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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:—

Distinguished Flying Cross.

Acting Squadron Leader Percival Sidney OSBORNE, (123964), R.A.F.V.R., 619 Sqn.

Flying Officer David John DAVIES (Aus.429880), R.A.A.F., 619 Sqn.

These officers were pilot and rear gunner respectively in an aircraft detailed to attack the Mittelland Canal at Gravenhorst one night in February, 1945. Shortly after leaving the target, Flying Officer Davies warned his pilot of the presence of an enemy fighter. Squadron Leader Osborne made the necessary manoeuvre and a burst of fire from Flying Officer Davies' guns drove the enemy aircraft off. But it closed in again. This time, Flying Officer Davies met the enemy aircraft with an accurate burst of fire which caused its destruction. A few minutes later another fighter attacked but Squadron Leader Osborne manoeuvred well and once again his rear gunner delivered a well placed burst which set the attacker on fire. Later on, yet a third enemy aircraft closed in. Although his guns had become unserviceable, Flying Officer Davies gave excellent direction to his pilot who manoeuvred well to prevent the enemy aircraft from pressing home any attack. Finally, Flying Officer Davies cleared one of his guns and delivered a short burst of fire which caused the attacker to terminate the engagement. Throughout the fights, Squadron Leader Osborne and Flying Officer Davies displayed great skill and co-operation, coupled with exceptional coolness and resolution.

Acting Squadron Leader David Buckley BRETHERTON (115776), R.A.F.V.R., 106 Sqn.

This officer was the pilot and captain in an aircraft detailed for a mine-laying mission in Northern Waters one night in February, 1945. On the outward flight, the starboard outer engine failed. The mid-upper turret then became unserviceable. Undeterred, Squadron Leader Bretherton continued his long flight to the target and executed his task with great accuracy. He afterwards flew safely back to a home based airfield. Throughout this well executed sortie, Squadron Leader Bretherton displayed skill and coolness of a high order. This officer has taken part in very many sorties and has proved himself to be an efficient and fearless captain.

Acting Flight Lieutenant George COLEMAN, D.F.M. (156629), R.A.F.V.R., 139 Sqn.

This officer has completed more than eighty sorties. He has displayed the finest qualities of skill and resolution and throughout his devotion to duty has been unfailing. One night in March, 1945, he piloted an aircraft detailed to attack Berlin. When nearing the target the aircraft was illuminated in the searchlights and subjected to considerable anti-aircraft fire. In spite of this, Flight Lieutenant Coleman pressed home his attack. Immediately afterwards, his aircraft was struck by bullets from an enemy fighter. The leading edge of the port mainplane was shot away, the main spar was holed and the underside of the port mainplane between the drop tank and the wing tip was torn away. The aircraft became difficult to control but showing superb skill, Flight Lieutenant Coleman flew to base and landed safely.

Acting Flight Lieutenant Robert Victor OSTLER (148524), R.A.F.V.R., 15 Sqn.

This officer was the pilot and captain of an aircraft detailed to attack Wiesbaden. Almost as the target was reached the aircraft sustained damage. Two petrol tanks were holed and much petrol was lost; nevertheless, Flight Lieutenant Ostler executed his attack. Just afterwards, the aircraft sustained further damage, the starboard outer engine being put out of action. Flight Lieutenant Ostler realised he would not be able to complete the return flight to base and set course for an airfield in allied territory. Soon after, the aircraft was attacked by 2 fighters. Coolly and skilfully, this pilot evaded the enemy fighters and eventually brought his badly damaged aircraft down safely at a landing ground. This officer displayed skill, courage and determination throughout.

Acting Flight Lieutenant Cyril Ebenezer PETERS (157670), R.A.F.V.R., 77 Sqn.

Flight Lieutenant Peters has completed numerous sorties and has set a very fine example of skill and determination. In February, 1945, he piloted an aircraft detailed to attack Bohlen. On the outward flight the starboard inner engine became defective and the propeller had to be feathered. Some airspeed was lost and Flight Lieutenant Peters was unable to keep his place in the main bomber force. In spite of this, Flight Lieutenant Peters went on to the target which he successfully attacked. On the return flight, whilst still over enemy territory, the starboard outer engine caught fire and had to be put out of action. The defective starboard inner