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ROYAL AIR FORCE.

The KING has been graciously pleased to approve the following awards in recognition of gallantry displayed in flying operations against the enemy:—

Distinguished Service Order.

Acting Wing Commander Douglas John Horatio LAY, D.F.C. (37909), No. 15 Squadron.

Since being awarded a Bar to his Distinguished Flying Cross, this officer has continued to show exceptional keenness and devotion to duty, whilst his magnificent leadership has contributed much to the fine record of operational achievement maintained by the squadron he commands.

Squadron Leader Billy DRAKE, D.F.C. (39095), No. 112 Squadron.

Since being awarded a Bar to his Distinguished Flying Cross, Squadron Leader Drake has continued to display the utmost courage and determination in operations against the enemy. In September 1942, he led his wing with great determination, against a formation of enemy dive-bombers escorted by fighters. In the ensuing combat 4 bombers and 1 fighter were destroyed. On a number of other occasions this officer has led bombing and low-level machine gun attacks with devastating results. His leadership and magnificent fighting spirit have been an inspiration to all.

Acting Squadron Leader Anthony WATSON, D.F.C. (41339), No. 272 Squadron (since missing.)

One day in November 1942, this officer led a formation of aircraft on a low-level attack on the airfield at El Agheila where at least 12 enemy aircraft were destroyed on the ground and many others damaged. During a patrol the next day, a Heinkel 115 was destroyed. On the third consecutive day, the squadron was detailed to attack an airfield in Tunisia. En route, a formation of 6 S.M.82's was intercepted. In the ensuing engagement, all the enemy aircraft were shot down; Squadron Leader Watson destroyed 3 of them himself. This officer has led the squadron on shipping sweeps and convoy escorts and in numerous low-level attacks on enemy aerodromes, during which many enemy aircraft, vehicles and E boats have been destroyed or damaged. By his high skill, courageous and inspiring leadership, Squadron Leader Watson has contributed materially to the splendid successes achieved. He has destroyed 11 enemy aircraft as well as a schooner.

Bar to Distinguished Flying Cross.

Acting Squadron Leader Sidney Patrick DANIELS, D.F.C. (81676), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, No. 83 Squadron.

Since being awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross this officer has participated in numerous

successful sorties. His attacks have at all times been pressed home with great determination and excellent photographs of the target area have frequently been obtained. One night in July, 1942, Squadron Leader Daniels piloted an aircraft detailed to attack Hamburg. On the outward flight, shortly after setting course from base, 1 of the engines caught fire and became useless. Despite this, Squadron Leader Daniels flew on to his objective and, regardless of the heavy defences, bombed it successfully. Displaying fine airmanship, he flew the aircraft to base and landed it safely. This officer is an exceptional operational captain who has always displayed fearless determination to complete his allotted task.

Distinguished Flying Cross.

Acting Squadron Leader Glyn ASHFIELD, A.F.C. (36225), No. 157 Squadron.

This officer has completed numerous sorties, many of them in adverse weather at night. He has at all times displayed exceptional keenness to engage the enemy and, by his skilful and untiring efforts has contributed materially to the successes achieved by the squadron he commands. He has destroyed 2 and probably destroyed further enemy aircraft.

Acting Squadron Leader William David Gordon WATKINS, D.F.M. (44828).

Since being awarded the Distinguished Flying Medal this bomb aimer has participated in many operational sorties. In October, 1942, he took part in an attack on Genoa and made 4 runs over the target area to ensure his bombs would strike their objective. On a previous occasion he was detailed to act as navigator and bomb aimer on a sortie over Hamburg. Despite the terrifically heavy defences, he made 4 runs over the target and obtained 2 excellent photographs. Squadron Leader Watkins always displays great determination to locate and bomb the target. His coolness and courage under fire are outstanding and his devotion to duty has been a high example.

Acting Flight Lieutenant Russell George FOSKETT (Aus.402652), Royal Australian Air Force, No. 80 Squadron.

One day in November, 1942, this officer led his squadron in an attack on a formation of Stuka dive bombers, heavily escorted by fighters. During the combat 7 Stukas were shot down, a further 8 probably destroyed and several others were damaged. Flight Lieutenant Foskett, who displayed great skill and daring, destroyed 2 of the enemy aircraft before his own was hit. He landed safely, however, and re-joined his squadron the same night. The following morning he resumed his flying duties. This officer has participated in a large number of sorties and has displayed inspiring leadership.