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CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD.

*St. James's Palace, S.W.1.
27th November, 1945.*

The KING has been graciously pleased to give orders for the following appointments to the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire and to approve the following awards of the British Empire Medal:—

To be Additional Members of the Military Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire:—

- Flying Officer John Aidan Hastings GOTT, G.M. (154963), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.
- Flying Officer Courtenay Cecil GREBBY (133289), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.

Awarded the British Empire Medal (Military Division).

- 918695 Corporal Raymond Graham FORSTER, Royal Air Force.
- 1184210 Corporal Leslie John Daniel FRISWELL, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.
- 1863590 Leading Aircraftman Frederick Phillip BROWN, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.
- 1037853 Leading Aircraftman William Edward THAXTON, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.

On the evening of 17th April, 1945, an explosion occurred in an aircraft which was being prepared for operations on the airfield at East Kirkby. A number of airmen and soldiers working in the vicinity were injured, two of them fatally. Two, and eventually three, aircraft already fully bombed up on adjacent dispersal positions caught fire, and shortly afterwards the bombs on these aircraft started to explode. Flying Officers Gott and Grebby went to the scene immediately after the first explosion. They found a soldier lying near the blazing wreckage with his clothing on fire, put out the flames and rendered first aid to his wounds. These officers then proceeded to extinguish fires which had taken hold of the tyres of some loaded bomb trolleys. Next, in spite of further explosions of bombs, they helped to remove wounded men to places of safety. Explosions were now occurring at frequent intervals, causing further casualties, some fatal. Orders were given to evacuate the area but Flying Officer Grebby continued to help with the wounded and asked permission to remove a body lying by the burning wreckage of an aircraft. At that moment a further bomb exploded and Flying Officer Grebby sustained a deep wound in the thigh. When in great pain, and lying on a stretcher, he asked to be assured that no injured persons were being left in danger while he was being given a

place in the ambulance. Flying Officer Gott was the last to leave the scene, taking with him in his car the last of the injured men. Corporal Forster, who was in charge of the airmen engaged in servicing the aircraft in which the initial explosion occurred, was in a hut some 50 yards away. Although injured and severely shaken, he immediately went to the scene and assisted Flying Officers Gott and Grebby in their rescue work. After having removed one injured man to safety, Corporal Forster returned to the aircraft and continued to render assistance until he was instructed to leave the area. Corporal Friswell was in charge of a party of airmen engaged in servicing an aircraft a short distance away. When the explosion occurred he was thrown to the ground and sustained slight injuries. Before he could reach safety a further explosion occurred and several men sustained injuries. Corporal Friswell went to the scene of the accident, removed one man to safety and arranged for his conveyance to sick quarters. Corporal Friswell then returned to the aircraft and continued the rescue work until he was ordered to retire. Leading Aircraftman Brown was in a flight hut some 50 yards away when the first explosion occurred and was knocked down by the blast. Leading Aircraftman Brown quickly extricated himself from the wreckage of the hut, and then proceeded to the scene of the accident. Soon 4 aircraft were ablaze and, although further explosions and fires were occurring, Leading Aircraftman Brown made every endeavour to help the injured personnel and also assisted in extinguishing isolated fires. Leading Aircraftman Thaxton, a member of the Station fire party, was injured by the explosion of a bomb as he arrived on the scene; his corporal was thrown to the ground and severely injured. Leading Aircraftman Thaxton carried the corporal to safety and then returned to the scene of the explosion. Despite the intermittent explosions which were still occurring this airman assisted in the rescue work and was instrumental in evacuating many of the injured personnel. Throughout the incident these officers and airmen displayed outstanding courage and initiative which resulted in the saving of many lives.

517352 Acting Flight Sergeant Herbert SIMS, Royal Air Force.

This Flight Sergeant was Senior Technical non-commissioned officer in No. 819 Squadron from January, 1944, to March, 1945. During the period January to March, 1944, the squadron was on H.M.S. "Activity" engaged in convoy escort duties. Later the squadron was operating