

wounded and in subsequent attacks one member of the crew was killed and six others were wounded. Immediately he regained consciousness Flying Officer Morgan, refusing medical aid until all other members had been treated, resumed his position commanding the vessel and directed defensive measures. Aircraftman Pickering, although suffering great pain, continued to tend other injured members of the crew. Throughout the action Flying Officer Morgan and Aircraftman Pickering conducted themselves with great courage, skill and resource. The excellent example set by this officer and airman inspired and encouraged the other members of the crew during the return of their sinking vessel.

To be an Additional Member of the Military Division of the said Most Excellent Order:—

Flying Officer Raymond Kitchener Weston (124832), Royal Air Force.

In January, 1943, this officer was the pilot of a Beaufighter aircraft which swung off the runway and hit an obstruction which caused the aircraft to catch fire. Flying Officer Weston managed to extricate himself and immediately went to the aid of the observer who was trapped in the blazing aircraft. Cannon gun ammunition was exploding, the flames were spreading and there was a very grave danger of the petrol tanks exploding. Nevertheless, with the assistance of 3 workmen, who were nearby when the accident occurred, Flying Officer Weston with bare hands, pulled the wreckage apart and dragged the observer to safety. Ten seconds later the aircraft was a complete mass of flames. Flying Officer Weston's courage and initiative undoubtedly saved his companion's life.

To be an Additional Member of the Military Division of the said Most Excellent Order:—

Pilot Officer Keith James Hall (134744), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.

Awarded the British Empire Medal (Military Division).

1515644 Leading Aircraftman Ian Joseph McCrae, Royal Air Force.

One morning in February, 1943, a Tiger Moth aircraft collided with a stationary aircraft and burst into flames immediately. Pilot Officer Hall and Leading Aircraftman McCrae, who were in another aircraft taxiing along the boundary of a nearby airfield, witnessed the accident and immediately ran to the scene in an endeavour to rescue the pilot who had been rendered unconscious. Pilot Officer Hall and Leading Aircraftman McCrae succeeded in unfastening the pilot's harness and were then driven back by the flames. Displaying complete disregard for their personal safety this officer and airman climbed on to the fuselage and re-entered the flames. The starboard wing was burnt out and the wreckage heeled over, throwing McCrae to the ground. Nevertheless he renewed his efforts and assisted Pilot Officer Hall in dragging the unconscious pilot to safety. This officer and airman displayed high courage.

1281343 Sergeant Sidney Peter Johnson, Royal Air Force.

One day in January, 1943, Sergeant Johnson was the pilot of a Master aircraft which crashed and burst into flames after taking off. Sergeant Johnson, although suffering from a broken leg, severe facial burns and with his clothing on fire, managed to extricate himself from the burning wreckage. The petrol tanks were ablaze and likely to explode at any moment, but, knowing that his instructor was trapped in the cockpit, Sergeant Johnson returned to the aircraft and, despite his injuries, succeeded in releasing his companion. This heroic act undoubtedly saved the instructor's life.

552166 Corporal Gerard James McQuaide, Royal Air Force.

1102677 Leading Aircraftman Sam Halstead, Royal Air Force.

One evening in October, 1942, during an enemy air attack, a fire occurred in an aircraft. Knowing the aircraft to be loaded with bombs, these airmen attempted to release the bombs while the aircraft was burning. Being unable to do so they obtained a fire extinguisher and persisted in their efforts to extinguish the fire until ordered to cease. The bombs exploded a few minutes later.

During the whole of this time enemy bombs were falling in the vicinity. Corporal McQuaide and Leading Aircraftman Halstead have, at all times, displayed a high standard of efficiency, courage and devotion to duty.

96274 Air Corporal Jack Friedman, South African Air Force.

In December, 1942, whilst being driven to his aircraft, Air Corporal Friedman observed an aircraft on fire coming in to land. When touching down the aircraft overturned and trapped the pilot in his seat. Air Corporal Friedman rushed to the scene and, while others raised the wing, he endeavoured to rescue the pilot. To do this it was necessary to unstrap the parachute. As he took this off flames entered the cockpit. Although fully aware of the danger from petrol tanks catching fire Air Corporal Friedman, displaying courage and initiative, succeeded in dragging the pilot clear. His gallant action undoubtedly saved the pilot's life.

1164525 Leading Aircraftman Cecil Arthur Layton, Royal Air Force.

One afternoon in October, 1942, a transport aircraft crashed and in the resulting fire was totally destroyed, its 13 occupants being killed. Leading Aircraftman Layton, who was working in the kitchen of the officers' mess, unhesitatingly ran to the burning aircraft and attempted to rescue the occupants. In the face of an inferno of flame and the danger of exploding petrol tanks and flying fragments, this airman, after several attempts, succeeded in dragging a body from the burning wreckage. In so doing he sustained severe burns and had to be removed to hospital. The courageous conduct of Leading Aircraftman Layton on this occasion is worthy of the highest praise.

CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD.

St. James's Palace, S.W.1, 14th May, 1943.

The KING has been graciously pleased to approve the award of the George Medal to:—

1277194 Aircraftman 2nd Class George Graham Layton, Royal Air Force.

One afternoon in July, 1942, an aircraft crashed on the edge of an airfield and burst into flames. The fire tender arrived on the scene almost immediately but was forced to withdraw to a distance of about 100 yards as the aircraft was burning fiercely and the bombs were still on board. Aircraftman Layton, on being informed that one member of the crew (the front gunner) was still in the aircraft, immediately ran back and climbed on to the wing. He assisted the gunner, whose clothing was alight, to get clear of the wreckage and stripped him of his burning clothing. Aircraftman Layton then took off his own shirt and wrapped the airman in it and assisted him to the fire tender just before the bombs exploded. Aircraftman Layton displayed courage and gallantry of the highest order.

Air Ministry, 14th May, 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.

Wing Commander John Marlow THOMPSON, D.F.C. (34183), Reserve of Air Force Officers.

This officer has a fine operational record. He fought in France and later took part in the Battle of Britain. For the past 9 months he has been engaged in flying operations from Malta, playing a prominent part in the defence of the island during a period of intense air attacks. Latterly, Wing Commander Thompson has led formations of fighter bombers in numerous successful attacks against port installations, factories, airfields and other targets. By his great skill and brilliant leadership, Wing Commander Thompson has contributed in a large measure to the excellent results obtained.

Lieutenant-Colonel Douglas Haig LOFTUS, D.F.C., South African Air Force.

This officer has completed much operational flying, having fought in Abyssinia and in the earlier