

LIFE-BOAT WAR BULLETIN No. 12

JUNE 1943.

45 MONTHS OF WAR.

In 45 months of war our life-boats have rescued 5177 lives and our life-boatmen have won 181 medals for gallantry.

IRISH COXSWAIN'S THIRD MEDAL.

Coxswain Patrick Sliney, of Ballycotton, who has already won the Institution's gold and bronze medals, has now won its silver medal for saving an Irish steamer and her crew of 35 men. The steamer's engines had failed and heavy seas were carrying her rapidly on to an island, where she would have been broken to pieces on the rocks in a few minutes. The life-boat towed her head round just in time and she drifted past the island with less than half a mile to spare. The Institution has awarded bronze medals to the second-coxswain and two motor mechanics, and its thanks on vellum to each of the other four members of the crew.

FIVE MEDALS FOR WALES.

Five bronze medals for gallantry have been won in Wales in the past three months.

Dr. Joseph Soar, Mus. Doc., the organist of St. David's Cathedral, who has been the honorary secretary of St. David's life-boat station for seventeen years, and Gwilym J. Davies, a member of the crew, each won it for rescuing in the darkness a man who was trapped on the cliffs. David J. Lewis, the second-coxswain, won the thanks on vellum for the same rescue.

Coxswain W. Watts Williams, of St. David's won the medal two months later for a gallant piece of work in heavy weather.

Coxswain Richard Jones, of Holyhead, and John Jones, the motor mechanic, each won it for the rescue of the crew of a steamer which had gone on the rocks in a gale. Heavy seas were breaking over her, a fierce tide was running, and a few hours after the rescue she had disappeared. Each of the other four members of the crew has won the thanks on vellum.

TWO MEDALS FOR HASTINGS.

Coxswain John Muggridge, of Hastings, on his first service in command of the life-boat, won the bronze medal, for rescuing seven lives from one of H.M. trawlers. She had gone ashore and the life-boat found her at daybreak half under water, with heavy seas breaking over her. The motor mechanic, W. R. Hilder, also won the bronze medal, and Commander W. Highfield, O.B.E., R.N., honorary secretary of the station, Edward F. Adams, the second coxswain, and Frederick White, the bowman, the thanks of the Institution on vellum. A few days after the rescue Coxswain Muggridge lost his life, when his fishing boat went down, and three days after the medals had been awarded, Hilder, the motor mechanic, was killed in an air raid.

HOYLAKE COXSWAIN'S BRONZE MEDAL.

Coxswain Herbert Jones, of Hoylake, and two other men have won bronze medals for rescuing two men whose dinghy was in grave danger in very heavy seas off West Kirby in the river Dee. They went out to the rescue in a dinghy knowing that if they were capsized, or lost their oars, they would be carried on to the sea wall where no one could have come to their help. Since the outbreak of war, apart from his life boat work Coxswain Jones has rescued six lives from drowning

CLACTON SECOND COXSWAIN DROWNED.

Frank Castle, second coxswain of the Clacton-on-Sea life-boat for 19 years, lost his life in a gale in April. The life-boat had gone out to a barge, and the coxswain put Castle, the bowman and the assistant motor mechanic on board to help weigh anchor. Without warning the barge capsized and her skipper and boy, as well as Castle, were drowned. The bowman and assistant motor mechanic were rescued by the life-boat.

LIFE-BOAT DAYS IN 1942.

In each of the first three years of the war the life-boat flag days have raised more than ever before. In 1942, 827 branches held these days and 541 collected more than ever before. 10,649,200 people contributed. That is 1,360,300 more than in 1941. The sum raised was £113,616, which is £23,363 more than in 1941 and nearly two and a half times as much as in 1939, the last year of peace. In 1942 more branches held flag days, more people contributed and a larger sum was given than ever before.

£25,000 TYNEMOUTH APPEAL.

In April 1941, the Tynemouth life-boat and life-boathouse were destroyed, in an air-raid, by two bombs which fell right on the house. In order to provide a new boat and house, an appeal was launched in February of this year by Mayors of all the Tyneside boroughs for £25,000. The life-boat herself could not be insured under the War Damage Act, but the boat-house and slipway were covered, and the £25,000, with the money from insurance, should rebuild the station. So far the appeal has brought in over £2000.

£17,000 FROM SOUTH AFRICA.

The Southern African Branch, which was formed at a meeting at the end of February, 1942, had within a year sent the Institution £9,000 out of the £11,000 which it aims to raise in order to provide a motor life-boat to be named "Field-Marshal and Mrs. Smuts". Altogether South Africa has contributed over £17,000 in the past two years.

A Dutchman in Capetown, who for many years subscribed to the Life-boat Service of the Netherlands, and cannot do it now because of the war, has sent his subscription instead to the life-boat fund in South Africa.

A South African in Johannesburg, who for many years has subscribed five guineas to the Irvine branch in Ayrshire, doubled it.

The Girl Guides of Durban sent a Christmas present of £5 to the crew of the Cadgwith life-boat "Guide of Dunkirk", the life-boat which is a gift from the Girl Guides of the Empire.

FROM THE FIGHTING SERVICES.

In 1942 the Navy, Army and Air Force, with their Women's Services, contributed £19,385. All three contributions were much larger than in 1941. The Navy's was twelve times as much as in the last year of peace; the Army's twenty-one times as much; the Air Force's eleven times as much.

FROM GOLF CLUBS.

In 1942 seventy-seven golf clubs held competitions for the Life-boat Service and they raised £395. This is the largest sum received from golf clubs since these competitions were started in 1931.