

The **ROUNDDEL**

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MARCH 1955



ROYAL CANADIAN AIR FORCE



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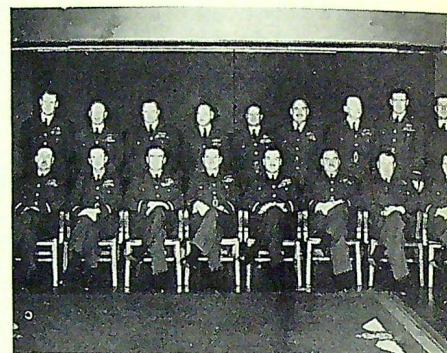
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This Month's Cover



The A.O.C.s' conference, 18 to 20 January 1955. Standing (l. to r.): Air Cdre. R. A. Cameron; Air Cdre. S. W. Coleman; Air Cdre. H. M. Carscallen, D.F.C.; Air Vice-Marshal L. E. Wray, O.B.E., A.F.C.; Air Cdre. A. D. Ross, G.C., C.B.E.; Air Cdre. J. G. Bryans, C.B.E.; Air Cdre. M. Costello, C.B.E.; Air Cdre. W. E. Kennedy, A.F.C. Seated (l. to r.): Air Vice-Marshal J. G. Kerr, C.B.E., A.F.C.; Air Vice-Marshal C. R. Dunlap, C.B.E.; Air Vice-Marshal H. L. Campbell, C.B.E.; Air Marshal C. R. Slemmon, C.B., C.B.E.; Air Vice-Marshal J. L. Plant, C.B.E., A.F.C.; Air Vice-Marshal D. M. Smith, C.B.E.; Air Vice-Marshal H. B. Godwin, C.B.E.

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SGT. SHATTERPROOF MUST TELL THE TRUTH

Sir:

Little did I anticipate that the publication last month of Sgt. Longbow's story would create so great a furore in flying-saucer circles. The fact remains, however, that the local postmaster has lodged a formal complaint about the increased volume of my mail. I would therefore ask, Sir, that you print a statement to the effect that any future enquiries as to Sgt. Longbow's whereabouts be directed, not to me, but to the Records Branch at A.F.H.Q. As I mentioned in my last letter to you, the control tower has no record of either the arrival or the departure of the aircraft which brought him to this station.

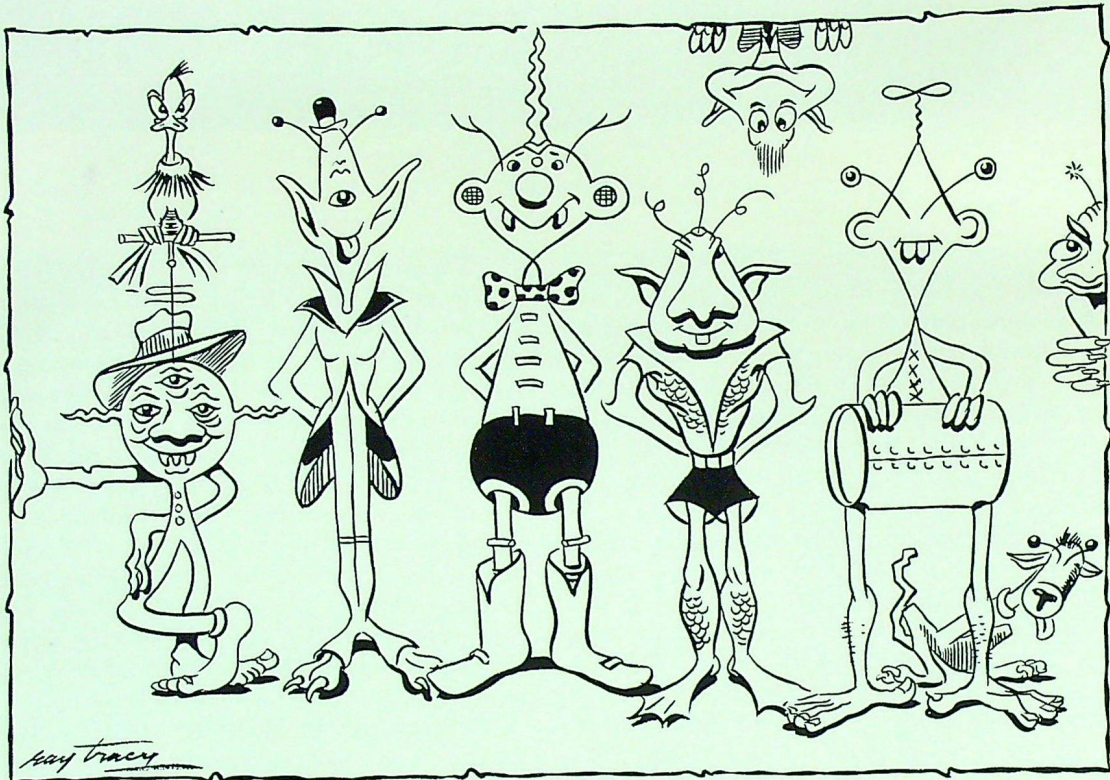


The letters which I have received are from many sources. The R.C.M.P., Scotland Yard, the F.B.I., and the M.G.B. are, of course, all well represented; but the authors of by far the greatest number appear to be ladies who live in a certain city where the female population outnumbers the male by about four to one. They have been somewhat chagrined to learn, first, that there is only one flying saucer, and secondly, that its pilot is merely an N.C.O. of the R.C.A.F. These heroic ladies, it seems, were fully prepared — should the saucers land — to make the supreme sacrifice and offer themselves up on the combined altar of matrimony and interplanetary goodwill.

We must, I think, pause for a moment in silent tribute to such selflessness. But, Sir, we must also tell the truth. Even if, dismissing Sgt. Longbow's story as the product of pure imagination, we accept the saucerers as intending New Canadians from outer space, there is little likelihood of their possessing those physical and mental attributes which go to the making of a lasting and successful marriage. Indeed, I would classify their matrimonial potential as well below the limits acceptable even in the city to which I have referred.

With the help of Flt. Sgt. Figment, whose profound studies in the field of science-fiction qualify him to speak with some authority, I have prepared a brief guide for the space-minded spinsterhood of our nation.

Lunarians. Since the men in the moon are devoid of both lungs and ears, their conversation is notably lacking in sparkle. Their most attractive feature is their teeth, which are situated in the middle of their abdomens. Even these, however, would not appeal to every taste, as they are designed for the mastication of rocks rather than the mixed diet to which we are accustomed.



Mercurians. Very fiery fellows, who freeze solid at the temperature of an ordinary blast-furnace. They normally go about their business in a molten state. Must be written off as matrimonially impracticable.

Venusians. Submarine in habit and monstrous in appearance. Any interest that they might have for professional female swimmers would soon pall.

Martians. There have been no Martians proper since the planet's last atomic war. Mars' only inhabitants are rabbits — all of whom are highly improper.

Jovians. Extremely heavy chaps. Would sink up to their chests in reinforced concrete. General build resembles that of a tortoise. Dependable, but slow on the uptake and decidedly awkward around the house.

Saturnians. Not much more frolicsome than Jovians. Would sink up to their knees (if they had any) in case-hardened steel. In shape not unlike armadillos.

Uranians. There are no male Uranians. Uranians are tri-sexual, a circumstance which leads to considerable confusion even on their own planet. Marriage to the masculine third of a Uranian would present an almost insoluble problem to the average terrestrial girl.

Neptunians and Plutonians. Best not described.

I trust that the ladies may derive some consolation from the foregoing summary. Though I would not for one moment assert that the N.C.O. of the R.C.A.F. is either the Adonis or the Aristotle of our galaxy, I cannot help feeling that his personal charm is at least equal to that of most of his neighbours in the solar system.

Shatzenberg

Memoirs of a Canadian in the R.A.F.

PART TWO

By Wing Commander A. L. Bocking, D.F.C.

(The end of Part One of Wing Cdr. Bocking's reminiscences left him flying Bristol Bulldogs as a pupil at No. 3 Flying Training School, Grantham, in the autumn of 1935. Among his fellow-pupils, it may be remembered, were "men who later fought the Luftwaffe over the Channel, the Italians over Albania, and the Japanese above the jungles of Burma. Among them were some of the men who were to lead and direct the Battle of Britain, and very few of them are alive today."—EDITOR.)

OUR COURSE would not have graduated, in the ordinary course of events, until April 1936; but suddenly the last long three months were swept away by an unprecedented Air Ministry decision to send us off to squadrons without further ado. There was an air of the last day of school as we gathered in the ante-room to hear our futures read out to us by no less a person than the Group Captain. We shifted anxiously in our seats, each of us deep in his own personal dream of choice postings.

The Group Captain held in his hand a list, which he waved back and forth as he talked. He told us that the very grave situation that existed in world affairs made it necessary to foist us upon long-suffering squadron commanders before we were really ready to leave the nest. He explained that the rebirth and rapid growth of the German Air Force, and the belligerent blasts from Italy's Mussolini, had called for a new look at Britain's air defences. In order to meet these threats, the R.A.F. was about to expand rapidly. New F.T.S.s were to be opened, new aircraft were being produced, and more squadrons were being formed. It was all very martial and exciting — and he kept waving that vital piece of paper to emphasize his points.

Our attention, I fear, was focused more on the gyrations of the list than on the important things he was saying. Eventually, the thirty pairs of eyes moving in unison, like those of spectators at a ping-pong game, were too much for him. Slowly he opened the list and began to read:

"Allison — No. 2 Army Co-operation Squadron.
Banks — Flying Boat School. Barker — School of Army Co-operation . . ."

My heart sank — and then I heard it:

"Bocking — No. 19 (Fighter) Squadron, Duxford."

This was it! No. 19 Squadron was one of the crack squadrons in the Air Defence of Great Britain (the famous A.D.G.B.). They had just been re-equipped with the Gloster *Gauntlet*, a very fast aircraft fitted with a Bristol *Mercury* radial engine, and reputed to be capable of speeds up to 200 m.p.h. I emerged from my happy daze just in time to hear the Group Captain saying that, in view of the tense situation in Abyssinia, it was the intention to reinforce the Middle East squadrons with a fourth (or "D") flight. This was to be a temporary measure for a six-month period, and anyone wishing to volunteer could do so with a reasonable hope of reporting to their squadrons (just detailed) after a half-year tour in Egypt, Palestine, or the Sudan.



There was a quickening of interest among those who were dissatisfied with their postings. For them, there was a chance here that something better might develop out of this unexpected reprieve. For me, however, it was a hard decision. In the end I was swayed by the fact that two of my close friends, Bill Richmond and "Sax" Rohmer (both to be killed in separate flying accidents in the Sudan before the war), were volunteering. And so I made my choice. After all, a first-class passage by Orient Line to Port Said, six months of pleasant duty in Egypt, and a 12-day cruise home, were not to be turned down lightly. I could not foresee that the simple act of raising my hand was to lead to several long years of conflict in the Middle East, starting with the Arab rebellion in Palestine and continuing on through campaigns in the Western Desert, Syria, Iran, and Greece.

Although our careers as pupils had now come to an end, our lowly status remained more or less unchanged. We were to remain Acting Pilot Officers for eighteen months before being "promoted" to pilot officers. Still, we were off "probation"—whatever that might mean. We did not, as is the custom today, immediately don our pilots' wings and change overnight from pupils to squadron pilots. Our education was far from finished. The Air Ministry, in its wisdom, decided that a month or two on a squadron with our chests bare of any bird-like adornment would be very good for our souls and would prevent any sudden increase in hat-size until the older squadron pilots had had sufficient time to impress upon us just where we fitted into the scheme of things.

So for several weeks the new pilot crept quietly around, doing what he was ordered, on the double, and assimilating the pearls of wisdom dropped by pilots more worthy the name. Then, finally, the adjutant sent for us and told us, with evident astonishment, that Air Ministry authority had finally filtered through for us to wear our wings. He was sure it was a mistake, or else Air Ministry didn't know us like he did. Still, as long as the permission wasn't rescinded, we could put up our wings, and they were to be christened at the bar that evening by the quaffing of numerous pints of

ale by the squadron officers — at our expense.

But I'm jumping ahead of my story. Let's go back to the moment we embarked on the Orient liner "Oronsay," bound from Tilbury to Port Said.

* * *

Dress was to be uniform (breeches and puttees) and, of course, dinner-jacket or mess kit for dinner. P.T. (in those knee-length English shorts!) was detailed for 0600 hrs. each morning on deck — and, by God! no "poodlefaking" with the first-class female passengers. "Poodlefaking," I gathered, was the English word for the fine old Canadian sport known as "necking". Fortunately, the possibility of young gentlemen "poodlefaking" with second-class female passengers apparently never crossed the minds of our superiors, so no order on this matter appeared — which only went to show that they had quite a lot to learn (or, perhaps, to remember).

The cruise-ships of those pre-war days, particularly on the U.K. to Middle East, India, and Australia run, inevitably produced their quota of "characters". The Sahibs and Memsahibs returning from leave, the young pink-cheeked lads from the better public schools en route to tea plantations in Malaya, and the lovesick newly-married young Serviceman on his way to Iraq for a three-year tour sans bride — all were represented. There was also the inevitable group known throughout the Mediterranean area as the "Fishing Fleet". This group consisted of mother and one or more daughters — the daughters usually a little long in the tooth and ranging from plain Janes to downright ugly ducklings.

The "girls" were guarded by mother with a zeal worthy of a better cause. They moved from port to port, following the Mediterranean fleet, the mothers vying desperately with each other to capture an eligible, young, and (most important) wealthy bachelor. Alas! — in most cases it was later than they thought; and daughter, fed up with being hawked about the cocktail party slave-mart, was more often than not an enthusiastic participant in a game called "Escape-from-Mother-and-meet-me-on-the-poop-deck". The inevitable result was that (if she participated during

the outward voyage) she ended up as the wife of some minor civil servant in Burma or (if on the homeward voyage) in a small flat in Upper Wallop.

On this first voyage of ours, protected partly by our tender years and partly by our nine-shillings-a-day pay, we missed much of the by-play of ship-board life. For us, the high point of the voyage came from a purely Service incident that occurred at the French port of Toulon. The "Oronsay" anchored in the early afternoon, and, as a special concession, the small group of Air Force officers was allowed to go ashore in civilian clothes, with strict instructions to return not later than midnight in order to be ready for the 2 a.m. sailing.

During the long evening ashore many toasts were made to our gallant Gallic hosts; and, as the evening wore on, the approach of the twelve-o'clock deadline began to worry the more conscientious of the acting pilot officers. One young A.P.O. (who shall be nameless because he is now an R.A.F. Group Captain and Station Commander, much decorated for gallantry), became so worried about missing the boat that, when it was decided by popular vote to miss the regular shore-to-ship ferry at 11:45 p.m. and to hire our own bum-boat at about 1:30 a.m., he decided to take off on his own and return to the ship early.

Now, unbeknown to our hero, the "Oronsay's" sister-ship, the "Orama", homeward bound from the Far East, had anchored alongside the "Oronsay" later in the afternoon . . . Thus it happened that, at some time around 3 a.m., a disgruntled "Orama" passenger found a stray A.P.O. happily snoring in his bunk and entirely unaware that he was proceeding westward at a steady rate of knots. Great was the excitement when his absence was discovered aboard the "Oronsay". Tales of sea-port cut-throats, of passengers robbed and beaten in the back alleys, were bandied about the bar. It was many weeks before we heard the true tale of what had taken place — and later on there were to be times when some of us wished that we too had made our friend's mistake.

* * *

The first glimpse of Port Said is one of those experiences which surpass one's expectations and

linger long in the memory. As the ship slides quietly forward through the oily water, the sun blazes down out of a greenish-blue sky and the smell that is carried to the ship from the distant shore is one that can be described in many ways, most of them unflattering, but all of them nostalgic. It is an unique odour, and it conjures up visions of adventure and far-away places.

Our ship approached the port through the usual flotsam and jetsam that abounds in any harbour, but on that occasion our eyes widened at the sight of something quite new to us in the way of debris. Bobbing in the wake of the troopship "Somersetshire", which was on its way home from the Far East, was a long line of military topis (sun-helmets). In keeping with tradition, the "Blighty-bound" soldiers had thrown overboard their tropical headgear as a symbol of the final break with the East and the beginning of a new tour of duty under more friendly skies.

My excitement at the fascinating sights of the harbour, with its gaily dressed Arabs in bright red tarbooshes, was somewhat tempered by the disturbing news that I had been detailed to take charge of a draft of airmen en route to Cairo to join No. 216 Squadron. My duties as conducting-officer, however, were not to begin for several hours, and I was free to go ashore until train-time. Our short stay in Port Said followed the usual pattern of the day. There were cries of "Get your knees brown!" from the old-timers, there was the furtive purchase of "feelthy pictures" from leering Arabs, and there were the taxi-rides to places of interest. The leering Arabs, by the way, must have been magicians in disguise, because the "feelthy pictures", bought at great price, proved on closer examination (and after the rapid departure of the vendor) to be scenes of the purely architectural aspect of Port Said's beauty. That was the beginning of an education into the wiles of the "worthy oriental gentlemen" that was to continue for some years.

It is well that the years have dimmed my memory of the train-ride to Cairo. Most of the draft for which I was responsible were old-timers on their second tour. All of them had seen the sights of Port Said through the bottom of a beer glass in



the Eastern Exchange or the Cigale bar. All attempts to stop them bashing the tarbooshes of the various Egyptian State Railway officials were met instantly with co-operative cries of "Righto, Sir! Won't 'appen again, Sir!", with only an occasional undertone of "Gor blimey! A little child shall lead them!" Their ready acquiescence to my pleas, however, was merely their way of being decent chaps to a new A.P.O., and the minute my back was turned, the bawdy songs floated anew across the desert and the tarboosh-bashing continued unabated as the train rattled on toward Cairo.

At Cairo, all was pandemonium. Large black men in red sweaters descended on our small mountain of luggage and scurried away in every direction. I chased first one and then another, only to be greeted by gold-toothed grins and cries of "*Kewáyez keteer, Effendi*". Despite the grins, the words made me blush — but I blushed even more at the cries of rage uttered by my airmen, who kept insisting that I was the bleedin' officer and wasn't I bleedin' well going to bleedin' do something about the bleedin' bags? In the middle of all this chaos, two familiar faces suddenly appeared, those of A.P.O.s Fulton and Pelley-Fry, both of whom had arrived in Egypt a short time before me. With a few well-chosen words in Arabic, they rounded up the luggage, and miraculously all was well. I looked at them in awe — an awe which disappeared when I found out later that their Arabic vocabulary, effective though it was, consisted of about half a dozen well-rounded phrases and took less than three days to learn.

My orders called for me to proceed across town to the old Bab-el-Luq station and catch the 10:30 p.m. train to Helwan-les-Bains, some 20 miles south of Cairo, and there to join No. 45 Squadron. It didn't take much urging on the part of "Moose" Fulton and Pelley-Fry to convince me that my descent on a squadron in the early hours of the morning would be the height of indiscretion. Much better, they said, that I should see the sights of Cairo and leave the next morning. I took their advice, and I think I shall not be misunderstood if I say that the evening which followed is best glossed over with a careless laugh and the

statement that it was, to use an R.A.F. expression, "bang on".

* * *

It is hard for me to realize now the eagerness with which, in those days, a squadron awaited a new boy's arrival. In small isolated squadrons, where officers lived in close contact with each other and where mess life was paramount, only the C.O. and sometimes the senior Flight Lieutenant were married. Thus, it was of the utmost importance what type of man joined the squadron. His background, both social and academic, his personality and other attributes, all would reflect on squadron life for some time to come. As a Canadian, I was an unknown factor; and No. 45 Squadron had no bad types and didn't want any. In fact, No. 45 Squadron had some very fine types indeed and was extremely jealous of its reputation and its motto, "*Per Ardua Surgo*". I was fortunate indeed to start my Service career in a squadron which numbered amongst its officers Flt. Lt. George Beamish, Flt. Lt. "Barney" Keilly, and several others of equal lustre.*

When, however, I arrived at Helwan the next morning, my first sight of the place offered no hint of my good fortune. I looked with horror at a scene that could have been taken straight from one of P.C. Wren's novels. Helwan-les-Bains derives its name from its odoriferous sulphur baths. The story has it that, when they once drained the baths, they removed from the bottom a dead camel, half a dozen kite-hawks, and two local inhabitants who had been missing for years. I can well believe it. Some twenty miles south of Cairo, the town lies in the desert just east of the Nile. The R.A.F. station was about two miles from the village, and was an excellent example of a small one-squadron station left over from the First World War. It hadn't weathered the depression years very well, and, by today's standards, it was almost unbelievable.

The landing-area itself consisted of a piece of desert slightly more flat than that which surrounded it — although, as I remember it, if one

*Air Vice-Marshal G. R. Beamish, C.B., C.B.E., C-in-C. Transport Command, Air Cdre. G. B. Keilly, D.F.C., A.F.C.



taxied out to the south end to take off, the hangars disappeared as one rolled, without benefit of brakes, down-hill. And those hangars! Known as Bessineau hangars, they were nothing more than large canvas tents with sand floors and with canvas-flap doors ripped by desert winds and scarred by many years of repair. In 1936 they were still surrounded by wooden revetments filled with sand, as a protection against the Kaiser's bombs. The rest of the station was in keeping with them. The officers' quarters were in long one-storey stone buildings and consisted of one room, one bed, one mosquito net, one wash-pail, and one dilapidated wardrobe. In the morning one's bearer (native servant) brought a small can of warm water for shaving-purposes, and the drinking-water was in a chatti (earthenware jar) outside the door. As for the "plumbing," that was in the end room, over a large sand-pit which served as the home of many denizens of the desert — including scorpions. The officers' mess consisted of an ante-room, a dining room, and a kitchen. Outside the front door was a small pond, in which several small fish of undetermined species hung without visible movement every day of the week except Saturdays and mess dinner nights. Then they were carefully removed by Ismail, who was "Boss of Fish", in order to leave room for the various Sahibs who might be thrown or who might fall in during the evening.

In those pre-war days very few of the British Colony in Cairo had ever met a real live Canadian. I was therefore in some demand, as a curiosity, at Cairo cocktail parties. The general ignorance of Canada shown at these functions was matched only by my ignorance of the social niceties. I was not slow in pointing out that anyone who came from Cholmondeley (pronounced Chumly)-on-the-Wash had little call to laugh at "Moose Jaw" or "Medicine Hat". Fortunately, this brashness on my part was accepted as Colonial humour, and, before the novelty had worn off, I had learned whom to laugh at and whom to laugh with.

Invitations to various social functions would, during the Cairo cocktail season, arrive thick and fast. They invariably requested the pleasure of the company of the "Commanding Officer and two

other officers". One evening the C.O., in a fit of generosity, included myself and an Australian A.P.O., "Scruffy" Bromwitch, in one of these invitations. We were late in starting, and, as inevitably happens on such occasions, the C.O.'s staff car (a shining black 1927 Crossley touring-car, with genuine leather-upholstered horsehair seats) gave several convulsive heaves and came to a grinding halt at the village of Maadi, some ten miles short of our goal. Scruffy's disgusted comment that "the ruddy thing's probably been in the Air Force ever since Pontius was a pilot" did nothing to calm the Old Man down, and it was a very unfortunate Arab taxi driver that answered his bellow and rattled us off towards Cairo in his ancient cab.

An Arab taxi-driver normally drives as if all the hours of Paradise awaited him at his destination. As luck would have it, however, this particular tarbooshed son of the Nile was in no hurry. The C.O. kept poking him with his swagger-stick and yelling "Mish-mish, you miserable fellow!", explaining to us condescendingly that "mish-mish" meant "faster". I couldn't see that it was getting any results, even though reiterated in ever-louder tones and accompanied by a regular tattoo with the stick on the driver's tarboosh. In fact, the driver, who at first looked merely puzzled, soon began to regard the C.O. with a very peculiar expression and seemed inclined to stop the car altogether. We finally got the desired results when Scruffy yelled at the driver, in plain English, "Quickly, more quickly, you ruddy fool!" For some reason this didn't seem to please the C.O., who kept muttering in his handlebar mustache about the stupidity of Arabs who didn't understand their own language. It was not until two or three years later that I discovered that "faster" in Arabic was not "mish-mish", but "bish-mish". "Mish-mish" means "apricots". I then realized that the driver's expression had been that of a man who was being beaten over the head with a swagger-stick while a red-faced Englishman shouted "apricots" at him all the way from Maadi to Cairo.

To the average young Air Force officer in the Middle East of 20 years ago the most important



day of the month was the 18th, or "St. Cox's Eve". All officers' pay was paid into Lloyd's Bank (Cox and King's branch), in London. This was automatic, no matter where he served. Consequently, all monetary transactions abroad were conducted by the signing of chits and then redeeming the chits by cheque. Unfortunately, the chit system required that payment be made every so often, or credit was cut off. Usually, at about the middle of the month, bars and other recreational establishments began to eye the growing piles of chits with some misgivings, and to press for payment. Finally, mutterings would start about forwarding the chits to the C.O. Since, however, that was the leisurely era before the advent of air mail between Egypt and the U.K., it took twelve days for a letter to get from Port Said to Tilbury or Southampton. Thus, one could cash a cheque in Cairo on the 18th of the month, secure in the knowledge that it couldn't possibly reach Lloyd's Bank (Cox and King's branch) before your next month's pay was safely deposited. This, then, was the significance of "St. Cox's Eve", and many a young officer's credit and well-being was saved on that hallowed night.

* * *

The Vickers *Vincent* aircraft with which No. 45 Squadron was then equipped was a large square biplane powered by a Bristol *Pegasus* engine. It was no beauty, but its long-range tank gave it a range of some 1000 miles, so that it was able to roam far and wide around the Nile delta and the desert.

These long flights were usually very uncomfortable for the pilot. At 100 m.p.h., the aircraft could be airborne for some ten hours — and ten hours spent in an open cockpit, situated well forward of the top mainplane and exposed to the Egyptian sun, usually resulted in a sore and beet-red face except where the head was covered by helmet and goggles. An even greater inconvenience was the inability of the pilot to attend to his personal comfort on long flights. However, the Air Ministry decided that, if the pilot couldn't go to the rest-room, then, by Heaven, the rest-room would go to him! Its experts therefore came up with a Rube Goldberg device of tubes, straps, and

reservoir, which appeared to be the answer. This device was sent to No. 45 Squadron for service "trials".

A tall thin P.G. Wodehouse-type of pilot officer was chosen as "test pilot". Much ribald advice was offered by the rest of the pilots when, with obvious distaste for his task, he climbed into his aircraft and became airborne at about 0800 hours. At 1230 hours, when flying ceased for the day, he landed. The crews gathered around as a rather tired and disgusted pilot climbed awkwardly down from the cockpit, shaking his head. Amidst hoots of laughter, he was told by the C.O. that he'd damn well continue to circle the aerodrome until the test was carried out as ordered. At 1700 hours the aircraft again landed, and once more the pilot shook his head slowly from side to side. The Flight Commander took this failure to complete the job as a personal affront and detailed the dehydrated pilot to continue the test until a successful report could be forwarded to the C.O. By noon the next day it was obvious that desperate measures would be required, and several pints of beer were forced on the wretched man before he was hustled back into the air with instructions to stay there until dark, if necessary. When excited word from the duty pilot was received at the bar, at about 1430 hours, that the test aircraft had just come in for a very shaky landing, everyone streamed down to the tarmac. There, still sitting in the cockpit in woebegone silence, sat the hero of the occasion. "Well?" demanded the Flight Commander. And the miserable answer came down: "I wish to report test completed, Sir. Reservoir capacity insufficient."

* * *

During the summer of 1936 the Italian Campaign in Ethiopia was causing bitter feelings, and the threat to Egypt was a very real one. In May of that year I left for Mersa Matruh in the Western Desert. This was my first visit to a desert over which I was to put in some 2000 hours of flying and where I was eventually to command a squadron in operations against Rommel's Afrika Korps. Our job was to provide air cover to an R.A.F. ground party, under Flt. Lt. Dicky Barnett, which

was engaged in putting down cases of bombs, ammunition, and petrol, at various strategic locations along the Egyptian-Libyan frontier. Naturally, as this party was engaged in putting things down, it was called a "lifting party". All the cases were clearly marked as to their contents, and, since the operation took place with no attempt at secrecy, it was clear that the Italians (through friendly Arabs) were well aware of the location and amount of fuel and armament being cached. The operation continued for several months under very arduous conditions, and the amount handled must have surprised and appalled the Italians. It certainly did us. It wasn't until some years later, when Dicky was posted to the U.K., that a number of puzzling things became clear. Dicky pointed out that no one in Middle East H.Q. had ever evinced any interest in his location map of the many caches his "lifting company" had put down during this period, and that surely he would be required to lead any operation directed towards recovering the many tons of equipment lying buried. He was told not to concern himself, as there was no intention of recovering them. The Italians, apparently, weren't the only ones who'd been fooled about the contents of the boxes.

But whatever its purpose, the operation afforded extremely valuable training for the aircrews of No. 45 Squadron. For myself it meant many flights to remote desert spots, some of which were later to become household words when the British Eighth Army slugged it out first with the Italians and later with the Desert Fox. Among them were such places as Sidi Barrani, Siwa Oasis, Sollum, Bahariya, and Fuka.

Snaking across the desert from Sollum on the Mediterranean to Siwa Oasis far to the south, is a barbed-wire fence, now broken-backed and trampled into the sands by the "Waltzing Matilda" tanks of the Australians, the "Tiger" Tanks of the Afrika Korps, and the Italian Ariete Divisions. But in 1936 it was still serving its dubious purpose of containing the nomad tribes inside Italian Cyrenaica. The Italian Air Force was flying patrol on this wire, and we soon discovered that at 0530 hrs. every morning an Italian CR-32 fighter would start down its side of the wire, heading south. The

CR-32 was a single-seater biplane with a fixed undercarriage. Its cruising speed was about the same as that of the *Vincent*—i.e. 110 m.p.h. So every morning, just to see fair play, one of No. 45 Squadron's *Vincents* would accompany the CR-32 on its lonely patrol. They were beautiful mornings, the sky a brilliant blue arch across the vast yellow desert, still fresh and cool in the early morning air. The two aircraft hung suspended side by side, separated only by the unseen but impenetrable wall which reached upward from the wire into infinity, a barrier between two ways of life that could continue to live side by side for only a very little time more.

It was, of course, not long before the irrepressible cockney air-gunner found a way to relieve the boredom of staring across his gun sights at the unfriendly, but not as yet enemy, pilot just a few hundred feet away. The Italian was always a sucker for a Mussolini salute. The R.A.F. lad would stand precariously straight up in his rear cockpit and, when he had the Italian pilot's attention, raise his right hand palm-down in the Fascist salute. The Italian would wave and nod, behaving, together with his aircraft, not unlike a naughty pup that had unexpectedly received a friendly pat. His expression, however, changed quickly to one of frustrated rage when the Britisher held his nose with his left hand and made a downward flushing gesture with the other. One pilot, though, identified by a flaming yellow helmet and by ice-cream-vendor mustachios, used to retaliate by pointing back at our aircraft and repeating the rude gesture, accompanying it with a dazzling smile. We became very fond of him. I hope he survived the war.

The dry sense of humour of the R.A.F. airman was matched, in my opinion, only by the more rugged humour of the Australian soldier. A Western Desert classic of some years later concerned a cave at Tmimi. This cave was used alternately by the British 8th Army and the Italians, according as the tide of battle swept back and forth. During a period of Italian tenancy, some inspired soldier had painted a slogan on the wall in large white letters: "Viva Mussolini!— (signed) A Soldier of Rome." Underneath this, in equally large and un-

compromising strokes of the brush, was printed: "We eat ruddy soldiers of ruddy Rome before ruddy breakfast — (signed) A Soldier of ruddy Australia."

The success of the Italian aggression in Ethiopia, carried out so freely through the Suez Canal, left us all with a feeling of frustration. It seemed that the lion slept. The year 1936 closed with a return of the detached flights to their permanent base at Helwan and the renewal of the peace-time round of social functions and routine training —

both of equal importance to the young Middle East officer. By degrees life returned to normal, and once more the future seemed to stretch ahead serene and placid. Existence was almost Kipling-esque in its even tenor of colonial occupation. Life was simple. Britain ruled the seas and Hitler was an upstart corporal.

(To be continued)



VERB. SAP.

(The following strong remarks are taken from one of the R.C.A.F.'s very best station papers, published in the United Kingdom.—EDITOR.)

What has happened around the base . . . to the fire and spirit that so typifies the Canadian. Where is the pioneering spirit, the explorative, enterprising, competitive spirit, the spirit that should be deeply rooted in our make-up, the spirit that should have been handed down by our forefathers? . . . Has the English way of life lulled us into a sense of lethargy? Or has the security of the R.C.A.F. made us feel that we are fireproof, and that, since we are getting three square meals a day, personal effort beyond what must be done is just so much waste of time?

Has the R.C.A.F. done so much for us that personal initiative, enterprise and keenness aren't necessary? That "my-morale-is-low-so-amuse-me" attitude is seeping in . . . Take the Drama Club — who motivates it? Is it Canadians? The Hobby Shop, the Radio Station . . . even sports — all are lacking in support. It isn't generally realized that without your help these amenities and recreational facilities cannot be.

In the coming winter months, when social and other activities take high priority in our off-duty life, there is much to do to entertain ourselves. Let us not get into the habit of thinking that wherever there is a George to do it, let him go ahead. Someday George is going to be transferred, and then where will we be? What would Canada be if all Canadians let George do it?— a tenth rate nation without a future!

THE DANGEROUS CLIFF

(A copy of the following verses was given to Flying Officer A. C. Turner by Mr. Donald S. Buck, Safety Director of the U.S. Transportation Corps, who is widely known throughout the continent for his work on accident analysis and prevention. Mr. Buck informs us that, although the verses have been distributed and quoted in "safety circles" for some time, their author seems to be still unknown. Whoever wrote them, however, has certainly given pungent expression to the whole philosophy of accident prevention, whether on the ground or in the air.
— EDITOR.)

'T WAS a dangerous cliff, as they freely confessed,
Though to walk near its crest was so pleasant;
But over its terrible edge there had slipped
A duke and full many a peasant.

The people said something would have to be done,
But their projects did not at all tally.
Some said, "Put a fence round the edge of the
cliff";
Some, "An ambulance down in the valley."

The lament of the crowd was both lengthy and
loud,
As their hearts overflowed with their pity;
But the cry for the ambulance carried the day
As it spread through the neighbouring city.

A collection was made, to accumulate aid,
And the dwellers in highway and alley
Gave dollars or cents — *not* to furnish a fence,
But an ambulance down in the valley.

"For the cliff isn't bad if you're careful," they said;
"And if folks ever slip and are dropping,
It isn't the slipping that hurts them so much
As the shock down below — when they're stop-
ping."

So for years (we have heard), when such mishaps
occurred,
Quickly forth would the rescuers sally
To pick up the victim who fell from the cliff,
With the ambulance down in the valley.

Said one, in his plea: "It's a marvel to me
That you give so much greater attention
To repairing results than to curing the cause.
The thing that we need is prevention.

"For the mischief, of course, should be stopped at
its source.
Come, neighbours and friends, let us rally:
It is far better sense to rely on a fence,
Than an ambulance down in the valley."

The story looks queer as I've quoted it here,
But things oft occur that are stranger.
More humane, I assert, than to succour the hurt,
Is the plan of removing the danger.

The preferable plan is to safeguard the man,
And attend to the thing rationally;
We should build up the fence and attempt to
dispense
With the ambulance down in the valley.

THE PARTY LINE

THE PROBLEM OF SECURITY

By Squadron Leader B. Dale,
Directorate of Air Force Security

INTRODUCTION

EVER SINCE man has resorted to war, the dependence of initiative, whether in action or surprise, on the availability of accurate and timely information has been universally recognized. Consequently, man has evolved methods for obtaining and protecting information. In a democracy, where discussion and speech is free, the protection of any information imposes a number of difficult problems which do not exist in a non-democratic country.

In an article such as the present one, it would obviously be undesirable to discuss the organization or procedures used by the R.C.A.F. for protecting vital information, or to compare the R.C.A.F.'s methods either with those of the Navy or Army or with those used in other countries. Different countries have different ideas on the subject, and a variety of techniques are used to attain the same objectives. I propose, therefore, to limit this article to an analysis of some of the fundamental problems attendant on the security of vital information in a democracy.

TWO BASIC CONSIDERATIONS

After the accuracy and meaning of information has been established by analysis and comparison, this information can generally be used for some purpose at some time. It may be used to great advantage immediately, or perhaps not until some date in the distant future. It may be used for open warfare or for interfering with some field of en-

deavour of an unfriendly nation; it may be used for the improvement of one's own production techniques and materials; it may be used for concluding alliances or for obstructing negotiations. These are just a few of the many possibilities.

Two basic facts, therefore, are obvious:

- The importance of information varies according to how vital it is to the defence of, or an attack upon, a nation.
- Security resources, which are always limited, must be concentrated on the protection of vital information.

CONTROLS AND RESTRICTIONS

The protection of vital information consists of many different types of controls and restrictions in the handling of such information from the first moment of its existence until its final disposition. Some information requires the protection of standard steel containers; other information, of dial-lock safes. The use of guards or various electronic and sound-alarm protective devices is frequently necessary. Some information may be transmitted between two points through the regular postal system; other information must be carried by specially selected persons (sometimes called couriers), who are equipped either with diplomatic immunity or with arms. The disclosure of vital information to other persons, agencies, or governments, as well as the reproduction of such information, is subject to a whole system of procedures. During all the various stages of handling, careful accounting must be maintained of the documents or material containing vital information.

Of course, the degree of controls and restrictions should be in direct proportion to the importance of the information. In practice, however, it would be very difficult to lay down the procedures to be used each time vital information is produced. Therefore, for convenience's sake, most countries have established a number of groups into which all vital information is placed. Some of these groups are TOP SECRET, SECRET, CONFIDENTIAL, AND RESTRICTED. A different set of controls and restrictions is laid down for each of these groups, which are usually referred to generically as "security classifications" or, for short, "classifications". The information falling into any one of these classifications is often spoken of as "classified information". Once information is placed in any one of the above four groups, it automatically becomes subject to a predetermined set of controls and restrictions. Therefore it follows that the words TOP SECRET, SECRET, CONFIDENTIAL, RESTRICTED, or any other similar words, imply a condensed form of instructions which govern the methods of handling, storing, transmitting, reproducing, and releasing vital information from the moment of its origin.

CLASSIFYING INFORMATION

Authorized persons, often referred to as "originating authorities", determine how vital each type of information is and for how long it will be essential to apply special controls or restrictions. To do this intelligently, the originating authority should establish the relative values of such information by careful analysis and comparison.

Quite frequently he may find that the imposition of certain controls and restrictions, though desirable and even necessary, is impractical. Suppose, for example that a large and important defence system is about to be built, or that large quantities of new weapons are about to be manufactured. While the advantage of concealing such construction or manufacture may be self-evident, the obstacles in achieving even partial concealment are (for reasons which will appear later) unsurmountable. In fact, the mere attempt to provide protection would serve no useful purpose, because such an attempt would be foredoomed to failure. On other occasions, the originating authority may

have to consider how seriously the imposition of special controls and restrictions will interfere with his primary objective. If this objective should be, say, the completion of a certain defence installation by a definite target date, after which the installation will become obsolete or otherwise unusable, he may well have to sacrifice some or all of the controls and restrictions.

Since security of information is only a means to an end, various factors must be considered, and, when necessary, compromises must be made. Only then should the originating authority determine into which classification such information will best fit. This act may be referred to as "classifying information".

Because of the complexity of deciding the correct classification of information, one cannot over-emphasize the need for exercising the utmost care in classifying correctly. It is not difficult to visualize the serious consequences that result from abuse of security classifications. As indicated above, information is placed in any of the classified groups by the mere marking of a document with one or two words which bring into action a whole system of costly protective devices. To use this system unjustifiably is not only wasteful of time, money, and effort, but it also slows down production schedules and deliveries, thus reducing the operational efficiency in general.

The consequences of an incorrect decision by the originating authority are not limited to economic effects. Because the resources for the protection of vital information are limited, the placing of information in a higher classification than is warranted makes it necessary to spread out more thinly the available security resources. Thus, less protection can be given to the more vital information. But, most important of all, the abuse of security classification has a serious psychological effect — first, on all those who need to use such information, and secondly, on the originating authority himself. To understand this, one must consider a situation such as that described below.

John Smith prepares a document which he considers very important, and, without giving sufficient consideration to the security implications of the content of the document, he classifies it more

highly than is justified. Multiply this case by hundreds or thousands. Those who are required to handle such documents soon discover, by comparison, that the special safeguards imposed by the originating authority are not necessary. Inevitably, familiarity breeds contempt; and the users lose confidence both in the originating authority's judgment to classify correctly and in security classification in general. Eventually they reach the stage when they no longer make a distinction between correctly and incorrectly classified information, and both types are mishandled.

In the meantime, John Smith finds out that information in the lower classification groups no longer receives adequate protection. He tries to offset this deficiency by further increasing the classification of his documents, believing that this will automatically create a greater respect for his information. Thus an impasse may eventually be reached in which security classifications will lose their original purpose.

A further complication of the originating authority's already difficult task is the factor of the changing values of information. After a certain stage in planning, design, construction, manufacture, or operation is reached, the original classification may no longer be practical or necessary. Unless the originating authority provides for the timely progressive lowering, or for cancellation, of the classification, the consequences will be the same as if the information had been classified incorrectly from the beginning.

The only effective solution to this problem lies in the training, experience, and good judgment of the originating authorities.

RELEASE AND DISCLOSURE

Parliament

The next serious problem affecting the security of vital information is the need, in democratic countries, for the public release of information. Whereas, in totalitarian states, the means and methods of criticizing the government are either limited or non-existent, a democratic government cannot remain indifferent to public opinion. To maintain the support of the public, it is essential that it justify its policies and actions in open

debate before parliament, and generally keep the public very well informed.

Parliamentary debate forms the basis for free and general discussions, enquiries, and investigations, which are followed sometimes by public approval of government policies and actions, and at other times by public criticism. During this process, information which is vital to the security of a nation often comes to light. Since, in a democracy, public criticism of governmental action is one of the most important factors, such a situation is unavoidable; but the unfortunate fact remains that, by giving information to the public at large, we cannot avoid giving it to our potential enemies as well. While in many countries the movement of foreign nationals is greatly restricted, and the unauthorized possession of even a telephone directory, road map, or aerial photograph, would often be considered as an act of espionage, the democratic system of government seldom imposes any such restrictions. On the contrary, it enables potential enemies to obtain, with little or no effort, most of the vital information required for planning war.

News Media

The collection of vital information by foreign powers is further facilitated, in a democracy, by news media of all kinds, advertising material, and various technical publications. The news media serve as a platform of public opinion. If they are to discharge their responsibility, the public must be informed, not only of events which are of a purely social or sensational nature, but of various government activities of which open discussion is not only embarrassing to the administration but which can easily reveal, to friend and foe alike, a mass of detail pertaining to serious weaknesses in a nation's defence system, production schedules, defence estimates and expenditures, and countless other vital intelligence data.

The desire on the part of news media to keep the public informed is further accentuated by the need for meeting competition. This latter necessitates the immediate publication of information which is as complete and as accurate as possible. Obviously, to do this, reliable sources must be cultivated

and maintained. News media perform a vital function for which there is no substitute in a democracy, and any interference with their freedom would be incompatible with any democratic system. Let me quote in part from a recent statement made by Professor Frank Underhill, of the University of Toronto:

“... our political democracy is in danger unless we can rely upon some part of our press setting itself seriously to the task of reporting to us the unseen environment so that we can make reasonably intelligent judgments about it...”

Obviously it is not an easy task to reconcile freedom of the press and security of vital information.

In a democracy, the two main reasons for publishing accurate, complete, and new information, would appear to be the protection of public interests and the meeting of competition which may or may not serve the interests of the public. A newspaperman who finds himself in a position to report information should first seek answers to the following two questions:

- Would the disclosure of such information be of greater service to the public or to a potential enemy?
- Are the anticipated sensation and results worth the risk to the future of the nation? (This is a question which only his own conscience can answer.)

The newspaperman may also wish to consider the fact that, very frequently, omission of much of the detail would not detract either from his responsibility to the public or from the news- or sensation-value. There is no evidence to support the assertion that the majority of the general public is interested in the details of the performance, capabilities, and characteristics of various types of complicated weapons or equipment. We do, however, very definitely know that such technical and semi-technical data are of the greatest interest to those who are actively working against the public interests.

Careless Talk

The release of vital information by various government agencies in a democracy is, as we have seen, frequently unavoidable; and the right of the free press to report and criticize is unquestionable. But the unauthorized disclosure of vital information by “a usually reliable source” is inexcusable.

Why does a person of high integrity sometimes talk out of turn? Often he discloses vital information because of vanity or straight carelessness — or just too much talking. Although the loyalty of such a person cannot be questioned, his reliability is open to serious doubt. Such a person would no doubt be horrified if it were suggested to him that he put his indiscretion on a paying basis by selling it to a foreign power.

Because such indiscretion lacks the drama of cloak-and-dagger methods, the public attention is seldom focused on this type of danger to national security. It is the person who is a member of, or associated with, an organization considered subversive, who has remained in the limelight for years; and by so doing he has succeeded in distracting public attention from a far greater danger. It is true that there is a vast difference in motivation and intent between an agent and a loyal citizen who is careless; but, from the point of view of a potential enemy, it matters little whether vital information has been obtained from a paid agent, a sympathizer, or a “usually reliable source”. In point of fact, the latter source is usually preferred because it usually *is* reliable — and, of course, costs nothing. The fact that the paid agent or the sympathizer may be severely punished upon conviction, while the “usually reliable source” gets away scot free, does not in any way alter this preference.

It is obvious that the “usually reliable source”, more than any agent or sympathizer, is in a position to defeat the whole purpose for which a costly system of controls and restrictions is maintained. No agent in his right mind would attempt to penetrate an elaborate system of protective devices when the required results can be obtained more easily. Because every chain is only as strong as its weakest link, it is the weakest link that determines or nullifies the effectiveness of the chain.

The ease with which sensitive information is often obtained has other serious implications, which are frequently overlooked. First, if an agent is to be effective, he must produce. In his endeavour to produce, he leaves himself open to exposure. However, if such information is obtained with little or no effort, he does not need to risk exposure

and is, therefore, both available for reassignment and protected for future operations. Secondly, information which was first reported by an agent and subsequently confirmed in the press provides the agent's employers with an accurate assessment of the effectiveness of their employee. Such additional benefits are particularly valuable to countries in which an atmosphere of suspicion and distrust prevails.

THE SOLUTION

In the future as in the past, the nation that possesses more accurate and timely information will stand the better chance for victory or survival. Because the stakes are so much higher now than they have ever been before, a solution must be found to the problems under review. The conclusion to be drawn is that such a solution can be effected only through compromise in each case.

Anyone who has the authority to decide the relative value of information must bear in mind that each one of his decisions, regardless of his position, brings into action a machinery whose workings it is difficult to simplify and whose

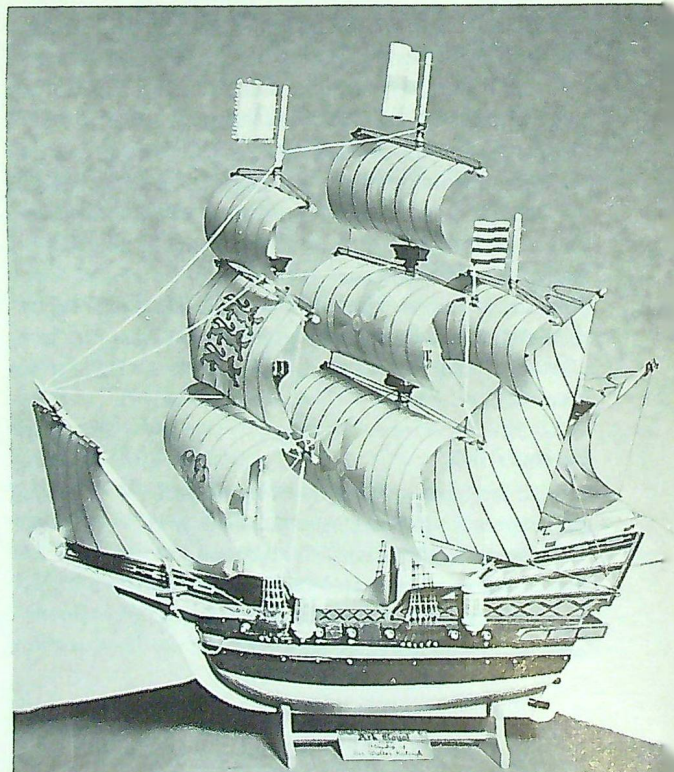
ramifications are innumerable. He must remember, too, that it is a machinery which can be greatly weakened by abuse, and that such abuse seriously complicates the democratic system of government.

It is not intended to minimize by one iota the danger of the covert (or hidden) threat of espionage, sabotage, and subversion; but I have attempted in this article to bring to the forefront some of the other, and even darker, pitfalls that have remained in obscurity because of their lack of emotional appeal. The effectiveness of the covert threat in a democracy is largely or wholly dependent upon and determined by the availability of vital information from releases and disclosures from numerous sources. Common sense, combined with a sense of personal responsibility, should considerably lessen the threat without its becoming necessary for us to stoop to the mental and moral level of the foe and to suppress the rights of man.

The "co-existence" of security of vital information and freedom of public discussion should be — and *must* be — possible.

GREENWOOD HOBBYIST

This impressive model of Sir Walter Raleigh's flagship, the "Ark Royal," was made at R.C.A.F. Station Greenwood's hobby shop by L.A.C. W. Nastuk. Materials cost \$12.00. ("Wings Over Greenwood.")



Pin-Points in the Past

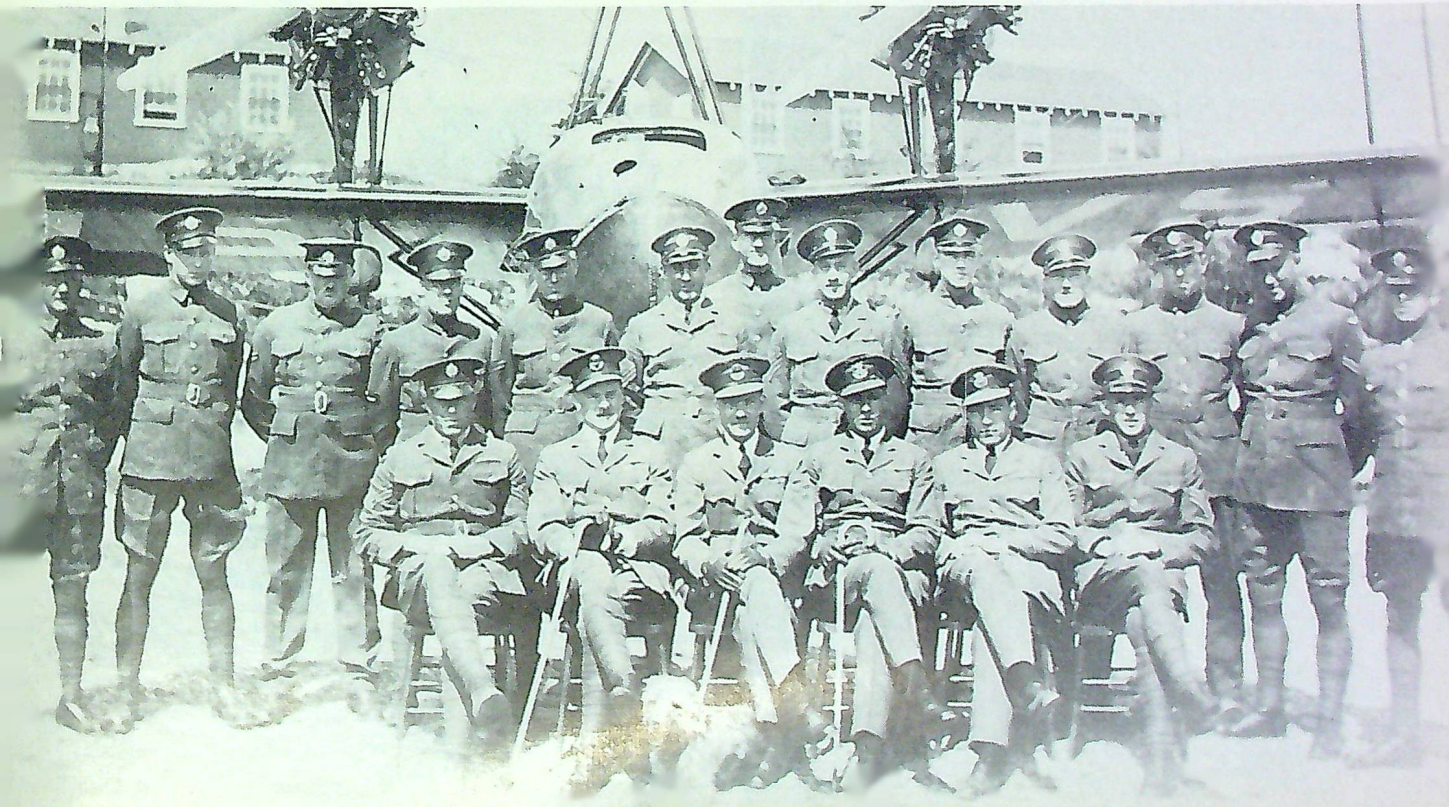
Cormorant Lake (about 375 miles N.W. of Winnipeg) was, in the latter half of the twenties and the first half of the thirties, one of the R.C.A.F.'s several bases for aerial photography and forestry patrol in that area. The photograph of Cormorant Lake's personnel in 1931, shown on this page, was lent to us by Sqn. Ldr. C. S. Lindberg.

Standing in front of the Vickers *Varuna* are (left to right): L.A.C. G. P. Bradley (Wing Cdr.), L.A.C. W. B. Coates (Wing Cdr.), Cpl. S. Baker (Sq. Ldr., M.B.E.: retired), L.A.C. H. C. Shaw (Flt. Sgt.: released), Cpl. S. F. Clark (W.O.1: rel.), Sgt. R. I. Thomas (Wing Cdr., A.F.C.), R. Inglis (W.O.2: rel.), Sgt. J.W. McNee (Wing Cdr.), J. W. Graham (Flt. Sgt.: rel.), L. A. Bailey (Flying Officer: ret.), A. H. W. Collings (Flt. Lt.), Cpl. J. R. Carscadden (W.O.1: rel.), W. C. Williams (deceased). Seated (left to right): Sgt. J. M. Ready (Flt. Lt.: ret.), Flying Officer M. K. McGregor (rel.), Flt. Lt. A. L. Morfee (Air Vice-Marshal,



C.B., C.B.E.,: ret.), Flying Officer L. H. Brooks (rel.), Flying Officer L. E. Cook (rel.), Sgt. J. C. MacKenzie (Flt. Lt.: ret.).

Our second photograph shows the D.H. 4B in which a mail-carrying demonstration was carried out at Rockcliffe Air Station in 1923. (Regular mail services did not begin in Canada until about a year later.) Leaning on the wing of the aircraft is the pilot, Flt. Lt. G. E. Wait (Air Vice-Marshal, C.B.E.: ret.). Next to him stands L.A.C. W. Staveley (Flt. Lt.: ret.). We are indebted to Flt. Lt. Staveley for this photograph.



Feminine Gen

Sgt. V. R. Dudley, of R.C.A.F. Station Trenton, whose serious and constructive thinking has lent weight to these pages on several occasions in the past, here reveals to us some of the hitherto jealously guarded secrets of that little-publicized Service operative —

THE WOARTO

Although I have never taken a formal cloak-and-dagger course or become in any way involved in international intrigue, I am proud to be one of the most experienced WOARTOs in the R.C.A.F. We are a tightly-knit group; and, for the sake of our own skins, we have never till now divulged any of the secrets of our operations. Most of us are of N.C.O. rank — although, now and then, we are willing to consider applications from extremely alert Flying Officers or L.A.C.s.

Though shown on no establishment, there is a WOARTO in every office which contains more than three people (civilian and Service), one or more radiators, and one or more windows. The WOARTO always practises some ancillary Service trade — clerical, telecom, etc. — but his (or her) chief work is that of window-opener-and-radiator-turner-offer. This may sound like a rather elementary job. ELEMENTARY MY MONKEY-WRENCH!

For some inexplicable reason, no two people have the same views on the amount of fresh air (if any) which should be allowed to permeate an orderly room. The little civvy stenographer who won't attend office parties on the grounds that they are "too hot and smoky" will shudder like a camelia in a blizzard if she happens, from May to September inclusive, to notice a window open even one inch. And unless the radiators play repeated encores of "SSSSTTEAM," the L.A.C. who scorns wearing a greatcoat all winter screams about the draught on the back of his neck. Again, in the

upper income-bracket, there is the inveterate cigar-burner. While he does not complain in actual words, his hurt looks convey the idea that he much prefers the sealed-in atmosphere.

All the above personalities, as well as the chronic grouchers and articulate martyrs, keep us WOARTOs constantly on the alert. It takes a nice equilibrium slyly to turn off a radiator with one hand while deftly filing a paper with the other, at the same time diverting attention by exclaiming brightly: "My oh my! They certainly *are* giving us heat today, aren't they?"





A recent clever innovation in WOARTO techniques is Operation "Coffee-Break". The WOARTO, having lingered behind while the rest of the staff herds to the coffee-corner, rushes about flinging open windows and turning off radiators. This done, he (or she) joins the crowd, gulps two mouthfuls of coffee, and then dervishes around closing windows and turning on radiators before work is resumed. A really clever WOARTO can accomplish this without having one member of the staff wrinkle an enquiring nostril upon return to the main office.

For those who feel that they might develop into WOARTOs, here is a suggestion . . .

Take a hammer (hand, WOARTO, for the use of) and make the rounds of the radiators, giving each a few hearty clangs. After each clang, quickly twist the "off-on" knob to an "off" position. By rudimentary sleight-of-hand you can be appearing to turn it to a full "on" position. Colour is lent to the illusion by the firm statement: "There now! That should teach Works and Bricks to give us more heat!" This technique is especially effective in a double-doored conference room occupied by

visiting C.O.s, four pipes, three cigars, innumerable overflowing ashtrays, and a minutes-taker. (An even better method, but one which should only be attempted by the expert, is to make your entrance with coffee and doughnuts and to complete your mission unobserved amid the ensuing joviality.) If the operation is accomplished without (a) the operative being ejected bodily from the room or (b) being mistaken for a *bona fide* C.E. type and pounced upon to provide anything from sink-washers to new paint-jobs for the C.O.'s home, you are definitely talented and should make an excellent WOARTO.

It would be ideal if a WOARTO, upon being assigned to a new office or station, could separate the are-colds from the are-not-colds and could get the C.A.S. to approve a suggestion whereby half the office be cold-air-conditioned and the other half warm-air-conditioned. Since, however, this is only a poor WOARTO's dream, and could not (if proposed through the proper channels) be realized until the Ozone Age, it would seem that we must continue to carry out our selfless task without official recognition or trades pay.

A.W.A. PRIZE-WINNER

Mr. R. V. Dodds, Director of Public Relations for the R.C.A.F., was awarded second prize by the Aviation Writers' Association in the general aviation stories class for the year 1954. The story which won him the award was "Wings Over Europe," a 3,000-word account of the R.C.A.F.'s No. 1 Air Division.

Mr. R. V. Dodds.



"ALEX"

The Career of Field Marshal the Rt. Hon. the Earl Alexander of Tunis, K.G.

A Review Article by Captain Donald M. A. R. Vince,
Corps of Royal Canadian Engineers (S.R.)

(Norman Hillson's "Alexander of Tunis" was published more than two years ago by W. H. Allen, in London, England. None the less we feel that Capt. Vince's review article will still be of considerable interest in so far as it presents a deftly drawn portrait of one of England's most distinguished soldiers and Canada's most popular and respected Governor-Generals. Mr. Hillson's book itself is obtainable in Canada from Smithers and Bonellie, 266 King St. West, Toronto 2-B, Ont. The price is \$4.00.—EDITOR.)



"He had the gift of many highly-strung temperaments of acquiring in the heat and confusion of battle a strange composure, thus enabling him to see every detail in the light of reality."

(John Buchan on Cromwell).

THE NAME Alexander has been almost a synonym for "great conqueror" ever since the Titian-haired son of Philip of Macedon shattered the Greeks at Chaeronea, the Persians at Issus and Arbela, and watered his war-elephants in the waters of the Oxus. But it has never been borne with the quiet efficiency, repressed shyness, and simple charm that characterizes the Alexander of the Irish Guards who fought in the retreat from Dunkirk, the retreat from Burma, the advance from Alamein to Tunis, and the long exhausting struggle up the axis of Italy. Mr. Hillson's book sheds some light on this Alexander's outstanding career.

Harold Rupert Leofric George Alexander was born on December 10th, 1891, in County Tyrone of the province of Ulster, in Ireland. He was the third son of the fourth Earl of Caledon. The family descended from a Londonderry merchant who had gone to India in the golden days of Clive and Hastings. There he had shaken the guinea-tree to

the tune of £600,000, and, returning home, he gradually transformed himself from a nabob to a landed aristocrat, a staunch Unionist, and an Irish earl.

Possessed of modest prospects, the younger Alexanders early faced the problem of choosing careers. For Harold this was not difficult. The landed gentry of Ireland had always provided a large number of the best officers in the British Army. (Wellington, Kitchener, Roberts and French, were all Irishmen.) So, in his first years Harold found appropriate and natural outlets for his energies in riding his pony, carving headstones for deceased dogs, dancing the Irish jig, fighting mock battles with his brothers, and dreaming of future military glory. He entered Harrow in 1906. By then his ambition to be a soldier had crystallized still further, for in 1900 Queen Victoria had raised a new regiment of Household Troops — the Irish Guards — and Harold wanted passionately to go to that regiment.

At Harrow he displayed a retiring and modest disposition, became a notable cross-country runner, and played cricket for his school against Eton. Then, unburdened with any scholastic distinction and equipped with the very qualities which made an irresistible appeal to the Regular Army of those days, Harold Alexander passed on to the Royal Military College, Sandhurst. A year later he was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in the Irish Guards.

His last success, before the guns of 1914 began the decimation of his generation, was his winning of the Irish mile championship in Dublin on Whit Monday, 1914. A surprise last-minute entry, an "unknown soldier from Aldershot" defeated easily the defending champion. Most astonished of all was his "rubber", who received from the young Guardsman a guinea tip. The new champion miler then returned to his battalion at Aldershot.

* * *

It was as Lieutenant Alexander that the future Field Marshal sailed for France on August 11th, 1914. In France and Flanders, through the next four years of war, he laid the basis of his reputation for astonishing gallantry and cool leadership.

The Guards rather enjoyed the early stages of the war:

"'Twas like a football scrum. Everybody was somebody, ye'll understand. If he dropped there was no one to take his place. Great days! An' we not so frightened as when it came to fighting by machinery on the Somme afterwards."*

Alexander's battalion sustained heavy casualties in the retreat from Mons, but Alexander escaped until the *mêlée* at Zillebeke Wood. This particular scrum left him wounded in hand and thigh. He was evacuated to a London hospital and from there took sick leave to Ireland. Convalescence, however, was slow. Impatient to return to France, he proceeded to demonstrate his fitness by walking 64 miles in 17 hours. The wounded hand was still bandaged, and there were stitches in his thigh. Pain and discomfort walked with him, but he refused a lift: "I would not put my hand on a donkey for help on this tramp. This walk has to be done . . . It's do or die. I am going to do it if I have to crawl on my hands and knees."

It was a successful demonstration, and he went back to France. There he immediately went into the Battle of Loos as a Captain with the 2nd Battalion. He added an M.C. to his *Legion d'Honneur*, but his battalion alone lost seven officers in forty minutes and 300 effectives in the battle. Mr. Rudyard Kipling has commented on the tactics of Sir John French: "It does not seem to have occurred to anyone . . . that direct infantry attacks, after ninety minutes' bombardment, on works . . . developed against all contingencies in nine months, are not likely to find a fortunate issue."

Guardsman McShane, who went with Alexander through this 1915 fighting, has pointed to the basis for Alexander's gift of leadership:

"We saw at once that he was an extraordinary young man. There was originality in everything he did. Even then he appeared to be able to lead and control men by the power of his personality. He was entirely free from fear, superior airs, or snobbery. Being an athlete who knew how to train and look after himself, he was fitter than anyone

*Rudyard Kipling: "The Irish Guards in The Great War."

in the regiment. Fitness was a religion with him, but not his only religion. He seemed to be able unconsciously to pass on the inspiration to others. He was the most perfect man, morally, physically, and mentally, that I have ever met. These things enabled him to be superb in face of danger and in tight corners. For his own safety he never gave a thought. After a long march during which he marched with the men — even when Commanding Officer — the first thing he did was to go round to where the men were, to see if they were comfortable before attending to his own needs. He seemed to be able to command company or battalion without swearing.”

In November 1915, at the advanced age of 23, Alexander became Major and acting C.O. of the 1st Battalion. He spent 1916 in the slaughter of the Somme, where in one day one Guards battalion was reduced to 40 effectives. He gained a D.S.O. and much bitter experience. In March 1917 he became Lieutenant-Colonel commanding the 1st Battalion, and in October he took over the 2nd Battalion. There, “he found he had under him a battalion of rather outsize tough men which he had to control with a firm but kindly discipline.”

The war ground on. Bourlon Wood (part of the Battle of Cambrai) reduced the 2nd Irish Guards to 117. Alexander fought his battalion through the German offensive of March 1918, and then was recalled to England. “The whole Battalion turned out to bid him good-bye with an affection few commanding officers had ever awakened.”* When he left the Front he was one of the very few living Irish Guardsmen who had paraded by Birdcage Walk in August 1914 to hear Lord Roberts bid them Godspeed to war.

* * *

Colonel Alexander did not rest overlong in England. In July 1919 he was detached from the Irish Guards to lead the Baltic *Landswehr* in the Latvian War of Independence against Trotsky's Red Army. Alexander stayed in Latvia until April 1920, when he returned to regimental duty. He had some tidy little operations to his credit; he had learnt a great deal about dealing with allies;

*Rudyard Kipling.

he had mastered German and Russian; and he had acquired an even higher degree of self-control than had been necessary in the gay comradeship of the Irish Guards. He also confirmed a taste for the Russian-type high-crowned forage cap that hallmarked him throughout his Service life.

Back in England he reverted to his substantive rank of Major and took command of the 1st Battalion, which was then doing the normal ceremonial duties of the Household Brigade at London and Windsor. But the flutter of court life did not hold them long. The Chanak crisis came to take them to Constantinople, and give Alexander his Lieutenant-Colonelcy.

Constantinople was pleasant enough. The Irish Guards planted gardens, built a cricket pitch and tennis courts, shot snipe, and paraded with polish and precision on the King's Birthday.

Chanak, although a crisis, was not war. The Irish Guards returned in the rain to Wellington Barracks, via Gibraltar, still led by that “trim, slight, smiling figure which endeared itself to us all.” It was clear now that Alexander was marked for higher commands. He was sent to the Staff College at Camberley, did a tour at the War Office, and passed through the Imperial Defence College. In 1931 he married a sweet and charming Irishwoman, Lady Margaret Bingham; and his next tour, as G.S.O.1 in Northern Ireland, was the prelude to his appointment as commander of the Nowshera Brigade on the North-West Frontier of India.

We catch a glimpse of him on board the ship that took him out:

“There was an Irish Guardsman on board, Alexander by name, going out to command a brigade at Nowshera on the North-West Frontier. We were fortunate enough to see quite a lot of him, though he divided most of his time between writing to his wife and the earnest acquisition of the Urdu tongue. Both of the Griggs were much impressed with ‘Alex’, and we jokingly predicted that he would end up as Commander-in-Chief in India.”*

Under Brigadier Alexander, the Nowshera

*P. J. Grigg: “Prejudice and Judgment”

Brigade was busy. First the Fakir of Alingar, then the Haji of Turangzai and his three sons, provided spring and summer entertainment. Swift night marches, aggressive advances, careful use of fire to reduce casualties, and the greatest possible employment of R.A.F. squadrons, were the marks of Alexander's little frontier wars. He left India as an A.D.C. to the King, Colonel of the 2nd Punjabis, Commander of the Star of India, and a victim of malaria.

In 1937 the Hon. Harold Alexander became the youngest major-general in the Army (46) and G.O.C. the 1st Division at Aldershot. His C.-in-C. was General Sir John Dill; a companion commander of the 2nd Division was Major-General Maitland Wilson.

* * *

That spring the *Wehrmacht* rolled through Vienna. The next year, 1938, saw the panzers cheered through the Sudetenland, garlanded with flowers, while Mr. Chamberlain sat in a Munich hotel. Prague echoed to the rattle of Prussian drums on a dull March day in 1939; and in September the *Lufwaffe* dived from the Polish skies over Warsaw as Great Britain went to war.

Major-General Alexander's 1st Division mobilized easily and crossed the Channel seventeen days after the declaration of war. They sat through the "sitzkrieg" and advanced through Belgium when von Kleist sent his panzers tearing through the Ardennes. Sedan fell as Rommel led his tanks swiftly along the roads of France. The B.E.F. fell back successively to the Dindre, to the Scheldt, to the Ypres-Commines Canal, and finally to the half-circle between Nieuport and Gravelines which held the port of Dunkirk and a hope of escape.

The retreat only served to add to Alexander's reputation. To his troops he conveyed the impression of being "calm and unruffled" and he capitalized on his reputation from the First World War for bearing a charmed life. His driver says:

"Not once did he attempt to take cover. Once we were particularly heavily shelled. I accelerated to get out of the danger area. General Alexander tapped me on the shoulder. Pointing to the accelerator, he said: 'Slow down and keep to twenty. We'll be hit by a shell as easily at seventy as

twenty' . . . Twelve miles from Dunkirk the road was completely blocked by wreckage. There was nothing left to do but . . . burn the car. General Alexander rode into the perimeter on a push-bike."

Through the days on the beaches, Alexander moved, cool, unhurried, immaculate in glittering field boots and Sam Browne belt. When Lord Gort, the C.-in-C., returned to England he nominated Alexander to be the commander charged with the final defence of the perimeter.

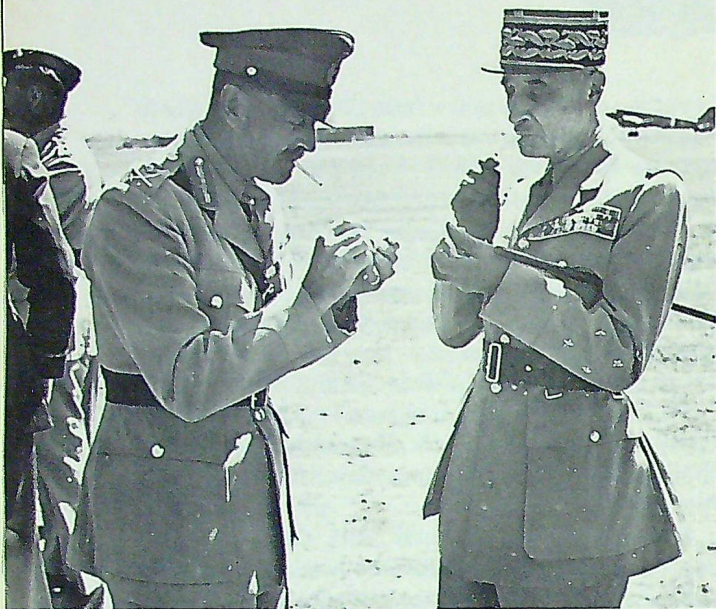
On June 1st, the greater number of the troops remaining were taken off. Rear-Admiral Wake-Walker has left a feeling description of the evacuation:

"The night was very calm, with the lightest of breezes from the southward — just sufficient to drift the huge pall of smoke over the harbour and beaches and give excellent protection without detracting much from good visibility. Among the many impressions made on my mind during that very vivid week, one of the most dramatic was the picture by night of the eastern arm of the harbour lit up in silhouette by the huge flames beyond it to show the never-ending stream of weary men moving seawards. Sometimes they hurried into a tired run, sometimes just plodded blindly towards safety. At other times they were packed stationary on the narrow parapet waiting for the next ship to berth. The men who were now embarking had borne the brunt of the fighting . . . the rearguard of the B.E.F. who, after three weeks of continuous battle, could still march in perfect order on to the pier. Ay, some of them even sang too."

The last of the troops left on Sunday night. Their commander took a last tour along the beaches, hailing in vain through a megaphone. There was no response. The B.E.F. was safe and General Alexander returned to England with a new sobriquet — "Last Man off the Beaches".

His experiences in France reinforced those opinions on the necessity for close air-land co-operation which he had formed in India. During his tenure of Southern Command he established the closest contact with the R.A.F., and his joint air-land exercises were models of their type.

* * *



General Alexander and General Catroux at Beyrouth.

Lieutenant-General Alexander remained in England until December 1941. Then, as the Japanese pilots came in over Pearl Harbour, another war front opened — and immediately began to disintegrate. From the south of England, Alexander was sent to conduct the retreat of the garrison of Burma. Sir Winston Churchill has this to say:

“If we could not send an army we could at any rate send a man . . . It was resolved to send General Alexander by air to the doomed capital. To save time, he was to fly direct over large stretches of enemy territory . . . A few hours before his departure, he dined at the Annexe with me and my wife. I remember the evening well, for never have I taken the responsibility for sending a general on a more forlorn hope. Alexander was, as usual, calm and good-humoured. He said he was delighted to go. In the First Great War, in years of fighting as a regimental officer with the Guards Division, he was reported to bear a charmed life, and under heavy fire men were glad to follow exactly in his footsteps. Confidence spread around him, whether as a lieutenant or in supreme command. He was the last British commander at Dunkirk. Nothing ever disturbed or rattled him, and duty was a full satisfaction in itself, especially

if it seemed perilous and hard. But all this was combined with so gay and easy a manner that the pleasure and honour of his friendship were prized by all those who enjoyed it, among whom I could count myself. For this reason I must admit that at our dinner I found it difficult to imitate his composure.”*

On reaching Rangoon, Alexander came to the decision that a retreat from that city was essential, and the retirement, once begun, continued to the borders of India. Alexander was his calm, confident self, and his skilful handling of the troops held the Japanese long enough to give India a vital breathing-space. His Burma experiences, too, included something new. He found one person he could not charm — “Vinegar Joe” Stilwell, the American General attached to the Chinese forces. General Chiang Kai Shek, on the other hand, said that the Irish Guardsman was the most able soldier he had ever met.

Alexander fought until the fall of Lashio made a general retirement necessary. However, he had held off the Japanese until the monsoon. The road to India had been barred and India had been given another four months to prepare. He flew back to Britain, a “mining engineer” in appearance and passport, in fact a full General and a Knight Grand Cross of the Bath.

* * *

When he reached England, Sir Harold spent a few days with his family in their small Georgian house, “The Vale”, at the edge of Windsor Forest. Then he went up to town to lunch with a man he had never met, General Dwight D. Eisenhower. The West Pointer had been appointed to command TORCH, the Allied invasion of North Africa, and Alexander was to lead the First British Army in the assault. The luncheon table was set for the two Generals alone. Alexander made an instant and lasting impression on the great-hearted American. When Alexander had gone, Eisenhower told his friend Commander Harry Butcher: “That guy’s good! He ought to be Commander-in-chief instead of me.”**

*Winston Churchill: “The Hinge of Fate”.

**Harry C. Butcher: “My three years with Eisenhower”.

Alexander did not go ashore with TORCH. Mr. Churchill, en route to Russia, stopped off in Cairo to find the Eighth Army "brave but baffled." He decided to change Generals and to withdraw Alexander from TORCH to be C.-in-C. Middle East. As commander of the Eighth Army the Prime Minister nominated General "Straffer" Gott. After Gott died in an aeroplane crash, Montgomery was chosen to replace him.

Before Alexander flew out to Cairo, Mr. Churchill gave the new C.-in-C. a written directive:

"Your prime and main duty will be to take or destroy at the earliest opportunity, the German-Italian Army commanded by Field Marshal Rommel, together with all its supplies and establishments in Egypt and Libya . . ."

The stencil for Alamein was cut.

The story of Alamein and afterwards — the 1000-gun night barrage of October 23rd, the gallant fighting of British, Indian, New Zealand, and Australian troops, the stupendous efforts of the Desert Air Force, the rout of the Afrika Korps, the fall of Tobruk, Benghazi, El Agheila, Tripoli — all are now part of history. The vital, balanced, logical mind of Montgomery fitted in with the calm organizing genius of the C.-in-C. They got on surprisingly well:

"They were always most interesting. They always worked well together — a good team — but there seemed to be a falling off toward the end of their time together. Each had different qualities. Alexander excelled in sitting back and getting the best out of allies and different Services. He was self-effacing and always generous in allotting subordinates their full measure of reward and praise. He showed himself most able in dealing with the complex political problems that came his way . . ."

Montgomery's tactical abilities are well known. But El Alamein would not have been the triumph it was if, behind the battle front, there had not been the cool brain of Alexander.

British victory in the desert had been followed by TORCH, and the problem of command became urgent. After Kasserine, Alexander was appointed Deputy C.-in-C. North Africa. He re-established the line and directed operations to capture Tunis.

His first attack in North Africa was a model for a tactical offence. Calculating that von Arnim (Rommel had returned, sick, to face an angry Fuehrer) would concentrate against the Eighth Army, Alexander struck in the North, driving along the Medjerda Valley. He sent the 4th Indian Division, the 7th Armoured Division, and a Guards brigade to that front. At dawn on May 6th the troops went forward. Von Arnim capitulated on May 12th. Alexander said in his despatch: "The final battle of Africa was an unusually complete example of annihilation." Prisoners numbered 267,000; and only 663 escaped. It was the death of an army.

* * *

Alexander's next task was command of HUSKY — the invasion of Sicily. The assault waves went in through the surf on July 10th. Catania fell to the careful Montgomery, Palermo to the dashing Patton, and, thirty-eight days after the 1st Canadian Division waded through the breakers at Maucini, the 3rd American Division entered the streets of Messina. They were welcomed by gesticulating Sicilians who loaded them with gifts of figs, grapes, and wine.

The fall of Sicily toppled Mussolini; Marshal Badoglio signed an armistice in an olive grove, and, for an instant, Italy tasted peace. But General Hube had extracted most of his German troops from Sicily. They waited in Calabria for the next stroke. When General Mark Clark's Fifth Army hit the Salerno beaches, the Eighth Army crossed the Straits of Messina to the thunder of 1000 guns, and the Allies had a firm foothold in Italy. This is not the place for a history of the Italian Campaign. Monte Cassino (Alexander opposed the bombing until General Freyberg made it a condition for assault), Anzio, the Gustav line, the Gothic line, the Hitler line, the long bitter struggle up the leg of the boot, the loss of Alexander's best divisions for OVERLOAD and ANVIL, and the departure of Montgomery, all fill part of the picture. By the time his subordinate left, relations between them may have been a little strained. General Mark Clark relates:

"Just as he was ready to leave, Montgomery spoke to me confidentially.

“‘Do you know Alexander well?’ he asked.

“‘No’, I said.

“‘Well, I do. From time to time you will get instructions from Alex that you won’t understand. When you do, just tell him to go to hell.’ I thought this over for a moment and replied, ‘I’ve got a better idea, General. If I have trouble, I’ll tell you about it and let you tell Alex for me.’”*

Throughout the campaign Alexander impressed his troops anew with his calm assurance: “When Alex spoke you knew that everything was tickety boo! He got the word across: ‘Well, chaps, going to be a tough show but everything will go as planned.’ He inspired us with his smiling and serene confidence.”**

His great opportunity, the grand assault on the “soft under-belly of the Axis”, never came. The great attack went across the Channel, and Yugoslavia, Hungary, and Austria fell to the Red Armies. For Alexander personally, all continued to go well. He became Field Marshal and Supreme Allied Commander in the Mediterranean in December 1944. He joined Mr. Churchill in Athens and accompanied him to Yalta. There he spoke Russian to Stalin and gave the Red Dictator a lecture on the Burma Campaign. Finally he received the first surrender of a German army in Europe. The *communiqué* read: “Enemy land, sea and air forces commanded by General von Vietinghoff Scheel have surrendered unconditionally to Field Marshal Sir Harold Alexander. The terms of the surrender provide for the cessation of hostilities at noon G.M.T. Wednesday, 2nd May, 1945.”

He had fought a campaign of scarcity — the traditional campaign of Great Britain — with consummate intuitive skill. Lack of men and shortage of landing-craft had meant lost opportunities, wasted plans, unfulfilled schemes of victory. Despite these frustrations he made his diverse forces homogeneous. He led them from the first great victories of Alamein and Tunis to the first great German surrender at Caserta. In the minds

of many of those who knew, Alexander stood on the ramparts of the Alps as the greatest British soldier of the Second World War.

* * *

With the military portion of Alexander’s career Mr. Hillson has dealt factually if not brilliantly. But his chapters on Viscount Alexander as Governor-General of Canada are the least happy in his book. Mr. Mackenzie King’s quarrel with Lord Byng, who is surprisingly called the “Defender” of Vimy Ridge (p. 197), could hardly have led to a “Second Boston Tea Party” (p. 190). Mr. King himself would not have liked being called “Mr. Mackenzie” (p. 197); neither would his old Alma Mater in Toronto relish the term “the local University”. Although the late Chancellor of McGill, Mr. Justice Tyndall, suffers a misspelt name, McGill itself gets full credit. This is natural, since the new Governor-General found himself “Visitor” of that Royal Institution.

Despite Mr. Hillson’s errors, the new Governor-General did set an inspiring but exhausting record in his first years of office. He travelled 25,000 miles, entertained 7,000 guests, and made 100 speeches. And he came to excel in one tricky art; he became the best kicker-off at football games in Viceregal history. To do so he practised assiduously in the early mornings in the grounds of Rideau Hall — and got a “Well kicked, Viscount!” from the Rideau Hall milkman for his pains.

But official duties did not occupy all his time. Canada gave him opportunity to relax — one of few opportunities in a crowded career. He had time to paint neat but somewhat mystic landscapes, to fish for Miramichi salmon, to hurtle down Gatineau ski-trails (hurling basic phrases at misfortunates who blocked his path), to spend time with his family. From this pleasant interlude he left, well remembered and much regretted by the Canadian people, to become one of Sir Winston Churchill’s “Overlords” as Minister of Defence, a portfolio which he resigned last autumn.

It is to be hoped that Viscount Alexander will write his autobiography before too long, for Mr. Hillson’s book leaves too many questions unanswered. There are facts, pleasant anecdotes, formal quotations from official documents, but no indica-

*Mark Clark: “Calculated Risk”.

**Conversation between the writer and Major R. Smith, R.E.



tion of what made Alexander the man he was. Since the peculiar combination of vices and virtues that make up great men are of profound human interest, it is worth taking some of Mr. Hillson's facts and attempting to make the analysis he avoids.

Any man who, in the profession of arms, reaches the eminence of Field Marshal is certain to be larded with the restlessness of ambition. No doubt Alexander's position as a younger son contributed greatly to this (his eldest brother, the Earl of Caledon, is a Major). The feeling of insecurity in the younger son of a British peer who must make his own way in the world stimulates great drive. But it must have been an extraordinary intensity of emotion which drove a young man to walk 64 miles with an unhealed wound in his leg. There are signs that Alexander, intense as he was and constantly calm as he made himself, must have found the heat of battle a place where he could relax mentally, soothed by the intense activity and the opportunity to spend his innate aggressiveness on a legitimate object—the enemy. There lingers about him, too, a touch of Irish

feyness, an almost feminine intuition which is not unnatural to one born in the shadow of the Mountains of Mourne. Sir Percy Grigg has perhaps come as close to the enigma of Alexander as may be done in our time:

"I have known him longer than I have known any other soldier, and I ought perhaps to know him better than I know any other soldier. In fact, I sometimes wonder whether I really know him at all. I know all the externals — his athletic prowess, his fighting career, his military achievements. I know his good looks, his courtesy and charm. I know, too, his devotion to duty and his scrupulous loyalty to colleagues or subordinates. But there is something inscrutable about him which gives me the feeling that there is another life beyond all this, a life of his own into which very few are allowed to enter. This is reserved for his family, of whom in his agitated and mutable career he has seen all too little, and for his dreams of being able some day to read and write and paint to his heart's desire."*

*P. J. Grigg: "Prejudice and Judgment".

LOW TOSS

Tests have recently been made from a Gloster Meteor jet fighter of the automatic ejection of a dummy pilot to make a parachute descent from as low as 50 ft. above the ground. The equipment used was the Martin-Baker ejection seat, in which the whole process is automatic from the moment when the pilot fires himself out of the aircraft, still sitting in his seat, to when he reaches the ground.

(*"The Times"*: U.K.)

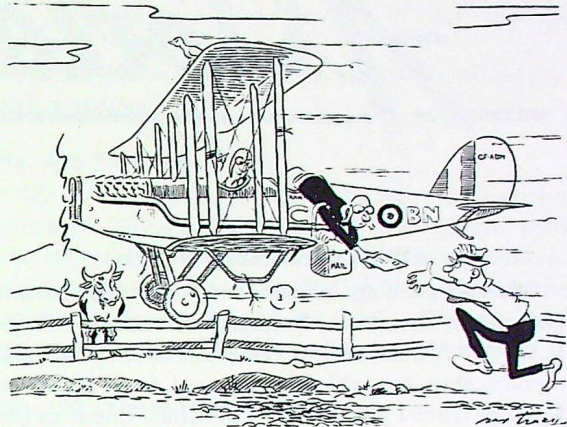
WHAT'S THE SCORE?

*"He pasted a sheet of postage stamps from snout clean down to tail,
Put on a quick-delivery stamp, and sent the cod by mail."*

Reading the above stirring lines by Holman Day, we were moved to wonder what the Post Office would do if faced with such a package. It so happened that the Bureau of Current Affairs' booklet, "The Post Office", was lying on the editorial desk at the time. Though it did not provide us with a specific answer to our problem, it did make us aware of quite a number of facts of which we had previously been ignorant. Here, in questionnaire form, are twenty of them. Correct answers appear on page 48.—EDITOR.

1. Postal services were established 3,000 years ago:
 - (a) For the transmission of communications between rulers.
 - (b) In order to stimulate the study of philately.
 - (c) To increase the national revenue.
 - (d) As a means of increasing literacy.
2. The first postmen travelled by:
 - (a) Horse.
 - (b) Stegosaur.
 - (c) Sampan.
 - (d) Camel.
3. Canada's original letter-carriers were:
 - (a) Missionaries.
 - (b) Coureurs de bois.
 - (c) Explorers.
 - (d) Fire-water salesmen.
4. Canada's first postal establishment, as a governmental institution, was set up in:
 - (a) Saint John, N.B.: 1798.
 - (b) St. John's, Nfld.: 1822.
 - (c) Halifax, N.S.: 1755.
 - (d) Port Royal, N.S.: 1806.
5. The "Father" of the Canada Post Office was:
 - (a) Thomas Darcy McGee.
 - (b) Benjamin Franklin.
 - (c) Honoré Mercier.
 - (d) William Lyon MacKenzie.
6. The postal affairs of the Canadian colonies were administered from London, England, until:
 - (a) 1837.
 - (b) 1841.
 - (c) 1910.
 - (d) 1867.
7. The number of post-offices in Canada is today:
 - (a) 10,865.
 - (b) In excess of 12,000.
 - (c) 11,340.
 - (d) 5,649.
8. The postal services of the world handle all mail, both foreign and domestic, because:
 - (a) The Universal Postal Union makes financial adjustments every three years.
 - (b) The cost of handling foreign mail is paid for yearly by the respective countries of origin.
 - (c) The expense of handling foreign mail is negligible.
 - (d) A letter normally inspires a reply.
9. One of the unique features of the Post Office Saving Bank is that:
 - (a) Persons with an annual income exceeding \$3,000 are not accepted as depositors.
 - (b) Not more than \$1,000 may be deposited at any one time.
 - (c) Cheques cannot be written on the money held in the bank.
 - (d) An account may not be maintained for more than 15 years.
10. Mail for the Eastern Arctic is handled by a regular post office established:
 - (a) On board the Canadian government steamer "C. D. Howe".
 - (b) In an R.C.A.F. North Star.
 - (c) On board the Government ice-breaker "d'Iberville".
 - (d) At Frobisher Bay and manned by the Department of Transport.
11. The most northerly point to which mail is delivered is:
 - (a) Frobisher Bay.
 - (b) Resolute Bay, 500 miles north of the Arctic Circle.
 - (c) Cape Herschel, 800 miles from the North Pole.
 - (d) Aklavik.

12. Although the proceeds from the sale of unclaimed articles totalled six thousand dollars during the fiscal year (April 1st to April 1st) of 1953-1954, the cash found in "dead letters" during the same period totalled to:
- More than \$34,000.
 - Slightly more than \$12,000.
 - Less than \$5,000.
 - \$25,856.
13. Canada's first official air mail service was begun in:
- 1918, between Val d'Or and Dorval.
 - 1920, between Moose Wallow and Moose Jaw.
 - 1922, between Winnipeg and Edmonton.
 - 1924, between Haileybury, Ont., and Angliers, P.Q.
14. The rural mail carrier is a:
- Temporary civil servant.
 - Post Office employee.
 - Private citizen with a Post Office contract.
 - Employee of the Department of Agriculture.
15. During the fiscal year of 1953-54 the Philatelic Branch of the Post Office (which caters to stamp collectors) filled orders amounting to:
- About \$350,000.
 - \$427,836.
 - About \$834,000.
 - \$1,854,355.
16. A rural mail box may be used by:
- One family only.
 - Any number of families.
 - Not more than three families.
 - No tradesmen other than the baker and milkman.
17. Stamps in Canada are printed by the:
- Post Office Department.
 - Canadian Bank Note Company.
 - Government Printing Bureau.
 - American Bank Note Company.



18. Parcels that end up in the "Undelivered Mail Office" are:
- Sold on behalf of the Post Office Benevolent Fund.
 - Sold at an annual auction.
 - Given to charitable organizations at the end of three years.
 - Sold and the proceeds absorbed into Post Office revenue.
19. The maximum amount in which a single money order is sold is:
- \$100.00.
 - \$500.00.
 - \$1,000.00.
 - \$1,500.00.
20. The most recently inaugurated (1951) of the Post Office Department's services is the:
- Air parcel post.
 - Coastal steamer mail service.
 - Savings Bank.
 - Philatelic Branch.

Views expressed in "The Roundel" upon controversial subjects are the views of the writers expressing them. They do not necessarily reflect the official opinions of the Royal Canadian Air Force.

ROYAL CANADIAN AIR FORCE

Association



ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE

Members are again reminded that a motion was passed at the 1954 Annual Convention of the R.C.A.F. Association to the effect that the annual membership fee will be increased from \$2.00 to \$3.00 as from 1 April 1955. This amendment to the Association's by-laws has been approved by the Secretary of State.

CHANGE IN NATIONAL H.Q. STAFF

Flt. Lt. R. J. Palmer has been appointed as executive assistant to the National President, replacing Flt. Lt. A. F. MacKell, who has been transferred to R.C.A.F. Station Saskatoon as adjutant. The new E.A. was previously engaged in flying duties at R.C.A.F. Station Summerside, P.E.I.

R. Johnson, president of No. 500 (Winnipeg) Wing, inspects No. 220 Air Cadet Squadron. With him are Sqn. Ldr. W. A. Mildren (C.O. of squadron), E. A. Carlyle, and Flt. Lt. D. A. Roffey.



WING NEWS

NO. 410 (Ottawa-District) Wing

The annual meeting of the Ladies' Auxiliary of No. 410 Wing was held recently, when the election of officers took place. Elected were Bernice McKim, pres.; Daisy Kossatz, vice-pres.; Lenoire Rowland, treas.; Lois Newell, sec'y.

The ladies provide organized assistance to many Wing functions, and are extremely active in Wing affairs.

No. 416 (Kingston) Wing

Last December No. 416 Wing contacted thirteen prospective recruits for the R.C.A.F. and was successful in enrolling four. Every month this Wing contributes new members for the Air Force.

No. 429 (Elgin) Wing, St. Thomas. Executive for 1955. Front row (l. to r.): A. R. Wicks, W. H. Allen, T. Hunt, H. Moody. Back row (l. to r.): G. Mildren, J. Jury, T. Monteith, J. Sullivan, R. Collis.





No. 412 Wing's annual Air Force reunion. Left to right: G. Penhold, B. Gorski, T. Muldoon, and N. Crapper.

No. 422 (Leamington) Wing

No. 422 Wing is sponsoring the newly formed Air Cadet squadron in Leamington. The Wing had previously provided instruments for the bands of the Leamington High School Air Cadets.

No. 254 (Miramichi) Wing

A new Air Cadet squadron, No. 597 (St. Thomas High School), was recently formed and is sponsored by No. 254 Wing, Chatham, N.B.

No. 500 (Winnipeg) Wing

Rex Johnson, President of No. 500 Wing, recently carried out an inspection of No. 220 (Red River) Air Cadet Squadron. The Commanding Officer of the Air Cadet squadron is Sqn. Ldr. W. A. Mildren, president of the Manitoba-N.W. Ontario Group of the Association. No. 500 Wing is the sponsoring body for this squadron.

No. 412 (Windsor) Wing

No. 412 Wing has had a very busy winter season. In the last week of November they held their annual Air Force Reunion, which proved to be a great success.

On December 19th more than two hundred youngsters put in a glorious afternoon at the Kiddies' Christmas Party which was given at the club for members' children. Each child received a

gift from Santa Claus. Lavalle Walter was in charge of the party.

On New Year's Eve the Wing sponsored a very well attended ball.

No. 426 (Brockville) Wing

The members of No. 426 Wing have arranged a series of dinner-meetings to be held jointly with the different service clubs in that city. Recently, at a combined Lions Club-R.C.A.F.A. dinner, the guest speaker was Sqn. Ldr. R. F. Murray, Chief Flying Instructor, R.C.A.F. Station Trenton.

No. 603 (Yorkton) Wing

We are pleased to learn from President C. Bennett that No. 603 Wing is very active in the community, and that during the winter months many worthwhile meetings have been planned.

No. 700 (Edmonton) Wing

Dave Wright is the new president of No. 700 Wing, and under his leadership we look forward to continued good reports from Edmonton. A new policy has been instituted in the Wing whereby all Wing members will be called upon to take an active part in at least one meeting, or serve on at least one house committee.

Sqn. Ldr. R. F. Murray, H. Ker (pres. of Brockville Lions Club), and R. C. Nuttbrown (pres. of No. 426 Wing, Brockville).





No. 434 Wing's 1955 executive. Seated (l. to r.): W. Cawthorne, G. Remigio, F. McKenna, Flt. Lt. A. MacKell (R.C.A.F.A. Headquarters), P. Sadesky. Standing (l. to r.): Dr. M. McLean, B. Currie, M. Seymour, J. Knight, H. Reece, C. Hockridge.

No. 600 (Regina) Wing

The members of No. 600 Wing have undertaken the sponsorship of three Air Cadet squadrons in Regina. Arrangements have been made for the squadron parades to be held in the new "H.M.S. Queen", and for a Parents' Night to be held in the Regina Armouries.

No. 434 (Welland) Wing

It was in November 1953 that a small group of former members of the R.C.A.F. held a meeting for the purpose of forming a Wing of the R.C.A.F. Association in Welland, Ontario. Organizational plans were laid at a rally of former Air Force personnel in the district, and officers were elected. The Wing is to be known as No. 434 (Welland) Wing, with Mr. Fred McKenna as its first president.

The Charter Night, held in May 1954, was a great success; and it was attended by the National President, R.C.A.F. officers from units in the area, the Mayor of Welland, and local M.P.P.s.

Even at this early date the members of the Wing realized that they required a home. With assistance from the merchants of Welland, they rented, renovated, and furnished a building; and the official opening of the club was a gala occasion. The National President, who paid a visit to the Wing in December 1954, expressed his great pleasure at the manner in which the Wing had

progressed during the year. Flt. Lt. Norman Patterson, president of the Welland Branch of the Canadian Legion, was a guest at this gathering. He proffered the facilities of the Legion's quarters to all members of the Wing.

At Christmas a wonderful party was arranged for the children, with Fred McKenna as Santa Claus; and of course, New Year's Eve was suitably and royally celebrated.

Our congratulations to Fred McKenna, to Peter Sadesky (secretary) and, to all the executive and Wing members, for their achievements during 1954; and our best wishes for a successful 1955.

No. 312 (La Tuque) Wing

A new Wing has been formed at La Tuque, under the jurisdiction of the Quebec Group. Much of the success of this Wing to date is due to the energetic manner in which its president, A. W. Bishop, and his committee have worked during the organizational stage, and we are looking forward to its continued progress.

No. 435 (Hamilton Tiger) Wing

A new Wing has also been formed in Hamilton, Ontario. Arrangements for its Charter Night will be completed shortly. Again we offer our congratulations.

Bathurst, N.B.

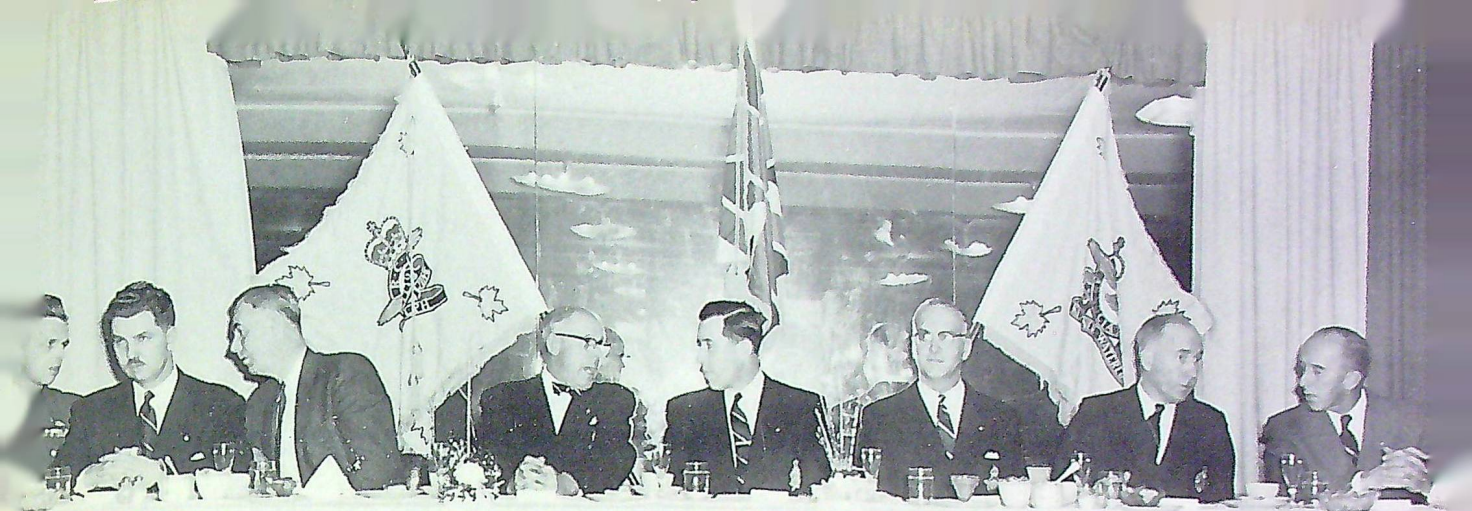
Word has just been received that another new Wing will shortly be formed in Bathurst, N.B.

BOOKS FOR ZWEIBRUCKEN

Last fall Wing Commander J. Gellner, D.F.C., Senior Administrative Officer at No. 3 (Fighter) Wing, intimated that an additional 2,000 hard-covered books would be a welcome addition to the station library.

No. 424 (Cornwall) Wing collected these books and forwarded them to R.C.A.F. Station Lachine. Here George Cattiny and a group from No. 306 (Maple Leaf) Wing sorted and packed the books for overseas shipment. The accompanying picture shows the books on arrival. A letter received from Group Captain A. C. Hull, D.F.C., states, in part:

"Our Library has a weekly turnover of about



Banquet in honour of National President on occasion of his visit to Nos. 400 and 404 Wings last December. Left to right: Flt. Lt. D. Bate, R.C.A.F. Liaison Officer; J. A. Spence, charter pres., No. 400; G. B. Guest, treas., No. 400; Air Vice-Marshal G. E. Brookes, C.B., O.B.E.; H. W. Wilkie, pres., No. 400; W. G. Roberts, pres., No. 404; Major the Rev. D. Crawford Smith; A. Snetsinger, past-pres., No. 404.

R.C.A.F. RECRUITING

The Association's recruiting for the month of December produced the following results:

Wing	Contacts	Enrolments
No. 300 (Granby)	1	—
No. 416 (Kingston)	13	4
No. 502 (Brandon)	1	—
No. 703 (Red Deer)	3	2
Total	18	6

LIFE MEMBERSHIP

We are pleased to add to our Life Membership List:

Denis V. Turner, Verdun, Que.

Flt. Lt. J. D. Noble, Educational Officer, and Miss Mary Gray, schoolteacher, look over shipment of books at Zweibrücken. Miss Gray is the daughter of Mr. J. C. Gray, General Sec'y of the R.C.A.F.A.

250 books, which will give you an idea of how much the additional books are appreciated by our readers. I believe I can say that your contribution has made our library the equal of that of any of the Canadian units on the continent. On behalf of all the personnel of the unit, their dependents, and myself, I wish to extend my sincere thanks for your generous contribution to the welfare of No. 3 (Fighter) Wing."



Piasecki Mercy Flight

(From Flying Officer A. W. Nicolson, of No. 108 Communications Flight, Bagotville, we have received the following account of the first mercy mission carried out by one of the R.C.A.F.'s Piasecki helicopters.—EDITOR.)

On December 10th, the Dept. of Indian Affairs reported by telephone that an Indian woman was seriously ill with T.B. at a camp beside Lake Manuan, approximately 170 miles north of Bagotville. A fixed-wing aircraft had attempted the evacuation but was unable to land because the lakes and rivers were unsafe for skis or floats.

At 1130 hours a Piasecki helicopter was sent out by No. 108 Flight, and approximately 2¼ hours later was picking up the patient. On account of blowing snow and "whiteout" conditions, it was

not feasible for the helicopter to make a landing; so the pilot held his aircraft in a hovering position just off the ground while the semi-conscious patient was lifted from a dog-sled into the machine. At 1530 hours the helicopter landed in the hospital grounds at Roberval, Quebec, where an ambulance was standing by to rush the patient inside.

The Piasecki was one of the helicopters used in training R.C.A.F. pilots and groundcrews for work at Search and Rescue Units. The pilot, Mr. Max Nebergall, of the Piasecki Helicopter Corporation, is the company's pilot-instructor. He was assisted by Flying Officer T. W. Kirkwood of No. 111 C. and R. Flight, Winnipeg, and Mr. R. B. Lee, a civilian bush pilot who acted as navigator. An R.C.A.F. nursing sister, Flying Officer Jeannette Gagné, accompanied the flight in order to administer to the needs of the patient while in the air. Crewmen were Sgt. G. Pugh, of No. 108 Flight, and Mr. Bob Chesney, technical representative from the Piasecki Corporation.

The aircraft stopped for refuelling en route. Two 45-gallon drums of gas were carried on board the aircraft, and these were unloaded and pumped by hand into the helicopter's tanks. While refuelling, the crew learned that the patient was at an Indian camp on a lake ten miles further on than had been reported. The lake proved to be about 200 ft. in diameter, surrounded by high trees, and covered by deep snow.

While the Piasecki was picking up the patient, a Sikorsky helicopter from No. 108 Flight flew to the hospital grounds in Roberval to prepare a landing-spot, in the event that the Piasecki might have to make a night-landing. The mission was, however, completed in daylight hours.

Landing at Lake Manuan dam site.



No. 433 SQUADRON

PART ONE

By Flight Lieutenant A. P. Heathcote, Air Historical Section.

ON SEPTEMBER 25th, 1943, No. 433 (Porcupine) Squadron officially came into being. Though it was one of the later R.C.A.F. heavy bomber squadrons to be formed, this unit was to compile a highly respectable record with regard to bomb-tonnage dropped, operational sorties flown, and individual heroism displayed.

For the first three months or so, the efforts of squadron personnel were devoted to building up strength in manpower and material, organizing generally, and achieving a state of operational readiness. Aircraft (Halifax IIIs) began to arrive on 3 November, and no time was lost in checking out pilots and organizing a crew-training schedule. In addition, eleven pilots gained operational experience as "second dickies" with No. 427 (Lion) Squadron.

Unfortunately, a bad flying accident occurred during this period, causing the death of five aircrew N.C.O.s and one airman, and injuries to two airmen. While taking off, a Halifax suddenly turned over on its back and crashed down upon a dispersed aircraft in which four fitters were working. The fatalities were: Flt. Sgt. P. R. Humphreys (captain), Sgt. H. L. Miller (air bomber), Sgt. H. G. Buxton (flight engineer), Sgt. K. N. Lake (mid-upper air gunner), Sgt. L. D. Griese (rear gunner), and L.A.C. M. F. O'Connor. Injured were L.A.C.s S. T. McEvoy and P. W. Butler.

At the end of December, with a personnel strength of 49 officers and 473 airmen, and an aircraft strength of 20 Halifax IIIs, No. 433 Squadron was ready to start work. Shortly after 2030 hours on 2 January 1944, four Hallies took off on this squadron's first operation, a sea-mining expedition to the "Nectarines I" area (Frisian Islands). This proved to be an omen of sorts, for the Porcupines went on to become one of the foremost mining squadrons of No. 6 Group.

After 17 days of bad weather, during which the unit's chief activities were local training and anticipating "scrub" signals, the squadron made its operational bombing debut. Nine aircraft were detailed to take part, one of which became a non-starter. At the coming-out party, held over Berlin,





2,000-pound "cookies" were served amid a shower of incendiaries. One of two early-returning aircraft was flown by Flt. Lt. G. W. Wolton, who was jinxed by malfunctioning overload pumps. This misadventure gave him and his crew the honour of dropping the squadron's first bombs on "Hitler's Fortress." They bombed Kiel at 1845 hours on the 20th January.

Despite the non-start and early returns, this attack, in which the "Porkies" were led personally by their Commanding Officer, Wing Cdr. Clive B. Sinton, D.F.C., (a Briton in the R.C.A.F.), was considered quite successful for a first attempt. Unbroken cloud lay over the target, but the six successful crews had little trouble finding the target and bombing on Pathfinder Force's sky markers. Opposition was surprisingly light. The groundcrew deserved special commendation for their quick work in installing overload tanks which had arrived only that morning.

The Squadron suffered its first operational casualties the following night, when the crews of Flt. Lt. A. G. Jira and Flt. Sgt. J. A. Wilson failed to return from Magdeburg. It was Flt. Lt. Jira's first operation as captain, and the first for his crew. His aircraft was brought down over Magdeburg, and he and his entire crew were killed. The other crew members were: Flying Officer R. J. McMehen, Sgt. T. J. Seeley, Flying Officer B. A. Russell, Sgt. M. Couture, Sgt. S. J. Swain, and Sgt. J. C. Webber.*

Flt. Sgt. Wilson was forced to ditch in the North Sea about fifty miles off the English Coast, according to the last "fix" taken on the aircraft. He and his crew perished before a rescue could be effected. His crew consisted of the following men: Flying Officer R. B. McLellan, Warrant Officer C. L. Depper, Flying Officers J. H. Seymour, W. R. Reed, Sgt. J. M. Townsend, R.A.F., and Pilot Officer R. H. Megainey, R.A.F.

On 28 January the squadron rejoined the battle of Berlin. It contributed ten aircraft, all of which bombed successfully on sky markers. Crews

reported a good attack and an intense cloud glow visible up to 120 miles away. Three Hallies did not return to base, but fortunately only two personnel lost their lives. In the crash of one aircraft during a landing attempt at R.A.F. Station Catfoss, the captain, Flt. Sgt. W. A. Stiles, was killed, while the m/u gunner, Sgt. R. L. Ludlow, and the bomb-aimer, Sgt. H. C. Boissevain, were injured. The remaining crew members escaped unhurt. It was Stiles' second operational sortie.

Another aircraft, piloted by J. M. (Johnny) Gray, who was making his first sortie as captain, had to be ditched just off the English Coast. The starboard fuel tanks had been holed by flak before the target was reached. The bombing was carried out and course was set for home. Two more attacks by enemy aircraft caused no further damage, but not quite enough fuel remained to complete the trip, and the Hally had to be ditched. The entire crew was rescued after two and a half hours in the water. This, the squadron's first successful ditching, earned an immediate D.F.C. for Flying Officer Gray, the first member of this squadron to be decorated.

The third Halifax — "H-Harry", captained by Flt. Sgt. J. E. Mitchell — had been attacked on the way in by a Ju.88. The starboard rudder was damaged to the point of complete uselessness, and a fuel tank was badly holed. "H-Harry" continued on to the target and bombed successfully, but excessive loss of fuel forced the crew to bail out near Thirsk, Yorks. All the crew reached earth safely except the rear gunner, Pilot Officer H. Cox. His parachute fouled on the aircraft and he was killed. Mitchell, later commissioned, was awarded an immediate D.F.C.

The month's final operation took place on 30/31 January, and the target was again Berlin. Most crews considered the operation a "piece of cake" in comparison to other Berlin trips. One aircraft, captained by Flt. Sgt. G. E. Hagerman, flying on his first operation as captain, did not return. All crew members were officially presumed dead except the rear gunner, Sgt. M. B. Parke-Taylor, who became a prisoner-of-war. The other crew members were: Flt. Sgt. K. Hargreaves, Warrant Officer J. R. Charlton, Flt. Sgt. C. Phillips, Sgt.

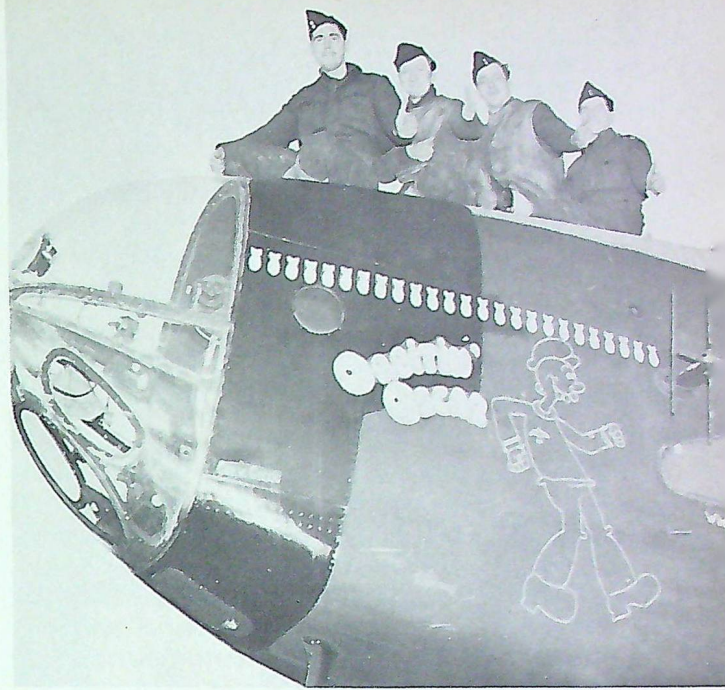
*Unless otherwise noted, crews are listed in the following order: captain, navigator, wireless operator, air bomber, rear gunner, flight engineer, and mid-upper gunner. Ranks shown are those held at the time of the casualty; many of the personnel were subsequently promoted or commissioned.

J. Wannop, R.A.F., and Sgt. J. F. Walters.

After a mining trip to the Kiel Canal on 2 February and a fourth blow at Berlin on the 15th (for the Porkies both operations were casualty-free and almost routine), the squadron paid its first call to Leipzig. On this occasion the usually reliable "met" winds were not even close, and more than 800 bombers were forced to waste from 20 to 30 minutes before bombing. This gave the enemy a decided advantage, and Bomber Command losses were heavy. One of 78 missing aircraft was captained by Flt. Sgt. R. J. McKay of this quadron, who was on his fifth operation. McKay's crew consisted of the following: Sgt. J. E. Davidson, Sgt. F. W. Daplyn, R.A.F., Sgt. J. Oliver, Sgt. J. Hein, Sgt. J. J. Murphy, R.A.F., and Sgt. B. Fraser. All Canadian members of the crew were officially presumed dead, and the fate of the English crew members was indefinite.

Before the month was out, the Porkies, in keeping with Bomber Command's policy of "incendiarism and more incendiarism," gave the hot foot to Stuttgart, Schweinfurt (chief source of the German ball-bearing), and Augsburg. Casualties were sustained on the Schweinfurt operation when two aircraft, captained by Flt. Sgts. G. F. Fielding and V. T. Meldrum, did not return. The former captain became a P.O.W. along with Flt. Sgt. J. J.

Left to right: Warrant Officer H. G. McVeigh, Flt. Sgt. Y. K. Carter, Sgt. Bob Spence.



Left to right: L.A.C.s D. W. Higgins, D. C. Dack, N. L. Bugg, Cpl. F. J. Hallaghan.

Mulvaney, Pilot Officer I. S. Thomas, and Sgt. J. D. McAnulty, but nothing is known of the fate of Sgts. H. W. Whitt, J. Cowen, and A. J. Wood, all R.A.F. Flt. Sgt. Meldrum was also captured, as was his navigator, Flt. Sgt. D. C. Ferguson. His other three Canadian crew members, Flt. Sgt. O. L. Harding and Sgts. E. R. Machesney and C. A. Lavery, were killed. The fate of the English crew members, Flying Officer P. Dormand, D.F.C., and Sgt. J. R. Frost, was undetermined.

On 6 March the Porcupines took to the air to attack their first French target — the Trappes marshalling-yards near Paris. The fact that they were carrying their first full load of explosives (as opposed to incendiaries) further illustrated Bomber Command's aspirations to arsony during the previous two months. Moreover, the nature of the target signalled the beginning of a series of tactical operations (in preparation for the invasion of Normandy and designed to disrupt enemy transport to coastal areas) on vital rail junctions in France and Belgium. Little opposition in the form of flak or fighters was encountered. The railway yards at Le Mans were given similar treatment the following night and again on the 13th.

The next target, on the 18th, was Frankfurt. Taking a personal hand in the actual operation

was the Station Commander, Group Capt. (now Air Vice-Marshal) L. E. Wray, A.F.C., who was flying as second pilot in "K-King" with Warrant Officer D. E. James and crew, all of whom had completed 20 or more sorties. Everything went well with "King" on the way to the target, as it reached Frankfurt and bombed without mishap. About eighty miles from the target on the way home, however, the navigator discovered they were off track and gave an alteration. At that moment "King" received a direct flak hit and went out of control. Failing to regain control after dropping 5,000 feet, the captain gave the bale-out order. Warrant Officer C. W. Sharpe (nav.), Flt. Lt. S. A. Sinclair (a/b), Sgt. R. Pearce, R.A.F. (w/op), Group Capt. Wray, Sgt. R. Stinson (mu/ag), and Sgt. R. Green, R.A.F. (f/e), baled out successfully in that order, but Warrant Officer James and Sgt. J. Levesque (a/g) were killed. Sharpe, Sinclair, Wray, and Stinson were taken prisoner, while the ultimate fate of Pearce and Green is not clear.

After despatching, without loss, a strong mining force to Kiel Bay and a lone bombing representative to Frankfurt on the 22nd, the squadron hit "the Big City" for the fifth time on the 24th/25th. One of the last crews to bomb described the target area as a mass of flame from which smoke rose to a height of 23,000 feet. Two crews, captained by Flt. Sgt. H. Lossing and W. F. Russell, failed to return from this operation. Flt. Sgt. Lossing, Flying Officer D. A. Robinson (nav.), and Sgt. L. G. Davey (w/op), were presumed dead, while Flt. Sgt. G. A. Dancey (a/b) and Sgt. O. W. Sporne, R.A.F. (f/e), were known to have been killed. Of the fate of the two gunners, Sgts. E. Osborne and F. E. Simons, both R.A.F., nothing is known. Flying in the other missing Halifax, Flt. Sgt. Russell and the mid-upper gunner, Sgt. D. W. Howell, were killed, while Flying Officers M. Topplin (nav.), J. T. Shea (a/b), and Sgt. R. C. Cossar (a/g), were captured. The ultimate fate of Sgts. W. Walmsley and P. McLuskie, both R.A.F., is unknown.

A third crew, captained by Flying Officer E. B. Van Slyck, was badly shot up on the return journey over the Ruhr. Despite fire and flak damage to the port outer engine, the fuselage, the

undercarriage, and both wings, all of which made the aircraft extremely difficult to control, Van Slyck managed to nurse the Hally ("G-George") back to Woodbridge, where he effected an emergency landing. The navigator, Sgt. A. R. Phillips, although weak from loss of blood caused by flak wounds in the chest and arm, stuck to his navigational duties until the aircraft reached England. For a highly commendable showing on this operation, Van Slyck received an immediate D.F.C., Phillips an immediate D.F.M.

The rear gunner of "George", Flt. Sgt. R. H. Potentier, had baled out over enemy territory when given the precautionary order, "put on parachutes." Landing in a field near the village of Membach, Belgium, Potentier knocked at the door of a nearby cottage, and when a woman answered from a window, he shouted "Aviateur"! Thinking him drunk, she ignored him, whereupon he retired to the seclusion of a wood and fell asleep. Discovered in the early morning by the same woman who had earlier rebuffed him, he was taken to her house and given food. From then on for nearly six months he was assisted by the underground, until, on 11 September, he contacted an American recce patrol at Sart. An advance unit of the U.S. 9th Air Force directed him to the proper authorities, who arranged for his return to England. Flt. Sgt. Potentier thus became No. 433 Squadron's first successful evader.

Operating again on the 26th, the Porcupines made a strangely quiet trip to Essen. Then, on the 30th, they joined a Bomber Command force of 800 despatched against Nuremburg. Flight conditions over England and most of the Continent were cloudless, but 8-10/10ths cloud suddenly materialized near the target, making visual bombing impossible. The homeward trip was flown in bright moonlight, and, as expected, the Luftwaffe was very active. Combats were reported all the way from the target to a point south of Aachen. It was on this occasion that Bomber Command suffered its most grievous losses of the War — 94 aircraft. No. 6 Group suffered heavily, but only one missing aircraft belonged to this squadron. It was Halifax "N-Nan", captained by an American, Pilot Officer C. M. "Chris" Nielsen (the



Group Capt. L. E. Wray congratulates Wing Cdr. C. B. Sinton, on completion of Porcupines' first operation. Also in foreground are Flt. Sgt. W. E. Powell and Flt. Lt. D. W. Simpson.

"Mad Dane"), of New York City, a veteran of 26 operations and the outstanding "character" on the squadron. (He received his nickname after a raid on Leipzig. On that occasion, having arrived early on the target, he decided to put in time by hopping over for a look at Berlin, which he did. Then he rejoined the main force at Leipzig.) "Nan" had just started its timed bombing-run when there occurred an explosion in the starboard inner engine which the pilot later attributed to fuel vaporization in the empty tank. At any rate, no enemy action was reported. The engine was immediately enveloped in flames which soon spread to the wing. The bale-out order was given, but before it was completely carried out, the aircraft blew up: Nielsen, who was thrown clear, parachuted safely to the ground along with his wireless operator, Warrant Officer H. Cooper, and rear gunner, Warrant Officer J. G. McLaughlan. All three became P.O.W.s. The remaining Canadian crew members — Flt. Sgt. W. S. Rost (2nd p.), Pilot Officer D. M. Awrey (nav.), and W.O. I. Milward (a/b) — were killed. The fate of Flt. Sgt. C. W. Panton (f/e) and Sgt. J. Thompson (mu/ag), both

R.A.F., is not known. Another Halifax, "Q-Queen", captained by Flt. Sgt. R. C. Reinelt, R.A.F., was set on fire and extensively damaged when attacked by a fighter. Its starboard mainplane and outer engine were aflame for nearly two hours, and it landed with approximately 32 square feet of skin burned from the wing. Having also been holed in two fuel tanks, this Hally barely made it to Mans-ton. Reinelt and his navigator, Flgt. Sgt. A. Harde, were gonged for their part in this action.

After Nuremburg and an extended period of bad weather, assaults were made on marshalling-yards at Villeneuve St. Georges and Ghent, and a mining jaunt to the Kattegat was completed, without loss. Six more days of "scrub" weather followed. Then the Porcupines went after Noisy-le-Sec, another key rail centre, and gave it a good going-over. The defence consisted of sporadic heavy flak and the usual quota of night fighters. Though it was another well-concentrated attack, it was, for the Porcupines, a costly one, as two experienced crews failed to return. The captains of the missing aircraft were Flt. Lt. G. B. Edmonds and Flt. Sgt. W. J. Sturmy. The former was killed, as were W.O.2 T. M. Ryan (nav.), Sgt. E. A. Lansdowne (a/b), Sgt. H. K. Tole (a/g), and Sgt. D. B. Carter (mu/ag). Sgts. H. W. Fox (w/op), and A. W. Wilkinson (f/e), both R.A.F., were missing. Flt.

Sgt. Sturmy, Warrant Officer G. H. Taylor (nav.), Flying Officer A. R. Thrasher (a/b), and Sgts. N. I. Innis (a/g) and S. W. Follows (mu/ag), were presumed dead, while Sgts. J. F. Barron (w/op) and L. Morgan (f/e), both R.A.F., were missing.

After a tactical operation on Lens, the squadron reverted to strategic bombing with attacks on Düsseldorf, Karlsruhe, and Essen, on 23, 25, and 27 April, respectively. Over Düsseldorf, despite the presence of haze and vapour trails, the bombing was "on target," and, as one pilot put it, the city became "a mass of flame and fire over an area of five square miles." But the squadron suffered its heaviest setback thus far when three experienced crews failed to return. The missing crews were captained by Flying Officers G. C. Burns, W. L. Canter, D.F.M., and Warrant Officer J. Bourgeault. Burns, Sgt. J. W. Dunford, R.A.F., Flt. Sgt. D. C. MacDougall, Pilot Officer A. S. Holmes, Sgt. J. J. Bedard, and Sgt. J. Desroches, lost their lives on this operation. The sole surviving crew member, Sgt. T. N. Morris (w/op), recalled seeing a fire burning furiously in the rest position after the aircraft had been holed by flak when just east of Aachen. The last thing he remembered doing in the aircraft was donning his parachute; the next thing he was aware of was lying on German soil. He could only assume that an explosion had occurred, knocking him unconscious but at the same time throwing him clear and opening his 'chute for him. He became a P.O.W.

Flying Officer Canter's aircraft dropped its load on Düsseldorf without incident, but was attacked on the homeward journey about 10 miles east of the Belgian-German border. The port outer engine was knocked out, the port inner damaged, and the wing set ablaze. A second attack was evaded, but as the fire could not be extinguished, the skipper gave the order to bale out. Flying Officer Canter, with his navigator, Flying Officer A. W. Norris, and rear gunner, Sgt. A. M. Camenzuli, floated safely to earth but were captured. W.O.2 H. Boissevain (a/b) and Sgt. H. C. Seedhouse (mu/ag) were killed, while the fate of Sgt. G. J. Cummings, R.A.F. (f/e), is unknown.

W.O.2 Bourgeault and crew had experienced no difficulty until near Aachen, where their aircraft

was holed several times by flak. The starboard wing and outer engine took fire, and they began to lose height rapidly. After an unsuccessful attempt to jettison the bomb load, the skipper gave the order to prepare to abandon aircraft. Then, following a frontal attack by a Dornier, the order to abandon was given. All crew members baled out successfully except the captain, who was killed. Four members of his crew — W.O.2 T. A. Miller (w/op), Flying Officer J. W. Guignon (a/b), Sgt. L. Plante (a/g), and Sgt. J. Laframboise (mu/ag) — fell into enemy hands. It is not known whether Sgt. D. R. Bowerman, R.A.F. (f/e), became a P.O.W. or a successful evader.

Two members of the three aforementioned crews — Flying Officer P. A. Schnobb, wireless operator with Flying Officer Canter, and W.O.2 W. G. Dennstedt, navigator with Warrant Officer Bourgeault — became evaders, and each had his share of adventure.

After baling out, Schnobb landed in Holland near the German border. He walked for almost 36 hours, then found shelter, successively, at a farmhouse, a convent, and a policeman's house in Dork. Moving on to St. Proud, he contacted the underground organization and was given shelter at the home of the district chief. On 22 July, the Gestapo came to search the house, and Schnobb and his benefactor were forced to hide in a loft. From there they lowered themselves with a rope to a garden outside the house while the Gestapo was searching inside the house. They hid in the garden until led to safety by two girls who acted as lookouts. Two days later, Schnobb contacted another organization at Liège, where he remained until the city was liberated by the Americans.

W.O.2 Dennstedt parachuted to earth just west of Düren, Germany, and started travelling southwest. After three weeks of alternate walking and sheltering in friendly farmhouses, he contacted the underground. On being told that it was then impossible to smuggle him out, he continued once more on his own. Feeling his way to another organization at On, he remained there until mid-August, being then moved to another camp. On 2 September he was taken, along with five R.A.F. airmen, to a camp containing several American

airmen. This group became scattered shortly after, when the Germans raided the camp. On the same day, however, Dennstedt was delivered into Allied hands when an advancing American unit captured the area.

Foul weather, with unpredicted high cloud and severe icing conditions, accompanied the squadron on the Karlsruhe raid, which was considered unsuccessful. One returning Hally — “K-King” — landed at Woodbridge with 64 square feet of its starboard wing showing daylight and with its navigational equipment shot to pieces by flak. The skipper, Pilot Officer D. Brown, and his navigator, Pilot Officer H. Rumble, both R.A.F., earned immediate D.F.C.s on this operation.

With improved weather over Essen some 48 hours later, there was a corresponding improvement in the calibre of bombing. Enormous fires, the glow of which was visible from the Dutch coast, left little doubt about that. For the Porcupines the operation was, like the Karlsruhe affair, casualty-free.

Before the month was over, the squadron went tactical again, hitting rail yards at Aulnoye and Somain, the first of which was particularly well plastered. Both operations were pleasantly devoid of serious enemy activity.

In May, Porcupine activities had a pronounced horticultural flavour, ten of their seventeen operations in that period being of the gardening variety. Lorient, St. Nazaire, Cherbourg, St. Malo, Brest, Morlaix, the Kattegat, and the Frisians — all were visited once or twice during the month, and only three sorties out of 79 were abortive. Operations not maritime in nature were tactical, directed against gun emplacements at St. Valery-en-Caux and Le Clipon, marshalling yards at Ghent, Boulogne, Le Mans, and Aachen, and a radio station at Au Fevre. Throughout all these missions the enemy offered only token resistance. Scarcely any fighter activity was reported, and even the German flak, which could usually be relied upon to make things hot, was weak. The chief hazard during this period was congestion over the target, which reached its peak when aircraft had to orbit the area before bombing. Such was the case at Le Mans on the 23rd, where the



Left to right: Flying Officer Rod Wilson, Warrant Officer Stewart McDougall, Flying Officer K. Shedden, Warrant Officer J. Mitchell.

wing of “U-Uncle”, piloted by Flt. Sgt. R. L. Porter, was neatly holed by a 500-lb. bomb.

The end-month tabulation of squadron data revealed a most significant and cheering statistic. In May’s 173 sorties (169 successful), the Porcupines had suffered not a single casualty. The only sorrowful note of the month was struck when it was learned that Wing Cdr. Sinton had been screened from operations. This happy Englishman’s cheerful leadership and inspiration in all phases of Porcupine activity would be sorely missed. Effective 1 June 1944, he was replaced by Wing Cdr. A. J. Lewington.

Throughout the momentous month of June, Porcupine operations followed a distinctly tactical pattern. Every bombing mission was against a French target, all but three of these being designed either to help set up the enemy for the D-Day punch or to speed up the Allies’ breakout from the Normandy beach-head. Assaults were made on gun emplacements and key junction points in the invasion area, also on vital rail yards farther inland. Other operations included five mining excursions, a twilight raid on E-boat pens at Boulogne, and three attacks on sites housing the latest German victory weapon, the flying bomb (alias V-1, buzz bomb, robot bomb, and doodlebug). One of these sites, situated at Bonnetot, was the object of the squadron’s first daylight raid, and



photographs proved the attack to have been a model of precision bombing.

On 15 June the squadron suffered its first loss in more than 400 sorties when one of its original crews, captained by Flt. Sgt. R. L. Porter, failed to return from a raid on Cambrai. Other crew members were: Flt. Sgt. J. Rathbone, R.A.F., Warrant Officer L. D. Bennett, Flying Officer C. Ramsdell, U.S.A.A.F., Sgt. D. Wallbank, Sgt. D. C. Wood, R.A.F., and Sgt. J. Buckingham. All were lost when only an operation or two away from the end of their tours. A single fatal casualty was sustained two nights later when Flt. Sgt. D. E. Horton (a/g) was killed during a taxiing accident.

A raid on Metz on 29 June was shaky for more than one Porcupine crew. Among them was the crew of Warrant Officer H. G. McVeigh, about whom the following appears in the squadron diary:

"This night was marked by a wonderful bit of work by Warrant Officer H. G. McVeigh, who was captain of 'C-Charlie'. He was attacked four times by fighters, and evaded them all until he was finally hit while in a corkscrew. The starboard fin and rudder were completely shot off, the starboard elevator, aileron and wing tip were smashed, and the starboard flap and mainplane were badly damaged. The aircraft went into a tight spin at 13,000 feet, and McVeigh told his crew to abandon aircraft. Two members of the crew (the bomb aimer and the mid-upper gunner) baled out before the captain managed to level off at 6,000 feet. He had barely set course for England when his port inner engine packed up. However, he managed to reach Woodbridge, where he landed. A good thing it was this station with its long runways, as it was necessary to land at 155 m.p.h. to hold the starboard wing up . . ."

Commissioned shortly after, McVeigh was awarded an immediate D.F.C. for this outstanding performance.

But what of the two crew members who had baled out? The bomb-aimer, Flt. Sgt. Y. K. Carter, touched down in a marshalling-yard near Metz (his erstwhile target), and had to get out of there fast, as hostile-looking people were rushing towards him. Evading them, he began to walk, hugging

wooded areas and secondary roads. For two days he kept moving, but met only people who were either unwilling or unable to help him. On the fourth day after being shot down, he was taken in at a farmhouse, given civilian clothes and food, and introduced to an Englishman who arranged to put him in touch with the leader of the local resistance movement. The latter took him to a wood near Orbois, where he was presently joined by his crew-mate, Sgt. D. W. Palmer, who had contacted the organization with the help of a friendly farmer. The pair remained there until American troops liberated Paris.

On the Metz raid the squadron recorded its first victory over the Luftwaffe. It came at 0038 hours, and the marksmen were Pilot Officers A. L. Butler and W. MacKay, of Flying Officer J. D. R. Nixon's crew. The squadron's combat report records the action as follows:

"Fighter first seen by mid-upper gunner port quarter well up. Dived down to level and closed in, opening fire. As enemy aircraft turned in from port quarter, corkscrew port was given, and rear gunner, followed by mid-upper, opened fire. At 400 yards, fighter burst into flames and dived steeply. Was seen to explode by both gunners and flight engineer."

Butler and MacKay earned immediate D.F.C.s in this action. The squadron's second victory came seven minutes later, when an enemy aircraft fell to the guns of Sgts. W. D. Robertson and A. W. Prosofsky, flying with Flying Officer A. C. Stein.

In June the Porkies dropped nearly 1000 tons of bombs and mines, almost equalling their cumulative total for the previous five months. An idea of how busy they were may be gleaned from another statistic: in the fifteen days from the 2nd to the 17th they completed 13 operations.

In July the squadron concentrated on V-1 launching sites, but also managed two "army co-op" attacks, three strategic stabs at the Fatherland, four gardening operations, and a foray on a French rail centre. The first target to feel the sharp quill of Porky in July was the marshalling-yard at Villeneuve St. George, which got properly clobbered. But the cost to the squadron was high. Although no enemy fighters were seen by returning

crews, they were active in the area, and accounted for three Porcupine aircraft. Each of the missing Hallies bombed successfully, but was shot down by a fighter on the homeward journey. One of them, struck by cannon fire from a Ju.188, began to burn furiously amidships and around the port wing root. Five of the crew baled out as ordered, but the pilot, Pilot Officer G. A. Wolstencroft (an American), and the flight engineer, Sgt. S. J. Chambers, R.A.F., had no alternative other than to stick with the ship, since their 'chutes had been burned. Wolstencroft set the blazing Hally down in a soft, moonlit field, and he and Chambers walked away from it without a scratch. They eventually became P.O.W.s, as did Sgt. D. L. MacLean (mu/ag). Three other crew members, Sgts. H. P. Pergantes (nav.), P. R. Reeve (a/b), and A. R. Hutchinson (a/g), managed to avoid capture until mid-August, when they were taken by a retreating German ack-ack battery. In transit to Rouen, their vehicle was strafed by allied fighters, and Pergantes was wounded. During the attendant confusion Reeve and Hutchinson escaped, thereafter evading until being delivered into Allied hands. Pergantes was liberated by the Americans in September. Flt. Sgt. H. R. Brewer was the crew's only fatal casualty.

When another Halifax was shot down by an enemy aircraft, the captain, Flying Officer B. Yunker, and the mid-upper gunner, Sgt. W. Gracie, were killed. Flying Officers P. Scullion (w/op), S. G. Heatherinton (a/b), and Flt. Sgt. L. T. Grenon (a/g), baled out safely but became P.O.W.s. Nothing is known of what befell Sgt. C. F. Watmough, R.A.F. The only crew member who avoided capture was the navigator, Flying Officer M. Wiome. He struck out through rural country, walking southwest until daybreak. Hailing a farmer, he became frustrated by the latter's complete ignorance of English. However, another farmer soon appeared bearing a French-English dictionary, with the aid of which he told the Canadian to stay hidden until his return after dark. The Frenchman returned as promised and took Wiome to his home. On 7 July, the farmer conveyed the officer by horse and cart to a Maquis camp in the forest of Freteval, near Chateaudun.

From this point Wiome's journey was arranged for him.

Six members of the crew of the third missing aircraft were killed. They were; Flying Officer W. D. Baird, Warrant Officer R. T. Longley, Pilot Officer D. F. Wilson, and Sgts. T. C. Jenkins, J. H. Marler, R.A.F., and W. H. Winder. The sole survivor, Pilot Officer J. D. D. Harvie (nav.), was taken prisoner.

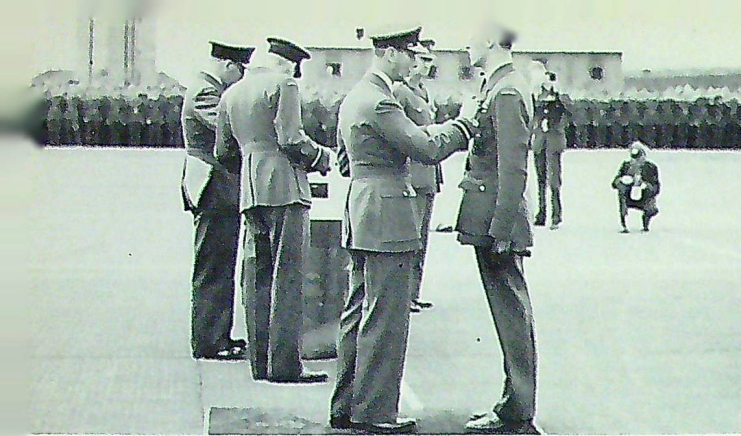
Of the next twelve operations, seven were swats at the doodlebug, and results varied from poor to good. The best attacks by this squadron were on sites at Anderbelck and Donges, where bombing was of an unusually high order. But raids on Siracourt, Ardouval, Acquet, Ferme du Forrestel, and L'Hey, had to be assessed as unsuccessful. It must be remembered that these launching-sites were very small, and nothing but direct hits, or at worst, near misses, could achieve appreciable results. Direct hits required, among other things, a combination of crystal-clear weather and near-perfect marking and bombing. No such conditions had yet been fully satisfied.

The squadron suffered unexpected casualties on the 14th, when Halifax "U-Uncle", on a cross-country exercise, crashed on the Isle of Man, killing its entire crew. In the crew were Warrant Officer J. M. Murie, Flying Officer W. M. Wallace, R.A.F., Flt. Sgt. B. E. Tees, Flying Officer J. T. Evans, and Sgts. R. L. Movold, C. F. Walker, R.A.F., and C. W. Pidgeon.

In direct support of the British Second Army, Bomber Command and the Porkies attacked Caen on the 18th and enemy positions in the Villers-Bocage area on the 30th. At Caen, pin-pointing and calculating more carefully than ever before, crews bombed within the prescribed limits, despite an unforeseen veil of cloud and smoke which partly obscured the target five minutes after bombing began.

The total effect at Villers-Bocage was also good. It was a low-level affair wherein crews, some flying as low as 1400 feet, were buffeted by the concussion of their own bomb-bursts.

In matter of strategic warfare, this squadron, on 19, 26 and 29 July, attacked Wesseling, Stuttgart, and Hamburg. At Wesseling, where the target was



Sqn. Ldr. H. T. Patterson being decorated by King George VI.

a synthetic oil plant, wishful-thinking Germans jammed our master-bomber, planted decoy markers, and put up a smoke screen. But Porky was not easily put off. Before departing, he made a smoke screen of his own — the smoke of burning *ersatz* oil, which reached a level two miles above the earth.

From the Hamburg operation, one aircraft — “W-William” — failed to return. In the crew were Flying Officers J. K. Armstrong and W. A. Martineau, Warrant Officer J. A. Robertson, Flying Officer R. W. James, and Sgts. T. B. Owen, G. A. Stonham, R.A.F., and R. W. Robinson. This aircraft had bombed successfully and was returning home, when suddenly and inexplicably the port inner engine took fire. Unable to extinguish it, the captain ordered the crew to abandon aircraft, as the flames were now spreading rapidly over the wing. Before the order could be carried out, the port wing broke off and the aircraft went into a vicious spin. Then an explosion occurred, throwing clear Martineau, James, and Robertson. Somehow or other their ‘chutes opened on the way down (two of them pulled the silk out by hand), and they landed heavily but safely, although the last-named sustained an injured back and a paralyzed right leg and arm. All three were captured. The other crew members were killed.

The four mining operations were like so many others carried out by this squadron to date, crews having met with practically nothing resembling difficulty or opposition.

In August the majority of Porcupine bombs were again aimed at V-1 launching-platforms and supply depots. The squadron made not a single attack on Germany, but it did mine once in German waters. Forêt de Nieppe, Bois de Cassan, St.

Leu d’Esserent, Forêt du Croc — these were a few of many French names pin-pointed for destruction on the squadron wall-map. Ten of them were hard-to-hit V-1 depots or launching-sites.

In the course of the raids on Bois de Cassan and St. Leu d’Esserent the squadron suffered two fatal casualties and lost two aircraft. Halifax “H-How”, returning from the latter target, crashed in the village of Skipton Bridge while making a three-engine approach to land. The pilot, Pilot Officer J. R. Harrison, was instantly killed, and the flight engineer, Sgt. D. L. Whitbread, R.A.F., died in hospital. The other crew members were hospitalized with injuries, but recovered. The loss of the second aircraft was directly attributable to enemy action. Just after bombing Bois de Cassan, Halifax “S-Sugar”, piloted by Flying Officer R. H. Simpson, was hit by flak which slightly wounded the bomb-aimer and disabled Sugar’s steering gear. After an unsuccessful attempt to repair the broken rudder-rods with aerial wire, it was found that the gunners, Sgt. O. M. Brown and R. E. Budd, could help to control the aircraft by manipulating the rudder controls. Through this unusual bit of pilot-gunner co-operation, “S-Sugar” was brought back to England. Deciding not to press his luck further by attempting to land this way, the captain ordered a bale-out, which was carried out successfully. This example of cool thinking and close crew co-operation earned an immediate D.F.C. for Simpson and D.F.M.s for Brown and Budd.

August 11th, 1944 — mark that as a most memorable date in the history of the Porcupine Squadron. The occasion was an investiture held at Leeming, wherein His Majesty King George VI officiated personally. Accompanied by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, Princess Elizabeth, and Princess Margaret, the King first made a tour of the aircraft and chatted with several of the crew members. Then came the investiture. His Majesty pinned the D.F.C. on Pilot Officer H. G. McVeigh, Flt. Lt. D. Brown, R.A.F., Sqn. Ldr. H. T. Patterson, and Flying Officer G. B. Sharman, R.A.F., and the D.F.M. on Flt. Sgt. A. R. Phillips, R.A.F.

(To be continued)

THE LIGHT AEROPLANE

(The following few remarks on the subject of light aeroplanes are taken from an after-dinner talk given by the noted R.A.F. pilot, Group Capt. D. R. S. Bader, D.S.O., D.F.C. (ret.), Ottawa on 25 January. Group Capt. Bader, it may be recalled, lost both his legs in a flying accident in 1931, but learnt to fly again with artificial legs in 1932. Invalided out of the R.A.F. in 1933, he rejoined as a Flying Officer in 1939. Before being taken prisoner in 1941, he was credited with 22½ enemy aircraft. He retired from the Service in 1946, and is now operations manager of the Shell Petroleum Company's fleet of aircraft, which is scattered all over the world. In 1940 and 1941 he commanded the only Canadian squadron then in the R.A.F., No. 242.—EDITOR.)

... The older chaps here, like myself, who learned to fly between the wars or, saving their presence, during the latter part of World War I, have a certain nostalgia for the old days when aeroplanes were constructed of wood and wire, with open cockpits — and when the more usual method of navigation, certainly in England, was by railway line... We all remember, if we are honest, the occasion when we landed in a field and asked the farmer where we were. It is not done these days — or rather, I hope it is still done occasionally by members of flying clubs in light aeroplanes — because the modern aeroplane with its gadgetry and skilled crews usually knows where it is. I say "usually", because there is still the rare occasion when even they lose themselves...

What might be described as the gay abandon of the pre-war days, with a little club-house and a field with some light aeroplanes on it, and people having tea under sunshades, and all that pleasant peaceful scene — is no longer so much in evidence. I suppose the real reason is that, with the advance of science, what started as a pioneering effort and a sport... has now become an immense world-wide big business, in the main confined within the transportation and military fields...

When the more senior of us here tonight were youngsters, and flying was something exciting and different, we all wanted to go up in an aeroplane. It was, of course, a two-seater open-cockpit job. I cannot help feeling that our ardour might have been damped if our first experience of flying was

sitting in a pressurized tube looking out of a small side-window with 40 other people. Such an introduction to flying, which is what the vast majority of people have now had, produces none of that feeling of exhilaration, in spite of the considerably greater speed — which is not in evidence, anyhow. There is far more exhilaration, fun, and impression of speed, in the open cockpit of a Tiger Moth doing 80 m.p.h. in and out of the valleys and hills made by cumulus clouds on a summer day. Owing to the presence of senior officers here, I hesitate to mention the fun which we have all experienced — let there be no mistake — of low-flying over ground.*

All that I have said so far adds up to the feeling we all have who have any knowledge of or association with the flying of light aeroplanes. It is, I think, essential that the fun of flying be kept alive and it is only through the flying clubs that this can be done. The cheap light aeroplane, in which the youngster can fly around the field — and, when he gets a bit better, take his girl friend up too — must remain with us. Let it cruise at 100 m.p.h., let it have an open cockpit with a detachable lid to put on when it is cold. The nearest modern aeroplane to this was actually built and developed in Canada — the Chipmunk. We must keep the aeroplane for pleasure, for an afternoon's fun which does not need two or three thousand yards

*Note to pilots. Group Capt. Bader's confession will have no bearing on the severity with which the R.C.A.F. will continue to deal with low-flying offenders! — EDITOR.



Some of the members of No. 242 Squadron in 1940. Left to right: Crowley-Milling, Tamblin, Turner, Saville, Campbell, McKnight, Bader, Ball, Homer, and Brown.

of runway, control towers and controls, and all the paper work that makes life so intolerable these days for the private aviator. Give me a field with a circle in the middle and let us still enjoy those things which have almost disappeared with the biplane and the open cockpit.

I remember in England before the war there was a phase when some people tried to develop what was called the ultra-light aeroplane. This was a small single-seater aeroplane with a two-cylinder motor-cycle engine. With its very low wing-loading, it landed slowly, and its maximum speed was probably about sixty miles an hour . . . I even remember a man flying one of these things from England, to, I believe, Johannesburg. It took him a long time, but he got there, and, after all, some people like riding a bicycle . . .

If the flying clubs are to flourish and blossom

again, it is essential to have a cheap aeroplane and an easy one to fly. The fantastic fees that are being demanded for private flying in England prevent the sort of person who wants to fly — the youngster — from being able to afford it. Like you over here in Canada, we have in England a limited number of subsidized pilot training schemes, but they only help the few . . .

The very considerable contribution that Canada made to the last war, including the foundation of the remarkable Empire Training Scheme, had its basis in the ab initio instruction given by the flying clubs before and during the war. Whatever the future of the aeroplane, so long as it is manned by human beings I believe there can be no better start for a pilot, however young, than the flying-club training in the light aeroplane. Maybe in the so-called jet age of the future it will dispense with its propeller and its piece of elastic and be driven by a tiny squirt, but it will still need to be a little aeroplane using a little field . . .

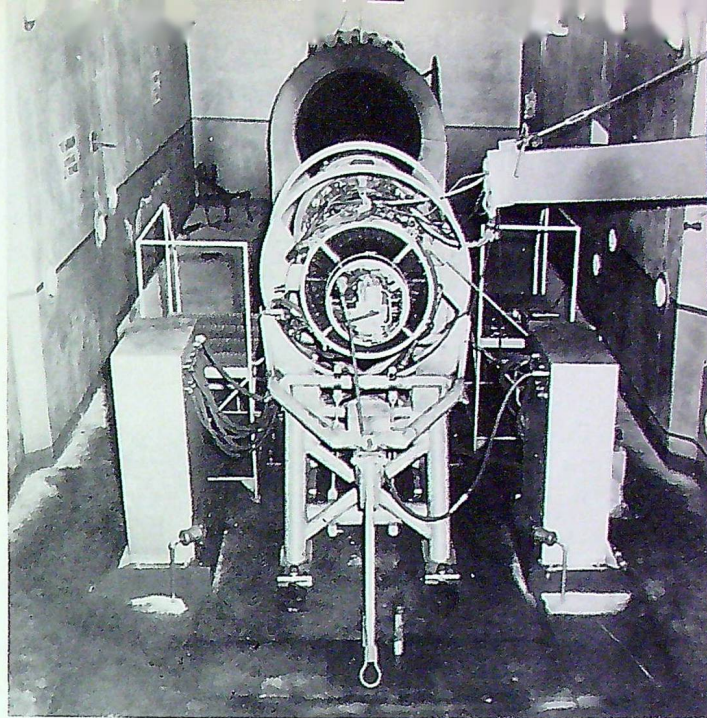
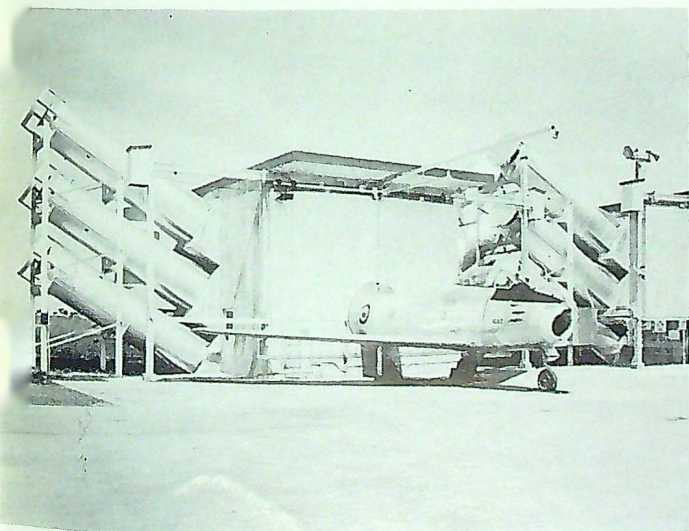
JET NOISE ABATEMENT

The noise abatement programme recently inaugurated at Canadair's plant on the outskirts of Montreal has reduced the noise made by engine run-ups to the point where it compares favourably with the normal "disturbing noises" of day-to-day life.

For example, the noise level during a rush-hour at the corner of Peel and Ste. Catherine Streets, Montreal, would be rated by a sound engineer as 85 decibels (or units of sound measurement). Since the installation of Canadair's run-up stands for completed aircraft, the sound at nearby Norgate Shopping Centre has dropped to only 65 decibels.

Like all aircraft manufacturers who produce jet 'planes, Canadair officials have been highly conscious of the noise problem when testing engines both before and after installation in aircraft, and for some considerable time research has been carried on which would lead to a noise reduction in the areas affected. A partial answer has now been found to this vexing problem.

F-86 aircraft in ground running-stand.



Jet cell for testing engines before installation. (Walter Stoneman photo.)

All un-installed engines that require testing are set up on special stands enclosed in a "jet-cell", and this has proved so effective that engine-running is practically inaudible at a short distance.

The ground-running stands for completed aircraft have proved equally effective. At Marlborough Golf Club, north-west of the plant, the noise level has dropped from 94 to 64 — 16 decibels less than the sound of a street-car passing at a distance of fifteen feet. The school opposite the plant shows a similar reduction of 30 decibels.

The two types of Maxim silencers used, one for un-installed engines and the other for completed aircraft, are far too technical for detailed description here. However, an easily understandable part of the system is the series of baffles which absorb and break up the sound waves, distributing them overhead where they are dissipated into the atmosphere.

Some idea of the size of the installations may be gained from the statement that the exhaust silencer, which is only part of the system, is 10 feet in outside diameter, 6 feet inside, 43 feet long, and weighs 25 tons. The average man could walk through the silencer without knocking his hat off.

At the moment there is no answer to the normal noise of aircraft taking off and landing.

Letters to the Editor ★ ★ ★

FLYING SAUCERS

Dear Sir:

While reading through the December issue of "The Roundel", I came across a request for information on flying saucers. We have in our station library a number of books on this subject. One which I would particularly like to recommend to anyone interested is: "Flying Saucers Have Landed", by George Adamski. I hope that, after reading it, your correspondent will be able to sleep.

Cpl. R. A. Royston,
R.C.A.F. Station Lincoln Park.

WARTIME SQUADRON PHOTOS

Dear Sir:

During my service with Nos 401 and 411 Squadrons (and, of course, with No. 126 Wing), many pictures were taken by H.Q. photographers of our operations. Are any of them available for purchase? I am also interested in obtaining a Ram Squadron (No. 401) badge suitable for framing.— May I take the opportunity here of remarking that I'd very much like to hear from some of the old gang?

Allan C. Hogue (R.C.A.F.A.),
115 Carlton Ave.,
Welland, Ont.

(Requests for photographs such as those requested by Mr. Hogue should be addressed to: Director of Public Relations (R.C.A.F.), Air Force Headquarters, Ottawa, Ont. The charge for an 8" x 10" glossy print is 50c.— EDITOR.)

NO. 126 WING VETERANS

Dear Sir:

Can you tell me whether or not veterans of No. 126 Wing are having a reunion this year? We still feel that No. 126 was certainly not one of the best wings: it was *the* best.

Both Sgt. George Westwood (also at Trenton) and I would much appreciate hearing from any former members of No. 126 Wing — especially "Doc" Dillane, "Doc" Lindsay, "Doc" Jones, Sgt. Hatfield, and Cpl. Killen.

Cpl. S. A. E. Smith,
Station Hospital,
R.C.A.F. Station Trenton,
Trenton, Ont.

Answer to "What's the Score?"

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

★ ★ ★

INADVERTENT AVIATOR

The danger of disregarding the laws of aerodynamics were never more graphically demonstrated than in 1907. That year, three years after the first aeroplane had flown at Kitty Hawk, a gentleman named Fred Marriott decided to make an assault on the world's land speed record in a Stanley Steamer. To minimize wind resistance, the bottom of the car was sheathed over into a flat surface that made a very good aerofoil.

Marriott took his car to Ormond Beach in Florida. He started nine miles from the beginning of the measured mile, and turned on the steam, which was under some 1300 pounds per square

inch pressure. When it crossed the starting-line the car was doing 190 miles an hour, and the needle was up to 197 and still climbing when the front wheels hit a bump. The front of the car lifted, the bottom of the car took on an efficient angle of attack, and the Stanley Steamer took off.

It was airborne for 100 feet. The driver was thrown, the car broke in two, and the boiler rolled down the beach for nearly a mile. Marriott, luckily, lived to tell the tale.

It is not recorded whether he logged the flying time as first pilot or not.

Sqn. Ldr. N. W. Emmott, D.F.C.

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