

*Awards approved by His Majesty the King*

Office of the Minister of Defence,  
Wellington, 6th May, 1944.

THE following awards to members of the Royal New Zealand Air Force since the 3rd September, 1939, have been published from time to time in the *London Gazette*, but have not previously appeared in the *New Zealand Gazette* :—

*Victoria Cross*

His Majesty the King has been graciously pleased to confer the Victoria Cross on the undermentioned officer and airman in recognition of most conspicuous bravery :—

Flying Officer Lloyd Allan Trigg, D.F.C. (NZ 413515), of Pahiatua (missing, believed killed).

Flying Officer Trigg had rendered outstanding service on convoy escort and anti-submarine duties. He had completed forty-six operational sorties, and had invariably displayed skill and courage of a very high order.

One day, in August, 1943, Flying Officer Trigg undertook, as captain and pilot, a patrol in a Liberator although he had not previously made any operational sorties in that type of aircraft. After searching for eight hours a surfaced U-boat was sighted.

Flying Officer Trigg immediately prepared to attack. During the approach the aircraft received many hits from the submarine's anti-aircraft guns and burst into flames, which quickly enveloped the tail.

The moment was critical. Flying Officer Trigg could have broken off the engagement and made a forced landing in the sea. But if he continued the attack the aircraft would present a "no deflection" target to deadly accurate anti-aircraft fire, and every second spent in the air would increase the extent and intensity of the flames and diminish his chances of survival.

There could have been no hesitation or doubt in his mind. He maintained his course in spite of the already precarious condition of his aircraft and executed a masterly attack. Skimming over the U-boat at less than 50 ft. with the aircraft, fire entering his opened bomb doors, Flying Officer Trigg dropped his bombs on and around the U-boat, where they exploded with devastating effect. A short distance further on the Liberator dived into the sea with her gallant captain and crew.

The U-boat sank within twenty minutes, and some of her crew were picked up later in a rubber dinghy that had broken loose from the Liberator.

The battle of the Atlantic has yielded many fine stories of air attacks on underwater craft, but Flying Officer Trigg's exploit stands out as an epic of grim determination and high courage. His was the path of duty that leads to glory.

NZ 401793 Sergeant James Allen Ward, of Wanganui.

On the night of 7th July, 1941, Sergeant Ward was second pilot of a Wellington returning from an attack on Munster. When flying over the Zuider Zee at 13,000 ft., the aircraft was attacked from beneath by a Messerschmitt 110, which secured hits with cannon shell and incendiary bullets. The rear gunner was wounded in the foot, but delivered a burst of fire which sent the enemy fighter down apparently out of control. Fire then broke out near the starboard engine, and, fed by petrol from a split pipe, quickly gained an alarming hold and threatened to spread to the entire wing. The crew forced a hole in the fuselage and made strenuous efforts to reduce the fire with extinguishers and even the coffee in their vacuum flasks, but without success. They were then warned to be ready to abandon the aircraft.

As a last resort, Sergeant Ward volunteered to make an attempt to smother the fire with an engine cover which happened to be in use as a cushion. At first he proposed to discard his parachute to reduce wind resistance, but was finally persuaded to take it. A rope from the dinghy was tied to him, though this was of little help and might have become a danger had he been blown off the aircraft. With the help of the navigator, he then climbed through the narrow astrot hatch and put on his parachute. The bomber was flying at a reduced speed, but the wind-pressure must have been sufficient to render the operation one of extreme difficulty.

Breaking the fabric to make hand and foot holds where necessary, and also taking advantage of existing holes in the fabric, Sergeant Ward succeeded in descending three feet to the wing and proceeding another three feet to a position behind the engine, despite the slipstream from the airscrew, which nearly blew him off the wing. Lying in this precarious position, he smothered the fire in the wing fabric and tried to push the cover into the hole in the wing and on to the leaking pipe from which the fire came. As soon as he removed his hand, however, the terrific wind blew the cover out, and when he tried again it was lost. Tired as he was he was able, with the navigator's assistance, to make successfully the perilous journey back into the aircraft.

There was now no danger of the fire spreading from the petrol pipe, as there was no fabric left nearby, and in due course it burnt itself out. When the aircraft was nearly home some petrol which had collected in the wing blazed up furiously, but died down quite suddenly. A safe landing was then made despite the damage sustained by the aircraft. The flight home had been made possible by the gallant action of Sergeant Ward in extinguishing the fire on the wing in circumstances of the greatest difficulty and at the risk of his life.

His Majesty the King has been graciously pleased to approve the following awards in recognition of gallantry and devotion to duty in operations against the enemy :—

*Distinguished Service Order*

- Acting Wing Commander Trevor Owen Freeman, D.F.C. (NZ 1026), of Dunedin.
- Acting Wing Commander Edward Preston Wells, D.F.C. (NZ 39950), of Cambridge.
- Acting Squadron Leader Maechel Anthony Ensor, D.F.C. (NZ 402175), of Rangiora.
- Acting Flight Lieutenant James Fraser Barron, D.F.C., D.F.M. (NZ 401749), of Palmerston South.
- Group Captain Edward George Olson (NZ 1008), of New Plymouth.
- Flight Lieutenant Keith Frederick Thiele, D.F.C. (NZ 404966), of Christchurch.
- Pilot Officer Valentine Stuart Moore, D.F.M. (NZ 404924), of Taumarunui.
- Acting Squadron Leader Gage Darwent Sise, D.F.C. (NZ 39941), of Dunedin.
- Acting Squadron Leader William Robert Kofoed, D.F.C. (NZ 404380), of Outram.
- Acting Squadron Leader Desmond James Scott, D.F.C. (NZ 40779), of Westland.
- Acting Squadron Leader James Bayntun Starky, D.F.C. (NZ 401787), of Opotiki.
- Acting Flight Lieutenant Charles Wynne Brunsdon Kelly, D.F.C. (NZ 403562), of Christchurch.
- Acting Flight Lieutenant John Leonard Wright, D.F.C. (NZ 405781), of Frankton.
- Acting Squadron Leader John Milne Checketts, D.F.C. (NZ 403602), of Invercargill.
- Squadron Leader John Alfred Hegman, D.F.C. (NZ 411508), of Auckland.
- Flight Lieutenant Malcolm Robert Head (NZ 413414), of Invercargill.
- Acting Squadron Leader John Leslie Munro, D.F.C. (NZ 413942), of Gisborne.

*Military Cross*

- Pilot Officer Edmund Douglas Crossley (NZ 402465), of Wellington.

*Bar to Distinguished Flying Cross*

- Acting Flight Lieutenant Edward Preston Wells, D.F.C. (NZ 39950), of Cambridge.
- Pilot Officer Timothy John Wilder Williams, D.F.C. (NZ 401797), of Hastings.
- Acting Squadron Leader Frederick John Lucas, D.F.C. (NZ 1056), of Balclutha.
- Acting Wing Commander Trevor Owen Freeman, D.S.O., D.F.C. (NZ 1026), of Dunedin.
- Flight Lieutenant Desmond James Scott, D.F.C. (NZ 40779), of Westland.
- Flying Officer Maechel Anthony Ensor, D.F.C. (NZ 402175), of Rangiora.
- Flying Officer Roy Oldfield Calvert, D.F.C. (NZ 404890), of Cambridge.
- Acting Flight Lieutenant Cyril Keith Silcock, D.F.C. (NZ 411461), of Nelson.
- Acting Squadron Leader Keith Frederick Thiele, D.S.O., D.F.C. (NZ 404966), of Christchurch.
- Acting Squadron Leader Reginald Joseph Cowan Grant, D.F.C., D.F.M. (NZ 391352), of Auckland.
- Squadron Leader Cyril Henry Baigent, D.F.C. (NZ 411973), of Taupo.
- Flying Officer John Donald Rae, D.F.C. (NZ 402896), of Auckland.
- Squadron Leader Bruce Gibb Wallace, D.F.C. (NZ 403482), of Invercargill.
- Acting Squadron Leader Evan Dall Mackie, D.F.C. (NZ 41520), of Waihi.

*Distinguished Flying Cross*

- Squadron Leader Cyril Eytton Kay, O.B.E. (NZ 1011), of Auckland.
- Flying Officer Neville Williams (NZ 1068), of Auckland.
- Flight Lieutenant Aubrey Arthur Ninnis Breckon (NZ 1025), of Auckland.
- Acting Flight Lieutenant John Adams (NZ 1027), of Christchurch.
- Flying Officer Trevor Owen Freeman (NZ 1026), of Dunedin.
- Flying Officer William Harcourt Coleman (NZ 39781), of Auckland.
- Acting Flight Lieutenant Frederick John Lucas (NZ 1056), of Balclutha.
- Flying Officer Wilfred Maurice Chalk Williams (NZ 1057), of Napier.
- Flying Officer Lindsay Basil Buchanan (NZ 40885), of Palmerston North.
- Flying Officer William Davenport Brown (NZ 40732), of Wanganui.
- Pilot Officer George Ronald Simich (NZ 391369), of Auckland.
- Pilot Officer Kenneth Stanley Peterson (NZ 40628), of Wellington.
- Pilot Officer Richard James Bolland (NZ 40642), of Auckland.
- Acting Flight Lieutenant Edward Preston Wells (NZ 39950), of Cambridge.
- Pilot Officer Graham Wellesley Hamlin (NZ 40227), of Auckland.
- Pilot Officer Alan Murray Hobbs (NZ 40230), of Christchurch.
- Pilot Officer John William Purcivall (NZ 401031), of New Plymouth.
- Pilot Officer James Williamson Thomson (NZ 40667), of Oamaru.
- Pilot Officer Winston Brooke Mackley (NZ 39926), of Auckland.
- Pilot Officer Eric Clarence Cox (NZ 401256), of Napier.
- Pilot Officer Timothy John Wilder Williams (NZ 401797), of Hastings.
- Acting Flight Lieutenant Everest George Edmunds (NZ 403312), of Wellington.
- Pilot Officer Harold Roger Blake (NZ 401164), of Christchurch.
- Pilot Officer James Fraser Craig (NZ 402168), of Wellington.
- Pilot Officer William Adino Newenham (NZ 39869), of Nelson.
- Pilot Officer Maechel Anthony Ensor (NZ 402175), of Rangiora.
- Acting Flight Lieutenant Graham Howe Francis (NZ 391834), of Takapuna.