Week End With Canadian Bombers

For the next four weeks the editor is publishing four articles from the pen of R. P. McLean, who recently returned from England representing the C.W.N.A., giving in detail the work of a Canadian bomber group he visited in England. The first article appears below.

PART 1

"There's Smitty."

Under the guidance of an R.C.A.F. public relations officer we were hurrying through the dark on an early Sunday morning; hurrying from our billets to the station debriefing room where we would meet the boys as they returned from their raid on Leipzig.

The roar of the first returning plane as it circled the field waiting for its landing signal prompted the P.R.O. man to make the remark because at every station there is always one pilot who brings his plane home first. At this station it was "Smitty," and, sure enough, he was th first pilot to walk into the debriefing room.

We heard a dozen stories of how he does it but they all differ and when asked about it Smitty just grins and says he doesn't know either. But, oddly enough, there is a "Smitty" on every station.

We had arrived at the station on Saturday afternoon and were to remain until Monday morning. Three cars driven by RCAFWD's met us and I discovered that one of the girls was the daughter of one of my rural correspondents!

At the station we were met by the station commander who told us "ops" were scheduled for that night. We had dinner and sat in the mess chatting through most of the evening with the men who were to fly to Leipzig later that night.

It was about midnight when with the station commander we went out to see the take off.

The takeoff is something weird and wonderful; something out of a "King Kong" type of movie. You feel you have been transported back into a prehistoric age; that this thing cannot be taking place in a quiet English countryside.

The night is dark and the clouds are heavy. The ceiling is low and one searchlight stabs almost straight up through the dark focusing on the clouds to show the pilots the height of the ceiling. Around the perimeter of the field are spaced flares close to the ground. Other flares, of a different color edge the path of the runway over which the planes will take off.

Crouched on the perimeter and faintly outlined against the flares were the ships which will soon take off. Their warming engines are ticking over and frequently roar to a deafening throb as they are given a little more gas.

A signal comes from the control van near us. The first plane wobbles to the starting mark and hitches itself around to face down the runway. A light from the control van briefly plays along its side as its number is taken. Its motors roar and throb until you cannot hear the man next to you speak. Suddenly it commences to move, slowly at first, and then gathering momentum. As it draws away from you its front light vanishes and you see the tail light lift from the ground. You watch that tail light speed swiftly away from you, until suddenly, a mile away, it seems to jump straight up into the air. "It's airborne," the station commander remarks.

One after another machine after machine after machine, engines roaring, wobbles off the perimeter to the start line and crouches there for a moment or two before hurling itself through the darkness on its mission of destruction. The scene is unreal, fantastic. Are they prehistoric monsters preparing to pounce upon some unsuspecting city? Are they huge dragonflies from a bygone age?

As you stand and watch, you shiver But it is not the cold wind that has sent a chill over you, that has stiffened the hair at the back of your neck. You realize that in those things are the clean, decent youngsters with whom you chatted less than an hour ago; the price of Canadian manhood. And you remember that their mission is one of destruction and that some of them, probably, will not return.

You think, too, of the people of Leipzig, who in five hours or six will hear the roar of these planes and the crash of bursting bombs and see incendiaries rain down upon their homes. Despite yourself you pity the people of Leipzig.

One plane fails to become airborne. The crew, far down the runway wheel it off, tumble out and hurry to another machine ready and waiting. They are the last machine to take off.

Finally, the roar from he field is ended. In the sky there is the diminishing sound of the planes hurrying to the marshalling point. You discover you are very weary and welcome a drink with the station commander in his sitting room in an old fashioned English farm house. And then to bed, knowing that you will be called in the early morning hours to see the planes return.

Once, twice, during the night you are awakened by the sound of a plane near your window. Drowsily, you realize that the machines have returned to their base as something was not functioning as it should.

All too soon comes the knock on your door and you hurry into your clothes and cross to the debriefing room. The return to base after the "op" of each aircraft is unquestionably the most dramatic phase of the operation so far as those who remain behind are concerned. As each bomber lands and the boys file into the interrogation room, they dispose of all the special equipment and maps they have taken with them. They are served coffee, food and cigarettes, and then are interviewed by the specialist officers such as gunnery leader, squadron commander, navigation leader, radio officer, etc. Then they are interrogated by the intelligence officers, one crew at a time, and the boys tell of the night's operation, describe the weather and cloud formation, tell in detail of any combats with enemy aircraft, discuss the relative strength of the anti-aircraft defences, relate in detail the position of their plane, speed, height, etc., when making their actual bombing run. All the story of the night unfolds either under questioning or by unprompted telling by the crew. The interrogation is definitely a highlight for an observer and is probably the most revealing incident in the operation of a bomber tation.

Following the interrogation the boys are free to go and have breakfast and go to bed, but they look at the end of the room and see that all the planes are not reported back. They hang around and wait, exchanging experiences with their fellows. This one will tell you of the explosion his bombs made; that one tells about a round with an enemy night-fighter. Another one will describe the flak while a fourth will damn the new machine he was flying and long to have his "old crate" back.

You chat with them for an hour or more and all the time you are conscious that, while they are talking, they are looking over their shoulders casting glances at the board.

It so happened that this was a bad trip and the losses from this station were comparatively heavy.

As crew after crew reported I watched for chaps I had talked with the evening before. Suddenly I found that I was watching for two youngsters with whom I had sat on a chesterfield for three quarters of an hour. One from Toronto and one from a small town on the prairies. Nice kids. Hurriedly I again checked the room. They weren't there. For an hour I watched the door. They did not return.

Presently without a word or a sign all the air crew in the room gathered close in front of the blackboard. They had realized that if any of the missing planes had landed at another airfield, there had been ample time for this station to be notified. The W. O. in charge of the board got up and wiped the blackboard and within thirty seconds, without a word, the men left the room. A dozen of us were left . . . alone with a blackboard — wiped clean.

While those chaps slept all traces of their missing fellows would be removed. Special officers pick up all personal belongings and equipment. It is carefully tabulated, packaged and sent to their relatives. Significantly their final place upon the station is a line on a blackboard never completed.

(To be continued)

Alex. Stewart Passes

The death occurred in Ceylon at 1.30 Wednesday morning of last week of Alex Stewart, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. John S. McDermid, in his 77th year. The deceased was the son of the late John Stewart and Mary Ferguson. He was born two miles north of Priceville and spent all his life there until health forced him to retire two years ago.

Since his retirement, the late Mr. Stewart has made his home with Mr. and Mrs. McDermid at Ceylon. He was unmarried. Of a quiet and kindly disposition, he will be much missed by his friends. Although not in the best of health, the late Mr. Stewart was confined to his bed for only two days before he died.

The deceased was the last remaining member of a family of three brothers and three sisters, Donald, Roderick, Archie, Annie, Ellen and Mary all predeceased him. The late Mr. Stewart was a life-long Presbyterian. He took a great interest in politics and was a Liberal.

The three nieces surviving are, Mrs. J. S. McDermid, Mrs. M. T. Hogarth, Miss Catherine Stewart, R. N., and one nephew, J. P. Stewart.

Rev. Paul Rumball, pastor of Presbyterian Church, Priceville had charge of the short service at the house and at the Presbyterian Church in Priceville and delivered a very appropriate message. The hymns used in the service were, "Unto the Hills Around." and "Abide With Me."

The pall-bearers were: Stewart Muir, A. S. Muir, Wm. Hincks, D. Campbell, J. Nichol, N. McKenzie, J. McWilliam and Henry Tucker.

The beautiful floral offerings were carried by Messrs. M. T. Hogarth, J. P. Stewart and H. Baxter.

Friends and relatives attended the funeral were from Toronto, Caledon, Orangeville, and Holstein. Interment took place in Priceville Cemetery.

St. John's W.M.S. Meeting

The regular monthly meeting of the St. John's W. M. S. was held Friday in the Sunday School room of the church. Mrs. E. Betts presided in the absence of the president and opened the meeting with hymn 376, followed by the Lord's Prayer in unison. Mrs. Moore was in charge of the devotional period. Mrs. Cargoe offered prayer and Mrs. R. Fisher read the scripture. The study book was taken by Mrs. Bell, who gave a splendid address on "Faith as a grain of mustard seed," from the passage Luke 17: 6, showing how much can be accomplished when one has faith and really sets out to do it. Her illustration was of a small group in China who wrought wonders in a farming community. The meeting closed with mizpah benediction.

Another rooster story is the one about the belligerent Chatham bird that recently attacked and injured a little girl.

Local and Personal

Pte. Gordon Stuart of Simcoe was in town on Saturday.

Pte. Ted McCracken of Camp Borden was home over the week end.

Mr. and Mrs. Alex. Aberdein and family visited on Sunday with relatives at Durham and Holstein.

Mr. and Mrs. Gordon McKinnon of Toronto spent the week end at their home in town.

L.A.C. Ted McTavish of St. Jean, Que., and Jean McTavish of Toronto spent the week end at their home.

Mrs. Ellen Armstrong, manager of the local Bell office, spent the week end with friends in Toronto.

Mrs. W. G. Trelford of Toronto visited with Mr. and Mrs. C. N. Richardson for a few days last week.

Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Irwin of Elmira spent Saturday with Mr. and Mrs. Alex. Aberdein.

Miss Dorothy Welton has returned home, after spending the past several months at Kingston.

Mr. and Mrs. J. O. Dargavel spent Sunday with Mr. and Mrs. Bryce Dargavel at Dornoch.

Mrs. D. A. Clark and son, Elmer, of Durham spent a day last week with Mr. and Mrs. J. O. Dargavel.

Pte. Reg. Hutton of Camp Borden spent the week end with his wife on the east backline.

Mr. T. A. McDonald spent the week end with the Stewart families. Mrs. McDonald and babe returned to Toronto with him.

Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Perigoe, Betty and Mary Kay, of Malton were visitors over the week end with Mr. and Mrs. Ab. Stewart.

Mrs. Grace Hindle and Dennis of Duncan and Mrs. Orville McWharter of Red Wing were callers on Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Kaitting on Saturday.

Mr. and Mrs. Wallace Brett and son and Mrs. Florence McIntyre of Orangeville visited on Sunday with Mr. and Mrs. R. J. Boyd.

Mr. and Mrs. Ken Kaitting of Preston spent the week end with the former's parents in town and the latter's parents at Singhampton.

Mr. W. Sloane attended the funeral of his cousin, Mrs. Flora Turner, which took place in Toronto on Monday afternoon.

Mrs. W. S. Inkster returned to town last week, after spending the past several months with her family in Toronto.

Mrs. F. J. Thurston returned from the Owen Sound hospital on Wednesday of last week, following her operation two weeks previously.

Aircraftman Bob Bellamy and Mrs. Bellamy of Toronto and L.A.C. Ben Bellamy of Centralia spent the week end with their parents, Mr. and Mrs. C. J. Bellamy.

Mr. N. R. Richards and Mrs. Wm. Melville and Betty Ann of Alliston were the guests of their brother, Mr. J. A. Richards, and Mrs. Richards over the week end.

Mrs. Reg. Fawcett of Galt, Pte. Wayne Weber of Terrace, B.C., and Mrs. Weber of Kearney were visitors on Saturday with Mr. and Mrs. K. G. Betts.

The ladies of the Red Cross Society wish to thank all who helped to make the display tea on Wednesday last such a success. The proceeds amounted to $15.15.

Recently a ring was sent to Pte. Emerson McKillop, who is with the R.C.A.M.C. at Red Deer, Alta., and acknowledgement has been received, thanking the people for the gift, which he greatly appreciated.

Mr. and Mrs. Geo. Goldsborough and Harriett of St. Catharines, Mrs. Otto Clipperton and Miss Aleda Mitchell of Toronto attended the sale of the household effects of the late George Mitchell, successfully conducted by the auctioneer, Mr. Wm. Kaitting.

The pupils of Mrs. J. E. Milne, A. T. C. M., will be presented in a recital on Friday evening, May 26th, at 8.15 p.m., in the Town Hall. An interesting program including all Festival numbers, has been arranged. An admission of 25c is being charged, all proceeds going to the "Milk for Britain" fund.

The bombing of railways behind the German lines starts another train of thought in connection with the invasion.

CREAM

SAVING GASOLINE AND TIRES IS PART OF EVERYONE'S DUTY

May we suggest that you bring your can of cream with you to the Creamery each time you come to town.

Besides the saving of gasoline, it will pay you well to follow this parctice.

The Creamery will be open Wednesday and Saturday nights to 10 o'clock.

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Phone 66 **Angus Avis, Manager**

In the days when bread was the staff of life many people lived to a crusty old age.

In their heyday Italian Fascist leaders used to jump over bayonets. The next jump North is the Alps.

Small Ad. Column

FOR SALE 12 Pigs ready to wean.—Lloyd Talbot, Flesherton. 50c1

FOR SALE — O.A.C. No. 21 barley. —Herb Betts, R.R. 3, Flesherton.

FOR SALE — Small barn. Apply to John S. McDermid, Ceylon. 49c2

WANTED — Number of cattle for pasture. Apply on the premises. Phone 44r3 Flesherton.

FOR SALE — Quantity of yellow feeding mangles, firm; also goose eggs. Apply at The Advance office

FOR SALE—General Purpose horse. —W. T. Genoe, Ceylon, phone 32r 12, Flesherton. 48p2

WANTED — Animals suitable for mink and fox feed.—Bert McIntosh Eugenia, phone Feversham 5r25

FOR RENT—100 Acre pasture farm lots 8 and 9, 3 N.D.R. "Cheap."—Boyd Bros., Flesherton. 50p2

FOR SALE — Young pigs ready to wean. — Emerson Beaton, R. R. 1, phone 22r32. 11c1

PASTURE TO RENT — 150 acres, Lots 5, 6, 7, Con. 2, N.D.R., Artemesia. — A. Conkey, Men's Staff House, Hamilton.

PASTURE — A number of cattle wanted to pasture, never-failing stream in pasture.—Eldon Blackburn, R.R. 3 Proton Station.

FOR SALE — Four good purebred Shorthorn bulls, about 1 year old. Howard I. Graham, Markdale R.R. No. 4, phone 59r2. 47p2

FOR SALE — 3 Young purebred Scotch Shorthorn bulls, 2 dark roan, 1 white, sired by a Klaymor Discovery, a son of Colynie Royal Barage (Imp.) and out of good milking dams, herd fully accredited.—M. J. Varey, R.R. Mono Mills P.O., village of Hockley. 49p2

AUTOTRAC FOR SALE

Autotrac on Durant Four, in good condition, with 5.00x19 tires on front and spare.

GLEN MOORE

phone 605r22. DURHAM, Ont.

TENDER FOR LAND

Sealed tenders will be received by the undersigned up to 12 o'clock noon on Saturday, the 27th day of May, 1944, for the purchase of Lots 77 and 78, Con. 1, S.D.R., Township of Artemesia. Possession given on acceptance of tender. Highest or any tender not necessarily accepted. Tenders marked "Tender."

—Herb Corbett, Proton Station.

Paid

FOR SALE — Potatoes for seed or eating.—Jim Stewart, Flesherton.

FOR SALE — Settings of duck eggs. —D. W. Adams, Flesherton.

FOR SALE — Number of year-old and two-year-cattle. — Johnston Bros., R. R. 2 Flesherton. 50c2

PASTURE — A few year-old can be taken for pasture. — J. F. Collinson, Ceylon, phone 21r3. 50p1

FOR SALE — Quantity of No. 1 silver hull buckwheat. — Alex. S. Muir, Ceylon, phone 49r14. 50c2

FOR SALE — Yorkshire sow and 10 young pigs.—I. B. Whittaker, Ceylon, phone 40r23. 50c2

POTATOES — Irish Cobbler potatoes, good for seed.—W. E. Loucks, phone Flesherton 72r23 48p2

FOR SALE — Brick residence with double lot on which is small barn, in Flesherton. Apply to Francis Genoe, Eugenia. 43tf

FOR SALE — Mammoth clover seed. also good G.P. mare.—L. Alcox, R.R. 5, Markdale, two and a half miles north of Flesherton on No. 10 Highway. 49p2

FARM WANTED — To rent or buy, 100 acre farm, possession to be taken in the fall. Write Alex. Duncan, R. R. 1, Markdale, phone 132r2 Markdale. 11p2

PIANOS FOR SALE — Choice selection re-onditioned pianos ranging in price $65 and up.—J. C. Blackstone, 515-8th Street (A) East, Owen Sound, phone 672.

CAME ASTRAY — Came to Lot 17, Con. 6, Osprey, on or about April 17, black, tan and white hound. Owner can have same by paying expenses.—Warren Morrison, Maxwell P.O. 49p3

BUSINESS CARDS

DR. J. E. MILNE
Office — Durham St.
Office hours: afternoons 2 to 4.30. Wednesday and Saturday evenings 7.30 to 10 p.m.
No office hours on Sunday.

WM. KAITTING
LICENSED AUCTIONEER
for the County of Grey
Farm and Stock sales our specialty. Terms: reasonable. Satisfaction is guaranteed. Dates arranged at The Advance office or phone 4w.

STALLIONS

THESE TWO REGISTERED STALLIONS WILL STAND AT MY STABLE IN FLESHERTON FOR THE SEASON OF 1944

CHEPTEL DUKE

Dapple Grey PERCHERON Stallion, Reg No. 15995, weight 1900 lbs. Sired by Cheptel, Dam, Karlette 2nd.

KING ABDELL

Bay STANDARD BRED Stallion, Reg. No. 6091. Junior Granl Champion Royal Winter Fair 1935, weight 1100 lbs. Sire, Berton Petch; Dam, Charlotte Abdell.

H. BEST, Proprietor, FLESHERTON

AT STABLE $8.00 . . . FEES . . . ON ROAD $10.00

Interested parties over a distance of five miles, may have stable prices by paying for cost of trucking.

AVAILABLE

1 Binder 6 or 7 foot cut.
2 Manure Spreaders.
1 Dump Hay Rake.
1 Smoothing Harrow.
3 Walking Plows.
1 12-Disc Harrow.
New Renfrew Cream Separator 600 lb. capacity.
3 Good Used Separators.
Asphalt Roofing.
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