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The KING has been graciously pleased to approve the following awards in recognition of gallantry displayed in flying operations against the enemy:—

Distinguished Service Order.

Flying Officer Maxwell Samuel STRANGE (Can/J.24504), R.C.A.F., 427 (R.C.A.F.) Sqn.

This officer was the pilot of an aircraft detailed to attack a target in Northern France. When nearing the target the aircraft was attacked by a fighter. The starboard side of the fuselage was badly holed by the enemy's machine gun fire which also seriously damaged the starboard elevator. The dinghy was set on fire and petrol from one of the tanks which had been pierced caused the flames to burn fiercely. The rear gunner was wounded but remained in his damaged turret to give directions to his pilot, Flying Officer Strange, who out-manoeuvred the attacker and afterwards successfully bombed his objective. Soon afterwards another fighter was encountered but once again Flying Officer Strange proved his skill and evaded the attacker and finally reached an airfield in this country where he effected a masterly landing. This officer displayed the highest standard of skill, courage and devotion to duty in the face of extremely difficult and dangerous circumstances.

Bar to Distinguished Flying Cross.

Acting Flight Lieutenant George William Alfred AUSTEN, D.F.C. (134021), R.A.F.V.R., 640 Sqn.

Since being awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross this officer has completed many sorties and has continued to display the highest standard of skill and gallantry. Recently, he was the rear gunner of an aircraft detailed to attack the railway sidings at Amiens. During the operation his aircraft was attacked by a fighter. Flight Lieutenant Austen promptly gave his pilot the necessary combat manoeuvre and then opened fire. His bullets struck the attacker which is believed to have been destroyed. On this as on other occasions, Flight Lieutenant Austen defended his aircraft with great skill and thus contributed materially to its safe return.

Bar to Distinguished Flying Cross.

Flight Lieutenant Brian George FROW, D.F.C. (100087), R.A.F.V.R., 7 Sqn.

Distinguished Flying Cross.

Acting Flight Lieutenant Ernest Wharton, D.F.M. (135017), R.A.F.V.R., 7 Sqn.

Acting Warrant Officer Owen Glyndwa ERASMUS (1314546), R.A.F.V.R., 7 Sqn.

One night in June, 1944, these officers and warrant officer were captain, rear gunner and mid-

upper gunner respectively of an aircraft detailed to attack an enemy target. When nearing the enemy coast on the return flight, Flight Lieutenant Frow saw a Junkers 88 about to attack another aircraft of the bomber force. He immediately ordered his gunners to open fire. Flight Lieutenant Wharton and Warrant Officer Erasmus promptly delivered bursts of fire which struck the enemy aircraft, causing it to dive to the ground where it exploded. A few minutes later Flight Lieutenant Wharton sighted another fighter coming in to attack. He quickly warned his captain who manoeuvred to a good position from which Flight Lieutenant Wharton delivered a long burst of fire. His bullets struck the attacker which caught fire and dived earthwards. In the meantime, Warrant Officer Erasmus had sighted yet a third fighter on the starboard quarter. Although the inter-communication system was defective he managed to warn his captain and co-gunner and the latter drove off the attacker which had closed in. These members of aircraft crew displayed great skill, coolness and co-operation throughout this notable action. They have completed many sorties against dangerous and difficult targets.

Distinguished Flying Cross.

Acting Squadron Leader Ian Bishop BUTLER, A.F.C. (84700), R.A.F.V.R., 252 Sqn.

This officer has completed a very large number of sorties and has displayed a high standard of skill and devotion to duty throughout. He is a most efficient flight commander whose fine fighting qualities have been well reflected in the operational efficiency of the formation he commands. In June, 1944, he commanded a small formation of aircraft in a successful attack on an enemy convoy and his fine leadership played a prominent part in the success achieved.

Acting Squadron Leader Harry Thomas PATTERSON (Can/J.15159), R.C.A.F., 433 (R.C.A.F.) Sqn.

As captain and pilot of aircraft this officer has completed a very large number of attacks on targets important to the enemy's war effort. He has displayed a high degree of skill throughout and his example of courage and determination has been most inspiring. His record is worthy of high praise.

Acting Flight Lieutenant Wilfred Arthur CORY (134091), R.A.F.V.R., 427 (R.C.A.F.) Sqn.

Flight Lieutenant Cory is a skilful and resolute pilot. He has taken part in a large number of sorties and his determination to achieve success has won great praise. On more than one occasion his aircraft has been damaged by anti-aircraft fire but he has flown safely to base each time. This officer has displayed devotion to duty of a high order.