

Throughout the period of rescue Rayner showed courage and initiative. By his example and leadership he inspired the rescue party in their splendid work.

*Awarded the George Medal:—*

Leonard Charles DEPTFORD, Constable, Lincolnshire Constabulary. (Chapel St. Leonards, Lincolnshire.)

The sea defences on the Lincolnshire coast were breached in several places and serious flooding occurred. Constable Deptford made his way to some flooded bungalows and searched one which had collapsed into the sea. He then made a most hazardous journey across the remains of the sea bank and sandhills to a two-storey house where seven persons, mostly elderly, were sheltering in the upstairs rooms. Part of the house had disintegrated and the foundations were in a precarious state. Constable Deptford took command of the situation and organised an immediate evacuation. He roped the party together and urged them forward whilst mountainous waves broke through the gaps. He inspired the party by his cheerful determination and competent handling of the desperate situation and eventually all reached safety. Deptford made another attempt to cross the broken sea bank but was forced back by the strong tide. The Constable then returned to the police station and set out to rescue an aged couple and their daughter who were marooned in a bungalow. The elderly couple were both bedridden and, as no boats were available, Deptford borrowed six 40 gallon tanks, roped them together and removed the couple on stretchers on top of this improvised raft. The Constable managed to reach another bungalow in which several elderly people were sheltering and guided this party to safety over the sea bank and along the beach to the village. Mud and flood water had to be traversed in the strong gale which was still blowing and at intervals Deptford carried two infirm members of the party over the worst parts of the route. He continued with rescue work throughout the next 24 hours.

Constable Deptford displayed gallantry of an exceptionally high order in crossing the broken sea wall at the height of a very strong gale, and in the face of mountainous seas, and successfully led a most hazardous enterprise.

Charles LEWIS, Inspector, Lincolnshire Constabulary. (Mablethorpe, Lincolnshire.)

When the neighbouring sea bank gave way the Police Station premises at Mablethorpe were soon surrounded by water several feet deep. All services were put out of action and the road outside was impassable owing to the flood water. Hearing cries for help Inspector Lewis opened a window and climbed out. The water was rushing by in a torrent carrying with it railings, parts of sheds and boxes. The gale lashed the water into waves which came up to the Inspector's neck but he reached the garage drive where an elderly man and his wife were in danger of drowning. The Inspector managed to get the woman on to his shoulders, and struggled

across the street and found shelter for the two old people in the upstairs room of a house. Before re-crossing the street he had to dive under water to pass lengths of railings which had been washed into the entrance of the house. Inspector Lewis obtained a lorry and set out for Sutton-on-Sea, where much of the promenade and the sea defences had been carried away. The main street was covered in sand and water to a depth of from two to eight feet and about 100 people had taken refuge in the cinema. The Inspector organised the evacuation of these and of old people and others from houses and bungalows. He then went on to Trusthorpe where some old people were in danger of drowning in bungalows, the approach to which was very difficult and hazardous. The attempt was made, however, and the Inspector rescued a man and three women from three bungalows and a man and two women from two cottages. The water was nearly up to his neck and at one stage he went under through stepping into a dyke.

Inspector Lewis returned to Mablethorpe and continued with the evacuation of the inhabitants until 11.30 p.m. on Monday, 2nd February, when he went off duty, having been continuously engaged for 54 hours, for 26 of which he was constantly in and out of ice cold water.

Frederick William SADD, Leading Fireman, Great Yarmouth Fire Brigade. (Caister-on-Sea, Norfolk.)

Leading Fireman Sadd was in charge of a fire appliance which attended a fire call to Gorleston where a small estate consisting of 16 prefabricated bungalows and some 30 two-storey houses was completely flooded to a depth of more than 5 feet. Sadd, seeing there were several people trapped in the bungalows and houses, and hearing their cries for help, instructed a fisherman to collect a boat and report back to him with it. Meanwhile, as something approaching panic was reigning in most of the flooded buildings, Leading Fireman Sadd, accompanied by two members of his crew, started to wade to the bungalows. The water, however, soon proved to be too deep for his companions and Sadd, realising that they were unlikely to survive, ordered them back and continued alone. The level of the water was still rising, a very severe gale was blowing, it was pitch dark and the surface of the water was exceedingly rough. At times Sadd was completely submerged but he alternately waded and swam his way from house to house, reassuring the occupants and promising them that he would return with a boat to rescue them. He then made his way back to the high ground where the fisherman had returned with a boat. No oars were available but Sadd refused to abandon the attempt and by wading, and at times swimming, either pulling or pushing the boat in the direction it was desired to take, visited each of the bungalows, rescuing the persons found in them. In almost every case it was impossible to take the boat close up to the bungalows, and Sadd had therefore to carry each person in turn from bungalow to boat. The water was exceedingly cold