THE FLESHERTON ADVANCE

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F. J. THURSTON, Editor.

Pilots Learn to Handle Planes at Elementary Flying Schools

This is the sixth in a series of articles about the Royal Canadian Air Force and the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, written for the weekly newspapers of Ontario.

By HUGH TEMPLIN

One year ago, Mount Hope was a little crossroads village south of Hamilton, about half-way between that city and the Grand River. How it got its name, I don't know, but the hopes of the early citizens must have been realized at last. The village itself is little changed as yet, but on the high ground nearby there are two air training camps, one of them operated by the Royal Air Force of Great Britain, the other by the Royal Canadian Air Force as a unit of the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan.

Previous stories in this series have followed the future pilot through the first two months or more of his training but he has not been in the air yet. He has had to prove his fitness in many ways, but the nearest he has come to actual flight has been in a minature plane, anchored firmly to the ground. At some one of the 26 Elementary Flying Training Schools scattered across Canada, he will experience the thrill of his first flight, unless he has, at some time before enlistment, paid for a ride as a passenger, or is one of those rare recruits with training as commercial pilots.

The "No Admittance" Sign

It isn't easy to get inside the gate at any of the R. C. A. F. training schools. That is as it should be, and no one can object to the rules, but sometimes, the guards interpret them ore strictly than others.

I drove up to the gate, armed with letters from the Training Command and accompanied by a Flying Officer in uniform. The Commanding Officer was expecting me. But the guard at the barrier was adamant. I had no pass, so I didn't get in. He must have been an N.C.O. in the Imperials —rules to him were rules. Protestations by my guide and a telephone call to the Commanding Officer didn't alter the fact that I had no pass. Finnally it was suggested to the guard that he write me out one himself. He did so, and I passed triumphantly inside.

There isn't much beauty about the Mount Hope School. The countryside is flat and uninteresting. A year ago the camp site was still farm land The landing field hasn't grown up in grass yet, though the runways are paved. The buildings are of the familiar pattern found at all the schools, with everything standardised for rapid and economical construction. The outside of the huts is covered with roofing paper. Everywhere there is a look of newness.

The First Flying Instruction

After graduation from the Initial Training School, the future pilots part from the other students and go to the Elementary Flying Training Schools, of which Mount Hope is a typical example. These schools are not run by the Government, but by private companies, each one sponsored by a Canadian Flying Club. One result is that there is a certain division of labour at each of these Elemntary Schools. There is a civilian manager, whose duty it is to supervise all the actual flying instruction and maintenance of the planes, and an R. C. A. F. officer in charge of discipline and of the classroom teaching.

The arrangement has been criticized, but it seems to be working well. Early in the war, when the great Air Training Plan was first put into operation, it enabled the R.C.A. F. to take advantage of the most experienced instructors available, the enthusiasts who had kept alive the Flying Clubs. That saved precious weeks and has worked so well, there is not likely to be any immediate change- except in minor details. All other types of schools are directly under the R. C. A. F.

All the planes used at Mount Hope are Fleet Finches. Some other schools use Tiger Moths. There was a time, months ago, when they used some of each or whatever training planes were available, but there is no longer any scarcity of training planes. The Fleet Finches and the Tiger Moths are both double-seated biplanes. Two pairs of wings enable them to fly steadily in the hands of beginners and to land at a safe speed Flying speed is slightly over 100 miles an hour; landing speed less than half that .

Officials at Mount Hop are proud of one record. Since the school was opened last October, not one student has been injured or killed. The hospital hasn't had an emergency case to handle. I found similar records at other schools. It is not the beginners who crash, but those who think they are experienced pilots.

Parachutes and Their uses

The student takes his first flight in the front seat of a Fleet trainer with an experienced pilot in the rear. Before he goes up, he puts on one of several types of warm flying suits, a helmet with ear phones, so that he can listen to the instructor, and a pair of big, soft moccasins. A parachute is strapped to his body. There is a broad belt of webbing around the waist, with two narrower straps over the shoulders and two more around the legs. All staps are fastened to a lock in front of the body. The parachute itself is carefully folded inside a bag which serves as a cushion on which the student sits while flying. The "rip cord" isn't a cord at all. Fastened to the belt, on the left side, is a large metal cable, like that used in camera shutters, jerks open thee bag in which the parachute is folded. Few students will ever have to use one, in Canada at least, but the feel of o parachute on the back gives added confidence.

One of the buildings at Mount Hope is the parachute room. The parachute is made of the finest grade Japanese silk, with braided cords. The length is about 40 feet and the cost of one is about $400. Parachutes are given constant care, since lives depend on them. Every few days, they are unpacked and hung up in a tower, looking like a flock of big bats hanging from the ceiling. Folding and re-packing are done by experts.

An interesting 'chute story comes from another school. New parachutes were taken there for testing. A weight was attached and the parachute taken up in one of the big bombers. It was laid on two planks across an opening in the floor of the plane. One of the ground crew, not too bright apparently, was given the duty of going aloft and releasing the parachute to be tested. His duties were simple. The weight rested on a couple of planks streached across the opening. All he had to do was tip the planks at the proper time, to let the parachute go. All went well until one day when a plank got caught Jerking at it, the aircraftman lost his balance and fell forward through the hole. Quite unexpectedly, he tested a parachute, but it was his own.

How To Aim A Spitfire

At the Elementary Flying Training School the stodent pilot flies about 50 hours, 25 of them under the eeys of an instructor and the rest alone. He may go up as often as four times a day, but never over four hours altogether. The other half of the day is spent in the lecture rooms. Two afternoons a week, there are sports at 4 o'clock, tennis, softball and soccer. One building houses the Link Trainers, which are continually used for testing the students. Lectures include such subjects as navigation, engines, rigging, theory of flight, armament and signals.

Classrooms vary according to the subject taught. I will describe only one of the most interesting.

It is obviously important that pilots of fighting planes should be able t recognize an enemy at a distance and get in the first shots—and those shots must be accurate.

All fying schools teach aircraft recognition. Walls of classrooms and halls are covered with pictures of British, American and enemy planes. Models, made of plastic and brought from Britain, or carved from wood by Canadian boys, accurately measured to scale, are suspended from wires in various positions and can be moved across the room.

Using these models, the student learn to aim with the sights used on the famous Spitfire planes. I found this sight a fascinating piece of optical equipment. It is not much larger than a flashlight and is illuminated by a small bulb at the bottom. The pilot looks through a sloping piece of glass which is transparent and yet acts a s a mirror. On the glass, a circle of light appears, with a cross-bar of light, broken in the middle. In the exact centre of the circle is a spot of bright light.

There are two dials on the gunsight, similar to those on the lens of a camera. The pilot sees an enemy plane in the distance. He sets one dial according to the type of plane,, say a Messerschmitt 19, and the other for the distance at which he intends to open fire, say 300 yards. After that he can concentrate on keeping the enemp plane inside that circle of light. When it is close enough that the wings of the approaching plane fill the space in the broken bar of light, the pilot touches a button and the fire of eight machine guns converges on the spot marked by the bright point of light on the gun-sight. In training, no guns are fired but the pupil learns to judge distance and to aim accurately ang quickly.

Commanding Officer at Mount Hope is Flying Officer W. P. Pleasance. The Administration Officer, who was our guide, is Flying Officer I. W. Code.

(Next Week — Camp Borden)

VICTORIA CORNERS

Mr. and Mrs. McClure are visiting the latter's sister, Mrs. Albert Stinson.

Mr. and Mrs. Jas. Batchelor, Mr. and Mrs. Wilfred Gallagher and Kingsley visited Bill Batchelor in the Orangeville hospital. Bill was at Ayton after a load of shingles and had a flat tire. He pulled into a garage to pump the tire up and it is supposed that the heat burst the tire and the rim hit him in the face, breaking his nose and causing so large a gash that 16 stitches had to be made to close the wound. Half an inch lower it would have hit his eyes. It was a remarkable escape from death. He knew nothing from when he started to put air in the tire until he awakened in Orangeville hospital. He is, however, doing as well as could be expected.

Rev. McMillan of Flesherton was the preacher at Inistioge on Sunday, as Mr. Jackson, our student minister, is one of the leaders at the summer camp, north of Owen Sound.

One of the things you cannot deposit at the bank is a promise.

Most gardens are now far enough advanced to be neglected.

There's been some jawing and whining about recent rains falling on one part of this moisture-needed area and not on others, but we can't help thinking there's a lot of satisfaction and good in the fact that somebody got some.

Ed. Strain Tells Experience On Trip to Phillipines

Dr. J. E. Strain of North Bonnville, Wash., has been enjoying a fine holiday during the past week among the scenes of his boyhood, and has met many old friends who were glad to see him again. As a young man Ed. served with the American army in the Phillipines in the Spanish-American war and relates the following story when he was leaving for the scene of action:

As a veteran of the Spanish-American War in the Montana Regiment, I think back on my experience as a soldier and recall many incidents. One story that comes to mind is a humorous situation which I will recount in tribute to Miss Carrie Davis, a former Flesherton girl who was very active with the church societies in San Francisco, giving their time arranging social events for the soldiers.

We were stationed in San Francisco, Calif., in training for combat in the Phillipine Islands. We had been there four months and expected to leave any time on our journey of 7,000 miles across the Pacific Ocean. On the eve of our departure, many of our friends came to wish us goodbye, giving us tokens of friendship to take on our trip. Miss Davis, on this occasion, prepared for me a basket filled with jars of jams and preserves. I pized the contents highly, feeling that I must be a special friend. Shortly afterwards we sailed out into the Pacific.

It took me several days to become acquainted with the rolling of the ship. Accommodations aboard were crude and rations still worse. I was able to endure the food with the addition of the tasty preserves on my hard tack. Such bliss lasted several days without any condescending signs that anything in the reverse could take place.

One day, unbeknown to me, my jams and preserves disappeared. On finding the empty basket, I was filled with indignation and determined to find the culprit. The mess call was sounded, the bunks were vacated and I began my hunt — the first mattress I overturned I beheld several jars of jams and preserves that looked just like mine. Thinking I had found my stolen fruits, I took them back to my quarters, not waiting to question anyone. I was soon back at my own stand of eating hard tack and preserves. I did not have long to wait —trouble was in the air—"Who stole my fruit?" came a loud husky shout. "Yes, who stole my fruit?" was my joining reply; the air was hot with words, each accusing the other of an underhand trick. When we calmed down I learned that he had purchased his fruit from a friend on board, and on further investigation, discovered that the friend had received his fruit from the same party as I. In fact most of the fellows in my company had received such baskets from Miss Davis.

It took over thirty years to solve the mystery of my stolen fruit. I was in my office in Vancouver, Wash., when an old comrade of my company came up. I hadn't seen him since we were discharged from the army. Shortly after his arrival he began to laugh. He told me of a practical joke he and another fellow had played on me during our ocean voyage to the Phillipines. They had taken my fruit and preserves from my basket. He said the joke of the affair was spoiled. The First Sergeant of the company, on hearing of the disappearance of my fruit, directed a hunt to find the offender. During the search the fruit had been slipped into the Sergeant's quarters, and of course not discovered; that was the last they had seen of the preserves. They kept a close watch on the Sergeant and noticed at mealtimes that he came from his quarters licking his moustache.

According to news item from the United States a bakery over there has just offered to its customers an improved doughnut with a handle on it for dunking purposes. Now, if they'll just go to work on a hot dog bun with a zipper opening and a mustard trough, everything will be fine.

Its' "Duncan's for HARDWARE

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HOLIDAY NEEDS — Fishing Tackle, Guns and Ammunition, Flashlights and Batteries, Softballs, Bats, Tennis Balls, Vacuum Bottles, Sta-Away Insect repellant.

F. W. DUNCAN

HARDWARE "Blue Coal" Phone 54

Mussolini has been quiet for a long time. Perhaps he has finally learned that he has a big chin to stick out.

A man in Georgia got a divorce because his wife tore four shirts off his back one after the other. Her method was wrong, but her taste may have been good.

The motor stalls at times, and so do people who are trying to get the thing paid for.

"We have but one aim, and one single purpose. We are resolved to destroy Hitler and every vestige of his Nazi regime; from this nothing will turn us — nothing! — Rt. Hon. Winston Churchill.

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- ☐ Avoid useless or non-essential driving.
- ☐ Turn motor off when not in use, do not leave idling.
- ☐ Don't race your engine; let it warm up slowly.
- ☐ Don't strain your engine; change gears.
- ☐ Keep carburetor cleaned and properly adjusted.
- ☐ Tune up motor, timing, etc.
- ☐ Keep spark plugs and valves clean.
- ☐ Check cooling system; overheating wastes gasoline.
- ☐ Maintain tires at right pressure.
- ☐ Lubricate efficiently; worn engines waste gasoline.
- ☐ Drive in groups to and from work, using cars alternate days.
- ☐ For golf, picnics and other outings, use one car instead of four.
- ☐ Take those short shopping trips ON FOOT and carry parcels home.
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