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The KING has been graciously pleased to approve the following awards in recognition of gallantry and devotion to duty in the execution of air operations:—

Bar to Distinguished Flying Cross.

Acting Wing Commander Derrick Milner WALBOURN, D.S.O., D.F.C. (72004), R.A.F.V.R., 37 Sqn.

In December, 1944, Wing Commander Walbourn piloted an aircraft in an attack on the railway sidings at Coblenz. Almost immediately after taking off, the starboard engine began to vibrate badly and had to be put out of action. Despite the loss of engine power, Wing Commander Walbourn continued to the target which he reached on time. Whilst over the target much anti-aircraft fire was directed at his aircraft. Nevertheless, Wing Commander Walbourn executed a straight and level bombing run. The aircraft was hit many times in the fuselage and mainplane but this pilot flew back to base. The success achieved reflects the greatest credit on the skill and determination of this officer.

Acting Squadron Leader Gordon Wonnacott, D.F.C. (Can/J.9868), R.C.A.F., 414 (R.C.A.F.) Sqn.

This officer continues to show great gallantry in air operations. His keenness to engage the enemy was well in evidence on one occasion in January, 1945, when, on returning to base at the completion of a reconnaissance, he saw the airfield was being attacked by a large force of enemy aircraft. Squadron Leader Wonnacott immediately engaged the enemy. Before all his ammunition was expended, this resolute pilot had destroyed three of the attacking force. This officer has displayed devotion to duty of a very high order.

Flight Lieutenant Reginald John FOSTER, D.F.C. (106065), R.A.F.V.R., 604 Sqn.

Flight Lieutenant Maurice Frederick NEWTON, D.F.C. (116700), R.A.F.V.R., 604 Sqn.

As pilot and observer respectively, Flight Lieutenants Foster and Newton have completed a very large number of sorties. They have set a fine example of courage and determination and have destroyed eight enemy aircraft, successes which are an excellent testimony to their great skill and co-operation. Flight Lieutenant Newton has shared in the destruction of one more enemy aircraft which was shot down when he was flying with another pilot.

Distinguished Flying Cross.

Acting Squadron Leader Peter Maurice BEZENCENET (115617), R.A.F.V.R., 208 Sqn.

This officer has completed a very large number of sorties, including numerous successful recon-

naissances over the forward battle area during these operations. Squadron Leader Bezencenet has faced heavy enemy fire with complete disregard for his own safety. Nevertheless, he has executed his missions with great skill. On one occasion, in September, 1944, whilst over the Bologna area, his aircraft sustained such damage that he was forced to abandon it. Although he was badly wounded when fired upon by an enemy patrol, Squadron Leader Bezencenet succeeded in reaching the British lines. This officer has displayed outstanding keenness and has set a fine example of bravery and devotion to duty.

Flight Lieutenant Peter Frank RAW (Aus.409445), R.A.A.F., 178 Sqn.

This officer has completed a notable tour of operational duty. He has displayed exceptional skill and devotion to duty and his example of determination and courage in the face of danger has been reflected in the fine spirit of his crew. Early in his operational career, Flight Lieutenant Raw was called upon to take part in an attack on Ploesti East oil refinery. In spite of fierce fire from the ground defences, this resolute pilot executed a successful bombing run and afterwards evaded an enemy fighter which attempted to close in. He returned safely to base. Since then, Flight Lieutenant Raw has participated in several sorties calling for a high degree of skill and resolution. His record is most impressive.

Flight Lieutenant Donald Campbell GORDON (Can/J.16633), R.C.A.F., 442 (R.C.A.F.) Sqn.

This officer has displayed the highest standard of skill and resolution in his attacks on the enemy. Among his successes is the destruction of four enemy aircraft. Two of these he shot down recently in an engagement against a large force of enemy fighters. Flight Lieutenant Gordon was wounded and his aircraft was badly damaged but he effected a successful crash-landing.

Flight Lieutenant Stewart William REES (Aus.415681), R.A.A.F., 600 Sqn.

Flying Officer Douglas Clive BARTLETT (147947), R.A.F.V.R., 600 Sqn.

These officers, as pilot and observer respectively, have completed a large number of sorties. Throughout, they have displayed great co-operation and high skill and have been responsible for the destruction of four enemy aircraft at night.

Acting Flight Lieutenant Ernest Jack FLETCHER (Aus.409138), R.A.A.F., 178 Sqn.

As pilot and captain of aircraft, Flight Lieutenant Fletcher has participated in very many sorties and has displayed exceptional ability and devotion to duty. On several occasions he has been detailed for missions entailing flights far into enemy territory. The success obtained on all

these occasions is a fine tribute to his skill, courage and fortitude. This officer has rendered valuable service.

Acting Flight Lieutenant Frederick James LAWRENSON (Aus.412544), R.A.A.F., 450 (R.A.A.F.) Sqn.

Flight Lieutenant Lawrenson has completed a large number of sorties, during which he has attacked a variety of enemy targets, often in the face of heavy opposing fire. In December, 1944, he was detailed to attack a railway junction at Nervasa. As he dived to the attack his aircraft was hit by a shell which blew away the canopy above his head and smashed part of the windscreen around him. Flight Lieutenant Lawrenson was wounded in the face and his headphones and microphone were ripped away from his flying helmet. Undeterred, this resolute pilot pressed home his attack with great determination and accuracy. Although suffering severely from pain and, the cold, Flight Lieutenant Lawrenson flew the damaged aircraft a considerable distance to base and landed safely with the undercarriage retracted. This officer displayed a high degree of skill, courage and fortitude.

Captain Edwin SWALES (6101V), S.A.A.F., 582 Sqn.

This officer was pilot and captain of an aircraft detailed to attack Cologne in December, 1944. When approaching the target intense anti-aircraft fire was encountered. Despite this a good bombing attack was executed. Soon afterwards the aircraft was attacked by five enemy aircraft. In the ensuing fights, Captain Swales manoeuvred with great skill. As a result his gunners were able to bring effective fire to bear upon the attackers, one of which is believed to have been shot down. Throughout this spirited action Captain Swales displayed exceptional coolness and captaincy, setting a very fine example. This officer has completed very many sorties during which he has attacked a variety of enemy targets.

Flying Officer John Reginald BREWER (147935), R.A.F.V.R., 600 Sqn.

Flying Officer Garnett Wolsely JUDD (Aus.420957), R.A.A.F., 600 Sqn.

These officers have displayed outstanding keenness for air operations. As observer and pilot respectively they have completed a large number of sorties during which they have been responsible for the destruction of four enemy aircraft at night. They have displayed commendable skill and courage. In addition to his success with Flying Officer Judd, Flying Officer Brewer has shared in the destruction of one more enemy aircraft.

Flying Officer Gregory Donald CAMERON (Can/J.16336), R.C.A.F., 401 (R.C.A.F.) Sqn.

Flying Officer Cameron has displayed a high standard of skill and resolution in air operations. He has participated in a large number of sorties during which he has shown the greatest keenness to engage the enemy. Flying Officer Cameron has destroyed four enemy aircraft, three of which he shot down within a few minutes in an engagement against a large force of fighters in January, 1945. Flying Officer Cameron has also attacked several locomotives and a number of mechanical vehicles with damaging effect.

Flying Officer William Henry CORNELIUS (176231), R.A.F.V.R., 156 Sqn.

In December, 1944, Flying Officer Cornelius was detailed to attack Coblenz. Whilst over the target his aircraft was hit by anti-aircraft fire and Flying Officer Cornelius was wounded in the leg. In spite of this he made two runs over the target to execute a successful attack. Although suffering considerable pain and weak through loss of blood, he flew his aircraft back to base where he landed it safely, despite poor visibility. Flying Officer Cornelius has completed numerous sorties and has invariably displayed commendable courage and determination.

Flying Officer John Wilburn GARLAND (Can/J 17155), R.C.A.F., 80 Sqn.

This officer has completed a very large number of sorties, involving attacks on enemy targets in various battle areas. During these operations he has effectively attacked shipping, many mechanical vehicles and a number of locomotives and wagons; his successes also include the destruction of four enemy aircraft. Flying Officer Garland has proved himself to be a highly skilled, courageous and resolute fighter.

Flying Officer Robert Harold LAURENCE (Can/J.20602), R.C.A.F., 439 (R.C.A.F.) Sqn.

This officer has taken part in a large number of sorties and throughout has set a fine example of skill and determination in pressing home his attacks on various targets. In air fighting, Flying Officer Laurence has destroyed four enemy aircraft. He has rendered much valuable and devoted service.

Flying Officer William SAWERS (Can/J.14539), R.C.A.F., 414 (R.C.A.F.) Sqn.

This officer has displayed a high degree of skill and courage in his attacks on the enemy. In an engagement against a force of some ten enemy fighters in December, 1944, Flying Officer Sawers fought with great tenacity and shot down three of the enemy aircraft. This officer has taken part in very many sorties and throughout has shown the greatest keenness.

Distinguished Flying Cross.

Warrant Officer Arnold Andreas Leslie ANDERSEN (Aus.426001), R.A.A.F., 582 Sqn.

Distinguished Flying Medal.

Aus.424485 Flight Sergeant John Grylls WATSON, R.A.A.F., 582 Sqn.

Warrant Officer Andersen and Flight Sergeant Watson were wireless operator and rear gunner respectively in an aircraft detailed to attack Cologne in December, 1944. When approaching the target the aircraft was hit by anti-aircraft fire and sustained some damage. On leaving the area, the bomber was engaged by ten fighters. In the face of persistent attacks, Flight Sergeant Watson displayed great coolness. His turret was not functioning properly and two of his guns were unserviceable. Nevertheless, he defended his aircraft with great resolution. Eventually, his turret was hit by a cannon shell. The windscreen was shattered. The intercommunication system was smashed. The turret doors became firmly jammed and Flight Sergeant Watson was trapped. Undeterred, he continued to fire at the enemy as best he could. Meantime, Warrant Officer Andersen had seen his comrade's plight and went to render assistance. It was a dangerous task as the pilot was taking violent evading action and the fuselage had suffered considerable damage. Nevertheless he negotiated a safe passage to the rear turret and extricated his comrade after forcing the turret doors with an axe. Soon afterwards it became necessary to leave the crippled aircraft by parachute. Had Warrant Officer Andersen not been successful the rear gunner would have had no hope of escape. In most distressing circumstances these crew members displayed cool courage and great determination.

Distinguished Flying Medal.

1000028 Flight Sergeant Bryn LEACH, R.A.F.V.R., 582 Sqn.

This airman was the mid upper gunner of an aircraft detailed to attack Cologne in December, 1944. Soon after leaving the target, the aircraft was engaged by seven fighters. The rear gunner was unable to give his pilot any evading directions as that part of the intercommunication system connected to his turret was inoperative. Flight Sergeant Leach therefore assumed the responsibility and directed the necessary combat manoeuvres during constant attacks by the enemy aircraft. Although his aircraft was hit many times by the attacker's bullets, Flight Sergeant Leach fought with great resolution. One of the enemy aircraft fell to his guns, whilst in two instances the other fighters' attacks were rendered completely ineffective by his clever evading directions. Finally, the enemy aircraft broke off the engagement. Flight Sergeant Leach proved himself to be a cool and courageous member of aircraft crew. His excellent work contributed much towards the safe return of the aircraft.

1397347 Sergeant Joseph Arthur Augustine SKERRITT, R.A.F.V.R., 40 Sqn.

As air gunner, Sergeant Skerritt has completed a good number of sorties, many of them involving flights far into enemy territory. Throughout, he has displayed the highest standard of devotion to duty and has proved himself to be a most vigilant and reliable member of aircraft crew. One night in November, 1944, he took part in an attack on a railway target in Hungary. Whilst on the bombing run the aircraft was attacked by a fighter.

Displaying great coolness, Sergeant Skerritt gave his pilot excellent evading directions and afterwards delivered a burst of fire which struck the enemy aircraft, causing its destruction. Shortly after turning for home another fighter closed in but it was evaded. Some few minutes later, yet a third enemy aircraft attacked but Sergeant Skerritt drove it off. This airman displayed commendable skill and resolution throughout this successful sortie.

Air Ministry, 23rd February, 1945.

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

Bar to Distinguished Service Order.

Acting Wing Commander.

Anthony Desmond Joseph LOVELL, D.S.O., D.F.C. (40402), R.A.F.O.

Distinguished Service Order.

Acting Wing Commander.

Charles Leopold Walker STEWART, A.F.C. (40646), R.A.F.O., 255 Sqn.

Distinguished Flying Cross.

Acting Squadron Leaders.

Alan DUNNING (105187), R.A.F.V.R., 614 Sqn.
Arthur Harry JUPP (108022), R.A.F.V.R., 43 Sqn.
Peter Wilson LOVELL (42351), R.A.F., 260 Sqn.

Flight Lieutenants.

Douglas Walter Charles ENGLAND (133220), R.A.F.V.R., 260 Sqn
Maurice William SMYTH (130926), R.A.F.V.R. 253 Sqn.
Charles Trevor STIMPSON (129663), R.A.F.V.R., 601 Sqn.

Acting Flight Lieutenants.

John FEELY (148280), R.A.F.V.R., 70 Sqn.
Colin FISHER, D.F.M. (245169), R.A.F.V.R., 70 Sqn.
John Wilfred PATTERSON (157148), R.A.F.V.R., 253 Sqn.
John Marston RALPH (171223), R.A.F.V.R., 37 Sqn.
William Joseph RICHINGS (157850), R.A.F.V.R., 70 Sqn.

Flying Officers.

John Patrick Lewen SHARP (162286), R.A.F.V.R., 178 Sqn.
Frederick Leonard SIMPSON (156409), R.A.F.V.R., 70 Sqn.
Alfred William James SMITHERS (178944), R.A.F.V.R., 37 Sqn.
Henry WHELDON (151690), R.A.F.V.R., 614 Sqn.

Pilot Officers.

William Trotter Pringle JOHNSTON (188445), R.A.F.V.R., 148 Sqn.
William Dudley Claude PRATT (184884), R.A.F.V.R., 70 Sqn.
John Cameron WORDIE (188414), R.A.F.V.R., 70 Sqn.

Warrant Officer.

Charles Mortimer HALL (1349894), R.A.F.V.R., 148 Sqn.

Distinguished Flying Medal.

Flight Sergeants.

1614764 Geoffrey Barnard BRIGGS, R.A.F.V.R., 614 Sqn.
1623161 John HORSFORD, R.A.F.V.R., 272 Sqn. (since deceased) with effect from 5th September, 1944.
1670322 Thomas MERRICK, R.A.F.V.R., 37 Sqn.

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE.

Distinguished Flying Cross.

Flight Lieutenant.

William SIMPSON (Aus.409757), 614 Sqn.

Flying Officers.

Allen David LACKEY (Aus.413613), 683 Sqn.
Robert Peter MCMILLAN (Aus.406220), 55 Sqn.

ROYAL CANADIAN AIR FORCE.

Distinguished Flying Cross.

Flight Lieutenant.

Walter Arnott IRWIN (Can/J.12868), 614 Sqn.

Flying Officer.

James Robert McLAUGHLIN (Can/J.85328), 683 Sqn.

ROYAL NEW ZEALAND AIR FORCE.

Distinguished Flying Cross.

Acting Squadron Leader.

Brian Maurice O'CONNOR (N.Z.412261), 70 Sqn.

SOUTH AFRICAN AIR FORCE.

Distinguished Service Order.

Lieutenant-Colonel.

Richard Adrian BLACKWELL, D.F.C. (103017V), 24 (S.A.A.F.) Sqn.

Distinguished Flying Cross.

Lieutenants.

Johannes Hendrik KRUGER (32878V), 601 Sqn.
John LEWIS (542562V), 70 Sqn.
Eric James Hugh McTEER (329207V), 70 Sqn.
Peter Donald POTE (209544V), 601 Sqn.

Second Lieutenant.

Neville BAYLEY (26821V), 40 Sqn.

The above awards are in recognition of gallantry and devotion to duty in the execution of air operations.

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