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# On Her Majesty's Service

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DAILY SKETCH

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"Coachload of heroes". [Photo  
and notes of George Cross  
holders including Stanley  
Sewell and Leo O'Hagen  
awarded G.C. for gallantry  
at R.G.P.F. 1940.]

# A COACHLOAD OF HEROES



DRIVING AROUND TOWN YESTERDAY . . . 56 MEN OF COURAGE AND A VERY SPECIAL WOMAN, ALL GEORGE CROSS HOLDERS

By  
PETER GRIEG

**I**T was a small boy's dream . . . three busloads of heroes, who did, in real life, what actors pretend to do every night on the telly.

There were 56 men and one woman, all holders of the George Cross for Gallantry, who had gathered together in London to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the founding of the order.

Sipping sherry, looking shy, men who had risked their lives for England clustered in small groups with their wives, talking about anything but courage.

The only medallist who looked at ease was French-born Mrs. Odette Hallowes—better known as Odette Churchill.

Looking more like a film star, slim and elegant in her black silk costume and twinkling decorations, our most famous wartime heroine was the centre of attention.

## Generous

She explained: "I am used now to being the only woman on these occasions. I am very spoiled. English people are so kind to me, and the men at this gathering so generous. They congratulate me for what I did years ago—but they have all done as much, perhaps more."

Commander Anthony Cobham, G.C., R.N.Rtd., actually blushed when I asked him how he had earned his decoration. "There was a sort of explosion in the turret," he said.

"My children?" laughed Wing-Commander Leonard Harrison, G.C., who won his medal in bomb disposal. "Do they think of me as a hero? They don't even know I've got a medal."

William Mosedale, 71-year-old holder from Upper Killmarsh, Sheffield, who won his for rescuing ten people in a burning AFS station in the Birmingham blitz, said the same.

## No hitch

"What does it mean today?"

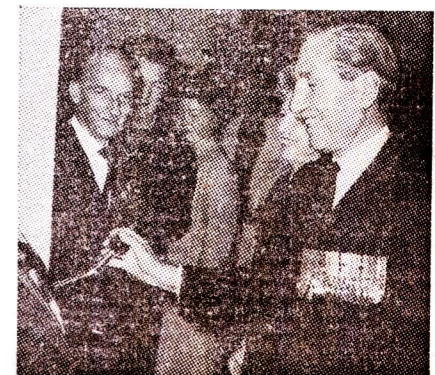
Yesterday had its own hero, too—Mr. V. Hollowday, who was the officer commanding the day's outing.

This consisted of a memorial service at the King George VI statue in the Mall, the sherry get-together, a luncheon at the Café Royal, with Lady Spencer Churchill and Mary Soames as guests of honour, and a remembrance service at the Guards' Chapel, Wellington Barracks.

It was a busy schedule, and with unobtrusive efficiency Mr. Hollowday saw that it went off without a hitch.



A kiss for Resistance heroine Odette Churchill (left) from Anna Neagle—the actress who portrayed her in the film "Odette."



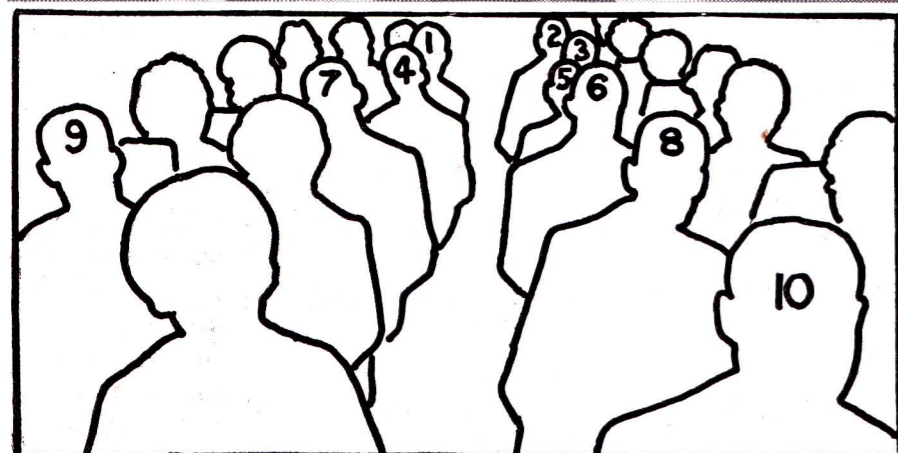
Hero gambling . . . Air Vice-Marshal Sir Laurence Sinclair.



VCs the Rev. Geoffrey Woolley and Brig. Sir John Smythe.



Picture by DON PRICE



Key to ten heroes . . . and how they won the George Cross.

## WHO'S WHO OF THE BRAVE ONES

- 1 REGINALD RIMMER. For gallantry while serving with the Indian Police in 1931.
- 2 RICHARD BLACKBURN. Won the George Cross in 1936 for bravery in tackling a forest fire.
- 3 ERIC BONAR. For gallantry in an air rescue in 1932, when he was a civil airline pilot.
- 4 STANLEY SEWELL. For gallantry after an arms explosion at Waltham Abbey, in 1940.
- 5 Lt.-Col. ARTHUR MERRIMAN. For gallantry dealing with an unexploded-bomb in 1942.
- 6 LEO O'HAGEN. For gallantry following a munitions explosion at Waltham Abbey, Essex, in 1940.
- 7 F. MAURICE CHIELD. For gallantry in disposing of a bomb planted by the IRA in 1939.
- 8 Lt.-Col. CHARLES TANDY GREEN. For gallantry at Darjeeling in 1934, while a member of the Indian Civil Service.
- 9 NORMAN TUNNA. For gallantry during the blitz on the railway at Liverpool in 1941.
- 10 HARRY ERRINGTON. For gallantry with the fire service in the London blitz, 1941.