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*Air Ministry.*  
16th June, 1942.

## 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 Donald Clifford Tyndall BENNETT (32065), No. 10 Squadron.

### *Distinguished Flying Medal.*

1114164 Sergeant Harry WALMSLEY, No. 10 Squadron.

One night in April, 1942, Wing Commander Bennett and Sergeant Walmsley were the captain and second pilot respectively of an aircraft which attacked the German naval base in the Trondheim fiord. In spite of a fierce defensive barrage, the attack was carried out at an extremely low level. The aircraft was hit by shell-fire and, later, burst into flames. Wing Commander Bennett and Sergeant Walmsley were forced to escape by parachute but both landed safely in occupied territory. Both Wing Commander Bennett and Sergeant Walmsley displayed excellent resource and, after escaping from German soldiers and police, they eventually reached Swedish territory after a most arduous and trying journey across snow-clad mountains. Throughout, both Wing Commander Bennett and Sergeant Walmsley displayed courage, initiative and devotion to duty of the highest order.

### *Distinguished Service Order.*

Flight Lieutenant Ralph Maclaren CHRISTIE (Can/C.1278), Royal Canadian Air Force, No. 407 (R.C.A.F.) Squadron.

### *Distinguished Flying Cross.*

Pilot Officer Frank Albert KAY (Can/J.15337), Royal Canadian Air Force, No. 407 (R.C.A.F.) Squadron.

In May, 1942, Flight Lieutenant Christie and Pilot Officer Kay each led a force of

bombers in an attack on a large enemy convoy, including armed ships and destroyers off the Dutch coast. The attack, which was delivered in the fading light, was pressed home in the face of a barrage of the utmost intensity. Pilot Officer Kay, who was first to attack, received wounds on the fingers when shrapnel tore through the floor in front of him. Despite this, he flew in, firing his guns, and bombs were released on a ship almost at deck level. Flight Lieutenant Christie followed in and, releasing his bombs from mast height, scored hits on a medium-sized ship. Both aircraft were damaged. That of Flight Lieutenant Christie was hit in the wings, fuselage and tail, causing damage which made the aircraft exceedingly difficult to control. Pilot Officer Kay's aircraft was hit in both engines while he himself received a further wound in the arm. Despite their difficulties, both these officers flew their damaged aircraft back to this country. Some time previously, Flight Lieutenant Christie participated in a daring attack on a convoy off the Dutch coast. In the face of heavy defensive fire, a large ship was bombed from only 20 feet. As the bombs exploded large quantities of debris were hurled in the air and the vessel was set on fire.

### *Bar to the Distinguished Flying Cross.*

Flight Lieutenant Edward Dixon CREW, D.F.C. (74700), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, No. 604 Squadron.

Since the award of the Distinguished Flying Cross in July, 1941, this officer has carried out a large number of operational patrols by night and has destroyed 4 enemy aircraft. He has now destroyed a total of 8 enemy aircraft at night and damaged a number of others. By his readiness to fly in any weather and his skill and ability in dealing with the enemy at night, he sets a splendid example to the squadron.

*Distinguished Flying Cross.*

Acting Flight Lieutenant Hedley James HOUGHTON (45301), No. 107 Squadron.

In April, 1942, this officer led a formation of bombing aircraft escorted by fighters in a daylight raid on the marshalling yards at Abbeville. Following the attack, the formation was intercepted by enemy fighters. Flight Lieutenant Houghton's aircraft was hit by bursting cannon shells which shot away the rudder control and trim tabs, put one engine out of action and inflicted damage on the hydraulic system. Splinters pierced Flight Lieutenant Houghton's right shoulder and arm causing him considerable pain and discomfort. Despite this, he skillfully led his formation back to this country and made a safe landing at a coastal aerodrome. This officer displayed great courage and devotion to duty. He has been engaged on active operations over a long period and has at all times displayed great skill and cool resolution in action.

Pilot Officer William James DALEY (101457), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, No. 121 (Eagle) Squadron.

Pilot Officer Daley is an extremely keen officer who shows outstanding devotion to duty. Since February, 1942, he has completed 51 operational sorties over Northern France, Holland and Belgium, and has destroyed at least 2 enemy aircraft.

Warrant Officer Ronald John EMBERG (Can/R.56105), Royal Canadian Air Force, No. 175 Squadron.

This pilot has undertaken numerous bombing and fighter sorties over occupied territory and has proved himself to be an excellent section leader who, by his keenness and courage inspires confidence in his fellow pilots. In April, 1942, he led a flight against 2 enemy destroyers 1 of which he hit in spite of heavy anti-aircraft fire and left in a badly damaged condition. He has also shot down an enemy aircraft.

*Distinguished Flying Medal.*

Aus.402823 Flight Sergeant John William YARRA, Royal Australian Air Force, No. 185 Squadron.

This pilot has shot down 4 enemy aircraft in air battles. On one occasion, when protecting a rescue launch in the face of numerous enemy aircraft, he shot down 1 Messerschmitt and probably destroyed another. When his ammunition was exhausted he made feint attacks and kept the enemy at bay for three quarters of an hour.

742999 Flight Sergeant Ronald Leslie STILLWELL, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, No. 65 (East India) Squadron.

This airman is a fine leader and an inspiration to his squadron. Since August, 1940, he has been engaged on active operations and has taken part in many sorties

over enemy occupied territory, during which he has destroyed 1 enemy aircraft and damaged others. In August, 1941, he reported the exact position of a Royal Air Force bomber crew whom he had sighted in the sea 15 miles off the Dutch coast. The information he gave was responsible for their final rescue. In April, 1942, when returning from a sweep, he sighted a pilot in the sea without a dinghy and, although Flight Sergeant Stillwell was short of fuel, he succeeded in dropping his own dinghy within 25 yards of the spot. Unfortunately, the pilot was afterwards found to be dead.

Can/R.7812 Flight Sergeant Gordon James STRUTT, Royal Canadian Air Force, No. 58 Squadron.

Can/R.54334 Sergeant Kenneth William CRAIG, Royal Canadian Air Force, No. 58 Squadron.

Flight Sergeant Strutt and Sergeant Craig were captain and second pilot respectively of an aircraft recently engaged on an anti-submarine patrol in the Bay of Biscay. A U-boat was observed surfaced on the sea and, under the direction of his captain, Sergeant Craig immediately attacked the submarine from a height of about 40 feet. The attack was carried out with such speed and skill that the explosives detonated before the U-boat had time to submerge completely. At least one exploded alongside the hull. The submarine came to the surface for a few moments and then submerged at a steep angle and a large patch of oil and very large air bubbles appeared. The success achieved reflects the greatest credit on both these airmen.

1262838 Sergeant Harold Emery BATCHELDER, No. 102 Squadron.

One night in May, 1942, Sergeant Batchelder was the captain of an aircraft detailed to attack Mannheim. Shortly after crossing the Dutch coast, on the outward journey, the aircraft was damaged by enemy shell-fire, but the journey was continued and the target bombed. On the return journey, one engine failed to function but height was maintained. After crossing the Dutch coast, the aircraft was attacked by an enemy fighter. Skilfully handling his damaged aircraft, Sergeant Batchelder outmanoeuvred his attacker and enabled his own gunners to deliver accurate bursts of fire. The enemy fighter was seen diving away steeply and it is believed to have been destroyed. Sergeant Batchelder then flew on to this country and made a skilful landing in difficult circumstances. Throughout, this airman displayed great skill, courage and coolness.

## AMENDMENT.

In notification of 11th June, 1942 (p. 2529, col. 1) for Flight Officer R. M. HOLLIDAY (45410), W.A.A.F., read Flying Officer R. M. HOLLIDAY (45410).

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