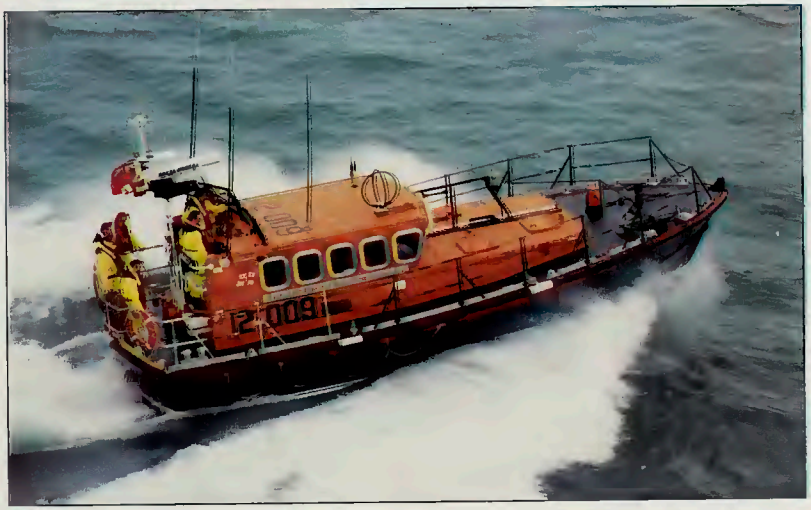
125 years of

# CISPOTEL

support for the

Royal National Lifeboat Institution



THE CIVIL SERVICE, POST OFFICE AND BRITISH TELECOM LIFEBOAT FUND 1866-1991

# A History of the Fund and its Lifeboats

By Leslie G. Fawkes, Tony Barker and Jeff Morris
Edited by Peter Sims

**Leslie G Fawkes** was a retired member of The Post Office in 1965 when he wrote the original text for the history of The Civil Service Lifeboat Fund which was published in 1966 to celebrate the centenary of the Fund.

**Tony Barker** has been Honorary Treasurer of CISPOTEL Lifeboat Fund since 1982. He retired from the Crown Estate Office in 1987.

**Jeff Morris** is well known as a lifeboat photographer. He has been Honorary Archivist of the Lifeboat Enthusiasts' Society since January 1984 and has written and produced over 50 booklets on various aspects of Lifeboat History.

**Peter Sims** has been Honorary Secretary of CISPOTEL Lifeboat Fund since late 1983. He currently works as a Senior Executive Officer in the Ministry of Defence.

Cover Photograph: CISPOTEL Lifeboat Fund's latest purchase for the RNLI, "The Princess Royal (Civil Service No. 41)"

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York House
St. James's Palace
London S.W.1

The staff of the Civil Service, Post Office and British Telecom hold a unique record of support for the Royal National Lifeboat Institution. Through their perennial generosity over the span of 125 years they have provided no fewer than 41 new lifeboats for the Institution.

As President of the RNLI I should like to offer my most sincere thanks to the Civil Service Post Office and British Telecom Lifeboat Fund for their constant help which I know is deeply appreciated by our lifeboat crews.

Whatever happens in the future, there will always be lives to save at sea. May the RNLI and CISPOTEL partnership continue to provide the means of saving them.

H.R.H. The Duke of Kent
President RNLI

# Civil Service, Post Office and British Telecom (CISPOTEL) Lifeboat Fund 1866-1991

**The following article by Leslie G Fawkes was published in 1966 for the Centenary of the Fund; it is reprinted here, updated as necessary, to mark the Fund's 125th anniversary.**

There is no part of Britain far distant from the sea, and there are few British people who have never been stirred by its call of adventure, or by the sense of its mystery. The greatness of Britain has been built up and founded upon the sea, and over a long period our nation has been unique amongst all nations of the world in its use and mastery of the sea. The British Commonwealth and empire was created and developed overseas, and we remain to this day dependent upon the sea for our very existence.

It is not therefore altogether surprising to find that, in Britain alone amongst nations, the Civil Service, that supposedly humdrum and cut-and-dried profession, has a long standing and entirely voluntary connection with the voluntary national body responsible for life-saving at sea. There is nothing else in the world quite like this - a voluntary service, which is essential to our life, being assisted by a body of professional State servants. This is of the very essence of things British: a spontaneous expression of things which lie at the very root of our national character.

The Royal National Lifeboat Institution was founded in 1824, 167 years ago. For 125 of those years, the CISPOTEL Lifeboat Fund has been closely linked with the Institution. It has been by far its largest single contributor. From its ranks came the most famous of the Institution's secretaries, Charles Dibdin, who as a Civil Servant in the General Post Office was one of the founders of the Fund in 1866, and who in 1885 gave up his career in the Post Office to become Secretary of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution in which post he died in 1910. Only a Civil Servant can appreciate what it meant at that time to sacrifice a State pension after some thirty years' service.

In the course of 125 years the Fund has made a total contribution of over £2 million and has paid for 41 lifeboats and one Atlantic 21 which have saved 4216 lives. Of these 41 boats 6 are in regular service today out of the Institution's present fleet of 267 boats.

## The Challenge

The Fund aims to provide the RNLI with a new lifeboat at an annual interval of three years. The last boat was provided in 1990 but the present rate of income of £100,000 per annum will not be enough to buy another within that timescale. The Fund hopes therefore not only to increase its traditional annual appeal income but also to generate more income by new means, particularly that of payroll giving. Nevertheless, the success of the Fund is dependent on the generosity of its contributors - and it is confident of the continuation of their support.

## The Beginning of the Fund

The early Civil Servants who, in February 1866, began the Fund could have had little idea that their work would carry on into the twentieth century. They merely met together with the avowed determination to present a lifeboat to the Royal National Lifeboat Institution. For this purpose they formed a committee and issued an appeal to Government Offices. They asked for £300, obtained it before the end of the year, and with the money purchased the lifeboat "Civil Service". The first boat, propelled by 10 oars, was 32 feet in length and incorporated the latest self-righting and draining developments of the time. Stationed at Wexford she fully justified the faith in her by saving 122 lives and three vessels before she was finally broken up twelve years later.

With the "Civil Service" in commission, the committee extended their appeal, asking for 400 contributors willing to pledge 2s. 6d., annually, to provide the £50 required to maintain the lifeboat station. In the event, the appeal was soon over-subscribed, and by 1868, with 800 subscribers, the committee decided to devote the surplus towards the purchase and upkeep of a second life-boat. But unfortunately the initial enthusiasm of many of the subscribers seems to have waned and indeed by 1872 it even seemed likely that the Fund might have to be wound up. The fact that it is still very much alive today is probably due to the energy and dedication of Charles Dibdin, to whose remarkable career reference has already been made. In 1873 Dibdin was confirmed in the post of Honorary Secretary to the Civil Service Lifeboat Fund. Into this appointment he infused such energy and enthusiasm that within a year funds were again in surplus and a second boat once more became a possibility. By now the cost of a lifeboat had risen to £480 but by June 1875 the vessel was built and stationed at Tynemouth.

In tribute to his work, this boat was named "Charles Dibdin" and since that time up until 1988 there had always been a vessel so named with the Civil Service fleet. The original "Charles Dibdin" was replaced by a larger boat and was again stationed at Tynemouth. while the third boat carrying his name was commissioned in 1905 for service at North Deal and later at Walmer where a Civil Service lifeboat was continuously stationed between 1884 and 1975. It is fitting to record that the third vessel to bear his name, a pulling and sailing boat stationed at North Deal for 26 years, has the amazing record of 186 launchings during which 385 lives were saved, and this despite the fact that the boat had lain on the open beach without the usual protection of a boathouse.

**The Fund Progresses**

Despite the rising cost of lifeboat construction, the Civil Service Lifeboat Fund had so progressed that by 1892 it had provided nine vessels and was able to take over an ever increasing share of financial responsibility from the Institution. From 1887 it had been able to meet the cost of rewards to the crews manning the Civil Service fleet and in 1895 it accepted responsibility not only for the maintenance of the seven lifeboat stations but for payments to coxswains, boatmen and signalmen and for the drilling of crews. By this time a replacement fund of £7,000 had also been created.

Even with these further commitments, funds continued to accumulate and the committee decided to aim at the exciting prospect of building their first steam-powered lifeboat to join the two already serving with the RNLI fleet. Somewhat disappointingly this project was shelved in favour of assisting the Institution with the important task of building boathouses and slipways for Civil Service boats at Douglas, Margate and Kingstown. This £5,850 programme was completed in 1902. Today's familiar pattern of rising prices was not unknown in the early years of this century and to meet the increased costs of boatbuilding a target of £10,500 was set for the Replacement Fund. This was reached in 1912.

**Motor Lifeboats**

The committee now felt free to set their sights at a new venture. They decided to provide two motor lifeboats but delays were to occur before this could be achieved. An interesting extract from the 1913 Annual Report gives one of the reasons:

"Apart from delays naturally incident to such an important change, great difficulty has been found in securing adequate supply of highly qualified Boat Builders, the great majority of these men having been absorbed by the immense demand for Lifeboats (so called) for Passenger Liners, which was caused by the Titanic disaster".

A further inevitable delay was, of course, caused by the outbreak of the first World War. However, in 1919, the "Dunleary", built at a cost of £8,000, was brought into service at Kingstown, Co. Dublin. The Fund also provided a new boathouse and slipway for this vessel.

**The "Lord Southborough"**

The Fund's second motor lifeboat, the "Lord Southborough" deserves special mention. Named after the man who was Chairman and Honorary Treasurer of the Fund for 33 years, this boat took over at Margate in 1925 and served there for over a quarter of a century. She was of advanced design with accommodation for 90 passengers and a range of 80 miles. This vessel cost £8,800 but it is of somewhat melancholy interest that her replacement in 1951 cost nearly £30,000.

The "Lord Southborough" had a colourful career which began with her appearance at the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley in 1924. Later she attended the centenary celebrations of the Boulogne life-boat service and in 1927 she was at Calais for the unveiling of the "Monument des Sauveteurs". One of her proudest moments was in 1940 when she again crossed the Channel with the armada of little ships and played her part in the Dunkirk evacuation. With the "Lord Southborough" in service, the Fund devoted itself from 1925 onwards to the task of gradually replacing the remaining oar and sail boats in the Civil Service fleet with modern vessels.

**Economic Problems**

The troubled economics of the difficult years following the first World War were not without their repercussions on the work of the Fund. In 1919, annual income from subscriptions had been £3,000 but by 1930 this had only increased to £3,320. In the following year it even dropped to £3,200 although the committee then recorded that this amount was "extremely satisfactory, having regard to the Bonus Cuts and the demands of the Tax Gatherer which leave a very small margin for charitable purposes". Against this background, from 1931 the

Fund was reluctantly forced to limit its contributions to the RNLI to the rewards to crews and an annual grant of £1,000 for boat maintenance. But there was also a brighter side. With this reduction in annual commitments, the Fund was able to provide six motor lifeboats, bringing the total of the Civil Service fleet to seven. The boats were stationed at Margate, Southend, Walmer, Whitehills (Banffs), Donaghadee (Co. Down), St. Davids (Pembs) and Hartlepool. One of these boats was the fourth "Charles Dibdin" which was stationed opposite the treacherous Goodwin Sands off the Kent Coast. It was specially designed for this assignment since the larger 20 ton boats were too heavy to be launched from the beach, while the smaller 7 1/2 ton vessels were too light for the hazardous conditions at sea.

**The Second World War**

Meetings of the Fund's committee were suspended between 1941 and 1946. Again the Fund was extremely fortunate in finding the man for the hour. During the war the work was continued almost single-handed by Charles H. Barrett; a committee member for twelve years, he became Honorary Secretary in 1938. Despite the perils and emergencies of war, he continued to issue annual appeals. As ever, the Civil Service responded and by the end of hostilities Charles Barrett, then also Honorary Treasurer, had built up a reserve fund of £40,000 for post-war replacements. He retired in 1954 shortly before his death.

**Rebuilding after the War**

With the return to more normal conditions, a reorganised Council of 50 representatives, led by an Executive Committee of eight members, went forward with the task of replacing six of the seven pre-war boats, re-fitting and reconditioning the seventh, and building up the Civil Service fleet to 13 boats. The financial history since the war has been one of continual price inflation, but this has been offset to some extent by the increased level of donations, supplemented latterly by the annual Half Marathon in Windsor Great Park, which has brought in over £15,000 net each year since its inception in 1984. The annual income of £12,000 in 1947 has risen to £100,000 in recent years but the cost of a lifeboat has increased over that time from £18,000 to £400,000 or more. Today the Fund and its many thousands of helpers can take considerable pride in the fact that their modern well-equipped and maintained boats fill no mean place in the fleet of the RNLI.

**Title**

The title of the Fund was changed in 1969 when the Post Office left the Civil Service, and again in 1983 when British Telecom did likewise, thus continuing the tradition of those bodies in the Fund; the somewhat long title resulting may alternatively be contracted to the acronym CISPOTEL Lifeboat Fund.

**Royal Patronage**

Since 1910 the unique contribution of the Fund to this most worthy effort has been acknowledged and honoured by having the reigning Monarch as its Patron. This began when King George V continued the Patronage he had granted when Prince of Wales. Many distinguished Vice-Patrons have helped the Fund, none more illustrious than Sir Winston Churchill, who acted in this capacity since first accepting it when First Lord of the Admiralty in 1914. Amongst the Fund's Vice-Patrons today are the Head of the Home Civil Service (Sir Robin Butler), the Chairman of The Post Office (Sir Bryan Nicholson) and the Deputy Chairman of British Telecom (John Raisman).

**The Present and the Future**

So to the present day and the 125th year of a Fund that has not only been fortunate in the men and women who have directly served it, but in the countless thousands who have responded to its challenge. Who, having read this history of 125 years of effort, can doubt but that the Fund will continue to respond in like fashion.

Throughout the years, the heroic exploits of the lifeboatmen have given shape and purpose to the simple basic aim to save lives at sea. As the Fund enters its 125th year, it does so with the same aim and with the same conviction that it will continue to enjoy support and encouragement throughout these Islands and abroad.

# CIVIL SERVICE, POST OFFICE AND BRITISH TELECOM (CISPOTEL) LIFEBOAT FUND

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# "CIVIL SERVICE"

32ft x 7'6" SR. Built by Forrestt. Cost £242.
Stationed at Wexford No.2, May 1866 to October 1878.
(Then transferred to Whitby and re-named "Harriott Forteath").
At Wexford:- 33 service launches, 122 lives saved.

This lifeboat was launched for the first time on service on 9 October 1866. when she was called out to the barque "Voluna". In heavy seas, 5 men were rescued and brought ashore, the lifeboatmen later helping to bring the disabled into port.

When the ship "Indus", of Nova Scotia, was seen to be aground on the Long Bank, off Wexford. at dawn on 12 December 1866, the "Civil Serevice" was quickly launched. However, the Master refused to abandon ship, the lifeboat taking off 2 passengers and putting them aboard a tug. This tug made repeated efforts to try and pull the vessel clear, but without success, the lifeboat remaining close-by throughout these attempts. Then, at 3.00 p.m., the Master finally agreed to leave his ship and he and his crew were all taken aboard the tug and brought safely ashore, the "Indus" later becoming a total wreck.

Later that month, on the 27th., while 9 men, all employed by the Wexford Harbour Commissioners, were working on the Dogger Bank, a sudden storm blew up, whipping up very heavy seas and they were unable to return to the shore in their own boat. The "Civil Service" was therefore launched, rescued the 9 men from the sandbank and landed them at Wexford.

On 23rd. March 1867, the barque "Loretta", of Liverpool, was seen at anchor, dangerously close to Blackwater Head, in rapidly deteriorating conditions. The "Civil service" was launched and, in heavy seas and a southerly gale, put some men on board the barque and helped the crew of 14 to connect tow-lines from 2 tugs. The anchor-cable was slipped and the barque pulled clear of the headland and taken to a safe anchorage at Wexford.

Six weeks later, on 9th. May, the "Civil Service" was launched to the aid of the brig "Ayrshire Lass", which was in distress, the lifeboatmen and a tug eventually taking the brig safely into the harbour.

After the smack "Robert Hudson", of Arklow, had run aground on the southern end of the Dogger Bank, in very heavy seas and a full WSW gale, on 17th. August 1867, the "Civil Service" was launched and her crew succeeded in rescuing the crew of 4 men.

The Wexford lifeboatmen had a busy start to 1871, the "Civil Service" being called out on 4th. January, after the barque "Paquita" had run aground on the Dogger Bank. The Lifeboat rescued the crew of 16 and brought them ashore, the lifeboat being launched again later and her crew helping to refloat the vessel. The following day, the lifeboat was called out when the smack "Lark" was wrecked in very heavy seas. on the Dogger Bank, the lifeboat rescuing her crew of 2 men.

In exceptionally heavy seas on 24th. August 1873, the schooner "Rambler" was wrecked off Rosslare and the "Civil Service" was launched to her aid. In a service lasting 9 hours, the lifeboatmen eventually succeeded in saving the schooner's crew of 3. Mr W. Taylor, the Examining Officer at the Wexford Custom House, who had volunteered to make up the crew, was awarded the RNLI's Thanks on Vellum for this service.

Nearly a fortnight later, on 5th. September, this lifeboat saved 6 men from the schooner "Gem", which was wrecked on the Dogger Bank.

The last rescue performed by the "Civil Service" at Wexford, proved to be outstanding. On 25th. April 1878, the S.S. "Montagu" ran aground off Wexford and the lifeboat was launched at 11-45a.m. In heavy seas and a full gale, the lifeboat succeeded in rescuing the 18 passengers, the crew deciding to remain on board until a tug arrived. For this rescue, Coxswain Marcus Doyle was awarded the RNLI's Silver Medal for gallantry.

## "CHARLES DIBDIN (CIVIL SERVICE No. 2)"

37ft. x 9ft. SR. Built by Woolfe. Cost £433.
Stationed at Tynemouth No.1, June 1875 to December 1888.
At Tynemouth:- 6 service launches, 18 lives saved.

This lifeboat was named in tribute to the work of Charles Dibdin, a civil servant in the General Post Office who was one of the founders of the Fund in 1866. Between 1875 and 1988 there was always a vessel so named in the Civil Service fleet.

This lifeboat only recorded 3 effective services, the first of these coming on 20th. October 1881, when she was launched in the early hours, after the barque "Iron Crown" had run aground in very heavy seas, off Tynemouth Haven, while trying to enter the port during a violent storm. Rocket-lines were fired over the ship from the shore and 4 of her crew were rescued using the breeches-buoy.

As the "Charles Dibdin (C.S. No.2)" desperately tried to reach the wreck, she was driven back three times by the huge seas, but eventually, she did manage to get alongside and succeeded in rescuing 17 people, including the Captain's wife. It was only after these survivors had been landed, that it was discovered that one man was unaccounted for and so the lifeboat was quickly launched again. The lifeboatmen battled their way back out to the wreck, found the missing man and took him aboard the lifeboat, which landed him safely.

The only other effective service performed by this lifeboat took place on 7th. February 1883. After the brigantine "Hannah and Eleanor" had been seen to be disabled off Tynemouth, in very heavy seas, the "Charles Dibdin (Civil Service No.2)" was launched to her assistance, some of the lifeboatmen boarding the disabled vessel and helping the crew to bring the brigantine safely into port.

## "CIVIL SERVICE No . 3"

37ft. x 8'6" SR(ON284). Built by Woolfe. Cost £412.
Stationed at Portpatrick, December 1877 to 1899.
At Portpatrick:- 21 service launches, 41 lives saved.

The Portpatrick lifeboatmen had to wait until 1890 before recording their first effective service in this lifeboat, this coming on 15th. August. Shortly before mid-day, the schooner "General Cathcart", heavily laden with coal from Maryport, was seen to be in distress, in very heavy seas and a WNW gale. The "Civil Service No. 3" was launched at 12-15 p.m. and, as the schooner was being driven rapidly towards the rocky shore, she got alongside and rescued the crew of 4. Within minutes, the schooner struck the rocks and immediately began to break up.

In the early hours of 11th. November 1892, the fishing vessel "Minnie" set out from Portpatrick, for a day' s fishing. However, during the morning, the weather deteriorated, with frequent squalls. The "Civil Service No. 3" was launched at 11-30 a.m. and found the fishing vessel sheltering in Broadsea Bay, about 6 miles north of the harbour. The lifeboat escorted the fishing vessel back to Portpatrick and stood-by at the Harbour Bar until she had entered safely .

At 10-30 a.m. on 2nd. June 1894, the "Civil Service No. 3" was launched for her regular quarterly exercise. In rough seas and a strong ENE wind, the crew rowed out of the harbour and headed out to sea. They were then hailed by the Master of the schooner "Volusia", who asked for assistance, as his ship was leaking badly. Two of the lifeboatmen boarded the schooner and helped to take her to safety.

After the crew of a fishing boat had reported that a steamer was stranded on the rocks in Par Bay, on 3rd. December 1894, the "Civil Service No. 3" was launched at 11-20 a.m. She was manoeuvred alongside and 12 of the crew were rescued, the remainder getting ashore in one of the ship's own boats .

The "Civil Service No. 3" was launched at 1-00 p.m. on Christmas Eve 1895, after the French brig "Robert" had signalled for assistance. In very rough seas and a south-easterly gale, the lifeboatmen went to the brig and found that she had lost both anchors. Three of the lifeboatmen went on board and helped to navigate as the brig made her way to Corsewell Point, escorted by the lifeboat, a tug then taking the brig in-tow. The lifeboat

received some damage in the heavy seas and then her fore-mast was sprung. She put into Port Dally, where temporary repairs were made and she was sailed back to Portpatrick when the gale moderated.

The "Civil Service No. 3" was launched at 7-10 a.m. on 5th. December 1897, after a steamer had been reported ashore in Larbrax Bay, 6 miles north of Portpatrick. In dense fog, the lifeboatmen cautiously made their way to the scene and found the Austrian steamer "Bathori". The lifeboat remained alongside the steamer throughout that day and the following night, but on the next morning, conditions began to change, until eventually, a full westerly gale was blowing. After a while, the Master decided to abandonship and all 25 members of the crew were rescued, the lifeboat returning to Portpatrick after being at sea for 30 hours.

## "CIVIL SERVICE No. I"

34ft. x 8'3" SR(ON301). Built by Woolfe. Cost £363.
Stationed at Wexford No. 2, October 1878 to 1897.
(Then transferred to Fethard and re-named 'Helen Blake').
At Wexford:- 12 service launches, 48 lives saved.

The first rescue performed by this lifeboat came on 24th. February 1879. She was launched at 6-05 p.m., into very heavy seas and a near galeforce ENE wind, to the aid of the fishing lugger "Dolphin", which had run aground at the entrance to the harbour during a heavy snow-storm. With seas breaking clean over her, the lifeboat got alongside and rescued the crew of 5 men, the lugger later becoming a total wreck.

As the local fishing vessel "Kate" attempted to enter the harbour, at 5-30 p.m. on 12th. February 1880, in extremely heavy seas and a violent south-westerly gale, she was seen to run aground on the Bar and, in an instant, she had capsized. The "Civil Service No. I" was immediately launched, but all that the lifeboatmen found were small pieces of wreckage. But suddenly, one of the lifeboatmen spotted one of the fishermen in the water. He was quickly pulled aboard the lifeboat, where every effort was made to revive him, as the lifeboat quickly returned to the shore. But sadly, the man died shortly after being landed, no trace being found of any of his colleagues.

During the evening of 18th. March 1881, distress signals were seen coming from a vessel on the Dogger Bank and so, at 9-20 p.m., the "Civil Service No. I" was launched. The casualty was the schooner "Blue Jacket", with a crew of 3, bound for Wexford with a cargo of slates. Some of the lifeboatmen boarded the stranded vessel and helped the crew to throw some of the cargo overboard, to lighten her, the vessel eventually being refloated at 7-30 a.m. the following morning.

At 1 o'clock on the afternoon of 9th. May 1883, distress signals were made by the crew of the fishing boat "Favourite", of Wexford. A near galeforce wind was churning up heavy seas, as the "Civil Service No. I" was launched. The lifeboatmen found that the fishing boat was taking-in water and so, with considerable difficulty, the crew of 6 were rescued and landed at Rosslare, the fishing boat becoming a total wreck shortly afterwards.

The "Civil Service No. I" was launched shortly after mid-night on 11th. February 1884, to go to the aid of the schooner "Egremont", which was anchored in a very dangerous position, in heavy seas and a south-westerly gale. However, the lifeboatmen found the schooner abandoned, the crew having got aboard another schooner, the "Rapid". There was 6 feet of water in the hold of the "Egremont", but the lifeboatmen did all they could to save her. Eventually however, they had to abandon her, as the water was still rising and the weather getting even worse.

When the S.S. "Slaney" ran aground off Wexford, on the morning of 15th. January 1885, the "Civil Service No. I" was launched at 9-00 a.m. In extremely rough seas and a violent ENE gale, the lifeboat was towed out by a tug and eventually got alongside the steamer at 11-00 a.m. 15 of the passengers were rescued and put aboard the tug, the lifeboat then returning to the steamer and rescuing the remaining 18 people, including the crew.

What proved to be the last service performed by this lifeboat at Wexford, took place on 21st. May 1893. She was launched at 8-30 p.m., after news had been received that the schooner "Lapwing", of Arklow, had struck the Blackwater Bank and was sinking. The lifeboat escorted the schooner as she slowly made her way into the South Bay, where she was beached.

## "CIVIL SERVICE No. 4"

40ft. x 10ft. SR(ON34). Built by Forrestt. Cost £504.
Stationed at Walmer, May 1884 to October 1895.
At Walmer:- 56 service launches, 6 lives saved.

Many of the services by lifeboats at this station involved the crews spending many hours at sea, standing-by vessels which had run aground on the notorious Goodwin Sands.

One such instance came on 27th. November 1884, when the "Civil Service No. 4" was launched at 6-45 a.m., after a vessel had been reported aground on the Goodwins. She was the Russian barque "Usko", which was heavily laden with a cargo of timber. With the lifeboatmen standing-by, the crew were taken off by several of the Deal luggers, the lifeboat only returning ashore when everyone was safe.

The "Civil Service No. 4" was launched at 12-30 a.m. on 4th. March 1887, together with the lifeboat from North Deal, to go to the aid of the s.s. "Waesland", of Antwerp, which had run aground on the Sands in a dense fog. The two lifeboats stood-by the steamer for nearly 30 hours, before she was eventually refloated and the exhausted lifeboatmen could return ashore .

Later that year, on 3rd. November, the "Civil Service No. 4" spent nearly 24 hours standing-by the brig "C. Neumann Gaedebehn", of Rostock, after the ship had run aground in Pegwell Bay, all her masts and gear having to be cut-away before she could be refloated.

On 5th. March 1893, the "Civil Service No. 4" stood-by the steamer "Auricula", which had run aground on the Goodwins, near the Middle Lightvessel, in dense fog, a tug eventually pulling her clear on the high-tide. Later that year, on 2nd. September, the lifeboats from Walmer, North Deal and Kingsdowne, were all launched to the aid of the S.S. "Cerigo", which had run aground near the South Sand Head Lightvessel. Men from all three lifeboats boarded the steamer and helped to jettison most of her cargo of barley, a tug eventually succeeding in refloating the vessel at high-tide.

Also in 1893, on 19th. November, the "Civil Service No. 4" was launched at 10-30 a.m., after the crew of the fishing vessel "Stephen and Sarah" had been seen flying a distress signal, near Deal Pier. The lifeboat headed out into very rough seas and a fierce NNE gale and found that the 2 fishermen were totally exhausted. They were rescued and landed at Dover.

At 2-45 p.m. on 14th. November 1894, the "Civil Service No. 4" was launched to the assistance of the sloop "Rival", which had got into difficulties in heavy seas and a SSW gale. Some of the lifeboatmen were put aboard and they helped the crew of 4 to take the sloop safely into Ramsgate Harbour.

Together with the lifeboats from North Deal and Ramsgate, the "Civil Service No. 4" was launched at 1-00 a.m. on 21st. April 1895, to the aid of the barque "Madeline Rickmers". Some of the lifeboatmen went on board and helped the crew to throw about 150 tons of her cargo of rice overboard, before the vessel was eventually refloated at about noon. This proved to be the last service by this lifeboat.

## "CIVIL SERVICE No. 5"

34ft. x 7'6" SR(ON80). Built by Woolfe. Cost £297.
Stationed at Maryport, November 1886 to May 1905.
At Maryport:- 10 service launches, 22 lives saved.

The first rescue by this lifeboat took place on 25th. November 1888, when she was launched at 2-20 p.m., after a vessel had been seen in distress in the Solway Firth. She was the 580 ton. barque "Estrella de Chile", which eventually ran aground on the Robin Rigg Sandbank. A fierce gale was churning up very heavy seas and, when the lifeboat reached the sands, all that could be seen of the barque were her masts, to which the crew of 14 were desperately clinging. All 14 men were rescued and landed at Maryport.

At 9 o'clock on the evening of 6th. October 1900, the Harbour Master at Maryport sighted distress signals and the lifeboatmen were summoned. In very heavy seas and a full south-westerly gale, the "Civil Service No. 5" was

CIVIL SERVICE No.5

launched at 9-30 p.m., the lifeboatmen finding the casualty to be the Russian barque "Topdal". She had run aground on the Robin Rigg and most of her cargo of timber was floating in the sea around the stranded vessel. The steamer "Kittiwake" was first to arrive on the scene and her Master took the steamer in as close as he could and one of the ship's boats was launched and rescued the barque's crew of 8. The lifeboat arrived just as the last man was being rescued and all 8 were transferred to the lifeboat and landed at Maryport.

When several local fishing boats were caught at sea in a sudden storm, with a south-westerly gale gusting up to hurricane force, on the morning of 3rd. September 1902, the "Civil Service No. 5" was launched at 9-30 a.m. Most of the fishing boats made it safely into port, but the smack "Victory" got into difficulties and the lifeboat rescued her crew of 5.

The "Civil Service No. 5" was launched at noon on 27th. February 1903, after the 2,000 ton ship "Hougomont" was driven ashore in hurricane force conditions, at Allonby, near Maryport. The lifeboat brought 25 of the crew ashore, the remainder staying on board and coming ashore later.

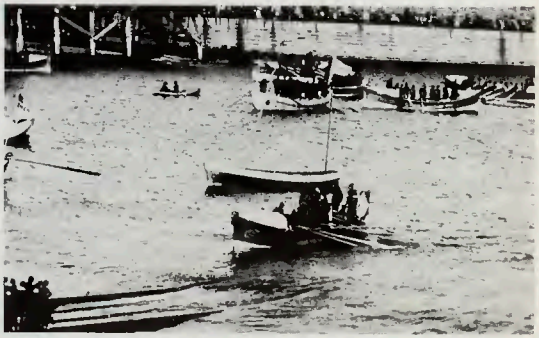
Late on the evening of 18th. May 1904, distress signals were seen just to the north of Maryport Harbour and the "Civil Service No. 5" was launched at 11-05 p.m. A WNW gale was blowing, with rough seas, as the lifeboatmen battled their way out to the casualty, which was the schooner "Jane", from which they rescued the crew of 3.

## "CHARLES DIBDIN (CIVIL SERVICE No. 2)"

37ft. x 8ft. SR(ON204). Built by Henderson. Cost £495.
Stationed at Tynemouth No. 1, December 1888 to May 1905.
At Tynemouth:- 1 service launch, 0 lives saved.

On 7th. January 1895, a sudden gale sprang up off the north-east coast, catching many of the local fishing boats at sea. The lifeboats from North Sunderland, Boulmer, Cullercoats, Tynemouth and Scarborough were all called out during the day, to stand-by and assist the fishing boats safely back into harbour.

The "Charles Dibdin (C.S. No. 5)" was launched at 12-15 p.m. and stood-by several of the fishing cobles from Cullercoats, until they had all reached the shore safely. This proved to be the only occasion when this lifeboat was launched on service.



CHARLES DIBDIN (CIVIL SERVICE No.2)

## "CIVIL SERVICE No. 6"

42ft. x 11ft. SR(ON273). Built by Forrestt. Cost £667.
Stationed at Douglas No.2, April 1890 to January 1895.
At Douglas:- 4 service launches, 7 lives saved.

When the schooner "Progress" dragged her anchors in very heavy seas and a severe south-westerly gale, in Douglas Bay, on the evening of 13th. October 1891, the "Civil Service No. 6" slipped her moorings in the harbour at 8-15 p.m. and headed out to sea. The schooner had drifted into an extremely dangerous position when the lifeboat reached her and the crew of 4 were quickly rescued and landed at the harbour.

This lifeboat was called out again nearly 3 months later, on 7th. January 1892, when another schooner, the "Broughty Castle" also dragged her anchors in very heavy seas in the Bay, her crew of 3 being rescued by the lifeboatmen.

On 12th. January 1895, during an extremely severe storm, the "Civil Service No. 6" broke away from her moorings in Douglas Harbour and was driven onto the nearby rocks and damaged beyond repair. As a result, the RNLI closed the Douglas No. 2 Lifeboat Station and decided to build a new boathouse and slipway in the harbour, at a cost of £1,439, this cost being met by the Civil Service Lifeboat Fund.

## "CIVIL SERVICE No. 7"

42ft. x 11ft. SR(ON289). Built by Woolfe. Cost £706.
Stationed at Kingstown (Dun Laoghaire) No.2, August 1890 to December 1895.
At Kingstown:- 1 service launch, 0 lives saved.

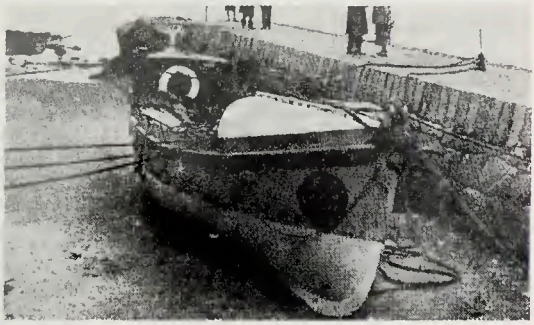
At 10 o'clock on the morning of Christmas Eve 1895, the ship "Palme" was seen to be dragging her anchors off Kingstown Harbour, in very heavy seas and a severe ESE gale. The "Civil Service No. 7" was quickly manned and proceeded out to sea, under a storm-sail. Tragically, when only about 600 yards from the "Palme", the lifeboat was struck by an exceptionally heavy sea and capsized. It was discovered later that, in the capsize, one of the boat's high end-boxes, upon which the boat relied for the selfrighting capability, was damaged and as a result, the lifeboat failed to right herself. Sadly, all 15 lifeboatmen on board were drowned.

The Kingstown No. 1 Lifeboat, "Hannah Pickard" had also been launched to the aid of the "Palme", but so severe were the conditions, that she too capsized, although, fortunately, she did right herself and no-one was lost.

Further attempts were made by the Poolbeg Lifeboat and the S.S. "Tearaght", which belonged to the Commissioners of Irish Lights, to reach the "Palme", but each time they were driven back by the high seas.

Eventually, on Christmas Day, the "Tearaght" succeeded in getting close to the "Palme", dropped anchor and one of her ship's lifeboats was launched, under the command of the ship's Master, Capt. McCombie, with a crew of 9. With outstanding skill and a great deal of courage, in two trips, they rescued all 20 people from the "Palme", a rescue for which Capt. McCombie was awarded the Gold Medal by the RNLI.

The Institution decided to build a new boathouse and slipway at Kingstown to house the replacement lifeboat and the cost, £2,350, was met by the Civil Service Lifeboat Fund.



**CIVIL SERVICE No.7 (Seen After Capsize)**

# "CIVIL SERVICE No. 6"

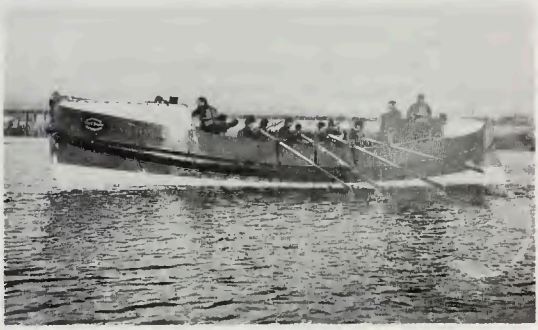
42ft. x 11'4" SR(ON384). Built by Rutherford. Cost £618.
Stationed at Douglas No.2, June 1896 to November 1924.
At Douglas:- 22 service launches, 48 lives saved.

The first rescue performed by this lifeboat, the second "Civil Service No. 6", came on 1st. October 1899, when in fact the boat was launched twice. The first launch took place at 6-10 p.m., after the schooner "Fairy Queen", of Dublin, ran aground between the Victoria Pier and the Red Pier, in very heavy seas and an ENE gale. The lifeboat quickly got alongside the stranded vessel and rescued her crew of 4. The lifeboatmen then went to the schooner "Mary", of Dublin, which was anchored nearby. Her crew of 3 were also rescued, but the Master refused to leave his ship and so the lifeboat returned ashore and was re-housed at 8-00 p.m.

Ninety minutes later. signals were seen coming from the "Mary" and so the lifeboat was launched again and rescued the Master, the schooner sinking only minutes later. The lifeboat went on to the schooner "Paragon", which was dragging her anchors and stood-by until it was certain she was safe.

The "Civil Service No. 6" was launched at 8-05 p.m. on 2nd. April 1901, when the schooner "Mersey" began to drag her anchors in very heavy seas.

The crew of 3 were rescued and landed safely at the harbour.



**CIVIL SERVICE No.6**

Shortly before mid-night on 23rd. January 1903, the crew of the barque "Otzamiz", of Montevideo, were seen signalling for help, as their ship lay at anchor in the North Bay, at Douglas. The barque was dragging her anchors in very heavy seas, the lifeboat being launched at mid-night and rescuing the crew of 16, who were landed at the harbour at 1-00 a.m.

While the pleasure yacht "Eagle", with 6 passengers and a crew of 2, was on passage from Derby Haven to Douglas, on the evening of 11th. September 1904, her rudder-head was carried away in heavy seas, 3 miles off Douglas Head. The "Civil Service No. 6" was launched at 10-45 p.m., rescued all 8 people and landed them at Douglas Harbour.

Although the "Civil Service No. 6" remained in service at Douglas until 1924, what proved to be her last effective service took place on 13th. February 1915, when she rescued the crew of 4, plus a dog, from the schooner "Catherine Latham", of Chester, which was dragging her anchors in very heavy seas and a full ESE gale.

# "CIVIL SERVICE No. 4"

40ft. x 10'4" SR(ON394). Built by Hanson. Cost £649.
Stationed at Walmer, February 1897 to May 1912; then in relief fleet as 'Reserve No. 3', until 1922.
(Then stationed at Fowey until 1916, being re-named 'James, William & Caroline Courtney' while at Fowey).
At Walmer:- 79 service launches, 155 lives saved. In Relief Fleet:- 7 launches, 14 lives saved.

As with the first "Civil Service No. 4" which was also stationed at Walmer, many of the services by this second lifeboat also involved many hours at sea, standing-by stranded vessels, often, the lifeboatmen then helping to refloat the casualty.

But attempts to refloat stranded vessels were not always successful, as was the case on 9th. October 1900. The "Civil Service No. 4" was launched at 1-45 p.m., together with the Kingsdowne Lifeboat "Charles Hargreave",

after reports had been received that a vessel was aground near the South Sand Head Lightvessel. She proved to be the 1,800 ton. steamer "Carlotta", of Spezzia and many of the lifeboatmen, plus other men who had put out in shore-boats to help, went on board to jettison some of the cargo of barley and rape-seed. Suddenly, the "Carlotta" broke in-two and the two lifeboats went alongside and rescued a total of 58 men, 35 of them being landed by the Walmer Lifeboat at 11-00 p.m.


**CIVIL SERVICE No.4**

The "Civil Service No. 4" was launched at 10 o'clock on the evening of 11th. January 1910, after distress signals had been seen coming from a vessel off Walmer Castle. A full south-westerly gale was blowing, with very heavy seas and, as the lifeboat was being launched through the extremely heavy surf, her rudder was badly damaged. However, the lifeboatmen carried on, using a large sweep-oar to steer with. The casualty was the barque "Formosa", with a crew of 22, the barque's sails having been blown away in the storm. With the help of the lifeboatmen, a tow-line from a tug was connected to the barque and she was towed to the River Thames.

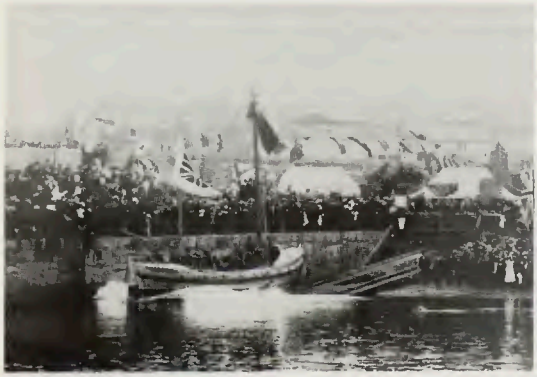
What proved to be the last service performed by this lifeboat at Walmer, took place on 20th. December 1911, when she was launched at 6-00 p.m., to the assistance of several local fishing boats, which had been caught at sea by a sudden WNW gale, the lifeboat escorting them all to safety.

At a meeting of the RNLI's Committee of Management on 9th. May 1912, it was decided to close the Walmer Lifeboat Station and the "Civil Service No. 4" was withdrawn shortly afterwards.

## "DUNLEARY (CIVIL SERVICE No. 7 )"

45ft. x 12'6" Watson(ON409). Built by Hollwey. Cost £958.
Stationed at Kingstown (Dun Laoghaire) No.2, July 1898 to 1914.
At Kingstown: - 20 service launches, 24 lives saved.

Early on the morning of 6th. February 1899, the barque "Loch Fergus", of Liverpool, ran aground in heavy seas and a south-easterly gale, in Killiney Bay. A tug tried to get close enough to rescue the crew, but was repeatedly forced back by the heavy seas . The tug therefore made for Kingstown and the crew of the "Dunleary (C.S. No. 7)" were summoned, the lifeboat being launched at 8-00 a.m. She rescued 15 men from the barque plus 2 stowaways, who only appeared at the very last moment!



**DUNLEARY (CIVIL SERVICE No.7)**

After the trawler "Industry" had run aground on Dalkey Island, in extremely rough seas and a violent north-easterly gale, on 10th. January 1903, the "Dunleary (C.S. No. 7)" was launched at 8-30 p.m. She reached the trawler at 10-00 p.m. and made repeated attempts to get alongside, but this proved to be impossible. Coxswain Knight tried again and again, but without success. Then, one of the lifeboatmen was taken seriously ill and so the Coxswain decided to return ashore to land him. After a hot meal and a change of clothing, the lifeboatmen put to sea again at 7-30 a.m. and this time they succeeded in getting close enough to the trawler to rescue the crew of 4 men, who were landed safely at noon. The RNLI awarded its Thanks on Vellum to Coxswain Knight for this long and difficult service.

The "Dunleary (C.S. No. 7)" was launched at 12-20 p.m. on 26th. October 1909, to the aid of the barque "Poseidon", of Kragero, which was dragging her anchors in heavy seas and an easterly gale, her sails having been ripped to pieces. Three men were rescued, totally exhausted, from a ship's boat, which was tied-up astern of the barque, the men being in such a bad way that they had to be rushed to hospital as soon as they were landed. The lifeboat put to sea again straight away and stood-by the barque, until a tug eventually took the disabled boat in-tow.

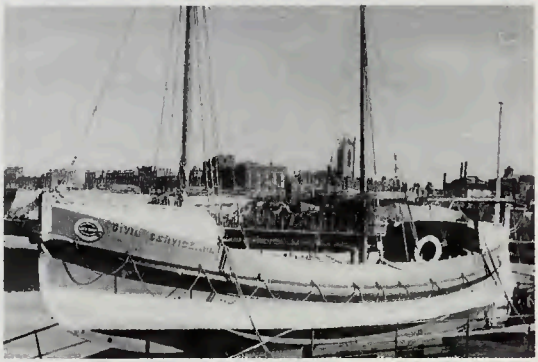
The last service by this lifeboat took place on 30th. January 1913, when she was launched at 6-05 p.m. and stood-by two of the local fishing boats as they returned to the harbour in heavy seas.

## "CIVIL SERVICE No. I"

40ft. x 10'6" SR(ON415). Built by Roberts. Cost £726.
Stationed at Margate No.2, September 1898 to March 1925.
At Margate:- 122 service launches, 212 lives saved.

As the figures above show, this lifeboat had a long, extremely busy and highly successful career. Just as one example, in one year - 1900 - she was involved in the saving of 61 lives (and a dog) and 2 vessels.

On 11th. February of that year, the "Civil Service No. I" was launched at 2-20 a.m., in heavy seas, a full SSW gale and driving snow, to go to the aid of the schooner "Picton", which had run aground on the Shingles Bank. Her foreward-compartment was on fire and so some of the lifeboatmen went on board and helped to put out the fire. But the ship was leaking badly and although they worked hard at the pumps for over 4 hours, the water continued to rise. The crew of 5, plus a dog, were therefore rescued and brought ashore by the lifeboat.



CIVIL SERVICE No.1

The "Civil Service No. I" was next called out on 18th. March of that year, to the ketch "Egremont", which had run aground off Margate in heavy seas and a south-easterly gale, accompanied by heavy snow. With the help of the lifeboatmen and a steam-tug, the ketch, which had a crew of 5, was eventually refloated and towed to Ramsgate.

On 3rd. August that year, this lifeboat and her crew helped to save the barge "Intrepid" and her crew of 3. The final 2 services of that busy year were to the same vessel, the S.S. "Sardonyx", which ran aground near the Kentish Knock Lightvessel on 13th. November. The "Civil Service No. I" was launched at 9-10 p.m., many of her crew, plus men from other shoreboats, going aboard to help jettison some of the cargo. This work continued until 9-00 a.m. on the 15th., when conditions grew so bad that the lifeboat had to rescue 26 men from the stranded vessel. Many of these men returned to the "Sardonyx" on the 16th., when conditions appeared to have improved, but the lifeboat was called out again later that day, when the men had to abandon-ship again, this time the lifeboat rescuing 22 men.

It should be noted that the slipway which was built at the side of Margate Pier in 1898 for this lifeboat, at a cost of £1,250, was paid for by the Civil Service Lifeboat Fund.

## "CIVIL SERVICE No . 3"

37ft. x 9'3" SR(ON437). Built by Thames Ironworks. Cost £857.
Stationed at Portpatrick, February 1900 to 1922: Montrose No. 1, 1924 to 1926
At Portpatrick:- 18 service launches. 42 lives saved.
At Montrose: - 3 service launches, 2 lives saved.

The "Civil Service No. 3" slipped her moorings in Portpatrick Harbour at 1-20 p.m. on 21st. January 1903, to go to the aid of the S.S. "Baron Glamis", which had run aground on the Ebb Stone Rocks in dense fog. Eventually, in very heavy seas, the lifeboat managed to get close enough to rescue the steamer's crew of 26, the lifeboat receiving some damage in doing so. Coxswain Smith was awarded the RNLI's Thanks on Vellum for this service .

CIVIL SERVICE No.3

When one of the local fishing boats returned to the harbour, late on the afternoon of 3rd. August 1906, her crew reported that the fishing vessel "Klondyke" was still at sea, with 2 men on board, in rapidly deteriorating conditions. The "Civil Service No. 3" put to sea at 6-00 p.m., found the fishing boat heading back and stood-by while she entered the harbour.

During the evening of 23rd. July 1907, 3 youths hired a small sailing dinghy, the "Moa", to go for a sail. But by next morning they still had not returned and so, as by then the sea was quite choppy, with a stiff south-easterly breeze, the "Civil Service No. 3" was called out at 7-00 a.m. The missing dinghy was found an hour later and the 3 exhausted and very frightened youths were rescued. The lifeboat took their boat in-tow and they were all landed safely at Portpatrick.

After flares had been sighted 5 miles off Portpatrick, on the evening of 15th. December 1913, the "Civil Service No. 3" put to sea at 8-55 p.m., in heavy seas, a full gale and sleet showers. The casualty proved to be the S.S. "Dunira", which was disabled and drifting towards the rocky shore. With outstanding skill and great courage, Coxswain Smith manoeuvred the lifeboat up to the steamer and all 5 members of her crew were rescued, the vessel then being less than 100 yards from the rocks. The RNLI awarded Coxswain James Smith the Silver Medal for this outstanding rescue.

The last rescue performed by this lifeboat at Portpatrick came on 23rd. May 1920, when she landed 36 passengers from the S.S. "Lurcher", which had run aground in Morrock Bay, in dense fog.

The only effective service by this lifeboat after she had been sent to Montrose, came on 27th. May 1925, when she rescued 2 men from a small fishing boat which was being swamped in rough seas in Montrose Bay.

## "CHARLES DIBDIN (CIVIL SERVICE No. 2)"

43ft. x 12ft. SR(ON552). Built by Thames Ironworks. Cost £1,713.
Stationed at North Deal, November 1905 to July 1932.
At North Deal:- 186 service launches, 395 lives saved.

This was another lifeboat with a very long and distinguished career, as had been the case with the 'Civil Service' Lifeboats which were stationed at nearby Walmer. Many of the services by this lifeboat also involved standing-by and helping to refloat vessels which had run aground on the Goodwin Sands, 5 of those services resulting in awards for gallantry.

The first of these came on 4th. February 1916, when the "Charles Dibdin (C.S. No. 2)" was launched at 5-05 a.m., to go to the aid of the trawler "De la Pole", which had run aground on the Goodwins. When the lifeboat

reached her, heavy seas were crashing over the trawler and her crew of 11 were in the rigging, holding on desperately. Eventually, Coxswain Adams manoeuvred the lifeboat close enough for a grapnel to be thrown up to the men and this was made fast. The 11 men were rescued and landed at Broadstairs, the RNLI awarding Coxswain Adams the Silver Medal for this outstanding service.

CHARLES DIBDIN (CIVIL SERVICE No.2)

Later that year, on Sunday, 19th. November, at the height of a violent storm, distress signals were seen coming from a ship aground on the Goodwin Sands. The "Charles Dibdin (C.S. No. 2)" was launched at 10-00 p.m. and Coxswain Adams and his crew battled their way out through mountainous seas, churned up by near hurricane force ENE winds. The casualty was the Italian steamer "Val Salice", the lifeboat reaching her at about mid-night. The lifeboatmen dropped anchor and in torrential rain, with the steamer being illuminated by a searchlight from one of the guard-ships, the lifeboat was slowly veered down towards the casualty, huge waves repeatedly sweeping over the lifeboat. With very great difficulty, all 30 members of the steamer's crew were rescued and landed at 3-00 a.m. For this rescue, Coxswain Adams was awarded his second Silver Medal.

For the rescue of 29 members of the crew of the S.S. "Piave", of New Jersey, which was wrecked in violent seas on the Goodwins, on 29th. January 1919, Coxswain Adams was awarded a gold watch and chain by the United States Government, with gold watches being awarded to all the other lifeboatmen.

Coxswain William Adams was awarded his third Silver Medal by the RNLI later that same year, for the rescue of 2 of the crew of the schooner "Tooga" on 1st. November. As soon as the exhausted lifeboatmen came ashore from this service, a reserve crew took the lifeboat to sea again and rescued 2 of the crew of the ketch "Corinthian", for which Acting Coxswain William Stanton was awarded the Bronze Medal.

## "CIVIL SERVICE No. 5"

38ft. x 9'4" Watson(ON544). Built by Thames Ironworks. Cost £1,011.
Stationed at Maryport, May 1905 to 1931.
At Maryport:- 11 service launches, 30 lives saved.

The first rescue performed by this lifeboat took place on 21st. November 1906, when she was launched at 9-30 p.m., to go to the aid of the S.S. "Grayfield", which had run aground in the Solway Firth. Heavy seas were sweeping over the stranded vessel, but eventually, the lifeboat got close enough to rescue the whole crew of 21.

Nearly 2 years later, the "Civil Service No. 5" was launched at 8-40 p.m. on 28th. August, after the schooner "Englebert", which had a crew of 5, had run aground in heavy seas and a WSW gale. Some of the lifeboatmen went on board the vessel and helped to refloat her and then take her safely into port.

CIVIL SERVICE No.5

Ten years passed before this lifeboat recorded another effective service. This came on 22nd. September 1918, when she was launched at 2-20 p.m., to the aid of the Solway Lightvessel, which had broken adrift in very heavy seas and a fierce SSW gale. With great skill, the lifeboat was manoeuvred close to the drifting lightvessel and her crew of 4 were rescued.

Another 10 years passed before the next - and what proved to be the last - service by this lifeboat took place. The "Civil Service No. 5"

was launched at 7-50 a.m. on 2nd. February 1928, to go to the assistance of the coaster "Achill", which was drifting in very heavy seas and a north-westerly gale. 10 member's of the coaster's crew were brought ashore, 7 of them being put back on board again later by the lifeboat, after the coaster had drifted into more sheltered waters, where she was eventually safely anchored

## "DUNLEARY (CIVIL SERVICE No. 7)"

45ft. Watson(motor)(ON658). Built by S.E.Saunders. Cost £6,074.
Powered by one 60 BHP Tylor petrol engine.
Stationed at Kingstown, December 1919 to July 1938; Lytham 1939 to April 1951
At Kingstown:- 23 service launches, 55 lives saved. At Lytham:- 58 service launches, 30 lives saved.

**DUNLEARY (CIVIL SERVICE No.7)**

This was the first motor-lifeboat to be provided by the Civil Service Lifeboat Fund and, to accommodate her, the boathouse and slipway at Kingstown had to be altered, at a cost of £1,550, which was met by the Fund.

The first of the many effective services performed by this motor-lifeboat, came on 7th. February 1923, when she was launched at 8-15 a.m. and saved the local fishing boat "Katie" and her crew of 3.

On 29th. October 1925, the 2,000 ton. ship "Hamburg" came ashore near the Coastguard Station, the lifeboat being launched at 3-45 p.m. and eventually rescuing all 46 people on board.

What proved to be the last service by this lifeboat at Kingstown, took place on 2nd. June 1936, when, in rough seas and a north-easterly gale, she was launched at 11-00 a.m. and towed the disabled yacht "Vixen", with just the owner on board, to safety.

In July 1938, a new lifeboat was sent to Kingstown and the "Dunleary (C.S. No. 7)" was re-allocated to Lytham. On 25th. November 1939, this lifeboat rescued the crew of 15 from H.M. Trawler "Gaul", landing them at 2-45 a.m. At 7-15 a.m. that same morning, the lifeboat was called out again, after distress flares had been sighted. These had come from the Pilot Boat "Charles Livingstone" , the casualty eventually being found ashore on Ainsdale Beach. With great skill and tremendous courage, the lifeboat was eventually taken alongside, but the only 2 men still on board refused to leave and so the lifeboat was forced to back away and she returned to Lytham. For this service, Coxswain John Parkinson was awarded the Silver Medal by the RNLI, with Motor Mechanic G. Harrison being awarded the Bronze Medal.

When the fishing vessel "Gipsy", with a crew of 5, was reported to be in distress, near the Wall End Buoy, on July 9th. 1944, the "Dunleary (C.S. No. 7)" slipped her moorings at 2-20 p.m. and headed out into rough seas and a SSE gale. Two lifeboatmen were put aboard and the "Gipsy" was towed to Lytham, arriving at 4-00 p.m.

## "LORD SOUTHBOROUGH (CIVIL SERVICE No. 1)"

45ft. Watson(motor)(ON688). Built by S.E.Saunders. Cost £8,997.
Powered by one 80 BHP Weyburn DE6 petrol engine.
Stationed at Margate, March 1925 to March 1951; relief fleet 1951 to 1955.
At Margate:- 278 service launches, 269 lives saved
In relief fleet:- 14 service launches, 17 lives saved.

This lifeboat was named after the man who was Chairman and Honorary Treasurer of the Fund for 33 years, and was another of the 'Civil Service' lifeboats which had a long and extremely distinguished career.

On 29th. December 1929, the "Lord - Southborough (C.S. No.1)" was launched at 5-50 a.m., into very heavy seas and a south-westerly gale, after flares had been sighted off Margate. The casualty proved to be the motorvessel "Hermine", of Wilhelmshaven, which had run aground in rough seas. Several of the lifeboatmen boarded the stranded vessel and helped to try and refloat her, but without success, all the crew eventually being brought ashore by a Pilot Boat. The German Government later awarded Certificates to each of the lifeboatmen involved in this service.

**LORD SOUTHBOROUGH (CIVIL SERVICE No.1)**

At 5-30 p.m. on 30th. May 1940, the "Lord Southborough (C.S. No. 1)" was launched, at the request of the Naval Officer-in-Charge at Margate, to go to Dunkirk, to help with the evacuation of the British Expeditionary Force. The Margate and Ramsgate Lifeboats were the only two to go to Dunkirk, manned by their own crews. The "Lord Southborough (C.S. No. 1)" was to return to Margate after nearly 24 hours, having brought some 600 men off the beaches around Dunkirk, operating under the most difficult and dangerous conditions. The RNLI later awarded its Thanks on Vellum to each of the 11 Margate lifeboatmen involved. Coxswain Edward Parker was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal for this hazardous service.

In addition to the men brought off the beaches at Dunkirk, the "Lord Southborough (C.S. No. 1)" rescued a total of 137 lives during the Second World War.

Early on the afternoon of 15th. November 1940, the lifeboatmen assembled in the boathouse on the Pier at Margate as another air-raid began. At 1-40 p.m., they saw a tug, the "Guardsman", blow-up when she struck a mine, the "Lord Southborough (C.S. No. 1)" being launched in a matter of minutes. The tug sank 5 miles north of the Pier and 7 survivors were found clinging desperately to pieces of wreckage. They were rescued and rushed ashore, there being no sign of the other 2 members of the tug's crew.

When a Blenheim bomber crashed into the sea, 3 miles off Margate, late on the afternoon of 10th. April 1941, the "Lord Southborough (C.S. No. 1)" was launched at 5-45 p.m. and rescued the 3 airmen, who had taken to a rubber dinghy.

## "GREATER LONDON (CIVIL SERVICE No. 3)"

48'6" Ramsgate(motor)(ON704). Built by J.S.White. Cost £8,668.
Powered by two 40 BHP Weyburn CE4 petrol engines.
Stationed at Southend, May 1928 to Dec. 1941 and Feb. 1945 to April 1955; in relief fleet, 1941 to 1945 and 1955 to 1957. At Southend:- 253 service launches, 218 lives saved.
In relief fleet:- 22 service launches, 22 lives saved.

The "Greater London (C.S. No. 3)" was launched shortly after mid-night on 2nd. June 1938, to go to the aid of the yacht "Wimpie", which was in distress to the east of Southend Pier, in extremely heavy seas, a full gale and torrential rain. The lifeboat rescued the 2 yachtsmen, landed them on the Pier and put to sea again straight away, as flares had been sighted near the Shoebury Sands. The casualty was the barge "Glenrosa", which sank, the lifeboat having to be driven over the submerged deck to rescue the crew of 3 from the rigging. As these men were being landed at Southend, news came that another barge was in distress, near the Low Way Buoy, but her crew refused to leave the barge. On their way back to Southend, the lifeboatmen went to another barge, the "Audrey" and rescued her crew of 2. The lifeboat eventually returned to her station after 10 1/2 hours at sea, in truly appalling conditions. Coxswain Sidney Page was awarded the RNLI's Bronze Medal for this prolonged service, each of the other lifeboatmen receiving the Institution's Thanks on Vellum.

In May 1940, this lifeboat, manned by Naval personnel, helped with the evacuation from Dunkirk.

On 5th. December 1940, this lifeboat was at sea for over 5 hours, towing the barge "Nelson", with a crew of 2, to safety. The lifeboat was launched again at 9-45 a.m. the following morning, to go to another barge, the "Glencoe", which had a crew of 2, this proving to be the first of 7 calls to be answered by this lifeboat and her crew during the next 36 hours. 10 more lives were saved, the lifeboat being at sea almost continuously, in a severe gale and violent seas.

**GREATER LONDON (CIVIL SERVICE No.3)**

For this long and exhausting service, Coxswain Sidney Page was awarded the RNLI's Silver Medal, with each of the other 5 members of the crew being awarded Bronze Medals.

Later that month, on the 27th., the lifeboat was called out at 3-25 p.m., after a ship had been attacked by enemy aircraft. She was the motor-vessel "Araby", of Liverpool, which broke in-two. Her crew of 28 were found in a ship's boat, alongside the wreck and, with great difficulty, in a strong, swirling tide, the men were rescued and landed at 5-30 p.m.

## "CIVIL SERVICE No. 4"

35'6" SR(motor)(ON756). Built by J.S.White. Cost £3,342.
Powered by one 35 BHP Weyburn AE6 petrol engine.
Stationed at Whitehills, August 1932 to April 1948.
At Whitehills:- 26 service launches, 9 lives saved.

The first effective service performed by this lifeboat took place on 3rd. March 1933. when she was launched at 12-15 p.m., to the aid of the fishing vessel "Gowan", with a crew of 4, which had broken down in heavy seas and an easterly gale, the lifeboat towing the disabled boat into Whitehills Harbour at 1-45 p.m.

Not all launches by our lifeboats result in dramatic rescues, but always there are the ever present risks to the lifeboatmen. At 7-35 a.m. on 4th. December 1936, the "Civil Service No. 4" was launched, after the Coastguard had reported sighting a distress flare 3 miles north-west of East Head. A full north-westerly gale was blowing, churning up extremely rough seas and it was bitterly cold. Despite a thorough search of the area, no vessel in distress was found and so the lifeboat headed back to Whitehills. As she approached the harbour, Coxswain Findlay could see that heavy seas were sweeping across the entrance and so he ordered the drogue, or sea anchor, to be streamed astern. As lifeboatman Alexander Mair was doing this, a huge wave swept over the lifeboat and he was washed overboard. Fortunately, he managed to hold on to one of the ropes and he was pulled back on board. the lifeboat then entering the harbour safely at 10-30 a.m. A Framed Letter of Appreciation was later sent to Coxswain Findlay by the RNLI, for this service.

**CIVIL SERVICE NO.4**

The career of this lifeboat came to an early end. on 8th. April 1948. She was launched at 10-04 p.m., to go to the aid of the S.S. "Lindean", which had run aground off Macduff, the lifeboat standing-by while all the crew were rescued from the steamer by the Coastguard, using a breeches-buoy The lifeboat returned to Whitehills at mid-night but, as she tried to enter the harbour, in very

CIVIL SERVICE NO.4

heavy seas, she was caught by a huge wave and swept forward on its crest, diagonally across the harbour-entrance, the Coxswain having no control over the boat at all. She struck the rocks close to a concrete parapet and one of the crew leaped ashore, taking a line with him. One by one, all the lifeboatmen got onto the parapet, before the boat was swept over more rocks and into a gulley. She was eventually pulled clear 12 hours later, but was found to be so badly damaged that it was decided to scrap her.

## "CIVIL SERVICE No. 5"

45'6" Watson(motor)(ON753). Built by J.S.White. Cost £7,294.
Powered by two 40 BHP Weyburn CE4 petrol engines.
Stationed at Donaghadee, 1932 to May 1950; re-allocated to Port St. Mary, September 1950 to July 1956; in relief fleet, 1956 to 1958.
At Donaghadee:- 80 service launches, 56 lives saved. At Port St. Mary:- 7 service launches, 0 lives saved.
In relief fleet:- 7 service launches, 2 lives saved.

The first rescue performed by this lifeboat took place on the afternoon of 15th. September 1934, as she was returning to the harbour after a routine exercise. The crew spotted a small rowing boat with 3 people on board, drifting out of control in choppy seas, near Foreland Point. The 3 people were rescued and their boat towed ashore.

CIVIL SERVICE No. 5

The "Civil Service No. 5" slipped her moorings at 6-30 a.m. on 21st. November 1940, to go to the aid of a steamer which was ashore in Belfast Lough, reaching the casualty at 8-15 a.m. She was the "Coastville", with 9 men on board. With great skill, Coxswain Nelson took the lifeboat alongside and all 9 men were rescued.

Two weeks later, on 6th.December, the lifeboat was called out at 9-20 a.m. to another steamer, the "Hope Star", which had run aground in Ballyholme Bay. Only 9 of the crew would leave their ship, the others deciding to remain on board, the lifeboat landing the 9 men at 5-30 p.m. For these two services, Coxswain Samuel Nelson was awarded the Bronze Medal.

The "Civil Service No. 5" was called out in the early hours of 1st. May 1946, after the S.S. "Georgetown Victory" ran aground off Killard Point, with over 1,500 British soldiers, sailors and airmen on board. The lifeboats from Cloughey and Newcastle were also called out and, at dawn, the steamer split in-two and the men began getting into the ship's lifeboats. The 3 RNLI lifeboats went alongside and helped to take more men off, the Newcastle Lifeboat bringing a total of 141 men ashore, the Cloughey Lifeboat landing 400 and the Donaghadee Lifeboat another 42, many of these being stretcher cases.

In 1950, the "Civil Service No. 5" was re-allocated to Port St. Mary, where she recorded 3 effective services. On 8th. April 1952, she towed-in the motor-boat "Leprechaun", with 4 people on board and then, on 11th. July, of the following year, she towed-in 2 yachts, each with 2 men on board. Finally, on 27th. May 1956, together with the Port Erin Lifeboat, she helped to refloat the S.S. "Crestville", which had run aground near the Calf of Man.

## "CHARLES DIBDIN (CIVIL SERVICE No 2)"

41ft. Beach Watson(motor)(ON762). Built by Groves & Guttridge. Cost £5,664.
Powered by two 35 BHP Weyburn AE6 petrol engines.
Stationed at Walmer, July 1933 to March 1959.
At Walmer:- 241 service launches, 412 lives saved.

This was yet another Walmer Lifeboat which had a long and very distinguished career. In May 1940, manned by Royal Naval personnel, she was one of the 19 RNLI lifeboats which went to Dunkirk, to help with the evacuation of the British Expeditionary Force.

CHARLES DIBDIN (CIVIL SERVICE No. 2)

A total of 5 RNLI medals for gallantry were awarded to Walmer lifeboatmen for services in this boat, the first being for a service on 18th. January 1944. Late the previous evening, H.M. Anti-Submarine Boat No. 25 had run aground on the East Goodwins at 23 knots and she quickly began to fill with water. When the Walmer Lifeboat reached her, after a full-speed dash straight across the sandbanks, only the bows of the wreck were visible above the waves. The Coxswain put the lifeboat's bow onto the sunken vessel 5 times, before all 13 members of the crew were rescued. Coxswain Joe Mercer was awarded the Bronze Medal for this service.

On the afternoon of 2nd. January 1948, the S.S. "Silvia Onorato" ran aground near the East Goodwin Lightvessel and the "Charles Dibdin(C.S. No.2)" was launched at 3-20 p.m. Heavy seas were breaking clean over the stranded vessel, as Coxswain Upton manoeuvred the lifeboat up to the steamer. but the Captain refused to abandon-ship. For nearly 40 hours, the lifeboat stood-by the steamer, only returning ashore to be re-fuelled and for the crew to have a hot meal, before, eventually. the Captain agreed to leave his ship, the lifeboat rescuing all 30 people on board. Coxswain Fred Upton was awarded the Silver Medal and Motor Mechanic Percy Cavell the Bronze Medal, for this prolonged and extremely arduous service.

The "Charles Dibdin (C.S. No. 2)" was launched at 11-10 p.m. on 13th. January 1952, to the aid of the 4,000 ton. French steamer "Agen", which had run aground on the South Goodwins. In extremely heavy seas and a south-westerly gale, the steamer broke in-two and eventually the lifeboat succeeded in rescuing all 38 men from the two halves of the ship. Coxswain Upton having to take the lifeboat through the 30ft. gap between the two sections. For this rescue, Coxswain Fred Upton was awarded his second Silver Medal and Motor Mechanic Percy Cavell received his second Bronze Medal, the other 7 lifeboatmen each receiving the Thanks on Vellum.

## "CIVIL SERVICE No. 6"[later "SWN-Y-MOR(C.S. No. 6)"]

46ft. Watson(motor)(ON784). Built by Groves & Guttridge. Cost £7,618.
Powered by two 40 BHP Weyburn CE4 petrol engines.
Stationed at St. Davids, 1936 to September 1963.
Re-allocated to Eyemouth, 1964 to 1967.
In relief fleet, 1967 to 1972.
At St. Davids:- 90 service launches, 108 lives saved.
At Eyemouth: - 3 service launches. 0 lives saved.
In Relief Fleet:- 21 service launches, 7 lives saved.

Five medals for gallantry for services in this lifeboat were awarded. the first being for a service on 25th. April 1943. In a severe storm that evening, two Tank Landing Craft foundered in very heavy seas. with a total of 73 men on board. The "Civil Service No. 6" was launched from St. Davids at 10-45 p.m. and eventually found the only survivor, covered in oil, swimming in the sea. The lifeboat returned ashore at 8-30 a.m., great skill being required by the Coxswain and shore-helpers in re-housing the lifeboat in the very heavy seas.

On the morning of 27th. November 1954, the 20,000 ton. tanker "World Concord" broke in-two in very heavy seas in the Irish Sea and the "Civil Service No. 6" was launched at 8-28 a.m., the Rosslare Harbour Lifeboat also being called out. Thirty-five times Coxswain Williams had to manoeuvre the St. Davids Lifeboat alongside the after-part of the tanker before all 35 men on board this section were rescued. Eventually, the Rosslare Harbour Lifeboat rescued the 7 men trapped on the forward section of the tanker. The RNLI awarded Silver Medals to Coxswain William Watts Williams, of St. Davids and to Coxswain Richard Walsh, of Rosslare Harbour, with Bronze Medals being awarded to the St. Davids Motor Mechanic, George Jordan and the Assistant Mechanic, Gwillym Davies and to the Second Coxswain of the Rosslare Harbour Lifeboat, William Duggan and their Motor Mechanic, Richard Hickey.

**"CIVIL SERVICE No. 6"**
**[later "SWN-Y-MOR(C.S. No. 6)"]**

In 1956, the St. Davids Lifeboat was re-named "Swn-Y-Mor(C.S. No. 6)".

She was launched at 4-20 p.m. on 8th. November 1956, to the aid of the French trawler "Notre Dame de Fatima", which had broken away from another trawler, which had been towing her. Eventually, all 8 members of the trawler's crew were rescued and the lifeboat set course for Milford Haven. But, in mountainous seas, she was struck by a huge wave and rolled over onto her beam-ends. Fortunately, she came upright again, but crew-member Ieuan Bateman was washed overboard and drowned. The RNLI awarded the Bronze Medal to Coxswain D. Lewis for this service and the French Lifeboat Society awarded its Bronze Medal, posthumously, to Ieuan Bateman.

## "PRINCESS ROYAL (CIVIL SERVICE No. 7)"

46ft. Watson(motor)(ON828). Built by J.S.White. Cost £10,145.
Powered by two 40 BHP Ferry VE4 diesel engines.
Stationed at Hartlepool, October 1939 to June 1968; relief fleet until 1976.
At Hartlepool:- 152 service launches, 94 lives saved.
In Relief Fleet:- 41 service launches, 24 lives saved.

This lifeboat arrived at Hartlepool on 24th. October 1939, just 7 weeks after the outbreak of the war, during which she was launched 36 times on service and saved 57 lives. She was launched at 10-30 a.m. on 9th. March 1941, after the 4,500 ton. S.S. "Flimston" had run aground on the Long Scar Rocks. The Coxswain had an extremely difficult task, manoeuvring the lifeboat up to the steamer through a mass of rocks and in very heavy seas, churned up by an ESE gale. But, eventually, they got alongside and all 38 members of the crew were rescued. The RNLI's Thanks on Vellum were awarded to Coxswain Lt. W. Bennison, RNVR, for this service.

**PRINCESS ROYAL (CIVIL SERVICE No.7)**

Nearly 9 months later, on 26th. January 1942, the Hartlepool lifeboatmen took part in a truly outstanding service. The "Princess Royal(C.S.No.7)" was launched at 7-35 a.m., after distress flares had been sighted off Seaton Carew. A fierce easterly gale was whipping up exceptionally heavy seas and it was bitterly cold, with frequent heavy squalls of snow. The casualty was the S.S. "Hawkwood", with a crew of 23. She had run aground half-a-mile north of the Tees North Gare Jetty and almost immediately broke in-two. The stern part, with several men on it, was

very close in-shore, in extremely shallow water, the forward part of the ship being some 200 yards further out to sea. With the water being so shallow, Coxswain Bennison had to wait until high-tide, at about noon, before attempting a rescue. In mountainous seas, with the lifeboat at times almost standing on-end, he eventually got alongside the fore-part of the ship and the 5 men there were rescued and brought ashore. Another attempt was made to reach the stern section of the ship that afternoon, but again the shallow water and violent seas prevented this. As the gale eased slightly, the Coastguard succeeded in getting a line aboard the wreck and all the remaining men were brought ashore. The RNLI awarded its Gold Medal to Coxswain Lt. William Bennison, RNVR, for outstanding gallantry, the Silver Medal being awarded to Motor Mechanic H. Jefferson. Each of the other 6 lifeboatmen involved were awarded Bronze Medals.

## "WINSTON CHURCHILL (CIVIL SERVICE No. 8)"

46'9" Watson(motor)(ON853). Built by J.S.White. Cost £16,535.
Powered by two 40 BHP Ferry VE4 diesel engines.
Stationed at Blyth, January 1948 to September 1979;relief fleet until 1982.
At Blyth:- 68 service launches, 39 lives saved.
In Relief Fleet: - 22 service launches, 6 lives saved.

**WINSTON CHURCHILL (CIVIL SERVICE No.8)**

This lifeboat was named after the great statesman who acted as Vice-Patron of the Fund since first accepting it when First Lord of the Admiralty in 1914.

When the S.S. "Holderness" ran aground 100 yards east of Blyth EastPier Lighthouse, as she was leaving the harbour on the morning of 11th March 1959, the "Winston Churchill (C.S. No. 8)" was launched at 10-32 a.m. The steamer, which was fully laden with coal, was found to be aground aft, with her bows rising and falling in the heavy seas and a strong south-easterly wind. Coxswain Fawcus skilfully took the lifeboat between the stern of the vessel and the Pier, the heavy seas filling the lifeboat's stern-cockpit several times, the lifeboat then receiving some damage as she was thrown heavily against the casualty. Four members of the steamer's crew were rescued and brought ashore, the Master and 9 men remaining on board, in the hope that a tug would be able to pull the ship clear. But this proved to be impossible and so, as conditions grew steadily worse, the 10 men were hauled ashore by the Coastguard, using a breeches-buoy, the lifeboat standing-by until everyone was safe. The RNLI's Thanks on Vellum were awarded to Coxswain Thomas Fawcus for this service.

The "Winston Churchill (C.S. No. 8)" was launched at 2-19 p.m. on 18th. November 1962 (the day after the Seaham Lifeboat had capsized on service, 20 miles down the coast, with the loss of 9 men), to go to the aid of the 200 ton. motor-vessel "Paulgate", which was in difficulties off Blyth Harbour. Exceptionally heavy seas were sweeping across the entrance to the harbour, and the lifeboat disappeared from view several times as she fought her way out. The motor-vessel had a list of 35° to port, but eventually Coxswain Fawcus manoeuvred the lifeboat close enough for 2 of the crew to jump onto the lifeboat, leaving just the Master on the "Paulgate". He indicated that he intended making for the Tyne and so, escorted by the lifeboat, the motor-vessel headed slowly south. But, off the entrance to the Tyne, the "Paulgate" ran out of fuel and began to drift between the Piers. With great skill Coxswain Fawcus took the lifeboat alongside and Bowman John Kerr jumped aboard and helped to secure a tow-line, by means of which the lifeboat held the vessel clear of the Piers until a tug arrived. Coxswain Thomas Fawcus was awarded the Silver Medal and Bowman John Kerr the Bronze Medal for this service. The other 6 lifeboatmen each received the RNLI's Thanks on Vellum.

## "LADY SCOTT (CIVIL SERVICE No. 4)"

46'9" Watson(motor)(ON867). Built by J.S.White. Cost £18,972.
Powered by two 40 BHP Ferry VE4 diesel engines.
Stationed at Portrush, 1949 to March 1981;relief fleet until 1987.
At Portrush:- 148 service launches, 73 lives saved.
In Relief Fleet:- 31 service launches, 0 lives saved.

Lady Scott (C.S. No.4) was named after the wife of Sir William Scott, who was a Vice-Patron of the Fund.

Many of the services by this lifeboat were to local fishing boats, or pleasure craft. Indeed, the first lives to be saved by this lifeboat were the 4 members of the crew of the fishing boat "C.E. 61". The "Lady Scott (C.S. No. 4)" was launched at 4-56 a.m. on 26th. June 1951, after the fishing boat had broken down in choppy seas and a strong NNW wind, 1 mile west of Ramore Head. The disabled boat, with her crew on board, was towed back to Portrush, arriving at 5-20 a.m.

LADY SCOTT (CIVIL SERVICE No. 4)

On 22nd. October 1960 however, this lifeboat was launched at 3-05 a.m. to the aid of the 10,400 ton. Greek steamer "Argo Delos", which had run aground on Inishtrahull Island, 24 miles from Portrush. In heavy seas, with the lifeboat rising and falling some 15 feet, Coxswain Cunningham brought her in time and time again for nearly 2 hours, until 14 men had been rescued A rope then fouled the lifeboat's port propeller and so the 14 men were put aboard H.M.S. Leopard, which was standing-by and the lifeboat was taken into the lee of the Island, so that the propeller could be cleared.

This done, the lifeboat then stood-by while another 15 men were lifted off the steamer by helicopter, the lifeboat returning to Portrush after over 14 hours at sea. Coxswain Sam Cunningham was awarded the Silver Medal and Second Coxswain Robert McMullen the Bronze Medal for this service.

When the Fleetwood trawler "Ella Hewett" ran onto a submerged wreck in Church Bay, on 3rd.November 1962, the "Lady Scott (C.S. No. 4)" was launched at 1-20 a.m. At high-tide, the lifeboat got alongside and rescued 14 men, landing them at Ballycastle and then returning to the trawler again. Later that afternoon, the trawler developed a list, which grew steadily worse and so the lifeboat went alongside and rescued the remaining 5 men, landing them at Portrush, after being at sea for 23 hours.

After towing-in the fishing vessel "Emerald Isle", on 23rd. June 1965, the "Lady Scott (C.S. No. 4)" was called out again 2 days later, towing another fishing vessel to safety. The very next day, the lifeboat spent 13 hours at sea, towing 3 more fishing vessels, with a total of 11 men on board, to safety.

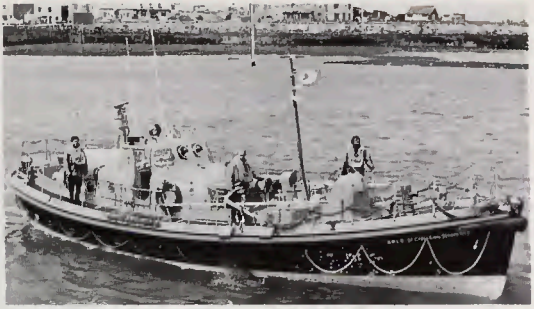
## "ST. CYBI (CIVIL SERVICE No. 9)"

52ft. Barnett(motor)(ON884). Built by J.S.White. Cost £28,906.
Powered by two 60 BHP Ferry VE6 diesel engines.
Stationed at Holyhead, Feb. 1950 to Sept. 1980; relief fleet until 1985.
At Holyhead:- 243 service launches, 152 lives saved.
In Relief Fleet:- 14 service launches, 9 lives saved.

A total of 13 medals for gallantry were awarded for rescues carried out in this lifeboat, in an outstanding career at Holyhead.

On 2nd. December 1966, in one of the worst storms witnessed off the coast of Anglesey for many years, the 1,287 ton. Greek steamer "Nafsiporos" broke down. In winds of 100 m.p.h. and mountainous seas, the lifeboats

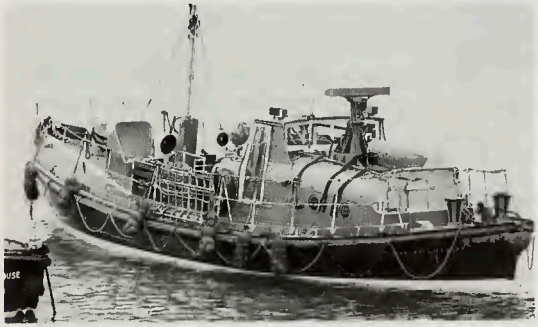
from Holyhead and Moelfre were called out, the "St. Cybi (C.S. No. 9)" being launched at 10-30 a.m. The RNLI's District Inspector of Lifeboats, Lieutenant Commander Harvey, who happened to be in Holyhead at the time, went out with the lifeboatmen and, at the request of Coxswain Alcock, he took the wheel during the actual rescue. The lifeboat's experienced Bowman was away at the time and Coxswain Alcock decided that his own experience was needed out on the open foredeck, actually helping the men off the steamer. Eventually - and only thanks to outstanding seamanship and first class teamwork - the Holyhead Lifeboat rescued 4 men and the Moelfre Lifeboat another 10 men. The RNLI awarded Gold Medals to Lieutenant Commander Harold Harvey and to Richard Evans, the Coxswain of the Moelfre Lifeboat (the man after whom the present Portrush Lifeboat is named), with Silver Medals being awarded to Coxswain Alcock and the Motor Mechanics of the two lifeboats. Each of the other 12 lifehoatmen, from the two boats involved in this rescue, was awarded the Bronze Medal.



**ST. CYBI (CIVIL SERVICE No.9**

For the rescue of 3 men who had been overcome by fumes on board the yacht "Sinbad", on 3rd. September 1971, the Motor Mechanic of the "St. Cybi (C.S. No. 9)", Donald Forrestt and crew-members John Hughes and Gareth Ogwen-Jones, were each awarded Bronze Medals.

For the rescue of the crew of 4 from the yacht "Pastime", on 11th. September 1976, in violent seas and a force 10 north-easterly gale, Coxswain Will Jones was awarded the Silver Medal, each of the other members of the lifeboat's crew being awarded the Thanks on Vellum.



**NORTH FORELAND (CIVIL SERVICE No.11)**

## "NORTH FORELAND (CIVIL SERVICE No. 11)"

46'9" Watson(motor)(ON888). Built by J.S.White. Cost £24,846.
Powered by two 40 BHP Ferry VE4 diesel engines.
Stationed at Margate, March 1951 to Dec. 1978; in relief fleet until 1981.
At Margate:- 389 service launches, 216 lives saved.
In Relief Fleet:- 6 service launches, 0 lives saved.

In the early hours of 2nd. September 1951, the Coastguard reported sighting 'SOS' being flashed by torch-light, from a yacht just outside the harbour at Margate. There was a heavy sea and near gale force northwesterly wind blowing and it was extremely dark. The "North Foreland (C.S. No. 11)" was launched at 12-55 a.m. and her crew found the yacht "Girlanda", anchored about 100 yards from the Harbour Wall. She was rolling and pitching wildly. The 2 men in the cockpit appeared to be unable to move. Coxswain Price skilfully manoeuvred the lifeboat close to the yacht and lifeboat-man Alfred Wilson jumped aboard. As heavy seas swept over him, holding on with one hand, he succeeded in securing a tow-line from the lifeboat and then he managed to release the yacht's 2 anchors. the lifeboat then towing the yacht into the harbour. Lifeboatman Alfred Wilson was awarded the Bronze Medal for gallantry during this service.

The "North Foreland (C.S. No. 11)" was launched at 3-10 a.m. on 7th. November 1952, after flares had been sighted some 20 miles north of Margate. The casualty was the barge "Vega", which had sunk near the Maplin Spit Buoy, her crew of 2 having to take to the rigging. As heavy seas swept over the 2 exhausted men, Coxswain Price brought the lifeboat in over the deck of the sunken barge, driving the bow between the rigging and the mast, 3 attempts having to be made before the 2 men were rescued, the lifeboat going on to Brightlingsea to land the men, arriving there at 9-45 a.m. The RNLI awarded Coxswain Dennis Price the Silver Medal for this rescue, with the Thanks on Vellum being awarded to the Second Coxswain and the Motor Mechanic.

When the French trawler "Notre Dame de la Mer", with a crew of 7, ran onto rocks 12 miles east of Margate, on the morning of 19th. December 1953, in dense fog, the "North Foreland (C.S. No. 11)" was launched at 6-10 a.m. Eventually, the lifeboat succeeded in pulling the trawler clear and she towed her to Ramsgate. Coxswain Dennis Price was awarded the RNLI's Thanks on Vellum for this service.

## "ST. ANDREW (CIVIL SERVICE No. 10)"

41ft. Watson(motor)(ON897). Built by Osbornes. Cost £20,700.
Powered by two 35 BHP Weyburn AE6 diesel engines.
Stationed at Whitehills, 1952 to 1959; in relief fleet 1959 to 1961;
Stationed at Girvan, July 1961 to September 1968; re-allocated to Arklow, 1968 to 1973;
in relief fleet, 1973 to 1982. At Whitehills:- 9 service launches, 0 lives saved.
At Girvan:- 18 service launches, 8 lives saved. At Arklow:- 5 service launches, 0 lives saved.
In Relief Fleet (total):- 49 service launches, 13 lives saved.

The first of only 2 effective services by this lifeboat at Whitehills came on 5th. June 1956. She was launched at 6-00 p.m., after the fishing vessel "Golden Eagle" had been sighted drifting towards the shore, but showing no distress signal. The lifeboatmen found the vessel deserted, although her engine was still running. A search was made of the area, but no trace was found of the missing crew and so the deserted boat was taken in-tow by another fishing vessel and, escorted by the lifeboat, they returned to the harbour at 7-30 p.m.

ST. ANDREW (CIVIL SERVICE No.10)

When a small motorboat, with 1 man on board, broke down on the evening of 4th. August 1957, the "St. Andrew (C.S. No. 10)" was launched at 6-50 p.m. and took the disabled boat in-tow. She then went to the assistance of another motorboat, with 1 man on board, which had put out to help the original casualty, but had then broken down as well, both boats being towed into Whitehills Harbour at 8-45 p.m.

In July 1961, this lifeboat was re-allocated to Girvan. She was called out at 8-55 p.m. on 4th. June 1966, after flares had been sighted, the casualty being a small motor-boat, the "Marietta", with 6 people on board, which had broken down in choppy seas and a fresh south-westerly wind. The boat was taken in-tow back to the harbour, arriving at 9-30 p.m.

The "St. Andrew (C.S. No. 10)" slipped her moorings in Girvan Harbour at 4-05 p.m. on 5th. September 1968, to go to the aid of a motorboat which had been reported in difficulties in Maidens Bay. The lifeboatmen found a man and a boy huddled in the bottom of the boat and they were rescued and landed at 6-20 p.m.

A few days after this service, the "St. Andrew (C.S. No. 10)" was replaced at Girvan and re-allocated to Arklow, where she answered 5 more calls, but did not save any more lives.

## "GREATER LONDON II (CIVIL SERVICE NO. 30)"

46'9" Watson(motor)(ON921). Built by Goves & Guttridge. Cost £32,163.
Powered by two 40 BHP Ferry VE4 diesel engines.
Stationed at Southend, 1955 to March 1976;
re-allocated to Beaumaris, February 1977 to April 1989.
At Southend:- 253 service launches, 139 lives saved.
At Beaumaris:- 38 service launches, 21 lives saved.

The "Greater London II (C.S. No. 30)" was launched at 9-45 p.m. on 21st. October 1955, to a ship aground near the North-East Mouse Buoy. A severe NNW gale was blowing, with short, very steep seas and, in torrential

rain, visibility was very poor. The casualty was the motor-barge "Fence", her crew of 3 having taken shelter in the wheelhouse. With great skill, Coxswain Page brought the lifeboat alongside the barge and eventually the 3 men were rescued. The lifeboat was launched again the following day and towed the barge back to Southend. For this prolonged service, Coxswain Sidney Page was awarded the RNLI's Thanks on Vellum.

GREATER LONDON II (CIVIL SERVICE No.30)

On 8th. December 1962, the "Greater London II (C.S. No. 30)" was launched to the Dutch motor-vessel "Temar", which was on fire, several other boats also putting out to help. As the lifeboat approached the burning vessel, a man could be seen trapped in one of the portholes. As men cut away the decking above, the lifeboatmen gave the man oxygen, only being able to do so for a few seconds at a time, as the lifeboat rose and fell in the rough seas. Eventually, the man was released and brought ashore by the lifeboat. The RNLI awarded a Collective Thanks on Vellum to the whole crew of the lifeboat for this service.

In 1977, the "Greater London II (C.S. No. 30)" was re-allocated to Beaumaris. She was called out on 13th. December 1981, when the angling boat "Wygyr" got into difficulties near Puffin Island. It was just on high-tide, which was exceptionally high and much of Beaumaris was flooded. A severe SSE gale was blowing, it was snowing heavily and was bitterly cold. Huge seas were breaking clean over the catwalk out to the lifeboathouse, but the crew fought their way out, being soaked and frozen stiff before they even reached the boathouse. The lifeboat was launched at 12-45 p.m. and, eventually, in appalling conditions, the casualty was found and taken in tow, visibility being greatly hampered by a build-up of frozen snow of the lifeboat's windscreen. Coxswain Gillichan then decided it would be safer to take the 2 men off the casualty, which was done, only thanks to tremendous skill and great teamwork, the exhausted, frozen lifeboatmen landing the 2 survivors at Menai Bridge at 4-40 p.m. The RNLI awarded the Bronze Medal to Coxswain David Gallichan for this outstanding service.

## "DUNNET HEAD (CIVIL SERVICE No. 31 )"

47ft. Watson(motor)(ON920). Built by Osborne. Cost £35,000.
Powered by two 60 BHP Gardner 5LW diesel engines.
Stationed at Thurso. January 1956 to December 1956.
At Thurso:- 1 service launch, 4 lives saved.

This was the first lifeboat in this class and was unusual in several respects. She was the first RNLI boat to be fitted with 60 BHP commercial diesel engines and was the first RNLI lifeboat to be built with a covered steering-position - in effect, a wheelhouse. She was also fitted with worm-drive steering, instead of the usual self-centering steering, making her much easier to manoeuvre. She was also fitted - at the request of the crew - with an echo-sounder.

The "Dunnet Head (Civil Service No. 31)" was launched at 10-50 a.m. on 7th. June 1956, after a report had been received that a fishing boat had broken down off Brims Ness. She was the "Falcon", of Buckie, with a crew of 4 and was leaking badly. Three of her crew were taken aboard the lifeboat, the skipper remaining on board. A tow-line was secured and the disabled boat was towed to Scrabster, arriving at 1-50 p.m.

H.M. Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother, Patron of the RNLI, formally christened this

DUNNET HEAD (CIVIL SERVICE No.31)

lifeboat, in a ceremony at Thurso on 18th. August 1956. Unfortunately, this lifeboat was never launched on service again, for, in the early hours of 10th. December 1956, this lifeboat and the boathouse at Scrabster Harbour, were totally destroyed by fire.

PENTLAND (CIVIL SERVICE No.31)

The RNLI ordered a new 47ft. Watson class boat for this station and she arrived at Thurso in December 1957, being named "Pentland (Civil Service No. 31)", but funded by the R.N.L.I., to replace the "Dunnet Head". The "Pentland (C.S. No. 31)" served at Thurso until 1970, being launched 49 times on service and saving 15 lives. Then, after a spell in the Relief Fleet, she was re-allocated to The Mumbles in 1974, serving there until 1985 and answering a further 50 calls and saving 21 more lives. From 1986, this lifeboat served at Workington, until she was withdrawn from service in September 1990, having added 28 more calls to her service list and saved 4 more lives.

## CHARLES DIBDIN (CIVIL SERVICE No. 32)"

42ft. Watson(Beach)(motor)(ON948). Built by Osborne. Cost £30,000.
Powered by two 48 h.p. Gardner 4LW diesel engines.
Stationed at Walmer, March 1959 to 1975; relief fleet 1975 to 1977;
re-allocated to Eastbourne, 1977 to 1979; re-allocated to Aldeburgh 1979 to 1982;
relief fleet 1982 to 1988. At Walmer:- 143 service launches, 115 lives saved.
At Eastbourne:- 11 service launches, 13 lives saved.
At Aldeburgh:- 13 service launches, 5 lives saved.
In Relief Fleet (total):- 28 service launches, 4 lives saved.

As we have seen with previous lifeboats at Walmer and North Deal, many of the services by this lifeboat were to the aid of vessel stranded on the treacherous Goodwin Sands. But, at 9-58 p.m. on 12th. November 1961, the "Charles Dibdin (C.S. No. 32)" was launched to the aid of the East Goodwin Lightvessel, which had broken adrift from her moorings, in tremendous seas and a fierce north-easterly gale. By the time the lifeboat reached the Lightvessel, the crew had let-go their emergency anchor and, as this appeared to be holding, the men remained on board, with the lifeboat standing-by, in terrible seas, throughout that wild and stormy night. One huge wave which swept over the lifeboat, threw Bowman Baker to the deck, knocking him unconcious and he was only prevented from going overboard by the quick reactions of his colleagues. At 2-00 p.m. on the 13th., the Dover Lifeboat took over 'stand-by' duty and the cold and exhausted Walmer crew were able to come ashore, putting into Dover at 3-00 p.m. The Dover Lifeboat was in turn relieved by the Ramsgate Lifeboat, with the Walmer boat putting to sea again on the morning of the 14th. and continuing to stand-by until, in slowly improving conditions, the Lightvessel was taken in-tow by a Trinity House vessel. H.R.H. The Duke of Gloucester, Master of Trinity House, sent a telegram of thanks to the crews of all 3 lifeboats, another telegram being received from the Secretary to Trinity House.

CHARLES DIBDIN (CIVIL SERVICE No.32)

When the yacht "Nell", with 6 people on board, broke down close to the Goodwins, early on the morning of May 24th. 1972, the "Charles Dibdin (C.S. No. 32)" was launched at 4-06 a.m. Eventually, the yacht was located and taken in-tow, the yacht - built in 1887 and with a draught of 9 feet was pulled clear of the sands and taken to Dover. The RNLI's Thanks on Vellum were awarded to Coxswain Bruce Brown for this service.

This lifeboat was re-allocated to Eastbourne in May 1977, serving there for 2 years, before being re-allocated again, to Aldeburgh, in August 1979. where she served until June 1982, before entering the relief fleet.

## "DUKE OF CORNWALL (CIVIL SERVICE No. 33 )"

52ft. Barnett(motor) (ON952). Built by Groves & Guttridge. Cost £40,500.
Powered by two 72 h. p. Gardner 6LW diesel engines.
Stationed at Lizard/Cadgwith, 1961 to 1984; relief fleet 1984 to 1989.
At Lizard/Cadgwith:- 99 service launches, 85 lives saved.
In Relief Fleet:- 22 service launches, 8 lives saved.

The first rescue carried out by this lifeboat, at the brand new station which had been built at Kilcobben Cove, in Cornwall, in 1961, came in the early hours of 15th. July 1962. The "Duke of Cornwall (C.S. No. 33)" was launched at 3-14 a.m. to the aid of a small yacht, which was slowly drifting ashore. She was the "Gweneth", with a crew of 3 and the lifeboat took her in-tow to moorings at Kilcobben Cove, arriving at 4-30 a.m.

Millions of people around the world saw this lifeboat, when she was featured in the first television programme to be transmitted by Telstar Satellite, on 23rd. July 1962.

**DUKE OF CORNWALL (CIVIL SERVICE No.33)**

When flares were sighted late in the evening of 29th. June 1967, the "Duke of Cornwall (C.S. No. 33)" was launched at 11-09 p.m. The casualty was the French trawler "Marie Helene", broken down some 20 miles south of Lizard Point. She had a crew of 6. The lifeboat took the disabled trawler in-tow and they reached Newlyn at 10-00 a.m. the following morning .

Less than a month later, on 22nd. July, this lifeboat was launched to the aid of the yacht "Gipsy Mariner", which had a crew of 2. The yacht's rudder-pintle had snapped and so she was towed to Falmouth.

While the barge "Queen", with a crew of 2, was on passage from The Scillies to Falmouth, on the morning of 9th. November 1968, her engine seized and the "Duke of Cornwall (C.S. No. 33)" was launched at 6-18 a.m. She towed the barge to Falmouth and returned to her station at 2-00 p. m.

She was launched again at 10-40 a.m. the following morning, to the aid of the "Nonsuch", a 65 ton. replica of a 17th. century trading-vessel, which had a crew of 7 and which was in difficulties in heavy seas off Lizard Point

The lifeboat took the "Nonsuch" in-tow and they headed for Falmouth, the tow-line parting 4 times. Eventually, the tow was handed over to a tug, which, escorted by the lifeboat, towed the ship into harbour at 9-10 p.m.

## "JOSEPH SOAR (CIVIL SERVICE No. 34)"

47ft. Watson(motor)(ON971). Built by J.S.White. Cost £40,000.
Powered by two 60 BHP Gardner SLW diesel engines.
Stationed at St. David's. September 1963 to October 1985;
re-allocated to Dunbar, June 1986 to August 1988;
re-allocated to Shoreham, September 1988 to September 1990.
At St. David's:- 99 service launches. 45 lives saved.
At Dunbar:- 6 service launches, 0 lives saved.
At Shoreham:- 29 service launches, 8 lives saved.

This lifeboat was named after Dr. Joseph Soar, the local RNLI Honorary Secretary at St. Davids for 38 years.

JOSEPH SOAR (CIVIL SERVICE No.34)

When the fishing boat "MFV 7" broke down to the west of St. David's Head, on the morning of 11th. March 1978, the "Joseph Soar (C.S. No. 34)" was launched at 12-30 p.m. As the lifeboat approached the disabled boat, Coxswain Morris saw that she was drifting rapidly towards the rocks and so he quickly altered course to intercept her, reaching the boat just 800 yards from the shore. In very heavy, confused seas, a tow-line was eventually passed across and secured. Towing proved to be very difficult, as the fishing boat's steering-gear was broken, a great deal of skill being shown by Coxswain Morris as they safely negotiated the tidal-race off Skokholm Island. The tow was eventually transferred to another fishing boat and the lifeboat returned to her station at 5-10 p.m. The RNLI awarded the Bronze Medal to Coxswain William Morris for this service.

The "Joseph Soar (C.S. No. 34)" was re-allocated to Dunbar in June 1986. She slipped her moorings in the harbour there at 8-15 a.m. on 10th. November 1986, to go to the assistance of the 20,000 ton. Danish gastanker "Inga Tholstrup", which had run aground in the Firth of Forth. In very heavy seas and a south-westerly gale, it took 21 hours to reach the stranded tanker, the lifeboat then taking off 3 of the crew and landing them at Leith. The lifeboat immediately returned to stand-by while attempts were made to refloat the tanker. But she was very firmly aground and so it was decided it would be too dangerous to try and pull her clear and arrangements were made to off-load the cargo of Alphabutylene into another tanker. The "Joseph Soar (C.S. No. 34)" was relieved by the Anstruther Lifeboat at noon on the 11th., the two lifeboats then taking it in turn to stand-by while the cargo was slowly off-loaded. The lifeboats finally returned to their respective stations at about 2-00 a.m. on the 14th. Letters of Thanks, signed by the Director of the RNLI, were sent to the two Lifeboat Stations, following this very long and arduous service.

## "CHARLES H. BARRETT (CIVIL SERVICE No. 35)"

71ft. Clyde(motor)(ON987). Built by Yarrow & Co. Cost £63,907.
Powered by two 230 h.p. Gardner 8L3B diesel engines.
Stationed at Clovelly/Bristol Channel, 1968 to 1975; relief fleet to 1988.
At Clovelly:- 179 service calls, 38 lives saved.
In Relief Fleet:- 70 service calls, 38 lives saved.

This lifeboat was named after Charles Barrett who ran the Fund almost single-handed during the Second World War. He became Honorary Secretary in 1938 and retired in 1954, shortly before his death.


CHARLES H. BARRETT (CIVIL SERVICE No.35)

When the Staff Coxswain on board the "Charles H. Barrett (C.S.No.35)", moored off Clovelly on 7th. November 1971, was informed that a man had been seriously injured on board the German motor-vessel "Embdena", he immediately contacted the local Doctor, Dr. D. Mackenzie, who was taken on board the lifeboat, which slipped her moorings at 6-30 p.m. In rough seas and a force 8 WSW gale, they reached the motorvessel at 10-00 p.m., some 25 miles off Hartland Point. With great skill, Coxswain Reeves brought the rolling, pitching lifeboat alongside the motorvessel and Dr. Mackenzie jumped aboard. He found that the injured man had just died. The Doctor remained on hoard until both vessels were in the shelter of Lundy Island, where he rejoined the lifeboat, which returned to Clovelly at 8-00 a.m. The RNLI's Thanks on Vellum were awarded to Dr. Mackenzie for this service.

The "Charles H. Barrett (C.S. No. 35)" slipped her moorings off Clovelly at 2-20 a.m. on 6th. February 1974, after the Coastguard had reported that a trawler was sinking 26 miles off Hartland Point, in heavy seas and a north-westerly gale. She was the trawler "St. Pierre", with a crew of 3. She was taking-in a great deal of water. The lifeboatmen sighted the trawler at 5-15 a.m., by which time the wind had increased to force 11, with extremely heavy seas. With great skill, Staff Coxswain Houchens manoeuvred the lifeboat close to the trawler and a hand-line was thrown across, the French fishermen then hauling across a 41'' towing-warp. This was secured and slowly they headed towards Lundy Island. Waves up to 40 feet high were encountered in Lundy Race, both vessels coming very close to broaching-to at times. But they reached Lundy safely, arriving there at 10-00 a.m. and the trawler was anchored. For this excellent service, the RNLI awarded its Bronze Medal to Staff Coxswain Michael Houchens.

## "ERIC SEAL (CIVIL SERVICE No. 36)"

44ft. Waveney(motor)(ON1026). Built by Groves & Guttridge. Cost £100,000.
Powered by two 260 h.p. General Motors 8V53 diesel engines.
Stationed at Eyemouth, 6th. February 1974 to date.
At Eyemouth:- 77 service launches, 17 lives saved.

This lifeboat was named after Sir Eric Seal, who retired at the Annual General Meeting on 24th. March 1971 as Chairman of the Fund, and who sadly died eight days later. His last act as Chairman was to agree to the purchase of Civil Service No. 36.

The "Eric Seal (C.S. No. 36)" slipped her moorings at 4-20 p.m. on 14th. February 1978, after the Coastguard had reported that many of the local fishing boats were still at sea, in rapidly deteriorating conditions. As heavy seas built up at the entrance to the harbour, the lifeboat escorted 15 fishing boats into the harbour, one at a time, parachute flares having to be fired as the last 2 entered the harbour, in total darkness, the lifeboat returning to her moorings again at 6-30 p.m.

When 2 skin divers went missing, while diving from an inflatable dinghy, on 8th. October 1980, the "Eric Seal (C.S. No. 36)" was called out at 11-24 a.m. to search for them. With the assistance of the Coastguard on top of the cliffs, the 2 men were found and rescued, being landed at the harbour, where a Doctor was waiting to examine them.

**ERIC SEAL (CIVIL SERVICE No.36)**

During the evening of 5th. July 1984, the Coastguard reported that an inflatable boat, with 4 people on board, was overdue on passage from St. Abbs to Eyemouth. The "Eric Seal (C.S. No. 36)" put to sea at 9-52 p.m. to look for the missing boat, being joined in the search by the 'Atlantic 21' lifeboat from St. Abbs, plus H.M.S. Pollington and a Sea King helicopter. But it was not until 4-50 a.m. the following morning, that the Eyemouth lifeboatmen eventually found the missing boat, with 2 men and 2 youths on board, all dressed only in T-shirts and shorts. They were quickly taken aboard the lifeboat and treated for shock and hypothermia, the lifeboat landing them at Eyemouth at 6-07 a.m.

The "Eric Seal (C.S. No. 36)" was called out at 1-31 p.m. on 13th. October 1989, after the Coastguard had reported that a sailing dinghy had capsized half-a-mile off Eyemouth. The casualty was found in amongst the rocks on the east side of the bay, the lifeboat going in as close as possible and a heaving-line being thrown to the dinghy's sole occupant. The half-submerged boat was hauled clear of the rocks and the survivor taken aboard the lifeboat, which landed him at 2-40 p.m.

## "EDWARD BRIDGES (CIVIL SERVICE & POST OFFICE No. 37)"

54ft. Arun(motor) (ON1037) . Built by Oshorne. Cost £150,000.
Powered by two 460 h.p. Caterpillar D343 diesel engines.
Stationed at Torbay, April 1975 to date.
At Torbay:- 318 service launches, 238 lives saved.

This lifeboat was named after the Head of the Civil Service and was presented to the RNLI to celebrate the Institution's 150th Anniversary in 1974.


**EDWARD BRIDGES (CIVIL SERVICE & POST OFFICE No.37)**

The "Edward Bridges (C.S. & P.O. Wo. 37)" slipped her moorings in Brixham Harbour at 1-15 a.m. on 6th. December 1976, to go to the aid of the motor-vessel "Lyrma", whose steering-gear had jammed. Conditions at sea were appalling, with near hurricane-force winds churning up extremely heavy seas, the waves being estimated at up to 40 feet high. The "Lyrma" was found going slowly round and round in a circle, with a heavy list to starboard. The Captain feared that any further movement of the cargo would cause the ship to capsize immediately. In command of the lifeboat was Second Coxswain Keith Bower, the regular Coxswain having been caught at sea by the storm. After assessing the situation, Acting Coxswain Bower decided that it would be highly dangerous for them to attempt to take the crew off the motor-vessel and so he radioed for the assistance of a helicopter. This arrived at 3-30 a.m., but the winchman, who was swinging like a pendulum on the end of the winch-wire, became entangled in one of the "Lyrma's" davits and was injured, and the rescue attempt was abandoned.

Keith Bower took the lifeboat in towards the motor-vessel, to check on the possibilities and it was agreed that they would try to take the crew off one at a time. Several successful runs-in were made and 4 people were rescued. But on the sixth attempt, the "Lyrma" rolled over onto the lifeboat's foredeck, the lifeboatmen having to jump clear as the hand-rails and stanchions were flattened. Acting Coxswain Bower, in the upper-steering position, leaned over and pushed away one of the "Lyrma's" ship's-boats, which was still in her davits - 5 feet in-board of the ship's side. Two men seized the opportunity and jumped aboard the lifeboat, as Acting Coxswain Bower slammed both engines full astern and, with a roar, the lifeboat pulled clear. The last 2 men were then rescued from the "Lyrma", leaving just 2 who had got into a liferaft, which was tied-up alongside. As the lifeboat was positioned to windward of the "Lyrma", the 2 men cut the rope and the liferaft drifted down to the lifeboat and they were pulled aboard, all 10 survivors being landed at Brixham at 5-00 a.m.

For this truly outstanding rescue, the RNLI's Gold Medal was awarded to Acting Coxswain Keith Bower, with Bronze Medals being awarded to each of the other 6 members of that very gallant crew.

## "SILVER JUBILEE (CIVIL SERVICE No. 38)"

37'6" Rother(motor)(ON1046). Built by Osborne. Cost £105,000.
Powered by two 52 h.p. Mermaid 397 diesel engines.
Stationed at Margate, 12th. October 1978 to date.
At Margate:- 150 service launches, 65 lives saved.

The "Silver Jubilee (C.S. No. 38)" was launched at 5-17 a.m. on 2nd. April 1989, after the Coastguard had reported that the yacht "Pegasus" had sunk 5 miles north of the Margate Light and the crew of 3 were in a life-raft. In rough seas and a strong ENE wind, the liferaft was found in broken-water, to the north of Margate Sands. The 3 men were rescued and they and their liferaft were landed at at 7-40 a.m.

On the morning of 27th. May 1989, another yacht, the "Odyssey", with 4 people on board, was reported to be

aground in the Princess Channel and breaking-up in choppy seas and a strong north-easterly wind. The "Silver Jubilee (C.S. No. 38)" was launched at 11-02 a.m., a helicopter also being called out. The helicopter lifted a woman off the yacht, as she was in a very poor way, and the lifeboat took the yacht in-tow back to Margate, where the other 3 survivors were landed.

SILVER JUBILEE (CIVIL SERVICE No.38)

After the motor-cruiser "San Patrico", with 5 people on board, ran aground on the north side of Margate Hook, on the afternoon of 13th. August 1989, the "Silver Jubilee (C.S. No. 38)" was launched at 5-50 p.m., into choppy seas and a stiff south-westerly wind. The casualty was found in very shallow water, the lifeboat approaching her very cautiously. Two lifeboatmen were put aboard and a tow-line was secured. The yacht and her occupants were towed to Ramsgate and the lifeboat returned to her station at 11-00 p.m.

At 9-55 p.m. on 24th. May 1990, the Coastguard reported that the cabin-cruiser "Bridgewater Castle", with 6 people on board, had broken-down close to the Main Sands. The "Silver Jubilee (C.S. No. 38)" was launched at 10-19 p.m. and found the casualty at anchor. A tow-line was secured and, with some difficulty, the cabin-cruiser was pulled clear and towed into the harbour.

On 8th. June 1990, the "Silver Jubilee (C.S. No. 38)" was launched at 11-34 a.m., go to the aid of a small cabin-cruiser, with 2 people on board, which had broken down near the South Margate Buoy. The disabled boat was taken in-tow to Ramsgate and the lifeboat returned to Margate at 3-20 p.m.

## "RICHARD EVANS (CIVIL SERVICE No. 39)"

52ft. Arun(motor)(ON1070). Built by Halmatic/Osborne. Cost £350,000.
Powered by two 485 h.p. Caterpillar D3408 diesel engines.
Stationed at Portrush, 1st. March 1981 to date.
At Portrush:- 153 service launches. 35 lives saved.

RICHARD EVANS (CIVIL SERVICE No.39)

The "Richard Evans (C.S. No. 39)" was named after the most decorated lifeboatman alive at the time (1981), Richard Evans SGM, BEM. retired coxswain of the Moelfre (Angelsey) Lifeboat. Dick Evans won the RNLI's Bronze Medal in 1943, the Gold Medal in 1959 and again in 1966 and the Silver Medal in 1961. Following his retirement in 1970 he devoted his time to giving talks on behalf of the RNLI, proving himself a popular speaker, and he was awarded the RNLI's Public Relations Statuette in 1978 for his work in this field.

The "Richard Evans (C.S. No. 39)" slipped her moorings at 10-50 a.m. on 1st. December 1986, to go to the asistance of the fishing vessel "Dermot Anne", which had a fire in her engine-room. She had a crew of 6. The boat had been towing the fishing vessel "Albatross", which also had a crew of 6, the tow being taken over by the fishing vessel "Slieve Bloom". When the lifeboat reached the "Dermot Anne", the fire had been put out and so she escorted the fishing boat into Molville Harbour. The lifeboat then put to sea again straight away and escorted in the other 2 fishing vessels, eventually returning to her station at 5-25 p.m.

After the Coastguard had reported that 4 men in two canoes were being swept out to sea off Portstewart, on the afternoon of 10th. March 1989, the "Richard Evans (C.S. No. 39)" put to sea at 1-45 p.m. The 4 men were

rescued and they and their canoes were landed at 2-22 p.m., one of the men having to be taken to hospital by ambulance.

When the fishing vessel "Rath Cormack", with a crew of 4, reported she was taking-in water, 46 miles NNW of Portrush, on 9th. April 1989, the "Richard Evans (C.S. No. 39)" slipped her moorings at 5-15 p.m. and headed out into rough seas and a strong southerly wind. She reached the casualty nearly 3 hours later and the vessel was taken in-tow. Two men had already been taken off by another fishing vessel, but in worsening conditions the other 2 were taken off by the lifeboat at 9-20 p.m. At 10-37 p.m., the towline had to be cut and the fishing vessel sank 90 minutes later. The lifeboat returned to her station at 4-00 a.m.

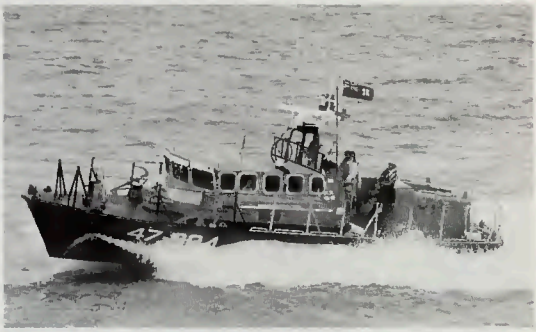
After a catamaran, with 2 people on board, had capsized off Portstewart Point, on the afternoon of 8th. July 1990, the "Richard Evans (C.S. No. 39)" was called out at 4-06 p.m., heading out at full speed into rough seas and a westerly gale. She reached the casualty within 10 minutes, but found that the 2 people had scrambled ashore on a tiny island. The lifeboat's small inflatable 'Y' boat was launched, took the 2 people off the Island and put them aboard the lifeboat. Their catamaran was taken in-tow and they arrived back at Portrush at 5-40 p.m.

## "ST. CYBI II (CIVIL SERVICE No. 40)"

47ft. Tyne(motor)(ON1095). Built by Fairy/Osborne. Cost £445,000.
Powered by two 425 h.p. General Motors 6V92TA diesel engines.
Stationed at Holyhead. 20th. September 1985 to date.
At Holyhead:- 98 service launches, 46 lives saved.

At the request of the President of the Holyhead RNLI Branch, Lord Stanley, this boat was called "ST. CYBI II (C.S. No.40)" in order to perpetuate the link established with the Fund's last lifeboat at the station, "ST. CYBI (C.S. No.9)".

The first effective service by this lifeboat took place on 2nd October 1985, when she was launched at 4-15 p.m. to go to the aid of the fishing vessel "Morvil", with a crew of 3, their boat having broken down in heavy seas and a south-westerly gale. The lifeboat took the disabled boat in-tow and they arrived back at the harbour at 5-35 p.m.



ST. CYBI II (CIVIL SERVICE No.40)

When a yacht was reported to be in difficulties, 2 miles north-east of the Skerries on 19th. June 1987, the "St. Cybi II (C.S. No. 40)" was launched at 3-46 a.m. The casualty was the "Cirius", with 5 people on board and the yacht was taken in-tow back to Holyhead, arriving there at 6-20 a.m.

After a red flare had been sighted just south of the South Stack Lighthouse, on the afternoon of 19th. September 1987, the "St. Cybi II (C.S. No. 40)" was launched at 5-17 p.m. The casualty was a 16ft. inflatable boat, with 2 people on board. They were rescued and their boat taken in-tow back towards Holyhead. On the way there, the lifeboat was diverted to investigate reports of more flares, but nothing was found.

On 20th. July 1989, the "St. Cybi II (C.S. No. 40)" towed-in the yacht "Recoil", which had a crew of 2, after the yacht had been seen drifting 1 mile north of the breakwater. Another yacht, the "Marathon", also with 2 people on board, was towed to safety by this lifeboat in the early hours of 6th. August 1989.

At 10-10 a.m. on 30th. August 1989, the Coastguard reported that the 52ft. yacht "Espaniola", was disabled some 15 miles NNW of Holyhead, in heavy seas and a force 7 south-westerly wind. The lifeboat was quickly launched and reached the casualty at 11-40 a.m. A tow-line was secured and the slow haul back to Holyhead began, the yacht being berthed inthe harbour at 2-55 p.m. The RNLI's Chief of Operations later sent a Letter of Congratulations to the Holyhead Coxswain, Grahame Drinkwater and his crew, for this excellent service.

# "THE PRINCESS ROYAL (CIVIL SERVICE No. 41)"

12 metre Mersey(motor)(ON1167). Built by Osborne. Cost £445,000.
Powered by two 285 h.p. Caterpillar 3208T diesel engines.
Stationed at St. Ives, 16th. October 1990 to date.
At St. Ives:- 3 service launches, 0 lives saved.

PRINCESS ROYAL (CIVIL SERVICE No.41)
AT ITS SELF-RIGHTING TRIAL

"The Princess Royal (Civil Service No. 41)" was launched for the first time on service at 6-15 a.m. on 2nd. November 1990, when the fishing vessel "Julia Nadine" caught fire in St. Ives Harbour. The burning vessel, with no-one on board, drifted out of the harbour and capsized. The lifeboatmen beached the burnt-out remains at Porthminster and the lifeboat returned to her station at 7-00 a.m.

When the fishing vessel "Gorah Lass" broke down off Porthtowan, in rapidly deteriorating conditions, early on the afternoon of November 16th. 1990, "The Princess Royal (C.S. No. 41)" was launched at 12-37 p.m. She took the disabled boat in-tow and, in rough seas, brought her into St. Ives Harbour at 3-32 p.m.

Ten days later, this lifeboat was called out again, being launched at 10-14 a.m., to go to the aid of the fishing vessel "Celtic Lass", which had lost her rudder, 1 mile north of Western Carricks. The lifeboat reached the casualty at 10-28 a.m. and after a tow-line was passed across and secured, the fishing vessel was towed into St. Ives Harbour at 11-06 a.m.

# "PERCY GARON"

'Atlantic 21', semi-rigid inflatable lifeboat. Powered by two 50 h. p. outboard engines .
Stationed at Southend, May 1976 to 1986; relief fleet to date.
At Southend:- 422 service launches, 131 lives saved.
In Relief Fleet:- 25 service launches, 5 lives saved.

The 'Atlantic 21' class inshore-lifeboat "Percy Garon", B-527, was launched from the Pier Head boathouse at Southend, at 3-52 p.m. on 6th. June 1977, to go to the assistance of the 19ft. fishing boat "Kelly", with 3 men on board, which had broken down about 3 miles from Southend Pier. Conditions at the time were very bad, with short, heavy seas and a force 9 southerly gale. A tow-line was secured and the disabled boat towed to a sheltered mooring and the 3 men then taken aboard the lifeboat, which landed them at 4-48 p.m. Three men were then taken out from the Pier and put aboard the fishing boat "Anja", which had parted one of her mooring-lines in the heavy seas. The ILB was then called to the aid of a 28ft. sloop, with 6 people on board, which was in difficulties. Four young boys were taken aboard the ILB and eventually put aboard the Sheerness Lifeboat, which then towed the sloop to Sheerness.


PERCY GARON

The Coastguard then radioed that the 26ft. yacht "Cogneto" was in difficulties and so one of the Southend lifeboatmen was put aboard to help the sole occupant, the 'Atlantic 21' putting a line aboard and holding the yacht clear of the sands until the Sheerness Lifeboat could return and take over the tow. B-527 was then called to a yacht

whose sail had split, her crew of 3 being rescued and landed at 9-45 p.m., the ILB by that time having been at sea continuously for 6 hours, in appalling conditions . For this prolonged and very arduous service, Helmsman Robert Fossett was awarded the RNLI's Thanks on Vellum.

After the Coastguard had reported that the tug "Laity F" was on fire, the "Percy Garon" was launched at 11-48 a.m. on 21st. March 1981, the Sheerness Lifeboat also being called out, together with an RAF helicopter. As the ILB approached the tug, the lifeboatmen could feel the heat from the fire in her engine-room and, as there was a risk of an explosion, Helmsman Gilson took the ILB alongside and 2 men were rescued, the Master refusing to leave his ship. One of the rescued men, a River Pilot, was lifted off the ILB by the helicopter, the tug eventually being taken in-tow by the Sheerness Lifeboat. Escorted by B-527, they made their way slowly into the lee of the Marsh End Sands, where the tow was handed-over to a tug, the 'Atlantic 21' returning to Southend at 12-55 p.m. Framed Letters of Thanks, signed by the Chairman of the RNLI, were later presented to the crew of the Southend ILB, Helmsman Paul Gilson and crew-members Glyn Gilson and Paul Manners .

# LIFEBOATS PROVIDED BY THE CIVIL SERVICE, POST OFFICE AND BRITISH TELECOM LIFEBOAT FUND IN THE ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY FIVE YEARS BETWEEN 1866 AND 1991

| Year | Civil Service No. | Name | Stationed at | Launches made | Lives saved | Remarks |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1866 | 1 | Wexford No. 2 | 1866 - 1878 | 33 | 122 | Transferred to Whitby and re-named "Harriett Forteath" |
| 1875 | 2 | Charles Dibdin | Tynemouth 1875 - 1888 | 6 | 18 | · |
| 1877 | 3 | | Portpatrick 1877 - 1899 | 21 | 41 | |
| 1878 | 1 | | Wexford No. 2 1878 - 1897 | 12 | 48 | |
| 1884 | 4 | | Walmer 1884 - 1895 | 56 | 6 | Damaged beyond repair - 1895 |
| 1886 | 5 | | Maryport 1886 - 1905 | 10 | 22 | |
| 1888 | 2 | Charles Dibdin | Tynemouth No. 1 1888 - 1905 | 1 | 0 | |
| 1890 | 6 | | Douglas No. 2 1890 - 1895 | 4 | 7 | Wrecked - 1895 |
| 1891 | 7 | | Kingstown No.2 1890 - 1895 | 1 | 0 | Damaged beyond repair - 1895 |
| 1895 | 6 | | Douglas No. 2 1896 - 1924 | 22 | 48 | |
| 1897 | 4 | | Walmer 1897 - 1912<br>Reserve 1912 - 1922 | 79<br>7 | 155<br>14 | |
| 1898 | 7 | Dunleary | Kingstown 1898 - 1914 | 20 | 24 | |
| 1898 | 1 | | Margate No. 2 1898 - 1925 | 122 | 212 | |
| 1900 | 3 | | Portpatrick 1900 - 1922<br>Montrose No. 1 1924 - 1926 | 18<br>3 | 42<br>2 | |
| 1905 | 2 | Charles Dibdin | North Deal 1905 - 1932 | 186 | 395 | |
| 1905 | 5 | | Maryport 1905 - 1931 | 11 | 30 | |
| 1919 | 7 | Dunleary | Kingstown 1919 - 1938<br>Lytham St. Annes 1939 - 1951 | 23<br>58 | 55<br>30 | |
| 1925 | 1 | Lord Southborough | Margate 1925 - 1951<br>Relief 1951 - 1955 | 278<br>14 | 269<br>17 | |

| Year | Civil Service No. | Name | Stationed at | Launches made | Lives saved | Remarks |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1928 | 3 | Greater London | Southend-on-Sea 1928 -1941} 1945 - 1955 | 253 | 218 | |
| | | | Relief 1941 - 1945} 1955 - 1957} | 22 | 22 | |
| 1932 | 4 | | Whitehills 1932 - 1948 | 26 | 9 | Damaged beyond repair - 1948 |
| 1932 | 5 | | Donaghadee 1932 - 1950 | 80 | 58 | |
| | | | Port St. Mary 1950 - 1956 | 7 | 0 | |
| | | | Relief 1956 - 1958 | 7 | 2 | |
| 1933 | 2 | Charles Dibdin | Walmer 1933 - 1959 | 241 | 412 | |
| 1936 | 6 | Swn-y-Mor | St. David's 1936 - 1963 | 90 | 108 | |
| | | | Eyemouth 1964 - 1967 | 3 | 0 | |
| | | | Relief 1967 - 1972 | 21 | 7 | |
| 1939 | 7 | Princess Royal | Hartlepool 1939 - 1968 | 152 | 94 | |
| | | | Relief 1968 - 1976 | 41 | 24 | |
| 1948 | 8 | Winston Churchill | Blyth 1948 - 1979 | 68 | 39 | |
| | | | Relief 1979 - 1982 | 22 | 6 | |
| 1949 | 4 | Lady Scott | Portrush 1949 - 1981 | 148 | 73 | |
| | | | Relief 1981 - 1987 | 31 | 0 | |
| 1950 | 9 | St. Cybi | Holyhead 1950 - 1980 | 243 | 152 | |
| | | | Relief 1980 - 1985 | 14 | 9 | |
| 1951 | 11 | North Foreland | Margate 1951 - 1978 | 389 | 216 | |
| | | | Relief 1978 - 1981 | 6 | 0 | |
| 1952 | 10 | St. Andrew | Whitehills 1952 - 1959 | 9 | 0 | |
| | | | Girvan 1961 - 1968 | 18 | 8 | |
| | | | Arklow 1968 - 1973 | 5 | 0 | |
| | | | Relief 1959 - 1961} 1973 - 1982 | 49 | 13 | |
| 1955 | 30 | Greater London II | Southend-on-Sea 1955 - 1976 | 253 | 139 | |
| | | | Beaumaris 1977 - 1989 | 38 | 21 | |
| 1956 | 31 | Dunnet Head Pentland | Thurso 1956 - 1956 | 1 | 4 | (Destroyed by fire, 1956. Replaced by C.S. No. 31 "Pentland" by RNLI) |
| | | | Thurso 1957 - 1970 | 49 | 15 | |
| | | | Mumbles 1974 - 1985 | 50 | 21 | |
| 1959 | 32 | Charles Dibdin | Walmer 1959 - 1975 | 143 | 115 | |
| | | | Eastbourne 1977 - 1979 | 11 | 13 | |
| | | | Aldeburgh 1979 - 1982 | 13 | 5 | |
| | | | Relief 1975 - 1977 | 4 | 0 | |
| | | | Relief 1982 - 1988 | 24 | 4 | |

| Year | Civil Service No. | Name | Stationed at | Launches made | Lives saved | Remarks |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1961 | 33 | Duke of Cornwall | Lizard/Cadgwith 1961 - 1984 | 99 | 85 | |
| | | | Relief 1984 - 1989 | 22 | 8 | |
| 1963 | 34 | Joseph Soar | St. David's 1963 - 1985 | 99 | 45 | |
| | | | Dunbar 1986 - 1988 | 6 | 0 | |
| | | | Shoreham 1988 - 1990 | 29 | 8 | |
| 1966 | 35 | Charles H. Barrett | Clovelly 1968 - 1975 | 179 | 38 | |
| | | | Relief 1975 - 1988 | 70 | 38 | |
| 1973 | 36 | Eric Seal | Eyemouth 1974 to date | 77 | 17 | |
| 1975 | 37 | Edward Bridges | Torbay 1975 to date | 318 | 238 | |
| 1976 | - | Percy Garon* | Southend 1976 - 1986 | 422 | 131 | |
| | | | Relief 1986 to date | 25 | 5 | |
| 1978 | 38 | Silver Jubilee | Margate 1978 to date | 150 | 65 | |
| 1981 | 39 | Richard Evans | Portrush 1981 to date | 153 | 35 | |
| 1985 | 40 | St. Cybi II | Holyhead 1985 to date | 98 | 46 | |
| 1990 | 41 | The Princess Royal | St. Ives 1990 to date | 3 | 0 | |

* Atlantic 21

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