

### WARTIME INFORMATION BOARD

This is the Sixth of a Series Written by Walter E. Legge

The highlight of our visits to the R.C.A.F. stations was the night that we were permitted to see a bomber squadron start for Germany and return after delivering their goods.

There is a great amount of detailed preparation for such a raid; the planes are carefully serviced and loaded with bombs by the ground crew and the crews are assigned and "briefed". That is to say they are told their destination, and objectives, and given every possible detail that will help them to reach their objective and return safely.

Briefing takes place several hours before the take-off, as the crews have to do quite a bit of making ready, and also have to study the objective, route, etc.

The editors met the crews and conversed with them before they left to go on board their planes. It is hard to describe the feeling in the room. The boys realize the serious business they are doing, and they go about their preparations, making sure that they have everything that they need, with no nonsense, yet lightly, and surely.

The zero hour approached and our guide suggested that we go down to the place of take-off to see them start. The station, like the others, was so big that we got into a car to drive over.

Getting out of the car, we started to walk over some ploughed ground, when one of the party exclaimed, "What are those lights up in the sky over there?" referring to four lights in the sky. Hardly had our guide replied that they were flares evidently from a German raider when about four other sets of flares appeared in the sky, followed by the flash and echo of an explosion.

Then searchlights appeared darting over the sky, and clouds of pin points of lights as the ack-ack came into action. The raid actually was about twenty or thirty miles away, but the flare made it bright even where we stood, and the sound of the bombs could be heard and the bursting of the ack-ack shells clearly seen.

After some time, the noise and lights died down and everything was again quiet and dark.

The word came to warm up the machines and the signal was given to begin. Immediately there was a new noise, the roar of planes warming up.

After several minutes of this, another signal was given, and the first plane took off, followed by many others. Another one developed trouble and was scrubbed.

The scene was typical of what takes place on scores of stations nearly every night. After the last machine had taken off, the silence seemed to be unbroken as we made our way back to the mess. There seemed to be a great many lights about the grounds but we were informed that they were made in such a way that they could not be seen from the air.

The station had no sleeping accommodation for us, so we made ourselves as comfortable as possible in the arm chairs to pass the four or five hours until the bombers should return.

Having managed to fall off to sleep in a chair, it seemed only a few minutes before we were being awakened as it was nearly time for the planes to be returning.

Going to the central room, we found the first plane was reporting back. On the wall was a large operations board, listing with full particulars the machines that were out on the raid. As they reported it was marked on the board and their instructions for attending given them by a radio which could only be heard a few miles.

All machines had returned except one, when we finally left for another building where the crews report on their return and are questioned by intelligence officers. A full report is obtained from each man who answers such questions as, did they obtain their objective, how were they sure it was the right one, did they encounter much opposition, flank, etc., how long were they going and how long returning, how did they come back, and a score of other questions.

In addition to this, most machines are equipped with automatic cameras, which record the exact bombing.

The editors were again given an opportunity to talk to these crews who had just returned from an important raid.

Just as we were ready to leave this room, word came in that the missing bomber had arrived home, having experienced some difficulty which had delayed it about two hours. As far as this station was concerned the press could report that "from this operation all our machines returned safely."

It was a memorable night. Few newspapermen have been able to go to a station and see what we had seen, on their first visit, and probably no others had a German raid thrown in for good measure.

Later that day, after a good sleep, we were shown the work of the central room by Flying Officer Jos. Hammett, the senior Canadian control officer, and his talk was a marvel of concise information. Under present control, the number of avoidable accidents had been cut very low, and no possible help to land any friendly plane is ever overlooked.

Diversion to other fields, full information as to the condition of all landing fields, and other aids, even to sending up planes to assist in among the means taken to help machines in trouble.

If an extra large machine, for instance, with some of its instruments out of order, needs a special field or emergency landing, full information can be collected and given out in a few seconds.

England is covered with airports all standing by constantly on the alert to give this help.

Newspaper reporters showed that the raid of the previous night had been most successful, and fires were still burning there when our daylight observers returned during the day.

Later we were able to see some of the photos taken by the bombers that night over the objective which was Duisburg.

The information which is obtained regarding the effectiveness of these raids on Germany is truly remarkable. Many of the bombers are equipped with cameras, which automatically take photographs of the explosions of their bombs. When these are compared with photographs taken before and after the actual raid the story is pretty complete.

When the German propaganda reports that all bombs fell in a field or on workmen's houses, they cannot fool the R.C.A.F. for they know exactly where they fell and what damage they did.

These pictures can be enlarged to tremendous size. At some of the stations the editors saw pictures about five or six feet square, mounted on heavy cardboard, which could be studied in very great detail. In many cases there were pictures of the same location taken before and after the raid and the comparison was most interesting.

The day after we watched the German raid in the neighbourhood of night, the following reference to it appeared in the district papers, "A number of people were rendered homeless, and emergency feeding-centres were opened during the night after an enemy air attack on a Northeast town. There were a number of casualties."



By Flight Lieut. T. C. McCall  
R.C.A.F. Public Relations Officer

#### "Lefty" Does the Blue

Four years ago, off Canadian shores came one of the finest piloting prospects to enter the professional baseball field. He was Paul Marchalidon, a lad who had been standing amateur teams on both sides in the vicinity of Penetanguishene, Ontario. After two years with the Toronto Maple Leafs, Marchalidon was sold to the Philadelphia Athletics and was named by the veteran Captain Mack as one of the most promising southpaws he had ever seen. This season Marchalidon fully lived up to Mack's expectations for him and with a decidedly leggy team won more games than he lost. The other day Marchalidon was called upon at an R.C.A.F. recreation centre, was whisked through the preliminaries and applied for enlistment as a flier. He hopes to be a fighter pilot, firing plenty of stuff in the direction of the Axis.

#### Bush Pilots Helping Out

Long before the present war started, Canadians had hung up a remarkable record in aviation by using aeroplanes to traverse the vast unsettled distance of the far north and west, taking men and supplies to remote lumbering and mining settlements. When the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan came into being, most of the men who had been piling up thousands of hours of flying time flocked to the colors. A number of them will be found today at the huge Toronto Air Station, where as instructors at Central Flying School, they pass on their extensive knowledge to the R.C.A.F.'s instructional personnel. "C.F.S." as it is commonly called, is in reality the university of the air where experienced instructors go for advanced training to qualify for the coveted "A-1" rating which indicates their fitness to instruct on all types of training craft. On the staff at C.F.S. are three former bush pilots—Squadron Leader Pat Twist, Herrn, Langford and Lou Ingram. All of them key men in the instructor-training system, this trio represents a pool of diversified flying experience such as probably no other country in the world could duplicate.

#### Another Canadian Ace

Canada's prairies have produced another outstanding aviator in the person of Flight Lieutenant H. W. McLeod of Regina who recently received a bar to the Distinguished Flying Cross which he won a short time ago. Flight Lieutenant McLeod is the top scorer among pilots serving with the R.C.A.F. overseas, being officially credited with the destruction of 13 enemy aircraft. Like Pilot Officer George Beurling of Verdun, Quebec, who is Canada's No. 1 ace, although serving with the R.A.F., McLeod has been operating recently from Malta, the happy hunting ground of fighter pilots. In one week alone he shot down three Junkers-88 bombers, two Messerschmidt-100 fighters, as well as inflicting severe damage on a number of other fighters and bombers.

#### A New Precision Sound

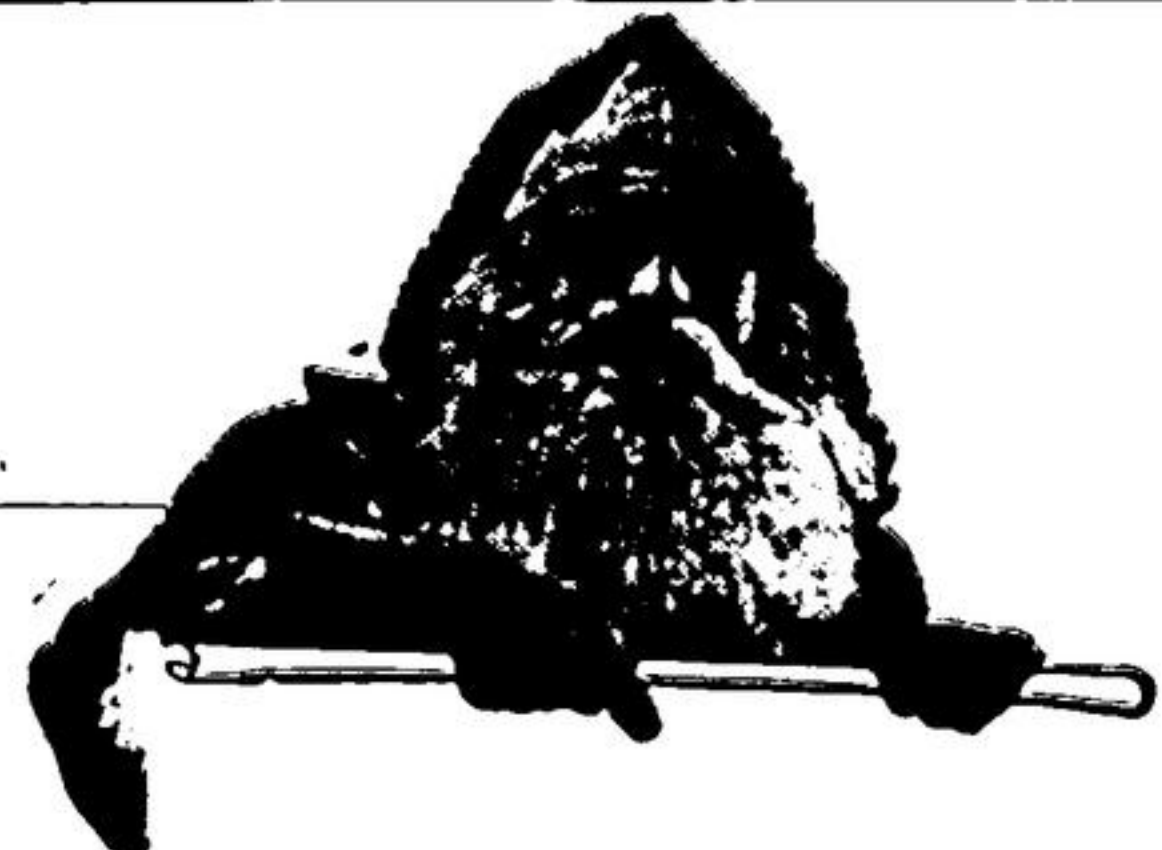
Royal Canadian Air Force precision drill squads have achieved for themselves an enviable reputation in the field of military smartness and drill. Determined to show that the lads in blue are in no way superior, members of the Women's Division have formed a precision squad which, on its limited appearances in the east, have won widespread acclaim. The squad is shortly leaving on a tour of Western Canada where demonstrations will be presented in a number of cities and towns. Among other things, the W.D. precision squad performs 140 manoeuvres without a word of command. They

#### LOCAL PRIZE-WINNERS AT BRAMPTON POULTRY SHOW

Although the Brampton Poultry show exhibits, at their annual show held this year, were down to less than half (368 to 865 last year) the exhibition was judged a success. The birds shown were of a splendid quality and type, and made up for the lack in numbers. Among the Georgetown winners were: W. J. Alexander, with best Hampshire, Barred Rocks, White Rocks and Buff Rocks; Partridge Wyandottes, 1st cock, 2nd hen; Rhode Island Reds; Light Brown Leghorns, 1st pullet; Dark Green Leghorns, 1st pullet; Dark Cornish; Golden Sebrights; Nuns, 1st cock; Harvey Lacy, with Laced Wyandottes and White Wyandottes; Partridge Wyandottes, all except 1st cock and 2nd hen; Spangled Hamburgs; Black Hamburgs; Cornish, 1st hen. Exhibitors were present from Georgetown, Milton, Mt. Dennis, Weston, Waterford and Brampton.

#### THANKS

The Georgetown Fire Brigade wish to express their sincere thanks to the citizens of Georgetown who so ably assisted them in fighting the fire at the Woolen Mills on December 3rd against high winds on cold weather. Also many thanks to the ones who donated coffee, tea and sandwiches. As tea and coffee are rationed it was very thoughtful of them—Donald Lattimer, Chief.



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### "We'll hold your place"

IN EVERY city, town and village throughout Canada today there are gaps where once were young men. They heard a call and put on navy blue, khaki, horizon blue, and they have gone, answering a call . . .

They are missed—missed not only in their homes but also in the business places which once they filled.

They have gone from every institution in Canada; but from none more than from the chartered banks. There is hardly a branch office from coast to coast which is not today the poorer—and the prouder—for those who thus laid down their pens.

But every branch manager, as he shook parting hands, had this consolation: he could say, "We'll hold your place. It will be waiting for you when you come back. That is a pledge."

So it is the part of those who remain to serve their country in such a way that the promise may be kept: "We'll hold your place."



There were 14,433 single and married men from 18 to 45 years of age employed by the Chartered Banks at the outbreak of war, 5,033—or 35% of them had joined the armed forces by October 31st, 1942; 1,243 others who joined bank staffs since war began have also enlisted.

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were trained by Squadron Leader J. L. Dyle, who has been in charge of the training of the men's drill squadrons.  
Do You Know—  
That training planes of the R.C.A.F. fly more than two million miles a day?  
That equivalent ranks for the three

services include—Lieutenant (Army), Sub-Lieutenant (Navy); Flying Officer (R.C.A.F.) and Section Officer (R.C.A.F. Women's Division).  
That the first Distinguished Flying Cross awarded in the present war was won by a Canadian—Flight Lieutenant Alan C. Brown, of Winnipeg.