

to safety a 3 ton truck which had been parked between the petrol and bomb dumps. He afterwards returned and was rolling petrol drums to safety when the second explosion took place and he was removed to hospital on account of injuries sustained. Sergeant Mitchell searched for injured persons in the blazing wreckage and then assisted in removing explosive equipment from the area of the conflagration. The personnel concerned in this incident showed great courage and initiative and acted with entire disregard of personal safety.

*Awarded the George Medal:—*

Flight Lieutenant William Edward Speirs (88579), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.

In March, 1944, a party of airmen was fusing 500 lb. bombs. One or more of the bombs exploded, causing a number of casualties (3 of which were fatal) and rendering a large number of the remaining bombs dangerous. Flight Lieutenant Speirs, the Wing Armament Officer, was near the fusing area and had been severely shaken by blast but he immediately rushed to the scene and helped an injured man to safety. He then commenced to disperse the remaining bombs, although he knew that some of them might detonate at any moment. Having dispersed them he proceeded to make a detailed examination of each of the suspected bombs and, on his advice, the dump was declared closed for 24 hours. After this lapse of time, Flight Lieutenant Speirs again examined each bomb and recommended the further closure of the dump. Six hours later 4 more bombs exploded, and during the following 24 hours other bombs detonated. It then became essential to examine the remaining bombs as the woods in their vicinity were burning furiously. Flight Lieutenant Speirs undertook this examination and, as a result, an area was declared safe and the fire in the woods was dealt with, thereby saving a considerable number of trees from destruction. After a further period of waiting, this officer again examined all bombs in the area and on his decision that they were sufficiently safe, he supervised their demolition. Thirty bombs were rendered innocuous. This officer displayed high courage and leadership throughout.

*Awarded the George Medal:—*

991199 Leading Aircraftman James McKay McCabe, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.

1177914 Leading Aircraftman Leonard Maynard Williams, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.

One evening in February, 1944, these airmen displayed exceptional courage and devotion to duty when an aircraft, carrying a full bomb load, crashed and caught fire. Leading Aircraftman Williams, who was nearby, was one of the first to arrive at the scene of the accident, and, in spite of exploding ammunition and the danger of the bombs exploding, he succeeded in rescuing the rear gunner. Then, with the assistance of 2 others, he proceeded to take the gunner to safety; the first bomb exploded when they were only 50 yards away. Leading Aircraftman McCabe, a nursing orderly, arrived in the ambulance within 4 minutes of the aircraft crashing. The first bomb had exploded and, although fully aware that others were likely to detonate at any moment, he continued to the aircraft and located a member of the crew who was, unfortunately, dead. Leading Aircraftman McCabe helped to remove the body to a place of safety. When only 30 yards away from the aircraft, a second bomb exploded and no further rescues could be effected. These airmen displayed high courage and complete disregard of their personal safety.

*Awarded the British Empire Medal*

(Military Division):—

Aus./434299 Flight Sergeant Geoffrey Ray Whimpey, Royal Australian Air Force.

One night in May, 1944, Flight Sergeant Whimpey was the rear gunner of a Stirling aircraft which crashed and caught fire after stalling at an altitude of 300 feet. Five of the crew were killed but this airman was in his turret which was torn from the aircraft and flung some distance away from it. Flight Sergeant Whimpey was thrown out of the turret and, although he was uninjured, he suffered badly from shock. Despite this experience he was one of the first to enter the blazing wreckage and rendered most valuable ser-

vice in extricating other members of the crew. Throughout the rescue work there was considerable danger from exploding ammunition and the fuel tanks blew up with an explosion which shook buildings 2 miles distant. Flight Sergeant Whimpey continued to render assistance courageously until the medical officer ordered him to go to the ambulance.

Can/R.18799r Sergeant Richard Theodore Bunt, Royal Canadian Air Force.

Sergeant Bunt was the tail gunner in an aircraft which crashed and burst into flames during practice flying one night in March, 1944. He was thrown clear and stunned but did not suffer any serious injury or burns. On hearing cries from the wireless operator, who was trapped in the blazing wreckage, Sergeant Bunt attempted to reach him, approaching the aircraft from the side furthest from the most intense part of the fire and the fuel tanks. Even so heat compelled him to retire but he again attempted an approach, this time passing near to the blazing fuel tanks. He eventually succeeded in dragging the wireless operator, whose clothes were on fire, to safety and remained with him until help arrived. This was achieved just before the petrol tanks exploded. In rescuing his companion Sergeant Bunt sustained burns to his face and wrists and it was subsequently found that he had sustained a fractured humerus. This airman displayed great bravery under harassing circumstances.

1586158 Sergeant John Noel Rumsby, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.

One night in March, 1944, Sergeant Rumsby was a member of the crew of a Wellington aircraft which crashed through a free on to a barn and proceeded through the top storey of a farm building, finally resting on the roof of another building containing livestock. The tangled wreckage burst into flames. Sergeant Rumsby, although badly bruised and shaken, managed to extricate himself from the wreckage and fell off the roof of the building into the midst of many pedigree bullocks in a stall below. After releasing the animals, who were wild with fear, Sergeant Rumsby climbed back on the roof to search for his companions. He found the pilot of the aircraft injured and with his clothes on fire. Sergeant Rumsby put out the flames and assisted the pilot from the roof and to the farm house. He then returned to the blazing wreckage and made a further search, disregarding the danger from the explosion of fuel tanks in the aircraft and the collapse of the roof of the building. He displayed great gallantry and undoubtedly saved the life of his pilot.

820012 Corporal John Stokes O'Shea, Auxiliary Air Force.

During a low flying attack on our aircraft operating behind the Japanese lines, an aircraft on the ground was set on fire and its pilot was seriously injured. Disregarding the attackers and the fire, Corporal O'Shea left his slit trench and ran to the aid of the pilot, whom he assisted from his burning aircraft. Later, with help from another airman, Corporal O'Shea carried the pilot a distance of 30 yards and applied a tourniquet to stem the flow of blood.

955634 Leading Aircraftman Edward George William Hall, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.

In February, 1944, an aircraft crashed and caught fire. The crew were badly injured and trapped in the blazing wreckage. Leading Aircraftman Hall, who was the first to arrive at the scene of the accident, immediately plunged into the flames in an endeavour to rescue the injured airmen. Despite the danger from the exploding ammunition and petrol tanks he succeeded in dragging two of the airmen to safety. Leading Aircraftman Hall's gallant and prompt action undoubtedly saved 2 lives.

*Air Ministry, 22nd August, 1944.*

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 Kenneth Owen Moore (Can./J.22754), R.C.A.F., 224 Sqn.