

Flight Lieutenant Cecil Philip Leith STREATFIELD (79018), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, No. 18 Squadron.

As air gunner, this officer has participated in a very large number of sorties. He has at all times displayed the greatest keenness for operations and his gunnery skill has been of a high order. He is a devoted member of aircraft crew whose services have proved of great value.

Acting Flight Lieutenant French SMITH (Aus.412037), Royal Australian Air Force, No. 635 Squadron.

This officer has displayed great skill, courage and devotion to duty. He has completed a large number of sorties, including 10 attacks on Berlin. One night in May, 1944, he participated in an attack on an enemy railway junction and the accuracy of his bombing was a notable factor in the success obtained. Flight Lieutenant Smith is a most efficient captain, whose example has been worthy of the greatest praise.

Acting Flight Lieutenant Henry SPARKES (124532), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, No. 114 Squadron.

One night in May, 1944, this officer was the navigator of an aircraft detailed for a reconnaissance over the battle area in the region of Frosinone. In spite of extremely adverse weather, Flight Lieutenant Sparkes displayed much skill and perseverance and eventually a number of enemy vehicles were successfully attacked. On the return flight severe electrical storms accompanied by blinding rain were encountered but Flight Lieutenant Sparkes skilfully navigated the aircraft home. This officer has completed a large number of sorties and has set a fine example of courage and resolution.

Captain John Edward GASSON (279804V), South African Air Force, No. 92 Squadron.

This officer has participated in very many sorties. He is a most inspiring leader, whose fine fighting spirit and great courage have contributed materially to the high morale of his flight. During a recent sortie, Captain Gasson single-handed, engaged a number of enemy aircraft, four of which were hit and damaged by his bullets. When approaching an enemy airfield, in pursuit of another of the fighters, Captain Gasson sighted an enemy aircraft coming in to land. He promptly opened fire with his machine guns and, whilst taking evading action, the enemy aircraft crashed. Captain Gasson has destroyed at least 3 hostile aircraft.

Flying Officer David Manning ASHFORD (124490), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, No. 268 Squadron.

In May, 1944, this officer took part in an operation against a target in a most heavily defended area in Northern France. When approaching the objective his aircraft was hit by anti-aircraft fire. The fuselage was pierced in very many places by flying splinters, whilst Flying Officer Ashford was hit in the side and the foot. The aircraft temporarily went out of control but, when down to almost treetop height, this pilot regained control. Coolly and skilfully, he went in to complete his allotted task and afterwards flew the damaged aircraft to base where he executed a safe landing although deprived of the use of the brakes and flap. He displayed courage, tenacity and fortitude of a high order.

Flying Officer Brian BASTABLE (159501), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, No. 210 Squadron.

Recently this officer piloted an aircraft in an engagement against a U-boat. In spite of intense opposing fire, Flying Officer Bastable pressed home his attack which ended with the destruction of the enemy vessel. In this spirited action, this officer displayed skill and determination of a high order. He has completed much operational flying and throughout has set a fine example.

Flying Officer Maurice Henry PINCHES (49207), Royal Air Force, No. 122 Squadron.

This officer has proved himself to be a determined and resolute fighter. Within a short period

he has destroyed at least 5 enemy aircraft, two of which he shot down in one sortie recently. His example has been most praiseworthy.

Lieutenant Patrick McCCLURE (206245V), South African Air Force, No. 40 (S.A.A.F.) Squadron.

This officer has completed a very large number of sorties and has displayed high qualities of skill, courage and perseverance. In May, 1944, he executed a reconnaissance over the battle area with outstanding results. On another occasion, some days later, he sighted some 20 enemy vehicles moving at great speed. As the leading vehicle entered a narrow defile, Lieutenant McClure opened fire with devastating effect. The vehicle was set on fire and its destruction caused a road block. Before this could be cleared the remaining vehicles were effectively attacked by other aircraft. Lieutenant McClure has displayed the greatest keenness and devotion to duty.

Pilot Officer Edgar Vincent DEARNALEY (Aus.414341), Royal Australian Air Force, No. 467 (R.A.A.F.) Squadron.

This officer has displayed great skill and resolution during his tour of operations when he has attacked a large number of well defended targets. On a recent occasion in an operation against Brunswick one engine of his aircraft became useless. In spite of this he flew in to the target which he bombed with his usual determination. His keenness and devotion to duty have been most commendable.

Conspicuous Gallantry Medal (Flying).

778890 Flight Sergeant John CASSON, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, No. 250 Squadron.

One morning in May, 1944, this airman took part in an attack on mechanical transport on the Alatri-Frosinone Road. Despite intense opposing fire, Flight Sergeant Casson pressed home his attacks with great determination. Whilst making a second run over the target his aircraft was hit by a shell. Flight Sergeant Casson was badly wounded in the thigh. Although faint through the loss of blood and shock, this valiant pilot flew his damaged aircraft to base. He was unable to operate one rudder-bar owing to his exhausted condition. Nevertheless, he effected a safe landing. As he was lifted from the controls, Flight Sergeant Casson collapsed. This airman displayed courage, fortitude and devotion to duty of the highest order.

Distinguished Flying Medal.

1266256 Flight Sergeant Albert Edward BEAMONT, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, No. 18 Squadron.

This airman is a resolute and skilful pilot, whose successes well illustrate his great skill and devotion to duty. He has completed a large number of sorties, many of them in adverse weather, and has never spared himself in his endeavours to ensure accurate bombing. He has proved himself to be a most valuable member of aircraft crew.

1438903 Flight Sergeant Arthur HILL, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, No. 75 (N.Z.) Squadron.

This airman has participated in a large number of sorties involving attacks on a wide range of enemy targets. He is a navigator of high merit and his ability has contributed in good measure to the successes obtained. During a sortie one night in May, 1944, Flight Sergeant Hill was wounded in the arm. Although suffering acutely he insisted on continuing his duties and successfully navigated the aircraft home. His exemplary conduct was typical of that which he has shown throughout his tour.

AMENDMENT.

In notification of 8th June 1944 (Birthday honours list) (p. 2599, col. 1) regarding 1267189 Flight Sergeant Henry Benjamin STUKKY, R.A.F.V.R. for "STUKEY" read "STUCKEY."

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