

The **ROUNDDEL**

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ROYAL CANADIAN AIR FORCE

* * * CONTENTS * * *

	page
Reunion in Vancouver	1
L'Escadrille "Cité de Montréal"	4
Ferry Flight	7
The North-West Staging Route: Part Five	10
No. 425 Squadron: Part Three	15
* * *	
Badges of the R.C.A.F.: 5	21
The Queen's Commendation	22
Royal Canadian Air Cadets	24
What's the Score?	26
The Suggestion Box	28
Letters to the Editor	32
* * *	
20th Anniversary Reunion	9
The Firestreak	14
Ray Tracy	23
They Also Dare	27
McKee Trophy Winner	29
"Learn to Fly"	29
Bowling Championship, 1957	30
The Recreation Badge	31
After 6,000 Years	32

THIS MONTH'S COVER



The Founder Members' Cups of the R.C.A.F., bearing the signatures of the 62 officers originally commissioned in the Permanent Force on 1 April 1924. (See page 1.)

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REUNION IN VANCOUVER

BY WING COMMANDER F. H. HITCHINS,
Air Historian.

John Griffin Library

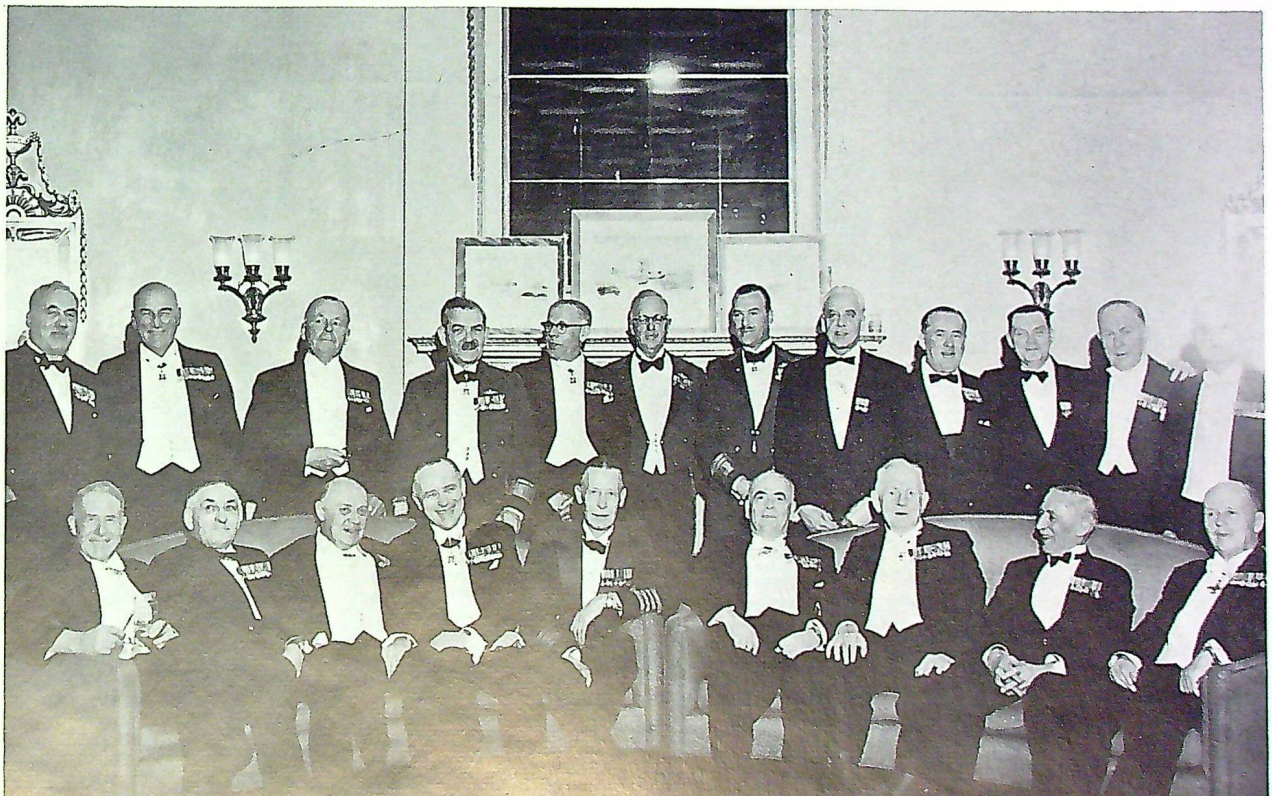
IN November 1919, when the Canadian Air Board submitted to the Privy Council its proposals for the organization of a Canadian Air Force, the members of the Board did not favour the establishment of a permanent military force because, in their opinion, it would be a "blind alley" profession from

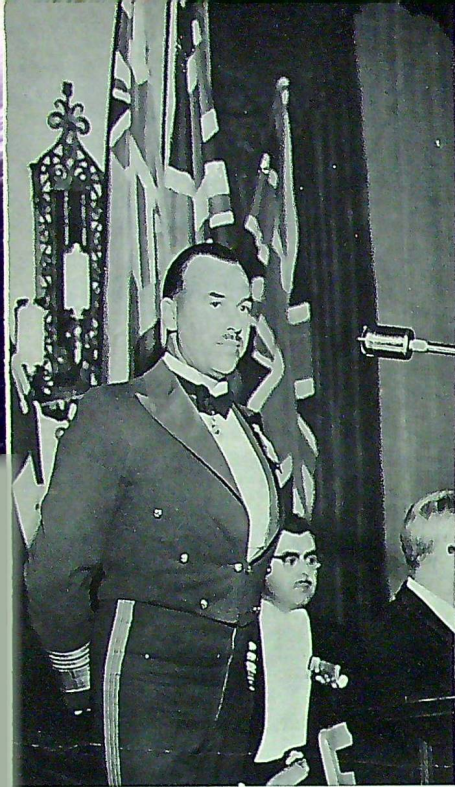
which the personnel would have to retire at a comparatively early age. On 1 April of this year a dinner was given in Vancouver to honour a group of men who had found that, despite the forebodings of the Air Board, the Air Force could be a permanent profession. The total *continuous* service accumulated by

these 21 men in travelling down that "blind alley" amounted to more than 358 years; and, before they had to retire "at a comparatively early age", ten of them had attained the rank of Air Vice-Marshal, three had become Air Commodores, and five Group Captains.

The occasion which brought the group together for their reunion in Vancouver was the Annual Anniversary Dinner of the Air Force Officers' Association of British Columbia, which this year was given in honour of the "originals" of the R.C.A.F. — the 62 officers who were appointed to commissions in the

The "originals" who attended the reunion. Back row (l. to r.): Group Captain D. A. Harding, O.B.E., A.F.C.; Air Vice-Marshal L. F. Stevenson, C.B.; Group Capt. B. D. Hobbs, D.S.O., O.B.E., D.S.C.; Air Vice-Marshal A. L. Morjee, C.B., C.B.E.; Air Vice-Marshal G. E. Brookes, C.B., O.B.E.; Air Commodore A. H. Hull, LL.B.; Air Marshal C. R. Slemon, C.B., C.B.E.; Flying Officer J. H. Hector; Wing Commander F. S. Coghill; Flying Officer C. H. Dickens, O.B.E., D.F.C.; Group Capt. F. J. Mawdesley, A.F.C.; Air Cdre. E. L. MacLeod. Front row (l. to r.): Air Vice-Marshal A. Ferrier, C.B., M.C.; Air Vice-Marshal C. M. McEwen, C.B., M.C., D.F.C., LL.D.; Air Vice-Marshal G. V. Walsh, C.B., C.B.E.; Air Vice-Marshal G. R. Howsam, C.B., M.C.; Group Capt. G. A. Mercer; Air Vice-Marshal J. L. E. A. de Niverville, C.B., LL.D.; Air Vice-Marshal F. V. Heakes, C.B.; Air Cdre. A. J. Ashton; Air Vice-Marshal A. T. N. Cowley, C.B.E. (Missing from photograph: Group Capt. R. S. Grandy, O.B.E.)





Air Marshal C. R. Slemon, C.B., C.B.E.

Permanent R.C.A.F. upon its organization on 1 April 1924. Originator and organizer of the reunion—the first ever held of the “originals”—was Air Commodore A. H. Hull, who for two years devoted his zeal, drive, and enthusiasm to the necessary correspondence and preparations. Time had somewhat thinned the ranks of the 62 “originals”, and others were unable to attend for various reasons, but almost one-half of the survivors accepted the invitation for the rendezvous.

The first function to welcome them was a cocktail party given by the officers of R.C.A.F. Station Sea Island. For two hours the mess throbbled with hangar talk that ranged over two score years, and junior officers, to whom HS2L probably sounded like a chemical formula or perhaps a war-time radar, and to whom 504K was just an unfamiliar version of a Service form, were able to meet their seniors who, on those two types of aircraft, had laid the first foundations of our Service and had enriched its legends with their feats.

The reunion dinner, held in the Hotel Vancouver, drew more than 200 members of the Air Force Officers' Association and their friends from across Canada. Tactical Air Command band was in attendance to provide musical background for the occasion, and the foyer of the banquet hall was appropriately decorated with a collection of water

colours by Wing Commander Harold Pearce which depicted the early aircraft of the R.C.A.F., from the *Avro* to the *Siskin* and *Stranraer*.

Mr. Lloyd W. Manuel, president of the Association, introduced the guests at the head table, and the Hon. Frank M. Ross, Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia, expressed the province's welcome to

Group Captain F. J. Mawdesley, A.F.C.



the "originals". Greetings from Air Chief Marshal Sir Dermot Boyle, the R.A.F. Chief of Air Staff, were read by Air Marshal Sir Philip Livingston, retired Director General of Medical Services in the R.A.F., who holds the distinction of being the Canadian to attain the highest rank in that service. The principal speaker of the evening was Air Marshal C. R. Slemon (whose appointment as a Provisional Pilot Officer in the Non-Permanent R.C.A.F. was dated 1 April 1924). In a talk sparkling with witty reminiscence the Chief of the Air Staff recalled anecdotes about each of the "old sweats" present and paid high tribute to the men "who taught us all that we know."

The reunion was the first opportunity that many of the "originals" had had to meet in a decade or more, and it was probably the first occasion on which all of them had been together in one place at the same time. The great pleasure and satisfaction that the reunion brought to them and their friends must have been a rich reward to Air Commodore Hull for his inspiration, work, and correspondence.

Although they are now officially retired from the R.C.A.F., some of the "originals" have found new fields of endeavour, in law, civil defence, and government service; others are still active in aviation as executives with aircraft manufacturers, the Department of Transport, and I.C.A.O., and one of them — a grandfather — is still keeping his hand in as a flying instructor.



Mr. Lloyd W. Manuel (left) and Air Commodore A. H. Hull, LL.B.

In a reminiscent mood two of the "originals" paused for a moment to muse why they had stayed on in the Air Force in the early days

when, for a time, there seemed to be little future in it: "I guess it was because we liked to fly." They still do.

The rung of a ladder was never meant to rest upon, but only to hold him to put the other somewhat higher. (Thomas Huxley.)

L'Escadrille

"Cité de Montréal"

No. 438 (Fighter) Squadron (Auxiliary)

As in the case of the Alouettes, whose story is now being told elsewhere in this magazine, the nominal roll of No. 438 Squadron* shows that it is predominantly French-Canadian in composition. Authorized on 1 September 1934 as No. 18 Bomber Squadron of the Non-Permanent Active Air Force, based at St. Hubert, the unit was redesignated as No. 118 Squadron in November 1937.

During the war the squadron served on the east coast for a time before it was transferred to the other side of the country for a tour in B.C. and Alaska. Then, late in 1943, it was sent overseas, where it received its present designation of No. 438. One memento of its war-time rôle as a fighter-bomber squadron is its motto, "Going Down", which derives from the radio call of formation leaders as they went into their bombing dive. At the end of hostilities, after more than five years of distinguished service, the squadron was disbanded in Germany. Twelve years — almost to a day — from the date of its first formation, the squadron was re-formed at St. Hubert, and in 1951 was officially named for the City of Montreal.

The aim of Auxiliary fighter squadrons, as laid down by Air Defence Command, is to "maintain such a standard of proficiency that, after a short course, they would proceed to any regular R.C.A.F. day-fighter squadron if necessary".

*The war-time history of No. 438 was published in "The Roundel", Sept. 1950.

No. 438's C.O., Wing Commander J. E. M. M. Gauthier, a veteran of five years of war-time flying and five and a half years of flying with the Auxiliary, is not alone in his belief that this aim has in large measure been met.

To ensure that Auxiliary squadrons remain at the desired standard of proficiency, a monthly status return is sent to A.D.C. showing the squadron's state of combat-readiness. For a squadron to be considered combat-ready, each individual member of the squadron must have a valid instrument rating and be up-to-date in cross-country and formation flying, night-flying, G.C.I., and tactics. If, for any reason, a pilot is away from the squadron for a period of three months or more, he must re-qualify as combat-ready. Towards maintaining this desired status of combat-readiness, No. 438's personnel devote the major portion of their individual and collective energies.

For practice interceptions, squadron aircraft are generally used; but, whenever the opportunity presents itself, the squadron's pilots indulge (with G.C.I. permission) in such extra-curricular activity as "bouncing" U.S.A.F. aircraft flying over Canada on Strategic Air Command exercises. Every week-end the sound of their aerial activity rends the air in the neighbourhood of R.C.A.F. Station St. Hubert as these men, who are civilians during five days of the week, climb into their jet aircraft and take-off to practice the many complex manoeuvres which are the stock in trade of the



modern fighter pilot. The squadron's record in winning the McBrien Trophy, which is awarded to the Auxiliary jet squadron obtaining the highest gunnery scores in annual competition, affords ample evidence that their constant practice pays off.

Contributing in no small way to the squadron's continuous smooth operation are the Regular Air Force support personnel who make up most of the groundcrew and some of the administrative staff. The Regular R.C.A.F. provides maintenance facilities at St. Hubert and special courses for the pilots — e.g. jet conversion and flying instructors' courses — in addition to the two-week gunnery practices which are held each summer at various R.C.A.F. stations.

October 26th of last year was a big day for No. 438: It received its first Sabres. Jets were not new to the squadron, for it had already flown T-33s and, before them, Vampires; but the arrival of Sabres gave it first-line operational aircraft with which to keep itself firmly in the Air Defence picture. In addition to the Sabres and T-33s, a number of Harvards are kept on squadron strength for the purpose of checking out newly joined pilots



Wing Cdr. J. E. Gauthier, C.O. of No. 438 Squadron, signs the City of Hamilton's Civic Book. With him is Hamilton's Mayor L. Jackson.

pool, and by frequent night-flying exercises. In addition to its primary rôle as a lecture hall and administrative section, the squadron headquarters building fulfills a variety of other purposes, serving as a clinic where four doctors and two nurses of the squadron carry out annual medicals on pilots and all incoming recruits, a processing-plant where cine-films are developed, a study hall for trade advancement, a parade square, and a dance-hall for both formal and informal occasions.

No. 438 Squadron, in common with all other Auxiliary squadrons

in Canada, is finding that its ranks are gradually being depleted of war veterans. New pilots come, generally speaking, from four sources: Regular Air Force pilots who have served their five-year term and been discharged (lately this group has included several ex-R.A.F. pilots who have emigrated to Canada), T.C.A. pilots who fly with No 438 on week-ends and on their days off, former U.R.T.P. flight cadets sponsored by the Auxiliary for further training, and finally, young men who are sponsored by the squadron, receive their training in the regular R.C.A.F., then return to

and providing instrument-flying practice, as well as to take care of routine flying requirements when all the jets are "booked". Flying the three types of aircraft from 8.30 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. on two days a week, the squadron averages more than 325 hours per month.

In addition to their flying activities, members of the squadron spend two evenings each week at their headquarters at 160 St. Joseph Blvd., in Montreal. This two-storey red brick building, which is occupied solely by the squadron, contains lecture rooms, briefing-rooms, drill hall, officers' mess, combined sergeants' and airmen's mess, an Orderly Room, medical inspection room, photo section, offices, and C.O.'s conference room.

For the 22 pilots, the Tuesday and Thursday evening sessions consist of lectures on navigation, meteorology, air regulations, *Sabre* handling, northern flying, flight safety, tactics, emergency procedures, and intelligence. The lectures are given by members of the R.C.A.F. support group, individuals from the local aircraft industries, members of the squadron, and by officers from A.D.C. The programme is supplemented by occasional dinghy practices at a local Y.M.C.A.

Cpl. J. McCall briefs his groundcrew. During the week Cpl. McCall works at Canadair Ltd.





Flying Officer C. Toussignant, Regular support officer, supervises Auxiliary personnel who work in the Orderly Room.

the time, additional on-the-job training is provided at various Air Force stations. Other sources of groundcrew personnel are mechanics from the local aircraft firms, who take busmen's holidays and work with the squadron on weekends, and airmen who have finished their tour of duty with the Regular R.C.A.F. and wish to maintain their Service connections by working with the Auxiliary. Squadron technical officers are officials from the local aircraft industries and from the Bell Telephone Company.

* * *

In this article we have attempted no more than to give a broad picture of the work of one of the R.C.A.F.'s auxiliary fighter squadrons. We could, of course, elaborate on it in considerably greater detail, just as we might write at some length of that active social life which has contributed so much to the high morale and friendly spirit of No. 438. We feel, however, that neither course would greatly further our underlying present purpose, which is, in effect, to remind our readers how real and how sharp is the weapon that is being forged by Canada's Auxiliary Air Force.

the squadron. In connection with the last-named group, a problem exists: how to get them to return to the Auxiliary squadrons once they have had a taste of Regular Air Force life. No. 438's records show that some 75% of all flight cadets sponsored by the squadron join the Regular Air Force.

Groundcrew personnel are recruited mainly from the ranks of

high-school students. These students receive training through the local Technical Training Unit (Aux.) during the school year and through the Reserve Tradesmen Training Plan during the summer; then, when they have acquired a Group II in their respective trades, they are posted to the squadron as tradesmen. For those members of the Auxiliary groundcrew who have

CORRECTION

We wish to extend our sincere apologies to W.O.1 P.V. Fletcher (retired) for the error on page 16 of our April issue, in which he was listed as "A.C. P.V. Fletcher (released)". On the contrary, **W**arrant Officer Fletcher was retired from the R.C.A.F. in March 1945 after 33 years' unusually varied and exemplary service in the Royal Navy, the Royal Air Force, and the Royal Canadian Air Force. In 1924 he served in Baghdad under Squadron Leader Robert Leckie, later Air Marshal and Chief of the Air Staff, R.C.A.F., and he was also in charge of the first contingent of men to be posted to Trenton in Sept. 1931.—In other words, we could not have been much more wide of the mark.—Editor.)

Ferry Flight

GENERALLY speaking, a pilot's log book shows the amount of time he spends in the air. For one group of pilots in the R.C.A.F., however, logged time represents only a fraction of the hours they are airborne. The aircrew in this unique position are the pilots of No. 129 Acceptance and Ferry Flight, based at No. 6 R.D. and having a detachment at Calgary. These pilots find that, in addition to the hours they log while engaged in delivering aircraft, they are required to spend many more riding as passengers to and from various points in Canada and the U.S.A. in order to pick those aircraft up.

Trips flown by ferry pilots vary from 3000-mile trips, with *Mitchells* from Los Angeles to Trenton, to three-minute hops in *Sabres* from Cartierville to St. Hubert. Unlike the majority of their colleagues in the Air Force, who operate from some particular station and return to that station each night, practically the only time ferry pilots are at their home station is when they are passing through. A typical working day for a ferry pilot may consist of picking up an aircraft at some point far removed from No. 6 R.D. and ferrying it to a third point equally distant from home. It is not uncommon for a ferry pilot to spend six hours riding as a passenger in a *Dakota* before being able to log one hour as pilot in a jet. This system, however, has its advantages, since a pilot home-bound in a jet can bid a fond farewell to his colleagues in the *Dakota*, spot them a few hours, and still be waiting for them at the bar for a pre-prandial.

Aircrew at No. 129 A. & F. Flight get to many places not generally visited by other R.C.A.F. personnel. In the U.S.A., they go to such spots as the C-119 plant in Maryland and the L-19 factory in Kansas; in Canada, they fly into fields where other Air Force aircraft would have no occasion to go, such as former wartime training stations now used as storage depots, and fields operated by civilian contractors. The wartime fields, incidentally, while serving admirably as storage depots, were never designed to handle present-day high-speed aircraft; consequently No. 129's pilots have no difficulty "staying current" on short-field landings and take-offs.

Since, during the course of a working week, the 11 pilots from the flight at Trenton, commanded by Squadron Leader W. G. Richmond, and the seven pilots from the Calgary detachment, commanded by Flight Lieutenant D. R. Souter, D.F.C., may be widely dispersed throughout Canada and the U.S.A., they are seldom, if ever, available for C.O.'s parades and mess dinners. But, though not often together as a unit, the crews meet frequently as their paths cross and re-cross at such places as the St-Charles Hotel in Winnipeg or the Lethbridge Flying Club. For them, temporary duty is the rule rather than the exception in life. More than half their tour with No. 129 is spent away from their home station, and more than 100 travel claims are submitted each month by the handful of pilots and the few crew members at No. 6 R.D. Since these wanderers seldom have a chance to get a normal advance



Sqn. Ldr. W. G. Richmond.

on their travel claims, a standing advance from the ever-benevolent Accounts Section keeps them solvent.

In addition to their prime responsibility of ferrying and test aircraft as directed by Air Command, No. 129 calibrates U.H.F./A.D.F. (ultra-high frequency/automatic direction-finding) sites and carries out such flying may be required to support A.M. salvage operations. The supplementary rôle of the detachment at Calgary is to make regular flights to Whitehorse and other points along the Alaskan route on behalf of No. 2 Construction and Maintenance Unit.

* * *

No pilot goes directly to Flight on completion of his assignment: he must have a fair amount of experience in the field joining the unit. The pilots on strength average 2500 hours experience, to which they are adding at the rate of some 500 hours a year. A current instrument is also a "must", as ferrying is now carried out in all weather as well as under the best conditions. Ferry pilots m

and, if applicable, the priority of the flight. This information is then entered on the status board and, in theory, all that remains is to assign the pilots to the job. However, things don't always work out quite that nicely. The status board is in a constant state of flux as the state of readiness changes for the 60 or more aircraft shown. The pick-up date may be changed because a modification wasn't completed on time, an aircraft may go unserviceable, or a *Lancaster* pilot may be required at a time when all available *Lancaster* pilots are out in the field. Weather may cause further delays by detaining an aircraft which is carrying ferry pilots to their assignments. In the elaborate and interlocking game of aerial hopscotch wherein different pilots fly different aircraft to different places at different times, a *Harvard* delayed at Winnipeg can prevent a *Dakota* from getting from Trenton to Toronto.

* * *

The maintenance personnel of No. 129 are as versatile as the aircrew. With a row of aircraft on the ramp resembling a line-up on Air Force Day, the groundcrew are assured of variety in their work. There are few, if any, aircraft in

the service of the R.C.A.F. today upon which the groundcrew of No. 129 haven't worked at one time or another. There remains, however, the problem of obtaining parts for the many types of aircraft. Since it would be impossible for the flight to stock spare parts for every aircraft in the R.C.A.F., only those minor items known to give recurring trouble are held. All other parts are demanded directly from the Supply Depots. Although the flight has a splendid record for keeping aircraft serviceable, no matter where those aircraft may be, inevitably there are some delays, since it takes time for requisitioned parts to arrive from the Supply Depots. Once an aircraft is turned over to a ferry pilot, A. & F. Flight assumes responsibility for it until it is delivered. From the maintenance point of view this means that, if the aircraft goes unserviceable at some airfield where no spares are available, it is up to A. & F. Flight to provide them.

Maintenance and servicing at No. 129 is a 24-hour affair, with groundcrew working in three shifts to ensure that immediate care will be taken of all aircraft regardless of their time of arrival. Having

considerable numbers of different aircraft to handle, some of which (particularly those going to contractors for repairs) are in anything but tip-top shape, the tradesmen at the unit must, of necessity, be of a very high calibre. Because of this need for first-class tradesmen, airmen at the unit are particularly concerned with trade advancement in order to add to their qualifications. It should be stated, too, that much of the credit for the flight's success in the maintenance and servicing department is due to the efforts of Flt. Lt. W. F. Olson, the Unit Technical Officer.

* * *

There are times when the operations room at No. 129 resembles a passenger terminal. As the activities of the flight's far-ranging pilots have become better known, transients have taken to dropping in, hoping for flips to their destinations. A sign prominently displayed in the ops. room reads: "We do not operate a sked run. You are welcome to wait and sweat it out." None the less, the chances are that, no matter where these Service hitch-hikers want to go, it won't be long before one of the R.C.A.F.'s ferry pilots will be heading that way.

20TH ANNIVERSARY REUNION

The two middle pages of our January-February issue were devoted to the proposed 20th Anniversary Reunion of the members of the 1937 intake at No. 2 Technical Training School, Camp Borden, of whom 130 are still serving.

Arrangements have been made to hold the reunion in Toronto on August 2nd 1957, and a large gathering is anticipated. All who are interested in attending are asked to contact the reunion co-ordinator as soon as possible:

Flight Lieutenant A. C. Maskell
107 Dundas St. East,
Trenton, Ont.

THE NORTH-WEST STAGING ROUTE

PART FIVE

BY FLYING OFFICER S. G. FRENCH



Fishing on Smith River.

(In Part Four the author left Watson Lake, and he is now on his way south back to Edmonton.—Editor.)

At Smith River, now operated entirely by the Department of Transport, I spoke to Little Louis, a prospector and trapper who was flown in a Fairchild into Lake Toobally in 1937. Little Louis told me that, "when the Smith River airport was built, all of the supplies, including the bulldozers and a saw-mill, were flown into Toobally Lake, at the head of Smith River. At the turn of the century a tribe of Indians camped on this lake and, for reasons known only to themselves, called it "Tea-Boiling Lake". Eventually "Tea-Boiling" became "Toobally". A rough camp was established there, but before any actual construction began, an aerial photograph showed a far better site further down the Smith River. The cats made a road down to the present site, and all the supplies were hauled down on sleighs. The saw-

mill was left at Toobally, and the logs were cut there and sent down the Smith River. When they unloaded the radio equipment at Toobally, it fell into the lake and would not work for a long time. There were Americans, D.O.T., and R.C.A.F. people here all this time, but I can't remember any of their names."

About fifteen miles straight east of the Smith River airport there is a valley with a curious name, the Million Dollar Valley. In 1943, three B-26s were winging their way north from Edmonton, when suddenly the pilot of the lead aircraft noticed that his fuel gauge registered zero. He radioed to the other two aircraft and told them to continue on to Whitehorse, as he was going to attempt a landing. They signalled back: "We aren't going on without you. We'll follow you down." The

three aircraft landed in perfect V-formation, two of them with their wheels down, and the crews all climbed out without a scratch among them. Ironically, the lead aircraft was not out of fuel; the gauge registered zero because of a short-circuit in the wiring.

Smith River is only an hour or so by air south-west of the famous Nahanni Valley. The Nahanni Mountains, unexplored to this day, lie sixty-odd miles west of Fort Simpson at the junction of the Liard and Mackenzie Rivers. Not many years ago, it was still believed that somewhere among them lay a valley where prehistoric monsters still survived amid warm pools and tropical vegetation.

To this valley, so the stories run, have gone many fortune-seekers who never returned. Willie and Frank McLeod, for instance, were murdered there in 1906, later to be found by their brother Charlie with their heads missing. In 1928, Charlie and a prospecting party were

flown in by Doc Oaks, but all they discovered was a desolate cabin and the skeleton of some still unidentified white man.

Wop May, Leigh Brintnell, and Dal Dalzel have, at one time or another, all flown into the Nahanni (or Dead Man's) Valley. Dal, who went there in 1936 to trap for furs, told me: "It's a vast country. Its rivers are walled in by high glacier-covered canyons. The valley, which is full of sulphur hot-springs, is about ten miles long and five miles wide. It is completely surrounded by mountains, and the Nahanni River splits it down the centre. Because of the turbulence of the river and the high gorges surrounding it, it's almost impossible to gain access to it on the ground. This leaves only the air, but the mountain peaks are still unmapped, and some of them rise to a height of 10,000 feet or more."

It was in this vicinity that Leigh Brintnell discovered, surveyed, and photographed, the Nahanni Ice-Field. This is the largest known ice-field in North America, larger even than the Columbia Ice-Field in the Rockies.

Ted Holmes told me, after I returned to Edmonton, about a flight that he made with Major-General John Peter Mackenzie, the Canadian Army Inspector-General, in July 1944. Ted flew him to Dawson City to inspect the B.C. Mountain Rangers. This militia outfit consisted of sourdoughs and Indians, many of whom were over eighty years old. It was the first major inspection that they had led in their thirty years' existence, "and man, did they look proud, standing on the square with their six bicycles."

After inspecting a similar group at Aklavik, the General and Ted headed back toward Fort Nelson. North of the Nahanni ranges their Lockheed 10 was struck by a bolt of lightning. The lightning blew holes in one wing tip, and a hole



Mystical experience at Steamboat Mountain.

in the tail end big enough to crawl through. Their radio was gone, and, of course, their compass. Flying by the disabled gyro and by clock, Ted allowed three degrees precession on the gyro every five minutes, and then cranked it back. After flying over (or around) the high mountains surrounding Dead Man's Valley, they arrived at a point five miles east of Nelson in the dark. "It was, needless to say, quite an experience."

* * *

On our drive from Smith River to R.C.A.F. Detachment Fort Nelson we crossed the second highest peak on the Alaska Highway, Steamboat Mountain. (The highest elevation is immediately north of the Snag cut-off, from which it is possible to see both Mount Logan and Mount McKinley.) The mountain actually does present the appearance of a steamboat, at least from a distance.

In the valley on the north side of Steamboat Mountain, there is a restaurant, about a hundred feet from which, right on the Alaska Highway, lay an R.C.A.F. Piasecki helicopter which had been hit by a

down-draft when returning from the previous Air Force Day celebrations at Namao. In the valley on the south side of Steamboat Mountain, there is another restaurant. About a hundred feet from this second restaurant, right on the Alaska Highway, lay a U.S.A.F. Piasecki which had been hit by a down-draft on its way to Alaska. This coincidence provided my mystical experience for the day.

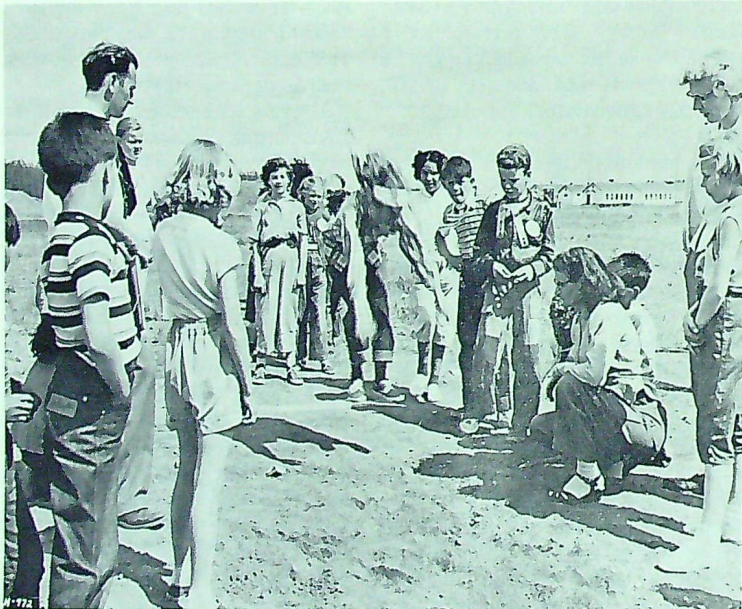
Arriving at Fort Nelson, a detachment under Namao, I went and paid my respects to its officer commanding, Squadron Leader V. T. Woods, D.F.C. He suggested that my best sources of information would be Mr. and Mrs. Arthur F. George, owners and proprietors of the fur-trading post across the Nelson River at Old Fort Nelson. We therefore drove down to the river bank, gave our horn three long blasts and, all of a sudden, an engine sputtered on the other side. Soon the ferryman came into view and took us across the river.

From Mr. and Mrs. George I heard the story of the station's construction, and a remarkable story it was of difficulties met and



Members of preliminary survey party at Fort Nelson, in 1940.

Sports Day at Fort Nelson — for children of R.C.A.F. personnel, local white residents, and from the Indian Reserve School.



overcome. Among others of the more humorous incidents in it was the episode of Old Macdonald, an Indian centenary who helped to burn the brush off the runway. Scuttling here and there, gleefully lighting matches and setting fire to everything, the old chap was in his element—until suddenly the flames got out of control and his own camp was razed to the ground. Macdonald drew himself up, deeply offended. "Me work no more!" he said. Then, turning on his heel, he stalked off into the bush and was seen no more.

The work continued rapidly, so that Fort Nelson was fit for flying three months before Pearl Harbour. Where, only a year before, Yukon Southern had landed its aircraft on the river, a modern airport now stood. "It seemed like only a day," said Mrs. George, "since we had an old Allis-Chalmers cat here pulling a home-made log roller which packed the snow so that Yukon Southern's two Barkley-Grows might land. Then, on almost the next day, an American paymaster took off from here in a C-47, bound for the north carrying the pay for all the American troops. This plane never did arrive over Watson. A big search was conducted, but not a trace was found. Three years ago, ten years after the loss, some hunters were looking for big game on Steamboat Mountain, when a few bills — paper money — blew against the flanks of their horses. The C-47 had crashed without catching fire. There was a fortune scattered about the clearing. Oh, we have fun in the North!"

Before leaving Fort Nelson, I stopped in at the hospital. The hospital answers all distress calls from people in the area between Fort St. John and Whitehorse, and every day is a busy one for it. Ambulances, run by the Army, are stationed at strategic points along the Alaska Highway. Often emergency advice is given by 'phone or radio

to isolated spots. All sorts of people are taken care of — Army and Air Force personnel and their dependents, civilians, tourists, Indians, trappers, prospectors, and patients from geological surveys and oil-drilling sites. The Indians are paid for by the Department of Indian Affairs. Civilians pay for their medical attention at Department of Veterans' Affairs rates. Pre-natal and post-natal clinics are provided for northern mothers. In cases of extreme emergency, air evacuation is made to Edmonton or Vancouver. Emergency operations, of which a fair number are performed, are carried out only in cases of extreme urgency.

Once, when Joe Chipezia, Chief of the Prophet River Indians, and his son Alec were out making a tour of their trap-line, Alec was attacked by a black bear while he slept. Joe scrambled out of his blankets and ran at the bear. In a rage, the bear threw Joe ten feet through the air. Joe landed beside his knife, which he grabbed up, and returned to the fray. He stuck his left hand in the bear's mouth and proceeded to stab with his right hand. The S.M.O. told me that Joe required quite a bit of sewing.

A few years ago, the S.M.O. at Nelson and a nursing sister crossed the Fort Nelson River to deliver an Indian woman's baby. It was a stormy night, and the midwife and relatives were shouting and beating the outside of the tent to ward off evil spirits. They were apparently not very successful, for inside the tent complications developed. The doctor decided to take the mother back across the river in their canoe to the hospital. The violent storm and the rushing waters of the Nelson combined to overturn the canoe and its three (or four) passengers, but the doctor and the nurse somehow managed to swim with the canoe to shore while holding on to the mother. Minutes after reaching



"The bridge across Beaton River had been washed out . . ."

shore, a natural birth occurred, and soon a baby's cries joined the thunder's growls.

* * *

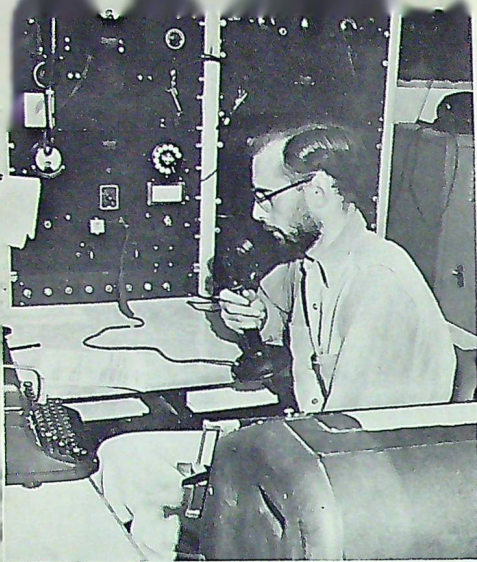
Leaving Fort Nelson, we set off for Beaton River, and were soon on the cut-off that leads from the Highway in to the airport. The cut-off is roughly of the same length and type as the one that connects the Highway to Aishihik; but there the resemblance ends. Gone, I found, were the dangerous hills, and the deep and precipitous slopes outside the car window. Game and fowl were less plentiful; trees were fuller and greater in variety; and the road was bordered with wild roses. Here and there the face of nature was scarred where men and their monstrous machines had driven side-roads in their search for oil.

At a point about sixty miles in, our road came to an abrupt end. The bridge across the Beaton River had been washed out that spring, and only its two ends remained. We abandoned our car, and

a trapper — the only man for miles around — kindly rowed us across to the other side. There we were met by Mr. J. Sobolewski, D.O.T. official in charge of the airport, who drove us on to our destination. He knew that we were coming because we had 'phoned to the control tower from the Highway a few hours before.

As Mr. Sobolewski told me, the story of the building of Beaton River airport is not a particularly gripping one. Supplies were simply brought up the old pack-trail to Fort Nelson, and construction followed the usual pattern. From the point of view of metropolitan amenities, however, the former R.C.A.F. unit remains an exceedingly isolated spot.

This is as good a place as any at which to interrupt my narrative with a few words on communications along the Staging Route. Two days after Pearl Harbour, it was announced in Ottawa that radio range facilities along the North-West Staging Route were completed



Mr. J. Sobolewski.

and in operation. This meant that the Route was ready to be flown in any type of weather. In addition to this, at the end of 1943 the R.C.A.F. began to organize, in Edmonton, an airways traffic control centre. The centre was responsible for all air traffic between the 49th parallel and the Alaska boundary, a distance of more than 1,500 miles of airway. The programme cost well over five million dollars, half of which was spent on the provision of telephone and teletype landline circuits between Edmonton and Snag, and the other half on the construction of a number of alternative radio channels.

Built by men of the R.C.A.F. signals and construction branches,

the landlines were equivalent to those required for a telephone circuit between Calgary and New York, a distance of approximately 2,400 miles. The flying controller in Edmonton can get in touch immediately with any control towers along the Staging Route. Similarly, the man in the tower at Snag may simply pick up his 'phone receiver, dial one digit, and talk to his counterpart at Edmonton, or Beaton River, or any other of the units on the route. Communication is also possible between aircraft in the air and any of the stations on the ground.

Alternative channels of communication were built in order that all exigencies might be provided for. Should, for example, the landline break down, powerful radio transmitters were available for use. Some of these transmitters ran to 10,000 watts. Backing up the first radio channel was another, of lower power. Behind this there were others, less powerful again, but still strong enough to ensure that the North-West Staging Route would never be without a channel of communication.

Early in 1944, it seemed that work on the communication system might have to stop. Important equipment for the repeater sta-

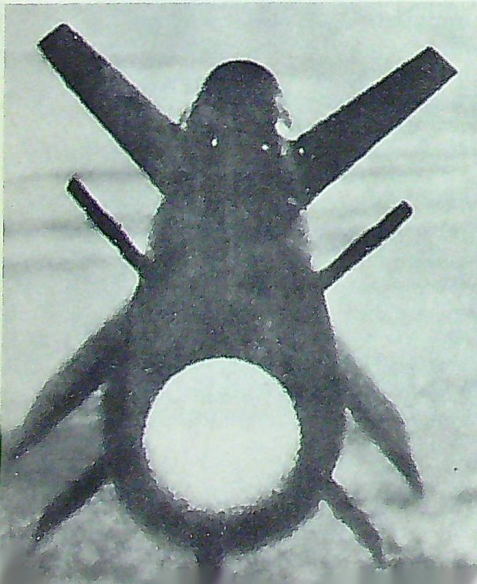
tions, which amplify messages as they flash along the landline, could not be found anywhere in North America. Manufacturers stated the desired equipment could not be delivered for nine months. Then, as often happens in war-time emergencies, it was learned that there was repeater equipment in North Africa which had been installed there during the fighting in 1942 and 1943, but which was no longer required. It was immediately rushed back across the Atlantic and installed on the Route.

To return to Beaton River. Before the reader rows back with me across to our waiting car, he may be interested by a curious belief that appears to be prevalent among the ladies of that region of Canada's northland. Stated with the decorum due to "The Roundel", it is this: that the drinking of beer from a clear glass bottle will almost certainly result in the drinker's becoming a mother.

And so, as Ezra Pound might have written:

*On and on and on and on,
On we drove to Fort St. John.*

(To be continued)



The Firestreak

Designed by de Havilland Propellers Ltd., the *Firestreak* is an air-to-air guided weapon which employs a system of infra-red target homing. It will be fitted to the English Electric P.1 and the Gloster *Javelin* aircraft.

The infra-red system possesses qualities of great range and sensi-

tivity, and is immune to the jamming which it is possible to employ against conventional radar weapons. The missile, employing a detector eye which is sensitive to the infra-red rays emitted from an aircraft, will home in on a target no matter what manoeuvre the target may perform.

No. 425

Squadron

PART THREE

BY FLIGHT LIEUTENANT A. P. HEATHCOTE,
Air Historical Branch.



Group Captain J. H. L. Lecompte, D.F.C.

BECAUSE of their absence overseas and their conversion to new aircraft types, the Alouettes had all but missed the Battle of Berlin. They were able to join Bomber Command's final grand gesture to the Nazi capital, on the night of 24/25 March 1944. They saw unmistakable earmarks of bombing success—fires merging into a fierce, concentrated holocaust around the markers; smoke already risen to 10,000 feet though the raid was still young; an awesome red glow visible more than 150 miles away.

Notwithstanding the successes of Bomber Command, the period of February and March, 1944, was, from the viewpoint of losses, a black one. Beginning with the Leipzig raid in February, the *Luftwaffe*, to give it its due, had been running up some impressive scores. These included 78 bombers downed on Leipzig, 72 on Berlin, 37 on Stuttgart, and 33 on each of Schweinfurt and Frankfurt. Command's most grievous setback of all came at the very end of the period, for it was Nurem-

berg, a name that ex-bomber crews would prefer to forget, that came to be linked with the loss of 94 crews after the raid of 30/31 March. No. 425 Squadron, which took part in all the above operations, lost five crews in the period.

With the arrival of March, the time had come to divert the heavy bomber from its appointed strategic task to something more in the nature of the tactical. Bearing in mind the invaluable assistance rendered by the air forces in their anti-communications work before the invasion of Italy, the top brass eventually agreed that before the European fortress could be breached with any great hope of success, its grey-clad occupants would have to be deprived, above all else, of transportation to forward areas during the critical time of initial assault and establishment. Nearly four score railway centres in north-west France and Belgium were then carefully designated for destruction, and the responsibility for roughly half the task fell to

Bomber Command. From early March till the middle of June more rail-smashing forays were made by the crews of the *Lancs* and *Hallies* than in any previous or following period of similar duration.

The Alouettes, old-timers at working on the railway, joined the heavy bombers' first rail-ripping demonstration, put on at the Trappes marshalling yard, near Paris, on 6 March. Striking results were achieved. Such thorough damage was done to tracks, engine sheds, and rolling stock that the yard was out of action for more than a month. Before the month was out, the squadron took aim at three more railway targets. Then, in April and May, eleven of its fifteen tactical operations were directed at further rail disruption. What may have been the most successful anti-railway operation in which it ever participated was that on the yard at Aulnoye on 27/28 April. Unmistakable evidence of the raid's accuracy and pulverising effect is graphically presented in the post-



Cpl. Maurice Marquet.

bombing recce photo, a picture that speaks for itself.

April had seen the departure of No. 425's second C.O. Wing Commander Richer, who, having served with the squadron for approximately a year, was the senior Alouette in point of service with the unit as well as of rank, was posted on the 4th upon completion of a tour. He was succeeded by Wing Cdr. R. A. McLernon, who stepped up from the position of flight commander.

In April, Command did not entirely abandon its strategical speciality as it was to in May and June. Over a four-day period the Alouettes gave the high-explosive-incendiary treatment to Düsseldorf, Karlsruhe, and Essen, and lost three crews. Of two crews missing on Karlsruhe, all but three members became either prisoners-of-war or successful evaders. Sergeants J. J. Michaud and A. Best effected a hair-raising evasion as a team. Contacting the Organization in Echalzer, Luxembourg, they remained there for three weeks, then moved on to Ech-

ternach. The day after their arrival there, two Gestapo agents entered the room where they were sleeping. One barked at them briefly in German, then went to investigate in the next room. There he was greeted by two shots in the head from a gun wielded by the son of the airmen's host. The dying Nazi staggered from the room, pursued by the young Luxembourger, who at this point was cut down by a burst of submachine-gun bullets from the second agent. This German then swung his fire toward the airmen, but missed. The unarmed pair scurried out of there fast, Michaud carrying a splinter in his head as a souvenir of the gunplay. After hiding out for a while, they moved along to Trois Verges and thence to an Underground camp in the Ardennes, which they were forced to evacuate during an enemy attack on it. They were finally sheltered in camps near Villance and Jehonville until their liberation.

In this pre-D-Day period the *Luftwaffe* was not having things all its own way *vis-à-vis les Alouettes*. Kills number two, three, and four were scored by Alouette gunners in just over a month. The marksmen were Sgt. J. M. Croteau, who knocked down a Ju. 88, and Sgt. L. S. Owen, R.A.F., joint victor with Sgt. A. E. Ashford and Pilot Officer O. R. Collins, respectively, over a Junkers 88 and an Me. 109. All three of the downed enemies were "flamers"; there was not a particle of doubt as to their complete destruction. Croteau, Owen, and Collins were soon to be decorated. Owen was an especially alert and gimlet-eyed gunner. Time and again he would be first to spot the enemy; time and again he would beat the enemy to the punch. Invariably manning the mid-under turret (many *Halifax* IIIs carried the extra gun position), he was a living advertisement for that single Browning .5 that he

handled so well. Much was still to be heard from him and Collins in a gunnery way.

* * *

Having a target priority second only to that of railway centres in the month or so before D-Day were the heavy gun batteries and radio and radar stations spread along the coastal areas of France and the Lowlands. As their targets among these, the Alouettes drew mostly guns. They hammered batteries at St. Valery-en-Caux, Calais, Merville-Franceville, Neufchatel, and Houlgate, the latter being bombed only a few hours before the start of Operation "Overlord", the greatest combined assault in history. Their lone radio target was a station at Au Fèvre, which, because of conditions beyond its control, was forced to go off the air after the raid.

On Victoria Day the Alouette leadership underwent its third change. Wing Cdr. J. H. L. Lecomte took over from Wing Cdr. McLernon, the latter being posted to No. 408 (Goose) Squadron, of which he eventually took command. His award of the D.F.C. was promulgated some three weeks later.

From D-Day until the middle of June the Alouettes kept up their work in indirect support of the invading forces, pounding six railway targets, one airfield, and E-boat pens at Boulogne. *En route* to a marshalling-yard at Versailles-Matelots, one of their *Halifaxes* ran into a barrage of heavy flak. The airspeed indicator, D. R. compass, and wireless aerial were put out of commission; damage was done to the rigging of a wing, markedly affecting the bomber's flying characteristics; a big hole was smashed in the nose near the bomb-aimer's position; but the crew were unharmed. The captain, Flight Lieutenant L. R. Brochu, flew on to the target, bombed as briefed, and took the *Halifax* home, anything but a

routine chore under the circumstances. He put up a gong before the summer was out, and his navigator, Pilot Officer J. J. P. Camire, was soon to follow suit.

The squadron found the month of June one of unprecedented night-fighter activity. It scuffled thirteen times with the German air force, and its gunners destroyed three aircraft in five nights. At precisely 0412 hours on 8 June, the firm of Owen, Collins, and McEvoy, gunnery experts, began to dispense business from Flying Officer E. E. Kirk's "Q"-Queen. The introductory part of the transaction was handled by Owen, who first saw a potential customer (an F.W. 190) at a range of 600 yards on the port quarter down. Uttering the opening remarks, "Corkscrew port, go", he greeted the Focke-Wulf with 30-odd rounds of .5. As it broke away and vanished, he handed the case over to his mid-upper colleague, Sgt. D. E. McEvoy, a new partner in the organization, who, almost simultaneously with the former's sighting, had spotted a second likely client (also a 190) approaching on the opposite quarter. This F. W. stated its case clearly and succinctly with a burst of tracer that passed just over the weaving "Queen". McEvoy's reply was in accordance with the business' best traditions — a burst of 500 rounds of .303. Contact was registered, and the Focke Wulf broke away in flames. Seeing an excellent opportunity to wrap up the deal, Collins now threw in an additional two hundred rounds. Client number two was seen to fall to earth in flames, then to explode. Client number one having taken his business elsewhere, the transaction was closed. For his finesse in the operation McEvoy was recommended for a D.F.M.

Owen and McEvoy were also much to the fore on the night of 12/13 June, notable for producing a double Alouette victory. This time

they collaborated on a Ju. 88. The second kill of the night went to Sgt. J. Howell, who despatched an Me. 110 that had obligingly dropped a fighter flare when sitting almost on his doorstep, thereby illuminating itself long enough for Howell to take swift and sure action. The twin-engine fighter, a type dubbed "destroyer" by its users, was itself destroyed, being seen to crash and explode in a matter of seconds after stopping a torrent of .303. As in the case of the aforementioned Junkers, the enemy's annihilation was effected without his being allowed the satisfaction of firing a single shot.

* * *

On the evening of 15 June (target, Boulogne) the *Hally* that had so recently seen three of the enemy go down under its blazing guns was itself brought down. The end of "Q"-Queen was brought about not by fighters, but by a single well-placed burst of flak, presumably from a flak ship, about ten miles short of the aiming-point. An abandonment was ordered over the French coast. As Flying Officer F. D. Hagen picked up his parachute, the ripcord caught somewhere and out billowed the silk on the fuselage floor. He gathered it up as best he could, attached it to his harness, then hurried to join the queue at the front escape hatch. At this critical point he and his captain, Flying Officer Kirk, proceeded to put on an Alphonse-Gaston act that ended with both trying to leave via the same hatch at the same time. The jam soon straightened out, and they departed the bomber at the 12,000-foot level. They left none too soon, for, only moments later, "Queen" practically disintegrated in an explosion. On the ground Kirk teamed up with Pilot Officer Collins and the pair evaded successfully, despite the fact that the former's left arm was paralyzed for a month and the latter was partially incapacitated for a



Sqdn. Ldr. G. B. Philbin.

like period by a foot injury. Also successful in evading were Flying Officer Hagen and Flt. Sgt. R. U. Furneaux. Flt. Sgt. Don McEvoy was fatally injured in an excessively heavy parachute landing.

A further half-dozen raids before the month's end were directed at a new German offensive weapon that had recently been unleashed on England. The V-1, which had any number of aliases, was a potential menace not only to millions of English civilians, but also to the success of "Overlord". The best method of combatting it was to attack its launching-places, or, even better, its sources of supply. The tiny, deftly concealed launching-ramps were extremely difficult to find, let alone hit. Between 16 June and 28 August the Alouettes went after twenty-one flying-bomb sites and also managed to fulfil their other tactical and strategical commitments seventeen times.

They entered the buzz-bomb battle by setting their bombsights on a V-I supply depot at Sautre-

court. This was the occasion for plucky performances by Flying Officer E. L. Vawter and Sgt. C. A. Matthews, bomb-aimer and flight engineer of *Halifax* "G"-George. Three minutes after bombing-time, tracer bullets, originating from above, pierced the fuselage in several places, one striking the pilot, Flying Officer H. M. Romuld. Called to assist his captain, Vawter took over the controls, while Matthews gave his wounded skipper every available medical assistance. Vawter flew above the overcast until well over the English coast, then descended through a break to a level below the cloud base. He headed for Woodbridge emergency field. Before attempting to land, he was instructed by Matthews on approach, landing, and stalling speeds, and also, as a precaution, on undercarriage and flap operation. With the engineer handling the throttles, flaps, and undercarriage, the bomb-aimer managed to get "George" down on his third try. On touchdown the *Halifax* swung violently, skidded a considerable distance, and finally stopped almost on a reciprocal heading to that of the landing run. The captain had died of wounds some time before, but the others sustained no injuries during the landing and "George" was serviceable for operations the next day. Vawter and Matthews were gonged within the month for showing bravery, resourcefulness and determination in bringing home safely six valuable air crew and their aircraft.

Another combined decoration-winning effort by No. 425's personnel took place eleven days later on the ground. Having returned from the bombing of Forêt D'Eawy, *Halifax* "A"-Able was executing a three-engine go-around when it crashed into bombed-up "U"-Uncle, parked in dispersal. Both aircraft immediately caught fire. The Base Commander, Air Commodore A. D. Ross, accompanied by Flt. Sgt. R. J. St.

Germain (a bomb-aimer whose aircraft had just landed), Corporal M. Marquet, of 425's groundcrew, and two Station personnel, rushed to the assistance of the endangered crew. Air Cdre. Ross and Cpl. Marquet had barely extricated the seriously injured pilot when 500-pounders in the bomb-bay exploded, throwing everyone to the ground. Ignoring the fire that was extending farther and farther back along the fuselage, the rescuers now concentrated on the rear turret with an axe in an effort to free the trapped gunner, Sgt. G. C. Rochon. The blows of St. Germain and Marquet finally smashed and bent the turret's frame enough to allow the pair to haul the gunner out. Almost at the moment of rescue another explosion occurred, again precipitating everyone to the ground. St. Germain threw himself on an injured crew member to protect him from flying debris. Air Cdre. Ross, hit in the right arm and with his wrist almost severed by the blast, was taken to hospital, where an emergency amputation was performed. Meanwhile, the crew of "Able" having been removed to safety, Marquet dutifully superintended the removal from the danger zone of two adjacent aircraft. The prompt action of Air Cdre. Ross, Flt. Sgt. St. Germain, and Cpl. Marquet was largely instrumental in saving the lives of at least two aircrew, the only dangerously injured member eventually recovering. Four months later, to the day, were gazetted awards of the George Cross to Air Cdre. Ross and of the George Medal to St. Germain and Marquet. Before the year was out, St. Germain had to move his G.M. to make room for a D.F.C.

* * *

In the course of No. 425's twelfth swipe at the doodlebug, on Bastille Day, one of its aircraft delivered something in addition to bombs. It dropped a French flag to which was

attached a message to the people of Nucourt, a town near which was situated a V-I supply depot that was even then being bombed. The message appears in an accompanying illustration.

The squadron's only aircraft loss in 330 "Crossbow" sorties (in point of fact, its only loss in 568 sorties from 30 July till 12 October) occurred early in August during a day raid on a supply depot at St. Leu d'Esserent. Five of the crew (which manned the only aircraft lost by Command on the raid) survived, one of them being Squadron Leader G. B. (Gerry) Philbin, "B"-Flight Commander, who was back in England soon after seeing the liberation of Paris from a hospital bed. Only four sorties aimed at doodlebug extermination were truly abortive, all through unserviceability. The Alouettes' part in "Crossbow" ended on 28 August with a daylight attempt on a ramp at Ferfay.

Three times in July and three times in August the Alouettes gave direct assistance to the ground forces. Four of these attacks were designed to loosen the *Wehrmacht's* tenacious hold around Caen. Although one of the attacks was made a virtual washout by the presence of marker-obscuring low cloud, the rest were excellent examples of the "carpet bombing" (to quote General Von Rundstedt) that the enemy came to dread so much. The squadron's specific aiming-point in a post-dawn smash on 18 July was a steelworks at Mondeville, two miles south-east of Caen. Assisted no little by a master bomber who directed traffic with admirable aplomb and efficiency, No. 425's seventeen attacking teams put their stuff down well within the pre-designated safe bombing limit. Such an accurate bombing pattern developed that the normal life expectancy of the markers was practically in no case being achieved, and the Pathfinders were kept

hustling as seldom before. The steelworks, visible on the edge of a churning cauldron of smoke and flame, took a frightful mauling. Though none save those of the *Wehrmacht* who survived the ordeal will ever know its true effect, one could easily gather from the shouting in the crew-room and the remarks at interrogation that this was no ordinary raid. Unofficial assessments like "Target fini" and "The best prang yet" were heard again and again.

The unit's other two close-support missions took it to the Falaise area in August. Its other non-strategical targets in July and August included oil dumps and storage depots, an airfield at Brussels, a heavy anti-aircraft battery, and an isolated island fort off St. Malo, all of which it bombed without loss.

Four strategical objectives were attacked during the period. The bombing of Wesseling, entailing the unit's first penetration of the Reich in nearly three months, saw Command lose but one crew. It belonged to this squadron. Stuttgart and Kiel were hit without a loss by 425, but not so Hamburg, from which two Alouette crews never returned. That was on the night of 28/29 July, the blackest of all for the Canadian Group, from which came 23 of Command's 24 missing crews. The captain of one of No. 425's missing aircraft was making his 35th operational flight. The circumstances of the non-return of his crew and the other may never be determined, but it was known that the *Luftwaffe* was unusually aggressive in the Hamburg area that night.

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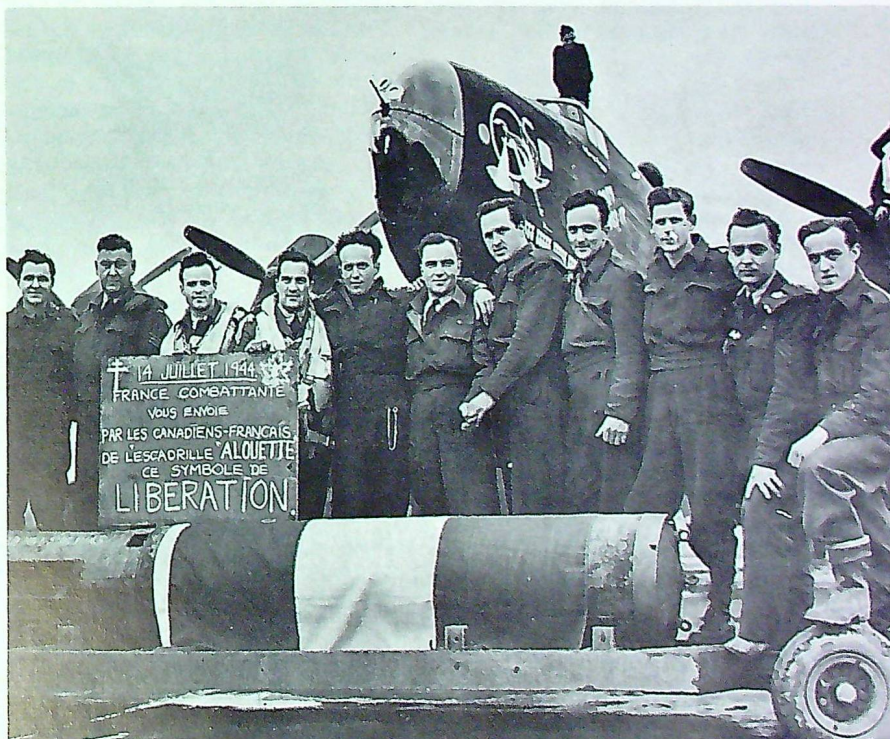
On 21 August the Alouettes saw the departure of their fourth Commanding Officer. Wing Cdr. J. H. L. Lecomte was posted on that date to Wombleton, there to take over No. 415 (Swordfish) Squadron. Early in the fall he was to put up a D.F.C. (Sometime later he became



Four members of "Q"-Queen's crew. L. to r.: Flying Officer E. E. Kirk, Sgts. C. Robertson, D. McEvoy, Flying Officer F. Hagen.



A Bastille Day present to the Germans from the Alouettes.





Flt. Sgt. R. M. St. Germain.

C.O. of Station Tholthorpe, and it was during that period that he became affectionately known as "Joe the C.O.") His successor was Wing Cdr. H. C. Ledoux, who had been with the squadron for several weeks.

On 3 September, airfields in the Low Countries were objects of a concerted assault by Allied bomber forces. The Alouettes drew one at Volkel, Holland, on which, without a doubt, they contributed to an outstanding bombing success. The field and everything associated with its operation were deluged with 1000- and 500-pounders, and excellent bombing pictures attested to 425's accuracy. There were so many craters on the 'drome that it might have been a section of the moon. One remarkably clear shot showed at least 42 holes along the length of one runway, at least 32 along the other, and hundreds of bomb pits distributed over the rest of the landing-ground. Administration

buildings and barracks, the perimeter track, and dispersal areas were not spared either. One building and a fuel dump were burning furiously, and in time both became airborne.

Next, the by-passed Channel ports, the bombing of which called for the greatest accuracy in flying, navigation, and bombing, in order not to jeopardize the safety of the ground attackers. Timed runs from a pre-established pin-point, positive target identification, and the use of a master bomber to superintend the bombing from beginning to end proved sufficient safeguards to prevent casualties to our own troops. The first attempt at Le Havre was a virtual washout, the master-bomber having ordered the bomb-carrying crews to abandon the mission. Each of fourteen Alouette crews returned to base and landed with sixteen 500-pounders still aboard. They tried it again on the 10th, this time twenty of them, and this time meeting with success. A week later came a blow at Boulogne, then, after eight days of bad weather, two cracks at Calais on successive days. A smash at Cap Griz Nez on the 28th wound up the highly successful series. Bomber crews had a personal stake in the bombing of these coastal strongholds which had for so long menaced aircraft that chanced to stray off track to within range of their formidable flak batteries. Now the only big worry in that respect was Dunkirk.

Even while heavily committed to supporting the armies in the field and bombing lines of communication and V-I installations, Bomber Command had not completely overlooked those "common denominator" synthetic oil plants so vital to practically every department of Germany's war effort. Now, with nearly all V-I sites either destroyed or under new management, the heavy bomber could fulfil its pri-

mary rôle of strategical bludgeon even while still engaged in tactical duties. Accordingly, in the late summer and early fall of 1944, attacks on oil targets were stepped up. Synthetic oil plants at Castrop Rauxel, Wanne Eickel, and Bottrop all received daylight attacks by the Alouettes in September before the last Channel strongpoint had fallen. Also attacked were Osna-brück by day and Kiel by night.

All aircraft of No. 425 Squadron came home from Kiel, but one belonging to No 420 Squadron, with which the Alouettes shared facilities at Tholthorpe, was reported down in the North Sea. Out to look for it the next afternoon went Flying Officer J. L. A. Marcotte and his veteran team. Locating the missing crew, they dropped them another dinghy, watched them scramble safely aboard, circled the area while transmitting the position to Air-Sea Rescue, and set course for base only after seeing the actual rescue effected.

At this stage the squadron was more heavily stocked with that most self-satisfied of all aircrew categories, the screened type, than ever before. To illustrate the effect on the screening rate of the summer's intensive operational pace, there were, on 29 September, 112 aircrew awaiting posting. Many refused indefinite leave in favour of remaining on the Station and availing themselves of every opportunity to pass on "the gen" to new crews. The turnover was practically twice that of nearly a year previous, when screenings had decimated unit strength at the conclusion of the Mediterranean phase.

(To be concluded)

BADGES OF THE R.C.A.F.: 5

This is the fifth in our series of illustrations of the badges of the R.C.A.F. Black-and-white reproductions of the badges shown may be obtained by writing to: Director of Public Relations, Air Force Headquarters, Ottawa, Ont. Glossy or matt prints are available in two sizes: 8" x 10" (50c.) and 11" x 14" (\$1.00). Cheques or money orders (not cash) must be made payable to the Receiver General of Canada.

PHOTOGRAPHIC ESTABLISHMENT (June 1954)



Clutching a scroll, a mythical two-headed raven of the Tlingit and Haida Indian tribes.

Knowledge from the Skies

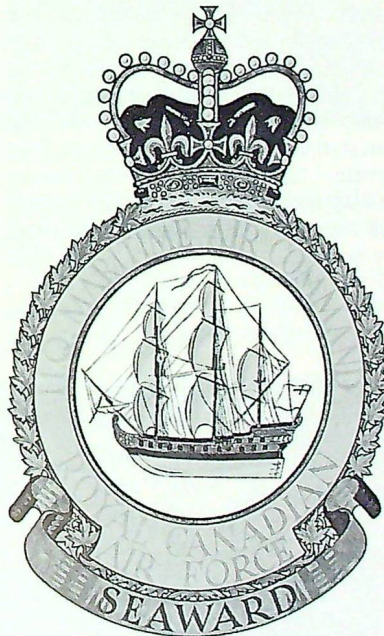
In the mythology of these West Coast Indian tribes, the raven is reputed to have brought light and knowledge to the world. The scroll suggests the use of aerial photography in "unrolling the map."

The first operations carried out by the Air Board in 1920 were for aerial survey, and this work has been continued by the R.C.A.F. down to the present day. The Pho-

tographic Section was located in Ottawa until January 1936 when it moved to a new building especially built for it at Rockcliffe, and thereupon became the Photographic Establishment. P. E. has remained at Rockcliffe ever since. During the war it was known for a time as No. 1 Photographic Centre (September 1942 to May 1944) and then as No. 1 Photographic Establishment. In February 1952 the numeral was deleted and it became the R.C.A.F. Photographic Establishment.

HEADQUARTERS MARITIME AIR COMMAND

(July 1954)



An eighteenth-century frigate.

Seaward

The badge and motto, derived from those originally approved for Eastern Air Command, typify the Command's primary function.

Eastern Air Command, which had been formed on 15 September 1938, with headquarters at Halifax, directed air operations on the Atlantic coast of Canada throughout the war. Disbanded on 28 February 1947, E.A.C. was succeeded by 10 Group, which became Maritime Group on 1 April 1949, and Maritime Air Command on 1 June 1953. Unlike E.A.C., which had a geographical basis, Maritime Air Command is a functional command controlling all maritime air operations of the R.C.A.F.

NO. 439 SQUADRON

(May 1954)

In front of a fountain, a sabre-



toothed tiger's head erased.

Fangs of death

The sabre-toothed tiger suggests both the fighting spirit of the squadron and the type of aircraft with which it was equipped when the badge was adopted. The fountain commemorates the fact that it was the first squadron to fly *Sabres* overseas from Canada to the United Kingdom, on "Leapfrog 1", in 1952.

No. 439 Squadron is descended from No. 123 (Army Co-Operation

Training) Squadron which formed at Rockcliffe in January 1942. Moving to Debert a month later, No. 123 carried out training with Army units until December 1943, when it was transferred overseas and redesignated No. 439. Equipped with *Typhoons*, the squadron took part in dive-bombing operations preparatory to D-Day and then supported the Second British Army in its advance from Normandy to the Baltic. The squadron's battle honours are Fortress Europe 1944,

France and Germany 1944-1945, Normandy 1944, Arnhem, and Rhine.

Disbanded overseas on 26 August 1945, No. 439 was reformed at Up-lands on 1 September 1951 and was the first post-war fighter squadron to receive *Sabres* as initial equipment. On 30 May 1952 it left Up-lands to join No. 1 Wing at North Luffenham, England, being the first R.C.A.F. jet squadron to fly the Atlantic. Early in 1955, No. 439 was relocated at Marville, France.

The Queen's Commendation

THE Queen's Commendation for Brave Conduct has been awarded to Flight Sergeant W. Hetman for the part played by him in a rescue operation near Haney, B.C., in November 1955.

A motor-boat crewman of R.C.A.F. Station Vancouver, Flt. Sgt. Hetman was called upon on 3 November 1955 to assist in the evacuation of eight civilians marooned on a pile of brush and rubbish that had formed in the flooded Alouette River in British Columbia's Fraser Valley, approximately 50 miles east of Vancouver. Accompanied by

three civilian volunteers, he attempted to reach the stranded people in a 25-foot open boat; but logs, debris, and the swift current of the river made it impossible to do so.

Tying a line around his waist, Flt. Sgt. Hetman plunged into the swift and icy water and waded, chest-deep, towards the marooned group. He remained in the water for approximately five hours before he succeeded in leading them back to safety.

Flt. Sgt. W. Hetman.



Ascend above the restrictions and
conventions of the World, but not
so high as to lose sight of them.
(Richard Garnett.)

RAY TRACY

WARRANT Officer R. A. Tracy, who has been closely associated with "The Roundel" since it began in November 1948, died suddenly in Ottawa on May 12th, of a heart-attack.

He will be remembered chiefly for his whimsical cartoons, in particular those of Sgt. Shatterproof and his circle. Cartooning, however, was not his only accomplishment. Many of our readers will also recall the several articles in which he described his experiences on those rare occasions when he managed to escape from No. 8 Temporary Building long enough to see for himself what the R.C.A.F. was doing outside Canada.

At the time of his death, he had just returned from a flying visit to Italy and Egypt. While he was away, we received a card from him bearing a coloured photograph of the Pyramids. The message on the back of it read: "Just checking over these crazy Temporary Buildings. Not impressed. At least we can stand upright in the corridors of No. 8. See you later.—Ray."

We saw him once later, on the day of his return. Wearing a very tight tarboosh, he was sitting astride a camel-saddle he had brought back with him, and demonstrating to his two wide-eyed little girls (with stirring cries in a language that might or might not



Ray Tracy.

have been Arabic) how their father had ridden over the sands of the Nile.

Ray's approach to life was one of humour, kindness, keen observation, and complete integrity; and

"The Roundel" owes to him much of whatever popularity it may have achieved. He will be deeply missed by the thousands who knew him, either as a personal friend or through his work.

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 Cadets

SUMMER PROGRAMME

THE first group of cadets to journey to R.C.A.F. summer camps at R.C.A.F. Stations Sea Island, Clinton, and Greenwood will arrive on June 30th. The attendance quota has been raised this year to 5,500 cadets. Because of this increase, Clinton will be filled to capacity, so a representative group of Ontario and Quebec cadets will be travelling to Greenwood for their two weeks of camp. Special features of the camps include an outdoor sports programme, advanced training, educational tours, and familiarization flights. Four two-week camps will be held in each location, thus bringing the date of departure for the last tanned and by then "operational" cadet to August 24th.

The Drill Instructors' and Senior Leaders' Courses, each accommodating 100 cadets, will start classes on July 6th and run for seven weeks to August 23rd. In addition to enjoying a competitive sports programme and week-end tours to neighbouring points of interest, these future squadron-instructors will receive instruction from the R.C.A.F.'s Supervisory

Service Training School. Their subjects will vary all the way from leadership principles and instructional techniques to character guidance and Service administration. Forty members of the Drill Instructors' Course will be selected to represent Canada in the International Drill Competition to be held at the Canadian National Exhibition in Toronto on August 24th. Canada has won the Beau Trophy at six out of the nine Competitions so far held. The U.S. Civil Air Patrol team took the trophy home twice, and the United Kingdom's A.T.C. cadets won once. Successful graduates of both courses receive a training bonus of \$100.

The R.C.A.F. will once again award 250 flying Scholarships. In recent years, the number of cadets qualifying for the flying training course has exceeded the supply of scholarships. The situation was remedied two years ago, when George Ross, general manager of the League, developed a plan whereby privately sponsored scholarships have been donated to the League by firms, service clubs, and individuals. This year, it is expected that the number of private scholarships will pass the 100-mark. Last year, a total of 324 cadets received this training at flying clubs and schools across Canada, enabling them to qualify for their private pilots' licenses and Air Cadet Flying Badges.

Final arrangements have been completed for the cadets who will take part in Exchange Visits this summer. Fifty-eight Canadian cadets will be selected for a trip to the United States, the United Kingdom, or Sweden, Denmark, Norway, and the Netherlands. The departure date for cadets going overseas is July 16th, while those going south of the border leave on July 21st. The overseas and U.S. cadets will be entertained in Ontario and Quebec, and, in addition, the U.S. party will travel through

to the west for a week in British Columbia.

NO. 14 (LAVAL) WING

When three or more squadrons unite to form a wing, they do so in order to benefit from combined administration and instructional staffs, quarters, etc. A successful example of such a partnership is No. 14 (Laval) Wing, formed in 1952 from Nos. 98, 558, and 560 Squadrons.

The C.O. of the wing is Wing Commander J. A. Gauthier, former C.O. of No. 98 (Iberville) Squadron. He is the only remaining officer of the original staff of No. 98, which was founded in 1942 under the direction of its first C.O., Lt. Col. Roger Maillet, owner of the Montreal weekly, "Le Petit Journal".

The strength of the wing presently stands at slightly more than 500 cadets. Its name is taken from Laval College of St. Vincent de Paul, to which it is attached. The wing boasts several hockey and softball teams, a rugby team, and a 100-instrument brass band. Extensive facilities are available to cadets, including a fully equipped photographic dark-room and a modern rifle range.

In addition to winning the A.O.C.'s Trophy for proficiency, the wing has also captured the Walsh Drill Trophy on three occasions. Several Laval graduates are now on the wing's civilian committee, which is headed by Dr. Paul Dagenais-Perusse, while others have attended the Services Colleges and enlisted in the R.C.A.F.

HISTORY OF A NAME

A great deal of curiosity has been expressed about the name of one of our western squadrons — No. 6 (Jim Whitecross) Squadron.

No. 6 Squadron's namesake was a young Winnipeg airman who put aside his engineering texts at the

Donald Rumble, chairman of No. 406 (R.C.A.F. Association) Wing's sponsoring committee, personally donated a bass drum to No. 547 (Canuck) Squadron. He is shown here (at left) with Sergeant J. Green and Flight Lieutenant F. Malone, C.O. of No. 547.



University of Manitoba to enlist in the R.A.F. in January 1939. By the time the Nazi threat had exploded into war, Jim had won his wings and was flying on operations.

He made a forced landing in France on April 1941, and managed to elude the Germans who were searching for him. In a series of exciting adventures, he made his way into unoccupied France and over the border into Spain. He was imprisoned for two weeks, but then released. He crossed into Portugal and finally reached Gibraltar.

Soon he was back flying with the R.A.F., and, as reported in the London "Times", he received the D.F.C. for a daring low-level bombing raid against an enemy aerodrome in adverse weather conditions.

Although he was due to return to Canada in September 1941, he volunteered to fly on a mercy mission to aid the crew of an R.A.F. aircraft down in the North Sea. Ironically, his own aircraft developed engine trouble, and, after one radio report, was not heard from or seen again.

Jim Whitecross was a modest but capable young man, with a keen sense of duty. He brought honour to his home city, and No. 6 Squadron is proud to bear his name.

N.C.O.s' MESS DINNER

A new and interesting idea was tried at the Abbotsford summer camp last year — an Air Cadet mess dinner. Its success led to the organizing of a large regional mess dinner held at R.C.A.F. Station Sea Island. The affair was entirely conducted by senior Cadet N.C.O.s of nine lower-mainland squadrons; and the cadets' C.O.s, and representatives from the various sponsoring committees from North and West Vancouver, Mission, Haney, Westminster, and Vancouver, renewed friendships and exchanged ideas. The whole-hearted co-operation of Wing Cdr. J. Watt, D.S.O., D.F.C.,



The 100-piece brass band of No. 14 Wing, under direction of Flight Lieutenant J. B. Moreau, which played at the march-past during the last annual inspection.

and his staff resulted in the serving of the finest turkey dinner in local recorded history. Traditional Air Force ceremony was observed, led by Warrant Officer 1st Class Jim Wainwright.

The guest speaker, Air Commodore A. D. Bell-Irving, O.B.E., M.C., held an appreciative audience as he spoke on "Loyalty and Co-

operation" and illustrated his talk with many colourful anecdotes from his own Air Force career.

It was evident from views expressed at the end of the evening that something new and valuable had been added to the local Air Cadet movement. This is an idea that might well be adopted by groups of squadrons in other areas.

Leon Bouchard, sec'y of Quebec Provincial Committee, cuts the ribbon at the opening ceremonies of No. 14 Wing's new 25-yard rifle range.



What's the Score?

The reader may remember that we had occasion last month to touch upon the problems with which we were faced by a somewhat mettlesome set of false teeth. Since then, however, Major McCavity of the Dental Clinic has been as good as his word. Three days ago, when Claudette appeared with the mid-morning cup, we enquired if her Aunt Mabel had made any more chocolate squares lately.

Her incomparable eyes widened. "Choklit squares?" she said. "Creepers, yes! She whomped up a fresh batch only last night. But wodda youse care? Yuh know yuh can't eat 'em with them plates. Yuh tried before."

We rose to our feet and clashed the relined dentures at her. "Claudette," we said sternly, "go to your Aunt Mabel and tell her that we defy her chocolate squares. Be their viscosity such that even an ore-crusher might shrink from them, nevertheless we will have ado with them again, It is Aunt Mabel against the Dental Corps — and Heaven shall decide the issue."

The next morning Claudette brought in a few of the formidable kick-shaws and ranged them beside our tea. The editorial heart sank as we thought of the inexorable gluten which lurked beneath that toothsome-looking crust. But we were committed. We seized one of them and bit deeply into it . . .

It would need the pen of a Milton to do justice to the struggle that followed. Suction strove with suction, molars with molasses. We played that chocolate square much as a fisherman plays a salmon. Whenever the lowers began to lift, we reseated them with a lightning clench, only to ease them a little further apart after each compression-stroke. At last, with a shocking sound suggestive of a tyrannosaurus breaking the grip of a Jurassic bog, we pulled free. After that, of course, the complete reduction to produce of Aunt Mabel's chocolate square was merely a matter of time.

The following questionnaire, which has been kindly prepared by Colonel W. E. Meldrum and Lieutenant Colonel T. L. Marsh, of the Royal Canadian Dental Corps, is offered in tribute to the many Major McCavities who keep the armed services so triumphantly a-chomping. Correct answers are shown on page 32.—Editor.

1. The Royal Canadian Dental Corps is responsible for the dental health of all members of the three armed services. It is:

- (a) An independent corps which is administered by the Dept. of National Defence and whose members wear the uniform of the Service to which they happen to be seconded.
- (b) A component of the Army Medical Services.
- (c) A branch of the Dept. of Health and Welfare, whose members hold honorary ranks in the Army.
- (d) An independent corps within the Army.

2. By present-day Canadian standards, the charm of many famous beauties of the past would have been spoilt by their

bad teeth. Sadly decayed, even in her youth, were the teeth of:

- (a) Cleopatra.
- (b) Mary Queen of Scots.
- (c) Marie Antoinette.
- (d) Madame Pompadour.

3. The most important function of a dentifrice is to:

- (a) Destroy bacteria.
- (b) Whiten the teeth.
- (c) Remove stain and food debris.
- (d) Counteract offensive breath.

4. An essential component of the filling material used by the R.C.D.C. to restore the anterior teeth and the winning smiles of Station Warrant Officers is an acid called:

- (a) Orthophosphoric.
- (b) Hydrocyanic.
- (c) Sulphuric.
- (d) Hydrofluoric.

5. R.C.D.C. dental clinics are maintained in:

- (a) Canada, England, France, Western Germany, Belgium, Korea, and Egypt.
- (b) Canada, England, France, Western Germany, Korea, and Egypt.
- (c) Canada, England, France, Western Germany, Indo-China, and Egypt.
- (d) Canada, England, France, Western Germany, Italy, and Egypt.

6. The dental records maintained for all Servicemen are available for purposes of establishing an individual's identity. If the records showed only fillings and missing teeth, the number of different dental profiles possible would run into:

- (a) Thousands.
- (b) Millions.
- (c) Billions.
- (d) Millions of billions or more.

7. An essential base metal component of the silver alloys used for filling the teeth of even the loftiest of the Brass is:

- (a) Lead.
- (b) Tin.
- (c) Antimony.
- (d) Nickel.

8. Under the tri-Service regulations, a Serviceman is eligible for comprehensive (i.e. other than emergency) dental treatment:

- (a) On enlistment.
- (b) After 3 months' service.
- (c) After 10 years' service.
- (d) After 1 year's service.

9. The R.C.D.C. is authorized on the basis of one dental officer being responsible for the dental care of:

- (a) 400 officers and 100 other ranks.
- (b) 1000 personnel (all ranks).
- (c) 100 officers and 700 other ranks.
- (d) 750 (all ranks).

10. A Serviceman who has not attended the dental clinic for twelve months or more, should:

- (a) Inform the adjutant.
- (b) Consider himself lucky and keep quiet about it.
- (c) Make an appointment to have his teeth checked.
- (d) Wait until he is notified to report at the dental clinic.



11. Artificial teeth are manufactured in several hundred shades. When a dental officer is selecting the shade for complete upper and lower dentures, he is guided in his choice principally by:
- (a) His own aesthetic sensibilities.
 - (b) The opinion and preference of the patient.
 - (c) The colour of the patient's hair and eyes.
 - (d) The colour of the patient's skin.
12. When Major McCavity (in last month's "Roundel") mentioned an Air Vice-Marshal with "buc-cals on his bicuspid", he meant that the Air Vice-Marshal in question:
- (a) Suffered from decay of his pre-molars in the areas next to the cheeks.
 - (b) Needed rather more than dental care.
 - (c) Had abscesses on his incisors.
 - (d) Had molars that had been "capped".
13. The R.C.D.C. operates both full- and part-time dental clinics for the treatment of Service personnel. The number of clinics at present maintained in Canada is:
- (a) 64
 - (b) 87
 - (c) 103
 - (d) 119
14. Dental x-rays assist the dental officer to:
- (a) Identify the bacteria causing the tooth decay.
 - (b) Determine the real age of female personnel.
 - (c) Decide what treatment is indicated.
 - (d) Forecast the patient's resistance to pain.
15. The airman who has been equipped by the R.C.D.C. with a complete set of dentures is the proud possessor of:
- (a) 24 teeth.
 - (b) 28 teeth.
 - (c) 32 teeth.
 - (d) 36 teeth.
16. The fastidious flight lieutenant whose gums bleed when he brushes his teeth should:
- (a) Keep a stiff upper lip.
 - (b) Stop brushing his teeth until the situation improves.
 - (c) Report at the dental clinic as soon as possible.
 - (d) Simply use a recognized mouth-wash on rising, retiring, and after every meal.
17. The most modern dentures provided by the R.C.D.C. are made of:
- (a) Acrylic resin.
 - (b) Synthetic rubber.
 - (c) Case-hardened steel.
 - (d) Vulcanite.
18. The cost of providing dental treatment for Canadian Servicemen is defrayed by:
- (a) The Air Force.
 - (b) All three Services, on a proportional basis.
 - (c) The Army.
 - (d) The Navy.
19. The number of dentists being graduated from Canadian Universities does not keep pace with our growing population. The approximate annual number of dental graduates is:
- (a) 140
 - (b) 190
 - (c) 260
 - (d) 335
20. Most R.C.D.C. clinics include a laboratory with a dental technician in charge. His job is to:
- (a) Prepare the filling materials and assist the dental officer with violent patients.
 - (b) Make dental appliances.
 - (c) Process all dental x-rays.
 - (d) Maintain the dental equipment and supplies.



They
Also
Dare

These also dare, who have no wings,
For whom no clouds are stepping-stones,
Who cannot hear how Heaven sings
Above the Earth's more sombre tones;

Who watch wings lift, with anxious thought
For men whose lives in *their* hands rest;
Who seek no glory for their lot,
But work, and pray, and give their best.

O Lord, bless these who, though their hearts
May crave the skies they cannot share,
Endure and, steadfast, play their parts.
Oh, bless these too! — They also dare.

Flying Officer H. L. Soucy.

The Suggestion Box



The Chief of the Air Staff has written letters of thanks to the undermentioned personnel for original suggestions that have been officially adopted by the R.C.A.F.

Wing Commander W. G. Dever, of Station Trenton, made several recommendations concerning the establishment and conduct, in collaboration with the Boy Scout organization, of courses for Boy Scout Leaders in Service communities.

Flight Sergeant H. F. Gerow, of Station Aylmer, put forward two suggestions that will simplify the procedures for the maintenance of aircrew safety equipment.

Flt. Sgt. D. Robinson, of No. 4 (F.) Wing, designed a removable step to facilitate work on the engines of *Sabre* aircraft. Its use will contribute to the safety of maintenance personnel.

Leading Aircraftman J. H. G. Valdron, of Station Greenwood, designed a modification to the Sonobuoy release system on *Neptune* aircraft which gives the navigator sole control of the release, thus freeing the co-pilot for other duties while in the tactical area.

Flt. Sgt. I. M. Wentzell, of Station Greenwood, designed a cocking-tool for the bomb rack and rocket-launcher of *Neptune* aircraft, and also a cocking-tool for the bomb shackle release unit. The use of these tools effects considerable simplification of work and economy of man-power.



Flt. Sgt. D. Robinson.



Flt. Sgt. I. M. Wentzell.

Wing Cdr. W. G. Dever.

L.A.C. J. H. G. Valdron.

Flt. Sgt. H. F. Gerow.



When any man tells you that he has no time for reading, you can be sure that he is committing mental suicide. What he says makes no more sense than the man who says, "I do not have the time to eat."
(Thomas Dreier.)

McKEE TROPHY WINNER



Sqn. Ldr. R. T. Heaslip, A.F.C.

SQUADRON Leader R. T. Heaslip, who has been awarded the McKee Trans-Canada Trophy for 1956, is officer commanding No. 108 Communications Flight, Rockcliffe. The award was made in recognition of his contribution to helicopter operations during the construction of the Mid-Canada Line. His Flight flew approximately 9,000 helicopter hours during 1956, during which more than 10,000 tons of material and almost 14,000 personnel were airlifted along the Line.

Sqn. Ldr. Heaslip flew extensively on these operations, and he evolved unique airlift techniques for a large variety of loads, including bulky antenna assemblies, large diesel engines, steel towers, and other equipment peculiar to the Mid-Canada Line operation. In addition, he was personally responsible for the evolution and perfection of helicopter cold-weather operating

techniques, which allowed the operation to proceed smoothly under extreme climatic conditions in the field.

The McKee Trophy, which dates back to 1927, is presented each year for meritorious services in advancement of Canadian aviation. Emphasis is placed on performance throughout the year rather than on a single brilliant exploit, and special consideration is given to the application of aircraft and aviation equipment to new and useful purposes.

The trophy was donated by the late Dalzell McKee of Pittsburgh, a wealthy aviation enthusiast who made the first trans-Canada flight by seaplane in 1926. Mr. McKee established the trophy in recognition of the welcome and assistance given him by the R.C.A.F. during his flight.

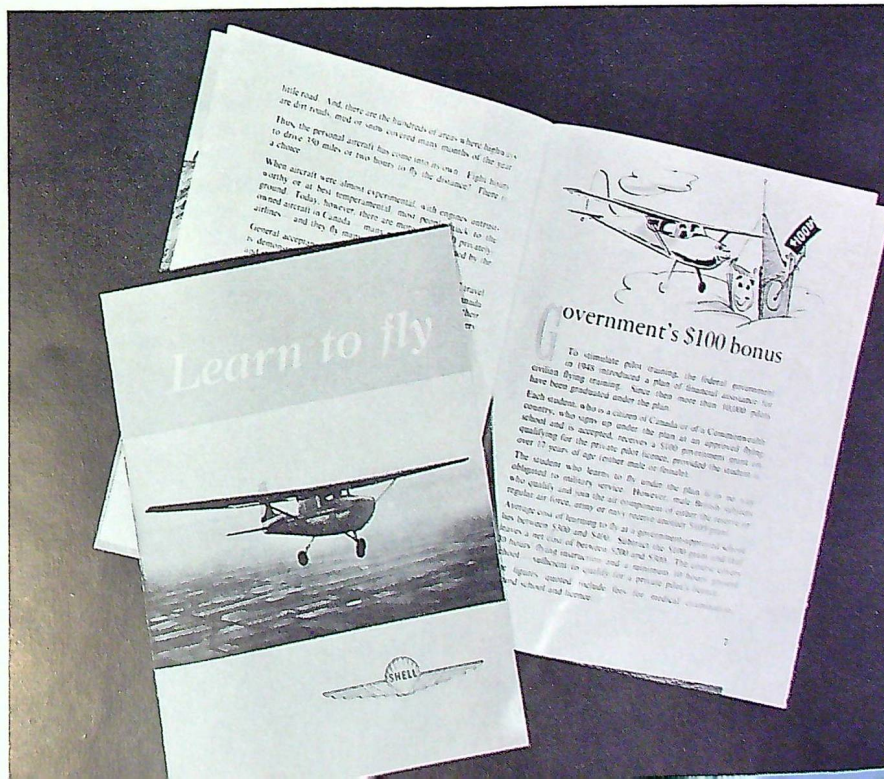
"Learn to Fly"

A BOOKLET entitled "Learn To Fly" has been produced by the Shell Oil Company outlining the various types of pilots' licenses in use in Canada, how to procure them, and how to use them. This booklet also explains the federal government's financial assistance plan for civilian flying training.

In the foreword Air Vice-Marshal A. de Niverville, C.B. (retired), now Director General of Air Services in the Department of Transport, states that the booklet should "contribute to the growth of aviation in Canada by encouraging more people to learn to fly."

The 24-page, profusely illustrated booklet, can be obtained free of charge by writing to:

Shell Oil Company of Canada Ltd.,
P.O. Box 400, Terminal "A",
Toronto, Ont.



Wire

Bowling

Championship,

1957

If the Dominion Observatory's seismographs recorded a few shock waves on the night of 21 March 1957, there was no need for alarm. On that night, from Whitehorse to Zweibrücken, some 230 R.C.A.F. bowling teams were scattering the pins to register for the R.C.A.F. Wire Bowling Championship and the award of "The Pin".

"The Pin" is following in the footsteps of "The Bat" (the R.C.A.F. Softball Championship Trophy) in developing a tradition of unique sport trophies individually designed for the R.C.A.F. Entry fees for these championships have been credited to a special Central Institutes Fund account which will provide the money needed to develop a complete series of trophies covering the popular Canadian sports.

On 21 March, as each team departed its score, a deferred signal was dispatched to A.F.H.Q. Portage

la Prairie was heard from at 2.45 a.m.; at 6.14 a.m. came results from St. Margarets; Gander had reported by 1.20 p.m., Aylmer by 6.58 p.m.; and, during the night of the 23rd, word came from St. Hubert at 1.27 and Rivers at 1.36. For twenty-four hours the file in the Recreation Branch swelled. "AFHQ 491-12" grew from Volume 1 to Volume 2.

Some consternation was caused at the eleventh hour by a plaintive signal from Macdonald just as the last results were coming in: UNABLE TO BOWL OFF 21 MAR DUE TO FLOODING OF ALLEYS PD REQUEST PERMISSION TO FORWARD RESULTS AS SOON AS REPAIRS COMPLETED. A top-level conference was immediately called. Amid cries of "precedent", "sympathetic", "gum up the . . . works", and so forth, a compromise was reached: REGRET UNABLE TO POSTPONE RESULTS AFTER 1200

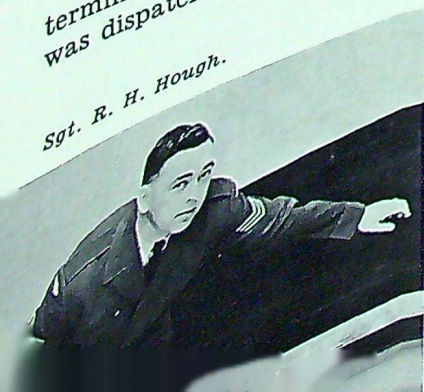
HOURS 26 MAR PD YOUR SCORES WILL BE INCLUDED IF RECEIVED IN TIME." The happy ending — Station Macdonald's score arrived. at 11.00 a.m., 26 March. It was, however, not good enough to win.

At R.C.A.F. Station Camp Borden, the fates were favourable for Mrs. Doris Williamson, wife of Leading Aircraftman J. Williamson. With scores of 344 and 769, she won both the high single (ladies) and high triple (ladies). On the same station, Sergeant R. H. Hough recorded a score of 851 to win the high triple (men's). Not all the honours went to Station Borden. At Station Saskatoon, Flight Sergeant C. L. Carroll was in form with a score of 405 to win the high single (men's).

Meanwhile team scores were being registered. When the dust had settled, it was clear that Portage la Prairie, with a score of 3,571, had won "The Pin" for the men, and



Sgt. R. H. Hough.



Mrs. Doris Williamson.



Flt. Sgt. C. L. Carroll.





The ladies' winning team. Left to right: Mrs. Marian Franklin, Mrs. Midge Redman, Mrs. Wayne Hart, Mrs. Lena Hatch, Mrs. Theresa Thompson.



The winning team (men's). Left to right: Leading Aircraftman D. Halpenny, Mr. M. Filby, L.A.C. G. Baril, L.A.C. A. Collins, Sgt. V. Dodds.

that Centralia, with 3,274, had won "The Pin" for the ladies.

The various trophies were duly despatched from A.F.H.Q. to the stations concerned, for presentation by their respective commanding officers.

Thus the second Wire Bowling

Championship is a matter for the historians. The first championship was a success, but the 1957 version was an even greater one, resulting in better participation all round. One innovation which improved the quality of the result was that of having two ladies' and two men's

teams picked from the bowlers on each station to compete against each other to decide the honour of representing their station. The individual high singles and triples were selected from both teams, resulting in a true individual R.C.A.F. winner.

THE RECREATION

Recreation Badges and accompanying ribbons, as shown in our photograph, are awarded to inter-section winners of local station leagues who proceed through zonal play-offs and are victorious in R.C.A.F.-wide finals.

The embossed charge of the badge, embroidered in red, orange, and gold, represents the Phoenix of Egyptian legend. This unique bird, whenever it reached the age of 500 or 600 years, burned itself on a funeral pyre and rose again, with renewed youth and vitality, from the ashes. It was therefore the symbol of revitalization, or re-creation.

BADGE

Backgrounds of the badges and their respective ribbons are as follows:

Swimming	aquamarine
Volleyball	wine
Archery	dark green
Softball	red
Bowling	pale green
Hockey	royal blue

BOWLING '57



Letters to the Editor



THE MacBRIDE MUSEUM

Dear Sir:

I notice that, in his nice series on "The North-West Staging Route," Flying Officer S. G. French states on page 6 of the March issue (with reference to myself): "He founded MacBride's Whitehorse Museum. He not only established it, he even bought the building and paid out of his own pocket for almost all the exhibits."

Mr. French must have misunderstood some of my remarks to him. While the writer was instrumental in starting the idea of the museum and is the President of the Yukon Historical Society, the facts are that the museum was inaugurated by the Society and that the building (which was the first Government Telegraph office in Whitehorse, erected in 1900) is nominally leased to the Society by the Department of National Defence. While a large number of the original exhibits were given or lent by the writer, all the members of the Yukon Historical Society are entitled to much credit for their work in this connection as well as for the active part they take in the museum's maintenance.

W. D. MacBride,
White Pass and Yukon Route,
Whitehorse, Y.T.

THE TWILLICK

Dear Sir:

You are to be congratulated on your article, "A Toast to the Twillick", in the March issue of "The Roundel". Your caption-writer, however, should be placed against the wall opposite the Twillick's cage, told to gaze his last upon the chain that secures its Occupant, then blindfolded and forwarded to the hereafter in the usual way.

He states on page 3: "The chain of office about the Twillick-Master's neck is, of course, the same chain that appears on our front cover."

The chain that appears on the front cover is the chain that safeguards the Twillick from envious and light-fingered visitors from less-blessed units. It takes the combined efforts of two of the smaller

members of the squadron (such as myself) to lift it. The chain worn by the Twillick-to Master, on the other hand, which is of delicate and intricate construction, serves only to carry the key which facilitates the Honoured Twillick's egress on ceremonial occasions.

In other words, Sir, there are two chains.

Flying Officer R. E. Thomas,
No. 2416 A. C. & W. Sqn. (Aux.)

(Alas, editor and caption-writer are one. Should the midsummer issue of "The Roundel" fail to appear, our readers will know that we have been duly forwarded, hair-shirted and repentant, in the manner suggested by Flying Officer Thomas.—Editor.)

"THE GOONEY BIRD"

Dear Sir:

On page 30 of the April issue you state that "the Dakota first came into regular service with the R.C.A.F. in March 1943, when one DC-3 was added to the strength of No. 412 Squadron."

Being a former member of that squadron, I seem to recall that No. 412 was a fighter unit completely equipped with Spitfires, and during my association with the squadron (1941-1945) I failed to see any Dakota attached to our outfit.

If I'm wrong, I'll most certainly retract my statement and humbly admit that I should have been wearing bifocals.

Cpl. G. E. Powley,
R.C.A.F. Station Greenwood.

(Cpl. Powley needed no bifocals: he is quite right. Our sentence should have read: "... of No. 12 Communication Squadron, which after the war was redesignated No. 412 Squadron." During the war the original No. 412 Squadron flew Spitfires.—Editor.)

SALUTING

Dear Sir:

If, in squadron or ceremonial Drill, a flight sergeant is for some reason appointed to be a flight commander, and the N.C.O. in charge of the flight itself is of equal rank or less, is the flight sergeant

required to salute the flight commander, and vice versa, in accordance with proper drill procedure?

Certain of my associates hold that they do not salute because the flight commander, not being a commissioned officer, is not entitled to it. I, on the other hand, contend that, technically, they are required to exchange salutes because the flight commander, even though an N.C.O., is filling an officer's position or an appointment that requires a commissioned officer—and, after all, what is a salute but an acknowledgment of the fact that one recognizes the rank, authority, or position of the person saluted?

In checking through C.A.P. 90, I could find nothing stating whom one does not salute, though I found plenty of reference as to whom one does salute, and also the requirement that an airman must salute those entitled to it by virtue of their appointment, etc.

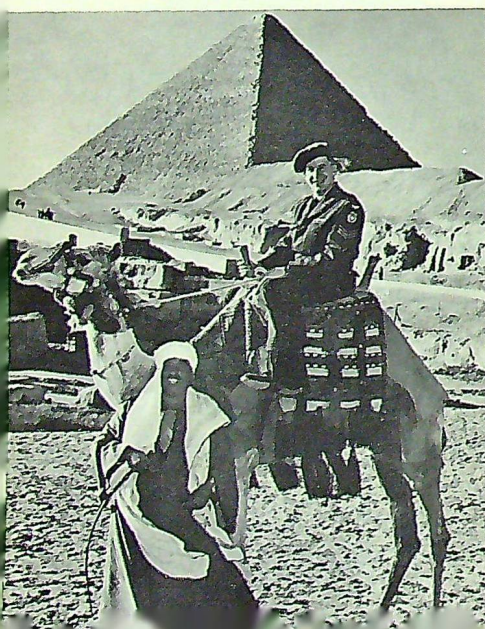
Perhaps the following excerpts support my contention:

Article 14.04 — "On parade, an officer in an executive position is to salute all others holding senior parade appointments, even if of the same or equivalent rank." Would this not also apply between non-commissioned officers, when one holds what is normally the position of a commissioned officer? C.A.P. 90 states further:

Article 8.18 (2) — "Each flight sergeant is to turn toward his respective flight commander as the latter approaches, salute him, turn about, march in quick time by the reverse flank to his position in the flight, and take up his dressing by the right." I could find nothing that stated that, if the flight commander was an N.C.O., he should not be saluted.

Flt. Sgt. S. N. Grove,
R.C.A.F. Station Camp Borden.

(We are informed by the Directorate of Personnel Administration that Flt. Sgt. Grove's "associates are correct in their assumption that airmen are not to be saluted at any time, regardless of parade position or otherwise. C.A.P. 90, chap 14, art. 14.01, clearly defines those persons entitled to a salute, and it is the commission that is held by the individual that makes him or her entitled to a salute."—Editor)



AFTER 6000 YEARS

It would be interesting to know what Sergeant L. D. Dopp's contemporary ancestors were doing when Cheops built the pyramid which serves here as a background for their remote descendant. We understand that the Sphinx, to whom Sgt. Dopp put the question later in the day, merely smiled inscrutably.



Answers to "What's the Score?"

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

THE R.C.A.F. BENEVOLENT FUND

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*This address is obtainable from any of the other three sources.

