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THE FLYING RADIO CLASSROOM

A Weekly Editor Observes This Exclusive RCAF Feature at First Hand; Only Seven of Its Kind in the World and Canada Has Them All.
by R. S. ATKEV, Editor.
Clinton (Ont.) News-Record

Canada is spending plenty of dollars on her armed services of which the Royal Canadian Air Force is receiving a healthy share. Is this money being well spent? Are we training the right kind of young men? Is there a future for young Canadians in the Air Force? Recently, through the kind permission of Air Vice-Marshal C. R. Sloman, CB, CBE, Trenton, Ontario, Air Officer Commanding Training Command, and Wing Commander A. C. Hull, DFC, commanding officer, RCAF Station Clinton, Ontario, the author was permitted to accompany trainees on an operational flight from RCAF Station, Centralia, Ontario to RCAF ground instruction also at Greenwood.

It was a rare privilege for me, as editor of a weekly newspaper, to observe "The Flying Radio Classroom" in operation. Seven of these fully equipped Dakota, twin-engine planes are based at Centralia-as Radar and Communications School Flight for the use of the R. and C. school at Clinton, 20 miles distant. Two of them were used on our flight from Centralia to Greenwood.

Flying Classrooms
I might describe one of these RCAF radio training planes as "flying classrooms" on which we made the trip to Greenwood, N.S.

Each of these Dakotas possesses five radio transmitters and receivers. Three of each of these are used for training the RCAF radio officers. In addition to this high-powered communications equipment, each aircraft carries many thousand radio navigation equipment to be found with any armed service anywhere in the world. It includes loran (for long range navigation) blind bombing equipment, blind landing equipment, and the only radio transmitter of its kind in the world.

As stated before, seven of these radio training planes are in constant use at Centralia by R. and C. S. Flight.

An Editor-Observer
As it happened, I was an observer on DGL ("Dog George Love"). Captain of the ship was flying officer S. J. Sisson, New Brunswick, with Flying Officer J. W. Matthews of Barrie, Ontario, as co-pilot.

Radio Officers in charge was Flight Lietu. G. G. Agnew, Clinton, who as Public Relations Officer for RCAF Station, Clinton, made all arrangements for my trip. I might add that not one detail for my comfort and information was lacking. Flt. Lt. Agnew has just been transferred as Signals Leader of No. 405 Squadron, the new Bombing and Reconnaissance Squadron based at Greenwood, N.S. and will be missed greatly at Clinton.

Associated with Flt. Lt. Agnew were Flight Cadets E. T. Frymire, Weyburn, Sask.; J. W. Smith, Kirkland Lake, Ont.; and Pilot Officer R. L. Browne, Montreal, a recent Radio Officer graduate.

The other trainer, DGG, ("Dog George"), was captained by Flying Officer J. L. Donovan, with Flying Officer H. A. Gibson, as co-pilot. Radio Officer in charge was Flying Officer J. G. Munnoch, Smooth Rock Falls, and Wingham, Ont. The three students associated with him were Flight Cadets R. E. S. Wright, Tisdale, Sask.; B. J. Perrier, Ottawa and M. L. Judd, New Westminster, B.C. (Surrey).

Excellent Flying Weather
As we set out on our trip from Centralia to Greenwood—close to 900 air miles away—we had the advantage of excellent flying weather with visibility near a maximum. Flying at 5000 feet, we landed at Dorval, Montreal, in two-and-a-quarter hours. A wonderful

view of the countryside presented itself—notably Ottawa and the Gatineau Hills lying to the north, and the St. Lawrence and the Adirondack Mountains in New York state to the south.

After having lunch at the Dorval Airport Restaurant, and refueling the plane, we took off again for Greenwood, N.S., with Montreal below us in the sun.

50-Mile Fall Wind
Then we ascended to 9,000 feet, as there was a 50-mile fall wind at this level, and set our course by instrument along the radio beam to our destination, using radio aids provided by the radio range stations enroute. These included Megantic, Que.; Millinocket, Maine; Blissville, N.B., and Greenwood, N.S.

The trip over the northern part of Maine and New Brunswick indicated little below us except dense forests studded with shimmering lakes. We landed at Greenwood, N.S. two-and-three-quarter hours after taking off at Dorval, making a total of five hours from Centralia.

Efficiency Tested
The efficiency of our Radio Officers Course students was tested throughout the trip, under actual operational conditions.

F. C. Frymire, from Centralia to Montreal, communicated with Centralia, Trenton and Summerside, P.E.I., on one of the high-powered transmitting and receiving instruments.

For the remaining half of the trip, he traded places with F.C. Smith, who at the same time, had been communicating with Ottawa, Montreal, Halifax, N.S.; Goose Bay, Labrador; and Churchill, Man.

P.O. Brown used another set of instruments on a different frequency to keep in touch for the whole trip with Centralia, Trenton, Summerside, P.E.I., and Greenwood, N.S.

The pattern followed on the other plane was similar to the proceedings on ours.

We were given a hearty welcome at Greenwood and enjoyed our overnight stay there.

At Greenwood, the students were given a first glimpse of operations as they actually exist on a flying station where search and rescue and flying exercises with the Navy are prime tasks.

One of the most interesting and valuable demonstrations was the carrying out of three ground-controlled approaches by our DDG plane. A Ground Control Approach is a method, by radar and radio, used to bring an aircraft into a station under conditions of extremely poor visibility when the pilot is unable to see the ground from a height of approximately 100-foot or more.

Greenwood to Centralia
The weather for the return trip from Greenwood to Centralia necessitated making the entire trip by the use of instruments or as the pilots say, by IFR (Instrument flying rules). In this case, the flight is controlled very rigidly by radio range stations, in much the same manner as the railway dispatcher or the railway block system control trains.

Our plane flew at 6,000 feet to Montreal, and at 4,000 feet from Montreal to Centralia. To save time, we did not land at Dorval as on the down trip, but flew right through.

Arriving over Montreal just at dark, that metropolis was a marvelous sight with its coloured lights along Sherbrooke and Ste. Catherine Streets.

Weather Provides Test
Flying by night and with the weather becoming progressively worse, the need of radio communication became all apparent. Frequent reports of the weather ahead were received by the student operators and were passed on to the pilots for their information.

Shortly after passing over Toronto at an altitude of 4,000 feet, an electrical storm broke in all its fury and gave us a few thrills.

However, when we arrived over Centralia, the storm had abated and we were able to land without difficulty.

Due to heavy head-winds, our non-stop flight from Greenwood to Centralia had taken us just five minutes short of eight hours, instead of the five hours on the journey east the previous day.

Supper was waiting in the Air-men's Mess at Centralia, and a journey by RCAF transport to Clinton, brought a fine experience to a close.

Here's one thing I found out. "You don't have to be a pilot to fly in the RCAF. The radio and radar fellows do it, too!"

Five Graduates
Incidentally, the five student operators on the two aircraft graduated as members of Radio Officers Course No. 12 at RCAF Station, Clinton, after the flight, receiving their "wings" from Air Vice-Marshal C. R. Sloman, CB, CBE, Trenton, Ontario, Air Officer Commanding Training Command.

That the Radio Officers Course is no "push-over" is indicated by the fact that RO 12 started out a year ago with 13 members and only five graduated at the proper time. These men—now with the rank of Pilot Officer—will take a two-month's course in gunnery at RCAF Station, Trenton, before being posted to various RCAF Stations in Canada.

"Per Ardua Ad Astra"

Sugar beets or roots which may have been the forerunner of today's beets, were eaten for their energy value by the Egyptian labourers who built the pyramids.

EUCHE and DANCE AT STEWARTTOWN

A good crowd attended a euche and dance in Stewarttown Hall last Thursday which was sponsored by the AYPA of that community. Ladies prizes were won by Miss E. Lealie, Georgetown and Mrs. F. Fendley, Norval and the men's prizes by Lt.-Col. Gordon Brown and Jesse McEnery, Ballinacree. The door prize, a box of groceries, was won by Frank Robinson, Erin. Mr. and Mrs. Clegg of Norval won the spotlight prize.

The Egyptians really took care of themselves. Back in 3200 B.C., which is quite a while ago, they had beauty salons.

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