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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.

Pilot Officer Frederick William GATES (126623), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, No. 101 Squadron.

Conspicuous Gallantry Medal (Flying).

621162 Flight Sergeant George Frederick DOVE, D.F.M., No. 101 Squadron.

1313768 Sergeant Ivan Henry HAZARD, No. 101 Squadron.

1127080 Sergeant William Ernest WILLIAMS, No. 101 Squadron.

654077 Sergeant James Fortune BAIN No. 101 Squadron.

1112525 Sergeant Leslie AIREY, No. 101 Squadron.

On the night of 14th February, 1943, Pilot Officer Gates, Flight Sergeant Dove and Sergeants Williams, Bain and Airey were members of the crew of an aircraft captained by Sergeant Hazard, which was detailed to attack Milan. Whilst over the target area, the aircraft was attacked by an enemy fighter from close range. Its gunfire exploded some incendiary bombs which had failed to release and a fire quickly developed in the bomber. The fuselage became a mass of flames reaching through the mid-upper turret manned by Flight Sergeant Dove. Ammunition in the turret boxes and ducts commenced to explode in all directions. In the face of an appalling situation, Flight Sergeant Dove coolly remained at his post. Although he was burned about the hands and face, he manned his guns with grim resolution, skill and accuracy. He delivered a devastating burst at the attacker, which had already been engaged and hit by the rear gunner and succeeded in destroying it. Disregarding the roaring flames, he then descended from his turret and went to the assistance of Sergeant Airey, the rear gunner, who had been wounded, and extricated him from the rear turret. The situation had become extremely critical and Sergeant Hazard ordered the crew to prepare to abandon aircraft. When informed that one of his comrades was helpless he decided, in spite of the grave risk entailed, to attempt a forced landing. Meanwhile, Pilot Officer Gates, assisted by Sergeants Williams and Bain bravely tackled the fire with extinguishers and succeeded in getting it under control. The aircraft was now down to 800 feet but, as the fire had subsided, Sergeant Hazard quickly decided to attempt to fly the badly damaged bomber home. He regained height and displaying fine airmanship crossed the Alps in safety, although 1 engine failed whilst so doing. On the remainder of the journey Pilot Officer Gates rendered valuable assistance to his captain and

frequently ministered to his wounded comrade, although this necessitated clambering over a hole in the floor of the aircraft in darkness. Aided by the skilful navigation of Sergeant Williams and good work by Sergeant Bain, the flight engineer, Sergeant Hazard succeeded in flying the seriously damaged aircraft back to this country. In circumstances of the greatest danger, this aircraft crew displayed courage, fortitude and devotion to duty in keeping with the highest traditions of the Royal Air Force.

Bar to Distinguished Flying Cross.

Acting Squadron Leader Charles Stewart DOWIE, D.F.C. (Can/J.6008), Royal Canadian Air Force, No. 426 (R.C.A.F.) Squadron.

One night in February, 1943, this officer captained an aircraft detailed to attack a target in Hamburg. In the face of heavy opposing fire from the ground defences, Squadron leader Dowie pressed home a vigorous attack but, immediately after releasing his bombs, the aircraft was hit. The hydraulic system was damaged, causing the bomber's wheels to be lowered, the bomb doors to open and the flaps to sag. Nevertheless, Squadron Leader Dowie set a direct course for home. Although his aircraft was subjected to almost continuous anti-aircraft fire until the enemy's coast was crossed, he flew the damaged bomber to an airfield in this country where he effected a masterly landing. His skilful airmanship was undoubtedly responsible for the safe return of the aircraft and its crew.

Acting Squadron Leader Desmond, James ISTD, D.F.C. (42347), No. 120 Squadron.

This officer has made 3 excellent attacks against enemy submarines within recent weeks. On one occasion he completed an outstanding flight lasting approximately 18 hours, during which he made a most determined attack on an enemy "U" boat when flying some 900 miles from his base. Squadron Leader Istd's keenness, skill and organising ability are worthy of the highest praise.

Distinguished Flying Cross.

Acting Flight Lieutenant John Philip CROWTHER (60901), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, No. 29 Squadron.

During the last 18 months, Flight Lieutenant Crowther has flown on a large number of operational patrols as observer. One night in February, 1943, in most adverse weather he took part in the destruction of 2 Dornier 217's. On all occasions Flight Lieutenant Crowther has set a magnificent example of courage and devotion to duty.

Acting Flight Lieutenant John Alexander SPENCE (Can/J. 3995), Royal Canadian Air Force, No. 277 Squadron.

This officer has flown on a number of rescue sorties over the Straits of Dover and the Channel and has been instrumental in rescuing 7 survivors from crashed planes. In December, 1942, when off Dungeness he was