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FRIDAY, 25 FEBRUARY, 1949

Privy Council Office,
25th February, 1949.

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT, 1923.

A Statute made by the University of Oxford on the 8th February, 1949, has been submitted for the approval of His Majesty in Council, and notice of its having been so submitted is published in accordance with the provisions of "The Universities of Oxford and Cambridge Act, 1923."

Whitehall, 2nd February, 1949.

The KING has been graciously pleased to ordain and declare that Rose Maud Talbot, Spinster, shall henceforth have, hold and enjoy the same title, rank, place, pre-eminence and precedence as the daughter of a Baron which would have been due to her had her father, Milo George Talbot, Esquire (commonly called the Honourable Milo George Talbot), survived his nephew, James Boswell, Baron Talbot de Malahide, and thereby succeeded to the title and dignity of Baron Talbot de Malahide.

And to command that the said Royal Concession and Declaration be recorded in His Majesty's College of Arms.
(104)

CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD.

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

25th February, 1949.

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

Warrant Officer Donald John Edward Hicks (616909), Royal Air Force, No. 45 Group.

Warrant Officer Hicks was flight engineer on Catalina flying boat JX.603, which was employed as safety aircraft for the South Pacific Survey Flight. On the morning of the 13th October, 1944, whilst the aircraft was moored, unmanned, off Clipperton Island, a hurricane developed and approached the Island. The crew were camping on land at the time. The preliminary squall dragged the anchors of the Catalina, blowing the aircraft towards the shore. Its movement towards destruction was halted by one anchor catching in a coral reef. The Captain of the Catalina, realizing that one anchor would only hold the aircraft for a short time, attempted to row out in a dinghy, but this attempt proved abortive. During a short lull, however, when the wind had dropped to approximately 35 m.p.h., Warrant Officer Hicks rushed out from shelter and, on his own initiative and with complete and deliberate disregard for his own safety—high seas were then running—jumped into a dinghy and slowly but successfully rowed the 50 yards to the aircraft, still precariously held by the one anchor, and clambered into the cockpit. The hurricane gained

its full strength soon after Warrant Officer Hicks had boarded the aircraft, but, during a subsequent short lull, he was able to let out another anchor which, fortunately, caught on the coral. Two hours later the full force of the hurricane struck the Island. The anchors were again dragged and the Catalina was in danger of being blown on the coral reef and destroyed. Warrant Officer Hicks appreciated that the anchors would not hold against the high winds and mountainous seas and that the only possible way of saving the aircraft from destruction would be to run the engines. Thereupon, single handed, he started up both engines and slowly but surely took her out to open water where he could hold her with the engines, facing up to the wind. During the ensuing five hours, amidst squalls of incredible violence and high seas, with the resultant spray making conditions still more intolerable, Warrant Officer Hicks remained at the controls, keeping the aircraft into wind and away from the rocks. He was actually flying her on the water. During these five hours the wind was blowing at a speed well over 50 m.p.h. with many squalls reaching more than 100 m.p.h. A Catalina becomes airborne at 80 m.p.h. The task of preventing the aircraft from becoming airborne or from being blown on to its back, or against the rocks, would have taxed to the uttermost the skill and endurance of an experienced pilot. Warrant Officer Hicks was not a pilot and had less than 350 hours' flying experience. He held the Catalina for seven hours, during five at least of which he could not have relaxed for a second from his readiness for instant and decisive action. It was an inspiring performance. Warrant Officer Hicks, by his resolute initiative, skill and powers of endurance, saved the flying boat from complete destruction and in doing so he might well have lost his life. He displayed outstanding courage and devotion to duty.

Crown Office, House of Lords,

22nd February, 1949.

The KING has been pleased by Letters Patent under the Great Seal to present The Reverend Thomas George Cecil de Vall, M.A., Hon. C.F., to the Vicarage of Ostwon with East Ferry in the County of Lincoln and Diocese of Lincoln void by the death of the last Incumbent and in His Majesty's Gift in full right.

Crown Office, House of Lords,

22nd February, 1949.

The KING has been pleased by Letters Patent under the Great Seal to present The Reverend Clive Beresford, B.A., to the Vicarage of Newborough with Borough Fen in the County of Northampton and Diocese of Peterborough void by the cession of the last Incumbent and in His Majesty's Gift in full right.