

THE SCARCE WW2 1941 'CLYDEBANK BLITZ' B.E.M. AWARDED TO A MEMBER OF THE A.R.P. FOR HIS GALLANTRY AFTER BOMBS HIT A TENEMENT IN BLANTYRE, GLASGOW, ON THE NIGHT OF 13/14 MARCH 1941. THE POLICEMAN WHO WORKED WITH HIM TO RELEASE THOSE TRAPPED WAS AWARDED THE GEORGE CROSS



BRITISH EMPIRE MEDAL, G.V.I.R. 'JAMES MCKENNA' IN ORIGINAL ENVELOPE AND CARD BOX OF ISSUE

B.E.M. *London Gazette* 30 May 1941.

'A bomb partly demolished a two storey tenement and persons were trapped. The remaining walls and an overhanging portion of roof were in a highly dangerous condition. Despite this McKenna entered the ruins and worked untiringly and unceasingly moving and lifting heavy timbers and other debris while those trapped were released.'

The award was recommended by the Chief Engineer of Glasgow

'Shortly after 1 a.m. on 14th March, 1941, McKenna's party was called to a tenement at 101, Logan Street, Glasgow, which had been partly demolished by a parachute mine. With Police Constable Archibald Walker, who has been awarded the George Medal for his gallantry on this occasion, he entered the building, the walls and roof of which were in a highly dangerous condition, and until 3 a.m. worked untiringly to release 5 trapped persons. He materially assisted Constable Walker, in conditions of equal danger, in releasing 2 of the 5 persons alive.'

Logan Street, where the bomb hit was in Clydebanks, Glasgow. During the night of 13/14 March 1941, the Luftwaffe launched massive raids against the shipping and industrial area of Clydebanks. As a result of the raids on the nights of 13 and 14 March 1941, the town was largely destroyed, and it suffered the worst destruction and civilian loss of life in all of Scotland. 1,200 people died, 1,000 people were seriously injured, and hundreds more were injured by blast debris. Over the course of the two nights, a total of 439 Luftwaffe bombers dropped in excess of 1,650 incendiary containers and 272 tonnes of bombs. Out of approximately 12,000 houses, only eight remained undamaged, with 4,000 completely destroyed and 4,500 severely damaged. Over 35,000 people were made homeless

<https://blitzincidents.blogspot.com/2016/01/clydeside-13th-and-14th-march-1941.html>



Copy of Police Reports:

'With reference to the Chief Constable's General Order No. 210/3/41 of 14th instant, I beg to report for the information of the Chief Constable, particulars of the actions of Archibald Campbell Walker, Reg. No. H.3., number 293 Constable of the Central Division, following the explosion of a parachute mine in Logan Street at Kilbride Street, about 12.30 a.m. on 14th March, 1941.

Constable Walker proceeded on duty at 2 p.m. on 13th March, and reported off duty in accordance with instructions, during the progress of an aerial attack on the City, at 12.20 a.m. on 14th March. Thereafter, while the Constable was proceeding homewards, a parachute mine dropped at the junction of Logan Street and Kilbride Street, demolishing, among other damage, a portion of a two storey tenement dwelling. The Constable, who had been passing along Polmadie Road, about one hundred yards from the scene of the explosion, immediately proceeded to the incident. An express message was sent out to the Report Centre and the required Civil Defence services were soon on the spot. These

included a Rescue Party from number 5 Depot, Titwood Road.

A bomb partly demolished a two story tenement and five persons were trapped in debris at what remained of the property at 101 Logan Street. Roof timbers, beams, doors and other heavy materials were bearing down on the trapped persons. The remaining walls and an overhanging portion of roof were in a highly dangerous condition. Despite this, Constable Walker entered the ruins along with James McKenna Rescue Party worker, residing at 70 Greenview Street, Glasgow, and together they worked untiringly and unceasingly till about 3 a.m., moving and lifting and holding heavy timbers and other debris for long periods while those trapped were released. Of the five persons so released, three were found dead and the remaining two seriously injured.

I saw Constable Walker and McKenna at work on the incident and in addition to being personally much impressed, I overheard several spontaneous remarks of genuine admiration of the Constable's conduct uttered by various Civil Defence workers.

David Gilmour, leader of Rescue Party from No.5 Depot, Titwood Road, and Sergeant Duncan Campbell, the Incident Officer, from each of whom statements are submitted, both speak in the highest terms of the gallant conduct of Constable Walker and Mr. Gilmour also gives praise to James McKenna of his Rescue party for the outstanding work performed by him.

I feel that in acting as he did, Constable Walker set a magnificent example to all other Civil Defence workers present. His conduct, in my opinion, is well worthy of recommendation for the award of the George Medal.

With regard to the actions of the Rescue party worker, James McKenna, I feel that while he was only performing his allotted task, his work, at this incident was also praiseworthy and I respectfully suggest that he be considered for a commendation

(Sgd.) George McLean Lieutenant.

Constable Walker was appointed to this Force on 5th July, 1937. He is a married man, 27 years of age, and has served in the Central Division from the date of his transfer from the Training School. He has a clear record and is regarded by his supervising Officers as a promising young Constable. I agree with Lieutenant McLean that this is a case well worthy of recommendation for the award of the George Medal.

As regards the actions of James McKenna, Rescue Party worker, the part which he played was certainly only what should be expected of a Rescue Party worker, but he appears to have performed his task exceedingly well and displayed exceptional devotion to duty. I also agree with Lieutenant McLean that he seems worthy of being recommended for a commendation.

(Sgd) James Storrier Superintendent.'



Condition NEF. Sold with copied recommendations and London Gazette entry.

A scarce Clydebank Blitz award

*900^B was one of the
cases circulated in the
first Scottish Batch*

CASE 900^B

James McKenna 34

70 Greenview Street, Pollokshaws, Glasgow, S.3.

Rescue Party - over 5 months.

Gallantry in assisting in the rescue of persons trapped in the ruins of a tenement building in Glasgow during the night of 13th/14th March, 1941.

Recommended by: Chief Engineer of Glasgow.

The Regional Commissioner for the No. 11 (Scotland) Region recommends:

Commendation.

Documents: (1) Summary of case
(2) Copy of Police/Rescue Party Reports.

CASE CONSIDERED BY COMMITTEE: 194. RECOMMENDATION:

TREASURY RECOMMENDATION: GAZETTED: 194.

Summary.

Shortly after 1 a.m. on 14th March, 1941, McKenna's party was called to a tenement at 101, Logan Street, Glasgow, which had been partly demolished by a parachute mine. With Police Constable Archibald Walker, who has been awarded the George Medal for his gallantry on this occasion, he entered the building, the walls and roof of which were in a highly dangerous condition, and until 3 a.m. worked untiringly to release 5 trapped persons.

~~He~~ materially assisted Constable Walker, in conditions of equal danger, in releasing 2 of the 5 persons alive.

Injuries and extent of injuries: None.

Copy of Police Reports:

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(Sgd.) GEORGE McLEAN

Lieutenant.

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(Sgd.) JAMES STORRIER.

Superintendent.

Copies of Statements regarding the incident:

DUNCAN CAMPBELL, No. 19 Sergeant, Central Division, Glasgow Police states:

About 12.30 a.m. on 14th March, 1941, during an enemy air attack on /

on the City and district, I was detailed to proceed from the Central Police Station with a party of Constables to a bomb incident at Logan Street. On arrival, I found that a parachute mine had caused very extensive damage to buildings, including a two storey tenement dwelling. The necessary Civil Defence Services were soon on the spot. These included a Rescue Party from No. 5 Depot, Titwood Road, under the charge of David Gilmour. Constable Archibald Walker of the Central Division, was not a member of the Police party which I took to the incident.

On arrival I found him very actively engaged in conducting persons from the less seriously damaged houses. A quick survey revealed that a number of persons were trapped in heavy timbers, doors, roofing timbers, masonry and other material. Efforts to remove them were thereupon commenced and from about 12.45 a.m. till 3 a.m., Constable Walker worked unceasingly in a very dangerous position and with absolute disregard for his personal safety. I was very much impressed with his actions and on the spot I overheard many remarks of admiration of his conduct by First Aid Party workers and other members of Civil Defence Services present.

I feel that the gallant conduct of Constable Walker is well worthy of recommendation for the award of the George Medal. Throughout Constable Walker was assisted by James McKenna, (33), of 70 Greenview Street, Glasgow. McKenna displayed exceptional devotion to duty and I feel that his actions are worthy of recognition.

DAVID GILMOUR, (63) 8 Kenmuir Street, Pollokshields, Glasgow, states:

I am employed as Leader of a Rescue Party at No. 5 Depot, Titwood Road, Glasgow.

About 12.50 a.m. on 14th March, 1941, we received a message to the effect that a parachute mine had dropped in Logan Street; that property had been damaged and that people were trapped underneath the wreckage. Along with my party of rescue workers I went to Logan Street, arriving about 1.5 a.m.

On my arrival I saw the property at 101 Logan Street was partially demolished by the explosion and learned that a number of persons had been trapped under furniture, broken wood and masonry. I looked into the building and saw a Police Constable endeavouring to free the people who were trapped and I went inside to assist. There was no room for a squad to work and I came out again, after instructing James McKenna, (33), of 70 Greenview Street, Glasgow, one of my Rescue Party, to go inside and assist the Constable.

This Constable, I heard his name was Walker - worked like a hero all the time, lifting furniture, broken beams of wood and heavy stones from off the trapped people and as a result of his efforts five persons were released. I think two of them were dead and the remainder were seriously injured. Had the Constable not acted so promptly and courageously, I am satisfied all five persons would have lost their lives. He never stopped working for a moment until the last person had been removed. I asked him repeatedly to come out of the wrecked building for a rest, but he refused saying, "No, the people must be taken out first". He was in great personal danger all the time as parts of the walls and a portion of the roof were in a dangerous condition and might have collapsed at any time. The danger of collapse was greater because of the fact that my men were hammering on the outside wall trying to make an aperture through which the trapped persons could be brought out with as little discomfort as possible.

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I must say that he set an excellent example of cool daring to all the workers present, and indeed I feel I cannot praise him too highly. His work is all the more praiseworthy because of the fact that he himself had been knocked down and badly shaken by the blast from the exploding mine.

The constable was efficiently assisted in his efforts by McKenna who worked untiringly along with the Constable inside the building trying to free the injured and the dead and outside clearing away the debris and helping me to make an aperture in the wall through which the dead and injured were removed. In my opinion he is worthy of a very high commendation. While inside the building he was, like the Constable, in great personal danger owing to the possibility of the walls collapsing at any moment.