

LIFE-BOAT WAR BULLETIN No. 11

MARCH 1943.

THREE AND A HALF YEARS OF WAR.

In three and a half years of war our life-boats have rescued 5100 lives, and our life-boatmen have won 177 medals for gallantry. Twenty-eight lives have been rescued every week since the war began.

THE SERVICE IN 1942.

In 1942 life-boats rescued 596 lives and helped to save 43 boats and vessels from destruction. Life-boatmen won three gold medals of the Institution, six silver and 29 bronze, and four British Empire Medals.

SCOTLAND'S YEAR.

1942 was Scotland's year. Scottish life-boatmen rescued 357 of the 596 lives, and the two stations of Great Britain and Ireland which rescued most lives were Peterhead, with 135, and Campbeltown with 74. Scotland also won 18 of the 38 medals awarded by the Institution and three of the four British Empire Medals.

THE DUCHESS OF KENT.

The Duchess of Kent has accepted the invitation of the Committee of Management to become the Institution's President in succession to the late Duke of Kent.

COXSWAIN CROSS AGAIN.

Coxswain Robert Cross, of the Humber, has won the Institution's gold medal for the second time since the war began. He has won it for rescuing the crew of a trawler which had stranded on a sandbank in a gale. There were heavy snow showers, a six-knot tide was running, and the trawler was smothered in the seas. The life-boat had to go alongside twelve times before she had rescued the men. She was flung against the trawler again and again. Her mast was broken, her stem smashed, her planking holed. Four days later, although her stem had not been replaced, she was out again and rescued eight more lives from another vessel. Besides the gold medal to Coxswain Cross, the Institution has awarded a silver medal to the motor mechanic and bronze medals to the five members of the crew.

BRONZE MEDAL FOR VOLUNTEER OF 69.

The Institution has awarded its bronze medal to Captain James Winter, harbour master of Peterhead, Aberdeenshire, who is 69 years old, for his gallantry in taking command of the life-boat, when the coxswain was ill, and rescuing the crew of twelve of a trawler which was lying half submerged on the rocks in a heavy sea. The rescue was completed in the nick of time, for as the life-boat drew away the trawler turned over and sank.

A VELLUM FOR SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.

Coxswain Sydney Page, of Southend-on-Sea, has won the thanks of the Institution on vellum for rescuing the crew of a yacht which had gone aground on a sandbank in the Thames estuary in a gale. The night was very dark, with mist; the tide was low; and the life-boat herself went aground. While she was rolling heavily on a sandbank, with the seas breaking over her all the time, her

crew threw a line aboard the yacht, rigged the breeches buoy, and hauled the eight men of the crew through the surf. As the tide rose the life-boat refloated

TWO M.B.E.'S.

In the New Year's Honours Mr. W. W. Harris was made a Member of the Order of the British Empire for his work as honorary secretary of the New Brighton life-boat station, and Mrs. E. M. Astley Roberts, president of the Eastbourne Ladies' Life-boat Guild, for her public services in Eastbourne and her work for the Institution.

RED ARMY DAY.

Life-boatmen took part in the meetings, on 20th and 21st February, celebrating the 25th birthday of the Red Army. Life-boatmen from Margate and Southend-on-Sea were at the chief celebration in the Albert Hall, London; men from Newhaven and Shoreham Harbour were at the celebration in Brighton; men from Barry Dock, went to Cardiff; from Sunderland, to Newcastle, and from Girvan and Troon, to Glasgow.

FISHERMEN RETURN REWARDS.

Five fishermen of Sillioth, Cumberland, as they came back from their fishing, saw an aeroplane crash in the sea, went to its help, and rescued the airmen. The Institution sent them rewards, but they returned them, saying: "This is not the first time that we have gone out to such plane crashes, and we will be always ready and willing to render any assistance we can to our fellow brothers."

THE FISHWIVES OF CULLERCOATS.

The annual summer appeal by the fishwives of Cullercoats collected £449 last year. That is £171 more than their collection in 1941, which was a record. In 21 years they have collected over £3,400. One collector last year, Mrs. Mattison, got £150. It was made up of about 20,000 coins, weighing four hundredweight, or three times her own weight.

FROM MALTA.

Since June of last year the Institution has received seven gifts from a church in Malta, sent by a regimental sergeant major of the Royal Artillery. In sending the fourth gift he wrote that it was part of the collection at a harvest festival service held during an air-raid. In sending the fifth he said that there were no more raids, and "life on this island is very dull".

A LADIES' CLUB'S GIFTS.

Since 1941 the Ladies' Unity Club, of Boston Manor, Ealing, has presented the line-throwing pistol, searchlight and compass for the Aldeburgh No. 2 life-boat, and the line-throwing pistols for the life-boats at Sunderland and Newquay, Cornwall.

A CRIPPLE'S HELP.

The Dunbar and Skateraw branch has received £4:11:3 from a paralysed woman. It was got by the sale of work which she crocheted herself, though she can only use her left hand,