

LIFE-BOAT BULLETIN No. 23.

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1945.

Life-boats rescued 553 lives in 1945. In the first four months, up to the end of the war, they rescued 223 lives. In the first eight months of peace they rescued 330. That is, they rescued 55 lives a month in the four months of war, and 41 a month in the eight months of peace.

THE WINTER GALES

During the five winter months, from October to February, life-boats were launched 241 times and rescued 314 lives, an average of 63 lives a month.

IN THE NICK OF TIME

On 24th. October, 1945, the St. Ives life-boat went to the help of the ketch "Minnie Flossie", of Bideford, and found her right in the surf with a man and woman clinging to her. The coxswain could see that there was not a moment to lose. He drove the life-boat straight at her, and the man and woman were dragged into the life-boat. The rescue had taken less than five minutes, and as the life-boat turned away a heavy sea came in and sank the ketch. The Institution has awarded its silver medal to Coxswain William Peters and vellums to the crew.

RESCUE BY A DAMAGED LIFE-BOAT

On the night of 21st. December, 1945, the Walton and Frinton life-boat rescued eleven men from two naval motor fishing vessels which had stranded on the Gunfleet Sands in a very heavy sea. The life-boat's rudder was damaged and Coxswain Thomas Bloom carried out the rescue steering the boat by her engines. He has been awarded a clasp to his bronze medal, and the motor mechanic and assistant mechanics vellums. Coxswain Bloom won the silver medal and the bronze medal during the war.

CHRISTMAS EVE AND CHRISTMAS DAY

The life-boats at Padstow and Appledore were out all night in a gale on Christmas Eve, searching for an unknown vessel, and on Christmas Day the Galway Bay life-boat fetched a soldier, on leave from Italy, from the mainland to his home in the Aran Islands. He had been kept on the mainland for two days by bad weather.

ATTEMPT TO STEAL A LIFE-BOAT

Seven German prisoners of war, who had been working on the beach at Wells, Norfolk, removing coast defences, and had seen the life-boat launched on exercise, stole a lorry from a car park and drove to the life-boat house on the night of January 5th. They forced open a window and tried to start the engine, but gave up the attempt. They had been seen driving down to the beach by the late tractor driver of the station who gave information to the police, and the seven men were arrested when they returned to the lorry.

1939-45 STAR FOR LIFE-BOATMEN

The 1939-45 star has been awarded to all members of the crews of life-boats in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland who were out on life-boat service 25 times or more during the war. Two hundred and fourteen men have

qualified for the star, and the ribbons are now being distributed to them.

DISTRICT INSPECTORS

Captain G. R. Cousins, D.S.C., R.N., who has returned to the Institution from the Navy, has been appointed to the Southern District. During the war he helped to build the Lyness base in Scapa Flow and then took command of H.M.S. "Churchill", the first of the American destroyers which were transferred to the British Navy. He served in her for eighteen months in charge of an escort group in the North Atlantic. Later he was appointed to the staff of the Commander-in-Chief, Western Approaches, and at the end of 1943 was promoted acting captain and took command of a combined-operation base on the Clyde.

Commander E. W. Middleton, R.N.V.R., who among other service during the war was on the staff of the Allied Naval Command Expeditionary Force for the Normandy Landings, and was congratulated for his fine work on the beaches, has joined the staff of the Institution, and been appointed to the Western District.

Lieut.-Commander W. L. G. Dutton, R.N.R., who was in command of mine-sweepers during the war, has also joined the staff of the Institution and been appointed to the Irish District.

DISTRICT INSPECTOR, -- O.B.E.

Captain Harold G. Innes, R.N., who retired as a district inspector on account of ill health in 1929, and returned to the Service in 1939, acting as inspector of the Western District throughout the war, has been made an O.B.E., for his services.

GUILD HONORARY SECRETARY, -- M.B.E.

Mrs. Hilda C. Brown, who has been honorary secretary of the Withernsea Ladies' Life-boat Guild since 1926, and was awarded the Institution's gold badge in 1937, has been made an M.B.E. for her many public services during the war.

THE FISHWIVES OF CULLERCOATS

The fishwives of Cullercoats last year collected £259. One fishwife, Mrs. B. Mattison, alone collected over £258 of that total, a record sum for one collector; and the Institution has since had £19 from the R.N. Sick Quarters' Canteen at Cullercoats to add to it in gratitude for the help which she gave the naval hospital during the war. In 24 years the fishwives have collected over £4620, and Mrs. Mattison has collected over £1000.

MRS. E. LEEMING

The Institution has suffered a severe loss by the death on February 20th of Mrs. Eva Leeming, organising secretary for Greater London. She was appointed assistant organising secretary in 1926. In 1935 she became joint organising secretary, being in charge of Central London, and during the war, and until her death, she was organising secretary for the whole of Greater London.

FROM A BURMESE CHURCH

St. Marks Church at Akyab, Burma, has just been reopened, and one of the first things that it has done is to send a gift of 69 rupees to the Institution.