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CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD.

St. James's Palace, S.W.1.

11th March, 1941.

The KING has been graciously pleased to approve the award of the George Cross to:—

700404 Sergeant Raymond Mayhew Lewin, Royal Air Force.

In November, 1940, Sergeant Lewin was the captain of an aircraft on a night bombing mission. Shortly after the take off the aircraft began to sink and crashed into a hillside where it burst into flames. Sergeant Lewin extricated himself and saw three of his crew of four climbing out of the escape hatch. He ordered them to run clear. He then ran round the blazing wing in which full petrol tanks were burning and crawled under it to rescue his injured second pilot. Despite his own injuries—a cracked kneecap and severe contusions on the face and legs—he dragged and carried the pilot some 40 yards from the aircraft to a hole in the ground, where he lay on him just as the bombs exploded. This superbly gallant deed was performed in the dark under most difficult conditions and in the certain knowledge that the bombs and petrol tanks would explode.

CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD.

St. James's Palace, S.W.1.

11th March, 1941.

The KING has been graciously pleased to approve the award of the George Medal to:—

The Reverend Stanley William Harrison. Royal Air Force.

One night in November, 1940, an aircraft crashed and burst into flames about three miles from the aerodrome and, although it was not his duty to do so, Mr. Harrison boarded the ambulance which was proceeding to the scene. On arrival, he immediately plunged into the wreckage and despite the scorching heat and exploding machine gun bullets, commenced to drag a member of the crew from the burning debris. He then supervised the work and led the fire picket, himself extricating a second member of the crew and assisting to remove a third. Further efforts were unavailing, however, as the remaining members of the crew were completely buried under the wreckage. Throughout he displayed the utmost courage and an entire disregard for his own safety.

Flight Lieutenant Donald Cecil Smythe (37331). Reserve of Air Force Officers.

Pilot Officer Gerard Ryder (44266). Royal Air Force.

One night in December, 1940, Flight Lieutenant Smythe, Pilot Officer Ryder and a sergeant comprised the crew of an aircraft which crashed and caught fire shortly after taking off. Flight Lieutenant Smythe and Pilot Officer Ryder managed to extricate themselves from the wreckage but the sergeant was trapped in his cockpit. In spite of the fire and exploding incendiaries, and knowing that there were bombs which had not exploded, the two officers immediately re-entered the crashed aircraft and succeeded in extricating the trapped airman. Both these officers displayed great courage and a complete disregard for their personal safety.

Flying Officer Kenneth Leopold George Nobbs (79138). Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.

One night in November, 1940, an aircraft caught fire in the air and crashed in the vicinity of an aerodrome. Flying Officer Nobbs hastened to the scene of the accident and, although the aircraft was burning fiercely and machine gun bullets were flying in all directions, he at once entered the wreckage. He succeeded in pulling out the trapped air gunner, and after carrying him to a safe distance extinguished his burning clothing just before the petrol tanks exploded. Although the air gunner subsequently died of his injuries, Flying Officer Nobbs displayed the utmost courage and an entire disregard of danger in his efforts to save the air gunner's life.

529107 Leading Aircraftman David Nelson. Royal Air Force.

In October, 1940, an aircraft crashed and burst into flames. The air gunner was thrown clear and Leading Aircraftman Nelson shielded the air gunner's body with his own from flying debris. Then, regardless of personal danger, he crawled underneath the burning wreckage and dragged out the observer, who was seriously injured, and put out his burning clothing. Undaunted by the explosion of the petrol tanks, very lights, and bullets, which were exploding in all directions, he displayed conspicuous bravery in making repeated attempts to extricate the pilot, but failed owing to the intense heat and bursting ammunition.

1057438 Aircraftman 2nd Class William Joseph Whyte. Royal Air Force.

In October, 1940, an aircraft crashed and burst into flames. Aircraftman Whyte immediately ran to the scene, in an adjoining field, and found that both the main planes and the fuselage were on fire and that ammunition was exploding. Noticing that one of the pilots appeared to move, this airman, with complete disregard for his own safety, crawled on hands and knees into the damaged cockpit and dragged him clear. Bottles of oxygen were exploding and Aircraftman Whyte received a blow on the head, temporarily lost his sight and collapsed. Unfortunately the rescued pilot was found to be dead, otherwise this airman's gallant action would undoubtedly have saved his life.

Pilot Officer John Tregonwell Davison. Royal New Zealand Air Force.

Pilot Officer Davison was the pilot and Sergeant Brazier the wireless operator/air observer of an aircraft which took part in a bombing attack on two heavily armed merchant vessels. Pilot Officer Davison was wounded in the foot and thigh but succeeded in flying his aircraft back to base. Owing to severe damage sustained to the hydraulic gear, he was compelled to make a crash landing, not knowing that a bomb remained hung up on the rack. The bomb exploded on landing, severely wounding the rear gunner and setting the aircraft on fire. Pilot Officer Davison and Sergeant Brazier jumped clear but then discovered that the rear gunner was still in the aircraft. Regardless of the fire and the likelihood that the petrol tanks might explode, they succeeded in extricating the wounded rear gunner from the rear cockpit and dragging him to safety. By their courage and gallantry they undoubtedly saved the life of the rear gunner.

CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD.

St. James's Palace, S.W.1.

The KING has been graciously pleased to approve the following Awards:—

The Medal of the Military Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, for Meritorious Service.—

941439 Sergeant Geoffrey William Brazier. Royal Air Force.

Pilot Officer Davison was the pilot and Sergeant Brazier the wireless operator/air observer of an aircraft which took part in a bombing attack on two heavily armed merchant vessels. Pilot Officer Davison was wounded in the foot and thigh but succeeded in flying his aircraft back to base. Owing to severe damage sustained to the hydraulic gear, he was compelled to make a crash landing, not knowing that a bomb remained hung up on the rack. The bomb exploded on landing, severely wounding the rear gunner and setting the aircraft on fire. Pilot Officer Davison and Sergeant Brazier jumped clear but then discovered that the rear gunner was still in the aircraft. Regardless of the fire and the likelihood that the petrol tanks might explode, they succeeded in extricating the wounded rear gunner from the rear cockpit and dragging him to safety. By their courage and gallantry they undoubtedly saved the life of the rear gunner.

740518 Sergeant Alfred William Wood. Royal Air Force.

One night in November, 1940, an aircraft developed engine trouble and was compelled to come down on to the sea about 500 yards from the shore. Heavy seas were running at the time but dinghies were launched and finally manned with the exception of the captain of the aircraft and a member of the crew who were swept into the sea, the captain being lost. One dinghy drifted on to the rocks and, with great difficulty, the occupants, amongst whom was Sergeant Wood,

managed to climb up them, being cut and bruised in the attempt. The second dinghy was now in considerable difficulty, having been swept over the rocks in a partially deflated condition. Sergeant Wood, observing the danger to the occupants, stripped off his clothing, donned a flotation jacket and swam for the shore with the intention of securing aid. The sea carried him on to a rock on which he obtained a hand hold, and he afterwards succeeded in climbing the cliffs. To obtain help he ran for about a mile partly through a railway tunnel, on his bare feet,

and returned with a sergeant and two infantrymen, who improvised a rope of blankets and rescued a number of the crew of the aircraft. During the process, however, the rope broke and an R.A.F. officer fell back into the sea, but Sergeant Wood dived into the water and supported him until he was joined by another member of the rescue party, when they succeeded in bringing this officer ashore. Six hours later an officer succeeded in swimming out with a rope which enabled those left on the rocks to be rescued by means of a breeches buoy.

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