

C A S E 1490A.

YOUNG, Lawrence Barclay - 27 years.

Police Fireman.

73 Ashley Grove, West Jesmond, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 2.

Police Fire Brigade - Newcastle-upon-Tyne - 3 years.

Civil Occupation - Police Fireman.

* Rescue work at gas-filled crater at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, on the night of the 31st May, 1941.

Recommended by: Newcastle Chief Constable & Controller.

No. 1. (Northern) Region: Regional Commissioner recommends - G.M.
dated 20th June, 1941.

Documents: (1) Particulars of action.
(2) Report by Police superintendent. F. Russell.
(3) " " " Winterburn.
(4) " " Fireman Young.
(5) " " G.W.Bruce. (1490C)
(6) " " Patrol Officer.
(Secretary has 4 further statements).

CASE CONSIDERED BY COMMITTEE:

RECOMMENDATION:

TREASURY RECOMMENDATION:

GAZETTED:

C A S E 1490B.

WANLESS, George.(Deceased) - 31 years.

Auxiliary Fireman.

6 Gibson Street, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

A.F.S. - Newcastle-upon-Tyne - 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ years.

Civil Occupation: Engine Driver.

As for 1490A.

Recommended by Newcastle Chief Constable & Controller.

No. 1. (Northern) Region: Regional Commissioner Recommends - Com.
dated 20th June, 1941.

Documents: As for 1490A.

CASE CONSIDERED BY COMMITTEE:

RECOMMENDATION:

TREASURY RECOMMENDATION:

GAZETTED:

C A S E 1490C.

BRUCE, George Wilfred. - 33 years.

Leading Fireman.

151 Sandringham Road, South Gosforth, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 3.

A.F.S. - Newcastle-upon-Tyne - 3 years.

Civil Occupation - Shop Manager.

As for 1490A.

Recommended by: Newcastle Chief Constable & Controller.

No. 1. (Northern) Region: Regional Commissioner Recommends: Com.
dated 20th June, 1941.

Documents: As for 1490A.

CASE CONSIDERED BY COMMITTEE:

RECOMMENDATION:

TREASURY RECOMMENDATION:

GAZETTED:

PARTICULARS OF ACTION.

On the night of the 5th/6th May, the enemy bombed 28, Tarsset Street, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, the crater being in the back yard. The debris practically filled the crater. As per the attached reports it will be seen that an extension of this crater revealed itself, on the 31st May, 1941, possibly due to the rains, by a cavity having opened, through which a child fell.

A boy and Auxiliary Fireman Tulip, who attempted to affect a rescue, were overcome.

Auxiliary Fireman Wanless then entered the crater, although he was aware of the existence of gas, as indicated by his having donned his service respirator, and was successful in hoisting the boy to the surface. Wanless, after this effort, fell back into the crater and did not recover.

Leading Fireman George Wilfred Bruce, although aware of the presence of gas, as indicated by his putting a wet towel over his mouth, descended, placed a rope round Fireman Tulip, but was unable to tie it, he having to seek the surface again.

Police Fireman Young, having before him the effort made by Bruce, and the fact that three persons remained in the crater, one of whom had utilised a service respirator without effect, immediately entered the crater without any breathing appliance, tied the rope round Tulip and proceeded likewise with the remaining two, having to make the additional effort of digging, in order to release the casualties from a further fall of clay. Under no circumstances could Young have determined that the gas had weakened. On reaching the surface Young experienced sickness, but yet at once applied himself to directing artificial respiration on the casualties. From the time Young, in charge of the Ambulance, left the East End Police Station, at 8.14 p.m. until he arrived at the Royal Victoria Infirmary with the casualties at 8.30 p.m., a distance of say 2 miles, only 16 minutes elapsed.

(Sgd.) F. J. Crawley.

Chief Constable,
A.R.P., Controller.

Re: Tarsset Street Incident.

4th June, 1941.

Sir,

I respectfully beg to report further to my report of the 31st
/ult.,

ult., that I have been informed by Dr. Raper, Gas Identification Officer, that there was definite traces of carbon monoxide in the crater where the four deceased persons were found. Dr. Raper asked me to get the opinion of an Officer of the Bomb Disposal Squad as to the cause of the crater. I immediately contacted Capt. Maxwell-Stewart of the Bomb Disposal Squad, Fernwood Road, and accompanied him to Tarsset Street. He there made an examination of the crater and was very definite in his views that it had been caused by a high explosive bomb. I was later informed by Dr. Raper that the result of the Post Mortem examination of the deceased persons revealed there were definite traces of carbon monoxide.

I have sent a copy of this report to Superintendent Winterburn for his information and file.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,
(sgd) F. RUSSELL, SUPT.

F. J. Crawley, Esq.,
Chief Constable and Controller.

3rd June, 1941.

Re: Gas Fatalities in Back Tarsset Street, 31st May, 1941.

Sir,

I beg to state that about 8.0 p.m. on Saturday, 31st May, 1941, a girl named Irene Page, aged 7 yrs. of 13 Wansback Street, was playing on a site at the rear of No. 28 Tarsset Street, which had been damaged by enemy action on the night of the 5th/6th May, 1941, and which was being cleared by the Rescue Service of the City.

The Rescue Service had finished work for the day at 11.45 a.m. and during the course of their duties had been working on and over the site referred to, and had seen nothing to indicate the existence of a crater. (see statement of Robert E. C. Davidon, Chargeman, Rescue Squad, A.L. Depot).

At 8.0 p.m., the witness, Edward Corbitt, was passing the front of No. 28 Tarsset Street which had been his mother's house, and seeing the front door open, he went in to shut it, when he heard some children in the back. He went through the house and discovered that Irene Page had fallen through a hole which was about 2 ft. in diameter, and she was lying at the bottom about 10 ft. below.

Corbitt sent for assistance to Red Barns, A.L. Depot, and then procured a rope from a Mrs. Eleanor Johnson, and, between them, they lowered a boy named Earnest Clifford Smith Clarke, 12 yrs. of 59 Breamish Street, down the hole. The boy undid the rope and was in the act of going towards the girl to fasten it to her when he collapsed.

An Aux. Fireman, named John Scott Tulip, 33 yrs. of No. 2. St. Annes Row, was now on the scene. He was off duty and at once had the rope fastened to himself, was lowered down the hole, and repeated the performance of the boy Clarke, with the same result.

A man named Percy Wardle then procured his civilian gas mask, and was going down the hole - gas being by now suspected - when he was stopped by Auxiliary Fireman George Warless, 30 yrs. of No. 6 Gibson Street, who was on duty, and had arrived from Red Barns, to
/assist

assist Wanless put on his Service Respirator and went down the hole by ladder. He was going to fasten the rope to the boy Clarke, when Wardle, who had gone half way down the ladder, asked Wanless to lift the boy to him. This was done and Wardle lifted the boy up and was helped out.

Wanless then collapsed, and by this time Leading Fireman George Wilfred Bruce, had obtained a wet towel, and saying that he could hold his breath for two and a half minutes, put the towel round his mouth, and descended the ladder and fastened the rope on Tulip.

Bruce, by now, feeling the effects of the gas, came out of the hole, and Tulip was pulled out, assisted by Fireman Young, who took the place vacated by Bruce.

Young continued the Rescue Work and was the means of the two remaining - Wanless and the girl Page - being brought to the surface. He felt sick from the gas, but was otherwise no worse.

Artificial respiration and the use of the Oxygen Apparatus were immediately resorted to and continued, but with no effect on the deceased.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

(sgd) G. P. WINTERBURN,
SUPT.

F. J. Crawley, Esq.,
Chief Constable.

1st June, 1941.

Re: Incident in Back Tarsset Street.

Sir,

I beg to report that in response to a telephone message from the East End Police Station at 8.14 p.m. on the 31st May, 1941, I went with Police Ambulance to No. 4 Back Tarsset Street.

On arrival there I saw Mrs. Mona Coxon, an Ambulance Driver, employed by the Newcastle Air Raid Precautions, and stationed at the Red Barns Depot, applying artificial respiration to one Ernest Smith, aged 9 yrs. of 59 Breamish Street, who was overcome by poisonous fumes after having been down a crater in the back street.

I immediately applied Sparklit Resuscitating Set, also Artificial Respiration. Mrs. Coxon then informed me that there were three more persons in the crater, she then relieved me to go to the assistance of these people.

P.C. 75, "O" Clifford had arrived on the scene and I requested him to ask Headquarters Fire Station to send a "Self Contained Breathing Apparatus, also the Novita Resuscitating Set". While he was away, I crossed over to the crater, into which a ladder had been lowered, and I there saw George Wilfred Bruce, 32 yrs., a Leading Fireman of the Maintenance Dept., Newcastle A.F.S. at the bottom of the ladder. He had a wet towel around his mouth and rope tied round his waist. He was attempting to fasten a rope around Auxiliary Fireman John Tulip, who had already collapsed in the pit. Bruce returned with difficulty to the surface where he collapsed. I immediately entered the crater through the hole in the surface which /was

was approximately 30" wide (square). On reaching the bottom of the pit I completed the fastening of the rope around Fireman Tulip and assisted by civilians who were pulling at the rope from the top, I put my arm round the body and climbed the ladder to the top.

I descended the crater again and removed the clay which was partly covering Irene Page, 7 yrs., 13 Wansbeck Street, and carried her up the ladder, handing her through the hole to members of the public who were assisting. I again descended and pulled Aux. Fmn. Wanless from under a slight covering of clay towards the ladder, where I fastened the rope round and assisted in bringing him to the surface.

When I was walking away from the hole I felt myself collapsing but was prevented from falling by Inspector Batey, Special constabulary, and Patrol Officer Wallace. I recovered sufficiently and assisted with casualties.

After I had put the two Aux. Firemen and the girl into the Ambulance No. 4., I noticed that the Headquarters Fire Brigade had arrived, accompanied by the Emergency Van and Ambulance, the latter was driven by Fireman Scott, I put the deceased boy in this Ambulance.

Fireman T. J. Walton, Percy Wardle, 48 Howard Street, Peter Gilroy, 7 St. Annes Row, and another man whose name is at present unknown accompanied me to the R.V.I. who applied Artificial Respiration all the way, they were examined at the R.V.I. and life pronounced extinct by Dr. Hay.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

(sgd) L. YOUNG,

Fireman 52.

Supt. Burrows.

1st June, 1941.

I am a Leading Fireman, "Maintenance Engineer", and I reside at 151 Sandringham Road, Gosforth.

About 8.5 p.m. on Saturday, 31st May, 1941, I was in company with Patrol Officer Wallace at the Red Barns Depot when I was informed that a child had fallen into a crater at the back of Tarsset Street and that Auxiliary Fireman Wanless had gone down to give assistance. I immediately went with Patrol Officer Wallace to back Tarsset Street where we saw a crowd of people. I also saw a hole about 3 ft. square. I at the same time ascertained that there were three people at the bottom of the pit. A ladder had already been placed down the crater and I descended by this means with a rope tied around my waist, I also had a wet towel around my mouth, when I reached the bottom of the crater, I tied the other end of the rope around Tulip and then feeling slight effects of the gas, I ascended the ladder and assisted in pulling him to the top, this was accomplished with the assistance of Fireman Young who had descended the crater after I came out. I at once applied artificial respiration for about 10 minutes until the arrival of the Oxygen Apparatus. I could not discern any signs of life, so he was removed in the Ambulance to the R.V.I.

Whilst I was applying Artificial Respiration to Tulip I saw a child brought out of the crater.

/From

From the time I entered the crater, until the time I got the rope round the body of Tulip, I held my breath, on beginning to breathe what I smelt appeared to be sewer gas. This affected me slightly so I returned to the surface.

About one and a half hours afterwards, I felt sick and began to vomit but the effects soon passed away.

(sgd) G. W. BRUCE.

To:- DIVISIONAL OFFICER SOMERVILLE,
"A" DIVISION OFFICE.

31st May, 1941.

Sir,

At approximately 20.05 hours this evening, information was received from a member of the public by Aux. Fmn. Fortun, 1723, at this station, that a child had fallen into a bomb crater. The young lady bringing this information requested our help.

The late Aux. Fmn. Wanless, 75, heard this request and while same was being transmitted to me by Aux. Fmn. Fortun, he preceded me to the scene of the incident.

Accompanied by Leading Fireman G. W. Bruce, 58, I immediately followed. On arrival we found two children (a boy and a girl) and Aux. Fmn. J. S. Tulip, 1113, lying in the bottom of the crater in an apparently unconscious condition, they having been overcome by gas fumes.

The approximate measurements of the crater were:- Surface hole 2 ft. in diameter by 10 ft. deep. Wanless was not then in the crater and I failed to see him in the vicinity due to a dense crowd.

Realising the necessity for beathing apparatus, I was proceeding to the nearest telephone to summon Ambulances and Oxygen when I met P.C. T. Clifford "C" Div. Patrol Car Driver who informed me that he had already done so. At approx. the same time, (20-15 hours) he had issued instructions for our first line to be turned out, this was carried out at once, and the Sub-Director notified.

On receipt of this information I immediately returned to the incident. I could not possibly have been absent from the crater for more than 2 minutes and in that time I found that Wanless had entered the crater and on looking down was just in time to see him collapse. The male child had been brought to the surface apparently by Fn. Wanless although I did not witness same.

Leading Fmn. Bruce then insisted upon entering the crater and did so fastened to the end of our Lowering Line, the other end of which Bruce had secured to Fn. Tulip. Leading Fmn. Bruce was then pulled up the ladder and the unconscious form of Tulip was then hauled to the surface. Bruce was in no condition to enter the crater again but proceeded to administer the Schafer method of assistance to Aux. Fn. Tulip.

With other assistance L. Young, Fn. N.F.B. effected the rescue of the remaining child and Fn. Wanless.

The Regular Brigade then arrived in charge of D.O. McGregor who took charge and sent 2 men down with breathing apparatus. I then returned to Red Barns to report progress to my Divisional Office, contacting D.O. Somerville by 'phone at approx. 20.45 hours.

I later received instructions from Supt. Burrows to stand by with my 1st turnout. This I did until instructed by A.D.P. Trobe at 22.34 hours to return to the station. (sgd) PATROL OFFICER, SUB-STATION A.L.D.

C A S E 1490D.

Ernest Clifford Smith CLARKE (deceased) - 12 years.

Boy Scout.

Next of Kin: Mother, Frances Clarke.

59, Breamish Street, Newcastle.

Attempted rescue of a child from gas-filled crater at Newcastle-upon-Tyne on 31st May 1941.

Recommended by: Neighbours of Breamish Street, Byker, Newcastle.

No.1 (Northern) Regional Commissioner Recommends: Com. dated 18/8/41.

Documents: (1) For particulars of action see Case 1490A.

CASE CONSIDERED BY COMMITTEE: 19/8 1941. RECOMMENDATION: *Am*

TREASURY RECOMMENDATION: GAZETTED: 194 .

C A S E 1490E.

John Scott TULIP (deceased) - 33 years.

Auxiliary Fireman.

Next of Kin: Widow - Mary Davison Tulip.

2, St. Anne's Row, Newcastle.

A.F.S. - Newcastle-upon-Tyne - 9 months.

Brief Summary of Ground of Recommendation: As for 1490D.

Recommended by: Lord Chatfield's Committee.

No.1 (Northern) Regional Commissioner Recommends: Com. dated 18/8/41.

Documents: As for 1490A.

CASE CONSIDERED BY COMMITTEE: 19/8 1941. RECOMMENDATION: *Am*.

TREASURY RECOMMENDATION: GAZETTED: 194 .
