

do so came from Flight Sergeant Middleton, whose fortitude and strength of will made possible the completion of the mission. His devotion to duty in the face of overwhelming odds is unsurpassed in the annals of the Royal Air Force.

Air Ministry, 15th January, 1943.

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 Squadron Leader Robert Henry GIBBES, D.F.C. (AUS/714), Royal Australian Air Force, No. 3 (R.A.A.F.) Squadron.

This officer has completed many operational sorties in which he has destroyed at least 9 enemy aircraft and damaged several others. On one occasion, he led a small force on a long range expedition to reconnoitre and attack an enemy airfield. Owing to his excellent leadership 7 enemy aircraft were destroyed on the ground. During the engagement, one of his pilots was forced to land his aircraft. Squadron Leader Gibbes, immediately landed as near to him as possible and after waiting some time for his comrade, flew off with him. During the take-off a wheel was knocked off the aircraft, but on reaching base, Squadron Leader Gibbes, effected a masterly landing, causing only slight further damage to his aircraft. Squadron Leader Gibbes, has displayed outstanding qualities of leadership and enthusiasm throughout his long career of flying duties.

Acting Flight Lieutenant William Templeton CHRISTIE, D.F.M. (63779), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, No. 7 Squadron (since deceased).

Since being awarded the Distinguished Flying Medal this officer has taken part in 27 operational flights. Flight Lieutenant Christie has always displayed courage and determination of a very high order, pressing home his attacks on the most heavily defended targets. On one occasion he was detailed to attack Mannheim. In the face of heavy opposition he first dropped flares and then made his attack from a very low level. He is an outstanding captain of aircraft who has consistently displayed skill and judgment of a high order, while his devotion to duty has inspired his fellow pilots.

Distinguished Flying Cross.

Acting Squadron Leader Gilbert Meston ALLCOCK (36215), No. 214 Squadron.

This flight commander served with a transport squadron in the Middle East and since his return to this country has taken part in a number of night sorties against Germany and Italy. One night in December, 1942, he was detailed to attack Duisberg. While over the target area his aircraft was attacked by a Junkers 88. During the ensuing engagement the bomber sustained damage and 3 members of the crew were wounded. Undaunted Squadron Leader Allcock continued and bombed the target. On the return flight the port inner engine caught fire. Despite the crippled state of his aircraft, the grave possibility of the fire spreading and with both rear guns out of action, Squadron Leader Allcock flew the bomber safely back to base. This officer's courage, determination and skill set an example of the highest order.

Pilot Officer Stanley Cyril COSBURN (Can/C.15709), Royal Canadian Air Force, No. 401 (R.C.A.F.) Squadron.

During the past year Pilot Officer Cosburn has participated in numerous operational sorties. He has proved himself to be a courageous and skilful fighter pilot and has destroyed one enemy aircraft, shared in the destruction of another and damaged others. He has at all times set an inspiring example of enthusiasm and determination.

Pilot Officer Lloyd Woodrow POWELL (Can/J.15339), Royal Canadian Air Force, No. 412 (R.C.A.F.) Squadron.

Pilot Officer Powell has taken part in many operational sorties. Recently he has been engaged on a number of low level attacks against the enemy during the course of which he has severely damaged 19 locomotives. This officer has always shown exceptional keenness to get at grips with the enemy, coupled with a total disregard for his own safety. His enthusiasm and cool courage have set a splendid example to all.

Warrant Officer Arthur Raymond NOSEDA (Aus. 406029), Royal Australian Air Force, No. 105 Squadron.

In December, 1942, Warrant Officer Nosedo was pilot of one of a force of aircraft engaged in a low level daylight attack on a target in North-West Germany. During the operation, which was executed at a height of 1,000 feet, the leading aircraft was damaged by the intense anti-aircraft fire and lost speed owing to failure of one of its engines. Disdaining the prospect of attack by enemy fighters, Warrant Officer Nosedo reduced the speed of his own aircraft and escorted his leader safely to base. This warrant officer has completed many operational sorties and has displayed outstanding courage and determination.

Distinguished Flying Cross.

Acting Flight Lieutenant Nicholas Sydney MILNES (62329), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, No. 102 Squadron.

Distinguished Flying Medal.

Aus/401338 Flight Sergeant Angus Mackenzie McDONALD, Royal Australian Air Force, No. 102 Squadron.

One night in December, 1942, Flight Lieutenant Milnes and Flight Sergeant McDonald were captain and navigator respectively of a heavy bomber engaged in an attack on Turin. South of the Alps heavy anti-aircraft fire disabled one of the starboard engines. Height was speedily lost from 18,000 to 13,000 feet before the barrage was evaded and the bombs released. Severe icing conditions then forced the aircraft down to 5,000 feet and when breaking cloud, over Northern France, the bomber was menaced by the approach of 5 enemy aircraft. Although the fighters did not attack, intense gunfire from the ground defences disabled both port engines and the bomber's speed fell almost to stalling point and altitude was lost down to 2,000 feet. The question of abandoning aircraft was considered. Although Flight Sergeant McDonald was in the best position to effect an escape, he opposed the proposal and Flight Lieutenant Milnes decided to struggle on. Soon the port inner engine again functioned but the aircraft was still flying almost at stalling speed. Eventually the north coast of France was gained and the crippled aircraft was again subjected to intense anti-aircraft fire. Further height was sacrificed in evading the gun-fire and the crew flew on and eventually reached safety. Flight Lieutenant Milnes displayed dogged determination and superb airmanship throughout this hazardous flight. He was ably assisted by Flight Sergeant McDonald whose courage and technical skill contributed much to the result achieved.

Bar to Distinguished Flying Medal.

1003953 Sergeant Tom FLETCHER, D.F.M.

In December, 1942, Sergeant Fletcher was captain of an aircraft detailed to rescue 6 men seen on a raft some 8 to 10 miles east of Dover. In spite of the rough conditions he dropped a smoke float and successfully landed on the sea. The aircraft was taxied up to the raft and, with the aid of a boat hook, one man was helped into the aircraft. The rough sea and increasing darkness made further attempts most hazardous. Nevertheless Sergeant Fletcher persisted in his efforts, and after 4 attempts succeeded in rescuing a further two men. Unhappily in the darkness it was impossible to locate the others, who had been washed off the raft into the sea. During the rescue operations the aircraft was damaged and it took Sergeant Fletcher over an hour to reach the mouth of the harbour after taxying through 3 minefields. The 3 men who had been saved were German seamen. This is the seventh successful sea rescue undertaken by this airman. He is a courageous and skilful pilot who has directly contributed to the rescue of 13 people.

Distinguished Flying Medal.

1074152 Sergeant John Shiels DOVEY, No. 40 Squadron.

Sergeant Dovey has participated in several successful operations against the enemy. One night in December, 1942, owing to his skilful bomb aiming, a ship in La Goulette harbour was successfully attacked and set on fire. Later the vessel was observed to be exploding. Sergeant Dovey has always shown great courage and determination in the face of fierce opposing fire, whilst his keenness and skill has been an example to his fellow navigators.