

Joseph HANCOX, Constable, Liverpool and Bootle Constabulary.

Constable Hancox was informed that a woman had fallen in the water between a pier head wall and a floating landing stage. He ran to the scene and was then told that the woman was in the water beneath the floating stage, where she had been carried by the current. The Constable climbed down on to a pontoon and plunged into the water. The tide was on the ebb and a fast current was flowing. He swam underneath the floating stage, where the water is very turbulent due to the suction caused by the rise and fall of the pontoons. It is also very dark, making it difficult for a rescuer to distinguish objects. Hancox eventually located the woman but as he approached her she sank beneath the surface of the water. When he reached the spot where she had sunk, she floated back to the surface and he was able to grasp her. She was then apparently unconscious. He supported her in the water and swam with her, against the ebbing tide, back to the pontoon. Several men then climbed down and the woman was lifted on to the stage. She was taken by ambulance to hospital where after treatment she recovered. The action of Constable Hancox in the rescue of the woman, taken with complete disregard for his own personal safety, was in accord with the best traditions of the police service.