

WINGS



LOG OF THE R-C-A-F

5c
AUGUST
1943



RCAF in Alaska and the Aleutians

Land of the Williwaw

Pigeons On Patrol



When a crew crash-land at sea PO Pigeon hits the beam for base with their SOS

DON'T SEND OFF YOUR PIGEON TILL YOU'RE IN THE DINGHY — AND MAKE SURE HE HAS TIME TO REACH SHORE BEFORE DARK.

By AC2 DUNCAN DUNBAR

THE MOTORS lost their steady rhythm, coughed and sputtered dead. No gas! The plane faltered, then slid down, down, down. The pilot's clipped command cut the roaring silence: "Abandon aircraft!"

Five men tumbled into the night from their stricken ship and plunged to meet the Gulf, its angry waters screened by stinging snow and churned by growling blocks of jagged ice.

Five chutes flared into shape and slowly sank, tossed about like weighted corks. "So long fellas . . . see you later". Whipped from his lips, the man's words were swallowed in swirling snow.

Dawn, and five men picked their way across the treacherous ice of the floe to which luck had brought them. Dusk, and five men carefully counted scanty rations and swept the skies with anxious eyes for the help that hadn't come.

Four more dawns and five hungry, frosted fliers, huddled together for heat, saw their seekers and knew that they were saved. That they would eat, drink and be warm again. That they would fly again.

Courage, strength and stamina! They had all three. But they left their pigeons in the plane and spent five days adrift instead of a possible twenty-four hours.

What pigeons? Every bomber leaving this East Coast base carries at least two pigeons when it goes on a mission. The birds ride in their own baskets, or waterproof containers. They are ready to fly back from any point up to 500 miles distant with SOS calls or messages that cannot be trusted to radio.

Thousands of Canada's pigeons are on active service with the Royal Canadian Air Force. Every one of them is a volunteer. None of them cost the Air Force any money, for they were donated by loyal pigeon fanciers. Yet these birds go on patrol in all kinds of weather and get their messages through with stout-headed regularity.

Aircrew get a lot of fun out of their feathered passengers and they take an even keener interest in their proper care and usage since the five men on an ice raft told of their narrow escape.

The crew find that the birds become terribly

excited when the plane zooms up fast to higher altitudes, or takes a steep dive. From the dark confines of their baskets the birds are unable to see what's going on, and when the guns begin to chatter they set up such a racket with their cooing, they can be heard above the sound of the engines.

The men who take the birds aloft never

S-O-S

Date 22/6/43
 Aircraft Letter M
 Squadron 111(BB)
 Based at Andover
 Time 2100 hrs.
 Position* 54°21'N 45°18'W

Condition Drifting West

*If this is blank, see outside of carrier and transmit. Preserve container and forward with message.

R.C.A.F. Form No. H 10
 100 PAGES OF 100-11-42 (2884)
 H.Q. 895-14 10 (OVER)

DISTRESS MESSAGE is written on onion-skin paper, tucked in a tube and clipped to the pigeon's leg.

strike up a very close acquaintance with them, because pigeons must never be fed on patrol — unless they are gone more than twenty-four hours. Baskets and containers carry food rations and watering cups.

IN THE BAG

If a crewman finds he has to release a bird with a message, here is what he does. First he writes his message on onion-skin paper, giving all the dope on the plane's position and other information he wants to shoot back to the base in a hurry.

Then he rolls up the message and slips it into an aluminum tube, which clamps on the bird's leg. That tube is coated with a special white paint,

which takes an indelible lead pencil impression very easily and can be used for last minute memos on position or speed.

The bird is then carefully tucked, head first, into a paper bag, which has been slit down the sides. The ends of the bag are gently squeezed — not twisted for fear of damaging tail feathers — and the paper-protected pigeon is then eased out into the slipstream, (the method varies with the type of plane being flown), there to be tossed free of the ship.

Slipstream and bag combine to confine the bird for the first hundred yards, after which the force of the propwash is lost and the pigeon wriggles free of the paper and hits out for home.

Canada can take credit for many bright developments in preparing pigeons for aircraft work. Flight Sergeant Fred Threlfall, top pigeoneer in these parts, says that he feels Canada has evolved a more advanced routine for using pigeons in plane patrol work than the United States. Fred spent more than a month at Fort Monmouth, N.J., giant American Army camp, where he studied the American pigeon system and gave the Yanks a few pointers in return.

The new waterproof box used by the RCAF for carrying birds overboard when a ship must be abandoned, is a clever Canadian improvement. The watertight box is a double life saver, for it will support a man in the water.

Fred is in charge of the "pigeon loft" on this station. A pigeon loft is a sort of custom-built, super deluxe chicken coop. It's Fred's job to keep this loft at readiness.

He has been a pigeon fancier for the past 30 years and he has flown birds successfully on both sides of the Atlantic.

Handling pigeons to speed the grim business of war is not without its touches of humor, nor is every message that these winged warriors bring back to the loft a tale of trouble. Once in a while, an officer will send a query to his wife, like "Will you heat up some hash for your hungry hubby?"; or inter-squadron sports rivalry may get a shot in the arm with a devastating dig from some wit on the wing. In each case, the sender deals from the bottom of the deck, because there is no possible comeback.

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Most of Fred's fellow loftsmen are long-time pigeon enthusiasts. LACS Seager, Mather, Richer, Settle and ACI Latremouille all have worked with pigeons as a hobby for 20 years. ACI Sibley is the lone exception. He arrived on the station without a trade, was posted to the pigeon loft and says he "likes it fine".

Herb Mathers has had winners in the famed International Miller races, while Joe Settle picked off top honors two years in a row in the three hundred mile event staged annually by the West York Pigeon Club, strong Toronto association. They figure that the average civilian fancier will spend about \$100 a year to keep a loft of 20 birds in shape. If he wants to bet, he can spend plenty more.

Pigeons have personality, and down at the

"IT'S YOUR PIGEON"

While WINGS correspondent AC2 Dunbar was rounding up this story on RCAF pigeon squadrons at an east coast station, a National Film Board crew were equally busy shooting the pigeon story for the motion picture screen. This documentary film short has been produced at the request of the RCAF to tell aircrew just how vital "PO Pigeon" can be to their safety. Scheduled for release about September 1st, film will first show at bomber reconnaissance and operational units, and perhaps at non-operational stations.

loft the boys spot the show-offs and give them names. "Rex" struts around with a royal air, but wisely takes a back seat when "Joe Louis" comes out of his corner. "Joe" is a toughie. "Sensible" is the most reliable bird in the loft, while "Unprintable Jones" causes any amount of trouble with his pranks.

CAP 316 — the loftsmen's bible — calls for personal traits in the man who handles Air Force pigeons that sound like something every girl imagines she's getting in a husband.

If a loftman is going to keep a clean, attractive home for his pigeons, he must be "neat". Husbands, too, find that the little woman doesn't go home to mother nearly so often if they remember to do the dishes and empty the garbage without being told. A pigeoneer must exhibit "firmness" in handling his birds in order to enforce discipline. Any fellow who exhibits firmness in handling his wife does so, of course, at his own risk.

The homing pigeon usually tips the beam at 16 ounces and is considered a good bird when its wings are strong, its eyes are clear and it has smooth, clean body lines.

Each wing has 20 feathers, 10 rough and 10 fine. The rough feathers supply strength and shelter; the fine feathers act like a vest to keep the ribs warm when resting. Wings must have careful treatment when a bird is being handled, because once the feathers are bent or broken, there is a danger that the bird will never recover its old speed and endurance.

A remarkable feature of the pigeon's optical apparatus is what might be termed the "rough weather goggle". This is an extra lid which is transparent and which slides over the eyeball when the bird flies into rain, snow, dust or heavy wind. When these goggles are on, the bird can plow right through the nastiest weather with its eyes wide open.

On stormy days, pigeons fly close to the ground in order to maintain their bearings; but when the sun rides high in the sky and gentle zephyrs stir the air, then these birds soar away up almost out of human sight. Here again, the birds' eyes give them an edge on man, because of their extremely long range.

LOVE ON THE BEAM

What makes a pigeon want to come home anyway?

There are as many answers to this poser as there are airmen with a yen to remuster. Some say the pigeon flies by his ears, some say he flies by his nose, some say he flies by his eyes. Every authority can prove his theory too, but the best-supported answer is that he flies by his heart. Mr. Pigeon, it seems, is a family man.

When a he takes a shine to a she, in pigeon circles, he takes it for keeps. The newlyweds pick out their own particular nest in the loft and it's just a matter of time until they shatter the old formula and prove that one and one can make four. One fancier was having trouble con-

vincing a friend of this true-love theory, until he doped out the following solution.

He put a bachelor pigeon in the loft of a happy couple and left him there for a couple of days. The head of the household showed signs of mounting indignation and was in a black mood when the owner removed him from the loft on the third day and sent him to a point 50 miles distant. The bird was then released and it raced home in record time before the masher had a chance to strut his stuff. The friend was convinced.

Training of these high-spirited and sensitive birds begins from the time they leave their parents' nest. Most important early step is to teach the little "squeakers" that the sound of a rattling can means food. The can rattles enough since they are fed a mixture of Canada peas, flint corn, vetch and Australian maple peas.

By the time the birds are three or four weeks old, they are known as "squeakers" and can be led around the loft with the can rattle. They are then taught to "trap" or enter the loft from an outside landing board, through a one-way door. This is important, for if a bird fails to come into the loft after a flight, the message he carries will be delayed in reaching the officer concerned.

Before a squeaker, or youngster, can fly, he is placed outside on the landing board and encouraged to enter the trap door by the sound of the can being rattled within. Thus he develops the habit of entering the loft as soon as he lights on the board.

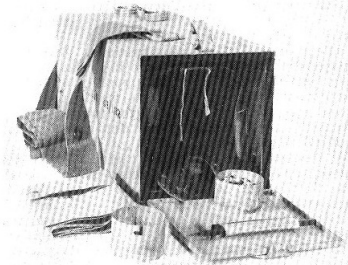
Within a week after the youngster is taught to trap, he learns to fly ever-increasing distances from a few feet to a mile. Training becomes more intensive from this point on and by the time the first month is completed, the birds are getting four or five training flights a week, all the way from three to 100 miles. They are then considered capable of travelling up to 150 or 200 miles.

Once the youngsters pass their first birthday, they can fly 300 miles and are kept in shape by doing about 50 miles twice a week.

Pigeons are taught to fly by night, but 30 miles is considered the limit for a night flight and flights can only be made in one specific direction. Day flying birds are trained to fly back to their loft from any direction, in all kinds of weather.

BOOMERANG BIRDS

Experiments are currently being carried out in an effort to develop "boomerang" birds. The idea is to send a bird with a message to a point several miles away and have it return with an answer. The work is still rudimentary, but already



WHEN BIRD IS TAKEN overboard, waterproof box protects pigeon — will also support a man in water.

some of these boomerang pigeons are flying as far as 30 miles from one base to another and back. The birds are nested in one loft and fed at another, which is located at the second base. Since feeding must be carried on as regularly as possible, the birds must make some trips without a pay load.

Usual flying speed of good homers is around 50 mph. One bird covered 600 miles in 540 minutes, which means it clipped along at better than a mile a minute.

Date of the pigeon's domestication is unknown, but Solomon kept some and the Greeks had a use for them, too. Names of winners at the great Olympic games were rushed by pigeon post to the home town of each champion, whether it was Salonika or Waukeganapolis.

Modern military use of pigeons dates from 1870-71, during the siege of Paris. Most dramatic instance of the pigeon's military value occurred during the critical defence of Verdun in 1916. One day, with battle smoke stinging his eyes and the noise of exploding shells pounding his

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ears, Major Raynal, officer in command at Fort Vaux, wearily wrote the following message:

WE STILL HOLD OUT BUT ARE UNDERGOING DANGEROUS GAS AND SMOKE ATTACK. IT IS URGENT TO RELIEVE US. THIS IS MY LAST PIGEON.

Actually, it was his next to last pigeon, but the same message was committed to each bird and they were released. The Germans promptly shot one, but the other got through. Relief came and Fort Vaux was saved. Verdun was saved. The war was saved.

Today, the pigeon on active service carries on the great tradition of his forebearers. There were over one hundred thousand in the military lofts of Europe before war broke. Three thousand birds were shipped to England from America under lend lease.

Pigeons have flown back from Commando parties raiding Norway and the first operational message received from the Canadians at Dieppe came with a bird called "Beachcomber".



WRONG WAY to release bird. Slipstream will damage feathers, may smash pigeon against the tail.



HEAD FIRST, pigeon is carefully "baggged" for proper take-off. Note how the bag is split up the sides.

FS FRED THRELFALL shows right way to ease bird into slipstream (below). When clear of plane, bag flies apart, freeing bird. Pigeons average 50 m. p. h.

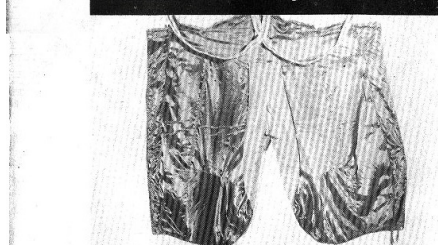




NEW TWO PIECE winter flying suit, right, in contrast with present issue. Both coat and pants have "disengage" zippers for quick escape in emergency. Pencil pocket on sleeve, watch pocket on chest, were asked for by aircrew.



BUTTONED-IN wool lining can be removed.



PANTS open out flat, are put on like a coat and legs zipped up. Yellow parka hood (below), hidden in collar, is easily spotted by searchers.



FULL-VISION GOGGLES

The new goggles are probably the most radical ever made, their feature a single, wide-visibility plastic window without any break over the nose. Roomy enough to be worn over corrective spectacles, the goggles are framed in a sponge rubber pad for extra protection, and this is slotted top, bottom and sides with air vents, some of which can be taped over in cold weather. The plastic "lens", when it becomes fouled by scratches, can be sprung out and replaced in a minute at a cost of a few cents for a new one.

The new issue gloves mean greater warmth for all flying fingers and their three-piece design is of special value to WAGS and navigators, who must at times have their hands free to push pencils, tinker with various instruments or pound a key. The outer leather gauntlet pulls off with

THE CREW ROOM at an east coast base was blue with smoke and harsh words.

"The damn thing bunches up like a blanket roll under my knees till my feet forget my heart's pumping blood to them. No wonder I freeze —"

"What about my hands?" a WAG cut off the pilot's moan. "I can't punch a key wearing a pair of working gloves and when I have to grab for the guns you'd think they'd been whittled out of a cake of ice!"

"Ever try to fish a pencil out of an inside pocket?" demanded a navigator. "Bloody point breaks every time—snags on my woollen scarf. You'd think they could rig a pencil pocket on the flying suit, maybe on the sleeve . . ."

"Scarf or no scarf," interrupted the mid-upper gunner of a Hudson, "there's a gale whips into my cage and down the back of my neck that would fast-freeze a smelt!"

"And you probably did," the Flight Commander planted a foul to shock the room to silence. "Now supposing we take this questionnaire item by item and get our ideas on paper."

"Yeah," cut in a lower-case wag, ". . . some good may come from one of these Headquarters quiz contests, yet. Who knows — it might even be this one!"

Scenes like this were being enacted in dozens of operational crew rooms and on advanced training stations all over Canada along about the time 1941 turned into '42. Today the boys in the Liberators who blaze the trail for Atlantic convoys, the flying boat crews who prowl the Labrador fjords, and the Kittyhawk warriors who whip out over the Aleutians in search of the Jap, are benefitting in warmth and comfort and flying efficiency from every one of those noisy bull-sessions.

Here's how.

It gets cold in the front office of a Hudson, flying at 150 miles an hour, 15,000 feet up and the Arctic seas below adrift with icebergs. Mercury can drop close to zero even at this time of year, and dive to 40 below in winter.

But today the man at the controls gets an even break with the weather. Just take a look at that flying suit the Hudson pilot is wearing.

First you'll notice that it is a two-piece affair, with a separate jacket and trousers. Next the zippers — zippers in all directions. One runs diagonally up the front to close the jacket, others seal jacket pockets and map pockets on either leg, below the knee! And two more zippers zip from ankle to waist, right up the front of either trouser leg. You don't climb into these pants, you put them on like a coat.

Remember the pilot that beefed because his heavily-padded flying suit bunched at the knees? He might have added elbows, crotch and shoulders, making for awkwardness and — because of binding—cold. There's no more of that now, but you've got to see the new Type E Flying Suit on the ground, where you can spring all the zippers and pull it apart, to appreciate the vast improvement it represents.

The same close-up inspection reveals significant changes in the helmet. Close fitting over the brow and sides of the face, making for comfort and warmth, it is roomier inside but absolutely draught free.

Our coastal fliers win a battle with high-altitude cold, thanks to 4,000 aircrew who designed these new winter flying togs

the central woollen mitt, leaving the hand snugly enveloped in the rayon inner glove which will retain warmth for several minutes at extremely low temperatures.

There's probably nothing like this RCAF innovation in flying garb anywhere in the world. For the job for which it was designed — long, chilling patrols as flown on Canada's coasts — it is without doubt the finest outfit ever developed.

And no wonder. It was designed by experts—four thousand one hundred and fifty-five of them, RCAF aircrew pooling their wisdom in wide-open bull sessions.

Their findings, based on chilling experience, were carefully recorded man by man and group by group. The results, salted down with the lore of research scientists wise in the mysteries of bodily heat distribution and textile insulation, were charted and translated into tailor's patterns.

The flying suit was built about a subject seated in a tailor's idea of a Link trainer and the first model carried 18,000 feet up an Alaskan mountain for testing. In fact, the story of how "Type E" was created is almost as unique as the suit itself.

FASTER, HIGHER, COLDER

When Canada's miniature peace-time Air Force was handed the BCATP contract to train 25,000 air crew a year, fancy trimmings like flying clothing necessarily got scant attention. What was good enough for peacetime fliers might not be good enough for Service crews, flying faster and higher every minute and blazing new shortcuts across the Arctic circle every month. But it had to do — for a time.

Two years of war passed, then in the fall of 1941 the experts were called together to form a Flying Clothing Committee. Something, it was resolved, must be done about de-icing equipment for home-frosted fliers. Scientific facts and theories were kited and bagged with great enthusiasm, till somebody suggested "Let's go and ask the men who man the planes. They ought to be able to tell us plenty about flying clothing."

They could and they did. Out to the 4,155 aircrew went a 10-page questionnaire that pulled no punches but gave each man a chance to voice every squawk he had about helmets, goggles, suits, gloves, boots.

The boys went for it like a chance at an overseas posting. Imagine being invited to beam your pet moans direct to AFHQ. They waxed wrathful about bulky suits that tore on cockpit projections, about clumsy gloves that had to be removed to adjust chin straps or reach for a handkerchief, and fogging goggles that made better blinkers than goggles even when clear.

They loudly demanded everything from tougher buttonholes to tapered trouserlegs, map pockets in suit linings to pencil pockets on sleeves, non-scratch lenses to a built-in gauntlet window so a fellow could see his wrist watch.

Back in Ottawa the committee was inundated by the flood but pitched right in to tabulate and summarize the results. Working with the National Research Council's protective clothing experts, they developed a new helmet, goggles and gloves for a starter. Then just as data was being completed on the flying suit, came an exciting invitation from Washington.

The U.S. Army was sending a party of 15 officers and civilian experts to Alaska to spend two months on Mt. McKinley testing winter clothing and emergency equipment. Would the RCAF care to send along an observer who might also test Canadian equipment?

The RCAF definitely would — but the expedition was to start in five days and the flying suit wasn't even complete on paper.

(Continued across page)



By LAC ED. HAYES

THE "radio" blared Mart Kenney's dance recordings. LACs Smoky Turner of Glace Bay and Pete Worden of Preston, Ont., rested in their bunks reading "Tropic Topics", just off the press. Frank Chaplin ducked in, wondering if there was an extra guy to make a ninth for his ball team.

Outside, a group of pilots scrambled for a football. Officers and airmen formed a fair-sized gallery. A big aircraft roared overhead, coming in for a landing.

It was a typical evening in an RCAF camp. But not at Paulson or Malton as you might expect. It was a typical evening with the First Canadian Squadron in far-off Ceylon.

When the first group of Can-

adian airmen arrived in Ceylon the outlook was bleak. Recreation and entertainment were nil. But these young Canucks set out to mould the place to their desire — to provide their own interests and amusements. This they have accomplished.

Their latest venture is the launching of a squadron paper, "Tropic Topics". Vol. 1, No. 1 reached Canada recently, presenting a lively picture of these fighting Canadians stationed in Ceylon under WC T. C. Scott, DSO, of Galt, Ont.

It doesn't matter where they are on leave, all golf courses look alike to Canadian invaders. Storms, tropical rains or sunshine, long courses or short make no difference.

They are there in fairs shouting "fore" what for they don't know, but all with the same ambition, to bag an eagle three on a par five hole.

But in sports softball holds first place with football a close second. Softball had a temporary relapse owing to the shortage of balls but the recent arrival of softball equipment from the Canadian YMCA in the United Kingdom revived new interest. A ten-team league operates.

"Radio" station C-O-R-N is the prize of the squadron. January, 1943, marked the opening of the "studios". Cpl Soper, Glenn Farrell, Tex Howell and Bert Somerville got together in Ceylon with a portable phonograph speaker, built a mike, rebuilt an amplifier and installed a "network" of speakers taking in every building. The station got its name as a result of the first program when Tex Howell, alias Alois Havrilla Don Wilson Howell "shot the bull" for two hours. Broadcasts emanate from the "Rotary Club" (Cookhouse), the Grill Room of Tully's Beanyery and several other "studios". C-O-R-N is on the air three times daily with up-to-the-minute news and the latest in snappy Canadian-style programs, via recording and stunt broadcasts.

Dispensing coffee and doughnuts nightly to bully-beef weary airmen is a job of the Rota-Mota Club, organized late last year. It is headed by LAC Ted Weaver of Ottawa.

The new paper pays tribute to the gallant flight commander SL L. J. Birchall, DFC, and FL Tommy Thomas, DFC, who were lost in the defence of Ceylon (Birchall has since been reported a prisoner of war). The editorial page also lists names of all men killed or missing.

Just behind a new hangar is a workshop with an impressive sign "No. 1 Repair Depot, RCAF, Ceylon." The name, not exactly official, was given to the shop by FS Jack Chapman of Toronto, a sort of damper to Cpl McKnight, also a Hogtownner who continually spouts: "That isn't the way we used to do it at 6 RD, Trenton." The men in this section have built among other things stoves for the kitchen and kitchen utensils, not to mention repairing refrigerators and furniture.

In between they find time to service their own aircraft as well as

for "those two other Allied Air Forces."

Even in Ceylon the Equipment Section considers its most proficient man the one who can turn down the most demands in one day, and boasts the motto:

If we've got it,
And you can find it,
You can have it.

Doc Riley, H.W., is "propietor" of "Ye Olde Meats Market". Male members only are on the hospital staff but here are a few intimate glimpses of the staff as reported in Tropic Topics: "Sister" Keele hails from that bloated cowtown, Vancouver. Then we have 'Sisters' Tucker and Orritt who hail from the West and East of Edmonton, respectively, and who it is said have done quite a bit of veterinary work back home on the farm. Also we have 'Sister' Young who comes from a wee bit of dirt stuck out in the Atlantic (although joined to Canada), West Petpeswick, N.S. We of the above-mentioned butchers, knifemen or what have you cordially invite you one and all to come and partake of some of our somewhat sometimes reluctant cures."

But the real spirit of these boys who are continually blasting hell out of the Axis from the skies is seen when they state the aims of their new paper: "To print a paper that can be sent home so that the people back home can see and hear what we are doing in Ceylon; to let the people back home know that we are proud to be Canadians and that we are proud to have the opportunity of serving Canada wherever she chooses to send us; and last but by all means not least, to let the people know we are very anxious to get this old war over so that we can go back home again and live in a world of peace."

WARM-UP — (Continued)

COCKPIT CHAIR was provided so that Type E suit could be built to fit comfortably a man seated at the controls, rigged out with intercom and oxygen equipment, chute harness and Mae West.



The chance was too good to be missed. A Squadron Leader who'd been all wrapped up in textiles since he was fourteen was chosen for the trip. In three days the specifications for the ideal cold-weather flying suit, as dictated by 4,155 aircrew, were rushed to completion. The SL tucked the papers in his briefcase and dashed off to a firm that had been manufacturing flying suits since the war began.

COCKPIT CHECK

The RCAF had previously supplied the shop with a cockpit chair for just such a job. In effect, the SL handed the boss designer his brief case and climbed into the dummy control seat.

"Here are the specifications for a new flying suit," he said, "The men who will wear it have to fly a plane at the same time, decked out with all the paraphernalia I have here — boots, gloves and helmet, intercom, R/T and oxygen equipment, Mae West and chute harness. And for the most part they do their job in cramped quarters, sitting down. . . Now build the suit around me."

Forty-eight hours later the first "draft" of the Type E flying suit had been completed; time off for sleep, approximately two hours. The result was a haggard crew of designers, tailors and the SL — plus something entirely new and different in flying suits.

Because the majority of the aircrew experts asked for a two-piece suit, Type E was tailored with separate coat and trousers; fighter pilots, and certain other personnel often find cold protection necessary only from the waist up, and may dispense with the trousers as desired.

Other two-piece suits have always bulged badly over the stomach, so the coat was cut away at the front. The double pile wool lining was buttoned into coat and trousers to be readily removable for warm weather and for drying out. But the lining is half an inch thick and was found to bulge at the knees, crotch and elbows — a fault in old suits which probably caused more cussing than anything else. So the lining was cut away at all three points. These, with the stomach, have been shown by tests to be the warmest parts of the body, where least protection is needed.

Operational crew wearing the new issue may

hear certain unkind comparisons to Gargantua hurled at them as they shuffle to their planes. A Type E-clad WAG will find himself standing with knees and elbows curved, arms swinging forward — but that uncomplimentary feature is another of this outfit's success secrets. Trousers legs were deliberately cut longer in front than at the back, the sleeves the same and so anchored at the shoulders as to permit a free forward or upward swing, because this suit is built for sitting, not standing.

And those seeming yards of zippers solve another. Operational crews were insistent that the "ideal" flying suit must be made to come off in a hurry in case it caught fire, or became water-logged on ditching to hinder a man trying to haul himself into a dinghy. So the designers devised the first quick-release slide-fasteners produced in Canada. The coat, and each trouser leg, zip up from the bottom in usual fashion and lock at the top. But flip-up the tab, haul upwards and outwards, and the sliding lock pulls free: the zipper teeth pull apart at a tug. Escape time 15 seconds, or slightly better than Houdini's for the straight jacket.

18,000 FEET UP

Bundling up the new helmet, suit and gloves, along with other items of current issue RCAF equipment, the SL hopped a plane to join the Yanks at McKinley National Park, Alaska. He tested the new suit, stationary, for an hour and a half in the face of a 50-mile wind which blasted snow clouds along the slopes at 18,000 feet and drove the thermometer down to 10 below. He noted several minor faults for correction but the final line to his report reads: "The flying suit is suitable for aircrew."

Other exhaustive tests have followed, modifications have been introduced not only in the suit but in the helmet and gloves. And today the complete outfit is issue and RCAF coastal patrol crews are already baffling the icy Atlantic and Alaskan elements in the finest thing in flying clothing. Making our boys sartorial examples of what the well-dressed flying man will wear, for comfort, confidence and freedom to concentrate on the sinking of subs and the blasting of Japs.



SWAGGER member of the crack WD Precision Squad from Rockcliffe does a snappy eyes right and holds it for the camera. After a big Maritime tour, squad has now broken up and the girls are now going with their trades.

MOSQUITO BLITZ

WINNIPEG — Flying students of No. 2 Training Command are biting back at mosquitoes.

In co-operation with the anti-mosquito campaign, Command authorities are providing a complete photographic survey of the entire district covered by oilers. Airmen are taking the pictures in the course of their training flights. The survey will reveal all the water-covered spots in the districts where the mosquitoes are breeding and which might not have been discovered from the ground. Army crews are helping spray oil on the bad spots.

Trenton Pilots, AGs Want Post-War Career In RCAF But Ground Personnel Not So Sure

TRENTON—Fifty percent of the pilots and potential air gunners stationed here desire to remain in the RCAF after the war, according to a survey on post-war rehabilitation conducted by the station paper, "Contact." Ground crew personnel who hope to stay in the service number 30 percent.

To the question: "Do you wish to return to your former civilian job?" — 60 percent answered in the negative; 32 percent said "yes" and the remainder were undecided. Thirty percent desire to go into civil aviation; 48 percent were not inclined to favor that trade, while 22 per-

MIDGET AIRMAN'S AMBITION NOT TO REACH 5 FEET BUT TO GET MARRIED

By Cpl. J. BRICKER
EDMONTON—Some sort of a record was chalked up when four-foot, 11-inch AC2 H. A. Wintonyk embryo air gunner, stalked through the gates of 3-M Depot here. In a loud voice he announced, "Lanky is here." Yes, that is his height.

From reveille to taps he is the cause of confusion. A right dress in his flight and he is nowhere to be seen. He has to reach up and attain the position of a right angle and still misses the shoulder of the airman on whom he is dressing. The other airman misses him completely.

On parades to the airmen's mess it is always assumed that there is a gap and many a time when the NCO in charge of the meal parade ordered the boys to "close up" AC2 Wintonyk has been almost trampled to death. But he is a hardy soul and seems to survive it all.

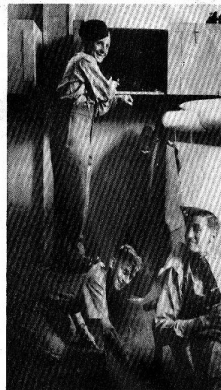
Life in barracks is not all gray either. For several days he had to stand in the wash basin to shave in order to see the mirror.

Getting into a locker is a job for the average sized man, and when plans were made for the

present locker system little thought was given to this small tyke.

Not to be outdone, Wintonyk has solved the problem. He gets onto an upper bunk (a la Tarzan) by scurrying up the legs of the bed, places himself in a jumping position, then makes a mad leap for the locker and swings there by one hand while he does his necessary work. In cases of necessity he crawls right into the locker and stamps around until he has completed the task at hand.

In civilian life things weren't quite so grim. Before entering the confines of the "agony hut" he lived at Winnipeg Beach with his family, the tallest member reaching five feet, three inches on a windy day. He was employed in activities where his stature was quite an asset. Working in an airplane factory was very simple. If there was something wrong with an engine, he would just shimmy up a spark plug, crawl in a piston and clean up the whole mess. Working for a milk company was the same set up. Bottles could easily be cleaned when our hero, armed with a tooth brush, would crawl in and scour out the con-



As for transportation, he travelled half fare on street cars until the day he put on his uniform.

His ambition? . . . Oddly enough his ambition is not to reach five feet. As soon as his annual leave rolls around he plans to head back to Winnipeg Beach where he intends to exchange vows with his one and only who towers above him by three inches. Little man what now?

MISSED BERLIN AS DIVER, NOW TRY'S AS SINGING FLIER

VICTORIAVILLE — "Jean Cavall Calling!"

That's a familiar announcement to radio listeners all over North America, and to short-wave listeners in South America and Europe. And even more familiar — and pleasurable — is the baritone voice that follows, singing love ballads of the between-wars generation.

That voice is now the main attraction on the periodic amateur nights at 3 ITS, Victoriaville, Que.

Jean (AC2 John Cawthray to you) has been singing for a living since 1936, so successfully that he had his own NBC program, his picture on numerous sheet music numbers, including Day Dreaming, Deep in the Heart of Texas, and Wherever You Are. His fan mail reached 700 letters a week, and 20th Century-Fox waved its potent check-book in his direction, intending to star him in a remake of an old Maurice Chevalier picture. But the

Gracie Greets Surprised RAF Lads Then Shows Them Hollywood Spots



WEST COAST RAF STATION — A loud and unmistakable cry greeted Cpl Lott of the RAF as he alighted from a train at Los Angeles, Calif. He turned. It was Gracie Fields, an old acquaintance whom he had known in Civvy Street, in England as a newsman. Without further ado he was whisked off to Gracie's Santa Monica home.

Cpl. Lott, accompanied by LACs Middleton and Wilks had come to California on furlough. But it was more than they expected to be guests of Gracie Fields. She took them shopping one morning. "Howdy, Gracie," "What's cooking," and "Glad to see you, Gracie," were the greetings she received from shopkeepers. To every one Gracie would fling a broad Lancashire quip or a whistle.

Gracie wasn't the only celebrity the RAF trio met. Lana Turner and Betty Grable joined the Lott-Middleton-Wilks Fan Club, at the Hollywood Service Club Canteen.

John's career as a singer began at 15 in Ottawa, near his birthplace, Grand Mère, Que. His main interest lay in fancy diving, however, and at 18 all that kept John from representing Canada in the Olympic Games in Berlin was a little matter of finances. John still intends to visit Berlin, however, with the RCAF paying his way.

It was while training in Miami that John's voice in the showers led to a contract as featured singer in Florida's famous Aquacade. From there it was a quick jump into radio, theatre and night club work.

His early days in the RCAF found him singing night and day helping to put over the Third Victory Loan. And the Fourth Loan found 3 ITS besieged with demands for his services. But John has a pressing date with a DeHavilland Mosquito in active service, and his detours are as few as he can make them.

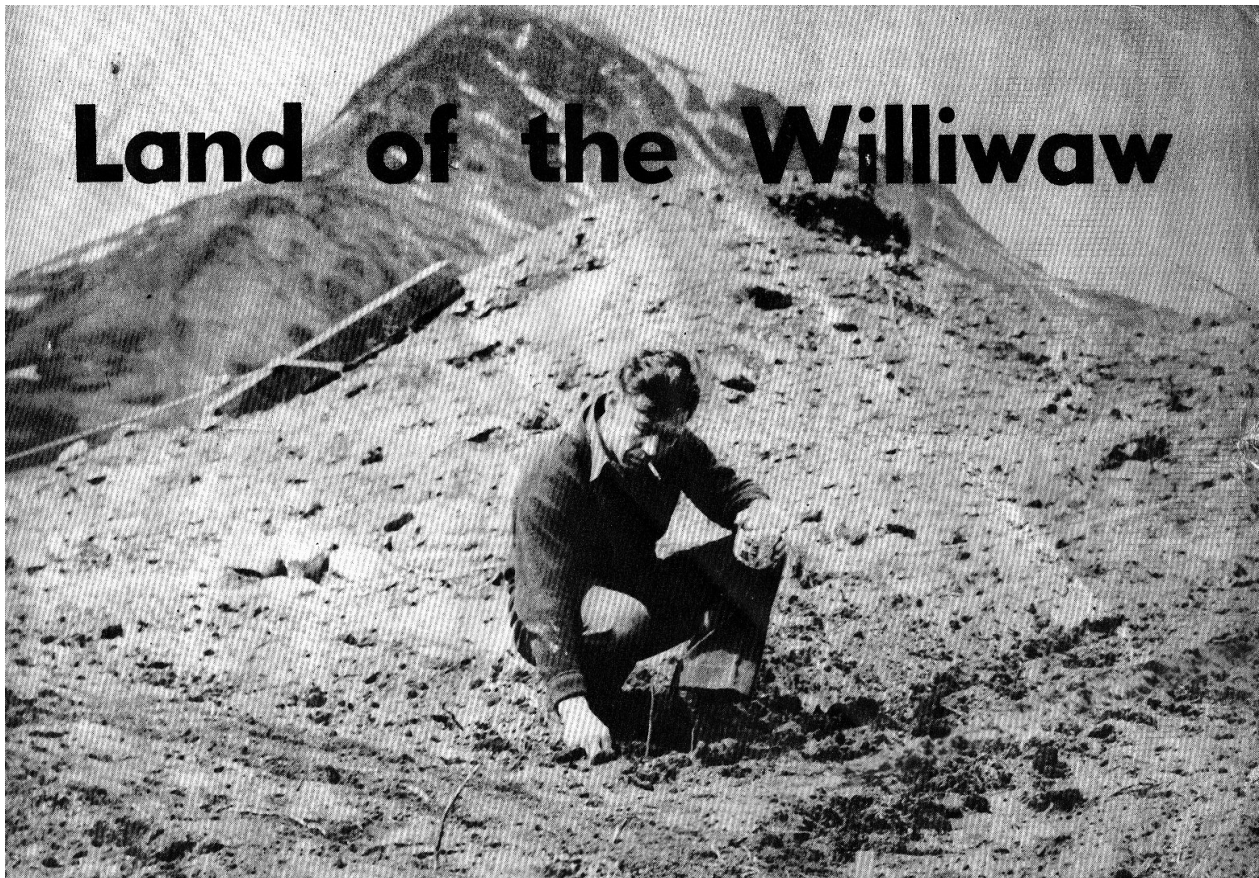
Winco Will Drop 2½ Stripes to be an AG

OTTAWA—Aircrew age limitations are no longer a barrier for 35-year-old Wing Commander Charles Gray, Director of Accounts at AFHQ.

Within a few weeks he expects to be "Pilot Officer Charles Gray, Air Gunner," because on graduation he will revert to the rank of Pilot Officer to ply his new "trade".

For two years the Vancouverite has been waiting for a chance to remuster to aircrew. Now, if he qualifies and gets his overseas posting, his dream of punching lead into Jerries with a machine gun, instead of metaphorically punching an adding machine, will be realized.

Land of the Williwaw



BLEAK AND BARREN IS THE VIEW FROM THE COOKHOUSE DOOR WHERE LAC "TEX" REEDER HOPEFULLY PLANTS AN ALASKAN VICTORY GARDEN.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY FL A. G. CANNINGS
Public Relations Officer, WAC

Far north in Alaska and down along the Aleutians chain, our boys battle the Jap and the wild williwaw gales

IT'S the modern land of Never-Never.

It's a land where money is almost valueless through its quantity and lack of market; where the sun smiles on your face and snow-squalls blast your neck before you have taken ten paces; where Paradise blooms and dies in a week as green grass and red, yellow and blue flowers briefly replace the Alberta burnt-prairie effect; where the williwaw flattens hangars, buildings and men with its 118-mile-per-hour blasts and where pilots of the Royal Canadian Air Force are rivalling the fighting legends of the ancient island totem poles through their activity over the fog-shrouded Aleutians.

I speak of Alaska and the "Chain" — the Fox, Andreanof and Rat Islands that stretch 3,000 miles into the North Pacific; that spawn real hell-weather for pilots in the union of the warm Pacific currents and the ice-filled Bering Sea.

It is here that fighter and bomber squadrons of the RCAF are commanding mounting respect from their American hosts and allies for their resourcefulness, efficiency and morale under as primitive conditions as any fighting front in the world can offer.

But although work is difficult alike for the fitter and rigger in his skimpy "nose-hangar"; for the clerk

in his corner of the Quonset hut office; for the pilot, the cook, and the motor transport driver, — still officers and men of the RCAF, especially in the Aleutians area, work hard and play hard, with native ingenuity for improvised sport overcoming the lack of entertainment normally found on Dominion stations.

There is always that indispensable holiday of the old hand — the 48. But in the Aleutians there is nowhere to go, no family friends to visit, no girl friends to visit. In fact there are no girls of any description, white or native.

MOVIE STARS DROP IN

To offset somewhat these diversions of the more sociable post and station life, Canadians in Alaska take full advantage of blanket invitations to personal appearances of big-name movie and radio stars.

They find a peculiar fascination in being able to say "I saw Bob Hope"; "What do you think of Frances Langford?"; "Even in the RAF, have you seen the equal of Jerry Colonna's moustache?"; "Boy, I'll bet Joe E. Brown could eat a grapefruit in one bite."

Sparkling new movie and sound equipment and a highly-developed system of film exchange brings "A" pictures to the most remote posts even before the films open for first run in major Canadian cities. There is,

too, a sprinkling of older films.

At one station four theatres — the largest capable of seating 2,000 men, the smallest about 500 — change shows daily, with a maximum run of two days if the film rating of the current showing is high enough.

After the show officers and airmen invariably drop into the officers club or the "P.X." (the American canteen) for a coke, a cup of coffee or light refreshments. The "P.X." sells everything from deodorants to doughnuts, from bootlaces to beer (when available and of the American 3.2 variety).

Mail flown in by army air transport is usually received within 10 days after mailing. A letter from Montreal has reached its Aleutian destination six days after being posted. Mail days are the milestones of time for officers and airmen.

Regardless of where he hails from any Canadian will see scenery that can't be touched anywhere in the world for its grandeur and ruggedness. Tremendous mountain chains with 20,000-foot peaks, mighty glaciers that mother entire webs of rivers in the alluvial glacial deltas and the occasional coastal plains.

Even the highly-touted and commercialized beauties of Banff and the Canadian Rockies and the Laurentians in the east are insignificant alongside the Alaskan ranges.

Canadian units sent into Alaska went in streamlined — with just enough men to do the necessary tasks of aircraft maintenance and administrative and equipment work. Alaska offers every tradesman a chance to work a normal day on his own job with the prospect of many additional

hours to keep up his end with hard-working mates.

No one is worked to death even though he may think so at times. Commanding officers were carefully selected for their knowledge of men. Work and recreational schedules have resulted that give a man ample time to follow any of the many available off-duty sports.

In Alaska proper, baseball, volleyball and rugby are played regularly. RCAF teams are entered in the American army and navy leagues. An Air Force hockey team won the Alaska title in February. For the skiing enthusiast, American army skis are handy if he wants to try his luck on the perpetual snowlanes.

Here one can do hunting such as is not found elsewhere in the world. If you can dream up a nightmare that stands 12 feet erect and leaves a 28-inch-diameter foot print, then you'll have some idea of what an adult Kodiak bear looks like. It took 56 rounds from a high-powered rifle to stop a small one, an airman reported on his return from a shooting trip.

Fishing, both deep sea and stream, is unlimited. Salmon are running and the trout are fat from gorging on the salmon eggs.

In the Aleutians there is no ice for skating but the numerous slopes are a skiers dream — steep and gentle, unmarked by tree or rock. In fact anyone from eastern or western Canada feels homesick for the sight of a tree — it doesn't seem to affect the harder airmen from the prairie provinces.

Down the island chain, men find excellent fishing in the smaller

(please turn page)

WILLIWAU (Continued)

The perennial canned food and fresh frozen articles are often supplemented by the firm fish of salmon trout and salmon.

There is little hunting in the area although caribou and fox abound. Caribou are protected as a natural food supply in case outside stores are cut by enemy action. The adult fox with natural castiness stays out of sight although many an airman has a red or black fox pup as a pet after digging out a den in the tundra.

In some cases airman have played the military strategy of using the animal's instincts to their advantage. In grazing the wild tundra is either too steep or too wet to cross the coast. Many of the dogs are in calf when found and usually shakedown the calf after the airman helps with its birth.

As a result as many as four to six calves have adopted the airman and remain about the camp on their own terms. One airman reported a dog pup howling for a dish of powdered milk. One airman reported a dog pup howling for a dish of powdered milk. One airman reported a dog pup howling for a dish of powdered milk.

THE WAILING WILLIWAU

The weather is perhaps the most amazing thing in Alaska and the Aleutians. "Down the chain" the four Canadian seasons can be experienced in twelve minutes. Standing on a hill the newcomer can watch the weather parade pass in the valley below.

Sunshine dances on the creek water. Then a baby willow fattens the grass. Light fog betrays the rain and snow squalls flow close behind.

Low clouds are misted down to become heavy fog. All games and the sun again dance on the creek water.

The sharpness of the demonstration can be seen from the day I chased a herd of caribou with a jeep to get an "unobscured" shot.

The herd was grazing in the centre of a long gentle slope that was bordered by woods, the Berling Sea and a creek in that order. To get the caribou at my back it was necessary to drive out into the grass and cross the creek. No sooner did the jeep detect a strange movement than they bunched the herd and milling slowly with a number of calves, moved up the slope. They disappeared into the cloud.

On attempting to follow them into the cloud, I stopped when white fog blotted out the jeep's flat radiator four feet in front of me. Bunking up two jeep-lengths, I was again in blinding sunshine.

On looking back, fifteen minutes and ten thousand jobs later, the caribou could be seen in the sun hither up the slope. The cloud was a hill of fog some five hundred yards thick.

The willow — the Pacific Ocean breeze from the combination of the Berling Sea and the Pacific Ocean heat — is terrific in its audacious, fury and uncertainty.

It can blow north on one side of an east-west runway and south on the other. This it reverses — but fast — and blows parallel to the line of take-off. One fighter pilot taking off

was hit by a willowwind at right angles to his line of flight. As soon as his wheels were clear he found himself 300 yards to starboard — blown off his course by the willow.

An Alaskan posting means a slight boost in wages for an airman. The Canadian is paid in American money and the difference to his equivalent pay in Canada is the difference in Canadian exchange on the American dollar.

Actually money is almost valueless because there is nothing to buy. When cars come in to Alaska are cleared in less than two hours. If an airman is lucky enough to get something, he can often realize a good profit by reselling it to an American.

Officers and men get along with very little money other than expenditures for cigarettes and personal necessities. There is no flour to be had anywhere "down the chain" and American army post offices do a roaring business selling money orders to Canadians who send their surplus money home. In a recent Victory bond drive one fighter unit sent an entire month's surplus into the United States. Working and living conditions have excellent financial examples of Canadian ingenuity. With only a fimer "cash" budget provided for major engine overhaul, NCOs and men built their own engine stands, hoods, tail frames and heating arrangements.

Tires of going through the ruts to get water from the ablation taps, a fimer valvally "overhaul" enough pipe, tape and sicks to install running water from a refrigerant stream in every hut. And after ten weeks of going without a bath, the same patient gathering of material from many sources enabled the crewsters and fimer to rig up a shower room.

When the Canadian took over one abandoned base, they took over five hundred bushels of the Berling Sea and eleven boxes from original sites by the willow. All hands turned to building desks, lockers, tables and wood paneling.

Away from the Quonset huts that house twelve men, each with his own single bed, the rest of the buildings are tents and corrugated iron sheds, sunk four feet in the ground to protect them from bomb blasts or the more imminent threat of the willow.

When one learns that the willow can blow twelve miles per hour, and that the Canadian took over one abandoned base, they took over five hundred bushels of the Berling Sea and eleven boxes from original sites by the willow. All hands turned to building desks, lockers, tables and wood paneling.

BEANS UNATTENDED

The best answer to the all important question of "What about the food?" can probably be found in the present health of the Alaskan personnel. Every officer and man has put on from five to thirty pounds from the predominantly starchy diet.

It wonder if I can hold my breath long enough to make the tonic look as though it were fitted up, one officer wally said as he made ready for one of the regular dress parades.

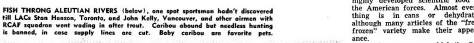
(Continued across page)



QUONSET HUT is the word for home in the Aleutians. SCAFOS built their own tables, desks and lockers from packing cases. Heat on hot feet down, hunked with earth, as protection against bomb-blasts, in case Jap cadets pay a visit.



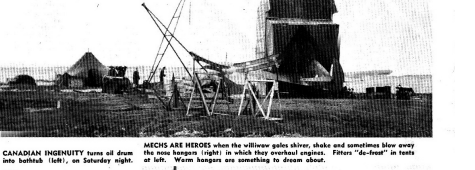
KITTYHAWK CREWS, making "sh-shooters" for my company, find trouble for the Jap. SCAF fighters like these joined Yanks in clearing Japs from Alaska.



FISH THROUGH ALEUTIAN RIVERS (below), one spot upstream had discovered 100 LACS from Moscow, Toronto, and John Kelly, Vancouver, and other airman with RCAF squadrons were waiting in after trout. Caribou abound but moose hunting is banned, in case supply lines are cut. Baby caribou are favorite pets.



NO MOANING IN THIS LINEUP and you'd laugh and like it too. If you were waiting for your first real bath in 10 weeks, a little patiently, uncomplainingly, hair and skin to give every hot running water — then rigged up this shower room. Now life in the Aleutians is practically civilized, though heating water for four showers takes an hour.



CANADIAN INGENUITY turns old down into shelter (left), on Saturday night.



MECHS ARE HEROES when the willow gets above, shaka and sometimes blow away the men happen (right) in which they worked engines. Fitter "de-been" in tents of left. Warm blankets are something to dream about.



CANADIAN SKIING ACE FO Louis Cochard of Montreal (right, above) gets a hand from PO "Major" Fanning of Winnipeg, on a vintage job. On readiness, they have to stick by planes, but America 40 life over for every.

BURST OF SUNLIGHT brings LACS Bert Somerton, Pukashan, Ont., and G.E.A. Michener, North Bay, out to six hours. But willow blow up men in 10 minutes!



PUBLISHED MONTHLY
FOR THE AIR FORCE PERSONNEL
BY THE AIR FORCE HEADQUARTERS
STATION HEAD OFFICE
505 BY STATION GARDENS
FIVE CENTS A COPY

HUP-ONE!

Your I.Q. may be O.K.
but how's your wind?

SO YOU DONT TALK, EH?

Dear Mom:

We had quite a trip over. Not much to do, but plenty of new fellows to get to know. It was the first time to see for most of us and we all got a kick out of it—except those who were sick. They showed us some movies, including a picture called "Next of Kin" about how important it is to keep our mouths shut and not write about war things.

Well I had better start from the beginning. We left Hotport at 4 a.m. Tuesday, April 6th, and arrived in Englishport at 5 p.m., April 16. We saw a sub on the second day out. I can't tell you the name of the ship we went on but perhaps you can guess when I say that it is named after that skyscraper hotel in Toronto. Maybe I shouldn't have written all this but if he doesn't like it the censor will cut it out . . .

This example of irresponsible chatter may be so funny that you will think it is overdone. But any security officer will tell you that such letters are all too common.

The quotations are faked, of course, but they are a composite of several actual instances. They illustrate some important points that Air Force people don't always keep in mind.

Let's analyse the letter.

The humor of the first paragraph is unintentional and reveals all the more clearly that AC2 Joe simply didn't realize that the film was directed at him, as well as all the other careless bodies in the service. Probably everybody who has seen the picture would agree that "Next of

Kin" hit a new high in attractive, even thrilling, security instruction. But what can you do when people won't pay attention?

The security violations in the next paragraph are shocking enough and AC2 Joe had time in the digger to realize the seriousness of his offense. Such disclosures can endanger the lives of hundreds of comrades.

His attempt to tell the folks he went over on the S.S. Duchess of York without disclosing it to the enemy was clumsy, you say. That's not the point. The thing to get clear in your mind is that you should never engage in such devices. No one person is competent to judge for himself what it is safe to let the enemy know and what should be withheld.

That is why simple rules are laid down by security authorities and why such rules should be blindly and rigidly observed. There is no time in this complicated war to explain in detail to everyone why a certain fact can be let out under one set of circumstances and time, yet barred under different circumstances and time.

But this much can be said. Our intelligence officers pick up some very important "gen" by piecing together just such little scraps of information from enemy sources. That is why their advice is followed by security officers in drafting the rules which forbid the disclosure of what you may think are insignificant items.

But the real pay-off comes in Joe's last quoted line. "Leave it to the censor." You can't. Even a censor

can slip. That would leave you holding the bag—responsible for the loss of lives, the failure of a military task.

If you think about that for a moment, you'll probably realize that the basic point about security is a strong sense of personal responsibility. You're Joe to see that not a scrap of information gets to the enemy that might be even remotely useful to him.

After all, it isn't as if you had no guidance on security. Turn to AFMO A. 72/1. It's headed General Security Order. No excuse for not knowing about it. The full text is a part of Station Standing Orders. It appears in DRO's every three months. It's read at muster parades. Take a look at it again. The appendix lists all the things you must not talk about. Glance through the order and see how many violations AC2 Joe committed above.

Or maybe you're the lazy type. Want WINGS to do your reading for you. Well, here's a check list condensed from the order.

Don't write anything about service matters at all when corresponding with our lads who are now prisoners of war in enemy hands.

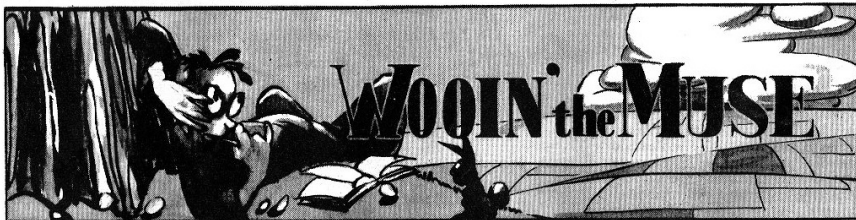
Don't write letters to people you don't know well. Pen pals are forbidden for a good reason—because the enemy is known to use that device for obtaining information.

Don't try to evade censorship. You can't win either way. If you are caught, which is rather more than likely, you're for it. If you are not caught, everybody else may be for it and you will be the unwilling cause of untold grief.

Don't talk or write about ship movements or overseas postings.

Don't talk about your work. Be doubly careful when writing people outside Canada. It's not that you don't trust your correspondent. But you can't be sure it won't fall into unreliable hands before, or even after, it is delivered.

P.S.—Mom will understand why you don't write about service matters. Your girl friend will be far more impressed by your discreet silence than by any evidence that you are "in the know."



AFTERMATH

Let us pause for a moment and contemplate the peculiar lot of the W.D.

Not at this moment, but when the war has ceased to be.

In the first place, how is a girl to know

When there is a knock at the door, whether or not the Fuller Brush man is going to turn out to be her ex C.O.?

The former M.T. driver, calling in her car for a friend will not pause at the curb and toot.

She'll probably struggle out from under the wheel, rush to open the door and smartly salute.

The cook, returned to civil life with income large,

May find her prospective household helper used to be her senior officer or even administrative sarge.

And if that's the case, its going to try the temper of the saints To face a delicately charred meal served with the belligerent enquiry — "Any complaints?"

Every W.D. will have the problem of getting used to high heels all over again.

And carrying umbrellas when it starts to rain.

Also, she will go back to handbags when the struggle's spent.

And the first little while of groping around for things that aren't there in pockets that aren't there either is going to cause no little comment.

FIG. O. F. M. DOUGLAS,
Overseas

ASTRO

Man is not lost! Across the trackless skies In the empyrean blue, the airman knows

Where he has been, now is, and where he goes

As on his sextant calmly he relies. Where am I? Here, Denebola replies.

Like a celestial beacon Mirfak throws His beam. And here's the North,

Polaris shows.

Look upward, man! The ancient Schedar cries!

Look upward man! Beyond the farthest star

Seek everlasting wisdom from afar.

Four freedoms are the landfall of our flight,

Of speech, religion and from want and fear.

Be this our prayer: Our Father, who is near,

Make good our track and set our course aright.

LAC J. W. CHALMERS,
1 CNS Rivers, Man.



1 — Can you dash off a 100 yards in 12 seconds — or if you're better than a good average, 11.4?

2 — Can you haul your chin up to the bar at least 13 times — or after an extra helping of spinach, 17 times? Bar is defined here as a horizontal pole suspended at fingertip reach over your head; waist-level bars not acceptable.

3 — From a standing position can you jump 8'1.5" — or if that's a cinch, 8'11"?

4 — After clouting a homer can you round a softball diamond (45 feet between each base, touching all bases) in 9.6 seconds, or better still, in 8.9? If you don't get a hit, try this one after the game.

5 — Can you stand, jump into the air, clap your feet together twice and land with the feet apart? Once won't do; finishing up with feet together likewise disqualifies.

6 — "In position for push-ups", hands on floor, arms and body straight — now, can you do at least five push-ups touching your chest. Touching chin, waist or legs puts you offside.

7 — Stand on right foot, grab left foot behind your right knee — then bend and touch left knee to floor, straightening up without (a) touching any other part of body except knee (b) failing to straighten up without falling on your face (c) tying yourself in knots.

If you can't score on all these, better see your P.T. instructor. If you can't do any of 'em, better apply for a discharge.

WINGS Editor: Sgt. Stan Helleur. Art Editor: FS Patrick O'Lee. Executive Editor: FO R. G. B. Anglin. WINGS is printed and distributed by the AFHQ Duplicating Pool. All contributions, other than letters to the editor, must be submitted through station correspondents. Address letters to the editor and all inquiries to the Editor, WINGS, AFHQ, Ottawa.

WINGS ABROAD

THE OFFICIAL ROYAL CANADIAN AIR FORCE R. C. A. F. NEWSPAPER

JULY

LONDON, ENG.

1943

19 Seamen Saved By RCAF Sunderland

UNABLE TO LAND, DROPS TRANSMITTER TO TARS IN BOAT

*Torpedo Victims Are
Adrift For 8 Days
Before Pickup*

A unique new portable wireless transmitter, dropped from a patrolling RCAF Sunderland into the sea beside a lifeboat in the Atlantic, led to the rescue recently of 19 merchant seamen, survivors of a torpedoed ship. The Sunderland was captained by FO A. H. Russell of Tofteld, Alta.

It was the first time a radio apparatus had been dropped to shipwrecked seamen from a search aircraft, and it enabled them to send out a continuous stream of SOS signals.

The foolproof set is about the size of an old-fashioned coffee grinder. Turning the crank generates power and transmits an automatic SOS signal, using an aerial suspended from a box kite or, in calm weather, a balloon. The operator need know nothing about radio.

The white sail of the lifeboat and a loud check suit worn by one of the survivors served as a guide to Russell when the castaways were sighted.

"They were about 450 miles from England when we spotted them," Russell said afterwards.

"First, I dropped two buoyant bags filled with supplies, which included the wireless set.

"We saw one picked up as we made height to get a fix and radio our base for permission to land on the sea. Back came word that we could come down at the captain's discretion. I returned to where I thought the boat was. The sea was still calm; perfect for the job. But we were robbed of our success. At the last minute visibility suddenly changed for the worse. For an hour we searched in vain."

For four days afterwards aircraft, handicapped by heavy rain and low cloud, continued to search over the Atlantic, but without success. On the fifth day came new hope. Faintly, in the headphones of a listening telegraphist at a British west coast radio post, was heard a barely discernible signal, "SOS."

On the eighth day signals were received in sufficient strength for a destroyer to home on them and pick up the boats in company. They were sighted by a destroyer of the Royal Canadian Navy and two patrolling Sunderlands.

Other Canadian members of Russell's crew were PO Arthur Moynall, Lindsay, Ont., WO Sidney Back, Toronto; PO Harry Forrest, Winnipeg; Sgt. F. R. Haar, Woodfibre, B.C.; and Sgt. R. J. Lock.



Twelve cents for a dozen bananas! What a price, what a price! FS S. L. Uffelman of Waterloo, Ont., and FS Frank Holcombe of St. Catharines, Ont., have found their match in bargaining with this Indian fruit seller. We'd just like to find the banana seller.

Home Guards Mistake Newfie WAG For Enemy, First Raid Nearly His Last

His first raid was almost his last for Sgt. Gregg O'Grady, RCAF WAG from Newfoundland. It was a trip over Emden with a New Zealand Wellington squadron. His aircraft was badly shot up, and he and a crewmate baled out over the Wash on the way home.

He must have been close to the shore, for everything went black for a minute, but when he came to, he found himself washed up on the beach.

Gregg's troubles were not over, however. He was unable to persuade the local Home Guards that Newfoundland was in the war on Britain's side. One pitchfork-bearing farmer was sure Newfoundland was somewhere in Central Europe.

O'Grady was taken to the police station, where with a Newfoundland

VETERAN PILOT SAYS FLYING IN INDIA WORSE THAN IN EUROPE

INDIA—Operational flying in India is more difficult than over Europe, WO Norman Parsons of Longueil, Que., believes — and he has done both. In Europe there are flak and searchlights to face, but they are seldom as dangerous as a heavy tropical storm, he says.

Parsons has dropped a lot of things from his Wellington bomber since he left Canada. He started by laying eggs in Germany. Then he came to India and began bombing the Japanese. Next he was assigned with his squadron to teach a battalion of Indian paratroops and dropped some 500 from the skies.

KING RIBS PHOTOG

A Royal inspection, and their Majesties kindly paused to pose for press photographer FO Ken Coleman. He set his lens, pulled the slide — and the metal edge came off in his hand. The slide stayed stuck, Ken got red in the face, and the King leaned toward him to chuckle.

"And it's never happened before, has it?"

stamp on a letter, his Newfoundland shoulder patches, and a map of the world, he managed to prove he was friend and not foe.

Besides, he was engaged in dropping food for the British army as it retreated from Burma last year.

The paratroops whom he helped train were mostly Gurkhas, although other Indian races were represented. Other Canucks in the RAF Wellington squadron that did training jobs were FS Gordon Venner of Brantford, Ont.; FL Jack Guest, Toronto; FS Frank Holcombe, St. Catharines, Ont., and FS S. L. Uffelman, Waterloo, Ont.

Now Parsons is back on bombing, this time with the Japs as victims. Uffelman is also Jap bombing. A WAG, he has helped paste Akyab,

BATTERED BOMBER GETS HOME, AIR GUNNER GETS DFM

*Kept 4 Guns Blazing,
Silenced Ack-ack,
Doused Lights*

Stuttgart was the target the night FS Russ Dorland, a tail-gunner of Islington, Ont., earned his DFM. The Wellington had dropped its bombs when an ack-ack cannonshell crashed through the nose of the aircraft, smashing the instrument panel and wrecking the landing wheels. After that it was a constant struggle for altitude. The bomber was never more than a hundred feet off the ground all the way home.

Searchlights and guns, some operating horizontally and some at a slightly depressed angle, soon picked out the slow-twisting bomber.

"The guns were terrific," Dorland admitted recently. "They filled the sky with fire."

But the tail-gunner kept his four machine guns firing ceaselessly, potting at searchlights and ack-ack guns. On its homeward journey the bomber flew over a vast railway marshalling yard.

"Every train there and many other things seemed to have guns mounted on them and they all let loose at us," said the lanky flight-sergeant. "Their guns were so close they roared louder than my Brownings."

An English squadron leader who was along for experience happened to be piloting at the time. He was hit in the arm and leg and slumped away from the controls. The Scottish captain wrestled him out of the pilot's seat, slipped in himself and regained control before the airplane had a chance to crash.

Meanwhile Dorland was firing from the rear turret. He successfully shot out the searchlights and silenced some of the guns, thereby enabling his captain to extricate his damaged aircraft.

Magwe and other Jap-occupied cities in Burma.

RCAF fliers are playing an important part in keeping open the new "Burma Road." This artery, running from Chittagong across the Bay of Bengal from Calcutta to Mangdaw (now in Jap hands), in occupied Burma, is the primary supply line of the Allied troops on the India-Burma front.

Members of the RCAF who have been out a year or more tell newcomers to "keep cool, you haven't seen anything yet" in reference to the weather. May temperatures averaged 110 in the shade at noon.

Brandon Airmen Build Brawn to Beat Hitler

BIG SPORTS PROGRAM HELPS 2 'M' ROOKIES TRAIN FOR ACTION

BRANDON — Such heroes as PO G. G. Sutherland, DFC, of Winnipeg; Sgt. Pilot S. J. Kernaghan, DFM, Vancouver and FL Harry Shapiro, DFC, Montreal, who began their air force careers within the walls of 2 M Depot Brandon, are recalled frequently these days. They were the boys, who, as acey deuceys, took an active part in sports and physical training, building up stamina and strong bodies for a difficult job. Their records speak for themselves.

Now, more than ever before, physical training instructors at Brandon are placing accent on physical fitness, emphasizing the importance of reserve strength for long, hazardous flights; teaching the art of swimming in cases of emergency, tumbling and gym work as a conditioner for the possibility of bailing out.

SAW HUN TRAINING

Before the war Wing Commander G. A. Hodgets, CO of 2 M Depot, Brandon, visited Germany. He observed with interest its immense youth-building program. He feels Canada must catch up with the Hun in the matter of muscle-making. This he has set out to do with the lads under his wing, and has encouraged the development of as varied a sports program as any unit in Canada can boast.

Recruits spend the first week or 10 days in the downtown arena, then are transferred to the depot's buildings on the exhibition grounds. Here they take a three-week build-up course directed by Squadron Leader D. Thomson, who makes his office in a log cabin.

Sgt. Fred Martin, senior physical training instructor, is assisted by Cpl. Alex Kuly. Cpl. Wilf Foucault handles the boxers.

A recent visit found Johnny Hammond, 18-year-old member of last year's Winnipeg Monarch Juniors testing his strength with a 122-pound weight; Clifford Bakkirk, ex-Winnipeg fire fighter handling 12-pound dumbbells, Sgt. Richard Macallister, Port Colbourne, Canadian flyweight wrestling champ in 1931 doing somersaults on the high bar. He can do 40 somersaults on end.

These lads take fitness seriously. They realize that some day it may mean the difference between life and death.

JOE ERK



COMEBACK

Crack at Crown Not Ex-champ's Aim
—He's Training for Bout With Hun

By Sgt. STAN HELLEUR

NINE years ago, Al Foreman, a curly-haired punishing lightweight, slugged it out with Petey Sarron in what was his last fight. When it was over, the British Empire champion retired.

But through the intervening years, the quiet, dapper Foreman has not lost his love for a good scrap, the kind where the chips are down and a guy has to be sharp all the way, or else. Undoubtedly that's why Al, at the age of 38, is remustering from RCAF photographer to straight air gunner.

The story of Foreman's remuster developed in an odd way. It started with a yarn in the Montreal Standard not long ago, telling sport fans that the former B.E., Canadian and U.S. Armed Forces lightweight king was training for a comeback; that even at his age he felt he could flatten most of the current namers.

Al had gone into training for a fight all right but it was for the big one which would find him manoeuvring inside a gun turret instead of a roped square. He was about 15 pounds overweight and in "pretty sloppy shape, generally." One thing he didn't want to do was fail his medical — and so he went into intensive training.

"COMEBACK" A GAG

"Actually," Foreman said with a smile, "the comeback story started as a gag on my part. I happened to be along with my brother Maurice, during one of my 48s, at a club where he was training a couple of kids. I put on the gloves and sparred around with some big guy, and — I don't know why it is — but most of these kids try to get smart with someone who's made a name as a fighter. Anyway, I started a left hook at this punk, just started it, and knocked him stiff. Another fellow wanted to spar and then another. Result was that in less than five minutes I'd cooled three guys.

"Kidding my brother, I told him I was going to make a comeback and he hit the roof. 'You'll

climb into a ring over my dead body!' he said." Al chuckled as he thought about it.

"I thought I'd kid him a while before telling him my real reason for training. But somehow Andy O'Brien (Standard sports editor), heard about me icing those three fellows and phoned Maurice to get the score. My brother said I seemed to be quite serious and so O'Brien printed the story."

Observing Foreman as he talks, you know he's not trying to kid anybody. He's a guy who came up the hard way, had to fight for every nickel he ever owned. He talks quietly and scholarly and looks straight at you, compelling you to think: "This fellow's ready to back up anything he says."

SHOOTS PUNCHES AND PIX

And you feel that way particularly when he talks of his remuster to air gunner. "I might not do the job with what the newspapers call the 'reckless abandon of youth,'" he says, "but I'd do it coolly, and I think I'd do it well."

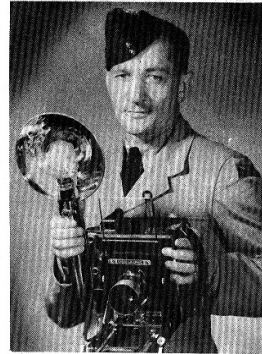
Foreman has had a colorful career not only as a fighter but also as a news photographer.

But a year ago, the yen for action was too great and Foreman attempted to join the RCAF as aircrew. He was refused because of his age but soon enlisted as a photographer, on condition that when the age limit was raised, he would be given the opportunity of remustering.

Photography has been his bread and butter for the last nine years, but boxing still is Foreman's first love. He likes to talk of the fighters who have brought credit to the game by distinguished action in the service of their country; fellows like Cpl Barney Ross of the U.S. Marines, decorated for gallantry at Guadalcanal.

"Nobody was surprised at what Barney did," he said. "He was that kind of guy."

"I remember one time back in the late 20s when I was training in a big Chicago gym, I noticed a slant-eyed kid hanging around the



EX-CHAMP AL FOREMAN

place, watching every move made by the big-time boxers who were working out.

"He was always clamoring for a chance to spar with a known boxer and one day pestered me until I let him come into the ring. The round-faced lad weighed only 100 pounds or so but wasn't afraid to mix it. And it wasn't long before I noticed that every little action I made that was new to him, he'd try it out on me. I remember once spinning him a bit in a clinch and then rapping him—and darned if he didn't try to do it right back.

POPS BARNEY ROSS

"I noted, however, that he had a bad habit of bringing up his chin from behind his shoulder and warned him to keep it down. Several warnings failed to do any good, though, and finally he dropped his hands, saying: 'Look, mister, it don't do no good telling me to keep my chin down. Next time it comes up, pop me on it, — not hard, but pop me.'

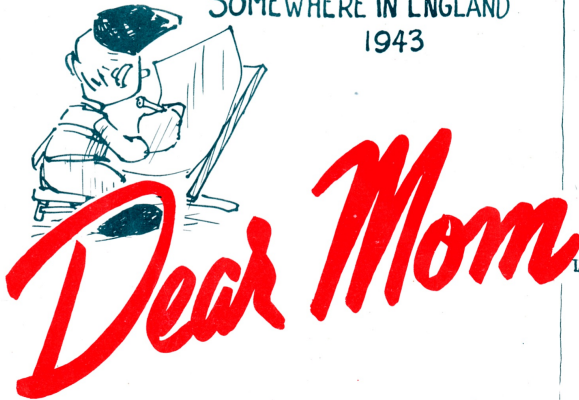
"I never saw the lad's face again for six or seven years until one day I was in Australia and picked up a paper to see his picture looking at me, along with a story that he had won the world's lightweight title. It was Barney Ross, a fellow who's done more for boxing than any other man in the last 25 years."

And you can't help but think that when the hard-hitting Foreman goes into action in the back end of a bomber, he too, will be serving the fight game as well as his country.

PAY-OFF PARADE



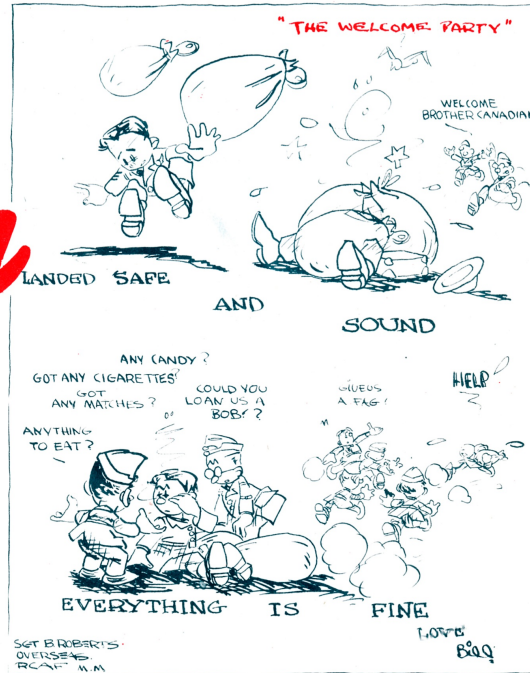
SOMEWHERE IN ENGLAND 1943



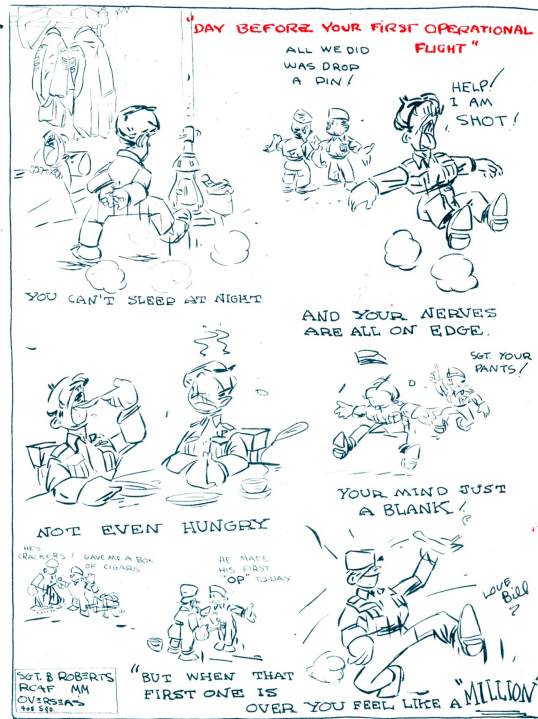
WHEN Sgt. Bill Roberts, an AG with an RCAF squadron in Britain, writes a letter home to his mother he starts off like any other guy, "Dear Mom," and he signs it "Love, Bill." But what comes in between is something unique in "letters" home. For words Bill substitutes cartoons which tell in a few deft lines what he saw on leave in London, what he felt like before his first flight on ops and whatever else comes into his head.

Mrs. Roberts got such a kick out of Bill's first "Dear Mom" cartoons that she sent them to the Vancouver Sun in which they have since been entertaining many readers. Recently at a garden party to raise funds for Bill's squadron, which has been adopted by the Women's Canadian Club of Vancouver, a display of cartoons drew such a crowd that a fortune teller gave up trying to do business at the same stand. She went off leaving her empty contributions dish; an hour later "Dear Mom" fans had filled the dish, helping to boost the squadron fund total to \$1,700.

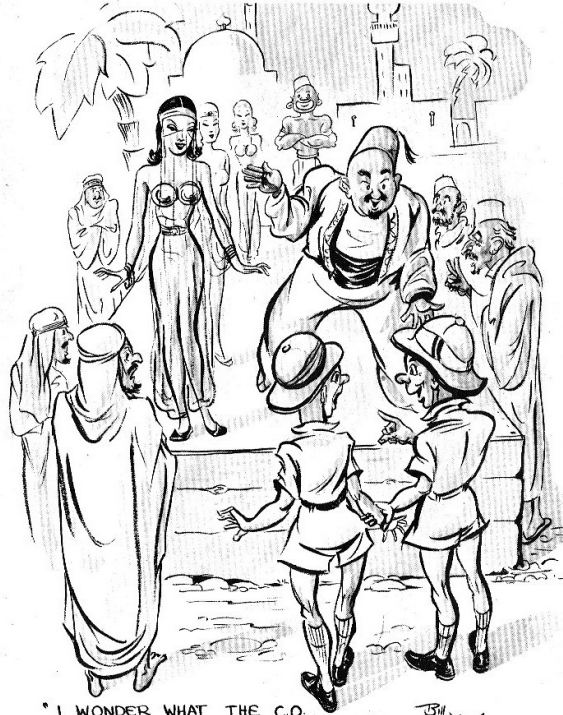
WINGS here presents a page of Sgt. Roberts' "cartoons home" — watch for others in future issues.



SERGEANT BILL ROBERTS SALTS A DASH OF SPARK AND HUMOR INTO HIS "LETTERS" HOME





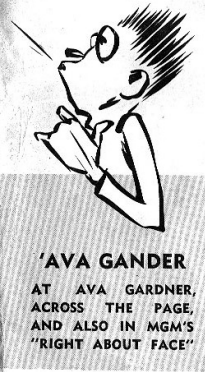
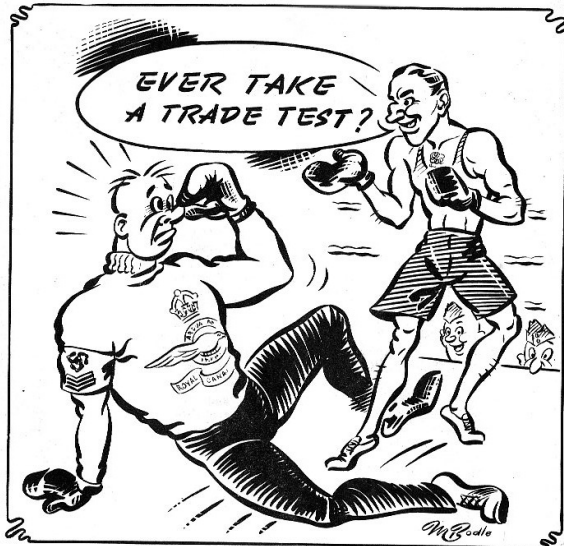


"I WONDER WHAT THE C.O. WOULD SAY!"

Ed Williams Rep.



'HAVE THE BAND PLAY A LITTLE MORE SLOWLY, SERGEANT'

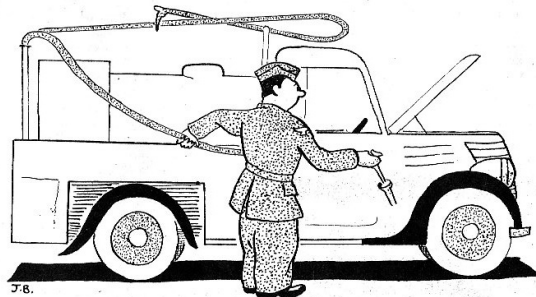


'AVA GANDER

AT AVA GARDNER, ACROSS THE PAGE, AND ALSO IN MGM'S "RIGHT ABOUT FACE"



I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU CALL IT IN THE AIR FORCE - I STILL THINK IT SHOULD BE IN THE REAR OF THE BARRACKS!



J.B.



PHOTOS BY LAC AL HANSON

They play

By Sgt. Vi DUDLEY

Scrambled shifts and haggardizing sessions don't belong exclusively to aircrew. Living proof are those boys who put the lift into route marches and swing out at station dances. While 99.98% of the RCAF bandmen would rather blast Hitler from 300 feet up than 3,000 miles away Fate — or the M.O. — decreed that "playing" should be their war effort.

Entering the Air Force under regular enlistment requirements plus musical qualifications, the musical recruit proceeds to a bandmen's manning pool operated in conjunction with the RCAF Central Band at Rockcliffe air station. Here the Bandmaster, WO2 E. A. "Eddie" Kirkwood, gives ear to the new lad's note-ical knowledge. Thumbs up on this test allows our bandman to wear his lyre insignia — but trade-test-time rolls around regularly at the band hut, too.

Getting much the same treatment as any M depot dishes out, lads train and are usually posted as a group approximately 30 strong, after three months' drill and rehearsal together. Twenty stations in Canada and one overseas unit have discovered delight-

edly that their newly-arrived musical outfit packed a dance orchestra or two and perhaps even an unobstrusive stringed ensemble. Six hundred qualified "playboys" have so far emerged from the Rockcliffe band hut.

The RCAF Central Band carries about 60 men, many of whom were recognized top-notch musicians in civilian life. Their days revolve around four hours' rehearsal but the practice makes perfect at parades — wings, Victory Loan, Inspector General, CO — and station dances. The boys are now having a summer holiday from their weekly broadcast on a national hook-up, but much appreciated outdoor band concerts fill the gap. Four dance orchestras get "Joed" for overtime aplenty.

Like pilots put on their own by the Winco's "Tallyho" are these swingsters given the "go" sign at a station dance, when they may cut loose and improvise. This takes real musicianship. Dance-band boys work hardest over weekends but are consoled by 1000 hrs reveille — if they were on duty until 2359 hrs the night before. However, should a CO's parade be slated, the 0630 bugle call means get up in their language too.

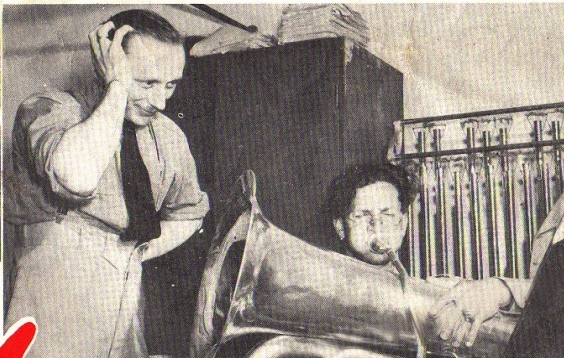
Suggested cure for the cynic who believes band business to be a soft snap, would be the maintenance, hauling and blowing of one big bass horn for one sunny summer afternoon — in Service blues.

#678.007



ROMBERG, SOUSA AND GROFFE attacked by this crew. Axis towns? Heavens no, composers. Training includes four hours' rehearsal daily.

"THAT AIN'T THE WAY I HEERD IT", Bandmaster Kirkwood grins as harried trate-test bait, LAC Cordabel, blows wrong answer (below).

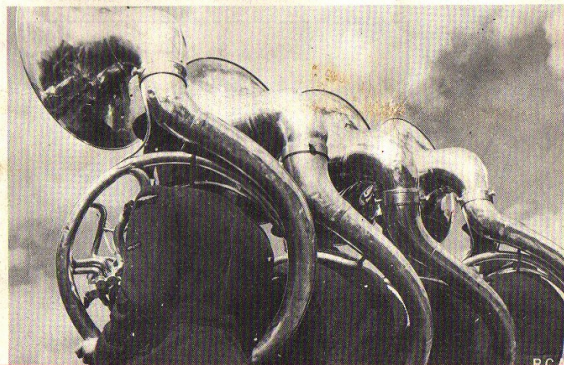


— AT WORK



FRENCH HORNS blowing off are no help to the Axis. They must be Free French. (LAC Hanson shot this from overhead. Per Ardua Ad Waterpipe.)

"FORTISSIMO", Bandmaster calls this shot. To the ignorant like us it's "Comph"! Sousaphones are biggest instruments carried — and the heaviest.



WINGS
LOG OF THE R-C-A-F