

# The **ROUNDDEL**

VOL. 3, No. 1  
DECEMBER 1950



**MERRY CHRISTMAS**

**ROYAL CANADIAN AIR FORCE**



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Royal Canadian Air Force

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May I take this opportunity to wish each member of the Royal Canadian Air Force a very Merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year.

During the past year, under the flag of the United Nations, we participated in democratic action against totalitarian aggression.

In 1951 we shall become much more operational, and it is my sincere hope that our action will help the world to move closer to a true Peace on Earth to Men of Goodwill.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "W.A. Curtis". The signature is written in dark ink on a light background.

Air Marshal,  
Chief of the Air Staff.

# A Toast from Sgt. Shatterproof



*Men:*

*This will be the twenty-seventh Christmas that I have spent in the R.C.A.F. It will also be the third during which I have stood watch at the helm of "The Roundel." Therefore, as you will readily understand, I am in no position to give forth with messages of hope.*

*I can, however, give you a toast — the same toast that I shall murmur into my tankard of home-brew at Farmer Fetlock's festive board on Christmas Day:*

*To the boys in the field, and to their worthy and time-honoured antagonists, the Brass; to our friends and former comrades in the Reserve and the R.C.A.F. Association; and to our young brothers in arms, the Air Cadets of Canada —*

*A Merry Christmas!*

# No. 420 (Snowy Owl) Squadron



*Prepared by the Air Historical Section*

**N**o. 420 (SNOWY OWL) SQUADRON was the fourth R.C.A.F. bomber squadron formed overseas. It began to organize on 19 December 1941 at Waddington, Lincolnshire, as a unit in No. 5 Group of Bomber Command, and a year later it joined the newly-formed No. 6 (R.C.A.F.) Group, with which it operated until the end of April 1943. The squadron then went to North Africa, in company with two other R.C.A.F. bomber squadrons, where it remained for four busy months, returning to No. 6 Group at the end of 1943. After the close of hostilities in Europe the Snowy Owls flew home to Canada, where the squadron was disbanded on 5 September 1945. During these years No. 420 served under eight commanding officers, Wing Cdrs. J. D. D. Collier, D.F.C. (R.A.F.), D. A. R. Bradshaw, D.F.C., D. McIntosh, D.F.C. (a Canadian in the R.A.F.), A. G. McKenna, D.F.C., G. J. J. Edwards, D.F.C. W. G. Phelan, D.F.C., F. S. McCarthy, D.F.C., and R. J. Gray, M.B.E. Four of the eight — Bradshaw, McKenna, Edwards and Gray — are still serving with the R.C.A.F.

In the beginning No. 420 was Canadian only in name — the first C.O. (Wing Cdr. J. D. D. Collier, D.F.C.), virtually all the ground crew,

and many of the aircrew being provided by the R.A.F. There was, however, a leaven of Canadians, including one of the flight commanders, Sqn. Ldr. G. C. Campbell, who had joined the R.A.F. in pre-war days. Campbell was later decorated with the D.F.C. for his work with the squadron. As time passed, more and more R.C.A.F. air and ground crew were posted in, until eventually No. 420 became Canadian in fact as well as name.

The Snowy Owls were first equipped with Hampden I aircraft, a medium bomber driven by two Pegasus XVIII engines and carrying a crew of four. Within a month of its official formation, on 19 December 1941, the squadron was fully organized, had completed its final training and was ready for operations. Its first blows against the enemy were delivered on the night of 21 January 1942, when five Hampdens bombed Essen while another laid mines off the Frisian Islands. No. 420 had the misfortune to lose one of its flight commanders on this initial operation when Sqn. Ldr. T. V. L. Wood (R.A.F.) and his crew were shot down and captured. By the end of January the Snowy Owls had completed three bombing raids (to Essen, Brest and St. Nazaire) and seven mine-laying sorties, and had sent one aircraft to scatter leaflets over the Paris area.

"Gardening" and "nickeling," as mine-laying and leaflet-dropping were officially designated, constituted the major part of the squadron's work in February 1942, but the month's highlight was the flight of the "Scharnhorst" and "Gneisenau" up-Channel from Brest. No. 420 sent out six Hampdens to bomb the enemy war vessels, and two were lost. Flying Officer H. H. Miller, flying with his flight commander, was navigator in one of the missing bombers. He was the first R.C.A.F. casualty in the squadron. The only other bombing operation that month was against Emden.

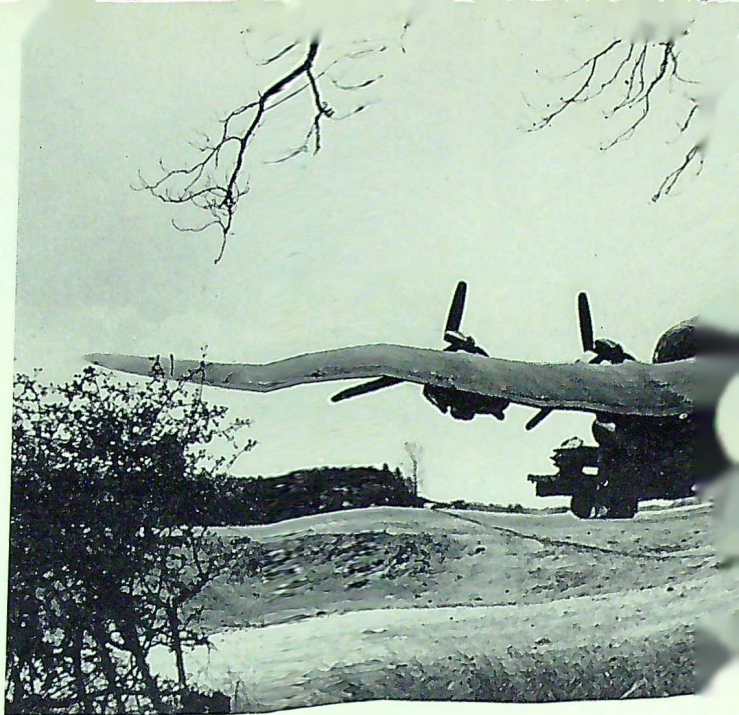
In March the Snowy Owls continued to "sow their gardens" and drop their leaflets and also took an active part in the Battle of the Ruhr, making four raids on Essen. They also shared in an attack on the Renault factory at Billancourt, near Paris, and in another on Lübeck which effectively demonstrated for the first time the power of

Bomber Command to destroy industrial centres by bomb and fire.

At the end of March, Wing Cdr. Collier was succeeded by Wing Cdr. D. A. R. Bradshaw, the first R.C.A.F. commander of the unit. Bradshaw remained in command for just over a year, the longest tenure of any of 420's C.O.'s. Under his leadership, during the next four months (April through July 1942), the squadron paid many visits to the Ruhr. Essen was the target for no less than seven attacks, Duisburg was bombed twice in succession, while Dortmund and Düsseldorf also came under 420's bomb-sights for the first time. German ports were the objectives for nine raids (Hamburg and Bremen three times each, Emden twice and Wilhelmshaven once). Other targets were the industrial cities of Stuttgart, Mannheim and Cologne. After one attack on the last-named city early in April, the Snowy Owls returned to the Rhenish metropolis on May 30th when they provided 15 Hampdens for the first 1,000 bomber raid in history. In June they shared also in the second and third 1,000-bomber assaults on Essen and Bremen.

Further proof of Bomber Command's ability to "blitz" an industrial area was provided by four successive attacks (on April 23rd, 24th, 25th, and 26th) against Rostock, a distant target on the Baltic. No. 420 participated in all four operations. To complete the picture of this active period, there were two attacks on the Gnome-Rhone factory at Gennevilliers in France and another on Warnemunde (near Rostock), as well as mining operations on a score of nights.

The raid on Düsseldorf on the night of July 31st marked the close of the first period in the history of No. 420 Squadron. A week later the Snowy Owls left Waddington and moved north to Skipton-on-Swale in Yorkshire, at the same time transferring from No. 5 Group to No. 4 in Bomber Command. In the spring of 1942 it had been planned to re-equip the squadron with Manchester bombers, and some conversion training had been carried out. The Manchester, however, was not a success and the plans were altered. At Skipton, No. 420 exchanged its Hampdens for Wellington III bombers and, after training on the new type,



Halifax

resumed operations on October 5th. A few days later the squadron moved north again to Middleton-St. George in Durham, where it remained for the next seven months.

The first Wellington attack was against Aachen, a new target for the squadron. In the weeks that followed, many familiar names re-appeared on the target list. "Happy Valley" and the Rhineland had the unhappy distinction of heading the list; Duisburg was on it four times; Cologne three times; Essen, Stuttgart and Mannheim twice; and Bochum, Krefeld and Frankfurt once. Heavy blows were still being dealt at German U-boat yards, Hamburg and Wilhelmshaven were raided thrice, Kiel and Emden twice. Other Nazi targets included Osnabrück, Norden and Esens (all new objectives). But the heaviest blows of all were reserved for the U-boat pens at Lorient, which were bombed by the Snowy Owls three times in January 1943, four times in February, and once more in April, while St. Nazaire was attacked twice. An interesting addition to the target list was Turin in northern Italy, which was visited for the first time on November 20th and again on December 9th. Crews making these long night sorties were able to look down upon the snow-clad Alps and marvel at their beauty.



The "Wimpy," like the Hampden, played an active part in Bomber Command's long and most successful mine-laying campaign, and, after making the change-over to the new type, No. 420 continued its operations in the "gardens" through which German coastal shipping moved. Between 1 November 1942 and the end of March 1943 the Snowy Owls were out on twenty-four nights planting "vegetables" by parachute.

Meanwhile the squadron, on 1 January 1943, had become part of the new No. 6 Group, the all-R.C.A.F. formation in Bomber Command. In February it began exchanging its Mark III Wellingtons for the Mark X version, and from the end of March onwards operated solely on the new type.

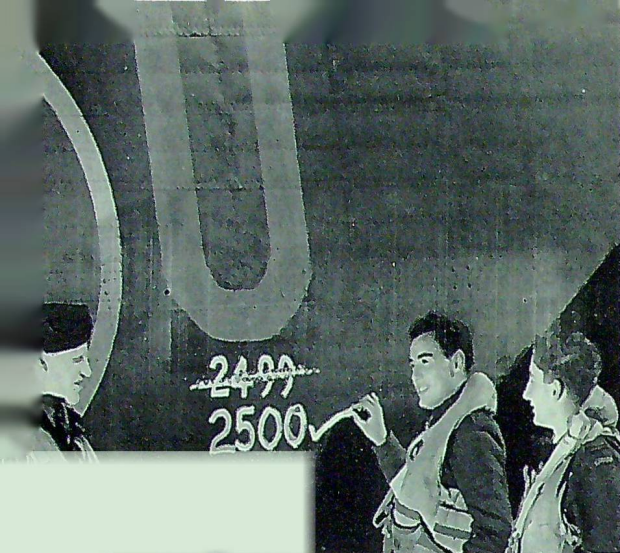
After raiding Duisburg on the night of April 26th, the squadron was released from operations and another chapter in its history closed. A fortnight previously Wing Cdr. Bradshaw had relinquished his command to Wing Cdr. D. McIntosh, D.F.C., a Canadian in the R.A.F. It was at this time, too, that No. 420's badge was approved by the King and presented to the squadron. It depicts a snowy owl, plunging down to strike its prey, and bears the proud motto "Pugnamus Finitum" (We Fight to Finish).



*Wing Cdr. F. S. McCarthy and some of the men who kept the Snowy Owls in the air*



*Left to right: LAC's A. Braund, P. Scantland, J. Currie, R. Depres, A. Koch*



*The Squadron completes its 2,500th sortie. Left to right: Sgt. G. Barry, Flying Officers J. A. Sefton and G. Oliver.*



*Sgt. J. Christie (left centre) and Flt. Sgt. T. Frayne (right) with the Handley-Page Trophy, won by No. 420 for best no-accident and general efficiency record in No. 6 Group during September 1944.*

On 15 May 1943 the Snowy Owls left Middleton-St. George for a new theatre of operations, North-West Africa, where they formed part of a Canadian bomber wing. While the groundcrew travelled by boat, the aircrew flew from England to Tunisia. En route they encountered some opposition from the Luftwaffe over the Bay of Biscay, and two Wimpies were lost. By June 19th the squadron had re-assembled at Kairouan in Tunisia and was ready for work. A week later Wing Cdr. McIntosh led five crews in the first attack on the landing-ground at Sciacca on the coast of Sicily.

The next fifteen weeks were one of the most active periods in the squadron's history, as (thanks to the favourable weather and the ineffective enemy opposition) operations were laid on almost every night. Airfields, freight yards, harbours, rail junctions, roads and many other objectives were attacked in a long series of raids which helped to soften up the enemy's defences in preparation for the Allied landings in Sicily and Italy. After a final attack on Grosseto airfield on the night of October 5th, the squadron was released from operations and prepared to return to the United Kingdom.

The homeward journey was made by sea, and the Snowy Owls rejoined No. 6 Group, going first to Dalton for a brief stay before moving in December to Tholthorpe in Yorkshire where it remained until the end of hostilities in Europe.

While at Dalton the Snowy Owls were adopted by the City of London Women's Air Force Auxiliary and sent to Mrs. A. L. Pidgeon (425 St. James Street, London) an expression of the squadron's deep appreciation. From the Auxiliary and the London City Council the squadron received many gifts of smokes and comforts. The Auxiliary also presented to the squadron a mounted snowy owl to serve as a mascot. Later, personnel of No. 420 purchased a \$500 Victory Bond which they sent to the Auxiliary to be donated to the Mayor and Council of the City of London to charitable purposes.

After moving to Tholthorpe the squadron was re-equipped with the Halifax III, a four-engined heavy bomber carrying a crew of seven. On February 15th it returned to the night skies over Germany, sending eleven "Hallies," led by Wing Cdr. McIntosh, to bomb Berlin. This was the first time the squadron's bomb-aimers had the Nazi capital in their sights. Later that month and in March there were further attacks on other German centres — Leipzig, Stuttgart (three times), Schweinfurt, Augsburg, Frankfurt (twice), Berlin (again), Essen and Nuremberg.

But the powerful weight of Bomber Command was beginning to shift from strategical objectives within the Reich to tactical targets in France where the armies of liberation were soon to land.



Over Le Havre

The Snowy Owl goes home. Left to right: Wing Cdr. R. J. Gray, M.B.E., LAC D. Hatfield, Sqn. Ldr. H. R. Ledingham, D.F.C., Air Cdre. H. B. Godwin, C.B.E.

Christmas cake from London, Ontario. Left to right: Flt. Lt. V. R. Glover, D.F.C., Flying Officers J. McH... D. Neil, Flt. Lt. T. E. C. Ainslie, D.F.C., Wing Cdr. F. McCarthy, Sqn. Off. C. L. Ferguson, Flt. Lt. J. W. Royce



As a preliminary to the invasion, railroad communications were methodically disrupted, airfields were blasted, bridges knocked out and coastal defences neutralised. It was necessary, too, to attend to the rocket sites which the Nazis were busily constructing in the Pas de Calais and Cherbourg peninsula. In March the Snowy Owls, in addition to their forays over Germany, bombed three of the new tactical targets in France—at Trappes, Le Mans (twice), and Aulnoye.

In April, when Wing Cdr. McIntosh handed over to Wing Cdr. A. G. McKenna, formerly a flight commander in No. 420, there were only three German targets (Düsseldorf, Karlsruhe and Essen) as against six in the future battle area in France. The latter were all railroad centres. In May and June the targets, twenty-six in number, were exclusively tactical ones — junctions, bridges, flying-bomb sites, enemy camps, coastal batteries, etc. On the eve of D-Day the Snowy Owls shared in an attack on coastal guns at Houlgate in the area where our troops were to land. On the 7th and 8th of July they participated in two heavy raids on Caen, in direct support of operations by the British and Canadian forces. On ten other occasions that month the squadron's Halifaxes bombed targets in France and also managed to include four German objectives, going twice to Hamburg.

In August the crescendo of attack rose to a climax. The Canadian Group set a record for total number of sorties and weight of bombs, which stood for the remainder of the war. For the Snowy Owls it was certainly the most active period in their history, with 271 sorties on 18 operations for a total of over 1280 hours' flying. Only one aircraft was lost. All but one of the targets were of tactical significance, the sole exception being the naval base and harbour at Kiel. Probably the most noteworthy of the tactical objectives was Falaise, where the Nazi armour and troops were caught in a pocket between British and Canadian forces smashing down from the north and American troops driving up from the south. On the night of August 12th/13th Bomber Command pounded enemy concentrations in the bottleneck.

In September the pressure began to ease: the squadron sent out 237 aircraft on 14 missions. They bombed the airfield at Volkel, Holland, in preparation for the airborne thrust at Arnhem later in the month; twice they attacked Le Havre; once they went to Boulogne; and three times to Calais and Cap Gris Nez; softening the enemy defences in these French ports so that the army could capture them. Freed to some extent from their tactical commitments, the heavy bombers were able to resume their strategical campaign against the Reich's war industries. Synthetic oil targets now stood high on the priority list, and the Snowy Owls in September had a part in attacks on four of these vital plants. They also bombed Emden, Kiel and Osnabrück. It is noteworthy that all but one of these operations were carried out in daylight.

Two hundred and six sorties were made in October in twelve raids against one Norwegian and eleven German targets. The Norwegian objective was Bergen, where the Nazi U-boats, driven out of the Bay of Biscay, were now concentrated. In Germany further blows were struck at Duisburg and Cologne (twice each), at Dortmund, Bochum, Wanne Eickel, Wilhelmshaven, Hanover, Essen and Homberg.

Late in October Wing Cdr. McKenna completed his tour of operations and was succeeded by Wing Cdr. G. J. J. Edwards. A month later Edwards too was screened, and Wing Cdr. W. G. Phelan took over the Snowy Owls. Winter weather inevitably curtailed heavy bomber operations, and in November and December the squadron was involved in only eighteen raids for a total of 281 sorties. In other words, the effort for the two months equalled that of the record-setting August. Most of the objectives were in the Ruhr or Rhine valleys — rail junctions, oil refineries, or industrial centres. An attack on Cologne at the end of the year brought the total weight of bombs and incendiaries dropped by the Snowy Owls during 1944 to almost 5310 tons.

January's weather was the worst in fifty years, and No. 420 could send out only 110 "Hallies" on seven operations. They bombed Ludwigshafen, Hanover, Hanau, Saarbrücken, Grevenbroich,



1945. Take-off for Canada

Magdeburg and Stuttgart. In February the squadron, now under the command of Wing Cdr. F. S. McCarthy, who had succeeded Phelan when the latter finished his tour, was more active as improving weather led to a quickening in the tempo of the bomber onslaught. On several occasions the "Hallies" gave direct support to the Army, as at Goch and Wesel (when the great airborne crossing of the Rhine was staged). Targets in the Ruhr were pounded again, and Chemnitz, a more distant objective in Saxony, was also attacked. In all there were 184 sorties on 13 operations.

March was the last full month of operations for the Snowy Owls, and they reached a scale almost equal to the summer of 1944. On seventeen nights and days 420's Halifaxes were over Hitler's dwindling Reich, delivering the last blows at the Ruhr, soon to be overrun by the Allied armies, and striking into the heart of the Reich to hit again at Hamburg and Chemnitz. Deprived of his early warning radar stations, forced to withdraw his air forces into the interior of Germany, the enemy was able to offer but feeble opposition to

these attacks and many times the heavy bombers operated by day. Only once did the Luftwaffe make show of resistance. That was on the last day of March when some jet-propelled fighters engaged a gaggle of bombers straggling behind the main stream.

By the beginning of April 1945 the rapid advance of the Allied and Russian armies had left relatively few targets for Bomber Command's attention. The Snowy Owls were called on only six times, for attacks on Harburg, Hamburg, a marshalling yard near Leipzig, Kiel, Heligoland and Bremen. The daylight raid on Heligoland was spectacular: the adjacent island of Dune, which had been assigned as the target for the Canadian Group, was smothered under a storm of heavy explosives in a most impressive demonstration of precision bombing. But the Bremen show a few days later was an anti-climax. Conditions over the target necessitated a cancellation of the attack, and the Snowy Owls had to return to base without releasing their bombs. It was their last war-time operation. Despite the bad weather of January, the squadron had delivered over 2466 tons of

bombs to the Germans in a period of little more than three and a half months.

After the Bremen sortie No. 420 was "stood down" for conversion to Lancaster X's, and at the same time Wing Cdr. R. J. Gray took over command from McCarthy. A few weeks later, in June 1945, twenty of the squadron's new aircraft flew home to Nova Scotia. It was intended to re-organize and re-equip the Snowy Owls for participation in the Second Phase of the war against Japan, but before these plans could be carried out, two atom bombs put an end to hostilities. Early in September, No. 420 Squadron was formally disbanded at Debert.

When the R.C.A.F. began developing its post-war Auxiliary component (now designated Reserve), it was planned to reform No. 420 as a fighter squadron in London, Ontario, the city with which it had established such close bonds of friendship during the war. Originally it was intended to form the new squadron in the spring of 1947, but conditions made it necessary to defer activation of the unit for over a year. Finally, as

a result of the keen interest shown by ex-R.C.A.F. personnel in London, No. 420 (F) Squadron (Reserve) was officially reborn on 15 September 1948. At first activities were limited to recruiting and ground training, until, in August 1949, it was possible to re-organize the squadron on a flying basis, with an initial complement of four Harvards. The introduction of air training was not only a great stimulus to recruiting, but also made it possible for the Snowy Owls to show their wings at various air shows in London, St. Thomas and Aylmer, and at several exercises in co-operation with the Navy and Army. Highlighting these displays was a demonstration over London on 17 August 1949 as part of the inauguration ceremonies which marked No. 420's emergence as a flying unit.

Wing Cdr. A. D. Haylett, A.F.C., has been commanding officer of the Snowy Owl squadron since its reformation in 1948, while the Regular Support Unit (9420) has been under Sqdn. Ldrs. H. C. Forbell, A.F.C., J. P. Coyne, D.F.C., and G. A. Lee, A.F.C.

## A Loss for "The Roundel"

**A**IR COMMODORE J. G. KERR, C.B.E., A.F.C., Deputy Air Member for Operations and Training, who has been Chairman of the Editorial Committee of "The Roundel" from its first tormented days until its present — well, tormented days, left to attend the Imperial Defence College, England, early this month.

The five other members of the Committee view his departure with very real regret. Whatever success the R.C.A.F.'s official organ has enjoyed has been largely due to his far-sighted and tolerant approach to the numberless problems that bedevil the production of Service magazines.

The Editorial Committee — and all his many (and more fortunate) friends who are not on the Editorial Committee — wish him every success in his new sphere of activity.



# Yuletide Reflections

By Group Capt. E. C. Luke, O.B.E.

WHAT OF CHRISTMAS 1950 and the year behind it, for those of us serving in the R.C.A.F.? One cannot fully contemplate the holiday season and the waning year without a backward glance here and there along the road we have travelled since last January. Your impressions and mine may be different, but it will be pleasant for us to see whether we can share some of them — with pride in a job well done, and with a smile or two.

Just to keep the piece in a Yuletide motif, we will draw upon our dormant imaginations a little, as you join me in a comfortable spot before the glowing fire and we see a bulging Christmas stocking hanging above it. It bears a bright tag marked "FOR THE R.C.A.F.," and each article hidden within will recall for us some highlight of the swiftly moving months gone by. Let's examine the contents, one by one.

Right on top, almost falling out, that looks like a smoker's pipe. It is a pipe. We don't need much prompting to see that it's the symbol of exercise Sweetbriar, the big army-air "war" staged in the North-west last winter — a full-scale mixture of jeeps and jets, cold and colonels, wings and wind, snows and snorts.

We still wonder where they got that name Sweetbriar. I was not there. I seem to remember



being told that planners should work from far away, and that if I came too close I would only get confused. Anyway, we were assured that it was a good thing — ideas were proven, toes were frozen, and many lessons were learned. *Per ardua* and all that — doing it the hard way.

As we tear away the paper and tinsel, we pick out a small globe of the World. It has a solid red line encircling it. Obviously it's our round-the-world flight for Mr. Pearson and his party, and it reminds us that this was an epic achievement in air transportation. We can see again the pictures taken in Gibraltar, in Ceylon, and other famous historic places. We can hear Mr. Pearson's kind words of praise for the courtesy and efficiency of our transport crew. Give that globe to the aircraft captain to keep for the boys.

We reach in and find two beautiful flags. They represent the colours of the R.C.A.F. and the King's. Ours was the first Commonwealth Air Force to receive such an honour. Not one of us who was privileged to witness the trooping-parade on that fine Spring day in Ottawa will soon forget the occasion, with its music and vivid colour. I heard one spectator say "But these guys are air-men, they are not supposed to that stuff. Look at them. They're terrific!" Not the way the Governor General would have described it, perhaps, after his limousine drove off, but a fitting tribute in its own way to an impressive and memorable event in our history.

Here's a book. A most sombre-looking one. It's a leather-bound copy of K.R. (Air), autographed "To our faithful and loyal Sgt. Shatterproof, Xmas 1950." Well, I can think of a few other things that we might have preferred, but I suppose the old battle-axe must be remembered. We will submerge our feelings in the benevolence of the Season, and wish him well — with fingers crossed.

Be careful of that aircraft. I think its tail is caught in the stocking. What is it? Two of them, tied together. The new jet fighters "Canuck" and "Sabre." They call for a bow from those engineers and technicians, Service and civilian, who worked and waited for the day when their jobs shot off the runway, airborne and successful, to mark a new high point in the Canadian aeronautical story.

This was their year, a grim warning to any aggressor and a preview of the future.

Another aircraft is held up for inspection. A gleaming North Star, bearing the insignia of the United Nations. No mistake about that. It's our Korean air-lift by No. 426 Transport Squadron. We were standing in the garden with our neighbours the evening they flew westward, and there were troubled and uncertain feelings as they passed over the city in their precise formation.

Who can deny some warmth of pride in the knowledge that we had a working part of that crusade in Asia? It was a part which may have fallen short of some desires, by fighting standards, but nevertheless honourably and efficiently carried out. And not without its own element of danger, too. Good show, boys! We salute you. Whether the Soviet Union agrees or not, the prestige of the United Nations has never gone higher. Its already famous blue flag has unfolded proudly in the South Korean breeze over Seoul by decision of the free nations of the world. Whatever the future holds, this in itself is priceless ground gained for our cause.

Next we find an airman's cap. Just an ordinary Service cap, but quite a large one. My guess is that it's a sign of our growing size and strength. Actually 1950 saw the authorization of the biggest R.C.A.F. in peacetime history, and the placing of contracts for more aircraft and other things than we ever dreamed of in 1939. For all of us it means hard work and busy times ahead, and a determination to be worthy of the new trust placed in us by the Canadian people.

After a pause to light a pipe and poke up the fire, we reach on down to the next layer. Well, well! A red wagon with a long handle, and painted on its side "For Disposal of Obsolete Plans, A.F.H.Q." This must be the load that goes with it, a bit dusty and tied up with old pink ribbon. Such nice-looking volumes, it seems a shame to throw them away. But they tell me they must make room for the new ones coming along, Plan K, Plan L, Plan M, Plan . . . Remind me to read one sometime.

Here's a smart-looking young officer — or probably a cadet. It's hard to tell in that foreign

uniform. European, isn't it? Sure, he is one of the first intake of aircrew for training in Canada under the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Just a token lot at present, but many more will be following later. We should be glad to have them with us, even if it means a few extra headaches. Apart from the training value, any scheme which promotes understanding and good will between our nations is well worth the effort.

Next in turn we produce a peculiar-looking package marked "Placed on Active Service." What an odd thing to find in a peacetime stocking! I wonder what we're supposed to do with it. We had better ask the legal boys to explain it to us when they have time. Things have been a bit confused this year. Maybe it was slipped in by mistake.

Go on, see what else there is. This one is on a long stand. A microphone, reminding us that the first national convention of the R.C.A.F. Association was held in Ottawa this year. A lot of talk was poured into that "mike", but what else do you expect at a convention? ("Gypsy Rose Lee" — Who *said* that?) Never mind, real progress was made and congratulations are offered to all those responsible. No greater force can be mobilized behind us than the good-will of the R.C.A.F.A. Let's offer a warm handshake to its president, Air Vice-Marshal Morfee ("Morf" to his many staunch friends), and the best wishes to all of its members for next year.

We must reach way down now, but I was always told that the best things were toward the bottom. It's an air cadet, and very smart too with his white belt and gloves against the blue tunic. He's holding a trophy, and look at that grin.

Those young fellows have had a wonderful year, and we are more than ever proud of them. Just to prove what they mean to the R.C.A.F., we decided to have a strength of 22,500 cadets from now on, instead of the old 15,000. They have been setting up new records, making new friends at home and abroad, stealing the show everywhere. And, as a real climax, our international cadet drill team won the Beau Trophy for the third consecutive year on a hot afternoon out in the corn country at the Iowa State Fair.

And now we hold up high, for all in the room to see, a battered but still trim and sleek old Spitfire. The figure "10" catches the light from the fire and glows for a moment in gold. Through the sudden hush you whisper that this is the tenth anniversary of the Battle of Britain. You see a chaplain on a little hill, arms outstretched over the drum-heads, his eyes moist yet defiant with mingled pride and humility as he repeats Churchill's immortal words — "Never in the field of human conflict . . ."

Ten years! So quickly gone.

I don't think we will find much more now. Hold on, here's something. A search and rescue Dakota, with J.A.T.O. equipment. I'm glad that wasn't forgotten. It reminds us vividly of the recent mercy flight to Eureka Sound. Though it represents only a small portion of our annual activity, nothing else we do is so packed with excitement and drama.

Try to follow that job. You will see something like this . . . a single Dakota high and alone, moving northward hour after hour across the sullen unspeaking vastness of the Arctic — farther north than any rescue crew had ever gone before — its crew tired and cramped, on to the tiny speck of a landing place. Then, after the breath-taking moment of the J.A.T.O. take-off, the same thing over again. Endless miles of solitary journey, across and beyond every horizon, monotonous and dreary, yet electric with tension. At last they are back and an ailing man is delivered to hospital and help.

All we will record here is that once more they renewed our faith in their creed which says no human heart shall stop which their skill, courage, and determination can reach out and save.

That just about winds up the party — no! what's this far down in the toe? Now, isn't that nice, and thoughtful too. A new wool scarf for P/O Prune in R.C.A.F. tartan. Wait, there's something heavy wrapped inside it. Careful! Don't drop it on the hearth, you clumsy clot! It's breakable. Bring some glasses and ice cubes, somebody . . .

## Merry Christmas!

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# ROYAL CANADIAN AIR FORCE

# Association

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## A Christmas Message from the President

## WING NEWS

**W**E ALL REMEMBER the Christmases we spent while serving in our Air Force. Probably one special Christmas comes to mind. It may have been the time we got home unexpectedly, or it may have been the Christmas spent away from home when every effort was bent to conjure up the atmosphere of which we were dreaming. It was, perhaps, during those Christmases when we were lonely for our loved ones — as one can only be lonely at the Yule season — when we turned to our brother airmen and fully realized the warmth and meaning of our comradeship.

At this Christmastide, let us be glad for the comradeship our Association brings to us. Let us renew our pledge to keep that comradeship alive now we are blessed with peace, so that we may move ahead in our common purpose with the same zeal that prompted our mutual endeavours in more urgent times.

May all Air Force veterans, both men and women, enjoy a very happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year. As you of our Air Force Association read my message, let your thoughts turn to your brother and sister veterans, so that from coast to coast the old spirit of comradeship and well-wishing will pervade this Christmastide.

A. H. Morfee

### No. 250 (Saint John) Wing Provides Plaque

Battle of Britain Sunday was solemnly marked in Saint John when a bronze plaque, bearing the names of 78 airmen from Saint John City and County who lost their lives in the Second World War, was unveiled in the County Court House. The memorial was presented to the municipality by the Saint John Wing and unveiled by Air Vice-Marshal Morfee, C.B., C.B.E.

Warden A. W. Carton accepted the plaque on behalf of the municipality, and Lieutenant Governor D. L. MacLaren placed a wreath below the plaque.

Following the ceremony, the Wing and No. 161 Air Cadet Squadron marched past the cenotaph, where the Lieutenant-Governor took the salute.

In unveiling the plaque, Air Vice-Marshal Morfee spoke for all Air Force veterans in Canada in extending heartfelt sympathy to relatives of all those who had fallen, in the Navy, the Army, the Air Force. "May this," he said, "be a lasting monument, marking the end of the sacrifice of war and the dawn of a peaceful day."

### No. 410 (Ottawa & District) Wing

Music and merriment went hand in hand with memories of Service life when No. 410 (Ottawa & District) Wing on September 30th staged the largest reunion of Air Force personnel yet seen in Canada. Over 4000 past and present members of the R.C.A.F. and their guests converged on Lansdowne Park, and shortly after the opening hour of 7.30 p.m. the Coliseum Arena was jammed to capacity.



*At No. 410's Reunion in Ottawa. Left to right: Air Vice-Marshal D. M. Smith, C.B.E., Mrs. D. M. Smith, Mr. J. D. McNee, M.B.E. (Wing President), Mrs. J. D. McNee, Air Vice-Marshal A. L. Morfee, C.B., C.B.E., Mrs. E. C. Snider, Sqn. Ldr. E. C. Snider, D.F.C.*

As the throngs of participants came through the entrance hall they were greeted by such familiar strains as the "Air Force March Past," "Bombasto," and "Why Am I Always Joe?" At the far end of the Arena, playing in magnificent style the nostalgic airs of the war days, was the R.C.A.F. Central Band under the direction of Flt. Lt. A. E. Kirkwood.

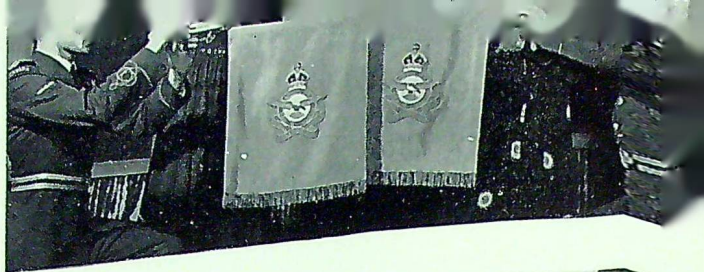
Behind the band was a huge stage trapped in Air Force colours and emblazoned with "R.C.A.F.A." in great silver foil letters. Circling the Arena were posters and cartoons depicting different wartime characters and Air Force bars.

At the "Captain's Cabin," "Dirty Dick's," "Snake Pit," "The Crackers," "Betty's Bar," "Mucky Duck," etc., refreshments were served by Wing volunteers under the supervision of Mr. R. French, the master-mind behind the organization of the reunion.

Sharply at nine o'clock, celebrations were interrupted by the seven fanfare trumpets of the R.C.A.F., first used during the presentation of the King's Colours to the R.C.A.F. last June. An impressive moment came when Mr. J. D. McNee, president of No. 410 Wing, called for the observance of the silence in memory of the fallen.



Three more shots of the Reunion



(Photos by Newton, Ottawa.)

Between the sounding of Last Post and Reveille, there was none present who did not recall a comrade who had given his life for Canada.

Air Vice-Marshal A. L. Morfee, C.B., C.B.E., Dominion President of the Association, and Air Vice-Marshal D. M. Smith, C.B.E., Acting Chief of the Air Staff, spoke briefly, and were followed by the No. 410 Wing "Air Revue," a splendid one-hour professional floor show featuring singing, dancing and acrobatic skits, with Chick Evans as Master of Ceremonies.

Dancing followed in the Convention Hall above the Arena, to the music of Buff Estes and his orchestra, while in the Arena informal groups gathered together wherever old acquaintances were recognized, to talk over old times, or drifted over to the piano to give voice to the old canteen and mess songs.

The reunion also was most successful financially, as reported by the Wing Treasurer at the October General Meeting, with profits approximating \$1800.00.

At the General Meeting, members voted unanimously that a sum of up to \$1000.00 be authorized to be expended for the purpose of purchasing instruments for the formation of a forty-piece bugle band for the four Ottawa and Hull District Air Cadet Squadrons.

The incoming executive of the Wing were instructed also to appoint a Building Committee to explore the possibilities of acquiring permanent Wing club-rooms to serve the Ottawa area.

Elections of officers for the following year were held. Names of the new executive are:

Past President	: J. D. McNeer
President	: R. C. Moffatt
First Vice-President	: D. A. Hall
Second Vice-President	: T. G. Holley
Corresponding Secretary	: Alan J. Scott
Recording Secretary	: Lillian Smith
Treasurer	: V. F. Courtemanche
Members	: R. G. French
	: John Foy
	: Joseph Cardillo
	: E. M. Moles
	: Earl P. Dagenais
	: John G. Roy

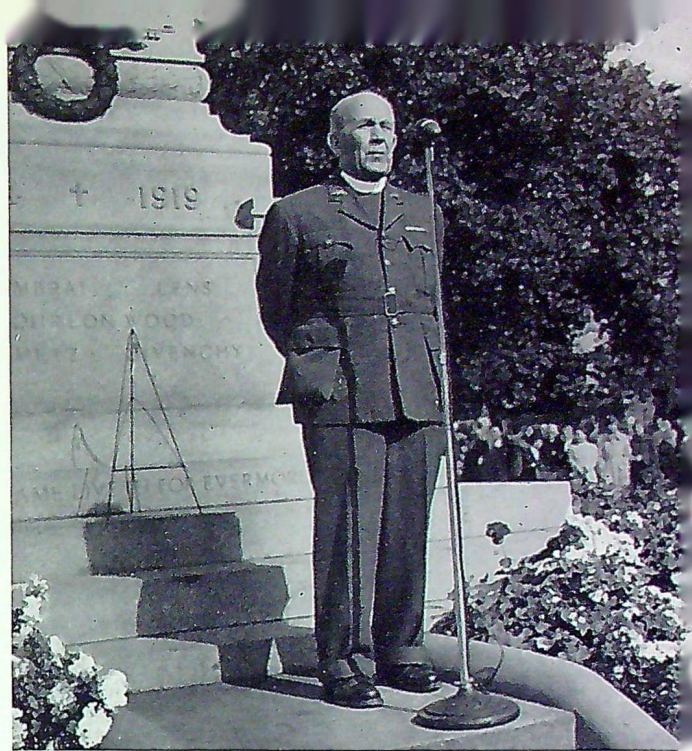
**No. 416 (Kingston) Wing**

We would like to congratulate No. 416 Kingston Wing on its "Current Gen" bulletin. It is extremely well prepared, and keeps us posted in Ottawa. From it we have learned that the Wing will be moving into their own permanent quarters in the very near future. Good show!

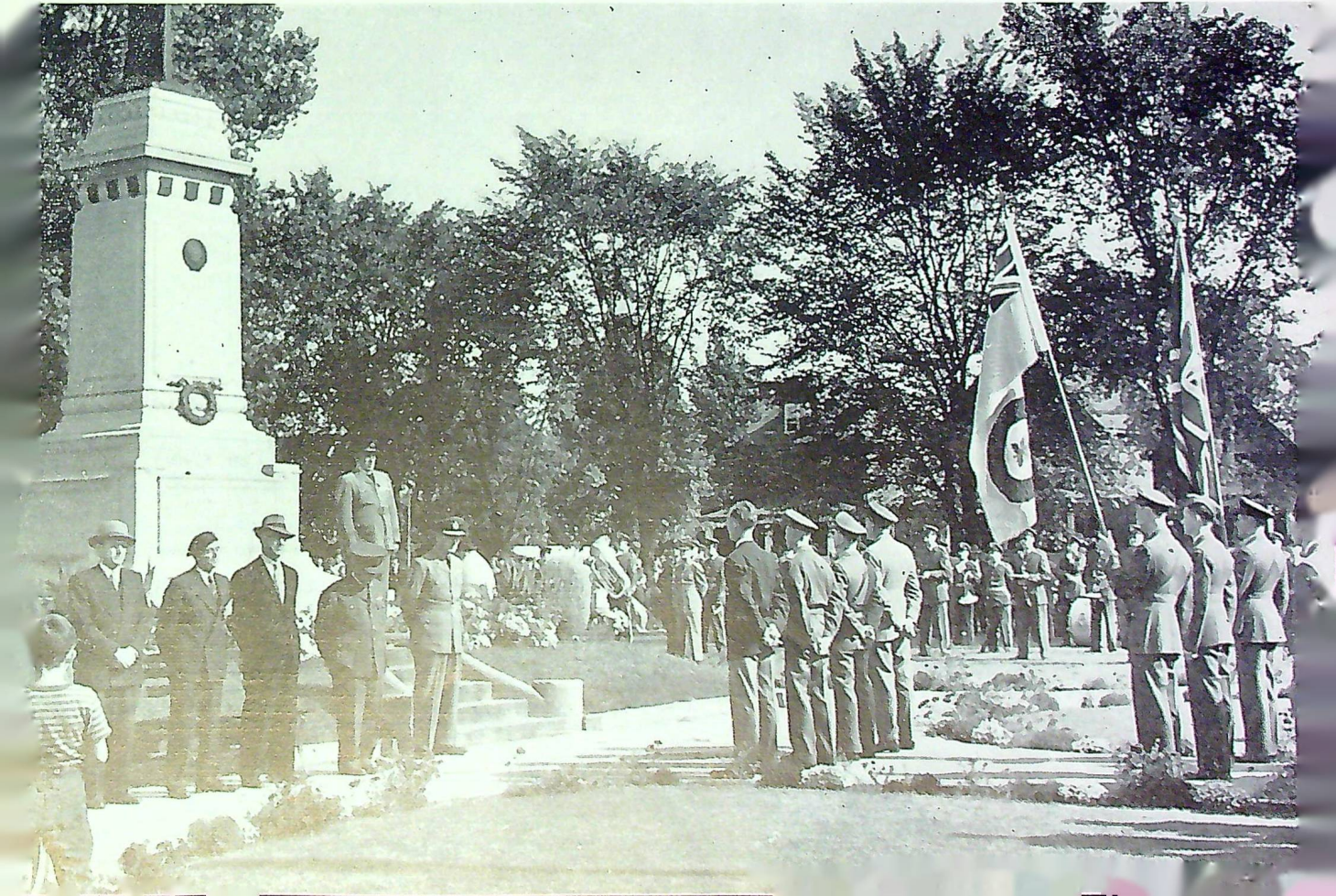
**No. 802 (Vancouver) Wing**

While we have no detailed information, we do know that a giant rally was held in the new Reserve Centre building to commemorate the anniversary of the Battle of Britain, and to serve as a general get-together for Association personnel.

*No. 406 Wing sponsors Battle of Britain Memorial Sunday at North Bay. At foot of cenotaph steps is Air Cdre. W. W. Brown, O.B.E., and at top, Sqn. Ldr. W. H. Dunphy, Principal R.C. Chaplain of Training Command ("Daily Nugget" photo.)*



*No. 406 Wing. Bishop R. J. Renison addressing the gathering*



The assembly hall was packed and many had to be turned away owing to lack of accommodation. The rally was addressed by Air Vice-Marshal F. V. Heakes, C.B., (retired) and Air Vice-Marshal D. M. Smith representing the Chief of the Air Staff.

## No. 108 (Summerside) Wing

A well-attended meeting of ex-members of the Air Force, with Mr. G. Mulholland in the chair, resulted in the formation of the first Wing of the Association in Prince Edward Island.

Forty-two members were signed up and an executive consisting of the following members was elected:

President	: Gregory Mulholland
1st Vice-President	: John Hopkirk
2nd Vice-President	: Eric Sheen
Secretary	: Arthur G. Rogers
Treasurer	: John Mungall
Additional Members	: Roy H. Johnston Harry Waugh Reginald E. Ellis John Leuty

To the new Wing and all its members, we extend our best wishes and welcome you to the National Organization.

## No. 429 Wing (Leeming Air Force Club), Toronto

Shades of No. 6 Group! This club has been in existence for three years, and we take great pleasure in welcoming them to the National Association.

Their executive consists of:

President	: W. V. Kearns
1st Vice-President	: J. H. Feeley
2nd Vice-President	: Leonard Sproule
Secretary	: S. Wood
Treasurer	: W. J. Montgomery
Additional Members	: Leslie Horton Dennis Tucker

## THE R.A.F.A. ANNUAL: 1951

In our November issue we mentioned that the R.A.F. Association Annual for 1951 will very shortly be available. It will be of great interest to many R.C.A.F.A. members, and may be obtained by writing to: The Editor, "Air Mail," 83 Portland Place, London W.1. England. Its price is 43c.

The contents include, among many other profusely illustrated items:

### Heraldry and the R.A.F.

The Editor is indebted to Sir Gerald Wollaston, K.C.B., K.C.V.O., Garter Principal King of Arms, who is recognised as the greatest living authority on heraldry, and the Air Ministry for a fascinating article on this subject, illustrated by reproductions of no fewer than 30 heraldic badges. These are the badges which have been approved by H.M. The King during the past year for R.A.F. groups, stations, squadrons and units, and with each is given the heraldic description and translated motto.

### Nine Came Back

Charles Anthony, well-known contributor to AIR MAIL, in which he recently told the full story of the Goldfish Club, describes the terrible war-time ordeal at sea of nine survivors of a crew of twelve Coastal Command airmen whose Sunderland flying-boat, "V for Victor," was ditched during an operation off the west coast of Africa. Before their rescue by a British destroyer the men had clung for days in a tropical sea to a single, half-collapsed dinghy with practically no food or water. It is an incredible tale, the more dramatic for its truth.

### Stalag Luft III

An eye-witness account by a Polish Air Force officer, W/Cdr. M. Brzozowski, who at one time in the war commanded 301 Squadron, of the mass-escape attempt from the notorious German prison camp, which was followed by the cold-blooded murder of 53 R.A.F. officers.

### Night Fighter

In another chapter to his as yet unpublished MS., *Sunlight and Shadow*, John Ashfield-Salter (who contributed *Teas I Have Known* and *Invasion* to the first R.A.F.A. Annual) writes in more serious vein, giving a compelling description of the interception and destruction of an enemy night raider over England.

### Leave It To Me, Chaps!

Hugh Falkus, the writer and B.B.C. actor—he played the part of Sir Basil Embry, C.-in-C., Fighter Command, in *Airman on the Run* in the C.B.C.'s *Now It Can Be Told* series at the beginning of this month—contributes one of several humorous stories in this edition of the *Annual*.

### D'Arcy's Mention

Robert Carpenter, who will be well remembered for his *The Burial of D'Arcy* in the last *Annual*, contributes another delightfully humorous story, in which his dim-witted pilot character becomes a hero—without knowing why.

### First Novel

Douglas Bader, an ex-Whitley bomber pilot who parachuted into Belgium and, together with the family who gave him shelter, was betrayed to the Gestapo and threatened with death, tells how, in Stalag Luft III, he was inspired to write his first book.

### The R.A.F. Display

Several pages of hitherto-unpublished photographs provide a permanent record, by skilled Air Ministry photographers, of the 1950 R.A.F. Display at Farnborough, the first of its kind since 1937.

### Looking Back — And Ahead

Sir Miles Thomas, D.F.C., Chairman of the B.O.A.C., reviews the past year in civil aviation and reveals Britain's hopes for the future, particularly in 1952, when the de Havilland Comet will be in service with B.O.A.C.

### The Whole Earth Is Their Sepulchre

The World-wide work of the Imperial War Graves Commission since its inception in the 1914-18 war is described in an informative, illustrated article. This year's *Annual* also illustrates and describes the designs of the Airmen's Memorial to be erected by the I.W.G.C. on Cooper's Hill.

### Convoy Attack

A thrilling log-book account of a Beaufighter navigator shot down in a low level attack on an important convoy off Crete during the war.

### In Heaven's Name

Every reader will enjoy this novel-length story of an aged Frenchwoman of the Maquis who, under the noses of the two German officers billeted upon her, contrives to aid the escape of a shot-down airman, in spite of the spying attentions of the village collaborateur.

### Air Review

The year in the air skilfully reviewed, both from the military and civil angle; a detailed report of the S.B.A.C. Display at Farnborough last month; and superb pictures of Britain's latest aircraft, covering all types, from trainers to experimental machines not yet off the secret list.

## THE "R.A.F. QUARTERLY": A REMINDER

In "The Roundel" for February 1950 we printed an announcement concerning the "R.A.F. Quarterly and Commonwealth Air Forces Journal." This publication, which is unsurpassed in its kind, deserves all the support that we in Canada can give it. To quote from our own earlier notice: "It is such things that help more than most of us realize to strengthen the bonds that hold that

unique historical organization the Commonwealth, together."

A one-year subscription to the "R.A.F. Quarterly" costs \$2.47. Subscriptions should be sent to:

**Messrs. Gale & Polden Ltd.,  
The Wellington Press,  
Aldershot, Hants,  
England.**

## No. 408 Anticipates St. Nick

WHILE COMPLETING the season's Photo Survey operations from their base at The Pas, a few members of No. 408 Squadron were visiting an airman patient at the Clearwater Lake Indian Sanatorium near the aerodrome. The sight of forty-eight Indian and Eskimo children suffering from tuberculosis inspired them with the idea of



*Flt. Lt. R. Tate reads to a patient*



*Sgt. J. L. Ducharme makes friends*

beating Santa Claus to the draw before returning to their own families in Ottawa. Funds were immediately voted from the Detachment Canteen and suitable preparations were made. When the great day came, every girl was given a doll and every boy a toy gun. Among numerous other gifts — such as colour and cut-out books, crayons, cars, etc. — were five gallons of ice cream.

# No. 6 Group Flashbacks

By T. C. McCall,  
Deputy Minister of Travel & Publicity, Ontario

(In the letter that accompanied his manuscript, Mr. McCall writes: "Numerous readers of *The Roundel*" have suggested that you publish material about Six Group, but nobody seems to have done anything about it. As a starter, here are a few thumbnail reminiscences that may evoke a memory or two in some of your public." Mr. McCall, before he went overseas as Senior Public Relations Officer in No. 6 Group, was Chief P.R.O. in Ottawa. He left the Service after the war with the rank of Squadron Leader.—EDITOR)

THE COLD YORKSHIRE wind whistling through the crevices of Nissen huts. Clothing and beds perpetually damp . . .

Allerton Hall, Group Headquarters, appropriately named *Castle Dismal* by Don MacMillan, author of that fine series of anecdotes published under the title "Only the Stars Know".

The Highland cattle in the enclosure adjoining the Attention Area, whose antics frequently brought blushes to the cheeks of the busy little W.D.'s hurrying to and fro . . .

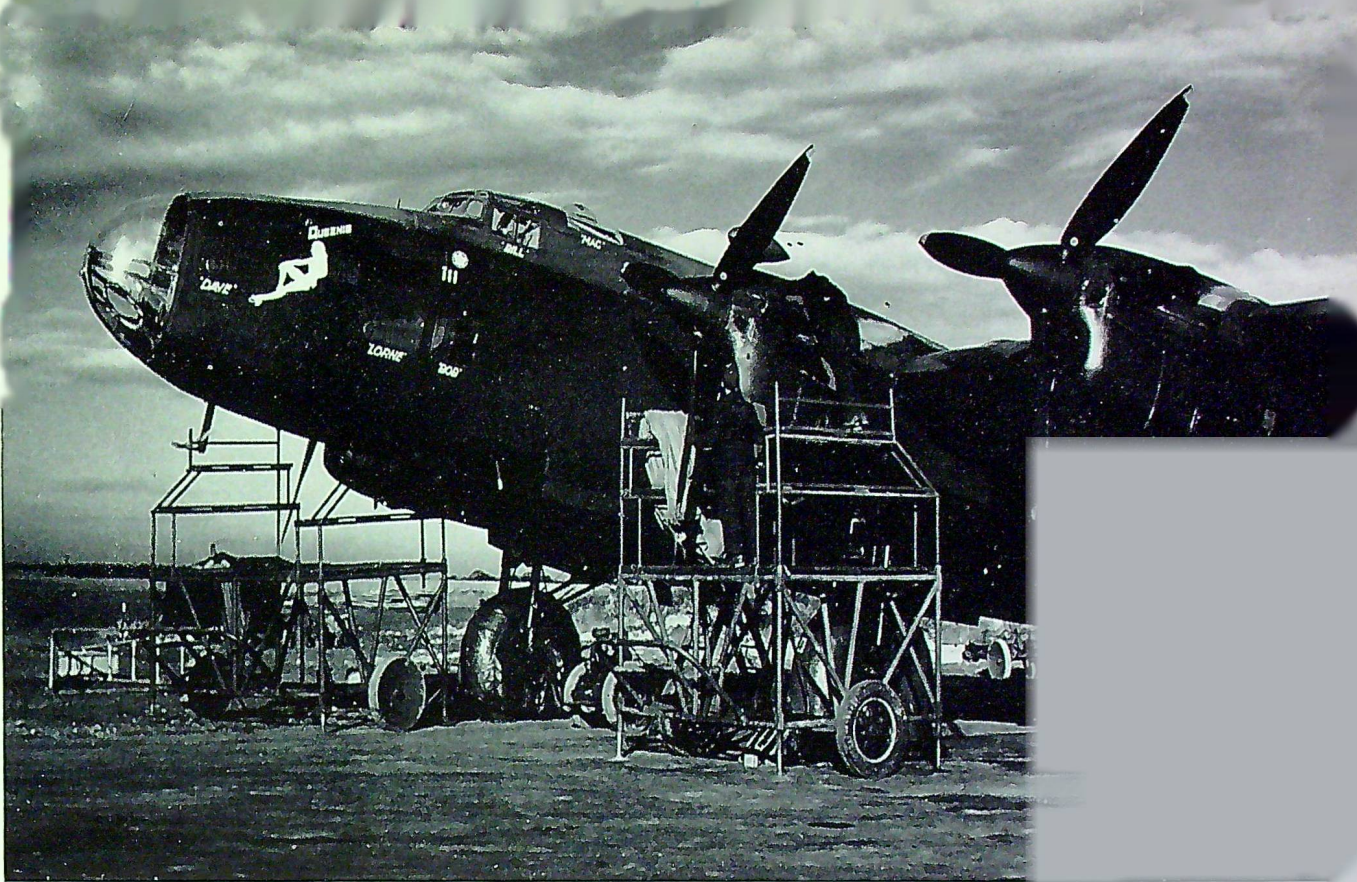
Sergeant Louis Moses, who really ran Group H.Q., Ferdie Bull, Jimmie Driver, Nick Carter, Shipwreck Seabourne, Major Nicholson, Major Stephenson, Cecily Taylor, Puffer Train, and all those other fine R.A.F. types who were alternately puzzled and titillated by the strange behavior of the Canadians . . . P.T. at 7 a.m., with the A.O.C. being tagged out trying to steal second base . . .

*Betty's Bar* in York, where the important briefings took place long before the squadron I.O.'s got around to it . . . The *Coach-and Horses*, the *White Swan* (*Mucky Duck*, to you), the Minster's twin towers looming out of the murk during the black-out, thereby giving hundreds of Canadian airmen a sense of orientation . . . The *Royal Station Hotel* and the always-courteous young ladies behind the bar . . . The *Gray Room* and the dances held therein . . . The badly-blitzed station: "Allo, 'Allo, this is Yoke" . . .

Weddings at Ripon Cathedral and celebrations at *Green Hammerton Inn* . . . The *Royal Baths* at Harrogate, the *Stray*, the American Bar of the *Queen's Hotel* . . . Voices in the blackout: "Anybody here going to Tholthorpe?" (There usually was) . . . The bent old lady who tended the toll gate over the Ouse at Little (or was it

*Air Vice-Marshal C. M. McEwen, C.B., M.C., D.F.C.*

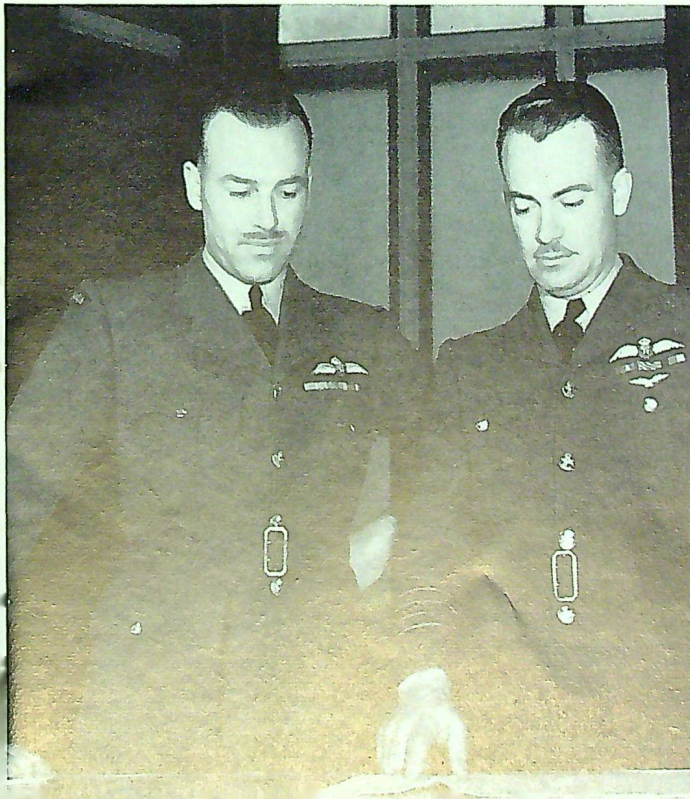




*Iroquois Squadron Halifax*

*Air Cdre. C. R. Slemon, C.B.E., and Group Capt. J. E. Fauquier, D.S.O. and Bar, D.F.C.*

*"W.A.A.F. site"*





*Interrogation after Sterkrade. Left to right: Wing Cdr. J. K. MacDonald, Group Capt. H. H. C. Rutledge, Flying Officer M. F. C. Grimsby*



*Moose Squadron Lancasters*

*Air Vice-Marshal G. E. Brookes, C.B., O.B.E.*



# The Roundel

Greater?) Ouseburn and kept A.O.C. and L.A.C. alike waiting. Nobody ever saw her smile . . . Meal hours at Linton being livened by the cosy little chats over the Tannoy by Group Captain Clare Annis . . . The Thunderbird and Goose squadrons and all the good fellows there — Tiny Ferris getting mad at a flak train, Bill Swetman, Ted Ratcliffe and Jimmy Devane, the Welshman with the Lancashire brogue . . . Eric Mulligan, first Flight Engineer in the R.C.A.F. to come up with a D.F.C. . . .

Those extroverted Australians, mostly air gunners, who enlivened every party . . . The mud around Tholthorpe and the initial operations of 431 and 434 squadrons . . . Wincos Newson and Harris, Adjutants Sutherland and Higgins . . . Auction sales for the P.O.W. fund . . . Great gobs of jubilation when 434 finally managed to screen a crew — Perkes, Tucker, Poppleston, Baldy and Tiny Weekes . . . The strange adventures of McLernon and Clary . . . those grand lads, Frank Carter, Lloyd Linnell, Freddie Lord, Hal German, Pop Lytle, Tommy Thompson, and their crews . . . Padre McMahon doing the circuit of the perimeter

on his bike every night before take-off . . . Verey cartridges down the chimney into the fireplace during a mess party . . .

The pranged Halifaxes always to be seen beside the Great North Road near Dishforth . . . Return of the “rascal” squadrons from the Middle East with sunburned airmen looking much out of place in Yorkshire in December . . . Those Land Army girls at Topcliffe, with the green sweaters and khaki (excuse the expression) breeches. Advent of the R.C.A.F. showgirls who did *not* wear green sweaters and khaki breeches, and the flap ensuing therefrom . . .

Lack of respect shown the bison’s head which hung in the mess at Leeming, particularly after a party . . . Bob Turnbull moving from Sergeant to Winco in 11 months . . . The Sherlock twins of 427 Squadron . . . Advent of the “gen boys” from 405 squadron — Fauquier, Powell, Lane, Sweany, MacKinnon and so forth . . . The station commander’s dog at Middleton-St. George and the Halifaxes of one of the squadrons which operated without an upper turret . . .

*Cpl. E. M. Powers and P.T.*





Left to right: Flying Officer E. McConkey, Sgt. Bert Hague, Pilot Officer R. Folks, Sgt. John Palen, Flt. Sgt. Bill Ledger, and Sgt. Evan Jones

First operation against Italian targets and the exclamations of wonder at the Alps in the moonlight . . . Congestion in the circuit over Topcliffe-Skipton-Dishforth-Dalton . . . Wembleton-in-the-Moors and the incessant nattering between the C.O. and the C.I. . . . Good food and pleasant company at Eastmoor near Sutton Forest . . . The farewell party held by one of the squadrons prior to departure for Leeming . . .

Tremendous flap occasioned by the Royal Visit in August 1944, and the attendant investitures . . . H.R.H. the Princess Elizabeth teasing an unnamed Air Commodore as to the whereabouts of the D.S.O. which had just been awarded him . . . Tremendous party at Croft Spa afterward . . . Baiting the R.A.F. types over the service chevrons which they finally had to wear — and being baited, in return, over the C.V.S.M.'s which we had to put up . . . Scrubbed operations announced over the Tannoy by the magic and appropriate word "Darlington" . . . Initial use of "Window" and the bewilderment of the Germans over the secret weapon . . . First efforts at daylight formation flying . . .

The first operation of 426 on Lancasters and the tragic loss of their Winco . . . Advent of the new Halifaxes and ultimately the Lancaster X's . . . The interrogations — coffee in a smoke-filled room, the cool hush of dawn, bacon and egg (singular), "there we were, coned over Hamburg with two Me. 110's on our tail . . ." Peenemunde, one of the great battles of history and still largely unknown to most Canadians . . . The hollow laughter when the B.B.C. announced for the umpteenth time that Hamburg (or Berlin) had been destroyed . . .

Freddie Rowe and Ray James, navigator and air bomber, getting a flying lesson via the R.T. after their skipper had been knocked out, and bringing the Halifax in with two chuteless erks aboard . . . The remarkable marksmanship of quiet little Peter Engbrecht which won him a C.G.M. . . . The nickname bestowed on Ganderton after he bailed out and landed squarely on the back of a cow . . . The legends about "Moose" Fulton . . . The great "D"-Day effort and a Station Commander hard at work in the bomb dump alongside the armourers . . . Fantastic rumours from London when the buzz-bombs began to fall . . . Artwork on the kites, particularly "P-Poison" whose engines were designated, respectively, *Cyanide*, *Arsenic*, *Iodine*, and *Naafi Tea* . . . The *Punch Bowl*, the *Shoulder-of-Mutton*, the *Black Bull*, and all the other delightful wayside pubs . . . Any gum chum? . . . Daylight at midnight in the summer and darkness at four P.M. in winter . . .

And the Duff-gen Merchants — Fred Jackson, John Badger, Meyer Negru, Harry Price, Ron Laidlaw, Mac Eggleston, Bill Dumsday, Reg Moir, Peter Field, Vic Baker, Les Powell — with all of whom the writer was proud to be associated . . .

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## TRACERS

Mr. Del Budd, of 6 State Court, Waterloo, Ont., would like to hear from Albert J. Spirok, formerly of No. 215 Squadron, R.A.F.

# The ROYAL CANADIAN AIR CADETS



By Arthur MacDonald,  
Director of Publicity, Air Cadet League of Canada

## THE ENROLMENT DRIVE

CHRISTMAS, 1950, marks the close of one of the most important campaigns ever undertaken by the Air Cadet League of Canada. We refer, of course, to the enrolment drive which had as its primary target an overall increase of 50% in Air Cadet strength across Canada.

While it has not been possible at this writing to get an accurate reading of the number of cadets actually enrolled, we have every assurance that the drive has been successful. As predicted, the increase has been achieved largely through boosting the strength of existing Air Cadet units. A few disbanded squadrons have, however, been re-activated and several new units have been formed or are in the process of formation. Once these new squadrons reach full stride, the 50% expansion will no doubt have been achieved — and possibly with something to spare.

We would particularly like to commend the Provincial Committees and squadrons for their efforts in ensuring the success of the campaign. The campaign itself has meant a great deal of extra work to squadron personnel, and the increased enrolments will also place an additional burden on the officers and instructors. It is a tribute to their sincerity that the burden is a welcome one and the expansion has led to a new high in enthusiasm across the country.

Against this background we would like to extend our best wishes for the holiday season to all who have contributed in such an outstanding manner to the success of the Royal Canadian Air

Cadets over the course of the past year. And we have saved an extra-special "Merry Christmas" for the thousands of new cadets who are currently enjoying their first taste of Air Cadet life. It can be a good life, boys, with plenty of opportunities to establish future careers for yourselves. We know you will make the most of it.

## EXCHANGE VISITS — A FLASHBACK

It seems a little strange to be speaking of Christmas plans and summer holidays almost in the same breath, but we can't pass up this opportunity to comment upon a vacation trip enjoyed by Air Cadet W.O.2 Victor Walker of No. 30 (Estevan) Squadron last summer. Cadet Walker was one of the 26 cadets selected to make a goodwill tour of the United States as part of the international Air Cadet exchange scheme. Shortly after returning to Canada he wrote a brief essay about the trip and we thought you would be interested in a few of his impressions.

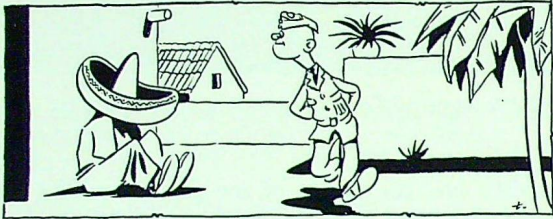
"On July 29th we left Edmonton in two U.S.A.F. aircraft bound for Portland, Oregon, via Great Falls, Montana. On landing, we were greeted by Civil Air Patrol personnel and taken to our billets at the Y.M.C.A. A dance was held in our honour at the Y.M.C.A. that night, and on the following day we toured the Columbia River, visiting the Bonneville Dam and power plant and many other points of interest. Towards evening we arrived at the home of Colonel H. K. Coffey, where there was swimming, speedboat-riding and a most wonderful dinner. The steaks, which were barbecued by Colonel Coffey himself, were no less than 1½ inches thick.

"San Francisco was our next stop, and it certainly gave us plenty to talk about. In the first place, we attended the Ice Follies (this was in early August), and in the second we tried a few new and different things in the line of food. We had seafood at its best at the 'Exposition Fish Grotto' and later enjoyed a Chinese meal at the 'Lamps of China' restaurant.

Later we were escorted by special police through Chinatown and the International Settlement, which is a replica of the old Barbary Coast.

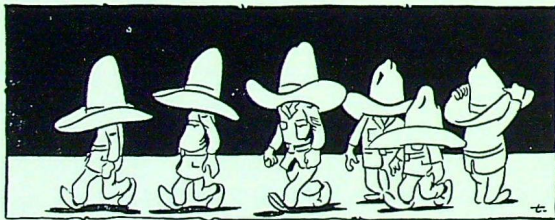
"We had a touch of luxury in Los Angeles, where we stayed at the 'Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel'. Visits to the Northrop Aeronautical School, television and movie studios formed the major part of the itinerary. Our finale in Hollywood was a supper dance in the 'Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel' with 26 charming girls as our partners.

"Moving on to Arizona, we stopped briefly at Phoenix and then settled down at Mesa for the remainder of our stay in



that State. Here we had our first taste of Mexican food and we also enjoyed barbecued steaks at 'Sunset Ranch'. After the steak dinner, an old-time dance was held in our honour and, once again, 26 partners were present. After a sightseeing tour, which included a flight over the Grand Canyon, we travelled to Dallas, Texas, where the high point of our trip was reached.

"In Dallas at the time were air cadets from France, Britain, Italy, Portugal and Sweden, who had gathered for a monster international party given by Colonel D. Harold Byrd, an executive director of the U.S. Civil Air Patrol. About 500 people were present at the party — including about 100 attractive young dancing partners. We played games, saw a floor show, danced to excellent music, and enjoyed some wonderful food. Before we left, Colonel Byrd presented each of us with a \$35 Stetson hat and several other presents to remind us of Texas.



"The flight home included a brief stop-over at Denver, Colorado, where we were taken to the amusement park in company with the usual supply of girls. We took off on the following morning for Edmonton, and the most wonderful trip in the world was over."

## GUTHRIE TROPHY WINNERS

Congratulations are extended to No. 22 (Powell River) Squadron, B.C., which has won the Guthrie Trophy for 1950. The Powell River Squadron has therefore been adjudged the most proficient

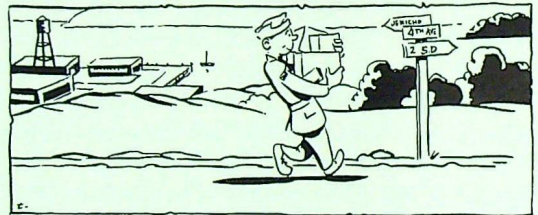
squadron in Western Canada for the past year and great credit is reflected upon Flight Lieutenant Vince Forbes, his officers, instructors and civilian committee members. It is also well to remember that the squadron did not reach its eminent position without the wholehearted co-operation of the cadets themselves.

Winners of the Guthrie Shield, awarded to the top squadron in each of the Western Provinces, have been announced as follows:

B.C.	... No. 22 (Powell River) Squadron
Alta.	... No. 230 (Athabasca) Squadron
Sask.	... No. 38 (Prince Albert) Squadron
Man.	... No. 82 (Brandon) Squadron
N.W. Ontario	... No. 227 (Geraldton) Squadron

## SPOT NEWS ON EXPANSION

As mentioned earlier, we are not yet in a position to report in detail on the expansion campaign. We know you will be interested, however, in the following spot reports which give a fairly clear picture of how the drive has progressed.



In Vancouver, No. 1 Wing has moved from the hangar at Jericho Beach into new quarters at No. 2 Supply Depot. The civilian committee, under chairman Denys H. Back, has been reorganized and the officer-instructor establishment strengthened. Cadet attendance is well up over last year and the Wing is predicting a total strength of over 500 cadets for 1951.

Elsewhere in B.C., those squadrons which are able to expand are doing so rapidly. An encouraging note is the re-activation of No. 259 (Penticton) Squadron, which was dormant for more than a year on account of accommodation problems.

Alberta, which has been well over its official quota for some time, is still growing. Cadet strength in the oil province already exceeds 1,500

and may even reach 2,000 before the close of the training year.

Big news from Saskatchewan is the reopening of a squadron at Campion College, Regina. The new No. 25 Squadron had over 100 cadets on its first parade and all signs point to 150 boys in uniform for 1951.

In Manitoba, a number of rural squadrons have expanded by taking in boys from neighbouring communities. The lads are transported to the



training headquarters in private cars one night a week. In Winnipeg, No. 3 Wing reported a higher attendance than ever before at this time of year.

No less than fourteen applications for new squadrons have been received in Ontario and are under consideration at the present time. Meanwhile, many of the established units have achieved the 50% boost and others are well advanced toward this goal.

Cadet strength is well up in Ottawa, and the four squadrons are presently forming a central

band with funds provided by the local wing of the R.C.A.F. Association. The record of No. 325 (Cornwall) Squadron is tough to beat. Although Cornwall is not a large city, the squadron boasts a strength of no less than 204 cadets.

A pleasant item from Quebec concerns No. 14 (Shawinigan Falls) Squadron, which has been on the inactive list for some time. With the sponsorship of the Kinsmen Club, this squadron is making a strong comeback and is expected to be up with the leaders in short order.

A new squadron is being formed at the Simmonds Regional High School in Saint John, N.B. and the Provincial Committee has plans for a Wing in the capital city. This is another province where the 50% seems well assured.

The final — and extremely encouraging — comment comes from the youngest province, Newfoundland. Here is the text of a telegram received by League Headquarters from H. Darroch Macgillivray, chairman of the Newfoundland Provincial Committee:

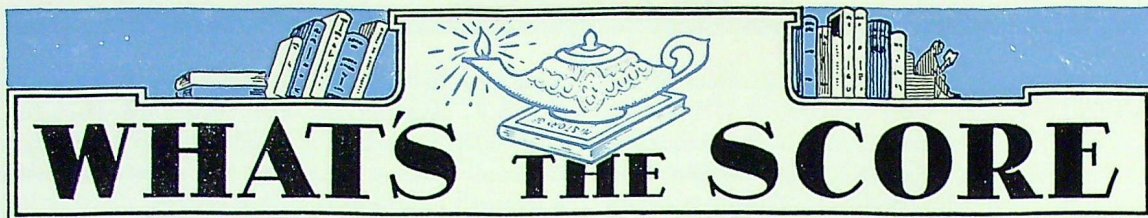
“With practically no stimulation through advertising or undue pressure from this Committee, squadrons are reporting a flood of new recruits, all of excellent calibre. Corner Brook has had 40 new applications. Grand Falls is increasing its squadron to 100. No. 508 (Caribou) has had 76 new applications. St. John’s Lions have had over 50. Both Feildian and Atlantic squadrons anticipate no trouble in increasing their strength to approximately 100 each. Accommodation problems still confront us, but we should end up in a month or so with at least our 50% increase in strength.”

## We Are Canadians

“WE ARE CANADIANS. Below the island of Montreal the water that comes from the North, the Ottawa, unites with the waters that come from the Western lakes, but uniting they do not mix. There they run parallel, separate, distinguishable, and yet are one stream, flowing within the same banks, the mighty St. Lawrence, rolling on toward the sea bearing the commerce of a nation


upon its bosom, — a perfect image of our nation. We may not assimilate, we may not blend, but for all that we are the component parts of the same country. We may be French in our origin, — and I do not deny my origin, I pride myself on it. — we may be English or Scotch, or whatever it may be, but we are Canadians, one in aim and purpose . . .” — Sir Wilfred Laurier.

(“Canadian Mail”)



# WHAT'S THE SCORE

**W**E INTEND to pin this questionnaire to the mantelpiece beside our Christmas stocking, just to see how much Santa Claus knows about the background of his job. Eliminating lucky guesses, we scored only ten. Correct answers are given on page 48.

- Good King Wenceslas was the king of:
    - England
    - Bohemia
    - Saxony
    - Poland
  - The only Christmas Carol that has never been sung was written by:
    - Charles Dickens
    - Cardinal Newman
    - Edgar Guest
    - Martin Luther
  - Bob Cratchit's lame son was named:
    - Slender Sam
    - Long Tom
    - Tom Thumb
    - Tiny Tim
  - There is no definite evidence that Christmas was celebrated prior to the:
    - Third century
    - Sixth century
    - Ninth century
    - Fourth century
  - December 25th, as the date for the celebration of Christmas, was decided upon by:
    - Pope Liberius, in Rome
    - King Stephen, in Hungary
    - St. Augustine, in England
    - Skeggi the Apostate, in Norway
  - In olden times, in England, it was the custom in all wealthy houses to appoint a superintendent of Christmas revelry, known as:
    - The Yule Clot
    - The Abbot of Unreason
    - The Merry Andrew
    - The Lord of Misrule
- 
- The Christmas Tree was not in general use until about the time of:
    - The American Revolution
    - The fall of Constantinople
    - The Norman Conquest
    - The Armada
  - The use of mistletoe at Christmas is generally supposed to be derived from:
    - The Assyrian worship of Ashtoreth (Venus)
    - The Druidic religion of the ancient Celts
    - Its reputation among the Romans as a post-prandial emetic
    - Its symbolism as the slayer of the pagan god, Baldur
  - The creature specifically mentioned in C. C. Moore's famous poem as keeping extremely quiet on Christmas Eve was:
    - A duck-billed platypus
    - A cassowary
    - A "wee sleekit tim'rous cow'rin beastie"
    - A close relative of the bandicoot
  - The correct punctuation of the first line of a famous carol is:
    - God! Rest you, merry gentlemen?
    - God rest you, merry gentlemen!
    - God rest, you merry gentlemen
    - God rest you merry, gentlemen

11. The first recorded use of Christmas Cards occurred:
- In England — about 1862
  - In Russia — about 1748
  - In Italy — about 1490
  - In the U.S.A.— about 1695
12. Santa Claus (a latter-day alias of St. Nicolas) was originally:
- A humorous version of the Devil
  - A famous Greek caterer during the First Crusade
  - The Bishop of Myra, later patron saint of Russia
  - The Abbot of Thulême, made famous by Rabelais, and later patron saint of *bon viveurs*
13. Boxing Day is so called because:
- In ancient Rome, December 26th was sacred to the undertaking profession
  - In England, it was formerly the day when Christmas Boxes were given to bank employees
  - On that day the early American settlers used to gather box-berry (or winter-green) for stuffing their New Year's turkeys
  - It used to be the occasion for displays of fisticuffs in Scottish villages
14. The distinguished Canadian whose remarks on Santa Claus created a furor in the correspondence columns of the daily press a few years ago, was:
- General Crerar
  - General Chisholm
  - General Worthington
  - General McNaughton
15. January 1st was established as the beginning of the year by:
- Julius Caesar
  - St. Swithin
  - Constantine the Great
  - Ptolemy the Third
16. December 31st is known in Scotland as:
- Samhain
  - Beltane
  - St. Swithin's Eve
  - Hogmanay
17. Twelfth-night occurs on:
- January 6th
  - December 13th
  - January 5th
  - December 14th
18. The word "Yule" is derived from:
- An Anglo-Saxon word, meaning "log-burning"
  - The old Norse name for a 12-day feast
  - A corruption of Julius (Caesar)
  - The sacrificial shout of the Druids
19. The word "Noel" is derived from:
- The French "nouvelles," meaning "tidings"
  - The glad cry of the Christian martyrs that there was "no hell" for the believer
  - The Latin "natalis," meaning "natal"
  - A French corruption of the name "Nicolas"
20. The Canadian New Year (Fiscal) begins on:
- Hogmanay
  - St. Swithin's Day
  - Martinmas
  - All Fools' Day



## "Tearing Off a Strip"

The expression "tearing off a strip" goes back to the origin of the Royal Air Force in No. 1 Balloon Squadron of the Royal Engineers. Pulling the rip cord on a gas bag (which had the effect of tearing off a strip of fabric) was the quickest way of deflating it. The phrase soon came to be used to describe the deflated feeling one got when interviewed by the C.O.

C. L. Wills ("The Aeroplane")

# Ghosts of Christmases Past

By Sqn. Ldr. A. J. Simpson, D.F.C.

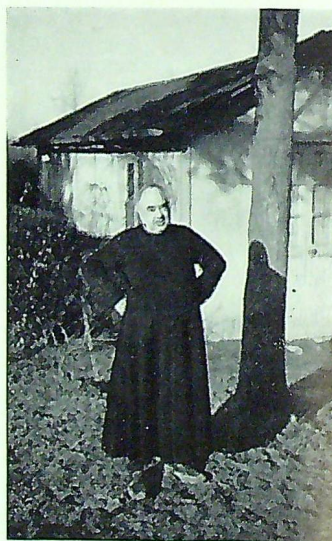
AS EACH NEW DECEMBER wears on towards the twenty-fifth, I find myself thinking again of those with whom I have shared the Christmases of the past, and of the places in which we shared them. Of people—the good types with whom I held wassail — many are dead, many of the places I shall not see again. But the memories throng, and to-night I am thinking of some of the eight Christmases I spent far from the shores of my native Canada . . .

December 25th, 1938, found me on the “Assania” in mid-Atlantic, en route for Britain and the R.A.F. With me were ten other fellows, similarly bound. Only six of us are still alive to remember as I am now remembering — Pitt Clayton (retired as Group Captain, with O.B.E., D.F.C. and Bar), Gerry Dillabough (retired), Al Wilson (retired as Squadron Leader), Les Sinclair (D.F.C., still in the R.A.F.), Boyd Corbett (P.O.W. from Aug. 1940 to June 1945), and myself. The others were: Ken Michie (killed in action), Larry Rogers (killed in a flying accident), Phil Purdy (D.F.C., killed in action), Irving McDermott (D.F.C., killed in action), and Dick Bennett (missing, presumed killed in action).

No shadows of the future, however, cast their gloom over us that day. We were a cheery group of young Canadians all set for a big time, without a care in the world, and with the promise of adventure before us. In the evening the Captain invited everyone to dine First Class. Up from the lower deck whole families came trooping; in festive mood we emerged from our Tourist cabins, together with several Regular Army chaps (headed for courses in the U.K.) and their wives; and after the Captain had made a few appropriate observations, we sat down to what was, without any exaggeration, the most sumptuous meal of my life. I have the menu beside me now — the unbelievable catalogue of victuals on the right-hand page and on the left the signatures of my pals . . .



1938. Back row (left to right): Michie, Clayton, Rogers, Wilson, Sinclair. Front: Purdy, McDermott, Bennett, Corbett, Simpson



1939. The village priest kept a good cellar

Christmas, 1939 . . . Larry Rogers and Boyd Corbett had gone to No. 4 Squadron and I to No. 13. Both squadrons, which were Army Co-op. units equipped with Lysanders, were located at an aerodrome near Peronne, in France. About half the pilots were seconded army officers, and the air-gunners were tradesmen who handled the single free Lewis gun in the back seat as a sort of hobby. At that time, of course, we had no direct-entry air gunners.

My squadron was billeted in the village of Mons en Chaussée. Early on Christmas morning my genial landlord roused me with an atomic shot of cognac, then regaled me with lengthy reminiscences of "l'autre guerre." Presently I rose and made my way through the icy streets to the Mess for breakfast. Later, some of us went skating on the River Somme, where Don Morgan managed to fall through the ice. We drove him back to his billet, removing his trousers and shoes on the way. From the car he ran in his long underwear into the house, evoking from the astonished natives loud remarks about "les fous Anglais."

At noon, the officers and N.C.O.'s served Christmas dinner to the airmen in accordance with the time-honoured custom of the Service; and after that, we exchanged visits with No. 4 Squadron in the village on the other side of the aerodrome. For dinner, some of us were guests of a French unit at St. Quentin, where we were given a thorough course in wine-tasting in general and Champagne-bibbing in particular. As the evening lengthened, our broken French and the equally broken English of our hosts somehow became less and less of a handicap . . .

The R.A.F. Officers' Convalescent Hospital at Torquay was full at Christmas 1940. Many of the patients were Battle of Britain casualties — some of them amps., some of them with bad burns, and one with a V.C. My own presence in this august assembly was due to a very mundane fall in the blackout, which had necessitated the removal of a knee cartilage. Nevertheless, I took my place in the queue that filed past Santa Claus, and received my gifts along with the rest. The man behind the whiskers was, in real life, Group Capt. "James" O'Malley, C.O. and chief medic,



1940. Torquay

1941. Ground-hockey at Aqir



1942. The Author takes a jaundiced view of things



*The Garden of Gethsemane*



*Bethlehem*

and a famous athlete in his day. Beside him stood the Matron, beaming over her brood as they went by.

At dinner, crutches, canes and casts were only slightly outnumbered by Christmas crackers and paper hats. Poles, Czechs, Australians, Englishmen, Irishmen, Welshmen, Canadians, South Africans, New Zealanders — all were there, joined in the common cause under the banner of the R.A.F. I wonder where they all are now. One of the nurses who was there that day was, I know, killed during a bombing of the hospital later in the war . . .

Hockey (ground-hockey, that is) was a feature of Christmas Day at R.A.F. Station Aqir, Palestine, where I found myself in 1941. I had tried to reach Bethlehem for Christmas Eve, but flooded roads had prevented the bus from getting through between Lydda and Jerusalem. A few days later I flew over the Holy City on my way to Amman, the capital of Transjordan. The scene below might have been taken from a Christmas card. Bethlehem was covered with a blanket of snow — a thing which happens on the average only once in twenty years . . .

Christmas 1942 found me in the Scottish Military Hospital in Cairo, with jaundice. On Christmas Day, in some British hospitals, bed-patients are offered their choice of a glass of sherry or a single Scotch. I chose sherry — and

promptly turned several shades yellow. The only really bright spot in the day was a visit from two nursing sisters who had looked after me in the hospital at Tobruk (a week before the town's capture) during the previous June, while I was still trying to remember what I'd done wrong that had made it necessary to bail out . . .

With my 1943 Christmas, however, there was nothing wrong at all — unless it was the painful pleasure of eating a magnificent dinner in the heat of a near-equatorial summer's eve. I was the guest of the Brink-Bester family in Bulawayo, Southern Rhodesia. It was the first Christmas in six years that I spent in the midst of a family, and I shall never forget the kindness and hospitality they extended to that far-strayed Canadian in the R.A.F. . . .

And so the ghosts of Christmases Past rise before me as I sit here writing. The passage of time does not dim them; nor, I think, will it ever do so. Each year adds to their number and to the wealth of memories they bring with them, and each year I send the same silent greeting to all those who have helped to make them the benign spectres that they are . . .

*Merry Christmas!*

## *From the Suggestion Box*

**T**HE CHIEF OF THE AIR STAFF has expressed his personal thanks to the undermentioned members of the R.C.A.F. for suggestions which have been officially adopted by the Service.

Sgt. G. B. Leckie, of R.C.A.F. Station Sea Island, designed a modification to transport aircraft which provides a wind-screen to deflect the slip-stream from the jump-master's face, thus giving him greatly improved vision and ensuring a higher degree of accuracy when dropping supplies or personnel. Fabrication of the deflector is simple and can be carried out locally.



*Cpl. J. A. Barbeau*

Cpl. J. A. Barbeau, of R.C.A.F. Station St. Hubert, designed a new type of wheel nut wrench which facilitates the removal of studs and nuts on the dual wheels of mobile equipment.



*Sgt. G. B. Leckie*

Flt. Sgt. M. F. Rogers, of No. 1 Supply Depot, Weston, found by experience that failure on the part of forklift truck operators to observe certain safety rules was responsible for a considerable waste of time and effort. He therefore selected what he considered to be the seven most important of the thirty-odd "DONT'S" for forklift truck operators and had them expressed in graphic form by LAC D. C. Allen, a Supply Technician at the Depot. Posters made from these drawings will be distributed to all units concerned.



*Flt. Sgt. M. F. Rogers*

# How Father Creesimiss Came to Cambridge Bay

By Flt. Lt. S. E. Alexander

*(The R.C.A.F.'s Polar Pundit goes back fifteen years to bring us this little tale of a personal appearance that was just a bit too convincing.—EDITOR)*

THE APPROACH of Christmas mellows even a policeman's heart.

Thus, November 1935 found nine Mounties aboard the R.C.M.P. schooner "St. Roch" planning to further the religious education of the Eskimos by introducing to them a very Christian saint named Nicolas. We were, I should explain, wintering at Cambridge Bay, which was the base for our routine patrols.

The natives for far and wide around were informed by moccasin telegraph that they would be visited at "Creessimiss" (as they called it) by a mysterious being from the North, who would come in a sled drawn by flying caribou. He would, the story went, be dressed in red, with a flowing beard, and he would bring presents for all the children. Particularly admired by the earthbound Eskimos was his reported means of locomotion, which, they felt, might revolutionize their own method of travel in the future.

As the sun waned and the winter darkness settled down throughout the Arctic, the general excitement mounted. Heaven only knows what strange speculations ran riot beneath the Northern Lights and in the malodorous quietness of the igloos, but it soon became evident that pretty nearly every Eskimo in that part of the country would be at Cambridge Bay in good time for the twenty-fifth of December. Accordingly, we made preparations for about four hundred. The resources of both trading-posts were severely strained to meet the demands for gifts suitable for some 175 children; but everyone pitched in, and at last an imposing mound of gaily wrapped parcels was

ready. The only factor that we did not take into consideration was the effect on the uninitiated natives of the high-altitude marine distress signals and railways flares with which we proposed to glorify the arrival of Father Christmas.

Throughout Christmas week dog-teams could be seen moving in from every direction. The settlement became a town of igloos, and the Bay took on the appearance of Spring as the dogs, on their individual team lines, stood about like boulders freshly emerged from virgin snow. By the day before Christmas the Eskimos, in a fever of anticipation, were making a continuous round from igloos to trading posts to the R.C.M.P. and back again.

Santa Claus was due to arrive at 9.00 p.m. on Christmas Eve, and an hour before that time all



the Eskimos were standing outside their igloos, gazing skyward. Even the dogs seemed to be affected: when the team cheer-leaders called for a full chorus, all they could elicit were isolated yelps. The night was cold (55° below zero), without wind, and as clear as only an arctic night can be. The Northern Lights kept up a ceaseless display of vividly coloured banners moving rapidly across the endless reaches of the heavens. The stars, piercingly bright, seemed to burn holes in space. The moon, perhaps dubious of what might follow, had retreated below the horizon.



Nine o'clock! Every Eskimo was still as though frozen. Even the dogs had stopped yelping. The silence was complete and unearthly . . .

Then it happened. A terrific explosion rent the air, followed by a horrid whooshing noise which terminated high above in another explosion. A blinding light glared down on the unmoving figures below, throwing ghastly shadows on the snow around them. Slowly the light died away while the Eskimos, their children and their dogs, stood transfixed and stunned. Before they could recover, there came another explosion, another whoosh, and once again the blinding light.

At that, things started to move. Every dog began frantically burrowing in the snow to hide himself. The Eskimos hurled themselves towards the shelter of the nearest igloo. The heavier of them actually broke through the walls in the frenzy of their panic. Those hardy few who dared another glance behind them, saw, to their final



and complete horror, a demonic figure of monstrous proportions advancing towards them. He was dressed in red and wore a white beard the like of which had never been seen in (or out of) the Arctic. Even we — though we knew the apparition to be nothing more than Sgt. Larsen, wearing a Father Christmas suit on top of two parkas — were a bit shocked at the supernatural appearance he presented in the light of six flares.

By this time every child was screaming in mortal terror — and their shrieks, added to the yells of their parents and the muted howls of the huskies as they burrowed underground, rather belied the fact that Christmas had at last arrived at Cambridge Bay. It was, I might add in conclusion, late in the afternoon of the 26th before we could persuade the Eskimos to leave their shelters and receive their gifts from the normal hands of nine somewhat crestfallen Mounties.



# December Transfers ★ ★ ★

## Officers

W/C E. Beaton (Sup.)—Can. Joint Staff, London, to No. 5 Supply Depot, Moncton  
 A/C W. E. Bennett (G.L.)—Can. Joint Staff, London, to N.W.A.C. Headquarters, Edmonton  
 W/C C. G. W. Chapman, D.S.O. (G.L.)—Can. Joint Staff, London, to A.F.H.Q.  
 S/L G. C. Fisher, D.F.C. (G.L.)—A.F.H.Q. to R.C.A.F. Stn. Lachine  
 W/C E. J. L. Gauthier (T.L.)—Can. Joint Staff, Washington, to A.F.H.Q.  
 A/C J. G. Kerr, C.B.E., A.F.C. (G.L.)—A.F.H.Q. to Can. Joint Staff, London  
 S/L J. H. C. Lewis (G.L.)—No. 426 Sqn., Tacoma, Washington, to A.F.H.Q.  
 W/C C. L. Olssen, D.F.C. (G.L.)—No. 408 Sqn., Rockcliffe to R.C.A.F. Stn. Rockcliffe  
 W/C W. H. Swetman, D.S.O., D.F.C. (G.L.)—Air Transport Command H.Q. to Can. Joint Staff, London  
 W/C R. I. Thomas, A.F.C. (G.L.)—R.C.A.F. Stn. Rockcliffe to Air Transport Command H. Q., Rockcliffe

## Warrant Officers

W.O. 2 D. W. Cranham (F.W.)—R.C.A.F. Stn. Edmonton to No. 2 Construction and Maintenance Unit, Calgary  
 W.O. 2 R. R. Fumerton (Clk. Adm.)—R.C.A.F. Stn. St. Hubert to R.C.A.F. Stn. Uplands  
 W.O. 1 P. J. S. Mackenzie (M. Com. Tech.)—R.C.A.F. Stn. Sea Island to North-West Air Command H.Q.  
 W.O. 1 D. S. McCuaig (M.A. Tech.)—No. 406 Sqn., Saskatoon, to Air Materiel Command H.Q., Ottawa  
 W.O. 2 A. E. Reinholdt (P.R.T.I.)—R.C.A.F. Stn. Toronto to No. 2 Manning Depot, Aylmer

### KEY TO TRADE DESIGNATIONS

G.L.	—	General List
P.R.T.I.	—	Physical Recreation Training Instructor
M.A. Tech.	—	Master Armament Technician
F.W.	—	Foreman of Works
M. Com. Tech.	—	Master Communications Technician
Clk. Adm.	—	Clerk Administrative

## No. 9406 Unit Rifle Team

THE RIFLE CLUB of No. 9406 R.C.A.F. Unit, Saskatoon, was organized early in 1948. During the same year it won second place in the Walker Team Match.

Comparatively inactive during 1949, it won the Saskatchewan Provincial Meet this year in competition with several Canadian Army teams and the R.C.M.P. Last September it entered the Saskatoon Services Rifle Association Meet, in which it won four cups and five spoons in competition with teams from both the Navy and the Army. The awards won were:

- The R.C.E.M.E. Trophy.
- The Saskatoon Light Infantry (M.G.) Trophy.
- The United Services Institute of Saskatoon Trophy.
- The 406 Squadron Trophy.



Seated (left to right): Sqn. Ldr. K. B. Hanley, Flt. Lt. S. M. Jenkyns. Standing (left to right): Flt. Sgt. F. Rothery, LAC G. Byers, Cpl. W. G. Bridgeman, LAC H. L. Ferguson, Cpls. J. M. Sorfleet, A. L. Mineault, Sgt. D. S. Grey, Flt. Sgt. J. Blakely

# Sweetbriar Diary

By Sgt. D. J. Blain, Canadian Joint Air Training Centre

*(This diary does not pretend to be an analysis of Exercise Sweetbriar. It is simply, as its author expresses it, "a clerk's-eye" view. However, it sidelights the Exercise in a human and often amusing way, and seems to us well worthy of publication.—EDITOR)*

8 January 1950.— It is not yet three weeks since the Medical Officer removed his stethoscope from my surfaces, gave it a mistrustful glance, then gazed at me with melancholy eyes. "You," he said incredulously, "are fit for northern posting." None the less, when I left Brandon at 1450 this afternoon, it was so cold that I had to refer to my fitness certificate to bolster my morale. I am on my way to Exercise Sweetbriar at last.

9 January.— Arriving in Edmonton at 0630 hours, I went directly to Station Edmonton in company with various other people who had entrained along the way. To judge from their appearance of rugged health, so similar to my own, they too were proceeding to Sweetbriar. My first official act on arriving at the Station was to ingest a hearty breakfast in the Sergeants' Mess. I there made the acquaintance of a brother clerk, Sgt. K. J. Strader of No. 11 Supply Depot, Calgary, who is also bound for the Exercise.

At clothing stores I was issued with two very handsome turtle-neck sweaters. These, according to my fellow travellers, are "musts" in the white wilderness into which I am so bravely venturing. They are disappointing, however. They do not make me resemble either Clark Gable or an athlete. The only effect produced is that of a stout middle-aged sergeant wearing a navy blue turtle-neck sweater.

11 January.— At six o'clock this morning I fumbled my way to the Air Traffic Handling Unit where, amid much light and bustle, a North Star was being loaded for Whitehorse. With my usual luck, I was forty-fifth on the list of its forty-four

passengers, and was therefore asked to possess myself in patience until other arrangements could be made for my transportation. I am to go by Dakota at 0700 hours to-morrow.

12 January.— No, to-morrow.

13 January.— Despite the date, here I am in Whitehorse.

It was quite cold in the aircraft, but I was fortified both by my turtle-neck sweater and by the knowledge that I was fit to face anything. At 1315, as we approached Fort Nelson, we were informed by one of the crew that the figures on a frozen lake below us were members of the current Survival Course fishing through the ice for their lunch. Since the ground temperature at this point was  $-35^{\circ}$ , I concluded that they were even fitter than I.

On the floor of one valley we saw an aircraft which appeared practically intact and which, we were informed by our crewman, had been there for over seven years.

On arrival at Whitehorse, we were immediately loaded on to a bus and rushed off to hospital, where we were vigorously punctured in each arm to insure our immunity to diphtheria and scarlet fever. I later found that this hospitality was extended to all comers and was no indication that our presence was unwelcome. Immediately afterwards we were taken to the Sweetbriar Mess for dinner. This is, at the present time, a joint mess for all ranks of Sweetbriar; and the food, service and accommodation are very fine. Thence I proceeded to the Sergeants' Mess in order to

# The Roundel

sample a beverage that had been highly recommended to me during my stay in Edmonton — Lemon Hart's Navy Rum. I know now that it is a distillate of some potency.

14 January.— Have been assigned to the Air Force Commander's staff to assist Sgt. Smith of Winnipeg in setting up the Sweetbriar Operations Room and Operations Orderly Room.

16 January.— Had a chat this morning with Sgt. Christianson of Rivers, who arrived last night in charge of the radar convoy which had driven from Dawson Creek. He told me that at one stage of the journey the temperature dropped to  $-72^{\circ}$ , which had greatly hampered adjustments and repairs. For much of the time the convoy was enveloped in its own vapour trails and was forced to proceed at speeds of from twenty to thirty miles an hour.

Finished setting up Ops. Room and Ops. Orderly Room.

Three aircraft arrived from Edmonton this afternoon. On board the last one was Wing Cdr. Parks, Officer-in-charge of Transport Support Wing, and with him my old friend Flt. Sgt. J. V. Ranson of No. 435 Squadron who will be N.C.O. in charge of Transport Support Wing Orderly Room.

*The author (left) and Master Sgt. F. P. Kelly*



19 January.— Operations room now functioning. A strict security system is being developed, as Aggressor has commenced a full-scale espionage campaign. The first stranger I challenged proved to be Col. T. W. Blackburn of the U.S.A.F., who was arriving to take up his duties as Senior Air Staff Officer for the Allied Air Forces. At lunch time a four-engine jet bomber (a U.S.A.F. B-45) arrived from Edmonton, having covered the 1008 air miles in 2 hours and 20 minutes. It was followed later in the day by a squadron of U.S.A.F. F-80's.

22 January.— Assigned to quarters in the Whitehorse Inn and removed my baggage there this afternoon. Some little space could be devoted to this Inn: it is a hostelry of some distinction.

24 January.— All American and Canadian Staff Officers have now arrived, and the Air Forces Commander's Headquarters is now fully manned. The R.C.A.F. Umpires, under the command of Wing Cdr. P. S. Turner, arrived last night and took up quarters in the Whitehorse Inn, and two North Stars came in this afternoon carrying more personnel for the Exercise.

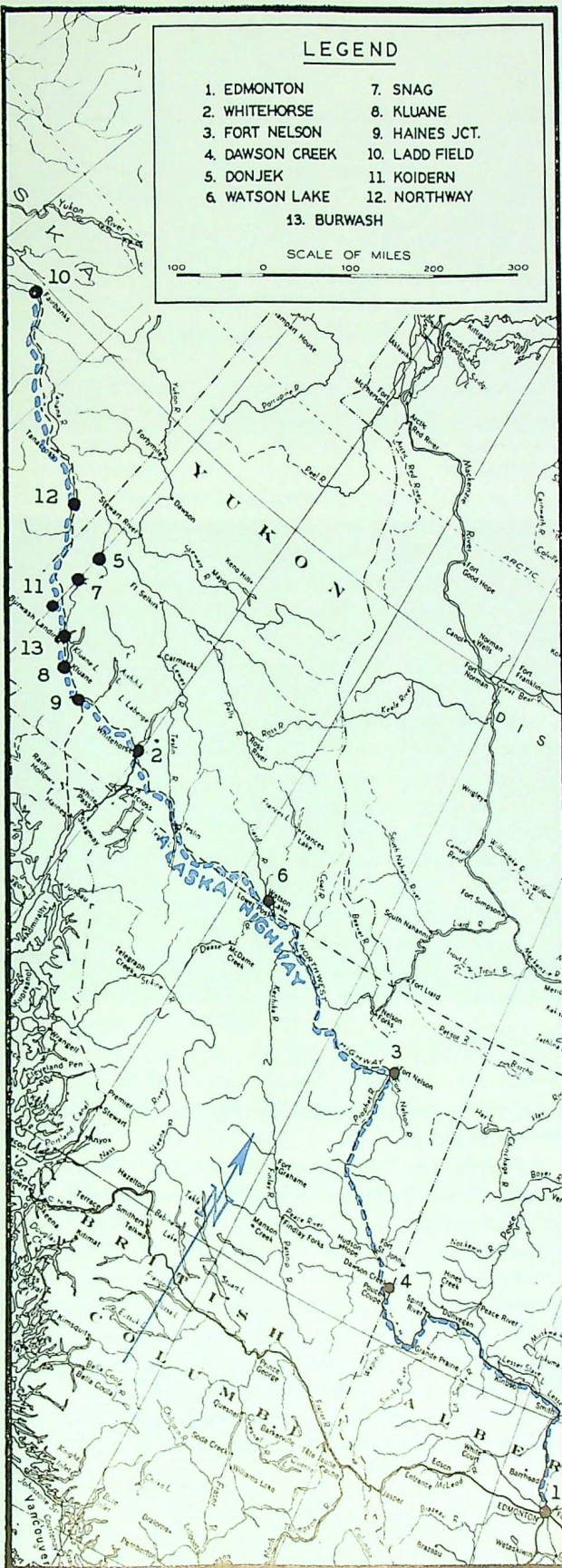
23 January.— With Wing Cdr. Turner, I am to attend an Umpire training course given at Camp McCrae, seven miles from here. The course will commence on Feb. 1st. and will be given by the Americans. I am to attend in order that I shall have a background knowledge of the Umpire situation when the time comes to make up the necessary reports. Further advised that on D-1 (the day after the commencement of hostilities) I shall accompany the Chief Umpire to Donjek Camp, 212 miles North of Whitehorse, where the Deputy Manoeuvre Cominader will establish his Field Headquarters for the first phase of the Exercise.

26 January.— Very heavy snow all day, so that air activity has been very limited. Temperature  $20^{\circ}$  above zero at noon. This evening information was received that an American C-54 is down somewhere in this area. The aircraft was last heard from at 1330 hours, when it made radio contact with Snag en route to Great Falls, Montana. A report was received that flares had been sighted in the vicinity of Watson Lake and

LEGEND

- |                 |                |
|-----------------|----------------|
| 1. EDMONTON     | 7. SNAG        |
| 2. WHITEHORSE   | 8. KLUANE      |
| 3. FORT NELSON  | 9. HAINES JCT. |
| 4. DAWSON CREEK | 10. LADD FIELD |
| 5. DONJEK       | 11. KOIDERN    |
| 6. WATSON LAKE  | 12. NORTHWAY   |
| 13. BURWASH     |                |

SCALE OF MILES  
0 100 200 300



a ski-equipped Dakota was despatched to search the area.

27 January.— No word as yet as to the whereabouts of the missing C-54, and Canadian and American aeroplanes are carrying out a full-scale search. No trace was found of flares or any other signals in the Watson Lake area. It is rumoured that a message has been picked up this afternoon, but so garbled that no definition as to position or situation can be gathered from it. Weather at Whitehorse is overcast, with snow, but clear over the area of search.

29 January.— Air Commodore Costello arrived at 1800 hours last night to assume the direction of the search, and all Sweetbriar facilities are being directed to that operation. Four North Stars arrived from Edmonton to-day with personnel of the Vampire squadron and maintenance personnel from Rivers.

30 January.— No report of the missing aircraft yet. The search is being pressed with fullest vigour and aircraft are constantly arriving and departing. This morning's rumour is that a message has been picked up which gives the latitude of the missing aeroplane. A Dakota of the U.S.A.F. searching a narrow valley was caught in a downdraft and piled into the side of the mountain, but the pilot crash-landed with such skill that no one was badly hurt. He then proceeded to make his way across six miles of very rugged terrain — sometimes through breast-deep snow — to the Alaska Highway, where he was picked up by a passing truck and driven to Station Whitehorse. A ground party was at once despatched to bring out the crew and passengers, who will reach hospital late to-night. Of great interest among the visiting aircraft to-day were two B-29's.

1 February.— Began Umpire training course. Camp McCrae is a U.S. military installation which has been rehabilitated for Sweetbriar. It consists of a collection of wooden buildings and Jamesway huts huddled at the foot of a range of high mountains, and the little huts, half-buried in snow, present a very desolate appearance indeed. The Umpire course is attended by about 150 R.C.A.F./U.S.A.F. and U.S. Army Canadian Army officers and a small group of American N.C.O.'s. I



*Allied gunpost on Alaska Highway*



*Donjek Camp*



*Donjek River*



*The author and friends*

appear to be the only Canadian N.C.O. present. The instructors are all officers of the American 5th Army and the U.S.A.F., and the syllabus of training covers the entire field of ground and air umpiring.

*2 February.*— Greatly impressed by the Aggressor campaigns and the care and planning which has gone into the creation of the Aggressor Forces as a training aid. The keynote of the Umpire course is realism — one captain stressed that the Exercise should be so realistic that the only thing lacking should be the “smell of blood and the screams of the wounded.”

Search is still being pressed on a very large

scale, but no trace has been found of the missing aircraft to date.

*4 February.*— Umpires concluded course with a two-hour discussion and a written examination for which the pass mark was 75%. All R.C.A.F. Umpires passed with an average mark of well over 80%.

Attended the Whitehorse Winter Carnival this evening. It took place in a small wooden hall well filled with noise, smoke, smell, troops and civilians. The carnival spirit was generously displayed, but there was little in the way of entertainment other than one or two crown and anchor boards, a dice

game, and a rather tired troupe of dancing girls dressed in costumes alleged to have been the vogue for entertainers in the gold-rush days. No gold nuggets were thrown.

*6 February.*— During the afternoon General Stuart, the Deputy Manoeuvre Commander, visited the A.F.C.'s Headquarters, and in his honour a group of F-80's manoeuvred over the aerodrome. Their bright red and silver colouring made a very impressive picture against the backdrop of brilliantly blue sky and towering snow-clad mountains.

*7 February.*— Umpires departed on a two-day tour to Northway.

An American C-47 engaged on the search is reported missing since 0900 hours this morning. Distress signals have been received from her all afternoon, and at the present time all that is known is that she is down somewhere between here and Aishihik.

*8 February.*— Missing C-47 was discovered this morning with all members of the party alive, though it is rumoured that five of them are slightly injured. The aircraft crashed high on the side of a mountain about forty-five miles north of here. Supplies have been dropped to the party and rescue operations are under way.

*9 February.*— Proceeded to Camp McCrae with Wing Cdr. Turner and Sqn. Ldr. Cameron to work on a Command Post Exercise (CPX) as a preliminary to Sweetbriar. Returned to Whitehorse Inn at 2000 hours.

Ground party meeting with very heavy going in attempts to rescue occupants of crashed Dakota. Fuel and supplies were dropped to them again to-day.

*10 February.*— A para-rescue team has been dropped to assistance of personnel on crashed aircraft, and finally a helicopter has been sent in to bring them out.

*11 February.*— Completed preparations for move to Donjek tomorrow. Search for the missing C-54 is still under way.

*12 February.*— Left Whitehorse at 0830 hours, complete with bed roll, mess kit, a large and handsome wash basin, kit bag, portable typewriter, a box of stationery, and a parting blessing



from my room-mates. Attitude of said room-mates left much to be desired, as they made it fairly obvious that this was a last farewell and I should never survive the rigours of life at a Field Headquarters in the Arctic. They were not alone in their doubts.

Wing Cdr. Turner, Sqn. Ldr. Cameron and I were the only Canadians in the party, the remainder being American officers and N.C.O.'s. Major Newland, U.S.A.F., the American Assistant Chief Air Umpire, and Technical Sergeant Gibson, also of the U.S.A.F. were the only other Air Force personnel present.

The morning was reasonably clear, and the road, with a surface of smooth and crystalline snow, was very good for travelling. The first stop was made at about eleven-thirty at a tiny settlement called Haines Junction, where the roads to Fairbanks and Haines meet. We lunched in a roadside cafe, very primitive but with quite a good kitchen. As we left, it was beginning to snow and a little later we ran into a howling blizzard which reduced our visibility and progress to practically nil. After an hour or so, however, we broke clear of the blizzard area, and early in the afternoon found ourselves skirting the shore of ice-covered Kluane Lake. At about three o'clock we reached Burwash and pulled up at a palatial establishment called "Joe's Air Port Inn" — presumably because it was located directly across the highway from the emergency landing-strip at Burwash. Although not in the same class as the Royal York, Joe's Inn provided good coffee and

a notable display of calendar art in the dining room.

On debussing we were assigned to quarters in one of the wooden barracks, and the N.C.O.'s were shown to a wash-house well equipped with hot and cold showers, wash basins and laundry facilities. This, I thought, is exactly the type of pioneering I am cut out for — an opinion in which I was confirmed when the time came to eat. The food was even better than that served to us at Whitehorse.

Excellent office space was ready for use, and as soon as our convoy arrived late in the evening we were able to set up the Umpire Control Room.

*13 February: D-Day.*— This is the first day of hostilities, and so far all is very quiet, as the weather is bad over both Allied and Aggressor bases. The P.P.C.L.I.'s (Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry) were on the move in the wee small hours of the morning and are advancing toward us up the highway, but at the present time they are still a considerable distance south of this point. Lt. Col. Erdin (the American Chief Air Umpire) and Lt. Col. Hellmann (the Chief Umpire) arrived late last night by staff car after a very rugged trip through the blizzard area earlier in the day. Another Canadian N.C.O., Sgt. Hacking of the Met. Section, arrived with Capt. McHenry, the American weather officer.

My duties are to maintain the Air Umpire's log of the Exercise under the direction of Sqn. Ldr. Cameron, to maintain a daily record of sorties flown, to transcribe the Air Umpire's Daily Summary, and to receive and file all Daily Reports and Mission Reports that are forwarded by the Unit Air Umpires and the Flying Umpires.

The Allies were able to fly a few missions to-day, but Aggressor Forces were grounded throughout the entire day by bad weather.

*14 February: D-1.*— Very little activity to record for some time, as weather prevented flying from bases on either side. The Aggressor Air Forces are hampered by ice fog which forms over their bases during the night and does not disperse until late morning or early afternoon. The weather (this is a little more than halfway north in the combat area) has been very good for the

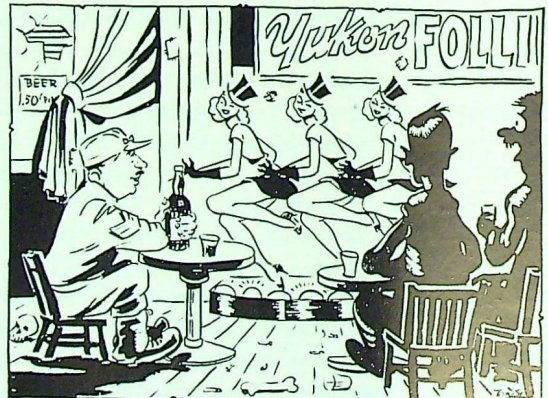
first two days. Weather cleared at Whitehorse early in the forenoon and several missions were flown. Early in the afternoon a call was received from Aggressor at Ladd Field, Alaska, to say that Aggressor aircraft were able to get off and would make a strike against Allied troops moving north on the highway. The message also stated that the Aggressor aeroplanes would strafe the bridge over the Donjek River, which is practically on our front doorstep; so we shall have a front seat for this effort.

At about 1600 hours, four F-82's of the Aggressor Air Forces were overhead, and I went outside to watch their attack on the Donjek Bridge. It was carried out very impressively. The F-82's are twin Mustangs painted black for use as night fighters, which gives them an appearance of deadly efficiency. Air Commodore Costello and Brigadier General Stuart are now at Donjek. Air Commodore Costello is the Canadian Assistant Deputy Manoeuvre Commander for Air and the ranking Air Force officer on the exercise: his American counterpart is Colonel McCollum of the U.S.A.F.

The press are here in great numbers and are briefed twice daily by air and ground umpires as to the progress of the Exercise.

*15 February: D-2.*— Air activity is mounting on both sides, although the Aggressor Air Forces are still hampered by ice fog over their aerodromes.

Food here continues excellent, and my American friends are overwhelmed by it. To-day we dined on chicken gumbo, which the cooks proudly



boasted was made only from white meat and covered with cream sauce fit for a king. The cracked wheat rolls, hot from the oven and eaten with lashings of butter, beggar description.

As I went to my quarters at about midnight, I noticed that the temperature had reached the scheduled low of  $-48^{\circ}$ .

*16 February: D-3.*— This morning the Army threw up a gun emplacement at the gateway to the camp and mounted a field gun to sweep the Donjek Bridge, which Aggressor must cross to push the P.P.C.L.I. southward down the highway. The field gun is painted white and the crew camouflaged in white coveralls and hoods. At noon the gun position was strafed by Aggressor aircraft, and Allied jets counter-attacked. I hurried out to see the excitement and take some snaps and was just in time to get caught in a spray of propaganda leaflets dropped by an F-82 which was flying so low that it practically knocked my cap off. While the F-82's strafed and the jets screamed and the Bren guns chattered, I took snapshots and absorbed battle atmosphere to such an extent that I finally wavered back to my log and charts with a touch of battle fatigue.

I have made friends with a huge snow-white husky who is the camp mascot. When I first brought him tidbits from the table he received my advances indifferently, taking my contributions as no more than his due. Now, however, he regards me with a sort of disdainful favour and occasionally strides magnificently into the control room, where he sits by my chair, thumping his tail languidly on the floor, regarding me inquiringly out of his oblique jade-green eyes. On being informed there is nothing for him until dinner-time, he stretches out on the floor, has a short snooze, and later strides out as splendidly as he entered. When, a day or so ago, the Chief Umpire asked what my friend's position was, I felt constrained to inform him that he was there to umpire dog fights.

*17 February: D-4.*— In this "war," as in all other wars, there are flashes of humour. It was planned that a number of prisoners-of-war should be taken and interrogated by the Allies. These prisoners were prepared and trained in their rôles

before the Exercise commenced, and last night, in accordance with instructions, one of them set out to be captured. On approaching the Allied lines he was challenged by an Allied sentry. He failed to identify himself and continued to advance. When he ignored a second and a third challenge, the sentry grunted with exasperation, "Hell, you must be an officer! Go ahead!" In spite of this lack of cooperation, the would-be prisoner eventually managed to get himself captured and was brought here for interrogation. The official language of the Aggressor is Spanish, and the prisoner refused to answer any questions in English, saying in Spanish that he could only reply to questions put in that tongue. The interrogation was conducted very realistically, and for a long time the prisoner would only give the routine information required of him by International Law. Finally, however, skilful questioning and well-timed assumption of knowledge drew from him replies considered of great importance by Allied Intelligence.

I was told this morning that some time after the ground forces joined battle, the commander of the Cameron Force (P.P.C.L.I. and other Canadian Units) forced Aggressor out of his prepared position and took prisoner the Aggressor Commander and his staff. For purposes of the Exercise, the Commander and staff were returned to their forces and the "war" proceeded.

*19 February: D-6.*— During the past two days air activity has been very heavy. The ground actions are now being fought north of here in the vicinity of the Koidern River, and the Allied Forces have forced Aggressor north across the Koidern bridges and are pressing him hard as he withdraws toward the International Border.

As the tempo of the Exercise increases, the Umpire Control H.Q. is becoming an exceedingly busy place. Generals Chamberlain and Stuart, U.S.A.F. Manoeuvre Commanders, are constantly conferring with the Assistant Deputy Manoeuvre Commanders, while the Air Officer Commanding N.W.A.C. and the General Officer Commanding Western Command are frequent visitors. Weather throughout the combat area continues good. Both Allied and Aggressor Air Forces are flying

numerous missions, so that our Situation State Board shows a constantly changing picture of affairs. Aggressor Air Force, in spite of heavy loss, is living up to its name and is vigorously pressing both combat missions and strikes against Allied vehicles and personnel. The ground forces have suffered heavily in these attacks on both sides, as the nature of the terrain and the heavy snow prevents any wide deployment, so that most of the time they are concentrated on the highway and easily vulnerable from the air. Wing Cdr. Turner, Lt. Col. Erdin, and Sgt. Gibson have proceeded to Northway to-day to establish advanced H.Q. there, and Sqn. Ldr. Cameron, Major Newland and I are to follow them to-morrow.

Received a visit this afternoon from Sqn. Ldr. Skene, Air Umpire at Allied Forces H.Q., and Sqn. Ldr. Tilley, of Joint Operations Centre. Both establishments are leading a far more rugged existence in the field than we, but Sqn. Ldrs. Skene and Tilley appear to be bearing up under it very well. I have contracted a sore throat and went this morning in search of the camp's medical man. Upon inquiry I found that he is an Army corporal whose basic trade is carpenter. I could not see him at the moment, as he was performing a major operation on the General's stove.

*20 February: D-7.*— The morning was spent in dismantling the Control Centre and loading the equipment for transport to Northway, and after an early lunch we embussed at approximately 1415 hours. The weather was cold and brilliantly clear, so that every jagged peak and crest of the towering Donjek Range was outlined with dazzling clarity against the azure sky. As we stood waiting for the bus, an Auster buzzed its way north, looking like some brilliant insect against the snow-clad backdrop of the mountains.

Late in the afternoon we arrived at Camp O'Hara, an Army camp rehabilitated for Exercise Sweetbriar. The camp stands in a large clearing surrounded by a heavy growth of small northern pines and with high mountains all about it. The Army received us hospitably and gave us hot tea and coffee as well as pie and biscuits. From O'Hara we proceeded northward again until, just before sundown, we approached the International

Border and found that we were also approaching the battle lines. At the border the traffic was being moved efficiently by the Provost Corps, and we were passed across the border into Alaska. Our American companions immediately exclaimed "Smell that air!" and "Look at that sun!" Since we were practically sealed in the bus, and since the sun was well-nigh set, I concluded they were indulging in a mild leg-pull.

After we had crossed the border I found with deep interest that we were in the midst of the Allied troops as they prepared to bivouac for the night. Although the temperature was well below zero, it did not seem to bother the men; and they were hard at work digging circular pits in the deep snow in which to erect their tents. With or near every group was one soldier who had been detailed for sentry duty, and in one or two places I noticed machine-gun crews keeping a sharp eye on the evening sky. Passing through the bivouackers, we came upon a line of troops prone in the snow, on and beside the road, firing with rifles and machine guns at some target which we could not see. A short distance away, however, numerous flashes indicated that the fire was being returned and that we must now be close upon the Aggressor lines.

The sun was now sinking fast behind the mountains in the west, but before darkness fell I saw that the mountains receded far back from the highway and we were crossing wild and barren plains. Almost as soon as the sun vanished, darkness set in; and we drove for a long time with no sight of anything save the reflection of our lights on the snow-covered road. Then, far off across the plain, we saw the intermittent beam of a circling beacon flashing through the darkness from the control tower at Northway. At 1900 hours (Alaska time) we debussed before the one hangar on the aerodrome, which now housed the Deputy Manoeuvre Commander's Headquarters.

The hangar presented a strange sight and was filled with a continual rushing sound from the line of Herman Nelson heaters across the end of the building. Three-quarters of the floor space was occupied by hundreds of wooden double-decker bunks hastily nailed together to accommodate the

troops who would end their campaign at Northway on Feb. 23rd. One end of the hangar was screened off to form a dining-hall. Here were no neatly set and clothed tables, no shining silverware and china. The tables were of unfinished lumber knocked together as hastily as the bunks. They stood breast-high, so that it was obvious that we were intended to eat standing and not to linger over our meals. The first meal served to us was palatable enough, but it suffered woefully in contrast with our princely fare at Donjek.

I found the Umpire Control Centre established on the second floor of the hangar in a large square room, well lighted but heated by a large oil stove which stank abominably.

*21 February: D-8.*— Much Allied Air activity to-day, particularly transport missions to re-supply the ground forces, and the Situation Board shows an ever-mounting tonnage of equipment, fuel and rations moved in this manner. Although the Allies have had air superiority throughout, they have never had air supremacy. Aggressor is fighting hard to the last, and the successful Allied transport missions become the more impressive when this factor is considered. The Aggressor Air Force is badly reduced by enemy action but is still striking hard where it can, and their aircraft passed overhead several times to-day on the way to and from Ladd Field, striking against advancing Allied forces. Aggressor is being driven back into this area, where he will make a last stand. This is where the Exercise is scheduled to end the day after to-morrow.

*22 February: D-9.*— The end of our "war" is in sight. This morning the Umpire Control Centre was visited by the most distinguished group of observers to date, headed by the Hon. Brooke Claxton and Mr. Lawrence Steinhart, the United States Ambassador to Canada. The Chief of the Air Staff was accompanied by all Air Officers Commanding, Group Commanders, and several other high-ranking staff officers; while with the Chief of the General Staff were a number of G.O.C.'s and Dr. Solandt, the Director General of Defence Research. Col. Riggs, Commander of Aggressor ground forces, was present at a gathering of Umpires and Unit Commanders from both



*Sqn. Ldr. Cameron and the Donjek husky*

forces in the afternoon. Col. Riggs has every appearance of a battle-hardened veteran, and he caused some amusement by his obvious reluctance to give up various almost impregnable positions to the enemy as called for by the scenario of the Exercise.

Another very distinguished visitor was Sir Hubert Wilkins, who is engaged on Arctic research during the Exercise.

Word was received during the afternoon that the J.O.C. has been attacked and destroyed by Aggressor aircraft, and it was ruled to be out of action until the following morning.

It is now 0020 hours and I am about to repair to my palatial camp cot, secure in the knowledge that the war is practically over and that within a few hours I shall be back in the comparative civilization of Whitehorse.

*23 February: D-10.*— The "war" is over. Justice, as symbolized by the Allies, has prevailed, and the evil forces of Aggressor have met their just deserts. Hostilities in the final battle for Northway commenced early this morning. The

Aggressor Air Force, now reduced to a mere two aeroplanes, was overhead early but briefly. The rattle of rifle and machine-gun fire and the crash of field pieces was heard from all sections of the aerodrome as the Allies pressed in on Aggressor, who was making this his last stand.

The Minister and his party arrived back at Northway at about 0900 hours, and shortly after that the aircraft carrying the airborne assault team flew over, dropping the paratroopers at previously agreed positions. Aggressor continued to resist, but by mid-morning it was plainly evident that his forces were hopelessly trapped; and at a few minutes after eleven a cluster of red flares was fired from the control tower, bringing to an end the first Joint Combined Canadian/American Army/Air Force Exercise.

The Umpire Control Centre was dismantled in record time, and by ten-thirty was as bare as the proverbial cupboard. In the midst of packing I was both startled and pleased to find General Stuart shaking my hand and thanking me for the work I had done. Evacuation commenced almost immediately after the flares ending hostilities were fired, and by one o'clock the Chief Umpire and the majority of his staff had departed. At noon a

steady stream of troops of both forces began to flow into the hangar. Though the great majority of them were weary and unshaven, all appeared to be in good spirits and were reviewing the events of the past ten days critically, profanely, and with humour. At about one o'clock, six Dakotas arrived to transport troops back to Whitehorse, and Wing Cdr. Turner arranged for our transportation aboard one of them. We took off from Northway at 1430 hours and touched down at Whitehorse shortly before 1700 hours. Those of my companions in arms who had regarded my departure with such dire forebodings received me with exaggerated amazement and many hollow protestations of delight . . .

26 February.—Seated here in that fine old institution, the Sergeants' Mess, at R.C.A.F. Station Edmonton, a veteran among veterans, I am surveying the immediate past through a golden haze of well-being induced by a good dinner and a tot or two of Lamb's Navy. I am also regarding the future with a prophetic eye. I can see myself settling back comfortably in some other Mess, and I can hear myself beginning:

"Well, fellows, when I was on Sweetbriar back in '50 . . ."

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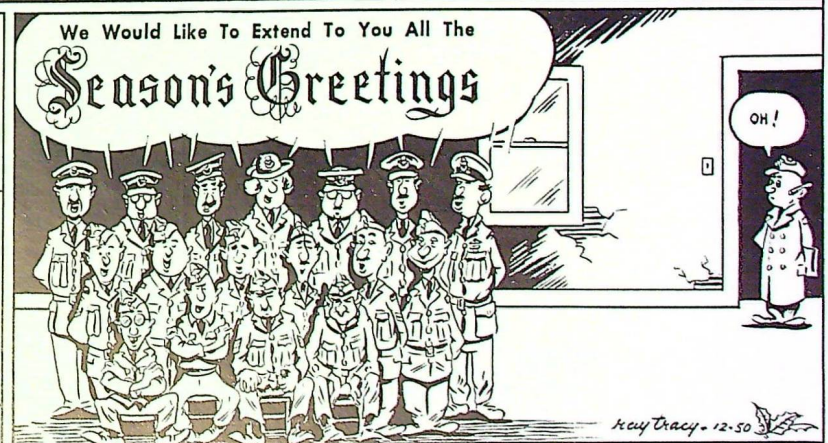
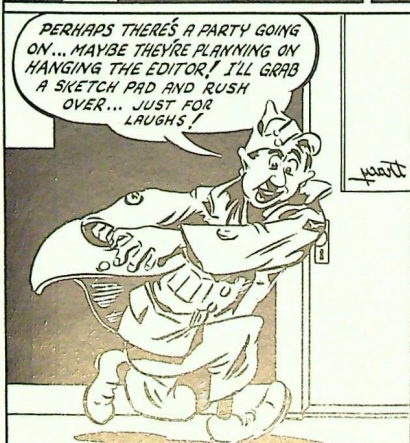
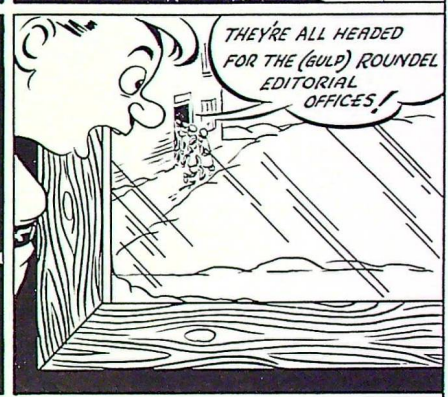
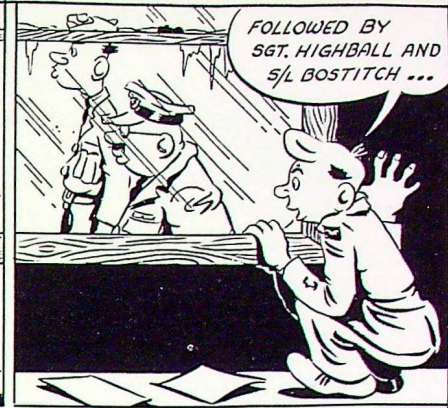
## Footnote to History

General Montcalm, who was always solicitous for those who served under his command, sent the following note to Brigadier Townshend a short while before his (Montcalm's) death:

"Monsieur, the humanity of the English sets my mind at peace concerning the fate of the French prisoners and the Canadians. Feel towards them as they have caused me to feel. Do not let them perceive that they have changed masters. Be their protector as I have been their father."

(*"Canadian Mail"*)

# The DIMMER VIEW.



# Letters to the Editor ★ ★ ★

## FIRST COAST-TO-COAST FLIGHT

Dear Sir:

No. 8 B.R. Squadron was the first to fly from coast to coast — not No. 438, as stated in your September issue. The Air Historian can probably verify this.

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

*(Mr. Hill, we learn from the Air Historian, is right. The statement in our September issue should have read "the first fighter squadron to fly from coast to coast." No. 8 B.R. Squadron, under the command of Sqdn. Ldr. C. A. Willis, had made the coast-to-coast flight in its Bolingbroke six months previously.—EDITOR)*

## "CANADA'S RADAR OUTPOSTS"

Dear Sir:

In his article on Canada's war-time Radar Stations (May issue), which I have been re-reading, Wing Cdr. Limbrick seems to give all the credit to the boys who manned them. He forgets the men who built them, and who lived in tents for months on end so that the radar chaps could have a roof over their heads. I could tell him lots about how we of No. 9 C.M.U. lived!

R. K. Freeman, (R.C.A.F.A.)

*(Wing Cdr. Limbrick realizes to the full how rugged was the lot of the men who built the Stations, and he joins with us in wishing that someone would write the story of their doings for us—and, if possible, send us photographs to accompany it.—EDITOR)*

## NO. 126 WING

Dear Sir:

It was with great interest that I read LAC J. Stanley's request in your July-August issue for a write-up on No. 126 Wing. I myself was one of the originals when the Wing was formed.

I would like to hear from LAC Stanley and from any other members of No. 126 Wing, particularly my associates from the pill-pushing section (Medical), which was led by Sqdn. Ldr. Dillane.

It would be unfair to close this short note without a few words of congratulations to those who compile and print this magazine. As I am miles from nowhere, it is impossible for me to attend any Association meetings, and "The Roundel" is the only means I have of keeping up with the news of the various groups.

Stan Smith, (R.C.A.F.A.)  
Youbou, B.C.

## "TEE EMM" — A COMPLETE SET

Dear Sir:

There are still lots of Prunes in Canada, but, as you say, a complete set of "TEE EMM" is as scarce as the proverbial hen's tooth. However, I happen to have one complete set, bound, which I would hate very much to part with unless someone offers me adequate compensation. What offers? (They'll have to be good.)

Percy Prune (R.C.A.F.A.)  
P.O. Box 128  
Ancienne-Lorette,  
Quebec.

## B.C.A.T.P.

Dear Sir:

I think it would be both interesting and enlightening if you could publish a feature about the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan. We have numerous arguments as to which Station trained the most pilots, flew the most hours, etc. etc.; but nobody seems able to quote factual statistics from any authoritative source.

LAC L. Wright,  
R.C.A.F. Stn. Winnipeg.

*(The December 1949 issue of "The Roundel" was devoted to the B.C.A.T.P. and gave many facts and figures of the kind requested by LAC Wright. The comparative hours flown at the various schools, however, and their comparative output of air and groundcrew, were not given, as it was considered that statistics of such a nature can be very misleading and that it was the overall figures that really mattered.—EDITOR)*

## ATTENTION SGT. SHATTERPROOF

Dear Sir:

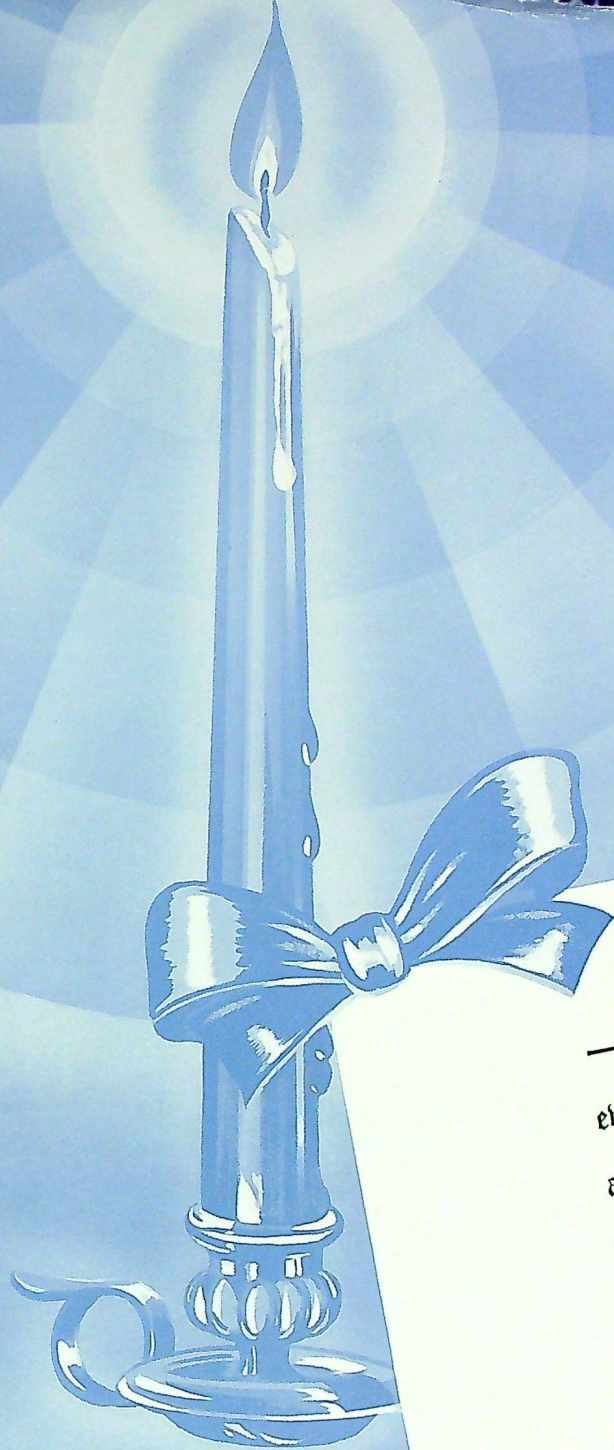
In the editorial of your June issue ("Sgt. Shatterproof and the Fourth Estate") you mention having studied several periodicals published by Units of the R.C.A.F. If you had really given thought to this matter, you would have noticed that in the first paragraph of our Committee Box it is clearly stated that "The Bordenaire" is not a mimeographed magazine. Production Staff, "The Bordenaire".

*(As Semper Absentius Shatterproof — who, it may be remembered from an earlier issue of "The Roundel," was editor of "The Slaughterhouse," the official organ of the 120th Panzer Legion — might have remarked: "Quando dormitat Homerus." "The Bordenaire" is produced by the Multilith Multigraph method —EDITOR)*

★

## Answers to "What's the Score"

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



—and so, wishing all our Readers  
every happiness this Christmastide  
and the very best of luck in 1951,  
we bring our twenty-fifth issue to a  
close.

*Merry Christmases*



