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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 Service Order.

Acting Wing Commander Robert Clifford ALABASTER, D.S.O., D.F.C. (81065), R.A.F.V.R., 608 Sqn.

This officer has a splendid operational record, having participated in a hundred bombing sorties. In these operations he has attacked a wide range of strongly defended targets and throughout has set the highest standard of devotion to duty. Highly skilled, brave and resolute at all times, Wing Commander Alabaster has set an example which has been well reflected in the operational efficiency of the squadron he commands.

Distinguished Service Order.

Acting Wing Commander Peter Livingstone CHILTON, D.F.C., A.F.C. (33459), R.A.F., 149 Sqn.

Wing Commander Chilton was pilot and captain of an aircraft detailed to lead a bomber force in a daylight attack against Bremen in April 1945. To ensure success, a high degree of accuracy was essential owing to the presence of our ground forces in the vicinity. When passing over Wilhelmshaven, much anti-aircraft fire was encountered. Wing Commander Chilton's aircraft was hit. The starboard aileron was rendered almost ineffective, the hydraulic system was made un-serviceable and petrol commenced to leak from the tank in the starboard wing. Although the aircraft became difficult to control, Wing Commander Chilton maintained his position in the formation and went on to execute a successful attack. He afterwards flew the damaged aircraft safely back to base. This officer, who has completed many sorties on his third tour of operational duty, set a splendid example of skill, courage and tenacity throughout.

Acting Flight Lieutenant George Alexander THORNE, D.F.C. (174525), R.A.F.V.R., 635 Sqn.

In April, 1945, this officer piloted an aircraft in an attack against Nuremberg. In the run-up to the target, Flight Lieutenant Thorne's aircraft was subjected to heavy and concentrated fire from the ground defences. The bomber was hit. The port aileron was affected and the aircraft became difficult to control. In spite of this, Flight Lieutenant Thorne made several runs over the target to ensure an accurate attack. He afterwards flew the damaged aircraft to base where he effected a safe landing. This officer, who has completed very many sorties since being awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and never failed to complete his allotted task, displayed the highest standard of devotion to duty throughout.

Distinguished Service Order.

Flying Officer Joseph Fred MOONEY (Can./J.41167), R.C.A.F., 625 Sqn.

Distinguished Flying Cross.

Flying Officer Harold Harvey HARDING (Can./J.40921), R.C.A.F., 625 Sqn.

Flying Officers Mooney and Harding were pilot and navigator respectively in an aircraft detailed to attack Plauen one night in April, 1945. Early on the outward flight the front windscreen became badly smeared with oil owing to an external leak. Although this obscured his vision, Flying Officer Mooney flew on. A little later the starboard inner engine became defective. The propeller had to be feathered. Shortly afterwards, the port outer engine had to be put out of action. Despite this, Flying Officer Mooney was determined, if possible, to reach his objective. Coming down to a much lower level and increasing his speed he flew on. Although deprived of the full use of the navigational aids, Flying Officer Harding navigated the aircraft to the target with great skill. Whilst over the area, much anti-aircraft fire was directed at the bomber. Several hits were sustained. Nevertheless, Flying Officer Mooney pressed home a most determined attack. The aircraft was losing height as he turned for home. When nearing Liege, the starboard outer engine caught fire and had to be put out of action. Height could no longer be maintained. Flying Officer Mooney gave the order to abandon aircraft and ensured that all members of his crew had got clear before he himself jumped at 500 feet. After reaching the ground, Flying Officer Mooney collected his comrades together and, within a very short time they returned safely to their unit. On this notable sortie, this officer displayed the highest standard of skill and courage, coupled with superb captaincy. Flying Officer Harding also proved himself to be a most valuable crew member, showing skill, coolness and devotion to duty in the face of great difficulties.

Bar to Distinguished Flying Cross.

Acting Squadron Leader Ross Garstang GRAY, D.F.C. (Can./J.7547), R.C.A.F., 418 (R.C.A.F.) Sqn.

This officer has completed many sorties far into enemy territory since being awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross. In these operations he has displayed a high degree of skill, coupled with unswerving devotion to duty. On a recent sortie, undertaken in most adverse weather, Squadron Leader Gray most effectively attacked 6 enemy aircraft on the two enemy airfields which he operated against in Czechoslovakia. The result obtained reflects the greatest credit on his outstanding ability and determination.