

Acting Flight Lieutenant Leonard BURSSELL (N.Z.415209), R.N.Z.A.F., 101 Sqn.

Flight Lieutenant Bursell has set a fine example of gallantry and devotion to duty. He has participated in very many sorties and has invariably pressed home his attacks with exceptional determination. One night in October, 1944, this officer was pilot and captain of an aircraft detailed to attack Cologne. Early on the outward flight one engine failed but Flight Lieutenant Bursell flew on. When nearing the target the inter-communication system became unserviceable. Although the aircraft was now subjected to considerable anti-aircraft fire this pilot pressed home a good attack and afterwards flew the aircraft back to an airfield in this country. The brakes were defective but he effected a safe landing. Flight Lieutenant Bursell displayed outstanding skill and great resolution.

Flying Officer Harold Graham GRANT (Can/J.86001), R.C.A.F., 101 Sqn.

As pilot, this officer has completed many sorties the last of which was an attack against Cologne recently. His determination on this occasion was typical of that which he has shown throughout his tour. Soon after the bombs had been released his aircraft was hit by shrapnel. One engine was put out of action. Almost immediately the aircraft was again struck. A second engine was damaged and soon failed completely. Both turrets had also been rendered unserviceable and much navigational equipment was damaged. Height was gradually lost and it seemed as though Flying Officer Grant would be compelled to try to land his aircraft in France. He held on to his original course, however, and displaying superb skill and exceptional determination flew the severely damaged aircraft to an airfield in this country. His coolness and courage in harassing circumstances set an example of a very high standard.

Acting Flying Officer Cecil David MATTINGLEY (Aus.408458), R.A.A.F., 625 Sqn.

As pilot and captain of aircraft, Flying Officer Mattingley took part in an attack against Dortmund in November, 1944. Whilst over the target the aircraft was badly hit. Flying Officer Mattingley was wounded about the head and in the arm and thigh. In spite of this, he carried through with his attack and afterwards flew the damaged aircraft back to this country. His indomitable spirit, superb captaincy and outstanding devotion to duty set an example of a high order.

Acting Flying Officer Joseph Guy Rene Wilfrid SICCOTTE (Can/J.87150), R.C.A.F., 425 (R.C.A.F.) Sqn.

In October, 1944, this officer piloted an aircraft in an attack against Duisburg. When nearing the target the starboard outer engine failed. Shortly afterwards the aircraft came under heavy anti-aircraft fire and was hit. The fuselage was pierced in innumerable places by pieces of shrapnel. One of the petrol tanks was punctured and much other damage sustained. Nevertheless, Flying Officer Siccotte executed a determined and successful attack. This officer has completed very many sorties against well defended targets and has displayed notable skill, courage and devotion to duty.

Acting Flying Officer John Henry TOLLEY (185434), R.A.F.V.R., 514 Sqn.

In November, 1944, this officer piloted an aircraft detailed to attack Homberg. Whilst over the target the aircraft sustained extensive damage. Two engines were rendered unserviceable. The cockpit cowling was shattered and the aircraft was riddled with holes from nose to tail. In spite of this the bombs were released on the target. Soon after leaving the area a third engine failed. The aircraft became very difficult to control and height was lost rapidly. Flying Officer Tolley displayed the greatest perseverance and determination in spite of this and succeeded in keeping airborne until over friendly territory where he executed a perfect landing in a field in the face of a blinding rainstorm. This officer, who has completed numerous sorties, proved himself to be a resolute and confident captain and was undoubtedly responsible for saving the aircraft and its crew.

Warrant Officer Leslie HOWELLS (1417802), R.A.F.V.R., 75 (N.Z.) Sqn.

As flight engineer this officer has executed his tasks with great skill and has set a fine example of devotion to duty. On one occasion, whilst over enemy territory, the aircraft in which he was a crew member was badly hit by anti-aircraft fire.

Warrant Officer Howells was wounded about the head. Although his injury was most painful he persisted in fulfilling his appointed duties and his good work contributed to the safe return of the aircraft. Since then, Warrant Officer Howells has completed numerous sorties and has displayed great ability and determination.

*Distinguished Flying Cross.*

Flying Officer Ronald Lee COX (Can/J.26413), R.C.A.F., 419 (R.C.A.F.) Sqn.

Flying Officer Lyle William SITTLINGTON (Can/J.37838), R.C.A.F., 419 (R.C.A.F.) Sqn.

*Distinguished Flying Medal.*

Can/R.222756 Flight Sergeant Raymond Austin TOANE, R.C.A.F., 419 (R.C.A.F.) Sqn.

These officers and this airman were pilot, wireless operator and rear gunner respectively of an aircraft detailed to attack Oberhausen one night in November, 1944. The target was successfully bombed but, soon after leaving the area, the aircraft was hit by a hail of bullets from an enemy fighter. Both inner engines were put out of action. The intercommunication and hydraulic systems were rendered unserviceable. Flying Officer Sittlington was wounded in the face and arm and Flight Sergeant Toane was injured in the face, the arms and leg. The enemy aircraft again came in with guns blazing. The bomber sustained further damage and went into a spiral dive but Flying Officer Cox succeeded in levelling out after considerable height had been lost. Meanwhile Flying Officer Sittlington had shown the greatest coolness and determination in successfully extinguishing a fire which had broken out in his cabin. Flight Sergeant Toane had also proved his courage and resolution. Blood streamed down his face and, though almost blinded by it, he had remained in his turret to fire his guns at the attacker. Throughout the fight, Flying Officer Cox displayed great skill and coolness and he afterwards flew the severely damaged aircraft to the first available airfield. Here, he effected a successful crash landing. He displayed the finest qualities of courage and determination. Flying Officer Sittlington and Flight Sergeant Toane also proved themselves to be most worthy members of aircraft crew. Although injured and in much distress they showed the highest standard of devotion to duty.

*Air Ministry, 26th January, 1945.*

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

*Bar to Distinguished Service Order.*

*Acting Wing Commander.*

William Vernon CRAWFORD-COMPTON, D.S.O., D.F.C. (65500), R.A.F.V.R.

*Distinguished Service Order.*

*Flight Lieutenant.*

Alfred William KILPATRICK (125463), R.A.F.V.R., 197 Sqn.

*Bar to Distinguished Flying Cross.*

*Squadron Leaders.*

James Chilton Francis HAYTER, D.F.C. (36207), R.A.F.O., 74 Sqn.

Keith Temple LOFTS, D.F.C. (90483), A.A.F., 66 Sqn.

*Acting Squadron Leaders.*

Robert Arman BANCE, D.F.C. (68165), R.A.F.V.R., 88 Sqn.

George Black MURRAY, D.F.C. (41450), R.A.F.O., 21 Sqn.

Robert Lawrence SPURDLE, D.F.C. (44230), R.A.F., 80 Sqn.

*Flight Lieutenants.*

George Arthur HALL, D.F.C. (120955), R.A.F.V.R., 219 Sqn.

Leslie STEPHENSON, D.F.C. (118959), R.A.F.V.R., 219 Sqn.

*Distinguished Flying Cross.*

*Acting Group Captain.*

Christopher Harold HARTLEY, A.F.C. (72439), R.A.F.V.R.