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TUESDAY, 1 JUNE, 1954

CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD.

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

1st June, 1954.

The QUEEN has been graciously pleased to approve the award of the George Medal to the undermentioned airman:—

574485 Flight Sergeant Ernest Thomas Edward EVANS, Royal Air Force, Royal Air Force Station, Pembroke Dock.

On 3rd March, 1954, Flight Sergeant EVANS, an air engineer at Royal Air Force Station, Pembroke Dock, was manning his station in a Sunderland flying boat when the aircraft began to "porpoise" violently while taking off. It crashed and was completely submerged. He was partially stunned but, on coming to, he made his way under water towards the bows, heading for a patch of light which proved to be the astro hatch. This had been broken open in the crash enabling him to get out of the aircraft which, by this time, had come to the surface again and was floating with the wing awash and the hull almost totally submerged. From the top of the hull, Flight Sergeant EVANS saw two other crew members in the water and released the wing dinghy for them. Returning to the astro hatch, he saw another member of the crew under water inside the hull. Swinging himself half through the hatch, he caught hold of the injured and semi-conscious navigator and, with considerable difficulty, he dragged him out. He inflated his life jacket, wrapped his uninjured arm round the aerial king post and propped him there in comparative safety. By now, air was hissing and bubbling out of the wreck as it was settling fast. After shouting to a fisherman's boat which had raced to the scene to come alongside, Flight Sergeant EVANS hastened back to the hatch to find another member of the crew floating to the surface inside the hull. By a herculean effort, he succeeded in getting this inert and badly injured signaller through the hatch and in carrying him to the safety of the boat. The signaller was prostrate and was repeatedly washed out of his grasp by waves breaking over the wing but, finally tying round him a life line thrown from the boat as an extra precaution, Flight Sergeant EVANS helped him on board. The navigator had recovered sufficiently at this stage to make his own way to the boat, so that, when the aircraft lurched and began to sink rapidly, Flight Sergeant EVANS clambered aboard himself. Two minutes later only the aircraft's fin was to be seen. Flight Sergeant EVANS's outstanding unselfishness and unquestionable courage were amply demonstrated by his utter disregard for his own safety and by his determination to stand by his injured comrades in their need.

Furthermore, the assistance given to these two almost helpless men so soon after he had himself escaped from drowning was, in itself, a physical feat of some magnitude. But for Flight Sergeant EVANS's gallantry, the navigator and signaller would undoubtedly have perished with the six other members of the crew who lost their lives.

Air Ministry, 1st June, 1954.

The QUEEN has been graciously pleased to give orders for the publication of the name of the undermentioned officer who has been commended for his skill in averting an aircraft accident in connection with the operations in Malaya.

Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service in the Air.

Flight Lieutenant Francis James MONTGOMERY, A.F.C. (03384), Royal Australian Air Force.

Air Ministry, 1st June, 1954.

ROYAL AIR FORCE.

Air Chief Marshal Sir William F. DICKSON, G.C.B., K.B.E., D.S.O., A.F.C., Chief of the Air Staff, is promoted to the rank of Marshal of the Royal Air Force. 1st June 1954.

GENERAL DUTIES BRANCH.

Appointment to commission (permanent).

As Flying Officer:—

Peter Bryan GEORGE (197031). 1st Oct. 1953 (for subsequent transfer to the Fighter Control Branch) (since promoted to the rank of Flight Lieutenant) (substituted for notification of 11th May 1954 (p. 2765, col. 2)).

As Pilot Officer (Branch Officer):—

742593 Master Pilot Cyril Leslie HOUGHTON (162636). 29th Apr. 1954 (seniority 27th Aug. 1952).

Appointment to commission (permanent) under A.M.O. A.499/52.

As Flight Lieutenant:—

Leslie Grantham LUNN (157825). 10th Dec. 1953.

Appointment to commission (permanent) under A.M.O. A.628/51.

As Flight Lieutenants:—

Albert George STRETCH, D.F.M. (54071). 4th Jan. 1954 (and transferred to the Fighter Control Branch. 17th Mar. 1954 (seniority 3rd Dec. 1948)).

Gregory Ashton MACMAHON (45485). 8th Apr. 1954 (and transferred to the Secretarial Branch. 12th May 1954 (seniority 27th Dec. 1949)).