

clear did he himself jump. He was then so low that, as he got clear of the crashing aircraft, he struck the top of a tree almost as his parachute opened. This officer displayed exemplary conduct in the face of great danger and the ultimate safety of his crew was undoubtedly due to his skill, bravery and resolution.

*Bar to Distinguished Flying Cross.*

Flight Lieutenant Arthur David BEATY, D.F.C. (60550), R.A.F.V.R., 206 Sqn.

One night in February, 1945, this officer piloted an aircraft in an attack on an enemy naval vessel in Baltic waters. In spite of intense and accurate anti-aircraft fire, Flight Lieutenant Beaty pressed home his attack with the greatest resolution. His aircraft was hit and sustained serious damage. All rudder controls were shot away. One engine was so badly hit that the propeller had to be feathered. The port aileron was damaged and one of the wings and part of the fuselage was holed. Although the aircraft was very difficult to control, Flight Lieutenant Beaty flew it a considerable distance to an airfield where he effected a safe landing. This officer displayed superb skill, great courage and determination throughout this notable sortie.

*Bar to Distinguished Flying Cross.*

Flight Lieutenant Gartrell Richard Ian PARKER, D.F.C., D.S.M. (47140), R.A.F., 219 Sqn.

*Distinguished Flying Cross.*

Warrant Officer Donald Ling GODFREY, D.F.M. (1398201), R.A.F.V.R., 219 Sqn.

As pilot and navigator of aircraft respectively, these officers have completed very many sorties and have consistently displayed a high degree of skill and determination. Their keenness has been outstanding and they have set an example which has impressed all. Flight Lieutenant Parker and Warrant Officer Godfrey have destroyed nine enemy aircraft at night.

*Distinguished Flying Cross.*

Flight Lieutenant Sydney Leonard DREW (84611), R.A.F.V.R., 169 Sqn.

Flight Lieutenant Alfred Paul MELLOWS (122223), R.A.F.V.R., 169 Sqn.

These officers have completed a large number of sorties in the capacity of navigator and pilot of aircraft respectively. During these operations they have displayed commendable skill and courage in pressing home their attacks on various targets, including a number of locomotives. They have also shot down 2 enemy aircraft. The second of these was destroyed one night in February, 1945. On this occasion, the attack was pressed home from such close range that, when the enemy aircraft exploded in the air, their own aircraft was damaged. Nevertheless, Flight Lieutenant Mellows flew it back to base. Both he and his fellow crew have always displayed the greatest keenness for operations.

Acting Flight Lieutenant Ian George NICKLIN (N.Z.424503), R.N.Z.A.F., 166 Sqn.

Pilot Officer Walter McEllister LEONARD (Aus.422277), R.A.A.F., 166 Sqn.

These officers were pilot and navigator respectively of an aircraft detailed to attack a target at Politz. Soon after taking off, the aircraft was caught in the slipstream of another bomber and temporarily went out of control, hitting a high tension cable which caused damage to two of the propellers and to the engine cowlings. Flight Lieutenant Nicklin, displaying superb skill, regained control. After a quick inspection of the fuselage had been made for any further possible damage, this captain decided to continue the long flight to the target which was reached on time. In completing his mission successfully, this officer displayed great determination and devotion to duty. Pilot Officer Leonard also proved himself to be a highly skilled and devoted crew member. Although most of the navigational aids had been rendered unserviceable he plotted his way to and from the target with great accuracy. His excellent work contributed materially to the success obtained.

Flying Officer William Elstan BAKER (Can./J.87677), R.C.A.F., 103 Sqn.

This officer, who has completed very many sorties against strongly defended targets, has set

a splendid example of determination and devotion to duty. One night in February, 1945, Flying Officer Baker was pilot and captain of an aircraft detailed to attack an oil refinery at Politz. On the outward flight the starboard inner engine failed. This did not deter Flying Officer Baker from continuing his mission and he reached the target on time and executed a successful attack. He afterwards flew safely to base where he landed his aircraft safely in difficult conditions. Flying Officer Baker is a most conscientious captain, whose thoroughness has won him much success.

Flying Officer Frederick Harry DENTON (N.Z.426036), R.N.Z.A.F., 9 Sqn.

In January, 1945, this officer was pilot and captain in an aircraft detailed to participate in an attack against the Dortmund-Ems canal. Just after the bombs had been released the aircraft was hit by anti-aircraft fire. Severe and extensive damage was sustained. A fire started in front of the mid-upper turret. The trimming gear was damaged, causing the aircraft to become tail heavy. The intercommunication system was put out of action and the hydraulic gear was damaged, causing the bomb doors to open and one leg of the undercarriage to drop to the down position. The nose of the aircraft had also been hit and most of the screen perspex of the nose compartment was shattered. The inrush of air blew away the navigator's charts. The starboard inner engine had caught fire but the propeller was feathered and the flames died away. In spite of all this, Flying Officer Denton was determined if possible to reach allied territory. The fire around the mid-upper turret had been extinguished but the aircraft was difficult to control and had lost height. Nevertheless, Flying Officer Denton, though suffering from physical strain and intense cold flew on. Shortly after crossing the Rhine, the port inner engine failed. Despite this, Flying Officer Denton executed a successful crash landing. In most perilous circumstances this officer displayed skill, courage and determination of a high order.

Flying Officer Stuart Frederick MERRITT (153815), R.A.F.V.R., 61 Sqn.

This officer was the air bomber in an aircraft detailed to attack Houffalize. Whilst over the target the aircraft was hit by anti-aircraft fire. Serious damage was sustained. The pilot, who was also captain, was wounded and momentarily lost control. Much height was lost but he succeeded in levelling out and afterwards regained some height. He was in great pain, however, and it was obvious that his wounds needed immediate attention. Though not as skilled as a regular pilot, Flying Officer Merritt thereupon took over the duties. The badly damaged aircraft became very difficult to control but Flying Officer Merritt flew it for some time to reach allied territory. Meanwhile the conditions of the injured pilot became worse. Flying Officer Merritt therefore assumed captaincy and later, when unable to control the aircraft any longer, he gave the order to abandon. The injured pilot was released first, and then Flying Officer Merritt ensured that each remaining crew member had got clear before he himself jumped. This officer displayed praiseworthy skill, coolness and resource in a most difficult situation.

Flying Officer Walter Lyle NISBET (Can./J.40949), R.C.A.F., 226 Sqn.

This officer has completed numerous sorties and throughout has set a fine example of keenness and determination. In February, 1945, he took part in an attack against a strongly defended railroad bridge at Deventer in Holland. During the bombing run considerable anti-aircraft fire was encountered. Flying Officer Nisbet's aircraft was hit and damaged while he himself was wounded in the leg. In spite of this, he maintained his position in the formation and released his bombs at the same time as the leading aircraft. Without informing his crew of his injury, Flying Officer Nisbet, unaided, flew the aircraft back to the nearest available airfield and executed a safe landing. His wound was so severe and the loss of blood so great that Flying Officer Nisbet was given a blood transfusion before he was lifted from the aircraft. This officer displayed the highest qualities of courage, fortitude and devotion to duty.