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TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER, 1941

CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD.

*St. James's Palace, S.W.1.
9th September, 1941.*

The KING has been graciously pleased to give orders for the following Appointment to the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire:—

To be an Additional Member of the Military Division of the said Most Excellent Order:—

Pilot Officer Charles Alfred Patten (82205), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.

One night in April, 1941, Pilot Officer Patten was the rear gunner of an aircraft which crashed and burst into flames during an operational mission. On extricating himself from his turret, he went to the front of the aircraft, where the front gunner was alive but trapped. Although this part of the aircraft was ablaze, and ammunition and flares were exploding, Pilot Officer Patten immediately endeavoured to rescue his trapped comrade. By almost superhuman efforts, and with the assistance of two members of the crew, he was able to wrench the turret from the aircraft and drag the front gunner to safety. By his promptness and courage, Pilot Officer Patten undoubtedly saved the life of this member of the crew.

CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD.

*St. James's Palace, S.W.1.
9th September, 1941.*

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

Group Captain John Astley Gray, D.F.C.
Acting Squadron Leader Joseph Aidan MacCarthy, M.B., Ch.B., B.A.O. (23425).

One night in May, 1941, the pilot of an aircraft attempted to land with the undercarriage retracted. The aircraft crashed into the main bomb dump and then burst into

flames. Group Captain Gray and Squadron Leader MacCarthy immediately went to the scene of the accident. Although there was some delay in getting the fire tender to the spot, owing to wire entanglements at the bomb dump, Group Captain Gray and Squadron Leader MacCarthy entered the burning aircraft and between them succeeded in extricating two members of the crew who were trapped. By the time the first man had been extricated the fire had spread from the starboard tanks to the cabin and on to the port tanks. Ammunition, incendiaries and flares were burning in the wreckage, whilst numerous explosions erupted from the tanks. In spite of this, an attempt was made to rescue the pilot who was still trapped at the bottom of the fuselage. He was dragged clear but his harness still held him to the burning aircraft. Before he could be released another petrol tank burst and flames spread to such an extent that any further attempts to rescue him became impossible. Group Captain Gray and Squadron Leader MacCarthy were assisted by two other officers who both displayed great courage in their efforts. Group Captain Gray received severe burns on the head and his uniform was destroyed but he continued his efforts until overcome by the fumes. Squadron Leader MacCarthy suffered minor facial injuries caused by burns but, despite this and the strain to which he had been exposed, he would not retire to his quarters until he was satisfied that everything possible had been done for the comfort of the injured. Both Group Captain Gray and Squadron Leader MacCarthy displayed great bravery in the most appalling circumstances.

Acting Flight Lieutenant Harold Charles Morris (44773).
910986 Leading Aircraftman John Lewis Goldsmith.

One night in February, 1941, an aircraft, with instructor and pupil as occupants,