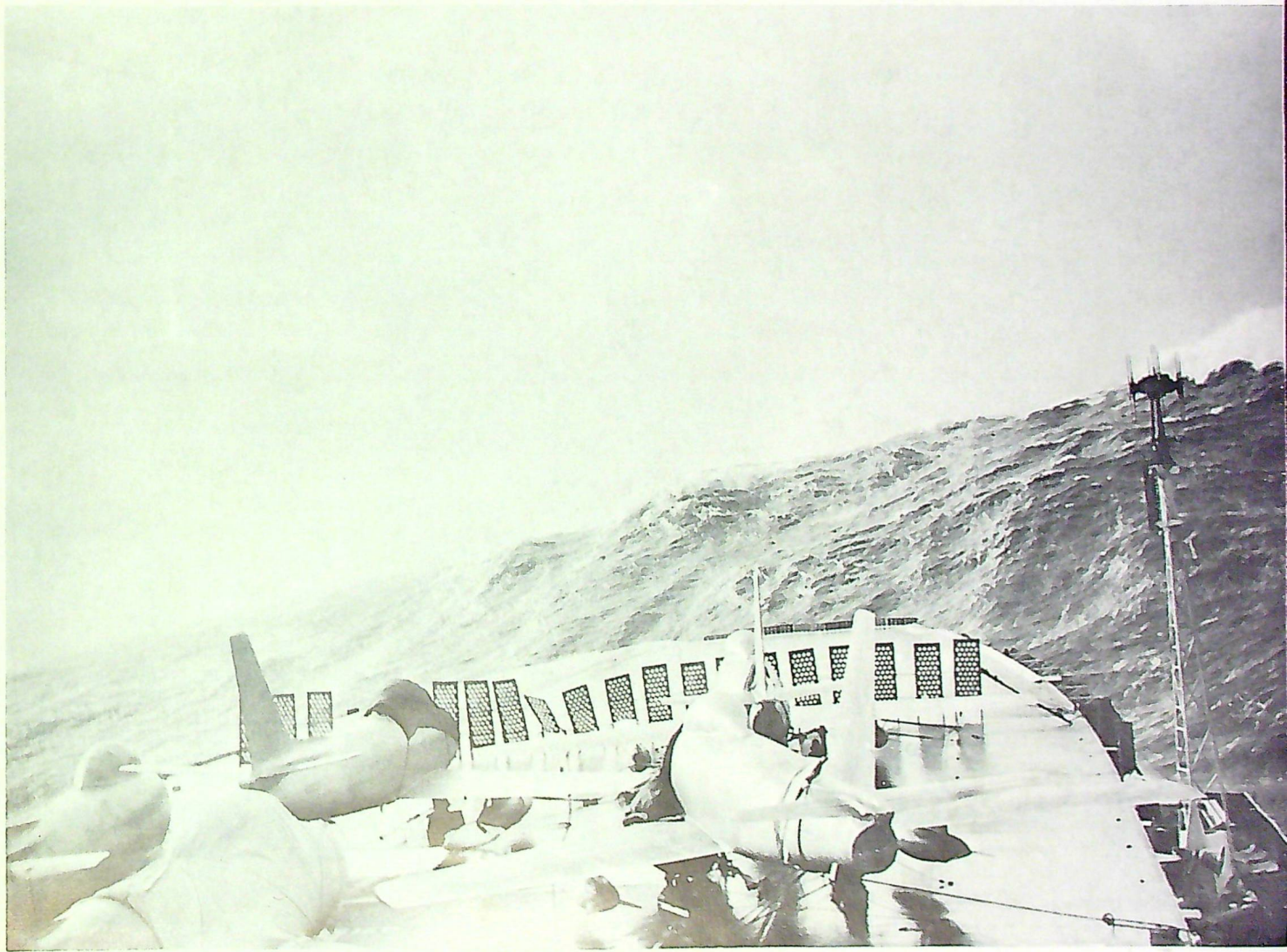


The ROUNDDEL



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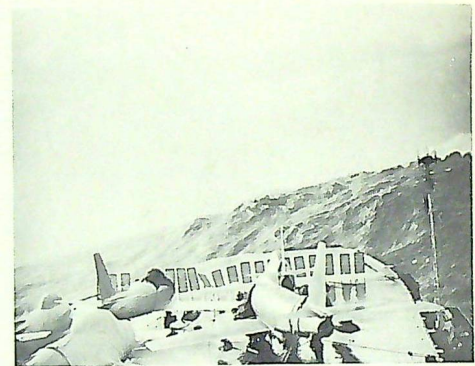


ROYAL CANADIAN AIR FORCE

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THIS MONTH'S COVER



We are indebted to the Royal Canadian Navy for this photograph of Sabre Vs being brought back to Canada on board H.M.C.S. *Magnificent*. Now in use by Auxiliary Squadrons, they have been replaced in the R.C.A.F.'s No. 1 Air Division, Europe, by Sabre VIs.

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Canada's New Minister of National Defence



*The Honourable George R. Pearkes, V.C., C.B., D.S.O., M.C., M.P.
(Photograph by Newton, Ottawa.)*

THE Hon. George Randolph Pearkes, appointed on 21 June as Minister of National Defence, brings to his task thirty years' military experience and twelve years' experience as a member of the House of Commons.

Coming to Canada from England in 1906, he homesteaded for a while in Alberta, then served with the Royal North-West Mounted Police for 2½ years in the Yukon. He enlisted early in 1915 in the Canadian Mounted Rifles, and was in command of the 116th Battalion, Canadian Expeditionary Force, as a lieutenant colonel, when the Great War ended.

Remaining in the Canadian Army as an officer of Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, he graduated from the British Army Staff College in 1919, and subsequently held various staff appointments in Canada. In 1935 he was made Director of Military Training and Staff Duties, and later, after grad-

uation from the Imperial Defence College, in England, he was promoted to the command of Military District No. 13, Calgary, with the rank of brigadier.

On mobilization of the 1st Canadian Division after the outbreak of the Second World War, he led the 2nd Canadian Infantry Brigade overseas in December 1939. Eight months later, promoted to the rank of major-general, he was placed in command of the 1st Division. September 1942 saw his appointment as General Officer Commanding, Pacific Command, and he remained in that appointment until the beginning of 1945.

He became Member of Parliament for Nanaimo, B.C., in June of the same year, and has retained

his seat ever since. His particular interests have been the problems connected with National Defence, External Affairs, Veterans' Affairs, and Fisheries.

He was awarded the Victoria Cross for gallantry at Passchendaele in 1917, while serving as a major in the Canadian Mounted Rifles, and the Distinguished Service Order at Amiens. In addition to these decorations, he was awarded the Military Cross and the French Croix de Guerre. Created a Companion of the Order of the Bath during the Second World War, he also received the United States Order of Merit for his contribution, as C.-in-C., Pacific Command, "to the joint defence of the United States and Canada".

SGT. SHATTERPROOF

URNS A THOUGHTFUL EYE

Sir:

It is being whispered in certain quarters that the old gladiator is not what he was. Subversive elements are not lacking to insinuate that he is become too preoccupied by the lessons of the past. His finger, they imply, is no longer on the Service pulse; nodding over his preprandials, he broods only upon yesterday and leaves the boys in the field to protect themselves as best they may against the immediate machinations of the Brass.

"We grow weary", complains an anonymous letter, "of hearing about the bygone glories of the House of Shatterproof. What is it to us that Shun-Dalliance Shatterproof was the squarest Roundhead that ever split a cavalier from chine to brisquet? Since he is dust these three hundred years, he can no longer unhorse even an assistant adjutant. And how, we ask, does a recital of the Sieur de Château Prouffe's prowess in the boudoirs of old Quebec help the young airman through the monastic rigours of a tour of

duty in Resolute Bay? As for Goody Shatterproof, the Hen-wife of Hartlepool, it is questionable whether her most potent spell could afflict the Director of Postings and Careers with even so much as a twinge of conscience."

In less Athenian vein, another pleads: "Lookit, Sarge—how's about a bit of current gen for a change? Old characters like them toothy guys you spoke of, Eoshatterproof and Praeposterus — well, I mean, so what? Now, don't get me wrong. I'm not saying they wasn't tops in their day, but us erks in 'B' Flight feel they're getting to be kinda back numbers. I take my hat off to the way they handled all them lions and tigers, but what we want to know is how to handle a gorilla like our flight-sergeant. Why, only yesterday he comes up to me. . ."

To such cries as these, Sir, no Shatterproof can turn a deaf ear. It is possible, I admit, that while considering the gloomy forest of Service policy as a whole, I may

have neglected to foster the growth of the individual saplings which will one day be its monarchs. However, let the boys in the fields take heart: Aes Semper Nobiscum.* The sword has not rusted, the shield is still untarnished, and the trumpet-blast of inspiration is only temporarily muted.

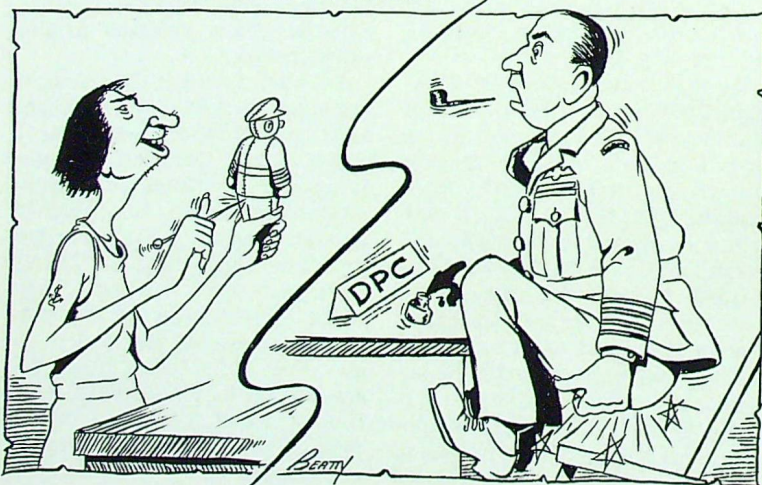
While neither of my correspondents appears to attach much importance to the examples of history, they would not, I think, deny the value of examples drawn from the Air Force world in which they live. What mightier stimulus to ambition could there be than a study of the career, let us say, of Leading Aircraftman Bladder? What more eloquent warning could be offered to the licentious than the story of how Flight Lieutenant Oglebody met his Waterloo? Therefore, Sir, turning a thoughtful eye upon a few of those men and women whom I have mentioned to you in the past, let us profit from a consideration of their more recent fortunes.

* * *

For L.A.C. Bladder, fresh and glittering horizons have opened up. I am more than ever hopeful that the boy will be ready to take over the helm when, in a few years' time, I relinquish it. He has, as you know, put in some two thousand original suggestions during the past eleven years. His plan for the elimination of the Brass, which he submitted in 1949, though not yet officially adopted by the R.C.A.F., has at least succeeded in bringing him to the earnest attention of

*As our older readers are aware, this is the motto of the House of Shatterproof. It means, alternatively: "The sword is ever at our side" or "The Brass we have always with us." — Editor.

"... with even so much as a twinge of conscience."



D.P.C. and the Service Police. Constant study of Q.R. (Air) has since matured the lad, and I understand that he has ironed out most of the problems raised by his former proposal. In view of the economies in the Defence Budget that his scheme would make possible, I do not feel that he is over-optimistic in anticipating a cash award which may even run into two figures. In a word, Sir, after more than a decade of selfless service, a new and brighter day is dawning for this devoted young airman.

For Flt. Lt. Oglebody, on the other hand, the forecast is anything but C.A.V.U. Last spring, while taking Nursing Sister Bussable for a drive in his M.G., that romantic and ingenious officer actually did run out of gas. Unfortunately, he ran out of it, not in any of the spots normally selected by him for such emergencies, but right on the main highway. By sheer force of habit, he automatically switched off his lights — and was promptly rammed in the rear by a transport truck. Though his companion sustained injuries of a slightly more serious nature, all that he himself suffered was a broken jaw-bone. It was, however, sufficient to write "finis" to his gallantries.

Temporarily incapable of the badinage which had so endeared him to the Sex, he was taken firmly in hand by Flt. Lt. Grindstone, the attractive and strong-minded officer in charge of female personnel. During the short and somewhat silent period of their engagement, Flt. Lt. Grindstone was promoted to the rank of Squadron Leader, and it is said that her fiancé's first words to her after the M.O. had unwired his maxillae were: "Now look, Ma'am, before this thing goes too far. . ." After their marriage, the remains of the M.G. were left to rust away in its garage (an empty packing-case behind the disused hangar), and Mrs. Oglebody

has insisted that their second-hand Austin A30 be governed down to 30 miles an hour — at least until her husband's completion of 20 years' service.

After the accident, Nursing Sister Bussable naturally found herself consigned to the tender care of Sqn. Ldr. Purger, our S.M.O. The latter, whose name was already becoming a household word for his work on the philoprogenitiveness of ferry pilots, had had little leisure for the cultivation of his own. But he soon began to take a more than merely clinical interest in the fractures, contusions, and traumata of his charming patient. Before Nursing Sister Bussable was out of her first walking-cast, she had consented to become Mrs. Purger; and now the ferry pilots are on their own.

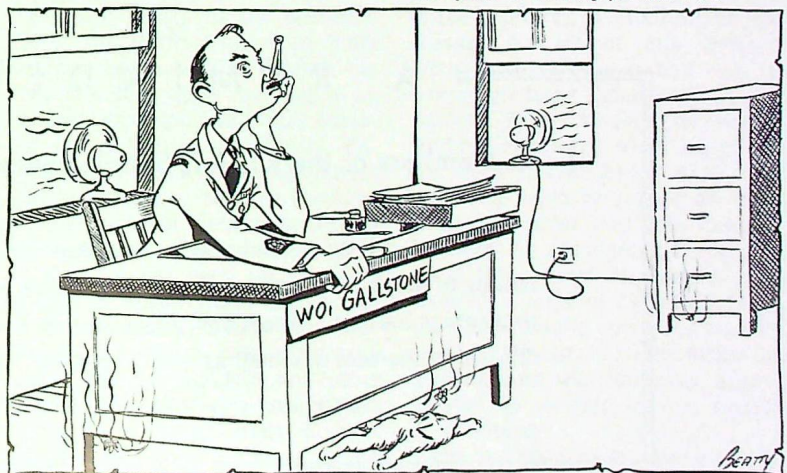
Padre Airlift officiated at their wedding. It is some time since I had occasion to mention Padre Airlift to you, Sir. Although, during the interval, he has not stood still in his cure of Service souls, his progress in other respects has been scarcely spectacular. Nevertheless, he appears to be tackling his problem in the spirit of the old church militant. If one may draw any con-

clusions from the fact that the text for his sermon last Sunday was taken from Psalms LXXV, 6,* he will shortly be applying for transfer to a more northerly unit.

W.O.1 Gallstone remains unchanged. The years do nothing for him, and our most dedicated attempts to broaden his outlook serve only to enlarge his spleen. His latest victim is Cpl. Spyder, who is now serving somewhere inside the Arctic Circle. Cpl. Spyder, in an hour of *joie de vivre*, procured several small cubes of round steak and tacked them to various inconspicuous surfaces in W.O.1 Gallstone's office. In the fulness of time, its occupant was unable to carry out his duties without three bottles of chlorophyll deodorizer on his desk. Nevertheless, none of his visitors, when questioned by him, would admit to noticing anything unusual in the atmosphere except a faint odour of Chanel No. 5. He did not, in fact, discover the truth until Prudence, the Station cat, whose palate had been a trifle debauched by her carousals among mess garbage-cans, expired in convulsions

*"Promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south."—Editor.

"The years do nothing for him . . ."





"... two thousand original suggestions ..."

while banqueting off the bottom of his desk.

* * *

Time, Sir, does not permit me at the moment to trace for you the destinies of any more of our old acquaintances. Much profit, I know, would accrue to your readers from a study of how success finally crowned the efforts of Sergeant Highball to create a long-range all-weather cocktail for consumption

before mess dinners. Nor is there any less food for thought in the fate of Cpl. Aperture, of the Photographic Section, who, having prepared a montage showing the head of the C.O.'s lady set firmly atop the C.O.'s shoulders, incautiously marketed it in the canteen for the not unreasonable price of ten cents per print. But, as I have said, other duties claim me.

I cannot, however, leave you without a word on the subject of young Cudgel, the son of my old friend Farmer Fetlock. As you may recall, young Cudgel entered the Service via the Air Cadets, and he is now flying Sabres somewhere in Europe. Very shortly after his arrival there, he married a daughter of the old Saarland nobility, Fraülein Kaffeeklatch, who speedily established herself as a social force in the life of married quarters. Their union has already been twice blessed with issue.

But success has not turned Flying Officer Fetlock's head. Far from it. He remains the same unaffected Canadian boy who used to inflate frogs beside his father's duck-pond. In a recent letter home, he writes:

"... and say, you should hear young Glockenspiel round feeding-time! He sounds just like old Bertram, the black Berkshire, when we slaughtered him in the fall of '51. Little Brengunde, too, gets cuter all the time. Remember, Pop, how Rosy, our old Guernsey, used to get the bloats whenever she got loose in the clover after a rain-storm? Well, it's that way with Brengunde whenever she gets those little mitts of hers on a bottle of ginger ale. From what the M.O. says, though, it seems you don't have to stick a knitting-needle between her ribs, the way we did with Rosy.—By the way, speaking of the bloats, how's old Shatterproof percolating these days? Not a bad old turkey — and I bear no malice for the time he waled the tar out of me when I ruffled his tail-feathers with my sling-shot. Remember, Pop? ..."

And on this note, Sir, I must end. There are some things that even a Shatterproof cannot recall unmoved.

A R E M I N D E R

To Members of the R.C.A.F. Supplementary Reserve

You will shortly receive your Annual Reporting Cards, the signing of which signifies your intention to remain with the Supplementary Reserve. Would you please sign in the manner indicated on the card and mail as soon as possible.

No. 425 Squadron

PART FOUR

BY FLIGHT LIEUTENANT A. P. HEATHCOTE

SEPTEMBER, 1944, was one of the extremely few months in which the Alouettes did not have to do battle with the *Luftwaffe* at least once. The dearth of fighter encounters was attributable mostly to the fact that all but one of their thirteen operations were executed in broad daylight under cover of *Spitfires* and *Mustangs*. Of their last 31 operations, in fact, 23 had been logged under "Day Flying".

With Cap Gris Nez taken care of, the bombing of French targets by the Alouettes was over. Once again the time had come for an all-out offensive on Germany itself. Though terribly battered and scarr-ed, the Valley of the Rhur still typified the industrial might of the Reich. Seventeen of twenty-six operations in the next eleven-to-twelve weeks took the Alouettes to that yet formidably defended area. Five others led them to a secondary manufacturing heartland along the Rhine. Their bombing fare was a steady diet of old and established "hot targets", the stuff that air-crews' bad dreams were made of. Some of the most flak-infested were Dortmund, Bochum (twice), Duisburg (four times), Wilhelmshaven, Essen, Cologne (twice), and Dues-seldorf. Operations against smaller targets such as Sterkrade, Hom-berg, Oberhausen, Gelsenkirchen, Castrop Rauxel, Hagen, and Wanne Eickel, all producers of *ersatz* lubrication, were no milk runs either. Flak in the daytime, flak and fighters at night — such enemy offer-ings were invariably present in considerable quantity and numbers. It was flak that accounted for No.

425's four crews posted missing in this period. On the other hand there were unmistakable signs that Germany's harried and overworked air defenders were losing their effectiveness. As the strength of the bombing forces increased, the score of the *Luftwaffe*, based on per-centage, showed a down-trend. In October alone, a night attack on Cologne was carried out by more than 900 bombers without a loss, and large-scale night raids on Dort-mund, Bochum, Duisburg, and Es-sen brought losses in the order of only one per cent. What a far cry from Nuremberg, Leipzig, and Ber-lin, only seven or eight months be-fore! Clearly the handwriting was on the wall for the super-race of the air, and the chief defacers were the tireless aircrews of Bomber Command.

The Oberhausen raid saw a good example of that unbeatable "press on" spirit in the conduct of Pilot Officer S. G. E. Chabot, skipper of "E"-Easy. Early in the operation (over the North Sea), both inner engines began to give trouble, but the pilot kept "Easy" heading in an easterly direction and finally bomb-ed the objective as briefed. En-counter- ing a heavy barrage during the bombing run, the kite absorbed enough German metal to be severely damaged. The main oxygen line was ripped open (at a critical height of 21,000 feet), the bomb-bay doors would not close, the star-board elevator was practically shredded, and the H2S and other navigational aids were knocked out of action. "Easy" made it back to England, but, because of her

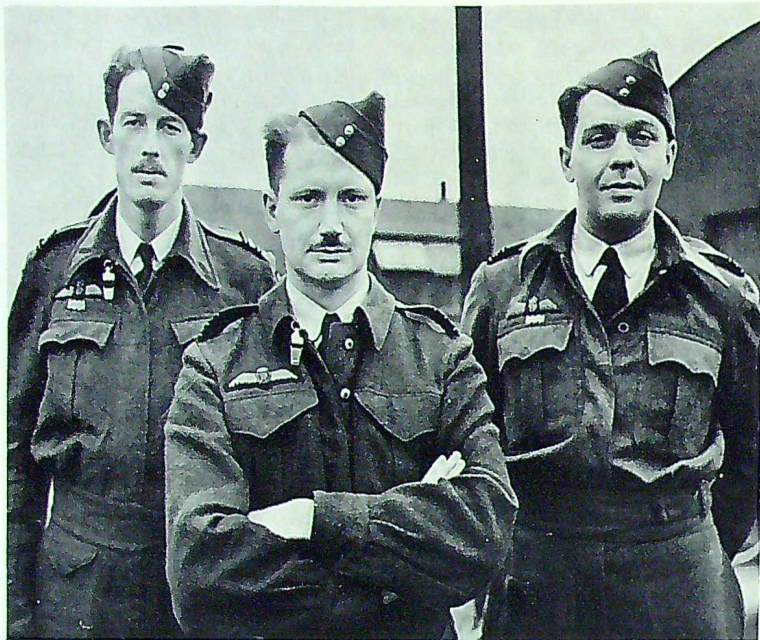


Navigator Pilot Officer L. P. Rodrigue congratulates his skipper Flt. Lt. R. Laporte on recent award of D.F.C. Other friends have already done so in chalk upon his locker.

damaged condition and a fuel shortage, her skipper elected to land at Horsham. He and his navig-ator, Flight Sergeant J. A. R. Guilbault, were subsequently gong-ed.

The squadron lost a crew on Oberhausen, and one of eight sur-vivors was Flt. Sgt. J. Federico, who had two very close calls. As he was descending from his mid-upper turret after the order to prepare to abandon, an explosion occurred be-tween him and the mid-under posi-tion, in other words, within a very few feet of him. His only souvenir of the blast was "a small bit of flak through the tip of one finger". When it came time to bail out, he left by the front hatch without dif-ficulty. Then trouble developed. Nothing happened when he pulled the ripcord. The shroud lines were entangled, and he tugged at them frantically until limp with exhaus-tion. As he plummeted through a cloud layer (later learned to have been at a level of 1500-2000 feet), the 'chute finally opened of its own accord. He sprained his ankle on landing, and was promptly appre-hended by soldiers from a nearby A. A. battery.

For another crew operating on



Wing Cdr. H. Ledoux, shortly after taking over as C.O. With him are his two flight commanders, Sqn. Ldr. L. P. J. Dupuis, D.F.C. (right), and Flt. Lt. G. Phelan, D.F.C.

Flt. Lt. R. D. Hemphill, D.F.C., encourages Alouettes to keep coal on the briefing-room fire.



Duesseldorf the following evening, things were warm enough without the enemy. Only a few minutes after take-off the starboard inner of "B"-Baker sprang an oil leak. The captain, Flight Lieutenant R. D. K. Hemphill, decided to continue the mission. When the target was practically in sight, the port inner exploded and was instantly aflame. At this point the flight engineer, Sgt. E. A. McAbendroth (R.A.F.), went to work. To prevent the fire's spreading and possibly reaching the escaping oil, he strove unremittingly, finally succeeding in extinguishing the flames. Meanwhile Hemphill held an accurate course, and "Baker", on three engines, successfully bombed the primary target from 13,500 feet, or 6,000 feet below briefed height. With one engine already useless and another not giving full power, there now arose a new cause for misgiving, that old bogey, fuel shortage. The skipper turned for the nearest point of England. During an anxious period before a safe landing at Manston emergency 'drome, McAbendroth applied all the tricks of the f/e's trade in order to achieve the vital maximum of fuel economy. His expert engine-tending aided the captain no end in bringing "Baker" home. For this action Hemphill received a D.F.C., McAbendroth a D.F.M. The former was soon to add a Bar to his decoration. After this crippling thousand-bomber attack of 2 November 1944, Command closed the file on Duesseldorf and marked it "Dead". Now 70 per cent destroyed, it was not again to be attacked in strength.

The daylight half of Command's mammoth mid-October smash at Duisburg finished a tour for Squadron Leader L. P. J. Dupuis, D.F.C., who, having begun his operational tour the previous February as a warrant officer, had risen to command a flight within 3½ months. His opposite number, Sqn. Ldr. W. G. Phelan, D.F.C., was posted in

November to the other side of the field, to No. 420 Squadron, which he was soon to command. He was the sixth Alouette alumnus to take over another squadron.

An aftermath of a late-October mission to Cologne was the screening of another veteran. Having been posted to the squadron on Easter Sunday, this particular Alouette had been taken on strength as an Airwoman 2nd Class, immediately promoted to temporary sergeant, and placed on the unit's operational establishment. Though her official trade was "operational overseer", her function was not really to oversee anything, but just to be aboard. Her name was Vickie, and she was a stuffed bunny. Wearing a holy medal blessed by a Montreal priest, she was adopted by the Alouettes as a good-luck mascot. In this capacity she had performed to perfection, having, on practically each of her 37 trips, seen a different crew safely through an operation.

Between the end of September and the middle of December, the squadron also pranged a U-boat base at Bergen, Norway, clobbered a few marshalling-yards in Westphalia and the Rhineland, and witnessed the death of a German town called Julich.

* * *

The weather had been decidedly dull for ten days when, one morning in mid-December, the Air Officer Commanding 6 Group, Air Vice-Marshal C. M. McEwen, M.C., D.F.C., presented No. 425 Squadron with its fourth Base Efficiency Trophy in six months. He also delivered a short address, paying special tribute to the groundcrew for their splendid work since the unit's inception.

Even as Air Vice-Marshal McEwen, speaking on a parade square in Yorkshire, was exhorting the Alouettes to continue all-out effort, Gerd von Roodstedt was

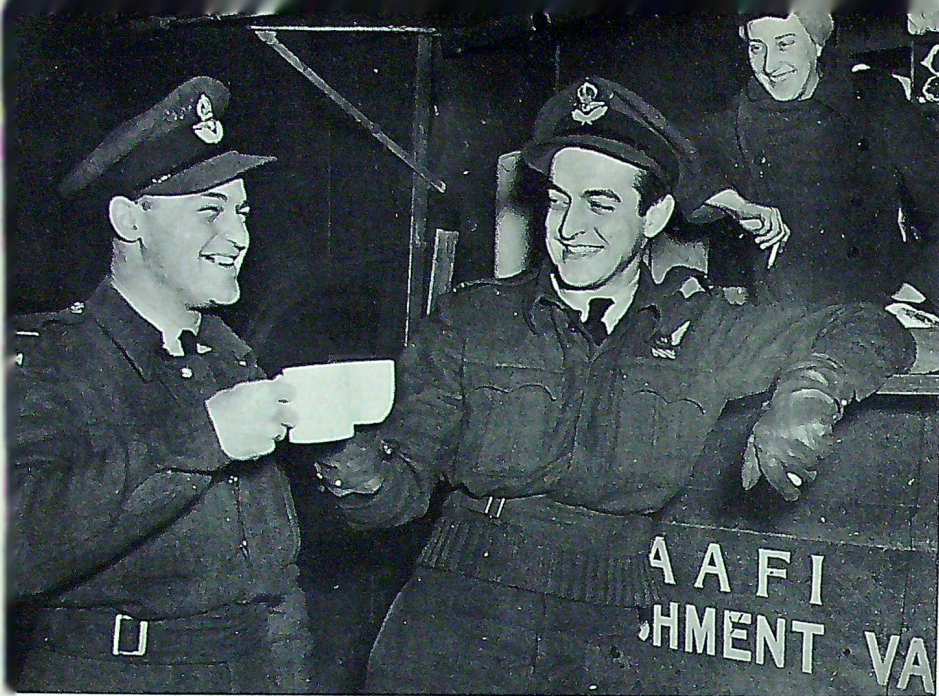
urging his men in a do-or-die push on the Ardennes sector of the western front, 400 or so miles away. By reason of this, the last large-scale German ground offensive, much of Command's work during the rest of 1944 and in the first two-to-three weeks of 1945 was semi-tactical and semi-strategical. Most of the Alouettes' nine targets in the period were marshalling-yards in cities and towns situated on the approaches to the battle area. It was while carrying out its sole purely strategical operation (Hanover) in this period that the squadron suffered the only triple loss of the twenty-four months or so during which it was actually engaged on operations. Fatalities among the three crews were, however, gratifyingly low. Four aircrew were lost on the operation itself and one was killed while attempting to escape his captors. Sixteen resigned themselves to the confined life of a prison camp.

The work of the Alouette Squadron after the middle of January was predominantly strategical. Discounting three tactical operations that were washed out by order of the master bomber, they participated thereafter in thirty-seven attacks, only four of which were not aimed primarily at the destruction of industry. In their last fourteen weeks of operations they revisited many of their old targets and introduced themselves to several new ones. They roamed from Heide in north Germany to Stuttgart in the south; from Goch, near the "bomb line", to Chemnitz, scarcely more than twenty miles from the Czechoslovakian border. They bombed in broad daylight, at dusk, and in the black of night. Many times they operated in weather conditions anything but ideal for finding and bombing a target. "Bombed through tenths cloud on skymarkers checked by Gee" — more often than not,

these words would appear in raid descriptions. The last half of January was a meteorologist's nightmare, allowing the squadron but two chances to get operational, on Magedburg and Stuttgart. The former raid was noteworthy for seeing the unit's first and only official "probable", an Me. 210 chalked up by Flt. Sgt. J. E. G. Marcil and Sgt. J. B. R. Paré. Both gunners were eventually gonged.

Statistics for abbreviated February looked much better. The Alouettes doubled their seven-target performance of January, and it was no fault of theirs that two army-support operations were scrubbed by the master bomber. (Again, blame the weather). Their sortie total was 193, their highest ever for a winter month. Their losses on operations were nil, apart from a crew that bailed out safely over Belgium and returned to operations within a month. The month also saw their last air-to-air victory over the German air force. The operation, on Goch (7/8 February), was one of the two mentioned above as having been washed out. Our crews had packed up for the night and were on their way home. But the *Luftwaffe's* night-shift was still operating, and over the area from Goch all the way to the Wash its Ju. 88s, Me. 210s, and F.W. 190s were showing surprising audacity. *Halifax* "E"-Easy (Flying Officer A. R. Lowe, captain) tangled four times with a Focke Wulf and came out on top. During the third attack strikes were seen on the F.W. before the breakaway at 300 yards, and during the fourth attack "Easy's" tracers were again seen pouring into it. The enemy disappeared for a second or two, then was seen to fall to earth in flames. The victorious gunners were Flying Officer P. J. Hall and Flt. Sgt. J. W. Hyde.

In the four months between 22 October and 23 February the Alouettes had been largely noctur-



Flying Officer L. Marcotte, D.F.C. (left), and Flt. Lt. M. Regimbald, D.F.C., at a refreshment van on an airfield in England.

nal in habit, having delivered only eight daylight raids. From the latter date until the war's end the reverse was true, as they bombed only eight targets at night. In most of those daylight excursions they were tucked in "gaggle" formation.

While the great majority of No. 425's targets in February were new to the squadron (Mainz, Osterfeld, Bonn, Goch, Bohlen, Chemnitz, Wesel, Monheim, Worms, and Kamen, for example), those of March and April were old established "four-pointers". They included Mannheim, Cologne, Hamburg (four times), Essen, Dortmund, Wuppertal, Hagen, Münster, Leipzig, Kiel, and Bremen, as impressive a lineup of targets as any old bomber type would care to forget. Lesser objectives were the Ruhr towns of Witten, Rheine, Dorsten, and Gladbeck, all attacked in support of Operation "Plunder", the crossing of the Rhine; and Hemmingstedt, an oil centre in Schleswig-Holstein.

March, although a strong third for the squadron with regard to number of sorties (236), was its blackest-ever in point of losses.

Nine aircraft went down over England and the Continent while on operations, and 31 fatal casualties resulted. The bad-luck string began on the ill-fated night of 5/6 March, one of those occasions when the elements proved more formidable than the enemy. One of 425's *Halifaxes*, undoubtedly encountering the severe icing that lurked that night even in very low cloud, crashed shortly after take-off. A second collided in cloud with a bomber of another squadron, and a third failed to return from the target, Chemnitz. Two nights later a highly experienced crew was missing on Hemmingstedt. A week after that, one did not return from Hagen, while another bailed out over Belgium, incurring a single fatality. On the Witten raid one aircraft was missing and a second was involved in a mid-air collision that was fatal for all but one of its crew. The squadron's final loss came in daylight over Hamburg on the 31st. On the favourable side, there were 28 survivors among the nine crews, only four of whom reached prison camp. Among the survivors was

Pilot Officer C. B. Racicot, one of two *Alouettes* who earned themselves "escaper" badges. Unfortunately the details of his escape are not available.

The Hagen operation, of 15/16 March, was the finest hour of Flt. Lt. J. R. ("Roly") Laporte, skipper of "G"-George, and his engineer, Sgt. J. R. Arcand. About forty-five minutes after bombing the objective, the *Hally* had its nose blasted off and its starboard inner engine set on fire by tracer from an unseen night-fighter. Fire also broke out at the engineer's position, and Sgt. Arcand set about the task of putting it out. A second attack came soon after, setting the starboard outer on fire. During the second attack Laporte was struck by a bullet that pierced both elbows; yet, somehow or other, he managed to carry out feathering and fire-extinguishing procedures for both engines. Meanwhile Arcand was succeeding in his attempt to extinguish the fuselage fire. But with two engines gone on one side, the *Hally* would no longer maintain height or stay on an even keel. The captain ordered his crew to abandon, all the while staying at the controls in spite of his painful wounds. When it came his turn to leave, he realized that his harness had become caught in the wind-screen de-icer pump handle. He disentangled it and proceeded to the escape hatch. Before getting there he was thrown violently to the floor, and his left foot became jammed between the "Window" chute and the wireless panel. Using his right leg as a lever, he managed to push himself to the hatch, and the forces of nature did the rest for him. He was sucked out of the *Halifax* and out of his boots, which stayed behind in the aircraft. For reasons unknown, Sgt. Arcand went down with the aircraft, but Laporte landed safely in Belgium with the others of his crew. He soon had a

Bar to go with the D.F.C. earned earlier in March by flying all but a small fraction of the long way to Chemnitz and back on three engines. The six survivors were able to operate together twice more before the war's end. Great spirit was shown on the same operation by a former United States Marine, Flt. Lt. J. B. MacHale, who flew the whole trip on three engines, his port outer having cut on take-off. Back home with him to Seattle he took a D.F.C.

Although no conclusive facts are available, it is thought that the last of 425's missing aircraft may have been one of eight 6 Group bombers that fell before the onslaught of Me. 262 jet fighters over Hamburg around 0900 hours on 31 March. If such was the case, the squadron may have exacted some measure of revenge on 10 April, in the course of its deepest daylight penetration into Germany. Mention was made of a single "squirt" (Me. 163 rocket fighter) that had tried its luck on a gaggle bombing Leipzig early that evening. While attacking a *Lancaster* it came within .303 range of 425's *Halifax* "T"-Tare. Flt. Sgt. J. J. Charbonneau opened fire on it from his mid-upper turret and presently saw it stall, flip on to its back, and fall away in a steep dive. The gunner claimed a probable. His were the last shots fired in anger by gunners of this squadron.

A few hours before the start of another operation on Hamburg, on 4 April, the squadron had received a cable from the mayor of Quebec City proclaiming the adoption of the *Alouettes* by the capital of French Canada.

The *Alouettes*' parting fling at the foe was a daylight crack at gun batteries on Wangerooze in the late afternoon of 25 April, which came a week after a similar and even more satisfying blow at Heligoland, that flak and fighter outpost which had for so long been shown a hate-



Veteran of 75 bombing missions, this *Halifax* was awarded a D.F.C. by the groundcrew who were responsible for keeping her flying. Here they pose with their pride and joy. Standing on ground (l. to r.) are: L.A.C. P. Crevier, Sgt. G. de Montigny, W.O.I. J. J. Deslauriers, Sgt. J. W. Desrosiers, L.A.C. J. H. Prince. On stand (clockwise): L.A.C.s A. A. Goshgarian, M. Charbonneau, Y. Rouleau, H. Benoit, Cpl. P. Clouthier, L.A.C. M. Renaud.

ful respect by bomber crews. When Command had done its deadly work, both islands were little more than cratered shambles. No 425's last crew to bomb *Festung Europa* was led by Flt. Lt. L. R. Paquette, whose bomb-aimer, Flying Officer L. J. Mallette, pressed the bomb-release button at 1720 hours. The last to land after a flight over enemy territory was captained by Fly-

ing Officer J. E. Marcoux. When he eased "T"-Tare on to the *Tholthorpe* runway at precisely 1950 hours, the *Alouette* show in the heavy bombing campaign of the Second World War was a *fait accompli*.

To express statistically the *Alouettes*' aerial accomplishments, in a span of just over 2½ years they

participated in 287 bombing attacks (44 on the Ruhr), 24 sea-mining missions, 11 leaflet raids, 6 sea searches, and 1 reconnaissance operation. All this added up to 3665 sorties and more than 20,000 hours in the air. Their most-bombed objectives in the Reich were Hamburg and Essen, each of which they punished eight times. But the target that had entered most often into their offensive plans lay in another theatre of war, and, in a global sense, was almost obscure by comparison. It was Messina, Italy, which, after nine visitations, they had come to know rather well. Their mine-laying responsibilities, confined to the first six months of their operations on *Wellingtons*, took them to such well seeded garden patches as the Frisian Islands, Brest, Wangerooge, and Heligoland areas. Complete figures on bomb and mine tonnages are not available, but it is known that in their 2263 sorties on *Halifaxes* alone they distributed 9000-plus tons of high explosives and incendiaries over targets in north-west Europe.

Total operational casualties were 338 (292 R.C.A.F., 44 R.A.F., 1 U.S.A.A.F., and 1 R.A.A.F.), of whom 190 were either killed or presumed dead. Of the survivors among those who failed to return from operations, 90 were prisoners-of-war, 54 evaded, escaped, or were otherwise safe, and 4 (all R.A.F.) were listed under "fate unknown", their final particulars being unavailable. Accidents arising out of non-operational flying took the lives of 61 aircrew and two groundcrew personnel. In addition, one officer succumbed in an accident not associated with aircraft, one airman was fatally injured through occupational hazard, and another airman died of natural causes. Finally, five aircrew and two groundcrew were lost to the squadron through internment in a neutral country in the course of a non-operational

(transport) flight.

While on operations, 43 crews went down in or near enemy territory, 5 crashed with fatal consequences in England, and 1 was known to have gone down in the Mediterranean. On the other hand, Alouette gunners exacted a not inconsiderable toll of their own, claiming eight enemy aircraft destroyed, 1 probably destroyed (another was unofficial), and three damaged.

The Alouettes won 190 decorations in addition to other honours. These included 4 Bars to the D.F.C., 163 D.F.C.s, 2 G.M.s, 18 D.F.M.s, 2 M.B.E.s, 1 American D.F.C., and several Mentions-in-Despatches.

* * *

The most important of all developments in the 12-day span between No. 425's last op and the formal ending of hostilities was the commencement of its conversion to *Lancaster X* aircraft, in which type it was to fly back to Canada. Behind this was the selection of the unit with seven other Canadian squadrons for service with the proposed Tiger Force in the East. Ground courses for aircrew began even before the end of April, and the first *Lanc* reached Tholthorpe on 1 May. The first week of victory month was one of intensified training, as many as seventeen aircraft in a single day being airborne on various exercises. Since it was wished that aircrew keep in constant touch with the skills of their respective trades, the *Halifax*, in the first half of the month, was still very much alive at Tholthorpe. But with an increase in the unit's *Lancaster* establishment, and as more crews completed the ground part of their conversion, it was gradually edged out of the picture. The good old *Hally* had served the squadron well, but it had now to give way to the superior range and load-carrying ability of the *Lanc*. Before the end of May the unit held on its charge 20 *Lan-*

casters; there was scarcely a *Halifax* to be seen.

* * *

After two days of victory hysteria, the squadron soberly realized that, several thousand miles away, the third Axis partner was still in business. There was still work to be done. Normality therefore returned as personnel resumed their duties and all aircrew on leave were recalled for training. Preparations for the trans-Atlantic jump again swung into high gear, special emphasis being placed on astronavigation.

On 14 June, after more than six weeks of conversion and special training, the Alouettes, led by Sq. Ldr. Dupuis, made their final take-off from their Tholthorpe home-away-from-home. Their last flight as a unit took them via St. Mawgan, the Azores, and Gander, to Debert, Nova Scotia. Once home, they were sent on leave to await the reorganization, re-equipment, and commencement of training of Tiger Force. Before they could be reformed, however, the hopes of the Land of the Rising Sun had been lost in the atomic dust over Hiroshima and Nagasaki. There was no longer a need for Tiger Force. On 22 August an order was issued authorizing the squadron's disbandment. It was accordingly dissolved on 5 September 1945, at the age of three years, two months, and ten days.

* * *

A little more than nine years later, the long-hibernating Alouette preened its feathers, stretched its wings, and made ready once more to take to the air. On 1 October 1954, No. 425 Squadron was officially reborn at St. Hubert. This time its official designation carried the added letters "A.W. (F.)", standing for "All Weather (Fighter)". In order to perform a function entirely new to it — defence — the unit had undergone a marked mechanical

metamorphosis. Replacing the bludgeon-like, seven-man *Halifax* as its standard equipment was the rapier-like, twin-jet-powered CF-100, manned by only a pilot and a radio navigator. Thus the Alouettes of 1954 were far fewer in number than their war-time counterparts.

Once a deadly instrument of war, this squadron is now an equally deadly guardian of the peace, poised on a round-the-clock *qui vive*, ready and able to administer swift and sure punishment to unwelcome aerial visitors. It is ironic that a one-time bomber unit now finds itself existing solely to prevent the visitation on this country of a type of devastation infinitely more frightful than that which it once helped to wreak on enemy-held Europe. Even as it was formerly hunted and opposed in the skies over Europe, so will it now hunt down and pluck from the sky any intruder upon our aerial realm, be the weather fair or foul. Now is there truly a maximum of meaning in the words that have come to be identified with No. 425 Squadron —

"Je te plumerai."

End



The newly-adopted Alouettes are christened by Group Capt. J. H. L. Lecomte, D.F.C.

Luke 12,19

The annual Chaplains' Conference within A.A.F.C.E. (Allied Air Forces Central Europe) took place this year at No. 4 (F.) Wing, No. 1 Air Division's senior chaplains, Wing Commander E. S. Light and Wing Cdr. A. J. E. Leveque, sent a signal to Air Div. H.Q. requesting authority to supply the visiting chaplains with rations and quarters free of charge.

The reply they received from Wing Cdr. W. A. Gamble, Staff Officer Accounts and Finance, read as

follows:

AUTHORITY GRANTED TO PROVIDE RATIONS AND QUARTERS WITHOUT CHARGE IN THAT R.C.A.F. WAS PROVIDED RECIPROCAL BENEFITS IN PREVIOUS YEARS. MOREOVER, PRESUMING LUKE TEN FOUR APPLIES, SEE NO OPTION TO CARRYING OUT LUKE TEN SEVEN.

For the benefit of those few readers who may not know their New

Testament by heart, we append the verses referred to in the signal.

Luke 10,4: Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and salute no man by the way.

Luke 10,7: And in the same house remain eating and drinking such things as they give: for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house.

THE NORTH-WEST STAGING ROUTE

PART SIX

BY FLYING OFFICER S. G. FRENCH.

(The writer, whom we left in Part Five driving back down the Alaska Highway towards Edmonton, now nears the end of his trip as he reaches Fort St. John. — Editor.)

THE entire city of Fort St. John owes its creation to flight. Around 1930, Stan MacMillan (later a Wing Commander in the R.C.A.F.), while carrying trappers and their dogs to various points in the north, landed at what was to become Fort St. John. (MacMillan will be remembered by many as the man who kept the world on edge through the winter of '24. Early in the season he crashed near the Arctic Circle, and it was not learned until the following spring that he had spent the intervening months with an Eskimo family in their igloo). Later, in 1932, when Grant McConachie risked his neck one night by landing on Pickell's field to pick up a man who had been badly injured in a sawmill, he discovered that this vicinity would be an ideal location for an airport. Charlie Lake was made an operations base for Yukon Southern, and "Red" Powell's house became a headquarters for the flyers. May, Kubichek, Coote, Sheldon Luck, Simmons, Elliott, Goldie, Patrie, were among those who helped to establish Fort St. John.

In 1942, the Joint Board decided that it would be a good idea to

have an interior bomber-base somewhere on the Staging Route. Fort St. John was chosen as an excellent spot at which to build facilities for such aircraft as the B-29 to land, and hundreds of these bombers subsequently came through there. Today Fort St. John has a large and busy airport, and I spent two interesting days as the guest of the kindly D.O.T. men who operate it.

I obtained most of my information from two sources; from Mrs. M. L. Murray, a remarkable elderly lady who runs, single-handed, the "Alaska Highway News", and Mr. and Mrs. "Red" Powell, the doyens of the Yukon Southern flyers. Mrs. Murray told me about the exploits of the R.C.A.F., and the manner in which it nurtured this country by performing such "buckshee" services as snow-removal, by providing emergency medical care for civilians, and by flying in food for starving pioneers.

Mr. and Mrs. Powell related to me many tales of northern flying. They told me about Ernie Kubichek, who, while flying from their cabin at Charlie Lake, had his 'plane flip over on to its back while going through the narrow Liard Canyon,

near Nelson Forks. He had no choice but to continue on in the same position.

Again, there was the night on which Don Patrie was flying into Charlie Lake at Fort St. John with several passengers, including a game-inspector, a doctor, and a trapper from the Nahannie area. Fog was nestled down right on top of the waves. "Don dropped one flare", Mrs. Powell said, "and thought he detected water below. With one flare left, Don yelled to his passengers: 'I'm going down on this one. I'm sure I saw water.' Down he came, and landed. His water turned out to be just a pot-hole in a marsh. When the fog cleared the next day, Don saw that a take-off would be almost impossible. He unloaded the aircraft, and even drained the fuel tanks, leaving only enough gas for a few minutes' flight. He then took off, ran out of gas, and glided down to the Peace River."

I mentioned earlier that the R.C.A.F. took over the North-West Staging Route on 16 July 1942. The first officer commanding the Route was "Con" Farrell. Wing Cdr. (later Group Capt.) C. M. G. Farrell was the C.O. of R.C.A.F. Station Bella Bella, B.C., when he was called to the Staging Route. Apart from his pleasing personality and his qualities of leadership, he had an excellent record from the Great War, when he won the D.F.C. while serving with the R.A.F.

Con Farrell will long be remembered throughout the North. He

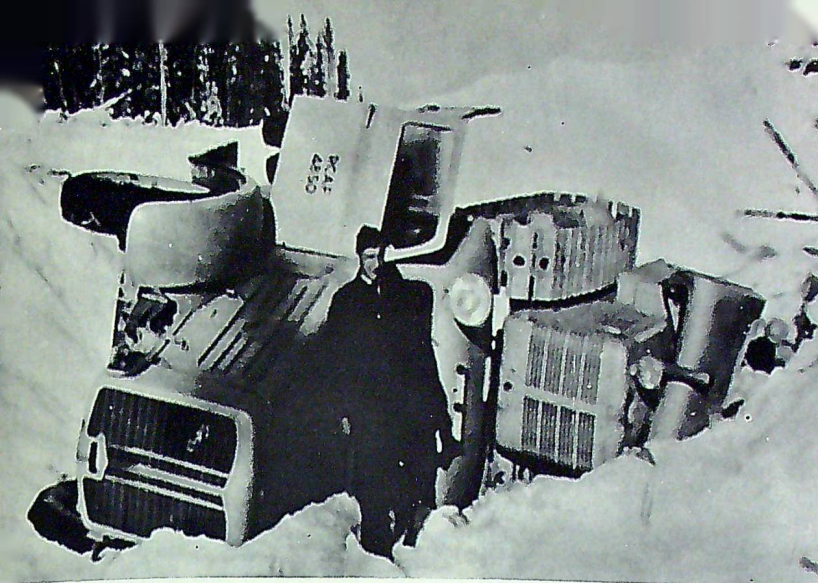


Fort St. John, 1944. (National Film Board photograph.)



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Trouble on the Alaska Highway during the war.

it was who spent the Christmas of 1933 forced down on a nameless lake between Fort Good Hope and the Arctic Red River, with the temperature at seventy degrees below and no radio; who flew into the wilderness and rescued Andy Bahr, the Laplander, and his party of reindeer herders; who was himself rescued by another famous bush pilot, Matt Berry, after being marooned at Snare Lake for thirteen days with some trappers whom he had been flying out. He it was, too, who once flew two sickly and sickening pigs to Cameron Bay in order to cut down the price of pork.

A letter which appeared in the "Ottawa Journal" not many years ago gives some insight into Farrell's character:

"Truly he was the Santa Claus of the North. No words of mine can describe this man with the heart and courage of a lion.

". . . I recall when Con was determined to get the Christmas mail through. Flying-weather was fine when he left the home base at McMurray, Alta. As he proceeded down the Mackenzie River, stretching its weary 900-odd miles from Slave Lake to Aklavik, with settlements nestled approximately 150 miles apart on its winding and twisting shores, a fog developed. . . Undaunted, he pushed on from set-

tlement to settlement, following the sprawling river . . . He arrived in Aklavik in time for Christmas, with a day to spare, and there the weather really closed in and held him for several days.

"I'll wager there were none along the river who did not rise and toast his health for such a feat. He made it a real Christmas for all of us."

* * *

In the early days of the Route, the problems of life were many and varied. For several months R.C.A.F. personnel suffered considerable financial hardship. The extra allowance of \$1.70 per day for officers and \$1.25 per day for other ranks was insufficient to defray expenses in an area influenced by U. S. wage scales, both Service and civilian. Prices rose to unprecedented heights, far beyond the reach of the comparatively small salaries of our own Service personnel. Bottles of whisky were known to sell for as high as one hundred dollars. Eventually, an adjustment was made and an increase in subsistence allowance granted, but it was somewhat slow in coming.

The supply of winter clothing did not arrive at any of the units until four months of the winter season had elapsed. Hangar facilities were not available; therefore all work on aircraft had to be done in the open,

sometimes with bare hands. This difficulty was eventually overcome by borrowing Jeep heaters from the U.S.A.A.F. and by the procurement of engine-tents.

Freight and personnel were moved to and fro by one Lockheed 10 (no. 7634) flying under the most difficult and hazardous conditions in all types of weather. The aircraft was not provided with deicing equipment, and its radio equipment was far from satisfactory. The aircraft was flown by Squadron Leader Ted Holmes, officer commanding Fort St. John. When Ted first reported to his new detachment he had to sleep in a D.O.T. hut. There were so many tired men and so few beds that the hut was run on the "hot bunk" system: every man had eight hours to sleep, then he had to vacate the sheets and let the next man in.

Preferring to sleep in no. 7634, Holmes serviced, loaded, and flew it all by himself, carrying supplies up and down the Route. Once he had to transport a 4200-pound power-transformer from Fort St. John to Fort Nelson. This necessitated stripping the Lockheed of everything, including its radio and some instruments. In the period between 21 August 1942 and 28 February 1943, he flew a total of 488 hours, covered 65,092 miles, and moved 117,110 pounds of freight.

In January 1943, Wing Cdr. Farrell was replaced as C.O. of the Route by Wing Cdr. W. J. ("Packie") McFarlane. With an ever-swelling number of R.C.A.F. personnel being sent to the Route, and with the increasing complexity of its operation, its problems became more numerous than ever. At the Route's headquarters in Edmonton, work was hampered by a lack of facilities. Housing, as well as office and warehouse space, was at a premium in the suddenly bulging city. In order to meet its needs, the R.C.A.F. set up tents on the lawn in front

of the civil Administration Building at the airport. These tents served for many months.

In the meantime, construction went on at the units. Airmen of No. 4 Construction and Maintenance Unit worked on the construction of such things as garages, coal compounds, and root houses. R.C.A.F. personnel even went into the wood-cutting business, supplying fuel for R.C.A.F. and U.S.A.A.F. alike.

It would appear that a serious attempt was made to provide recreation and entertainment for the airmen at these isolated spots. C. Morton Devitt and A. M. Hall, both of the Y.M.C.A., guided the general

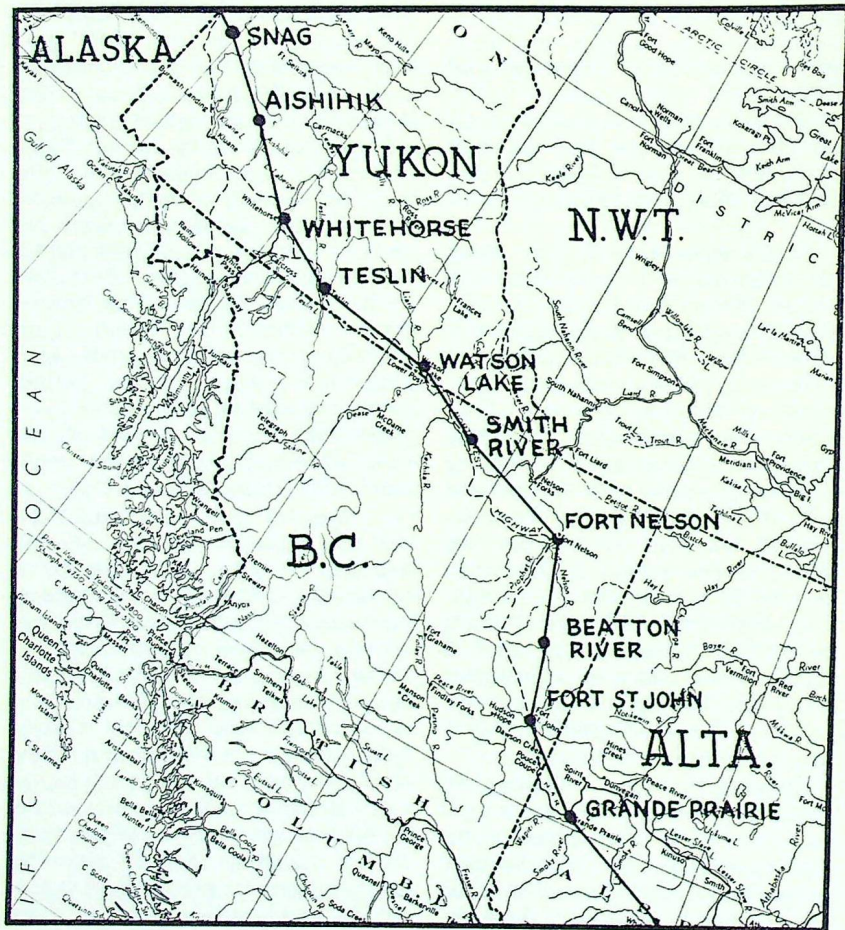
plan. The Air Force set aside rooms, which were magnificently equipped with reading and recreational facilities. Equipment for such games as ping-pong, checkers, darts, horse-shoes, and volleyball was sent to the detachments as quickly as possible. Softball was the favourite summer pastime for most. Packie told me when I was in Edmonton that "friendly games with the U.S. and other teams were weekly features at all stations. An R.C.A.F. league was organized, with a team entered from each unit, and a splendid silver trophy was provided for the competition. All was in a state of readiness, but unservice-

ability of aircraft prevented the paying of any League games."

Films were shown as regularly as conditions would permit. Many entertainers were flown up the Route, stopping at each unit to entertain the airmen of the U.S.A.A.F. and the R.C.A.F. Three such shows were: the R.C.A.F. Airmen Entertainment Group from A.F.H.Q., Capt. F. H. Armitage and his show "Dickens and His Queer Folk", and Mrs. Catherine Craig and party. All donations were gratefully received; although, as one ex-Staging Route airman told me, "some of those old who's-who clubwomen who came 'to entertain the boys' were a bit much, bless their souls!"

As much of what I have already said would imply, those who preferred the more individualistic sports, such as hunting and fishing, were never at a loss for recreation — although it may be added that the hunters at Fort Nelson must have been rather frustrated during the first few months that followed Pearl Harbour. At that time, the only gun on the station was a .22 which belonged to Lorne Harlson, guide of the original survey parties. The libraries were the amenities most appreciated, for the winters seemed interminable, and their nights were long and cold.

The R.C.A.F. compiled a fine record of flying along the Route. In October 1942, No. 6 Communications Flight was organized at Edmonton, with Ted Holmes as its O.C. At its inception, Com. Flight suffered from a dearth of aircraft: No. 7634 and a few *Norsemen* scattered around the various units — all of them constantly on the go carrying supplies and people — made up its total strength. The Flight's flying was not restricted to the Staging Route alone. Flights were made to such widely separated points as the Aleutian Islands, Fairbanks, Anchorage, and, when the



Canol Pipeline was being built, to Norman Wells.

One day when Ted Holmes was winging his way down the Route, he was radioed to turn around and proceed to Fort Simpson in order to pick up a package from the Mounties. The parcel turned out to contain the first Japanese balloon to be found in Canada. Released from enemy submarines on the Pacific coast, these balloons were about fifty feet wide, made out of fibre paper, with a gondola below carrying explosives. Their purpose was to land in the forests, explode, and set fire to the gas — and, of course, to the forests. About forty of these were found throughout the war. A few were shot down by *Mustangs* while in the air. The balloons were largely failures; only a couple of fires were started. They occasioned only one fatality — and that not until after the war. An Oregon minister was strolling in the bush with several children, when they spotted an unusual-looking object dangling from a tree. One of the party, a young girl, ran forward and somehow or other caused it to explode. Thus did the costly Japanese balloons claim their lone human life.

Before many months had passed, more aircraft were required to meet the growing demand from the detachments for rations, equipment, and personnel. The Com. Flight was not large enough to take care of all the flying, and therefore, in April 1943, No. 165 (Transport) Squadron was formed. By June, three *Lodestars* and a *Dakota III*, together with the necessary aircrew and groundcrew, were at work on the Route. Hangar and office space for No. 165 Squadron was made by the erection, on a rough lumber floor, of a large marquee behind the T.C.A. hangar.

Eventually, No. 165 changed over to Douglas DC-3 transport aircraft. Operating like a first-class com-



Incident at Fort St. John, 1943.

mercial airline, the squadron never had a serious accident. Over ninety per cent of its trips were made within ten minutes of the scheduled time. Except for one period of three weeks in the autumn of 1944, when record-breaking ground-fog conditions obscured almost the entire Route, they never cancelled a flight. Up to the end of 1944, more than 20,000 passengers and nearly 6,500,000 pounds of freight had been flown over a distance of approximately 1,750,000 miles. By 1945, most of the personnel flying with the squadron were men who had returned to Canada from operational duties overseas, and the majority of them were wearing either the D.F.M. or the D.F.C.

The Communications Flight did not cease to exist with the advent of No. 165 Squadron. It continued to operate with its smaller aircraft throughout the war, normally logging more than 100,000 miles a month over a vast territory in the North-West.

* * *

Before taking leave of Fort St. John, I feel that I should mention a story that is still told of Packie McFarlane and Ted Holmes — one which I am quite sure that neither

of them will mind my repeating.

When, in January 1944, the Route passed from the control of No. 4 Training Command, Edmonton, to that of Western Air Command (N.W.A.C. was not formed until June), "Packie" McFarlane was a group captain and Ted Holmes a squadron leader. On those occasions when they happened to find themselves together at the end of the day's work, long discussions of "shop" were apt to occur between them over the odd pre- (and, no doubt, post-) prandial. After the two old friends had brooded together for a time over the insuperable obstacles placed in their way by officialdom, the criminally inadequate comprehension displayed in Ottawa of their problems, and the general sorry pass to which the whole Air Force was rapidly coming, Packie would turn to Ted, eye him solemnly, and say:

"Ted, you'd be better off dead."

"Yes, sir," Ted would reply, "I would."

This invariable ritual having been duly carried out, the evening would progress thenceforward along more jovial lines.

(To be concluded)

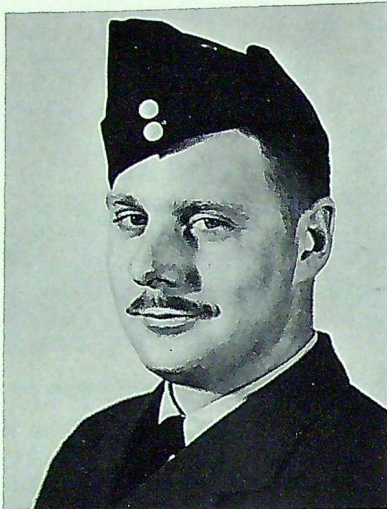
The Suggestion Box



The Chief of the Air Staff has written letters of thanks to the under-mentioned for original suggestions which have been officially adopted by the R.C.A.F.



Flight Lieutenant H. M. Misener, of Station Lachine, designed a new type of equipment for use in giving instruction in instrument flying. Based on the principle of the Venetian blind, it has several advantages over the equipment now in use, among them the elimination of awkward goggles for the pilot and ease of storage and positioning for flight.



Corporal M. J. Jackson, of R.C.A.F. Station Claresholm, developed an improved and simpler method of grounding aircraft to hangar floors, which also permits four aircraft to be grounded to one point.



Mr. (formerly Cpl.) M. R. Eldridge suggested that all aircrew operating in Europe carry cards bearing instructions printed in French and German. In the event of an aircraft being forced down, or of its crew being compelled to parachute to safety, these cards will help civilians to make the most direct contact with the R.C.A.F.

Flt. Lt. W. F. McRae, of Station St. Hubert, devised a harmonization disc which makes it possible for any M. & W. Technician, regardless of experience, to harmonize the guns of *Sabre* aircraft on the 1000-inch range.



Flight Sergeant J. W. Jameson, of Station Uplands, designed an improved ripcord pocket for parachutes. Its use will eliminate the possibility of accidental disconnection of the automatic operation of the 'chute.



LAST STAND AT HOLBERG



THE eyes of all Canadians are on the seven gallant cats and five undaunted dogs who, at the time of writing, are still holding out against the Terror which prowls R.C.A.F. Station Holberg after dark.

Stealing in from the surrounding forests, it is said to have spirited away some seventeen pets in a matter of six weeks. Now, when night falls, all household livestock are herded into safety behind closed doors. But who knows how soon the Marauder, emboldened by hunger, may carry his deprivations into the daylight hours? Uppermost in every mind is the question: who will be the next to go? Will it be Bonzo, or Sukie, or Towser, or Fluffie?

When we first mentioned the disappearance to Sgt. Shatterproof, he shook his head sadly and murmured something about "Service rations". The situation reminded him, he added, of the incident that occurred at Pukkapundit Pass, on the North-West Frontier of India, back in the eighties. The mule-train bringing supplies to the little British garrison had been held up for several months by an uprising among the tribesmen. When, finally, it did succeed in getting through, the officer in charge found only two of the garrison still alive, Colonel Tiffin Shatterproof and the drummer-boy — the latter recumbent on a large platter with an orange in his mouth. It was only with the greatest difficulty that Colonel Tiffin, who had already donned his mess-kit, was persuaded to forego what he had expected to be the last formal dinner held under his command.

We explained to the old wardog that things were not quite like that at Holberg. Although many military men had, admittedly, selected Vancouver Island as the place of their retirement, certain large footprints had revealed the fact that it was a cougar, not a colonel, who was haunting the neighbourhood of

the Air Force base.

Shatterproof, however, remained unconvinced. Taking with him all available data, he went away and remained incommunicado for almost two weeks. Then, in a ten-page letter, he pointed out to us that the Holberg Horror's methods clearly indicate an insight into the jungle tactics of the Hairy Bhils of Baluchistan, a warlike people whose partiality for pug-dogs was a constant source of annoyance to senior officer's wives shortly before the turn of the century. And, as he somewhat cogently asks, how many cougars have read the history of British India?

Be all that as it may, the fact remains that neither a professional cougar-hunter nor an amateur cougar-trap has, so far, succeeded in lifting the shadow that lowers above the pets of Holberg. For his own part, Sgt. Shatterproof pins his hopes upon the trap.

"But", he adds, "it must be baited with curry!"



"... it must be baited with curry!"



Mr. Hames, a professional cougar-hunter, about to take off from Comox to Holberg.



R.C.A.F. Association



THE SEVENTH ANNUAL CONVENTION

(This report was prepared for us by Flying Officer J. A. Cann, of the Directorate of Public Relations, A.F.H.Q. — Editor.)

THE QUEEN'S MESSAGE

The following message from Her Majesty was received at Saint John, N.B., by the National President of the R.C.A.F. Association, Air-Marshal F. G. Wait, C.B.E.:

"Please convey The Queen's warm and sincere thanks to all members of the Royal Canadian Air Force Association, assembled for their Seventh Annual Convention, for the kind and loyal terms of their resolutions, which Her Majesty appreciates."

THE CONVENTION

Election of Officers

At the Seventh National Convention of the R.C.A.F. Association, held in Saint John from June 6th to the 8th inclusive, Air Vice-Marshal F. G. Wait was returned by acclamation as National President for the ensuing year. The host for the convention was No. 250 (Saint John) Wing.

In accepting the presidency for a second term, Air Vice-Marshal Wait thanked the delegates for their

show of confidence in him and stated that he would try to do better next year than he had done in the past.

Other officers elected to the National Executive Council were:

Grand President: Air Vice-Marshal G. E. Brookes, C.B., O.B.E.
1st Vice-Pres.: L. N. Baldock.
2nd Vice-Pres.: Air Vice-Marshal A. L. James, C.B.E.
3rd Vice-Pres.: H. A. Ogden.
4th Vice-Pres.: S. M. Szuk.
Chairman: S. T. H. Malach.
Vice-Chairman: D. W. Cain.
Legal Adviser: G. A. Ault, Q.C.
W. D. Rep. (Nat.): Miss J. D. Williamson
Past-President: Air Vice-Marshal K. M. Guthrie, C.B., C.B.E.
W. D. Reps.:
(Eastern) Mrs. A. Gould.
(Central) Miss A. Black.
(Western) Miss M. K. Smith.

The President's Address

The convention was officially opened on Thursday morning by Air Vice-Marshal Wait at a ceremony which took place in front of the Admiral Beatty Hotel. Others taking part in the opening ceremonies included Mayor W. W. Macaulay, of Saint John; Mayor P. D. Mitchell, of Lancaster; the Hon. D. D. Patterson, provincial secretary-treasurer; and Chief J. J. Oakes, of the Saint John Police Department. Providing

music for the occasion was the R.C.A.F.'s Training Command band from Trenton.

Following the official welcome to more than a hundred accredited delegates and the large number of interested fraternal delegates and guests who attended, the minutes of the Sixth National Convention were adopted.

Delivering his presidential report, Air Vice-Marshal Wait stated that although the past year had not been spectacular, it had been one of steady growth. "Our relationship with the Air Force, the Air Cadet League, the Benevolent Fund, the Canadian Legion, and every other organization with which we work, has become closer", he added.

Reviewing the year's business, he went on to state that paid-up membership in the R.C.A.F. Association, as of 31 March 1957, was 8,885. This represented a small increase of 324 over last year. "However," he continued, "to compensate for the small overall increase, one most encouraging factor emerges, and that is that the rate of renewals runs well over 80 per cent. Two new Wings have been formed — one in Three Rivers, P.Q., and the other in Hamilton, Ont. — and, in addition, several dormant Wings have been reactivated and are now going concerns."

The President also mentioned that Wings of the Association are now sponsoring 38 Air Cadet squadrons and that plans are under way to increase this number to 40 before long.

Resolutions

Outlining the year's Group activities, each spokesman indicated that

The opening address. Left to right: G. Ault, Air Vice-Marshal F. G. Wait, and A. F. Wigglesworth.



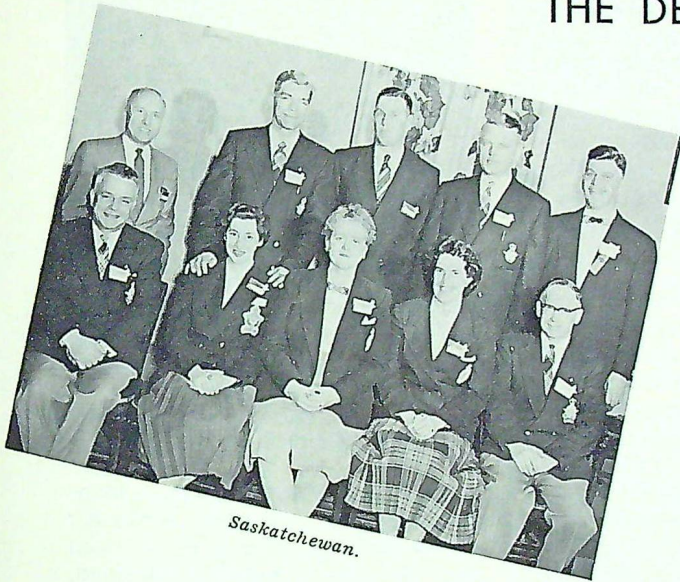


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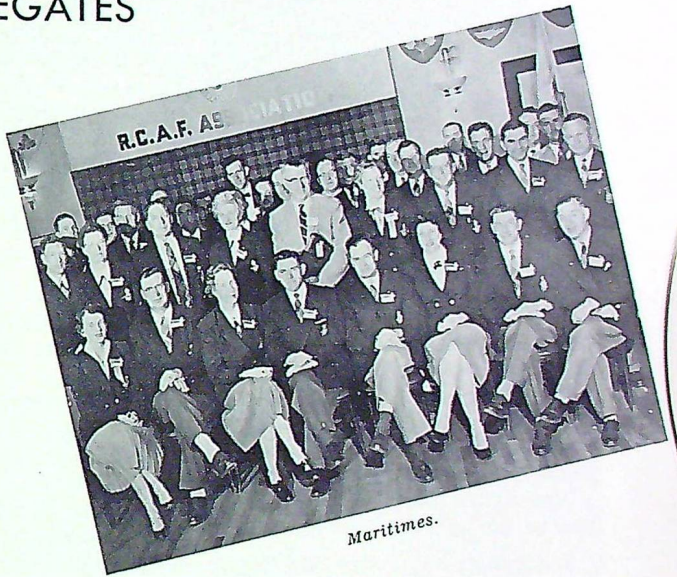


Alberta.

THE DELEGATES



Saskatchewan.



Maritimes.



Quebec.



Manitoba.



Mr. Gill Robb Wilson.

an active and keen interest was displayed in sponsoring Air Cadets.

Bids to bring next year's convention to the west came from several delegates, but no decision was reached regarding either time or place. However, the Montreal Wings were granted approval to hold the National Convention there in 1959.

Among the many resolutions carried at the convention were:

1. *Clothing allowance for reserve units.* The Chief of the Air Staff's official representative, Air Commodore J. G. Stephenson, O.B.E., A.F.C., stated that a new style of uniform is now being reviewed by the R.C.A.F., and that consideration may be given regarding its issuance to officers of the Reserve Units.

2. *Recognition of individual effort in future membership drives.* It was decided that emphasis be placed on individual effort and that recognition be given for such effort.

3. *The establishment of a national shrine of remembrance in Canada.* It was recommended that

the Canadian government consider the possibility of establishing a National Cemetery in Canada (similar to the one in Arlington, Va.), where those who have rendered outstanding service to Queen and Country may be buried with fitting honour and lasting recognition.

4. *Economy measure.* The Budget Committee submitted a revised budget with added economy measures taken to ensure that the R.C.A.F. Association operates in the black.

5. *Rules and procedures.* The book of rules and procedures, as produced by Flight Lieutenant M. E. Ferguson, executive assistant to the National President, was discussed and approved. It was decided that these rules and procedures be used as a guide during meetings and ceremonies of the Association.

Speakers

Speaking on Thursday at a reception and luncheon tendered by the City of Saint John, the Hon. Milton F. Gregg, V.C., commented that many ex-Servicemen and women such as those present at the convention had given a great deal during the war years without hope of reward. He suggested that young men and women who are pensioned into civilian life today should seek careers appropriate to their Service careers. Concluding his address, he added that the kind of spirit found in such an organization as the R.C.A.F. Association is difficult to find elsewhere.

At Friday's luncheon, sponsored by the City of Lancaster and the Parish of Simonds, Mr. E. A. Whitebone, chairman of Simonds' councillors and an R.C.A.F. veteran, was the main speaker. Mayor Parker D. Mitchell, of Lancaster, brought greetings from the citizens of his city and said he hoped that the delegates, when they returned to their homes, would take with them many



The Hon. Milton F. Gregg.

pleasant memories of the province by the sea.

On Friday afternoon, Mr. A. Macdonald spoke succinctly on the Air Cadet situation. He commented in general terms on the training given, and pointed out Cadet Warrant Officer Watts, of No. 161 Air Cadet Squadron, Saint John, as an excellent example of such training. He further listed the benefits of Air Cadet training and went on to add that about 25 per cent of all aircrew in the R.C.A.F. today were former cadets.

Air Vice-Marshal W. E. Kennedy, A.F.C., head of the Comptroller division at A.F.H.Q., spoke on Saturday at a luncheon sponsored by the A. V. Roe Co. He selected as his topic "Canadians in Europe", and his talk was as informative as it was entertaining. During a recent

visit to the Continent, he told the delegates, he had personally felt the kindness projected by Europeans toward Canadians serving in their countries.

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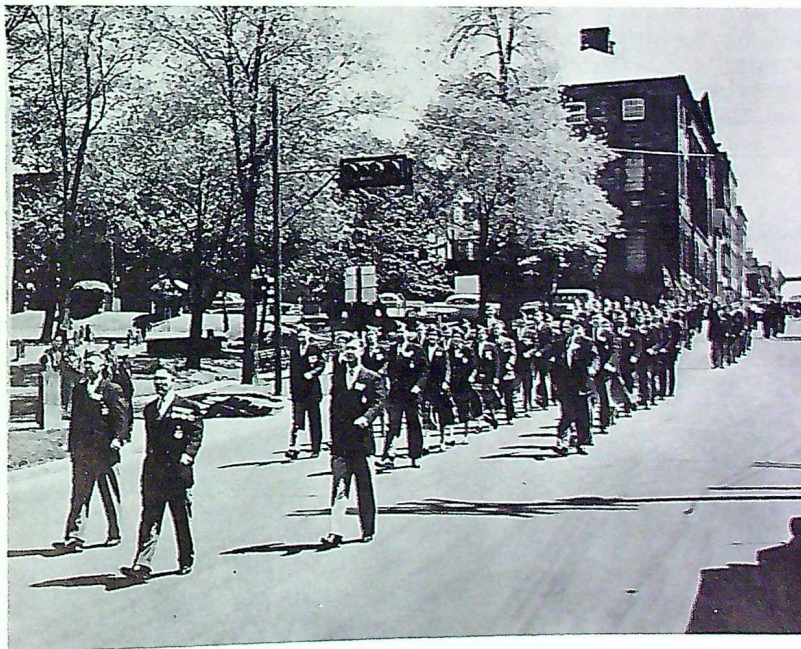
Guest speaker at the Annual Dinner, which was held in the Admiral Beatty Hotel on Saturday evening, was Mr. Gill Robb Wilson, Chairman of the United States Air Force Association. He compared the R.C.A.F. Association to watchdogs of freedom in the western world. He told the delegates that they had perhaps fought difficult battles in the past, but that their greatest was yet to come in alerting the citizens to the need for a strong air force with the most modern equipment. Only by so doing can the world be made safe for the dignity of the individual. He added that it would be a shame for the delegates to go home without realizing their tall stature against the times in which we live. In both our countries we are charged with certain responsibilities to achieve certain end results for civilization, and the fate of the world depends on us to fight not only a technological, but a psychological battle. We must make the people of the free world understand upon what they must depend for freedom. Summarizing his address, he said: "Fill in the concept, do the education and fill in the public mind until it sees what is over the hill, or otherwise, when you are as old as I, you will have to answer the cry of your grandchildren — 'Couldn't your generation have done a better job?' And I hope to God you'll have a better answer."

On behalf of the R.C.A.F. Association, Air Vice-Marshal Wait presented Mr. Wilson with card, badge, and tie, proclaiming him an honorary life-member of the Association. As a token of its appreciation, the host Wing presented him with an engraved stein.



The 1957-58 National Executive Council. Seated (l. to r.): Miss J. Williamson, Air Vice-Marshal F. G. Wait, Miss M. J. Smith. Standing (l. to r.): S. T. H. Malach, L. N. Baldock, H. Ogden, D. Cain, S. N. Sznuk, G. Ault, Miss Anne Black. (Missing from photograph): Air Vice-Marshal G. E. Brookes, Air Vice-Marshal A. L. James, Air Vice-Marshal K. M. Guthrie, Mrs. A. Gould).

The Memorial Parade.





Air Cdre. J. G. Stephenson at the Cenotaph.

General

During the afternoon of Thursday, 6 June, delegates were taken for a tour of Saint John's harbour and vicinity on board the R.C.N.'s frigate H.M.C.S. *Buckingham*. They witnessed a demonstration of deck take-offs and landings by a helicopter and were given a glimpse of submarine-hunting techniques.

At 7.30 that evening, Air Commodore M. Costello, C.B.E., Air Officer Commanding Maritime Air Command, inspected No. 161 (Saint John) Squadron of the Air Cadets. Under the Command of W.O.1

Watts, the boys later put on a brilliant display of precision marching in the Saint John Armouries.

On Saturday scores of delegates, headed by No. 507 (Kentville) Air Cadet Squadron band and the local St. Mary's band, marched to the Cenotaph to take part in the Service of Remembrance. Paying tribute to the fallen, Air Vice-Marshal Wait, on behalf of the R.C.A.F. Association, placed a wreath at the memorial while R.C.A.F. T-33 and CF-100 jets dipped their wings in salute overhead. Other wreaths were placed by Air Cdre. J. G. Stephenson, on behalf of the R.C.A.F.;

Mr. H. W. Sutherland, on behalf of the Canadian Legion; and Mr., P. F. Connell, on behalf of No. 250 (Saint John) Wing.

Special events were arranged by No. 250 Wing's Ladies' Auxiliary for the delegates' wives. Among the activities was a tea and fashion show, sponsored by Manchester Robertson Allison. Other events included a cocktail party and buffet suppers.

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Included among the guests were the Hon. A. Skaling, Minister of Labour, representing the province of New Brunswick; Air Cdre. D. E. MacKell, C.B.E., representing the R.C.A.F. Benevolent Fund; Mr. A. Macdonald, representing the Air Cadet League; and Mr. H. W. Sutherland, representing the Canadian Legion.

Representatives of the R.C.A.F. included Air Cdre. J. G. Stephenson, Air Cdre. M. Costello, Wing Commander J. H. Avent (Trenton), Squadron Leader W. W. Watson (Halifax), Sqn. Ldr. L. J. Doucet (Edmonton), Flt. Lt. G. A. McInnes (St. Hubert), and Corporal L. Rowland (photographer).

* * *

It was the feeling of the delegates that the Seventh National Convention of the R.C.A.F. Association had been a great success, from the point of view of both business and entertainment. No. 250 Wing deserves the highest praise for the planning and execution of what was a most valuable and interesting visit to its historic home.

More than a million Canadian campaign stars and war medals have still not been claimed by those entitled to them, according to Minister of Veterans Affairs Hugues Lapointe. Most of these are for service during World War II, though some have been carried over from the Korean War and others from World War I. (*Veterans' News Service: W.V.F.*)

BADGES OF THE R.C.A.F.: 6

This is the sixth in our series of illustrations of the badges of the R.C.A.F. Dates shown in parenthesis beneath the names of the units are the dates on which the badges were officially approved. 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.

TACTICAL AIR COMMAND

(October 1954)

A demi polar bear issuant from an astral crown.

Custos borealis
(Guardian of the North)

The astral crown is used to denote the formation's status as a Command, and the polar bear suggests its operational sphere.

On 1 April 1949, No. 11 Group, which had been formed with headquarters at Winnipeg on 1 March 1947, was designated Tactical Group in keeping with the R.C.A.F.'s transition in organization from a geographical to a functional basis. Two years later, on 1 August 1951, Tactical Group became autonomous,



under the direct control of Air Force Headquarters, and was moved to Edmonton where it was merged with North-West Air Command as Tactical Air Group. It was elevated to Command status as No. 1 Tactical Air Command on 1 June 1953. The prefix "1" was later dropped.

FLYING INSTRUCTORS' SCHOOL

(August 1955)

An owl perched on a key.

Doctor adjectat aeternitatem
(A teacher affects eternity)

Both the device and the motto reflect the school's important rôle of training pilots to be instructors for new generations of pilots.

No. 1 Flying Instructors' School was first formed at Trenton on 3 August 1942 to meet the increased demand for instructors in the schools of the B.C.A.T.P. When the demand eased with the reduction of the Plan in the closing months of the war, the F.I.S. was disbanded on 31 January 1945 and amalgamated with the Central Flying School. In the post-war years, as more flying training schools and advanced flying units were opened, it again became necessary to form No. 1 Flying Instructors' School at Trenton, on 1 April 1951, to supply the instructors needed for the greatly increased training programme.

NO. 402 SQUADRON

(November 1956)

A standing grizzly bear totem.

We stand on guard

The grizzly bear is a native Canadian animal of great fighting power; as a totem it holds a prominent place in the mythology of the Haida and Tlingit Indians. The de-



vice commemorates the nickname born by the squadron during the Second World War.

Originally formed in October 1932 as No. 12 (later 112) Squadron of the Auxiliary Active Air Force at Winnipeg, the squadron carried out army co-operation training until sent overseas in June 1940. In De-

ember 1940 it was converted to a fighter rôle and redesignated No. 2 (F.) Squadron, R.C.A.F. The number was changed again in March 1941 to No. 402 Squadron. Flying *Hurricanes* and *Spitfires*, the squadron served throughout the campaign in N. W. Europe and won the following battle honours: Defence

of Britain 1941-1944, English Channel and North Sea 1941-1944, Fortress Europe 1941-1944, Dieppe, France and Germany 1944-1945, Normandy 1944, Arnhem, and Rhine. Disbanded overseas in July 1945. No. 402 was reformed in May 1945 as the City of Winnipeg squadron in the R.C.A.F. Auxiliary.

Pin-Points in the Past



WE owe this month's pin-point to Wing Commander W. B. M. Millar. It shows the last course of R.C.A.F. pilots to get their wings before the outbreak of the Second World War. Three of the group, R. Smither, F. Pafford and D. V. Thomas, were sergeants; the others were pilot officers (provisional) in the Permanent or Non-Permanent Force. The course consisted of two groups. The first group (the middle and rear rows in our photograph) began their training at Trenton in November 1938 and were joined in

January 1939 by a second group (the front row) who were training for short-service commission in the Royal Air Force. On the outbreak of war, arrangements were made to retain this latter group in the R.C.A.F.

After completing their basic flying training at Trenton, the pilots were transferred to Camp Borden at the beginning of May 1939 and qualified for their wings on 2 September 1939 after having flown the required 100 hours on *Fleets* and *Tiger Moths*. Two days later they

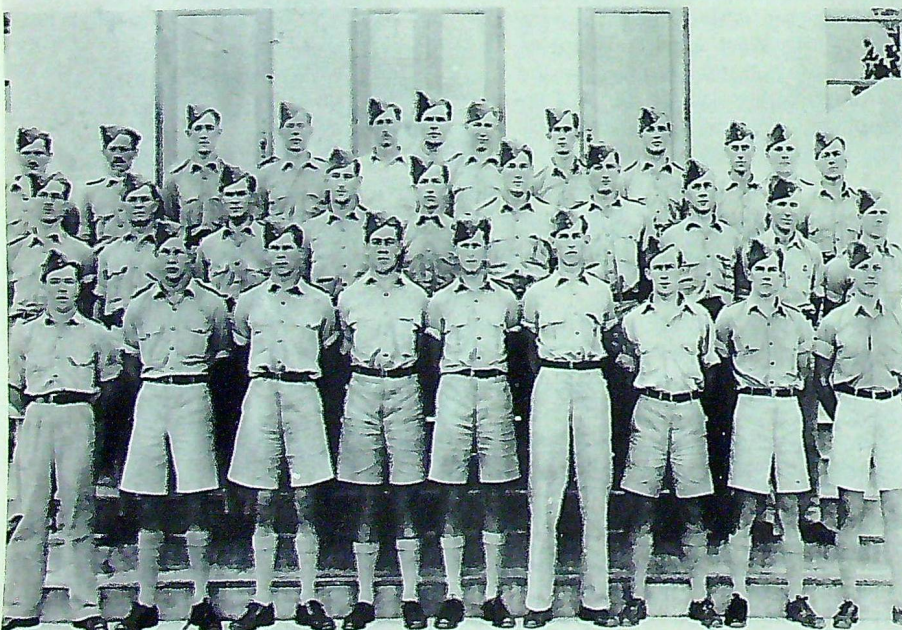
returned to Trenton for advanced training on *Harvards*, *Oxfords*, and *Battles*, being the first course in Canada to receive instruction on these three new types.

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Front row (l. to r.): G. T. Mitchell (released), B. E. Christmas (Group Captain), L. B. B. Price (deceased), P. D. Iverson (rel.), J. W. Reid (Group Capt., Aux.), W. M. Smith (rel.), J. W. Kerwin (dec.) G. J. C. Reid (dec.), E. W. J. Morris (rel.).

Middle row (l. to r.): A. B. C. Weatherwax (Wing Commander), O. J. Peterson (dec.), G. S. Austin (Group Capt.), W. B. M. Millar (Wing Cdr.), R. L. Edwards (dec.), H. K. Corbett (dec.) J. K. F. MacDonald (Group Capt., D.F.C.), R. N. Rand (rel.), R. Smither (dec.), J. Woolfenden (Wing Cdr.).

Back row (l. to r.): H. C. Ledoux (Group Capt., D.F.C.), M. W. Gall (Wing Cdr.), J. G. Richardson (dec.), H. A. Beer (rel.), F. Pafford (dec.), H. L. Kay (dec.), J. B. Reynolds (dec.), R. J. Gray (Group Capt., M.B.E.), J. H. U. Le Blanc (dec.), D. V. Thomas (Squadron Leader), W. M. Foster (Wing Cdr., D.F.C.), R. A. Ashman (Group Capt.).



Keep Your Shirt On!

BY A. M. FEAST

(The author, who was an R.C.A.F. pilot with the R.A.F. during the Second World War, here recalls an experience that shows him to be a man of resource in more senses than one.—Editor.)

As many an old Service pilot will attest, operating in the tropic or sub-tropic theatres of the Second World War was frequently afflicted by more problems than those presented by the enemy. Whether it was heat, sand, flies, jungle rot, or hurricanes, you could generally count on sooner or later being put into a spot by some interesting climatic or geographical quirk — or by a combination of such quirks.

My own narrowly averted come-uppance occurred during August 1942, and, I suppose, could be largely attributed to heat. My squadron had operated earlier in the Western Desert, where we learned to live with sand and, as we thought, heat. The big retreat that marked Rommel's drive to Al Alamein resulted in our hightailing it, in June, into southern Egypt. Here, far from the moderating influence of the Mediterranean, we were introduced to a blistering sun that was virtually stunning at mid-day. Siestas were absolutely necessary — unless one was unfortunate enough to be slated for flying duty.

Dress around the field was pretty informal for all ranks. It consisted of knee-length stockings, khaki shorts, a shirt, and topi. An order from Headquarters had filtered down previously, stating that all aircrew while engaged on flying duty were to wear clothes that adequately covered legs and arms. This whimsical directive further pointed out that, in the event of the aircraft catching fire, such protective clothing would be helpful. The wing commander posted the notice and, when flying, dressed accordingly. Not so the rest of us: we still contrived, despite harsh words, to fly in shorts whenever we could get away with it.

Then came the August day when the whole squadron was detailed for take-off at noon. An enemy convoy had been sighted heading for Benghazi harbour. We were ordered to fly from our base to an advanced landing field just behind Al Alamein, refuel, then proceed to attack.

The aircraft, baking in the sun at their dispersal points, were objects to be approached warily. Contact between bare skin and any portion of their metal surfaces was a painful experience. I had, as usual, neglected to change from shorts into trousers, and I clambered gingerly up on the wing, opened the cockpit hatch, and eased myself down with great circumspection. Behind me the other three members of the crew worked themselves in and took their positions. The interior temperature of the aircraft approximated that of a blast furnace.

My parachute lay on the seat. I regarded its straps with distaste, as perspiration was already dripping from my every pore. I removed my twill bush-shirt, which was already soaked, and tucked it into a map compartment above and behind the seat. This left me arrayed in shorts, a helmet, and little else. I slipped into a Mae West, fastened on the 'chute and Sutton harness, plugged in the intercommunication cord, opened both sliding windows on either side of the cockpit, and got down to the business of starting up.

The other squadron machines were barking into life as I snapped the switches on the port and starboard motors. Immediately the engines started, you had to work fast: in that heat the cylinder and oil temperatures had an awkward

habit of moving right off the dials. This was quite understandable, for the gauges, by mid-day, were already indicating higher than operating temperatures before you even touched the starter-switches. Our standard drill was to begin to taxi immediately to the take-off point, cylinder gills wide open, and with nothing so effete as a run-up to mar an immediate take-off. As the aircraft left the ground, it was deemed helpful by some if you kept your eyes studiously averted from the temperature and oil gauges, while yet another school of thought swore by the efficacy of holding your breath until the machine had gained four hundred feet. By that time the propeller blast usually coaxed the gauge readings back into this world.

I had performed all the rituals satisfactorily. Wheels and flaps up, I was savouring the blessed gale of cooling slipstream pouring through the cockpit windows. Settling back in the seat, I glanced ahead and spotted my number one making a climbing turn to port. I eased back a few hundred revs. on the pitch controls and banked after him. As I did so, something brushed the back of my head lightly, darkened the open window on my left, and was gone.

"Maps", I muttered to myself, "bloody maps! Gone for a burton." Then realization struck me. I turned as far as my harness permitted and clawed behind me with one hand. Maps nothing! It was my shirt — and securely buttoned in the top flap-pocket was my wallet, containing identity card, good Egyptian pounds, and a host of other trivia, valuable and otherwise.

I was given little time to ponder on this loss, however, for the 'plane's climbing turn had suddenly and inexplicably steepened. I grasped the wheel firmly and took off aileron. The wing came up, but

the instant I released the pressure it dropped down again in sympathy with a heavy skid to port. I hit right rudder hard and found it immovable. I also found myself getting worried. Very gingerly I touched left rudder. It answered in a soggy fashion—to increase the turn we were already in — then locked.

Maintaining sufficient right aileron to achieve a species of level skid, I tried to sort this thing out. I checked all gauges. Both of the 1,210 h.p. *Wasps* were growling away quite normally, yet the machine was skidding and yawing erratically around the sky at 1,100 feet. Meanwhile, the squadron had formed up and was dwindling out of sight to the north.

An intercommunication button clicked in my ear and the worried voice of my Kentish rear gunner broke into my perplexity:

"Say, I think some fabric must be peeling off the wing or somewhere. It's fouled around the tail back here."

I glanced nervously out along the top surface of the wing. The stressed skin was intact. The navigator, roused by the gunner's report, wormed his way out of the nose compartment and eyed me questioningly.

Came sudden enlightenment. "The shirt!" I bawled. "That blasted shirt!"

The navigator, concerned by the expression on my face, passed on down the cockpit towards the rear turret to look the situation over. In a few seconds he was back at my side.

"Your shirt all right", he roared in my ear, "wrapped around the rudder horn and flapping like blazes. What the hell is it doing back there?" Unnecessarily, he added: "I think it's jamming the rudder."

We flew around while I endeavoured to come up with an answer. Maximum right rudder trim, nearly

full right aileron trim, and a reduced starboard motor setting, proved to be of considerable help in keeping the machine reasonably level. It was obviously going to fly, but the big question remained, how was it going to land? And, assuming that I got it down intact, how was I going to explain this abort. I could just visualize myself standing rigidly before the wing commander and reporting: "Sorry, sir, Got my laundry caught in the rigging."

Winning at the thought, I concentrated on the immediate problem. It *was* a problem, too; for, in addition to carrying an armed torpedo, we had a full load of gas totalling nearly a thousand gallons. I could jettison the bulk of the gas, or I could jettison the torpedo. But then I had another cheerless vision of standing before a board of high-ranking brass and explaining the loss.

"Sit tight", I called to the crew over the mike, "we're going in."

As I slithered into the final approach, the lowering of the wheels reduced what marginal control I had, and I tried not to think of the *Beaufort's* celebrated proneness to ground-looping. With full flap we crabbed in for a touch-down that must surely have a built-in swing all ready for us. And no rudder. I broke into an icy sweat as I thought of a collapsing undercart and nine tons of aeroplane crunching down atop nearly a ton of live torpedo with its five hundred pounds of war-head.

The 'plane flared out at 90 knots, and for the next few seconds I was really too busy to know what happened. I advanced the port throttle just slightly and closed the starboard completely in a move that I could only hope would compensate for the skid. She touched down smoothly in a three-point position, and lurched heavily. Before the nose got into its yaw to port, I gave her

more left throttle, with the stick back in my chest. Then, before the port propeller could drive her to the right, I slapped both throttles shut and the machine's momentum was killed with full brake. We had it made.

I taxied up to the grinning groundcrew who clustered round the tail. The crew chief greeted me as I climbed out of the cockpit. In his hands was a bundle of rags, once a shirt, but now ripped into thin ribbons. The only intact portion of it was the pocket, with my wallet still inside.

The flight sergeant laughed raucously:

"Looking for this, sir?"

I led him away from the aircraft, out of earshot of the others.

"Flight," I said, removing my wallet from the rags, "is it true that you and the boys like beer?"

"Cor!" he replied, speculatively.

My fingers slipped a large green Egyptian pound note from the wallet.

"Now, Flight, I have a small problem here. I've been forced to return, due to a little port motor trouble. I suspect a couple of oiled-up plugs. I feel confident that we can correct this unhappy state of affairs within a few minutes. Your flight report will so indicate. Am I right?"

The note disappeared in his hand.

"It's a caution how they do oil up in these benighted parts," he agreed. "I'll speak to the erks, sir".

Beaufort "N" remained on the ground just long enough for its pilot to secure from quarters another shirt and a pair of trousers. Then it took off and managed to catch up with the remainder of the squadron at the advanced base. A routine report of motor trouble satisfactorily covered the brief abort.

* * *

If this story has a moral, its probably a bad one, so I shall let the reader draw it for himself.

A.F.H.Q. KEEPS CURRENT

A STREAM of T-33 aircraft landing, taxiing, and taking-off could hardly be considered an unusual sight in the R.C.A.F. If, however, one could glance into the cockpits of those operating off the runways of R.C.A.F. Station Uplands, one might be surprised to discover that most of the pilots were senior Air Force officers.

Jet Flight, one of two units in the Ottawa area which provide flying facilities for aircrew stationed at A.F.H.Q., exists for the purpose of indoctrinating senior officers, and then of "keeping them current", on modern jet aircraft. In the crew room at Jet Flight, the names on the lockers are, for by far the greater part, those of officers of the rank of Group Captain and above. The only exceptions, indeed, are names of officers of lower rank whose jobs demand an intimate knowledge of jet operations and whose applications to make use of the flight's facilities have been approved by the Chief of Air Operations.

Contrary to popular opinion, senior officers at A.F.H.Q. have been flying jets since they were first brought into the Service. At first the arrangements were unsatisfactory, since they had to depend on the Ottawa-based squadrons for aircraft, and, as these squadrons had their own flying commitments, they were not always able to meet the demands. The situation was remedied in the summer of 1955, when Station Flight, now called Jet Flight, was formed.

Once the flight was established, it became necessary to set up some sort of course. The standard curriculum used at the Advanced Flying School was not suitable, for various reasons. In the first place, all the "students" were experienced pilots, but with widely varying flying backgrounds, some having no jet experience whatsoever while others had flown several types of

British and American as well as Canadian jet aircraft. Secondly, owing to the pressure of work, senior officers are unable to get away from their offices for days on end, so that any flying instruction would have to make allowances for interruptions. And finally, since the students were several miles from the airport instead of being close at hand, it would not always be possible to capitalize on brief spells of suitable flying weather. A special syllabus and flying programme had therefore to be devised to meet these special circumstances. An eloquent testimony to its success is clearly seen by Jet Flight's 100% safety-record.

The three staff members of Jet Flight were selected with a view to providing as broad a field of instruction as possible. The officer commanding the flight, Flight Lieutenant M. E. Rowe, an A-1 instructor, is responsible for clear-hood instruction, Flying Officer J. J. B. MacDonald, a Unit Instrument Check Pilot, is in charge of instrument flying, while Flt. Lt. J. R. Howey, recently returned from the Air Division, provides an up-to-date operational viewpoint.

Before flying activities can be undertaken, the prospective student must go, first, to the Institute of Aviation Medicine in Toronto for high-altitude indoctrination (which includes an "ascent" in the decompression chamber), and then to a two-day Field Technical Training Unit course at Trenton. After this the flying programme begins, making allowances for each individual's previous jet experience, and adjusted to fit in with his normal staff duties at A.F.H.Q.

The first phase consists of a check-out on the T-33 followed by several dual, solo, and "mutual" periods of aerobatics, navigation, and night-flying. When familiarity with the aircraft has been ac-



Flt. Lt. M. E. Rowe (left) about to check out Air Vice-Marshal M. M. Hendrick, O.B.E.

quired, the comprehensive instrument phase of the course commences. Starting with basic instrument-flying and progressing gradually to radio let-downs and ground-controlled approaches, the officers who finish the course are in a favourable position to qualify for a "green ticket". As their jet time and their enthusiasm mounts, they begin to "scrounge" check-outs on CF-100s from the local squadrons. The exact number of flying hours that each senior officer logs varies in direct ratio to the number of hours they can contrive to spend away from their regular work or home life. Although not intended to be an *ab initio* jet training-school, Jet Flight has, in actual fact, frequently served that very purpose — much to the advantage of those officers who, after their respective tours at A.F.H.Q., have gone on to command jet units.

Operating five days a week from 1000 hrs. to 2359 hrs., and on Saturdays from 0830 hrs. to 1230 hrs. — and also available for week-end trips — Jet Flight's six aircraft log well over 300 hours a month when the weather is favourable. Whenever possible, in order to obtain even more flying time, two pilots fly together in the same aircraft. Air-



Group Captains R. M. Cox, D.F.C., A.F.C. (left) and W. B. Hodgson, D.F.C.

craft for week-end trips are always booked solid for ten days in advance, and, if there is a cancellation, the O.C. promptly telephones some other member of the flight to let him know that an aircraft — or at least part of an aircraft — is available.

Senior officers who are frequently required to travel about the continent to attend conferences find that Jet Flight's "T-birds" serve ad-

Sqn. Ldr. H. Williamson.



mirably as high-speed transports as well as training aircraft, and a typical day may find aircraft from the flight at such widely separated points as Vancouver and Washington, on Air Force business. Jet Flight has its own distinctive call signs: "Governor" for officers of air rank, and "Flat-top" for personnel of the Directorate of Air Operations. As the flight's T-birds spread further afield, these call signs are becoming daily more familiar to R.C.A.F. control-tower operators throughout the country. They know, for example, that the call sign "Governor Four" means that the pilot calling is the Air Member for Technical Services (Air Vice-Marshal M. M. Hendrick).

Small in size, but not in importance, Jet Flight provides jet experience for Air Force officers on the policy-making level — experience that will be reflected ultimately in the policies of the whole Service.

* * *

A.F.H.Q. Practice Flight, at R.C.A.F. Station Rockcliffe, is the unit which provides piston-engine aircraft for practice flying by A.F.H.Q. and Air Materiel Command H. Q. personnel. It also furnishes flying facilities for aircrew officers stationed at Recruiting Units in Quebec, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, and North Bay. An additional responsibility of Practice Flight is the provision of maintenance services for aircraft from Canadian Joint Staff Washington, for Army aircraft from Camp Petawawa, and for all visiting aircraft. Miscellaneous duties include participation in flying displays on Air Force Day, and the furnishing of aircraft for para-rescue personnel at A.F.H.Q., who carry out practice jumps at Rockcliffe Airport.

Practice Flight originated in 1940 as a flight within No. 12 Communication Squadron (now called No. 412 Transport Squadron) for aircrew who "wish to keep their hand

in during their tour at A.F.H.Q." In 1947 Practice Flight became a separate entity but continued to perform the same rôle. Although it has always been a busy flying establishment, it has done a regular land-office business ever since the appearance of an Administrative Order, on 16 November 1956, which stated that aircrew officers who were not filling designated flying positions must fly regularly to maintain the required standard. The resultant increase of flying activity keeps the flight's resources taxed to their maximum capacity. Every week-end several aircraft from the flight go on cross-country trips, and to ensure that they are put to their best use, orders have been laid down stating the minimum number of hours which the aircraft must fly during the week-end. Prominent among the week-end aircraft is the flight's *Dakota*, which is used almost exclusively for keeping the hundred and ten A.F.H.Q.-based observers up to date in their trade.

Practice Flight, commanded by Squadron Leader H. Williamson, has 15 aircraft: nine *Expeditors*, two *Dakotas*, and four *Harvards*. Using them are 230 pilots, among whom are included several R.C.N. and U.S.A.F. exchange officers. With such a large number of people flying and with so few aircraft available, it is difficult for anyone to get more than the minimum time required by Air Force regulations. However, plans call for a move by Practice Flight to Uplands as soon as hangar space becomes available, and additional aircraft will then be added to the flight to meet its heavy flying commitments.

Since a minimum amount of instrument-flying is specified in the Administrative Order just referred to, a considerable proportion of practice flying is devoted to it. In this respect, Practice Flight is ideally situated along the Montreal-Ottawa-Toronto airway, where

ample radio facilities exist and where the dense traffic ensures that more than casual interest will be paid when obtaining clearances.

Practice Flight is not, by any stretch of the imagination, a flying-school, but the staff assists the members of the flight in every possible way. It provides maps, navigation equipment, radio-facility charts, and supplementary rations for personnel going on week-end trips, and arrangements have also been made for the use of the station's Link Trainer for half a day each week by those members of the flight who wish to practice procedures. Each new arrival is given a unit check-out, and, if any dual is required, that too is available. In

addition, all instrument-rating renewals are carried out at Practice Flight, and on such occasions the flight conducts the written examinations and supplies an instrument check-pilot for the qualifying rides. Another staff member is a navigator whose function is to keep abreast of the latest navigation developments and procedures and to pass his information along to the observers stationed at A.F.H.Q.

* * *

Summing up, we may safely say that the flights at Uplands and Rockcliffe serve two most valuable purposes. First, they ensure that aircrew, by remaining in practice during their tours at H.Q., will be able to resume full-time flying duty



Air Commodore C. H. Greenway, O.B.E.

without delay. Second, they do more than anything else could towards maintaining high morale among aircrew who find themselves temporarily but inevitably embattled amid the sound and fury of typewriters and memoranda.

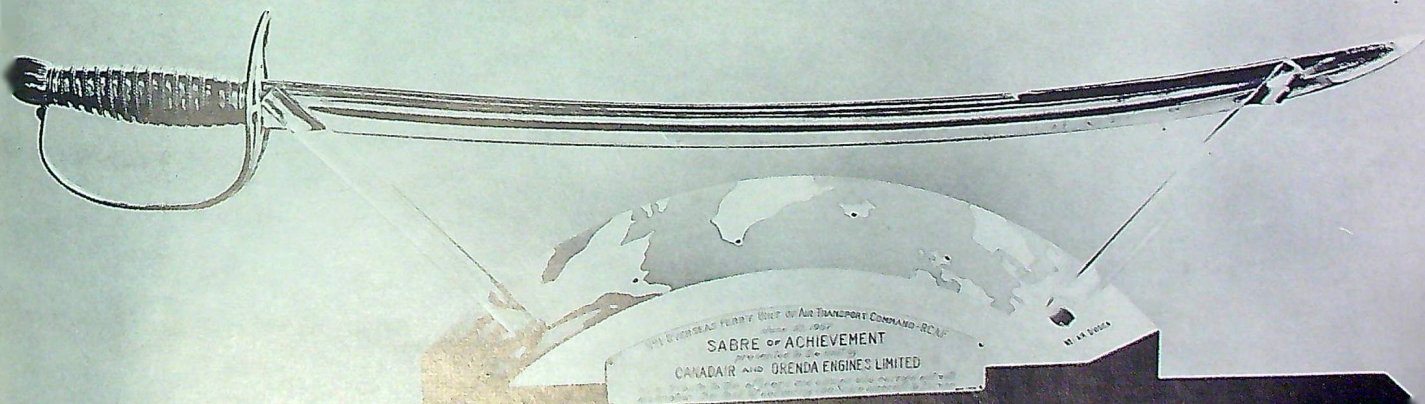


Sabre of Achievement

THE recent disbandment of No. 1 Overseas Ferry Unit was marked by a ceremony at which Mr. J. G. Notman, president of Canadair, and Mr. F. L. Trethewey, assistant to the president of Orenda Engines Ltd.,

presented the Unit with the "Sabre of Achievement" shown in our photograph. Given in tribute to the officers and airmen who have been responsible for ferrying almost 800 Sabre jets across the Atlantic to

No. 1 Air Division, the weapon is a silver dress-sabre, hallmarked London, England, 1790. The presentation was made to Squadron Leader D. R. Cuthbertson, A.F.C., the unit's commanding officer.



A.F.C. AWARD

A CITATION reading, in part, "his devotion to duty has served as an inspiration and a fine example to fellow aircrew", has accompanied the award of the Air Force Cross to Flying Officer L. T. Ross, of No. 433 (A.W.) Squadron.

Flying Officer Ross won the decoration for his actions during an incident which took place last year



Flying Officer L. T. Ross, A.F.C.

while he was on an operational training mission in a CF-100 aircraft. On that occasion Flying Officer Ross was climbing in dense cloud at about 20,000 feet when an explosion occurred in the port engine which blew off the top engine-covering and started a fire. He coolly carried out the normal emergency action and, although he could not be sure that the fire had been extinguished, decided against abandoning the aircraft. His decision, since he was flying in the vicinity of North Bay, avoided the possibility of loss of life resulting from the crash of the aircraft in a heavily populated area.

Flying Officer Ross experienced extreme difficulty in approaching the aerodrome on account of the unreliability, caused by atmospheric conditions, of both ground radar assistance and his aircraft radio compass. Furthermore, he was flying in solid cloud on instruments, a particularly noteworthy feat because of the considerable weight differential in fuel loads in the two wings, the port engine having been shut down at the time of the explosion. The cloud base was very low upon his return, and he was forced to make three attempts before achieving a successful landing.

AIR-FIRING RECORD

At a recent air-to-air firing competition held in France between French, American, and Canadian components of the 4th Allied Tactical Air Force, Canada's No. 1 Air Division team, flying F-86s, won a decisive victory over the Americans (F-100s) and the French (F-84s). Highest individual scorer was Flying Officer C. J. Henry, whose 95 hits out of a possible 100 constitute, as far as is known, the top score ever tallied in a competition of this nature. Our photograph shows him receiving the trophy from Major-General R. M. Lee, commander of 4th A.T.A.F.



Flying Officer C. J. Henry.

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.

"We take you now
to Winnipeg..."

On 7 June 1957, some 800,000 Canadians from Quebec City to Winnipeg saw, on their television screens, an R.C.A.F. pararescuer "bail-out" of an Air Force *Otter* near Winnipeg. Then, as he floated slowly to the ground, they heard him being interviewed by the show's M. C. in Toronto.

The event was part of the C.B.C.'s "Graphic" programme, on which Mr. J. McCulley interviews people in interesting circumstances and walks of life. The jumper on this occasion was Sergeant S. Trent. Leading Aircraftman D. Whittingham was the "patient", and Flight Lieutenant R. Dickson, of No. 111 Communications and Rescue Flight, piloted the aircraft. Other airmen participating in the show were: Flight Sergeant J. W. Jameson, Corporal T. Thompson, and Sgt. T. Chorney.

The jump, which was supposed to take place in Canada's isolated bush country, was in fact carried out in a field only a few hundred yards from R.C.A.F. Station Winnipeg. Thus, among the busiest contributors to the operation's success were the Air Force Police who had to shoo out of camera range the crowds of spectators that appeared as if by magic amid the supposititious wilderness.

Corporal B. J. Pauls.



Corporal T. Thompson and Flight Sergeant J. Jameson drop to the rescue.

Rescued!



I am not a bit anxious about my battles. If I am anxious, I don't fight them. I wait until I am ready. (*Viscount Montgomery.*)

AIR DIVISION MARKSMEN

THE woods around Ettlingen, Germany, echoed to the sound of rifle fire during the latter part of April as No. 1 Air Division competed in the annual small arms competition. This year an added incentive for the marksmen was a place on the R.C.A.F.'s 1957 Bisley team.

For the third consecutive year the five-man team from No. 4 Wing won the competition. One of its members, Corporal S. Goddard, took both the Dominion of Canada Rifle Association's Bronze Medal in the Service Rifle (A) competition, and the Silver Medal for the highest individual aggregate in the two-day shoot. The third individual prize, the National Rifle Association's Donegall Badge for the highest score in the Service Rifle (B) event, went to Sgt. Moseley from No. 1 Fighter Wing.

Organized under Ground Defence auspices within the Air Division, the annual inter-unit contest has stimulated great interest in competitive shooting.



Cpl. L. Snelgrove, captain of winning team, receives trophy from Group Captain B. E. Christmas. Left to right: Group Capt. Christmas, Cpl. Goddard, Sgt. Fraser, Cpl. Snelgrove, Sgt. Minault, and L. A. C. Brandon.

AVIATION NOTE

THE possibility of navigating the air has been in the past, as in the present, a tempting field for inventors, and in time of war their efforts have been directed to devising some form of flying machine that would bring confusion to the enemy. Our Civil War was fruitful of such ideas, as is interestingly shown by a letter written to John Ericsson by one Jeremiah Randall, Sept. 5, 1862. Mr. Randall, who had his own ideas of spelling, wrote: "I have in-

vented and constructed a machine that flies by its own Motive power. I put two clock Springs on to the lower end of two Shafts—one within the other, forming two wheels in one, and revolving in opposite directions on the top of each Shaft are long armes with screws, so arranged that when put in motion by the springs it raises right up."

(From "Army Navy Air Force Journal", 1905: U.S.A.)

Letter to the Editor

WEDDING ANNOUNCEMENT

Dear Sir:

I wonder if you would be good enough to print in your columns an announcement of my recent marriage to Signorina Anna Corsi, on 2 May, at Plombino. It may possibly be of interest to the many friends I made in the R.C.A.F. while receiving my training as a pilot in Canada.

Renato Castelvecchi,
2nd. Lieutenant,
Italian Air Force.

THE R.C.A.F. BENEVOLENT FUND

The Royal Canadian Air Force Benevolent Fund was established in order to assist serving and former members of the R.C.A.F. and their dependents in time of financial distress.

SERVING PERSONNEL can obtain full information from their units' Orderly Rooms.
FORMER MEMBERS can obtain it from:

- The local Benevolent Fund Committee.*
- Any Wing of the R.C.A.F. Association.
- Any District Office of D.V.A.
- Royal Canadian Air Force Benevolent Fund (Inc.), 424 Metcalfe St., Ottawa, Ont.

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

