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CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD.

St. James's Palace, S.W.1.

14th March, 1944.

The KING has been graciously pleased to give orders for the following appointments to the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire:—

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

Flying Officer Cyril Brooking Thornton (117692),
Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.

In November, 1943, a Mosquito aircraft, carrying full operational equipment and long range petrol tanks, crashed whilst taking off and immediately burst into flames. Soon explosions were occurring almost continuously owing to fuel tanks, cannon shells and Verey cartridges being ignited. Blazing wreckage was being flung in all directions. Flying Officer Thornton, a pilot, was one of the first to arrive at the scene of the accident. Finding the navigator had been thrown clear, he made him comfortable, organised the medical party and supervised the injured airman's removal to the ambulance. Then, with complete disregard of his own safety, this officer made straight for the main area of the crash which was surrounded by barbed wire, and saw that the pilot of the aircraft was lying beside an engine with his clothing on fire. Flying Officer Thornton went through the wire into the middle of the wreckage to reach the pilot, and, in spite of the great danger he was in, put out the flames on the pilot's clothing, and removed his parachute. With assistance he then carried the pilot to an ambulance. Unfortunately, both the rescued airmen died later but had it not been for the prompt and gallant action of Flying Officer Thornton, who sustained burns to both his hands, neither would have been rescued alive.

Lieutenant Ewen John Macdonald (205961V), South African Air Force.

One night in October, 1943, Lieutenant Macdonald was one of the crew of a Wellington aircraft detailed for an exercise in Suez Bay. While the aircraft was at 300 feet above sea level, the port engine misfired and shortly afterwards failed altogether. The aircraft could not maintain height on one engine, and was forced down on to the sea. Lieutenant Macdonald escaped from the astro hatch and noticed that the dinghy had broken away and, with a strong wind blowing, was rapidly drifting south. He immediately swam after it but his efforts to retrieve it were unsuccessful. Returning to the crew he found the pilot and navigator in difficulties, the pilot suffering from

a sprained ankle and partial paralysis of the leg. Lieutenant Macdonald inflated the navigator's life saving jacket for him and then went to the pilot's assistance. The other members of the crew separated and swam towards the shore, but Lieutenant Macdonald unselfishly continued to assist his two comrades, his cheerfulness and words of encouragement inspiring confidence in them. He tied himself to his two colleagues and the three men made slow progress towards the shore. After six hours in the water the navigator threw off his life saving jacket and swam away. Lieutenant Macdonald gave the injured pilot the extra life jacket and together they continued their slow journey towards the shore which was eventually reached after they had been in the water 13 hours. Throughout the whole period in a rough, shark-infested sea, Lieutenant Macdonald displayed great unselfishness. His conduct is worthy of high praise.

CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD.

St. James's Palace, S.W.1.

14th March, 1944.

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

Warrant Officer William Kerr McGrath (Can./R. 103014) Royal Canadian Air Force.

In December, 1943, Warrant Officer McGrath was the navigator of a Beaufighter aircraft which crashed shortly after taking off on an operational sortie. The aircraft, which was carrying a full petrol load and bombs, disintegrated on impact and burst into flames. Warrant Officer McGrath, who was uninjured, managed to extricate himself from his damaged turret and immediately went to the aid of the pilot. The pilot was unconscious and trapped in his cockpit which was enveloped by flames. The control column had been forced into his stomach and his right foot was locked under the smashed rudder bar. Ignoring the danger from possible explosions, Warrant Officer McGrath endeavoured to release the pilot. After unlocking the top hatch he moved the control column, unfastened the pilot's parachute harness and removed his right flying boot. Then by an almost superhuman effort, Warrant Officer McGrath extricated the pilot from the wreckage and dragged him 100 yards over very rough ground to safety. Warrant Officer McGrath then proceeded to the nearest farmhouse to obtain assistance. This airman displayed conspicuous courage and his prompt action undoubtedly saved his comrade's life.

1344410 Flight Sergeant Alastair Walter McGinnis, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.
1063270 Sergeant Henry Webster, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.

In September, 1943, these airmen, who were in the vicinity of an airfield, observed an aircraft overhead with its starboard engine and main plane on fire. The aircraft passed from view and crashed behind neighbouring trees. Commandeering a passing car, Flight Sergeant McGinnis and Sergeant Webster proceeded to the scene of the crash. The aircraft was burning furiously and ammunition was exploding. In spite of this and of the danger that the bombs, which they could see in the wreckage, might explode at any moment, these airmen approached the aircraft to search for the crew. They found the wireless operator (air) in the rear of the aircraft and succeeded in extricating him and in beating out the flames on his clothing. They also extricated another member of the crew who was lying in the burning wreckage but was unfortunately dead. Flight Sergeant McGinnis and Sergeant Webster then carried the wireless operator (air) away from immediate danger and commenced to render first aid to him. While they were thus engaged one of the bombs exploded and both airmen were thrown to the ground and hit by falling shrapnel. Undeterred, they continued to tend to their comrade. They laid him in a ditch further away and stayed with him until an ambulance arrived. In circumstances of great danger Flight Sergeant McGinnis and Sergeant Webster displayed coolness and outstanding gallantry and undoubtedly saved the life of one member of the crew.

949144 Acting Corporal John Andrew Sinclair, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.

In July, 1943, Corporal Sinclair was a passenger in a Wellington bomber which caught fire whilst taking off. A forced landing was made with the aircraft in flames and it became a total wreck. Although the petrol tanks were exploding and all had been ordered to stand clear, Corporal Sinclair, displaying complete disregard for his personal safety, re-entered the blazing aircraft and was instrumental in rescuing two passengers who were trapped in the rear turret. In effecting the rescue Corporal Sinclair sustained severe burns on the head and arms, and was subsequently in hospital for six weeks. He displayed great bravery in saving the lives of the two trapped passengers.

CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD.

St. James's Palace, S.W.1.

14th March, 1944.

The KING has been graciously pleased to approve the award of the British Empire Medal (Military Division) to the undermentioned:—

535488 Flight Sergeant Thomas Hall, Royal Air Force.

In November, 1943, a Beaufighter aircraft, carrying a normal load of explosives and ammunition, crashed and burst into flames. Flight Sergeant Hall, who was working in a nearby building, immediately went to the scene of the accident and endeavoured to rescue the pilot who, although he had struggled half way out of the hatch, was dazed and unable to get clear. Flight Sergeant Hall was driven back by the flames but, persisting in his efforts, he eventually succeeded in pulling the pilot out of the aircraft and in assisting him to safety. In so doing Flight Sergeant Hall sustained severe burns to his face. His prompt and courageous action, which was performed with the knowledge that the aircraft was carrying explosives and ammunition, undoubtedly saved the pilot's life.

1389699, Sergeant Eric Victor Sharp, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.

One morning in November, 1943, Sergeant Sharp was the wireless operator (air) of a Wellington aircraft which crashed and caught fire. The aircraft was fully fuelled and carrying ammunition and pyrotechnics. The crew, with one exception, managed to extricate themselves. Sergeant Sharp was just about to jump off the leading edge of the mainplane when the wing petrol tanks caught fire. At this moment, realising that one of his comrades was still in the aircraft, he returned through the fire and succeeded in pulling him out of the astro-dome on to the ground. In

so doing he sustained injuries which necessitated treatment at hospital but his gallant action saved his comrade's life.

771102 Corporal Ernest Marmaduke Bower, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.

On two occasions this airman, while in charge of the crash tender, has shown outstanding gallantry in his attempts to save the lives of pilots by quelling the flames of burning aircraft. The first incident occurred in August, 1943, when two Typhoon aircraft, which had collided in the air, burst into flames on impact with the ground. The second took place in November, 1943, when an aircraft landed from an operational sortie with a bomb which had failed to release; the bomb fell off during the landing run, exploded, and set the aircraft alight. In the face of great danger from exploding cannon shells and petrol tanks Corporal Bower, on both occasions, showed fine courage and devotion to duty by approaching, without hesitation, very close to the burning aircraft to enable his extinguisher to reach the flames. His excellent example encouraged the other airmen engaged in the fire fighting and enabled the flames to be subdued in a very short time.

1250011 Corporal Sidney John Mathews, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.

One night in December, 1943, this airman observed a Lancaster aircraft crash in a field. He immediately ran across several ploughed fields to reach the aircraft which was by then burning fiercely. Corporal Mathews succeeded in extricating the wireless operator and in pulling two other members of the crew from the blazing wreckage. Then after attending to the rear gunner who had been thrown clear and was dazed, Corporal Mathews went to a telephone and reported the crash to his base. Later, he directed the fire tender and the ambulance to the scene. By his prompt and courageous action this airman saved the life of the wireless operator and rendered valuable assistance in most harassing and difficult circumstances.

549750 Leading Aircraftman William Henry Goode, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.

One night in October, 1943, a Lancaster aircraft, returning from an operation, crashed on a beach. A crash tender was quickly on the scene. Leading Aircraftman Goode being a member of its crew. The aircraft was found to be burning fiercely. Despite the danger from ammunition, which was continually exploding, the crew of the tender successfully extinguished the fire. There being no sign of any occupants of the bomber, an extensive search was made of the aircraft and also in the neighbourhood of the beach. The search in this latter area was a particularly hazardous operation as the locality is heavily mined and personnel had been "warned off" in orders. Throughout the fire fighting work and during the subsequent search, which was undertaken in complete darkness, Leading Aircraftman Goode showed a conspicuous example of courageous and enthusiastic leadership, displaying complete disregard for his own safety. On a more recent occasion, he displayed similar courage and leadership when an aircraft crashed on a runway of his station and burst into flames. He made a prolonged attempt to save the pilot from the flames and, although unsuccessful, he eventually was able to recover the body.

1182257 Leading Aircraftman Terence James Bysshe Shelley Giles, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. (Royal Air Force Regiment.)

1454796 Aircraftman 1st Class Leonard John Waites, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. (Royal Air Force Regiment.)

In December, 1943, an Albemarle aircraft crashed when approaching to land on an airfield. The wreckage blazed furiously. Leading Aircraftman Giles and Aircraftman 1st Class Waites, who were employed in a gun post 200 yards away, immediately ran to the scene. Disdaining the intense heat and exploding ammunition they climbed on to the fuselage to reach the seriously injured wireless operator (air) and succeeded in extricating him from his broken and burning turret and in carrying him away to safety. After removing the airman's burning shoes, Aircraftmen Giles and Waites returned to the blazing wreckage but were unable to find any other occupants of the aircraft. These airmen displayed high courage.

431477 Corporal Alice Holden, Women's Auxiliary Air Force.

One night in October, 1943, a Wellington aircraft crashed about 150 yards from the flying control room at an airfield. Corporal Holden who was on stand by duty as a radio telephone operator, immediately ran towards the burning wreckage. Just before she reached it the petrol tanks exploded and fragments were hurled near to her. In spite of this she continued on hearing cries for help and she ultimately discovered the rear gunner trapped in his turret and enveloped by the flames. After some difficulty Corporal Holden managed to open the escape door but the gunner, whose clothing and harness were burning, was unable to get clear unaided. Ignoring the danger from the exploding ammunition and the intense heat Corporal Holden persisted in her rescue efforts and eventually succeeded in dragging the airman clear of the aircraft and in escorting him to an ambulance. She displayed courage and devotion to duty of a very high standard and but for her gallant action the gunner's life would have been lost.

Air Ministry, 14th March, 1944.

The KING has been graciously pleased to approve the following awards in recognition of gallantry displayed in flying operations against the enemy:—

Distinguished Flying Cross.

Acting Flight Lieutenant Ernest Robert HERRALD (122125), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, No. 51 Squadron.

This officer has completed a large number of sorties, involving attacks on a variety of strongly defended targets. In pressing home his attacks he has displayed great courage and determination; qualities which were well in evidence when he attacked Magdeburg recently. On the outward flight the bomber was attacked by a fighter. Owing to some defect, Flight Lieutenant Herald's gunners were unable to fire their guns to defend their aircraft. During the next half-hour the enemy attacked repeatedly but, each time, Flight Lieutenant Herald out-manoeuvred his adversary. In the end the fighter was successfully evaded and Flight Lieutenant Herald continued to the target and bombed it. His skill and resource throughout this spirited action were worthy of the highest praise.

Flying Officer Denis Edward William GARVAN (Aus.411770), Royal Australian Air Force, No. 136 Squadron.

This officer is a keen, courageous and resolute fighter and, within a short period has destroyed at least 4 enemy aircraft. In December, 1943, he took part in an engagement against a large formation of enemy aircraft, one of which he shot down. In two engagements some days later, Flying Officer Garvan destroyed 3 fighters. In the latter of these sorties, he was slightly wounded in the arm and leg and his aircraft sustained damage. In spite of this he flew safely to base.

Flying Officer Louis GREENBURGH (49803), Royal Air Force, No. 514 Squadron.

This officer was pilot and captain of an aircraft which attacked Berlin on a recent occasion. During the operation the aircraft was hit by anti-aircraft fire and sustained damage. Some petrol was lost but in spite of this, Flying Officer Greenburgh went on to make a successful attack. Before reaching England on the return flight the petrol supply became exhausted. Flying Officer Greenburgh brought his aircraft safely down on to the sea, however, and he and his crew got safely aboard the dinghy, from which they were rescued the following morning. Whilst they were adrift, Flying Officer Greenburgh did everything possible to cheer his crew, all of whom suffered severely through being buffeted by the heavy seas. Since then, this officer has made 2 more attacks on the German capital, pressing home his attacks with his usual thoroughness.

Flying Officer Wilbert Arley HEALEY (Can./J.21121), Royal Canadian Air Force, No. 49 Squadron.

This officer has completed many sorties, including 10 attacks on the capital of the German Reich. On the last of these, the bomber was attacked by a fighter and sustained much damage. A large portion of one of the wings was shot away but, despite this, Flying Officer Healey flew back to

base. He is a most determined captain, whose fine fighting qualities and exceptional skill have set a fine example.

Flying Officer Gordon Herbert RUDRUM (156049), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, No. 158 Squadron.

As flight engineer, this officer has participated in many sorties, including attacks on targets in the Ruhr area and others more distant. He has at all times displayed great determination and devotion to duty and proved himself to be a most dependable member of aircraft crew. His technical skill has contributed materially to the successes achieved.

Pilot Officer Arthur CAYGILL (53196), Royal Air Force, No. 51 Squadron.

This officer is a skilful and courageous captain of aircraft, whose determined efforts throughout the many sorties in which he has taken part have set a fine example. On one occasion, in an attack on Hanover, his aircraft was badly damaged in a fight with an enemy aircraft. Although his aircraft became difficult to control, Pilot Officer Caygill flew it to base and effected a safe landing. His keenness and devotion to duty have been most commendable.

Pilot Officer Michael Clifford FOSTER (156626), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, No. 51 Squadron.

This officer has attacked many targets in Germany, including Berlin, Hamburg, Hanover and Leipzig. Throughout his tour he has displayed great skill and his determination to complete his tasks successfully has been most evident. On one occasion, during a sortie against Mannheim, his aircraft was severely damaged in an encounter with a fighter. One engine was put out of action, the starboard main-plane and the ailerons were damaged. A fire broke out in the starboard wing and burned for more than an hour. The aircraft became very difficult to control but, displaying exceptional skill and resolution, Pilot Officer Foster flew it back to this country.

Distinguished Flying Medal.

Can/R.135221 Flight Sergeant Anthony Wright TINMOUTH, Royal Canadian Air Force, No. 431 (R.C.A.F.) Squadron.

One night in February, 1944, this airman piloted an aircraft detailed to attack Berlin. On the outward flight the aircraft was attacked by a fighter and sustained damage to the fuselage, the oxygen supply system, the wireless apparatus and other equipment; the intercommunication system was also rendered unserviceable. Undeterred, Flight Sergeant Tinmouth went on to the target and pressed home his attack. On the return flight, the bomber was intercepted by more fighters but, by his skill, good judgment and resource, Flight Sergeant Tinmouth brought his aircraft home without sustaining further damage. On this, his first sortie as captain, this airman displayed a high standard of leadership, courage and determination.

1318538 Flight Sergeant Francis WADGE, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, No. 100 Squadron.

One night in February, 1944, this airman was captain and pilot of an aircraft detailed to attack Stuttgart. Soon after leaving the target area the aircraft was heavily hit. Some 6 foot of the port wing was ripped away, both the port propellers were bent, the mid-upper turret was shattered and some other important parts of the bomber's structure were damaged. Considerable height was lost and Flight Sergeant Wadge gave orders to prepare to abandon aircraft. He succeeded in regaining control, however, and promptly informed his crew that he intended to try to reach England. His efforts were successful and, in the face of great difficulty, Flight Sergeant Wadge effected a masterly landing at an airfield near the coast. This airman displayed skill, courage and resolution of a high order.

Air Ministry, 14th March, 1944.

The KING has been graciously pleased to approve the following award in recognition of gallant and distinguished service:—

Military Cross.

Flight Lieutenant Forest Frederick Edward YEO-THOMAS (89215), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.

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