

LIFE-BOAT WAR BULLETIN No. 16.

JUNE 1944.

FOUR YEARS AND NINE MONTHS OF WAR

In the four years and nine months of war our life-boats have rescued 5661 lives, and have won 204 medals for gallantry.

IN THE NICK OF TIME

The Institution has awarded its bronze medal for gallantry to Coxswain J. Mercer, of Walmer, for taking the life-boat across the Goodwin Sands by night in a rough sea and rescuing the crew of 13 of a naval launch. At times there was only a foot and a half of water under the life-boat, and old wrecks made the passage dangerous. The life-boat arrived in the nick of time, for the launch was already half under water, the tide was rising, and in a little while she would have been completely submerged.

TO THE HELP OF TWO RAFTS

Coxswain J. McLeod, of Thurso, Caithness-shire has won the bronze medal for gallantry in rescuing two exhausted men from a ship's raft when it was within two hundred yards of the rocks in a heavy sea. The life-boat then went to another raft, but the five men on it had already died of exhaustion.

GALLANTRY AT 67

Coxswain James Watkins of Angle, Pembrokeshire, who won the bronze medal for gallantry fifteen years ago, has now won the silver medal for rescuing six of the crew of a small motor ship which had turned turtle in a gale. Some of the men were in the water and others clinging to the bottom of the ship.

LIFE-BOAT INSPECTORS

Captain E. S. Carver, R.D., R.N.R., on the advice of his doctor, retired from the chief inspectorship of life-boats at the end of last year. He had been chief inspector since the beginning of the war, and before that a district inspector for eleven years, during which time he won the silver medal for gallantry, and then superintendent of the storeyard for nine years. Commander P. E. Vaux, D.S.C., R.N., who was chief inspector on the outbreak of war, and was then recalled to the Navy, has been released by the Admiralty to resume his work as chief inspector. Captain C. Smith of the merchant navy, who has served for seventeen years with Royal Fleet Auxiliaries, became inspector for the northern district in January last.

THE ARMIES HELP

At Scarborough recently, when the life-boat was called to the rescue of an airman, an army vehicle gave valuable help by towing her across heavy sand and into the sea. At Newcastle, Co. Down, when only 28 launchers could be mustered, American infantry, who were passing on a route-march, helped to launch.

SAVED FROM DIPHTHERIA

Three children were dangerously ill with diphtheria on an island off the west coast of Ireland. The proper drugs were not to be got on the island and the children would have been dead in a few hours. The Arranmore life-boat took the doctor to the mainland in a gale with a very heavy sea running

and he returned with the drugs in time to save the children's lives.

£45,000 FROM AN AEROPLANE

The Newquay life-boat went out in a fog to a crashed aeroplane. She found no one alive, but she brought ashore twelve bodies, mail bags and £45,000 in 100-dollar bills.

QUICK WORK

The Selsey coxswain saw an airman crash nearly a mile out at sea. He summoned the crew at once, and the life-boat rescued the airman just twenty minutes after he came down. Fifteen minutes later he was safe ashore.

HELPING A SICK SOLDIER

The New Brighton life-boat carried out a very difficult service when, in a rough sea, she brought a sick soldier ashore from a fort. He had to be lowered into the life-boat, lashed to his stretcher, while she was in violent motion all the time, rising and falling fifteen feet on the seas. After repeated attempts he was got into the life-boat uninjured, but she was damaged.

LIFE-BOAT DAYS IN 1943.

In 1943 more branches held flag days, more people gave, and a larger sum was given than ever before. The number of days was 857, the number who gave was 10,761,000, and the sum given £131,172. That is £17,556 more than in 1942 and nearly three times as much as in 1939, the last year of peace.'

A PERSIAN'S GRATITUDE

The Institution has received £15 from a Persian, living in Isfahan. He sent it to show his admiration for Great Britain, and wrote: "I know well the meaning of the English hospitality, the English home, the English liberties, the English correctitude. . . . We owe you too much, and it is only just and fair we try to discharge partially our debt by doing what we can. We have admired the wonderful resistance of the British nation during the terrible blitz days of 1940, when with blood, sacrifices and tears you once more saved the world's liberties. . . . This is why we like England and we will continue to like her."

AFTER 54 YEARS

The Institution has received a gift from two ladies in Toronto, Canada, who wrote that they remembered seeing the Walton-on-the-Naze life-boat going out on service in the spring of 1889.

FROM A MOTHER IN EIRE

A woman in County Cork has sent a pound, saying: "My son has just been saved after his ship went, and I feel I should like to help to save another mother's son".

FROM BABY GOLDFISH

The Institution has had a gift of 5/- which came with the message: "from the sale of a few baby goldfish"