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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 BLACKBURN, D.F.C. (70067), Reserve of Air Force Officers, No. 148 Squadron.

Since he was appointed to command this squadron, Wing Commander Blackburn has completed 300 hours operational flying nearly all of which have been at night. His sorties have involved very long flights over difficult and mountainous country when he has displayed skill, endurance and courage of a high order. The success of the operations completed by his squadron has been largely due to this officer's personal example and masterly leadership.

Bar to Distinguished Flying Cross.

Acting Wing Commander James Roger WHELAN, D.F.C. (40330), Reserve of Air Force Officers, No. 680 Squadron.

Wing Commander Whelan has commanded his squadron since May, 1942, and has completed many long distance reconnaissance sorties over the sea and enemy territory. Recently he successfully completed a mission at the extreme range of his aircraft which thereby required precise flying and most accurate photography. At all times this officer's example of perseverance and efficiency has been an inspiration to his squadron.

Distinguished Flying Cross.

Wing Commander Wilfrid Allen Lance DAVIS (37315), Royal Air Force.

Wing Commander Davis has participated in 45 operational sorties including 11 operations against enemy shipping. He has led his formation on 6 occasions. During an attack against heavily armed enemy minesweepers, in September, 1943, this officer's skilful leadership contributed much to the success of the attack. At all times his conduct on operations has been exemplary.

Acting Squadron Leader Peter Harry HUMPHREYS (84961), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, No. 92 Squadron.

This officer has commanded his squadron since May, 1943, and has led it with great skill and determination. During this period the squadron has destroyed at least 8 enemy aircraft, and Squadron Leader Humphreys has destroyed 2 of these, assisted in the destruction of another and damaged 4 more. This officer is a resourceful pilot whose example has been a great inspiration to others.

Flight Lieutenant Robert Bruce COLE (66483), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, No. 250 Squadron.

Whilst serving on his first tour of operations Flight Lieutenant Cole participated in many sorties against enemy supply ships at Tobruk, during which he displayed great tenacity in pressing home his attacks. Although on one occasion his aircraft was shot down and he was wounded, Flight Lieutenant Cole returned to operations and has frequently led his squadron in bombing attacks. His courage and determination have been a commendable example.

Flight Lieutenant Reginald Francis HAYES (60457), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, No. 284 Squadron.

Flight Lieutenant Hayes has displayed great skill and devotion to duty in air/sea rescue operations and his example is worthy of the highest praise.

Acting Flight Lieutenant Maurice Sydney HARDS, D.F.M. (122662), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, No. 92 Squadron.

This officer has been engaged on operational flying since the beginning of the war. He is a skilful flight commander whose example of keenness and devotion to duty has proved most inspiring. Flight Lieutenant Hards has destroyed 10 enemy aircraft.

Acting Flight Lieutenant Thomas LAWLOR (121313), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, No. 40 Squadron.

As navigator/bomb aimer, this officer has participated in 40 sorties in the Middle East theatre and has displayed commendable skill and devotion to duty. One night in December, 1942, he navigated his aircraft to the docks and harbour at La-Goulette and, despite the intense opposition encountered, bombed a large ship in the harbour; the vessel was extensively damaged. As squadron navigation officer, his services have proved invaluable.

Acting Flight Lieutenant Bryan Hubert THOMAS (N.Z.405341), Royal New Zealand Air Force, No. 260 Squadron.

In operations against Tunisia and Sicily this officer displayed outstanding courage and gallantry. In August, 1943, whilst machine gunning enemy motor transport on the Randazzo Fiume Freddo road, intense and accurate light anti-aircraft fire was encountered and Flight Lieutenant Thomas's aircraft sustained much damage. Nevertheless he continued to deliver his attack at a very low level. His skill and keenness have set a worthy example and been an inspiration to other pilots.