

LIFE-BOAT WAR BULLETIN No.7.

MARCH 1942.

30 MONTHS OF WAR.

In the first thirty months of war Life-boats have rescued 4630 lives. They have rescued more lives in thirty months of war than in the last thirteen years of peace. They are rescuing nearly two lives for every life rescued in the last war, and five lives for every one rescued in the twenty years of peace between the two wars

GOLD MEDAL FOR PETERHEAD.

The gold medal for gallantry has been awarded to Coxswain John B. McLean, of Peterhead, the silver medal to David F. Wiseman, the motor mechanic, and the bronze medal to each of the other six members of the crew for rescuing the crews of three steamers in a gale, with gusts at over 100 miles an hour, heavy seas, blinding snow and intense cold.

All three steamers had been driven on the rocks, and two of the three rescues were carried out by night. In the course of three days and three nights the life-boatmen were at sea, or standing by on shore, for over 63 hours. This is the first gold medal to be awarded by the Institution in Scotland for 104 years.

GOLD MEDAL FOR HARTLEPOOL.

The gold medal for gallantry has been awarded to Lieutenant W. H. Bennison, C.G.M., R.N.V.R., coxswain of the Hartlepool life-boat, the silver medal to H. W. Jefferson, the motor mechanic, and the bronze medal to each of the seven other members of the crew, for rescuing five men from a steamer, which had been driven ashore in a gale and had then broken in half. The two halves were 200 yards apart in very shallow water. Those on the stern part were rescued from the shore by the life-saving rocket apparatus and those on the bow by the life-boat. They were being swept by heavy seas and could not have lived much longer. Heavy seas were breaking all the time in the life-boat, and so violent were they that at times she was almost standing on end.

RESCUE OF A FLYING BOAT.

The bronze medal for gallantry has been awarded to Coxswain Walter D. Crowther, of Plymouth, and its thanks on vellum to each of the eight members of his crew, for saving a flying boat and the two men on board her. The flying boat was at anchor one night in a rough sea when a vessel collided with her and carried her on to the rocks. With great difficulty the life-boat towed her off. But for her help the flying boat and the two men would have been lost.

13 LIVES RESCUED AT RAMSEY.

The bronze medal for gallantry has been awarded to Coxswain John Comish, of Ramsey, Isle of Man, and its thanks on vellum to the acting motor mechanic, for rescuing thirteen lives from an Aberdeen trawler which had gone ashore in a very heavy sea.

Thirteen times the coxswain took the life-boat near enough to the trawler for one of her crew to jump aboard. Again and again she was within a foot of being flung against the trawler, and those who were watching from the shore were expecting at any moment to see them crash together. They knew that if they did it would almost certainly be the end of the trawler, the life-boat and their crews.

143 MEDALS FOR GALLANTRY.

In thirty months of war the Institution has awarded to life-boatmen 143 medals for gallantry, and life-boatmen have also won the Distinguished Service Medal, the British Empire Medal and the George Medal.

THANKS OF THE R.A.F.

The Director-General of Aircraft Safety has thanked the Institution for its "real and gallant co-operation in the work of rescue on many occasions".

A NEW TYPE OF LIFE-BOAT.

Construction began last December on the first of a new type of motor life-boat and three more of the type have been laid down since. They are a development of the powerful Watson cabin type of life-boat, 46 feet long and driven by two 40 h.p. Diesel engines, which has a speed of over eight knots and can travel 200 miles at full speed without refuelling. These new boats will be the first in the Institution's fleet to have the steering wheel amidships instead of at the stern. They will cost about £10,000 each.

LIFE-BOAT DAY IN CAPETOWN.

The first life-boat day to be held in one of the Dominions for the British Life-boat Service was held in Capetown on February 4th. It raised £1506. This day was part of the appeal which Miss Pattie Price has been making throughout the Union of South Africa. Since her appeal was launched in the summer of 1940, the Institution has received from South Africa £7447:17:7.

THE NAVY'S HELP IN 1941.

In 1941 the Navy contributed £3408 to the Life-boat Service. That is £1811 more than in 1940, and seven times as much as in the last year of peace.

THE FISHWIVES OF CULLERCOATS.

The annual summer appeal made last year by the fishwives of Cullercoats raised £278. This is the twentieth year of their appeal, and this is the largest sum which they have ever raised. The total is now £2983.

FROM GOLF CLUBS.

In 1941 seventy-one golf clubs held competitions for the Life-boat Service and these competitions contributed over £282.

84 - AND STILL WORKING FOR THE LIFE-BOATS.

The Institution has received cheques from two ladies who are now both 84 years old, but still continue to collect for it. One cheque comes from Mrs. L. M. Smith, of Gedling, the honorary organiser for a district of the Nottingham branch, who holds the Institution's gold badge for distinguished honorary services. It is for £213, a record collection for the district. The other is for £31, from Mrs. Lathbury, the honorary secretary of the branch at Chipperfield, Hertfordshire, who also holds the Institution's gold badge for distinguished honorary services.

CHILDREN'S GIFTS.

Many gifts come from children, who get the money in all sorts of ways, some of them very unexpected. Here are some of the ways used in the last four months, with the names of the places, and the amounts of the gifts. Selling Christmas cards (Dewsbury, 10/-), carol singing (Malmesbury, 7/6), selling jam jars (Ipswich, 12/6), a beetle drive and selling d'oyleys and calendars (Sheffield, £1. 5. 9), painting and selling cardboard V's (Witney, 2/6), a museum, admission 2d., and a garden fete and sale (Gerrards Cross, £5. 10. 0), making wool dolls and selling them at 1d. and ½d. (Croydon 2/6), collecting and selling bomb splinters (Manchester 4/6), bazaar (Hereford 10/-), sale of work and concert in the back yard (Walsall 16/-), writing, producing and acting a play of the Holy Nativity (Cuffley 12/6).

SCOTTISH FISHERMEN'S GIFT.

Two fishermen of Fifeshire were rewarded by the Institution for towing in another boat, disabled in a rough sea. They returned the rewards saying, "the Institution requires more funds instead of taking donations from it".