

caught fire in a street of houses after the pilot had descended by parachute. One gun was firing to the danger of the people in the vicinity, and ammunition in the aircraft was exploding. Despite the danger of the petrol tank exploding at any moment and the fact that he sustained burns to his hands and arms in the process, which necessitated subsequent medical attention. Leading Aircraftman Prior succeeded in gaining access to the gun and removing the back plate in an endeavour to arrest the continued functioning of the gun.

# CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD.

*St. James's Palace, S.W.1.  
21st January, 1941.*

The KING has been graciously pleased to approve the following Awards:—

*The Medal of the Military Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, for Meritorious Service:—*

547794 Sergeant Francis John BLACKWOOD.

This airman has displayed courage of a high order in ten successive enemy raids and has energetically assisted in raising the morale of the station by his example.

567944 Corporal Joseph Graham Michael DAVIS.

619213 Aircraftman 1st Class Thomas McCANN.

During September, 1940, these airmen approached a burning aircraft and succeeded in detaching Vickers guns and magazines of ammunition and removing them to a place of safety. Both displayed conspicuous gallantry in disregarding imminent personal danger from exploding ammunition and the likelihood that the petrol tanks might explode.

335107 Corporal Harry SPENCER.

1001638 Aircraftman 2nd Class Stanley WARD.

During a night in September, 1940, these airmen were members of the fire tender crew on duty when an aircraft crashed on taking off and burst into flames. Though fully aware that the aircraft was carrying a full load of bombs and ammunition, Corporal Spencer rushed into the fire and endeavoured to extricate the injured observer who was lying under the port wing. Aircraftman Ward, also knowing the aircraft was loaded, went to his assistance and they were able to carry the injured man to safety. Corporal Spencer then returned to the fire in an attempt to rescue other members of the crew. One of the two 250 lb. bombs exploded and threw him to the ground ten yards away but without causing him serious injury. Both these airmen displayed a complete disregard for their personal safety, and the injured observer undoubtedly owes his life to their gallantry.

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