cries, rushed to Mr Webb's assistance. They wrapped their overcoats round him, rolled him on the ground, and smothered the flames. Mr Webb was taken to the Royal Northern Hospital'.

16,319: Guardsman Reginald William Taylor, 3rd Bn., Coldstream Guards: Bronze medal and £1.1s
Guardsman James Graham, 3rd Bn., Coldstream Guards: Bronze medal and £1.1s

Details: AR 1929; MB(6) - 17 July 1928: 'On 28th April 1928, Gladys (7) and Thomas Scroggs (3) were saved from a fire at 37 King's Road, Windsor, caused by sparks from a chimney'. The awards
were then noted in *The Times* (Saturday, 1 September 1928, p. 9) thus: 'AWARDS FOR SAVING LIFE FROM FIRE. At Windsor on Thursday, The Mayor (Sir William Carter) presented bronze medals and cheques on behalf of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire to Guardsmen Reginald William Taylor and James Graham, 3rd Battalion, Coldstream Guards, for rescuing a woman and three children from a burning house. Returning to barracks at Windsor recently by way of the Long Walk, Windsor Great Park, at midnight, they saw flames and smoke coming from the premises of a house in King's-road, and immediately went to help. The Mayor congratulated them on their gallantry. Police Constable Carter said that the men undoubtedly saved the lives of the woman and children. The smoke was so dense that Taylor was overcome and had to be rescued from the building by the police. He was taken to hospital where he had to remain for two days. The gallant action of the men was to be brought to the notice of their commanding officer'.

16,322: PC Richard Harold Yeoman: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1929; MB(6) - 17 July 1928: 'On 8th May 1928, Mrs S E (46), Charles F (12) and Norman E Marten 8), were saved from a fire at Millbrook Nursing Home, Foundry Lane, Southampton, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,323: PC Harold McInnes: Bronze medal and £1.1s
PC Thomas Martin: Bronze medal and £1.1s

Details: AR 1929; MB(6) - 17 July 1928: 'On 19th May 1928, R Morganstein (12) and David Phillips (10) were saved from a fire at 247 Oxford Street, Stepney, London, E, cause of the fire was unknown'. The awards were then noted in *The Times* (Saturday, 1 September 1928, p. 9) thus: 'AWARDS FOR SAVING LIFE FROM FIRE. The bravery of Police Constable Thomas Martin and Police Constable Harold McInnes at an East End fire was recognised at the Arbour Square Police Station, Stepney, on Wednesday, when Chief-Constable Landon presented them with the bronze medal of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire and a cheque for a guinea. Mr Landon said that when a fire occurred during May at the shop of Mr Morganstein, in Oxford Street, E, strenuous efforts to rescue the family were made by the two police-constables. They endeavoured to climb up the sun blind, but were driven back by the flames. Eventually they persuaded the imprisoned people to jump. Police Constable Martin is well known in the police force as a boxer and swimmer'.

16,326: PC Albert Harrop: Silver medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1929; MB(6) - 17 July 1928: 'On 30th May 1928, Albert Billings (66) was saved from a fire at 37 Brocco Street, Sheffield, caused by a lighted candle igniting bedding'.

16,327: Leonard Simmons, Schoolboy: Silver watch

Details: AR 1929; MB(6) - 17 July 1928: 'On 31st May 1928, Mr W R (63) and Mrs Sarah Roots (65) were saved from a fire at 94a Woodbine Grove, Penge, London, SE20, caused by smouldering paper igniting clothing'.

16,347: Charles Clark Hannam, Painter: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1929; MB(6) - 16 October 1928: 'On 17th June 1928, John S Staples (48) was saved from a fire at 168 Kingsley Road, Hounslow, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,348: Kathleen Jessup, Florist: Silver watch

Details: AR 1929; MB(6) - 16 October 1928: 'On 1st July 1928, Lucy (13), Percy (9), John (4) and Joseph Jessup (2) were saved from a fire at 52 Church Road, Mitcham, Surrey, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,355: PC Robert Bowden: Bronze medal and £2.2s
Frederick W C Todd, Labourer: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1929; MB(6) - 16 October 1928: 'On 7th August 1928, William (30), Patrick (5) and Joyce Lawrence (93) were saved from a fire at the Junction of Blackheath Hill and Lewisham Hill, London SE, caused by a motor vehicle in collision'. The Society's Annual Report describes the award to Todd as a certificate and two guineas.

16,359: PC Alfred Mooreland: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1929; MB(6) - 16 October 1928: 'On 27th August 1928, a rescue was made from a fire at 2 Dyers Buildings, Holborn. London EC, caused by the fusing of electric cable'. The identities of the person(s) saved were not recorded.

16,361: Albert Thornley, Member of Fire Brigade: Silver medal and £2.2

Details: AR 1929; MB(6) - 16 October 1928: 'On 4th September 1928, Dora Armstrong (28) was saved from a fire at Fence Houses, 69 Wentworth Street, Bolton, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,362: PSgt Henry Barnes: Bronze medal
PC Rodney Goodsell: Bronze medal
Pioneer Birch, Member of Fire Brigade: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1929; MB(6) - 16 October 1928: 'On 14th September 1928, Charlotte Ward (79) was saved from a fire at 196 Queen's Road, Hastings, caused by sparks from a fire igniting clothing'. The incident was recorded in the *Hastings & St. Leonards Observer*, 15th September 1928, p.13 as follows:-'LAST NIGHT'S FIRE THRILL – GALLANT RESCUE BY FIREMAN AND POLICE OFFICERS – LADY OF 80 IN BLAZING ROOM. A St Leonards Fireman and two Hastings police officers figured in the dramatic rescue of a lady of 80 from a burning basement room beneath a hop at Queen's-road, last evening (Friday). Fireman George Birch, of No.3 section of the Brigade, actually effected the rescue after several gallant efforts had failed, Police-Sergt Barnes, in attempting to rescue the old lady was overcome by smoke. Fortunately he had a comrade at his elbow, PC Goodsell, who dragged him to the open air, where he revived at once, and immediately plunged into the smoke again to search for the lady. The fire was in a basement kitchen below a fancy goods shop (J P Mallard), at 195, Queen's Road. The alarm was telephoned to the Central Police Station, and while the Brigade was being called out, Police-Sergt Barnes and PC Goodsell rushed to the scene on one of the "Flying Squad's" motor-cycle combinations. They were greeted with cries of "There's a woman down below," from the occupants of upper rooms over the shop. Both officers at once began to search the lower rooms. They were met by dense volumes of smoke which drove them back. Placing handkerchiefs over their mouths, they fought their way into the smoke once more, but were driven back before completing the search. Meanwhile, Mr George Birch, of 56 Gensing Road, and Mr Stanley Sims, both members of No.3 section of the Fire Brigade, who were passing, had noticed the smoke, and had plunged into the building. They joined in the search. With towels tied over their mouths and noses, the four men groped their way from room to room. The smoke was so dense that it was impossible for them to tell just where the actual fire was located. Three times the searchers were driven back, but they returned doggedly to the task. Eventually Mr Birch saw the old lady at the other side of a mass of flame. She was staggering from the scullery to the kitchen, carrying a bucket of water! A draught of air from a broken fanlight, which was driving the smoke towards the men, had kept it from affecting her seriously. The room was well alight and blazing fiercely. Birch closely followed by Sergeant Barnes, forced his way through the blaze, and seizing the old lady handed her to the sergeant, who assisted her to safety. The rescued woman is Mrs Charlotte Ward. She occupied the lower rooms and will be 80 next birthday. But for the prompt action taken, she was in grave danger of being completely cut off from the stairs by the fire. "What I did was nothing very much," said Mr Birch modestly, when interviewed by an *Observer* reporter. "The smoke was the worst part of it – it was very dense and choking. When I saw the old lady she was standing at the other side of the fire; and I just went to her and handed her to the sergeant, who got her up the stairs"'.

Medal inscribed: 'Pioneer Birch, Hastings. 14-9-28.'.

16,389: Superintendent Frederick Windebank, Fire Brigade: Bar to Silver medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1929; MB(6) - 22 January 1929: 'On 30th September 1928, Mrs A Garrett (46) and Mrs E L Spraggett (24) were saved from a fire at 3 Commercial Road, Gloucester, caused by smouldering paper in a fire grate'.

Bar inscribed: 'For conspicuous bravery Gloucester 30th Sept 1928'. See original medal award (case 15,443) for details of his further medals and awards.

16,390: PC Cecil Newing: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1929; MB(6) - 22 January 1929: 'On 10th October 1928, Mrs Ethel (25) and Lionel Huckle (4) were saved from a fire at 155 High Road, South Woodford, Essex, cause of the fire was unknown'. Newing also received the KPM for his actions, the National Archives (file HO45/13418) and the *London Gazette* (1 January 1929) note the circumstances thus: 'At 2.15am on 10 October 1928, a serious fire occurred at South Woodford, originating in an Oil and Colour warehouse, above which were two flats. A passing motor cyclist notified the police station, and Constable Newing went to the premises, which were by this time blazing furiously. On being told that a woman and child were in one of the flats, the Constable went into the building and up the smoke filled stairs. Following the sounds of the screams, he found the woman and her child in the kitchen, and carrying the child in his arms, and with the woman holding onto his shoulders, he guided them down to the street. Immediately afterwards the whole of the shop front collapsed'.

16,391: PC (262) Frederick John Nash: Silver medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1929; MB(6) - 22 January 1929: 'On 13th October 1928, a rescue was made from a fire at Charfield, Gloucestershire, caused by a railway collision'. The following further information is based on the research of Jon Cann (email to the author, 11 September 2010). At 5:16am on Saturday 13 October 1928 the Leeds to Bristol night mail train, travelling on the London, Midland & Scottish railway line, crashed under the road bridge at Charfield Station, some 20 miles south of Gloucester. It had collided in fog with another train being shunted on to a station siding, and this threw it into the path of an oncoming freight train. The mail train had run by its home signal, and in seconds, the Class 3 4-4-0 No 714 appeared out of the darkness and at over 60mph hit the eighth wagon of the GWR goods train. No 714 was sandwiched between this and the LM&S goods train coming the other way. The goods wagons were reduced to matchwood. The eight wooden-bodied coaches of the mail train fared little better as they broke up and rode over the wagons. One coach was thrown over the bridge which crossed the line. Worse was to follow however. All the coaches were gas lit and hot ashes from the fire box spat over the line. Fire broke out and escaping gas soon ignited the wreckage. Within seconds the express was an inferno. The official report lists 16 deaths and 41 injuries. Shortly after the crash, at 5:40am, PC Nash was woken from his bed at the Charfield Police Station by somebody knocking on the door. He went down and was informed there had been a terrible railway accident, and discovered several injured men and women at his door. He assisted them inside and telephoned for two doctors from Wotton-under-Edge, and then informed his Superintendant and Sergeant. Nash then rushed to the scene of the disaster and found that the flames from the burning wreckage were about 20 feet above the sides of the Charfield railway bridge. He had to cover his face with his tunic to enable him to get across. He arrived at the scene at 6:10am and saw several men cutting through the bottom of a railway truck which was lying on its side. He asked if anyone was in the wreckage, and was told there was a woman trapped. He at once crawled on his hands and knees for five to six yards, through the wreckage, and then for six to seven yards more on his stomach, but on reaching the woman he found she was dead. Having no assistance at hand it was impossible for him to get the body out as the heat was unbearable, the fire was spreading so quickly and owing to explosions taking place, at intervals, the wreckage was moving. He finally had to scramble over the top of a goods truck to get clear himself. Later the woman's body was removed and taken to a make shift mortuary at the Railway Hotel, Charfield, where she was examined by Dr Horace Walshman-Ward. She was later identified as being Miss Dorothy Burnell (37), of Claremont Terrace, Belle Vue, Wakefield. The inquest into the crash was opened on Wednesday 17 October 1928, where PC Nash gave his evidence verbally. The Chief Constable received letters from the Postmaster General, the General Superintendant of the LM&S Railway, the

coroner and two civilians, calling for his attention to the valuable assistance rendered by the police, two of the letters particularly directed to the gallantry shown by PC Nash. In addition to his SPLF awards, Nash received the Silver Braid for gallantry by the Chief Constable of Gloucestershire, and the sum of £5 by the Police Authority on 9 April 1929. He was described by their Chairman as being 'A credit to himself and to the Police Force to which he belonged'. His gallant actions were further recognised by the award of The Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem, bronze life saving medal. Frederick Nash died in Gloucester on 20 August 1967 aged 80. See also *The Gloucester Journal* (Saturday 20 October 1928), *The Gloucestershire Citizen* (22 August 1967), Harry Thomas' *The History of the Gloucestershire Constabulary 1839-1985* (Gloucester: Gloucestershire Constabulary, 1987), and *Gloucestershire Constabulary General Orders, 15 November 1928 – 15 April 1929*.



Charfield Railway Disaster,
Gloucester Journal

16,398: PSgt (25F) Thomas Lynch: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1929; MB(6) - 22 January 1929: 'On 21st November 1928, Mrs Rogers (30), John D (3) and Terence Rogers (4 months); Mrs Murray (27) and Florence McDermott (4 months) were saved from a fire at 1 Eaton Square, Monkstown, Co Dublin, caused by an overturned oil lamp'. A report on the events appeared in the *Irish Times* (22 November 1928) thus: 'SERIOUS FIRE IN MONKSTOWN WOMEN AND CHILDREN RESCUED ..... Michael Lacey, who was doing painting work on the floor above, heard Mrs MacDermott cry out for help, and when he got down the room was well alight. He snatched up Mrs McDermott's baby, aged five months. It was slightly burned on the head. Lacey rushed out of the house across to Mr Kells, a building contractor, on the opposite side of the road, and called on him to bring a ladder, as there were other people in the house. George and John Kells, and two younger members of the family – William and Edward Kells – promptly got a ladder and came over. Lacey and George Kells endeavoured to get up the stairs, but were driven back by the smoke. The Kells family then rigged a ladder to the upper windows. Sergeant Lynch, 24F, of the Civic Guard, who was passing in a bus, noticed smoke and flames issuing from the lower windows of the house. He left the bus and ran to the house George Kells was then climbing the ladder. Kells called down that he thought there were people in danger above. Just then Mrs Rogers came to a second storey window with a baby in her arms. She cried out, "Save us; save us;" and Kells running up the ladder, followed by Sergeant Lynch, seized the baby and passed it down to Sergeant Lynch, who took it to the grounds. George Kells, despite the smoke, got in through the window and found there Mrs Rogers and her five year old boy and Mrs Murray, from the flat above. Mrs Murray, when she heard the alarm of fire, hurried down, but, owing to the flames and smoke below, took refuge in Mrs Rogers' flat. Here all had to remain while Mr John Kells, who is an ex-Dublin Metropolitan Policeman, and Mr George Kells two sons, William and Edward, were raising a long ladder to the roof in front of the house. Sergeant Lynch, having put the McDermott baby in safe hands, entered 2 Eaton Square, the house of Mr Cecil Tyson, and telephoned the Dublin Fire Brigade and to the Civic Guards stations at Blackrock and Kingstown. By this time the Blackrock Fire Brigade had arrived, and began to deal with the fire. The Kingstown Brigade also arrived, and a number of Civic Guards from Kingstown and Blackrock stations. As soon as the Kells brothers got their ladder to the roof they brought up a stout ladder, which was placed along the two adjoining roofs, from the skylight, and by this means Mr George Kells was able to lead the two women and the small boy from the burning house to Mr Tyson's house. The flames had quickly mounted through 1 Eaton Square. John Kells was on the roof endeavouring to break the connection between the two houses to prevent the spread of the fire. Sergeant Lynch noticed that he was in imminent danger, and called to him to get clear, but before he could pass to the next roof

the fire burned part of one of the legs of his trousers. Fortunately the Dublin Fire Brigade had now arrived, and under the direction of Captain Power directed a powerful stream of water on the burning house. The fire had got too firm a hold of No. 1, however, to be saved, and the place was burned out, and all the floors and roof collapsed…'. See also *The Garda Review* (January 1929).

Medal inscribed: 'Thomas Lynch, Monkstown, 21-11-28'.

16,400: PC Victor Frederick Eales: Silver medal and £3.3s



PC Victor Eales

Details: AR 1929; MB(6) - 22 January 1929: 'On 30th November 1928, Jacob R. (58) and Annie E. Gibbons (64) were saved from a fire at 263 Wellingborough Road, Northampton, caused by a defective hearth'. A report of the events is given in the *Northampton Daily Chronicle* (30 November 1928) thus: 'THRILLING RESCUE OF OLD COUPLE – A thrilling rescue of an old couple , both deaf mutes, was made by a police motorcyclist, P.C. Eales, in a fire which broke out in the early hours of the morning, at the sweets-shop premises of Mt Harry Kirby, at 263 Wellingborough Road, Northampton. Noticing smoke coming from the premises as he was motor-cycling past the shop, PC Eales dismounted, entered the basement by smashing the glass of the front door, and dashed up the stairs to one of the bedrooms, occupied by the old couple, a Mr and Mrs Gibbons. They had been roused from sleep by the smoke which filled the room, and onlookers stated that, fearing their retreat was cut off and unable to make known their plight on account of their affliction they stood helplessly in front of the window, looking out into the street below, where a crowd soon assembled. From this plight, it is stated that they were rescued by PC Eales, who, with a handkerchief over his mouth and nostrils, carried Mrs Gibbons from the burning, smoke-laden bedroom downstairs and into the street, and then went back for Mr Gibbons…The fire is believed to have been caused by a defective hearth on the first floor – a theory based on the fact that the woodwork round the fireplace was very soon alight…Mr and Mrs Turvey, newsagents, living on the opposite side of the road, who first saw the fire from their bed-room window, expressed admiration at the way in which Mr and Mrs Gibbons were rescued. "When I saw the smoke pouring out of the shop", said Mrs Turvey, "I shouted to my husband, 'Good Heavens! There's a fire, and those deaf and dumb people are sleeping above it! The policeman, however", she added, "quickly rescued them, and it was as well he did so, for there was a terrible amount of smoke, and but for the speedy arrival of the firemen the whole premises, in another ten minutes, would have been burned to the ground". Mr and Mrs Gibbons were reported later today to be none the worse for their alarming experience'.

16,402: Henry M Major, Farmer: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1929; MB(6) - 22 January 1929: 'On 18th December 1928, Lady Glanely and Miss Knight were saved from a fire near Royston, Herts, caused by a motor car collision'.

16,405: W A Muir: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1929; MB(6) - 22 January 1929: No details. The case number is not reported in the Society's Annual Report.

16,406: J Chapman: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1929; MB(6) - 22 January 1929: No details. The case number is not reported in the Society's Annual Report.

16,412: PC Thomas Whittle: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1929; MB(6) - 16 April 1929: 'On 13th September 1928, Susannah McMahon (32) was saved from a fire at the Bush Hotel, Churchgate, Bolton, caused by a defective electrical installation'. The DNW auction catalogue (20 September 2002), at lot 134, noted that: 'PC Thomas Whittle had been attracted by Miss McMahon's cries of "Fire" and "Help" from her bedroom window. He was admitted to the house by the licensee,



PC Thomas Whittle's medal group (l-r) SPLF Medal, Defence Medal, Bolton Borough Police Good Service Medal with additional service bars for 'over 25 years' and 'over 30 years'



PC Thomas Whittle

who had himself tried to reach Miss McMahon's room and had been driven back by the flames with scorched arms, and he at once rushed up the stairs along the corridor into which the flames were coming through the thin partition wall, and to the room in which the imprisoned woman was still hysterically calling for help. A return by the way he had come, with the woman in a state of semi-collapse, was impossible, and so, placing her on a ledge outside her bedroom window, he jumped on to the roof of an adjoining building about 12 feet below, and then persuaded Miss McMahon to jump into his arms. No sooner was she safe than she fainted, and he had to carry her along the roof, break a window to gain access to a lower floor of the hotel, and get her through there, a task in which he was assisted by PC Doyle'.

Medal inscribed: 'Thomas Whittle, Bolton, 13-9-28', together with Bolton Borough Police Good Service Medal, silver, 2 bars 'Over 25 Years' and 'Over 30 Years' (Constable 187 Thomas Whittle, appointed 27 December 1920).

16,415: PC Stanley Copper: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1930; MB(6) - 16 April 1929: 'On 4th January 1929, Harold P (21), Irene, June D (3) and Teresa Terrill (9 months) were saved from a fire at Terrill's Garage, St Leonards, caused by a defective hearth'.

16,417: Samuel Hodge, Schoolboy: Silver watch

Details: AR 1930; MB(6) - 16 April 1929: 'On 23rd January 1929, Frederick Hodge (82) was saved from a fire at 33 Clarence Gardens, Regent's Park, London NW1, caused by an overturning of oil lamp'.

16,419: Inspector Herbert North, Fire Brigade: Silver medal

Details: AR 1930; MB(6) - 16 April 1929: 'On 7th February 1929, Emma, William C. (8), Ellen (3) and Joyce Kennett (8 months), were saved from a fire at 2 Spyvee Street, Hull, cause of the fire was unknown'. North also received the KPM for his actions, the National Archives (file HO45/14251) and the London Gazette (1 January 1930) note the circumstances thus: 'Shortly before daybreak on 7 February 1929, a fire broke out in a house in Hull, occupied by Mrs Kennett and her three young children. Before the arrival of the Fire Brigade, Mrs Kennett, and two of the children had been rescued, but 3 year old Helen was still in her room. Inspector North tried to get through the window, but was unable to do so, due to the flames. He then called for an oilskin coat, which he put round his head. He gave orders that the hose should be played on him, and he entered the room on the first floor. After some time, he found the bed, which was on fire, and in it was the little girl, partly covered by burning sheets. Inspector North wrapped her in the oilskin, and got her out, from where she

was rushed to hospital. However she died from her injuries a week later'.



Inspector Herbert North

16,420: Able Seaman Joseph Whelan: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1930; MB(6) - 16 April 1929: 'On 14th February 1929, John (86) and Mary A Slade (82) were saved from a fire in School Lane, Sheerness, caused by clothing ignited at a domestic fire'.

16,429: PC Herbert W Woodward: Silver medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1930; MB(6) - 16 April 1929: 'On 3rd March 1929, Mrs Ethel, Kathlene (9), Donald (7), Zena (2½) and Brenda Leathley (15 months) and Emma Sherwood (66) were saved from a fire at 9 Clarendon Street, Hull, cause of the fire was unknown'.

Medal inscribed: 'Herbert W. Woodward, Hull, 3-3-29.', in pair with Defence Medal.

16,430: PC Charles Gibson: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1930; MB(6) - 16 April 1929: 'On 9th March 1929, --- Hazlett (6 months) was saved from a fire at 260 Derby Road, Bootle, Liverpool, caused by the careless dropping of a lighted cigarette end'.

16,431: PC Walter Clark: Bronze medal
PC Ralph Wright: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1930; MB(6) - 16 April 1929: 'On 12th March 1929, Albert G Nash (38) and Bruce Crick (35) were saved from a fire in Penhill Road, Bexley, Kent, caused by petrol igniting in a motor lorry'. The Minutes Book records the recipient as Walter Wright.

16,432: PC Joseph Mulholland: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1930; MB(6) - 16 April 1929: 'On 17th March 1929, Joseph Gillibrand (73) and Elizabeth Simms (76) were saved from a fire at 214 Lyons Lane, Chorley, Lancs., caused by a paraffin lamp exploding'.

16,446: Chief Officer George Gallaway, Fire Brigade: Silver medal
Officer Edgar J Double, Fire Brigade: Bronze medal
Fireman William G Squirrell: Bronze medal
Fireman Alfred J Heaver: Bronze medal
Fireman Reginald C Fisher: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1930; MB(6) - 16 April 1929: 'On 15th March 1929, Mrs (75), Ethel (45) and Frank Warden (47) were saved from a fire at 41 Hawes Street, Ipswich, caused by a defective flue'. Double and Squirrell were awarded the NFBA Gallantry Medal for a subsequent rescue (see *Fire*, May 1939, pp. 269 and 272, which includes photographs of both recipients).

According to the DNW catalogue of their 28 March 2012 sale (lot 687): 'George William Squirrell was born in Ringshall, Suffolk on 1 September 1893. A Chauffeur by occupation, he attested for the Army Service Corps (Motor Transport) at Grove Park on 9 April 1916, aged 22 years, 8 months. Serving in France/Flanders he received a scalp wound on 21 May 1918. For his services during the war he was awarded the British War and Victory Medals. After the war he served with distinction in the Ipswich Fire Brigade, being awarded the bronze lifesaving medal of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire in 1929 and the N.F.B.A. Conspicuous Gallantry Medal in 1939. As Sub-Officer in the Suffolk and Ipswich Fire Brigade, he was awarded the Coronation Medal in 1953. Squirrell died on 14 May 1982 and was buried in the churchyard of St.Ethelbert at Hessett, Suffolk'.



Medals William George Squirrell

Medal inscribed; William George Sqirrell, Ipswich. 15-3-29', together in a group with his British War Medal 1914-20 (M2-167379 Pte., A.S.C.'); Defence Medal, unnamed; Coronation Medal 1953, unnamed; National Fire Brigade Association, Conspicuous Gallantry Medal, bronze, reverse inscribed, 'Presented to William George Squirrell, Ipswich Fire Brigade, 1939'; Ipswich Fire Brigade L.S. Medal, bronze ('3rd Officer W.G. Squirrell') reverse inscribed, 'For Ten Years Service, Ipswich Fire Brigade'; and National Fire Brigade Association L.S. Medal 1 clasp, Ten Years bronze ('14360 William G. Squirrell.') this in damaged card box of issue, sold by DNW, 28 March 2012, lot 687, GVF, £2,200.

16,447: PC Frederick White: Silver medal

Details: AR 1930; MB(6) - 16 April 1929: 'On 29th March 1929, Albert (13) and Henry Jenkins (8) were saved from a fire at 4 Argyle Place, London WC1, caused by furnishings being ignited by lighted candle'.

16,448: PC Henry T Brooks: Silver medal

Details: AR 1930; MB(6) - 16 April 1929: 'On 2nd April 1929, Mrs Sherlock (63) was saved from a fire at 140a Fulham Road, Kensington, caused by rubbish ignited by hot cinders'. The Society's Minutes record the recipient's name as Brook.

16,449: PC Kenneth McLee: Bronze medal
PC William R MacLeod: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1930; MB(6) - 16 April 1929: 'On 7th April 1929, Andrew Allison (72) was saved from a fire at 2 Station Street, Renfrew, Dumbartonshire, caused by an oil lamp overturning'.

16,453: PC John Chapman: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1930; MB(6) - 16 April 1929: 'On 21st May 1929, James Sayer (26) was saved from a fire at 31 Eastney Street, East Greenwich, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,455: PC James Cole: Bronze medal
PC George Kirkup: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1930; MB(6) - 16 April 1929: 'On 26th May 1929, Walter (30), Florence (30) and George Cole (4) and Joan Briggs (24) were saved from a fire at 50 Molyneux Street, Marylebone, cause of the fire was unknown'. Cole also received the KPM for his actions, the National Archives (file HO45/14251) and the London Gazette (1 January 1930) note the circumstances thus: 'At 1 am on 26 May 1929, a fire occurred at a tenement house at 50 Molyneux Street, Marylebone. When Constable Cole arrived, smoke was pouring out of the windows, and there were people shouting for help. He at once entered the building, and went to the top floor from where he had heard the screams. Owing to the smoke, he could not see, but groping about, he found a man and two woman, and a child. Taking the child in his arms, he directed the others to hold onto his belt, and then guided them all down the staircase into the street. He handed them all into the care of bystanders, and then re-entered the building with another Constable, and when they got to the top floor again, Constable Cole, who was by this time exhausted, collapsed. He was assisted out by his colleague'.

16,456: Irene Bell (15), Typist: Silver watch

Details: AR 1930; MB(6) - 16 April 1929: 'On the 8th June 1929, Mrs E Rudd (68) and Rita Gerlach (17) were saved from a fire at 19/21 Wilson Street, Finsbury, cause of the fire was unknown'. The presentation was noted in *The Times* (Wednesday, 21 August 1929, p. 9) thus: 'GIRL TYPIST REWARDED FOR BRAVERY. Miss Irene Bell, aged 15, a girl typist, of Stratford, who was instrumental in saving two lives from a fire, was presented, on behalf of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, by the magistrate, Mr Clarke Hall, at Old Street Police Court yesterday with a silver wristlet watch in recognition of her bravery. Miss Bell is employed at an office in Wilson Street, Finsbury. When she arrived there on June 8 she found that fire had broken out in the basement. Although the staircase was threatened by the flames, she ran up to the top floor and roused the housekeeper, Mrs Ellen Rudd, and a young woman. Miss Rita Gerlach, who was with her'. See also the *Daily Mirror* (Wednesday, 21 August 1929, p. 1), which includes a picture of the recipient.

16,464: Superintendent Ernest W Calvert, Fire Brigade: Silver medal

Details: AR 1930; MB(6) - 15 October 1929: 'On 31st March 1929, Mrs B (32), Michael (8), Philip (3) and June Tinsley (9 months); Mrs

M Carson (54), Mrs M Sawyer (65) and Miss J Smith (18) were saved from a fire at 6 Gordon Terrace, Saltaire, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,472: Chief Officer Robert Gooding - SS *Ben Read*: Silver medal
Captain William Forsyth, SS *Efos*: Silver medal

Details: AR 1930; MB(6) - 15 October 1929: 'On 9th August 1929, Joseph Leaman (35), William H Smith (29), William Hammeller (22), A Robertson (56) and F W R Daniels (32) were saved from a fire on the SS *Ben Read* in the River Medway, caused by an explosion'.

16,476: PC Thomas H D Smith: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1930; MB(6) - 15 October 1929: 'On 7th September 1929, Ellen (78) and Lucy Ellis (73) were saved from a fire at 14 Ferndale Road, Clapham, cause of the fire was unknown'. The presentation was noted in *The Times* (Thursday, 21 November 1929, p. 16) thus: 'FIRE RESCUE AWARDS. Police Constable W Smith [*sic*] was given the bronze medal of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire and a cheque for £2 for rescuing a woman of 73, who was paralysed and helpless, on the top floor of a burning house in Ferndale Road, Clapham. The woman's sister, aged 78, perished'. According to his Metropolitan Police Central Record of Service, PC Smith (1890-1938) (warrant no. 107791) received £2.2 and his SPLF medal for 'meritorious services at a fire on 7.9.29. Also commended by the coroner at the inquest' in Police Orders 28.11.29.

16,477: PC George E Phillips: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1930; MB(6) - 15 October 1929: 'On 8th September 1929, Angela M (4½) and Genevieve Jeffreys (18 months) were saved from a fire at 114 Broadwall, Lambeth, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,489: Fireman Vincent Baldwin: Silver medal

Details: AR 1930; MB(6) - 7 January 1930: 'On 5th September 1929, Trevor G Todd (9 months) was saved from a fire at Angel Hill, Bury St Edmunds, caused by the fusing of electric wire'.

16,493: PSgt Frank R Shimwell: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1930; MB(6) - 7 January 1930: 'On 27th October 1929, Mrs M Bearder (56) was saved from a fire at 16 Albert Street, Alfreton, Derbyshire, caused by a spark from a fire grate'. The Society's Minutes record the recipient's name as Frank J Shimwell.

16,494: Archie Veryard, Schoolboy: Silver watch

Details: AR 1930; MB(6) - 7 January 1930: 'On 28th October 1929, Mrs R Cunningham Flowers (45) was saved from a fire at 491 Fairfax Drive, Westcliffe-on-Sea, caused by clothing igniting at a domestic fire'.

16,499: PC Edward Offord: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1930; MB(6) - 7 January 1930: 'On 25th November 1929, Bert (37) and Alice Toye (29) and Henry Nurse (36) were saved from a fire at 40 St. George's Road, Southwark, London SE, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,500: PC James Cockroft: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1930; MB(6) - 7 January 1930: 'On 26th November 1929, Alice (23) and Thomas H Sargeson (6 weeks) were saved from a fire at 18 Leighton Street, Leeds, caused by clothing igniting at a domestic fire'.The 1914 Star and bar trio (for service in the RM) and National Fire Brigades Association Long Service Medal with 5 and 10 year bars awarded to Cockroft are known in a private collection. See also cases 16,586 and 16,737. For further details see *Medal News* (February 2002, pp. 32-33) and www.nhcra-nline.org/20c/j_cockroft.htm



PC James Cockroft

16,501: PSgt Thomas C Watson: Bronze medal
PSgt Arthur Patrick: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1930; MB(6) - 7 January 1930: 'On 27th November 1929, Elizabeth Ludgate (56) was saved from a fire at 10 Little Bridge Street, Leeds caused by hot ashes igniting firewood'.

Medal inscribed: 'Arthur Patrick, Leeds, 27-11-29', known together with his QSA 1899-1902 with four clasps, Transvaal, Cape Colony, South Africa 1901, South Africa 1902 (6926 Pte., Rifle Bde), 1914 Star and bar (6926 Cpl., 3/Rif Brig), BWM and Vict Medals with MID (6926 W.O. Cl. 1, Rif Brig), and 1935 Jubilee Medal.

16,511: Dan Finch, Schoolboy: Silver watch

Details: AR 1930; MB(6) - 15 April 1930: 'On 18th July 1929, Rosalind Davies was saved from a fire at the Bank of Amman, River Ammanford, Carmarthenshire, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,516: John Reid – Schoolboy: Silver watch

Details: AR 1930; MB(6) - 15 April 1930: 'On 24th December 1929, Nora Reid (39) was saved from a fire at 5 Avenue Road, Teddington, caused by clothing igniting at an electric radiator'.

16,519: William Todd, Schoolboy: Silver watch

Details: AR 1931; MB(6) - 15 April 1930: 'On 12th January 1930, Greta (16), David (8), James (4), Isobel (6) and Elizabeth Todd (9 months) were saved from a fire at Shawhead Farm, Stonehouse, Lancashire, caused by curtains igniting through contact with an oil lamp'.

16,521: Superintendent Tom Breaks, Fire Brigade: Bar to Silver medal
Inspector Archie Cornish, Fire Brigade: Bronze medal
Fireman William Gregory, Fireman: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1931; MB(6) - 15 April 1930: 'On 16th January 1930, Mrs A (38) and Florence Morton (2½) were saved from a fire at No. 2, Court 1 House, Trafalgar Street, Sheffield, cause of the fire was unknown'. Despite the citation details, the Mortons died, as Mills (forthcoming) makes clear. Drawing substantially on contemporary reports from the *Yorkshire Telegraph and Star*, Mills retells the story thus: 'Deeply moving tragedy was associated with the death of a Sheffield widow, Mrs Amanda Morton (38), and her two-and-a-half-year old daughter, Florence Morton, in a fire at 2 Court, 1 House, Trafalgar Street, off Division Street, in the centre of Sheffield this morning. Mrs Morton and the child were in bed when the fire broke out, and the flames increased with such furnace-like intensity that the firemen, who were quickly on the scene, were unable to attempt a rescue through the actual premises. The fire created heart-breaking scenes, neighbours stood with blankets, calling upon Mrs Morton to jump from the window, but she was caught up in the smoke and was seen to collapse. Mrs Morton collapsed in what was a desperate effort to escape the swiftly following flames. It was however, fortunate that other young members of the family had left the house. Three children named Percy, George and Rosie, aged 9, 7 and 10 respectively had been got off to school earlier by their sister Alice aged 16, who had then got off to work leaving their mother with the young child Florence, aged two and a half years. The fire which had broken out in the kitchen of the house, which was one of several single dwellings in a court yard, and it, was surprising that neighbours did not discover the fire until they heard the screams of Mrs Morton. By then the flames had got a good hold, and although attempts were made to enter the house, it was found to be impossible. When the Fire Brigade arrived under Superintendent Breaks, they were informed by the crowd of onlookers that had assembled, that a woman and a child were in the bedroom of the house, by this time the building was burning fiercely, but the firemen lost no time in their attempts to rescue the woman and her infant. The Brigade firstly attempted to gain access into the kitchen, but it was found to be impossible due to the intense heat and smoke. A fire escape (ladder) was raised to the windows, and Superintendent Breaks ascended it. At this time dense volumes of smoke were pouring from the windows, with flames sheeting from the first floor. With great courage, the Superintendent had reached half way when he seemed to be enveloped in the smoke and flames. The onlookers thought that he must be burnt or suffocated. The conditions became too much for him, resulting in him having to descend. He then put on a "smoke helmet" and made another attempt to reach the imprisoned woman and child. On this occasion he had a jet of water played upon him as he ascended the ladder. Even with these strenuous and daring efforts, it was impossible for him to succeed, and for a while other firemen (Inspector Archie Cornish & Fireman Archibald Booth)

attempted the climb, only to suffer the same fate, they too had to give up. Whilst the firemen had been attempting to effect an entry in order to rescue Mrs Morton and her child Florence, two neighbours, a James Jenkinson and Percy Jackson, realising that the firemen were having difficulties in the access, went to the attic of James Jenkinson, Mrs Morton's next door neighbour. Once there, they successfully knocked a hole through an adjoining wall, but were prevented from getting through this by the terrific heat and smoke… Knowing that the Brigade had been beaten back below, Jenkinson broke open the window in his attic and summoned the Brigade below, informing them of the hole they had managed to make. When the firemen rushed in, they were able to enlarge the hole, enabling them to gain access. Unfortunately, on reaching the woman and the child, they realised that they were too late; they had both succumbed. The firemen were confronted with the tragic spectacle of Mrs Morton, crouched in a corner with her child beneath her, and it seemed that she and her child had suffocated by the smoke'.

See also www.sfbhistory.org.uk for further details of this and other Sheffield fires, including the death of Archie Cornish following injuries sustained fighting a fire in November 1930.

Medal known: Thomas Breaks' SPLF medals, bars and other awards are in the Fire & Police Museum, Sheffield.

16,526: William Holmes, Footman: Bronze medal
William Shuff, Butler: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1931; MB(6) - 15 July 1930: 'On 10th February 1930, Edith E Davidson (22) was saved from a fire at 37 Portland Place, Marylebone, caused by clothing ignited at a kitchen range'.

16,538: Commander D L Lloyd, SS *Trafford Hall*: Silver medal
Chief Officer Macdonald Martyn, SS *Trafford Hall*: Silver medal

Details: AR 1931; MB(6) - 15 July 1930: 'On 1st September 1929, a rescue was made from a fire on board the SS *Trafford Hall*, caused by spontaneous combustion'. The identities of the person(s) saved were not recorded.

16,539: Inspector Francis Winteringham, Fire Brigade: Bronze medal
PC David Price: Bronze medal

PC (152A) Frederick Hollister Morris: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1931; MB(6) - 15 July 1930: 'On 17th March 1930, Alfred Bullen (13), George (40) and Mrs M Bradley (37) were saved from a fire at 8 Wassail Square, Swansea, cause of the fire was unknown'. The Head Constable's report (Swansea Watch Committee minutes, dated 25 March 1930, pp. 149-150) of the incident noted how: 'At 12.32am on the 17 [March 1930], in response to a call from the St Mary's Police Box, Inspector Wintering-ham, P.S. 23 Kennedy, and 9 firemen, turned out with the Fire tender and the "Dennis" Pump CY3 [to the fire at 8 Wassaill Square, Swansea]. On arrival at 12.35am it was found that a shop and dwelling accommodation above at this address was burning furiously. The Brigade promptly set to work with a jet from a street main, and Inspector Winteringham was informed that some persons were upon the premises, but, owing to the shouting and crying of women, was unable to ascertain who and how many. After two unsuccessful attempts to get up the stairs, which were impassible on account of the flames, the Inspector entered through the first floor window, using a ladder, and in the front room near the door found Alfred Thomas or Bullin, aged 14 years, who was lifted and handed through the window to a fireman outside. At the same time the Inspector instructed that the ambulance be sent for.



PC Frederick Hollister Morris

The Inspector then continued his search, being hampered owing to the stairs still burning, but managed to get into a back bedroom but found no one there. He was then joined by PC 130 Price and together they went up the still burning staircase to the second floor. PC Price entered the front bedroom and rescued a man, George Bradley, and carried him downstairs and handed him from the front bedroom window to a fireman who was on the ladder. In the meantime the Inspector found May Sydenham or Bradley in a back bedroom. Owing to her serious condition through burns it was deemed advisable to try to carry her down the still burning staircase. It was possible to break away some of the burning parts of the stairs and fittings, and, on the Inspector's instructions, she was, after being wrapped in a blanket, carried by PC 152 Morris down the stairs and thence to Sullivan's Lodging House – two doors away. Elsie Sydenham, age 20, a daughter of Mrs Sydenham or Bradley, had previously jumped from the first floor window into the backyard before the arrival of the Brigade, and sustained a fractured wrist [and] also burns. The three people rescued from the house were conveyed to the General Hospital, and the woman, Mrs Sydenham or Bradley, died there a day or two later. Inspector Winteringham reports that all the firemen did their work in a remarkably efficient manner, and especially brought to my notice the conduct of PC 130 Price, who at one time was obviously suffering from the intense heat and smoke. Inspector Winteringham's leadership was inspiring and no doubt contributed largely to the success which attended the efforts of the Brigade'.

Medal inscribed: 'F H Morris, Swansea 17 March 1930'. See case 16,776 for the bar awarded to Morris.

16,566: Chief Inspector Daniel D Sloan, Fire Brigade: Silver medal
Station Officer George Taylor, Fire Brigade: Silver medal
Fireman Charles Barry, Fireman: Bronze medal
Fireman George Reay, Fireman: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1931; MB(6) - 21 October 1930: 'On 16th August 1930, Isaac (60) and Marie Marcus (60) and Marjorie Ellison (15) were saved from a fire at 19 Cannon Street, Manchester, caused by a light dropped near to a gas stove'. See also case 15,745 for another award to Sloan.

16,568: PC Herbert Scott: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1931; MB(6) - 21 October 1930: 'On 2nd September 1930, Mrs Eva (33), Robert (13), William (11) and Francis Yen (1); Mrs (38), Coral (3) and Nina (9 months) Lee and Ah Sim (48) were saved from a fire at 20 Pitt Street, Liverpool, cause of the fire was unknown'. A longer account of the events was recorded in a contemporary Liverpool newspaper cutting (title unknown), thus: 'Tuesday 2nd September 1930: Rescues in Pitt Street. At 02.49 hours a fire was reported at No. 20 Pitt Street and Hatton Garden turned out its 1st Turn engine and crew, arriving at 02.51 hours the Chief followed in his car. Upon arrival it was found that the premises was well alight on the staircase, the flames having reached the uppermost floors and also coming out through the front and rear windows. It was observed that the tenants were trapped within the building and a man was seen standing on the ledge outside a window on the 1st floor. Auxiliary Fireman Con 307A Scott, who had climbed a downspout, to prevent him jumping into the street, was holding him in that position. This man later proved to be a blind china man named Ah Sim and he was rescued by Con 333H Mullin, by means of an "Ajax" fire ladder. An Escape was run up to the rooms on the top floor where there were several people at the window. Sergeant 121H Lobley, Con 455H Grimshaw and Con 395H Davies, mounted the escape, and from a window rescued and passed down the escape, Cora Lee aged 3 years, Nina Lee aged 9 months, William Yen age 11 years, Francis Yen age 1 year, also Mrs Jenny Lee the mother of the two previous children. Main branches and the first aid jet were brought into operation to quell the flames to enable this rescue to be performed. Chief Officer Oakes then made enquiries as to the total number of people sleeping in the house; he ascertained that there were still three children still supposed to be in the building. Frantic efforts were made by the Firemen to cross the landing to the rear portion of the premises but this was found impossible at the time. The fire had gained such a good hold and there was a collapse of part of the roof and staircase, which entirely cut off this means. Strenuous efforts were made to force a way through the floor at the rear of the premises. A stairway from the 2nd to the 3rd floor, which had previously been boarded up and temporarily made good, was hacked away to gain access to the top back bedroom. Con 395H Davies and the Chief, arrived there at approximately the same time as Sergeant 121H Lobley and Con 455H Grimshaw who had made their way across the front portion of the house

after extinguishing the main body of the fire on the staircase. A search was then made for the children in the bedding despite the room being still on fire, but no one was found in this compartment. A search was then made in the middle back room in the debris, the ceiling and plaster had collapsed and the whole of the room practically consumed. The bodies of the three children Edith Yen 8 years, George Yen aged 6 years, and Joan Yen aged 3 years, were found burnt beyond recognition, and they were later removed to the mortuary. The "Fire Under" was passed at 3.55 hours and the engine and crew returned to station at 4.15 hours after being relieved by a Sergeant and five Constables. The Chief later said everything humanly possible was done, and he commended the work of the whole staff who was engaged, particularly the work of Sergeant 121H Lobley and Constable 455H Grimshaw and Constable 395H Davies. The fire originated in the kitchen at the rear of No. 20 which was entirely burnt out, the brickwork in many places having collapsed, but the actual cause could not be determined'.

16,586: Chief Inspector John Taylor: Silver medal

Details: AR 1931; MB(6) - 29 January 1931: 'On 5th November 1930, Fanny Rooms (53), Esther (36) and Sybil Levin (12), and Elsie Thompson (18) were saved from a fire at 161 North Street, Leeds, cause of the fire was unknown'. Certificates were awarded to PCs Cockroft (see case 16,500 and 16,737), William Faulkner, Edward Burfield and E Pearson.

16,587: PC Herbert Sawyer: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1931; MB(6) - 29 January 1931: 'On 8th November 1930, Mrs Maria Johnston (70) was saved from a fire at 31 Great Ormond Street, London WC, caused by an oil stove igniting'.

16,589: PC Gilbert Underwood: Silver medal

Details: AR 1931; MB(6) - 29 January 1931: 'On 11th November 1930, Mary A Ford (56) was saved from a fire at 20 George Yard, Hull, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,590: PC Richard A Miles: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1931; MB(6) - 29 January 1931: 'On 11th November 1930, Annie (5), Emily E. (3) and Harry P Bossom (2) were saved from a fire at 11 King William Street, Greenwich, caused by a child lighting a gas jet'.

16,593: Captain Tom James Smith, Fire Brigade: Silver medal

Details: AR 1931; MB(6) - 29 January 1931: 'On 22nd November 1930, Phillis M. (8), Arthur E. (6) and Hazel J. Aspin (4) were saved from a fire at East Portholland, Gorran, Cornwall, cause of the fire was unknown'. Smith also received the KPM for his actions, the National Archives (file HO45/15173) and the *London Gazette* (1 January 1931) note the circumstances thus: 'During the evening of 22 November 1930, a fire broke out in a house in St. Austell. Three children aged 8, 6 and 4 were known to be inside the house alone. Several men had made vain attempts to enter the house, but after nearly three quarters of an hour the Fire Brigade were called. By this time smoke was pouring out of the windows. As soon as Chief Officer Smith arrived, he was told that the children were still in the house, so he climbed up to the first floor window and went in, but owing to the heat he was unable to make much progress. He climbed back out, and then went into the house by the front door, and up the stairs and reached the children's bedroom. The heat was intense, and almost drove him back, but he managed to crawl in, and found the cot, which was empty. After searching on all fours, and with chocking smoke all around, he found the children all huddled together in a corner. He handed one out, and went back for the other two, and brought them out, but all three had died of suffocation'.

16,594: PC George Sandels: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1931; MB(6) - 29 January 1931: 'On 23rd November 1930, Louisa Thompson (89) was saved from a fire 23 Kendal Lane, Leeds, caused by clothing being ignited by a night light'.

16,598: PC Edward Lecount: Bronze medal
Second Officer William H Wilkinson, Fire Brigade: Bronze medal
Fireman Ernest Robert Thorne: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1931; MB(6) - 29 January 1931: 'On 15th December 1930, Richard (32), Florence (31) and Richard Jones (8) were saved from a fire at 206 High Road, Leyton, caused by the fusing of an electric cable'.

16,599: PC Harvey Watson: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1931; MB(6) - 29 January 1931: 'On 17th December 1930, Mrs Mary Bates (94), Mrs M Snett (22) and Arthur Holgate (7) were saved from a fire at 281 Burdett Road,

Limehouse, London E14, caused by a lighted match being dropped'.

16,617: Robert W Armour-Chelu, Schoolboy: Silver watch

Details: AR 1931; MB(7) - 30 April 1931: 'On 24th December 1930, Kenneth J (3) and Ian C Chelu (2) were saved from a fire at 10 Quex Road, West Hampstead, caused by a gas escape'. Several years later, in reporting a separate story – concerning his parents' marital breakdown and his mother's apparent abandonment of them – the *Daily Mirror* (Friday, 2 September1938, p. 1) noted: '…Bob was awarded a silver watch when he was only ten. He carried his two baby brothers from a gas-filled room, saving their lives. Then, he went back into the house and covered the leaking pipe with his hands until help arrived…'.

16,620: PC William Krill: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1932; MB(7) - 30 April 1931: 'On 20th January 1931, Joan (8) and Christopher Kent (4) were saved from a fire at 216 Freeman Street, Grimsby, caused by the fusing of electric wire'.

16,621: PC Joseph Andrews: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1932; MB(7) - 30 April 1931: 'On 24th January 1931, Elsie Gardner (28) was saved from a fire at 345, Albert Road, Aston Manor, Birmingham, caused by a defective boiler'.

16,622: PC Thomas Bennington: Bronze medal
Fireman Constable Joseph Walsh: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1932; MB(7) - 30 April 1931: 'On 29th January 1931, Rev. Father J. Kieley and Cecelia Travers (28) were saved from a fire at St. Mary's Presbytery, Bankside, Backup, Lancs, caused by the fusing of electric wire'.

16,635: PC Edmund Egan: Bronze medal
PSgt William Grinsted: Bronze medal
Inspector William Fyall: Silver medal

Details: AR 1932; MB(7) - 30 April 1931: 'On 8th March 1931, L W (39), Ethel M (37), Leonard V (16) and Kenneth Shortland (6) were saved from a fire at 15 Greenwich Road, Greenwich, London SE10, cause of the fire was unknown'. The presentation was noted in *The Times* (Monday, 1 June 1931, p. 12), thus: 'AWARDS FOR RESCUES FROM FIRE. Tribute was paid at the Greenwich Police Court on Saturday to the gallantry of three local police officers, Inspector Fyall, Sergeant W Grinsted, and Police Constable Edmund Egan, the Metropolitan Police middle-weight champion boxer, in rescuing four persons from burning premises at 15, Greenwich Road, a grocer's shop, in the occupation of Mr W L Shortland. The magistrate (Mr H Metcalfe) presented to Inspector Fyall the silver medal of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, and bronze medals to Police Sergeant Grinstead and Police Constable Egan'.

16,642: Able Seaman William Sweetman, HMS *Marlborough*: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1932; MB(7) - 23 July 1931: 'On 8th January 1931, Mrs F Blackman (52) was saved from a fire at 12 Granville Road, Tunbridge Wells, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,644: Fireman Leslie G Stevens: Silver medal

Details: AR 1932; MB(7) - 23 July 1931: 'On 10th March 1931, Mrs Armstrong (42) was saved from a fire at 89 Montgomery Street, Hove, caused by a child playing with matches'.

16,647: PC William Hebden McGuinness: Silver medal
PC Norman Linsley: Silver medal

Details: AR 1932; MB(7) - 23 July 1931: 'On 2nd May 1931, Charles (53), John (30), Harold (25) and Harry Corboz (20); Marie L (27) and Douglas Arthur (21 months) were saved from a fire at 31 Preston Street, Bradford, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,649: Daphne Rust, Schoolgirl: Silver watch

Details: AR 1932; MB(7) - 23 July 1931: 'On 5th May 1931, Freda Rust (4) was saved from a fire at 147 New Kent Road, Southwark, caused by the fusing of electric wiring'.

16,652: PC Nicholas Leech: Silver medal

Details: AR 1932; MB(7) - 23 July 1931: 'On 24th May 1931, made an attempt to save life at 46 Fletcher Road, Preston, cause of the fire was unknown'. Further details appeared in the *Lancashire Daily Post* (25 May 1931) thus: 'DESERVED V.C. – STRICKEN HUSBAND'S TRIBUTE TO BRAVE CONSTABLE – Interviewed yesterday by our representative, Mr Samuel Allen who was evidently still suffering from shock of the tragedy and painful burns on both arms and on the neck,

chest, and, face, said he went to bed with his wife and invalid daughter, Elizabeth, who occupied the back bedroom with him, about 10.30 on Saturday night. The child suffered from heart trouble, and had overgrown her strength. She had been kept in bed on doctor's advice for about 11 weeks but slept badly, and about 2.30 in the morning complained of feeling very hot and thirsty. He went down to the kitchen to make a cup of tea for her, and found his brother-in-law dozing in a chair by the fire. The fire had burned so low that it took…minutes to boil a small pan full of water to make the tea. After making the tea he left Woan sitting by the fire half asleep, and everything was in order in the kitchen… afterwards he went to sleep. The next thing he remembered was being aroused by Woan shouting from the landing, "Come on; the house is on fire." He rushed downstairs and found the kitchen full of smoke, and the armchair in which Woan had been sitting the night before on fire. He at once rushed into the street by the back door at shouted "Fire". There was nobody about, and he immediately ran back to call his wife and child out. As he passed through he saw the piano in the kitchen had caught fire and was "going up like a flash". The stairs and landing and the back room were thick with smoke and fumes, and the landing burst into flames as he went up. He called out to his wife, "Jane, where are you? Come on, be quick". Getting no reply, he thought she must have gone into the front room with the child. He dashed through the flames, which were growing fiercer every second, and saw Mr Woan helping the lad to clamber through the window and slide down the sunblind, which had been lowered by some neighbours. Mr Woan clambered out the same way, and he followed. A crowd had been assembled by that time, and PC Leech arrived a moment later. Then he heard someone say that his wife and child were still in the house, and the constable and Mr Edward Williams, of 22 Irvin Street, went to the back to try and get in. The brigade arrived soon after. When he got into the street he was exhausted by the shock and the burns, and had only a confused idea of what was happening, but he did remember the way the policeman worked. "If anybody ever deserved a Victoria Cross it was him," said Mr Allen. He was a gem, and no man alive could have done more than he did". Mr Allen said he was taken to the Infirmary and attended to, and they wanted to keep him there, but by that time he had realised that his wife and child could not possibly be alive if they had remained in the house even a minute longer than he had, and he insisted on going home. When asked what space of time elapsed between the alarm raised by Woan and his escape by the front window, Mr Allen said it all seemed to happen in less than three minutes. He thought it was the piano catching fire that caused the flames to spread so quickly; but he had no idea how the fire started. His arm was burned as he rushed through the kitchen, and other injuries were caused when he dashed through the flames into the front room, thinking his wife and daughter had gone before him. "I did the best I could," said the bereaved man'. Later, the *Lancashire Daily Post* (25 May 1931) noted: 'CONSTABLE'S MODEST REPORT: PC (107) Leech reports that at 5.30 a.m. he was on duty in Church Street, when a passing cyclist shouted that there was a shop on fire in Fletcher-road, and that he was calling the Fire Brigade out. He at once went to the scene, and saw volumes of smoke issuing from the windows at the back of 46 Fletcher Road. He was told that a woman and child were in a room at the rear, and he made two attempts to rescue them, but the smoke was so dense that it was impossible to enter the building, or to see where they were'.

Medal inscribed: 'Nicholas Leech, Preston, 24-5-31'

16,656: PSgt Claude W Archer: Bronze medal
PC Walter Hills: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1932; MB(7) - 23 July 1931: 'On 1st June 1931, Charles Whittington (17) was saved from a fire at Blackfen Road, Sidcup, caused by paraffin being ignited by live coals'.

Archer's medal, in its case of issue, is known in a private collection (2011)

16,661: Engineer's Apprentice Thomas Charles Snow: Silver watch

Details: AR 1932; MB(7) - 23 July 1931: 'On 12th June 1931, Elsie (11), Joseph (7), James (5) and Frank Kent (3) were saved from a fire at 12 Bolwell Street, Lambeth, caused by children playing with matches'.

16,664: Cecil Claude Bond, Scoutmaster: Silver medal

Details: AR 1932; MB(7) - 22 October 1931: 'On 27th June 1931, Samuel Cockton (12), Norman Carr (11), Lawrence Blackburn (12), Clifford Stoneham (11), William Winship (13), Oswald Carr (15), Thomas Watson (10), Ronald Smith (11), Thomas Edgar (10), John Wright (11) and Frank Bond

(10) were saved from a fire in a bell tent in field near Clockburn Farm, Whiskham, caused by sparks from a fire'.

Medal inscribed: 'Cecil Claude Bond, Whickham 26.6.31', with its case of issue (*LSARS Journal*, 1989, 5).

16,670: PC Alfred Shirley: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1932; MB(7) - 22 October 1931: 'On 4th September 1931, Patrick Shakespear (15 months) was saved from a fire at 107 Walsgrave Road, Coventry, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,673: Officer Charles Walter Wiley, Fire Brigade: Silver medal

Details: AR 1932; MB(7) - 22 October 1931: 'On 11th September 1931, a rescue was made from a fire at 60 Avenue Road, Herne Bay, caused by the ignition of an oil lamp'. The identities of the person(s) saved were not recorded.

16,674: PC Bertie Tabreham: Silver medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1932; MB(7) - 22 October 1931: 'On 4th September 1931, Mrs (40) and Florence Levy (6) were saved from a fire at 29 Dempsey Street, Stepney, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,679: PSgt John Allen: Silver medal

Details: AR 1932; MB(7) - 14 January 1932: 'On 6th March 1931, Fanny Turvey (74) was saved from a fire at the Alms House, Church Street, Kidderminster, caused by bedding ignited by a lighted candle'.

16,681: PC Norman Cowey: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1932; MB(7) - 14 January 1932: 'On 13th October 1931, Florence (5), Hilda (4), Lily (1) and Joan Shaw (4 months) were saved from a fire at 5 Whites Row, Stepney, London E., caused by a child playing with matches'.

16,686: Raymond Johnston Denwood – Schoolboy: Silver watch

Details: AR 1932; MB(7) - 14 January 1932: 'On 2nd November 1931, Joyce Horsfield (4) was saved from a fire in Scotswood-on-Tyne, caused by clothing igniting at a fire'.

16,690: PC Henry Coburn: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1932; MB(7) - 14 January 1932: 'On 20th December 1931, a rescue was made from a fire at 192 Stanhope Street, Liverpool, caused by a defective hearth'. The identities of the person(s) saved were not recorded.

16,699: PC Ernest Fuller: Silver medal

Details: AR 1932; MB(7) - 14 January 1932: 'On 29th December 1931, Mrs Winifred Rogers (30) and Miss Winifred Warriner (30) were saved from a fire at 7 Ilminster Gardens, Battersea, caused by the ignition of petrol'.

16,707: Denis Dixon, Schoolboy: Silver watch

Details: AR 1933; MB(7) - 14 April 1932: 'On 12th January 1932, a Maid Servant was saved from a fire at Mill View House, Ennis, Co Clare, caused by clothing igniting at a fire'.

16,710: PC Edgar Wright: Bronze medal
PC William Taylor: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1933; MB(7) - 14 April 1932: 'On 24th January 1932, Rose Meadows (4) was saved from a fire at 45 Lower Essex Street, Birmingham, caused by falling soot from a chimney'.

16,719: PC H Chapman: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1933; MB(7) - 14 April 1932: 'On 2nd March 1932, E Tindall (46) was saved from a fire in High Street, Flimwell, Sussex, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,720: PSgt Walter Davidson Bolam: Silver medal

Details: AR 1933; MB(7) - 14 April 1932: 'On 5th March 1932, James Burnside (57) was saved from a fire at 13 Daisey Street, Govanhill, Glasgow, caused by a dropped light'.

16,722: PC Frederick George Nichols: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1933; MB(7) - 14 April 1932: 'On 16th March 1932, Sarah Ann Smith (74) was saved from a fire in High Street, Braunston, caused by clothing being ignited by a candle'. Fuller details are to be found in the *Mercury and Herald, Northampton* (3 June 1932) thus: 'FOR BRAVERY – In recognition of his bravery at the disastrous fire at Braunston on March 18, when five cottages were destroyed and an old woman was burnt to death, PC Frederick George Nichols was presented with a bronze medal at Daventry

Divisional Court on Tuesday. The presentation was made by Mr E Hall, the presiding magistrate, on behalf of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire. Mr Hall told how the constable entered a burning building with great courage, and at the risk of his life brought out the body of the unfortunate woman. PC Nichols thanked Mr Hall, saying he had only done what any other policeman would have done'. In *Policing Northamptonshire 1836 – 1986* the following details are given: 'A row of six stone built cottages in High Street (Braunston) housed five families with very small children, but in the second of the six, lived 73 year old Miss Sarah Ann Smith. Although Miss Smith was physically very frail, she still retained her mental faculties, and insisted on taking a lighted candle to bed with her every night – much to the consternation of her immediate neighbours. In the early hours of Wednesday 16 March 1932, one of these neighbours, Mrs Quinnery, smelt smoke. Going into the garden at her insistence, her husband was horrified to see flames coming from Miss Smith's bedroom window. The alarm was raised and the other neighbours fetched a ladder. Climbing up to the bedroom window, Mr Quinnery could see Miss Smith lying underneath the window; but the heat and flames beat him back. PC Nichols then arrived on the scene, and tried a different method. Going inside the house, he rushed up the stairs, despite the intense heat from the blazing thatched roof, burst open the bedroom door, and dragged Miss Smith back the way he had come and out into the open. Despite his gallantry however, Miss Smith was so badly burned that she had already perished in the blaze, which was started by her candle setting fire to her nightdress'.



PC Frederick Nichols

16,725: PC William Daniel Harries: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1933; MB(7) - 14 April 1932: 'On 16th March 1932, Sarah (83) and Henry W (78) Collins were saved from a fire at 18 Arcola Street, Hackney, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,737: Fireman James Cockroft: Bar to Bronze medal
Fireman George W Baker: Bronze medal
Fireman William H Oldridge: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1933; MB(7) - 12 July 1932: 'On 26th April 1932, Nellie (11), Margaret (8) and Alfred (5) Connell were saved from a fire at 32 High Street, Halton, Leeds, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,738: Chief Air Pilot Eric Watt Bonar: Bronze medal
PC Herbert Hayes: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1933; MB(7) - 12 July 1932: 'On 24th May 1932, Sergeant. J. Treadwell (29) was saved from a fire at Barton Airport, near Eccles, caused by an aeroplane crash'. Further details of the events are to be found in The National Archives (see file HO45/19474) and *London Gazette* (1 January 1933), which record the related award of the KPM to Hayes, thus: 'On the afternoon of 24 May 1932, the Constable was on motor cycle patrol near Barton Airport, Manchester, when he saw a RAF 2-seater airplane crash in flames in a field about 400 yards from the airport. He immediately drove the motor-cycle across the aerodrome to a fence, and then climbed over and ran to the crash scene. The flames were 30 feet high, but Constable Hayes found Flight Sergeant Treadwell strapped in the rear cockpit surrounded by flames. He immediately began to unstrap him from the seat, when the deputy Airport Manager, Eric Bonar arrived with an asbestos blanket. Whilst others played a fire extinguisher on them, Constable Hayes and Eric Bonar pulled the Sergeant out of the wreck, however he died later in hospital. They were unable to assist the pilot, who died in the flames'



Eric Bonar EGM – during WWII

As a result of his actions in this incident, *The London Gazette*, 5 August 1932, states, 'The KING has been graciously pleased to approve of the Award of the Medal of the Civil Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire to the undermentioned: *For Gallantry* – Flight-Sergeant Eric Watt Bonar, Royal Air Force Reserve, Chief Pilot of Northern Air Transport Limited. For an act of conspicuous courage in rescuing the pilot of a burning aeroplane of the Royal Air Force at Barton in May last. Under the protection of an asbestos blanket he unfastened the straps binding the pilot, releasing him from his parachute harness, and with assistance dragged him from the burning wreckage. He gave first aid to the airman, who was conveyed to the hospital but died about a fortnight later'. See also the *OMRS Journal*, 31(1): 30-33.

The EGM and SPLF medals to Bonar are extant in a UK collection. SPLF medal inscribed: 'Eric Bonar, Barton Airport 24.5.32'. EGM inscribed: 'Flt. Sergt. Eric Watt Bonar, R.A.F.R.'

16,752: Kathleen Glover, Schoolgirl: Silver watch

Details: AR 1933; MB(7) - 25 October 1932: 'On 11th June 1932, Norma La Petit (8) was saved from a fire at 16 Park Road, Thackley, Bradford, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,758: PC Frank Rudd: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1933; MB(7) - 25 October 1932: 'On 30th July 1932, Walter (40), Violet L (31), Margaret (13), Doris (12), Rose (10), Violet (8), Winnie (6), Edith (4) and Thomas Spencer (42) were saved from a fire at 32 Campbell Street, New Wortley, Leeds, caused by a lighted match or cigarette end being thrown down'.

16,760: PC Frederick C Preest: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1933; MB(7) - 25 October 1932: 'On 4th September 1932, Lawrence B (37), Vera M (35) and Doreen Ann Cook (5 months) were saved from a fire at 13 Lavender Road, Battersea, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,762: Chief Officer A Wilson, Fire Brigade: Silver medal
2nd Officer H Stevenson, Fire Brigade: Silver medal
Fireman R Baxter: Bronze medal
PC Peter C Groome: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1933; MB(7) - 25 October 1932: 'On 27th September 1932, Mrs E Worby (41), Mrs A. Mellor (43) and H Whitton (65) were saved from a fire at 22 Salisbury Street, Morecambe and Heysham, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,763: PC Arthur Parker: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1933; MB(7) - 25 October 1932: 'On 1st October 1932, Felice Norman (12) was saved from a fire at 22 Noel Street, Berwick Street, London W1, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,773: PC John Rees: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1933; MB(7) - 31 January 1933: 'On 13th November 1932, William (6), Francis (4), Christopher (2) and Mary (1) Dunne were saved from a fire at 8 Harcourt Street, Liverpool, caused by a child playing with a lighted candle'.

16,774: PC Frederick Gilbert Blundell: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1933; MB(7) - 31 January 1933: 'On 17th November 1932, Doris S (5½) and William T Maynard (2) were saved from a fire at 51 Lambeth Palace Road, London SE1, cause of the fire was unknown'. Blundell also received the KPM and further details on this and the events are contained in the National Archives (file HO45/19479) and *London Gazette* (1 January 1934) thus: 'At about 1 pm on 27 November 1932 a fire broke out in a room on the second floor of a house in

Lambeth Palace Road, opposite St. Thomas's Hospital. Constable Blundell, who was on sick leave, saw the fire as he was leaving hospital after undergoing a minor nasal operation. He hurried to the house, ran up the stairs to the fiercely burning room. The mother of the family living there had already rescued one of her children, and Constable Blundell met her on the point of collapse, with another child in her arms. The Constable took her downstairs, and hurried with the child to hospital. On his return he tried to crawl into the burning room to attempt to rescue the remaining child but after being chocked and scorched by smoke and flames, he withdraw. The child was later found dead. Constable Blundell had to return to hospital for treatment'.



PC Frederick Gilbert Blundell

16,776: PC Ebenezer Jones: Bronze medal
PC Hugh Rawlings: Bronze medal
PC Frederick Hollister Morris: Bar to bronze medal

Details: AR 1933; MB(7) - 31 January 1933: 'On 20th November 1932, E G Harris (27), H R Bully (26) and William Drury (23) were saved from a fire in High Street, Swansea, cause of the fire was unknown'. Fire brigade historian Keith Mills (personal communication, 2009) described the events in more detail, thus: One of Swansea Fire Brigade's blackest days was Sunday 20 November 1932 when around 7am the caretaker of the Alexandra Road Chapel observed smoke issuing from the nearby Llewellyn's Warehouse in High Street, Swansea. After first investigating, he ran to the Police Station, which fortunately was just across the road from the warehouse. On receipt of the call the fire brigade responded under the command of Sergeant George Hey. Even though the fire station was only a stone's throw away, it was already apparent that the fire had secured a firm hold on the premises. The warehouse abutted a narrow lane, known as Tower Lane and due to the narrowness of the lane the heat generated made it impossible for the firemen to enter. Opposite the warehouse within this narrow lane was the Mackwoth Hotel, which was already showing signs of being affected by the heat. Although it was thought at the time that there was no risk to hotel's occupants, the hotel was evacuated. Throughout the fire there were sounds of explosions from within: these were thought to be the petrol tanks of the stores delivery trucks. It was decided that the firemen had no option other than to enter the lane in order to fight the fire and stop the spread to the hotel opposite. It was at this time whilst they were dragging the hose into Tower Lane that the wall of Llewellyn's Warehouse collapsed, burying firemen Bulley, Harris and Drury. With no apparent thought to their own safety Firemen Rawlings, Morris and Jones rushed forward with the hope of rescuing their colleagues. The scene that they were confronted with was one of absolute devastation. Fireman Drury's brass helmet was on the ground totally crushed and distorted. In what was described as a 'frenzied rescue', the three firemen began to remove the red-hot debris in order to extricate their colleagues. At this time all that could be seen of Fireman Harris was his head and eyes, although he was believed to be conscious. Fireman Morris's hands were badly burned through removing the red-hot debris, but this did not deter him. He continued with the rescue until all three firemen were pulled from the rubble. All the injured firemen were taken to Swansea General Hospital, Gethin Harris, who had a good physique due to his interest in boxing and wrestling, was the most severely injured, although at this time it was thought that he would eventually recover. Unfortunately, on the morning of 22 November aged 27 he succumbed to his injuries and died. Fireman William Drury was considered to be 'getting on well' and Fireman Harold Bulley was described as 'much the same' Fireman

Gethin Harris was buried on Friday 25 November 1932 with a 'Full Service' funeral, his body travelling on the recently purchased fire engine WN 4613 which proceeded from his home in Landore to the Oystermouth Cemetery in the Mumbles. The cortege passed through the town and eventually passed the Swansea General Hospital, where Harold Bulley insisted on being taken out on to the hospital's balcony to see his close friend's procession. The presentation of the Society's awards was reported by the *South Wales Evening Post* (19 April 1933) thus: 'Swansea Firemen Decorated: Medals for Work in Big High Street Blaze. Swansea Council had an impressive few minutes at the opening of its meeting to-day, when the Mayor, Mr Daniel Evans, JP, presented the bronze medals of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, arising out of the fatal fire at Messrs Llewellyns in High Street on November 20, 1932 to Police Constables (74) Hugh Rawlings, (124) Ebenezer Jones, and (152) Frederick Hollister Morris. In the record read by the town clerk it was stated: "The bronze medals have been awarded in recognition of the splendid work done by the three recipients in connection with the disastrous fire which occurred at Messrs Llewellyns premises in High-street on Sunday, November 20, 1932, when two members of the Swansea Police Fire Brigade sustained fatal injuries, and a third suffered from severe burns, through a collapse of a portion of the wall of the burning building. Constable Rawlings, Jones and Morris, at great personal risk, went to the assistance of their three comrades when the wall collapsed, and successfully extricated them alive from the burning debris. Each of the officers showed great self-sacrifice, and the awards which the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire have made in this instance were well merited." The Mayor congratulated each recipient in pinning the medal to his tunic, and then added that, on behalf of the town, he wanted to compliment them on their efforts for their fellow firemen on this occasion'. See also the *South Wales Evening Post* (21 November 1932, 22 November 1932, 23 November 1932, 30 November 1932 and 21 March 1933).

Bar inscribed: 'F.H.MORRIS SWANSEA 20-11-32'. See case 16,539 for details of the original medal to Morris.

16,779: PC Alfred Charles Cleaver: Bronze medal
PSgt William Capper: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1933; MB(7) - 31 January 1933: 'On 3rd December 1932, Mrs M (50), Annie (23), Dennis (5), Doris (10), William (15), Laurence (17) and Hilda Bailey (8) and Mrs A Mitchell (42), were saved from a fire at 15 Trinity Street, Chester, caused by a defective fire grate'. Cleaver also received the KPM and further details on this and the events are to be found in the *National Archives* (file HO45/19479) and the *London Gazette* (1 January 1934), thus: 'Shortly after 6 am on 3 December 1932 a fire broke out in the front ground floor room of a house in Trinity Street, Chester. Constable Cleaver was told of the fire, and on entering the house through the flames, found two women in the back room. They said that another woman and several children were upstairs. The Constable told them to get out, and then went upstairs, and brought two children down to safety. A third was following, but ran back on meeting the flames. The Constable returned, followed by a Sergeant, and brought out the third child, and the Sergeant brought out two more women and a child. A further search of the house was then made, but all had been saved. The house was an old wooded property and was well alight'. See also R.W James *To the Best of our Skill and Knowledge: A Short History of the Cheshire Constabulary 1857-1957*, Museum of Policing in Cheshire, 2005, p. 61.



PSgt William Capper

The medal to Alfred Cleaver (1896-1984), in a group with his KPM, 1914-15 Star trio, Defence Medal, 1953 Coronation Medal, and Police LS&GC Medal (GVI issue), is in the Museum of Policing in Cheshire.

16,780: Fireman Austin A Shelley: Bronze medal
Fireman Ivor W Blakey: Bronze medal
Fireman William D Outram: Bronze medal
Inspector Charles Teather: Silver medal

Details: AR 1933; MB(7) - 31 January 1933: 'On 5th December 1932, Carrie Johnson (10), Dorothy (4), Tommy (2) and Sophia Booth (4 months) were saved from a fire at 48 Irving Street, Sheffield, caused by a spark from a fire'. The awards were presented by the Lord Mayor of Sheffield, Alderman Ernest Wilson, in about September 1933 (*Fire*, September 1933, p. 83).

16,781: Fireman Thomas Wilson: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1933; MB(7) - 31 January 1933: 'On 8th December 1932, Mary McLean (18), William (5) and Margaret Bain (18 months) were saved from a fire at 10 Laburnum Road, Glasgow, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,784: PC William Brooks: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1933; MB(7) - 31 January 1933: 'On 19th December 1932, George Mockbridge (72) was saved from a fire at 57 Oxford Street, Totterdown, Bristol, cause of the fire was unknown'. Supplementary details about the rescue and medal presentation are to be found in the *Bristol Evening World* (22 March 1933), thus: 'HEROIC RESCUE BY BRISTOL CONSTABLE - MEDAL AWARDED FOR LIFE-SAVING. Constable William Brooks, of the Bedminster, Bristol, division, was today presented, at the Council House, with the bronze medal of the Protection of Life and Property from Fire Society [*sic*]. The Lord Mayor, Mr T J Wise, made the presentation, in the presence of the Chief Constable of Bristol, Mr C J Maby, Alderman Frank Sheppard, chairman, and members of the Watch Committee. The award was made in recognition of the heroic rescue of an aged man from the top room of a house in Oxford Street, Totterdown, on December 19. Brooks was walking along St. John's Lane, when he saw smoke and flames rising from the house. He found the upper storey alight, and sent a boy to telephone the brigade. Brooks heard a women shout, "Save him: my father is in there," and pulled himself up by the ledges of the windows until he reached the bedroom where the fire was raging. He entered the room, which was full of smoke and flames, and groped about for the man. He was nearly overcome and had to go to the window for air. He returned and found Mr George Mockridge, aged 72, the occupier unconscious on the floor. Brooks found a pair of trousers which he wrapped around the man's waist, and then with his belt he lowered him to the ground. The lower portion of the premises were destroyed by fire while Brooks was performing his heroic action. The Lord Mayor, before pinning the medal on Constable Brooks's tunic, said "I am performing this duty in the name of the citizens of Bristol. We are proud of you and also of the police force as a whole. Bristol is wonderfully served by its police. "You saved a man from certain death". "The physical fitness of the police force of today enables its members under stress of circumstances to rise to the occasion, and at the call of emergency are willing to risk their lives to save others". Constable Brooks suitably replied'Medal inscribed: 'William Brooks, Totterdown 19-12-32'. Brooks also received the Defence Medal, War Medal, and the RLSS Medallion and bar.

16,797: PC John Kirkpatrick: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1934; MB(7) - 2 May 1933: 'On 15th January 1933, Elizabeth Hutton (73) was saved from a fire at Bowholme, Canonbie, Dunfriesshire, caused by furnishings being ignited by a candle'.

16,801: PC Osmond Dade: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1934; MB(7) - 2 May 1933: 'On 26th January 1933, Mrs A. Denny (62) was saved from a fire at 77 Barnfield Road, Belvedere, caused by a spark from a fire'.

16,802: PC R Topham: Bronze medal
PSgt R Roworth: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1934; MB(7) - 2 May 1933: 'On 29th January 1933, Algernon H (62), Miss F E (75) and Mrs F Mills (55) were saved from a fire at High Street, Amersham, Bucks, caused by a lighted cigarette being thrown down'.

16,804: PC William Frederick King: Bronze medal
PSgt James Bowden: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1934; MB(7) - 2 May 1933: 'On 14th February 1933, Mrs Ada Matthews (65) was saved from a fire at 37 Bennetts Road, Chadwell Heath, Essex, caused by a spark from a fire'. King also received the KPM and further details on this and the rescue are to be found in the *National Archives* (file HO45/19479) and the *London Gazette* (1 January 1934), thus: 'At about 1.30 pm on 14 February 1933 a fire broke out in an upstairs room of a house in Chadwell Heath, where an old lady was bedridden. The housekeeper had tried to drag the old lady out, but had

been unsuccessful, and then Constable King crawled into the room through thick smoke and flames. He found the woman lying on the floor partly covered by smouldering bedclothes and a burning nightdress. Constable King rolled her along the ground to put out the flames, and then with great difficulty, owing to her weight, dragged her from the room onto the landing. He was then overcome by smoke, and had to go out for some air. Others then brought the woman downstairs, and she was taken to hospital, where she later died'.



PC William King

16,808: PSgt Wyndham Martin: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1934; MB(7) - 2 May 1933: 'On 5th March 1933, Mrs E Head (60) was saved from a fire at 66 Asylum Road, Peckham, caused by furnishings ignited by a candle'.

16,809: Superintendent Thomas Breaks, Fire Brigade: Bar to silver medal
Fireman Archibald Booth: Bar to silver medal
Fireman John Genders: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1934; MB(7) - 2 May 1933: 'On 14th March 1933, William Burke (62), John Doyle (65) and William Parkes (60) were saved from a fire at 138 Smithfields, Sheffield, cause of the fire was unknown'. The events were reported in the *Sheffield Star* (14 March 1933, p. 4-5) thus: 'Thrilling rescues were made during a fire which almost gutted a house No. 38 [*sic*] Smithfields, Sheffield, early this morning. Six people, who were all asleep, were trapped in the burning building, and one, Alfred Webster (64) jumped from an attic window into the street, and was killed in full view of the crowds in the street. Two men escaped through a bedroom window, another climbed through another window onto the roof, where he was rescued by Supt T Breaks of the Sheffield Fire Brigade. William Burke (62) the tenant of the house was rescued by Firemen Genders, and Amos Holland, a lodger, was brought to safety by Fireman Booth. John Doyle a lodger, escaped through a window into the yard, but was badly burned about the arms, neck and face. He is detained in the Royal Infirmary in a serious condition. Today he was reported as being fairly comfortable. The fire which broke out in the kitchen, quickly spread down the staircase and the people awoke to find themselves trapped in the upper part of the house. The manner in which the firemen carried out their duties is worthy of commendation said Superintendent Breaks today. He mentioned particularly Firemen Genders and Booth, Firemen Genders, he concluded, made unsuccessful attempts to rescue one of the men, succeeding at the third attempt. Superintendent Breaks himself was responsible for one of the most daring rescues – that of the man on the roof, who was in a semi-conscious condition. To accomplish the rescue he used the extension ladder and a hook ladder'. The awards were presented by the Lord Mayor of Sheffield, Alderman Ernest Wilson, in about September 1933 (*Fire*, September 1933, p. 83).

Medal known: Thomas Breaks' SPLF medals, bars and other awards are in the Fire & Police Museum, Sheffield.

16,810: PC Thomas William Godwin: Bronze medal
PC Francis Cunningham: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1934; MB(7) - 2 May 1933: 'On 23rd March 1933, Lancelot G Le Mesurier (29) was saved from a fire at 93 Gloucester Terrace, Paddington, London W, caused by a lighted cigarette thrown down'.

16,811: PC Herbert Scott: Bar to bronze medal

Details: AR 1934; MB(7) - 2 May 1933: 'On 3rd April 1933, Mrs R, Margaret (2), Thomas (7) and Bernard (5) Benali; Mary Bradley (85)

and Osman Ben Ali were saved from a fire at 43 Hurst Street, Liverpool, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,818: Inspector Alfred Ernest Fawcett, Fire Brigade: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1934; MB(7) - 25 July 1933: 'On 1st April 1933, Jenny Miller (26) was saved from a fire at The Rookery, Scotland Lane, Horsforth, near Leeds, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,821: PC Ernest Ker: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1934; MB(7) - 25 July 1933: 'On 25th April 1933, Mrs Mary A Cryer (83), Thomas B. Pocklington (78) and Mrs Jane Herbert (71) were saved from a fire at 10 Woodside Park Road, North Finchley, caused by an overturned oil lamp'.

16,823: Reginald Turner, Schoolboy: Silver watch

Details: AR 1934; MB(7) - 25 July 1933: 'On 3rd May 1933, Dr E J Littledale was saved from a fire at Charing Hill, Kent, caused by an aeroplane crash'.

16,825: Superintendent Feather Bartle, Fire Brigade: Bronze medal
Chief Inspector James Bailey, Fire Brigade: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1934; MB(7) - 25 July 1933. 'On 21st May 1933, Ethel Snowden (45) was saved from a fire at Cayton Institution, Clayton near Bradford, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,828: PC Charles Picking: Silver medal

Details: AR 1934; MB(7) - 25 July 1933: 'On 29th May 1933, Maurice (2½) and Emmie (4½) Hawkyard were saved from a fire at 147 Padiham Road, Burnley, caused by an electric iron'.

16,838: PC Clarence Groom: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1934; MB(7) - 31 October 1933: 'On 8th August 1933, Miss D E Huggett (15), Colin G (27), Mrs O M (21) and Clive G Brodie (22 months) were saved from fire at 18 Boston Parade, Boston Road, Hanwell, caused by the fusing of electric wire'.

16,839: PC Albert Gibson: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1934; MB(7) - 31 October 1933: 'On 16th August 1933, Ernest, Mrs E A (42), Ellen (18), Nora (15), Doreen (13), Jean (5), William (19), Wilfred (16), Dennis (8) and Bryan Roberts (1) were saved from a fire at 26 Witham Hill, Hull, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,848: PSgt Richard Clarke: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1934; MB(7) - 31 October 1933: 'On 9th October 1933, Mrs E, William (15), George (13), Edgar (11), Dennis (7), Iris (5) and Richard Chandler (2), were saved from a fire at 25 Handel Street, Liverpool, caused by a spark from fire'.

16,856: PC William A Hayward: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1934; MB(7) - 13 February 1934: 'On 22nd October 1933, Mrs Mary (38) and Anne Gallop (12) were saved from a fire in Eleanor Cross Road, Waltham Cross, caused by an overturning motor car'.

16,859: PC Stanley Nelson Hewitt: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1934; MB(7) - 13 February 1934: 'On 11th October 1933, Margaret M (23), Norah C (20) and Joan E (18) Keirle were saved from a fire at 67 Nightingale Lane, Balham, SW, caused by a defective hearth'. Medal inscribed: 'Stanley Nelson Hewitt, Balham 11-11-1935'.

16,860: Patrick Beirne, Motor Bus Conductor: Bronze medal



Patric Beirne in bus conductor's uniform

Details: AR 1934; MB(7) - 13 February 1934: 'On 16th November 1933, Mary Moss (67) and Francis Anderson (33) were saved from a fire in First Avenue, Trafford Park, Manchester, caused by a collision of motor vehicles'. Four people died in this blaze and in reporting the subsequent inquest, the *News Chronicle* (30 November 1933) described how: '…Patrick Beirne (22), of Ryder Street, Manchester, the conductor, said he felt a crash and saw everyone on the floor of the bus. He got out and saw the front of the bus and the back of the lorry burning. The Coroner: Did you see anybody trampled down? Beirne: No, sir. I saw people on the floor and tried to get to the emergency door which is on the right-hand side of the bus, but could not do so because of the people crushing. "I got out," added the witness, "and knowing the passengers by sight I missed some of them. Miss Anderson was inside the bus. She collapsed and fell down and I took her outside. Then I saw Mrs Moss, her mother, had collapsed and I went to drag her out." The Coroner: Do you mean to say you went twice into the burning bus? Beirne: Yes. Then I went again to see if all had cleared out, but because of the heat I was driven back and could not see on account of the smoke. I saw three or four men at the back of the bus get out before women. I didn't see any of the men try to help any of the men and women. [Alfred] Dale, the driver, in reply to a question, said he was an ex-tram driver. He was driving his bus at a moderate speed on the crown of the road, he said, and saw a dark object in front of the bus. He applied his brakes and swerved to the right. The bus burst into flames from end to end. He helped a girl to climb through a window and also helped a man. He could not get hold of the fire extinguishers as they were red-hot. Dale added that the night was dark and squally. Harry Jackson, of Stretford, a passenger on the bus, said it was proceeding at a moderate speed when there was a loud crash. He was thrown to the floor and the bus burst into flames. "There were two figures wedged in the rear door of the bus," he added, "and I charged into them, grabbing another man after me. I knocked them into the roadway. I do not know who they were. They may have been women. "I saw a young lady whose coat and hair were on fire running away along First Avenue. I ran after her and with the help of another man extinguished the flames"'. The subsequent presentation of the SPLF bronze medal to Beirne was reported thus: 'Manchester Bus Conductor's Gallantry – Award for life-saving in bus fire – The bronze medal of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, together with a gift of money from the members of the Manchester Corporation Transport Committee, were presented on March 27th by Councillor J.S. Hill (the Chairman of the committee) to Guard Patrick Beirne in recognition of the courage and resourcefulness shown by him on the occasion of the bus accident that occurred in Trafford Park in November last, in which four people lost their lives. Councillor Hill explained that immediately after the bus had collided with the rear of a motor lorry it became enveloped in flames and Beirne either fell or was pushed by the struggling passengers into the road. When he got to his feet he discovered that there were still passengers in the bus and he went in and succeeded in getting out a young woman whose clothes were burning. After entering a second time and dragging out the girl's mother, who was very badly burned, he attempted a third rescue, but was defeated by the fierceness of the fire. The day after the inquest the County Coroner wrote to Mr Pilcher, the General Manager of the Transport Department, regretting that he had omitted to express publicly, owing to the strain of conducting the inquest, his great appreciation of the gallant conduct of Beirne. The attention of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire was subsequently directed to the case' (unattributed newspaper cutting in Beirne family possession). For further details see D Owens 'Patrick Beirne – saving life from a burning bus', *LSARS Journal*, October 2007, 61: 3-9.

Medal inscribed: 'Patrick Beirne, Stretford, 16/11/33'.

16,861: James Barry, Postman: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1934; MB(7) - 13 February 1934: 'On 24th November 1933, Martha Vine (90), was saved from a fire at 206 Whitehorse Lane, South Norwood caused by clothing igniting at a gas fire'.

16,869: Alexander Wood, Tramway Conductor: Silver medal

Details: AR 1934; MB(7) - 13 February 1934: 'On 18th March 1932, Mrs Joseph Ross and two children were saved from a fire at 4 Devanha Terrace, Aberdeen, caused by hot ashes from a fire'.

16,871: PC William E Goffin: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1934; MB(7) - 13 February 1934: 'On 30th December 1933, Stella F (22) and Donald Grenstead (2 months) were saved

from a fire at 4 Parkfield Way, Bickley, caused by a spark from a fire'.

16,880: PC James Mansfield: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1935; MB(7) - 17 April 1934: 'On 14th January 1934, Sidney G (47), Mrs Sylvia (29), Vivian (3½), Betty (2½) and Sylvia Scopes (7 months) were saved from a fire at 52 Blackfriars Road, Southwark, London SE1, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,881: PC William Lappin: Bronze medal
PC Charles Pearce: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1935; MB(7) - 17 April 1934: 'On 25th January 1934, Mrs E Capell (65), Mrs D Azario (21) and Miss Azario (2½), were saved from a fire at 12 Lorn Road, Brixton, London SW9, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,882: PC K Hamilton: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1935; MB(7) - 17 April 1934: 'On 25th January 1934, Jeffrey H. (12) and James Morris (7) were saved from a fire at 284 High Street, Stratford, London E.15., caused by a defective hearth'.

16,884: PC William Moir: Bronze medal
Fireman Arthur Baldock: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1935; MB(7) - 17 April 1934: 'On 3rd February 1934, Mrs E E Burton (85) was saved from a fire at 4 Mornington Road, Leytonstone, London E11, clothing ignited by a candle'.

16,894: John Francis McCarthy, Painter: Silver medal and £5.5s
PSgt Reginald A Annett: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1935 MB(7) – 17 April 1934: 'On 9th-10th March 1934, Joyce Davie (17) and Miss Vincent were saved from a fire at Castle Hill, Filleigh, Devon, cause of the fire was unknown'. The Minutes Book records the award to McCarthy as a certificate and five guineas. In reporting the inquest on Mary Ellen Vincent and Elizabeth Joyce Davie (who both in fact died as a result of the fire at Castle Hill, the West Country home of Lord and Lady Fortescue), *The Times* noted that '…John Francis McCarthy, a painter, said that he was roused from bed by a woman screaming about 1 o'clock and found the building ablaze. He was assisting to get out the hose when he heard Miss Barrow screaming, "They are inside. Get them out". He went into the servants' quarters with some of his mates and they attempted to get up the staircase through the thick black fumes. After the third attempt he crawled up to the second floor. Hearing a movement, he put his hand out and found a body, which he carried downstairs and with help into the kitchen. It was that of Miss Davie, who was unconscious. Mr McCarthy described another attempt he made to reach Miss Vincent's room, but said that Police Sergeant Annett, who accompanied him, called him back as he was losing his senses and carried him down… The jury returned verdicts of "Accidental Death", due to burns in each case and expressed sympathy with the relatives, as did Mr Smyth Richards on behalf of Lord Fortescue. The jury complimented Mr McCarthy and those who assisted in the rescue…'(13 March 1934, p. 9).



John Francis McCarthy

Medal inscribed: 'John Francis McCarthy Filleigh 10.3.34'

16,903: Irene G Kelsey, Schoolgirl: Silver watch

Details: AR 1935; MB(7) - 10 July 1934: 'On 1st April 1934, Joan M Kelsey (9) was saved from a fire at 93 Old Chapel Road, Smethwick, caused by clothing ignited by a gas jet'.

16,907: Ivor B Nicholas, Postman: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1935; MB(7) - 10 July 1934: 'On 11th April 1934, Mrs N M (37) and John L

Buck (6); Joan M (16), Peter H P (13), Margaret B (11), Grace Jean (5) and Grace Jean Laing (4) were saved from a fire at 17 Plymouth Road, Penarth, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,908: PC Walter M Hodgson: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1935; MB(7) - 10 July 1934: 'On 14th April 1934, James Sheddon (69) was saved from a fire at 46 Roundhill Place, Bradford, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,914: PC James Christie: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1935; MB(7) - 10 July 1934: 'On 16th June 1934, Mrs W (46), Margaret (12) and Agnes McMillan (10) were saved from a fire at 207 Union Street, Aberdeen, caused by a lighted cigarette being thrown down'.

16,918: PC Walter Parker: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1935; MB(7) - 9 October 1934: 'On 17th June 1934, Miss R (17) and Miss B Bunner (14) were saved from a fire at 62a Leytonstone Road, Stratford, caused by an electric iron'. Parker also received a Commissioner's Commendation for this rescue.



Walter Parker in WWI RMA uniform

Medal inscribed: 'Walter Parker, Stratford E., 17.6.34', this medal in its case of issue, together with his 1914-15 Star trio (Gnr, RMA), a silver sports medal from K Division, Metropolitan Police, an original photograph of him in RMA uniform and his RMA service parchment of service were offered for sale by N W Collett, June 2010.

16,919: PC John Bett: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1935; MB(7) - 9 October 1934: 'On 8th July 1934, Miss I V Lott (28) was saved from a fire at 67 Elms Road, Clapham, London SW4, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,924: PC William Irving: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1935; MB(7) - 9 October 1934: 'On 29th July 1934, William Jack (4½) was saved from a fire at 29 Great George Street, Liverpool, caused by an electrical defect'.

16,925: PC Charles Vaughan: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1935; MB(7) - 9 October 1934: 'On 31st July 1934, Mrs J Davies (72) and Margaret Joseph (19) were saved from a fire at the 'Bird-in-Hand', Monk Street, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,932: Albert Humphrey, Commissionaire: Silver medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1935; MB (7) - 9 October 1934: 'On 17th September 1934, G M Key (29) were saved from a fire at Bestobell Works, Slough, explosion in an experimental fire tunnel'.

16,933: PC Stanley Spedding: Bronze medal
PSgt Christopher J Gartland: Bronze medal
PSgt William Henry Lobley: Silver medal
PC John Irving Mullin: Silver medal
PC Joseph W Crimes: Bronze medal
Salvage Officer F O Ellams: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1935; MB(7) - 9 October 1934: 'On 12th September 1934, John, Mrs M, Isabella (10), Francis (7), John (11), Michael (9), Joseph (4), Theresa (2) and Eileen Murphy (10 months) Mrs J (39), Mary (7 weeks) and Margaret Jones (2) 55 Wilbraham Street, Liverpool, caused by a dropped light'. In recording the incident the *Liverpool Echo* (13 September 1934) reported the events thus: '12th September 1934: Rescues at Wilbraham Street. Thirteen people were saved from a house on fire in Wilbraham Street, off Great Homer Street, Liverpool. The house was three storeys dwelling with eight rooms, comprising two cellar kitchens, two parlours, and four bedrooms.



Salvage Officer F Ellams

The fire was discovered shortly after 07.00 hours, by a night-worker employed at a cookhouse in Great Homer Street, adjoining the back of the Wilbraham Street premises. He saw flames in the back parlour and, after shouting the alarm, climbed on the wall and banged at the doors. He roused some members of the house, who in turn started to rouse the others. Police Sergeant Gartland, was attracted to the scene by the commotion, he forced the front door and was first to enter the house, but was met by blinding volumes of smoke with the staircase already ablaze. He was forced back, and said it was hopeless that way and the only chance was through the windows. In the meantime, crowds of neighbours gathered, and there were terrifying screams from them as they saw dim figures at the top bedroom windows amid clouds of smoke. One of the inmates Mr J Murphy rescued his wife and three of his children, by dropping them from the first floor into a blanket held by neighbours. Both the Fire and Salvage Brigades arrived, and an escape was quickly placed in position while Sergeant Lobley and Fireman Mullen dashed into the house. They fought their way upstairs and, groping around in the smoke filled back bedroom brought three children out. The children were unconscious and were taken into a neighbour's house for first aid attention. Mrs Lambert, aged sixty-nine, was found badly burned on her hands and face on a sofa in the cellar, she had apparently, got down the blazing staircase. In the meantime, Fireman Crimes and Salvageman F O Ellams rescued others by means of an escape, one groping about in the smoke for unconscious victims while the other took them down the escape. There was a great deal of excitement that some person in the house might be overlooked, and a neighbour shouted, "What about little Teresa?" He was referring to the two year old Murphy child. An officer rushed back into the house and found the child lying in a huddled position between the bed and the wall. Onlookers praised Sergeant Gartland. They said "He was covered in soot and tears were streaming down his face, he helped to take an old lady and handed several children to neighbours as Firemen brought them down. In a neighbours house he gave first aid and generally worked extremely hard." The fire itself was extinguished in a very short time, but its ferocity was such that it must have been smouldering all night'. Sergeant Gartland was later awarded the George Medal (*LG*, 1.8.1941, p. 4417).

16,941: Mary Beatrice Chainey, Milliner: Silver watch

Details: AR 1935; MB(7) - 8 January 1935: 'On 1st October 1934, Yvonne Chainey (6) was saved from a fire at 53 Cornwall Road, Brixton Hill, caused by furnishings ignited by a candle'.

16,943: PC Frederick Brown: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1935; MB(7) - 8 January 1935: 'On 7th October 1934, Steven (55) and Beatrice Fishburn (26) and John C (58) and Laura Milligan (58) were saved from a fire at 8 Olliver Street, Redcar, caused by a defective hearth'.

16,950: PSgt James Kelly: Bronze medal
PC Ernest Fraser: Bronze medal
PC Percy George Noble: Bronze medal
Chief Officer Frank Richards, Fire Brigade: Silver medal
Second Officer Frederick Wain, Fire Brigade: Silver medal

Details: AR 1935; MB(7) - 8 January 1935: 'On 12th November 1934, Miss Mary Agnew (90) was saved from a fire at 18 Crosspark Terrace, Heavitree, Exeter, caused by an overturned oil stove'. See also *Fire* (February 1935, p. 180).

16,954: Alexander Anderson, Engineer: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: AR 1935; MB(7) - 8 January 1935: 'On 17th August 1934, Frederick Knott (38) was saved from a fire on board the oil tanker SS *Laurel Wood*, South Shields, caused by an explosion'.

16,963: Joan Graves, Schoolgirl: Silver watch

Details: AR 1935; MB(7) - 8 January 1935: 'On 17th December 1934, Harold (8), Norman (6) and Elsie Graves (3) were saved from a fire at 9 Killarney Road, Old Swan, Liverpool, caused by children playing with lighted paper'.

16,964: Second Officer William R Blower, Fire Brigade: Bronze medal
Fireman R W Elson: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1935; MB(7) - 8 January 1935: 'On 23rd November 1934, Mrs O K Burnard (31) was saved from a fire at 4 and 5 Factory Row, Torquay, cause of the fire was unknown'. The awards were presented by the Mayor of Torquay, Mr A L J d'Espiney, in about April 1935 (*Fire*, April 1935, p. 220).

16,967: PC Ernest Filkins: Bronze medal
PC Ernest Freeman: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1935; MB(7) - 2 April 1935: 'On 15th December 1934, Edgar (30), Mrs B (28) and Joan (20 months) Routh; Mrs S A Gates (40), Cecil Austin (38) and Mrs Ward (55) were saved from a fire at 42 Wickham Road, Bromley, London SE, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,971: Sydney Lightfoot, Royal Artillery: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1936; MB(7) - 2 April 1935: 'On 4th January 1935, Frederick Heaton (32) was saved from a fire in Eccles New Road, Weaste, Salford, Lancs, caused of the fire was unknown'.

16,973: PC (51D) George Thompson Hudson: Bronze medal



PC George Thompson Hudson

Details: AR 1936; MB(7) - 2 April 1935: 'On 6th January 1935, John (74) and Catherine (48) Dufour were saved from a fire in 152 Kendal Street, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,975: PC J George: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1936; MB(7) - 2 April 1935: 'On 9th January 1935, Mrs Mary Callaghan (73) was saved from a fire at 9 Coningsby Road, Ealing, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,977: PC Charles Stather: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1936; MB(7) - 2 April 1935: 'On 17th January 1935, William Bowers (81) was saved from a fire in Low Barugh, near Barnsley, Yorks. caused by burning soot from a chimney'.

16,980: Vernon Jack Lovatt, Insurance Agent: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1936; MB(7) - 2 April 1935: 'On 28th January 1935, Violet (2yrs 8 months) and Joan Greta Goodeve (14 months) were saved from a fire at 1a Clarendon Place, Landport, Portsmouth, caused by spark from a fire'.

16,984: PC Alexander Booth: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1936; MB(7) - 2 April 1935: 'On 3rd March 1935, James McCarthy (78) was saved from a fire at 3 Gleave Street, Bolton, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,985: Emmeline Buckingham, Nurse: Silver watch and illuminated certificate.

Details: AR 1936; MB(7) - 2 April 1935: 'On 4th March 1935, Michael (9 months) and Peter W Robinson (3) were saved from a fire at Stanley House, Rolle Road, Exmouth, cause of the fire was unknown'.

16,988: Harry Smith, Miner: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1936; MB(7) - 2 April 1935: 'On 6th February 1935, Zachariah Slater (45) was saved from a fire at 20 Dolcliffe Road, Mexborough, caused by an overturned gas ring'.

16,989: PC John Tyler: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1936; MB(7) - 2 April 1935: 'On 9th March 1935, John F Leedham (45) was saved from a fire at 4/33 Ladywood Road, Birmingham, caused by children playing with lighted paper'. The presentation was recorded by the *Daily Mirror* (Thursday, 6

June 1935, p. 9) thus: The bull dog breed: 'At the same time [at the Birmingham Watch Committee yesterday] Police Constable John Tyler received the bronze medal of the Society… for his bravery in rescuing an invalid from a house fire in Ladywood Road, Birmingham'.

16,990: Chief Officer George E Carter, Fire Brigade: Silver medal

Details: AR 1936; MB(7) - 2 July 1935: 'On 13th November 1934, R Stevens (69) was saved from a fire at 11 Market Street, Lewes, caused by an overturned oil stove'.

16,994: Doris E E Beynon (11), Schoolgirl: Silver watch

Details: AR 1936; MB(7) - 2 July 1935: 'On 25th February 1935, Doris I Benyon (8) was saved from a fire at 40 Arlingford Road, Brixton, London SW, caused by clothing igniting at a fire'. A brief note about the presentation is given in *The Times* (Tuesday, 1 October 1935, p. 11), thus: 'The efforts of Doris Benyon, aged 11, of Arlingford Road, Brixton, to put out the flames in which a younger sister was enveloped were praised at Camberwell Coroner's Court yesterday, when she was presented with a silver watch by the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire'.

16,997: PC Kenneth Walter Lawrence Steele: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1936; MB(7) - 2 July 1935: 'On 13th March 1935, Mrs Eliza Lewis (86) was saved from a fire at 46 Wilmington Square, London, WC1, caused by an overturned oil lamp'. Steele also received the KPM and a further account of the rescue may be found in the citation for that award in the National Archives (file HO45/19490) and the *London Gazette* (1 January 1936) thus: 'At about 12.55 am on 13 March 1935, Constable Steele and another Constable were told of a fire, and that a woman was trapped on the second floor. Both Constables ran to the house, and found the door to the room locked. They broke it down, and were met by a wall of flames and smoke. The woman could be seen some 10 ft into the room. Whilst the other constable went out to call the Fire Brigade, Constable Steele put a wet handkerchief over his nose and mouth, and entered the room, locating the woman in a collapsed state. After several attempts, he managed to drag her to the door, but she became jammed against a chest of drawers. The Constable was then overcome with the smoke and had to leave. The Fire Brigade arrived and took the woman out, but she was dead. Constable Steele sustained severe burns to his face and hands'. See also *The Times* (Saturday 20 April 1935, p. 9).



PC Kenneth Walter Lawrence Steele

17,001: PC Fred Blagg: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1936; MB(7) - 2 July 1935: 'On 6th April 1935, Elizabeth (84) and Dora M Davis (50) were saved from a fire at 72 Lowesmoor, Worcester, caused by articles falling onto an oil stove'.

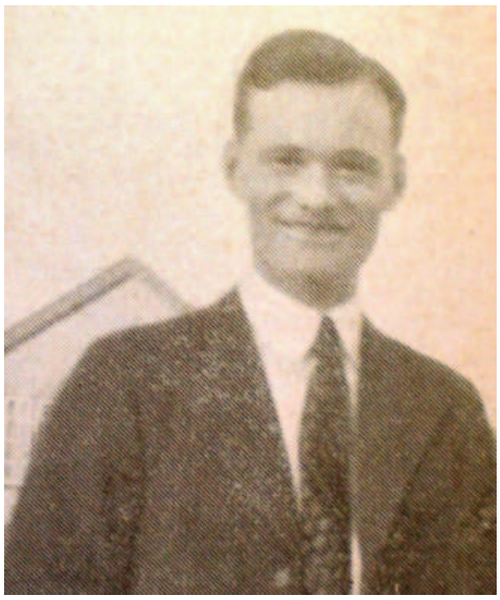
17,005: Jack Diamond, Schoolboy: Silver watch

Details: AR 1936; MB(7) - 2 July 1935: 'On 2nd May 1935, Margaret (7), John (5), Harry (3) and Daniel Erwin (1) were saved from a fire at Burnie Olace, Bellshill, caused by furnishings ignited by a candle'.

17,007: PC Ronald Martin: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1935; MB(7) - 2 July 1935: 'On 16th May 1935, Mrs Amy E A Teal (81), George D Pepper (75), John (77) and Mrs Caroline Keeler (69) were saved from a fire at St Nicholas Hospital, Harbledown, near Canterbury, caused by an overturned oil stove'. Martin also received the KPM for this recue and further details on this are contained in the National Archives (file HO 45/19490) and the *London Gazette* (1 January 1936) thus: 'On 16 May 1935, Constable Martin was called to a fire caused by an oil

fire exploding, at the Almshouses in St Nicholas's Hospital, Harbledown. Mr and Mrs Keeler, an elderly couple, who occupied the flat above, were trapped in their rooms by flames on the stairs. The flat became very hot, and full of smoke, and Mrs Keeler opened the window to get out, intending to jump the 18 ft to the ground. Constable Martin climbed up onto the roof of an adjoining almshouse, and made his way to the bedroom window, and into the flat, and then assisted Mr and Mrs Keeler down a ladder, which had been found. Very soon after the rescue, the roof and floor of the flat collapsed'.



PC Ronald Martin

17,008: PC Phillip Marshall: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1935; MB(7) - 2 July 1935: 'On 27th May 1935, Albert L (48) and Lilian May Caldicott (43) were saved from a fire at 960 Yardley Wood Road, Billesley, Birmingham, caused by fusing of electric wire'.

17,013: PC Luther Taylor: Bronze medal
PC Frank R Whitewick: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1935; MB(7) - 29 October 1935: 'On 9th June 1935, Mrs Elizabeth M Jones (47) was saved from a fire at an Underground lavatory in Old Kent Road, Southwark, caused by clothing igniting at a gas fire'.

17,014: Mary Elizabeth Lee, Schoolgirl: Silver watch

Details: AR 1935; MB(7) - 29 October 1935: 'On 15th June 1935, Patricia Lee (18 months) was saved from a fire at 38 Aylmer Road, Dagenham, caused by lightning'.

17,018: PC James Airton: Bronze medal



PC James Airton

Details: AR 1935; MB(7) - 29 October 1935: 'On 11th July 1935, Edward Cook (45) was saved from a fire at the junction of Ashley Place and Morpeth Terrace, London SW1, caused by an electrical short circuit in an Underground cable box'. Airton also received the KPM for this rescue and further details on this are contained in the National Archives (file HO45/19940) and the *London Gazette* (1 January 1936), thus: 'On 11 July 1935, a fire broke out at Ashley Place, Westminster. When Constable Airton arrived he found dense smoke and flames coming from an underground cable box. With some assistance he extinguished the flames by throwing several barrel loads of sand into the hole, He then learned that a man who had been working down the hole was still there. Despite the dense smoke and impossible visibility, and the danger from the high voltage cables, Constable Airton went down into the hole, and found the man at the end of the tunnel, after searching in the darkness. He was overcome by smoke and had to come out for air. As he did so, the Fire Brigade arrived, and Fireman [Percy] Waldren went down into the hole and with difficulty brought the man to the surface. The man was badly burned and subsequently died'. (Fireman Waldren, though not put

forward for a SPLF award, also received the KPM).

17,019: PC Aaron Laycock: Bronze medal
PC Harry Bullock: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1935; MB(7) - 29 October 1935: 'On 14th July 1935, John Beswick (64) and Mrs Evelyn M Almond (40) were saved from a fire at 90 Kirkgate, Leeds, cause of the fire was unknown'.

17,028: PC Arthur E Whitty: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1935; MB(7) - 29 October 1935: 'On 29th August 1935, Frederick (51) and Ellen (56) Howarth and Peggy Ford (17), were saved from a fire at 30 Norwood Street, Hull, caused by hot ashes from a fish frying range'.

17,031: Fireman Sidney Harrison: Bronze medal
Fireman John Davis: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1935; MB(7) - 29 October 1935: 'On 21st September 1935, George A (62) and Ellen Reaney (59) were saved from a fire at 2 Court, 8 House, Wentworth Street, [Sheffield], caused by a light being thrown down'. One of the local newspapers, *The Star* (Saturday 21 September 1935, p.1), reported the events under the headline 'CAT GIVES ALARM: Man and Wife Rescued in Sheffield Fire' thus: 'The mewing of a cat awakened a 60 year-old Sheffield couple in the early hours of the day. They rushed from their bedroom to the attic and shouted for help. The Fire Brigade arrived, and the couple were rescued from the attic by means of a fire-escape. In addition, two large dogs and the cat who gave the warning, were rescued by the Brigade. The fire was at 2/8, Wentworth Street, and the occupants were Mr and Mrs G A Rainer. The house is a single back-to-back type. When the Brigade arrived under Superintendent T Breaks, the fire was gaining good hold. Firemen S Harrison and J (Micky) Davis gained entry into the house and rushed through the smoke and flames to the attic. These two firemen reassured the elderly couple, and helped them down the escape. When safely down, the woman remem-bered her pets - the two dogs and the cat - and with promptitude the Fire Brigade rescued the animals. The damage was confined to the living room'. The story was repeated in the *Sheffield Independent* (Monday 23 September 1935, p. 5) and the *Sheffield Telegraph* (Monday 23 September 1935, p. 2).

17,036: PSgt Charles Bacon: Bronze medal
Junior Station Inspector George A Mounsey: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1936; MB(7) - 14 January 1936: 'On 24th September 1935, Mrs C A (40), Helena (11), Glenys (7) and David Roberts (2½) were saved from a fire at 18 Charlotte Street, London W1, cause of the fire was unknown'.

17,040: PC Stanley G J Knight: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1936; MB(7) - 14 January 1936: 'On 23rd October 1935, George Garner (86)was saved from a fire at Cowfairlands, Biggleswade, Beds., caused by smouldering tobacco left in clothing'. The Society Minutes Book records the recipient as 'J G Knight'.

17,044: Police Inspector Wilfred Harrison: Bronze medal
PSgt Cyril Ramsden: Bronze medal
PC Frank Roberts: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1936; MB(7) - 14 January 1936: 'On 23rd November 1935 David Daniels (72) was saved from a fire at 8 Highbury Grove, Pudsey, Yorks., caused by hot ashes from a fire'. The awards were presented by the Lord Mayor of Leeds in about May 1936 (*Fire*, May 1936, p. 244).

17,048: Captain David Bourner, Employment Officer: Silver medal

Details: AR 1936; MB(7) - 14 January 1936: 'On 26th May 1935, Mr Sanderson (65) was saved from a fire at the junction of Sandy Lane and Pinewood Avenue, Gosforth, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, caused by a motor car collision'.

17,062: Winifred Earl, Nurse: Silver watch

Details: AR 1936; MB(7) - 21 April 1936: 'On 18th December 1935, Prudence Colvin (8), Annie Hicks (39) and Miss McNullan (28) were saved from a fire at the Royal Naval College, Greenwich, caused by a spark from a fire'.

17,070: Margaret Murray, Child: Silver watch

Details: AR 1937; MB(7) - 21 April 1936: 'On 16th January 1936, a child (3 months) was saved from a fire at 20 West Park Street, Huntly, caused by the ignition of a gas pipe'.

17,075: Miss Margery Maunton: Silver watch

Details: AR 1937; MB(7) - 21 April 1936: 'On 7th February 1936, John Vollmer (9 months) was saved from a fire at 30 Napier Road, Bromley, Kent, caused by a spark from a fire'.

17,079: PC Arthur Eastwood: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1937; MB(7) - 7 July 1936: 'On 23rd February 1936, Mary A Jeffery (69) was saved from a fire at 122 Aln Street, Hebburn-on-Tyne, caused by furnishings being ignited by a candle'. Further details on this rescue are contained in the *Sunderland Daily Echo* (24 February 1936) thus: 'A graphic description of efforts made to rescue two aged women from a blazing house was given at an inquest at Hebburn today on Christiana Bamborough aged 85 years, a widow who lived at 122 Aln Street, Hebburn. Coroner Mr W M Patterson commended Sergeant Shillaw, PC Eastwood and Mr Sydney Ball of 7 Jervis Street, Hebburn, an electric welder employed by Messrs Reyrolle & Co, and expressed the hope that their bravery be brought to the notice of the proper authorities. Mr Paterson said that they had heard with pride and gratitude of the brave attempts of the three men to save life and the county was proud of their gallantry and courage. Evidence from Dr Phillips showed that Mrs Bamborough was badly burned, her death was almost instantaneously from shock and asphyxia. Coroner recorded verdict of, "Death due to severe injury accidentally received". Sgt Shillaw stated that about 4.35am yesterday, he and PC Eastwood smelt burning and they traced it to Aln Street where they saw volumes of smoke coming out of a chimney at 122. They tried to awaken the inmates of the house and then broke a sitting room window and climbed in, Mr Ball also entered the room. The smoke and fumes were so dense that they all had to return to the window for fresh air. They then attempted to cross the room and PC Eastwood shouted, "Is anyone there", a faint voice replied, "I am here". Witness heard a slight thud as if someone was falling. He then heard PC Eastwood say, "I have got her", they carried a woman, Mrs Mary Jeffrey, 69 years, who lived there with Mrs Bamborough, through the room and lifted her out of the window. Mrs Jeffrey told them that there was another woman in the house. PC Eastwood and Mr Ball made further attempts to enter the house but were met by smoke and flames. When they did get in, PC Eastwood found the kitchen door locked, he had to be assisted to fresh air. Sgt Shillaw saw it was impossible to do any more, and he told the others not to risk their lives and he went and telephoned for Gateshead Fire Brigade. Through a window at the back of the house he saw a single bedstead destroyed and the remains of a woman on the floor. It was stated that a candlestick was found in the room, Sgt Shillaw said he thought Mrs Bamborough had got out of bed when bedclothes caught fire and she could not help herself and had collapsed'. The subsequent presentations are recorded in *The Times* (Tuesday 18 August 1936, p. 7) thus: 'At Hebburn-on-Tyne Police Court yesterday the Chairman (Mr J Watson) presented the bronze medal of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire to Police-constable Arthur Eastwood, and a certificate and two guineas to Mr Sidney Ball, of Victoria Road, East Hebburn, for their bravery in rescuing a woman from a burning house'.

17,080: Chief Officer James Hurst, Fire Brigade: Silver medal
Fireman Albert Ernest V Hanney: Bronze medal
Station Officer Stanley Gerald Fear: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1937; MB(7) - 21 April 1936: 'On 23rd February 1936, Helen (6) and Hilary King (7) and Veronica McHardy (35), were saved from a fire at Citizen House and Bath Labour Exchange, Westgate Buildings, Bath, cause of the fire was unknown'. For further details see D Hill's *Bath Fire Brigade and Ambulance Service 1891-1974*, Huddersfield: Millstream Books, 2003, pp. 82-85.

17,083: Roy Bicknell, Schoolboy: Silver watch

Details: AR 1937; MB(7) - 21 April 1936: 'On 2nd March 1936, Mrs Bicknell (29) was saved from a fire at School Lane, Long Preston, caused by paraffin being spilt over a fire'.

17,090: Chief Officer F Richards, Fire Brigade: Bar to silver medal
Second Officer A W Townshend, Fire Brigade: Silver medal
Fireman Sidney E Davey: Bronze medal
Fireman F Soulpher: Bronze medal
Fireman E Shephard: Bronze medal
Fireman J Tancock: Bronze medal
Fireman W L Woodland: Bronze medal
PC A R Dooling: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1937; MB(7) - 21 April 1936: 'On 5th February 1936, Edith Newbury (40) and Georgina Nowell (73) were saved from a fire at the rear of 9a Guinea Street [a residential tenement], Exeter, caused by an overturned

paraffin lamp'. At the subsequent inquest into the death of the one person who died at the 9a Guinea Street fire, the *Exeter Express & Echo* (5 February 1936) reported that 12 people were saved. The Chief Officer and his Firemen were praised but none mentioned by name; similarly, the report of the Coroner's Court enquiry again praises the Exeter Fire Brigade without naming individuals.



Fireman Sidney E Davey

Medal inscribed: 'Sidney E. Davey. Exeter 5-2-36', in a group with BWM and Victory Medal (514115 A Cpl S Davey R.E.),TFWM (2652 Cpl S Davey. R.E.), Defence Medal, 1953 Coronation Medal (Stn. Officer S. E. P. Davey. Exeter F.B.), Fire Brigade LS Medal, EII type, with five and ten year clasps (9657 Sidney E. P. Davey), and six NFS buttons.

17,099: PC Thomas Henwood: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1937; MB(7) - 7 July 1936: 'On 26th April 1936, Clara (58) and Alice (28) Davies were saved from a fire at 3 Tiverton Terrace, Poplar Road, Sparkhill, Birmingham, cause of the fire was unknown'.

17,101: Acting Station Officer John T Proudlove: Bronze medal
Fireman Anthony O'Melia: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1937; MB(7) - 7 July 1936: 'On 25th February 1936, Jack (79) and Nellie Townend 62) were saved from a fire at 1 Sunnyside Lane, Bradford, cause of the fire was unknown'.

17,102: Leslie Newton, Schoolboy: Silver watch

Details: AR 1937; MB(7) - 7 July 1936: 'On 8th April 1936, Donald Bray (10) was saved from a fire at Plant Hill Road, Blackley, Manchester, caused by clothing ignited at a bonfire'.

17,105: Chief Officer William Monaghan, Fire Brigade: Silver medal
Fireman Michael Murphy: Bronze medal
Fireman John McInerney: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1937; MB(7) - 13 October 1936: 'On 30th May 1936, John Keating (75) and Miss Flynn were saved from a fire at 108 North Main Street, Cork, cause of the fire was unknown'.

17,119: John J Trevenen, Schoolboy: Silver watch

Details: AR 1937; MB(7) - 13 October 1936: 'On 29th September 1936, Mary D. Trevenen (17) was saved from a fire at Lower Hellangove Farm, Guival, Penzance, caused by an oil stove exploding'.

17,127: PC Charles Donald: Bronze medal
Station Officer Thomas McMurtrie, Fire Brigade: Bronze medal
Fireman John Holt: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1937; MB(7) - 26 January 1937: 'On 7th October 1936, Alexander Simpson (70) was saved from a fire at 135 Rose Street, Edinburgh, caused by furnishings being ignited by a naked light'. The Museum of Fire, in Edinburgh, notes the citation thus: 'On the occasion of a fire in Rose Street on 7th October 1936 at 2.42am, Station Officer Thomas McMurtrie and Second Class Fireman John Holt displayed great coolness and courage in attempting to rescue Alexander Simpson, 70 years of age, who was found suffocated in a back bedroom, and for their gallantry have been awarded a Bronze Medal each, suitably inscribed, by The Royal Society for the Protection of Life

from Fire. Their task on this occasion required great presence of mind and they had to work in a suffocating atmosphere with great personal danger'. The medals awarded to McMurtie and Holt are on loan to the Museum of Fire, Edinburgh (2011).



Holt and McMurtie receiving their SPLF medals

17,128: Ellen Wright, Schoolgirl: Silver watch

Details: AR 1937; MB(7) - 26 January 1937: 'On 11th October 1936, Robert (12 months) and Joyce Wright (3) were saved from a fire at 123 Bridport Place, Shoreditch, London N1, caused by a spark from a fire'.

17,129: Station Officer J O'Neill, Fire Brigade: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1937; MB(7) - 26 January 1937: 'On 11th October 1936, T (45), E (42), R (15), Thomas (14), Elsie (8), A (3) and J Molyneaux (6 weeks) were saved from a fire at 27 Turin Street, Belfast, caused by clothing being ignited by a spark from a fire'. The fire was reported at length in the press, one account noting how …Shortly after midnight a neighbour, Robert Hastings, who resides next door, smelt burning, and believing his own house on fire got out of bed immediately. Going into the street he found the lower portion of the house next door well alight, and immediately raised the alarm. Other neighbours came on the scene, and one of them brought a short ladder which they placed against the first floor window. The occupants of the house were in a state of semi-suffocation. They tried to get down the stairs, but were forced back by fire and smoke. Several of the neighbours went up the ladder and assisted them to reach the street. The Fire Brigade arrived shortly after. The lower portion of the house was burning like an inferno, and it was stated that one of the children was still in the burning building. Station Officer O'Neill, of the Fire Brigade, forced his way into a back room where he found the eight-year-old child, Elsie Molyneaux, semi-conscious in bed, the clothing of which was smouldering. The child was immediately removed in the ambulance to the Royal Victoria Hospital, a short distance away, but she died an hour after admission…' (*Irish Times*, Monday 12 October 1936, p. 7). Both parents, Thomas and Elizabeth Molyneaux, and their children Elsie and Rachel all died from their injuries (*Irish Times*, Tuesday 13 October 1936, p. 7). Their funeral on Tuesday 13 October in Carnmoney Cemetery attracted huge crowds, numbering nearly 100,000 along the streets according to one estimate (*Irish Times*, Wednesday 14 October 1936, p. 5). The coroner noted the bravery of many of those involved in the rescue efforts: 'Gallant and heroic work, he said, was done by neighbours and firemen and the police in attempts to save life. But for the promptitude of Mr Hastings in discovering the fire, probably all would have perished, and the initiative of Mrs Hastings in so quickly procuring the shawl, into which the baby was dropped, no doubt saved its life. Robert Elder, Victor Morrow, and Fireman O'Neill risked their lives in their gallant and fearless efforts to rescue the victims. From the moment the fire was discovered there seemed to have been nothing but gallantry and heroism shown by neighbours…' (*Irish Times*, Wednesday 21 October 1936, p. 5).

17,130: Raymond Dent, Junior Clerk: Silver watch

Details: AR 1937; MB(7) - 26 January 1937: 'On 17th October 1936, Mrs Jackson (71) was saved from a fire at Sir Arthur Dorman's Memorial Homes, Dormans-town, Redcar, Yorks, cause of the fire was unknown'.

17,144: PC Stanley Sutton: Bronze medal
PC William E Malpas: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1937; MB(7) - 26 January 1937: 'On 26th November 1936, T E (64) and Mary L Smith (62) were saved from a fire at 6 Market Place, Poulton-le-Fylde, Lancs., caused by a defective chimney flue'.

17,149: John Scott, jnr, Schoolboy: Silver watch

Details: AR 1937; MB(7) - 26 January 1937: 'On 17th December 1936, Martha Kerr (20) was saved from a fire at Overcroy Farm, Croy, caused by clothing igniting at a boiler fire'.

17,158: Miss Mary E Fegan, Schoolgirl: Silver watch

Details: AR 1938; MB(7) - 20 April 1937: 'On 6th February 1937, Miss E Carville (85) was saved from a fire at Lavellyreagh, Rostrevor, Co Down, caused by clothing being ignited by a candle'.

17,159: PC William Thornber: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1938; MB(7) - 20 April 1937: 'On 6th February 1937, James (8) and Hugh O'Day (6) were saved from a fire at 87 Bordesley Street, Birmingham, caused by a dropped light'.

17,163: Harold Hawkesford, Schoolboy: Silver watch

Details: AR 1938; MB(7) - 20 April 1937: 'On 13th February 1937, Christine P R Moreton (5) was saved from a fire at 9 Tythe Barn Lane, Shirley, Warwickshire, caused by clothing igniting at a fire'.

17,165: William N Newall, Stores Foreman: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1938; MB(7) - 20 April 1937: 'On 21st February 1937, Mrs Martha G Harrison (59) was saved from a fire at 75 Gowan Road, Alum Rock, Birmingham, caused by clothing being ignited at a fire'.

17,166: Superintendent George A Bainbridge, Fire Brigade: Silver medal
Sergeant Daniel James Collins, Fire Brigade: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1938; MB(7) - 20 April 1937: 'On 21st February 1937, J P Murray's three children were saved from a fire at Cymric Buildings, West Bute Street, Cardiff, cause of the fire was unknown'. Further details of the fire are contained in the Cardiff Watch Committee, Chief Constable's Report, dated 3 March 1937, thus: 'A fire, which might have been attended by grave consequences, occurred at the Cymric Buildings, West Bute Street, a four storey structure, consisting of offices with quarters for the caretaker and his family on the top floor. The alarm was received at 7:12 am on Sunday the 21st February 1937. Upon the arrival of the brigade it was found that the fire had secured a good hold of the ground floor and was already making headway on the first floor. The caretaker had opened the main doors in readiness for the Brigade, and he rendered valuable assistance to allow them to attack the fire. In the early stages the Brigade devoted themselves to the extinction of the fire on the ground and first floors. The caretaker's daughter then informed the caretaker and Super-intendent Bainbridge that she had escaped from the flat roof and that her mother and other members of the family were still in the quarters. The caretaker and Superintendent then ascended the building by the passenger lift and found Mrs Murray, the caretaker's wife and three children in bed, and Mr F Lovering, Mrs Murray's father, in the kitchen and unable to leave the building. Lovering was escorted from the kitchen, where the smoke was becoming very dense, to the bedroom



George Bainbridge in later years

occupied by the remainder of the family. This bedroom was at the rear and on the windward side of the premises and fairly clear of smoke. It was impossible for the Superintendent and the caretaker to leave the

room owing to the density of the smoke in the quarters and presumably on the top floors. After a lapse of about ten to fifteen minutes the Superintendent and Murray were able to attract the attention of the caretaker of an adjoining building, who eventually informed the other members of the Fire Brigade of the isolation and dangerous position of the Superintendent and the caretaker and his family. Upon the arrival of the second fire engine additional lines of hose were got to work by firemen who were equipped with breathing apparatus. The extinction of the fire did not reduce the volume of smoke in the bedroom in which were the marooned family and the Superintendent. There was no means of escape for them because they could not reach the staircase. Eventually a fire-escape was taken to the Old Bute Yard at the rear of the building and pitched to the window of the bedroom. Though fully extended, the escape was 8 to 10 feet from its objective. A lifeline was then obtained and taken to the top of the escape and thrown to the Superintendent, together with a life-saving belt. By using the lifeline and belt the Superintendent was able to lower the three children to Sgt. Collins who was on top of the escape ladder, and he in turn passed them to other firemen on the ladder. Meanwhile the caretaker had made frequent journeys of investigation to ascertain the conditions. At last he reported that the smoke and heat were clearing and it was decided that the three adults should make at attempt to escape by means of the emergency escape over the roof. This was accomplished but only because the caretaker had good knowledge of the building. He took the lead with a life line by which the remainder were guided to the flat roof, thence by means of the staircase of the adjoining building to safety. An outstanding feature was the manner in which the caretaker, Mr. J. P. Murray and his family calmly accepted the dangerous situation in which they were placed. Murray himself, was calm, collected and most helpful to the brigade throughout the proceedings, and a great credit is due to him that his wife and family were not seized with panic, because it was obvious that for at least 20 minutes that that the fire was advancing from the first to the second and third floors before the Brigade gained the upper hand, and the position was becoming perilous. In dealing with this fire the members of the Brigade acquitted themselves with remarkable promptitude and coolness. They were prepared to accept any hazard to rescue those who were in jeopardy, and it was a pleasure to me to witness and to assess the strenuous work of the Brigade to prevent the flames reaching the top floor. The Superintendent of the Brigade, in his anxiety to assure himself of the safety of the caretaker's family, did not hesitate to go with the caretaker in the passenger lift to his quarters, but as explained they could not return by the same method. I submit a letter addressed to the Superintendent of the Fire Brigade, by Mr J P Murray, expressing his admiration for the manner in which the Brigade fought the fire and his gratitude for the rescue of himself and his family:

Cymric Buildings,
West Bute Street,
Cardiff,
24.2.37

Dear Sir,
I now take this opportunity of writing to thank you and your staff for the splendid way you fought the fire, and for the gallant rescue of myself wife and family under such difficult conditions. I have nothing but the greatest admiration for one and all who risked their lives so gallantly, your brave work will never be forgotten. Kindly tender our sincere gratitude to all who fought so well,

I remain,

J P Murray'.

Medal inscribed: 'Superintendent Bainbridge, Cardiff 21-2-37', in a group with his King's Police & Fire Service Medal (George A. Bainbridge 20 F.F.), War Medal, Jubilee Medal 1935 (Supt. G.A. Bainbridge 1935), Coronation medal 1937, Cardiff Watch Committee Conspicuous Bravery Medal (Supt. G.A. Bainbridge 11 March 1929), second SPLF silver medal (G.A. Bainbridge, Cardiff, 6-3-40), APFBO LS medal with 2 x 10 year clasps (Supt. G.A. Bainbridge 1916), NFBA LS medal with 1 x 20 years and 4 x 5 years clasps (6086 George A. Bainbridge). The SPLF note in their accompanying letter (1937 award) that their medallist made a mistake by omitting the Christian names from the engraving, and suggested that although they could have the medals altered, the result may not be satisfactory and it may well be better to leave them as they are. The medals were not altered. See case 17,403 for the second silver medal to Bainbridge.



George Bainbridge's medal group

17,170: Police Fireman Sidney Andrews: Bronze medal
Police Inspector Frank Jowett: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1938; MB(7) - 20 April 1937: 'On 24th March 1937, John F. Booth (36) was saved from a fire on the SS *Florida* at Alexandra Dock, Hull, cause of the fire was unknown'. According to *Fire* (July 1937, p. 52): 'Alderman A Stark, chairman of Hull watch committee, has publically decorated Mr Jowett, an officer of the fire brigade, and Fireman Andrews with the bronze medal of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire. During a fire in the hold of a ship, on March 24 last, Fireman Booth, wearing oxygen breathing apparatus, was climbing the hold ladder when he fell backward into the smoke-logged hold below. Mr Jowett and Fireman Andrews went to his aid. They found him in a serious condition, with water rising in the hold. By means of a line, they sent him to the upper deck. "Actions such as these" said Alderman Stark "come from impulse and not from desire for medals or other rewards"'.

17,175: Eli Morrison, Schoolboy: Silver watch and certificate.

Details: AR 1938; MB(7) - 13 July 1937: 'On 4th November 1936, Mrs D, Mary, Phyllis, Jane and Godfrey Extance were saved from a fire at 126 Herbert Street, Pontardawe, Glam., cause of the fire was unknown'.

17,182: PC Robert McIntyre Starkey: Bronze medal



PC Robert Starkey

Details: AR 1938; MB(7) - 13 July 1937: 'On 1st May 1937, Mrs Vera Jones (26) was saved from a fire at 54 Frederick Street, St. Pancras, London WC1, cause of the fire was unknown'. Starkey also received the KPM for this rescue and further details on the events are consequently to be found in the National Archives (file HO45/19507) and the *London Gazette* (1 January 1938), 'At 4.10 am on 1 May 1937, Constable Starkey and another Constable were on duty in plain clothes when they noticed flames coming from the basement room of a house in Frederick Street WC2. Whilst another Constable went to call the Fire Brigade, Constable Starkey kicked the door open and went in to arouse the occupants. He saw two men in the basement flat, and made his way down into the basement, where there was thick smoke. He made two attempts to enter the room, and finally was able to get in, and search the room, only to find that the two men had escaped by another route. The Constable then went upstairs, where he was able to rescue a young girl, before he collapsed from the smoke, and was taken to hospital suffering from burns and injuries to his eyes'.

17,183: PC Harold F Trotman: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1938; MB(7) - 13 July 1937: 'On 3rd May 1937, Theodore E Friend (26) was saved from a fire at 4 St Ann's Terrace, London, NW8, caused by a lighted cigarette'.

17,189: PC Matthew John Kelly: Bronze medal
PC Kenneth W Sutherland: Bronze medal
PSgt Griffith Owen Jones: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1938; MB(7) - 13 July 1937: 'On 17th May 1937, Alexander (50), Mrs Emily K. (45), Hilda (12) and Betty Ouseley (10) were saved from a fire at 170 Littlefield Road, Burnt Oak, Edgware, cause of the fire was unknown'.

17,205: Frederick T Trew, Shop Boy: Silver watch

Details: AR 1938; MB(7) - 5 October 1937: 'On 5th July 1937, Miss Charlotte Povey (52) was saved from a fire at 341 Queen's Road, Upton Park, London E13, caused by clothing igniting at a copper fire'.

17,206: PC Louis Rendell: Bronze medal
Fireman William Puttick: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1938; MB(7) - 5 October 1937: 'On 7th July 1937, Reverend Benjamin Wheeler (84) and Mrs Frank Balkwill (60) were saved from a fire at Halwell Village, near Totnes, Devon, caused by a defective fire grate'.

17,207: Police Fire Sergeant George Charles Hey: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1938; MB(7) - 5 October 1937: 'On 15th July 1937, William John (38), Patrick J (9), Malcolm (6) and Sally Donald (4) were saved from a fire at 25 Maple Crescent, Glanmor, Swansea, cause of the fire was unknown'. Contrary to this account, William John Donald did not survive the fire and details of the fire and rescue emerged at the subsequent inquest. In reporting this, the *South Wales Evening Post* (24 July 1937) noted Hey's bravery thus: '…Addressing the jurors before they retired to consider their verdict at the inquest on William John Donald, of 25 Maple Crescent, Uplands, Swansea, yesterday afternoon, the Swansea borough coroner, Mr David H Clarke, paid tribute to the very gallant conduct of Police Sergeant George C Hey, who crawled on his hands and knees into the blazing kitchen at the dead man's home, and although beaten back by the heat on the first occasion, went in again and pulled Mr Donald out. Afterwards the sergeant crawled into the bedrooms in search of any other occupants who may have been in the house, and found a little daughter of the dead man in the bed under the bedclothes. He shielded her head from the smoke and brought her down an extension ladder to safety. If Sergeant Hey had not gone into the bedrooms anything may have happened to the little daughter, Sally, Mr Clarke added. He also paid tribute to the help given by the other neighbours, Mr Joseph Whelan, Mr Donald Edwards, and Constable Gregory. The jury endorsed the commendation of the coroner'.

17,210: PC Charles H Patrick – London & NE Railway Police: Bronze medal
PC Herbert Maxwell – South Shields Borough Police: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1938; MB(7) - 5 October 1937: 'On 23rd July 1937, Jean (5), Sylvia (3) and Rita Bland (2) were saved from a fire at 8 Dock Street, South Shields, cause of the fire was unknown'. A vivid account of the fire is contained in the *Shields Gazette* (24 July 1937) thus: 'CHILDREN'S PERIL IN FLAT FIRE - Tyne Dock Rescuers Find Three Unconscious. Three young children were rescued from a blazing flat at 8 Dock Street, Tyne Dock yesterday afternoon. The parents were out of the house at the time and when the fire broke out the children ran into the front room where they were found unconscious. The children were Jean aged four, Sylvia aged three and 20 months old Rita, daughters of Mr and Mrs T Bland. Two police constables and a civilian helped in the rescue. Neighbours who saw smoke gave the alarm and PC Patrick of the London & North Eastern Railway Police was first on the scene. He found the house full of smoke and an easy chair, linoleum and woodwork ablaze in the kitchen. With the assistance of PC Maxwell and Mr John William Booth of 5 Bede Street, he entered the front room of the house and brought the children to safety. Apparently when the fire had broken out, the frightened children had fled to the front of the house in a panic and although out of reach of the flames had been gassed by the fumes. The children were taken to South Shields General Hospital in the police ambulance. The fire brigade was summoned and until their arrival volunteers assisted in quelling the flames. The brigade extinguished the blaze with one jet of water, damage was confined to the kitchen. Mrs Bland told a *Shields Gazette* reporter that she was returning home after a short absence when neighbours told her that her house was on fire. I had left my two children there and I ran home with all haste for fear they were still in the house. As I was dashing up the stairs, Mr Booth told me that they had got the kiddies out and taken them to hospital. I don't know how the fire started, for there were no cinders in the grate. I should think that one of the children must have lit the stove in the corner and somehow set fire to the easy chair. They must have also locked

the door, for before the rescuers could enter, they had to burst the catch. Mt Bland was at work at the time and when he returned home for lunch he found the kitchen of his home ruined by fire and water. At the General Hospital this afternoon, the *Shields Gazette* was informed that all the children would be detained, none of them however was seriously ill'.

17,226: William Timothy, Schoolboy: Silver watch

Details: AR 1938; MB(7) - 18 January 1938: 'On 5th November 1937, Arthur M. Timothy (12) was saved from a fire at The Marl, Ferry Road, Grangetown, Cardiff, caused by clothing igniting at a bonfire'.

17,231: PC Walter Harding: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1938; MB(7) - 18 January 1938: 'On 24th November 1937, Mrs Rachel Gilbert (75) and Mrs Maud Challis (65) were saved from a fire at 471 Kingsland Road, Dalston, London E8, cause of the fire was unknown'.

17,243: William Greener, Schoolboy: Silver watch

Details: AR 1938; MB(7) - 5 April 1938: 'On 28th November 1937, Henry Greener (11). Robert W (4) and Doreen Mary Walker (2) were saved from a fire at 17 Yeoman Street, Redcar, caused by clothing igniting at a kitchen fire'.

17,244: PC William Easto: Bronze medal
PC Sydney Hart: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1938; MB(7) - 5 April 1938: 'On 17th December 1937, Walter (65) and Mrs Victoria (63) Newall were saved from a fire at 85 Kensington Road, London SE1, cause of the fire was unknown'.
Medal inscribed: 'William Easto, London S.E.1. 17-12-37'.

17,252: PC George Ellis J Capelin: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1939; MB(7) - 5 April 1938: 'On 19th January 1938, George (27), Mrs Phyllis (25), John (4), January (3) and Grace Stannard (2) were saved from a fire at 22 Oakdene Road, Redhill, Surrey, caused by petrol igniting'. When the medal award was announced, further details of the events appeared in *The Courier* (date unknown), thus: 'PC George Capelin, son of the late P Sgt S J Capelin, who was for 20 years in charge of the police station at Crawley, and Mrs Capelin, of Spencer Road, Crawley, has been awarded the Bronze Medal of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire. He has been awarded the medal in recognition of his recent brave act in going to the rescue of a family trapped in a burning house. It will be presented to him by the Mayor of Reigate (Alderman A J Hamblen) at a meeting of Reigate Watch Committee. Whilst working in his garage at Oakdene Road, Reigate, one morning, PC Capelin noticed smoke issuing from a house. He went to the house and discovered that the staircase was burning furiously. A man, his wife, and three children aged two, three and four years, were in the upstairs rooms. They could not get down the staircase owing to the intense heat. After sending a passer-by to summon the fire brigade, PC Capelin climbed over an adjacent roof, to a second storey window. The children were handed down to him one at a time by the anxious parents from a bedroom window above, and PC Capelin in turn handed them to watchers below. In the meantime he had directed another "spectator" to obtain a ladder down which he carried the mother, who was overcome by the experience. The woman and children were sleeping when the fire broke out'. PC Capelin received his medal on 30 May 1938 (according to his police service record).



PC George E J Capelin

Medal inscribed: 'George E. J. Capelin, Redhill 19.1.38'.

17,256: Derrick Makinson, Errand Boy: Silver watch

Details: AR 1939; MB(7) - 5 April 1938: 'On 25th January 1938, James (3) and Allan Bradburn (4 months) were saved from a fire at 41 Somers Road, Reddish, Stockport, caused by clothing falling onto a fire'.

17,259: PC Joseph Myers: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1939; MB(7) - 5 April 1938: 'On 7th February 1938, Elizabeth (5), Joan (3) and Donald Oakes (1) were saved from a fire at 21 Mellor Street, Droylsden, Lancs., caused by a spark from a fire'.

17,261: PC David Allison: Bronze medal
PSgt Frederick Appleton: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1939; MB(7) - 5 April 1938: 'On 14th February 1938, Elizabeth J Ward (77) was saved from a fire at 210 Bitterne Road, Southampton, caused by clothing igniting at an electric fire'.

17,262: Leonard White, Schoolboy: Silver watch

Details: AR 1939; MB(7) - 5 April 1938: 'On 15th February 1938, Mary Moles (8) was saved from a fire at 26 Martindale Road, London E16, caused by clothing igniting at a fire'.

17,264: PC Thomas G Turnbull: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1939; MB(7) - 5 April 1938: 'On 21st February 1938, Annie Walkley (84) was saved from a fire at 394 Hawthorne Road, Bootle, caused by furnishing being ignited by a spark from a fire'.

17,271: PC Dugald T S Currie: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1939; MB(7) - 5 July 1938: 'On 2nd April 1938, Margaret J Bryden (39), Isabella C. Simpson (32), Helen S Bain (34), Ann Stuart (29) and Mr Cowie were saved from a fire in the Northern Hotel, Kittybrewster, Aberdeen, cause of the fire was unknown'.

17,272: PC Philip Thomas Jenkins: Bronze medal
PC Tom H Stevens: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1939; MB(7) - 5 July 1938: 'On 4th April 1938, Joseph Birt (62) and Miss Mary Dyer (15) were saved from a fire at 2 Edgar Street, Hereford, cause of the fire was unknown'.

17,274: PC-Fireman Charles A Johnson: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1939; MB(7) - 5 July 1938: 'On 20th April 1938, Mrs Florence (38), Margaret (8), Joyce (9 weeks) and Annie May Davies were saved from a fire at 13 Orchard Street, Swansea, caused by leakage of gas from the main'. A fuller account of the events was related in the *South Wales Evening Post* (20 April 1938), thus: 'THRILLS DURING SWANSEA HOME FIRE. Four young children, roused by their father. Four young children, roused by their father when smoke filled their bedroom from a blaze in a shop adjoining, were dropped to a safety from a bedroom window at the rear of a house in Orchard Street, Swansea, this morning. Had the fire occurred at night there would have been every possibility of a tragedy. Two families and an elderly woman occupy rooms in the building, the back of which is used for cooking a variety of articles for a produce store in the town. The presence of a quantity of fat and other combustible materials, in the shop, made the blaze burn fiercely, and created dense clouds of smoke, which filled the buildings. There were thrilling incidents not apparent to the crowd who quickly gathered. A rumour that quickly spread, on the arrival of the fire brigade, under Inspector Chadwick, that an aged woman was still in the house, caused the Inspector to enter the house from a ladder, by way of the top front window. He found that the woman was safely outside, but the Inspector was almost immediately overcome by an escape of gas. The brigade, however, made short work of the fire, which was confined to the shop, where the cooking utensils were, and the room at the rear. Considerable damage was done to these two rooms. Rooms above the shop are occupied by Mr and Mrs Davies, and three young children. Another room is occupied by Mrs Alstead and the rooms at the rear by Mr and Mrs Pearce and four children. Mr Davies had gone to the Labour Exchange when the fire occurred, but Mrs Davies receiving an early warning was able to get the children to safety. Mr Pearce told an *Evening Post* reporter that he was in the bedroom with the children when he heard violent knockings from the ceiling downstairs. "I opened the door, and was met by a cloud of thick smoke," he said. "It was impossible to get down the stairs, and I opened the window to get the children outside. Fortunately, a young man from a nearby shop was in the back yard. He had come to see whether he could do anything, and I lowered the children to him. I could feel myself being

overcome by the smoke and I got the last one out, and got out myself"'.

17,276: Chief Officer Walter H Mardon, Middlesbrough Fire Brigade: Silver medal

Details: AR 1939; MB(7) - 5 July 1938: 'On 29th April 1938, Mrs James Huskinson and her three children; George and Mrs Bella Waters were saved from a fire at 60 Princes Road, Middlesbrough, cause of the fire was unknown'. A fuller account of the events was related in the *North Eastern Daily Gazzette* (30 April 1938) thus: 'Seven Middlesbrough people had a narrow escape from being burnt to death when the house in which they were sleeping at 60 Princess Road, Middlesbrough was badly damaged by fire shortly after midnight. Mr and Mrs James Hoskinson and their three daughters aged 4, 2 and 11 weeks were sleeping in a front room, and escaped by the bedroom window. Mr and Mrs George Waters who were occupying the back bedroom were rescued by the fire brigade. The fire which broke out in the back room of the ground floor is suspected to have been caused by a fall of soot. Furniture in the backroom was totally destroyed, and the stairs and passageway were also affected by the flames'. Mardon received his award at a meeting of the Corporation of Middlesborough, as reported in *Fire* (November 1938, p. 148), which – as well as publishing a photograph of Mardon – further noted that: 'The Professional Fire Brigades Association has marked its appreciation of Chief Officer Mardon's personal gallantry on this occasion by awarding to him the association's certificate of honour'.

17,277: Alec Leslie Hill, Schoolboy: Silver watch
Violet Doris Hill, Schoolgirl: Silver watch

Details: AR 1939; MB(7) - 5 July 1938: 'On 10th May 1938, Mrs Annie Hill (42) was saved from a fire at 1 Alexandra Road, South Hornchurch, Essex, caused by clothing being ignited by a spark from a fire'. The presentation was recorded by the *Daily Mirror* (Friday, 26 August 1938, p. 7) thus: 'They saved their mother: Two children who saved their mother were rewarded yesterday at Romford, Essex. They are Violet Doris Hill, ten, and Alec Leslie Hill, twelve, of Alexandra Road, South Hornchurch. Silver wristlet watches were handed to them on behalf of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire. When their mother's dress caught fire the girl beat out the flames with a mat and the boy tried to extinguish them with water'.

17,293: Head Constable William J Reid: Silver medal
PC Walter Starritt: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1939; MB(7) - 11 October 1938: 'On 22nd May 1938, John (49), Annie (45), Maureen (17) and John Jnr Herdman (16), were saved from a fire at 8 Altcar Street, Belfast, caused by furnishings being ignited by a spark from a fire'.

17,294: PSgt John Babington: Bronze medal
PC John Thompson: Bronze medal
PC Basil Havard: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1939; MB(7) - 11 October 1938: 'On 24th May 1938, Jennifer S Bramall (9) was saved from a fire at 11 Temple Gardens, Golders Green. London, NW11, cause of the fire was unknown'.

17,297: Police Inspector Harry Wild: Silver medal

Details: AR 1939; MB(7) - 11 October 1938: 'On 6th August 1938, Fred Walsh (43) was saved from a fire at the Nori Brickworks, Hayworth Street, Altham West, near Accrington, caused by a spark from a kiln'. Wild also received the KPM for this rescue and a fuller account of the events is contained in the National Archives (file HO45/19519) and the *London Gazette* (1 January 1939. 'On the evening of 6 August 1938, a fire broke out at a brickworks near Accrington. The fire had been burning about an hour, with the roof well alight, when it was discovered that a fireman, called Fred Walsh was trapped inside, and in imminent danger of being burnt alive. Inspector Wild, entered the burning building, and after searching in the direction of the shouts for help, succeeded in dragging the fireman to safety. This action undoubtedly saved the life of the fireman'.

17,298: Captain Alfred W Norman, Fire Brigade: Bronze medal
PC John Rice: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1939; MB(7) - 11 October 1938: 'On 28th August 1938, Ernest J Hampton (61) was saved from a fire at 38 and 39 Moulsham Street, Chelmsford, Essex, cause of the fire was unknown'. A photograph of Norman appears in *Fire* (January 1939, p. 188), which reports that: 'Chief Officer A W Norman, of the Chelmsford Fire Brigade… has been publicly decorated, by the Mayor of Chelmsford, with the bronze medal of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire.



Police Inspector Harry Wild

The occasion which brought this decoration was a boarding house fire, in which two men were trapped. One, lying unconscious on the roof, was lowered by Chief Officer Norman and Constable Rice, also decorated, to the ground, only to die in hospital. The other man perished; it was impossible to reach him. The Mayor, in presenting the awards, described the building as "a blazing furnace", the flames from which leapt around the chief officer and the policeman as they stood on a narrow parapet lowering the unconscious man to the ground. Messrs William Slade, son of the proprietress of the boarding house, and William McGregor have been each awarded the society's gallantry certificate and two guineas for the assistance they rendered to the fire chief and the constable'.

17,300: Police Inspector V A Winner: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1939; MB(7) - 11 October 1938: 'On 22nd August 1938, Eric Redway (21) and Richard D Smith (18) were saved from a fire at Abington Cross Roads, Newmarket, Cambridgeshire, caused by motor vehicles colliding'.

17,301: Margaret Berry, Mill Hand: Silver watch

Details: AR 1939; MB(7) - 17 January 1939: 'On 23rd September 1938, Arthur C (11), Ethel (4) and George Berry (4) were saved from a fire at 65 Sidcup Road, Cudworth, Barnsley, caused by furnishings being ignited by a naked light'.

17,303: PC Allan Macdonald: Bronze medal
PC John Blackwell: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1939; MB(7) - 17 January 1939: 'On 8th October 1938, Allen Taylor (30) was saved from a fire in St . Albans Road, Shenley, caused by spark igniting petrol'.

17,307: Fireman Thomas Wilson: Bar to bronze medal
Fireman John Stanton: Bronze medal
Fireman John Smith: Bronze medal
Superintendent Michael Skelly, Fire Brigade: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1939; MB(7) - 17 January 1939: 'On 30th October 1938, Ronald Bremner (1) was saved from a fire at 91 Barlogan Avenue, Cardonald, Glasgow, caused by a lighted paper'.

17,322: PSgt John Hedley Smith: Bronze medal
PSgt Charles Mander: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1939; MB(7) - 18 April 1939: 'On 8th April 1938, Iris E R (7), Patrick E (6), Rita D A (4) and Kenneth C H Sparks (3) were saved from a fire at 7 Eden Place, Gravesend, cause of the fire was unknown'. The subsequent presentation was reported in *The Times* (Friday 16 June 1939, p. 11), thus: 'The Society for the Protection of Life from Fire has awarded bronze medals to Chief Officer J H Smith and Inspector C Mander, of Gravesend Fire Brigade, for gallantry in trying to save the lives of four children who perished in a fire at Eden Place, Gravesend, last year. Chief Officer Smith broke an arm and suffered serious cuts and burns'.

17,326: Fireman John Tombs: Bronze medal
PC Arthur Carter: Bronze medal
Second Officer Harold Rose, Fire Brigade: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1939; MB(7) - 18 April 1939: 'On 22nd December 1938, John E (6), David, J (2) and Michael E Turrell (6 weeks) were saved from a fire at 15 Link Way, Bromley, cause of the fire was unknown'.

17,324: Flight Lieutenant John Milne Morgan, Royal Air Force: Silver medal

Details: MB(7) - 14 July 1939: No details. An account of the circumstances is given in Air Council Letter, dated 31 March 1939, thus: 'To Air Officer Commanding, No. 23 (Training Group), RAF Grantham, Lincs. Sir, With reference to your letter dated 7th February 1939 (No. 23G735/102/P(20)), I am commanded by the Air Council to inform you that they have noted with satisfaction the gallantry and perseverance displayed by Acting Pilot Officer J M Morgan in attempting to rescue Acting Pilot Officer W A Jenns following an aircraft accident at Bletchley on 19th December 1938. The council have caused a suitable note to be made in Acting Pilot Officer Morgan's record and I am to request that the officer may be informed accordingly'. The award was then noted in the SPLF Letter, dated 17 August 1939, thus: 'To The Under Secretary of State, Air Ministry, S7D, Adastral House, Kingsway, London, WC2. REACTION OF:- Acting Pilot Officer J M Morgan in Aeroplane crash at Bletchley, near Tern Hill – 19th December 1938. The circumstances of this case have been reported to us and the Trustees have decided to make an award of the Society's Silver Medal to Acting Pilot Officer J M Morgan. At the request of the Group Captain, No. 10 Flying Training School, Market Drayton, I am forwarding the medal to you under separate cover today. We should be greatly obliged if you would advise us of its safe receipt and be so good as to give such instructions as may commend themselves to you for its presentation to the recipient'. Both letter and medal were forwarded for conferral, the details being recorded in RAF correspondence thus: 'HQ, No. 22 Group, RAF letter – 24 August 1939. To No. 1 Anti-Aircraft Co-operation Unit – Re: Pilot Officer J M Morgan. The attached copy of a letter received from the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire is forwarded together with the Silver Medal referred to therein, and it is requested that you will arrange for this award to be presented to the above named officer in a suitable manner, details of the presentation being notified to this Headquarters in due course'.

Medal known in group with DFC, 1939-45 Star with Battle of Britain clasp, Air Crew of Europe Star, Africa Star, War Medal, and Queen's Messengers Badge.

17,346: John Dixon, Electrician: Bronze medal and £5.5s



John Dixon GC, showing his father's medals for service in Africa and India

Details: AR 1940; MB(7) - 14 July 1939: 'On 16th February 1939, Arthur Whittaker (55) was saved from a fire at Canwick Road, Lincoln, caused by the blowing' of a casting'. John Dixon received the Edward Medal in bronze, with 'Industry' reverse, for the same action and an account of the events is contained in the *London Gazette* (23 February 1940), thus: 'On the 16th February 1939, an accident occurred during the casting of a mould at the foundry of Messrs Robey and Company Limited, Globe Works, Lincoln, which resulted in two large overhead electric cranes and the foundry roof being set on fire. Dixon, who is an electrician, was on the crane gantry to watch the electrical equipment and was able to escape from immediate danger, but the driver of one of the cranes, a man named Whittaker, who managed to climb out of the cabin, collapsed on the top of the crane with his clothing ablaze. Dixon saw this and promptly went back to rescue Whittaker, although the fire was then at its height and there was also some risk of his suffering an electric shock. He extinguished the flames from Whittaker's clothing and carried him from his own crane across the crane in the next bay, out on to the roof gutter, along and then across the roof, and down a vertical ladder, thirty-one feet in length, to the ground. Dixon then collapsed.

He was very badly burned about the arms and upper part of the body and was absent from work about ten weeks. His action, which involved going back from a point of comparative safety to face considerable risk, almost certainly saved Whittaker's life.' For this rescue he additionally received a £50 cheque and certificate from the Carnegie Hero Fund Trust the *Daily Herald* Order of Industrial Heroism with certificate, a Westminster chiming clock and purse from the workmen, staff and directors of Robey and Co Ltd. Mr Dixon was invested with the George Cross in November 1972 and his Edward Medal is now in the City and County Museum, Lincoln.

17,347: Michael Lodge, Child: Silver watch and certificate

Details: AR 1940; MB(7) - 14 July 1939. 'On 21st February 1938, Mrs Lodge was saved from a fire at 'Rosslyn', Leigh Road, Cobham, Surrey, caused by clothing being ignited by hot coals'.

17,349: PC Alick Boosey: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1940; MB(7) - 14 July 1939: 'On 24th March 1939, Harry (52) and Harry Daniel Vanderburg (16); Mrs Florence Rose (46), Joseph Robert (14) and Leonard George Hazard (10) were saved from a fire at 91 Bigland Street, Stepney, London E.1., caused by furnishings being ignited by a spark from a fire'.

17,354: Nurse Daly: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1940; MB(7) - 14 July 1939: 'On 22nd April 1939, Davis Reid (8), Frank Carragher (50), B Andrews (4 months), Patrick McNeil (20), Henry Ruddy (3), Jim Soase (7), Jim Wilson (8) and Mrs O'Hanlon (56) were saved from a fire at Newry Fever Hospital, Daisy Hill, Newry, Co Armagh, caused by the fusing of electric wires'.

17,355: Fireman James Francis Booth: Bronze medal
Superintendent Fred Goodrich: Silver medal

Details: AR 1940; MB(7) - 14 July 1939: 'On 26th April 1939, Mary Anna Chapman (73) and Mary O'Brien (76) were saved from a fire at 1 Blanket Row, Hull, cause of the fire was unknown'.

17,359: PC Edward Booth: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1940; MB(7) - 14 July 1939: 'On 30th March 1939, Mrs William Ramsey (46) was saved from a fire at 31 New Road, Southampton, caused by a defective fireplace'.

17,370: David Merven, Schoolboy: Silver watch
Sgt Blagdon, Royal Air Force: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1940; MB(7) - 15 November 1939: 'On 8th September 1939, Pilot Sergeant Hilton was saved from a fire at Crugan Farm, Llanbedrog, Pwllheli, caused by an aeroplane crash'.

17,371: PC-Fireman Edgar A West: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1940; MB(7) - 15 November 1939: 'On 1st October 1939, Phillip (48), Mary Anne (50) and Audrey Williams (16) was saved from a fire at Brookfield House, Horeb Road, Morriston, Swansea, cause of the fire was unknown'. A fuller account of the events was related in the *South Wales Evening Post* (2 December 1939), thus: 'THREE TRAPPED IN BEDROOM. Mr and Mrs Philip Williams and their 16-years-old daughter Audrey had to be rescued from the bedroom window of their home in Brookfield House, Horeb Road, Morriston, Swansea, when fire broke out in the house shortly before 1 am on Sunday. Brookfield House has three tenements, one of which is occupied by Mr and Mrs Williams and their daughter; another by Mrs Jowett and her niece, and the third by Mr and Mrs P Joseph and two children. When the outbreak was discovered all the occupants except the Williams family were able to leave the house in safety. It was a bus driver, Mr John Rimell, on his way home, who first gave the alarm. He called Police Constable West, who found one of the tenements well alight, and Mrs Williams and her daughter leaning out of the bedroom window screaming. Constable West and James Paul, of Horeb Road, forced the front door, Paul injuring his wrist in doing so, but the volume of smoke which poured through the passage made it impossible to enter the house that way. The Fire Brigade was summoned, and meanwhile Constable West obtained a ladder and, with the help of a couple of men, brought Mrs Williams and her daughter to safety. They told those outside that Mr Williams was still inside, and he also was brought through the window and down the ladder in a semi-conscious condition. The Fire Brigade, under Acting-Inspector Hey, found certain parts of the house burning fiercely, but they quickly got the outbreak under control. The cause of the fire is at present unknown, and the amount of the damage was extensive'.

17,372: Special Constable William Frank Prisk (incorrectly noted as Fisk in the SPLF records), Garage Proprietor: Bronze medal
Special Constable William Francis Williams, Grocery Manager: Bronze medal
PSgt (143) Fitzroy Frederick Taylor: Bronze medal
PC (143) Victor James Bullock: Bronze medal



(l-r) PC Bullock, Special Constable Williams, Special Constable Prisk and PSgt Taylor receiving the Gloucestershire Constabulary Braid from the Chief Constable.

Details: AR 1940; MB(7) - 15 November 1939: 'On 22nd October 1939, Edmund (85) and Ellen S Freeman (88); Minnie Stephens (69), Edith Pelham (62) and Myrtle Nash (19) were saved from a fire in Victoria Road, Coleford, Glos., cause of the fire was unknown'. The following further details are based on the research of Jon Cann (emails to the author, 13 September 2010 and 16 May 2011). On the night of Wednesday 22 October 1939 a fire broke out at Duncan Cottage, Victoria Road, Coleford, in the Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire. Inside the address were Edmund (85yrs) and Ellen (88yrs) Freeman, Minnie Stephens (69yrs), Edith Pelham (62yrs), Myrtle Nash (19yrs) and Mrs Annie Smith. Thirty-two year old garage proprietor and special constable William Prisk (noted incorrectly as Fisk and Pride in some accounts) was at home off-duty on the night of the fire, which occurred at the house of one of his nearby neighbours. He went to the scene to offer assistance, and discovered the house well ablaze, and five people were still inside, by this time his part time police colleague, 42 year-old Special Constable William Williams, who was also off-duty, had arrived at the scene. They started to rescue the occupants, and were joined by local Police Officers, 143 Sergeant Fitzroy Taylor (39) and 141 Constable Victor Bullock (24) from the nearby Coleford Police Station. They successfully rescued five occupants from the blaze, but sadly Mrs Annie Smith died as a result of the injuries she received. On 15 November 1939 the four rescuers were awarded the Bronze medal from the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire. Later the men's actions were also acknowledged by the Gloucestershire Chief Constable, Colonel W F Henn, and in March 1940 they were awarded the Gloucestershire Silver Braid for Gallantry. Their citation in the Silver Braid Book, held by the Gloucester Archives Offices, was recorded on the 2 November 1939 (under General Order 6676), and reads 'For gallant action in saving life from fire'.

Medal inscribed: 'FITZROY F. TAYLOR. COLEFORD. 22-10-39.', together with his British War Medal, impressed 'RMA 106060 GR F. F. TAYLOR', remain in family possession (2011).

17,373: Bertie H Matthews: Bronze medal
William Murray: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 23 February 1940: No details.

17,374: L/Cpl Alfred Cliffe, Labour Corps: Bronze medal and £2.2s

Details: AR 1940; MB(7) - 23 February 1940: 'On 27th September 1939, five Auxiliary Firemen were saved from a fire at the Indian Theatre, Pleasure Beach, Blackpool, cause of the fire was unknown'.

17,378: Miss Margaret Louise Chandler: Silver watch

Details: AR 1940: 'On 6th November 1939, Mrs Gamble (75) was saved from a fire at 11 Alma Road, Cheriton, Folkestone, cause of the fire was unknown'. In addition to the award to Margaret Chandler, the *Annual Report* also notes that Mrs V Buck was granted a certificate and two guineas. The Society's Minutes Book [MB(7) - 23 February 1940] records case number 17,378 as an award of a certificate and two guineas to Mrs V Buck, though fails to mention Miss Chandler.

17,379: PC Alfred Jones: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1940; MB(7) - 23 February 1940: 'On 22nd October 1939, Mrs Ada Freeman (55) was saved from a fire at 396 Katherine Road, Forest Gate, London E7, cause of the fire was unknown'.

17,384: PC Charles P Young: Bronze medal
PC Dennis Church: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1940; MB(7) - 23 February 1940: 'On 8th December 1939, Peter (2½) and Alice

Whittaker (4) were saved from a fire at 273 High Lane, Burslem, Stoke-on-Trent, caused by children playing with lighted paper'. A fuller account of the events was related in the *Evening Sentinel* (11 December 1939), thus: 'The fire occurred on Friday afternoon at 273 High Lane, Burslem, the front portion of which premises are occupied by Mrs Hilda Whitaker, a 24-years-old widow, and her two children – Peter, aged two-and-a-half, and Alice, aged four. The rear portion of the house is occupied by Mr and Mrs William Smith, both deaf and dumb persons, and their two children, Frederick and David Smith, aged five and three respectively. At 3.5pm Police Constables Church and Young, of the Hanley Division, were on motor patrol duty in High Lane, Burslem, travelling towards Smallthorpe, when they saw flames through the front window of a house. They took an automatic fire extinguisher to the house and there saw a Mr Walter Ewart Williams of Langham, Friar's Walk, Newcastle, who had also seen the flames when passing the house a minute or so earlier. Mr Williams was in the act of entering the house through a window which he had broken, and all three men gained access by this means. Inside the burning room were found Peter and Alice, who, it is stated, had been left there in the charge of Mr and Mrs Smith, while their mother, visited the Burslem Employment Exchange. There were flames and dense smoke in the room, the ceiling paper, wallpaper, curtains and articles of children's clothing being on fire. The two children were carried to safety through the broken window, after which the fire was partly extinguished by the police automatic extinguisher. It was when the police officers went into the rear of the house to fetch water for completing their work that they surprised Mr and Mrs Smith. Neither of the deaf mutes were aware of the fire or of the danger to the two children. It is stated that ten minutes previously Mrs Smith had visited the Whitaker's children and found them alright. It is believed that paper lighted by the boy caused the outbreak of fire. Both Whitaker children were subsequently treated at the Haywood Hospital for slight burns to the neck, cheeks and ears, but they were not detained. Mr Williams also received treatment at the hospital for cut hands and fingers, received in breaking the window and helping in the rescue operations'.

Medal inscribed: 'Charles P. Young, Stoke-On-Trent, 8.12.39'. PC Young at other points in his career received the Police LS&GC Medal, GVIR (Sgt. Charles P. Young) and RLSS Reward of Merit, silver.

17,385: Fire Brigade 4th Officer George Bell: Silver medal

Details: AR 1940; MB(7) - 23 February 1940: 'On 11th December 1939, Amos (3½) and Rose Sowerby (4½) were saved from a fire at 104 Marsh Road, Middlesbrough, caused by children playing with matches'. A fuller account of the events was related in the *North Eastern Daily Gazette* (11 December 1939), thus: 'Fireman George Bell, fourth officer of Middlesbrough Fire Brigade, figured in a heroic rescue of two young children from the bedroom of 104 Marsh Road, Middlesbrough, which was destroyed by fire at mid-day today. When the Fire Brigade arrived, he was the first to dash into the house. He was told that there were two young children inside, but a quick search of the smoke filled room failed to find them. He tried to dash through the thick blanket of smoke on the stairs, but was beaten back. Fireman Bell then ran outside, where a ladder was being placed against the bedroom window. He quickly scaled the ladder, burst his way through the window and found the two children, Rosie Sowerby (4) and Amos Sowerby (2) in a collapsed condition. He handed the little girl down the fire-escape to willing hands, then groped his way back through the thick smoke to rescue the boy. After handing him through the window, Fireman Bell himself collapsed from the effects of the smoke. He had to receive attention from Chief Fire Officer Walter H Mardon who was directing operations, and afterwards he was sent home. The house was occupied by Mrs Rose Sowerby, wife of James Sowerby, a labourer at the ICI Billingham. After the rescues, Fireman Bell told a *North Eastern Gazette* reporter the following story of his heroic exploit: "When we arrived the house was full of smoke, and we were told that there might be two children inside. I searched around the downstairs room, which was dark with heavy smoke and fumes, but there was no sign of the children. I made my way to the stairs, but after making two attempts to climb them, I was beaten back by the fumes. I ran out to the front of the house, and by this time other firemen had an escape placed against the bedroom window. I ran up the ladder and managed to get into the bedroom. The room was black with smoke, but I managed to find the little girl lying stretched out on the bed. I picked her up and carried her to the window, where she was taken to safety. I then groped my way back into the bedroom and after much searching found the little boy behind a large double bed. Both children were unconscious; in fact, I thought they were both dead. After rescuing the little boy,

I don't remember any more. How the fire started is a mystery as there was no fire in the grate". There are six children in the family, and Mrs Sowerby had left the house for a short while, taking five of the children (one being in hospital) over to her mother Mrs Rosetta Emmerson of 97 Marsh Road. Rosie and Amos ran out of the house and went home, and it was not for some minutes that the mother followed them. When she got out into the street she found volumes of smoke pouring out of the house. A medical report at the North Riding Infirmary stated that the children were admitted in an asphyxiated, unconscious condition, but made some progress after their admission to hospital'.

17,386: PC Alexander Clark: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1940; MB(7) - 23 February 1940: 'On 25th December 1939, Thomas Grange (55) was saved from a fire at 5 Morpeth Street, Queensbury, caused by an electrical short circuit'.

17,391: John R Mellish: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 23 February 1940: No details.

17,392: John S Body: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 23 February 1940: No details.

17,394: Ella Gray: Silver watch

Details: MB(7) - 19 June 1940: No details.

17,396: John O'Malley: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 19 June 1940: No details.

17,400: Sgt Holland: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 19 June 1940: No details.

17,403: Robert Maxwell: Bronze medal
George A Bainbridge: Silver medal

Details: MB(7) - 19 June 1940: No details. Fortunately, Bainbridge's Fire Brigade personnel record notes the SPLF citation thus: 'For the rescue of two children and an aged woman during a fire at 55 Lower Cathedral Road on the night of 5th/6th March 1940'.

Note: The medal group to Bainbridge is known and consists of the King's Police & Fire Service Medal (George A. Bainbridge 20 F.F.) War Medal, Jubilee Medal 1935 (Supt. G.A. Bainbridge 1935), Coronation medal 1937, Cardiff Watch Committee Conspicuous Bravery Medal (Supt. G.A. Bainbridge 11 March 1929), SPLF silver medal (Superintendent Bainbridge, Cardiff 21-2-37), SPLF silver medal (G.A. Bainbridge, Cardiff, 6-3-40), APFBO LS medal with 2 x 10 year clasps (Supt. G.A. Bainbridge 1916), and the NFBA LS medal with 1 x 20 years and 4 x 5 years clasps (6086 George A. Bainbridge). See case 17,166 for the previous silver medal to Bainbridge.

17,406: Daniel Elliott: Bronze medal
James E Wright: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 19 June 1940: No details. The Society's Minutes Book, Ordinary Meeting of Trustees, 3 July 1968 [MB(8) – 3 July 1968], noted that the: 'Secretary reported that Mr James E Wright, who had been awarded a Bronze Medal in 1940 had written from Tasmania asking whether his medal could be replaced because it had been lost while travelling in Australia. He had readily paid the cost of £9 and the Secretary was asked to write to him expressing the Trustees appreciation of his attitude regarding his medal'.

17,407: Joseph Hebdon: Silver medal
Ernest Hughes: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 19 June 1940: No details.

17,408: Alfred Parnell: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 19 June 1940: No details.

17,410: Chief Officer H J A Jones, Fire Brigade: Silver medal
Fireman Harry Blann: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 19 June 1940: No details. An account of the events was related in the *Worthing Herald* (Friday, 26 April 1949, p. 1), thus: 'Fire Chief Saves Women Trapped in Bedroom – Two women – one aged 87 and the other 77 – were carried to safety from the window of a top floor bedroom in a smoke-filled house in Western Place in the early hours of yesterday morning. Both were rushed to Worthing Hospital. The elder, Miss Annie Sharpe, who sustained head injuries, was stated to be in a serious condition. Her friend, Miss Annie Ingram, has recovered.



Fireman Harry Blann

Fire had broken out in a kitchen on the ground floor of Edgeworth, 17 Western Place. And the dense smoke which made it impossible for firemen to reach the door of the bedroom threatened them with suffocation. Chief Officer H J Jones ordered a fire-escape to be run up to the window, which is about 35 feet from the ground. He mounted the escape, shattered the window and called to the frightened women. So thick was the smoke that he could not see or reach them. While Fireman H Blann donned a breathing apparatus the Chief Officer talked to the women to keep up their spirits. Fireman Blann entered the room and lifted Miss Ingram onto the Chief Officer's shoulder. Mr Jones carried her to the street below and returned for Miss Sharp. Immediately after he had carried the second woman to safety, the Chief Officer, overcome with smoke, collapsed. He was carried to Haslett's Garage, which is an ARP centre, and recovered consciousness after treatment. Five children and ten adults were sleeping in the house, which is let out as flats, and had not Mr Thomas Squires, whose bedroom was on the first floor, smelt smoke when he got up for a drink of water at about 2.30 more lives would have been in danger. Mr Squires dashed downstairs, knocking on all the doors as he went and one of the men sleeping on the ground floor phoned for the fire brigade. Police arrived and ordered all the occupants to leave the house. They were made comfortable at the garage across the road. "The place was one mass of smoke and flames when I carried my baby downstairs," said a woman sleeping on the first floor. The kitchen on the ground floor was completely destroyed and that on the first floor was partly damaged'. See also *Fire* (September 1940).

Medal inscribed: 'Harry Blann, Worthing, 25-4-40', in group with Defence Medal [unnamed], National Fire Brigades Association Long Service Medal, bronze, with 'Ten Years' bar [11499 Harry Blann], British Fire Services Association Long Service Medal, silver, with 'BFSA' bar and BFSH Twenty Years Suspender [139 H. Blann], St John Ambulance Association Re-examination Medallion, 4th issue, bronze [367683 Harry Blann], and BFS Identity Disc, in fibre [726072, Blann, H.].

17,417: PC W T G Prudmore: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 17 January 1941: No details.

17,418: Philip Onslow: Silver watch

Details: MB(7) - 17 January 1941: No details.

17,422: H Duncan: Bronze medal
H Sharples: Bronze medal
T W Cooper: Bronze medal
J Craig: Bronze medal
E L Hanlon: Bronze medal
J Mylrou: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 17 January 1941: No details.

17,423: A Knight: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 17 January 1941: No details.

17,424: PC W Salisbury: Bronze medal
Henry Margerison: Bronze medal
J Greenhall: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 17 January 1941: No details.

17,430: PC Joseph Harman: Bronze medal
PC Arthur Jones: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 27 June 1941: No details.

17,433: Arthur Finch: Silver medal

Details: MB(7) - 27 June 1941: No details

17,436: War Reserve Constable Charles Emery: Bronze medal
Vivian Leicester: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 27 June 1941: No details.

17,438: PSgt Joseph Germain: Bronze medal
John E Harding: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 27 June 1941: No details.

17,440: George Lister: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 27 June 1941: No details.

17,445: PC F D Wheeler: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 27 June 1941: No details.

17,446: Dennis Thomas: Silver watch

Details: MB(7) - 27 June 1941: No details.

17,450: Lilian Mawson: Silver watch

Details: MB(7) - 18 December 1941: No details.

17,455: PC Cecil Hawes: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 18 December 1941: No details.

17,456: PC Harry Jackson: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) 18 December 1941: No details.

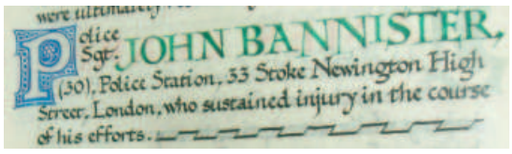
17,459: PSgt John Bannister: Silver medal

Details: MB(7) - 18 December 1941: No details. Bannister received the KPM for the same action and an account of the events is contained in the National Archives (file HO45/19108) and in the *London Gazette* (1 January 1942), thus: 'At about 3.40am on 15 October 1941 Sergeant Bannister was told that fire had broken out at a house in Farleigh Road, Stoke Newington, and some people were believed to be trapped. He immediately gave the alarm at the fire post, then ran to the scene. The house was burning fiercely, and he was told of three people trapped on the upper floor. He dashed through the front door, climbed the burning staircase, and entered the bedroom where he saw a woman and child lying on the bed, with another woman on the floor nearby. He grabbed the child, aged 7, and carried her out to safety, returned to the bedroom, and picked up one of the women and carried her out, before he was overcome and collapsed. Help came too late for the other woman, and she was dead when found'. According to his Metropolitan Police Central Record of Service, Sgt Bannister (1911-1972) (warrant



Sgt John Bannister

no. 122507) was highly commended 'for outstanding bravery in rescuing two persons from a dwelling house on 15 October, whereby he sustained personal injury' in Police Orders 15.12.41 and is noted as having received the KPM, SPLF silver medal, and a Certificate and £15 from the Carnegie Hero Fund Trust.


were ultimately
Police Sgt. JOHN BANNISTER,
(30), Police Station, 33 Stoke Newington High
Street, London, who sustained injury in the course
of his efforts.

Extract from the Carnegie Hero Trust Fund's 'Book of Heroes'

The Trust records the case thus: 'Mrs Mary Green (40), Stoke Newington, London, lost her life on 15th October 1941 while attempting to rescue a little girl after an outbreak of fire. The child and a woman (60) were ultimately rescued by Police Sergeant John Bannister (30), Police Station, Stoke Newington, London, who sustained injury in the course of his efforts. John James Branch (29), Plumber, Stoke Newington, London assisted in the rescue work. The Carnegie Hero Fund Trustees awarded a memorial certificate and £20 to Mrs Green's husband; an honorary certificate and £15 to Police Sergeant John Bannister and an honorary certificate and £10 to John Branch'. Sergeant Bannister later received a bronze medal from the Society

(see case 17,691) and the BEM for distinguished service (Police Orders 2.7.62).

17,461: PC H D Tomkins: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 18 December 1941: No details.

17,464: PC Stephen Flanigan: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 17 April 1942: No details. According to his Metropolitan Police Central Record of Service, PC Flanigan (1897-1970) (warrant no. 105877) was commended for 'courage and promptitude in effecting the rescue of an elderly, bedridden woman from a burning house on 22 July 1939. Highly commended: also awarded £15 from Bow Street Police Court Reward Fund' in Police Orders 29.10.39.

17,467: Stanley Wilton: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 17 April 1942: No details.

17,468: Archibald Paton: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 17 April 1942: No details.

17,473: Thomas Epple: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 17 April 1942: No details.

17,481: John Cooke: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 6 November 1942: No details.

17,482: Sgt G R Seymour: Silver medal

Details: MB(7) - 6 November 1942: No details.

17,485: George Hankinson: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 6 November 1942: No details.

17,489: PC Albert H Baker (E203): Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 6 November 1942: No details. The *Birmingham Evening Despatch* reported on 2 June 1943 as follows. 'Saved three from smoke filled house – The bronze medal for the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire was today presented to P.C. Albert Harry Baker (E203) for his gallant rescue of trapped persons suffering from the effects of smoke following a fire in Moseley-road, Birmingham in the early hours on 20 August. P.C. Baker heard calls for help and discovered that fire had broken out in the dwelling house. He found a man, his wife and a baby at a bedroom window, afraid to leave by the stairs owing to the volume of smoke. Forcing an entry to the house, after tying a wet handkerchief around his mouth, he threw water on a burning settee, and managed to reach a bedroom. He carried the baby downstairs in his jacket, and then returned to assist the man and his wife to the street. The Lord Mayor (Councillor W.S. Lewis) who made the presentation at a meeting of the Watch Committee, congratulated the constable on his prompt and highly efficient action.' See also *Birmingham Mail* (2 June 1943).



PC Albert H Baker

Medal inscribed: ''PC A.H. Baker, Birmingham, 20.8.42' together with Police Exemplary Service medal 'Sergt Albert H. Baker.'

17,494: George Hewitt: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 6 November 1942: No details.

17,496: John Webster: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 6 November 1942: No details.

17,498: Corporal Kennedy: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 22 January 1943: No details.

17,499: James Finnie: Silver medal

Details: MB(7) - 22 January 1943: No details.

17,504: Edward Fenton: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 18 June 1943. No details.

17,512: PC John Charles Salmon: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 18 June 1943: No details. Salmon also received the KPM for his actions and an account of the events is contained in the National Archives (file HO45/19546) and in the *London Gazette* (1 January 1944), thus: 'At about 3.15am on 8 February 1943 a fire broke out in a house in Somerford Street, Bethnal Green. Constable Salmon saw flames coming from the ground floor, and a woman at a first floor window shouting for help. He kicked open the front door and succeeded in getting half way up the stairs before being beaten back by the flames. He obtained some steps, and managed to reach the first floor window, lifting the woman down to other persons below, before he dropped to the ground. He was then told of a boy in the bedroom, and he tried to go upstairs again without success. He decided to go round the back, and climbed onto an outhouse roof. He wrapped a cloth round his head, and leaned into the room, but the smoke was too much, and he almost fell from the roof, being saved by another Constable. After he got to the ground, the Constable collapsed. The child was found dead by the fire brigade'. According to his Metropolitan Police Central Record of Service, PC Salmon (warrant no. 123,603) was commended 'for saving the life of a woman and attempting to rescue a boy trapped in a burning dwelling house… on 8.2.43. Awarded £10 from the Bow Street Police Court Reward Fund [and] also commended at the Shoreditch Coroner's Court' in Police Orders 26.3.43. Salmon later received the BEM in the 1962 Queen's Birthday Honours.

17,513: William Skyner: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 18 June 1943: No details.

17,514: John V Read: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 18 June 1943: No details. According to the *Birmingham Mail* (8 October 1943) 'Police Reserve Officer J V Read [number B445] was patrolling near the premises of Super Oil Seals and Gaskets Ltd, King's Norton, when he heard a shout of "Fire". He saw a man enveloped in flames attempting to open a window. Read picked up an iron bar and smashed the window. Mr W H Gittins, who had come from inside the burning building, ran to Read's assistance. Mr A T Clayton also came on the scene and, with Gittins, assisted Read in rescuing the man whose clothing was ablaze and in extinguished the flames. The premises were com-pletely gutted and the fire could not be extinguished for some time. The Society for the Protection of Life from Fire awarded a framed certificate and a cheque for two guineas to both Mr Gittins and Mr Clayton, and a bronze medal to the officer, Read'. See also the *Birmingham Mail* (6 October 1943) and the *Birmingham Despatch* (6 October 1943).

Medal inscribed: 'First Pol. Res. Con. John. V. Read, Kings Norton, 30, 12-3-1943'.

17,520: Edward Charles Ayers: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 12 November 1943: No details. Ayers served with the Manchester Police from March 1930 to April 1955. His police service record includes the following note to the Watch Committee from the Chief Constable: 'About 7.45pm on the 6th June 1943, Sergeant Ayres was on duty in Mill Street, Ancoats, when he saw large volumes of smoke coming from the dwelling house, 55 Canning Street, Ancoats. A large crowd of people was gathered outside the house, and Sergeant Ayres was informed that there was a baby trapped in the house. Disregarding the flames and smoke which were issuing from the front windows, both upstairs and downstairs, Sergeant Ayres made several attempts to enter the house, but owing to the excessive heat, he was unable to do so. He then threw several buckets of water on to the flames near the front door, and tying a piece of white cloth around his face and mouth, he again entered the house on his knees and crawled into the back kitchen which was by then burning furiously. When he entered the room, he saw in one corner a cot which was a mass of flames, but he was unable to reach it. Sergeant Ayres then obtained a ladder and entered the front bedroom in an attempt to get to the child from upstairs, but owing to the excessive heat and smoke, he was again driven back. By this time, the National Fire Service had arrived and Sergeant Ayres was taken to hospital for medical attention to his eyes. The body of the child, whom Sergeant Ayres attempted to save, was eventually located in the debris of the badly damaged kitchen. Tributes to the gallantry shown by Sergeant Ayres were paid by the City Coroner and the Fire Force Commander, and many witnesses of his brave action

volunteered statements. The Chief Constable reported the facts to the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, who have awarded Sergeant Ayres their Bronze Medal. The Chief Constable has pleasure in asking the Chairman to make the presentation of the Clasp and ribbon to Sergeant Ayres. The Medal itself cannot be manufactured until after the cessation of hostilities owing to Wartime metal restrictions. J Bell, Chief Constable, 11 February 1944'. Ayres received his medal ribbon and 'wartime bar' from the Watch Committee on 17 February 1944 and at the same time it was recorded that a: 'note should be handed to Sergeant Ayres so that he may apply for the medal after the cessation of hostilities'.

Medal inscribed: 'Pol. Sgt. Edward Ayres, Manchester, 6.6.1943', with wartime issue 'bar' inscribed: 'Pol. Sgt. Edward Ayres, Manchester, 6th June, 1943', in pair with his Police Long Service Medal (EIIR, 1st issue) (Sergt. Edward C. Ayres).

17,522: Reginald Morrey: Bronze medal
William Haddock: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 12 November 1943: No details.

17,527: PC Edward Longland: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 12 November 1943: No details. Recent research published on the internet reveals the circumstances that lead to the award. On 30 August 1943 B-24H Liberator 42-7468 crashed at Northfield Farm, shortly after takeoff from Burtonwood, Lancashire. Off duty police constable Edward Longland was at Northfield Farm when the aircraft flew over and he saw it losing height and then bank to the right until he could see the outline and upper surface of both wings, when suddenly it hit an earthwork some 300 yards away. Longland ran to the spot. The aircraft was a mass of flames and had broken into two parts with wreckage spread over a large area. He then noticed a body lying on the ground near the front of the fuselage which was burning furiously. He shielded his face with a sack and dragged the crewman clear, but unfortunately he was dead. He was then joined by Civil Defence Warden Robert Wilson and Special Constable Redhead and they made repeated attempts to recover other members of the crew from the wreckage. However, the heat, smoke and numerous explosions made this impossible. The AFS arrived and began to put the fire out. After the flames were brought under control a further four crewmen were recovered. Shortly afterwards USAAF personnel arrived and took charge of the situation. Edward Longland was presented with his medal at Widnes Police Court in February 1944, along with a merit badge and monetary award. Constable Redhead and Robert Wilson were presented with framed certificates and three guineas each. For further details on the events see http://web.ukonline.co.uk/lait/site/B-4%2042-7468.htm

17,531: Sgt A J Docherty: Silver medal

Details: MB(7) - 10 March 1944: No details.

17,533: Joseph Thompson: Bronze medal
Edward Parker: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 10 March 1944: No details.

17,538: John Irving: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 10 March 1944: No details.

17,539: William J Burn: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 10 March 1944: No details.

17,540: Norman Bryce: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 10 March 1944: No details.

17,543: Burt Bardon: Bronze medal
PC Arthur Alfred Hicks: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 10 March 1944: No details. According to his Metropolitan Police Central Record of Service, PC Arthur A Hicks (1897-1980) (warrant no. 105929) was commended for 'action at a fire' in Police Orders 21.1.44 and received the SPLF medal 'for saving a life from a burning house'.

17,548: David A Williams: Silver medal and £5.5s.

Details: MB(7) - 10 March 1944: No details.

17,552: PC Wilfred Clifford O'Dell: Bronze medal
PO Geoffrey Kates, RN: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 28 July 1944: No details. O'Dell served as a PC (107326) in the Metropolitan Police and their records include two unattributed newspaper cuttings relating to the rescue efforts. The first notes that: 'There were dramatic rescues when a fierce fire broke out at the Railway Hotel, Station Road, South Norwood [on 20 January 1944], and later in the year the Bronze medal of the Society for the Protection of Life from

Fire was awarded to PC W O'Dell and Petty Officer G Kates, RN, for the part they played in saving the licensee, his wife and three children who were trapped in the burning building'. The second cutting describes the presentation of the temporary wartime issue 'bar' to O'Dell by the Mayor of Croydon and notes that: In the early hours of Jan 20, 1944, a serious fire was discovered at the Railway Hotel, South Norwood. The whole of the ground floor was ablaze, and the licensee, his wife and three children were trapped on the top floor. The constable, with the assistance of a naval officer (who has also been awarded a similar medal), succeeded in reaching a narrow ledge, only eight inches wide and 15 feet from the ground, and was able to throw a rope to the trapped people. The rope was secured and the occupants who were in a desperate plight, began to descend. At this moment the fire-escape arrived and completed the rescue so gallantly attempted by the police officer. The Mayor, in offering his hearty congratulations to PC O'Dell, said that the medal would be available at the end of the war…'. The Society sent O'Dell his actual medal by post on 3 November 1947 and at the same time gave him the temporary 'bar' to retain as a souvenir.

Medal inscribed: 'Wilfred O'Dell, South Norwood, 20.1.1944': medal and WWI trio presented to Metropolitan Police Museum in 1975.

17,553: Samuel Delty: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 28 July 1944: No details.

17,554: J H Tetley: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 28 July 1944: No details.

17,555: Inspector Charles Alexander Patterson: Bronze medal
Sgt Walter Berrystone: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 28 July 1944: No details. Patterson (1900-1969) was an Inspector in the Metropolitan Police (warrant no. 112730) and according to his Metropolitan Police Central Record of Service, he was commended 'for actions at a fire (w.a.o.). Also commended at Shoreditch Coroner's Court' in Police Orders 7.4.44. Walter Berrystone (1901-1966) was a Sergeant (warrant no. 114435) in the Metropolitan Police, his record being endorsed similarly to Patterson's.

Medal known: Berrystone's SPLF medal and Defence Medal 1939-45 were presented to the Metropolitan Police Museum.

17,556: G A Scott: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 28 July 1944: No details.

17,557: N Hodgkinson: Bronze medal
Russell E Falan: Bronze medal
Charles W Hall: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 28 July 1944: No details.

17,560: Miss Mary Saunders: Silver medal and £5.5s.

Details: MB(7) - 28 July 1944: No details.

17,572: E Clarke: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 1 December 1944: No details.

17,573: Jack L Page: Bronze medal
Peter Wynn: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 1 December 1944: No details.

17,579: John Burridge: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 1 December 1944: No details.

Wartime issue 'bar' inscribed: 'P. Con John Burridge Blackpool 3rd October 1944'.

17,580: Harold K Watson: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 13 April 1945: No details.

17,582: Patrick H J Tilley: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 13 April 1945: No details.

17,589: John W. Tooke: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 13 April 1945: No details.

17,590: Lieutenant Colonel A H Lewis: Silver medal

Details: MB(7) - 13 April 1945: No details.

17,592: George Frederick Larkins: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 13 April 1945: No details.
According to his Metropolitan Police Central Record of Service, PC Larkins (1901-1977) (warrant no. 115201) was commended 'for promptitude at a fire…27 January 1945' in Police Orders 24.8.45.

17,594: John W Burrows: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 13 April 1945: No details.

17,595: Harold Mason: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 13 April 1945: No details.

17,597: Henry Thomas Casling: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 21 September 1945: No details. According to his Metropolitan Police Central Record of Service, PC Casling (1894-1973) (warrant no. 107136) was commended 'for releasing a pilot from a crashed and burning aircraft' in Police Orders 11.5.45. The medal is still in family possession. Along with the medal, the family retain the following letter which gives some details of the rescue:

'HEADQUARTERS
AAF STATION F-378
APO 559 U. S. ARMY
13 April 1945

The Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis
New Scotland Yard
London SW1

Dear Sir,

I would very much like to express appreciation for the heroic action of PC Casling (269T) attached to the Norwood Green Station in connection with the airplane accident of 26 February 1945, at Heston, involving 1st Lieutenant Gaston H Riggs, 0758379, of this station. The airplane collided with a house at 91 North Hyde Lane, Heston, while attempting to make an emergency landing at Heston Aerodrome at approximately 1325. Police Constable Casling, together with Mr William L Blake, 71 High Street, Hampton Hill, Hampton, Middlesex, Mr Arthur H Rowles, 24 Fern Lane, Heston, Middlesex, Mr Alfred A Hooper, 17 North Hyde Lane, Heston, Middlesex, rushed to the aid of the pilot in spite of the fact that the wreck burst into flames and the ammunition was exploding. With extreme risk to themselves, these men succeeded in extricating the pilot from the cockpit in spite of considerable difficulty in freeing him from his safety straps. Unfortunately Lieutenant Riggs died on the way to the hospital, however the heroic and spontaneous aid rendered by Police Constable Casling and the others concerned is worthy of merit and commendation.
Sincerely yours,
JOHN B. HENRY, JR.,
Colonel, Air Corps,
Commanding'

For further details on the crash see http://forum.armyairforces.com/tm.aspx?m=137761

17,608: H Richards: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 21 September 1945: No details.

17,609: Joseph H Maulkerson: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 22 March 1946: No details.

17,620: John T Evans: Bronze medal and £3.3s

Details: MB(7) - 22 March 1946: No details.

17,623: Squadron Leader Gray: Bronze medal
Column Officer Vaughan: Silver medal

Details: MB(7) - 22 March 1946: No details.

17,626: Alfred Edwards: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 22 March 1946: No details.

17,629: Inspector James Wilkie McAndrew: Bronze medal
Sgt James Arthur Leslie Digby: Bronze medal
PC Frank Walter James Guy: Bronze medal
PC William Edward Odey: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 19 July 1946: No details. According to his Metropolitan Police Central Record of Service, PC Frank Guy (1916-) (warrant no. L 125097) was commended 'for action in attempting to rescue two men from a burning building. Also commended at Lewisham Coroner's Court' in Police Orders 22.3.46. Inspector McAndrew (1905-) (warrant no. 116564) and PC Odey's (1903-1974) (warrant no. 114896) records are similarly endorsed, though Sgt Digby's (1911-) record (warrant no. 122667) is not.

17,631: John Schofield: Bronze medal
Matthew Sharp: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 19 July 1946: No details.

17,632: Column Officer Sheard: Silver medal
Section Leader Carns: Silver medal

Details: MB(7) - 19 July 1946: No details. An account of the probable circumstances is given in the *Liverpool Echo* (18 March 1946) thus: 'Attempted rescue in Rectory Street. Roy Davies, twelve-months-old son of Mr and Mrs Albert Davies, transport driver, of No. 22 Rectory Street, off Wellington Road, lost his life in a fire which broke out at his home shortly before noon on Saturday 16th March. His brother, Albert, aged 3 was

rescued by a neighbour, who saw the fire as she was passing. Mrs Davies had gone shopping and the baby was in bed upstairs. It is believed the fire broke out in the kitchen, and the rear of the two bedroom house was quickly ablaze. The NFS arrived and Section Officer Carns gained access to the bedroom by means of a fire-escape ladder, found the baby and he was brought out but was found to be dead'.

17,640: Albert C J Diamond: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 19 July 1946: No details.

17,642: Dennis Simpson: Silver watch or 5 savings Bonds.

Details: MB(7) - 19 July 1946: No details.

17,647: William Stewart: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 30 January 1947: No details.

17,657: Norman B Gee: Bronze medal
John McMurdo: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 30 January 1947: No details.

17,677: Company Section Leader Charles Norman Bidgood: Silver medal
Fireman Albert S Chedzey: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 11 June 1947: No details. A fire broke out at around 5am in a large office building, Merthyr House, in the dock area of Cardiff, on 17 March 1946 and several people were rescued from the fifth floor. Afterwards the firefighters came in for some criticism (*The Times*, Thursday 13 June 1946, p. 2). According to *The Times* (Saturday 3 August 1946, p. 6): 'NFS UPHELD AFTER CARDIFF INQUIRY: The Home Office have published the report by Mr John Flowers, KC, on an enquiry into a fire at Merthyr House, James Street, Cardiff, on March 17. At a meeting of the Watch Committee on March 20 the Chief Constable of Cardiff (Sir James Wilson) made a number of complaints reflecting on the efficiency of the National Fire Service in the way they dealt with the fire. Mr Flowers finds that none of the complaints was justified, that the National Fire Service acted with great expedition and efficiency, and that Column Officer Bidgood carried out the rescue of those persons trapped on the top storey with commendable gallantry'.

The medal to Charles Bidgood is known to be in possession of the family.

17,684: PC William Sinclair: Bronze medal
Henry T Carden: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 26 November 1947: No details. According to his Metropolitan Police Central Record of Service, PC Sinclair (1908-) (warrant no. 122364) was commended 'for promptitude in effecting the rescue of persons from a burning dwelling house (W.A.O.)' in Police Orders 27.6.47.

17,685: William J Kendall: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 26 November 1947: No details.

17,687: Walter Oliver: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 26 November 1947: No details.

17,688: Sgt M E Chapman: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 26 November 1947: No details.

17,690: Ernest Woodsworth: Bronze medal
Henry Sharples: Bronze medal
Coy. Officer Welsh: Bronze medal
Log. Officer Larkin: Bronze medal
Fireman Walsh: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 26 November 1947: No details.

17,691: Sgt John Bannister: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 26 November 1947: No details. According to his Metropolitan Police Central Record of Service, Sgt Bannister (see also case 17,459) was commended 'for dealing with a man whose clothing had caught fire' in Police Orders 2.4.48.

17,694: PC Robert Hendry Cruickshank: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 26 November 1947: No details. According to his Metropolitan Police Central Record of Service, PC Cruickshank (1921-) (warrant no. 129976) was: 'highly commended for courage and promptitude in effecting the rescue of persons from a burning dwelling house. Also commended by HM Coroner for St Pancras' in Police Orders 18.11.47 and was awarded £20 from the Bow Street Metropolitan Magistrates Court Reward Fund (noted in Police Orders 30.12.1947) and the SPLF medal (Police Orders 2.4.48).

17,695: Harry Williams: Bronze medal
Fred Scraton: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 26 November 1947: No details.

17,696: Thomas Smith: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 14 April 1948: No details.

17,697: J Shallise: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 14 April 1948: No details.

17,698: Harry Rowe: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 14 April 1948: No details.

17,706: PC John Armitage Crocker: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 14 April 1948: No details. According to his Metropolitan Police Central Record of Service, PC Crocker (1917-) (warrant no. 131221) was commended 'for devotion to duty, while off duty, and promptitude in dealing with a woman whose clothing had caught fire' in Police Orders 12.3.48.

17,709: PC Williams: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 14 April 1948: No details

17,720: Albert H Wicks: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 6 October 1948: No details.

17,728: Charles Kilgrave: Silver medal

Details: MB(7) - 16 February 1949: No details.

17,728: Robert G Moseley: Silver medal
John B Lewis: Silver medal

Details: MB(7) 16 February 1949: No details.

Medal inscribed: 'Fireman Robert G Mosley, South Africa 26-7-48'.

17,731: Jasper F Kroager: Silver medal

Details: MB(7) - 16 February 1949: No details. The Society's Minute Book records recipient as deceased.

17,737: Eric G Boll: Bronze medal
Eric Fetton: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 16 February 1949: No details.

17,739: Robert Binns: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 16 February 1949: No details.

17,743: William J Newton: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 16 February 1949: No details.

17,747: Doctor Percy Scott: Silver medal
PC Reginald E A Tate: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1949; MB(7) - 16 February 1949: 'On 29th November 1949, a girl trapped by debris at the British Cocoa Mills, Tower Street, Hull was saved from a fire. Doctor Scott climbed an escape ladder and entered the building through a window to release and attend a girl who was trapped by debris. The fire was caused by an explosion'. The Society's Minutes Book records recipient as 'A E Tate'.

17,748: William J Kosking: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 1 June 1949: No details.

17,748: John Hillier: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 1 June 1949: No details.

17,752: Alan Nash: Bronze medal and £3.3s.

Details: AR 1949; MB(7) - 1 June 1949: 'On 23rd January 1949, an unconscious woman was saved from a fire at King William's College, near Castletown, IOM Alan Nash crawled through dense smoke to locate a woman who was lying unconscious when a fire occurred'.

17,763: A/PSgt Joseph Bland: Bronze medal
PC Henry Gordon Swain: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1949; MB(7) - 1 June 1949: 'On 3rd April 1949, a woman was saved from a burning house at 17 Samuel Street, Bury, Lancs'.

17,766: Richard Vardy: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 1 June 1949: No details.

17,771: PC Thomas Richard Adams: Bronze medal
PC John Harness: Bronze medal
PC Robert Victor Tapp: Bronze medal
PC Lewis Arthur Holness: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1949; MB(7) - 16 November 1949: 'On 21st April 1949, the above Police Constables rescued one occupant and made determined efforts to save the other occupants of an aeroplane which crashed and caught fire at 4 Peel Drive, Aerodrome Road, Hendon, London NW9. According to his Metropolitan Police Central Record of Service, PC Harness (1921-1991) (warrant no. 134372 and 151044) was commended 'for courage and promptitude in removing an

airman from a crashed and burning aeroplane' in Police Orders 27.5.49. The records of Adams (1928-1993) (warrant no. 134365), Tapp (1923-) (warrant no. 134276), and Holness (1922-) (warrant no. 134272) were similarly endorsed.

Medal inscribed: 'P.C. John Harness, Hendon 21-4-1949', this being together with his other awards, which consist of the 1939/45 Star, Atlantic Star with 'France and Germany Clasp', Defence Medal, War Medal, and Police Long Service Medal with Queen's Commendation Oak Leaf (Const. John Harness.).

17,772: David N Kelly: Bronze medal
William G Trelsley: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 16 November 1949: No details.

17,774: PC Clifford Robinson: Bronze medal
Fireman Percy Edward Fullick: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1949; MB(7) - 16 November 1949: 'On 23rd June 1949 Robinson and Fullick entered a burning shop and dwelling house at 5 Hepworth Buildings. Chapel Street, Guildford. Despite the dense smoke and flames they rescued a child'.

17,776: Hector Howarth: Silver medal
Station Officer William Elliott: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1949; MB(7) - 16 November 1949: 'On 22nd July 1949 a boy was rescued from the attic at 34 Armstrong Avenue, Heaton, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, but Howarth was unable to descend the stairs. So the rescuer lowered himself out of a window whilst holding onto the framework with one hand and held the boy with the other hand until a ladder was obtained. William Elliott crawled upstairs and rescued another child'.

17,779: Thomas H Prater: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 16 November 1949: No details

17,787: George T Barlow: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 16 November 1949: No details.

Medal inscribed: 'George T. Barlow, Battersea 27.8.1949.'

17,794: Detective Constable Leonard Barton: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1950; MB(7) - 1 March 1950: 'On 26th November 1949 a woman was rescued from a burning house at 12 Stone Moore Bottom, Padiham, Lancs. The ladder which the Constable ascended became broken, so he was compelled to support the woman at an upstairs window until the Fire Brigade arrived'.

17,795: Sidney J Smith: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 1 March 1950: No details.

17,795: Walter Williams: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 1 March 1950: No details.

17,801: John Williams: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 1 March 1950: No details.

17,802: William Whitehouse: Bronze medal
Alfred Bowater: Bronze medal
Fred Wade: Bronze medal
J T Lloyd: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 1 March 1950: No details.

17,803: Arthur Eyett: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 1 March 1950: No details.

17,804: Donald Wells (15), Delivery Boy: Silver watch

Details: AR 1950; MB(7) - 1 March 1950: 'On 28th December 1949 a baby was saved from a fire at 201 Hopewell Road, Kingston-upon-Hull. Whilst making a delivery, Donald Wells observed smoke at the premises and after tying a handkerchief over his face, he entered the house and rescued a baby from a burning room'.

17,816: PC Robert Beckett: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1950; MB(7) - 12 July 1950: 'On 12th March 1950, Police Constable Robert Beckett ascended a ladder and made several entries into a burning house to rescue the occupants at 29 Heaton Street, Standish, Lancs'.

17,822: PC William Edward Wight: Bronze medal
PC Kenneth Jackson: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 12 July 1950: No details. According to their Metropolitan Police Central Records of Service, PC Wight (1927-1983) (warrant no. 132953) and PC Jackson (1929-) (warrant no. 135099 and 154847) were each commended 'for action at a serious

fire… awarded £10 from the Bow Street Metropolitan Magistrates Court Reward Fund…' in Police Orders 9.5.50 and 28.7.50.

17,844: Harry Hoyle: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 12 July 1950: No details.

17,856: Maureen Gurdin: Silver watch

Details: MB(7) - 12 July 1950: No details.

17,861: Brian F Pain (11), Child: Watch
Patricia Pain (10), Child: Watch

Details: AR 1951; MB(7) - 30 May 1951: 'On 16th December 1950 Patricia Pain rescued a baby from the top floor of a house in Stoke Newington, London, having had to negotiate four flights of stairs through thick smoke'.

17,868: Station Officer Alfred James H Bollington, Hereford Fire Brigade: Silver medal
Fireman Allen J Thomas, Hereford Fire Brigade: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1951; MB(7) - 30 May 1951: 'On 9th February 1951 Bollington and Thomas made gallant attempts to rescue an aged woman from an upstairs room of a burning house in Harold Street, Hereford, which was badly on fire'. The awards were later reported in the Gloucestershire newspaper *The Citizen* (undated cutting) thus: 'Early last February the Hereford Fire Brigade were called to a fire at Nos 9 and 11 Harold Street. On arrival they learned that an elderly lady was trapped in a bedroom on the first floor of the house. Two firemen, Station Officer A J H Bollington and Fireman A J Thomas, climbed the escape and entered the room in an effort to save her. They were driven back by the dense volumes of smoke but after donning breathing apparatus they once again attempted to enter the room. The two firemen were again forced to withdraw because of the fierce heat, but in a third gallant effort, Station Officer Bollington entered the room and found the body under the bed. With the aid of Fireman Thomas the lady was removed from the building and taken to hospital where she was found to be dead. As a result of this [rescue effort], the two firemen have been awarded the premier awards of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire. Station Officer Bollington has been presented with the Silver Medal and Fireman Thomas the Bronze Medal of the Society, 'for the highest devotion to duty and carrying out a most dangerous and difficult task with great gallantry and disregard for their own safety'. Presenting the medal, the chairman of the Fire Brigade Committee, Major H E B Holden, paid tribute to their gallantry'. The Society's Minutes Book records the second recipient as 'A F Thomas'. Alfred Bollington (1911-1997) was subsequently promoted ADO in the early 1960s.

Medal inscribed: 'Fireman A J Thomas – Hereford – 9-2-1951', together with 1939-45 Star, Burma Star, Defence Medal and Fire Service LS&GC Medal, in the recipient's possession (2009).

17,881: Janet Taylor (8), Child: Silver watch

Details: AR 1951; MB(7) - 28 November 1951: 'On 14th March 1951 Janet Taylor saved her young sister's life when her clothing caught fire. Showing great presence of mind and in spite of burned hands, Janet removed all the child's clothing and wrapped her in a rug, then ran for assistance'.

17,883: Fireman Thomas G Upward: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1951; MB(7) - 28 November 1951: 'On 10th May 1951 Thomas Upward rescued a child from the top floor of a house at White Cliff, Blandford, Dorset. Without waiting for the Brigade to arrive, the rescuer entered the burning building, and ascended through thick smoke to the bedroom where the child was lying unconscious'.

17,891: W A Darlington: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 28 November 1951: No details.

17,905: Cyril Gardner – Schoolboy: Watch

Details: MB(7) - 19 March 1952: No details.

17,907: Dennis C A Haile (13), Schoolboy: Watch

Details: AR 1952; MB(7) - 19 March 1952: 'On 28th November 1951 Dennis Haile rescued two small children from an upstairs room which was on fire in a house in Sheldon, Birmingham. To effect the rescues he had to make a double journey along a narrow ledge seven feet above the ground, carrying one child at a time'.

17,917: PC Kenneth Fanyers: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 19 March 1952: No details.

17,919: Ambulance Driver James H Blundell: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 19 March 1952: No details.

17,932: Aircraftsman Stanley Bartlett, Royal Air Force: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1952; MB(7) - 28 August 1952: 'On 30th May 1952 Stanley Bartlett rescued a crippled man from a smoke logged room in Lee Bank Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham'.

17,945: Constable Fireman Thomas Baptiste: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1953; MB(7) - 6 January 1953: 'On 24th August 1952 Thomas Baptiste rescued a panic stricken woman from a fire which destroyed eight buildings in St. Georges, Windward Islands'.

17,954: John Bamford (15): Silver medal

Details: AR 1953; MB(7) - 6 January 1954: 'On 19th October 1952 John Bamford displayed great heroism in rescuing two younger brothers from a fierce fire at Newthorp, Notts. In doing so was seriously burned'.



John Bamford GC, after his Investiture, outside Buckingham Palace

John Bamford also received the George Cross for the rescue and the citation is recorded in the *London Gazette* (12 December 1952) thus: 'GEORGE CROSS. John Bamford, Colliery Worker, Newthorpe, Nottingham. A fire broke out in a house occupied by a man, his wife and six children, and in a very short time was burning fiercely. John Bamford and his father went downstairs, and upon opening the living room door at the foot of the stairs the interior of the room burst into flames. Owing to the intense heat they were unable to get back upstairs to the rest of the family. They ran out through the front door, climbed on to the top of a baywindow which gave access to a bedroom, opened the window and helped three of the children and the mother on to the flat roof. John Bamford and his father then climbed into the bedroom where they could hear the two remaining children, aged 4 and 6, shouting in the back bedroom, situated immediately above the seat of the fire. The bedroom doors at the head of the stairs were enveloped in flames. The father draped a blanket around himself and attempted to reach the children but the blanket caught fire and he was driven back. John Bamford then told his father to go to the back of the house while he got down on his hands and knees and crawled through the flames into the bedroom. His shirt was completely burned upon him but nevertheless he snatched the two young boys from the bed and managed to get them to the window. He dropped the younger boy from the window into his father's arms but the elder boy struggled from his grasp. Bamford could then have got out himself but he left the window and chased the screaming child through the flames across the room. He eventually managed to catch him and throw him from the window. By this time Bamford was fast losing consciousness. He was terribly burned on the face, neck, chest, back, arms and hands but he managed to get one leg over the window sill and then fell to the ground. John Bamford displayed courage of the highest order, and in spite of excruciating pain succeeded in rescuing his two brothers.



John Bamford recovering in Nottingham General Hospital – Sister Odey is showing him the letter informing him of his award of the George Cross

17,967: PC Kenneth Dunkley: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1953; MB(7) - 20 May 1953: 'On 19th December 1952 P.C. Dunkley rescued an unconscious man from the bedroom of a house in Stamford Brook Avenue, Chiswick,

London W4. A downstairs room was on fire and the house was filled with dense smoke'. According to his Metropolitan Police Central Record of Service, PC Dunkley (1924-1996) (warrant no. 129685) was commended by the 'Commissioner [who] has pleasure in notifying the grant of a bronze medal by the Society…for rescuing a man from a burning building' in Police Orders 18.8.53.

17,980: Carol Ann Colebrook (10): Watch

Details: AR 1953; MB(7) – 20 May 1953: 'On 4th February 1953 Carol Colebrook tried to save her younger brother's life when his nightshirt caught alight from an open fire at a Flat in Chenies Street, London WC1. She first tried to beat out the flames with her hands, and then tore off the burning nightshirt and stamped on it. Unfortunately the boy died from his injuries a month later'.

17,996: Constable Kipsambo Arap Mosonik: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1953; MB(7) - 20 October 1953: 'On 25th May 1953 the Constable rescued a village Headman from a blazing hut which had been set on fire by Mau Mau terrorists near Kamakwa Village, Nyeri, Kenya. The roof collapsed a few moments after the Constable had brought the man out'.

18,001: Alan Taylor (16): Watch

Details: AR 1953; MB(7) - 20 October 1953: 'On 29th June 1953 Alan Taylor entered an upper window of a burning house at Abertillery, Monmouthshire, and brought out a three year old girl who was already overcome by smoke and heat. To effect the rescue he had to climb from the roof of an outhouse'.

18,004: Alfred Dunstan: Watch

Details: MB(7) - 20 October 1953: No details.

18,009: PC Anthony Frank Saddington: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1953; MB(7) - 20 October 1953: 'On 5th September 1953, PC Saddington rescued an unconscious woman from a house at Harworth, Notts., and in doing so he had to pass through a burning room and ascend the stairs to the bedroom. From the window he lowered the woman into the arms of bystanders and in climbing out himself he fell and was injured'.

18,024: PC (C22) Samuel Binks: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1954; MB(7) - 4 March 1954: 'On 19th November 1953, PC Binks, in spite of dense smoke and severe heat, dragged a woman from the blazing kitchen of a house in Randolph Street, Leverhulme, Manchester'. In Binks' Manchester police service record, it notes that: 'The constable went to the house [50 Randolph Street] after having been told that it appeared to be on fire and that a woman was believed to be inside. He saw that the rooms at the front of the house appeared to be full of smoke, arranged for the Fire Brigade to be informed and went to the back of the house. He opened the back door and crawled, with a wet napkin over his mouth, through dense smoke into the kitchen. He then discovered the body of a woman lying by the fireplace and dragged her out. She was extensively burnt and was later found to be dead. Constable Binks then went back into the house and with the assistance of Mr Thomas Taylor, 57 Randolph Street, Levenshulme – who kept him supplied with buckets of water – fought the fire until the arrival of the Brigade soon afterwards. At an inquest upon the deceased woman on the 24th November, HM Coroner said: "When Police Constable Binks came to the scene he acted with considerable promptitude in taking charge of the situation. He is to be highly commended for his presence of mind and for his courage in going into this place. He crawled in on the floor with a wet cloth around his face and searched about until he found the deceased and got her out. Not satisfied with that he went back into the holocaust of smoke and worked with buckets of water to put out the fire. The conduct of Constable Binks is according to the highest traditions of the Manchester Police Force" Constable Binks has been instructed to attend this meeting of the [Watch] Committee to received the medal'. PC Binks appears to have been presented with his medal on 24 June 1954 by the Watch Committee at the Town Hall.

18,030: Pauline Baldwin: Watch

Details: MB(7) - March 1954: No details.

18,035: PC Richard G North: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1954; MB(7) - March 1954: 'On 8th January 1954, P.C. North showed bravery in extricating an elderly man from the blazing living room of a house at New Crofton, Yorks'.

18,041: John Fletcher: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 15 June 1954. No details.

18,049: Sylvan S Sneed: Bronze medal
John F Cassidy: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 15 June 1954: No details.

18,052: Alfred W Creed: Watch

Details: MB(7) - 15 June 1954: No details.

18,055: Rodney G C Pepper: Watch

Details: MB(7) - 15 June 1954: No details.

18,056: Maureen Miles: Watch

Details: MB(7) - 15 June 1954: No details.

18,062: William James Ackerley: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 10 November 1954: No details.

18,064: Sub-Officer Reginald Joseph Richens: Silver medal

Details: AR 1954; MB(7) - 10 November 1954: 'On 19th April 1954, Sub-Officer Richens showed courage and devotion to duty in rescuing a woman from the living quarters over a burning garage at Bacup, Lancs'.

18,069: PC P D Crisp: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1954; MB(7) - 10 November 1954: 'On 7th June 1954 P.C. Crisp took part in the rescue of a woman from a burning house in Wymering, near Portsmouth. His task was to support the unconscious woman from a ladder at a narrow window whilst she was being freed by the brigade, and in doing so he was constantly subjected to much smoke and intense heat from the fire'.

18,096: John K Duncan: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 6 April 1955: No details.

18,117: Loo Myok: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 3 August 1955: No details. Later, in MR(7) – 21 March 1956: 'The Chairman read a letter from the Under-Secretary for the Colonies replying that the evidence on which a bronze medal had been awarded to Chong Chin was incorrect, and that the rescue of the woman and two children had in fact been effected by Loo Myok. After considering the fresh evidence submitted it was agreed that the previous award should be withdrawn and another bronze medal despatched for presentation to the said Loo Myok'.

18,134: Constable William Mapesa: Silver medal

Details: AR 1955; MB(7) - 12 December 1955: 'On 19th February 1955, an RAF plane crashed at Kiambu, Kenya. Despite intense heat and exploding ammunition Constable Mapesa extracted the rear gunner from the crashed plane'. Further details were obtained from Fred Stringer (personal communication) who had served in the Kenya Police during the Mau Mau campaign, and for a time was stationed at Githunguri Police Station. "On Saturday, February 19, 1955, a Lincoln bomber (SX984) of 49th Squadron was returning from an operational bombing sortie at 1540 hours on route to returning to Eastleigh airport in Nairobi, when the pilot carried out several unauthorised low passes over the police hut where another 49 Squadron crew were paying a visit. On the third such pass the plane struck the roof of the building and a telegraph pole breaking off part of the wing and some of its nose (an alternative source says that the plane struck the chimney and lost its tailplane). It went into a steep climb, stalled and crashed eight miles away to the north west in the valley below Kiambu killing five members of the crew and four civilians on the ground. Constable, William Malpesa, ran down to the crash site and regardless of his own safety ran in amongst exploding ammunition and oxygen bottles and pulled the rear gunner, Sgt Bartlett, out, extinguishing the flames, stripping him and covering him with his own clothing. With the aid of two of the visiting aircrew he dragged Sgt Bartlett about 50 yards to a Land Rover which then took him to hospital in Nairobi. Unfortunately Sgt Bartlett died of his injuries'. (Another source notes that Pierson, a member of the visiting crew, was also involved in pulling the rear gunner from the wreckage. See also: *Medal News*, August 2010, and www.bomberhistory.co.uk/49squadron/Documentssection/Kenya Crash.html?

18,137: Fire Officer Charles MacConnell: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1955; MB(7) - 12 December 1955: 'On 25th June 1955 Fire Officer MacConnell rescued a boy from the upper floor of a burning house in Russell Street, Chester'.

18,139: PC Frederick Stephen: Bronze medal

Details: AR (1955) and MB(7) – 12 December 1955: 'On 24th July 1955, P,C. Stephen displayed courage and persistence in attempting to rescue persons trapped in a burning building in Amble Grove,

Newcastle-upon-Tyne'. Further details are included in the *Newcastle Evening Chronicle* (25 July 1955): 'An inquest was opened in Newcastle today on the four people who died when fire swept through their five roomed upstairs flat in Amble Grove, Newcastle yesterday. After evidence of identification, the inquest was adjourned for 14 days on John Archibold McPherson 56 years, a general labourer, his wife Mary Josephine 53 years, and their two sons, John Charles 25 years, a general labourer, and Ronald 20 years, an apprentice plumber. Sgt William Todd, the Coroner's Officer said there might be further investigations to be made by the police and fire brigade. Referring to the funeral arrangements, he said everything had been lost in the fire. The WVS were to see to the surviving daughter, Evelyn 18 years, and Anne Bell, Ronald's 18 year old fiancée, who escaped from the flat, about clothing arrangements. The funeral was to take place on Thursday at Heaton Cemetery. The fire alarm was given when the two girls raised the alarm with their screaming. A neighbour, Mr Thomas Gosling, who had heard them, ran barefoot for a ladder, placed it against the house and carried Anne to safety. Mr Frederick Scott, another neighbour brought Evelyn down. The blaze was out in about 15 minutes'.

18,142: PC Stanley Thomas Seagull: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1955; MB(7) - 12 December 1955: 'On 31st July 1955, PC Seagull's efforts in a fire at the Walnuttree Hospital, Sudbury, Suffolk enabled three patients to escape to safety from the top floor'.

18,144: Roderick M Macleod: Bronze medal

Details: MB(7) - 12 December 1955: No details.

18,210: PC T J Mulholland: Bronze medal

Details: MB(8) - 2 October 1956: No details.

18,286: PSgt Walter Kenyon: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1957; MB(8) - 5 September 1957: 'On 20th April 1957, PS Kenyon, at the second attempt, succeeded in dragging an unconscious woman from a burning flat at Ansdell, Lytham St Annes, Lancs'.

18,293: PC Clement Albert Frederick Welling: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1957; MB(8) - 5 September 1957: 'On 7th May 1957 P.C. Welling displayed courage and perseverance when entering a blazing flat in Magee Street, Kennington and bringing out a crippled woman. She was pronounced dead upon arrival at hospital'. According to his Metropolitan Police Central Record of Service, PC Welling (1926-1995) (warrant no. 95/135119) was commended 'for promptitude and resourcefulness in rescuing a woman from a fire' in Police Orders 7.2.58.

18,316: PC Ronald P Starkey: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1958; MB(8) - 15 January 1958: 'On 17th August 1957, PC Starkey entered a burning building in King Street, Whitehaven, Cumberland and brought to safety a woman and two children'.

18,334: PC P W Wigley: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1958; MB(8) - 15 January 1958: 'On 21st December 1957, P.C. Wigley successfully extricating the unconscious driver from a burning lorry near Breedon-on-the-Hill, Leics'.

18,373: PC Phillip Hoggard: Bronze medal

Details: MB(8) - 6 August 1958: No details. According to his Metropolitan Police Central Record of Service, PC Hoggard (1917-) (warrant no. 127135) was: 'highly commended for outstanding courage and initiative in a case of arson. Also commended at the Central Criminal Court' in Police Orders 11.4.58. He was then warded £15 from the Bow Street Metropolitan Magistrates Court Reward Fund (Police Orders 16.5.58) and received a Queen's Commendation for Brave Conduct (*LG*, 17 October 1958, p. 6427, and Police Orders 21.10.58). The *Gazette* entry for the Queen's Commendation notes that it was 'for services when a basement Club was set on fire'.

18,459: Jean Audrey Bromley (16): Watch

Details: AR 1959; MB(8) - 20 May 1959: 'On 24th January 1959, Jean Bromley displayed courage and devotion to duty when fire broke out late at night at the Old Rectory, Cuxwold, Lincs. In pitch darkness, and despite dense smoke and a fierce fire, she collected and brought to safety three infant children left in her charge'.

18,488: PC Ronald Frederick Compton: Bronze medal

Details: MB(8) - 21 October 1959: No details. According to his Metropolitan Police Central Record of Service, PC Compton (1939-) (warrant no. 146282) was commended 'for courage and promptitude in attempting to rescue a man from a fire. Also commended at Ealing Coroner's Court' in Police Orders 8.5.59. His record goes on to note he was

awarded his SPLF medal on 24 November 1959.

18,811: Fireman James Newton: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1962; MB(8) - 27 June 1962: 'On 27th February 1962, Fireman James Newton rescued a girl (16) from a serious fire in the 2nd floor of a store in Congleton, Cheshire. During the rescue he used his own breathing apparatus to administer oxygen to the girl who had collapsed. The fireman, who had been injured by broken glass, with difficulty and in severe conditions, carried her down a ladder to safety. When the rescue had been completed, he collapsed from the loss of blood and the effects of heat and smoke, and was detained in hospital for over a month'.

18,868: Fireman Vernon A Forde: Bronze medal
Fireman Alston R Sobers: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1962; MB(8) - 4 October 1962: 'On 16th February 1962, the two firemen rescued a woman from the street in a serious fire in Georgetown, British Guiana, caused by incendiarism. Tall wooden buildings were giving off billowing flames more than half-way across the street. In conditions of heat so intense that it was physically impossible to retrace their steps, the two men ran to the woman, picked her up, and were able to carry her to safety'.

18,950: Miss Sheila Baker (16): Watch and certificate

Details: AR 1963; MB(8) - 3 April 1963: 'On 6th March 1963, Miss Baker rescued six children from a bungalow fire at Holsworthy, Devon. As the building was a bad fire risk, the fire spread rapidly, causing damage estimated at £3,000'.

18,952: Company Officer Norman J Kelly: Bronze medal

Details: AR 1963; MB(8) - 3 April 1963: 'On 19th November 1962, Norman Kelly rescued a work colleague at storage premises at Newtonabbey, Co Antrim during a serious fire. He remained in a room on the fourth floor of the premises after a second explosion had separated him from a colleague. Unaware that the blast had, in fact, blown the man to a place of safety, he continued to search for him, although almost overcome by the intense heat and shock from the blast'.

19,143: Kevin B White: Watch

Details: MB(8) - 8 July 1964: No details.

23,332: John Douglas Swann: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 6 December 1983: No details. Case submitted by New Scotland Yard.

23,349: Alan William Halse: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 6 December 1983: No details. Case submitted by Essex Police.

23,385: George James Gibbs: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 6 December 1983: No details.

23,399: Bradley James Rudgley: Bronze Medal, Certificate and £10

Details: MB(9) - 6 December 1983. No details. Case submitted by Essex Police. The Society's Minutes note the recipient was 11 years and 9 months of age at the time. According to *The Times* (Friday 14 December 1983, p. 6, which includes a picture of the recipient) Rudgley, who came from Sheering, Essex, saved his mother, grandmother, sister and a friend from a burning car in September 1983. He also received the Samaritano 84 prize for his efforts.

23,418: W T Roberts: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 27 March 1984: No details. Case submitted by Cornwall Fire Brigade.

23,433: J W Allinson: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 27 March 1984: No details. Case submitted by Humberside Police.

23,440: B Crouch: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 27 March 1984: No details. Case submitted by Kent Fire Brigade.

23,509: Mrs P Knight-Cartmell: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 31 July 1984: No details. Case submitted by Leicestershire Fire Brigade.

23,545: Mrs C E Humphries: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 31 July 1984: No details. Case submitted by West Midlands Police.

23,598: Michelle Brannigan: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 27 November 1984: No details. Case submitted by Lancashire Constabulary.

23,614: T N Chant: Bronze Medal and Certificate
R M Newman: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 27 November 1984: No details. Case submitted by Somerset Fire Brigade.

23,622: Lorraine Duncan: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 27 November 1984: No details. Case submitted by Tayside Fire Brigade.

23,664: G Meredith: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 26 March 1985: No details. Case submitted by Avon Fire Brigade.

23,666: D Hackett: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 26 March 1985: No details. Case submitted by Cheshire Fire Brigade.

23,668: G Kennedy: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 26 March 1985: No details. Case submitted by Cumbria Fire Brigade.

23,671: G J White: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 26 March 1985: No details. Case submitted by Essex Police.

23,684: A Grandison: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 26 March 1985: No details. Case submitted by Lothian and Borders Police.

23,701: P Hancock: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 26 March 1985: No details. Case submitted by South Yorkshire Police.

23,734: R Lambert: Bronze Medal and Certificate
T S J Whitbread: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 30 July 1985: No details. Case submitted by Lancashire Constabulary.

23,743: P Carter: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 30 July 1985: No details. Case submitted by Nottinghamshire Fire Brigade.

23,756: V M Honeyball: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 30 July 1985: No details. Case submitted by Sussex Police.

23,758: Alan Bayliss: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 30 July 1985: No details. Case submitted by Surrey Fire Brigade. The award was consequent to a light aircraft crash on 25 April 1985, which *The Times* (Friday, 26 April 1985, p. 2) briefly reported with some photo coverage. The aircraft crashed while trying to land at Fairoaks Airport, Chobham, Surrey. Alan Bayliss (38) pulled the pilot and another man free of the burning plane, both men being badly injured and with their clothes on fire. Two young brothers, Ray and David Egan, assisted Bayliss in extinguishing the men's burning clothing. The plane subsequently exploded, killing two other passengers.

23,832: N C Nicolaou: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 26 November 1985: No details. Case submitted by New Scotland Yard.

23,866: A A Beck: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 26 November 1985: No details. Case submitted by Strathclyde Police.

23,928: A S Windsor: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 25 March 1986: No details. Case submitted by Lincolnshire Fire Brigade.

23,934: C J H Stewart: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 25 March 1986: No details. Case submitted by Lothian and Borders Police.

23,936: J A Shaw: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 25 March 1986: No details. Case submitted by Greater Manchester Fire Service.

23,945: J Bradley: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 25 March 1986: No details. Case submitted by Royal Ulster Constabulary.

23,946: J M McSorley: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 25 March 1986: No details. Case submitted by Royal Ulster Constabulary.

24,007: Kenneth Hopkins: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 29 July 1986: No details. Case submitted by Mid Glamorgan Fire Service.

24,015: Bruce B Whitelock: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 29 July 1986: No details. Case submitted by South Wales Constabulary.

24,062: Alan Ainsworth: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 25 November 1986: No details. Case submitted by New Scotland Yard. The Society's original case note record describes how:[278] 'On 3rd July 1986, at 2.15 am, Mr Alan Ainsworth (28) was alerted to the fact that the third floor flat opposite his own was ablaze. He immediately rushed towards the burning flat even as a window exploded with the force of the heat. He dashed up the stairs ignoring warnings from another resident who was outside the burning flat. He forced open the front door and entered the flat. Opening the street door blocked out the flames in the living room although the air was hot and thick smoke prevalent. Mr Ainsworth advanced along the hallway to the bedroom where the woman and her four year old daughter and the young man (17) were cut off by smoke and flames and screaming for help. Assessing the situation immediately he cradled the child in his arms and told the two adults to hold on to him. Poisonous fumes and smoke made it difficult to breathe and see, but he braved the flames with the child in his arms and led the occupants in a chain effect out of the front door and to safety'.

Medal inscribed: 'A. Ainsworth 3rd July 1986'

24,091: D Key: Bronze Medal and Certificate
K H Pugh: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 25 November 1986: No details. Case submitted by Shropshire Fire Service.

24,097: G Wood: Bronze Medal and Certificate
S J Harrison: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 25 November 1986: No details. Case submitted by Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service.

24,148: K Cook: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 24 March 1987: No details. Case submitted by Devon Fire Brigade.

24,164: F Denham: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 24 March 1987: No details. Case submitted by Greater Manchester County Fire Service.

24,179: P Pinder: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 24 March 1987: No details. Case submitted by South Yorkshire Police.

24,220: J Minet: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 28 July 1987: No details. Case submitted by New Scotland Yard.

24,235: G Bull: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 28 July 1987: No details. Case submitted by Kent Fire Service.

[278] These original Case Reports have not survived in the Society's Records that were transferred to the London Metropolitan Archives.

24,261: J Thomson: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 28 July 1987: No details. Case submitted by Strathclyde Police.

24,304: Simon Roberts: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 24 November 1987: No details. Case submitted by Dyfed Fire Brigade.

24,376: D H Ollerenshaw: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 22 March 1988: No details. Case submitted by Derbyshire Fire Service.

24,399: G Skip: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 22 March 1988: No details. Case submitted by Somerset Fire Brigade.

24,409: R Dennis: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 22 March 1988: No details. Case submitted by Suffolk Fire Service.

24,438: C Thompson: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 19 July 1988: No details. Case submitted by Cheshire Fire Brigade.

24,487: P Patel: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 19 July 1988: No details. Case submitted by West Midlands Police.

24,551: W Bolton: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 29 November 1988: No details. Case submitted by South Yorkshire Police.

24,562: G Tallis: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 29 November 1988: No details. Case submitted by Warwickshire Fire and Rescue service.

24,589: Mrs V M Vaughan: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 21 March 1989: No details. Case submitted by Avon Fire Brigade.

24,616: Mr G F Boucher: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 21 March 1989: No details. Case submitted by South Yorkshire Police.

24,680: Scott Matthew Baillie: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 25 July 1989: No details. Case submitted by Lothian and Borders Police.

24,685: Mrs Annie Whitehead: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 25 July 1989: No details. Case submitted by South Yorkshire Police.

24,739: Nathan Smith: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 21 November 1989: No details. Case submitted by Glamorgan Fire and Rescue Service.

24,757: Jean Turbill: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 21 November 1989: No details. Case submitted by Northants Police.

24,774: Anthony John Doick: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 21 November 1989: No details. Case submitted by Sussex Police.

24,802: J Davies: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 27 March 1990: No details. Case submitted by Gloucester-shire Fire and Rescue service.

24,817: M D Bradley: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 27 March 1990: No details. Case submitted by Northants Police.

24,861: P W Chapman: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 24 July 1990: No details. Case submitted by Humberside Police.

24,864: A Whitelaw: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 24 July 1990: No details. Case submitted by Lothian and Borders Police.

24,925: R Gale: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 13 November 1990: No details. Case submitted by Dorset Fire Brigade.

24,933: M D Hoare: Bronze Medal and Certificate
D A Cowdry: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 13 November 1990: No details. Case submitted by Hampshire Constabulary.

24,935: Lillian Chipchase: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 13 November 1990: No details. Case submitted by Lancashire Constabulary.

25,027: Andrew M Hazell: Silver Medal and Certificate



Andrew M Hazell

Details: MB(9) - 26 March 1991: No details. Case submitted by Avon Fire Brigade. However, in reporting the award the *Bristol Evening Post* (17 October 1991) recorded that: 'Blaze Hero Wins Special Acclaim. Silver badge of rescue courage. - The hero of a house fire which threatened to engulf a Bristol family has become the first person in 36 years to receive a special award. Andrew Hazel (28) of Upjohn Crescent, Hartcliffe, was presented with a silver medal last night from the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire. It was last awarded in 1955. Mr Hazel, a van driver, saved a mother and her two small children, when their home next door caught fire in January. He smashed down the front door, put a blanket over his head, and fought his way through the smoke barefoot. He managed to find mum, Rosa Hahn in her smoke filled bedroom, and helped her out of the window. Mr Hazel then lowered Mrs Hahn's son, Cassius, aged eight to safety, and handed five year old Rocky to firemen before climbing to safety down a ladder'.

24,972: A M Hunt: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 26 March 1991: No details. Case submitted by New Scotland Yard.

24,987: M Griffiths: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 26 March 1991: No details. Case submitted by Dyfed Fire Brigade.

25,057: B A Riviere: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 23 July 1991: No details. Case submitted by Lancashire Constabulary.

25,066: K Doherty: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 23 July 1991: No details. Case submitted by Royal Ulster Constabulary.

25,071: J Hobson: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 23 July 1991: No details. Case submitted by South Yorkshire Police.

25,125: E Stevenson: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 12 November 1991: No details. Case submitted by South Yorkshire Police.

25,141: A Sutton: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 12 November 1991: No details. Case submitted by West Yorkshire Fire Service.

24,153: PC Gary Lawless: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 18 March 1992: No details. PC Lawless was recommended by his Station Sergeant, Mark McCall, for a Commendation and an award from the SPLF, in a report dated 18 November 1991. The events occurred on 22 October 1991 at 42 Chelsea Square, London, SW3, the home of Mrs Katherine Longman, an 89 year old widow who was severely paralysed due to a stoke. A fire was discovered by her nurse at 9.40am and initial attempts to rescue Mrs Longman from her first floor bedroom failed.



PC Gary Lawless receiving his SPLF medal and certificate

At 9.48 PCs Gary Lawless and Shirley Splaine arrived. Lawless climbed onto the roof of an extension and managed to reach the window of the room Mrs Longman was in. The report notes that: 'He then pulled himself into the room. It was full of black smoke and he could just make out the door to the rear of the room. He heard it cracking from the intensity of the fire on the other side. Smoke was coming in under the door Her limbs were stiff through her paralysis and she was a dead weight. Despite suffering from the effects of the smoke and heat, PC Lawless carried Mrs Longman to the open window. In doing so he was fully exposed to the smoke. There was no way down except to jump and PC Lawless thought that to do that would almost certainly result in serious injury to Mrs Longman. Therefore, he decided to remain in the room, shielding her from the heat with his body and await the fire brigade. The heat and smoke was increasing and the door was continuing to crack. PC Lawless was coughing from the effects of the smoke and under some distress. The fire brigade arrived at 9.51am and a ladder was brought to the window. Station Officer Jones climbed the ladder to carry Mrs Longman to safety but PC Lawless was tiring and suffering from the now thickening smoke. Station Officer Jones therefore went into the room and assisted PC Lawless pass Mrs Longman, with some difficulty, to another fireman and then to safety. PC Lawless climbed down to the courtyard and went to hospital suffering from the effects of smoke inhalation. The fire was brought under control at 10.25am. …Mrs Longman passed away later than night [from] coronary failure…'. Witnesses further supported the calls for Lawless' actions to be recognised and the recommendation for a commendation was further supported by Inspector Ian Brooks on 20 November 1991.

The medal (engraved 'Gary Lawless 22 October 1991 24153') remains in the possession of PC (now Inspector) Lawless (2011).

24,169: H Brown: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 18 March 1992: No details. Case submitted by Lancashire Constabulary.

24,185: R N Jamieson: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 18 March 1992: No details. Case submitted by Strathclyde police.

24,200: T Roe: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 18 March 1992: No details. Case submitted by West Midland Fire Service.

25,207: Abdul Hudani: Bronze Medal and Certificate
Details: MB(9) - 28 July 1992: No details. Case submitted by New Scotland Yard.

25,275: M J Preece: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 26 November 1992: No details. Case submitted by Devon Police.

25,279: PC D Waters: Bronze Medal and Certificate
C Perkins: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 26 November 1992: No details. Case submitted by Gloucester Police.

25,289: E Nash: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 26 November 1992: No details. Case submitted by Royal Ulster Constabulary.

25,321: D L Jones: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 23 March 1993: No details. Case submitted by Cumbria Constabulary.

25,331: G Ritchie: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 23 March 1993: No details. Case submitted by Essex Police.

25,342: P Lewis: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 23 March 1993: No details. Case submitted by Northumbria Police.

25,364: G J Black: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 27 July 1993: No details. Case submitted by Cambridgeshire Constabulary.

25,375: S Bruce: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 27 July 1993: No details. Case submitted by Fife Constabulary.

25,411: A Boaten: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 23 November 1993: No details. Case submitted by Metropolitan Police.

25,440: A S Rycroft: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 23 November 1993: No details. Case submitted by Lincolnshire Fire Brigade.

25,471: S Morris: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 22 March 1994: No details. Case submitted by Metropolitan Police.

25,486: A Clark: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 22 March 1994: No details. Case submitted by Kent Fire Brigade.

25,547: S D Hamill: Bronze Medal and Certificate and £25

Details: MB(9) - 26 July 1994: No details. Case submitted by Northern Police.

25,551: A Bolton: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 26 July 1994: No details. Case submitted by Oxfordshire Police.

25,552: Mrs E Lamrock: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 26 July 1994: No details. Case submitted by Royal Ulster Constabulary.

25,573: Hassan Nevzat: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 14 November 1994: No details. Case submitted by Metropolitan Police.

25,596: Alan M Smith: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 14 November 1994: No details. Case submitted by Humberside Police.

25,606: P Broughton: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 25 July 1995: No details. Case submitted by Norfolk Constabulary.

25,618: F Wiltshire: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 25 July 1995: No details. Case submitted by West Sussex Fire Brigade.

25,633: G Wilkinson: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 21 March 1995: No details. Case submitted by Avon Fire Brigade.

25,651: W Fletcher: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 21 March 1995: No details. Case submitted by Lincoln Fire Brigade.

25,663: A Bulgin: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 21 March 1995: No details. Case submitted by Royal Ulster Constabulary.

25,724: P C Jones: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 20 November 1995: No details. Case submitted by South Wales Constabulary.

25,726: J T D Hunter: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 20 November 1995: No details. Case submitted by Staffordshire Fire Brigade.

25,825: Mr O'Neil Walker: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 23 July 1996: No details. Case submitted by Metropolitan Police.

25,864: Mr V Barber: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 23 July 1996: No details. Case submitted by Chester Constabulary.

25,926: Mr G P Sansbury: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 25 March 1997: No details. Case submitted by Fife Constabulary.

25,953: Mr P Patrick: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 16 July 1997: No details. Case submitted by Metropolitan Police.

26,016: Mr C Anderson: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: MB(9) - 28 January 1998: No details. Case submitted by Metropolitan Police.

26,025: Mr R Cant: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: Current Society Records - 28 January 1998: No details. Case submitted by Suffolk Fire Brigade.

26,145: Mr G M Percival: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: Current Society Records - 2 February 1999: No details.

26,178: Mr N Fuegi: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: Current Society Records - 14 July 1999:. Case submitted by Metropolitan Police.

26,319: Mr M Hardman: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: Current Society Records - 1 November 2000: No details. Case submitted by Hampshire Police.

26,340: Mr E F Hyde: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: Current Society Records - 1 November 2000: No details. Case submitted by Warwickshire Police.

26,344: B Stephenson: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: Current Society Records - 14 March 2001: No details. Case submitted by Metropolitan Police.

26,351: Stephen Mex: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: Current Society Records – 14 March 2001: No details of the rescue, though the minutes record the recommendation as coming from the Herts Police, that Mex was a German national, and the medal itself was not presented as he had left the UK by the time it was prepared. The Society did award a certificate to M J Gardner for the same rescue.

26,423: S Foster: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: Current Society Records - 30 October 2001: No details. Case submitted by Cumbria Police.

26,435: R Austin: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: Current Society Records - 30 October 2001: Case submitted by Hertfordshire Police.

26,448: Bruce A Paul: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: Current Society Records - 21 March 2002:. No details. Case submitted by Lothian and Borders Police. According to the Lothian & Borders Police Bruce Paul was nominated for an award for rescuing and applying vital first aid to a man injured and alight after a gas explosion, on 14 August 2001 in the Muirhouse area of Edinburgh. It would appear that Mr Paul did not attend the ceremony and the SPLF award was sent to him at his home address.

26,488: James Randall: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: Current Society Records - 19 November 2002: On the afternoon of 4 November 2001 a van crashed into a tree by the side of the A21 road at Flimwell, East Sussex. A passing motorist, James Randall of South Ockenden, Essex, tried alternative methods of releasing the occupant of the crashed vehicle, which had caught fire. He was unable to effect a rescue via the car doors and eventually he removed tree branches from the front of the van, pulled out remnants of windscreen glass with his hands and extracted the driver through the windscreen space. The developing fire engulfed and destroyed the engine compartment and the main parts of the van.

26,657: Edward Carmichael: Bronze Medal and Certificate

Details: Current Society Records - 25 November 2004: Edward Carmichael lived in a block of flats in Dunoon. Late in the evening of 10 August 2003 he learned of a fire in the third floor of the flats. He ran upstairs and tried without success to kick in the door of the affected flat. Back outside, he climbed up a pipe on the front of the building, onto the third storey flat's verandah, kicked in the verandah door and entered the sitting room. He was beaten back outside by heat and smoke but he heard a baby cry. He crawled back into the flat, located the baby in her playpen and took her to the safety of the verandah, whence he dropped the infant into a children's inflatable pool which was being held up by neighbours in the garden. The fire brigade extinguished the fire and found the baby's father dead in the rear bedroom. The cause of fire was a lighted chip pan.

26,704: Alan Forrester: Bronze medal and Certificate

Details: Current Society Records – 13 July 2005: A road traffic collision occurred on the A44 at Sweet Lamb, Llangurig on 15 October 2004. A vehicle, driven by Mrs Gillian Silcox, left the carriageway, mounted the kerb, hit a tree, rebounded onto the road and burst into flames. The occupants of the vehicle, Mrs Silcox and her three-year-old son Cameron, were trapped in the burning car. A quick thinking motorist, Alan Forrester (a 58 year old car body repairer), was among those stopped by the accident. He entered the car as flames were beginning to penetrate the front of the car and were lapping against the lady driver. He found the child's seat belt stuck and quickly returned to his own car to get a knife. On returning he cut the boy's seat belt and released him. He had assumed the driver was dead but as he was removing the child he heard her groan. Having ensured the boy's safety he returned to the car and with difficulty opened the driver's door. The car was heavily smoke logged and tyres were exploding. The driver was a heavy lady (who had broken her leg) but Mr Forrester managed to pull her clear. A few moments later the car was a fully developed fire. Alan Forrester suffered smoke inhalation and required treatment at hospital. For further details: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/wales/mid/4184170.stm



Alan Forrester

26,828: Joseph Smith: Bronze medal and Certificate

Details: Current Society Records – May 2009: On 17 May 2008 there was an accident on the A495 near Welsh Frankton, north Shropshire, involving two motor cars. At a crest in the road one vehicle (with five occupants) crossed the central hazard lines and collided with a vehicle coming from the other direction. The first vehicle caught fire and the two front-seat occupants were trapped in the car and did not escape. When their bodies were recovered it was discovered that they had died as a result of the collision. Four passing motorists made attempts to rescue the back-seat occupants of the vehicle, three females aged 18, 19 and 36. All were rescued but the 19-year-old died at the scene. Among the rescuers was Joseph Smith (60), a garage proprietor. He telephoned for assistance and joined in the rescue attempts. After one occupant was extracted, both vehicles began to burn and Mr Smith partially entered the burning vehicle to remove a second occupant. At that point both cars were fully ablaze and Mr Thomas, aware that the fuel tank was in danger of rupturing, re-entered the vehicle and removed the third casualty. Seconds later the fuel tank exploded and fire

engulfed the two cars. The occupants of the second car had escaped without assistance and with minor injuries. In addition to Mr Smith being awarded the Society's medal and certificate for his actions at the Society's meeting in May 2009, the other three rescuers being awarded certificates.

26,829: Michael Higgs: Bronze medal and Certificate

Details: Current Society Records – May 2009: On the evening of 10 February 2009 there was a road traffic collision at Newton Lane, Wigston, in treacherous road conditions (black ice). A Citroen driven by Mrs Anne Boulger (40) went out of control and collided with other vehicles. Within seconds of the collision the Citroen caught fire and was very soon engulfed in flames. The driver of one of the cars involved in the collision, Mr Michael Higgs (44), attempted to free Mrs Boulger. The front doors were jammed shut so Mr Higgs pulled the female over the front seat and out through a rear passenger door and dragged her to a place of safety. She was screaming, in shock and unable to help herself. Another of the collision vehicles had ended up in the roadside ditch, near the burning car, and Mr Higgs assisted passengers in the ditched car to escape. Mr Higgs sustained burns to his hands in the course of his rescue activities but did not mention them at the time since he thought his injuries were minor compared to those of the other people involved. See also the *Leicester Mercury* (Thursday, 20 August 2009).

APPENDICES

1: KNOWN MEDALS

Medals to the following recipients are known to exist in museums, private collections, or family hands. The dates here given are those of the rescue, while the letter in brackets (s or b) indicates whether the medal was silver or bronze.

First type

1. David Lock, 25.5.1836 (s)
2. William Jones, 7.11.1837 (s)
3. Henry George Greeves, 7.11.1837 (s)
4. John White, 7.11.1837 (s)
5. William Kemball, 14.5.1840 (s)
6. Edward F Lipscombe, 14.5.1840 (s)

First type honorary awards

1. To Captain Manby, FRS, as a memorial for his valuable services (s)

Second type

1. Joseph Hepworth, 16.4.1844 (s)
2. Lewis Bray, 29.8.1844 (s)
3. Frederick Chapman, 5.5.1848 (s)
4. Charles Smith, 5.5.1848 (s)

Third type

1. Sgt Sanderson, 12.3.1851 (b)
2. Nathan Abraham, 12.3.1851 (b)
3. Robert Needes, 20.3.1851 (b)
4. George Bramstone, 2.4.1851 (b)
5. George Low, 3.4.1851 (s, with bar 18.7.1859)
6. Berry Carman, 2.1.1852 (b)
7. Robert Oefield, 2.4.1852 (b)
8. George Waldron, 12.9.1852 (s)
9. Elias Miller, 24.2.1853 (s)
10. John Pallis, 19.7.1853 (s)
11. Thomas Moore, 26.4.1855 (s)
12. William Brown, 1856 (s)
13. Andrew Gernon, 1856 (s)
14. George Harmsworth, 1857 (s)
15. J Reynolds, 1857 (b)
16. Alexander Mee, 22.10.1857 (s)
17. Robert Gould, 26.1.1859 (s)
18. Edward Cooke, 6.12.1859 (s)
19. Edward Paine, 6.4.1860 (s)
20. John Curtis Piller, 17.11.1861 (s)
21. William Isles, 28.5.1862 (s, with bar 12.9.1864)
22. George Elsden, 15.8.1862 (s)
23. Adam Briggs, 17.11.1862 (s)
24. Joseph Witham, 26.12.1862 (s)
25. George Hardway, 25.1.1863 (s)
26. Edward Dunk, 16.9.1864 (s)
27. Edmund Green, 30.1.1865 (s)
28. Alfred Vivian, 30.1.1865 (s)
29. Edward Miller, 6.12.1864 (s)
30. Henry Douglas, 21.3.1866 (s)
31. Cornelius Reading, 5.11.1866 (s)
32. Benjamin Howell, 22.1.1868 (s)

33. John Doyle, 1868 (s)
34. John Grimshaw, 17.1.1869 (s)
35. Francis William Boon, 14.6.1869 (s)
36. William Murphy, 20.10.1873 (s)
37. William Faulkner, 20.10.1873 (s)
38. Frederick Walter, 22.12.1875 (s)
39. Arthur Turton, 24.11.1886 (s)
40. George Bassett, 4.9.1887 (s)
41. David Buchanan, 30.5.1888 (s)
42. Frederick Strickland, 14.1.1890 (b)
43. J J Evans, 4.2.1890 (b)
44. J A Tennant, 11.1890 (s)
45. Walter Marsh 10.1.1891 (b)

Third type honorary awards

1. J T Bedford, Member of Committee 1851 (b)
2. T J Holt, Deputy Member of Committee 1851 (b)
3. H M Kemshead, Vice President 1851 (b)
4. S Low, Member of Committee 1851 (b)
5. A M Perkins, Member of Committee 1851 (b)
6. Hon Surgeon C Ridley, 1851 (b)
7. Joshua W Butterworth, Member of Committee 1856-1867 (s)
8. Sampson Low, junior, 1867 (s)
9. Hon Surgeon C Ridley, 1867 (naming partly erased) (s)
10. E H Gledhill, 2002 (s)

Fourth type

1. John Lindos Emerson, 4.3.1891 (s)
2. Arthur Smith, 19.6.1892 (s)
3. James Garrow, 2.1.1893 (s)
4. George Butler, 25.4.1893 (b)
5. George Cull, 25.4.1893 (b)
6. Thomas Ellison, 8.2.1895 (s)
7. George Bidwell, 3.11.1895 (s)
8. A C Stamberg, 11.1.1896 (s)
9. Bernard McCann, 25.2.1897 (s)
10. William Buckley, 19.7.1897 (b)
11. William Piper, 4.9.1897 (s)
12. William Fletcher, 13.3.1898 (s)
13. John Danzey, 22.12.1899 (b)
14. William John Perry, 14.1.1900 (b)
15. John J McEntyre, 24.3.1900 (b)
16. William H Timmins, 24.3.1900 (b)
17. Peter Murphy, 27.11.1900 (b)
18. Francis Coulter, 23.4.1901 (b)
19. Alfred Crouch, 24.5.1901 (s)
20. George Ward, 29.10.1901 (s)

Fifth type

1. Thomas Tucker, 7.2.1902 (s)
2. James Brunt, 17.3.1902 (b)
3. John Balfour Graham, 5.11.1902 (s)
4. Peter Boyd, 16.2.1903 (b)
5. Harry D Bailey, 5.1.1905 (s)
6. Robert C Hall, 21.5.1905 (s)
7. Percy Howard, 11.3.1905 (b)
8. William H Brumby, 5.6.1905 (b)
9. Joseph H Booth, 27.7.1905 (b)
10. Walter Funnell, 21.10.1905 (b)
11. John Spiers, 19.11.1905 (s)
12. Harry Private, 31.12.1905 (b)
13. Edwin C Flack, 11.1.1906 (s)
14. Ernest Payne, 8.4.1906 (s)

15. William Martin Furness, 5.6.1906 (b)
16. Michael McCarthy 13.12.1906 (b)
17. Edwin Abbott, 23.12.1906 (b)
18. George T Obeney, 3.1.1907 (b)
19. Robert W S Bishop, 12.2.1907 (b)
20. Alfred Smith, 25.9.1907 (b)
21. Frederick Thomas Rolfe, 15.11.1907 (b)
22. Hugh Geoffrey Houlder, 14.1.1908 (b)
23. Lilian James, 19.11.1908 (s) (partly erased)
24. John Scully, 19.10.1909 (s)
25. Clifford John Foakes, 20.12.1909 (s)
26. Robinson Devlin, 24.1.1910 (b)
27. John T Sparkes, 17.3.1910 (b)
28. Thomas D Scott, 22.3.1910 (b)
29. Patrick Sullivan, 19.5.1911 (b)
30. Frederick Windebank, 9.8.1911 (s, with silver bar for 30.9.1928)
31. James Lynch, 23.10.1911 (b)
32. John V Thomas, 30.11.1911 (b)
33. Simon Malone, 14.2.1912 (b)
34. Charles White, 16.4.1912 (b)
35. Edward Bell, 11.7.1912 (s)
36. Peter Cleary, 25.12.1912 (b)
37. Cornelius Goodwin, 24.1.1913 (s)
38. Albert Mowle, 29.1.1913 (b)
39. Sydney Welch, 8.2.1913 (b)
40. Grace Jones, 20.5.1913 (s)
41. H G Paine, 22.2.1914 (s)
42. David T Morgans, 17.3.1914 (s)
43. Lieut A Dechamps Woollard, 15.11.1915 (s)
44. Dr D R Thomas, 13.3.1916 (s)
45. Matthew Landy, 25.1.1917 (s)
46. George Durey, 12.3.1917 (s)
47. George Ralph, 12.3.1917 (s)
48. William E Ward, 29.4.1917 (s)
49. James Kemp, 7.7.1917 (s)
50. Henry Smith, 28.11.1917 (s)
51. William Watson, 25.3.1918 (s)
52. J S Woolrich, 15.4.1918 (s)
53. Thomas Calderwood, 23.6.1918 (s)
54. William J Gorman, 10.1.1919 (b)
55. Daniel Collins, 15.7.1919 (s)
56. John Pulham, 28.7.1919 (s)
57. Thomas W Brown, 23.12.1919 (s)
58. Robert Brown, 30.4.1920 (b)
59. Maurice Wallis, 21.1.1921 (s)
60. Joseph Topley, 21.1.1921 (s)
61. Alfred P Thorpe, 13.6.1923 (b)
62. James Oswald Ayres, 13.6.1923 (b)
63. James W Hague, 14.7.1923 (s)
64. Daniel Divers, 24.2.1924 (s)
65. Frederick Charles West, 13.4.1925 (s)
66. Sidney K Ellis, 13.4.1925 (b)
67. Albert Blake, 9.7.1925 (b)
68. Thomas Breaks, 11.11.1925 (s)
69. M Conway, 28.1.1927 (s)
70. John Bennett, 27.7.1927 (b)
71. Leonard Allen 30.10.1927 (s)
72. Thomas Breaks, 30.1.1928 (s, with 2 silver bars for 16.1.1930 & 14.3.1933)
73. John Allen, 25.4.1928 (b)
74. Thomas Whittle, 13.9.1928 (b)
75. Pioneer Birch, 14.9.1928 (b)
76. Thomas Lynch, 21.11.1928 (b)
77. Herbert W Woodward, 3.3.1929 (s)

78. George W Squirrell, 15.3.1929 (b)
79. Arthur Patrick, 27.11.1929 (b)
80. Frederick H Morris, 17.3.1930 (b, with bronze bar for 20.11.1932)
81. Nicholas Leech, 24.5.1931 (s)
82. Claude W Archer, 1.6.1931 (b)
83. Cecil Claude Bond, 26.6.1931 (s)
84. Eric Watt Bonar, 24.5.1932 (b)
85. Alfred C Cleaver, 3.12.1932 (b)
86. William Brooks, 19.12.1932 (b)
87. Patrick Francis Beirne, 16.11.1933 (b)
88. John Francis McCarthy, 10.3.1934 (s)
89. Walter Parker, 17.6.1934 (b)
90. Stanley N Hewitt, 11.11.1935 (b)
91. Sidney E Davey, 5.2.1936 (b)
92. John Holt, 7.10.1936 (b)
93. Thomas McMurtie, 7.10.1936 (b)
94. G A Bainbridge, 21.2.1937 (s)
95. Daniel Collins, 21.2.1937 (b)
96. William Easto, 17.12.1937 (b)
97. George E J Capelin, 19.1.1938 (b)
98. John Milne Morgan, 19.12.1938 (s)
99. Charles P Young, 8.12.1939 (b)
100. G A Bainbridge, 6.3.1940 (s)
101. Harry Blann 25.4.1940 (b)
102. John V Read 12.3.1943 (b)
103. Edward C Ayres, 6.6.1943 (b)
104. Walter Berrystone, --1944 (b)
105. Wilfred O'Dell, 20.1.1944 (b)
106. Henry Thomas Casling, 26.2.1945 (b)
107. Charles Bidgood, 17.3.1946 (s)
108. Robert G Mosley, 26.7.1948 (s)
109. John Harness, 21.4.1949 (b)
110. George T Barlow, 27.8.1949 (b)
111. Allen J Thomas, 9.2.1951 (b)

Sixth type

1. Alan Ainsworth, 3.7.1986 (b)
2. Gary Lawless, 22.10.1991 (b)

2: CONDUCTORS

This is a partial list of the Society's conductors and a few supernumeraries (who may have progressed to full conductor status) incidentally identified during the present research from mentions in Society Minute Books, Annual Reports, and newspapers. Supernumaries are distinguished by an (S) after their names.

1. Ames
2. -- Andrews
3. Joseph Arkyll (Arkell)
4. -- Armsworth
5. Charles B Arnold
6. Robert Austin (S)
7. – Bangay
8. Henry Bartle
9. John Barton
10. John Francis Bartons
11. William Baxter
12. Thomas Bell
13. -- Bond
14. – Boozey
15. James Boston
16. Michael Bresneham
17. Adam Briggs
18. Alfred John Brooker
19. – Brown
20. Frederick Brown
21. Joseph Brown
22. George Carey
23. W Carey (Casey)
24. William Chandler
25. Frederick Chapman
26. Richard Christianson
27. George Clarke
28. Thomas Clarke
29. John Clements
30. Edward Collins
31. Edward Cooke
32. James Cotterell
33. -- Crookes
34. – Crowley
35. Henry Davenport
36. – Dell
37. Joseph Dolby
38. Henry Douglas
39. John Douglas
40. Edward Dunk
41. Thomas Easom
42. William Eilbeck
43. George Elsden
44. James Fermor
45. Thomas Fewster
46. Thomas Field
47. – Freeman
48. John Gardner
49. David Gill
50. Edward Gill
51. William Gill
52. James Gould
53. Charles Green
54. Edward Green (S)
55. – Haines
56. John Hall
57. Thomas Hall
58. George Hardway
59. George Harmsworth
60. – Heden
61. William Hemery
62. William Hocking
63. Henry Horne
64. – Horton
65. – Hudson
66. Edward Hunt (S)
67. Charles Hurst
68. Robert Hutchings
69. John Hutchins
70. William Isles
71. -- Jones
72. – Joyce
73. Joseph Keeble (S)
74. Philip Kench
75. W Kent
76. Edward Knight
77. – Lane
78. John Langston
79. Alfred Lano
80. -- Last
81. George Lewis
82. Charles Lloyd
83. George Low
84. -- Lucas
85. James McComb
86. Robert McCulloch
87. Thomas McCulloch
88. -- Manghan
89. J Markerow
90. – Mason
91. Richard Melsom
92. Henry Michelin
93. Edward Miller
94. Henry Mitchener
95. – Moorby (S)
96. Thomas Moore

97. -- Morgan
98. Isaac Myers
99. James Neville
100. James Newall
101. Edward Paine
102. -- Parker
103. Edward Passmore
104. William Passmore
105. William Peak
106. William Perkins
107. Joseph Pert
108. Richard Phillips
109. -- Pike
110. Edward Preston
111. John Proctor
112. Nathaniel Pusey (Puzey)
113. Robert J Putman
114. -- Renby
115. J Reynolds
116. William Rickell
117. Edward Rigby
118. Joseph Robinson
119. William Robinson
120. -- Ross
121. -- Rowland
122. John Rummens
123. Joseph Salsbury
124. -- Sarsfield
125. Joseph Sell
126. Samuel Semmens
127. – Seymour
128. John Shaw
129. H W Sherrick
130. Thomas Smart
131. J Smith
132. John Snelling (S)
133. John Stanning
134. Robert Steer
135. - Stevens
136. John F Sunshine
137. William Swaine
138. Stephen Tapsel (Tapsell)
139. -- Taylor
140. – Tell
141. Frank Thompson
142. -- Thorn
143. John Tordoff
144. Joseph Virco
145. John Waken
146. – Wallis (S)
147. James Ward
148. Joseph Warren
149. S B Weaver
150. – Webb
151. Joseph Weed
152. Thomas Welford
153. -- Whatley
154. William Wheatley
155. Frederick White
156. – Whitty
157. Charles Wilkes
158. -- Wilson
159. Joseph Witham
160. Samuel Wood
161. Thomas Wood
162. William Woods

3: RULES FOR CONDUCTORS (February 1864)

[These were submitted by Sampson Low, junior, to the 1867 Select Committee on Fire Protection and were subsequently printed as an appendix to their parliamentary report]

1. It must be distinctly understood that all conductors and supernumeraries employed by this Society are to be subject to the following rules, any infraction of which will be visited by the committee with dismissal, fine, or suspension, as the case may deserve.

2. Persons desirous of employment as conductors must fill up a printed form of application to the committee, which they may obtain of the secretary. If approved of by the committee, they will be appointed supernumeraries, when they must attend night and morning to assist such conductors in removing their escapes as the secretary shall decide; making themselves acquainted with the working of the escapes and the duties which will be required of them as conductors.

3. Supernumeraries will be appointed conductors in their turn, as vacancies occur. The two senior supernumeraries are paid assistance money if they regularly attend; with this exception, they receive no wages unless on temporary duty for a conductor.

4. When a conductor requires a supernumerary to take his place for a night, he must make application to the secretary by 12 o'clock the morning previous.

5. The conductors are to be on duty at their respective stations with their escapes from 9 o'clock in the evening until 6 o'clock in the morning, during the months of May, June, July, and August; and from 8 o'clock in the evening until 7 o'clock in the morning, during the other eight months.

6. Two conductors in rotation are to attend as orderlies for one week daily at the office, the first orderly at 11 o'clock, the second at 3 o'clock.

7. The conductors are to be clean and respectable in their personal appearance, sober and steady in their conduct at all times (the offence of drunkenness will subject a conductor to instant dismissal), to wear their uniform coat, cap, and belt whenever on business for the Society; and when on night duty to wear also their axe and other accoutrements, and be furnished with a helmet, lamp, and rattle; the whole of which are to be at all times kept in a clean and efficient condition.

8. To obey all orders of the secretary and the inspectors of their respective districts; these officers, representing the committee, must be treated with respect and attention. Any breach of this rule will be an act of insubordination, and will be dealt with accordingly.

9. Each conductor will be held responsible for the appearance and sound condition of his escape, and will be required to pay for any damage that may arise from his carelessness or inattention. When put up for the day, the escape must be properly secured, so as to protect it from injury. The escapes are to be thoroughly cleaned at least once a week, and the wheels taken off and greased once a month. A report, in writing, must be made to the secretary whenever any repairs are found to be required, as well as the same reported to the inspector on his next visit.

10. Upon going on duty, the conductor is every night to examine the condition of his ladders, ropes, lamp, and other accoutrements, and see that the whole are clean and in good condition, and fit for immediate use.

11. While on night duty, the conductors are upon no account to leave their station, nor to enter any public house or other building. The watch boxes are provided as a protection against inclement weather, and must not be used by any person but the conductor; nor are the doors to be closed when the conductor is within, as he is expected to be vigilantly zealous for the preservation of life, and ready to give immediate attendance whenever required.

12. If taken suddenly ill while on duty, the conductor must send a messenger to the inspector of his district. Upon no pretence whatever will absence from duty, without the secretary's or inspector's knowledge, be permitted.

13. When called to a fire, the conductor will immediately secure the assistance of three persons (police constables being preferred), and, losing no time in starting, proceed with his escape to the fire. On his way, he will explain, as well as he can, the nature of the assistance to be rendered, particularly cautioning them to let no person ascend the escape except the conductor.

14. On arriving at the fire, the conductor is to place his escape in the most advantageous position, allowing no person to touch it beyond those he has selected, one of whom is to be stationed at the lever, while the conductor ascends the ladder. The whole attention and utmost energy of the conductor is to be given to the preservation of life; and having ascertained, beyond a doubt, that the inmates are out of danger, and that no further service is required of him, he must take his escape back to the station with all reasonable speed.

15. If, from the peculiar construction or situation of the house on fire, the large escape cannot be available, the conductor, resigning it to the charge of a police constable, will make the best of his way to the roof by the adjoining house, or otherwise take such steps as are most likely to rescue the lives in danger, availing himself of his short ladder, ropes, crowbar, etc; if in a narrow court, try and render assistance from the opposite window, by placing the ladder across.

16. The great variety of circumstances attending a fire render it impossible to lay down any precise rules; much will always depend upon the coolness, presence of mind, and skill of the conductors, who are therefore expected so to consider the subject and the Society's printed "directions to assist in saving life from fire" as to be prepared to act with coolness and judgement on all occasions. It is also necessary that the conductors make themselves acquainted with the neighbourhood of their respective stations.

17. The conductors are furnished with printed certificates, two of which they are to get filled up, with the particulars of the fire which they have attended, stating time, place, and services rendered; these they must get two of the nearest housekeepers to sign, asking them at the same time if they wish to make any remarks of their own on the back of the certificate, and the same must be brought to the secretary before 10 o'clock the following morning.

18. Whilst the observance of these rules will be strictly enforced, every encouragement will be given to the conductors to persevere in good conduct, and the committee will never allow vigilance and efficiency to pass unnoticed or unrewarded.

By Order of the Committee,
Office, Milton Chambers, Ludgate Hill, Sampson Low, Jun., Secretary
February 1864

4: FIRE-ESCAPE STATIONS (January 1867)

[This list were submitted by Sampson Low, junior, to the 1867 Select Committee on Fire Protection and were subsequently printed as an appendix to their parliamentary report]

At each Station, there is a Fire-Escape, attended throughout the night by a conductor, well instructed in its use, and provided with all necessary implements: it is his duty to attend any fire in his neighbourhood, upon the first alarm being communicated to him.

Western District

1. Edgware Road, near Cambridge Terrace
2. Bishop's Road, facing Trinity Church
3. Kensington - 1: Notting Hill, near the Gate
4. Kensington - 2: High-street, in front of the church
5. Oxford Street, corner of Dean Street, Soho
6. Oxford Street, corner of Marylebone Lane
7. Oxford Street West, corner of Connaught Place
8. Baker Street, corner of King Street
9. Great Portland Street, by the chapel
10. Tottenham Court Road, by the chapel
11. Marylebone Road, corner of Albany Street
12. St. John's Wood - 1: 'Eyre Arms'
13. St. John's Wood - 2: Near 'Swiss' tavern
14. St. John's Wood - 3: Aberdeen Place, near St John's Wood Road
15. Kilburn, by the Turnpike Gate
16. Kentish Town, Camden Broadway, facing the 'Falcon'
17. Camden Town, front of the 'Southampton Arms'

Inspector - Mr Spencer, 38 Great Portland Street

Northern District

18. Islington - 1: On the Green
19. Islington - 2: Compton Terrace, Highbury end
20. Islington - 3: Balls Pond, by the 'Northampton Arms'
21. Islington - 4: Richmond Road, Barnsbury
22. Islington - 5: Camden Road, Holloway
23. Euston Square, Euston Road, by St Pancras Church.
24. Battle Bridge, in front of King's Cross
25. Guildford Street, Foundling Hospital
26. Aldersgate Street, opposite Carthusian Street
27. Clerkenwell - 1: St. John Street, opposite Corporation Row
28. Clerkenwell - 2: Corner of Claremont Square and Pentonville Road
29. Old Street, St Luke's, corner of Bath Street
30. Hoxton, in front of the 'Stuart Arms'
31. Shoreditch, in front of the Church
32. Kingsland Road, near the Workhouse
33. Hackney. - 1: by Kingsland Turnpike
34. Hackney - 2: in Church Street

Inspector: - Mr Wade, 52 Newton Street, Bridport Place, Hoxton

Eastern District

35. Cheapside, by the Peel statue

36. Royal Exchange, by the Wellington statue
37. Aldgate, corner of Leadenhall and Fenchurch Streets
38. St Mary-at-Hill, corner of Rood Lane
39. Tower Hill, by the Mint
40. St John's, Wapping, in front of the Church
41. St George in the East, in front of the Church
42. Shadwell, High Street, opposite St Paul's Church
43. Ratcliffe, in the Commercial Road, by the Railway Arch
44. Limehouse, corner of Commercial and East India Roads
45. Poplar, opposite All Saints' Church
46. Bow, High Street, opposite the Church
47. Mile End Road, opposite Messrs Charrington's Brewery
48. Bethnal Green, opposite St John's Church
49. Whitechapel, in front of the Church
50. Bishopsgate Street, near Widegate Street
51. Finsbury Circus, corner of West Street

Inspector - Mr Venables, 16 Laura Terrace, Campbell Road, Bow

Southern District

52. Lambeth, by the Female Orphan Asylum
53. Kennington Cross
54. Clapham, in the High Street
55. Camberwell, on the Green
56. High Street, Peckham
57. Old Kent Road, by 'Green Man' Gate
58. Walworth Road, by Camberwell Green
59. Newington, opposite the 'Elephant and Castle'
60. Blackfriars Road, corner of Great Charlotte Street
61. Southwark, in front of St George's Church
62. Southwark Bridge Road, corner of Union Street
63. Tooley Street, near Bermondsey Street
64. Bermondsey - 1: Star Corner
65. Bermondsey - 2: St James's Church
66. Rotherhithe - 1: Cobourg Street
67. Rotherhithe - 2: Commercial Docks

Inspector - Mr Havard, 7 Gladstone Terrace, Walworth

South-Western District

68. Kensington, Fulham Road, corner of Pelham Crescent
69. Brompton, near Knightsbridge Green
70. Chelsea - 1: Oakley Square
71. Chelsea - 2: Sloane Square
72. Eaton Square, by St Peter's Church
73. South Audley Street, by the Chapel
74. .Conduit Street, corner of Gt George Street
75. Golden Square
76. Piccadilly, facing St James's Church
77. Bedford Row, south end
78. Hart Street, Bloomsbury, by St George's Church
79. Holborn Hill, corner of Hatton Garden
80. Long Acre, facing Bow Street
81. New Bridge Street, by the Obelisk
82. Strand, by St Clement's Church
83. West Strand, Trafalgar Square, by St Martin's Church
84. Westminster - 1: Broad Sanctuary
85. Westminster - 2: Horseferry Road

Inspector - Mr Hale, 2 Great Ormond Street, Queen Square

Hours of duty – September to April, inclusive, 8pm to 7am May, June, July, August, 9pm to 6am

Communications relative to the efficiency of the Fire-Escapes or the Conductors, from persons in the locality of each, will at all times receive attention from the Inspector of the district.

Office, 59 Ludgate Hill, January 1867
Samson Low, jun., Secretary

5: THE SOCIETY'S ARCHIVES[279]

In 2003-4 the majority of the records of the Society were presented to the Guildhall Library, where they were initially held in its Manuscripts Section. Since 2010 the records have been permanently transferred to the London Metropolitan Archives, based at 40 Northampton Road, Clerkenwell, London, EC1R 0HB. The Society plans to transfer further batches of more recent records to the LMA from time to time. The collection can be searched online at www.lma.gov.uk using the manuscript accession numbers or using 'Society for the Protection of Life from Fire' as the search term within the author search field. The Society records – catalogued under the main coding CLC/014 – essentially fall into nine categories as follows:

1: Annual Reports
The Annual Reports include 'directions for aiding persons to escape from Buildings on Fire, avoiding Accidents and for the Treatment of Injuries'; and lists of awards granted, arranged by case number, and usually giving the name of the recipient, occupation, type of award, date and cause of fire, details of person rescued and location of fire. The available Annual Reports are catalogued as follows:

Manuscript & Item Nos.	**Years**	**Case Nos.**
LMA CLC/014/MS34982/001	1892, 1896*	14324-14333, 14512-71
LMA CLC/014/MS34982/002	1897 – 1914	14572-15505
LMA CLC/014/MS34982/003	1916 – 1930	15581-16517
LMA CLC/014/MS34982/004	1931 – 1954	16518-18081
LMA CLC/014/MS34982/005	1955 – 1974	18086-21328

* Note: The 1896 Annual Report is currently unfit for production.

2: Summaries of Cases Submitted
These Summaries give details of case number, by whom submitted, nominees and action taken. The Summaries are catalogued as follows:

Manuscript & Item No.	**Years**	**Case Nos.**
LMA CLC/014/MS34982A/001	1975 – 1987	21521-24215
LMA CLC/014/MS34982A/002	1981 – 1998	22730-26120

3: Minutes of General Meetings and Committees
Amongst the other business of the Society, the Minutes contain brief details of many applications for, and grants of, awards (usually giving case number, name of recipient and amount, sometimes with further information of the incident). Cases were not always considered immediately, and entries for them are not always therefore in strict sequence.

The Minutes are catalogued as follows:

Manuscript & Volume Nos.	**Years**	**Case Nos.**
LMA CLC/014/MS34980/001	1844 – 1862	1-*c*.7300
LMA CLC/014/MS34980/002	1862 – 1872	*c*.7300-c11900
LMA CLC/014/MS34980/003	1872 – 1882	11900-13050
LMA CLC/014/MS34980/004	1882 – 1904	*c*.13050-14987
LMA CLC/014/MS34980/005	1905 – 1919	14988-15773
LMA CLC/014/MS34980/006	1919 – 1931	*c*.15770-16612
LMA CLC/014/MS34980/007	1931 – 1956	16613-18207
LMA CLC/014/MS34980/008	1956 – 1976	18209-21652
LMA CLC/014/MS34980/009	1976 – 1998	*c*.21700-26025

[279] This section is primarily extracted and adapted from an article on the SPLF archives by Matthew Payne, the original of which was published in the *LSARS Journal*, 52, pp. 35-39.

4: Miscellaneous Cuttings and Illustrations
This file contains miscellaneous cuttings and illustrations, including copies of two certificates awarded, 1895-96, pictures of fire-escapes and award ceremonies. These are held under the following reference:

Manuscript No.	**Years**
LMA CLC/014/MS34984	1849 – 1993

5: History of the Society
A history of the Society was written by a former Secretary, ***Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, 1836 – 1936,*** but was not published owing to cost. The Guildhall Library has a typescript copy of this book under reference GL Large Pam 503.

6: Withdrawal of Royal Patronage
Extracts from the minutes of the Society relating to the withdrawal of Royal patronage, 1901-02, compiled in the mid twentieth century and consisting of three items only, is available at:

Manuscript No.	**Years**
LMA CLC/014/MS34981	1901-2

7: Miscellaneous Correspondence
This file contains four items of miscellaneous correspondence.

Manuscript No.	**Years**
LMA CLC/014/MS34983	1872 - 1976

8: Metropolitan Board of Works (London, England)
This file contains a photocopied 'report of the sub committee on the transfer of Fire-Escape and Machinery Plant etc from Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire to the Metropolitan Board of Works, 1867.' It appears to have been copied in the mid twentieth century and is held under reference:

Manuscript No.	**Years**
LMA CLC/014/MS34979	1867

9: Management Scheme and Trustees Appointments
This file contains the scheme of management devised by the Charity Commission, along with their approval for the appointment of new trustees. It is available under reference:

Manuscript No.	**Years**	**Notes**
LMA CLC/014/MS34978	1881, 1962	5 items

Records of awards made by the Society after 1998 are currently retained by the Society. Enquiries about these should therefore be directed to the Secretary via the Society's web site at www.splf.org.uk or through the post to the Society's Secretary at the address given on the nomination form in the website.

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PATENT BALCONIAN FIRE ESCAPE LADDERS.



DAVIES'S FIRE ESCAPE.



Founded in 1836 during the reign of William IV, the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire pioneered fire escape and rescue services in London and then across Britain. The charity, initially working on a shoestring budget, gathered an eclectic and colourful set of supporters to its cause, including the dynamic Captain George Manby, the fashionable hairdresser cum portrait painter Abraham Wivell, banker and swindler Sir John Dean Paul and many other notables, not least Queen Victoria who became its patron in 1839.

Saved from the Flames tells the story of the Society from its earliest days, including how the initial setup descended into acrimony and an organisational and financial collapse, complicated as its Secretary was pursued through the bankruptcy courts before ending up in debtor's prison. Reformed in 1843, under a new management imbued with an evangelical spirit and philanthropic zeal, the Society then progressed solidly through the nineteenth century. Following the formation of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade in London, the Society's fire-escape establishment merged with them in 1867. The Society continued to supply mobile fire-escapes to other local authorities for some years, before becoming in 1881 a purely humane society distributing medals, watches, testimonials and other awards. The history of these events is discussed in critical and substantial detail, charting the fate of the Society through its Victorian heyday and the turbulent years of the twentieth century, up to the present. Today the Society continues its important work recognising and applauding the extraordinary actions of many ordinary people.

Going into blazing buildings, vehicle wrecks and other situations where fires occur, in search of people who may be trapped and injured takes very considerable courage, even for those trained and equipped for the task. From its beginning, the Society has sought to reward those men, women and children who have shown such bravery and often placed their own lives in danger in an effort to save others. The names of many of those decorated by the Society are recorded here for the first time, together with details of the dramatic events and sometimes tragedies that formed a catalyst for their actions. The present work also serves as a unique record of those saved and as a memorial to those who have died in the fires here documented over the course of the past 175 years.

Roger Willoughby *is a Senior Lecturer at Newman University College, Birmingham, with strong interdisciplinary interests, teaching on the education studies, counselling and children, young people & families courses. He is a long time member of the Life Saving Awards Research Society, the Orders & Medals Research Society and a founder member of the Medal Society of Ireland. He is currently writing Saved Lives, a study of societal recognition of lifesaving in Ireland during the past 200 years.*

John Wilson *is a Chartered Biologist and a Qualified Person, working in the pharmaceutical industry. His role is the evaluation and release of pharmaceutical products for clinical trials and prescription use. His great interest is the study of life saving awards, a welcome 'distraction' from the scientific 'day job.' An early member of the Life Saving Awards Research Society, of which he has been Journal Editor for a number of years, John is also a member of the Orders & Medals Research Society.*

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