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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 James Maitland Nicholson PIKE, D.F.C. (33200), No. 248 Squadron.

This officer is a gallant and skilful leader. By his untiring efforts and unceasing devotion to duty he has played a large part in the splendid work accomplished by his squadron. In August, 1942, he led a formation in an attack on aerodromes in Sardinia. In spite of heavy anti-aircraft fire, a large number of enemy aircraft were destroyed and damaged. Wing Commander Pike's careful planning before the flight and his brilliant leadership during the sortie, contributed materially to the success achieved.

Distinguished Flying Cross.

Pilot Officer Jackson Barrett MAHON (108640), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, No. 121 (Eagle) Squadron (since missing).

This officer has participated in a large number of sorties over Northern France, Belgium and Holland. He is an extremely skilful and confident pilot whose courage, especially when attacking superior numbers of hostile aircraft, has been unsurpassed.

Pilot Officer Roy Charles MUNSON (112298), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, No. 150 Squadron.

One night in August, 1942, this officer was captain of an aircraft detailed to attack Mainz. Whilst crossing the enemy coast on the outward flight, the aircraft was hit by anti-aircraft fire, sustaining damage to the port wing and the fuselage; several electric circuits also failed. In spite of this, Pilot Officer Munson resolutely flew on to his target, where he pressed home his attack. On the return journey his aircraft was attacked by a hostile fighter. The rear gunner was killed, the wireless operator wounded and the aircraft sustained further damage. The starboard engine was hit and various instruments, including the airspeed indicator, were put out of action. The controls became temporarily jammed but, after a great effort, Pilot Officer Munson managed to free them and decided to make an attempt to fly the aircraft back to this country. He eventually reached the English coast where he was compelled to effect a crash landing. This he did successfully in spite of difficulties. By his skill,

courage and determination, this officer surmounted a most perilous situation, thereby safeguarding the lives of his crew and much valuable equipment.

Distinguished Flying Cross.

Lieutenant Edward Theodore STREVER (108521), South African Air Force, No. 217 Squadron.
Pilot Officer William Martin DUNSMORE (116595), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, No. 217 Squadron.

Distinguished Flying Medal.

N.Z. 405471 Sergeant Alexander Raymond BROWN, Royal New Zealand Air Force, No. 217 Squadron.
N.Z. 404627 Sergeant John Aston WILKINSON, Royal New Zealand Air Force, No. 217 Squadron.
Lieutenant Strever, Pilot Officer Dunsmore and Sergeants Brown and Wilkinson were the crew of an aircraft which operated from Malta in June and July, 1942. During this period, they performed excellent work in attacking enemy merchant vessels and naval forces, and all displayed initiative, courage and devotion to duty of a high order.

Bar to Distinguished Flying Medal.

1267053 Sergeant George Frederick BEURLING, D.F.M., No. 249 Squadron.

Since being awarded the Distinguished Flying Medal in July, 1942, Sergeant Beurling has destroyed a further 9 enemy aircraft, bringing his victories to 17. One of his exploits was the destruction of 4 enemy fighters in one day; during these brief combats he also damaged a further 2 hostile aircraft. His courage and determination are a source of inspiration to all.

Distinguished Flying Medal.

902375 Flight Sergeant Philip Edwin GATEHOUSE, No. 248 Squadron.

One evening in August, 1942, an attack by a formation of our aircraft was made on two aerodromes in Sardinia. Flight Sergeant Gatehouse, who was the navigator of the leading aircraft, skilfully navigated the formation to the target which was reached exactly at the right time to deliver a telling attack. A large number of hostile aircraft on the ground were destroyed and damaged. The safe return of his aircraft, involving a flight of some 400 miles at night, was accomplished mainly as a result of his accurate work. During the next day, his aircraft was attacked by enemy fighters on five occasions but his cool directions enabled his pilot to evade the attacker each time. Flight Sergeant Gatehouse has displayed great gallantry and devotion to duty.