

VACHON, FS Everitt Thomas (R79229) - **Distinguished Flying Medal** - No.1474 Flight - Award effective 3 February 1943 as per **London Gazette** dated 5 February 1943 and AFRO 373/43 dated 9 March 1943. Born in Sumerville, U.S.A., 11 September 1920; home given as Ayer's Cliff, Quebec (machinist). Enlisted in Montreal, 5 March 1941. To No.1 Manning Depot, 14 March 1941; to No.1 WS, 22 April 1941; to No.3 ITS, 9 June 1941. Promoted LAC, 15 July 1941 and posted that date to No.4 EFTS; ceased training on 12 September 1941 and posted to No.7 BGS on 21 November 1941. Graduated 22 December 1941 and promoted Sergeant. To "Y" Depot, Halifax, 23 December 1941. Struck off strength in Canada on posting to RAF overseas, 7 January 1942. DFM presented at Buckingham Palace, 18 May 1943. Commissioned 3 February 1944. Promoted Flying Officer, 3 August 1944. Repatriated to Canada, 7 December 1944. To No.1 Air 26 January 1945. To No.9 BGS, 26 February 1945. To No.2 Release Centre, 7 April 1945. Released 14 April 1945. Died in Waterville, Quebec, 2 May 2012.

Flight Sergeant Vachon has always displayed outstanding keenness and great ability and by his courage and fortitude in harassing circumstances he has set a fine example.

NOTE: Public Records Office Air 2/8934 has recommendation dated 22 December 1942 which indicates that this brief citation masks an exciting and significant event - a hazardous attempt to learn more about German airborne radar by attracting a fighter onto a special aircraft and monitoring its radar pulses. His sortie list alone suggests more adventures; see also entries for P/O W.A.R. Barry, FS William W. Bigoray and P/O E.A. Paulton.

28 July 42 Bombing (Hamburg)
31 July 42 Bombing (Dusseldorf)
2 Sept 42 Special Wireless Investigation (Karlsruhe)
15 Sept 42 Air/Sea Rescue (North Sea)
14 Oct 42 Special Wireless Investigation (Belgian and Dutch coasts)
28 Oct 42 Special Wireless Investigation (West coast of France)
16 Nov 42 Special Wireless Investigation (Frisians and Danish coasts)
17 Nov 42 Special Wireless Investigation (Bayonne)
22 Nov 42 Special Wireless Investigation (Bayonne)
3 Dec 42 Special Wireless Investigation (Frankfurt)

Flight Sergeant Vachon was the Rear Gunner of a Wellington Ic aircraft which was engaged on Special Wireless Investigation in the Frankfurt area on the morning of 3rd December 1942. For the success of the operation an interception by an enemy night fighter was necessary and on the sortie the interception was made. The Wellington was engaged by a Ju.88 which carried out ten to twelve attacks on it. On the first attack the rear turret was put completely out of action and Flight Sergeant Vachon wounded in the shoulder. Despite this fact, he came out of his turret and took up position in the astro dome from where he continued to give fighter control for further attacks. He was again hit during another attack and later had to hand over his position.

By his coolness and courage in the face of enemy attack and completely ignoring his personal injuries he set a fine example to the rest of the crew.

He has always carried out his duties as Rear Gunner on operations to the utmost of his ability and has always been outstanding in his keenness to engage the enemy.

This was edited to a citation for the Air Ministry Honours and Awards Committee (unpublished except in the most abbreviated form):

Sergeant Vachon was the rear gunner of a Wellington aircraft engaged on a special mission in the Frankfurt area on the morning of 3rd December 1942. For the complete success of the operation it was necessary for the aircraft to be intercepted by an enemy fighter. The interception was made and the aircraft was subjected to ten to twelve attacks by a Junkers 88. In the first attack, Flight Sergeant Vachon was wounded in the shoulder while his turret was put out of action. Despite this he took up position in the astro dome from where he was able to comment on the fighter's movements. In a subsequent attack he was wounded in the hand and later had to relinquish his position. By his courage and fortitude in harassing circumstances, Flight Sergeant Vachon set a fine example. He has always displayed outstanding keenness and great ability, especially when engaged on special operational missions.

Public Record Office Air 50/503 has Combat Report filed by him on the action of 3 December 1942:

1. No.1 - 3 December 1942 - Wellington Ic "G" - 1474 Flight - Frankfurt
2. 0442 hours - 14,000 feet - 110 A.I.S.
3. Clear moonlight
4. No searchlights, no flak
5. Enemy aircraft attacked from rear and both sides from underneath.
6. Ju.88 night fighter
7. No lights.
8. All cannon shells front guns
9. Range about 400 - 600 yards. Straight from behind and underneath.
10. Ten attacks. All attacks from underneath and rear. Rear Gunner did not see breakaway as turret was damaged in first attack, Rear Gunner being wounded in left shoulder, wounded on right hand by splinter of cannon shells. After turret

was rendered unserviceable, Rear Gunner stood in astro hatch and gave fighter control.

11. Diving turns, corkscrew and low over the drink, land.

12. Rear gunner opened fire at 400 yards on first attack. The enemy aircraft opening fire at same time, damaging rear turret and making unserviceable. Front turret also becoming unserviceable through cannon fire after first attack, Front Gunner being wounded in leg.

13. No claims was made by either Rear Gunner or Front Gunner. Rear Gunner wounded in shoulder and right hand. Front Gunner wounded in leg. Wireless Operator wounded in right leg, baled out when over land on Captain's order. Special Wireless Operator wounded badly on face and neck.

14. Over 1,000 rounds fired in rear turret. No rounds in front turret. Guns Browning. Turret F.N. [Fraser Nash] 5.

15. No.6 AGS, Stormy Down. No.16 OTU, Upper Heyford. Rear Gunner only. Front Gunner is Navigator Bomb Aimer, trained at No.16 OTU. Front Gunner's report is not available as he was not in fit state to give same.

RCAF Press Release No. 8134 dated 8 January 1945 from S/L Vic Baker reads:

WITH RCAF IN BRITAIN: -- There was more action and excitement than a three-ring circus that night over Frankfurt in a Wellington bomber, reports F/O Edward T. Vachon, DFM, of Sherbrooke, Quebec.

A veteran air-gunner with a RAF squadron, Vachon recounts how their twin-engined aircraft was attacked simultaneously over the target by two German night-fighters. The fuselage was badly holed, one engine shot out of action, four of the six crew members wounded and the aircraft rapidly losing height. The plucky gunner succeeded in shooting one of the fighters down in flames and soared the other off despite a nasty shoulder wound. "We dropped from 15,000 feet to 2,000 feet before regaining control of our crippled Wimpy", said Vachon, now at an RCAF repatriation depot in Britain. Over the North Sea, the wounded crew had to abandon the battered bomber as it continued to lose height and fall towards the sea. They ditched in the icy water in the black of night. The rubber dinghy would not inflate since it was bullet-holed like a sieve. The crew scrambled onto the floating fuselage of their plane and awaited rescue or doom. Fortunately, the plane floated for several hours until a fishing smack from the English coast sighted them at dawn and brought them to safety and a hospital.

Overseas, for three years, Vachon worked as a mechanic with Butterfields Union Drill & Twist Co., in Sherbrooke, Quebec, and hopes to return to his old job on discharge from the service.

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VACOLA, FS George Henry (Can 10106) - **British Empire Medal** - Conversion Training Squadron - Awarded 1 January 1943 as per **London Gazette** of that date and AFRO 55/43 dated 15 January 1943. Born in Ethelbert, Manitoba, 6 May 1911. Enlisted in Hamilton as Aero Engine Mechanic, 20 April 1939 and posted to Trenton. Promoted LAC, 29 February 1940. Promoted Corporal, 1 June 1940. Promoted Sergeant, 1 January 1941. To "P", 6 May 1941; promoted Flight Sergeant, 1 October 1941; to Rockcliffe, 26 November 1941. To No.1 TTD (not sure what this is), 24 June 1943. Promoted WO2, 1 February 1944. To No.301 COMU (whatever that is), 30 April 1944. To No.124 Squadron, 29 November 1944. To No.435 Squadron, 1 August 1946. Reverted to Sergeant, 1 October 1946. To National Research Council, 9 February 1947. Promoted Flight Sergeant, 1 October 1949; promoted WO2, 1 April 1953. Promoted WO1, 1 April 1957. Award presented 16 April 1943.

This NCO has given outstandingly meritorious service on maintenance work. His deep knowledge of all types of service aircraft engines, coupled with his additional ability on airframes, has made him an extremely valuable asset to the RCAF. He has demonstrated an ability to undertake difficult operations and carry them through to a successful conclusion. His reliability, initiative and resourcefulness have been outstanding and he has displayed exceptional devotion to duty under what were, at times, the most difficult circumstances. He has been singularly successful in discharging the duties of a position well in excess of that called for by his present rank, thus commanding the respect and confidence of all ranks.

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VAESSEN, F/O Charles Leo (J28073) - **Distinguished Flying Cross** - No.410 Squadron - Award effective 5 December 1944 as per **London Gazette** of that date and AFRO 293/45 dated 16 February 1945. Born 10 September 1921 in Leipzig, Saskatchewan; home there (farmer); enlisted Regina, 28 May 1942 and posted to No.2 Manning Depot. To No.11 SFTS (guard), 14 August 1942. To No.7 ITS, 10 October 1942; graduated and promoted LAC, 18 December 1942 but not posted until 9 January 1943 to No.6 EFTS; ceased training and posted to No.2 Manning Depot, 10 February 1943. To No.5 AOS, 20 February 1943; graduated and commissioned, 9 July 1943. To "Y" Depot, 23 July 1943. To United Kingdom, 25 August 1943. Promoted Flying Officer, 6 January 1944. Repatriated 16 September 1945. To No.6 Release Centre, 3 September

1945. Retired 20 October 1945. Rejoined as Air Observer/Radio Operator, 10 May 1951 (38775) in rank of Flying Officer. Promoted Flight Lieutenant, 1 July 1955. Radar operator to C.E. Edinger. Together they damaged a Ju.88 (13/14 June 1944) and scored kills on 17/18 June 1944 (one Ju.188), 3/4 July 1944 (one Ju.188), 16/17 September 1944 (unidentified), 6/7 October 1944 (one Ju.88), 18/19 December 1944 (one Ju.88) and 24/25 December 1944 (one Ju.87). Award presented at Landis, Saskatchewan after the war. Died in Richmond, British Columbia in 1999 as per Royal Canadian Legion "Last Post" website and **Legion Magazine** of March/April 2001. Photo PL-36774 shows him. RCAF photo PL-40406 (ex UK-17553 dated 16 December 1944) is captioned as follows: "F/L C.L. Vaessen, DFC of Landis, Saskatchewan, gets a helping hand from Corporal Jim 'Scotty' Wilson of Vancouver as he climbs down from the navigator's seat in his Mosquito fighter." Photo PL-37253 shows F/L C.E. Edinger and F/O C.L. Vaessen on troopship **Louis Pasteur** on return to Canada.

This officer is a highly skilled observer. He has displayed outstanding keenness and determination and has assisted in the destruction of four enemy aircraft.

VAESSEN, F/O Charles Leo, DFC (J28073) - **Mention in Despatches** - No.410 Squadron - Award effective 1 January 1946 as per **London Gazette** of that date and AFRO 388/46 dated 12 April 1946. Certificate sent to Landis, Saskatchewan, 10 August 1948.

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VALENTINE, WO Paul Robert (R125376, later J90504) - **Distinguished Flying Cross** - No.13 Squadron - Award effective 2 October 1944 as per **London Gazette** dated 10 October 1944 and AFRO 2534/44 dated 24 November 1944. Born 2 June 1923. Home in Ottawa; enlisted there 18 August 1941 and posted to No.1 Manning Depot. To No.6 BGS, 1 September 1941 (guard); to No.4 WS, 22 November 1941; promoted LAC, 22 December 1941; graduated 6 June 1942 when posted to No.7 BGS; graduated and promoted Sergeant, 6 July 1942. To No.31 OTU, 31 July 1942; to "Y" Depot, 7 November 1942. To RAF overseas, 22 November 1942. Promoted Flight Sergeant, 6 January 1943. Commissioned 28 August 1944. Promoted Flying Officer, 28 February 1945. Repatriated, 2 August 1945. Retired 24 September 1945. Rejoined but reverted to LAC as Meteorological Observer, 20 September 1946. Retained in that post and rank, 1 October 1946 (23236). Promoted Corporal, 1 February 1953. Record of movements incomplete but posted to Toronto, 7 August 1956 and to No.436 Squadron, 1 October 1956. Released 22 March 1958, living in Ottawa on retirement. Award presented 28 February 1946. For more on the incident described (which took place on 31 July/1 August 1944) see entry for Frank Edgar Emeny.

Throughout many operational sorties this Warrant Officer has proved to be an outstanding gunner. On one occasion when flying on an aircraft reconnaissance

over the Avezzano area an enemy fighter engaged his aircraft. By his accurate return fire and skilful directions he not only damaged the enemy fighter but successfully directed his pilot through three attacks without sustaining damage to his own aircraft. On another occasion when flying over the Florence area an enemy fighter was encountered. Giving his pilot concise and accurate directions, Warrant Officer Valentine withheld his fire until 250 yards. After two bursts the hostile aircraft crashed to the ground in flames.

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VALPY, FS Laura Joan Dumaresq (W309190) - **British Empire Medal** - AFHQ - Award effective 13 June 1946 as per **Canada Gazette** of that date and AFRO 660/46 dated 5 July 1946. Born at Perce, Gaspé, Quebec, 15 October 1922; home there. Enlisted in Montreal, 15 December 1942. To No.7 Manning Depot, 31 December 1942. To Central Training School, 28 January 1943. To AFHQ, 25 February 1943. Promoted AW1, 15 March 1943. Promoted LAW, 1 October 1943. Promoted Corporal, 1 December 1943. Promoted Sergeant, 1 January 1945. Promoted Flight Sergeant, 1 March 1945. Discharged 11 December 1946. Clerk Stenographer until 29 October 1944 when reclassified as Clerk (Administration). As Laura Joan Valpy Brunner, died at Lake Placid, New York, 7 March 2009. Medal sent by registered mail 19 February 1949.

Flight Sergeant Valpy has been employed at work which required a high degree of personal responsibility and meticulous attention to detail. At all times she has displayed great devotion to duty, keenness and efficiency far above that required in the normal course of duty. She has consistently placed the interests of the service before her own, and her exemplary conduct, fine leadership and cheerful efficiency have proven an example and incentive to all her associates.

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VAN CAMP, S/L William Charles (C873) - **Mention in Despatches** - No.11 Squadron - Award effective 1 January 1943 as per **Canada Gazette** dated 9 January 1943 and AFRO 55/43 dated 15 January 1943. Born in Tring, Alberta, 15 February 1918 (RCAF press release 2659 announcing DFC, January 1944); attended University of Alberta; joined RCAF in 1938 (two award cards give enlistment variously as 8 March 1939 in Edmonton and 4 July 1938 in Calgary). Attended No.1 ATS (graduated 17 June 1939). Stationed at Dartmouth early in the war; promoted Squadron Leader, 1 August 1941; went to No.1 ANS (reported to have graduated 12 November 1941 but he had been posted to No.11 (BR) Squadron as of 7 October 1941); commanded No.11 (BR) Squadron, 16 April 1942 to 26 May 1943 (Wing Commander as of 1 January 1943). To No.1 Group Headquarters, 31 May 1943. To "Y" Depot, Lachine, 31 December 1943. Posted to Overseas Headquarters, 5 January 1944; attached to Coastal Command Headquarters.

Returned to Canada, 21 May 1944; to AFHQ, 22 June 1944; to War Staff College, 2 December 1944. To Western Air Command, 12 March 1945. To Coal Harbour, 19 March 1945. Remained in postwar force, rising to Group Captain, 1 March 1951. Awarded Queens Coronation Medal, 23 October 1953. Photo PL-10389 refers. Governor General's Records (RG.7 Group 26, Vol.57, File 190-I) has citation.

Squadron Leader Van Camp has completed 318 hours of flying as first pilot, 184 hours of which were during 54 operational flights. He has recently been appointed to command a squadron, and was formerly in charge of a detachment of the same squadron. He quite recently demonstrated his usual zeal and devotion to duty by successfully ferrying an aircraft to the United Kingdom on his semi-annual leave. He has recently been appointed to command his squadron.

VAN CAMP, W/C William Charles (C873) - **Distinguished Flying Cross** - No.1 Group HQ (Canada), now with No.11 Squadron. Award effective 1 January 1944 as per **London Gazette** of that date and AFRO 113/44 dated 21 January 1944. Award presented 28 February 1946.

This officer has been employed continuously on operational duties since the commencement of hostilities and has at all times displayed the greatest keenness for operational flying. His devotion to duty, coolness and courage under many trying conditions has been a source of strength and encouragement to all who have served under him.

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VAN GORDER, H/S/L John William Thomas (C9981) - **Mention in Despatches** - Overseas - Award effective 14 June 1945 as per **London Gazette** of that date and AFRO 1395/45 dated 31 August 1945. Born 12 November 1907 at Jordan Station, Ontario. Employed by National Steel Car, production, 1923-1934; Firestone Tire and Rubber production, 1924-1930; United Church clergyman from 1938 onwards; home in Hamilton; enlisted there 31 January 1942 and granted rank of Honorary Flight Lieutenant. Posted to Trenton at once. To Technical Training School, St. Thomas, 1 March 1942. To Western Air Command, Victoria, 10 August 1942. To Prince Rupert, 16 August 1942. To No.3 Training Command, Montreal, 7 May 1943. To Station Rockcliffe, 15 May 1943. To "Y" Depot, Lachine, 3 March 1944. Promoted Honorary Squadron Leader, 30 March 1944 when taken on strength overseas. Disembarked in Britain, 7 April 1944. Detached to No.5 District Headquarters, 17 April to 10 May 1944. To Gransden Lodge, 10 May 1944. To Overseas Headquarters, 7 December 1944. Attached to Cambridge, December 1944 to July 1945. Posted from Overseas Headquarters to Repatriation Depot, 25 October 1945. Repatriated to Canada, 19 November 1945. To No.1 Repair Depot, on repatriation. To No.1 Air Command, 23 November 1945. To No.2 Air Command, 5 January 1946. Taken on strength of

RCAF Regular Force, 1 October 1946 (19665). Posted to Trenton, 1 August 1950. To AFHQ, 2 August 1950. To Station Portage la Prairie, 2 October 1952. Retired 13 February 1954. Died in North Bay, Ontario, 1 April 1982 as per **Legion Magazine** of July 1982.

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VAN HOUTEN, F/L John Thomas (J8163) - **Air Force Cross** - No.7 (BR) Squadron - Award effective 21 April 1945 as per **Canada Gazette** of that date, **London Gazette** dated 24 April 1945 and AFRO 802/45 dated 11 May 1945. Born 6 December 1914 in United States. Home in Victoria, British Columbia; enlisted in Vancouver, 13 February 1941 and posted to No.2 Manning Depot. To No.7 BGS, 29 March 1941 (guard). To No.2 ITS, 21 April 1941; graduated and promoted LAC, 27 May 1941 when posted to No.5 EFTS; may have graduated 15 July 1941 but not posted to No.3 SFTS until 27 July 1941; graduated and commissioned 17 October 1941. To No.13 (Operational Training) Squadron, 18 October 1941. To No.7 (BR) Squadron, date uncertain. Promoted Flying Officer, 1 June 1942. Promoted Flight Lieutenant, 1 July 1943. To "Y" Depot, 28 January 1945. To United Kingdom, 30 January 1945. Repatriated 26 September 1945. To No.8 Release Centre, 2 October 1945. Retired 7 November 1945. Award presented 1 October 1946. Governor General's Records (RG.7 Group 26, Vol.58, file 190-I, dossier 6) has citation. When recommended he had flown 932 flying hours, of which 642 were on operations (166 sorties). American in RCAF.

This officer has completed many hundreds of hours of operational flying and as a flight commander by his excellent leadership has developed his crew into the most efficient in his squadron. On one occasion his coolness, exceptional flying skill and judgement were demonstrated when in spite of adverse weather conditions he successfully landed his aircraft and prevented the loss of the aircraft and possibly saved the lives of his crew. His keenness, willingness to work and devotion to duty have been outstanding.

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VAN KLEECK, F/L Larry Robertson (J9367) - **Distinguished Flying Cross** - No.427 Squadron - Award effective 15 December 1944 as per **London Gazette** of that date and AFRO 293/45 dated 16 February 1945. Born 29 December 1919 in Vancouver; home there; enlisted there 15 April 1941. To No.2 Manning Depot, 12 May 1941. To No.1 ANS (guard), 8 June 1941. To No.4 ITS, 2 July 1941; graduated and promoted LAC, 8 August 1941 when posted to No.5 EFTS; graduated 25 September 1941 when posted to No.7 SFTS; graduated and commissioned 19 December 1941. To "Y" Depot, 20 December 1941. To RAF overseas, 8 January 1942. Promoted Flying Officer, 1 October 1942. Promoted Flight Lieutenant, 19 December 1943. Repatriated 15 January 1945. To Western Air Command, 26 January 1945. To Patricia Bay, 1 March 1945. To

No.8 Release Centre. 29 August 1945. Retired 6 September 1945. Died in Maple Ridge, British Columbia, 16 April 2010. Award presented 13 July 1946. RCAF photo PL-31915 (ex UK-14050 dated 18 August 1944) is captioned as follows: "F/L Larry Van Kleek of Vancouver, left, Lion Squadron pilot, and his navigator, F/L Fred Du Vernet of Ottawa, right, talk over their gunners' victory over a Nazi night fighter on their way back from smashing at Brunswick. In the centre is F/O J.T. Read of Glace Bay, Nova Scotia, another navigator with the Lions." RCAF photo PL-33931 (ex UK-33931 dated 17 November 1944) shows six members of No.427 Squadron who had completed their tour on Remembrance Day, viz - F/O K.M. Stokke (Fort St. John, bomb aimer), F/L H.P. Woodruff, DFC (pilot, Vancouver), F/O Philip Slipec (navigator, Vancouver), F/L Geoffrey Slocombe, DFC (pilot, Vancouver), F/L F.D. Duvernet (Royston, B.C., navigator) and F/L L.R. Van Kleeck, DFC (Vancouver, pilot). RCAF Photo PL-33932 (ex UK-16711 dated 17 November 1944) shows F/O G.A. Michael (bomb aimer, Stoney Plain, Alberta) and F/L L.R. Van Kleeck, DFC (pilot, Vancouver) on completing tour on Remembrance Day. Photo PL-33934 (ex UK-16713 dated 17 November 1944) shows five pilots on completion of their first tour - F/L L.R. Van Kleeck, DFC (Vancouver), F/L Geoffrey Slocombe, DFC (Vancouver), F/L H.P. Woodruff, DFC (Vancouver), F/L F.H. Brownell (Westboro, Ontario) and P/O C.J. Ganley (Shaunovan, Saskatchewan). Photo PL-33935 (ex UK-16714 dated 17 November 1944) shows the following Vancouver aircrew who completed their first tour on Remembrance Day - F/L Geoffrey Slocombe, DFC (pilot), F/O Phillip Slipec (navigator), F/L H.P. Woodruff, DFC (pilot), and F/L L.R. Van Kleeck, DFC).

This officer has displayed high qualities of courage and leadership. He has participated in a large number of sorties, many of them against strongly defended targets. In September 1944 this officer piloted an aircraft detailed to attack a target in the Calais area. In the early stages of the outward flight one engine became unserviceable. This did not deter Flight Lieutenant Van Kleeck from continuing to the target which he successfully bombed. This officer has invariably pressed home his attack with outstanding determination.

NOTE: DHH file 181.009 D.2609 (RG.24 Volume 20627) has recommendation by W/C V.F. Ganderton drafted 19 October 1944 when he had flown 30 sorties (151 hours 25 minutes), 21 June to 14 October 1944.

This captain has completed 30 heavy operational bombing attacks against the enemy of which twelve have been on major targets.

On the 28th of June [his] aircraft was detailed to attack Metz and shortly after leaving the target the bomber was attacked by an enemy fighter; this captain was successful in his evasive action.

On the 12th of August [his] aircraft was detailed to attack Brunswick, and just after dropping their bombs the aircraft was attacked by an enemy Messerschmitt 109. The rear gunner gave instructions for evasive action and fired at the enemy fighter. The evasive action was successful. The bomber was later attacked over the North Seas by an enemy Messerschmitt 410. Evasive action was taken and both gunners opened fire and scored hits, damaging the enemy fighter. This captain brought his bomber back to base from this trip with slight damage by cannon shell.

On the 25th of September [his] bomber was detailed to attack Calais and lost an engine just after takeoff. This captain completed the trip on three engines and obtained a primary.

This captain has exceptional qualities of leadership and coolness, setting a splendid example to his crew. I strongly recommend that Flight Lieutenant Van Kleeck be awarded a Distinguished Flying Cross.

The sortie list was as follows:

21 June 1944 - Oisement au Neuville (5.10, second pilot)
24 June 1944 - Bonnetot (4.05, second pilot)
25 June 1944 - Gorenflos (4.55)
27 June 1944 - Wizernes (3.25)
28 June 1944 - Metz (7.50)
4 July 1944 - Villeneuve (6.10)
6 July 1944 - Siracourt (4.15)
9 July 1944 - Ardouval (4.00)
12 July 1944 - Acquet (4.30)
18 July 1944 - Wesseling (5.45)
20 July 1944 - Grande Bois (4.00)
24 July 1944 - L'Hey (3.20)
25 July 1944 - Stuttgart (8.40)
8 August 1944 - Chantilly (5.10)
9 August 1944 - La Neuville (4.25)
12 August 1944 - Brunswick (6.00)
14 August 1944 - Aisny (4.45)
15 August 1944 - Soesterburg (3.45)
16 August 1944 - Kiel (5.50)
18 August 1944 - Connatre (6.45)
25 August 1944 - St. Mathieu (5.45)

28 August 1944 - Gardening (6.20)
6 September 1944 - Emden (4.15)
23 September 1944 - Calais (4.00)
25 September 1944 - Calais (4.25)
27 September 1944 - Sterkrade (5.20)
28 September 1944 - Cap Gris Nez (4.00)
14 October 1944 - Duisburg (5.15)
14 October 1944 - Duisburg (6.10)

RCAF Press Release No. 8094 dated 4 January 1945 from S/L Vic Baker, transcribed by Huguette Oates, reads:

WITH RCAF IN BRITAIN: -- Three of Vancouver's celebrated sons are coming home with just about everything in common except being born triplets.

The three British Columbians wear the DFC, are flight lieutenant pilots, completed a tour of operations with the RCAF's Lion squadron of the Canadian Bomber Group, all became tour-expired on the same day after attacking the same target on the same night. They met at an RCAF Repatriation Depot in Britain on their way back to Canada after three years of service overseas.

First of the three is F/L Geoffrey Slocombe, DFC, of 1894 West 13th Avenue, who worked for the Bank of Nova Scotia in Vancouver before enlisting. He led his crew on a raid of the synthetic oil plant at Wanne-Eichel in the Ruhr Valley. Some 100 miles from the target, their Halifax was hit by a heavy burst of flak which holed one of the main wing tanks. Despite the serious loss of petrol, the skipper led his crew on to the target through heavy defences and just made an airfield in Britain before the petrol supply gave out. Slocombe hopes to join some commercial airline on discharge.

Second of the Vancouverites is F/L Larry R. Van Kleeck, DFC., of 2819 West 35th Avenue, who was an inspector with the American Can Company in Vancouver, and hopes to return to the company as a salesman on discharge from the service. He was loud in his praise for his rear-gunner, P/O B.J. Trainor of Victoria Beach, Manitoba, who shot down an ME 210 night fighter during a raid on Brunswick.

Last of the trio is F/L Henry P. Woodruff, DFC., of 1075 West 15th Avenue, who was a clerk with Safeway Stores in Vancouver before enlisting in May, 1941. He hopes to fly with a commercial airline on discharge.

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VAN METRE, P/O Roy Bentley (J89752) - **Distinguished Flying Cross** - No.405 Squadron - Award effective 18 May 1945 as per **London Gazette** of that date and AFRO 1085/45 dated 29 June 1945. Born 22 August 1919 in Lashburn, Saskatchewan; home in Okotoks, Alberta (farmer, ex-Royal Canadian Artillery); enlisted Calgary, 21 July 1941. To No.3 Manning Depot, 24 September 1941. To No.37 SFTS (guard), 13 October 1941. To No.2 WS, 28 February 1942; promoted LAC, 2 April 1942; graduated 11 September 1942 when posted to No.2 BGS; graduated and promoted Sergeant, 12 October 1942; to No.7 AOS, 26 October 1942. Promoted Flight Sergeant, 12 April 1943. To No.32 OTU, 20 August 1943. Promoted WO2, 12 October 1943. To "Y:" Depot, 27 November 1943. Taken on strength of No.3 PRC, Bournemouth, 12 December 1943. Commissioned 9 September 1944. Repatriated with No.405 Squadron, 17 June 1945. To Halifax, 9 September 1945. Retired 15 September 1945. Died 12 February 1970 as per DVA letter dated 18 February 1970. Cited with WO A. Robb (RAF, awarded CGM). Award presented 9 July 1949.

Pilot Officer Van Metre and Warrant Officer Robb were wireless operator and mid-upper gunner respectively in an aircraft detailed to attack Dessau one night in March 1945. Whilst over the target the aircraft was attacked by three enemy fighters. The first enemy aircraft to attack was shot down by the rear gunner. Warrant Officer Robb engaged the second fighter. Following a short but accurate burst of fire from his guns the enemy aircraft fell to the ground. The remaining fighter attacked with great persistence. The rear gun turret of the bomber was badly hit and set on fire. The rear gunner was trapped. Pilot Officer Van Metre and Warrant Officer Robb, displaying the greatest determination, immediately went to the assistance of their trapped comrade. By their joint efforts, these crew members finally extinguished the flames and extricated the rear gunner from the gun turret. Pilot Officer Van Metre had severely burned his hands. In spite of much pain he returned to his post to work at his wireless apparatus throughout the return flight. Pilot Officer Van Metre and Warrant Officer Robb set a fine example of courage and resolution in very trying circumstances.

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VAN NES, F/L Johan Christian (J10507) - **Distinguished Flying Cross** - No.177 Squadron - Award effective 8 August 1944 as per **London Gazette** dated 11 August 1944 and AFRO 2101/44 dated 29 September 1944. Born 23 November 1917 in Prud'homme, Saskatchewan; home in Saskatoon; enlisted there 12 June 1941 when posted to No.2 Manning Depot. To No.2 ITS, 26 July 1941; graduated and promoted LAC, 13 September 1941 when posted to No.15 EFTS; graduated 7 November 1941 when posted to No.11 SFTS ; graduated and commissioned 27

February 1942. To "Y" Depot, 28 February 1942; to RAF overseas, 19 March 1942. Promoted Flying Officer, 1 October 1942. Promoted Flight Lieutenant, date uncertain. Promoted Squadron Leader and posted 5 February 1945 from Station Ranchi to Ground Attack Development Section, India. Repatriated 16 September 1945. To No.5 Release Centre, 23 September 1945. Retired 26 October 1945. Rejoined Auxiliary Primary Reserve, 5 November 1951 (131657) as pilot and Squadron Leader, Winnipeg. Reclassified Administration Branch. Served with CJATC Rivers and Tactical Air Command; appears to have retired to Flin Flon, Manitoba. Award presented 23 April 1949. RCAF photo PL-60954 (ex UK-23128 dated 1 August 1945) is captioned as follows - "These two officers who married during their stay in India are lucky enough to have their wives travelling home with them. The couple at left are S/L R.W. Day, DFC, of Vancouver and his wife, the former Molly Hislop of Perley, Surrey, England. At right is S/L J.C. Van Nes of Saskatoon and Mrs. Van Nes, formerly Jean Quarrier of Dundee, Scotland. Both wives were nursing sisters with army units in India."

Flight Lieutenant Van Nes has completed many operational day and night sorties flying over very difficult country and through most adverse weather. He has always shown great courage and determination. Over a period of eight months he has attacked and destroyed or damaged twenty-eight locomotives, seventeen of these being attacked in one month. His fearlessness and devotion to duty in the face of severe opposition have set a fine example to all.

NOTE: Public Record Office has recommendation drafted 12 May 1944 when he had flown 42 sorties (172 hours 25 minutes). Sortie sheet and text add to the record:

10 September 1943 - Patrol Hunter's Bay-Taungup (4.25) - Sampans, etc.
22 September 1943 - Patrol Gwa Bay-Taungup (4.50) - Sandoway vessels attacked; one hit from anti-aircraft.
25 September 1943 - Road-rail patrol, Sedaw-Cokteik (3.20) - Weather unsuitable.
1 October 1943 - Offensive strike (2.40) - SS **Mahla** destroyed.
10 October 1943 - Road patrol, Mangaw-Kaleymo (2.30) - Nothing seen.
5 November 1943 - Kanzauk-Hunter's Bay (3.40) - River patrol; small craft damaged.
8 November 1943 - Allanmyo-Magwe (4.45) - Road patrol and reconnaissance; hit by anti-aircraft fire.
10 November 1943 - Air/Sea Rescue Search (1.50) - nil remarks
13 November 1943 - Strike, Yenanyaung oil fields (3.15) - No results.
20 November 1943 - Rail patrol, Henzada-Promo (5.05) - One locomotive destroyed; three factories set on fire.
27 November 1943 - Strike, Magwe aerodrome (3.10) - Motor transport strafed.
4 December 1943 - Rail patrol, Wetlet-Wuntho (3.20) - Locomotives and trucks damaged.

10 December 1943 - Road and waterways patrol (5.05) - An Chaung-Taungup-Padaung; river craft and motor transport attacked.

14 December 1943 - Road and rail patrol (3.55) - Pyinmana-Magwe-Pakokku; train attacked and left burning.

20 December 1943 - Rail strike, Thazi-Mandalay (3.35) - Locomotive and trucks strafed.

23 December 1943 - Rail, river strike, Andaw-Thazi (3.40) - River craft and trucks strafed; oil tank at Singu attacked.

31 December 1943 - Rail strike, Andaw-Thazi (3.45) - Locomotives and trucks damaged; heavy anti-aircraft fire.

4 January 1944 - Night road patrol, Prome-Taungup (4.40) - Nothing seen.

9 January 1944 - Rail, road and river night patrol (4.35) - Prome-Taungup.

14 January 1944 - River and road patrol (4.45) - Prome-Taungup; powered craft, country craft and barges destroyed and damaged.

22 January 1944 - River patrol, Mandalay-Male (3.30) - Small steamer attacked.

21 February 1944 - Offensive patrol, Myebon-Taungup (4.10) - Bridge attacked.

29 February 1944 - Waterways patrol, An Chaung-Gwa (5.00) - Motor transport and river craft attacked.

4 March 1944 - Night patrol, Padaung-Taungup (4.40) - Motor transport hit; rest camp attacked.

8 March 1944 - Night river patrol, Mandalay-Male (3.10) - Nothing seen; weather unsuitable.

11 March 1944 - Offensive patrol, Taungtha-Mindon (4.20) - Petrol dump destroyed; railway trucks damaged.

13 March 1944 - Patrol Mandalay-Thabbeikyin (3.05) - Nothing seen; recalled; weather unsuitable.

17 March 1944 - Patrol Monywa-Chauk-Kaleymo (4.15) - Two oil craft destroyed, 20 damaged; oil farm attacked; one hit from flak.

23 Mar 33 - Offensive patrol (4.40) - Thabyedaung-Toungoo; rail car and petrol wagon destroyed; Zero aircraft damaged.

25 March 1944 - River patrol, Moulmein-Tadein (6.55) - Locomotive, trucks, and motor transport damaged; aircraft hit by heavy and light anti-aircraft.

1 April 1944 - Rail strike, Pyinmana-Minzu (4.05) - Locomotives and trucks destroyed.

5 April 1944 - Rail strike, Moulmein-Tadein (6.35) - Locomotives and trucks damaged.

9 April 1944 - Air/Sea Rescue Search (3.10) - nil remarks

11 April 1944 - Road patrol, Taung-Kunhing (4.55) - Nothing seen.

15 April 1944 - Road patrol, Myingyan area (4.40) - River craft, rolling stock and motor transport strafed.

19 April 1944 - Rail strike and recce (4.00) - Sagaing-Wuntho; four locomotives, oil tanker and motor transport destroyed.

24 April 1944 - Rail strike, Mandalay-Lashio (4.05) - Two locomotives, two motor transport damaged.
28 April 1944 - Offensive patrol (4.30) - Mandalay-Kyaukme; two locomotives and motor transport hit.
3 May 1944 - Road patrol, Kyaukme-Thaneikkyin (3.40) - Buildings attacked.
5 May 1944 - Night patrol (3.30) - Zigon-Sagaing-Myingan; one motor transport damaged.
7 May 1944 - Night patrol, Ramree-Taungup Pass (4.35) - Motor transport destroyed.
9 May 1944 - Night patrol, Kyaukse-Yamethin (3.55) - Two trains attacked; two ammunition wagons destroyed; motor transport attacked.

This officer has carried out many operational sorties over Burma, in the course of which he has shown exemplary courage and devotion to duty in pressing home his attacks in the face of severe opposition. Both in day and night sorties he has displayed the greatest determination in reaching the target, in spite of adverse weather conditions and most difficult country. His chief successes have been scored in attacks on supply trains and dumps. Over a period of eight months he has attacked and either destroyed or severely damaged 28 locomotives, 17 of these being attacked in one month. His example has been an inspiration to all.

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VAN RASSEL, WO Anton John George (R69035) - **Distinguished Flying Cross** - No.40 Squadron - Award effective 1 December 1942 as per **London Gazette** dated 4 December 1942 and AFRO 2113/42 dated 30 December 1942. Born in Cochrane, Ontario, 3 June 1916; educated there and Timmins Technical School; home in Timmins (carpenter); enlisted North Bay, 20 July 1940. To No.1 ITS, 12 October 1940; graduated 16 November 1940 and promoted LAC, posted that date to No.11 EFTS; graduated 5 January 1941 and posted that date to No.9 SFTS; graduated and promoted Sergeant, 26 April 1941. To Embarkation Depot, 10 May 1941. To RAF overseas, 18 May 1941. TO No.23 OTU, 14 June 1941. To No.75 Squadron, 17 August 1941 (three sorties, 16.05 hours). To Overseas Air Delivery Unit, 12 September 1941. To Middle East, 28 September 1941, arriving Malta 1 October 1941 and attached to No.38 Squadron, Malta, 17 October 1941 (six sorties, 19/10 hours by day and 20.05 hours by night). To Egypt, 29 October 1941. Promoted Flight Sergeant, 1 November 1941. Hospitalized after five days, until 19 December 1941. Temporarily unfit for aircrew duty. To Kabrit, 22 January 1942 (No.236 Wing), paratroop training. To No.4 METS, 20 May 1942 (paratroop training). While at No.4 METS flew two operational sorties (15.45 hours by night). Promoted WO2 and WO1, 1 May 1942. To No.40 Squadron, 27 June 1942 (31 sorties, 203.15 hours). Commissioned 16 September 1942. To No.23 Personnel Transit Centre, 23 September 1942. Hospitalized again (malaria). To Home Establishment, 24 October 1942. Hospitalized again. To No.23 OTU, Pershore, 17 February

1943 (attached to No.1501 Beam Approach Training Flight, 7 March 1943 before returning to instructional duty). Promoted Flying Officer, 16 March 1943. Attended Night Training Unit before going to No.405 Squadron, 31 October 1943 (23 sorties, 134.45 hours). Promoted Flight Lieutenant, 27 March 1944. To Repatriation Depot, 17 June 1944. Repatriated 12 August 1944. To No.168 (Heavy Transport) Squadron, 14 September 1944. To Release Centre, 23 October 1945. Released 29 October 1945. Medal sent by registered mail 10 June 1948. RCAF photo PL-19321 (ex UK-4510 dated 15 July 1943) shows P/O John Van Rassel of Timmins (left) and Flight Lieutenant John A. Spence ((Guelph) taken outside Buckingham Palace following investiture. RCAF photo PL-25520R (right) shows F/L A.J. VanRassel, DFC on return to Canada. Died at Copper Cliff, Ontario, 15 September 1984 as per **Legion Magazine** of December 1984.

Warrant Officer Van Rassel has completed numerous operational sorties within the last two months. On the night of the 13th of July he was detailed to attack shipping at Tobruk. Extremely heavy gun fire was encountered and two flares ignited approximately 150 feet above the aircraft, causing it to be illuminated and caught by the searchlights. Despite these difficulties and the damage caused to the aircraft by the gun fire, Warrant Officer Van Rassel executed successful evasive tactics and later made a crash landing without injury to the crew or further serious damage to his aircraft. Although unable to return to his base for three days this officer returned to operational flying the day after his arrival. On three other occasions he experienced serious trouble with his engines but this did not deter him from completing his task. Warrant Officer Van Rassel has displayed continuous gallantry while his devotion to duty has set an example of the highest order.

NOTE: Public Records Office Air 2/9606 has recommendation dated 3 November 1942:

This Warrant Officer pilot joined No.40 Squadron on the 23rd of June 1942 on posting from No.4 Middle East Training School and after carrying out six operational sorties against the enemy as a second pilot, was appointed to the captaincy of a crew early in July. He has now completed 34 operational sorties comprising 237 hours, and of these 23 have been carried out in two months.

This pilot has carried out all his operations brilliantly and has on many occasions displayed great courage and daring. For example, on the night of the 13th of July, when detailed to attacking shipping at Tobruk, extremely heavy anti-aircraft fire was encountered and two flares ignited approximately 150 feet above the aircraft causing it to be illuminated and caught by the searchlights. Bombs were dropped however, and many explosions were observed and although the aircraft had to descend to 6,000 feet to avoid flak which had already caused some

damage to the aircraft, Warrant Officer Van Russell [sic] successfully piloted the aircraft away from the target area. On returning to base, the aircraft ran sort of fuel and the pilot decided to refuel at Landing Ground 224 but owing to haze which obscured the ground, this could not be located. Accordingly, he made a successful belly landing without injury to the crew or serious damaged to the aircraft. Although he was unable to return to base for three days, this Warrant Officer returned to operational flying upon the day after his arrival.

On three other occasions, namely on the 1st, the 9th and 14th of August, this Warrant Officer experienced serious trouble with his engines, his port engine catching fire on one occasion, but this did not deter him from completing his task. He has displayed continuous gallantly throughout the operations which he has carried out with this unit, while his devotion to duty has set an example to [of ?] the highest order to the remainder of the squadron.

VAN RASSEL, F/L Anton John George, DFC (J16709) - **Bar to Distinguished Flying Cross** - No.405 Squadron - Award effective 1 September 1944 as per **London Gazette** dated 15 September 1944 and AFRO 2373/44 dated 3 November 1944.

This officer has achieved many operational successes. He has displayed great courage in the face of danger and his determination to press home his attacks has set an inspiring example to all members of his squadron.

Public Record Office Air 50/248 has a Combat Report for the night of 1st/2nd March 1944, Lancaster O/405, ND507 or JB507. Crew consisted of J16708 F/L A.J. Van Rassel, 141555 F/O G.F.W. Gillspie, 710165 Sergeant W. Howard, R109440 Warrant Officer F. Billingsley, R211205 Sergeant C.C.Y. Bergeron (mid-upper gunner, trained at No.9 BGS), J14183 F/O E.G. Gray (rear gunner, trained at No.9 BGS and No.22 OTU and 1043385 Sergeant C.O, Beadman.

While on operations to Stuttgart on the night of March 1st, 1944 and in a position 48 degrees 50" North 09 degrees 30" East, Lancaster "O" Serial No.JB507 of 405 Squadron was attacked by a twin-engined fighter identified by the rear gunner as being a Me.210. The encounter took place at 19,000 feet altitude while flying at 145 I.A.S. on a heading of 070 degrees True. Visibility was good with 5/10 cloud tops at 12,000 feet and no moon.

The enemy aircraft was first sighted by the rear gunner [Gray] silhouetted against the cloud at a range of 1,000 yards in the Starboard Quarter down. The enemy followed the bomber while closing in slowly on the Port Quarter down until it reached a position at 800 yards range at which time it banked towards the

bomber and commenced to attack. The rear gunner held his fire until the range closed to 500 yards when he directed the pilot [Van Rassel] to corkscrew port, and opened fire with a short burst of 100 rounds total. The fighter then broke the attack by climbing on the port quarter and was not sighted again. There was no indication of imminent attack and the enemy aircraft did not open fire, no damage was caused to the fighter. Monica and Fishpond was reported unserviceable.

Notes: Application for Operational Wing and Bar gives the following - **First tour:** 17 August 1941 to 23 September 1942 (42 sorties); **Second tour:** 5 October 1943 to 17 June 1944 (22 sorties), 445 hours ten minutes on operations.

Flying accident, 14 July 1942, Wellington BB497, No.40 Squadron, operational sortie. Ran out of fuel and force landed on very rough ground. Repairable.

Accident, 15 July 1943, Wellington III, serial X3453, No.23 OTU, Pershore. Category "E" damage (write-off). A night operational training flight. On return to field, pupil at controls, doing an overshoot, the port engine failed. Van Rassel, as instructor, managed to complete circuit, lost height slowly and made a wheels-up landing on grass beside runway. Two practice bombs exploded, fabric around bomb doors caught fire and this spread quickly over port wing and fuselage. Crash tender was there promptly and prevented fire from spreading. Mechanical failure in four cylinders. "The aircraft was in a very critical state when the port engine failed, and in the circumstances it is considered that the pilot put up a very creditable performance in landing his crew safely without injury. It is recommended that this feat is worthy of official commendation."

The crew of the Wellington on this occasion was J16709 P/O A.J.C. Van Rassel (screened pilot, 161 hours on type, 818 hours on all types), 134045 F/O A.W. Batchelor (screened navigator, Canadian in the RAF), 131138 F/O J.C. Chapman (screened WOP), R130823 Sergeant G.W. Howard (pupil pilot, 41 hours on type, 218 hours on all types), J14791 P/O A.E. Beyack (pupil navigator), 1293398 Sergeant C.C. King (pupil WOP), J21984 P/O A. Chorneyko (pupil air bomber), R151463 Sergeant A.M. Fournier (pupil air gunner) and R154047 Sergeant J.C. Labreque (pupil air gunner). Van Rassel's own account is remarkable:

I was screening a pupil crew on a bombing detail in aircraft X3453 on the night of 15th July 1943, and we came back to the aerodrome and did a circuit at one thousand feet on the downwind leg. We signalled for permission to land and received a red from the ACP. I then ordered the student to continue on his circuit and do an overshoot at three thousand feet. We reached three hundred feet and the student opened the throttle and selected wheels up; at this time we

had twenty degrees of flap on. We crossed the aerodrome boundary and had gone a few hundred yards up the runway when the port engine started to surge. Finally there was a violent explosion and the revs and boost dropped off. I ordered the student to feather and called up control giving them the distress signal (Mayday). By this time we had turned off to port so we continued to port in a flat turn. The airspeed was one hundred miles per hour and rapidly losing height. I decided to lower the wheels but as the aerodrome was not in sight and we were at approximately two hundred feet I decided that the possibilities of making a landing on wheels did not exist. I put on full flap and started pumping on the emergency pump. We crossed over the aerodrome boundary at about seventy-five feet, still turning, and I attempted to land the aircraft on the grass. I succeeded in this and ended up to the left of the runway in use. As soon as the aircraft stopped, there was a couple of explosions and the aircraft caught fire. The crew discipline of the student crew was excellent; they showed no signs of panic and when ordered to do so, immediately took up crash positions. Immediately after feathering, I called control, giving them the distress call (Mayday). I immediately received a green from the ACP. The fire tender and crew arrived very quickly and dealt promptly with the fire, preventing the entire aircraft from being destroyed by fire.

Summary of flying dated 17 July 1945 gave types and hours as follows: Fleet Finch (23.45 solo, 30.05 dual); Harvard (38.00 solo, 42.10 dual), Wellington (555.10 as captain, 222.10 as second pilot), Lancaster (233.05 as captain, 10.20 as second pilot), Oxford (36.00 as captain, 11.25 as second pilot), Liberator (178.35 as second pilot), Fortress (51.45 as second pilot), C-47 (one hour as second pilot), Beechcraft (4.15 as second pilot)..

Selected Assessments: "This officer has been a keen pilot during the time at this OTU and has shown average ability. He failed his CFS course and was not employed as a full time instructor." (S/L G.G. Davies, DSO, No.23 OTU, 13 November 1943)

"This officer, by his cooperation and ability to present new ideas and alterations for improvements, has always been an asset to the flight. As he was an experienced operational pilot, he has always encourage by his example the less experienced captains and crews." (S/L J.R. McDonald, No.405 Squadron, 19 June 1945).

Training: Interviewed 27 May 1940 by F/O G.L. Lumsden - "Keen, well built, bright. Appears to possess good make-up for Air Crew training."

Course at No.1 ITS was 14 October to 15 November 1940. Courses in Mathematics (71/100), Armament, practical and oral (66/100), Visual Link (80/100), Drill (79/100), Law and Discipline

(88/100). Placed 208th in a class of 224. "Good pilot, excellent type" with second recommendation for Air Gunner.

Course at No.11 EFTS was 17 November to 4 January 1941. Fleet Finch (30.05 dual, 23.45 solo plus 3.20 in Link). "Very studious on his flying and is determined to make good. Essentially interested in becoming a bomber pilot and is recommend as so. Good sense of leadership." (P.M. Boisvert, Chief Flying Instructor, 4 January 1941). Ground courses in Airmanship (164/200), Airframes (193/200), Aero Engines (193/200), Signals, practical (45/50), Theory of Flight (79/100), Air Navigation (164/200), Armament, oral (196/200), Qualities as an NCO (180/200). Placed first in a class of 32. "Exceptionally bright young man. Should make a first class NCO." (J. Gordon Elliott, Chief Ground Instructor). Deemed unsuitable for commission.

Course at No.9 SFTS was 9 February to 26 April 1941. Harvard II aircraft (38.10 day dual, 35.35 day solo, 5.00 night dual, 2.25 night solo, 10.55 in Link). "A low average pilot - navigation average." Ground courses in Maintenance (43/50), Airmanship (109/150), Armament, written (70/100), Armament, practical (77/100), Air Navigation (167/200), Signals, written (75/100), Signals, practical with lamp (44/50). Placed 35 in a class of 59 and deemed suitable for commission. Classified as "average" in formation flying, navigation, night flying, instrument flying, determination and initiative.

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VAN SLYCK, F/L Earl Byron (J10246) - **Distinguished Flying Cross** - No.433 Squadron - Award effective 5 December 1944 as per **London Gazette** of that date and AFRO 293/45 dated 16 February 1945. Born 3 August 1917 in Plato, Saskatchewan; home in Laura, Saskatchewan (clerk). Enlisted in Saskatoon, 12 March 1941. To No.2 Manning Depot, 31 May 1941. To No.2 ITS, 26 July 1941; graduated and promoted LAC, 10 September 1941; posted that date to No.8 EFTS; to No.15 SFTS, 8 November 1941. Graduated and commissioned 27 February 1942. To Trenton, 29 March 1942; to No.11 SFTS as instructor, 17 May 1942. To "Y" Depot, 25 April 1943; to RAF overseas, 21 May 1943. Attained overseas rank of Squadron Leader. Repatriated 15 January 1945. Remained in postwar RCAF Auxiliary, reverting to Flight Lieutenant, 3 September 1947. Promoted Squadron Leader, 1 January 1955. Promoted Wing Commander, 1 January 1957. Promoted Group Captain, date uncertain. Died 10 February 2005 in Saskatoon as per Royal Canadian Legion "Last Post" website and **Legion Magazine** of November/December 2005. Photo PL-33680 (ex-K-15741, 9 October 1944) shows him.

This officer has at all times displayed commendable skill and determination. On one occasion whilst over Berlin his aircraft was badly damaged when struck by anti-aircraft fire and the aircraft became very difficult to control. Nevertheless

Flight Lieutenant Van Slyck flew it to base. By his skill and resolution this officer was undoubtedly responsible for the safe return of the aircraft and its crew.

DHH file 181.009 D.2611 (Library and Archives Canada RG.24 Volume 20627) has original recommendation by W/C A.J. Lewington, drafted 26 September 1944 when he had completed 24 sorties (124 hours 20 minutes operational time):

This officer, Deputy Flight Commander of "B" Flight for a considerable period, and now acting as Flight Commander, has completed twenty-four trips over enemy territory including attacks against Berlin (2), Leipzig, Frankfurt, Dortmund and Hamburg.

He has at all times shown exceptional fighting qualities and resourcefulness in action which has been a fine example to the entire squadron. On one occasion, after successfully bombing the city of Berlin, he was proceeding back to base when, at the edge of the Ruhr, his aircraft was hit twice by heavy flak inflicting extensive damage to the port wing, nose and underpart of the aircraft and rendering the port outer engine unserviceable.

Despite the fact that his aircraft was extremely difficult to control, and his Navigator seriously wounded, this officer by skilful and calculated handling of his aircraft managed to get back to a base in England, thereby saving the lives of his crew and much valuable equipment.

I consider that by his exceptional high qualities of leadership and his courage, skill and determination in action, Flight Lieutenant Van Slyck fully merits the immediate award of the Distinguished Flying Cross.

RCAF Press Release No.4402 dated 31 March 1944 reads:

WITH RCAF BOMBER GROUP OVERSEAS: --- Caught by blasts of flak over the Ruhr, a Porcupine Squadron Halifax sustained heavy damage and three of its crew were injured. But its Saskatchewan pilot battled through to an emergency airfield in Britain and succeeded in effecting a landing, in the face of almost every difficulty in the book.

The four-engined aircraft had bombed Berlin and was passing over the "Happy Valley" when, in the words of its captain, Flying Officer E.B. Van Slyck, Laura, Saskatchewan. "We ran into flak. The first burst hit the Hally a terrific blast and it began to lose height. I immediately told the crew to strap on their chute. A

few seconds later the second burst of flak came up at us. The flash from it nearly blinded us all." Meantime, the big plane was losing height and the crew discovered that the English navigator had been hit by flak under the left arm. "He was suffering considerable pain," went on the pilot's report. "The rest of the crew attempted to give him first aid, with the exception of the flight engineer who was changing the petrol cocks at the time. A terrific lunge of the aircraft threw him sideways and as he tried to regain his balance, he burned his left hand badly on the heating apparatus and wrenched his left shoulder." The second burst put the port outer engine out of commission. It broke into flames but later went out. The port inner engine also "started to act up", as Van Slyck put it, but the crew managed to get it going again. Then they discovered that two of the petrol tanks in the port wing had been holed and about 40 gallons of petrol drained away. Part of the air speed indicator system was shot away; the Perspex throughout the aircraft was blasted to pieces; there were holes behind the navigator's seat big enough for a man to put his fingers through.

The whole crew had their clothing riddled by flak, and the Irish wireless operator had his knuckles creased by splinters of the stuff. Van Slyck did not mention that he himself had been hit by little flak splinters in the hip. "To add to the confusion, the flak hit the navigator's chute lock," continued Van Slyck, "and the bomb-aimer, an Englishman, had accidentally pulled his, so we had two chutes flying around in the aircraft until they managed to get them under control again. The English flight engineer did a wonderful job in keeping the engines supplied with petrol despite his injuries. The navigator was quite groggy but kept working all the way home."

The shattered Halifax flew the rest of the way on two good engines and a partially unserviceable one. An enemy fighter which dropped flares to within 10 miles of the English coast in a futile hunt after them, prevented the crew sending an emergency call. Finally the navigator routed them to a coastal airfield which gave them permission to land.

"I came in to approach the airdrome," said Van Slyck, "but when I unlocked the wheels I found that the hydraulics were punctured and I had no control over them. The port wheel was also riddled by flak. We got the wheels down okay and then as I was making the approach to the airdrome the port inner engine quit altogether. I had to throttle the engine back and glide in on the grass-turfed runway. We got down okay although the aircraft swerved off to the right as we landed."

Hospital assistance was available immediately for the navigator and flight engineer. They will have to spend some time in hospital before they are fully recovered. "We can thank the skipper for getting us back safely. He did a magnificent job all the way through. His coolness and determination were instrumental in getting us through a tough situation," said Warrant Officer J.O. Weekes, of 76 Wolsley Road, Point Piper, Sydney, Australian mid-upper gunner.

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VAN TICHEM, F/O John Victor (J35508) - **Distinguished Flying Cross** - No.428 Squadron - Award effective 15 March 1945 as per **London Gazette** dated 27 March 1945 and AFRO 1127/45 dated 6 July 1945. Born 1 July 1917 in Strathmore, Alberta; home there (former COTC); enlisted Calgary, 29 June 1942. Granted Leave Without Pay until 3 August 1942 when posted to No.3 Manning Depot. To No.15 SFTS (guard duty), 11 September 1942. To No.2 ITS, 24 October 1942; graduated and promoted LAC, 31 December 1942 but not posted to No.15 EFTS until 23 January 1943. Ceased training and posted to No.3 Manning Depot, 17 February 1943; to No.6 BGS, Mountain View, 6 March 1943; to No.10 AOS, 1 May 1943; graduated and commissioned 17 September 1943. To No.1 GRS, 1 October 1943. To "Y" Depot, 24 November 1943. Taken on strength of No.3 PRC, 13 December 1943. Promoted Flying Officer, 17 March 1944. Repatriated 26 September 1945. Retired 6 November 1945. Award presented 9 July 1949. RCAF photo PL-42905 (ex UK-19048 dated 23 February 1945) shows, F/L H. Wilson, Toronto, at right, "who has just returned from guiding his Lancaster to a Ruhr target and back"; interrogating at left is F/O J.V. Van Tighem, Strathmore, Alberta, "who has finished his first tour"; listening is Flight Sergeant R.R. Des Rochers, Montreal, a radar mechanic. No citation other than "completed...many successful operations against the enemy in which [he has] displayed high skill, fortitude and devotion to duty." DHist file 181.009 D.3260 (RG.24 Vol.20637) has recommendation dated 5 December 1944 when he had flown 25 sorties (158 hours 40 minutes), 6 September to 4 December 1944. NOTE: The recommendation suggests the name as Vantighem or VanTighem. It is also for an **immediate** award but is granted as a non-immediate decoration. The incident described is clearly the same as that involving D.F. Poole.

On the night of 2nd December 1944, proceeding to attack Hagen, the Gee of Flying Officer VanTighen's aircraft ceased to function shortly after leaving base. The use of H2S was not permitted at the time and later it was found that the H2S was also unserviceable and that the Air Speed Indicator was out of commission.

Despite these handicaps and extremely trying conditions, including heavy icing in clouds, Flying Officer VanTighen navigated by Directional Radio and through his exceptional skill and determination the aircraft reached the target on time.

His calm confidence and great ability inspired his crew and contributed to a major degree in the successful attack by this aircraft and its safe return to base. For his courage, determination and great devotion to duty I recommend the immediate award of the Distinguished Flying Cross.

The sortie list was as follows:

6 September 1944 - Emden (5.10)
10 September 1944 - Le Havre (4.55)
14 September 1944 - Wilhelmshaven (4.10, recalled)
15 September 1944 - Kiel (7.05)
18 September 1944 - Domburg (5.25)
19 September 1944 - Domburg (3.30, recalled)
20 September 1944 - Calais (3.25)
25 September 1944 - Calais (5.05)
26 September 1944 - Calais (4.35)
27 September 1944 - Bottrop (7.15)
28 September 1944 - Cap Gris Nez (4.10)
4 October 1944 - Bergen (6.40)
14 October 1944 - Duisburg (5.55)
14 October 1944 - Duisburg (6.25)
19 October 1944 - Stuttgart (7.25)
23 October 1944 - Essen (6.35)
25 October 1944 - Essen (6.10)
28 October 1944 - Cologne (6.15)
30 October 1944 - Cologne (6.30)
1 November 1944 - Oberhausen (7.10)
2 November 1944 - Dusseldorf (6.45)
4 November 1944 - Bochum (5.45)
16 November 1944 - Julich (5.40)
27 November 1944 - Neuss (5.25)
30 November 1944 - Duisburg (6.15)
2 December 1944 - Hagen (7.30)
4 December 1944 - Karlsruhe (7.10)

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VANCE, F/O Alan Russell (J23617) - **Distinguished Flying Cross** - No.19 Squadron, South African Air Force (missing, believed killed) - Award effective 6 November 1944 as per **London Gazette** dated 14 November 1944 and AFRO 1/45 dated 5 January 1945. Born 11 September 1923 in

Spanish, Ontario; home there. Took radio school courses; mechanic's helper and commercial signaller before enlisting at North Bay, 15 October 1941. To No.2 Manning Depot, Brandon, 7 November 1941; to No.1 Training Command, 14 March 1942; to No.16 SFTS, Hagersville, 1 April 1942 (non-flying duties); to No.6 ITS, Toronto, 26 April 1942; graduated 19 June 1942 and promoted LAC. Posted to No.12 EFTS, Goderich, 2 August 1942; to No.16 SFTS, Hagersville, 11 October 1942. Promoted Sergeant, 5 February 1943. Commissioned 12 February 1943. No.1 General Reconnaissance School, 20 February 1943. To "Y" Depot, Halifax, 9 May 1943; to RAF overseas, 26 May 1943. Disembarked in Britain, 4 June 1943. Taken on strength of No.3 PRC, Bournemouth, 5 June 1943. To No.20 (P) AFU, 29 June 1943. Attached to No.1514 Beam Approach Training Flight, 3-9 August 1943. Posted to No.2 (Coastal) OTU, 31 August 1943; to No.132 OTU, 7 September 1943; to No.304 FTU, 30 November 1943. Attached to Station Llandow, 30 November 1943. Left Britain for Middle East, 14 December 1943. Taken on strength of No.22 Personnel Transit Centre, 26 December 1943; to No.227 Squadron, 29 February 1944; to No.19 Squadron, South African Air Force, 12 August 1944. Promoted Flight Lieutenant, 1 September 1944. Presumed dead, 10 October 1944 (Beaufighter NT997, name on Malta Memorial). Award presented to next of kin, 1 April 1949.

This officer has taken part in numerous long range convoy escort patrols in the course of which he has made many effective attacks on enemy vessels, some of which have been destroyed. He has also completed two attacks on oil installations in Yugoslavia during which storage tanks were destroyed. In September 1944 his aircraft was badly damaged by anti-aircraft fire while attacking trains. Despite this, he continued the flight giving all possible assistance to his leader. He finally flew the damaged aircraft safely to base.

Beaufighter NT997 was one of nine Beaufighters that took off at 1320 hours from Landing ground Bifirno to attack a "K.T. Ship" in Senj harbour, Yugoslavia. He attacked the vessel at 220 knots, released his rockets and scored strikes, but was immediately afterwards hit by flak and crashed into the sea, 500 yards from the target (1500 hours). Killed with 581438 Lieutenant A.N. Medalie, SAAF.

On 23 March 1948, No.5 Missing Research and Enquiry Unit reported their investigation of this case. They said, in part:

One of our Searcher Parties proceeded to Senj Harbour and was informed by Milan Tomljanovic, a clerk of Senj, that about 1500 hours on either the 10th or 11th October 1944, he saw a flight of twin-engined aircraft attacking the German ship "Arpione" in the harbour. One of these aeroplanes was hit by flak from the ship, burst into flames, and crashed into the sea about 50 metres from the end of the long jetty. On the following day an empty yellow crew dinghy was washed

up and was taken away by the Germans. The witness stated that when the water is clear and calm it is possible to see the wreckage lying on the sea bed. He estimated the depth of water as 40 metres.

A proposition was put to the Yugoslav authorities that divers should be employed to recover the two bodies which are believed to be still in the aircraft. No action has been taken by Yugoslavia, and it is thought therefore that this case must be closed, leaving the bodies not recovered.

When interviewed at North Bay on 15 October 1941, the Interviewing Officer wrote, "Not impressive - requires discipline. May improve with service training. Typical rural youth", and recommended Air Gunner training. At ITS, W/C J. Hanchet-Taylor was more favourable, describing him as "Not exceptional, but a hard working, earnest and cooperative trainee who will do a good job. Second Aircrew recommendation - Air Navigator" The Chief Supervisory Officer at No.12 EFTS wrote, "Good average, quiet, thinking student. Quite active and clear minded. Flying was of very high average ability". At No.16 SFTS the Chief Instructor wrote, "Above average in all respects. Intelligent interest in his work and is keen. Mild manner, deportment good. Link 80 %. Recommended for Commission." He was passed 8th in a class of 47.

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VANDEKERCKHOVE, P/O George Pierre Cornelius (J17326) - **Distinguished Flying Cross** - No.427 Squadron - Award effective 6 August 1943 as per **London Gazette** dated 17 August 1943 and AFRO 2258/43 dated 5 November 1943. Born Neuville Calvados, France, 15 April 1917; home in Stoney Mountain, Manitoba where he was a farmer and hatchery man. His father had been an instructor with the Royal Flying Corps. Enlisted Winnipeg 16 April 1941. To No.1 Manning Depot, 16 May 1941. To No.1 ANS (non-flying duties), 9 June 1941. To No.4 ITS, 3 July 1941; graduated and promoted LAC, 8 August 1941. To No.5 EFTS, 8 August 1941; to No.7 SFTS, 25 September 1941. Graduated and promoted Sergeant, 19 December 1941. To "Y" Depot, 20 December 1941. To RAF overseas, 7 January 1942. Taken on strength of No.3 PRC, 21 January 1942. To No.3 SFTS, 16 February 1942. To No.20 OTU, 16 June 1942. To No.431 Squadron, 25 November 1942. To No.427 Squadron, 26 November 1942. Commissioned 15 March 1943. Attached to No.1659 Conversion Unit, 24 April to 5 May 1943. Attached to No.1535 Beam Approach Training Flight, 12-14 June 1943. Killed in action, 31 August 1943 (Halifax EB251, No.427 Squadron). He took off at 2015 hours to attack Berlin. Crew consisted of himself (pilot), 156416 P/O A.E. Young (WAG), R134836 FS J.A. Albert (air gunner), R124704 FS J.J. McLeod (air gunner), 578277 Sergeant E. Bartlett (flight engineer), 1095873 FS C.C. Gofron (pilot) plus R116700 Sergeant W.A. Williamson (navigator) and 1392245 Sergeant A.D. Rothwell (bomb aimer), both of whom survived as POWs. Award presented to next-of-kin, 12 December 1944.

RCAF photo PL-34551 taken after ceremony showing Mr. and Mrs. B. Vandekerckhove and Germaine Vandekerckhove.

This officer has successfully completed a number of operational bombing flights during which he displayed courage of the highest order. An exceptionally good captain, he has invariably pressed home his attacks with vigour and his success has been demonstrated by the photographs he has secured. In March 1943, this officer was captain of an aircraft detailed for an attack on Essen. Nearing the target area the aircraft was badly damaged by anti-aircraft fire but he flew safely back to this country, his rear gunner damaging a Junkers 88 on the return flight. On another occasion, Pilot Officer Vandekerckhove was testing an aircraft at 10,000 feet when the dinghy broke loose and severely damaged the tail of the plane. Ordering his crew to leave the aircraft by parachute, he regained control and made a successful landing in hazardous circumstances. This officer has always shown excellent judgement and superb airmanship.

The original recommendation is found in DHH file 181.009 D.2617 (National Library and Archives RG.24 Volume 20627); drafted 21 June 1943 when he had flown twelve sorties (76 hours 50 minutes).

Pilot Officer Vandekerckhove has successfully completed twelve operational bombing flights and has displayed courage of the very highest order, particularly on two occasions. The first was while he was captain of an aircraft bombing Essen on 5/6 March. Near the target the aircraft was severely damaged by flak, but he flew the aircraft back to England after his starboard airscrew had come off over the sea, making a successful crash landing on an aerodrome. During this flight his Rear Gunner damaged a Ju.88. On the second occasion he was carrying out an aircraft test when at 10,000 feet the dinghy broke loose and severely damaged the tail plane. After ordering his crew to bale out he regained control of his damaged aircraft at 3,000 feet and made a successful landing on an aerodrome. He has at all times displayed fine airmanship and determination of the very highest order.

A card in his file lists the following sorties and times (all missions successfully carried out):

6 December 1942 - Mannheim (7.40)
21 December 1942 - Sea Search (5.45)
21 January 1943 - GARDENING (7.15)
26 January 1943 - Lorient (7.30)
29 January 1943 -Lorient (6.10)

24 February 1943 - Wilhelmshaven (5.10)
2 March 1943 - GARDENING (6.35)
5 March 1943 - Essen (5.20)
26 March 1943 - Duisburg (5.45)
29 March 1943 - Bochum (5.25)
4 April 1943 - Kiel (6.40)
16 April 1943 - Mannheim (7.20)
11 June 1943 - Dusseldorf (5.35)
21 June 1943 - Krefeld (5.05)
22 June 1943 - Mulheim (4.50)
24 June 1943 - Wuppertal (5.40)
9 July 1943 - Gladbach (7.00)
13 July 1943 - Aachen (6.00)
24 July 1943 - Hamburg (6.10)
25 July 1943 - Essen (5.38)
27 July 1943 - Hamburg (5.28)
29 July 1943 - Hamburg (5.59)
2 August 1943 - Hamburg (6.15)
23 August 1943 - Berlin (7.35)
27 August 1943 - Nuremberg (8.40)
30 August 1943 - Gladbach (5.05)

Total of 26 missions (161 hours 35 minutes).

His training record is interesting in that he was not considered impressive at the outset. When interviewed on 5 November 1940, the interviewing officer (F/O W.R. Griffiths) concluded, "With training may be possible material for Gunner. Fond of hunting and the use of firearms. Healthy type of farm youth of French descent." Nevertheless, at ITS he was considered good enough (based on Link experience) to send to pilot training. At EFTS he flew 53 hours 25 minutes on Tiger Moths (25 hours of that solo) and was still considered only "fair" At SFTS he was still considered slow but hard working. The CFI wrote (19 December 1941), "Flying progress very slow. This pupil has little natural ability and is a decidedly low average pilot. He is recommended for second pilot on bombers until he has gained more experience."

He nevertheless proceeded overseas. As a Sergeant at No.14 OTU, 6 July 1942, he severely damaged Hampden L6055 when taking off (swung, late in throttling back, undercarriage collapsed). The report of the accident, dated 8 July 1942, observed. "This pilot is not at all brilliant and has received special instruction from his Flight Commander regarding Hampden aircraft. It is not proposed to take any action against the pilot." The Station Commander added the following comment:

Since this accident everything possible has been done to check this NCO's flying, but unfortunately to no avail. It is considered that if he is allowed to continue with his Hampden flying he may once again wreck a Hampden. It is recommended that he be tried on Wellingtons or transferred to some other branch of aircrew duties.

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VANDER DASSON, FS William Lorne (R67655) - **Distinguished Flying Medal** - No.619 Squadron - Award effective 1 September 1943 as per **London Gazette** dated 10 September 1943 and AFRO 2322/43 dated 12 November 1943. Born in Leamington, Ontario, 2 July 1920; home in Windsor, Ontario (salesman); enlisted there 17 August 1940. To No.1 Equipment Depot, 10 November 1940. To No.2 WS, 2 January 1941. Promoted LAC, 3 February 1941. To No.3 BGS, 23 May 1941. Graduated 24 June 1941 when promoted Sergeant. To Embarkation Depot, 24 June 1941. To RAF overseas, 14 August 1941. Taken on strength at No.3 PRC, Bournemouth, 15 September 1941. To No.1 Signal School, 29 September 1941. To No.16 OTU, 27 January 1942. To No.49 Squadron, 27 May 1942. To No.49 Conversion Flight, 10 June 1942. To Station Scampton, 27 November 1942. To No.49 Squadron, 8 December 1942. To Station Scampton (sick), 30 December 1942. To No.49 Squadron, 2 January 1943. To No.1661 Conversion Unit, 23 March 1943. To No.49 Squadron, 15 April 1943. To No.619 Squadron, 6 May 1943. To No.83 OTU, 20 July 1943. Commissioned 14 October 1943 (J.18998). To No.82 OTU, 28 February 1944. To No.1656 Conversion Unit, 7 March 1944. To No.103 Squadron, 15 March 1944. "Charged with conduct to the prejudice of good order and Air Force discipline, in that he improperly took part in a discussion concerning the performance of Service aircraft on operations. Tried by Air Officer Commanding, No.25 Group on 20 March 1944. Found guilty and awarded a reprimand." The discussion in question had occurred on 9 February 1944 in the Greyhound Hotel, Louth, while he was attached to No.1 Air Armament School. Promoted Flying Officer, 14 April 1944. Missing, presumed dead, 12 May 1944 (Lancaster NB700, No.103 Squadron). Award presented to next-of-kin, 28 February 1946.

This airman has participated in numerous attacks against most of the enemy's heavily defended targets in Germany. He has obtained some excellent photographs. Although, on one occasion, he was forced to abandon his aircraft by parachute, he has continued to display enthusiasm for operational flying, maintaining a high standard of courage and determination.

The website "Lost Bombers" offers the following information on a moment in his career:

6/7 September 1942 - Lancaster R5752, No.49 Squadron (EA-D). R5757 was delivered to No.49 Squadron, 21 July 1942. It took part in the following key operations: Dusseldorf, 31July/1August 1942; Dusseldorf, 15/16 August 1942; Frankfurt, 24/25 August 1942; Kassel; 27/28 August 1942; Karlsruhe; 2/3 September 1942; Bremen, 4/5 September 1942; Duisburg, 6/7 September 19 42. When lost this aircraft had a total of 63 hours. Airborne at 0116 hours, 7 September 1942 from Scampton. Hit and severely damaged by flak, which knocked out two engines, and on return the Lancaster flew through tree tops and crashed at 0434 hours, 7 September 1942 into a field near Blunt's Wood at the back of Great Bealings Hall, two miles NW of Martlesham Heath, Suffolk. Sergeant Gregory-Coleman (RAAF) is buried in Ipswich Cemetery. Prior to the crash, four of the crew baled out in the vicinity of Orford - P/O G.S.Jeffreys (injured), Sergeant W.P.J.Gregory-Coleman (RAAF) killed, Sergeant J.C.H.Morgan, Sergeant O.D.Blaha, Sergeant P.Maloney (injured); Sergeant J.Harrison; Sergeant W.L.Vander Dasson (RCAF). Sergeant Blaha was destined to be killed with No.44 Squadron, 1-2 January 1944 in Lancaster W4831 against Berlin. Sergeant Vander Dasson went on to serve with No.619 Squadron and No.103 Squadron, killed in Lancaster ND700, against Hasselt, 11/12 May 1944.

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VANDEWATER, F/O Howard Smith (J16735) - **Mention in Despatches** - No.235 Squadron - Award effective 8 June 1944 as per **London Gazette** of that date and AFRO 1729/44 dated 11 August 1944. Born 19 January 1919. Home in Toronto; enlisted there 3 May 1941. To No.1 Manning Depot, 11 May 1941. To Trenton, 27 May 1941. To No.1 ITS, 15 July 1941; graduated 20 August 1941, promoted LAC and posted to No.20 EFTS; graduated 10 October 1941 and posted to No.16 SFTS; graduated 9 January 1942 and promoted Sergeant. To "Y" Depot, Halifax, 10 January 1942. To RAF overseas, 23 January 1942. Commissioned overseas (backdated to 3 January 1942). Promoted Flying Officer, 3 July 1943. Repatriated to Canada, 14 November 1943. To No.36 OTU, 29 December 1944. To No.8 OTU, 30 June 1944. To No.1 Training Command, 11 December 1944. To No.1 Wireless School, 18 December 1944. Promoted Flight Lieutenant, 3 January 1945. To Release Centre, 14 April 1945. Released 19 April 1945. Believed to have died in Toronto, 21 May 2002. No citation in AFRO.

RCAF Press Release No.1029 dated January 1943, transcribed by Huguette Oates, reads:

"Sailing through the skies in a Beaufighter is a lot different from sitting behind a desk and dreaming of it", said 23-year-old Sergeant Pilot H.S. Vandewater, son of Mr. and Mrs. E.S. Vandewater, of 25 Rose Park Drive, Toronto, Ontario. A student at North Toronto Collegiate, Van couldn't keep his mind on his work. He could only think of one thing, flying, but he needed academic credits to join the RCAF and so he stuck it out until graduation. Enlisting in May, 1941, Van won his

wings the following January at No.16 SFTS., Hagersville, Ontario, and was posted overseas soon afterwards.

Attached to an RAF fighter squadron, Van has been piloting Beaufighters ever since. He has had numerous encounters with the enemy, and has several probables and damaged to his credit. "The Beaufighter is good to me", said young Van, "and I wouldn't swap it for any ship in the world, not even Spitfire." In a recent sortie with an Arado, powerful and heavily armed German seaplane, Van gave Jerry more than he bargained. Closing in from the rear, he got in several bursts of cannon fire, knocking out the rear-gunner and sending the plane diving into a cloud bank in a trail of heavy black smoke. Because it was not seen again, Van can only claim it as a "probable".

Sergeant Vandewater plans to return to Canada after the war and study aeronautical engineering at University of Toronto. He loves flying so much that he hopes to make it a lifetime job.

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VANEXAN, WO William Corbett (R56148) - **Distinguished Flying Cross** - No.57 Squadron - Award effective 4 August 1942 as per **London Gazette** dated 11 August 1942 and AFRO 1371/42 dated 28 August 1942. Born 21 October 1918 in Smith Falls, Ontario; home there (clerk and salesman for local Cockshutt Plow Company); enlisted Montreal 22 June 1940. To No. 2 ITS, 30 June 1940; promoted LAC, 30 August 1940 and posted to No.3 EFTS; to No.1 SFTS , 4 November 1940; graduated and promoted Sergeant, 23 January 1941. To Station Trenton, 24 January 1941. To Embarkation Depot, 21 February 1941. To RAF overseas, 2 March 1941. To No.21 OTU, 10 March 1941. To No.57 Squadron, 2 June 1941. Promoted Flight Sergeant, 1 September 1941. Promoted WO2, 1 March 1942. To Station Feltwell, 11 March 1942. Commissioned 21 June 1942. To No.24 OTU, 21 June 1942 (instructing on Whitleys). Promoted Flying Officer, 21 December 1942. Promoted Flight Lieutenant, 8 June 1943. To No.1666 Conversion Unit, 16 November 1943. To No.425 Squadron, 6 January 1944. Promoted Squadron Leader, 1 May 1944. To No.431 Squadron, 7 June 1944. News clipping in the Ottawa **Citizen** dated 18 September 1944 credits him with two tours, 61 sorties - and only once was his aircraft damaged (flak - slight injury to one crewman). Repatriated to Canada, 30 September 1944 (apparently arriving 7 October 1944). To No.12 (Communications) Squadron 15 November 1944. To Transport Conversion Squadron, Pennfield Ridge, 17 February 1945. To No.2 Air Command Headquarters, 28 April 1945. Granted Leave Without Pay from 6 May 1945 while employed by TCA. To Release Centre, 12 August 1945. Retired 18 September 1945. Discharged with 1,550 service hours of flying. Joined TCA (later Air Canada) and logged 17,869 hours in 25 years,

culminating as a Regional Pilot. Died 10 January 1972. Plaque at Smith Falls Airport commemorates him. Medal sent by registered mail with DSO. 13 February 1948. RCAF PL-31157 and PL-31158 (ex UK-12591 and UK-12592 dated 21 July 1944) show him when appointed Flight Commander. RCAF photo PL-31159 (ex UK-12594 dated 21 July 1944) shows W/C H.R. Dow (centre, Toronto, new CO of Iroquois Squadron) with his Flight Commanders, S/L C.A. "Peter" Bull (Sudbury) and S/L W.C. Vanexen, DFC (Smith Falls, Ontario). RCAF photo PL-31159 (ex UK-12594 dated 21 July 1944) shows W/C H.R. Dow (centre, Toronto, new CO of Iroquois Squadron) with his Flight Commanders, S/L C.A. "Peter" Bull (Sudbury) and S/L W.C. Vanexen, DFC (Smith Falls, Ontario). RCAF photo PL-31172 is captioned as follows: "Virtues of Ontario's capital city are upheld by F/L R.M. Mickles of Toronto, recently appointed Adjutant of the RCAF Bomber Group's Iroquois Squadron in an airfield discussion with the Wing Commander, (W/C H.R. Dow, second from right) and the two flight commanders; S/L C.G. Bull (second from left) is a Sudbury man, while S/L W.C. Vanexen, DFC, (extreme right) is from Smith Falls, Ontario." RCAF photo PL-32028 (ex UK-14183 dated 24 August 1944) shows leaders in No.431 Squadron: left to right they are S/L W.C. Vanexen, DFC (Smith Falls, flight commander), F/O R.D. Lawson, RAF, F/O E. Bruce Hutchinson (Amherstburg, Ontario), W/C Eric Mitchell (Wolfville, Nova Scotia and Ottawa, squadron commanding officer), F/L Frank Guillevin (Outremont), F/L R.M. Mickles (Toronto), F/O Bert Kaplansky (Hamilton).

Warrant Officer Vanexen is an extremely capable operational pilot. The majority of his sorties have been against heavily defended targets and have all been pressed home with vigour. He has displayed courage and devotion to duty.

NOTE: Public Record Office Air 2/9595 has recommendation dated 18 June 1942 when he had flown 33 sorties (188 operational hours). This goes into much more detail both in sortie sheet and text.

11 June 1941 - Boulogne (4.05)
12 June 1941 - Hamm (5.35)
16 June 1941 - Dusseldorf (6.10)
18 June 1941 - Brest (6.15)
21 June 1941 - Dunkirk (3.00)
24 June 1941 - Kiel (6.25)
27 June 1941 - Bremen (6.40)
30 June 1941 - Cologne (5.20)
8 July 1941 - Munster (5.40)
10 July 1941 - Cologne (6.20)
4 November 1941 - Essen (6.20)
7 November 1941 - Berlin (3.40, early return)
23 November 1941 - Dunkirk (4.00)

26 November 1941 - Ostende (5.05)
30 November 1941 - Hamburg (6.30)
25 March 1942 - St.Nazaire (3.55)
28 March 1942 - Paris (4.40)
1 April 1942 - Hanau (6.25, aircraft shot up)
8 April 1942 - Hamburg (6.00)
10 April 1942 - Essen (4.50)
25 April 1942 - Rostock (7.10)
27 April 1942 - Cologne (6.55)
29 April 1942 - Paris (5.30)
2 May 1942 - St.Nazaire (7.30)
4 May 1942 - Stuttgart (7.00)
6 May 1942 - Stuttgart (7.00)
7 May 1942 - Kiel (6.55)
9 May 1942 - GARDENING, Baltic (7.20)
15 May 1942 - GARDENING, Baltic (7.25)
19 May 1942 - Mannheim (6.00)
30 May 1942 - Cologne (4.30)
1 June 1942 - Essen (4.00)
2 June 1942 - Essen (3.50)

Since 3rd June 1941, this Warrant Officer of the Royal Canadian Air Force has carried out 188 hours operational flying involving 33 sorties, 19 being as captain of aircraft.

He has carried out all his sorties with the utmost skill, courage and devotion to duty. The majority of his attacks have been carried out against the most heavily defended targets and have all been pressed home with the greatest determination at a low height.

On the night of 15th/16th May 1942, the aircraft of which he was captain had been detailed to lay mines in the Baltic area. In order to be sure of dropping the mines in the correct position it was necessary for him to fly over an area of sea which he knew to be defended by several enemy anti-aircraft ships. As a result his aircraft was subjected to intense anti-aircraft fire while flying at only 800 feet. The tail portion of the aircraft was hit, the tail gunner being wounded and the elevators badly damaged. Nevertheless, he continued on his course and dropped his mines in the correct position, returning the fire of the enemy anti-aircraft ships, and then brought his aircraft safely home to base without

incurring further damage, although he experienced considerable difficulty in controlling it.

This is typical of the manner in which he went about all his operational flying, and he has earned the respect and admiration of the rest of the squadron.

This document was favourably endorsed by the Officer Commanding, RAF Station Feltwell (date not recorded) and by the Air Officer Commanding, No.3 Group, on 26 June 1942.

VANEXAN, S/L William Corbett, DFC (J15603) - **Distinguished Service Order** - No.431 Squadron - Award effective 24 October 1944 as per **London Gazette** of that date and AFRO 2637/44 dated 8 December 1944.

This officer has completed a large number of sorties since being awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and has displayed outstanding determination and zeal. He has attacked his targets fearlessly, yet with cool and calculated methods which have brought him much success. He is a virile leader and has proved a great asset to the squadron.

NOTE: DHist file 181.009 D.5526 (RG.24 Vol.20667) has recommendation by the Commanding Officer, No.431 Squadron, dated 20 August 1944 when he had flown 60 sorties (318 hours 50 minutes); had flown 130 hours 50 minutes since previous award. This recommendation with successive remarks by senior officers is also found in Public Record Office Air 2/9160. The latter lists all sorties including first tour sorties from 11 June 1941 (Boulogne) to 2 June 1942 (Essen) - 33 trips in all - second tour began 6 March 1944 (Le Mans) and ran to 15 August 1944. Second tour sorties and submission as follows:

6 March 1944 - Trappes (4.50)
7 March 1944 - Le Mans (4.55)
15 March 1944 - Stuttgart (7.50)
18 March 1944 - Frankfurt (5.20)
9 April 1944 - Villeneuve (5.40)
10 April 1944 - Ghent (4.35)
18 April 1944 - Paris (5.10)
20 April 1944 - Lens (4.10)
1 May 1944 - St. Chilsam (4.35)
8 May 1944 - Haine-St.Pierre (4.05)
9 May 1944 - Calais (3.30)
12 May 1944 - Louvain (4.55)
22 May 1944 - Le Mans (5.50)
31 May 1944 - Au Fevre (4.35)

6 June 1944 - Houlgate (5.15)
9 June 1944 - Le Mans (6.00)
12 June 1944 - Arras (4.50)
14 June 1944 - Cambrai (4.00)
16 June 1944 - Sterkrade (4.50)
1 July 1944 - Biennais (4.15)
5 July 1944 - Biennais (4.30)
17 July 1944 - Caen (4.25)
4 August 1944 - Bois de Cassan (5.05)
7 August 1944 - Caen (4.30)
8 August 1944 - Chantelles (5.00)
12 August 1944 - Neuville (4.00)
15 August 1944 - Soesterburg (4.10)

This officer, as captain of aircraft, has now completed 60 sorties against the enemy. Since receiving the award of the Distinguished Flying Cross in July 1942, this gallant airman has continued to press home the attack on every occasion. During his complete second tour of operations, he has fearlessly attacked the strongest enemy targets, including Sterkrade, Frankfurt and Stuttgart and, by his cool, confident and methodical manner, has expertly bombed every target for which he was detailed. At all times showing a complete disregard for his own safety, he has inflicted damaging losses against the enemy. He has been an inspiring example to his comrades and a tower of strength to the squadron. For such outstanding devotion to duty and courageous flying, I strongly recommend that he be awarded the Distinguished Service Order.

The undated remarks of G/C R.S. Turnbull, Officer Commanding, Station Croft, read:

Squadron Leader Vanexan, as captain and Flight Commander, has shown outstanding skill and devotion to duty. His fearlessness, aggressive spirit in the air and untiring work on the ground has gained him the complete confidence and respect of all those under him. The success of his Flight and the squadron have been the result of this officer's efforts and leadership. I concur in the recommendation of his Squadron Commander that he be awarded the Distinguished Service Order.

On 24 August 1944, Air Commodore R.E. McBurney, Base Commander, No.64 Base, wrote:

This officer's personality and character have been an invaluable asset to the squadron. He was the only second tour captain on the unit, and, as such,

wielded a strong influence. His personal contempt of danger and enemy defences, his calm and assured handling of unexpected situations both on the ground and in the air set an example to his juniors which was of inestimable benefit to them.

Air Vice-Marshal C.M. McEwen, Air Officer Commanding, No.6 Group, wrote on 27 August 1944:

This officer has completed 27 sorties since the award of the Distinguished Flying Cross. His personal ability and valour, coupled with his strong sense of duty, have been the major factors in his outstanding record of achievement. On operations his leadership and coolness in the most difficult circumstances have gained for him the admiration and respect of his whole squadron, while his efficient and courageous performance has been a credit to the service. I consider Squadron Leader Vanexan is truly deserving of this recognition and have no hesitation in strongly recommending the award of the Distinguished Service Order (Non-Immediate).

This was subsequently approved by Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur Harris, Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Bomber Command, 17 September 1944.

Accidents: On 25 March 1942, at 2306 hours, on operational sorties with No.57 Squadron, Wellington X3658, damage Category "B". He reported: "On March 25th, 1942, I took off at 1950 hours for operations on St. Nazaire as detailed. I was flying at 9,000 feet in weak mixture and fixed pitch when the [starboard] engine stopped without any warning whatsoever. I jettisoned bombs in sea a few miles short of French coast and proceeded to set course for Exeter. I made a glide approach and landing, touching down just past the third flare on the grass inside runway but could not pull up in time and crashed into a Whirlwind dispersed on the side of the field." An assessment of the incident noted that he was inexperienced; his choice of landing to right of flare path, "not to obstruct the flare path in the event of a crash landing" was a mistake; swing to starboard was due in part to failed engine.

On 9 January 1943, at No.24 OTU, Whitley EB351, with pupil, R112769 Sergeant W.R. Farrell. "Pupil pilot at controls. Aircraft made a slight swing to starboard and instructor delayed taking over to see reaction of pupil under these conditions. Pupil over corrected in checking swing and aircraft swung violently to port. Instructor took over immediately but aircraft was out of hand and to keep in on runway had to swing violently to starboard, cutting throttles and using brake in endeavour to straighten aircraft on runway and bring it to a stop. The aircraft started to skid because of frosty surface of runway and was doing a ground loop on to the aerodrome when it skidded on the frozen crust of the aerodrome and starboard wheel dropped through."

Considered to be an "honest error of judgement" on his part for not taking control earlier - an occupational hazard of instructing.

On 19 March 1944, No.425 Squadron, Halifax LW391, he had returned from operations and was parked on perimeter track as instructed. Engines running and lights on. An aircraft of No.420 Squadron, whose pilot either failed to see LW391 or was unable to stop, taxied into the rear of Vanexan's aircraft. Complete new tail needed. His crew included R80649 FS J.V. Irvive (second pilot, later DFC), J16831 F/O E. Hutchinson (navigator, later DFC), 133298 Sergeant J.N. McDonald (RAF, WOP), R128484 Sergeant J.N. Gourlay (bomb aimer), R186828 Sergeant J. St. Goddard (rear gunner), R205254 Sergeant C. Anderson (mid-upper gunner) and 1832948 Sergeant G.L. Thomas (RAF, flight engineer); no injuries.

General Overseas Flying: On repatriation, 9 September 1944, he stated he had flown the following overseas: Wellington (376.15), Whitley (450.40), Halifax (220.05), Anson (140.30) and Oxford (39.10). Total flying overseas was 1,226 hours 40 minutes (324.45 on operations - 61 sorties).

Operational Wing: Statements are to effect that with No.57 Squadron he flew 33 sorties (188 operational hours).

Application for first Bar to Operational Wing dated 25 September 1944 noted he had flown 28 sorties (140 hours), 7 January to 5 September 1944 with Nos.425 and 431 Squadrons.

Training: Interviewed in Montreal, 25 April 1940 by F/O J.V. Sorsoleil who wrote, "Fair type, industrious, polite, keen, reliable, observant. Anxious to serve. Recommended for pilot." Course at No.2 ITS was 1-27 July 1940. Marked in Mathematics (87/100), Armament, practical and oral (76/100), Drill (80/100), Law and Discipline (88/100). No Link tests. Placed 70th in a class of 216. "Good type - clean cut - seems keen." (W/C John Burden, 8 August 1940)

Course at No.3 EFTS was 2 September to 21 October 1940. Flew Finch II (26.45 dual, 26.55 solo). "Inclined to be careless. Requires general practice to smooth out." Ground courses in Airmanship (127/200), Airframes (161/200), Aero Engines (122/200), Signals, practical (50/50), Theory of Flight (60/100), Air Navigation (179/200), Armament (160/200). Placed tenth in a class of 23.

Course at No.1 SFTS was 15 November 1940 to 24 January 1941. Flew Yale and Harvard 31.45 day dual, 31.55 day solo, 2.35 night dual, 4.15 night solo) and logged 11.40 in Link. "An average pilot who has made good progress. Very smooth on controls and good on instrument flying." (F/L J.N. Pristley). Ground courses in Airmanship (108/200), Armament, written (62/100),

Armament, oral (70/100), Air Navigation (116/200), Signals (40/50). Placed 31st in a class of 47. "Conscientious and willing. Has good appearance and should make an excellent NCO."

Transport Conversion course (which ceased 13 April 1945) included advanced ground courses in Navigation, Engines and Signals. Flew 56 hours 55 minutes (43.50 on instruments) and logged 17 hours in Link (three on instrument flying, 14 on radio procedures). Placed 16th in a class of 22. "A senior officer of outstanding ability in all respects. A distinct loss to the service." (G/C W.W.S. Ross.)

Selected Assessments: "This officer has worked hard at this unit, He is a very keen and conscientious officer instructor who sets a good example to members of his flight. He is a very good disciplinarian and will be an asset to any unit to which he is attached." (W/C T. Gunn, No.24 OTU, 11 November 1943, at which time he had flown 1,149 hours, 279 in previous six months).

"An excellent operational captain who has worked hard through his tours. Has organized his flight well and has given valuable assistance to all who worked under him." (G/C R.S. Turnbull, 6 September 1944, at which time he had flown 1,370 hours, 178 in previous six months.)

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VANIER, WO (now P/O) Joseph Benoit Felix Xavier (R135534/J87611) - **Distinguished Flying Cross** - No.424 Squadron - Award effective 2 October 1944 as per **London Gazette** dated 17 October 1944 and AFRO 2637/44 dated 8 December 1944. Born 9 November 1914 in Sherbrooke, Quebec; home there (book keeper); enlisted Montreal, 15 October 1941 as "Tradesman) and ;posted to No.1 Manning Depot. Classified as "Clerk, General) and posted to Trenton, 8 November 1941. Promoted AC1, 15 January 1942. To No.3 ITS, 13 December 1941. Promoted LAC, 15 April 1942. Remustered to pilot training, 4 July 1942. To No.11 EFTS , 15 August 1942; graduated 23 October 1942 and posted next day to No.13 SFTS; graduated and promoted Sergeant, 19 February 1943; to "Y" Depot, 5 March 1943. To RAF overseas, 8 March 1943. Promoted Flight Sergeant, 19 August 1943. Commissioned 30 June 1944. Promoted Flying Officer, 30 December 1944. Repatriated 13 August 1945. Retired 5 October 1945. RCAF photo PL-28188 (ex UK-8820 dated 15 March 1944) shows him checking tires before takeoff. RCAF photo PL-28189 (ex-UK-8821) shows him admiring new art work on his aircraft, "Blonde Bomber" (formerly B-Baker). RCAF photo PL-41572 (ex UK-18150 dated 12 January 1945) shows him at the end of his tour, noting that he won his DFC for a sortie in which his rear gunner shot down an ME.110. RCAF photo PL-41573 (ex UK-18151 dated 12 January 1945) shows F/O Dick Jackson, DFC (RAF flight engineer, London, left) with his pilot, F/O Benoit Vanier, DFC. PL-41574 (ex UK-18152) shows the same pair. PL-41575 (ex UK-18153) shows Vanier alone.

Award presented 25 February 1949. No citation other than "completed...numerous operations against the enemy in the course of which [he has] invariably displayed the utmost fortitude, courage and devotion to duty". DHist file 181.009 D.2609 (RG.24 Vol.20632) has recommendation by W/C J.D. Blane dated 23 July 1944 when he had flown 30 sorties (162 hours 15 minutes), 20 February to 12 July 1944. Airman's number might have been R135334.

Warrant Officer Vanier has completed thirty sorties, many of which have been flown over the most heavily defended enemy targets.

On many occasions Warrant Officer Vanier's exceptional airmanship, his high courage and coolness under the most trying circumstances, coupled with fine co-operation from his crew members has enabled him to press home the attacks successfully in the face of the most stubborn opposition.

It is my considered opinion that the example set by this Warrant Officer throughout his long operational tour is worthy of high recognition and I therefore strongly recommend him for the award of the Distinguished Flying Cross.

The sortie list was as follows:

20 February 1944 - Stuttgart (3.20, duty not carried out)
24 February 1944 - Schweinfurt (8.10)
7 March 1944 - Le Mans (5.30)
18 March 1944 - Frankfurt (7.30)
22 March 1944 - Frankfurt (1.00, duty not carried out)
24 March 1944 - Berlin (7.50)
26 March 1944 - Essen (5.30)
30 March 1944 - Nuremberg (9.00)
10 April 1944 - Ghent (4.05)
18 April 1944 - Noisy-le-Sec (6.10)
27 April 1944 - Aulnoye (4.55)
30 April 1944 - Somain (4.40)
4 May 1944 - Morlaix (4.35)
8 May 1944 - St. Nazaire (5.15)
9 May 1944 - St. Valery-en-Caux (1.05, duty not carried out)
10 May 1944 - St. Malo (4.35)
11 May 1944 - Boulogne (3.50)
13 May 1944 - Sea Search (3.45)
19 May 1944 - Morlaix (4.20)

20 May 1944 - Mining, Kattegat (5.25)
22 May 1944 - Le Mans (5.20)
24 May 1944 - Aachen (4.15)
27 May 1944 - Bourg Leopold (5.20)
31 May 1944 - Au Fevre (4.00)
9 June 1944 - Le Mans (5.30)
14 June 1944 - Cambrai (4.35)
15 June 1944 - Boulogne (3.50)
17 June 1944 - Oisemont (4.10)
21 June 1944 - Oisemont (4.35)
24 June 1944 - Bonnetot (4.20)
25 June 1944 - Gorenflos (4.20)
27 June 1944 - Wizernes (3.25)
6 July 1944 - Siracourt (4.20)
12 July 1944 - Bremont (4.05)

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VANN, F/L George Cecil James (J10122) - **Distinguished Flying Cross** - No.405 Squadron - Award effective 5 April 1945 as per **London Gazette** dated 13 April 1945 and AFRO 824/45 dated 18 May 1945. Born 11 June 1922 in Rosedale, Manitoba; educated in Minnedosa, Manitoba; home in Flin Flon (live stock assistant); enlisted Winnipeg 11 March 1941. Granted Leave Without Pay until 28 May 1941 when posted to No.2 Manning Depot. To No.38 SFTS, 20 June 1941 (guard); to No.4 ITS, 15 July 1941; graduated and promoted LAC, 30 August 1941 when posted to No.19 EFTS; graduated 24 October 1941 and posted next day to No.12 SFTS; graduated and commissioned 16 January 1942. To "Y" Depot, 14 February 1942; to RAF overseas, 1 March 1942. Promoted Flying Officer, 1 October 1942. Promoted Flight Lieutenant, 16 January 1944. Also an Acting Squadron Leader. Repatriated 9 July 1945. Retired 19 September 1945. . Award presented 9 April 1948. Photo PL-36293 is a portrait. Died in Toronto, 6 February 1998. No citation other than "completed...numerous operations against the enemy in the course of which [he has] invariably displayed the utmost courage and devotion to duty." Public Records Office Air 2/9060 has recommendation dated 20 January 1945 when he had flown 38 sorties (171 hours 15 minutes), 24 July 1944 to 16 January 1945. Died in Toronto, 6 February 1998.

24 July 1944 - Illfay (4.05)
25 July 1944 - Stuttgart (7.55)
1 August 1944 - Ferme de Forestel (3.45)
3 August 1944 - Foret de Dieppe [?] (4.00)
4 August 1944 - Bois de Cassant (4.45)
5 August 1944 - St.Leu Desserant (4.55)

8 August 1944 - Foret de Chantilly (4.10)
16 August 1944 - Kiel (4.15)
18 August 1944 - Bremen (5.25)
25 August 1944 - Brest (5.30)
27 August 1944 - Mimoycreques (3.35)
28 August 1944 - Oeuf en Ternus (3.30)
26 September 1944 - Cap Gris Nez (2.30)
27 September 1944 - Bottrop (3.15)
5 October 1944 - Saarbrücken (4.40)
6 October 1944 - Sterkrade (3.10)
15 October 1944 - Wilhelmshaven (4.15)
19 October 1944 - Stuttgart (5.15)
22 October 1944 - Essen (4.20)
24 October 1944 - Homburg (3.15)
28 October 1944 - Cologne (4.35)
29 October 1944 - Walcheren (2.20)
6 November 1944 - Gelsenkirchen (3.30)
16 November 1944 - Jülich (3.20)
17 November 1944 - Wanne Eickel (4.30)
2 December 1944 - Hagen (5.30)
6 December 1944 - Leuna (6.20)
12 December 1944 - Essen (5.25)
17 December 1944 - Ulm (6.25)
22 December 1944 - Bingen (4.25)
27 December 1944 - Gladbach (3.40)
28 December 1944 - Bonn (4.30)
29 December 1944 - Gelsenkirchen (4.30)
30 December 1944 - Cologne (4.10)
2 January 1945 - Nuremberg (6.15)
4 January 1945 - Royan (5.00)
14 January 1945 - Saarbrücken (4.40)
16 January 1945 - Magdeburg (5.40)

This officer has displayed the highest standard of skill and courage in air operations. As captain and pilot of aircraft, he has participated in a large number of sorties, many of which have necessitated Flight Lieutenant Venn remaining within the target area for a considerable period of time. The calmness and reliability of this officer, both in the face of the enemy and his work on the ground, have been an inspiration to his squadron.

VANN, S/L George Cecil James, DFC (J10122) - **Bar to Distinguished Flying Cross** - No.405 Squadron - Award effective 8 September 1945 as per **London Gazette** dated 21 September 1945 and AFRO 1704/45 dated 9 November 1945.

Since the award of the Distinguished Flying Cross, Squadron Leader Vann has continued to show outstanding enthusiasm on all operations. He has participated in many attacks on heavily defended targets, including Kiel, Hamburg and Stuttgart. His skill, determination and keen devotion to duty have done much to ensure the success of many of his missions.

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VARDEN, F/L Dennis Peter (J2456) - **George Medal** - Station Yarmouth - Award effective 15 December 1945 as per **Canada Gazette** of that date, AFRO 183/46 dated 22 February 1946 and **London Gazette** dated 21 February 1947. Born 10 June 1917. Home in Merrickville, Ontario; enlisted Montreal, 5 February 1942 and posted to No.5 Manning Depot. To No.5 ITS, 6 June 1942; graduated and promoted LAC, 1 August 1942 but not posted to No.20 EFTS until 12 September 1942; graduated 21 November 1942 when posted to No.2 SFTS; graduated and commissioned 19 March 1943. To "Y" Depot, 2 April 1943. To RAF, 7 April 1943. Promoted Flying Officer, 19 September 1943. Promoted Flight Lieutenant, 19 March 1945. Repatriated by air, 12 June 1945. To Halifax, 1 October 1945. To Air Navigation School, 20 November 1945. To Release Centre, 30 January 1946. Retired 12 February 1946. Medal sent by registered mail.

On the 30th June 1945, a Liberator took off from Royal Air Force Station Dorval, and within a few minutes, crashed in the close vicinity of the house occupied by Flight Lieutenant Varden, who was then on leave. This officer immediately ran to the scene of the crash, which was blazing fiercely, and with complete disregard for his own safety and with no immediate assistance, commenced pulling the occupants clear and returned again and successfully recovered a third. He then recovered two dead occupants. Undaunted by the flames and heat of the blazing aircraft he further extricated two other living occupants whom he discovered pinned down by the wreckage. To release the second of these two men he had to pour water (brought to him by his wife) on the wreckage to cool the metal sufficiently for him to lift and release him. He received burns on his hands in so doing. By this time other persons had arrived at the scene of the crash and it was not until he found that his services were no longer necessary that he ceased his efforts. This officer's courage and initiative were solely responsible for saving the lives of five occupants of the aircraft who otherwise would have certainly perished in the flames. Flight Lieutenant Varden's actions throughout the incident in question were in keeping with the finest traditions of the Royal Canadian Air Force.

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VAUGHAN, P/O Edward Gerrard (J86685) - **Distinguished Flying Cross** - No.408 Squadron - Award effective 4 November 1944 as per **London Gazette** dated 17 November 1944 and AFRO 239/45 dated 9 February 1945. Born 5 September 1923 in Swansea, Wales; home in Vancouver or Cumberland, British Columbia; enlisted Vancouver 25 February 1942. To No.3 Manning Depot, 11 March 1942. To No.4 ITS, 20 June 1942; graduated and promoted LAC, 11 September 1942; to No.5 EFTS, 10 October 1942; may have graduated 18 December 1942 but only posted to No.7 SFTS on 28 December 1942; graduated and promoted Sergeant, 16 April 1943. To "Y" Depot, 30 April 1943; to RAF overseas, 26 May 1943. Promoted Flight Sergeant, 16 October 1943. Commissioned 12 May 1944. Promoted Flying Officer, 12 November 1944. Repatriated 18 June 1945. To Debart, 19 June 1945. To Halifax, 10 September 1945. Retired 19 September 1945. Award presented 29 January 1947. No citation other than "completed...numerous operations against the enemy in the course of which [he has] invariably displayed the utmost fortitude, courage and devotion to duty." DHist file 181.009 D.1633 (RG.24 Vol.20603) has recommendation dated 18 August 1944 when he had flown 34 sorties (158 hours), 26 March to 14 August 1944.

Pilot Officer Vaughan has completed a tour of operations on four-engine bombers in an exemplary manner. His sorties took him to many heavily defended targets, such as Nuremburg, Essen and Karlsruhe, deep in Germany. On every occasion Pilot Officer Vaughan displayed fine offensive spirit and pressed home all his attacks with great determination. He brought back many splendid pictures of the aiming points attacked, and has proved to all that he is an operational pilot of outstanding ability.

The sortie list was as follows:

26 March 1944 - Essen (4.35, co-pilot)
30 March 1944 - Nuremburg (7.45)
18 April 1944 - Noisy-le-Sec (5.45)
22 April 1944 - Dusseldorf (5.45)
24 April 1944 - Karlsruhe (6.20)
26 April 1944 - Essen (4.35)
8 May 1944 - Haine St. Pierre (4.45)
10 May 1944 - Ghent (3.35)
11 May 1944 - Boulogne (3.25)
24 May 1944 - Aachen (4.15)
5 June 1944 - Longues (4.25)

6 June 1944 - Coutances (4.40)
8 June 1944 - Mayenne (6.25)
12 June 1944 - Cambrai (4.45)
14 June 1944 - St. Pol (3.20)
15 June 1944 - Boulogne (3.50)
21 June 1944 - St. Martin l'Hortier (4.10)
24 June 1944 - Bamieres (4.00)
27 June 1944 - Foret d'Eawy (3.50)
6 July 1944 - St.Paul Siracourt (4.05)
6 July 1944 - Conquereaux (4.10)
7 July 1944 - Caen (4.15)
12 July 1944 - Creil (4.30)
15 July 1944 - Bois de Jardins (3.40)
18 July 1944 - Weseling (5.00)
20 July 1944 - L'Hey (3.20)
23 July 1944 - Kiel (5.20)
5 August 1944 - St. Leu d'Esserent (4.40)
7 August 1944 - Caen (3.20)
8 August 1944 - Foret de Chantilly (4.10)
9 August 1944 - Foret de Nieppe (3.45)
10 August 1944 - La Pallice (6.10)
12 August 1944 - Falaise (4.33)
14 August 1944 - Bons Tassilly (4.29)

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VAUGHAN, S/L Robert Polk (C3094) - **Mention in Despatches** - Linton-on-Ouse - Award effective 1 January 1945 as per **London Gazette** of that date and AFRO 337/45 dated 23 February 1945. Enlisted in Aero Engineer Branch, 16 November 1940. Confirmed as Flying Officer, 10 May 1941. To RCAF Overseas Headquarters, 9 September 1941. Promoted Flight Lieutenant, 1 March 1943. Promoted Squadron Leader, 9 February 1944. Repatriated 8 April 1945. To No.1 Ai Command, 17 August 1945. To No.9 SFTS, 30 May 1945. To No.1 ACU, 30 June 1945. To No.16 SFTS, 6 July 1945. To No.2 Release Centre, 30 September 1945. Retired 4 October 1945. Died in Ottawa, 7 September 2004. RCAF photo PL-4727 (ex UK-470) has caption which reads, "F/O J.M. Teakles of Winnipeg, F/L M.E. Jines of Toronto, F/O R.P. Vaughan of Montreal who has been in England one week and formerly worked for the Dominion Engineering Works Limited, F/O D.A. Ward of Fort William, Ontario." AFRO gave unit as No.62 Base; DHist file 181.009 D1658 (RG.24 Vol.20605) gives station, states he enlisted 16 November 1940 (one year service in Canada, 34 months in UK); recommended August 1944 as follows:

This officer has been employed as Chief Technical Officer on an important and very busy operational station for the past several months. Throughout his tour of duty, and particularly in the month preceding the Normandy invasion and in those subsequent, this officer has displayed splendid qualities of organization and co-ordination, and by personal example of untiring zeal far above the normal call of duty has contributed in very large part to this station's excellent maintenance record, without which many important sorties would not have been possible.

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VAWTER, F/O Earl LeRoy (J28256) - **Distinguished Flying Cross** - No.425 Squadron - Award effective 22 August 1944 as per **London Gazette** of that date and AFRO 2274/44 dated 20 October 1944. Born 26 October 1918; home in Allan, Saskatchewan (farmer, two years in Royal Canadian Artillery); enlisted Regina 28 May 1942 and posted to No.2 Manning Depot. To No.5 BGS, 16 July 1942. To No.7 ITS, 10 October 1942; graduated and promoted LAC, 18 December 1942; to No.6 EFTS, 9 January 1943; ceased training and posted to No.2 Manning Depot, 10 February 1943; to No.7 BGS, 5 March 1943; graduated 28 May 1943 and posted next day to No.1 AOS ; graduated and commissioned 9 July 1943. To "Y" Depot that date; to RAF overseas, 13 August 1943. Promoted Flying Officer, 9 January 1944. Repatriated 31 August 1945. Retired 2 October 1945. Photo PL-32430 shows Sergeant Jock Matthews of Dundee with F/O E.R. Vawter. Photo PL-32431 shows him reading citation. Award presented 22 April 1950. Application for Operational Wing dated 28 June 1945 (when he was at No.1659 Conversion Unit) stated he had flown 33 sorties (184 hours 25 minutes) with Nos.425 and 434 Squadrons, 7 June 1944 to 24 February 1945.

This officer was the bomb aimer in an aircraft detailed to attack an enemy target one night in June 1944. Soon after the bombs had been released, the aircraft was struck by bullets from a fighter and the pilot was wounded. He called for assistance and Flying Officer Vawter, who promptly answered the call, found him slumped over the controls. With the help of another member of the crew, Flying Officer Vawter removed his injured comrade from his seat and took his place. Although untrained for such responsibilities, he took over the controls and flew back to an airfield where, with helpful instructions from the ground, he effected a safe landing at the third attempt. In a most trying situation this officer displayed a high degree of bravery, resourcefulness and determination and was undoubtedly responsible for saving a valuable aircraft and the lives of its crew.

The original recommendation submitted by W/C Lecompte, 25 June 1944 is found in DHH file 181.009 D.1730 (Library and Archives Canada RG.24 Volume 20607). Sortie list to that date and submission as follows:

7 June 1944 - Acheres (5.05)
8 June 1944 - Mayenne (5.50)
12 June 1944 - Cambrai (5.20)
14 June 1944 - St. Pol (4.10)
16 June 1944 - Sautrecourt (3.30, pilot wounded; aircraft landed by bomb aimer)

On the night of 16/17 June 1944, Flying Officer Vawter was bomb aimer in an aircraft detailed to attack Sautrecourt, France. On releasing the bombs, the aircraft was attacked from above, resulting in the pilot being wounded. The pilot informed the crew that he was hit and called for Flying Officer Vawter to give him assistance,

Flying Officer Vawter found the pilot slumped forward on the controls, and with the help of the Flight Engineer, removed him from his seat and took over control of the aircraft which he successfully flew from the target area to Woodbridge, where he made a successful landing after three attempts to get in. He contacted Woodbridge by W/T and helpful instructions were given regarding landing procedure. The pilot was found to be dead when the aircraft reached the ground.

Flying Officer Vawter, although untrained for such responsibilities, showed exceptional gallantry, outstanding initiative and undaunted devotion to duty which are worthy of the highest praise. His cool courage, fine leadership and tenacity of purpose saved the lives of the remainder of the crew. The aircraft was in operational service the following day.

I strongly recommend that this officer be granted the immediate award of the Distinguished Service Order.

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VEALE, FS Westcott Neville (R51050) - **British Empire Medal** - No.5 (BR) Squadron - Award effective 14 June 1945 as per **Canada Gazette** of that date and AFRO 1127/45 dated 6 July 1945. Born 29 March 1908 in Capetown, South Africa (RCAF press release announcing award). Educated at Landis, Saskatchewan. Mechanic before the war. Enlisted in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, 20 October 1939 as wireless mechanic. To No.5 (BR) Squadron, 5 November

1939. Promoted AC1, 29 February 1940. Promoted LAC, 1 October 1940. Promoted Corporal, 1 October 1941. To "K", 24 February 1942. To Torbay, 17 August 1942. Promoted Sergeant, 1 October 1942. Promoted Flight Sergeant, 1 September 1943. Returned to No.5 (BR) Squadron, 2 July 1944. To Release Centre, 16 June 1945. Retired 30 July 1945. Award presented 22 November 1945. Governor General's Records (RG.7 Group 26, Volume 59, file 190-I dossier 7) has citation.

This non-commissioned officer has served with his squadron since November 1939. While flying on operations for two and one-half years as a wireless engineer mechanic and wireless air gunner instructor, his skill and cheerfulness were most praiseworthy. In his present position as non-commissioned officer in charge of the wireless section of his squadron, he has continued to give loyal and efficient service. He has displayed splendid qualities of leadership and given unstintingly of his time to many activities of his squadron. The consistent devotion to duty shown by this non-commissioned officer for over five years has set a splendid example.

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VEIRA, F/O Basil Vernon Lancelot (J10677) - **Distinguished Flying Cross** - No.12 Squadron - Award effective 27 April 1943 as per **London Gazette** dated 20 June 1944 and AFRO 1660/44 dated 4 August 1944. Born 4 April 1914 in Basseterre, St.Kitts, British West Indies. Educated at St. Kitts Grammar School, 1922-1927 and St. Mary's College, Southampton, England, 1927-1929. Home in Montreal (worked for James Strachan, a bakery company, October 1929 to enlistment; assistant sales manager when he left); enlisted there 25 June 1941. To No.4A Manning Depot, St. Hubert, 28 June 1941. To No.3 Initial Training School, Victoriaville, 9 August 1941; graduated 28 September 1941 when promoted Leading Aircraftman; to No.9 Air Observer School, St. Jean, 29 September 1941; to No.6 Bombing and Gunnery School, Mountain View, 4 January 1942. Promoted to Sergeant, 14 February 1942; to No.2 Air Navigation School, Pennfield Ridge, 15 February 1942. Commissioned as Pilot Officer, 16 March 1942; to No.31 General Reconnaissance School, Charlottetown, 10 April 1942; to 14 June 1942. Embarked for overseas, 16 June 1942; disembarked in Britain, 24 June 1942. Posted to No.20 Operational Training Unit, 13 July 1942; posted to No.12 Squadron, 21 October 1942. Promoted Flying Officer, 1 October 1942. Killed in action 28/29 April 1943 on Lancaster ED408. Award presented to next of kin, 12 December 1944. RCAF photo PL-34537 taken on occasion of DFC presentation to Mrs. H.S. Veira (wife), accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. K.S. Veira (parents).

This officer has participated in numerous operational sorties which have included missions to Hamburg, Berlin, the Ruhr, Stettin and Spezia. His navigation has always been of a very high standard and he has a fine record of

achievement. His determination and confidence while on operations has always been an inspiration to the squadron while his gallantry and devotion to duty has done much to create a high morale among his fellow navigators.

NOTE: Public Record Office Air 2/8964 has recommendation drafted by Commanding Officer, No.12 Squadron, 26 April 1943 when he had flown 26 sorties (178 hours 55 minutes). Sortie list and submission as follows:

7 November 1942 - GARDENING (3.47)
9 November 1942 - Hamburg (6.36)
8 January 1943 - GARDENING (5.08)
16 January 1943 - Berlin (8.01)
31 January 1943 - Hamburg (5.49)
2 February 1943 - Cologne (5.06)
4 February 1943 - Turin (9.13)
18 February 1943 - Wilhelmshaven (4.43)
25 February 1943 - Nuremberg (7.21)
28 February 1943 - St. Nazaire (5.38)
1 March 1943 - Berlin (7.48)
3 March 1943 - Hamburg (4.36)
8 March 1943 - Nuremberg (7.10)
9 March 1943 - Munich (7.11)
11 March 1943 - Stuttgart (6.08)
12 March 1943 - Essen (3.54)
22 March 1943 - St. Nazaire (4.33)
3 April 1943 - Essen (3.56)
4 April 1943 - Kiel (4.57)
8 April 1943 - Duisburg (4.01)
10 April 1943 - Frankfurt (5.16)
13 April 1943 - Spezia (9.42)
16 April 1943 - Pilsen (8.09)
18 April 1943 - Spezia (8.38)
20 April 1943 - Stettin (6.59)
26 April 1943 - Duisburg (4.35)

Flying Officer Veira (a Canadian) has carried out 26 sorties with this squadron. The operations include sorties to Hamburg (three times), Berlin (twice), the Ruhr, Pilsen, Stettin, Spezia. His navigation has been constantly of a very high standard and he has a fine record of achievement. His cheerfulness, courage and devotion to duty has been an inspiration to the squadron, and has helped to

maintain the morale of the squadron at a high level. He is a leader of men and fully merits the award of the Distinguished Flying Cross.

On 7 May 1943 (when reported missing), the Officer Commanding, Station Binbrook, added his comments:

This Canadian officer is a navigator of exceptional ability. He has carried out 26 very good operations in his squadron, and all of a high standard. His strong purpose and cheerful attitude towards operations is a tonic and inspiration within the squadron, while his devotion to duty has created a high morale among his fellow navigators. Recommended for the award of the Distinguished Flying Cross.

Notes: In crew of Wellington Ic R1399 when it was in an accident at Lossiemouth, 28 September 1942. Pilot approached to land, touching down between second and third flare. Brakes did not respond; pilot swung off flare path, crossed perimeter track and retracted undercarriage; aircraft was just above a pile of stones. Investigators concluded that the pilot had been concentrating too much on his line and not paying attention to airspeed.

Training: Interviewed 13 May 1941 by F/O A.L.L. Lapointe. "Intelligent, straightforward, polite, well recommended. Reliable, good education and has held responsible and steady position."

Course at No.3 ITS was 8 August to 13 September 1941. Graded in Mathematics (74/100), Armament, practical and oral (88/100), Signals (90/100), Drill (80/100), Law and Discipline (56/60) and Hygiene and Sanitation (32/40). Placed sixth in a class of 18. "Very confident. Self assured. Good background. Very solid and very keen. Mature type. Intelligent outlook. Very well spoken. Sensible. Alert. Good leader type. Commission material." (W/C D.D. Findlay).

Course at No.9 AOS was 29 September 1941 to 3 January 1942. Anson aircraft - 29 hours 35 minutes as first navigator by day, 28 hours as second navigator by day, six hours 35 minutes as first navigator by night, seven hours 45 minutes as second navigator by night. Placed seventh in flying class of 22. Ground training in DR Plotting (139/150), DR, DF and WT written (164/200), Compasses and Instruments (125/150), Signals (73/100), Bombing, written (75/100), Maps and Charts (69/100), Meteorology (76/100), Photography (87/100) and Reconnaissance (69/100). In ground school was seventh in a group of 22. Considered "above average" as navigator and observer. "Fine type for a commission. Does very good work both on ground and in the air." (S/L K.S. Pitcairn).

Course at No.6 BGS was 5 January to 14 February 1942. Fairey Battle aircraft - nine hours 35 minutes on day bombing, five hours 15 minutes on night bombing, eight hours 45 minutes by

day on gunnery. Average bombing error was 95 yards, best was 65 yards. Dropped 30 bombs high level by day, 20 bombs high level by night and eight bombs at low level. Fired 1,200 rounds air-to-air. Scored 17.5 percent hits in Beam Test, 6.5 percent hits in Beam Relative Speed Test and 12.5 percent hits in Under Tail Test. Bombing results "satisfactory", gunnery results "above average". Placed ninth in a class of 27. "He has a good personality, is keen and hard working. He has done well at this school, and will be a very competent observer."

Course at No.2 ANS was 16 February to 16 March 1942. Anson aircraft - six hours 25 minutes as first navigator by day, six hours 25 minutes as second navigator by day, seven hours 50 minutes as first navigator by night, 13 hours 30 minutes as second navigator by night. Rated 203/250 as navigator. Tests in Astro Navigation Plotting (146/150) and Astro Navigation written (94/100). "First in his class and a very good man. Enthusiastic and accurate worker."

Course at No.31 General Reconnaissance School was 13 April to 9 May 1942. Anson aircraft - 13 hours 45 minutes in daylight navigation. "Above average. Very keen and competent. Log keeping is very good." Rated 162/200 in navigation air work and 67.5/100 in reconnaissance air work. Ground training in DR Navigation (169/200), Reconnaissance (145/200), Coding (89/100) Ship Recognition (158/200) and Visual Signals (Pass). "Average. This pupil has keenness and works hard. Results a little disappointing in reconnaissance." Placed 14th in a class of 26. Overall described as follows - "This officer has worked hard and shown keenness, but his results were disappointing" (Chief Instructor) and "Good officer who should develop into a useful General Reconnaissance observer after experience." (Commanding Officer, Station Charlottetown).

Particulars of Death Aircraft was shot down by a German night fighter, 29 April 1943 in vicinity of Leba (near Lauenburg, Germany). Body washed ashore and buried in Leba. Lancaster ED408; Crew were 1315743 Sergeant G. Elsworthy (pilot), J10677 F/O B.V.L. Veira (navigator), 1311073 FS W.E. Freeman (WAG), 143857 P/O J.J.L. Haddow (bomb aimer), 621910 Sergeant E.A. Pye (flight engineer), 989136 Sergeant C.W.S. Downes (mid-upper gunner) and 930059 Sergeant R.C. Grant (rear gunner). No.12 Squadron. Aircraft carrying four 1,500 pound sea mines when it took off. On 12 December 1944 his widow attended an investiture at Government House, Ottawa, to receive her husband's Distinguished Flying Cross. The Department of National Defence provided her with a rail ticket and \$ 10.00 expenses. It is interesting to note that this investiture was attended by 28 other next-of-kin receiving awards on behalf of deceased family; the list of those attending includes not only Mrs. B.V.L. Veira but also Mrs. D.E. Hornell (picking up her husband's posthumous Victoria Cross). This information is **not** on his personal file but is found in RCAF file 305-4-3 "Honours and Awards - Fifth Investiture at Government House", National Archives of Canada, RG.24 E.1, Volume 3350.

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VENN, FS (now P/O) Harry John (R156970/J87584) - **Distinguished Flying Medal** - No.429 Squadron - Award effective 2 October 1944 as per **London Gazette** dated 17 October 1944 and AFRO 2637/44 dated 8 December 1944. Born 9 August 1923 in Hamilton; home there; enlisted there 11 March 1942 and posted to No.1 Manning Depot. To No.6 ITS, 18 July 1942; graduated and promoted LAC, 28 September 1942; to No.4 BGS, 10 October 1942; to No.4 AOS, 5 December 1942; graduated and promoted Sergeant, 9 July 1943. To "Y" Depot, 23 July 1943. To United Kingdom, 2 August 1943. Commissioned 27 June 1944. Promoted Flying Officer, 27 December 1944. Repatriated 18 June 1945. To Debert for Tiger Force, 19 June 1945. To Release Centre, 9 October 1945; released 12 October 1945. Award presented 18 October 1947. No citation other than "completed....numerous operations against the enemy in the course of which they have invariably displayed the utmost fortitude, courage and devotion to duty." DHist file 181.009 D.2609 (RG.24 Vol.20627) has recommendation dated 9 July 1944 when he had flown 36 sorties (203 hours 50 minutes) from 22 September 1943 to 28 June 1944.

This air gunner has taken part in thirty-six attacks over enemy territory including three attacks on Berlin and numerous attacks on the Ruhr and other heavily defended targets. He has spent many hours under conditions of discomfort and fatigue in the mid-upper lookout position and by his unfailing vigilance has on several occasions warned his pilot of the approach of hostile aircraft in time for him to take evasive action, evade combat and proceed on his mission. Under trying conditions he has always shown a fine offensive spirit and his quiet confidence has been a great help to his pilot and a source of inspiration to his crew...

The sortie list was as follows:

22 September 1943 - Hanover (7.25)
23 September 1943 - Mannheim (6.35)
4 October 1943 - Frankfurt (8.15)
18 November 1943 - Mannheim (7.40|)
19 November 1943 - Leverkusen (6.20)
22 November 1943 - Berlin (7.10)
25 November 1943 - Frankfurt (7.25)
26 November 1943 - Stuttgart (7.05)
20 January 1944 - Berlin (7.15)
15 February 1944 - Berlin (7.20)
19 February 1944 - Leipzig (7.55)
6 March 1944 - Trappes (5.05)
15 March 1944 - Stuttgart (7.10)

18 March 1944 - Frankfurt (4.55)
9 April 1944 - Villeneuve St. George (6.05)
10 April 1944 - Ghent (3.55)
18 April 1944 - Le Bourget (5.00)
20 April 1944 - Lens (5.00)
22 April 1944 - Dusseldorf (5.05)
24 April 1944 - Karlsruhe (6.15)
10 May 1944 - Ghent (4.10)
11 May 1944 - Boulogne (2.55, abortive)
12 May 1944 - Louvain (4.55)
19 May 1944 - Le Clipon (4.00)
22 May 1944 - Le Mans (5.00)
24 May 1944 - Aachen (4.25)
27 May 1944 - Bourg Leopold (5.35)
31 May 1944 - Au Fevre (4.30)
4 June 1944 - Calais (3.25)
5 June 1944 - Merville (4.45)
14 June 1944 - Cambrai (4.00)
15 June 1944 - Boulogne (3.55)
16 June 1944 - Sautrecourt (3.50)
21 June 1944 - Oisemont (4.25)
25 June 1944 - Gorenflos (4.05)
27 June 1944 - Wizernes (3.55)
28 June 1944 - Metz (6.40)

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VENO, F/O Hazen Henley (J13027) - **Commended for Valuable Services in the Air** - No.10 EFTS - award effective 1 January 1946 as per **Canada Gazette** of that date and AFRO 82/46 dated 25 January 1946. Born in Waterloo, Lunenburg County, Nova Scotia, 30 January 1918. Home at Baker Settlement, Lunenburg County, Nova Scotia. Attended Nova Scotia Teachers College, Truro and taught four years. Enlisted in Halifax, 27 August 1941 and posted to No.5A Manning Depot, Valcartier. To No.31 OTU, Debert, 11 October 1941. To No.3 ITS, Victiaville, 22 November 1941; graduated and promoted LAC, 17 January 1942; to No.22 EFTS, Ancienne Lorette, 2 February 1942; may have graduated 27 March 1942 but not posted to No.13 SFTS, St. Hubert until 12 April 1942; graduated and commissioned , 31 July 1942. To No.1 Flying Instructor School, Trenton, 23 August 1942; to No.8 SFTS, Moncton to instruct, 15 October 1942; to No.11 EFTS, Cap de la Madelaine, 12 December 1942; promoted Flying Officer, 1 February 1943; to No.35 EFTS, Neepawa, 12 February 1944; to No.23 EFTS, Davidson, 12 August 1944. To No.3 Training Command, 8 September 1944; to No.10 EFTS, Pendleton, Ontario, 16

September 1944. Temporary duty at Central Flying School, Trenton, 7 October to 3 December 1944 (refresher instructor course) and then back to No.10 EFTS. Promoted Flight Lieutenant, 1 December 1944. To Trenton, 16 September 1945. Retired 3 November 1945. Postwar chartered accountant, retiring 1981. Died in Halifax, Nova Scotia, 6 December 1989.

During thirty-four months of association with flying training, this officer has set an admirable example amongst flying instructors. He has been responsible for the passing out of a continuous flow of high standard trainee pilots. During the past three months, he has held the post of Chief Examining Officer. This officer can always be relied upon to perform all and every task with the highest degree of accuracy and proficiency. His untiring efforts on the ground and in the air have always been a source of encouragement to instructors under him.

Recommendation for an Air Force Cross raised 31 July 1945 by S/L J.R. Watt, noting that he had flown 1,658 hours (238 in previous six months) of which 1,327 had been instructional hours (220 in previous six months).

During thirty-four months of association with flying training, this officer has set an admirable example amongst flying instructors in his devotion to his work and the service. He has been responsible for the passing out of a continuous flow of high standard trainee pilots.

During the past three months, he has held the post of Chief Examining Officer. This officer can always be relied upon to perform all and every task with the highest degree of accuracy and proficiency. As a leader of men, he is a model of efficient and his untiring efforts on the ground and in the air have always been a source of encouragement to instructors under him.

This was supported up to the level of Honours in War Committee (AFHQ) at which point (20 November 1945) Air Commodore Martin Costello wrote, "Recommended for King's Commendation for Valuable Services in the Air, New Year List 1946." This was agreed upon by the Chief of the Air Staff.

Selected Assessments: Course at Central Flying School, Trenton, 2 September to 5 October 1942 involved 9.30 day flying solo and 15.40 day dual on Single Engine Elementary Trainer, 11.40 day solo and 15.15 day dual (also 2.00 night dual) on Single Engine Advanced Trainer. His instructor (F/O J. Stephens) wrote, "Pleasing manner in the air and average knowledge of sequences. Aerobatics a little rough. Instrument flying good. Should make a capable instructor." Ground training under F/L G.P. Silke involved Flight Administration (87/100), Airmanship (65/100), Instruments (94/100) and Meteorology (mark not shown). Final test on Harvard by F/L G.A. Blunden. Graded under following headings: Sequence ("Good"), Voice

("Clear"), Manner ("Interesting"), Ability to Impart Knowledge ("Average"), Ability as Pilot ("Average. Instrument flying and aerobatics average.") and Remarks ("Will make a capable instructor"). Granted Category "C" (Single Engine).

"Quiet type. Will develop well with more experience." F/L A.R. Morrissette, No.11 EFTS, 25 January 1943.

"This officer is employed as a Flight Commander at this unit. As such he has been quite successful, works hard and commands respect from those serving with him." (F/L A.R. Morrissette, No.11 EFTS, 30 March 1943).

Instructional Category raised to "B" (Elementary) following tests on 17 June 1943 by F/O C.L. Smith and S/L O.B. Pulsiver, CFS Visiting Flight. "A capable instructor, he must improve aerobatics and practice turns to compass headings."

Tested again by Central Flying School, 2 December 1944. Category rated as "B" (Twin Engine and Single Engine). By then he had flown 923.35 single engine solo (day), 28.30 single engine solo (night), 189.25 single engine day dual, 113.00 twin engine day solo, 18.50 twin engine night solo, 9.10 twin engine day dual and 1.20 twin engine night dual. The refresher instructor course was 9 October to 2 December 1944. F/O L.S. Lutes wrote of him, "A conscientious and capable instructor who has worked hard on course and has reached high average on advanced types." F/L J.N.D. Holden described him as "An excellent pilot and instructor with a tendency to say too much in his air instruction."

"This officer has been acting as senior testing officer and Deputy Chief Instructor for the past four months. His work has always been of the highest order, Very strongly recommended for promotion to the rank of Temporary Flight Lieutenant." (S/L J.R. Watt, No.10 EFTS, 31 July 1945).

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VERRY, P/O Paul Eleferios (J86173) - **Distinguished Flying Cross** - No.427 Squadron - Award effective 1 December 1944 as per **London Gazette** dated 12 December 1944 and AFRO 337/45 dated 23 February 1945. Born 24 February 1921 in Winnipeg; home in Norwood, Manitoba (waiter); enlisted Winnipeg 5 September 1941 and posted to No.3 Manning Depot. Granted Leave Without Pay until 19 November 1941 when recalled to No.3 Manning Depot. To No.4 SFTS (guard), 14 March 1942. To No.7 ITS, 25 April 1942; graduated and promoted LAC, 3 July 1942 but not posted to No.6 EFTS until 15 August 1942. To No.4 SFTS, 10 October 1942. Ceased training and posted to No.1 Composite Training School, 30 October 1942; to No.7 BGS, 8

January 1943; may have graduated 5 March 1943); to No.4 AOS , 3 April 1943; graduated and promoted Sergeant, 14 May 1943. To "Y" Depot, 28 May 1943. To RAF overseas, 22 June 1943. Commissioned 24 March 1944. Promoted Flying Officer, 24 September 1944. Repatriated 8 December 1944. To No.2 Air Command, 20 December 1944. To No.170 Squadron, 24 January 1945. To "Y" Depot, 7 March 1945. To United Kingdom, 18 March 1945. Repatriated 7 July 1945. To No.8 Repair Depot, 17 July 1945. To No.5 Release Centre, 1 October 1945. Retired 5 October 1945. Award presented 13 September 1947. Royal Canadian Legion "Last Post" website and **Legion Magazine** of November/December 2007 record the death in Mississauga of Flying Officer Paul F. Verry, age 87, on 4 April 2007. Although there is no service number cited and the middle initial differs, it is probable that this is the decorated Verry. No citation other than "..in recognition of gallantry and devotion to duty in the execution of air operations against the enemy." DHist file 181.009 D.1729 (PAC RG.24 Vol.20607) has recommendation forwarded from squadron, date uncertain but apparently early July 1944 when he had flown 34 sorties (175 hours 25 minutes) in a tour lasting from 20 February 1944 to 11 September 1944.

The above officer has completed thirty-four operational bombing sorties against the enemy. He has outstanding ability and a strong sense of duty and is an inspiration to his crew.

The sortie list was as follows:

20 February 1944 - Stuttgart (8.45)
24 February 1944 - Schweinfurt (8.15)
25 February 1944 - Augsburg (7.15)
6 March 1944 - Trappes (4.30)
13 March 1944 - Le Mans (5.00)
15 March 1944 - Stuttgart (8.05)
19 April 1944 - Noisy-le-Sec (5.35)
20 April 1944 - Lens (4.35)
24 April 1944 - Karlsruhe (7.35)
26 April 1944 - Essen (4.50)
27 April 1944 - Aulnoye (5.05)
30 April 1944 - Somain (5.00)
1 May 1944 - St. Ghislain (4.30)
7 May 1944 - St. Valery (3.55)
9 May 1944 - Calais (3.30)
10 May 1944 - Ghent (4.15)
22 May 1944 - Le Mans (4.50)
27 May 1944 - Bourg Leopold (4.50)
2 June 1944 - Neufchatel (3.50)

9 June 1944 - Le Mans (5.25)
12 June 1944 - Cambrai (4.25)
24 June 1944 - Bonnetot (4.20)
26 June 1944 - Metz (7.15)
9 July 1944 - Ardouval (3.25)
28 July 1944 - Hamburg (5.00)
31 July 1944 - Concuereau (4.05)
4 August 1944 - Bois de Casson (5.05)
7 August 1944 - La Hogue (4.20)
8 August 1944 - Chantilly (4.15)
12 August 1944 - La Bretecque (4.30)
15 August 1944 - Soesterburg (4.30)
16 August 1944 - Kiel (5.55)
6 September 1944 - Emden (4.45)
11 September 1944 - Le Havre (4.30)

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VERNER, G/C James Abercrombie (C177) - **Mention in Despatches** - No.76 Base - Award effective 1 January 1946 as per **London Gazette** of that date and AFRO 322/46 dated 29 March 1946. Born in Vancouver, 17 April 1912; educated there including University of British Columbia (mechanical engineering). Enlisted at Camp Borden as a Provisional Pilot Officer, 8 June 1931. Probably let go as of 31 August 1931 in "The Big Cut"; re-appointed P/P/O in new Brunswick, 13 June 1935; awarded pilots wings 26 May 1936. Sent to England 1939 for a course in aero engineering. Returned to Canada in April 1940 to serve at Dartmouth. To No.4 Training Command, 20 December 1940 as Engineering Officer. Promoted Wing Commander, 1 June 1941. To No.3 Training Command, Regina, 5 September 1942 for same duties. To No.9 Repair Depot (St.Jean, Quebec), 4 March 1943 (appointed Commanding Officer in June 1943; promoted Group Captain, 1 January 1944). To "Y" Depot, 28 June 1944. To United Kingdom, 30 June 1944. Served at No.76 Base to July 1945. Repatriated to Canada, 15 July 1945. To No.3 Repair Depot, 3 September 1945. To No.7 Reserve Equipment and Maintenance Unit, 1 November 1945. Postwar RCAF; with Air Materiel Command Headquarters from November 1945 to March 1948 when he became CO of Station Goose Bay where he witnessed the first jets flying overhead, helped welcome Newfoundland/Labrador into Canada, co-founded the weekly base newsletter called **The Gosling** (which often contained his own penguin cartoons). Transferred in 1950 to AFHQ (Directorate of Materiel Supply); appointed Director of that office in 1952; awarded Queen's Coronation Medal, 23 October 1953 while Group Captain, Station London (on strength of that unit while attending a course in business administration, University of Western Ontario). To AFHQ, May 1955; in September 1955 he was named Director of Organization and Establishment. Promoted to Air Commodore in 1960 and sent to Imperial

Defence College. While on course, he had the pleasure of doing his famous "card tricks" for King Hussein of Jordan after flying him to his sea-side resort. Appointed Chief Staff Officer, Training Command Headquarters, Winnipeg, 18 December 1961. Retired 1964. Taught business management 1964-1975. Died in Vancouver, 8 November 2004. DHist file 181.002 D.225 notes that wartime service had included four years ten months in Canada, eleven months in England, when recommended.

This officer, in the position of Base Engineering Officer, has given unceasingly of his time and effort in order to improve the standard of our aircraft serviceability. Under his direction, the re-arming of two Heavy Conversion Units has been accomplished quickly and efficiently.

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VERNON, F/O Hubert Allen (J24327) - **Distinguished Flying Cross** - No.12 Squadron - Award effective 4 November 1944 as per **London Gazette** dated 17 November 1944 and AFRO 239/45 dated 9 February 1945. American in the RCAF. Born 1 March 1912 in Danforth, Maine; home in Vanceboro, Maine; enlisted Montreal, 2 February 1942 and posted to No.5 Manning Depot. To No.3 ITS, 6 June 1942; graduated and promoted LAC, 1 August 1942; to No.4 EFTS, 12 September 1942; to No.8 SFTS, 7 November 1942; graduated and commissioned, 5 March 1943. To "Y" Depot, 19 March 1943. To RAF overseas, 27 March 1943. Promoted Flying Officer, 5 September 1943. Promoted Flight Lieutenant, 5 March 1945. Repatriated 13 August 1945. Released 27 September 1945. Medal sent to his home in Maine via External Affairs, 29 July 1955. No citation other than "completed... numerous operations against the enemy in the course of which [he has] invariably displayed the utmost fortitude, courage and devotion to duty." Public Records Office Air 2/8827 has recommendation dated 14 August 1944 when he had flown 30 sorties (150 hours), 24 May to 10 August 1944.

24 May 1944 - Aachen
31 May 1944 - Tegnier
2 June 1944 - Berneval
4 June 1944 - Pas de Calais
5 June 1944 - Crisbecq
6 June 1944 - Acheres
9 June 1944 - Flers
11 June 1944 - Evreux
12 June 1944 - Gelsenkirchen
14 June 1944 - Le Havre
15 June 1944 - Boulogne
20 June 1944 - Marguise Mimoyecques

24 June 1944 - Flers
27 June 1944 - Vaires
28 June 1944 - Ciracourt
30 June 1944 - Vierzon
2 July 1944 - Domleger
4 July 1944 - Orleans rail yards
5 July 1944 - Dijon rail yards
5 July 1944 - Caen
18 July 1944 - Gelsenkirchen
20 July 1944 - Courtrai
24 July 1944 - Stuttgart
25 July 1944 - Stuttgart
31 July 1944 - Foret de Nieppe
2 August 1944 - Catelliers
3 August 1944 - Trossy St.Maximum
5 August 1944 - Blaye
8 August 1944 - Aire-sur-Lis
10 August 1944 - GARDENING

Flight Lieutenant Vernon, an American serving in the Royal Canadian Air Force, has completed thirty very successful sorties against the enemy. His skill as a pilot coupled with his infectious and unconquerable cheerfulness have kept the morale and efficiency of his crew at the highest level in spite of adversity. On two successive daylight raids his aircraft was extensively damaged by flak shortly before reaching the target. In both cases he pressed home his attacks with determination.

This officer's courage and leadership have been a definite asset to the squadron, not only inspiring the utmost confidence in his crew, but setting an excellent example to all other crews.

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VERONNEAU, F/O Joseph Francis Xavier (J25147) - **Distinguished Flying Cross** - No.90 Squadron - Award effective 15 December 1944 as per **London Gazette** of that date and AFRO 293/45 dated 16 February 1945. Born 5 March 1921 in Alberta; home in Bruderheim, Alberta; enlisted Edmonton 16 December 1941. Granted Leave Without Pay until 8 January 1942 when posted to No.3 Manning Depot. To No.13 SFTS, 14 March 1942 (guard duty); to No.6 ITS , 9 May 1942; graduated and promoted LAC, 3 July 1942 but not posted to No.12 EFTS until 1 August 1942; may have graduated 23 October 1942 but not posted to No.1 SFTS until 7 November 1942;

graduated and commissioned 2 April 1943. To "Y" Depot, 16 April 1943; to RAF overseas, 31 May 1943. Promoted Flying Officer, 2 October 1943. Promoted Flight Lieutenant, 10 October 1944. Repatriated 8 February 1945. Retired 25 April 1945. Award presented 27 May 1950. Cited with F/O F.H. Burdett (RAF, awarded DFC).

Flying Officer Burdett and Flying Officer Veronneau were flight engineer and pilot respectively of an aircraft detailed to attack Bonn in October 1944. Whilst on the bombing run the aircraft was subjected to heavy anti-aircraft fire. The bomber was hit, the aileron control was severed and the rudder control became firmly jammed in a main member in the fuselage. The aircraft commenced to lose height but the bombs were successfully released. Almost immediately the aircraft was again hit. This time the oxygen system was rendered unserviceable and considerable discomfort was experienced. Nevertheless, Flying Officer Veronneau retained a measure of control of the aircraft and headed for home. It was difficult in the circumstances to keep to an accurate course and the aircraft was again hit when passing over a heavily defended area. The mid-upper turret was put out of action. Meanwhile Flying Officer Burdett, although suffering from the lack of oxygen, worked unremittingly in an effort to free the rudder control rod. Although he toiled for more than an hour and a half his efforts were in vain but afterwards he rendered valuable assistance to his pilot by the use of the aileron trim and throttles. Eventually Flying Officer Veronneau reached an airfield where he effected a safe landing. In the face of great difficulty this officer displayed the highest standard of skill, coolness and resolution, setting a splendid example. Flying Officer Burdett also proved himself to be a cool, confident and devoted crew member. His conduct was exemplary.

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VIAU, F/L (now S/L) Joseph Jean Marie (C1160) - **Mention in Despatches** - No.5 Squadron (Canada) - Award effective 11 December 1943 as per **London Gazette** dated 14 December 1943 and AFRO 568/44 dated 17 March 1944. Home in Lachine, Quebec. RMC Cadet, 20 June to 31 July 1939. Commissioned in Kingston, 1 October 1939. Promoted Flying Officer, 10 August 1940. As of 14 February 1942 he was at No.13 SFTS. Promoted Flight Lieutenant, 5 April 1942. To No.1 ANS, 20 May 1942. To Eastern Air Command, 12 July 1942. To No.5 (BR) Squadron, 15 July 1942. Promoted Squadron Leader, 1 August 1943. Promoted Wing Commander, 1 August 1944. To Eastern Air Command Headquarters, 28 January 1945. To St. Hubert, 13 May 1945. To No.1 Air Command, 1 September 1945. To Release Centre, 29 June 1946. Released 6 July 1946. RCAF photo PL-2404 shows him as Flying Officer, 1941.

VIAU, W/C Joseph Jean Marie (C1160) - **Distinguished Flying Cross** - No.5 (BR) Squadron - Award effective 21 April 1945 as per **Canada Gazette** of that date and AFRO 802/45 dated 11 May 1945. Governor General's Records (RG.7 Group 26 Volume 58, file 190-I, dossier 6) has citation. When recommended he had flown 2,161 hours, of which 885 were on operations (91 sorties). Award presented in Montreal, 25 November 1949.

Over two and a half years on anti-submarine operations in the North Atlantic area this officer as captain of aircraft has displayed determination and devotion to duty of the highest order. He carried out a submarine attack under adverse weather conditions with courage and resourcefulness. As a squadron commander his inspiring leadership, enthusiasm and personal efforts have brought his squadron to the highest peak of efficiency. His record has been outstanding throughout his flying career.

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VICKERS, S/L George Peter (J15210) - **Distinguished Flying Cross** - No.88 Squadron - Award effective 12 August 1944 as per **London Gazette** dated 18 September 1945 and AFRO 1672/45 dated 2 November 1945. Born 7 October 1919 in Buxton, Derbyshire. Educated in British Columbia including two years of commercial courses at University of British Columbia. Home in Vancouver; enlisted there 17 July 1940. To No.1 Manning Depot, Toronto, 21 July 1940. To No.22 Magazine Detachment, Debert, 16 August 1940. To No.1 ITS, Toronto, 12 October 1940; graduated 4 November 1940 on promotion to LAC; to No.3 EFTS, London, 4 November 1941; to No.6 SFTS, Dunnville, 24 December 1940; graduated 5 March 1941 and promoted Sergeant. To "Y Depot, Debert, 16 March 1941; embarked 29 March 1941; arrived in Britain, 3 May 1941. To No.10 OTU, 10 May 1941. To No.13 OTU, 7 June 1941. To No.88 Squadron, Swanton Morley, 27 August 1941. Commissioned 20 February 1942. To No.487 (New Zealand) Squadron, 1 September 1942 (promoted Flight Lieutenant that day). Posted to No.13 OTU, 24 September 1942; posted to No.107 Squadron, 22 October 1943. To No.88 Squadron, 4 February 1944. Promoted Squadron Leader, 1 August 1944. Killed in action 13 August 1944 (Boston BZ382); buried in France. Medal presented to next-of-kin, 9 December 1947. RCAF photo PL-2702 shows Sergeants G.P. Vickers (Vancouver), R.H. Cotton (Vancouver), L.D. Holden (Chilliwack), and H.C. Charlesworth (Chemamus, Vancouver Island). RCAF photo PL-22709 (ex UK-7575 dated 30 January 1944) shows him; caption says he had then flown 30 sorties,

Squadron Leader Vickers has completed many successful operational sorties and has completed his second tour. During an attack on Charleroi in 1943 his port engine was set on fire by intense anti-aircraft fire but Squadron Leader Vickers maintained effective control of his aircraft, extinguished the fire and flew back to

his base without further damage or casualty. Throughout all his operations Squadron Leader Vickers has shown determination, coolness and skill..

On 28 September 1942 he was reported as having flown 419.30 hours (131.10 in past six months) and was described as "Very good operationally but not all that he might be as a junior officer. Needs close watching and a firm hand and will then make a very fine officer. Full of personality, a good influence operationally, easily independent of discipline".

As of 19 September 1943, W/C M.E. Pollard (No.13 OTU, Bicester) reported he had flown 787.55 hours (162.30 in past six months) and described him as "An average type of officer. Lacks self-assurance in dealing with subordinates. Very keen to return to operations. Hard working type."

On 22 October 1944, W/C D.J. Evans wrote:

Squadron Leader Vickers was outstanding in every way. His personality and cheerfulness was infectious, and as a flight commander was exceptional. He was reliable, and an exceedingly hard worker. It was a bad day for the squadron when he was reported missing.

He had signed up for a third tour. Boston BZ382 was airborne at 0003 hours, 13 August 1944 to harass enemy troops and transport in retreat in the area of the River Orne. Others in crew (all RAF) were F/L S.G. Turner (navigator), F/L K.E. Kimber (WOP/AG) and FS E. Rudge (Air Gunner).

A letter from RCAF Overseas Headquarters, 9 October 1945 to AFHQ Ottawa noted that his first tour (26 sorties) was completed at the end of August 1942; his second tour (21 sorties) was completed at the end of April 1944. He was reported missing on the 23rd mission of his third tour. That last tour had comprised 47.30 hours, not counting his last trip. The letter went on to say:

Squadron Leader Vickers' operations from 8.9.41 to 25.11.41 were carried out with No.88 Squadron flying Blenheim aircraft. The balance of his operations were carried out with 88 and 107 Squadrons flying Boston aircraft. These operations were carried mainly attacks on troops concentrations, fuel dumps, railways stations, marshalling yards, installations, airfields, power stations, docks, etc., mostly in occupied France.

Quoted hereunder is an entry promulgated in Group Routine Orders concerning an operation carried out by S/L Vickers on 22nd October 1943:-

“NOTABLE WAR SERVICE

“The Air Officer Commanding wishes to bring to the notice of all ranks in the Group the devotion to duty displayed by the undermentioned officer of No.107 squadron.

“Flight Lieutenant G.P. Vickers (J.15210)

“Flight Lieutenant Vickers was the captain of an aircraft detailed to attack at low level a target on 22nd October 1943.

“Whilst over enemy occupied territory, the port engine of his aircraft was hit by flak resulting in a serious fire in the engine. Flight Lieutenant Vickers gave his crew a preparatory warning order to abandon aircraft and climbed to a suitable height for baling out. Whilst climbing he stopped the engine which had been hit and succeeded in putting out the fire. He then reduced height to low level and continued flying on the one engine with the squadron formation, safely crossed the enemy occupied coast and made a successful landing in this country.”

RCAF Press Release No.4337 dated 29 March 1944, transcribed by Huguette Oates, reads:

Flight Lieutenant George P. Vickers (J15210), 24-year-old pilot of 4236 West 8th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C., has now a total of thirty-nine operational sorties in his log book. Crossing to Britain in March of 1941 after training at London and Dunsville in Ontario, George first joined an RAF Coastal Command squadron flying Blenheims with which he made ten operational trips.

“On two of these trips, we were lucky enough to get a crack at enemy convoys,” he said. “On one occasion, stooging in at low level to drop our bombs, we hit a 2,000 tonner barge and on the second occasion, carrying out the same tactics, successfully smashed up a 6,000 ton merchant vessel.

“I subsequently converted from Blenheims to Bostons and joined another RAF squadron which was part of the 2nd Tactical Air Force and got a new crew including Flying Officer George Murray (J16160) as an air gunner who comes from Ingersoll, Ontario. With this squadron, I booked another sixteen trips and of these, I suppose an attack on the Charlerois aircraft service works was our shakiest for a Bofors shell hit my port engine, set it on fire and knocked me out of the formation. I gave the order for the crew to bail out but, feathering my prop and setting the automatic fire extinguisher to work. I managed to put the

fire out and so was able to tell the crew to stay where they were. We rejoined the formation but not for long since I only had the one engine and so I had to limp back alone. During this time, I also carried out one night intruder sortie over Schipol aerodrome in Holland from which enemy bombers were raiding Britain. It was my first night trip and despite a terrific amount of flak --- which, by the way, entirely missed me but knocked down the other Boston bomber which had come out with me on the attack --- went in at low level and really hit the place.”

“But, of all my trips, I reckon a low level attack on a power station in France was my best or, at least, the one I got most satisfaction out of. My machine and another Boston were the only kites which managed to find the place owing to very bad visibility and the photographs we brought back with us showed our stick of bombs falling right across the place.”

Flight Lieutenant Vickers then made another move to another Boston bomber squadron of the Tactical Air Force and, to date, has carried out another ten sorties “pranging docks, ships, ports and enemy anti-invasion defences” which is all part of the softening up process of the invasion coast upon which work the T.A.F. Group is now engaged.

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VILA, S/L John Augustus (C13520) - **Member, Order of the British Empire** - AFHQ - Award effective 1 January 1946 as per **Canada Gazette** of that date and AFRO 82/46 dated 25 January 1946. Born 19 April 1910. Enlisted in Toronto, 21 August 1942 in Administrative List with rank of Pilot Officer and posted to No.5 Manning Depot. To No.17 Equipment Depot, 4 September 1942. To Trenton, 2 October 1942. To No.3 Training Command, 14 November 1942. To No.13 SFTS, 16 November 1942. To No.4 EFTS, 30 December 1942. To AFHQ, 23 January 1943. Promoted Flying Officer, 15 February 1943. Promoted Squadron Leader, 1 February 1945. To Release Centre, 2 December 1945; released 5 December 1945. Award presented 24 April 1948. Following the war he was employed with the Economical Insurance Group, and was its President from 1971 to 1978. Died in Kitchener, Ontario, 10 April 2008.

This officer, who is Secretary of the Honours and Awards Committee, has made an invaluable contribution to the Royal Canadian Air Force. The volume of work handled by his section has constantly increased and become more involved and has required imagination, a wide knowledge and the highest efficiency, all of which this officer has supplied. Squadron Leader Vila's close co-operation with Government House, in connection with the investitures held in Ottawa, has been

the subject of letters of appreciation from the Assistant Secretary to the Governor General. This officer, on his own volition, put in many long hours of overtime, has been tireless in his work and has set aside his own personal interests for the good of the Service. His devotion to duty has been an example to all.

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VILLENEUVE, Sergeant Joseph Hilaire Roland (Can 7641) - **Mention in Despatches** - No.63 Base - Award effective 1 January 1945 as per **London Gazette** of that date and AFRO 425/45 dated 9 March 1945. Born 31 July 1916. Home in St.Cyrille, Quebec; enlisted in Quebec 25 May 1939 for General Duties. To Trenton, 23 July 1939. Promoted LAC, 29 February 1940. Graded as Assistant Armourer, 1 April 1940. To No.118 (Coastal Artillery Cooperation) Squadron, 21 September 1940. To No.1 (CAC) Flight, 27 September 1940. Promoted Corporal, 1 January 1941. To No.118 (Fighter) Squadron, 7 January 1941. To No.5 BGS, 17 May 1941. Graded as Armourer, 1 July 1941. To "K", 8 May 1942. To No.126 (Fighter) Squadron, 31 August 1942. To "K", 15 September 1942. To "Y" Depot, 1 October 1942; to RAF overseas, 26 October 1942. Promoted Sergeant, 1 January 1943. Promoted Flight Sergeant, 1 January 1945. Repatriated 18 June 1945. To No.8 OTU, 19 June 1945 (Tiger Force training); to Greenwood, 31 July 1945. Re-engaged for Interim Force, remaining at Greenwood. Reverted to Sergeant in postwar RCAF, 1 October 1946. Released 31 January 1947. DHist file 181.009 D.2619 (RG.24 Vol.20628) has recommendation forwarded 31 July 1944 to No.6 Group Headquarters. Had served 41 months in Canada, 21 months overseas.

This NCO is a very capable fitter-armourer and has carried out his duties in a most conscientious and efficient manner. His ability of overcoming the handicap of not speaking English and becoming so efficient at his trade has earned the respect of all the airmen working with him.

A recommendation drafted by G/C J.L. Plant in the summer of 1943, when he was a Corporal with No.427 Squadron (found in DHH file 181.009 D.2617, National Library and Archives RG.24 Volume 20627) read as follows:

Corporal Villeneuve has shown great ability, keenness and exceptional devotion to duty whilst working as an armourer. At all times he has proved himself outstanding and tireless and the splendid example which he has set has inspired other members of the squadron and his work in the armoury section has directly affected the operational efficiency of the squadron.

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VINCE, S/L (now W/C) Archibald George (C1985) - **Member, Order of the British Empire** - Technical Training School - Award effective 1 January 1943 as per **London Gazette** of that date and AFRO 55/43 dated 15 January 1943. Born in Hampshire, England, 20 September 1899. Served in the Royal Navy, 30 August 1916 to 8 February 1919. A carpenter and musician by trade who ran a confectionary store on Main Street, Ottawa, before business foundered. His wife, Dora Lee, formerly on the staff at Rideau Hall, was the subject of a book, **Storming the Castle: The World of Dora and the Dutchess** by Jill Downie (Key Porter Books, 1998). Enlisted in Ottawa, 16 July 1924. Employed at Repair Depot, Ottawa, July-August 1924. Instructor at Camp Borden, 1924-1936. Classified as LAC, 1 May 1925. Promoted Corporal, 22 July 1925. Promoted Sergeant, 1 July 1927. Promoted Flight Sergeant, 1 April 1929. Promoted WO2, 1 April 1931. Chief Instructor at Technical Training School, Trenton, 1936-1937, and then holding same post at Camp Borden, 1937-1939. Promoted WO1 on 1 April 1939. As of 1 October 1939 he was a senior NCO and Airframe Mechanic. Posted to St. Thomas, 30 October 1939. Commissioned there, 15 May 1940 as Engineer Officer with rank of Flying Officer. Promoted Flight Lieutenant, 1 December 1940. Promoted Squadron Leader, 1 July 1941. To AFHQ, 15 August 1942 (Staff Officer, Engineer Training). Promoted Wing Commander, 15 October 1942. Award presented 17 April 1943. To Technical Training School again, 5 June 1944, to command. Promoted Group Captain, 1 December 1944. To Technical Engineering School, Aylmer, 31 March 1945. Retained in Interim Force until 31 March 1947 when discharged, retiring to London, Ontario. Died there 3 October 1962.

During and since the formative period of this unit this officer, as Chief Instructor, has proved exceptional ability and this together with his devotion to duty, which is well above the average, has inspired all with whom he comes in contact. He has contributed, in a large measure, to the building up of the present high standard of the Technical Training School and his good judgement and loyal support have been of great help to his superiors.

This was based on a recommendation raised 23 July 1942 by the Commanding Officer of the Technical Training School, St. Thomas (signature illegible) as follows:

During the formative period of this unit and since that time, this officer, as Chief Instructor, has shown marked ability and devotion to duty above the ordinary. He has contributed in a large measure to the building up of the present high standard of the Technical Training School, and his good judgement and loyal support have been of great help to his superiors.

Notes: His career was always that of technical work and teaching. An assessment dated 31 December 1932 from Camp Borden illustrates this: "Excellent in his trade. Of a studious nature

and takes a real interest in subjects he is allocated for instruction. A good instructor. Military bearing average. Rather retiring. Good on all forms of metal treatment.”

A further assessment, this one by S/L D.C.M. Hume (15 December 1934) described him a a good pianist including as a teacher. His duties were “rigging instructor and allied trades” and he was classified in all ways (including tact and administration) as above average. “A very useful instructional Warrant Officer who takes great pains with both his subjects and his pupils. Exceedingly well informed. Neat, tidy and regimentally sound. Reliable and entirely trustworthy. Placid type but holds his own quietly and strongly in a situation or argument.”

This continued well into his commissioned career. On 20 July 1942, W/C J.H. Keens wrote, “Outstanding Technical Officer with thorough knowledge of present unit, gained from long local experience. Calm and thoughtful approach to problems, acts as balance wheel.”

A further assessment (W/C J.H. Keens, 11 August 1942) was striking - “Exceptionally qualified for ground training but also capable of filling any engineering post. An outstanding officer in every respect. The present standard of technical training at Technical Training School has been largely founded upon the alacrity and engineering ability of this officer.”

This continued to his work at AFHQ; on 27 May 1944, G/C J.A. Easton wrote, “His considerable experience is well applied and in addition he has the ability to think objectively.”

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VINCE, FS Edward Lorne (R205706, later commissioned as J91062) - **Distinguished Flying Medal** - No.419 Squadron - Award effective 3 November 1944 as per **London Gazette** of that date and AFRO 2637/44 dated 8 December 1944. Born 14 February 1918 in Waterford, Ontario; home there (farmer); enlisted London, 3 December 1942. Granted Leave Without Pay until 14 March 1943 when posted to No.5 Manning Depot. To No.3 Flying Instructor School, 23 May 1943. To No.9 Pre-Aircrew Education Unit, 30 May 1943. To No.1 Air Gunner Ground Training School, 25 June 1943. Promoted LAC, 7 August 1943 and posted to No.9 BGS. Graduated and promoted Sergeant, 17 September 1943. To “Y” Depot, 1 October 1943. Taken on strength of No.3 PRC, Bournemouth, 8 October 1943. Commissioned 7 September 1944. Repatriated 28 December 1944. Released 19 February 1945. Award presented 28 May 1947. Died in Waterford, Ontario, 2 October 2011.

As rear gunner Flight Sergeant Vince has participated in very many sorties. He has displayed great skill and coolness and, when necessary, has defended his aircraft with resolution. On one occasion during an operation against Sterkrade his aircraft was intercepted by a fighter. In the ensuing engagement Flight

Sergeant Vince used his guns to good effect. Although his own aircraft sustained damage he shot down the attacker. Some time later, on the flight home, several more attacks from enemy fighters were experienced, but this rear gunner's vigilance and skilful combat manoeuvres enabled his captain to evade the enemy aircraft. Flight Sergeant Vince has displayed outstanding devotion to duty.

DHist file 181.009 D.1634 (RG.24 Volume 20604) has recommendation by W/C D.C. Hagerman dated 3 September 1944 when he had flown 25 sorties (137 hours 35 minutes) as follows:

Flight Sergeant Vince has taken part in 25 day and night attacks against the enemy. On the night of June 16th, when attacking Sterkrade, his aircraft was attacked by an unidentified enemy night fighter. Flight Sergeant Vince immediately gave correct evasive action but, as the aircraft corkscrewed, an Me.110 appeared from dead aster and firing without trace scored numerous hits on the aircraft and caused an explosion. This Me.110 had been in the dark part of the sky but, without hesitating to ascertain the extent of damage to his own aircraft, Flight Sergeant Vince immediately opened fire on the attacking fighter. Strikes were seen and the enemy's starboard motor was seen to burst into flames and the aircraft plunge downwards out of sight,

On the return journey, several more attacks by enemy night fighters were experienced and, as the aircraft's intercom was unserviceable, Flight Sergeant Vince continued to give evasive action by call light in a most efficient manner.

I consider the outstanding gallantry, devotion to duty and coolness displayed by Flight Sergeant Vince definitely merits the immediate award of the DFM.

The sortie list was as follows:

9 May 1944 - St. Valery (4.00)
27 May 1944 - Bourg Leopold (4.30)
7 June 1944 - Acheres (5.10)
9 June 1944 - Le Mans (5.55)
13 June 1944 - Cambrai (5.05)
15 June 1944 - Boulogne, day (4.25)
16 June 1944 - Sterkrade (4.45)
4 July 1944 - Villeneuve (6.15)
6 July 1944 - Siracourt, day (4.15)
7 July 1944 - Caen, day (4.30)
9 July 1944 - Mont Candon, day (5.35)

18 July 1944 - Wesseling (6.00)
20 July 1944 - L'Hey, day (3.40)
23 July 1944 - Kiel (5.55)
25 July 1944 - Stuttgart (9.10)
1 August 1944 - Acquet, day (4.20)
3 August 1944 - Bois de Cassan, day (5.15)
4 August 1944 - St. Leu d' Esserent, day (5.15)
8 August 1944 - Foret de Chantilly, day (5.30)
9 August 1944 - Acquet (4.25)
10 August 1944 - La Pallice (6.50)
14 August 1944 - Falaise, day (4.55)
15 August 1944 - Soesterberg, day (3.40)
16 August 1944 - Stettin (8.50)
29 August 1944 - Stettin (9.25)

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VINCENT, S/L (now A/W/C) Arthur James (C1056) - **Air Force Cross** - No.1 CFS (since moved to No.1 SFTS) - Award effective 14 November 1944 as per **London Gazette** of that date and AFRO 2684/44 dated 15 December 1944. Born in Toronto, 1913. Learned to fly while working for Inco. Enlisted at Camp Borden, 9 September 1939. As of 24 November 1940 he was at No.19 EFTS. Promoted Flight Lieutenant, 1 August 1941. To AFHQ, 25 April 1942. Promoted Squadron Leader, 1 July 1942. To Trenton, 10 January 1943. To AFHQ, 11 August 1943. To Composite Training School, 23 January 1944. To No.1 SFTS, 4 July 1944. Promoted Wing Commander, 1 August 1944. To Release Centre, 12 February 1945. Released 13 February 1945. Moved to Winnipeg after the war and became a grain dealer. Died in Winnipeg, 1998; see **Dictionary of Manitoba Biography** by J.M. Bumstead (University of Manitoba Press, 1999). Reported to have flown 1,428.10 hours to date, 1,120.20 hours as instructor, 272.10 hours in previous six months. Award presented 22 September 1945.

This officer has been actively engaged in flying training for the past four years. His flying has been exceptional and he has at all times performed his duties in an exceedingly praiseworthy manner. By his outstanding ability and untiring efforts, he has stimulated instructors at whatever flying schools he has visited and has contributed materially in the upgrading of flying training in Canada.

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VINCENT, P/O Gordon Ridge (J86473) - **Distinguished Flying Cross** - No.425 Squadron - Award effective 19 September 1944 as per **London Gazette** of that date and AFRO 2274/44 dated 20

October 1944. Born 17 January 1921 in Windsor, Ontario; home there (book keeper and clerk). Attended Dougal Avenue Public School, Patterson Collegiate (two years) and O'Neill Business College (two years). Enlisted in Windsor, 14 June 1940 in Clerical Branch and posted to No.2 Manning Depot, Brandon where he attended Clerks Course, No.2 Clerks Training Section (course lasted 24 June to 20 July 1940). To No.4 Training Command, Regina, 23 July 1940; to No.12 EFTS, Goderich, 15 January 1941; reclassified as Clerk/Stenographer, 1 March 1941; promoted LAC, 1 April 1941; to No.6 ITS, Toronto, 26 April 1941. Promoted Corporal, 1 August 1941. Applied on 31 March 1942 for remuster to aircrew. Attended course at No.6 ITS, 27 April to 19 June 1942 when he was deemed average but "a bit of a play boy, sincere enough but much too full of hell to buckle down seriously over a lengthy period. Should make a good pilot but will require some disciplining. Second aircrew recommendation, Air Bomber." Posted to No.12 EFTS, Goderich again, 2 August 1942, where he flew Tiger Moths (35.05 day dual, 34.30 day solo, 2.00 night dual; logged 8.45 dual to first solo, 11.25 on instruments, ten hours in Link. Course duration given as 3 August to 25 September 1942. Assessed as "Average student with plenty of ability but no application. Takes easiest way out. Could have done better if tried harder." To No.9 SFTS, Centralia, 26 September 1942 where he flew 87.20 day dual on Ansons, 94.25 day solo on Ansons (12.15 dual to first solo), 7.35 night dual and 9.00 night solo; time in air included 5.05 in formation, 13.25 on instruments; also logged 35.00 in Link. Described as average pilot who improved during course (seems to have had trouble with steep turns at first). Graduated and promoted Sergeant, 9 February 1943. To "Y" Depot, Halifax, 24 February 1943. To RAF Trainee Pool, 8 March 1943. Disembarked in United Kingdom, 17 March 1943. To No.15 (P) AFU, 1 June 1943. While there he was detached to No.1 Beam Approach School (7-13 July 1943), logging 10.40 on Oxfords and five more hours in Link. Described as "steady and reliable...acquired a good knowledge of beam approach procedure. His application was spoilt by slow reactions to beam signals.". Recommended for twin-engine fighters. To No.24 OTU, 10 August 1943. To Dalton Battle School, 19 November 1943. Attached to No.1664 Conversion Unit, 4 December 1943. To No.425 Squadron, 12 January 1944, although attending No.1664 Conversion Unit on attachment, January 1944. Commissioned 14 March 1944. Killed in action, 28/29 July 1944 (Halifax MZ712 "S"). At the time he was reported missing he had flown 34 sorties (170 operational hours).

This officer has completed many sorties during which he effectively attacked such enemy targets as Essen, Dusseldorf and Berlin. On one occasion whilst over Karlsruhe his aircraft commenced to vibrate badly. Nevertheless, Pilot Officer Vincent executed his attack and flew his aircraft to this country despite much physical discomfort. At the airfield visibility was extremely poor but Pilot Officer Vincent made a landing at the third attempt. As the aircraft came to rest the starboard petrol tanks caught fire. It was then discovered that the rear gunner was trapped in his turret. Heedless of the imminent danger, Pilot Officer Vincent worked strenuously to force open the door of the damaged turret and

succeeded in releasing his comrade. This officer displayed great skill, courage and determination in most harassing circumstances.

Further notes on training. His course at No.15 (P) AFU was from 15 June to 10 August 1943. In that time he flew Oxford aircraft (8.40 day dual to first solo, 28.55 day dual and 31.15 say solo plus 2.35 night dual to first solo, 7.25 night dual and 13.20 night solo. It is not clear if these figures include his Beam Approach course (see above). He also logged 2.25 day formation and 10.40 night formation plus 10.15 in Link. Described as "Navigation weak. Rather overconfident. Rough and heavy on the controls. Lacks initiative and needs to realise his responsibilities as a Senior NCO before he is considered for Captain of aircraft." Much of his instruction was under a Sergeant Etheridge whose log of training records flights from 14 June 1943 (in spite of course date shown above) to 28 July 1943 while further flying extends to 3 August 1943. Many entries in the Progress Reports by Etheridge are hard to read, but legible samples are as follows: **14 June 1943:** "A little rough having been off flying for some time but should do well. At home in the Oxford. Good taxiing." **14 June 1943** (second flight that day): "Showed him local landmarks; grasped single-engine flying; intelligent type." **19 June 1943:** "A bit rough on controls on I/F; needs practice. Loses height in turns in aircraft but landings good three-points." **22 June 1943:** "I/F very poor. Fails to make proper use of artificial horizon for climbing, descending, etc. Needs more practice in this respect. Due to this failing he allows nose to get far too high causing an overshoot. Improved towards end of period. **23 June 1943** (navigation exercise): "Not very good. Courses erratic and does not link up features on pin points. Improved later but needs practice." **19 July 1943** (Beacon flight): "Not a good show. Lacks initiative and finds it difficult to concentrate on more than one thing at a time. Flies quite steadily when he settles down, but takes a long time to do so. Very slow to comprehend the exercises." **22 July 1943:** (Beacon exercise) "Fair effort. Beacon really good. Evasive action very good. Single engine flying fair but VA's very hazy. Quite fit for solo beam."

Course at No.24 OTU landed 10 August to 29 October 1943 fly Whitley aircraft (4.35 dual to first day solo, 9.10 day dual, 7.15 day at controls with another captain; 25.45 at controls unaccompanied by another captain, 2.15 night dual to first solo, 3.50 night dual, 3.55 night at controls with another captain, 34.05 night as unaccompanied captain. Instrument time was 17.30 and he logged 14.50 in Link. Described as "pilot of average ability who experienced great difficulty in converting to to type, mainly due to lack of confidence. As a captain will need to become more determined in order to make a successful operational pilot. In the course of his training he has carried out four cross-countries by day, three by night, one Bulls Eye and one NICKEL at heights up to 15,000 feet. He has also completed a war load and fighter affiliation exercise. He has volunteered by is not yet recommended for Path Finder duties. Has been through the decompression chamber." The Chief Instructor was W/C T.J. Gunn, AFC who recommended him for four-engined bombers but not yet for a commission.

His general flying at No.1664 Conversion Unit is listed as follows:

1. Familiarization (45 minutes dual).
2. Dual Circuits and Bumps (2.00 dual)
3. Dual Circuits and Bumps, Overshoots (2.00 dual)
4. Three-Engine Flying (30 minutes dual before going solo)
5. Solo Circuits and Bumps (2.10 solo)
6. Dual Check Including Overshoot (25 minutes dual)
7. Circuits and Bumps with Three-Engine Flying (1.30 solo)
8. Circuits and Bumps in general flying and bomb aiming (1.20 solo),
9. Three Engine Landings and Overshoots (1.10 dual)
10. Solo with complete crew, air-to-sea firing, bombing, W/T practice, Gee and map reading (3.10 as captain).
11. Solo with complete crew, air-to-air firing, 16,000 foot climb, general flying (3.10 as captain)
12. Dual, complete crew, fighter affiliation, air-to-sea firing, SBA (1.00 dual)
13. Complete crew fighter affiliation - apparently not carried out.
14. Complete crew, air to air firing, bombing - apparently not carried out.
15. Dual night Circuits and Bumps (1.55 dual)
16. Solo night Circuits and Bumps (2.15)
17. Solo day cross-country with full crew (4.15 as captain)
18. Solo night cross-country and night bombing with full crew (4.30)
19. Solo night cross-country with full crew - apparently not carried out.

Totals at No.1664 Conversion Unit were 9.45 dual and 22.20 as captain.

Several documents (notably overseas) give his name as "Vimy Ridge Vincent" but his medals were inscribed "Gordon Ridge Vincent" . The family subsequently wrote that he had indeed been christened as "Gordon Vimy Ridge Vincent" (for the battle) and that he had been best known by that name in Windsor. There is a strong suspicion that he chose to use the name "Gordon Ridge Vincent" once he had enlisted.

Note: The website "Lost Bombers" gives the following on his loss. Halifax MZ712, No.425 Squadron (KW-S), target Hamburg, 28/29 July 1944. This was one of two No.425 Squadron Halifaxes lost on this operation; the other was MZ641. Airborne at 2230 hours, 28 July 1944 from Tholthorpe. Lost without trace. All are commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial. Crew (all RCAF) was P/O G.V.R.Vincent, DFC, RCAF, Sergeant J.W.R.Noonan, Flight Sergeant H.L.Vanderveen, WO2 F.S.Watson, RCAF, Flight Sergeant B.G.Betts, WO2 L.Image, Flight Sergeant F.J. Daleessandro, Flight Sergeant R.E.Patterson and Flight Sergeant W.W.Vance.

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VINCENT, F/O Harry (J28068) - **Distinguished Flying Cross** - No.424 Squadron - Award effective 6 January 1945 as per **London Gazette** dated 19 January 1945 and AFRO 508/45 dated 23 March 1945. Born 15 August 1916 in Winnipeg (as per obituary notice); home there (butcher); enlisted there 26 February 1942). To No.2 Manning Depot, 1 April 1942. To No.8 BGS (non-flying duty), 23 May 1942. To No.2 ITS, 18 July 1942; graduated and promoted LAC on 12 September 1942; to No.15 EFTS, 10 October 1942; ceased training and posted to Composite Training School, 5 December 1942; to No.5 AOS, 20 February 1943; graduated and commissioned 9 July 1943. To "Y" Depot, 23 July 1943; to United Kingdom, 2 August 1943. Promoted Flying Officer, 6 January 1944. Repatriated 12 June 1945. To Eastern Air Command, 1 August 1945. Commissioned as Flying Officer in permanent postwar force, 1 October 1946. Medal sent by registered mail 30 March 1949. Promoted Flight Lieutenant, 1 June 1951. Promoted Squadron Leader, 1 July 1956. Retired from the RCAF in 1963. Following that he joined Canada Customs and on the staff of the Sergeant-at-Arms, Legislature of British Columbia. Died in Victoria, 12 August 1998. No citation other than "completed ...numerous operations against the enemy in the course of which [he has] invariably displayed the utmost fortitude, courage and devotion to duty." DHist file 181.009 D.2609 (RG.24 Vol.20627) has recommendation dated 23 October 1944 when he had flown 35 sorties (179 hours 25 minutes) from 5 June to 14 October 1944.

5 June 1944 - Houlgate (4.55)
6 June 1944 - Conde-sur-Noireau (5.35)
7 June 1944 - Lorient (6.10)
8 June 1944 - Mayenne (5.35)
10 June 1944 - Versailles (6.05)
14 June 1944 - Cambrai (5.40)
16 June 1944 - Sautrecourt (4.30)
17 June 1944 - Oisemont (4.50)
21 June 1944 - Oisemont (5.30)
27 June 1944 - Wizernes (3.45)
28 June 1944 - Metz (7.30)
9 July 1944 - Ardouval (4.05)
12 July 1944 - Bremont (4.35)
18 July 1944 - Caen (4.45)
20 July 1944 - Ferme du Grand Bois (3.40)
24 July 1944 - L'Hey 3.25)
25 July 1944 - Stuttgart (9.40)
28 July 1944 - Hamburg (6.00)
1 August 1944 - L'Hey 3.40)
12 August 1944 - Brunswick (5.40)

14 August 1944 - Montigny (4.20)
15 August 1944 - Tassilly (4.15)
16 August 1944 - Kiel (5.10)
18 August 1944 - Connatre 6.15)
25 August 1944 - Karandieu (5.00)
28 August 1944 - Brest (4.30)
11 September 1944 - Le Havre (4.25)
12 September 1944 - Dortmund (5.30)
23 September 1944 - Domberg (3.25)
25 September 1944 - Calais (4.05)
27 September 1944 - Sterkrade (5.15)
28 September 1944 - Cap Gris Nex (4.05)
6 October 1944 - Dortmund (6.15)
9 October 1944 - Bochum (6.10)
14 October 1944 - Duisburg (5.10)

A veteran of nine raids on heavily defended targets in Germany, including Stuttgart, Hamburg, Brunswick, Dortmund and twenty-two precision targets in enemy occupied territory, this officer has proved himself to be a capable navigator. Flying Officer Vincent has always been on his target on time; in addition he has been of valuable assistance in the navigational section checking logs, assisting with records, and briefing crews for operations. Throughout thirty-five trips this officer has done exceptional work in the air and at all times has been an example to other navigators in the squadron and an inspiration to his crew.

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VINE, P/O James (J93012) - **Distinguished Flying Cross** - No.415 Squadron - Award effective 5 April 1945 as per **London Gazette** dated 17 April 1945 and AFRO 918/45 dated 1 June 1945. Born 23 March 1925 in Winnipeg; home in St. James, Manitoba (student, ex-Royal Canadian Artillery); enlisted Winnipeg 24 February 1943 and posted to No.2 Manning Depot, Brandon. To No.23 EFTS (non-flying duties), 15 April 1943. To No.4 WS, 27 June 1943; to No.2 Air Gunner Ground Training School, 20 August 1943; promoted LAC and posted to No.3 BGS, 16 October 1943. Graduated 26 November 1943 and promoted Sergeant. To "Y" Depot, Halifax, 10 December 1943. To No.4 Air Gunner Training School, 25 January 1944. To "Y" Depot again, 11 February 1944. Taken on strength of No.3 PRC, Bournemouth, 5 March 1944. Commissioned 24 November 1944. Repatriated 8 February 1945. Released 20 April 1945. Worked two years for Canada Post and then for the Manitoba Liquor Commission until retirement. Died in Winnipeg, 19 April 2000. RCAF photo PL-40521 (ex UK-17260 dated 8 December 1944) is

captioned as follows: "With the RCAF Bomber Group in Britain. Two Winnipeg air gunners who fought off three enemy attacks during a recent raid on the Ruhr Valley. While their aircraft was hit 20 times the pilot was able to bring it back to base. Left to right: Flight Sergeant W. Molden (846 Carter Avenue) and Flight Sergeant James Vine (285 Roseberry Street). The pair scored a hit on one of the Nazi fighters." Award presented 11 June 1949.

Through a tour of operations as air gunner Pilot Officer Vine has shown enthusiasm, vigilance and courage of a high order. On one occasion during a mission against Castrop Rauxel his aircraft was attacked by three enemy aircraft in succession. While engaged on the third attack Pilot Officer Vine's guns jammed. Despite this his excellent tactics saved his aircraft from major damage and the mission was completed. His devotion to duty has always been most praiseworthy.

Press Release No. 7599 by F/L E. McVeity and dated 27 November 1944 read as follows:

WITH RCAF BOMBER GROUP IN BRITAIN: --- Two Winnipeg air gunners fought off three enemy attacks to enable their captain to bring the heavy bomber back to base. The action took place recently after a raid on a synthetic oil plant in the Ruhr Valley.

The gunners are Flight Sergeant W. Molden (846 Carter Avenue), Winnipeg, mid-upper and Flight Sergeant James Vine (285 Roseberry Street), Winnipeg. "We were just leaving the target when an Me 190 hit us with his first shot before we could take evasive action," said Flight Sergeant Vine, "then he broke away. Just then a 410 came in from above and started firing at 400 yards but he missed us. The mid-upper returned fire and scored a hit on his fuselage, then his guns jammed and we didn't see him again".

"A third followed. It was another 190 and he came on the port. He was shooting wild and we were able to corkscrew and that was the last we saw of him. It all happened in three minutes and a pretty tense three minutes it was. Our kite was hit about 20 times but Old Lady Luck was with us and no one was injured."

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VINE, P/O William Edward (C88225) - **Distinguished Flying Cross** - No.405 Squadron - Award effective 5 February 1945 as per **London Gazette** dated 16 February 1945 and AFRO 563/45 dated 29 March 1945. Born 5 January 1921 in Toronto; home in Hamilton (production clerk); enlisted there 1 June 1940. Commissioned 1944. Released 2 October 1945. Re-engaged, 30

August 1946 to 25 January 1947. Rejoined again, 22 July 1952 (service number 209520), retiring 12 June 1970 and settling in North Bay, Ontario. No citation other than "completed...numerous operations against the enemy in the course of which [he has] invariably displayed the utmost fortitude, courage and devotion to duty." Public Records Office Air 2/8831 has recommendation dated 20 November 1944 when he had flown 46 sorties (209 hours five minutes):

30 August 1943 - Munchen Gladbach (6.00)
31 August 1943 - Berlin (7.50)
5 September 1943 - Mannheim (8.30)
6 September 1943 - Munich (9.35)
22 September 1943 - Hanover (6.00)
23 September 1943 - Mannheim (8.00)
27 September 1943 - Hanover (6.30)
29 September 1943 - Bochum (6.25)
4 October 1943 - Frankfurt (8.10)
15 February 1944 - Berlin (6.33)
20 February 1944 - Stettin (6.15)
24 February 1944 - Schweinfurt (6.49)
15 March 1944 - Stuttgart (6.48)
18 March 1944 - Frankfurt (4.48)
22 March 1944 - Frankfurt (5.13)
24 March 1944 - Berlin (6.39)
30 March 1944 - Nuremburg (6.38)
26 April 1944 - Essen (3.53)
27 April 1944 - Montzen (3.11)
3 May 1944 - Montdidier (3.08)
8 May 1944 - Haine St.Pierre (2.29)
11 May 1944 - Boulogne (2.17)
19 May 1944 - Mont Couple (1.46)
22 May 1944 - Dortmund (3.51)
27 May 1944 - Rennes (3.51)
28 May 1944 - Mardyck (2.15)
5 June 1944 - Longues (2.57)
7 June 1944 - Foret de Cerisy (3.32)
27 June 1944 - Oisemont-au-Bois (2.15)
28 June 1944 - Metz (5.18)
2 July 1944 - Oisemont-au-Bois (2.21)
9 July 1944 - L'Hey (1.46)
7 August 1944 - TOTALIZE (2.45)

8 August 1944 - Lucheux (3.01)
10 August 1944 - La Pallice (5.03)
20 September 1944 - Calais (2.16)
24 September 1944 - Calais (2.16)
25 September 1944 - Calais (2.42)
26 September 1944 - Cap Gris Nez (2.27)
28 September 1944 - Cap Gris Nez (1.56)
5 October 1944 - Saarbrucken (4.35)
14 October 1944 - Duisburg (3.20)
15 October 1944 - Wilhelmshaven (4.16)
19 October 1944 - Stuttgart (5.25)
23 October 1944 - Essen (4.14)
25 October 1944 - Homberg (3.16)

Pilot Officer Vine is a very capable Flight Engineer, now on his second tour of operations. He has participated in attacks on such heavily defended enemy areas as Berlin, Hanover and Stuttgart. Throughout his long and varied operational career, this officer has often been placed in great personal danger, but he has never allowed personal considerations to overrule service exigencies. He has remained faithfully at his post of duty, carrying out his allotted tasks in a very cool and efficient manner. The fine example of fearlessness and sense of responsibility displayed by this officer is most commendable and has had a salutary effect on all fellow members of his crew. Strongly recommended for the non-immediate award of the Distinguished Flying Cross.

For a Combat Report involving him, 15/16 February 1944, see entry for F/O D.E. Biden.

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VINEN, Sergeant Vern Edgar (R52140)- **British Empire Medal** - Station Rockcliffe - Award effective 1 January 1945 as per **London Gazette** of that date and AFRO 89/45 dated 19 January 1945. Born 6 June 1919 in Brighton, England (RCAF press release 4907 announcing award). Educated in London, Ontario. Home in Eastview, Ontario (modern Vanier); enlisted Ottawa 24 October 1939. Promoted AC1, 27 May 1940. Promoted LAC, 1 October 1940. Promoted Corporal, 8 July 1941. Promoted Sergeant, 1 May 1942. Award presented 27 June 1945. Posted to Release Centre, 25 July 1945. Released 27 July 1945.

This non-commissioned officer has been employed on experimental armament work at the Test and Development Establishment for the past three years. On

several occasions he has taken part in experimental trials of an extremely hazardous nature, during which he has always displayed the greatest skill and coolness. His untiring enthusiasm and ability displayed in the execution of all tasks allotted to him are most praiseworthy. His outstanding devotion to duty has set a very fine example to all.

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VINISH, P/O George Alexander (J17099) - **Distinguished Flying Cross** - No.10 Squadron, RAF - Award effective 1 July 1943 as per **London Gazette** dated 13 July 1943 and AFRO 1724/43 dated 27 August 1943. Born Prince Albert, 26 January 1920; home in Wakaw, Saskatchewan; enlisted Saskatoon, 12 February 1941. To No.2 Manning Depot, 8 March 1941. To No.2 BGS, 28 March 1941 (guard). To No.2 ITS, 4 May 1941; graduated and promoted LAC, 26 July 1941 when posted to No.6 EFTS; graduated 12 September 1941 when posted to No.4 SFTS; graduated and promoted Sergeant, 2 January 1942. To "Y" Depot, 3 January 1942. To RAF overseas, 23 January 1942. Promoted Flight Sergeant, 2 July 1942. Commissioned 6 March 1943. Promoted Flying Officer, 6 September 1943. Promoted Flight Lieutenant, 1 May 1944. Invested with award by King George VI 23 May 1944. Repatriated 30 November 1944. Retired 2 February 1945. Died in Toronto, 8 July 1964.

Throughout his tour of operational duty Pilot Officer Vinish has been an outstanding captain of aircraft. In March 1943, while on a sortie to Essen, he completed his mission successfully though his tail gunner seriously wounded and one engine in his aircraft was unserviceable. On another occasion he again bombed Essen effectively, although his windscreen had been shattered and fragments blown into his face. Pilot Officer Vinish has a splendid record and it is largely due to his resolution and enthusiasm that his crew has achieved many success.

NOTE: Public Record Office Air 2/8964 has recommendation drafted by the Commanding Officer, No.10 Squadron, 13 May 1943 when he had flown 29 sorties (177 hours). Sortie list and submission as follows:

8 September 1942 - Frankfurt (6.36, second pilot, bombed primary)
10 October 1942 - GARDENING (4.27)
13 October 1942 - Kiel (6.05)
15 October 1942 - Cologne (5.15)
7 November 1942 - Genoa (8.36)
9 November 1942 - Hamburg (1.58, abandoned, hydraulics unserviceable)
2 December 1942 - Frankfurt (6.10)

9 December 1942 - Turin (1.49, abandoned, engines unserviceable)
11 December 1942 - Turin (7.33, abandoned, heavy cloud)
14 December 1942 - GARDENING (3.30)
20 December 1942 - Duisburg (4.00)
15 January 1943 - Lorient (5.45)
21 January 1943 - GARDENING (5.22)
23 January 1943 - Lorient (6.21)
30 January 1943 - GARDENING (4.45)
4 February 1943 - Turin (8.13)
18 February 1943 - Wilhelmshaven (2.04, abandoned, unserviceable turret)
5 March 1943 - Essen (4.34)
8 March 1943 - Nuremberg (8.29)
9 March 1943 - Munich (8.31)
11 March 1943 - Stuttgart (7.49)
12 March 1943 - Essen (4.08)
22 March 1943 - St. Nazaire (6.120)
26 March 1943 - Duisburg (4.11)
27 March 1943 - Berlin (7.16)
3 April 1943 - Essen (4.35)
4 April 1943 - Kiel (5.27)
16 April 1943 - Pilsen (8.46)
 20 April 1943 - Stettin (8.01)
 26 April 1943 - Duisburg (4.33)
 28 April 1943 - GARDENING (6.40)
 30 April 1943 - Essen (4.45)

This Canadian officer was posted as a Sergeant to No.10 Squadron in September 1942, and after completing 29 successful operational sorties totalling 177 hours he has now been screened and recommended for posting to instructional duties.

Pilot Officer Vinish has throughout his tour been an outstanding captain, and his Flight Commander has repeatedly said of him, "Nothing seems too arduous or too trivial." It is but characteristic of his unswerving determination to blast the target that when on 12th March 1943, his tail gunner was seriously wounded by flak and one engine put out of action, he continued on three engines to bomb Essen before returning and landing at an emergency airfield. Again on 30th April 1943 his aircraft was heavily damaged by flak on approaching Essen, and although the front perspex was shattered and fragments blown into his face, he coolly continued on his mission and carried out a second bombing run.

This Dominion officer is undoubtedly one of the outstanding captains in this squadron, and it is typical of his grim resolution and ardour that in January 1943 his crew was top of the Group Photographic ladder. On reviewing Pilot Officer Vinish's operational record, I now find myself with the firm conviction that he actually merited the award of the Distinguished Flying Cross at least two months ago.

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VINNICOMBE, S/L Harry Cail (C985) - **Mention in Despatches** - Station Dartmouth (now Station Gander) - Award effective 1 January 1944 as per **London Gazette** and **Canada Gazette** of that date and AFRO 113/44 dated 21 January 1944. Born 16 June 1915 at Boston, Massachusetts (RCAF press release 2659 announcing award). Home in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia; enlisted in Halifax, 5 June 1939. Trained as pilot at Hamilton Flying Club and Camp Borden; qualified for pilots wings, 30 October 1939. With No.5 (BR) Squadron as of 14 March 1941. Promoted Flight Lieutenant, 1 July 1941. To "BW", 31 August 1942. To Shellburne, 3 November 1942. To "K", 27 January 1943. Promoted Squadron Leader, 1 April 1943. To Newfoundland, 30 November 1943. To No.1 Group Headquarters, 14 August 1944. Promoted Wing Commander, 1 December 1944. To No.160 (BR) Squadron, 3 March 1945. To Torbay, 4 June 1945. To War Staff College, 1 July 1945. Remained in postwar RCAF, reverting to Squadron Leader, 1 October 1946 but regaining Wing Commander rank, 1 September 1951; received Queens Coronation Medal, 23 October 1953 while with No.31 ACW Squadron. Died at Waterloo, Ontario, 23 June 2000. Governor General's Records (RG.7 Group 26, Volume 57, file 190-I) has citation.

This officer as assistant controller has by his capable ability and personal attention, carefully and skilfully directed anti-submarine operations and convoy patrols from his unit with outstanding success.

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VIPOND, F/L James French (J35759) - **Distinguished Flying Cross** - No.434 Squadron - Award effective 8 September 1945 as per **London Gazette** dated 21 September 1945 and AFRO 1704/45 dated 9 November 1945. Born 11 July 1916 in Southport, England; home in Toronto (news reporter); enlisted there 27 June 1942. To No.1 Manning Depot, 27 September 1942. To No.5 ITS, 23 January 1943; graduated and promoted LAC, 3 April 1943 but not posted to No.4 AOS until 1 May 1943; graduated and commissioned, 17 September 1943; to "Y" Depot, 1 October 1943. Taken on strength of No.3 PRC, Bournemouth, 21 October 1943. Promoted Flying Officer, 17 March 1944. Repatriated with No.434 Squadron, 15 June 1945. Retired 4 September 1945. Award presented 22 November 1948. No citation other than "completed...numerous operations against the enemy in the course of which [he has] invariably

displayed the utmost fortitude, courage and devotion to duty." DHist file 181.009 D.1941 (RG.9 Vol.20612) has recommendation dated 3 April 1945 when he had flown 28 sorties (156 hours 43 minutes), 24 June 1944 to 21 March 1945.

As an outstanding navigator, Flight Lieutenant Vipond has completed numerous sorties against heavily defended targets such as Stuttgart and Hamburg. This officer has continuously exhibited skill and reliability worthy of high praise. As Squadron Navigation Leader, he has carried out his duties very efficiently, holding the high respect of all those under him, and proving himself a tower of strength to the squadron. His devotion to duty and fine offensive spirit have been an example worthy of emulation by all members of the squadron.

The sortie list was as follows:

24 June 1944 - Bonnetot (3.50)
25 June 1944 - Gorenflos (4.10)
27 June 1944 - Wizernes (3.50)
1 July 1944 - Biennais (4.15)
4 July 1944 - Biennais (3.55)
18 July 1944 - Caen (4.50)
18 July 1944 - Paris (3.50)
20 July 1944 - Anderbelck (4.00)
22 July 1944 - St. Nazaire (5.55)
25 July 1944 - Stuttgart (8.20)
29 July 1944 - Hamburg (5.45)
3 August 1944 - Foret de Nieppe (4.05)
4 August 1944 - Bois de Casson (5.05)
7 August 1944 - La Hogue (4.50)
27 September 1944 - Sterkrade (5.20)
6 October 1944 - Dortmund (6.40)
9 October 1944 - Bochum (6.58)
14 October 1944 - Duisburg (6.00)
14 October 1944 - Duisburg (6.35)
23 October 1944 - Essen (5.55)
25 October 1944 - Homburg (5.25)
28 October 1944 - Cologne (6.05)
1 November 1944 - Oberhausen (6.35)
28 January 1945 - Stuttgart (7.50)
4 February 1945 - Bonn (6.40)
20 February 1945 - Dortmund (7.20)
27 February 1945 - Mainz (7.25)

21 March 1945 - Hemmingstadt (5.25)

RCAF photo PL-43604 (ex UK-20854, circa 26 April 1945) is captioned as follows: "A former stalwart of the **Globe and Mail** newsroom, F/L Jimmy Vipond of Toronto interrogates a flier on his return from attacking Leuna, one of the few remaining synthetic oil centres left to Nazi control in Germany. Vipond is now Navigation Officer of the Bluenose Squadron in RCAF Bomber Group. Centre sits his assistant interrogator, P/O W.L. Anderson, navigator, Southey, Saskatchewan. Patiently being interrogated is F/O Cliff Shaw, also a navigator, of North Bay, Ontario."

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VIRR, F/L Laurence Garnet Reid (C987) - **Mention in Despatches** - No.259 Squadron (AFRO gives "Overseas" only as unit) - Award effective 8 June 1944 as per **London Gazette** of that date and AFRO 1729/44 dated 11 August 1944. Born in Ramsgate, England, 13 April 1917 (Ferry Command records). Home in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia; enlisted in Kingston, 5 June 1939 as General List. Trained at Toronto Flying Club, qualifying for wings 30 October 1939. With No.5 (BR) Squadron as of 17 June 1941. Promoted Flight Lieutenant, 15 July 1941. To Ferry Command, 28 July 1942. To Britain by Catalina FP171, August 1942, arriving in Britain 6 September 1942; to East Africa in early 1943 where he flew a tour with No.259 Squadron. Promoted Squadron Leader, 12 December 1943. Repatriated 23 March 1945. To No.1 Air Command, 3 April 1945; to No.6 Repair Depot, 10 May 1945; to AFHQ, 16 December 1945. Retained rank of Squadron Leader as of 1 October 1946. To Trenton, 5 April 1947. To Northwest Air Command, date uncertain. Commanded RCAF Suffield Experimental Station. Promoted Wing Commander, 1 June 1952. On exchange duties with USAF, Pepperell Air Force Base, St. John's, Newfoundland until July 1957 when appointed Air Cadet Liaison Officer, AFHQ. Died in Ottawa, 27 February 2013. No citation in AFRO.

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VOGAN, P/O George Lindsay (J17351) - **Distinguished Flying Cross** - No.427 Squadron - Award effective 30 November 1943 as per **London Gazette** dated 10 December 1943 and AFRO 297/44 dated 11 February 1944. See **War Service Records 1939-1945** (Canadian Bank of Commerce, 1947). Born in Wellesley Township, Ontario, 21 August 1918. Educated at Elmira, Stratford, and Queens University; home in Millbank, Ontario. Enlisted in Hamilton 23 July 1941 and posted to No.1 Manning Depot. To No.4 BGS, 9 August 1941 (guard). To No.1 ITS, 10 October 1941; graduated and promoted LAC, 6 December 1941 when posted to No.4 AOS; graduated 14 March 1942 when posted to No.4 BGS; graduated and promoted Sergeant 25 April 1942 when posted to No.2 ANS; graduated 25 May 1942. To No.5 Manning Depot, 9 June 1942. To Embarkation Depot, 12 June 1942. To RAF overseas, 4 July 1942. Commissioned 22 April 1943.

Promoted Flying Officer, 22 October 1943. Flew a tour with No.427 Squadron (DFC 30 November 1943). Promoted to Flight Lieutenant, 30 October 1943, Squadron Leader in September 1944. Graduated with high honours from RAF Bombing Leaders' Course, No.1 Air Armament School, and became Bombing Leader of No.427 Squadron. Organized the Bombing Section at Gamston, Notts. Attended Bomber Command Bombing Analysis School, Worsop, Notts. Transferred to the OTU at Ossington, Notts., as Bombing Leader. Served as Bombing Leader at Bomber Command Instructors' School, Finningly, Yorks. Posted to Training and Operational Staff, No.6 Group Headquarters, January 1945. Repatriated 7 June 1945. To Eastern Air Command, 8 June 1945. To No.4 Release Centre, 28 August 1945. Retired 7 September 1945. Postwar minister of the United Church of Canada, chiefly in the Edmonton area. Retired 1992. Died in Mitchell, Ontario, 11 October 2009. Medal sent by registered mail.

Pilot Officer Vogan has completed many successful operations against the enemy in which he has displayed high skill, fortitude and devotion to duty.

VOGAN, S/L George Lindsay, DFC (J17351) - **Mention in Despatches** - No.6 Group Headquarters - Award effective 1 January 1946 as per **London Gazette** of that date and AFRO 322/46 dated 29 March 1946. AFRO gives unit only as "Overseas"; unit found in McEwen Papers list of recommendations for MiD.

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VOGAN, F/O Raymond Ross (J27576) - **Distinguished Flying Cross** - No.408 Squadron - Award effective 5 February 1945 as per **London Gazette** dated 20 February 1945 and AFRO 625/45 dated 13 April 1945. Born 19 March 1910 in Carrick, Ontario; home there (farmer); enlisted Ottawa 9 May 1942. To No.5 Manning Depot, 12 July 1942. To No.8 SFTS (guard), 19 August 1942. To No.1 ITS, 25 October 1942; graduated and promoted LAC, 30 December 1942 but not posted to No.7 AOS until 6 February 1943; graduated and commissioned, 25 June 1943. To "Y" Depot, 9 July 1943. To United Kingdom, 15 July 1943. Promoted Flying Officer, 25 December 1943. Repatriated 9 November 1944. To No.3 Release Centre, 21 December 1944. Retired 10 January 1945. Award presented 30 May 1947. No citation other than "completed... numerous operations against the enemy in the course of which [he has] displayed the utmost fortitude, courage and devotion to duty." DHist file 181.009 D.1515 (RG.24 Vol.20600) has recommendation dated 4 November 1944 when he had flown 33 sorties (160 hours ten minutes), 1 May to 12 September 1944.

Flying Officer Vogan has completed a tour of operations as navigator on four engined bombers in an exemplary manner. He has navigated his aircraft with exceptional accuracy to such heavily defended targets in Germany as Sterkrade,

Kiel, Stuttgart and Hamburg, and has on all occasions shown a complete disregard of any defences the enemy had to offer.

As a navigator, Flying Officer Vogan has stood out as one of the best the squadron has had, and his coolness and cheerful disregard of any dangers in operations has inspired his crew with complete confidence in his skill. He has, by his accuracy in timing and track keeping, set a fine example to all navigators in the squadron. Therefore I recommend that by virtue of this officer's outstanding service, he be awarded the Non-Immediate Distinguished Flying Cross.

The sortie list was as follows:

1 May 1944 - St. Ghislain (4.20)
9 May 1944 - Calais (3.30)
10 May 1944 - Ghent (4.10)
31 May 1944 - Au Favre (4.15)
2 June 1944 - Neufchatel (4.15)
5 June 1944 - Longue (4.20)
6 June 1944 - Coutances (5.40)
8 June 1944 - Mayenne (6.30)
12 June 1944 - Cambrai (4.40)
16 June 1944 - Sterkrade (4.20)
17 June 1944 - Oisemont (4.10)
25 June 1944 - Bientques (3.45)
26 June 1944 - Foret d'Eawy (4.05)
5 July 1944 - Siracourt (4.20)
6 July 1944 - Coquereaux (4.25)
17 July 1944 - Caen (4.35)
20 July 1944 - L'Hey (3.30)
23 July 1944 - Kiel (5.30)
24 July 1944 - Stuttgart (8.30)
25 July 1944 - Stuttgart (8.25)
27 July 1944 - Hamburg (4.50)
1 August 1944 - Ferme de Forestel (4.00)
2 August 1944 - Bois de Casson (4.30)
3 August 1944 - Bois de Casson (4.30)
5 August 1944 - St. Leu d'Esserent (5.10)
8 August 1944 - Foret de Chantilly (5.10)
9 August 1944 - Foret de Nieppe (3.45)
10 August 1944 - La Pallice (6.40)

11 August 1944 - Montrichard (5.05)
28 August 1944 - Cezembre (4.00)
9 September 1944 - Le Havre/Buick II (4.20)
11 September 1944 - Castrop Rauxel (5.00)
13 September 1944 - Wanne Eickel (5.05)

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VOKEY, W/C Joseph (C2194) - **Member, Order of the British Empire** - AFHQ - Award effective 1 January 1946 as per **Canada Gazette** of that date and AFRO 82/46 dated 25 January 1946. Home in Montreal; enlisted there 6 June 1940 in Administrative Branch; to AFHQ, 29 July 1940; promoted Flight Lieutenant, 15 May 1941; promoted Squadron Leader, 1 July 1942; promoted Wing Commander, 1 December 1944. To No.2 Release Centre, 16 April 1946. Retired 18 September 1946. Award presented 24 April 1948. Possible CEF member.

This officer in his capacity as Secretary of the Aerodrome Development and Projects Committee for over four years has performed his duties with outstanding ability and conscientiousness. His initiative and knowledge in dealing with Royal Canadian Air Force Headquarters Divisions and other Governmental Departments has been displayed time and again and has frequently resulted in considerable saving of public funds. His work throughout, despite the fact that it at times has been arduous, has been performed on a very high plane of efficiency.

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VOKEY, Corporal Joseph Henry Gordon (R73974, later C85274) - **Mention in Despatches** - Middleton St. George - Award effective 14 January 1944 as per **London Gazette** of that date and AFRO 874/44 dated 21 April 1944. Unit identified in AFRO only as "Overseas"; positive unit identification from **No.6 Group Monthly Summary of Operational and Training Activities** (January 1944). Born 13 December 1919. Home Verdun, Quebec; enlisted Montreal, 22 November 1940 as Equipment Assistant and posted to No.1 Manning Depot. To St. Thomas, 29 November 1940. To No.1 SFTS, 17 January 1941. To No.3 BGS, 1 February 1941. Promoted AC1, 22 February 1941. Promoted LAC, 19 July 1941. To "Y" Depot, 21 January 1942. To RAF overseas, 17 February 1942. Promoted Corporal, 1 July 1942. Promoted Sergeant, 20 August 1943. Commissioned 19 May 1944. Promoted Flying Officer, 19 November 1944. Repatriated 23 October 1945. To No.2 Release Centre, 30 October 1945. Retired 1 December 1945. Re-engaged as Air Cadet Officer, 15 March 1948 in rank of Flying Officer (300046).

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VOLLHOFFER, Sergeant Olga Mary (W301617) - **Mention in Despatches** - No.2 Detachment - Award effective 14 June 1945 as per **Canada Gazette** of that date and AFRO 1127/45 dated 6 July 1945. Home in Regina, Saskatchewan; enlisted there 28 October 1941 as cook. To CWAF Training Depot, 26 November 1941. To No.4 WS 20 December 1941. Promoted AW1, 31 January 1942 and posted that date to No.4 FTS. Promoted LAW, 1 July 1942. Promoted Corporal, 1 August 1942. Reclassified as Chef, 1 June 1943. Promoted Sergeant, 1 June 1944. To No.2 Filter Detachment, 8 September 1944. Recommended 19 January 1945. Certificate sent to Victoria, 4 July 1945. To No.6 Release Centre, 19 September 1945. Released 5 October 1945.

Sergeant Vollhoffer has worked long and arduous hours with no job too small or too unimportant to be left undone. She has diligently performed her duties in such a manner as to be a constant source of inspiration to her fellow workers. Her initiative and devotion to duty have been an outstanding contribution to her station.

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VOLLICK, FS (now WO2) Carlisle Nelson (R75767) - **British Empire Medal** - No.5 Radio School - Award effective as of 1 January 1945 as per **London Gazette** of that date and AFRO 89/45 dated 19 January 1945. Born 4 November 1909 in Dunnville, Ontario (RCAF press release 4907 announcing award). Educated there and Niagara Falls. Battery repair man in a garage (two years, barber (two years), sign painter (five years) and finally employed for two years by F.F. Henry, Electrical Radio Repairs, Dunnville. Served with 2nd Battalion, Dufferin and Haldiman Rifles, 21 July to 24 October 1940 (Corporal). Enlisted in RCAF, Hamilton, 5 November 1940 as Wireless Electrical Mechanic with rank of Leading Aircraftman and posted to No.1 Manning Depot, Toronto. To Embarkation Pool, Saint John, New Brunswick, 3 January 1941. Taken on strength of No.2 Personnel Despatch Centre (from Canada), 15 January 1941. To No.4 Wireless and Radio School, Yatesbury, 17 January 1941. Reclassified as Radio Mechanic, 28 March 1941. To No.1 Personnel Despatch Centre, 23 June 1941. To No.31 Radar School, Clinton, 26 June 1941. Unit subsequently renamed No.5 Radio School. Promoted Corporal, 1 October 1941. Promoted Sergeant, 1 June 1942. Reclassified as Radar Mechanic and promoted Flight Sergeant, 1 January 1944. Promoted WO2, 1 October 1944. To No.4 Release Centre, Toronto, 14 October 1945. Retired 23 October 1945. Award presented 17 June 1945. Died, date not stated, in Dunnville, Ontario, age 78 (which would place his date of death in 1987) as per Royal Canadian Legion "Last Post" website and **Legion Magazine** of March 1988.

This airman has been the non-commissioned officer in charge of the radar training section at this station for the past year, during which time he has shown outstanding initiative in organizing additional instruction, which has done much

towards raising the standard of training. His keen interest and outstanding work in organizing extra-mural activities is most praiseworthy. His outstanding skill and untiring efforts he has rendered highly meritorious service.

Recommendation raised 24 July 1944 by a Squadron Leader whose signature is illegible. Text as follows:

This airman has been the non-commissioned officer in charge of the radar training section at this station for the past eleven months, and in addition to exceptional performance in the discharge of his normal duties, has rendered special services and shown initiative in organizing additional instruction, serving to raise the level of training. His interest and outstanding work in organizing extra-mural activities is also worthy of high commendation. The exemplary attitude of this Non-Commissioned Officer is reflected by the airmen in this Section.

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VOUT, F/O Theodore Robert (C7880) - **Mention in Despatches** - Award effective 1 June 1943 as per **London Gazette** dated 2 June 1943 and AFRO 1247/43 dated 2 July 1943. Born in Leeds, Ontario, 27 October 1908. Home in Ottawa; enlisted there 3 October 1941 as Range Controller and commissioned that date. To RAF Overseas Pool, 13 November 1941. Promoted Flying Officer, 3 April 1942. Promoted Flight Lieutenant, 15 September 1943. Reported that as of May 1945 he was an Air Traffic Controller in Malta although posting record indicates repatriation to Canada 23 April 1945 and posting to No.1 Air Command on 8 May 1945. To No.1 Instrument Flying School, 2 June 1945. To Eastern Air Command, 27 June 1945. To No.8 OTU, 10 July 1945. To Greenwood, 31 July 1945. To Halifax, 2 October 1945. Retired 11 October 1945.