

**THE GEORGETOWN HERALD**

News of Georgetown, Naval, Civil, Maritime, Commercial, Educational and Sports Events

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**The Editor's Corner**

**BRAMPTON PREPARES FOR SOLDIERS' WELCOME**

Brampton citizens are laying plans for the entertainment of the large number of soldiers who will soon be stationed on the outskirts of their town, and the new Basic Training Centre property is already humming with activity. The Citizens' Win-the-War Committee has rented the Badminton Club property and is establishing a club for the men. It will consist of snack bar, lounge room, reading and writing rooms and a recreation hall. It is an attempt to give the soldiers a place of their own, away from the surroundings of the camp and camp discipline. On Saturdays and Sundays, they may entertain relatives and friends there. Because of the limited recreational facilities of the town, the club will be a real asset.

An appeal is being made throughout this district for sturdy used furniture. Heavy lounging chairs, like the old favourite Morris chair, library tables, and strong, straight chairs are needed. Games, such as Chinese checkers, croquinoles boards, cribbage boards, cards, dominoes, jig-saw puzzles, books and magazines will be thankfully received. If any of our readers have such things to donate, a card addressed to Mrs. Frank Richardson, Brampton, stating particulars, will receive prompt attention.

**WHAT CAN GEORGETOWN DO?**

With an army camp at our back door, Georgetown citizens now have an opportunity of helping in another small way to bolster Canada's war effort. Many of the soldiers at Brampton will be far from their homes—most of them for the first time—and when you add to this the fact that their environment is something totally different from what they have been accustomed to, it isn't hard to understand that they will be lonesome. We would suggest that some local organization make plans to entertain groups of them for week end leaves, when they are too far from home to get there for week ends. While the club sponsored by the Win-the-War Committee will play its part in keeping up morale, there is still nothing that can take the place of a week-end at someone's home, where a soldier can relax among civilian friends. How about it, Georgetown?

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**Something About Fighting Planes, Bombs and Results of Bombing**

Article No. 7  
By HUGH TEMPLIN

This week, I leave the purely descriptive to turn to discussion of a subject that is of particular interest to the present time, and especially to Canadians. What is the Royal Canadian Air Force doing?

Before I flew to England, I had the advantage of visiting many of the air training camps in Ontario. Before that, I had been up in a number of planes of quite a wide variety of types, starting as far back as 1919, and including everything from the vintage of the first war to an auto-gyro. As long ago as 1923, I flew to Jervis Bay in a Vickers Vimy bombing plane of the same type as that in which the first non-stop flight was made across the Atlantic. For that reason, it was not surprising that I was interested in the Air Force.

During my stay in England, I had many opportunities to meet members of the R.C.A.F. from Air Commodore P. L. Stevenson down. The Air Commodore gave a party one afternoon at the Royal Automobile Club, a swanky place on Pall Mall, and he invited the leaders of all Canadian squadrons in England. Most of them were able to come and I had a chance to listen to them discuss their adventures. Several had been decorated by the King for conspicuous service. Often, I saw familiar faces in looking over photographs in the newspaper.

There has recently been some discussion in Parliament about separating the Canadians from the rest of the R.A.F. This has brought both praise and condemnation to the Hon. C. G. Power from Canadian papers, depending upon whether they belong to the ultra-loyal group or not. But it isn't a matter of loyalty, but of practical considerations. When I was in England, there were some 150 Canadian squadrons, the number starting at 49. Since then, the number has been increased considerably. It was up to 25 when I last saw figures given out, but that was some time ago, and changes have been kept secret.

A great many Canadians are in other R.A.F. units. They are serving in some different sort of way among the forces overseas as well. Whether the Canadians were better mixed in with the R.A.F. or in separate squadrons.

The R.A.F. is now well divided into Commands, depending on the work done by the various aircraft. The Fighter Command is the most interesting part, such as the Hurricane, Spitfire, and the Hawker Hurricane. The latter is a single-engine machine, with a power of about one thousand horsepower, capable of speeds up to six miles a minute. The Hurricane would have needed that human being couldn't stand a speed like that. It is said that the designer of the Hurricane has never been in one. There is no room for a passenger, and he had a pilot. The Spitfire is only 37 feet across the wings and 30 feet in length—a tiny plane compared to the bomber.

The weakness of these fighters is that they can remain in the air only three hours and a half, which gives them a radius of 150 miles or so, but does not allow them to protect the bombers all the way to Germany and back.

Some machines of the Fighter Command have two or more in the crew. The Boulton Paul Defiant is no larger than the Spitfire, but it has a gun turret with a gunner as its second member of the crew. At least one of the faster bombers, the Bristol Blenheim, is used as a fighter.

The Coastal Command is in charge of patrol work around the coasts, the search for enemy craft on and under the water, the conveying of ships for the last part of the journey to Britain, and similar tasks. The Avro Anson, now used almost entirely for training and quite familiar over our Canadian towns, were originally used almost entirely for Coastal Command work. They are now outdated, but the first plane I saw in the English air (after leaving the airport where I landed) was an Avro Anson. The last one plane of the Coastal Command now seems to be the American-built Lockheed Hudson. This is much like the Trans-Canada passenger planes (which are made by the same firm). They are flown across the Atlantic by the Ferry Command. The Bristol Beaufort, a torpedo bomber, was in use by the Coastal Command, as well as the Blenheim.

The R.A.F. Bomber Command is the busy division now, and has become quite aggressive. Larger and larger bombers are being used to carry bigger loads. Changes have been so rapid that the favorite types of bombing planes last October are now more or less out of date. Their places are taken by the huge Halifax Sterling and other types, which were just coming into use when I was in England. I did not see either of these bombing planes, though I almost had a trip through the Halifax factory. Had I been there another day or two, I might have made it.

One of the largest and most popular bombers up to last Fall was the Wellington. Those who saw the moving picture, "Target for Tonight," know what it looks like. It is a huge machine, with a wing span of nearly ninety feet and the body over 60 feet long, and "fat" in appearance. In contrast to the extreme thinness of a number of other bombers. When it is loaded, it weighs over 13 tons. The body is an odd basket-work construction, said to give strength, and the chief characteristic is the lattice-work windows.

Other bombers were the Blenheim, the Bolingbroke, the Hampden, the Whitley, and several others whose names don't come readily to mind. The big American bombers, the consolidated Liberator and the Boeing Flying Fortress, were not there in large numbers in October and had been

used only in trial raids. I did not see either of them.

There is an Army Co-operation Command, which hasn't had much to do except in training, as its business is to be the eyes of the Army during active fighting. It was using the old four-winged Liberator planes. No 400 Canadian squadron was an Army Co-operation unit. As the Liberator is a fairly old model, it has probably been replaced with something newer in the meantime.

The First Air Arm is attached to the Navy. I had no contact with it.

**At A Bomber Station**

The Canadian editors spent one evening at a Bomber station up in the central part of the East coast of England. It gave me something of a thrill to drive along the Great North Road. The name itself is interesting, but the thrill came from memories of the book, "The Good Companions" and from passing through the Robin Hood country.

It seemed that every few minutes that famous road passed an airfield of the Bomber Command. There was no particular attempt at concealment from the road, whatever there may have been from the air. Many different types of bombers were to be seen out in the open. The driver of our auto, however, had a son in the Bomber Command. He had never visited his station but he had me keep a lookout after we passed a certain town, to see the first bomber using Wellington, and was greatly pleased when we found the place, though he didn't suggest stopping.

Well up the road our little procession of cars passed through the home town of the Duke of Devonshire, with his estate in the square, and out towards the coast, along winding roads, following a motorcycle guide. The fields were full of plane trees—always a sign that one is approaching some place of importance. There was a tiny hamlet, and three or four miles beyond that, down a road that wasn't much more than a lane, bordered by hedges, we came to the bomber station.

The main buildings were of new red brick. Beside the door, a guide showed me the marks where machine gun bullets had splattered on the wall from German guns. One of two had been killed but the chief target of my eyes was that the Hun planes had not safely away.

In the hangars, nearby were the bombers, Handley Page Hampdens. The Hampden is deceptive in its appearance, particularly from the front. The body is extremely narrow, only one man wide, while it tapers off in a long narrow line to the tail. It is hard to believe that it carries a crew of four and weighs more than nine tons when it is loaded. The wing span is about 70 feet. There are two aircraft engines and twin tails. For a bomber, it has a high speed of 265 m.p.h. or over four miles a minute, and it can stay in the air for eight hours and a half. It has over 150 miles of fuel tank capacity. The quarters were comfortable, and the lounge room where we were greeted might be called luxurious. Over the mantel at one end was a big painting of the Hampden, presented by Mr. Handley Page himself. There were Chesterfield, and padded chairs and a radio.

A few Canadians were among the officers, the only one from around this part of Ontario being Pilot Officer J. G. Spiers, of Brantford, Ontario. The Station Commander was Group-Capt. Bachman. He didn't tell us anything about himself, but some of the other officers did. He faced in the famous Schneider Cup race more than ten years ago and won the cup himself in 1931. These races were high-speed tests with tiny planes, and being sporting events, they kept the British on their toes, with the result that the cup nearly always stayed in Britain—strangely enough, this race probably saved Britain from destruction in 1940 and 1941. They kept over 150 firms building the latest and finest planes, and the Spitfire and Hurricane, particularly the former, are adaptations of the racing planes of Schneider Cup days.

I ate that night in the officers' mess at this R. A. F. station, and brought away the menu. The supper was excellent. The foods were the familiar foods of wartime England, but on the other side of the menu was the luncheon at noon, and it had featured the roast beef and Yorkshire pudding I saw only once in England—and that at the private home of a manufacturer. Here is the evening menu:

Kidney Soup  
Oo-ni-Gratin  
Sausage and Mashed Cabbage  
Trifle  
Stewed Figs and Custard  
Coffee  
Cheese

Food is important in Britain and it is strange how I recall meals after an interval of six or seven months. Kidney is unrationed and so one is apt to find it anywhere, even in soup.

I had a little of each kind of meat, for the "Oo-ni-Gratin" aroused my curiosity. It turned out to be cold sliced bologna with cheese in it. That was, I think, my first encounter with English wartime sausage. They were amazing things. I ate them once or twice in hotels, just to see if they were all as bad as the first ones I encountered that night. There was no improvement. Sausages come in three grades I am told, and presumably these were all of the best grade. The grades are 40, 50 and 60, that being the percentage of meat in them, but I always doubted it. The rest of the percentage is said to be bread, but again I have my doubts. It wasn't that the sausage tasted bad; they didn't. They simply didn't taste at all. They might have been ground up blotting paper, put into skins and fried. But the dessert and coffee were good and the cheese excellent.

But this was the menu for the noon meal we missed:

Provencale Soup  
Roast Beef and Yorkshire Pudding  
Creamed Potatoes and Cauliflower

Cold Whitehead Roll  
Salad  
Steamed Biscuits Roll  
Rice Pudding  
Stewed Figs  
Custard

The boys at the Bomber stations are under a continual nervous strain. They live among the greatest thrills in the world when they are out on a job with the anti-aircraft units. During the night, they are around them and they need to watch continually for an attack by fighter planes, while looking all the time for their targets.

It had been the intention to have the Canadian editors see the bombing planes go out. They have a few hours sleep and get up in time to see them come back. It didn't turn out that way that night. There was a bit of fog and operations were cancelled. Word had gone around before we arrived that the flight was "off" and so tension had relaxed.

One officer told me that when the boys are all keyed up and then, at the last minute the trip is cancelled, it is hard to keep discipline. He said all kinds of stunts are pulled off. One night a couple of the pilots drove their little Austin car in the front door and around the halls.

(to be continued)

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12:09 p.m.	2:20 p.m.
2:24 p.m.	ay 4:45 p.m.
4:54 p.m.	b 5:40 p.m.
6:34 p.m.	c 7:15 p.m.
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