

The

PRAIRIE HOWLER



Dorothy G. Garver

January 1944





No. 35 SERVICE FLYING TRAINING SCHOOL

R. A. F. NORTH BATTLEFORD, SASKATCHEWAN

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EDITORIAL

It is unfortunate that this second 'Howler' may be the last, and that many of us will probably depart before it goes to press.

To those already departed, an affectionate farewell, and may we all find ourselves settled in stations no less happy in personal associations than North Battleford. A magazine is a good thing, and helps to bring everybody into closer relation; whoever will contribute to or organize one is doing a useful turn to the Service and helping to make life more interesting for the community as a whole. We should all bear this in mind, and utilize the experience we have gained with the 'Howler', to assist in the same way on other stations.

There is a lot of hard work to be done yet before the Hun is finally disposed of, but on some date in the future when he's finally had it, let us hope for a great foregathering of those who were together on this Unit, for a great reunion Howl!

To those 'on the boat'—bon voyage and good luck, and may you get bags of leave with a chance to 'have one' for the rest of us—but don't forget to leave some for us! Once again, thanks to the Commanding Officer for his interest and co-operation, to the editorial staff and contributors, to the-er-P Flight taxi service, and to the business manager and his helpers, who actually managed to sell 'Howlers' to an unsuspecting public!

A happy new year to all our readers.

—The Editor.



“SHOULDN'T ‘A JOINED”

Prairie Fever

(Apologies to Mr. John Masefield).
I must go down to the Bess again for
my weekly 48,
And all I ask is my liquor card, and an
amenable date;
And weather wet will not upset this
prospect rosy,
When I'm ensconced in Saskabash with
my popsy cosy.

I must go down to the Bess again
where the wine flows fast and free,
And thirteen ounces of rye are mine,
and a popsy on my knee.

Wine and women and fun and games,
dancing the whole night through,
Down at the Bess in Saskatoon, doing
a spot of woo.

Why should I spend the winter long in
a hole that's meant for a gopher,
When down at the Bess in Saskatoon
I could rest on a well-sprung sofa?
So book me a seat in an Oxford V to
bridge the prairie gulf;
For life is good on a 48—the life of
a u/t wolf.

BACK TO THE INDIANS

Towards the end of the year 1943, when the Second World War had run a quarter of its course, there was great excitement and much conjecture among the members of the Royal Air Force stationed at North Battleford, when they learned that the Station was to close down. It was generally said by the local storekeepers and taxi drivers that the R.A.F. would be replaced by a French Canadian unit, but for once the bush telegraph failed to provide accurate information.

Of the transition period, the less said the better. The R.A.F. men eventually sorted out their inventories and their affairs of the heart, and left the camp to the gophers and an odd (very odd) Flight Lieutenant, who wandered moodily from hangar to hangar, looking for eleven cents to balance the Sergeants' Mess books. He was last seen burrowing frantically, and it is assumed that he contracted gopher fever, and probably is still hibernating.

Shortly afterwards the Indians arrived, and those despairing souls who had long urged that the camp should be returned to them could rejoice, as they languished somewhere in New Brunswick, in the knowledge that their suggestion was at long last being acted upon.

First of the tribe to arrive was Big Chief Mustang-rider Fluster, who pitched his teepee appropriately in front of the control tower. There he sat for the greater part of the day, scowling fiercely at the younger braves who galloped at too high a speed past his abode. At times he would observe that the odd mustang was suffering from glanders, and his actions then

were indeed wonderful to behold. First he would call loudly to one of his minions, whose name appears to have been Ich Dien, although the records show—an obvious mis-spelling—"Itch Dean". This worthy type would then begin shooting broad arrows, of which he had somehow managed to accumulate a large stock, across the path of the steed in question, thus recalling it to base. Next, Big Chief Fluster would reach for his wet blanket, on the existence of which no comment is necessary, and make smoke signals to Very Big Chief Thynn, who would reply with much indignant puffing that the animal must have caught the affliction from its young and inexperienced rider.

Great as was the glory which surrounded the teepee of the Big Chief Mustang-rider, it yet was as nothing compared to that of the teepee of the Great White Chief Spider, who, with his minions, Big Chief Much Frenzy and Little Chief Dash It, held court a short distance away, and there dispensed justice, leave and other nominally good things.

Now sometimes it would happen that Big Chief Fluster would require of Very Big Chief Thynn more mustangs than were in fact available. Then the mustang-minder would make mighty puffings and blowings of smoke and frequently also of hot air, and would complain bitterly of the unreasonableness of man in general and of muscang-riders in particular. And you may imagine that, for their part, the mustang-riders were far from silent. Or it might be that Big Chief Much Frenzy would say of the minders and riders of mustangs that they were absconding with large numbers of drinking vessels, and, they in their turn denying this, again civil war would ensue.

But the Great White Chief, pouring oil upon the waters, save occasionally when he missed and poured it on the flames, would stop the battle, and pass around the pipe of peace. Thereafter in imbibing fire-water all these differences would disappear, sometimes permanently, sometimes only until the morrow, when a troublesome liver would set it off again.

How different was all this from the time when the R.A.F. dwelt at North Battleford!

Congratulations this month to Flight Lieutenant and Mrs. Frye on the birth of a daughter at their home in England, and to Warrant Officer Dean, also of Maintenance Wing Headquarters, who was married on 30th December.



We found this piece of holly on our desk when we came back from leave. Can any kind reader suggest what we can do with it?

No prizes are offered, and the Editor is always binding.

AN AIR GUNNER IN THE WESTERN DESERT

By F/Sgt. A. J. Hubbard

It was all so new to me—sand in my shoes, in my hair, ears, nose and eyes and in the early morning “sai”, but it was impossible to escape it. Everybody from the rawest “erk” up to the “gold braiders” had more than his share.

My first day began in the early hours of a beautiful but cold November morning. The sun seemed to be kissing the summits of the perfectly moulded sand dunes, as it rose lazily into the heavens, and the shadows of tents and aircraft were thrown long and sharp on to the rich yellow sand. Occasionally the silence would be broken by the cry of a scurrying sand rabbit disturbed by an airman plodding his way back to his tent, or shattered by the staccato report of a fellow air gunner testing his machine guns in preparation for the day's work, reminding me that I, too, had guns to test.

To the sand it is a matter of supreme indifference, as to whose guns it clogs—either Jerrie's or ours. It wages unrelentless war on both sides, doing favours to no man.

Our guns cleaned, harmonized, loaded, and ammunition troughs replenished, we then set about helping the ground staff to refuel the machines with the life blood that sends these man-made messengers of death and destruction into the air against the Hun.

Mid-day with its dry sultry heat would see every aircraft bombed up, and air tested for operations the same night, and every individual member of the crew from the pilot to the rear gunner satisfied that he had done his share towards making the raid a complete success.

Never have I yet found a finer “Eprit de corps” than that which exists in a small group of men thrown together by war. It is a spirit that is typical of all Bomber Command lads, proved by the fact that the diminutive Royal Air Force which first took defensive action against the “invincible” Luftwaffe, has now reversed the position and is attacking hard.

Tiffin usually consisted of bully beef, raw or fried, supplemented by a few dry biscuits and washed down with either “shai” or captured Italian wine.

Occasionally a Bombay or Valentina would stagger in and land with the mail and rations. Beer was scarce, but during one of these rare visits, I saw a navigator go up to the Valentina, climb in and emerge triumphantly with a bottle of beer that obviously was not his. Unfortunately his triumph

was short lived. He was immediately pounced upon by half a dozen members of a rival crew, and relieved of his booty.

After tiffin we usually grabbed as much rest as possible, waking up about one hour before briefing.

Briefing over, everybody would make a double check over everything. The navigator and pilot would be left with their problems concerning the flight to and from target, the wireless operator would check his wireless, and the gunners would pull their barrels through for the last time before zero hour.

Then as the sun sank below the horizon, the huge bombers would suddenly burst into life, the propellers slashing the air and churning up a thick cloud of sand and dust in their slipstreams.

Ops were on!

One after the other they would lumber across the desert airfield, tails well up, and noses into wind. Then after an effort the huge shapes would lift and climb into the night, the engines giving a deep throated roar as if in protest at being brought to life so suddenly.

The target was the harbour installations and jetty at Tobruk. Once we were over the target area, everything seemed to come up at us—heavy ack-ack, 20 mm cannon shells, and when we came down to about 1500 feet after dropping our bombs on the jetty, machine-gun fire was directed at us which proved to be quite effective.

Turning away from the target area in a climbing turn, we could see the coast road like a ribbon of moonlight stretching as far as the eye could see towards the East and home. Following the road along for about ten minutes we came upon a convoy of enemy lorries and mixed transport. The air gunners' dream. As the front gunner strafed them from the front, so I hosepiped them from the rear as we passed over them. A few haphazard shots were all we received in retaliation, and the convoy was soon out of sight.

Climbing to 3,000 feet, the course was set for home and with one or two cracks between the pilot and navigator everyone settled down to a flask of hot coffee and sandwiches.

Some time later the front gunner reported "Flare-path ahead" and everybody prepared for landing. After circling the drome twice we were given the O.K. to land, and touched down to a perfect landing. Our aircraft having been parked and picketed down at the dispersal area, we were taken by truck to the Intelligence Officer's tent where we were interrogated for fully twenty minutes. That ceremony over we did justice to a good hot supper of eggs and bacon.

Having eaten we retired to our quarters content in the thought that we had done something—that we had played a part in the prosecution of the war, that we had played a part in the defence of the land to which we had pledged ourselves.



HITCH-HIKING..

HOW TO SKI

So you want to learn to ski?

Now you must understand from the start that ski-ing is simplicity itself. All you have to do is work with gravity. No, that doesn't mean you may not smile. . . .

First we will do some straight and level. Watch me Left, right, left, right, . . . The mistake most people make is that of sitting down at frequent intervals—quite unjustified, and utterly pointless Ouch! Help me up, will you?

Next I will demonstrate the downhill run. You stand at the top of the slope, so, with the skis parallel and one ski-width apart. Then, when you are quite ready, you push off smartly with your poles, so, and slide gracefully forward. It is customary in the course of your descent to sit down, so, and wave your arms in the air, so

Before repeating this exercise, it is necessary for us to return to the top of the slope. Several methods are available. The most used is this sliding forward as in straight and level, and then sliding backwards so, finishing in a sitting position similar to that adopted in straight and level ski-ing, save that you are now facing uphill, and will find it impossible to rise.

Alternatively, you may march up the hill, banging the skis smartly on the snow at each step. This method is especially recommended when ladies are present, being designed to attract their admiring attention to the practised ease with which finally you recline in the snow.

A third method is known as the kipperbone, so called because there seems something a little fishy about the ease with which it is performed by the expert, and because also it frequently happens that your skis stick in your throat in the process.

Lastly, for very steep slopes we may employ the side-step, which involves stepping sideways, and has the great advantage of variety in that you will finally slide down the slope on your side instead of as heretofore on your backside.

One thing to remember is that while the snow is soft your skis are hard, and it is therefore very desirable to refrain as far as possible from sitting on them. Above all, if you *must* sit on your skis, do not first turn them on edge; to do so is to invite damage to the lower spinal processes.

You must know also how to turn and stop. . . . To turn to the left, put the weight on the right leg, lean on the left leg, and turn the right ski inwards in such a way that the inner edge digs into the snow. Recline gently on the snow, wrapping the right ski around the neck and placing the left

ski carefully under the right armpit as you do so. A similar principle applies to turns to the right.

Stopping is a thing which you will probably do frequently, whether you wish to or not. This leads us to one of the cardinal rules of ski-ing: never say in advance what evolution you intend to perform. Afterwards you can say proudly 'See? A left inverted Christiana!' Or perhaps—'Right-handed backward Burton. Now you have a shot!' In this respect, ski-ing resembles billiards, wherein I have long maintained that you never know until the balls have stopped rolling what masterly shot you may not accomplish. . . .

But to revert to this stopping business. The safest way to stop is simply to sit down, but this is frowned upon in official circles, where a hole in the seat of the ski-pants is regarded with as much disfavour as was a wound in the back of a dead Roman. So, if you want to do the job in a professional manner, turn your skis inwards, dig the inner edges into the snow, stand on your head, and wave your skis vigorously in the air.

One last thing on which instruction is essential—what to do if you meet a grizzly bear. It's quite simple—you just climb a tree. As you read this, it may seem to you that climbing a tree whilst wearing skis is a difficult operation. When you do meet a grizzly, however, you will be surprised how easy you will find it.



We may be able to drop a hint

Regarding the silence of Padre Flint.

Since he has started living out

He's very rarely seen about.

He's better things to do, I wean,

Than writing for the magazine.

SWAN SONG OF No. 211 DRAFT

On the eve of our departure from this land of maple leaves and gophers, we, the survivors of 211 Draft, once a proud and formidable body of men but now dwindled to a stalwart handful, pause on the threshold to look back over the past years. A wave of nostalgia sweeps over us as we cast our minds back to the dark and distant days of '41 when we first set foot on the shores of Canada.

We of 211 draft have never professed to be supermen; we have been the steady, silent worker type. No fanfare of trumpets heralded our arrival and we do not anticipate a fusillade of shots to speed our departure. We never bind about being the pioneers, we have got into the habit of bearing our hardships quietly and stolidly, not even pointing out to our fore-runners that until we arrived the word "work" had not been heard within these strong cold fences.

Those were happy days, 'way back in '41. We pushed back the frontier and opened up unexplored wildernesses, taking our lives in our hands every day—and night—travelling by taxi loads to blanket parties at Battleford, weiner roasts at Wilkie, hayrides at Hamlin, picnics at Jackfish Lake and of course making pilgrimages to admire the beauty of Saskatoon. How we yearn for those ripsnorting pioneer days when men were men and beer parlors were open from eight in the morning until eleven at night, when hard liquor was *hard* and unrationed and buses ran to Edmonton and Saskatoon seven times a day.

We had hardships to face; the summer of '41 would have made Beau Geste long for the cool Sahara—and don't forget we had topees in those days! Then came the winter and it got MIGHTY cold; even Esquimo Nell spoke of quitting the delights of the frozen North and heading back for the Rio Grande. However the stout hearts of 211 Draft survived and the fresh drafts coming in benefited from our toil and experience.

We have many memories to take back with us of incidents since we left home soil, some of which were aptly put into song by Pat Harridine of the original Blue Aces. Of forced marches at 5 a.m. with full kit at a censored port, blessing the censored so and so who was responsible, of travelling unnumbered weeks across the censored ocean; of fighting the rolling wastes of the prairies and sending forth fighting birdmen into the battle and now, our humble duty completed, going back with no reward asked but the feeling of having accomplished something worth while.

Our footsteps may be minute in the sands of time but we have the comfortably smug feeling that we have helped to make the world—at least that part of it occupied by No. 35 S.F.T.S.—a better place.



AN OUNCE O' PRACTICE

Ee, a shrimp of a lad were Tich Martin,
The littlest chap in t' flight,
From Wigan he came, so he told us,
If tha ask me I think he did right.

'E wanted, 'e said to remuster,
'E were brownd off with cleaning
latrines,
An' wiping flight-desk with a duster,
'An sweeping the 'angar, it seems.

So 'e bunged in a reet applicairtion
To see the O.C. or C.O.,
Or the bloke wots in charge of the
stairtion,
The chap they call Groupy, tha know.

So quite soon e were wheeled in' t'
office,
The C.O. said "What have you here?
Stand up, man, and peer over 't table
Or take two paces back to the rear".

Then C.O. he pored over t' pairper
That Tich had filled in with such care,
Then he said "Just what is all this
cairper?
Dost tha want to fly oop in t' air?"

"Oh no, Sir," said young Pincher Mar-
tin,
"I'd sooner keep one foot on t' ground,
But Ahm fed oop with sweepin' oop
'angars,
And pushing the kites round and round.

I just want to be Flight Mechanic,
And just get a little more pay,
And then later on, if they'll let me,
Remuster to Fitter II A."

Then C.O. 'e looks down at Martin,
As though 'e weren't sure 'e were there,
Our 'ero felt smaller than ever,
And tried to 'ide under a chair.

The C.O. said "What dost tha know
lad?
Can tha tell different metals by sight,
Hast tha got any gen, canst tha count
up to ten,
And dost tha know Theory o' Flight?"

Now Pincher 'd worked in t' 'angars,
'E knew all the aircraft by sight,
But 'he 'ardly knew joystick from rudder,
'ow could 'e know Theory o' Flight?

Still, 'e did know the various metals,
An expert 'e was at that game,
As a civvy 'e'd mended old kettles,
In Wigan 'e 'd made quite a name.

So 'e blinded the C.O. with science
About copper and ali and such,
And C.O. were impressed, 'e said well
I'm blessed,
For 'e 'imself didn't know much.

'E said "Let me make a suggestion
Since tha shows promise to rise,
Just swot up some books on the ques-
tion
Of just why an aeroplane flies.

And next week thou canst attend lec-
ture
'Twill be held in the school Monday
night,
It commences at seven and goes on
till eleven
And it's mostly on Theory o' Flight".

Next morning sees young Pincher
Martin

With a broom in 'is 'and as of yore,
Sweepin' round kites in the 'angars
Or wipin' up oil off the floor.

But this morning young Tich is elated,
A Flight Mech he is going to be,
The rise in 'is pay will be five cents
a day,
A 'andsome amount you'll agree.

Just then Flight-sergeant called across
'angar

'E were making a 'ell of a row,
It seemed oo 'e wanted was Martin,
Thought Pincher, What 'ave I done
now?

Just take this 'ere plywood to work-
shops,
Said Chiefy to our little lad,
'Tis wanted for making a fairble,
And 'urry, or Chippy'll be mad.

So Pincher looks at sheet o' plywood,
It measured near six foot by three,
'Twas bigger than 'e could fair man-
age,
'Im being so little, tha see.

So 'e got nearby corporal to 'elp 'im
To tie it across his small back.
'E looked like an aeroplane walking,
Or an airman wot's wearing full pack.

Now outside the weather was breezy,
You might almost 'a called it a gale,
And what Pincher 'ad thought to be
easy
Soon caused 'im to tremble and quail.

But on 'e went struggling bravely
With the plywood tied tightly be'ind,
But 'e soon found 'e couldn't make
'eadway,
Against that there blustery wind.

All of a sudden 'e lifted,
Yes lifted clean up off the deck,
'E 'ad wanted a rise but 'e got a sur-
prise
As 'e 'overed 'e cried "What the heck!"

Pretty soon 'e was high as the flag-
staff,

And higher still higher 'e soared,
'E couldn't come down and 'e felt like
a clown
As 'e helplessly twisted and yawed.

'E quite naturally drew the attention
Of the people what stood on the
ground.

"I wouldn't be 'im for a pension".
"Nor would I, not for ten thousand
pound."

All work was soon stopped on the
startion

As everyone stood there and gazed.
In 'eadquarters it caused consternair-
tion

The C.O. just stood there amazed.

Tich Martin flew right over t' drill shed
Then dropped rapidly down out of
sight,

Fire engine and ambulance were wair-
tin'

An' crash-crew sent oop from t' flight.

Poor old Pincher 'ad dropped rather
'eavy

'E came down 'ead first on the turf
They carried 'im into t' sick-bay,
'E looked fit to be put under t' earth.

For days poor old Pincher lay sense-
less

Then 'e came round at eight Monday
night.

When they told 'im the date 'e said
"Ee, I'm too late!

I've missed lecture on Theory o
Flight."

'E told all the nurses next morning
About what in his dreams he did see;
'E 'ad dreamed that C.O. o' t' stairtior
'Ad pinned on 'is breast D.F.C.

Now Pincher's a full-blown Mechanic
'E knows aircraft from rudder to boom,
But still Flight-sergeant yells across
'angar,

"Tich Martin—Get 'old of a broom!"
A. W. F.

THE STRANGE CASE JOHN ADAMS

Many years have passed since the strange case of John Adams filled the headlines of every newspaper throughout the length and breadth of the nation. No doubt the very name of John Adams sets you wondering once more why he killed the thing he loved and how he came to cheat the hangman and die a death which dumbfounded the nation's greatest medical men.

The police never discovered, and neither did I whose duty it was to watch him whilst in the condemned cell, what was the motive of his crime.

Why did he kill his wife of a few months? Why did he kill the thing he loved?

I must admit, contrary to the Penitentiary Rules, I tried to get his motive out of him. Each time I asked him he would only smile—that peculiar smile of his—the same smile he wore when the Judge had sentenced him “to be hanged by the neck until dead”. I realize now why he smiled. He must have known that the sentence would never be carried out. He would cheat the hangman.

It was a dull winter's afternoon when he was taken from the courthouse and placed in the condemned cell of Lockwood Penitentiary. He seemed happy, which was strange for a man who had only two weeks to live. As the sun peeped above the horizon on Friday, 13th March he was “to be hanged by the neck until dead”. So thought the law—but John Adams thought differently.

During the two weeks he occupied that cell of doom it seemed as if the place was cursed. The other convicts walked about with fear written on their faces. They cowered in their cells as he walked past on his way to exercise. Even those who had faced death many times in their careers of crime were restless as he passed by. That peculiar smile of his seemed to unnerve even the toughest of them.

The only equipment his cell possessed was a bed (if one can call it that), a rough wooden table, two chairs, a pack of playing cards and some poker chips. He had especially asked for the last two items. This was a strange request for a man who was all alone. But then John Adams was a strange man. Little did I realize at that time who was to be his partner. When he used the cards he would deal out two hands, and each time he would turn them over and compare them. It seemed to me that he dealt them in such a way that all the high cards went to his partner. For hours on end he would practise. Many times I asked him the reason for this but he would only smile and say “When my partner comes, then you will see.” When asked who was going to be his partner, again he smiled in his peculiar way and answered “My partner, he will help me cheat the hangman.” This phrase he repeated over and over again to himself.

As the day of reckoning drew near the convicts grew more and more restless. On the night of the 12th, the Governor, fearing that a jail break might be in the offing, set me to guard over the occupant of that cell of

doom. Determined that no one, if I could help it, would aid John Adams cheat the hangman, I seated myself outside the door of his cell. Tomorrow he would swing for the murder of the thing he loved. Through the bars I could see him sitting at the table, staring into space, the cards neatly stacked before him. The only sign of life in him was when the prison clock boomed out the hour. Each time he would count the chimes as if waiting for some pre-arranged hour when his "partner" would come.

At last the clock boomed out the hour of midnight. As the last chime echoed away he stirred and began shuffling and dealing the cards. Was this the zero hour? I was about to speak to him when suddenly I realized he was not alone. Seated across from him was a figure dressed in a black robe and a hood which covered his head and from my position I could not see its face. Who was this strange midnight visitor—the partner of John Adams. My first reaction was to draw my revolver and blow my whistle to summon assistance. I tried to rise to my feet but could not—my limbs were powerless. I shouted for help but no sound came. I could only sit and watch.

John Adams was dead serious now. The smile which had played about his lips for so long was no longer there. What game they were playing I did not know. Who was this strange midnight visitor—the partner of John Adams? John Adams was losing. How long they played I know not but eventually the game terminated—John Adams had lost. His partner laughed a hollow laugh which I shall remember until my dying day. Getting up from his chair he shook hands and then for the first time I saw its face—a face from which the flesh had rotted away—a skull ghastly white against the blackness of the hood which framed it. It was the face of Death.

How long I sat there after the departure of that dreadful visitor I have no idea. Eventually I pulled myself together and I looked at my watch. It was 5 minutes past twelve—my relief would soon be here. I was still shaking with fright when he did appear and I poured out my story through trembling lips. He did not believe me—said I had been dreaming. All this time Adams spoke not a word but sat just as he was on the departure of his nocturnal guest. His eyes stared forward and once more he was wearing that peculiar smile. In my desperation I shouted at him to confirm my story. He did not answer. Unlocking the door of his cell I rushed inside and shook him roughly. He slumped forward across the table. John Adams was dead. He had cheated the hangman.

That is the story as it was told to me by the late Robert Boyd, ex warder of Lockwood Penitentiary, who died recently in the State Asylum for the Insane. Poor fellow, ever since his admission shortly after the death of John Adams he would wake in the night, screaming that he was being followed by a figure in black. Of course he was mad. The greatest medical men of the nation said so. I would have said that also but for one thing. I, as reporter for the 'Morning Star', happened to see the body of John Adams as it lay in the Penitentiary morgue. There were no marks of any kind on his body but for these. Impressed on his right hand were the imprints of a man's hand—a hand devoid of flesh. John Adams had shaken the hand of Death.

"ANDY".



OUCH !!

SECTION NEWS

OFFICERS' MESS GOSSIP



Even before his tribute to the departed had appeared in print in the last 'Howler', F/O 'Pete' Dodson left us in his turn, having first done some crafty juggling with his second ring.

He was soon followed by the first of what we now realize is the general exodus. F/Lt. Snedden organized some pre-Christmas festivities, and left early on Christmas Eve, muttering something about his head. As he left, someone threw the Mess line book into the corner, sobbing, 'We shan't

need that any more now.'

We feel there is a grave danger of excessive optimism creeping in, now that S/Ldr. Flynn is no longer here to tell us what's wrong. His departure leaves a place which will be hard to fill. . . . It appears, however, that F/Lt MacCormac is prepared to make the attempt.

In view of the note regarding S/Ldr Morris in last month's 'Howler' we feel comment is unnecessary on his recent confinement. He, however, calls it 'flu.

We notice that there are not nearly so many educational conferences on in Saskatoon and Edmonton recently. We are assured that the recent marriage of a certain Flight Lieutenant has no relevance in this connection.

Stamping-grounds are being marked out at the entrances to the Mess rooms in preparation for the change-over to the R.C.A.F.

Heard in the Mess office: 'I'm not going to drink all through my leave'. A lot depends on your intonation, but we don't believe it anyway.

The C.O. twirled a pretty broom against the Sergeants in the match on Christmas Day until his whiskers iced up, and he found it necessary to hand over to the C.G.I.

We were pleased to entertain and to be entertained by the Sergeants' Mess. We joined forces for the airmen's Christmas dinner, and didn't spill much, all things considered. Three junior types made the trip to Hamlin, and found there a lot of food and other good things, and a very contented staff—a really splendid isolation.

Clampus, the Mess cat, was present at Dinner on Christmas night, and despite previous celebratory fights, still had enough energy to play with bits of cracker. . . . After Dinner we saw P/O Marsh drinking a quintuple Rye, . . . the bar . . . Mrs.—smoking a cigar. . . the bar. . . F/Lt MacCormac dancing with his wife. . . the bar. . . the C.O. with two noses. . . and then we went to bed.

Christmas Day was also the occasion of our farewell to Mrs. Bett, who is on the Boat. We wish her the best of luck.

A senior officers' convention was held at Saskatoon at Christmas. F/Lt Millard was also seen in the city. Bobbing, eh?

We note that no operations for appendectomy were performed at Christmas. Doc MacPhail is now hard at work trying to make up for lost time, and it is dangerous to report sick with any pain higher up than gout or lower than toothache.

Oh, Boy! Were S/Ldr Raynor's ears red!

Several people went on leave intending to do some ski-ing. Others pointed out the two possible pronunciations of 'ski'.

Without comment: F/O Barratt, on his return from leave, says he found it 'very misty' at Vancouver.

Liquor allocation gets less and less for more and more, until finally we get nothing at all for everything we have. If you can sort that out you're getting more than your share.

Effective tomorrow, a Duty Beer will be detailed daily.

Line of the Month: A squadron commander, on hearing a suggestion that he might be sent on a senior instructors' course, said 'Waste of time, old boy, I don't need it'.

'One in the eye for St. Hubert's', said someone to console himself for having spilled his beer on the new furniture.

P/O Howard gave berth to child on train returning from New Year leave.

Best wishes, and many thanks for all he has done for the Unit and the Mess, to F/Lt Frank Martin, our Works and Bricks king, who has left us for the wilds of Newfoundland.

GUARDROOM CHATTER

Part of this month and last found the guardroom in quite a mix up with painting and white-washing, and it looked as if A.C. Burke had more on his overalls than on the ceiling and walls. We also notice that Sgt. Logue is getting to be quite a painter; we hope he won't get ideas like one painter we know, but there—he was only a Corporal.

We welcome this month to our Gestapo staff two new Police Corporals from Pat. Bay, Cpls. Corke and Cudbill; we hope that they will enjoy their stay with us, although we know that one of them will not be able to collect so much Art from here as he did from his last Unit. Since the arrival of these two corporals we find that most Police have gone in for photography a lot more.

We are sorry that Cpl. Mat. Bailey has left us to take up duties at Estevan, but we think that there is someone in town who is a lot more sorry than us. Anyway Mat we wish you the best of luck at your new Unit and hope that you will still keep that twinkle in your eye when you return from your Town Patrol duties.

We think we know why Cpl. (Tub) Smith is still in hospital; he calls it a carbuncle, but we think his stomach must be coming out of the back of his neck. Whilst on the subject of sickness we hope that Cpl. Heslin will soon be well enough to return to bind the erks again.

o o o o o

Cpl. Howard must have decided to take his wife with him on his last weekend as they were both seen boarding the bus for the Old Town.



It is officially denied that posting instructions are sent to this Unit via Craigs or Woolworths.

A new personal service has now been introduced—altering dates of disembarkation in Canada on Forms 1580—fee \$50.00—terms strictly cash.

It was with regret that we said good-buy to Glover and Coggins, the Siamese twins who have at last been split up after having been through fire and water, sickness and health, leave, hospital, sick leave and Christmas grant together.

Congrats. to Roy Mortimore on his recent promotion—well earned and well done, Roy!

We see that some of the athletic types are dashing across to the Old Town these days—is the attraction skating or some form of rugby?

WE'D LIKE TO KNOW

When the P.S.I. accounts were audited, who started to panic, and what does he do with the money he chisels?

Which pay clerk got kicked out of the trade union recently for saying "Thirteen dollers"?

What Rex and his pals were doing outside S.H.Q. to attract everybody to the east side windows?

Why M.T. Section like to label themselves "Motor" transport?

Which Orderly Room Corporal was lucky enough to be escorted "home" on New Year's Eve by an Army Captain and Sergeant M.P.?

HEARD RECENTLY IN S.H.Q.

“Now if I’d been one of these bobbing types, I’d have my third, too”.
 “You’d never think she sings in the choir”.
 “Yes, I get the general idea alright, its just the detail that bothers me”.
 “No, Airman, the boat is NOT in yet”.
 “He always walks around as if he’d been jacked up!”

HOW TO REGAIN A LOST LOVE

It’s easy—just make a date with her rooming mate and take your chum along with you.

“P” FLIGHT NOTES

ullo mister editer its me agane joe and im cheesed.
 i told you i was a naircraft pusherouter eh well i pushed a naircraft out of the angar this mornin an cor it wernt arf cold too an one of them pylup tipes cums out wivout any stifner in is at an e sez oh i say old boy i dont like this wun its to yellow. an i sez to im look ere chum if you dont like this wun you can bloomin well go an stuff coz its bleedin cold. and e sez oh i say old boy i dont think you ort to speke to me like that i mene dash it im a norficer. and enyway e sez that mashin is US e sez ive put it US becoz it bounces 2 igh wen it lands an anyway its to yellow. now run er-long e sez like a good tipe an see if you can find me no 17 becoz 17 is my lukky no. wel i coodnt stand thare torking al day to im so i sez o k chum an bugg—sorry mister editer—went erway an then i met flite loot fry an i sez wotcher an e sez bagzer cheer i got a dorter an i sez seen no 17 an e sez wy yes repares ave got it an shore enuff i found it 2 ours later in no 1 angar. wel then i ad to go an find this instrukter tipe an i gos to is flite and they sez oh es gorn coz met say thares goin to be a clamp an e sez e cant fly wen thares a clamp so es gorn to the mess. so i jest ad to push the bleeding thing back agane. cor i aint arf cheesed.

slong joe.

ps the flite comarnder aint cum dahn yet you no im wot took orf in that 5. i think e must ave fergotten to levell aht.

o o o o o

When you read this, there will be only 296 more shopping days to Christmas.

Remember! Only 296 more shopping days to Christmas! So save the coupon chaps! Clip it out right now, and save it carefully.

Roll the BOAT on



Entertainment News

You ought to read upon this page
Of things that happened on the stage,
Of bags of "gen" and yards of "rope",
Stage managers who madly cope,
Of chorus girls,—(alas all male),
And dirty cracks about McPhail.

Of pin-up girls, alas now gone
(Oh! thank you, Mrs. Bretherton).
Of P.S.I. for taking chances,
Raising cash for running dances.
Lots of rhyme but little reason,
Indigestion—festive season.

o o o o

So much to say upon this page,
So much missed, we curse and rage.
The Entertainments page a "sell"
—No "gen" from F/Lt Bell.

Y.M.C.A.--WHY NOT?

Do you know how the Y. M. C. A. came to operate on this station?
Are you aware of what it is, its purpose and function?

Back home in the U. K., the N.A.A.F.I. usually operated the canteen facilities. Out here in Canada you will find the Y. M. C. A. operating the canteen, while on R. C. A. F. stations the canteen is operated by the station itself. Perhaps this causes some confusion in the minds of those of you who have arrived in Canada only recently. Here is the Gen:

When the Royal Air Force decided to set up in Canada certain schools for the training of R.A.F. personnel, Air Marshal L. D. D. McKean approached Major J. W. Beaton, the Senior Secretary for Y. M. C. A. War Services, asking him to place at the R. A. F.'s disposal certain services by the Y organization. Between them they drew up an agreement, and here are

a couple of the "whereas" clauses: "... the Royal Air Force has *requested* the Young Men's Christian Association to operate . . . recreational and canteen facilities in . . . suitable buildings to be provided by the Royal Air Force for that purpose".

"... The Young Men's Christian Association has agreed to provide such recreational and Canteen facilities together with the suitable personnel to organize sports, recreation, entertainment and similar welfare projects".

"... the operation of such welfare projects may result in a profit, which profit is agreed, shall be utilized for the benefit of the R. A. F. personnel connected with or trained at such schools":

"... it is agreed that the Young Men's Christian Association shall not derive any financial gain or profit from the operation of the Canteen or other welfare projects".

Thus the main source of income on this station or any other R. A. F. camp in Canada for their P.S.I. fund is the Y.M.C.A. operated canteen. The money you spend there comes back to the Airman in the form of such things as free billiards, P. S. I.-subsidized concert party shows, sports equipment, and - on this station for over two years - cinema equipment bought and paid for by P. S.I., with films provided free because P. S. I. paid the film rentals.

That aspect of the Y.M.C.A. is perhaps the most prominent. But don't run away with the idea that the Y is here primarily to run a canteen. In charge of the Y operation on each R. A. F. station is a chap who signed on with the Y War Services, to serve in any theatre of war, whose primary aim is to try to organize for the men on active service a bit of recreation, entertainment, relaxation, and to endeavour in his own way to make things just a bit easier for soldiers, airmen, or sailors. Some of the Supervisors are professional entertainment organizers, some were teachers, some ministers, and some business men, but whatever the background, their common aim is to promote welfare work in the Services. The Y. M. C. A. peacetime organization endeavours to build healthy bodies, minds and spirits among young men. The war-time organization's purpose is to do what it can in a military atmosphere to achieve that same end.

When R. A. F. camps were opened in Canada, the Y Supervisors looked after sports organization, ran entertainments such as dances, concerts, games, etc., did what they could of the work now done by the Education Officers, sometimes acted as Padre's pinch-hitter, and in general did the odd jobs nobody else had in hand. With the settling down of the pattern, Education Officers arrived, Entertainments Officers were detailed, English Padres came out to each station and Sports Officers took off the Y Supervisor's shoulders much of the work of sports promoting.

But through it all, there emerges a constant goal. The Y. M. C. A.'s aim is to be of real service particularly to men who are thousands of miles from home, in a 'foreign' land, with perhaps little practical knowledge of a

Canadian winter. It is at the service of anyone, but its members are anxious to exert every effort to make Old Country men at home in Canada. Therefore, besides grinding along with Canteen operations - the Y operates Lounge facilities, writing and reading room facilities, small games, sells stamps and dishes out mailing information, is willing and anxious to help fellows find out where to go on their leaves, and how much it will cost them to get there. Y supervisors are on their stations to be of whatever assistance they can in any way. That is one reason they get into the Laundry business! You will find that they are only too willing to dig up for you all sorts of seemingly inaccessible information. You will find that any suggestions you have to make toward improving Canteen service, entertainment amenities, recreational facilities, or requests for personal services will gain a listening ear and an attitude anxious to assist.

Art Etter.



“HIC”--TOWN



Sport

News



With the Boat looming on the horizon for many of us and for the rest of us the prospect of following many of our fellows to other parts of the Dominion, Sport on the Station during the last few weeks has proved difficult to conduct. All ideas of Leagues have been washed out and weekly Knock-out Competitions have been substituted. With the inception of Indoor Soccer, interest is on the upgrade—things are going with a “bang”, and after all what is a window or a lamp or two amongst friends! So far, the matches have been keenly contested—several of the elite (ex 1st XI men) still show that the nimble foot has not lost its cunning!

Basket Ball still struggles against the unequal competition of Indoor Soccer. The League had to be abandoned owing to changes in personnel and the difficulties of keeping teams together—however the weekly competitions have quite a number of teams still devoted to the game.

Ice Hockey is off the mark satisfactorily with S/Ldr Betts as “Old Father Hockey” gathering his aspirants and perspirants around him. League matches start in a few days time. S.S.Q. have been well supplied with trade—we wonder whether a certain F/Lt. saw stars or heard bells—perhaps it was bells! Anyway the Ice Gæmlins seem to be doing their stuff!

The Ice Rink has proved a popular asset and is well ‘cut-up’ every night—so we know the place is being well used.

Skiing has been attempted by few—the “First of the Few” in fact—lack of snow is holding up interest.

A few last words—until the station closes and until the last man has left we shall do our best in the Sports Department to provide you with a varied dish. You can assist us by helping and co-operating when we ask you.

P. W. Clear, F/O., Sports Officer.

There is a term that's much in use,
Its application's rather loose,
And prefixed by much stern abuse,—
“You've 'Ad It”.

If lack of leave makes you dismayed,
If you think you've been underpaid,
If your parcel gets mislaid,
“You've 'Ad It”.

When dawns the day I cease to serve,
They'll ask me “Join our nice Reserve”,
I'll answer, as my lip I curve,
“You've 'Ad It”.

Moral Tale

How rarely do some folks attend
To warnings that they should not lend
Their ears to other folks affairs,
They do not moderate their stares;
Their necks are craned, their heads are
turned
Wherever they are not concerned.

I ask such folk, ere it's too late,
To listen well, whilst I relate
A tale to make their manners mend,
Of poor Bill Brown and his sad end.

Our Bill was moderately nice;
He had one o'erweening vice,
In every matter that arose
Poor Bill just had to stick his nose,
And always would our William try
To know the wherefor and the why.

One morning, going on his way,
Our Bill descried (Ah, fateful day),
A man hard working (as men should),
Engaged in chopping up some wood.

Our hero just could not pass by;
He had to know just how and why.
On this occasion, I suppose,
He got a little bit too close,
And, ere he knew it, (what a shock),
His bloody nose was on the block.

Oh, such a sight you've never seen,
Poor Bill clasped where his nose had
been
And gave a most appalling yell.
The axeman shouted "What the hell?"
And there the ambulance quickly hied
And Bill was taken for a ride
In a most peculiar pose,
With a small stretcher for his nose.

Our Bill sustained a dreadful fright,
But things might still have been alright,
For surgery's so far ahead
It mends you when you're almost dead.
(It's said they even patch your mind
With skin they take off your behind)—
So putting Bill's nose in position
Should not have been an awkward mis-
sion.

It seems the Doc who had Bill's case,
And joined Bill's nose on to his face,
Was, so to speak, a trifle stewed—
In fact, was very much imbued,
With Hammerton's and Whitbread's
brown,
And stuck Bill's nose on upside down.

He mended well, and his discharge
Returned Bill to the world at large;
Though folks thought him a funny fel-
ler
Because they had reversed his smeller.

Now comes the crisis—One dull day,
Once more Bill walked upon his way,
When suddenly the heavy rain
Came down, and filled up every drain
And Poor Bill's nostrils—he was found
Upon the pavement—stone dead—
drowned.

O Prairie Fairy, bright and airy,
Maiden good, be sweet, be wary!
Beware the wolf-pack, hungry, hairy!
Guard, my sweet, your airy dairy.