



FOURTH SUPPLEMENT
TO
The London Gazette

Of TUESDAY, the 7th of NOVEMBER, 1944

Published by Authority

Registered as a newspaper

FRIDAY, 10 NOVEMBER, 1944

Air Ministry, 10th November, 1944.

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 Air Commodore Alfred Charles Henry SHARP, A.D.C., R.A.F.

This officer has participated in many sorties during which he has attacked such targets as Hamburg, Bremen and heavily defended centres in the Ruhr area. Throughout these operations he has displayed the highest qualities of skill and leadership, and his example has proved most inspiring. In addition to his work in the air, Air Commodore Sharp has shown great organising ability and his excellent work has contributed in a large way to the successes of the squadrons he commands. This officer has rendered outstanding service.

Acting Wing Commander Reginald William Cox, D.F.C., A.F.C. (43145), R.A.F., 7 Sqn.

In September, 1944, this officer captained an aircraft of a bomber force detailed to attack a target in the Calais area. In the operation the aircraft was hit and control was temporarily lost. The elevator control had been severed. Nevertheless, Wing Commander Cox succeeded in levelling out. Although his aircraft was most difficult to control Wing Commander Cox decided to attempt to fly the damaged aircraft back to this country. During the flight the aircraft climbed and dived alternately. Wing Commander Cox was faced with an extremely difficult task to retain a measure of control but he flew to an airfield and effected a masterly landing. This officer has displayed the highest standard of skill, courage and leadership and his example has proved a rare source of inspiration.

Acting Squadron Leader French SMITH, D.F.C. (Aus.412037), R.A.A.F. 635 Sqn.

Squadron Leader Smith has completed many more sorties since being awarded the D.F.C. Most of them have been against most heavily defended German targets. In September, this officer was detailed to participate in an attack on a target near Calais. Whilst over the target his aircraft was repeatedly hit and sustained damage. He afterwards flew the badly damaged aircraft safely back to base. His determination and splendid fighting spirit have been a fine example to all.

Acting Squadron Leader Peter Harrison SWAN, D.F.C. (Aus. 400498), R.A.A.F., 635 Sqn.

Since the award of the D.F.C. this officer has completed very many sorties involving attacks on

vital targets in Germany and also in Northern France. He has continued to display the highest skill and bravery and his example has greatly inspired all with whom he has flown. In September, 1944, he participated in an attack on a synthetic oil refinery at Gelsenkirchen. In the face of heavy fire from the ground defences, Squadron Leader Swan executed his bombing task with great accuracy. Following this successful attack Squadron Leader Swan was quickly in action again. This time the target was Frankfurt. In spite of strong opposition this intrepid pilot executed a most determined attack. His successes are a fine tribute to his outstanding ability, thoroughness and tenacity.

Distinguished Service Order.

Squadron Leader Thomas Woodruff RIPPINGALE (39159), R.A.F.O., 166 Sqn.

Conspicuous Gallantry Medal (Flying).

1802499 Sergeant Francis William CRIDGE, R.A.F.V.R., 166 Sqn.

This officer and airman were pilot and navigator respectively of an aircraft detailed to attack Neuss one night in September, 1944. When nearing the target the aircraft was attacked by a fighter. The fight ended with the destruction of the enemy aircraft which exploded in the air. The bomber had sustained much damage. The mid-upper and rear turrets were wrecked, the gunner of the latter being killed. The wireless apparatus, many of the pilot's instruments and much navigational equipment were rendered useless. The hydraulic gear was put out of action, making it impossible to operate the bomb doors mechanically. Even so, Squadron Leader Rippingale calculated that if the bombs were released their weight would force open the bomb doors. He gave the order and the bombs fell. A course was set for home and finally an airfield was reached and a safe landing made. In hazardous circumstances, Squadron Leader Rippingale displayed exceptional skill, inspiring leadership and great courage. Sergeant Cridge also proved himself to be a brave and devoted member of aircraft crew. In the fight he was wounded in the face, arm and the body by fragments of a cannon shell. His first thought was to give his captain all the assistance of which he was capable. Although in great pain and suffering from the loss of blood he navigated the aircraft home with much skill.

Bar to Distinguished Flying Cross.

Acting Squadron Leader Bransome Arthur BURBRIDGE, D.F.C. (100067), R.A.F.V.R., 85 Sqn.

Flight Lieutenant Frank Seymour SKELTON, D.F.C. (106675), R.A.F.V.R., 85 Sqn.

As pilot and observer respectively these officers have completed many sorties and have destroyed 7 enemy aircraft. They have displayed outstanding keenness, great skill and gallantry, setting an example worthy of the highest praise.

Flight Lieutenant Lewis BRANDON, D.F.C. (116886), R.A.F.V.R., 157 Sqn.

This officer has set a fine example of gallantry and devotion to duty. He is a highly skilled and resolute member of aircraft crew and has assisted in the destruction of 6 enemy aircraft and 6 flying bombs.

Distinguished Flying Cross.

Wing Commander Christopher William Mitchell LING (26204), R.A.F., 51 Sqn.

Wing Commander Ling has completed many sorties far into enemy occupied territory and his successes are an excellent testimony to his great skill, courage and determination. He is a fine leader whose sterling qualities have contributed in good measure to the operational efficiency of the squadron which has achieved much success. Wing Commander Ling has destroyed one and assisted in the destruction of 2 more enemy aircraft.

Acting Wing Commander Ralph Kennedy CASSELS, A.F.C. (41254), R.A.F.O., 76 Sqn.

This officer has completed very many sorties, including attacks on such targets as Berlin, Stuttgart and industrial centres in the Ruhr area. He has at all times displayed the highest standard of devotion to duty and his fine leadership, great skill and courage have been reflected in the efficiency and fighting qualities of the squadron he commands.

Flight Lieutenant James Paul HOWARD (Can/J.8790), R.C.A.F., 139 Sqn.

Flight Lieutenant Howard has completed many sorties and has proved himself to be a skilful and determined pilot. On three occasions whilst over Berlin, his aircraft has been hit by anti-aircraft fire, and has sustained damage but Flight Lieutenant Howard has completed his task and flown the aircraft back to this country. He has displayed courage and devotion to duty.

Flight Lieutenant Ralph William READ (61278), R.A.F.V.R., 138 Sqn.

One night in September, 1944, Flight Lieutenant Read piloted an aircraft detailed for an operation in Denmark. Soon after the target had been attacked the aircraft was intercepted by a fighter. In the ensuing engagement the bomber sustained extensive damage. The starboard engines were affected, one of them being put out of action. The starboard aileron was shot away. One of the petrol tanks was damaged. The elevator trimming tabs were rendered useless and the wireless apparatus made unserviceable. The aircraft became exceedingly difficult to control and to keep it level, it was necessary for another member of the crew to assist in holding the control column. In spite of this Flight Lieutenant Read flew the aircraft to an airfield near the English coast. When coming in to land the port outer and starboard inner engines failed. Despite this, Flight Lieutenant Read effected a successful crash landing. In perilous circumstances this officer displayed outstanding skill, great courage and determination.

Acting Flight Lieutenant Sydney Harley JOHNSON (Aus.427362), R.A.A.F., 582 Sqn.

This officer is a most efficient and resolute member of aircraft crew. He has participated in very many sorties, one of them being an attack in daylight on an oil refinery at Castrop Rauxel recently. On this occasion he was the bomb aimer. Whilst over the target the aircraft was subjected to heavy anti-aircraft fire and was repeatedly hit. In spite of this a steady attacking run was made and Flight Lieutenant Johnson attacked the target with accuracy. His cool and skilful work in harassing circumstances set a fine example.

Flying Officer Ronald Henry ANDERSON (145342), R.A.F.V.R., 640 Sqn.

One night in September, 1944, Flying Officer Anderson was detailed to attack Kiel. On the outward journey the aircraft was hit by anti-aircraft fire. The starboard outer engine caught fire. The flames were extinguished but owing to severe vibration, the propeller fell away. Kiel

was still 100 miles distant. In spite of the damage sustained, Flying Officer Anderson was determined to bomb the target. Some height was lost and he reached the objective after the main bomber force had completed its attack. Nevertheless, in the face of concentrated fire from the ground defences, Flying Officer Anderson executed his bombing mission. He displayed courage and resolution typical of that which he has shown throughout his tour of operational duty.

Flying Officer Cyril Kenneth CURTIS (52165), R.A.F., 138 Sqn.

As flight engineer this officer has participated in very many sorties and has displayed a high standard of ability throughout. During a recent sortie, Flying Officer Curtis was wounded in the back and legs when his aircraft was attacked by a fighter. Although in great pain he showed a fine spirit and from a position on the floor, calmly instructed another member of the crew in the correct usage of the fuel tanks. This proved an important factor in the eventual safe return of the aircraft as the petrol supply was fast becoming exhausted as an airfield was reached. Flying Officer Curtis displayed great fortitude and devotion to duty.

Flying Officer William Joseph MULLEN (Aus.426137), R.A.A.F., No. 466 (R.A.A.F.) Sqn.

Flying Officer Mullen has flown on many operational sorties and has attacked a variety of targets. One night in August, 1944, he was detailed to attack a military target in the battle area in Normandy. To ensure success, accurate bombing was essential. In the run-in intense anti-aircraft fire was encountered. The aircraft was hit and the starboard engine caught fire. Fully aware of the responsibilities entrusted to him, Flying Officer Mullen held to a straight and steady bombing run and, in the face of heavy fire, he attacked his target with great precision. This officer displayed great skill, courage and resolution.

Flying Officer George Oliver RUSSELL (147618), R.A.F.V.R., 115 Sqn.

This officer has completed numerous sorties and has displayed outstanding determination and devotion to duty, qualities which were well illustrated on a recent occasion when detailed to attack Neuss. In the early stages of the flight the port outer engine failed. Some time later the mid-upper turret became unserviceable. Nevertheless, Flying Officer Russell continued to the target and executed his bombing attack from a much lower level than that which had been planned. His resolution to complete his mission successfully set an excellent example.

Flying Officer Noel Douglas WILKINSON (172187), R.A.F.V.R., 608 Sqn.

One night in September, 1944, Flying Officer Wilkinson, as pilot of aircraft, was detailed to attack Berlin. During the bombing run the aircraft was illuminated in the searchlights and immediately after the bombs had been released was attacked by an enemy fighter. The aircraft was repeatedly hit. The windscreen was smashed and the navigator was temporarily blinded by flying particles of glass. Coolly and skilfully, however, Flying Officer Wilkinson manoeuvred his damaged aircraft and finally evaded the attacker. Soon afterwards one engine became useless. Despite this, and although deprived of the services of the injured navigator Flying Officer Wilkinson flew back to an airfield and effected a successful crash landing. He set a fine example of courage and determination.

Flying Officer Vivian Thomas WOODS (Can/J.16361), R.C.A.F., 405 (R.C.A.F.) Sqn.

In September, 1944, Flying Officer Woods was pilot and captain of an aircraft detailed for a daylight attack on a synthetic oil refinery in Germany. During the bombing run, the aircraft was hit by anti-aircraft fire and sustained severe damage but the attack was pressed home. Two petrol tanks had been punctured and, as the bomber turned away from the target a third one was pierced. On the homeward flight, Flying Officer Woods used the engines with great skill thus conserving a certain amount of petrol. As the enemy coast was crossed the last remaining tank was pierced. The situation was serious but this pilot succeeded in flying to within 4 miles of the English coast before the engines failed through lack of petrol. Even so, Flying Officer Woods managed to reach an airfield on the coast and effect a successful crash landing. He displayed exceptional skill, great courage and determination.

Acting Flying Officer Kenneth Joseph SHEPPARDSON (175261), R.A.F.V.R., No. 640 Sqn.

In air operations Flying Officer Sheppardson has displayed qualities of skill, courage and fortitude in keeping with the best traditions of the Royal Air Force.

Distinguished Flying Medal.

1615909 Flight Sergeant Alfred MANSTOFF, R.A.F.V.R., 77 Sqn.

This airman has displayed the highest standard of skill, fortitude and bravery in air operations.

Government House, Canberra, 10th November, 1944.

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE.

The KING has been graciously pleased to approve the following award, with effect from 25th October, 1944, in recognition of gallantry displayed in flying operations against the enemy in the South-West Pacific area:—

Bar to Distinguished Flying Cross.

Squadron Leader Adam Howie BRYDON, D.F.C. (Aus.578).

AMENDMENTS.

In notification of 17th October, 1944, (p. 4749, col. 2) under heading Distinguished Flying Cross, *delete* "Warrant Officer Ralph WALKER (1435348), R.A.F.V.R.; 455 (R.A.A.F.) Sqn." and relevant citation. Award previously announced on 13th October, 1944 (p. 4690, col. 2).

(P. 4751, col. 2), under heading Warrant Officers *delete* "Philip Arthur CLOUGH (2212859) (now Pilot Officer) R.A.F.V.R., 625 Sqn.," and *insert* "Philip Arthur CLOUGH (2212859), R.A.F.V.R., 625 Sqn." on p. 4750, col. 1, immediately below "Dennis Clark (176717), R.A.F.V.R."

In notification of 7th November, 1944, (p. 5085, col. 1) under heading Distinguished Flying Cross. Flight Lieutenants. *Delete* "Arthur Jacques (128978), R.A.F.V.R., 235 Sqn." Award previously announced on 10th October, 1944 (p. 4641, col. 1).

(P. 5085, col. 2), ROYAL CANADIAN AIR FORCE. Immediately below Pilot Officer Arthur Bodan FRENCH (Can/J.85937) *insert* heading "Distinguished Flying Medal."

LONDON

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1944

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