

never expected to be in uniform. Like most people in those early days I underestimated the strength of the German war machine and Hitler's ability as a leader.

1942...Jack Townsend: In September I turned 19 at exactly the same time that the call-up age for military service changed from 21 to 19. Within two weeks I received an urgent request to join the Canadian Army. Like many of my peers I felt the RCAF was a better choice so I headed for the Air Force recruiting office and was accepted as a potential air crew candidate. So many 19 year olds made the same choice that most of us were sworn into the RCAF and placed on leave without pay until June of 1943. I returned to my job as a draftsman making drawings of some Army truck components.

1943...Jack Townsend: On June 14 I reported to Manning Depot which was in the Coliseum at the Canadian National Exhibition. After a series of tests in which I demonstrated a lack of aptitude for any air crew trade other than Navigator I began my training as a student in the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan. In May of the following year I graduated from Portage La Prairie Air Observer School with my Navigator Wing and was granted a Commission with the rank of Pilot Officer.

1944... Jack Townsend: Following my graduation I was assigned to Transport Command and completed my Operational Training at Comox on Vancouver Island before being posted overseas from Halifax with 15,000 other service personnel on a troop ship bound for Britain. The trip was not too exciting although we did follow a zig-zag course which was intended to discourage German submarines reported to be nearby. I was violently sea-sick for several days and can still recall praying for a torpedo to end my misery. Happily my time on the Isle de France finally ended when we docked in Scotland after seven days at sea. After a few weeks in England we flew to India to