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CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD.

St. James's Palace, S.W.1, 29th January, 1943.

The KING has been graciously pleased to give orders for the following appointments to the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, and for the following awards of the British Empire Medal (Military Division):—

To be an Additional Officer of the Military Division of the said Most Excellent Order:—

Acting Squadron Leader Charles James Lofthouse, D.F.C. (60752), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.

Awarded the British Empire Medal (Military Division):—

1223636 Aircraftman 1st Class John Edward Taylor, Royal Air Force.

1412045 Aircraftman 2nd Class Albert Henry Martin, Royal Air Force.

One night in October, 1942, an aircraft crashed while attempting to land at a Royal Air Force Station, and immediately burst into flames. The petrol tanks were ablaze and ammunition was exploding in all directions. Despite the dangerous conditions Squadron Leader Lofthouse directed the rescue work and, accompanied by Aircraftmen Taylor and Martin who were members of a fire party, repeatedly entered the burning fuselage in an endeavour to rescue the crew. They continued their efforts for over an hour and removed 5 members of the crew from the burning area, but 4 of them unfortunately succumbed to their injuries. Squadron Leader Lofthouse and Aircraftmen Taylor and Martin displayed great energy and a complete disregard for their personal safety.

To be an Additional Member of the Military Division of the said Most Excellent Order:—

Flying Officer Alan James Fuller Eberle (110805), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.

One day in November, 1942, when 2 aircraft were taking off in formation, the one leading struck another which was standing on the side of the runway, causing it to be thrown into the path of the second aircraft which was taking off. The 3 aircraft caught fire and the pilot of the second aircraft in the formation was stunned and trapped in his cockpit by the hood which had become locked. Fire engines which came to the scene immediately were unable to subdue the flames. At this stage Flying Officer Eberle and an army officer leapt on to the wing but, despite frantic attempts to open the cockpit hood, they were unable to do so before being forced to retire owing to the flames. Seizing an axe these officers returned to

the aircraft, which was burning furiously with ammunition exploding in both wings, and succeeded in smashing a panel. An airman then leaped on to the wing, and with great presence of mind pulled the hood release enabling the 2 officers to extricate the pilot from the blazing aircraft. Flying Officer Eberle and his army companion displayed outstanding courage and complete disregard of their safety in saving the pilot from certain death.

Awarded the British Empire Medal (Military Division):—

1370558 Sergeant Andrew Sangster Donaldson, Royal Air Force.

In October, 1942, this non-commissioned officer was in charge of a bomb dump guard when an aircraft crashed in the vicinity. On hearing the crash, which had occurred about 30 yards away, he called together the guard, collected a fire extinguisher and hurried to the aircraft. He tried to open the doors but found them both jammed. He then moved to the front of the machine and saw one of the occupants hanging by his harness. He climbed through the wreckage and, assisted by one other member of the guard from the outside, with great difficulty extricated the occupant from the harness and wreckage. Meanwhile, escaping petrol and the port engine of the aircraft had burst into flames which considerably increased the difficulties of his task. At this stage he noticed for the first time the other occupant, the pilot of the aircraft, who was lying on his back underneath the wreckage with his head in the flames. Without hesitation, Sergeant Donaldson took off his tunic, and with extreme difficulty, succeeded in covering the head of the pilot; in so doing he sustained burns on the hands and arms. Sergeant Donaldson saw that, alone, he was unable to do more for the pilot, so he turned his attention again to the other member of the crew. He dragged the latter some 20 yards clear of the machine, and attended to him. By this time personnel from the dispersal point arrived and, together with the members of the guard, they succeeded in dragging the wreckage away from the pilot, whose legs were entangled in the controls. He was pulled clear and wrapped in blankets until the arrival of the ambulance.

307737 Leading Aircraftman Harry Denton Hartle, Royal Air Force.

One night in November, 1942, an aircraft which had taken off from an airfield, crashed and burst into flames. Leading Aircraftman Hartle, who was billeted near the scene of the crash, left his home and made his way with considerable difficulty to the burning aircraft. He was the first to arrive on the scene and immediately endeavoured to