

a very dazed condition and oblivious to what had happened. Shortly afterwards a petrol tank exploded. Squadron Leader Ottewill, who had been severely burned on a previous occasion when his own aircraft was shot down by the enemy, accepted the risk of further severe burns, and injury in going to the assistance of his comrades and effecting their rescue. Fortunately he sustained only slight burns during this rescue.

635541 Sergeant Gildus DAVIES, Royal Air Force.

In June, 1943, Sergeant Davies was the 2nd engineer in an aircraft which crashed into high ground and immediately caught fire. Sergeant Davies, displaying complete disregard for his own safety, made many attempts to open a hatch and eventually succeeded in releasing one of his trapped comrades whom he dragged to safety. Sergeant Davies then attempted to re-enter the blazing aircraft in an endeavour to rescue other members of the crew. He was, however, compelled to abandon the attempt owing to the intense heat which exploded depth charges in the aircraft. This airman displayed outstanding courage and devotion to duty.

1412165 Aircraftman 1st Class Daniel OWEN, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.

In July, 1943, Aircraftman Owen was working in a bomb dump with 6 other airmen. He was engaged in attaching trolleys of bombs behind a tractor when a 1,000 lb. bomb in the dump exploded, killing 5 of the party and setting fire to a tractor and a portable crane. Aircraftman Owen, who was only a few yards from the airmen who had been killed, was badly shaken but, ignoring the danger of further explosions, he immediately attempted to rescue another airman who was lying under a fiercely blazing vehicle. Although his comrade died as a result of injuries he succeeded in dragging him clear of the vehicle. Still disregarding his own safety Aircraftman Owen then drove a tractor and towed 3 loaded bomb trolleys away from the burning wreckage. This action probably saved further damage and injuries to personnel. Aircraftman Owen's prompt and gallant conduct was a fine example of devotion to duty.

*Awarded the British Empire Medal
(Military Division).*

1436050 Flight Sergeant Harry Ernest HALL, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.

One night in August, 1943, Flight Sergeant Hall was pilot of an aircraft which was returning from operations. When approaching the South Coast of England the aircraft ran out of fuel and dived almost out of control into the sea. The crew were temporarily knocked out by the impact and the aircraft filled rapidly with water. Flight Sergeant Hall was the first to recover and his first thoughts were for the safety of his crew. He found the wireless operator injured and floating just below the astro-dome, and in spite of the rapidly rising water and with complete disregard for his own safety, he succeeded in extricating him from the aircraft and securing him safely in a dinghy. He then returned to the aircraft to search for the navigator and flight engineer who were missing. Five members of the crew were subsequently picked up by an air/sea rescue launch. In a desperate situation, aggravated by darkness, Flight Sergeant Hall displayed extreme courage and coolness throughout.

Aus.412666 Flight Sergeant William John NEILSEN, Royal Australian Air Force.

Aus.412649 Flight Sergeant Henry Alexander McDONALD, Royal Australian Air Force.

516813 Sergeant Roland Walton COULSTON, Royal Air Force.

One night in June, 1943, one of a number of aircraft which had been loaded with bombs in readiness for an operation, caught fire. The bombs on board exploded and flaming masses of debris were hurled in all directions setting fire to 2 other aircraft and much of the dry grass in the vicinity. Flight Sergeants McDonald and Neilsen, a pilot and an air gunner, respectively, immediately ran to a bomber which was almost surrounded by burning scrub and, after starting the engines, taxied it to safety. Sergeant Coulston, a pilot, rushed to a bomber which was standing by the 2 which had caught fire, and although fully aware that the 2 burning bombers were likely to explode, proceeded to start its engines, thereby enabling the aircraft to be taxied away to safety. Flight Sergeants McDonald, and Neilsen and

Sergeant Coulston displayed courage and complete disregard for their personal safety and undoubtedly saved several valuable aircraft from destruction.

1394967 Sergeant Harold John RHODA, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.

In June, 1943, Sergeant Rhoda was the wireless operator-air gunner in an aircraft which was forced down into the sea. This airman managed to extricate himself from the almost submerged aircraft but, realising that some members of the crew were missing, re-entered the aircraft and successfully extricated the 2nd pilot who was unconscious and trapped. Sergeant Rhoda, being uncertain whether the navigator had escaped, then searched the fuselage but was unable to locate him. Throughout, Sergeant Rhoda displayed high courage and undoubtedly saved the 2nd pilot's life.

650030 Sergeant Norman Andrew WORKMAN, Royal Air Force.

On 5th June, 1943, Sergeant Workman was a member of the crew of an aircraft which crashed when alighting on the sea. The flying boat, which was about half mile from the flare path burst into flames. Although suffering from burns, bruises, cuts and shock, Sergeant Workman, disregarding his own safety, managed to lift one member of the crew into a gun position and to help another to a float. When the flames prevented him from rendering further assistance, Sergeant Workman made his way to shore in an endeavour to secure help. The half-mile journey involved wading through water waist deep, whilst hampered by weeds and mud. This airman displayed great determination and fortitude in his efforts to assist his companions but unfortunately Sergeant Workman was the only survivor.

1291419 Leading Aircraftman Harry Thomas COLLINS, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.

One morning in July, 1943, while a petrol bowser was being re-fuelled, the pumping motor backfired and started a fire in the bowser, which contained about 850 gallons of 100 octane fuel and which was surrounded by a large number of 40 gallon drums filled with petrol. The bowser burned fiercely and showed signs of exploding and igniting the entire fuel dump. Leading Aircraftman Collins ran to the scene and assisted in rolling the nearest drums to a safe distance. Then, despite the great heat, he crawled under the lorry where the rear tyres were burning, unhooked the towing bar and then drove the lorry away. In so doing Leading Aircraftman Collins prevented the conflagration from spreading to the main fuel dump and saved the lorry from destruction. He displayed great gallantry and a complete disregard of his own safety.

1028731 Leading Aircraftman George Roper THOMPSON, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.

In August, 1943, this airman was working in an aircraft which had been fuelled and loaded with depth charges. An explosion occurred which set fire to the starboard side of the fuselage. Leading Aircraftman Thompson immediately left the aircraft and, having procured a fire extinguisher, re-entered it and succeeded in quelling the flames. This airman's prompt and gallant action in returning to the aircraft, knowing that it was loaded with high explosives, is worthy of high praise. He saved a valuable aircraft and averted serious damage to others which would have occurred had the fire caused the detonation of the explosives.

Air Ministry, 12th November, 1943.

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 George Francis GRANT, D.F.C. (42216), Royal Air Force, No. 156 Squadron.

Since being awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross this officer has undertaken many sorties, covering a wide range of targets. His unswerving devotion to duty, fortitude and tenacity were amply demonstrated on one occasion when he attacked Bochum in the face of difficult circumstances. Wing Commander Grant is an outstanding leader whose fine qualities have impressed all.