

RESCUERS!

EXCLUSIVE By NEIL WYATT

A HEROIC pub manager from North Woolwich rescued three children trapped up to their chests in mud in the River Thames.

Darren Bolger, who works at The California in Albert Road, waded into the quagmire and dragged out the brothers aged ten, 11 and 13.

He was working one afternoon when a man ran into the pub and raised the alarm.

Darren, 29, said: "At first we thought a house was on fire and I ran out with some locals."

But the group were led to the river. "I overheard some children were trapped in the mud. I ran down the slipway and saw they were in up to their chests, they had been in there for half-an-hour."

Luckily Darren used to work as a shipbuilder and knows how to walk through mud.

"I didn't realise how deep it was. I thought it would be about a foot, but it was more like four feet," he said.

Darren went out as far as he could. "It was then that I realised I would have trouble getting myself out let alone anyone else."

"I lifted one out of the mud and told him to relax, he was screaming."

Darren rescued the other two before the children were taken to the pub.

They were stripped to their underclothes, wrapped in blankets and sat in front of the fire where they were given crisps and drinks.

Exhausted

The boys' parents, who come from Charlton, were called and they collected the children.

"Afterwards I was absolutely exhausted," admitted Darren. "The water was coming in, another 30 minutes and it would have been over them."

White Watch Commander at Silvertown fire station, Michael Burrell, said: "It was quite a feat. We had been sent to the wrong address and by the time we got to the scene the children were out."

It appears one of the children had fallen in and the other two had gone in after him.

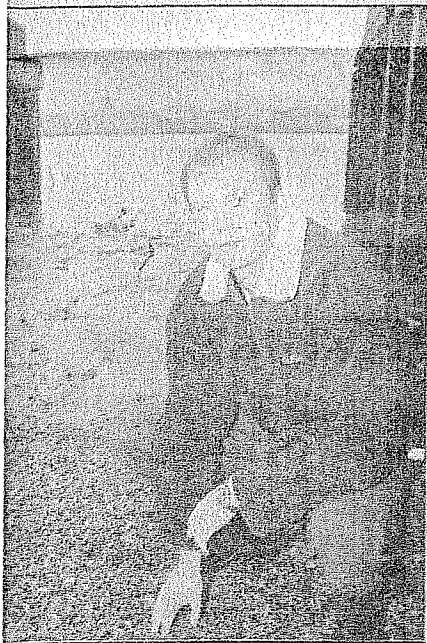
Darren may now be in line for a bravery award.

'HELL' FAMILY EVICTED

NEWHAM Council this week evicted some "neighbours from hell" - their first eviction using new powers to tackle nuisance.

The family had already vacated the house, but left behind an incredible mess.

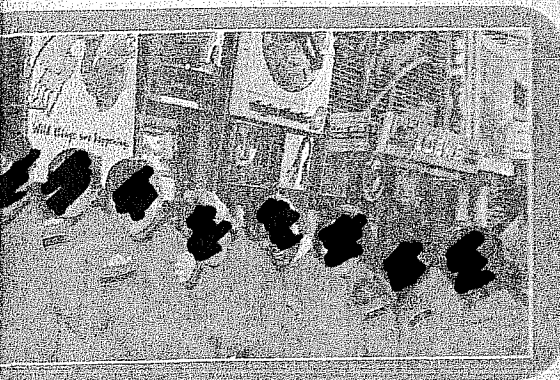
Residents were overjoyed at the action. REPORT and PICTURES: PAGE 11.



Mr Bolger back at the scene of the rescue



Mr and Mrs Bolger. PICTURES: STEVE POSTON



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