

immediate attempt to escape in an army uniform. He cut the wire of a second-floor window and, timing his action so as to miss the guards, he jumped clear and escaped. He travelled in the direction of Prague but, after three days, he was discovered by some German civilians. He was handed over to the authorities and sent to a Gestapo prison where he was kept for 14 days in solitary confinement. He was then sent back to Stalag 344 and spent a further 10 days in solitary confinement. In October 1943, Warrant Officer Bastable made another attempt to escape by means of an emergency ladder in the main shaft of a coal mine in which he was working. He gained his liberty for two days after which he was recaptured by German police. In company with a Czech Air Force sergeant he made another attempt to escape from Stalag 344 but both were recaptured and were returned to the camp. Warrant Officer Bastable and the same Czech sergeant finally escaped in October 1944, by jumping from the roof of their billets over the wire fence and proceeding into some woods nearby. Here they were assisted by Czech civilians. They eventually made contact with the Czech underground movement, and co-operated with its members. They were supplied with arms and ammunition and took part in many operations, destroying railways, bridges, road blocks and electrical installations. The Czech sergeant was captured again and has not been heard of since. Warrant Officer Bastable continued serving in the underground movement until he was liberated by the Russians in May 1945.

Warrant Officer David YOUNG (745910) Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, No. 49 Squadron.

Warrant Officer Young was the wireless operator of a Hampden aircraft that crash-landed near Courville in December 1940. His companions were all badly injured, so he went to a nearby farm for help. The occupier, a German, promised to get a doctor, but instead of doing so, he informed the Gestapo and later, the crew of the Hampden were arrested. They were taken to Dulag Luft at Frankfurt and transferred to Stalag Luft I at Barth in March 1941. In July 1941, while at Stalag Luft I, Warrant Officer Young, with four others, dug a tunnel through which he and a colleague made their escape, each carrying a day's food. They hid in a wood until morning, but were discovered by a German forester who informed the German authorities. The two escapers were recaptured and were eventually returned to the camp. Warrant Officer Young made a second attempt to escape from Stalag Luft I in September 1941, whilst he was being sent to a flour mill to work. He got clear and made for Rugen Island in an effort to reach Sweden but, after two and a half hours walk, he was seen by a guard and was escorted back to the camp. On the 5th June, 1942, Warrant Officer Young was transferred to a camp at Sagan. The camp had just been opened and owing to the chaos which existed, Warrant Officer Young was able to walk out of the confines in company with some civilian workers. He walked 25 miles in an effort to reach the river Oder, but was stopped by a civilian policeman. Failing to produce an identity card, he was eventually escorted back to the camp where he received a week's punishment. Warrant Officer Young made another attempt to escape, this time from Stalag Luft IV in September 1944. He hid underneath a cart used to deliver food and managed to leave the camp. For 2½ days he walked to the port of Colberg, and on arrival there he found the Germans were evacuating the town. After waiting 24 hours, he decided it was hopeless to try and leave the port by ship. In a starving condition he went to a house posing as a Dutchman, and was given food. While he was there a German came and asked for proof of his identity. Warrant Officer Young was forced to produce a letter which bore his R.A.F. number. The authorities were informed and he was sent back to Stalag Luft IV. Warrant Officer Young made his fifth attempt to escape in March 1945. While on the march with other prisoners, he broke away from the column and walked to the town of Parchin. Here he made contact with a Russian who took him to a house where he found a R.A.F. sergeant suffering from a poisoned leg and seriously ill. The latter had been left by the Germans. Warrant Officer Young conveyed him to a hospital and stayed with him for a week until he died.

Warrant Officer Young moved on to Sternberg where he was ultimately liberated by the Russians on 4th May, 1945.

*Military Medal.*

1354412 Sergeant Alec Charles HAINES, R.A.F.V.R., No. 2962 Squadron, Royal Air Force Regiment.

Sergeant Haines was in charge of a firing party at a funeral in Batavia on 20th November, 1945, when the party was subjected to heavy fire from a large force of Indonesian Extremists. Sergeant Haines quickly appreciated the situation and covered the withdrawal of the funeral party to a safe area without loss to personnel. He then carried out a reconnaissance. When he was satisfied that the moment was opportune he returned to the cemetery, and with the help of other Royal Air Force Regiment personnel, retrieved the coffin. This non-commissioned officer displayed courage, initiative and leadership in a very difficult situation. He was instrumental in saving many lives.

630123 Temporary Corporal Lionel Dennis Squire GROOME, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, No. 2810 Squadron, Royal Air Force Regiment.

Corporal Groome, a nursing orderly, was parachuted into Sourabaya with a Medical Officer and a P.O.W. Contact Officer, on operation "Mastiff." The party was well received but on 19th September, 1945, the Dutch hoisted the Dutch flag and this caused a riot among the population. This was eventually quelled after the flag was lowered.

On 28th October, following various incidents, the British party became the object of all types of small arms fire. The party withdrew to an hotel which was organised as a defensive position with the aid of a platoon of Rajput Rifles. Sniping became intermittent and on 29th October, the Indonesians made a frontal fierce attack on the hotel, and the party was forced to withdraw from the front of the hotel. Casualties were sustained by I.O.R.'s and Corporal Groome rendered first aid under fire. Later, when a Bren gunner became a casualty, Corporal Groome, although a nursing orderly, took over the gun and handled it with such efficiency that he considerably helped to repel the Indonesians, who were prevented from reaching the upper floors of the hotel. Corporal Groome then proceeded to render first aid to the wounded, and, while so doing, was taken prisoner. He was released on 3rd November, 1945.

AMENDMENTS.

In notification of 8th June, 1944 (Birthday Honours) Mentions in Despatches (p. 2647, col. 1) delete the following:—

INDIAN AIR FORCE.

*Naik.*

B. N. BANERJEE (0278).

*Lance Naik.*

N. SEN (6069).

In notification of 14th June, 1945 (Birthday Honours) Mentions in Despatches (p. 3030, col. 1) under heading South African Air Force delete Lieutenant-Colonel A. G. W. HAMMOND (68002).

In notification of 1st January, 1946 (p. 116, col. 2) regarding a mention in despatches for 2065859 Corporal A. I. K. LEANAN, R.A.F.V.R., amend to read 2065859 Corporal A. I. K. LEAMON, W.A.A.F.

In notification of 1st January, 1946 (p. 71, col. 1) regarding award of B.E.M. to 710154 Sergeant Christopher Michael CUTCHIE, amend to read "CUTCHI."

In notification of 8th June, 1944 (p. 2614, col. 2) regarding a mention in despatches for Acting Wing Commander R. B. BROWN (21501), amend rank to read Wing Commander.

In notification of 23rd October, 1945 (p. 5183, col. 2) regarding award of Distinguished Flying Medal to 1605638 Flight Sergeant Laurence Arthur HOWES, R.A.F.V.R., amend to read "HAWES."