



FIFTH SUPPLEMENT  
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*Air Ministry, 27th June, 1944*

The KING has been graciously pleased to confer the VICTORIA CROSS on the under-mentioned officer in recognition of most conspicuous bravery —

Pilot Officer Cyril Joe BARTON (168669), R A F V R , 578 Squadron (deceased)

On the night of 30th March, 1944, Pilot Officer Barton was captain and pilot of a Halifax aircraft detailed to attack Nuremberg. When some 70 miles short of the target, the aircraft was attacked by a Junkers 88. The first burst of fire from the enemy made the intercommunication system useless. One engine was damaged when a Messerschmitt 210 joined the fight. The bomber's machine guns were out of action and the gunners were unable to return the fire.

2 Fighters continued to attack the aircraft as it approached the target area and, in the confusion caused by the failure of the communications system at the height of the battle, a signal was misinterpreted and the navigator, air bomber and wireless operator left the aircraft by parachute.

3 Pilot Officer Barton faced a situation of dire peril. His aircraft was damaged, his navigational team had gone and he could not communicate with the remainder of the crew. If he continued his mission, he would be at the mercy of hostile fighters when silhouetted against the fires in the target area and if he survived, he would have to make a 4½ hours journey home on three engines across heavily-defended territory. Determined to press home his attack at all costs, he flew on and, reaching the target, released the bombs himself.

4 As Pilot Officer Barton turned for home the propeller of the damaged engine, which was vibrating badly, flew off. It was also discovered that two of the petrol tanks had suffered damage and were leaking. Pilot Officer Barton held to his course and, without navigational aids and in spite of strong head winds, successfully avoided the most

dangerous defence areas on his route. Eventually he crossed the English coast only 90 miles north of his base.

5 By this time the petrol supply was nearly exhausted. Before a suitable landing place could be found, the port engines stopped. The aircraft was now too low to be abandoned successfully. Pilot Officer Barton therefore ordered the three remaining members of his crew to take up their crash stations. Then, with only one engine working, he made a gallant attempt to land clear of the houses over which he was flying. The aircraft finally crashed and Pilot Officer Barton lost his life, but his three comrades survived.

6 Pilot Officer Barton had previously taken part in 4 attacks on Berlin and 14 other operational missions. On one of these, two members of his crew were wounded during a determined effort to locate the target despite appalling weather conditions. In gallantly completing his last mission in the face of almost impossible odds, this officer displayed unsurpassed courage and devotion to duty.

*Air Ministry, 27th June, 1944*

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 Squadron Leader Charles Curnow SCHERR, D F C (Aus 413671), R A A F

On two occasions in May, 1944, this officer led a section of Mosquito aircraft on daylight sorties over well-defended areas far into Germany. During these 2 flights a number of enemy aircraft were destroyed of which Squadron Leader Scherr shot down 6, he also destroyed 3 on the ground. His successes are a splendid tribute to his great skill, enterprise and fearlessness. This officer has set an example of the highest order.

*Bar to Distinguished Flying Cross*

Flight Lieutenant Richard Frank DAVIES, D F C (114736), R A F V R , 627 Sqn

This officer was the navigator of an aircraft detailed for an operation against Munich recently. When nearing the target the aircraft was illuminated in a concentration of searchlights and was