

*Bar to Distinguished Flying Cross.*

Acting Squadron Leader Bransome Arthur BURBRIDGE, D.F.C. (100067), R.A.F.V.R., 85 Sqn.

Flight Lieutenant Frank Seymour SKELTON, D.F.C. (106675), R.A.F.V.R., 85 Sqn.

As pilot and observer respectively these officers have completed many sorties and have destroyed 7 enemy aircraft. They have displayed outstanding keenness, great skill and gallantry, setting an example worthy of the highest praise.

Flight Lieutenant Lewis BRANDON, D.F.C. (116886), R.A.F.V.R., 157 Sqn.

This officer has set a fine example of gallantry and devotion to duty. He is a highly skilled and resolute member of aircraft crew and has assisted in the destruction of 6 enemy aircraft and 6 flying bombs.

*Distinguished Flying Cross.*

Wing Commander Christopher William Mitchell LING (26204), R.A.F., 51 Sqn.

Wing Commander Ling has completed many sorties far into enemy occupied territory and his successes are an excellent testimony to his great skill, courage and determination. He is a fine leader whose sterling qualities have contributed in good measure to the operational efficiency of the squadron which has achieved much success. Wing Commander Ling has destroyed one and assisted in the destruction of 2 more enemy aircraft.

Acting Wing Commander Ralph Kennedy CASSELS, A.F.C. (41254), R.A.F.O., 76 Sqn.

This officer has completed very many sorties, including attacks on such targets as Berlin, Stuttgart and industrial centres in the Ruhr area. He has at all times displayed the highest standard of devotion to duty and his fine leadership, great skill and courage have been reflected in the efficiency and fighting qualities of the squadron he commands.

Flight Lieutenant James Paul HOWARD (Can/J.8790), R.C.A.F., 139 Sqn.

Flight Lieutenant Howard has completed many sorties and has proved himself to be a skilful and determined pilot. On three occasions whilst over Berlin, his aircraft has been hit by anti-aircraft fire, and has sustained damage but Flight Lieutenant Howard has completed his task and flown the aircraft back to this country. He has displayed courage and devotion to duty.

Flight Lieutenant Ralph William READ (61278), R.A.F.V.R., 138 Sqn.

One night in September, 1944, Flight Lieutenant Read piloted an aircraft detailed for an operation in Denmark. Soon after the target had been attacked the aircraft was intercepted by a fighter. In the ensuing engagement the bomber sustained extensive damage. The starboard engines were affected, one of them being put out of action. The starboard aileron was shot away. One of the petrol tanks was damaged. The elevator trimming tabs were rendered useless and the wireless apparatus made unserviceable. The aircraft became exceedingly difficult to control and to keep it level, it was necessary for another member of the crew to assist in holding the control column. In spite of this Flight Lieutenant Read flew the aircraft to an airfield near the English coast. When coming in to land the port outer and starboard inner engines failed. Despite this, Flight Lieutenant Read effected a successful crash landing. In perilous circumstances this officer displayed outstanding skill, great courage and determination.

Acting Flight Lieutenant Sydney Harley JOHNSON (Aus.427362), R.A.A.F., 582 Sqn.

This officer is a most efficient and resolute member of aircraft crew. He has participated in very many sorties, one of them being an attack in daylight on an oil refinery at Castrop Rauxel recently. On this occasion he was the bomb aimer. Whilst over the target the aircraft was subjected to heavy anti-aircraft fire and was repeatedly hit. In spite of this a steady attacking run was made and Flight Lieutenant Johnson attacked the target with accuracy. His cool and skilful work in harassing circumstances set a fine example.

Flying Officer Ronald Henry ANDERSON (145342), R.A.F.V.R., 640 Sqn.

One night in September, 1944, Flying Officer Anderson was detailed to attack Kiel. On the outward journey the aircraft was hit by anti-aircraft fire. The starboard outer engine caught fire. The flames were extinguished but owing to severe vibration, the propeller fell away. Kiel

was still 100 miles distant. In spite of the damage sustained, Flying Officer Anderson was determined to bomb the target. Some height was lost and he reached the objective after the main bomber force had completed its attack. Nevertheless, in the face of concentrated fire from the ground defences, Flying Officer Anderson executed his bombing mission. He displayed courage and resolution typical of that which he has shown throughout his tour of operational duty.

Flying Officer Cyril Kenneth CURTIS (52165), R.A.F., 138 Sqn.

As flight engineer this officer has participated in very many sorties and has displayed a high standard of ability throughout. During a recent sortie, Flying Officer Curtis was wounded in the back and legs when his aircraft was attacked by a fighter. Although in great pain he showed a fine spirit and from a position on the floor, calmly instructed another member of the crew in the correct usage of the fuel tanks. This proved an important factor in the eventual safe return of the aircraft as the petrol supply was fast becoming exhausted as an airfield was reached. Flying Officer Curtis displayed great fortitude and devotion to duty.

Flying Officer William Joseph MULLEN (Aus.426137), R.A.A.F., No. 466 (R.A.A.F.) Sqn.

Flying Officer Mullen has flown on many operational sorties and has attacked a variety of targets. One night in August, 1944, he was detailed to attack a military target in the battle area in Normandy. To ensure success, accurate bombing was essential. In the run-in intense anti-aircraft fire was encountered. The aircraft was hit and the starboard engine caught fire. Fully aware of the responsibilities entrusted to him, Flying Officer Mullen held to a straight and steady bombing run and, in the face of heavy fire, he attacked his target with great precision. This officer displayed great skill, courage and resolution.

Flying Officer George Oliver RUSSELL (147618), R.A.F.V.R., 115 Sqn.

This officer has completed numerous sorties and has displayed outstanding determination and devotion to duty, qualities which were well illustrated on a recent occasion when detailed to attack Neuss. In the early stages of the flight the port outer engine failed. Some time later the mid-upper turret became unserviceable. Nevertheless, Flying Officer Russell continued to the target and executed his bombing attack from a much lower level than that which had been planned. His resolution to complete his mission successfully set an excellent example.

Flying Officer Noel Douglas WILKINSON (172187), R.A.F.V.R., 608 Sqn.

One night in September, 1944, Flying Officer Wilkinson, as pilot of aircraft, was detailed to attack Berlin. During the bombing run the aircraft was illuminated in the searchlights and immediately after the bombs had been released was attacked by an enemy fighter. The aircraft was repeatedly hit. The windscreen was smashed and the navigator was temporarily blinded by flying particles of glass. Coolly and skilfully, however, Flying Officer Wilkinson manoeuvred his damaged aircraft and finally evaded the attacker. Soon afterwards one engine became useless. Despite this, and although deprived of the services of the injured navigator Flying Officer Wilkinson flew back to an airfield and effected a successful crash landing. He set a fine example of courage and determination.

Flying Officer Vivian Thomas WOODS (Can/J.16361), R.C.A.F., 405 (R.C.A.F.) Sqn.

In September, 1944, Flying Officer Woods was pilot and captain of an aircraft detailed for a daylight attack on a synthetic oil refinery in Germany. During the bombing run, the aircraft was hit by anti-aircraft fire and sustained severe damage but the attack was pressed home. Two petrol tanks had been punctured and, as the bomber turned away from the target a third one was pierced. On the homeward flight, Flying Officer Woods used the engines with great skill thus conserving a certain amount of petrol. As the enemy coast was crossed the last remaining tank was pierced. The situation was serious but this pilot succeeded in flying to within 4 miles of the English coast before the engines failed through lack of petrol. Even so, Flying Officer Woods managed to reach an airfield on the coast and effect a successful crash landing. He displayed exceptional skill, great courage and determination.