

The ROUNDDEL

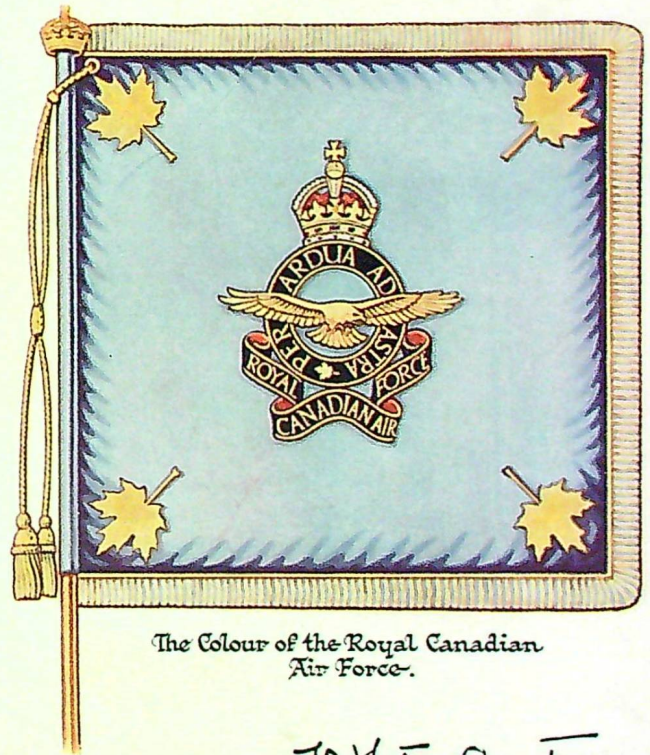
VOL. 2, No. 8
JUNE 1950

*app'd.
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The King's Colour of the Royal Canadian Air Force.

College of Arms
London
January, 1949.



The Colour of the Royal Canadian Air Force.

J. D. Hester - Armstrong
Chester Herald
and Inspector of Royal
Canadian Air Force Badges.

ROYAL CANADIAN AIR FORCE



Issued on the authority of
THE CHIEF OF THE AIR STAFF
 Royal Canadian Air Force

VOL. 2, No. 8

JUNE 1950

* * * **CONTENTS** * * *

	<i>page</i>
THE COLOURS OF OUR SERVICE.....	1
EDITORIAL	
Sgt. Shatterproof and the Fourth Estate.....	2
ARTICLES	
Stalag Luft III: Part 8.....	4
No. 401 (RAM) Squadron.....	10
Per Ardua Ad - ?.....	22
Round the World by North Star.....	26
Air Power Grows Up.....	31
Gliders in the Sky.....	38
REGULAR FEATURES	
R.C.A.F. Association.....	16
June Transfers.....	23
What's the Score?.....	24
Royal Canadian Air Cadets.....	42
The Dimmer View.....	46
Letters to the Editor.....	47
MISCELLANY	
R.C.A.F. Composer.....	3
!.....	9
Bygone Beauty.....	21
Human Compass.....	41
Memorial Books.....	44
Ten Pins.....	45

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 Ottawa, Ont.

The Colours of Our Service

His Majesty the King has graciously approved the carrying by the R.C.A.F. of the Colours shown on our front cover. This is an honour of which our Service has reason to be more than ordinarily proud, since the R.C.A.F. is the first British Air Force to be granted, as a whole, the right to carry the King's Colour. Presentation and consecration of the Colours will take place in Ottawa on the King's birthday, June 5th. His Excellency Viscount Alexander of Tunis, Governor-General of Canada, will make the presentation on his Majesty's behalf. Photographs of the ceremony will be published in a later issue.

Reproduced below is a facsimile of the petition submitted to His Majesty by the Hon. Brooke Claxton, Minister of National Defence.



MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEFENCE

The Minister of National Defence of Canada presents his humble duty to His Majesty the King and wishes to inform His Majesty that:

- (a) the Royal Canadian Air Force is desirous of enjoying the honour and distinction equivalent to that enjoyed by the Royal Canadian Navy and the Canadian Army in carrying Colours;
- (b) accordingly, illustrations of the proposed King's Colour of the Royal Canadian Air Force and the Colour of the Royal Canadian Air Force were submitted for review to His Majesty and to which His Majesty kindly gave his gracious approval;
- (c) the Royal Canadian Air Force intends to carry the King's Colour of the Royal Canadian Air Force and the Colour of the Royal Canadian Air Force on ceremonial parades held:
- (i) in honour of visits of His Majesty, His Majesty's Family, Foreign Sovereigns, Presidents of Republican States, Members of Foreign Imperial and Royal Families, Viceroys, His Excellency the Governor General of Canada, High Commissioners,

- 2 -

Governors, Lieutenant Governors, Officer or special Commissioner administering the Government in capacity as His Majesty's representative within the area of his jurisdiction;

- (ii) on His Majesty's Birthday, Battle of Britain Sunday and on other appropriate occasions.

On all other ceremonial parades the Colour of the Royal Canadian Air Force will be carried alone.

The Minister of National Defence accordingly has the honour to recommend for the approval of His Majesty the humble petition of the Royal Canadian Air Force to carry the King's Colour of the Royal Canadian Air Force and the Colour of the Royal Canadian Air Force.

The Minister of National Defence remains His Majesty's most faithful and obedient servant.

Minister of National Defence.

Ottawa, January 13, 1950.

Sgt. Shatterproof and the Fourth Estate

IN A BRIEF AND SOMEWHAT subdued letter, Sgt. Shatterproof advises us that he has gone to earth.

"I am lying low," he writes, "until June 21st. After the hideous experience I mentioned in my last letter, I shall not feel safe until the Spring is well and truly over. I am therefore remaining on the Station, trusting in the natural robustness of my constitution to enable me to survive the Mess diet and outlast the mating-season.

"Meanwhile, my mental activity is unimpaired. In fact, its keen edge seems to have been whetted by my self-imposed privations. I have detected several new subtleties in K.R. (Air), cunningly concealed in sub-paragraphs where the Brass no doubt hopes that the boys in the field will fail to notice them. Should I again have occasion to cross swords with W.O.1 Gallstone, I plan to shake him to the core.

"In addition to analysing the legal aspect of the R.C.A.F., I have been giving my attention to its intellectual welfare. I have been studying the periodicals published, not only by the various Units of our Regular Service, but also by the Air Cadets, the Reserve, and the R.C.A.F. Association. I receive regularly seventeen organs of Air Force thought, and (ignoring one whose title you, Sir, should have little trouble in guessing) I am happy to report that we appear to be in the middle of a literary renaissance.

"The following is a list of the periodicals just referred to:

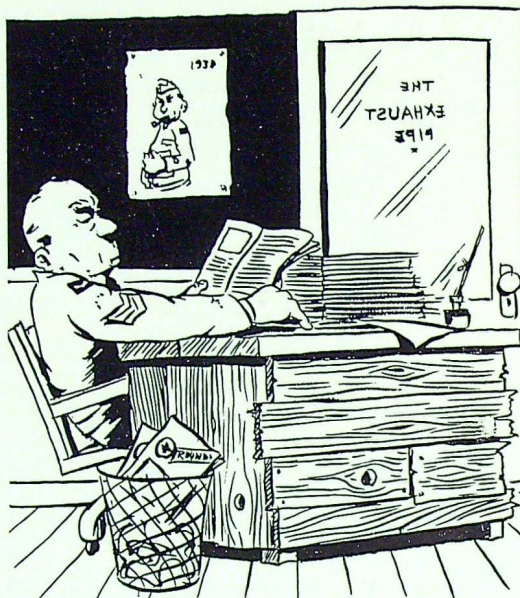
'Gremlin Gen'. The gallant pioneer of Cadet Journalism. An enthusiastic mimeographed monthly published by No. 200 (Sudbury) Squadron, R.C.A.C.

'Monthly Newsletter'. A multigraphed official report of Air Material Command Headquarters' activities and projects. Of more interest to Shatterproof the Executive than to Shatterproof the Connoisseur.

'News Letter'. Mimeographed fortnightly by No. 1 Radar and Communications Unit (Reserve), Montreal. Concise and to the point.

'New Westonian'. Published monthly by No. 1 Supply Depot, Weston, Ont. An all-round Station paper, with an astrological section that I strongly recommend to the Planning Branch of our Service.

'R.C.A.F. Navigation Bulletin'. Published irregularly by the Air Navigation School, Summerside, P.E.I. A very fine multigraphed publication that seems to have no doubt about where it's going.



'The Air Cadet'. Monthly newspaper published by No. 1 Wing, Vancouver. Printed by letterpress on high-quality paper, it contains B.C.-wide Cadet news coverage and excellent photographs. An unusually fine effort.

'The Bordenaire'. The fortnightly mimeographed magazine of R.C.A.F. Station Camp Borden. Another all-round Station paper, written with plenty of gusto and humour.

'The 11 Supply Depot Round-Up'. Monthly mimeographed magazine giving detailed coverage of every aspect of Station life. First-class sports section. Since it was in the bracing air of Calgary that the 'Eye-Opener' flourished, I have great hopes of this publication.

'The Gosling'. Mimeographed pocket-size magazine published weekly by R.C.A.F. Station Goose Bay. Caters to all the interests of a large and isolated Station. At the present time I find its recipes rather nostalgic reading.

'The Jet Journal'. Lively mimeographed monthly newsletter published by No. 438 (F) Squadron (Reserve), Montreal.

'The Link'. Top-flight monthly letterpress magazine published by the Canadian Joint Air Training Centre, Rivers, Man. Skilfully combines Army and Air Force interests.

'The Rocket'. Another first-rate and well-produced magazine, published quarterly by R.C.A.F. Station Rockcliffe. Covers the doings of A.T.C., the Photo Squadrons, Experimental and Proving Establishment, and miscellaneous Station activities.

'The Roundel'. Even its position on this list (13th) is unlucky.

'The Thrust'. New monthly mimeographed organ of No. 1. (West Montreal) Squadron, R.C.A.C. I look forward to its future issues.

The Roundel

'Squadronaire'. Published monthly by No. 100 (Bluenose) Wing (W.D.), R.C.A.F.A. A gay little mimeographed newsletter, edited by a lady with a nice taste in jokes.

'Wings Over Greenwood'. A newspaper printed on good paper and published weekly by R.C.A.F. Station Greenwood, N.S. High standard of writing and clever cartoon character.

'?' Mimeographed monthly newspaper of No. 313 (Edmundston) Squadron, R.C.A.C. No question about its continuing success, but title to be decided upon by competition before its second issue.

"The above list is not complete, I know. There is also a paper named 'Wings', published by the Hamilton Air Cadets, which has not yet come my way; and I have not included 'The Exhaust Pipe', our own Station paper, for which I act as adviser on all questions of law and protocol. Nor, you will notice, have I ventured upon any close criticism, since I am all too well aware of the difficulties that attend the production of magazines and newspapers by comparatively small groups, no matter how fiercely the fires of individual genius may burn. But complete or not, the list is impressive enough to merit being pinned up in a conspicuous place in the editorial office of 'The Roundel'."



"Let me exhort you to reflect seriously as you gaze upon it, Sir. Let us, in our moments of despair (which must be many), draw new strength from the contemplation of it. Let us square our shoulders and manfully resolve to climb the ladder of success rung by rung. If sixteen other publications have already won the approval of the boys (and girls) in the field, there is still hope, however slight, for 'The Roundel'."

R.C.A.F. Composer



"Dream With Me on the Miramichi," a song written and composed by LAC F. J. Orford, of R.C.A.F. Station, Chatham, N.B., has already achieved considerable fame in New Brunswick and is shortly to be released to the public by Broadcast Music Incorporated.

LAC Orford, who served with the R.A.F. from 1940 to 1946 and who joined the R.C.A.F. in England last year, has been composing since he was 15 years old. During the Second World War he appeared in troop shows in England and on the Continent. Several of his earlier compositions were recorded for Columbia Records by well-known English and American bands.

The accompanying photograph of a Chatham group shows LAC Orford in the front row, to the right of the microphone. He has a wife and three children, the eldest of whom, Michael, recently won a children's talent contest in Newcastle, N.B.

Stalag Luft III: Part 8

by FLT. LT. JOHN E. MAHONEY

CHAPTER TEN

Tarmstedt to Trenthorst

DURING THE FIRST THREE or four weeks our new camp was hell. No beds. No cooking utensils. Very little barrack equipment. Broken stoves. No coal or wood. Shortage of lights. Dirt, dampness, a minimum of food, and no clothing except what we had brought with us.

The huts were much the same as those we had occupied at Sagan, but the rooms were larger and fewer per hut, each one being designed to accommodate fourteen men. The grounds outside were strewn with rubbish, and there was a dank, musty atmosphere about the place. The only really good feature was an excellent shower-house not far away, to which we were permitted to go in organized groups once a week.

On the first day each block was issued with one cupboard per room, one water jug per two rooms, one bowl per five officers, and two wash-basins (to be used for washing clothes and dishes) per block. Very few of the fellows had brought any dishes or cooking pots with them, on account of the weight. We therefore buckled down to "tin-bashing" again, and before long, plates, bowls and jugs (made from the adaptable "Klim" tins) began to make their appearance.

Our greatest difficulty was in cooking our food. The only contribution the camp kitchen could make was to provide hot water five times daily and one issue of soup at lunch time. There was no fuel at first, but later the Goons allowed us to organize "wood parties" to collect brushwood and dead tree stumps outside the camp, under supervision of a guard. We had to give our parole that we would not attempt to escape.

Slowly but surely, however, conditions improved. Equipment began to filter through — beds, eating utensils, water jugs, bowls and cups. Everyone was excited when the new beds arrived. They were

metal spring camp beds, the like of which we had not seen before. We allotted them by the usual method of cutting cards.

For some time we had to manage on half-parcels, as there were not many in stock. This resulted in considerable black market activity with the German guards. The kriegies used to line up at night by the gate and take their turn in making deals with the guards who came along. They would trade bread, eggs and even chickens in exchange for cigarettes, soap, coffee and chocolate. Others used to walk around the wire and try to arrange deals with the guards patrolling outside. This traffic came to an end, however, when one night an officer was shot while attempting to do some trading beyond the "warning wire".

The prisoners' habitual moaning about living conditions practically ceased when they heard of the sad plight of the occupants of some of the other camps. At a meeting of British medical officer representatives from every British prison camp in Germany, a horrible picture of living conditions was disclosed to us. Though not as bad as some of the infamous horror-camps, they were bad enough. Many were without fuel or water and were sadly lacking in barrack equipment of all kinds. One camp had had no Red Cross food parcels for six months, others for three. The Germans said they just couldn't keep them supplied, since the German transportation system was completely ruined. (As it was now March, 1945, this was quite believable.) On top of all this, no new prison camps had been built for some time, with the result that the existing camps were badly overcrowded. Typhoid, dysentery, jaundice and other diseases were rampant. We at Tarmstedt were comparatively well off.

In view of the larger number of occupants of each room (in our case, twelve), we divided the duties as follows: one cook, two assistant cooks and general "stooges," one tea- and coffee-maker,



Warning sign for advancing British troops. Seated are the author (left) and Flt. Lt. R. J. Ball

two lunch and tea-time washers-up, one water-fetcher and towel-washer, one vegetable-peeler, and one floor-sweeper and wood-chopper. We also held regular mess meetings, at which we discussed such all-important problems as quietness after "lights out," room duties, distribution of chocolate, getting in the way of the supper disher-outer (by clustering around the table, looking at the helpings to choose which one we'd take), and so on.

After the great push across the Rhine and the rapid advance which followed, our hopes of an early liberation soared. Would the Germans leave us or would we soon be on the march again? In preparation against the latter eventuality, the S.B.O. issued a complete set of instructions. Many of the boys began making pack-frames and little hand-carts to carry their kits. Some of the latter required a great deal of hard work, as the wheels had to be carved out of whatever wood could be found.

Overhead, the Luftwaffe was nowhere to be seen. Allied bombers and fighters roared above us each night with monotonous regularity — and when the target was Bremen or Hamburg, we were given a magnificent display of fireworks. Sometimes, too, our delight was tempered with sorrow as we saw trails of fire pass through the night like blazing comets — sober reminders that victory

was being won only at the cost of many of our comrades' lives . . .

Then, when the Allies had reached Bremen, twenty-five miles away, we received the order once more to take up our packs.

* * *

We tried to delay the second march as much as possible. Every hour stalled, we felt, gave us a better chance of speedy release. The S.B.O. ordered a "go slow" policy. The front of the column was to march in slow time, and the rest of us were ordered to stay with our own blocks and not to overtake any of the others. We were to halt for rests as often as the Germans would tolerate our doing so.

We started out late in the evening. We had not even reached the main road (a distance of about three hundred yards) when a heavy mist descended. The Kommandant yielded to the S.B.O.'s persuasion and let us return to the camp, since we could not be competently guarded in such bad visibility. The Germans themselves were fed-up with the war, and were just as willing to be taken prisoner as to undergo the impending march. As long as they had a reasonable excuse to offer the High Command and the Gestapo they were satisfied.

The next morning we set out once more.

How different this march was from the last! The weather was perfect. The days were sunny, but not too hot. We were not hurried. We took our time as we wandered slowly along the quiet country roads, even enjoying the pleasant German countryside. We passed through sleepy villages, where simple country folk would gather along the road to watch us go by. They held no grudge against us, and were only too willing to stop for a friendly chat. I am quite convinced that their attitude was genuine — and not adopted merely because they had lost the war.

Inevitably the German "fraus" appeared by their gates, with buckets of cool water to quench our thirst. If we wanted hot water to make coffee and they happened to have some handy, they would gladly fetch it for us. Unless there happened



British P.O.W.'s with two Russian slave labourers at Trenthorst

to be an officer nearby, no objection was made by the guards to our dallying.

We soon acquired the habit of trading with the German civilians. In the country they seemed to have eggs, bread, potatoes and apples to spare, though not in the larger towns. They were only too eager to trade such items for chocolate, cigarettes, soap and coffee, all of which they hardly ever saw. They had not tasted real coffee and chocolate since the war broke out. Their cigarette ration was two per day, and they could only get one bar of soap a month.

It was very amusing to watch the trading taking place. The boys would keep their eyes peeled for a likely customer, and the first person there usually made the deal. At first, the kriegie would approach with a somewhat bashful air, conscious of his meagre knowledge of the German language. He would point to the cigarettes in his hand and hesitantly ask "*Haben sie Eier (eggs), Brot (bread)?*" Later, as his knowledge of German increased with practice and his confidence in his trading ability grew, he would walk boldly up to a door, ring the bell and enquire, "*Wollen sie Eier, Brot oder Kartoffel verkaufen für Cigaretten, Schocolada oder Kaffee?*" (Do you want to sell eggs, bread or potatoes for cigarettes, chocolate or coffee?) It is amazing how quickly one can pick

up a language in actual conversation with a native. In my twenty months behind barbed wire I had not learned a dozen words of German, but after three weeks on the road I could carry on elementary conversations.

As I said before, the marching was very slow. Actually, it would have been much easier to step out at a decent stride. We averaged, with our frequent rest periods, only about one mile per hour, or seven miles per day. We generally marched till about three o'clock in the afternoon, at which time the Germans would commandeer some farmer's field for the night and we would prepare to sleep in the open. Immediately on arriving at such a field, the first thing we did was gather brushwood for a fire. Meals consisted mostly of food from our Red Cross parcels, of which we had each been given two at the start of the journey. The only rations the Germans provided were bread and an occasional tin of meat. Of course, we also had the food we earned by trading with the civilians — and this, for many of us, amounted to quite a lot. During the whole journey, I had at least four dozen eggs.

After the meal, we would prepare our beds. If there was any straw nearby, we used it for mattresses. If not, we slept on the ground on a single thickness of blankets.

Frequently we saw our planes circling overhead, and we had a few anxious moments, fearing we might be mistaken for Germans. We always took the precaution of identifying ourselves by means of huge letters, made from pieces of white clothing and placed in a conspicuous position, reading "RAF POW." We were only attacked once during the march, when some blunderhead in a Spitfire shot-up the tail end of our column and caused four casualties.

Awake at seven in the mornings, we lit our fires again for the morning brew, consisting of a couple of pieces of bread and jam and a cup of coffee. After this we packed our kits ready for the eight o'clock start.

When we had been marching for a couple of days, a new form of transportation began to appear. Someone had obtained a baby-carriage to carry his kit. This was the start of a grand effort

to obtain conveyances of any kind, and before long baby-carriages, kiddy-cars, wheelbarrows, small and large wagons, and vehicles of every description made their appearance. I myself eventually managed to purchase (for the sum of one tin of coffee, a bar of soap and twenty cigarettes) a baby-carriage of very ancient vintage. Very proud of my acquisition, I dumped my kit inside and started off down the road until I came across Frank, one of my former room-mates, who was still carrying his kit. I invited him to share my wagon, and from then on we took turns wheeling the pram. This made the journey a hundred times easier, and at the same time enabled me to get around unhampered in my trading.

One of the most pleasant features of the journey was the crossing of the Elbe. We crossed by ferry at a point about ten miles north of Hamburg, where the river was two miles wide. It was a beautiful sunny day, and the cool breezes blowing down from the sea made us forget for a moment our journey ahead. Presently, however, the weather changed. It started to rain intermittently, and walking was no longer so easy. It was impossible to sleep in the open, and the Germans had to find us shelter. They solved the problem by putting us in barns each night. This was by no means as comfortable as sleeping in the open, as the barns were dirty and dusty, and invariably stank.

It was just after crossing the Elbe that I made my greatest trading deal. I had always wanted a German camera, but they were hard to get and we were strictly forbidden to have them in our possession. None the less, I finally succeeded in finding one, a very nice Zeiss Ikon folding camera, for which I gave one pound of butter, one tin of meat, one tin of fish, one box of raisins, one tin of jam, and three hundred cigarettes. Thus, I was able to take a few pictures of the march. They weren't very good ones, as the opportunities for taking them when the guards weren't looking were few and far between; but they were better than nothing.

As we approached Lübeck, discussions arose as to whether or not we should proceed there. The S.B.O. demanded an investigation of the camp

first. We halted for two days in a village ten miles short of the city. From the investigation we learned that food was very scarce, the camp badly overcrowded, and that conditions in general were unsanitary. Group Captain Wray, our Senior British Officer, had the Germans under his thumb. He threatened them that if they moved us to Lübeck he would hold them directly responsible as war criminals. The Germans therefore agreed that we should march back to a place about five miles away under the orders of our own Senior Officer. Although a few of the guards still remained, they no longer attempted to assert their authority. On one occasion a sentry, stopping an officer from walking into the nearby village, said to him: "Sir, may I remind you that your Commanding Officer has ordered you to stay in the camp?"

And so, completing our march of one hundred and twenty miles in three weeks, we arrived at our new home near Trenthorst, fifteen miles southwest of Lübeck; and here we settled down to wait for our armies to arrive and release us.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Liberation

When we arrived at Trenthorst we were billeted in huge barns on a model Nazi farming estate. It was a huge place, magnificently finished, having



Listening to the S.B.O.'s liberation speech



Trenthorst. Father Goudreau, Flt. Lt. R. J. Ball, and another officer

tilled interiors and the most modern equipment. At that time it was staffed by slave workers, mostly Russian and Polish. Most of us were quartered in haylofts. These were very stuffy, and we used them mainly for sleeping in at night. During the daytime we lived in straw huts which we built outside. This was much more pleasant as long as it didn't rain, for we were able to build our camp-fires nearby and have our meals in the open.

During the daytime we were free to roam the countryside, providing we didn't go too far away. Louie and I found a farm house not far away which we used to visit in the afternoons. It was inhabited by a charming old couple. After enjoying a pleasant chat, during which we would provide coffee, they would repay us by offering a couple of eggs apiece. As with all the Germans, they were very fearful of how they would be treated when the country was captured. We assured them that no harm would come to them.

On our second day there we could hear the gunfire of our approaching columns in the distance, and speculation was rife as to how long it would be before our release.

On the third day firing became even more intense. Allied aircraft were everywhere. German aircraft were few and far between. We posted signs along the roads leading into the camp, reading "British prisoners ahead," for the information of the advancing troops.

On May 2nd the gunfire seemed to be practically all around us. Not knowing what to expect, most of us thought we would hear the rumble of heavy tanks come clattering down the road, throttles wide open and guns blazing. Imagine our surprise, therefore, when, calmly and quietly, at two o'clock that afternoon, a lone armoured scout car came driving into the camp.

We looked at it in dazed unbelief, hardly daring to trust our eyes. Slowly faces broke into smiles, and we let out a yell which brought a stampede from all corners of the camp. A mighty cheer resounded. It had come at last! Panting for breath, as fast as our legs could carry us, we dashed for the armoured car to get a view of the liberators. In no time at all the car was surrounded with ex-kriegies, most of them trying to get close enough to thrust a piece of paper in front of the liberating officer (a smiling British Lieutenant) in an attempt to get his autograph. I was lucky enough to be able to obtain a snap of this event — the only one of its kind that I know of.*

So undramatic was our release that it all seemed like a dream. We could hardly realize that we were free. The German guards laid down their arms and awaited the arrival of further troops. Apart from that, nothing seemed to have changed. It was not till two or three hours later, when a couple of tanks and other vehicles arrived and we were able to touch them and speak to English soldiers and read the English papers they carried with them, that the full reality of the situation penetrated our minds.

* Unfortunately, the photo was taken in the rain and is not quite clear enough for reproduction purposes.—EDITOR.

The Roundel

Now that we were liberated, our first thoughts were of getting back to England. We bombarded the army officers who arrived in the camp with questions. When would we leave? Who would take us? How would we travel? When could we expect to arrive in England?

"You are no longer known as P.O.W.'s," we were told, "but P.W.X.'s. There is a special P.W.X. army organization which deals exclusively with liberated prisoners. First of all you must fill in documentary records. You will then be transported by road to a P.W.X. Transit Camp, where you will be deloused and given a new set of clothes for your return. You will probably leave here in a couple of days, and should be back within a week."

The very next evening, army trucks arrived to transport us to Luneburg, a distance of eighty odd miles, on the other side of the Elbe. We had filled in the necessary documents that morning and were all ready to leave when they arrived. We reached the transit camp at Luneburg about midnight. It had previously been a modern German army barracks, and we found everything extremely well organized.

The next day we spent attending delousing and clothing parades. In walking about the station, we encountered the first English-speaking girls many of us had seen for a good long time. They were nursing sisters from the staffs of three hospitals which were established there. The reader may or may not be able to imagine what a pleasure it was just to be able to talk to them.

The following day we left by lorry for an army holding depot near Diepholz aerodrome, where we were to await air transport; and twenty-four hours later we were taking off for England in a squadron of Dakotas.

Veterans of innumerable flights though many of us were, you would have thought from our excitement that we had never flown before. This was probably the most memorable flight any of us had ever made — except, no doubt, the ones in which we had been shot down! As we crossed the English coast, a jubilant cheer went up from one and all. Day was just changing to dusk. The evening was that of May 7th, when news had come through of the German capitulation, and bonfires of celebration made crimson splashes of flame on the dark green carpet below.

We arrived at our destination at ten o'clock in the evening. As soon as the pilot had taxied up to the hangar, we threw open the door and jumped to the ground. Never have I experienced a thrill quite like that of setting foot on Empire soil once more.

The inside of the hangar was brilliantly lit. Flags, streamers, and welcoming signs were everywhere. Then a trim little W.A.A.F. walked up to me and introduced herself. "We are here to make you welcome," she said. "Would you like some cakes and tea?" She kept me company till our train was due to leave, on the last stage of our journey, to the Personnel Reception Centre . . .

And so, a mere thirty-six hours after our arrival in England, we at last stepped forth again into a world of freedom and plenty, a world of music and dancing, a world of love and laughter. With a smile on our lips, a song in our hearts, and a devil-may-care feeling in our souls, we set out to make up for all the months and years of prison monotony.

For most of us it was a case of, "Watch out, brother, here I come!"

THE END

!

The officer in charge of quarters and warlike stores will not issue new arrowheads unless worn or damaged arrowheads are produced in exchange.—*From an ancient Chinese document discovered by Sir Aurel Stein on the Chinese Western Frontier.*

("Canadian Army Journal")

No. 401 (Ram) Squadron

(Prepared by Air Historical Section)

NO SQUADRON IN THE Royal Canadian Air Force can boast a longer or prouder record than No. 401 (RAM) Squadron. It was the first R.C.A.F. unit to engage the Luftwaffe in combat, it won the R.C.A.F.'s first battle decorations and suffered the first casualties in action, and it ended the war with the highest score of enemy aircraft destroyed of any day-fighter squadron of the R.C.A.F.

Revived in 1946 as a unit of the post-war Reserve, No. 401 stems from both the Permanent and Auxiliary Forces of pre-war days. It originated several years before the war as a fighter flight, administered by No. 3 (Bomber) Squadron, which on 1st March 1937 became No. 1 (Fighter) Squadron. When the war broke out, No. 1 Squadron, then stationed at Calgary, was equipped with Hurricanes, and was the only unit in the R.C.A.F. flying up-to-date fighter aircraft. The squadron was mobilized at St. Hubert for active service, moving thence to Dartmouth, N.S., in October and November 1939. Here it remained until June 1940, carrying out convoy patrols and much practice flying. Just before departing for overseas, No. 1 was amalgamated with No. 115 (F) Squadron of Montreal. Formation of the latter unit as part of the Auxiliary Active Air Force had been authorized on 1 September 1934, but it did not actually form until the spring of 1936, at the same time as its sister squadron, No. 118 (B).

No. 1 embarked for overseas on 8 June 1940, under the command of Squadron Leader E. A.

McNab, and disembarked at Liverpool twelve days later. After a period of training at Middle Wallop and Croydon, the squadron became operational on 17 August and simultaneously moved to Northolt aerodrome to take part in the Battle of Britain, which was then reaching its climax. Two days previously Sqn. Ldr. McNab, while flying with an R.A.F. squadron, had scored the first victory for the R.C.A.F. unit. On the 26th, No. 1 went into action for the first time, destroyed three Dornier bombers, damaged four more, and lost one pilot killed in action. For the next eight weeks the Canadian squadron was in the thick of the Battle, winning credit for the destruction of 30 enemy aircraft, the probable destruction of 8, and damage to 35 more. It lost three pilots in action, Flying Officers R. L. Edwards, O. J. Peterson, and R. Smither, and won three D.F.C.'s — awarded to Sqn. Ldr. E. A. McNab, Flt. Lieut. G. R. McGregor and Flying Officer B. D. Russell.

From the battle-zone of southern England the squadron moved to Scotland early in October 1940, to rest, train new personnel, and carry out routine patrols. In February 1941 it returned to England, taking up station at Digby in Lincolnshire where, on 1 March, it was renumbered 401 in the new R.C.A.F. numeration.

By this time the number of R.C.A.F. fighter squadrons overseas had increased to two, with the





No. 1 Squadron, September 1940. Front row (left to right): Flying Officer O. J. Peterson, Flying Officer W. P. Sprenger, Sqn. Ldr. E. A. McNab, Flying Officer E. W. Beardmore, Flying Officer A. D. Nesbitt, Flying Officer B. E. Christmas. Back row: Flt. Lt. W. R. Pollock, Flying Officer C. W. Trevena, Flying Officer E. C. Briese, Flying Officer P. B. Pitcher, Flying Officer P. W. Lochman, Flt. Lt. E. M. Reyno, Flying Officer S. T. Blaiklock, Flying Officer R. W. Norris, Flying Officer A. M. Yuile, Capt. W. D. Rankin (R.C.A.M.C.).

addition of No. 402 (formerly No. 112) Squadron. For several months the two Hurricane squadrons worked together from Digby, carrying out dawn and dusk patrols, escorting convoys and scrambling after "bandits." They also took part in fighter sweeps and circuses (combined bomber-fighter operations) over Nazi-occupied France. For many weeks, however, these sorties proved relatively uneventful and, except for a Ju. 88 damaged during a scramble off the East coast early in August, there were no entries in the squadron's victory list.

In September 1941, No. 401 exchanged its Hurricanes for Spitfires (Mark V-B) and late in the following month moved to Biggin Hill to resume operations. A much more active and successful period now began. On its first sweep with the new aircraft the squadron destroyed one Me. 109 and probably destroyed another. Circuses

and sweeps became the daily routine, varied by convoy patrols and rhuarbs (low-level attacks on ground targets). Biggin Hill remained the squadron's base for eleven months, except for short periods spent at Gravesend and Eastchurch. During these months it tallied 19 confirmed kills, 20 more probables and 40 damaged, including one destroyed, two probables and eight damaged over the beaches at Dieppe on 19 August 1942.

From Biggin Hill No. 401 moved on 23 September 1942 to Kenley to join No. 402 Squadron in the R.C.A.F. Fighter Wing. In the four months which it spent here No. 401 added six destroyed, one probable and ten damaged (all F.W. 190's) to its score. Then followed ten months of much flying but little luck in the air. Moving to Catterick in Yorkshire in January 1943, the squadron did not return to the active southern zone until late in May, when it rejoined the Canadian



Sqn. Ldr. E. A. McNab, D.F.C. (Ranks and decorations given beneath photographs are as they were at time pictures were taken)



Sqn. Ldr. G. R. McGregor, D.F.C.

Fighter Wing at Redhill in Surrey. Operations were frequent, but it was not until November, when the pilots exchanged their V-B Spitfires for the newer Mark IX-B, that successes came their way. Meanwhile the Wing (No. 126) had returned to Biggin Hill where it remained until April 1944, when it moved down to Tangmere in preparation for D-Day. Between 26 November 1943 and June 1944, the squadron accounted for 14 destroyed and 6 damaged. In the spring of 1944 the pilots added a new rôle to their daily routine, carrying bombs slung beneath their Spits. to deposit on rocket sites, bridges, gun posts or other suitable targets.

D-Day opened a new chapter in the squadron's history. After twelve days of patrolling over the beach-heads, No. 401, accompanied by Nos. 411 and 412, crossed to Normandy on 18 June to work

from an air strip at Beny-sur-Mer. There was much hard fighting on the ground and there were many clashes in the air, in which the R.C.A.F. Spitfires repeatedly demonstrated their superiority. Seven confirmed kills on 7 June, six on the 28th, and ten on 27 July were the highlights of this period. In addition to victories in the air, the pilots had an equally impressive record on enemy tanks, armoured fighting vehicles and transport destroyed or damaged on the ground, especially during the critical days in mid-August when a Nazi army was trying to escape from the Falaise pocket.

From the Normandy coast the squadron followed in the wake of the triumphant Allied armies across northern France, through Belgium and into Holland. In April 1945 it crossed into Germany



Sqn. Ldr. A. D. Nesbitt

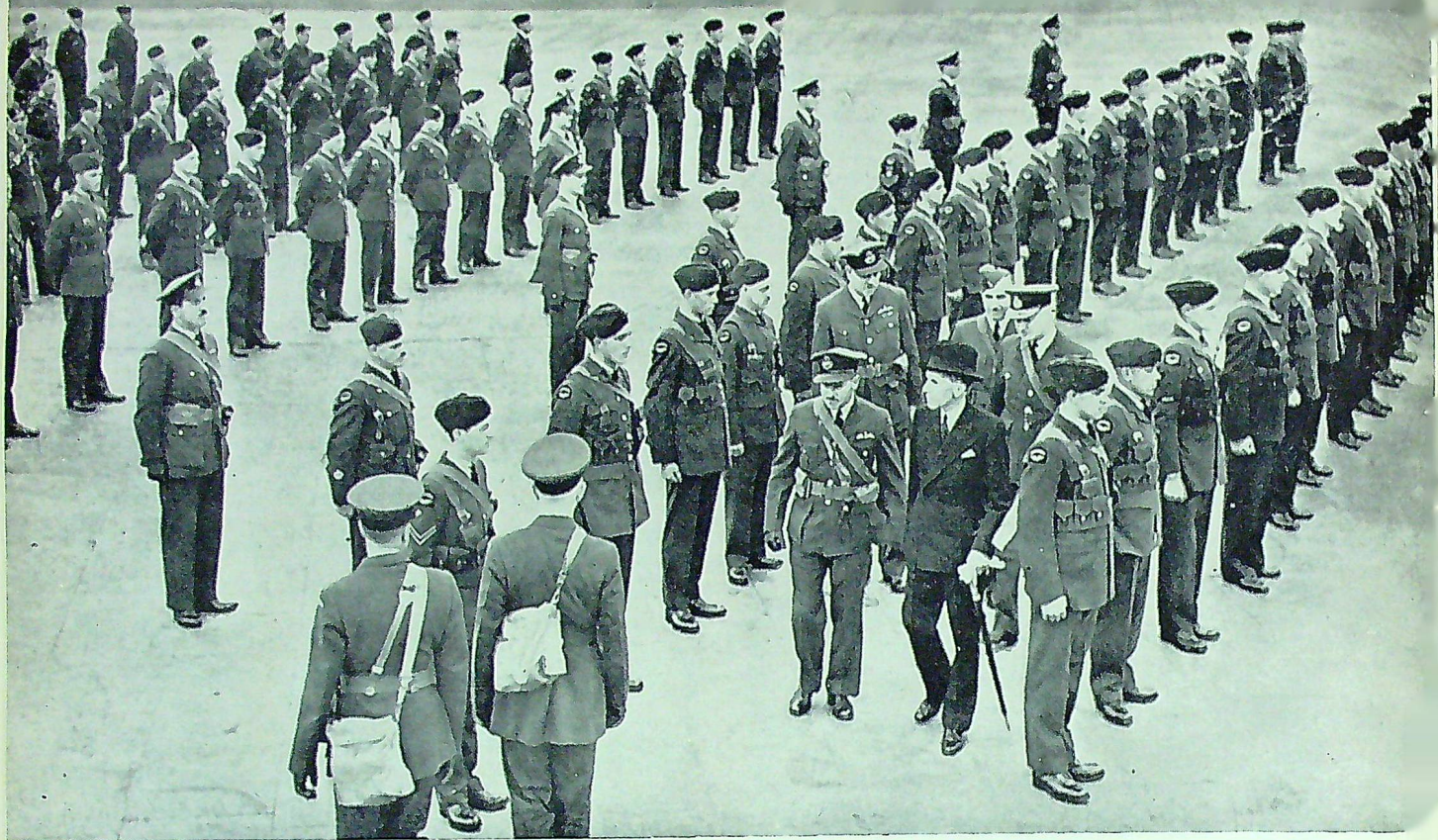


Sqn. Ldr. P. B. Pitcher

and on V-E Day was based at Wunstorf, not far from Hanover. The eleven months after D-Day had been most successful for the Rams: over 125 enemy aircraft had been destroyed in the air or on the ground and over 50 more probably destroyed or damaged. Included in this total was the first jet-propelled aircraft destroyed by the R.A.F. or R.C.A.F., an Me. 262 shot down by five pilots on 5 October 1944. In addition to the high scores in June and July, mentioned above, the squadron made noteworthy kills on 29 September 1944 and 1 January 1945 (when the Luftwaffe strafed our airfields in the Low Countries), destroying no less than nine Nazi aircraft on each occasion. But the record bag was on 20 April — Hitler's birthday — when No. 401 shot down eighteen Germans in the most successful day in its long history. Eleven

pilots, led by Sqn. Ldr. W. T. Klersy, had taken off in mid-afternoon to carry out an armed reconnaissance, when they sighted a large number of German fighters over an air-strip near Schwerin. The Spits. attacked and crashed eleven Me. 109's. One of our pilots was lost. That evening, on another armed recce, Sqn. Ldr. Klersy led his squadron to engage a large gaggle of F.W. 190's flying at low level near Hagenow aerodrome. This time seven of the enemy went down. In addition to the destroyed, the squadron counted six German fighters damaged, plus two locomotives, six freight cars and twenty-three vehicles damaged and four vehicles destroyed.

A fortnight later, on 3 May, No. 401 ended its operations with a successful beat-up of an airfield north-east of Kiel. The pilots attacked until their



The Hon. Vincent Massey inspecting No. 1 Squadron, Aug. 1940. ("Canada's Weekly")

ammunition was exhausted, leaving 15 aircraft destroyed on the ground. These successes boosted the squadron's total bag for the war to almost 200 enemy aircraft destroyed and 175 probably destroyed or damaged, and gave it top position among the day fighter squadrons of the R.C.A.F. Its casualties totalled 66 pilots lost on operations and 10 pilots killed in accidents. Of the 66 lost on operations, 11 were killed and 28 presumed dead; 18 were taken prisoners of war, while 9 evaded capture and returned to the United Kingdom.

During the war No. 401 had sixteen commanding officers: Sqn. Ldrs. E. G. Fullerton, E. A. McNab, G. R. McGregor, P. B. Pitcher, A. D. Nesbitt, N. R. Johnstone, A. G. Douglas (R.A.F.), K. L. B. Hodson, L. Neal, L. M. Cameron, I. F. Kennedy, H. C. Trainor, R. I. A. Smith, H. J. Everard, W. T. Klersy, and E. A. Ker. Of these, Cameron, Kennedy, Trainor and Everard went missing on operations. Cameron and Kennedy



Flying Officer Dal Russell, D.F.C.



His Majesty the King visits No. 401. He is shown talking with Gr. Capt. McNab and Wing Cdr. G. Elms.



Flt. Lt. R. I. Smith, D.F.C.

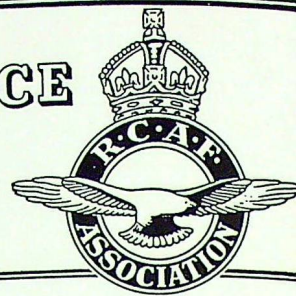
were able to regain our lines within a short time, but Trainer and Everard were taken prisoners. Klersy was killed in an accident a fortnight after V-E Day.

Disbanded in July 1945, No. 401 has now been re-established as a fighter unit of the Reserve Force at Montreal. It inherits a tradition second to none in the R.C.A.F., a tradition created by such redoubtable fighters as Ernie McNab, G. R. McGregor, Dal Russel, Don Morrison, Keith Hodson, "Jeep" Neal, Ian Ormston, Jack Shepard, Lorne Cameron, Bill Klersy, "Hap" Kennedy, Hugh Trainor, and John MacKay — to name but a few of the many who have served with the Rams.

The squadron badge depicts the head of a ram (or Canadian mountain sheep), with the well justified motto "Mors Celerrima Hostibus" (Very Swift Death to the Enemy).

ROYAL CANADIAN AIR FORCE

Association



GROUP CONVENTIONS

LAST MONTH WE GAVE a *résumé* of the Group Conventions held in Ontario and Alberta. We now have the reports in from British Columbia, Manitoba, Quebec and the Maritimes, the highlights of which are as follows:

British Columbia

No. of Wings:

3 (located at Courtenay, Victoria and Vancouver).

New Executive Elected:

President: A. D. Bell-Irving
Vice-President: D. C. Birch
Secretary-Treasurer: S. E. Parker
Additional Members: H. G. Malcolmson
J. I. M. Beddall
E. W. Beardmore
J. H. Norton
V. R. Clerihue

Resolutions:

The following Resolutions were carried:

- That the Royal Canadian Air Force Association study and promote co-ordinated effort by the three Services, whether by unification or other means, for the purpose of furthering the efficiency of all matters connected with the national defence of Canada.
- That the R.C.A.F. Association press the Department of National Defence and the Government to encourage and direct training throughout the nation by the establishment of Reserve training units and urban headquarters for the use of the said units.
- That a form of initiation be settled and the Constitution of the Association be amended accordingly.
- That the R.C.A.F. Association make the strongest possible representations to the Government to provide out of public funds such accommodation in large urban centres as will enable the Association not only to continue its existence but also to function in the important manner envisaged by the founders of the Association.

Manitoba

No. of Wings:

3 (Located at Winnipeg, Port Arthur and Brandon).

New Executive Elected:

President: W. F. Hanna
Vice-President: E. O. W. Hall
Honorary Secretary-Treasurer: J. S. Gunn
Additional Members: W. K. McGregor
Evelyn Halliday
R. S. Godfrey
Jean Livingston

Resolutions:

The following Resolutions were carried:

- That Dominion Council approach Department of National Defence with the request that a grant larger than the present \$15,000 be made annually to the R.C.A.F. Association.
- That Dominion Council allot to Wings a portion of the \$2 annual fee per member that now goes to Group and Dominion Headquarters.
- That the Dominion Council approach the appropriate authorities to determine what can be done to obtain for ex-R.C.A.F. prisoners-of-war a portion of funds resulting from the sale of German and Japanese assets frozen at the outbreak of war, similar to the action now being instituted in the United States of America.
- That the R.C.A.F. Association Group now called the Manitoba Group be redesignated the Manitoba-North-western Ontario Group.
- That the Association adopt the policy of appointing to Honorary Life Memberships-at-large prominent citizens in communities throughout Canada where Wings are organized, such appointments to be made on recommendations of Wings and Groups concerned.
- That Dominion Council undertake to recommend to the Trustees of the Fund the appointment of one member of the Association to each Regional Committee, and that all members of said committees be ex-R.C.A.F. personnel.

Quebec

No. of Wings:

7 (located at Granby, Quebec, Sherbrooke, and Montreal (4)).

New Executive Elected:

President: R. E. Morrow
1st Vice-President: P. A. Faguy
2nd Vice-President: E. T. Webster
Honorary Treasurer: C. H. Link
Honorary Secretary: Miss A. Groundwater
Additional Members: C. M. McEwen
R. H. Foss
T. B. Baker
R. Gauthier

Resolutions:

The following Resolutions were carried:

- That, in the overall interests of national defence, the Minister be urged to direct that immediate steps be taken to provide the R.C.A.F. Reserve with urban accommodation for ground training, etc., comparable in all respects with that presently provided for Naval and Army Reserve units, in the most important cities and towns of the Province of Quebec; and that in the case of Montreal this be accomplished by either:
 - (a) the construction of an "Air Force Centre" building, or
 - (b) the allocation to the R.C.A.F. Reserve of one of the modern armouries now used by the Reserve Army.

- That, as the inclusion of reports on Association activities with the periodical letters sent by the C.A.S. to Reserve, retired and former members of the R.C.A.F., is one of the most direct forms of promotional publicity available to the Association, the regular issuance of reports by this means be strongly recommended to the Dominion Executive.
- That annual Wing dues be payable on a calendar year basis. In the case of new members who have joined between January 1st and June 30th, the full amount of \$3 is to be collected, of which \$1 is to be retained by the Wing, as at present. For members joining after July 1st and before December 31st, dues to be \$1.50, of which 50c. are to be remitted to Dominion Headquarters and \$1 retained by the Wing.
- That a uniform type of headdress be adopted by the Association for Remembrance Day parades, etc. A beret similar to that of the R.A.F. Regiment, with the R.C.A.F.A. Badge, is suggested.
- That where R.C.A.F.A. Wings have been formed in smaller communities, they be given priority over other organizations in the sponsorship of R.C.A.F. Band Concerts at local events.

Maritimes

No. of Wings:

9 (located at Halifax (2), Truro, Saint John, Edmundston, Sydney, Amherst, Liverpool, Fredericton).

New Executive Elected:

President:	H. W. Aslin
Vice-President (N.S.):	C. R. MacDonald
Vice-President (N.B.):	C. Y. Swanton
Honorary Treasurer:	A. C. Tufts
Honorary Secretary:	Miss Ruth Vogler
Directors:	(to be appointed, one from each Wing).

Resolutions:

The following Resolutions were carried:

- That ex-Air Cadets, who have attained their majority and completed their course of training, may become members of the R.C.A.F. Association.
- That the Association's fiscal year and membership year should coincide.
- That the Maritime Group prevail upon the Air Force, through the proper channels, to organize as many Reserve Units as possible in the Maritimes.

WING NEWS

No. 100 (Bluenose) Wing, Halifax

We note from the Wing's paper, "The Squadronaire," that a very lively programme is lined up for the Spring. On April 4th they held a "Penny Auction," on April 18th a general business meeting, and on May 2nd a mixed card party. Their big party, however, was the dance at H.M.C.S. Stadacona's gym, which was sponsored jointly by the W.R.C.N.S.-W.D. Associations.

No. 101 (Atlantic) Wing, Halifax

A new executive has been elected for the Atlantic Wing:

President:	F. V. Shaw
1st Vice-President:	H. Jewett
2nd Vice-President:	G. Hughson
Secretary:	S. Gordon
Treasurer:	A. Edgar
Additional Members:	N. Naugler F. Sturmey F. Ellis

No. 303 (Sherbrooke) Wing

The following news bulletin has been received from No. 303 Wing:

"No. 303 (Sherbrooke) Wing celebrated its Charter Night on February 11th at a semi-formal banquet and dance, held at the New Sherbrooke Hotel. Close to two hundred members and guests heard a select group of guests of honour, composed of Air Marshal W. A. Curtis, C.B., C.B.E., D.S.C., Air Chief Marshal L. S. Breadner, C.B., D.S.C., Air Vice-Marshal G. V. Walsh, C.B., C.B.E., Group Captain W. R. MacBrien, O.B.E., Wing Commander K. Patrick, O.B.E., City Councillor Ross and many others. The newspapers and radio co-operated in giving this 'operation' plenty of publicity, and the main speeches at the banquet were broadcast.

"Our March outing was a very successful sugaring-off party held at Glenvilla Farm, North Hatley. Our President, Eric Webster, kindly turned over his sugar bush to more than seventy-five of our members and their wives. Those not familiar with the art of making maple syrup and sugar were familiarized by Mr. Webster's attendants, who gave them both a processing course and a bellyful of the product.

"We are planning on getting the R.C.A.F. band to give a concert on June 1st, followed by a dance on the 3rd."



No. 303 Wing in the sugar bush

No. 305 (City of Montreal) Wing

Since the announcement of the formation of No. 305 (City of Montreal) Wing in the April issue, a report on their progress has been received.

The first General Meeting of the Wing was held on February 15th, following the formation of a provisional Executive on February 6th. It was decided to adopt the name "City of Montreal" for the Wing and to apply for the Charter. A General Meeting was also held on March 1st, at which the provisional Executive were unanimously elected to be retained for the coming fiscal year. Various committees for entertainment, rules, etc., have been formed, and plans are now going ahead for a dinner to be held at a future date, at which time the presentation of the Charter will be made.

Although the membership of the Wing is now close to one hundred, all members have been requested to make every effort to introduce at least one new member to the Wing within the next few months. By the kind permission of the Commanding Officer, meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month at No. 401 Squadron Mess.

No. 408 (Toronto) Wing

Toronto has reported that their dance held on March 17th at R.C.A.F. Station, Toronto, was a "bang-up do" with over 600 in attendance, despite one of the worst storms ever to hit that city.

The thanks of all who attended should be shared equally by those members of the Committee who gave much time and thought to the planning of the evening, by the R.C.A.F. Training Command Band which performed so rhythmically and melodiously throughout the dance, by the A.O.C. who made their appearance possible, by the Commanding Officer of R.C.A.F. Station Toronto, and by anyone and everyone who helped to make the event a success.

The dance was the first step of the Wing to accumulate a building fund, and they are now off to a good start.

No. 416 (Kingston) Wing

On Tuesday, March 21st, at a general meeting, a new executive was elected, and we take pleasure in reproducing here their photograph. We are told that they have been working hard and have several plans afoot to raise money and membership. We wish them the best of luck.

No. 417 (Richmond Hill District) Wing

Members of No. 417 Wing were recently given an interesting talk by Squadron Leader D. A. MacFadyen, D.S.O., D.F.C., General Manager of Kenting Aviation Ltd., Toronto and Oshawa, on the subject of aerial survey in Canada. Kenting Aviation does the flying operations for Photographic Surveys Ltd., of Toronto, who operate in both North and South America. The talk was preceded by a screening of an R.C.A.F. film, "Photo Canada," which showed the R.C.A.F. Photographic Division in the air, on the ground, in the labs and the plotting rooms.

During the business session of this March meeting, it was announced that the following committees had been appointed by the Executive:

Programme: Don W. Murray, Chairman
G. W. Kydd
S. V. Paxton

Membership: Bernard Pearson, Chairman
Jack Bayley
W. W. Fisher

The band from R.C.A.F. Station Toronto will present a band concert in Richmond Hill on June 15th under the auspices of the local Wing, if arrangements can be completed. It is hoped it will be possible to hold this concert in the arena. It was also decided to write to the village council offering the co-operation of the Wing in the matter of repairs and additions of names to the War Memorial.

No. 600 (Regina) Wing

As a follow-up to the stag held by the men of the Wing, 37 ex-W.D.'s sat down to a dinner served in the Board Room of the Canadian Legion Memorial Hall. Miss Alice Lyons, guest speaker, and Miss Zona West of the "Leader-Post" staff, both ex-W.D.'s, were special guests.



Front row, left to right: J. F. Descent, Treasurer; H. Beaupré, Vice-President; D. Cain, President; K. Reid, Immediate Past-President; C. E. Pearson, Director. Back row, left to right: Directors J. Woodhouse, K. Whitney, J. Otten, D. Blair, G. L. Hillier, R. Baine, B. Dubenofsky. (J. Stansbury, Secretary, absent from photograph).

Miss Lyons' speech was both unusual and absorbing. In it she traced the development of the democratic ideal during the last 2000 years. She urged the serious study of history upon her listeners, and ended on a note of warning against the danger of a "let-the-other-fellow-do-it" attitude.

After the dinner, a social evening was spent in reminiscing — which, let us remind those of our male readers who are beginning to smile, is a post-prandial pastime not peculiar to the ladies.

No. 700 (City of Edmonton) Wing

On March 6th, Group Captain M. P. Martyn, S.A.S.O. of N.W.A.C., gave a comprehensive and highly instructive address on Operation Sweetbriar, with particular emphasis on the part taken by the R.C.A.F.; and on March 10th an enjoyable

membership dance was held in the Masonic Temple.

Next came the major event of the winter season — a gala indoor carnival on March 29th, lasting through to April 1st. All the many games that made the Wing's outdoor carnival a success last October were featured, with several added attractions. On the last day of the Carnival, the Grand Prize, a brand new 1950 automobile, was awarded to the successful winner of the car raffle which had been in progress since last December. It was won by Virtin Conrad, a young paper-carrier, and was to be sold and the money used for furthering his education. The Wing made a profit of \$3,300 from the car raffle and cleared a further \$1,100 from the carnival. Of this amount, 20% was donated to the D.V.A. Hospital comforts fund,

and \$100 earmarked for the Wing's own comforts fund. The remainder is being invested for a building fund.

Plans for the coming months include a smoker for the month of May, participation in Air Force Day in June, another dance (possibly in May), and plans for a picnic at Sylvan Lake in conjunction with the Calgary Wing. Also in June, plans are well under way for holding another mammoth outdoor carnival.

No. 702 (Lethbridge) Wing

A presentation of honorary membership in No. 702 Wing was made in Ottawa on March 3rd to Mr. E. R. McFarland in recognition of his aid in the formation of 702 Wing at Lethbridge, and for his financial assistance in enabling five Lethbridge Air Cadets to earn their private flying licences in 1949.

NEW WINGS

No. 424 (Cornwall District) Wing

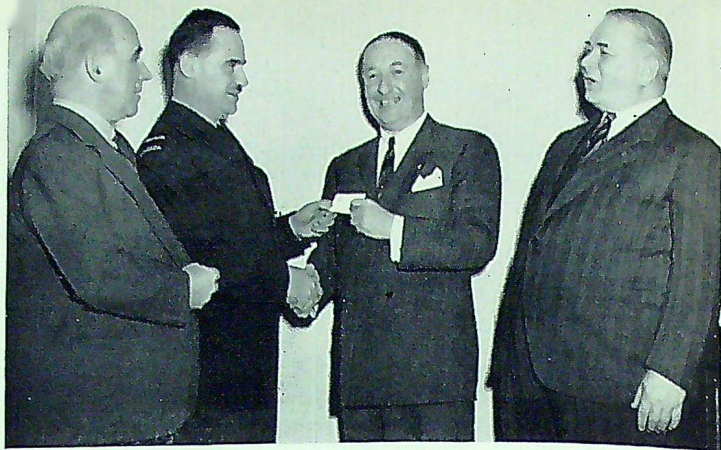
On March 18th, through the initiative of Squadron Leader H. G. Williams, an organization meeting was held at Cornwall, and No. 424 (Cornwall District) Wing was formed. Their progress has been extremely gratifying and they propose to hold their Charter Night on May 10th.

Their Executive is as follows:

President:	H. G. Williams
1st Vice-President:	F. H. Hunter
2nd Vice-President:	V. Webster
Secretary:	H. Airey
Treasurer:	A. Stanford
Additional Members:	Mrs. V. Webster
	Mrs. R. Johnson
	D. McAlear

No. 425 (Huron) Wing

On March 21st, at an organization meeting in the Legion Hall at Goderich, No. 425 (Huron) Wing was formed. The meeting was attended by over sixty ex-Air Force members and it was evident from the enthusiasm that the formation of the Wing answered an obvious need for such a project in the community. The Wing pledged itself to co-operate with and support every worthy



Left to Right: Air Marshal Robert Leckie, C.B., D.S.O., D.S.C., D.F.C., Air Vice-Marshal J. L. Plant, C.B.E., A.F.C., Mr. E. R. McFarland, Air Chief Marshal L. S. Breadner, C.B., D.S.O.

cause and organization in the community, and to work in conjunction with the Canadian Legion.

Principal speaker of the evening was Air Vice-Marshal J. A. Sully, C.B., A.F.C., Chairman of the Dominion Executive of the Association. He clearly and ably outlined the aims and objects of the Association. He was followed by Wing Commander Miller, A.F.C., Commanding Officer of the R.C.A.F. Radar School, Clinton, who offered the facilities of the Station and the assistance of its members in the furtherance of the Association. Later, Flight Lieutenant the Rev. C. L. Harding, Chaplain of the same Station, addressed the meeting and sincerely endorsed the purposes and programme of the new Wing.

Because of the extensive area under the jurisdiction of the Huron Wing, plans were formulated so that Wing meetings would revolve on a circuit about the key centres of the county.

An Executive, to be increased by the appointment of representatives from each of the key centres, was elected:

President:	J. M. Roberts, M.B.E.
Vice-President:	E. C. Rivett
Secretary:	G. E. Bell
Treasurer:	C. B. Banks
Additional Members:	T. E. Daly

No. 426 (Brockville) Wing

While the Brockville Air Force Association had been in existence for some time, it wasn't until April 5th that they decided to join the national association. We take pleasure in welcoming them and appreciate their co-operation. Their Executive consists of:

President: J. C. G. McDougall
 1st Vice-President: J. W. Langmuir
 Secretary: B. A. Gould
 Treasurer: L. G. Greer
 Additional Members: T. D. Dailey

No. 427 (London Air Force Association) Wing

Approximately one year ago, we were advised that the London Air Force Association had decided to join the national organization. However, for various reasons, the decision was not put into effect until March 15th, when the official application was received. The new Wing's reputation as a going organization is already well established and we are confident that it will be a decided asset to the national organization.

The Executive is as follows:

President: F. L. Ray
 1st Vice-President: W. W. Treleaven
 2nd Vice-President: H. G. F. Fox
 Secretary: R. E. Carmichael
 Treasurer: K. W. Porter
 Additional Members: J. Glassford
 R. A. Earl
 L. F. Lee

THE R.A.F.A. AND CIVIL DEFENCE

*(Extracts from an article in "Air Mail" by Sir John Hodsol, *Director of Civil Defence Training, England)*

It must be a very comforting thought to many of our older people that members of the Royal Air Forces Association, who devoted so much of their lives to the business of freeing the world from the tyranny of oppression, continue in peace-time to take a lively, intelligent interest in current affairs at home and abroad.

There is not one among us who would wish for a repetition of those dark days of 1939-45, much less the devastation that a future war would inevitably bring to mankind. But is there one among us in these troublesome times who sincerely believes that the danger of war has passed for a generation? For the shadow of aggression is still cast over a world twice saved from ruin in the last quarter of a century.

Perhaps the greatest deterrent to war is preparedness for it, and that is why Civil Defence is now being reconstituted in this country on a permanent basis, to take its regular place in the life of the nation.

Its primary objects will be to assist in the maintenance and the morale of the civil population, to reduce casualties and suffering to a minimum, and to try to restrict by all possible methods the effect of damage from bombs, whether they be high explosives, atom or hydrogen bombs.

Now that the recruiting campaign for Civil Defence has been opened, we are hoping to get the backing of a considerable number of those men and women who rendered such splendid service in Civil Defence in the last war. But many of them are not as young as they were, and it is vitally important that we do get new blood into the organization.

That is why we shall welcome any help that can possibly be given by members of the R.A.F.A.—particularly as there will be a number of jobs in connection with Civil Defence requiring a certain amount of technical knowledge.

In the main, the appeal is to men and women of 40 and over, but with no upward age limit. Between the ages of 30 and 40 certain personnel are required, particularly for the more strenuous work, such as rescue and fire-fighting, and there are also vacancies for young girls in the ambulance section in the Corps.

Training is carried out at the rate of a maximum of 60 hours a year, depending upon the work of a particular section. At some future date, behind the local division, it is hoped to raise mobile columns to act as a general Civil Defence reserve, and behind that again the Army have agreed to come to the help of Civil Defence.

Civil Defence does offer to those who have no further Service obligations, and who are still anxious to serve their country, a means by which such help can be of the greatest possible value.

*Canadian Civil Defence Co-ordinator is Major-General F. F. Worthington C.B., M.C., M.M.



Bygone Beauty

Some of the athletic lovelies that used to grace our Service. The 1945 W.D. softball team of R.C.A.F. Station Moncton, with coach Sgt. G. T. Meltzer (in sweat-shirt). Remember any of them?

Per Ardua Ad—?

BY GROUP CAPT. E. C. LUKE, O.B.E.

WHY AM I in the Air Force — now, in 1950? How many of us, I wonder, have faced that question squarely and come up with a satisfactory answer? I do not pretend for an instant that I have the whole answer yet. I've heard many reasons given — "interesting work, good pay, security, chance to travel, retirement pension" — but most of them are simply evasions or compromises.

Let's be honest about this thing. How do you feel about the *real* question? If you were taught the same beliefs as most of us, then it must be your Christian conviction that compulsion by force and the taking of life are wrong, completely abhorrent, and foreign to the ways of all men who believe in a beneficent God. Yet we go on spending our working days preparing for that very thing, learning and perfecting the art of human destruction and making ready to use it. How do you feel about *that*? To keep peace with my conscience at least I must try to reconcile this fundamental divergence. If I don't, then I am living a lie, and accepting either my pay or my religion under false pretences. Just how serious that may be is up to each individual.

To most of those who served during 1939-45 the picture must be reasonably clear, but there may be some of them, and possibly more among the young men recruited since, who have not even considered this question. They have joined up, trained, do their work well, and draw their pay, with only the most superficial examination of why they are doing it. Probably some one of the reasons I mentioned above seems to be adequate, for the moment. To them I can only say, "Wake up! Shake yourself out of it. Never mind so much *where* you are going. Find out *why*, and then be sure you have the truth."

To examine this matter at its roots, another important decision must first be made. Is it

necessary for one making a career in the armed services actually to believe that his country *must* be at war again some day in order to produce his best work? It is not easy to decide. Look at it conversely. If you could somehow be assured beyond doubt that the last war had been fought, and that the bomb you are working on would never be dropped on an enemy, could you go on giving your best to that work — taking a living from it? This also is a searching question, on which our whole attitude may depend. You and I must decide for ourselves.

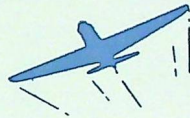
Someone is sure to say, "We have always had war, and we always will. You can't change human nature." I am more and more impatient with this attitude, which attempts to defend every human thought and action by the simple expedient of pointing out historical precedents. This type of reasoning would lead us to believe that it is sound practice to light our houses with kerosene lamps when electricity is available. Is there no upward human progress? Evidence of it may be lacking at times; but I, for one, reserve the right to hope. A frail utopian hope, you may think, but if it should die completely where would we be? Whether we are airmen, grocers, or professors, all of us on the Western side of "the curtain" must do our utmost to give moral support to those courageous and tireless men of our external affairs departments whose job it is to try to find the common ground on which two halves of the world may join hands and go forward as friends.

These thoughts have come uppermost in my mind many times during the past year or two, and I am convinced that many of my readers have pondered the same problems. The familiar and somewhat shop-worn analogies likening an armed service to a fire department or a police force must be discarded. They are not rejected because they

fail to apply. In many ways there is an interesting similarity, but the answer they provide is insufficient. It must go deeper than that. I have lately come to believe that our real motivation does not depend on whether we think a war is coming or not. I have enough confidence in our strength of purpose to declare that those in the R.C.A.F. willing to think beyond their next annual leave are in it *because it exists as an instrument to help defend a faith they believe in*. If the state of mankind is still such that our strength must again be tested by war, then we in the Service will accept that eventuality, without special blame to ourselves, and make certain that we are found strong in the test.

I saw a picture the other day, one that gave me

the seed of an idea and provided a compelling illustration. A man with a sincere and kindly face was making his way through a gang of ruffians. They appeared to be threatening him and his arm was raised with clenched fist to protect his head. He obviously had no intention of striking anyone unless he was molested, but the strong arm was poised and ready. *That is our task in the Air Force, to be part of that right arm and to make it alert and powerful. I cannot in all sincerity believe that what we are striving for, as members of a Canadian armed service, is inconsistent with God's will. His way is threatened. The arm must remain raised and protective for a while yet, to ensure that right prevails and that the doctrine, that Man and his Soul are free, shall not perish.*



JUNE TRANSFERS

Beginning with this issue, we propose to publish each month the transfers of all officers (of squadron leader's rank and above) and warrant officers. We are not responsible for any inaccuracies occasioned by changes in transfers that may be made while "The Roundel" is being printed.—EDITOR.

Officers

- S/L R. M. Beer (Marine)—122 Marine Sqn., Patricia Bay, to 102 Marine Sqn., Dartmouth.
 S/L S. C. Burridge (Marine)—A.F.H.Q. to 122 Marine Sqn.
 W/C P. S. Delaney (GL)—N.W.A.C. Headquarters, Edmonton, to Summer Camp, Gimli.
 S/L J. H. Dempster (GL)—R.C.A.F. Stn. Winnipeg to Central Flying School, Trenton.
 S/L R. McMillan (AE)—Can. Joint Staff, Washington, to 11 Tech. Serv. Unit, St. Laurent.
 G/C M. P. Martyn (GL)—N.W.A.C. Headquarters to Summer Camp, Gimli.
 S/L A. E. Mitchell (Armament)—A.F.H.Q. to Trng. Command H.Q., Trenton.
 S/L G. E. Nickerson (GL)—Tactical Grp., Winnipeg, to Summer Camp, Gimli.
 S/L W. G. Scott (Accounts)—Can. Joint Air Trng. Centre, Rivers, to No. 6 Repair Depot, Trenton.

- S/L J. G. Shenfield (Accounts)—6 Repair Depot to Can. Joint Trng. School, Rivers.
 S/L N. Thorp (GL)—Air Nav. School, Summerside, to Can. Joint Staff, London.
 S/L J. H. Watts (GL)—N.W.A.C. Headquarters to Summer Camp, Gimli.

Warrant Officers

- WO1 J. S. Dougherty (Pharmacist)—R.C.A.F. Stn. Rockcliffe to R.C.A.F. Stn. Centralia.
 WO2 S. H. Loch (Sup. Tech.)—Winter Exp. Est., Edmonton, to No. 1 Supply Depot, Weston.
 WO2 P. R. Spurgeon (SP)—No. 1 Supply Depot to Joint Air Training Centre.
 WO1 G. Towers (Sup. Tech.)—9424 R.C.A.F. Unit, Hamilton, to Maritime Grp. H.Q., Halifax.



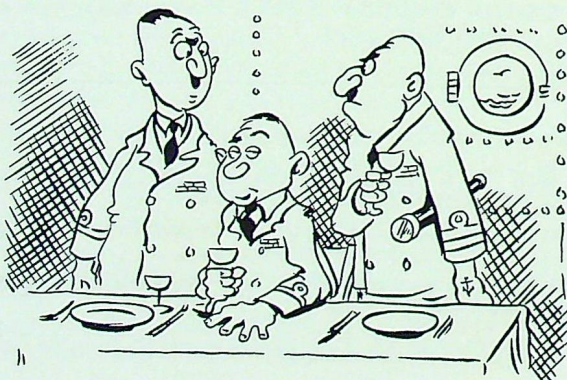
WHAT'S THE SCORE

Around the table in the Mess, the talk was of Atlantic and Pacific air patrols in the last war. Our old friend Lt. Cdr. Spindrift, of the R.C.N., listened in silence for a while, then murmured: "But there was quite a Navy too, you know. As a matter of fact, there still is . . ."

We cannot honestly estimate what constitutes an average score for this questionnaire without occasioning some embarrassment to those of our R.C.A.F. colleagues on whom we've tried it. The correct answers appear on page 48.

1. On toasting the King, a Naval officer on board ship:
 - (a) Rises in the usual manner
 - (b) Remains seated in any circumstances
 - (c) Remains seated except when "God Save The King" is played
 - (d) Leaves his glass untouched

2. The record for a non-stop flight from Toronto to Halifax of one hour fifty-four minutes was established by:
 - (a) A Vampire jet fighter
 - (b) Two Sea Furies from the 19th Carrier Air Group
 - (c) F-86 jet fighter
 - (d) None of these



3. The Canadian light Fleet Aircraft Carrier is named:
 - (a) H.M.C.S. "Ontario"
 - (b) H.M.C.S. "Warrior"
 - (c) H.M.C.S. "Uganda"
 - (d) H.M.C.S. "Magnificent"

4. On September 23, 1949, H.M.C.S. "Swansea" completed the longest tow in the history of the R.C.N. when she towed the R.C.A.F. supply vessel "Malahat":
 - (a) 10 miles
 - (b) 110 miles
 - (c) 1,100 miles
 - (d) 11,100 miles

5. The Royal Canadian Navy's New Entry Training Establishment is known as H.M.C.S.
 - (a) "Cornwallis," Nova Scotia
 - (b) "Esquimalt," British Columbia
 - (c) "Royal Roads," British Columbia
 - (d) "Stadacona," Halifax, N.S.

6. The R.C.N. during the Second World War successfully escorted 25,343 merchant ships carrying 181,643,180 tons of cargo from North America to United Kingdom ports. This was effected by use of the system known as:
 - (a) Barratry
 - (b) Convoy
 - (c) Keel-hauling
 - (d) Mal de mer

7. The "Crowsnest" is the title of the R.C.N. magazine and also:
 - (a) A look-out point on the main mast
 - (b) A stowage space for crowbars
 - (c) A signal platform above the bridge
 - (d) Accommodation formerly provided in naval vessels for the wives of commanding officers

8. The Royal Canadian Navy has commenced a building programme that includes:
 - (a) Two aircraft carriers, three destroyers, and six corvettes
 - (b) Three anti-submarine escort vessels, four minesweepers, a gate vessel and an icebreaker
 - (c) Three sub-chasers, one cruiser and five harbour craft
 - (d) Two destroyers, two minesweepers and an icebreaker
9. The R.C.N. has recently added a new type of carrier aircraft to its squadrons. It is the:
 - (a) Firefly
 - (b) Sea Fury
 - (c) Sea Vampire
 - (d) Avenger
10. Identification letters such as (S) or (SB) after a Naval officer's rank designate:
 - (a) His branch in the Service
 - (b) His seniority
 - (c) His proficiency
 - (d) His present appointment, afloat or ashore
11. The first ships to be commissioned in the R.C.N. were:
 - (a) H.M.C.S. "Rainbow" and "Niobe"
 - (b) H.M.C.S. "Aurora" and "Patriot"
 - (c) H.M.C.S. "Patrician" and "Rainbow"
 - (d) H.M.C.S. "Niobe" and "Saguenay"
12. The cruiser H.M.C.S. "Ontario" is described as being of 8,000 tons. This means she:
 - (a) Weighs 8,000 tons
 - (b) Carries guns whose broadsides displace 8,000 tons of earth
 - (c) Displaces 8,000 tons of water
 - (b) Can carry up to 8,000 tons of armament, guns and equipment
13. The Reserve Force of the Royal Canadian Navy is designated as the:
 - (a) Royal Canadian Navy (Reserve)
 - (b) Royal Canadian Naval Reserve
 - (c) Royal Canadian Navy Volunteer Reserve
 - (d) Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve
14. The name of the Naval Division in Newfoundland is:
 - (a) H.M.C.S. "Avalon"
 - (b) H.M.C.S. "St. John's"
 - (c) H.M.C.S. "Cabot"
 - (d) No reserve division at present in existence
15. At the beginning of the Second World War, Canada had a fleet of:
 - (a) A cruiser, three destroyers and a minesweeper
 - (b) Six destroyers
 - (c) Two destroyers
 - (d) No ships ready for sea service



16. At the close of the Second World War, Canada was the:
 - (a) Third largest allied naval power
 - (b) Third largest naval power in the world
 - (c) Tenth allied sea power
 - (d) Fourth allied sea power
17. Three gold buttons horizontally placed on a man's sleeve denote:
 - (a) Petty Officer, first class
 - (b) Chief Petty Officer
 - (c) Leading Seaman
 - (d) Thirty years' service
18. The present Chief of the Naval Staff is:
 - (a) Admiral Percy W. Nelles
 - (b) Rear-Admiral George L. Stephens
 - (c) Vice-Admiral H. E. Reid
 - (d) Vice-Admiral H. T. W. Grant
19. The Royal Canadian Naval Air Station, H.M.C.S. "Shearwater," is situated at:
 - (a) Dartmouth, Nova Scotia
 - (b) Annapolis, Nova Scotia
 - (c) Esquimalt, British Columbia
 - (d) Rivers, Manitoba
20. A ship of the Royal Canadian Navy rescued 18 survivors of an American B-29 off Bermuda in November, 1949. The ship was:
 - (a) The destroyer H.M.C.S. "Micmac"
 - (b) The frigate H.M.C.S. "Swansea"
 - (c) The destroyer H.M.C.S. "Haida"
 - (d) The destroyer H.M.C.S. "Sioux"

(Prepared for "The Roundel" by the R.C.N.)

Round the World by North Star

(Though the trip here described no longer has any news value, we believe that the accompanying photographs will be of interest to many of our readers. The text is by Flt. Lt. E. S. Annis, a member of the crew.—EDITOR)

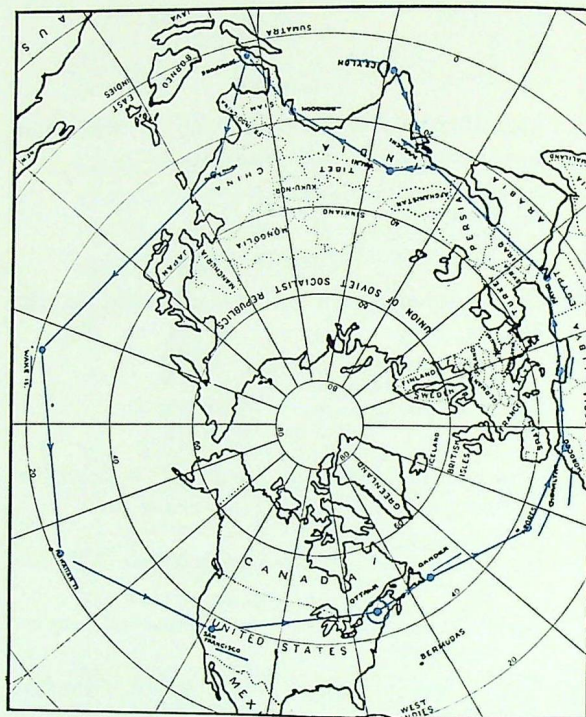
ON A COLD WET NIGHT last January, the Hon. Lester Pearson, Minister of External Affairs, climbed aboard No. 412 Squadron's North Star 17518 at Rockcliffe. The last notes of "Will Ye No Come Back Again?," played by the Pipe-Major of the Station Band, died away. Mr. Pearson and his party settled themselves comfortably in their seats, and a few minutes later the big aircraft roared away on the first lap of its long trip to Ceylon.

The first stop was at Gander, where aircraft and passengers were refuelled. Taking off at midnight, the plane headed out over the dark Atlantic and eventually landed at the rain-and-wind-swept airport of Lagens, in the Azores, where the travellers were luncheon guests of the Portugese Government. Then into the air and on again — until the second midnight of their journey found them crawling wearily into bed on the Rock of Gibraltar.

Early next morning they took off for Malta. After a night on the George Cross Island, they left on a south-easterly course for Habbaniya, but were diverted to Fayid in the Canal Zone two hours after take-off. At Fayid they were much impressed by their reception until they discovered that the fly-past of two Mosquito squadrons was for the A.O.C.-in C., Middle East, who was holding his annual inspection.

Then came the Orient — first Karachi, D.D.T. bombs, curry, and beer at a dollar a bottle; and on the following day Ceylon, that jewel of the Indian Ocean, and the Commonwealth Foreign Ministers' Conference.

Back through the clouds to Karachi . . . then Delhi, with its monument to the undying love of Shah Jehan . . . Rangoon . . . Singapore and the



world famed Raffles Club . . . Hong-Kong and two tire blow-outs . . . Wake Island, murmurous with the sound of moonlit breakers . . . Honolulu with its much envied R.C.A.F. exchange officer . . . and finally, after one engine had packed in about 100 miles from shore, San Francisco.

It was not long, however, before No. 426 Squadron's North Star 17520 arrived from Dorval to replace her lame sister, and the Minister was eventually returned to Rockcliffe safe and sound — and only ninety minutes after the time scheduled six weeks earlier.

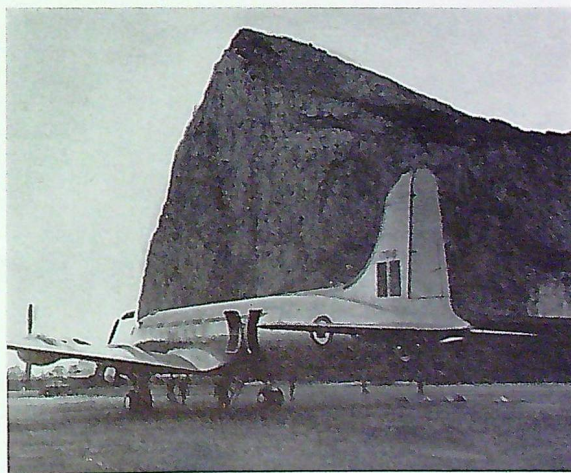
The Roundel



The crew. Back row, left to right: Flying Officer A. E. Tomkinson, D.F.C., navigator; Flt. Lt. R. McKee, radio officer; Flt. Lt. E. W. Smith, D.S.O., captain; Group Capt. R. J. Lane, D.S.O., D.F.C., conducting officer; Flt. Lt. E. S. Annis, navigator; Flt. Lt. E. G. Vrooman, co-pilot; Flt. Lt. K. C. Murphy, radio officer. Front row, left to right: Sgt. A. E. Statham, crewman; Sgt. W. I. Staples, flight engineer; LAC P.A. Ellard, crewman; Cpl. C. Martin, flight steward; LAC T. E. Andrews, crewman; Cpl. H. H. Easy, flight engineer; LAC D.M. Johnstone, air traffic assistant; Cpl. W. Korolyk, crewman. (Missing from photograph: Sqn. Ldr. H. A. Morrison, D.S.O., D.F.C.)



Mr. Pearson takes a last look at Ottawa before leaving



17518 at Gibraltar



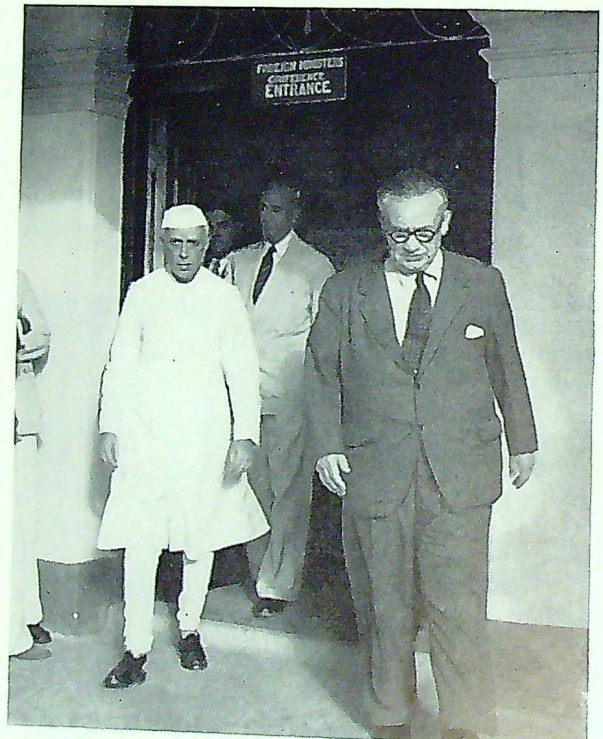
The Governor of Malta greets Mr. Pearson



The Minister's party at Karachi



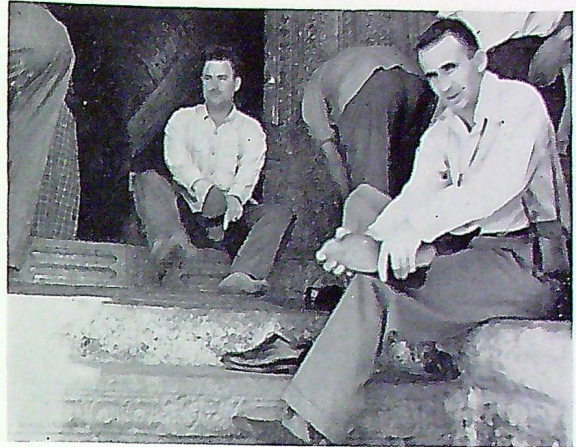
Loading baggage before taking-off from Fayid



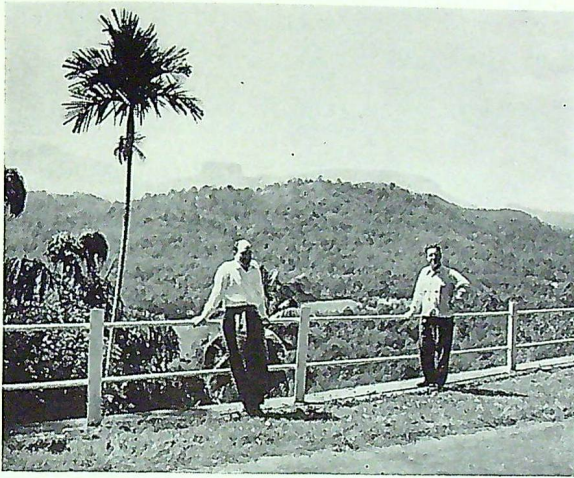
Mr. Nehru and Mr. Bevin



Senate Building, Colombo, Ceylon, where the Conference was held



Replacing shoes after visiting the Temple of the Sacred Tooth at Kandy



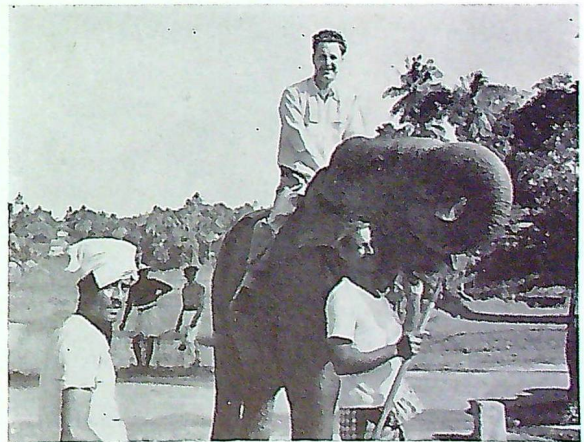
On the road between Kandy and Colombo



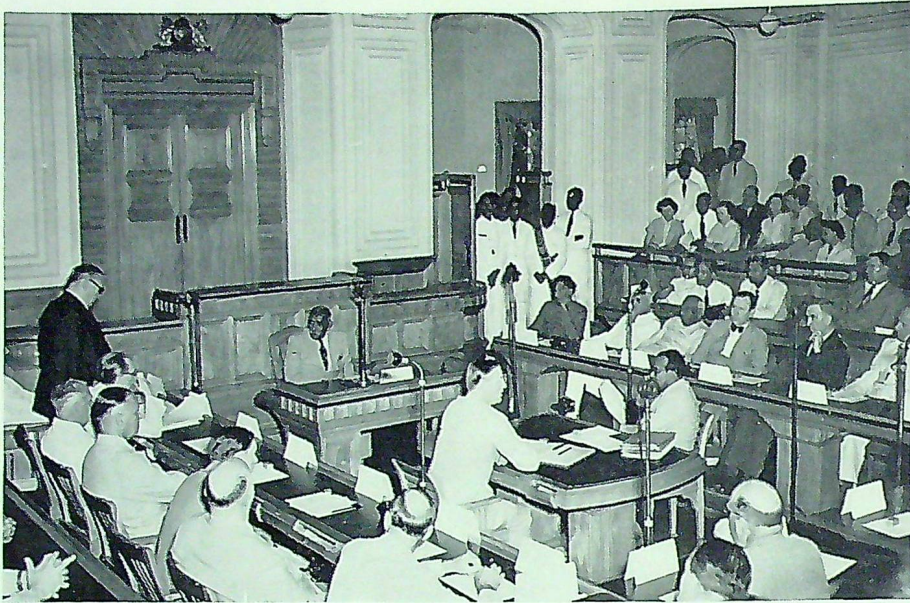
Another view of the Temple and its visitors



Crew members visit the Royal Botanical Gardens, Kandy



Jungle boy



Final session of the Colombo Conference. Ceylon's Prime Minister Senanayake, in the chair, listens to Mr. Bevin



Back in Canada, Mr. Pearson is welcomed by senior officials of his Department. The late Mr. Laurence Steinhardt, United States Ambassador, stands at extreme right

Air Power Grows up

By AIR CHIEF MARSHAL SIR JOHN C. SLESSOR, G.C.B., D.S.O., M.C.

This forceful and logical statement by the Chief of the Air Staff, R.A.F., was originally given by him as a talk to an audience of Army officers. It has also been published in the Royal United Services Institute Journal. The prefatory comment of the Editor of "Air Clues" may well be taken to heart by us who serve or have served in the R.C.A.F.: "And if any of us should still feel doubtful about the rôle of the Royal Air Force, or diffident about stressing it to the older—but not necessarily wiser—Services, this article should improve our knowledge and strengthen our courage."—EDITOR.

(Reprinted by courtesy of "Air Clues")

THIS TALK concerns the development of air power mainly as it affects land operations. That does not reduce the scope very much, however, since there are precious few aspects of air power that do not have a direct bearing on land operations. Let me quote one instance to show you what I mean. Already by the time of the Casablanca Conference in January, 1943, the Combined Chiefs of Staff were deeply concerned with the critical problem of whether and how soon they could build up Allied land and air strength in Europe for the great final assault, which was actually staged eighteen months later — Operation *Overlord*. There was only too good reason to fear that, if sinkings by U-boats continued at the rate experienced in recent months, we might never be able to build up that strength — in spite of the enormous merchant shipbuilding programme approaching its peak in the United States. So the Chiefs of Staff agreed, and the Prime Minister and the President approved, that the defeat of the U-boats was to be the first charge on our combined resources.

During the following year, Coastal Command sank 85 U-boats — about seven a month; not a bad average. The Battle of the Atlantic was won, and *Overlord* mounted in the following June. There you have air power, working away unseen — hundreds and hundreds of miles out in the North Atlantic — unheard of, unknown to all but a very few soldiers, yet exerting an influence on their destiny and on their capacity to fight, just as surely and vitally as the Spits and rocket Typhoons

that were commonplace in their daily lives once action was joined.

Air power, of course, covers the operation of all classes of aircraft — fighters, tactical air forces, maritime squadrons, transports. But the primary agent of air power is the bomber, and I am going to confine myself mainly to the development of air strategy as exemplified by the bomber offensive in the last war, with special relation to its influence on the other Services. Before doing so, however, I want to say one or two things to try to help you get the whole thing into perspective.

First, a point which is far too commonly overlooked is that our actual practical *experience* of air power is infinitesimal compared to our knowledge and experience of sea or land warfare. After all, we have been fighting at sea and on land for thousands of years; we have a vast literature on the subject; and certain principles have emerged from the experience of hundreds of great sea and land commanders of all nationalities — principles which I think in the main remain applicable today, though no doubt in a very modified form.

Not so in the air, however. Do remember the extreme youth of air power and consider whether we can really sensibly say that we know all about it and can foresee with any confidence its ultimate development and influence on the destinies of the Empire. I'm not a very old man, but the first aeroplane made its first flight when I was a small boy. And it isn't yet 40 years since the first man flew the English Channel and we, to our great

misfortune, ceased to be an island. Supposing the whole of our naval experience and knowledge of sea power had been compressed into 40 years — as our knowledge of air power has been. I do not think we should be entitled to claim that we know all about sea power or had exhausted its possibilities.

* * *

Another general comment I would make is this. Remember, in considering the last war in the air, that the methods and weapons with which it was waged are already obsolete — as obsolete as the armies of 1914-18 were by 1939. Probably more so, because in the closing stages of the last war we saw the beginning of three scientific and technical developments which have completely revolutionized warfare. I refer, of course, to the atomic bomb, the jet-propelled aircraft, and the guided missile. If our thinking is conditioned solely by our experience in France, Italy, Burma, or wherever we were in 1944-45, then we are in grave danger of doing what people of our profession have so often been accused of doing — not always without justification — namely, busying ourselves preparing for the last war.

The only other general point I would make is to warn you against drawing false lessons from your memories of the last couple of years of war, when Britain and the United States between them disposed of vast air forces and had achieved a degree of air superiority, amounting virtually to complete command of the air, that no one would have believed possible until actually experienced. What we have got to try to think clearly about now is the much more difficult problem of how best to employ our air forces in conditions, early in a war, when we are up against a numerically superior enemy, and before there has been time to wear down his resistance by that unending relentless offensive pressure against the heart of his country, which alone gives us air supremacy there and in the fringe areas — the sea and land battlefields. I am going to return to this later.

* * *

Now let us turn to the bomber offensive. The heavy long-range bomber always has been, and, I think, always will be, the "capital ship," so to

speaking, of *conventional* air forces. Let me hasten to say that I do not deny the probability that conventional air forces and their heavy bombers will some day be as obsolete as I believe the heavy battleship to have been for the last quarter century. In fact, I consider that an absolute certainty. I have no doubt whatever that most of you will live to see the day when the heavy bomber as we know it now is no more than a museum piece. I expect to see one mounted on concrete at Cranwell — as H.M.S. *Victory* is at Portsmouth — a standing reminder of what I regard as one of the greatest miracles of the late war. I mean the way the morale and fighting spirit of Bomber Command withstood a strain which, in the old days, I would hardly have believed any force could stand up to.

But whether the bomber of the future is a big jet-propelled job with a crew, or an unmanned expendable aircraft, or a rocket-propelled guided missile, there are certain principles which will apply in the future as in the past. Because of this, therefore, we can learn some lessons from the late war.

First, though, just let us have a quick look at past development — how things have progressed in this line in a quarter of a century, which isn't so long a time. The prototype of what we should today call a strategic bomber force was Lord Trenchard's old Independent Force. That bomber force in the ten months of 1918 dropped a total of 666 tons — almost exactly one quarter of what Bomber Command, just over twenty-five years later, dropped on Berlin in the single night of February 15th-16th, 1944. In 1918, 150 miles was a good range; in 1945, the American B29s in the Pacific were bombing at ten times this range. That is a measure of the advance in twenty-five years; and, remember, aviation is only forty-five years old!

What must we expect in another twenty-five years? I am still serving, but as a young officer I flew a 50-horse-power Blériot monoplane with a top speed of about 55 and a climb that made the Hog's Back an obstacle not to be taken too lightly. Today, the standard fighter in the Service has a top speed of over 600 and a ceiling of about 50,000

feet, which it can reach in a few minutes. Will speeds continue to increase at that rate? Not quite, perhaps, but I expect to live to see fighters operating well beyond the sonic barrier. In fact, I suggest that in another twenty years, 1,000 m.p.h. will be quite commonplace for a fighter.

Bomber speeds, too, may increase at a more spectacular rate — even manned bombers. As I have said, I think the manned bomber is obsolete — except, perhaps, as a marker for the unmanned bomber. I would rather say no more about the latter than that, while it is by no means “just round the corner,” we shall probably see it in existence quite a bit earlier than many of us imagine. Perhaps I should add also a word of warning against attaching too much importance to public statements by people such as a certain professor who was reported in the Press as saying that the unmanned bomber would never be accurate enough to be any good.

* * *

After that sortie into the past and plunge into the future, let us look at what the bomber offensive actually achieved in the late war. What were the main strategic effects of it?

Now, there is a peculiar tendency today for clever people to write books of which the general purport is that the bomber offensive had no decisive results, was a frightful waste of effort and lives and all, and how much better it would have been if all that effort had been put into supporting the Army or the Navy — according to the colour of the critic's coat. The general idea is that the naughty Air Staff was obsessed with this bomber offensive — with the result that the land or the sea operations, as the case may be, were seriously handicapped. This, of course, is poppycock; but it is superficially plausible, so let's examine it for a minute.

To begin with, it might be worth noting that the bomber offensive was not a sort of fad of the Air Staff's. It was settled strategic policy of the War Cabinet, advised by the Chiefs of Staff, and, subsequently, of the President and the Prime Minister, on the advice of the Combined Chiefs of Staff. But apart from that, so far from being a handicap

to the land or sea operations, such operations could not possibly have been successful without it, because it was the bomber offensive that was primarily responsible for the almost amazing degree of air superiority that we enjoyed in the last two and a half years of war. And as for having no decisive results — well, it dried up Germany's oil, grounded her air force, halted her tanks, smashed her railways, and brought her whole economic and military machine to a grinding standstill.

If these are not decisive results, I don't know what are. Ah, say the critics, but it didn't begin to have a serious effect until 1944. Now actually that is not true; it began to build up a favourable air situation from the very beginning. Said a German staff report to Hitler in 1944: “At the beginning of the war the operations of the German Air Force determined the character of events; the initiative has now, however, since 1941 been in the hands of the enemy.” But I am quite ready to admit that the bomber offensive did not, in itself, begin to be a real war-winning factor in its direct effect on the German economic and military machine till 1944. But did any of us?

True, I suppose one can say that at sea we did have a decisive success against the U-boats in 1943 — but the credit for that is in large measure due to the Air Force. So the bomber offensive does not seem to have been much of a handicap there. But on land? Surely no one will claim that military operations on land really began to be *decisive* till June, 1944? It always puzzles me why anyone should have expected air power to begin to pay big dividends so much sooner than land or sea power. Especially if it is remembered that between the wars we spent, I suppose — I don't know the exact figures — about six pounds on land plus sea power for every one spent on air power.

I think it is worth just having a look at what proportion of the national effort was put into the bomber offensive. The Army took about 50 per cent of the total effort, the Navy about 20 per cent, the Air Force about 27 per cent, and Civil Defence about 3 per cent. The bomber offensive took seven per cent — or about one quarter of the Air Force's total effort and one-seventh of the Army's share.

I don't think I need elaborate that; but I can't help wondering whether, if we had put, say, ten per cent instead of seven per cent into the bomber offensive, we might not have been able to go back to the Continent on a march table instead of an operation order. I don't know. No one ever will.

* * *

Now consider a more important factor; one which, perhaps, it is more difficult to understand and evaluate properly. I would not for a moment claim that exactly the right proportion of our air resources was always allocated at exactly the right time to meet each and every one of the many conflicting demands. That would be ridiculous. If we had known then what we do now, there would have been adjustments here and there, though I should not be surprised had the net result turned out to be strengthening of the bomber offensive earlier. But grasp this fact: these inter-service squabbles about air support — the Army's pressure for dive-bombers; the Navy's insistence on more anti-submarine aircraft for Coastal Command — were at their worst early in the war; by 1943 they had virtually ceased. Why? *Because the resources were available at last.* In the earlier years, there just was not enough to go round — and the Army and the Navy had then to pay for the development of the air superiority and direct support which enabled them to win their great victories in the later years. And you must remember that, even if we had wanted to, we could not have changed our air policy whenever we might have liked: the aircraft we had and were building were not all adaptable to each and every rôle. That is a point which will be relevant in any future war. In fact, in this event it will be a still more limiting factor because types are tending to diverge. For instance, it is very unlikely that the heavy bomber of the future will be easily adaptable to the anti-submarine rôle — as the Liberator and the Lancaster were.

In these days, strategy is conditioned to an alarming extent by production, and production is a long business. You can't say today, "*Let's go mainly for an air offensive;*" then six months later say, "*Oh, no, sorry; we want a land*

campaign now." It just does not work. In 1940, after the fall of France, when we were alone, the War Cabinet — on the advice of the Chiefs of Staff — went nap on the bomber offensive. What other way was there open to us, in the circumstances, of getting at Germany? So the aircraft industry here, and largely, also, in the United States, was geared, jugged, and tooled to the great heavy bomber production programme, which ultimately gave us Bomber Command as it was three years later. It is vain to imagine that about a year after, say, in '41, when we wanted more tactical aircraft in Africa, we could have turned round and said, "*Sorry, we have thought better of it; we want a lot of light bombers and fighter-bombers instead.*" The net result would have been that we got nothing.

One final point about this form of criticism, which always rather irritates me because it is based on ignorance. Even if it had been sound from a purely narrow military standpoint, it was, in fact, not a practicable proposition to let up on what was, from the summer of 1940 for about two years, the only offensive operation of any significance that the British were undertaking — certainly the only way in which we were exerting any direct pressure on German power in Europe. We could not possibly have diverted more aircraft from that offensive rôle — even if they had been technically suitable — to co-operate with an Army which, through no fault of its own, was not fighting except with a few divisions in Africa. The War Cabinet had to consider not only the imponderables — such as morale in this country and in the occupied countries — but far more practical pressures.

I remember Mr. Churchill violently reacting to an Admiralty suggestion to divert heavy aircraft from Bomber Command in the spring of '43; his grounds were the effect on the Russians of a reduction in the bomber offensive at a time when they were engaging about 200 German divisions and were clamouring for a Second Front. These matters are never as simple as they seem. It wasn't, in practice, a simple question of: *Shall we bomb Germany or shall we support a land campaign?* At War Cabinet levels where these

things are decided, it is necessary to take into account all sorts of imponderables and a whole variety of pressures which are not obvious to all.

Apart from that, of course, we should never have been able to develop the tactics and technique that achieved such terrific results in 1944-45, without long, weary years of trial and experience in the one field where this practical experience could be gained — in battle.

When you read these books and articles, then, criticizing our air policy in the war — and I hope you will, because they stimulate thought — remember what I have said and remember, too, that there is very much another side to the story. Read also, publications like Lord Tedder's book: *Air Power in War*, Sir Norman Bottomley's lecture in the *R.U.S.I. Journal*, and the report on Exercise *Thunderbolt*. Then, and only then, will you be in a position to form a worthwhile judgment of your own.

So there are what I suggest were the two main strategic effects of air power, as exemplified by the bomber offensive, in the European theatre last time: air supremacy and tearing the guts out of Germany. I do not underrate the importance of the tactical air forces; but I am speaking to an audience of soldiers, and any soldier who does not know that no army can fight without the close co-operation of a good tactical air force had better go back to school. Let me say just a little more about these two major effects of the bomber offensive.

* * *

First, about air superiority. I think any of you with experience of the Mediterranean and European theatres of war will agree with me, that from about the time of Alamein onwards, the German Air Force was never anything more than a nuisance — occasionally a rather tiresome nuisance, but never anything more. You really went about your business without giving much thought to enemy air action; you certainly had to give less thought to it than we did back in the Kaiser's war in France. I remember my astonishment when I first arrived in Italy, early in '44, and realized the almost complete disregard held for the German

Air Force — one hardly gave it a thought. In France and Germany, you chaps on the ground were able to press on virtually regardless of enemy air influence and with far fewer casualties than you really had any right to expect.

The late C.I.G.S. has constantly stressed the vital importance of air superiority, and I quote from one of his many statements on the subject: "The first and basic principle is that you must win the air battle before you embark on the land or sea battle." As a matter of fact, I think he overstates his case there — and there may be a lesson in that. You may *have* to embark on the land or sea battle *before* the air battle is won. I think it would be dangerous for the Army to get into the way of thinking that it cannot fight unless we have air superiority. It may have to — just as the Germans had to, and they did damned well in defence. In fact, Rommel hustled the 8th Army back to the Alamein position in the summer of '42 when he by no means had air superiority. But it is quite certain you won't *win* the land battle unless you have pretty well got command of the air — you won't be able to turn to the offensive, which on land, as at sea and in the air, is the only road to victory.

The point I do want to impress upon you is that this happy state of affairs was not due to the fighters which you could see overhead — at least, in small part only. You can get temporary local air superiority by using fighters well, as we did, for instance, at Dunkirk; but it is a precarious and very local affair. No; the thing that produced that extraordinary degree of air supremacy was the relentless — day in, night out — ding-dong pressure against the heart of Germany, starting from small beginnings back in 1940 and culminating in that terrific Anglo-American onslaught which reduced Germany to a rubble heap. The main air war, in fact, was fought out over Germany; not over England or our narrow seas; not over the land battlefields. It threw the Germans on the defensive and kept them there, until, by the end of the war, the cream of their remaining crews had been concentrated in their night-fighter force in Germany, and they were producing no bombers but more fighters than the British and Americans put

together, and which we were destroying almost as quickly as they were produced. Don't ever make any mistake about what it was to which you owed the air superiority that enabled you to do your job so well — it was, primarily, Bomber Command and the 8th and 15th Air Forces of the United States, operating from the United Kingdom and the Foggia airfields in Italy.

So for a few words about the other major strategic result — the direct effect on Germany. What were we getting at? What was, so to speak, the "Intention" paragraph of the operation order? Well, it varied, of course. For instance, for the few months before D-Day in 1944, the aim was to paralyse German rail movement in Northern France. But that was not the bomber offensive proper; it was a temporary and extremely valuable tactical employment of the bomber forces to help the Army get ashore and stay ashore. And how successful it was! Read Shulman's book: *Defeat in the West*, if you want to know what the Germans thought about it.

As I say, it was a temporary diversion, and I think the "Intention" paragraph of the main bomber offensive against Germany is best summed up in the words of the famous Casablanca Directive from the Combined Chiefs of Staff to the Allied Bomber Forces in January, 1943: "The progressive destruction and dislocation of the German military, industrial, and economic system, and the undermining of the morale of the German people to a point where their capacity for armed resistance is fatally weakened." And that, as a matter of fact, is just about what happened in the next two and a half years. There were occasional diversions, such as the bombing of the French railways I have just mentioned, and close tactical co-operation in the land battle — at Caen, for instance. The Directive was occasionally given more precision by supplementary directives on priorities; but in the end the German military, industrial, and economic system was so dislocated and destroyed that the capacity of the German people for armed resistance was fatally weakened.

* * *

I do not claim that we always chose the right objective or that we made no mistakes. There was,

I think, a good deal of unnecessary destruction. It is clear from our experience in the past three years that destruction as an end in itself is folly; it is a self-defeating object. Do you recall Foch's maxim that: "We must not regard war as the supreme object, because after war there is peace?" Of course, it is easy to be wise after the event, and remember what I said earlier on about our lack of experience. This was the First Air War and we just did not know what people could stand: we over-estimated the effect of bombing on morale; we underestimated the recovery factor.

I still think these two factors were among the greatest miracles of history. I would never have believed that the morale of a people could stand up to what the Germans endured. Would we have stood it, I wonder? Cast your minds back to, say, April 16th, or May 10th, 1941, when London was attacked with under 500 tons a night; or Liverpool, in the days leading up to May 8th in that same year. I'm rather afraid that this may be a direction in which the totalitarian Police State has an advantage over a free democracy.

Again, who, having seen Germany after VE Day, would have believed that — as one example only — late in 1944 the German aircraft industry, under the supreme direction of that genius, Albert Speer, was producing over 2,000 fighters a month? It is an almost unbelievable example of the recovery factor; of what *can* be done by dispersal, underground working, slave labour, and so on — even in the face of air bombardment on the 1944 scale. I don't think anyone can really be blamed for not having foreseen that.

I am not saying that the air forces did this all alone or could — in the circumstances as they existed in the years 1943-45 — have brought about the surrender of Germany without a land invasion of the Continent. I don't say they could not have done so if our national resources had been allocated somewhat differently . . . but this would only lead us into unprofitable speculation. What I do say — and this is not a matter of opinion but of historical fact which no one can doubt who has read the German documents — is that, if the Allied Armies had marked time when they reached the German frontiers, Germany would still have

had to surrender just about when she did. On March 15th, Speer reported to Hitler on the results of the bomber offensive: "The final collapse of the German economy can be counted on with certainty within four to eight weeks . . . after this collapse, even military continuation of the war will become impossible." He was dead right. And yet we are told that the bomber offensive had no decisive results!

An interesting point is that the target systems whose destruction and dislocation mainly brought about this result were oil and rail transportation, and these were the two target systems to which the Air Staff gave first priority in September, 1939. We had frequently to depart from them in the following years, chiefly because we had neither the strength nor the right bombs nor the technical ability to bomb sufficiently accurately in the earlier years. But it is interesting to reflect on the possibility of their being still the most profitable objectives in another possible war.

* * *

So much for Europe. Turn for a moment to the Far East. I don't know if you have studied the tremendous operations by the United States forces in the Pacific, but they are well worth studying. The great air-sea battles of Midway and the Coral Sea, the bitter fighting on Guadalcanal and Tarawa — all those operations which led up to the capture and establishment of air bases in the Marianas and Riukius.

But do not let our admiration of the gallantry, the ingenuity, and the colossal feat of organization, on the part of the U.S. Navy, Army, and Marines, blind us to the fact that Japan, with a vast army still intact and in possession of huge areas of the Asiatic mainland and archipelago, was reduced to abject unconditional surrender by the heavy bomber — without a single Allied soldier setting foot on Japanese soil.

My personal belief is that the same thing would have happened — possibly a little later — if we had never dropped the atomic bomb. The United States Air Force could not have done that to Japan without the help of the Army and the Navy, who got their bases for them; and an important contributory cause was the destruction

of the bulk of the Japanese Navy and merchant shipping — largely, also, by air power. But the moral surely is this — that a nation which loses command of the air over its territory and over its vital sea communications *can*, in these days, be knocked out by air power.

* * *

Lastly, about the future. I am not going to try and prophesy what a future war might be like in an age of atomic and biological weapons. A great deal of nonsense is being talked and written on that subject. The two extremes are almost equally dangerous and silly. At one extreme, one sees it suggested — more especially in America — that dropping a few atom bombs on places like Moscow and Leningrad would knock out Russia. At the other, you have gentlemen writing books and saying that since Germany resisted for five and a half years under bombing, and since the number of atom bombs we are likely to possess will have only about the same destructive capacity as all the H.E. bombs we dropped on Germany, therefore they couldn't possibly be decisive. Which entirely ignores the fact that what a nation may be able to stand spread over five and a half years might very well be mortal if compressed into a week or a month! It may be that the destructive capacity of the atom bomb has been somewhat exaggerated. I think it probably has, but I don't think that matters much. Also, I think it is by no means certain that bacteriological warfare is a practical proposition.

But of some things I am quite certain—and they are these. Unless we command the air over these islands, we are sunk—even more certainly than we should have been last time. Unless we have air superiority in the battle zone and a good tactical air force, it does not matter how many T.A. or any other sort of divisions we have; they will be quite useless. Unless we can protect our convoys from air attack, we shall starve. And finally, if we try to be strong everywhere, we shall be strong enough nowhere—and certainly not in the air, which is absolutely vital to our existence as a nation.

Gliders in the Sky

by FLT. LT. R. G. METCALFE

President of the Soaring Wing, R.C.A.F. Station, Trenton

GLIDER FLYING APPEALS to the imagination of most Air Force personnel. To some, silent flight acts as a tonic after the noise and vibration of engines. To others, it is a challenge. It places man alone in the blue with no engine to help him, and height, duration and quality of flight depend on the individual's unaided skill.

Until last year no definite step had been taken to promote organized glider flying at Trenton. On 21 June 1949 the first meeting was held to discuss the formation of a glider club. The attendance, from all ranks, numbered about fifty, and another twenty signified their willingness to join the club if and when it should be formed. An executive was elected; and it was decided that membership would be open to both flying and non-flying personnel and that the club would endeavour to provide an opportunity for all members to learn to glide and soar under the safest and most encouraging conditions. The club would thus serve the useful purpose of making glider pilots out of airmen who otherwise would have little or no chance to fly.

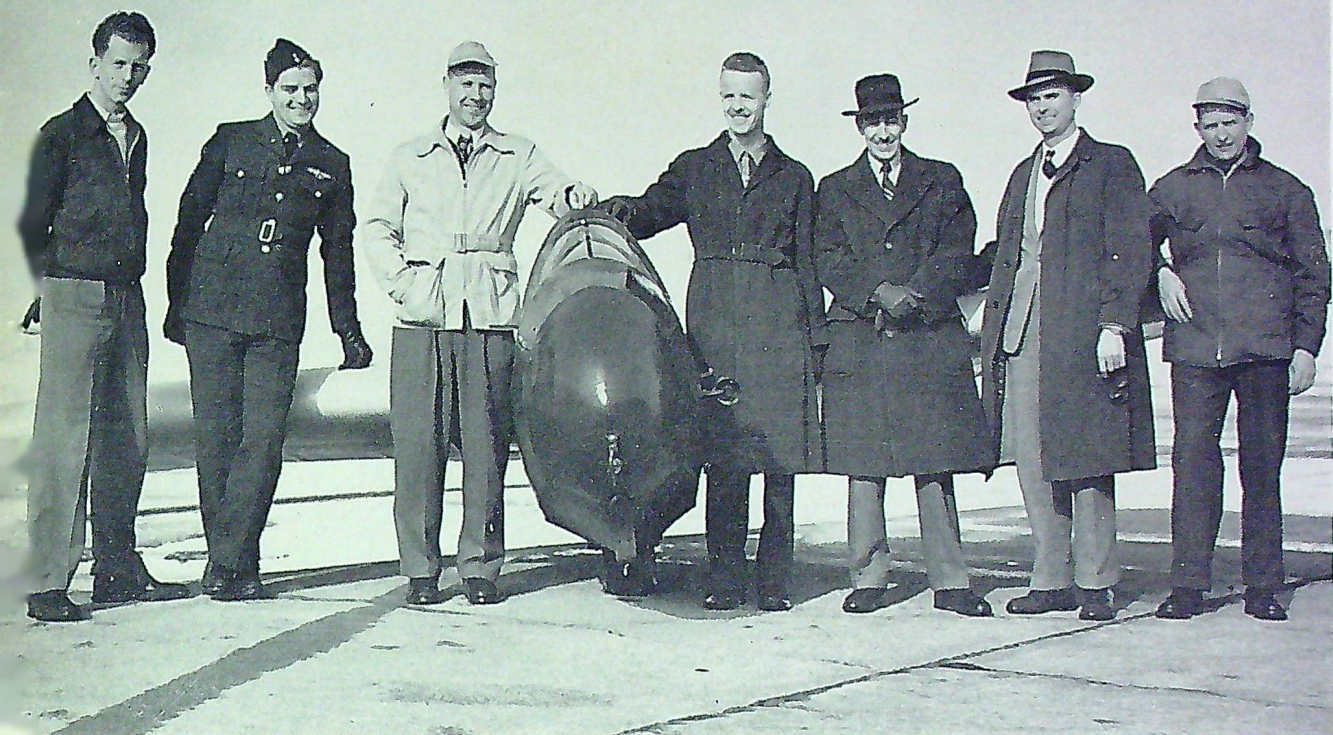
The Station Fund Committee gave financial help to the project. A loan, sufficient to purchase three machines and pay for the initial organizing expenses, was advanced to the club. This was to be repaid out of the members' annual and flying fees. As finances did not permit the buying of a tow-plane, winch-launching was decided upon. However, the club is fortunate in also having the air-tow method available. An airman on the Station generously allowed it to use a Tiger Moth belonging to him. A Kirby Cadet and a Liaster-Kaufman glider have been bought. On the annual Sports Day last year the Liaster-Kaufman, using air-tows, gave an exhibition of aerobatic flying from 2,000 ft. down to 400 ft. Several members who were already qualified pilots have since been checked out for solo flying.

A winch launching-unit has been installed, and works well. It consists of a Chrysler Industrial engine, a fluid fly-wheel, and a type "B" winch. The operators, who started from scratch, have learned their job quickly and well. Gliders, with a crew of two as well as parachutes, can be launched to a height of from 700 ft. to 900 ft. The record launch is 1500 ft. From a pilot's viewpoint, winch launching is perhaps the most spectacular way of getting into the air. Its remarkably steep angle of climb provides a new and thrilling sensation. The closest comparison to it is a JATO take-off.

The Chief Flying Instructor, who has his "C" certificate and is a qualified flying instructor, is Flying Officer Bacon. He has been granted an approved Glider Instructor's certificate by the Department of Transport. It is expected that at least four more of the club's members will soon be similarly certified. Present policy is to go slowly until the number of instructors and winch operators becomes large enough to enable training to be spread over the whole week. Members will thus get the maximum possible time in the air. A good start was made on the flying training programme by using the German method of training (ground slides, low hops, high hops, etc.) with the Kirby Cadet, and by giving dual with the Liaster-Kaufman.

Just before Christmas two more single-seater gliders were purchased. They were Schweizer SGU 1-19's. One was in fairly good condition, the other required repairs. The acquisition of these brought the number of gliders belonging to the club to four—three single- and one two-seater aircraft. These should be enough for a club which has a membership approaching 125. Of course, when funds permit, it would be desirable to secure high-performance craft for greater soaring.

Maintenance, inspection and repair are carried out under the capable direction of Flt. Lt. Hoye,



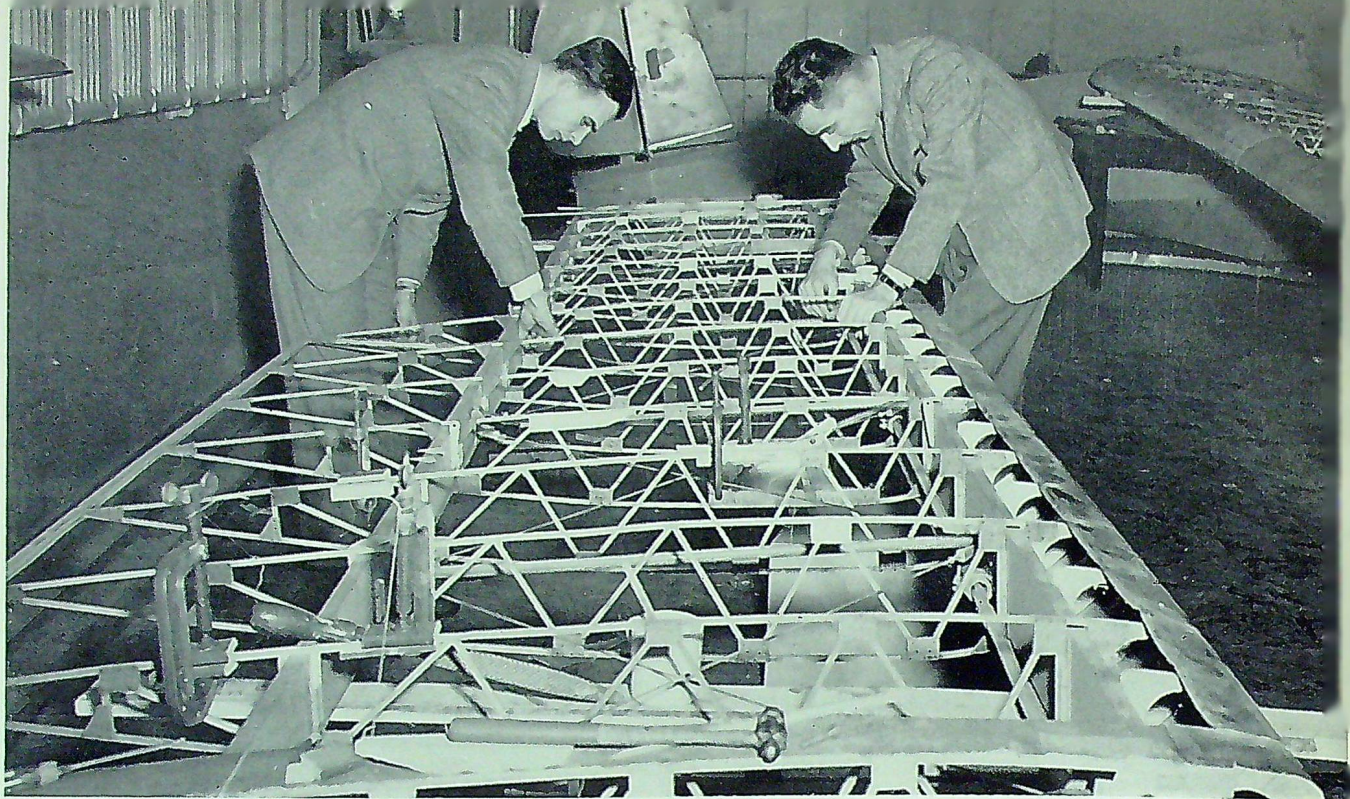
Left to right: Flying Officer Bacon, LAC Watson, Flt. Lt. Metcalfe, Flying Officer Schroeder, Flt. Lt. Hoye, Flt. Sgt. Thornhill, Flt. Sgt. Gillespie.

who has a wealth of experience in this line. The club's winter programme was directed towards the repair and overhaul of equipment. The importance of a thorough and well organized system of repair and maintenance is essential to the well-being of a club. A craft requires at least seven hours of checking and repairing for every hour it is in the air, and in the last six months, club members have spent 450 hours on this type of work. It is understood that a group at 10 R.D. has constructed a glider under a trade advancement programme. Experience by the club at Trenton has shown that most airmen have not had much practice in the type of carpentry necessary for glider construction and repair, but the club members are learning fast. There is no doubt that the work has much to be said in its favour. From the standpoint of trade advancement it is invaluable in imparting knowledge of the repair and construction of aircraft structures, and there is no joy or pride comparable to that felt by someone who has flown a glider of his own construction.



The Kirby Cadet (left) and the Liaster-Kaufman

The club, like others in this country, is organized in accordance with rules laid down by the Soaring Association of Canada. It operates under Department of Transport regulations as regards licensing of aircraft, pilots, students, etc. It is hoped that

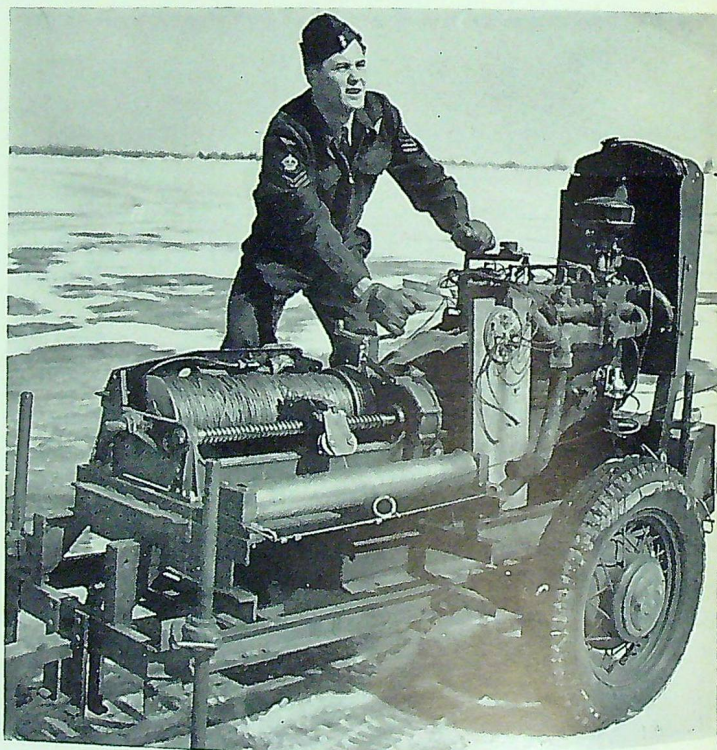


Flt. Lt. Hoyer and Flt. Sgt. Thornhill inspecting a Schweizer wing

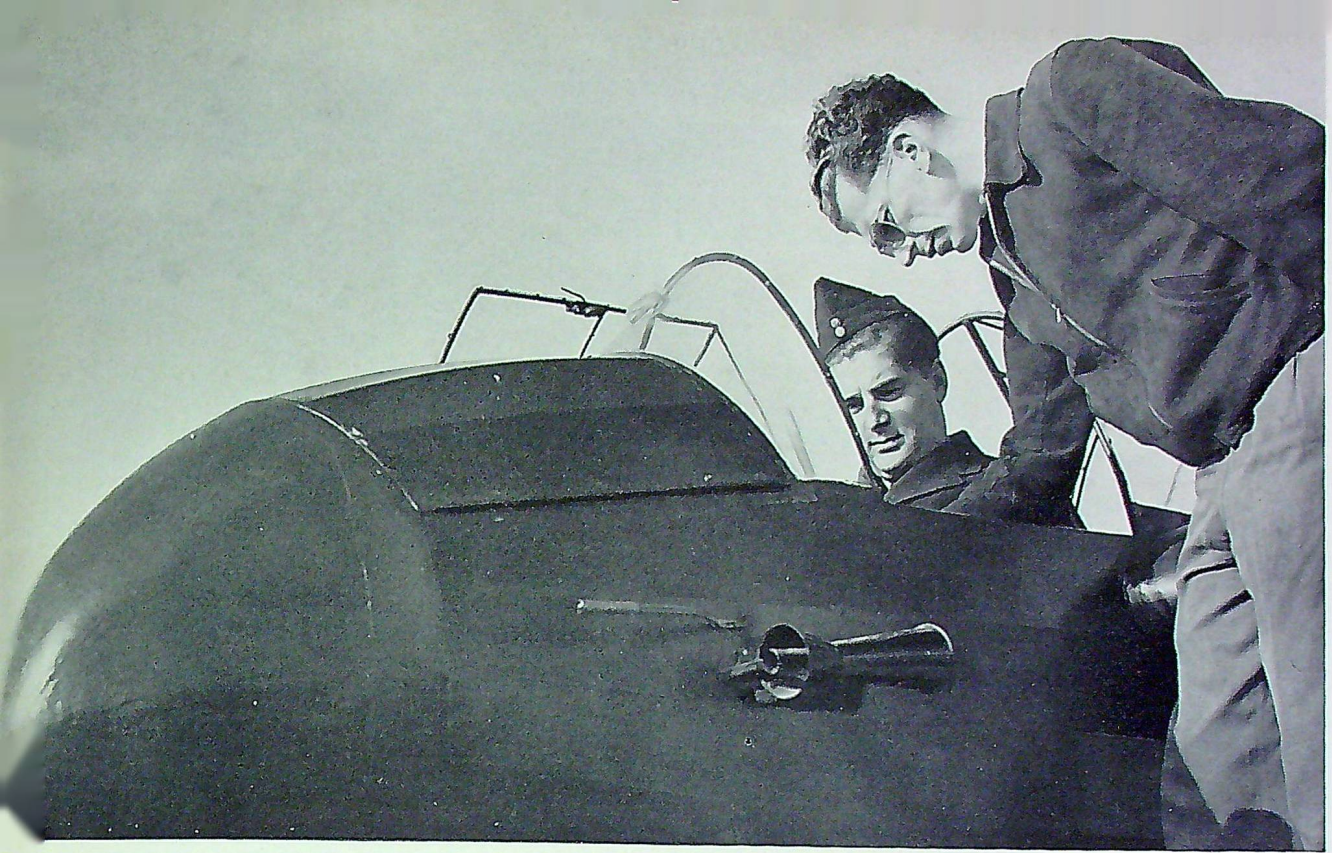
before long the club will have had enough experience to enable it to participate in Canadian gliding meets and other competitions. Having received great help from other clubs — particularly the Queens Club at Kingston — members would like to show how much this co-operation has helped them.

At the moment the only other known active gliding club in the R.C.A.F. is the one at 10 R.D. Calgary. One is now being formed at Camp Borden and it should become "operational" this summer. If any other Stations are interested in forming a club, we at Trenton will be pleased to extend all the help we can.

Last season's activities were mostly carried out with the Liaster-Kaufman. There were 148 flights and flying time totalled approximately 8 hours. Several of the club members soloed, and received their "B" certificates. The lateness of the season prevented other members from qualifying for the "C" certificate. The only soaring to date is that done by our C.F.I. who last September reached an altitude of 3,300 ft. in a 24-minute flight. The



Flt. Sgt. Perry at winch controls



LAC Watson receives instruction from the club's C.F.I.

club is looking forward to a successful season this coming summer.

The Executive Committee of the club is as follows:

President Flt. Lt. R. G. Metcalfe
 Vice-President Flt. Sgt. J. F. Gillespie

Secretary LAC R. W. Dalton

Treasurer Flt. Sgt. A. Perry

C.F.I. Flying Officer

E. A. H. Bacon, A.F.M.

O. C. Maintenance Flt. Lt. W. N. Hoyer

Social LAC Stranks

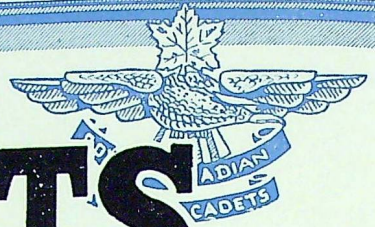
Human Compass

A CHINESE BOMBER CREW of the Fourteenth Air Force became separated from its formation while returning from a mission. After losing contact with other bombers, the crew eventually found a familiar landmark, the Yangtze River. This proved useless, however, when the navigator confessed that he was too confused to determine

the direction of their base. But shortly afterward the bomber changed course and went straight home — without the navigator. When he arrived, weary and footsore, some days later, he explained: "The pilot made me bail out and ask somebody. Then I made markers on the ground. Then I had to walk home."

(*"Air Force"*)

The ROYAL CANADIAN AIR CADETS



REPORT FROM NO. 1 WING

CANADA'S FIRST Air Cadet Wing was formed in 1947 at Vancouver, B.C., and was followed by similar formations in Edmonton, Winnipeg, Hamilton, Toronto and Montreal. As indicated by the following paragraphs, the Wing idea is a real success in Vancouver where the squadrons have banded together in the interests of increased proficiency.

The pioneer No. 1 Wing comprises four squadrons — Nos. 57, 59, 111 and 135 — all sponsored by a composite committee under the chairmanship of Mr. Denys H. Back. The Wing meets regularly in a special hangar at the old Jericho Beach Station of the R.C.A.F., which was turned over to the Air Cadets after the war and completely refurbished to suit its new purpose. It boasts well-outfitted classrooms, rest rooms, equipment stores and offices. There is even an attractive canteen, operated on the cadets' behalf by the Vancouver Mothers' Committee.

No. 1 Wing is commanded by Squadron Leader M. F. Taylor, assisted by Flight Lieutenant R. R. Brooks, Adjutant, and Flying Officer T. Bell, Equipment Officer. The Chief Instructor, who supervises the training of all four squadrons, is Flying Officer W. C. MacNeil. Flying Officer K. L. Martin is in charge of publicity.

During the past year the Wing was well represented in such Dominion-wide activities as exchange visits, flying training and summer camps; and the cadets were given the opportunity to qualify for many additional rewards. Highlights of the year's operation were the following:

Sgt. Malcolm Elliot, LAC John Lavmour and Cpl. Tommy Turpin enlisted in the permanent

R.C.A.F. Flt. Sgt. Rex B. Cameron toured the United States under the exchange visits plan, and five cadets were presented with their Wings by Group Capt. Z. L. Leigh, O.B.E., during the first Wings Parades for Vancouver cadets held in April 1949.

At last year's annual inspection held at Jericho Beach, eleven Air Cadets were awarded flying training scholarships and all ultimately passed the summer course. A smart display of counter-marching by the Wing Band and a rifle drill exhibition by the cadet precision drill team were notable events at the inspection.

The Wing Commander Charles Gray Memorial Trophy was presented to No. 59 Squadron for efficiency last June at Sea Island by Air Commodore J. M. Murray, C.B.E., of Air Force Headquarters.



Sqn. Ldr. M. S. Taylor



Navigation flight about to take-off

In November, the rifle team of No. 1 Wing flew to Prince George to capture the Firbank Rifle Trophy from the Prince George cadets by a score of 287 to 253. Another competition entered by No. 1 Wing cadets was the "Silver Gloves," sponsored by the British Columbia Amateur Boxing Association. LAC Robt. Jennings was runner-up in the finals.

In addition to the routine benefits of the Air Cadet programme, officials of No. 1 Wing have introduced many other activities designed to interest young men. Regular cadet and N.C.O. dances are held each month and there is a popular "turkey shoot" during each Christmas season. The Cadet Mothers' Committee takes care of catering for these functions.

The Wing is now in the process of organizing a girls' division, which is expected to offer real competition to other such units already formed in B.C.

Deserving special mention is the official newspaper of No. 1 Wing. This paper, which was originally issued in mimeographed form, has recently graduated to letterpress and is one of the



Off to Prince George

finest efforts of its kind to appear in Canada. The first glossy issue was printed in two colours, carried advertising, and was packed with interesting facts about the activities of Vancouver's Air Cadets. It sets a very high standard for those units planning to enter the fast-growing field of squadron newspapers.

NO. 19 (STRATFORD) SQUADRON

From the C.O. of No. 19 Squadron, Flt. Lt. W. G. Wreford, we have received the following account of an interesting talk recently heard by cadets (and their fathers) of No. 19 Squadron, as it was reported in the Stratford "Beacon-Herald."

"Squadron Leader A. P. Crowley, of Britain's Royal Air Force, had high praise for Canada's youth when he addressed cadets of Stratford's Squadron 19, Royal Canadian Air Cadets, and their fathers at the squadron's father-and-son banquet in St. James' Church of England parish hall here Friday night. The British officer, who is chief instructor at the R.C.A.F. radio school at Clinton, Ont., and serving two years on exchange duty with the R.C.A.F., told the dinner guests of the high regard in which Canadian troops were held by the British people who met them during the Second World War. 'From what I've seen of Canadian youth,' he observed, 'they are chips off the old block.'

"Sqn. Ldr. Crowley acted as guest speaker in place of Wing Commander R. F. Miller, A.F.C., commanding officer of R.C.A.F. Station Clinton, who was unable to attend the banquet. After the celebration, 12 cadets received their stripes on promotion to non-commissioned rank. The new N.C.O.'s are: Acting Sergeants R. Barr, B. Leinweber, T. Burrows, and R. Wreford; Corporals L. Fergusson, T. Banks, E. Douglas, W. Gibbons, W. Howey, G. Irwin, R. Jones, and H. Lamb.

"Sqn. Ldr. Crowley conveyed to the 19th Squadron the good wishes of his own squadron, the City of Plymouth Squadron, R.A.F. His address consisted of what he called 'an Englishman's impression of the young Canadian.' He recalled that during the late war it had been noted by English officers that orders to Canadian personnel had been a matter of simply explaining to the Canadian men what was to be done. The orders were usually carried out without delay.

"'We had less questioning of orders from Canadians than from any other servicemen,' said the officer. 'This spirit of getting things done on their own initiative without detailed instructions seems to be characteristic of Canadians.' He noted that Canadians act in the same way in regard to everyday work and relaxation. 'You play your games over here much harder and with more zest,' he commented.

"The speaker was impressed by the Canadian's ability to 'stand up for his rights and to forget rows as soon as they are over,' as shown in sports. He mentioned that his principal job in this country lies with the R.C.A.F., but he feels he is also a minor, unofficial ambassador of the English people and is interested in studying Canadians so that the British may better understand how to treat Canadians in England.

"He felt that the main benefit derived by youth from membership in Air Cadet groups does not lie in the military side of the movement. Sqn. Ldr. Crowley told the young men that theirs is a heritage to be proud of. 'You are a young generation in a young country that's growing fast,' he said. Finally he quoted Winston Churchill—'Give us the tools and we'll finish the job'—as he sought to stress the importance of the nation's youth to her prosperity."

Memorial Books — Nos. 1 and 5 Bomber Group (R.A.F.)

(The following item in Air Ministry News Letter No. 162, dated 3 March 1950, will probably be of interest to not a few of our readers.—EDITOR)

FOLLOWING THE DEDICATION at Lincoln Cathedral last November of the Memorial Books of Nos. 1 and 5 Groups (Bomber Command) which have been placed in the Royal Air Force Chapel of the Cathedral, commemorative booklets have now been issued. They may be obtained from Headquarters, Bomber Command, Royal Air Force, High Wycombe, Bucks. The price is 3/6 (54c.) each.

There are two booklets, one for each Group, and in addition to the names of those commemorated they contain a facsimile of the title page of the

appropriate Memorial Book, a picture of the Memorial Chapel, a description of the dedication ceremony, a copy of the order of service, and the sermon preached by the Bishop of Lincoln. The booklets are printed on art paper, and the covers, of Air Force blue with gold lettering, are facsimiles of the original books.

All who can afford to give more than 3/6 for them are asked to do so, The additional money will be used for the maintenance and furnishing of the Air Force Chapel. Those ordering copies of the Air Force Chapel. Those ordering copies should state which of the two booklets they require.

Ten Pins

(LAC Keith Jones, writing in "The Bordenaire" on the subject of bowling, discourses learnedly on that variety of the sport known as "Ten Pins."—EDITOR)

THE GAME of Ten Pins, played with the large balls and the large pins, is not extremely popular in Canada. This shows the inherent greatness of the Canadian People. To serve as a warning to future generations and to help preserve this inherent greatness, I shall describe some of the hazards of this game.

The rules call for a ball of specific dimensions. These are: not more than 27 inches in circumference or 16 pounds in weight. Most alleys, however, use 50-pound cannon balls left over from the Crimean War. The ball has two holes in it, into which you insert your finger and thumb. The holes come in two sizes: too small and too large.

Having lifted your ball, you totter towards the start-line, swinging the ball in a backward and forward motion. You then close your eyes and let go. The behaviour of the ball from then on depends upon the size of the holes and the position of your arm when you let go.



If the holes are too large and your arm happens to be straight down, you crush your instep. If your arm is pointed backwards, the ball will describe an arc and brain someone behind you. If your arm is pointing forwards, the ball will describe an arc and fall into either one of the neighbouring alleys, ruining the alley into which it falls and possibly going through into the basement.

If on the other hand the holes are too small, your fingers will remain in the ball. Two things can then happen. It either tears your fingers off at the knuckles, or you go with the ball. If the latter is the case, what happens again depends on the position of your arm. If it is backwards, the audience gets you and the ball. If forwards, you will undoubtedly go right down the alley with the

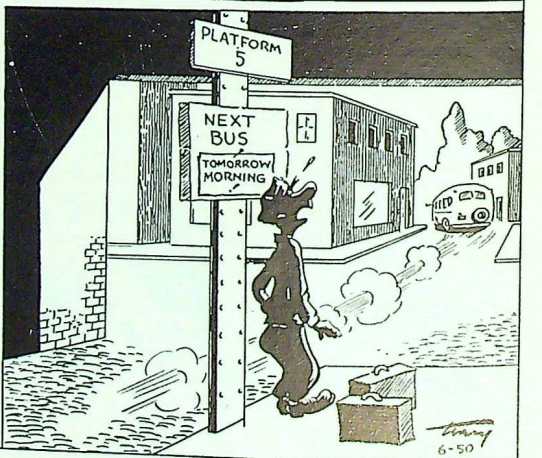
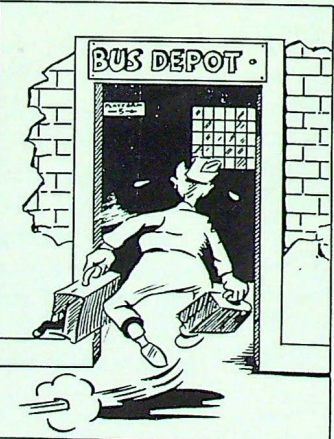
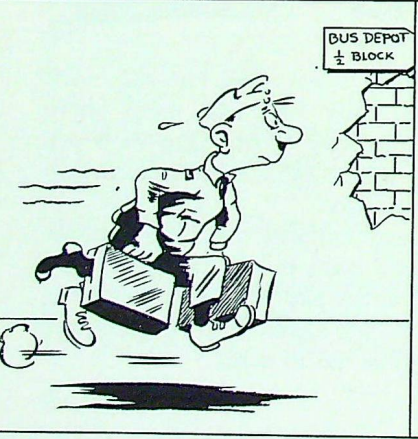
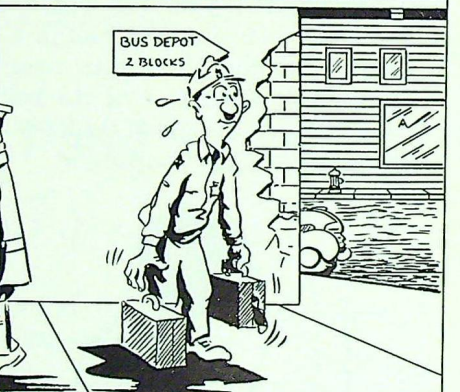
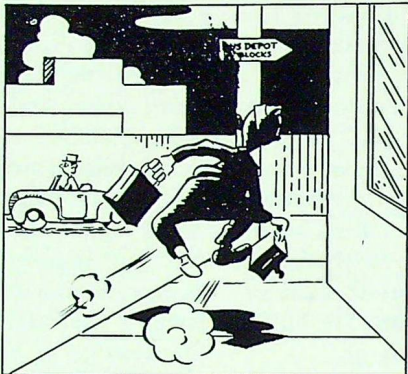
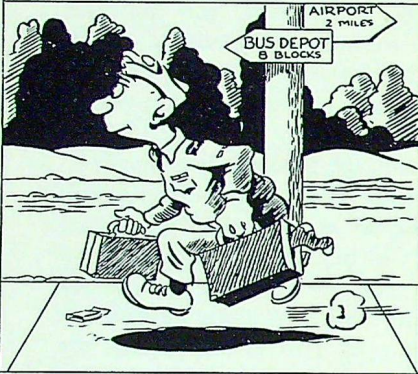
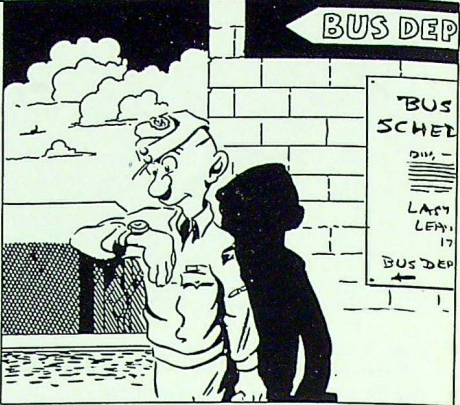
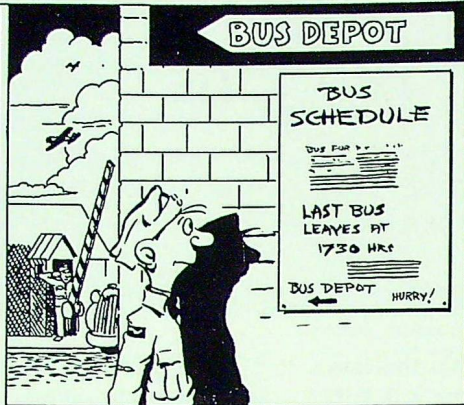


ball and score a strike, if not with the ball, with your body. I am the only man who made three strikes with one throw, and lived. One with my head in the centre alley, and one with each foot in the alleys on either side.

If the management allows you to continue playing, or if you still want to and can, you mark your score (if any) in the pad provided, and using your remaining arm, try again. You continue the game until everyone is out of arms.

The DIMMER VIEW

by ray bracy



Letters to the Editor ★ ★ ★

HOPE FOR THE OLD WARDOG

Dear Sir:

Squadron Leader Morris is entitled to his own opinions concerning a humorous character, since what strikes one person as good clean slapstick may strike another as undignified fooling.

However, there can be no doubt that Shatterproof is widely appreciated by all ranks, and no person in his right mind would expect to find a physical counterpart of this whimsical soul in the present day Air Force.

Shatterproof must stand firm against all intimidation. The Air Force cannot afford to lose him.

LAC Frank Kenley

Dear Sir:

Surely the ears of Sgt. Shatterproof will be burning over the starchy remarks of Squadron Leader Morris in your March number.

If the Sqn. Ldr.'s "better-than-average sense of humour" finds the conduct of our friend Shatterproof not funny, it must be outraged over commissioned officers of His Majesty's Services, such as Pilot Officer Prune, Group Capt. Biddable, etc., being made the subjects of ridicule. Low's cartoons of Col. Blimp must be particularly mortifying to his sense of propriety.

Long live Sgt. Shatterproof!

Group Capt. A. J. S. Taunton (R.C.A.F.A.)

Dear Sir:

Enjoy all phases of "The Roundel" immensely, especially Shatterproof. His stories should be longer.

J. A. Hill (R.C.A.F.A.)

FROM THE AUTHOR OF "STALAG LUFT III"

Dear Sir:

Several people have told me that, from reading my account of "Life in Stalag Luft III," they gained the impression that prison camp life was pretty much a bed of roses.

I hasten to point out that I have described the life only as I saw it between August 1943 and VE Day. Prisoners during the four years which preceded my arrival suffered untold hardships and privations which I have not touched upon. Not having endured them myself, I know of them only through hearsay. It was well-known, however, that in the early years of the war, before prison camp organization was highly developed, conditions were much tougher than they were later. Many officers who had been previously in other camps were eventually moved to ours, where the treatment was much better. I regret it if I have occasioned anyone embarrassment by painting a rosier picture than that which seems justifiable in the light of his own experiences.

I would also like to take this opportunity to inform numerous enquirers that my book is now out of print and unobtainable.

Ft. Lt. J. E. Mahoney

P/O PRUNE

Dear Sir:

In Sgt. Shatterproof's letter in the April issue he mentioned bringing Pilot Officer Prune out of retirement. I would like very much to read his life-story.

In "Letters to the Editor," a Mr. Buchanan was asking for information on pins inscribed "No. 6 Canadian Bomber Group." I have never seen these pins, but as I served in No. 6 Group, I would like very much to have one if you know where they are obtainable.

W. E. Burrell (R.C.A.F.A.),
37 George St. North,
Brampton, Ontario.

Dear Sir:

Would it be possible to get an extract from "Tee Emm" included in each issue of "Roundel?" It would be a well deserved tribute and a real pleasure to read them again. Surely P/O Prune deserves some continuing recognition!

Congratulations on the grand job you are doing.

W. H. Woodward (R.C.A.F.A.)

Dear Sir:

Since I spend a great deal of my time out of town, I miss most of the Association's meetings and my only contact with the Service is your excellent magazine. In a recent issue I noticed a letter asking for an article on 6 Group H.Q. I think a great number of your readers would like to see a series of articles covering the entire Group, including the conversion units. Also, if you receive any gen on those 6 group buttons, I would appreciate knowing where to obtain one.



Am in complete agreement with Sgt. Shatterproof's desire to see a life of P/O Prune published.

W. C. Long (R.C.A.F.A.)
355 Sharpe Blvd.,
St. James, Manitoba.

(P/O Prune will appear again in "The Roundel" in the near future.—EDITOR)

"MAWDY"

Sir:

I have been receiving my issues of "The Roundel" for quite some time and as yet have been unable to find fault with the magazine.

"Mawdy," mentioned in your March "Letters to the Editor," brings back fondest memories of the R.C.A.F. I served under him as a Sergeant in the S.W.O.'s office at No. 5 B. & G. (Dafoe) in 1943—and believe me, it isn't necessary to have served in the North Country or on the West Coast during the R.C.A.F.'s early days to know "Mawdy"!

My wife (an ex-W.D. chef) and I can tell countless tales about him—she of his meals, favourite dishes, doings in and around the Mess, and I of his orderly room procedure, his habit of ignoring the intercomm. and relying on sheer lung-power, and numerous other idiosyncrasies.

I look forward with the greatest eagerness to the biography of this amazing officer.

D. Cooke Sisty (R.C.A.F.A.)

Sir:

As a long-service pensioner of the R.C.A.F. and a member of the Winnipeg Wing of the R.C.A.F. Association... I think the suggestion of Mr. N. S. McGregor is an excellent one.

A biographical article about Group Capt. F. H. Mawdesley would, I feel sure, appeal to a great many of us who served with him, knew him intimately, and above all respected him.

I was his batman in the good old days at Camp Borden in 1925 and at various later dates until 1939 at Trenton.

J. ("Tug") Wilson (R.C.A.F.A.)

(The seed sown by Mr. McGregor seems to have taken firm root. The above are only two of many letters of agreement with his suggestion. The Editorial Committee therefore asks that all readers of "The Roundel" who came in contact with Group Capt. F. H. Mawdesley at any time during his long Service career assist us in the preparation of his literary portrait. Please send us your reminiscences of him, authentic anecdotes about him, and any relevant photographs you may happen to have. Photographs will, of course, be returned. It is not necessary to type your contributions.—Editor)

STIRLING PHOTO WANTED

Dear Sir:

Having tried every source I could think of to get an actual photograph of a Short Stirling aircraft, I have so far been unsuccessful.

I was a wireless operator in No. 218 Squadron during the war, but never took a picture of the aircraft. I would now very much like to get one for my scrap-book.

Could you tell me where I might secure a good photograph, together with the relevant data?

Herbert H. F. Harker (R.C.A.F.A.)
693 Bloor Street West,
Toronto 4, Ont.

(The R.C.A.F. has no disposable supply of such photographs. Possibly Mr. Harker's requirements might be filled by Associated Screen News Ltd., Western Ave. and Decarie Blvd., Montreal; the National Film Board (Graphics Section), Ottawa, Ont.; the "Toronto Star" News Service, Toronto, Ont.; or by some other similar agency.—Editor)

1ST J.A.T.P. WINGS PARADE

Dear Sir:

While reading the March issue, I noticed Tommy Burke's letter on the first J.A.T.P. Wings Parade.

I was fortunate in being one of the student pilots in No. 2 Course at Uplands when that Station was opened by the Earl of Athlone on August 4th, 1940. No. 2 Course reached Uplands at about the same time that No. 1 was sent to Camp Borden. However, No. 1 Course received their wings on 30 Sept. 1940, while we received ours on 5 Oct., just five days later.

I can recall the names of some of the students on Course No. 1—Colborne, Carscadden, Burke, Martin, Orr, Barr, Biernes, Danny Raymes, and others.

On No. 2 Course I had the pleasure of flying with the late Lloyd Chadburn, D.S.O., D.F.C., Norm Bretz, Fred Kelly, Dave Smith, Bill Jenkins, Jimmy Thompson, the late Gunnar Freese, Art Fair, Jack Bradley, Bill Wilkes, and several others.

For the information of my many buddies on Courses 1 and 2, who are almost certainly all reading "The Roundel," I finished the war as a Flight Lieutenant and am now back in the Service as an LAC taking a Comm. Tech. (Air) Course at Clinton. Like a lot of the others, I just couldn't stay away from it.

LAC R. K. Roulston

Dear Sir:

I was a member of the 39 who received their wings at Camp Borden in Sept. 1939 and have postponed writing to you in an effort to locate a newspaper clipping which carried a list of those present. I am sorry to state, however, that it has been misplaced.

If the Air Historian is anxious to obtain the names of those present, I am sure the files of the larger newspapers contain an account of this first Wings Parade. I believe that the clipping I had was taken from a Toronto daily.

T. C. Mears (R.C.A.F.A.)

U.S.A.F.

Dear Sir:

On page 25 of the April issue you speak of a "Lt. Shockley, U.S.A.A.F." and further on of a "Capt. Slatterlee, U.S.A.A.F." The United States Air Force is no longer a part of the Army and I feel that, in keeping with the high prestige of "The Roundel," you should avoid using the old name when referring to the U.S.A.F.

Ft. Lt. R. E. Kent

(We stand reproved for our carelessness.—EDITOR)

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Answers to "What's the Score?"

- | | | | |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1: (c) | 2: (b) | 3: (d) | 4: (c) |
| 5: (a) | 6: (b) | 7: (a) | 8: (b) |
| 9: (d) | 10: (a) | 11: (a) | 12: (c) |
| 13: (a) | 14: (c) | 15: (b) | 16: (a) |
| 17: (b) | 18: (d) | 19: (a) | 20: (c) |

Back Issues

Requests for back issues of "The Roundel" have been pouring in and are being filled as rapidly as possible. Readers who do not receive all the issues they have requested, will know that the stocks of the missing issues have been exhausted. We regret that the smallness of our staff prevents us from replying individually to letters requesting such issues.



"The Roundel" Moves

Readers are asked to note our new address:

"The Roundel"
Room 2738,
D.N.B. Bldg. "A"
Ottawa, Ont.

