

Reel C12,359

**Number 2 Wireless School, Calgary, Alberta**

August 22, 1940 - April 14, 1945

August, 1940

Organization Order No 43

Formation of No 2 Wireless School

It has now become necessary to open the second wireless school under the Joint Air Training Plan. It is intended to form No 2 Wireless School at Calgary, Alberta. No 2 Wireless School is to open at Calgary on September 16, 1940. AMES is requested to arrange for aircraft to be delivered, 50 percent by the first of November, 1940 and 50 percent by the first December or as soon thereafter as unit is ready to receive them. All necessary modifications should be carried out before delivery of aircraft. No 2 Wireless School will be accommodated in the Institute of Technology, Calgary.

August 22, 1940

The board of officers, S/L A H K Russell, F/L G E McCormick and F/O L H Pilling arrived to take over the buildings. The other members of this board of officers, Mr H G Randelson was already on the Station.

September 16, 1940

177 WAGS reported and were paraded from the CNR station under F/O G E H Brandon, ceremony etc band, Brig Connelly acting mayor. The entire Station went on service rations.

October 1, 1940

Hon H G Powers, A/V/M L S Breadner DFC and S/L H G Richards paid a visit and inspected the school. Mr George Ross MP and Mr Manley Edwards MP visited the school with the party. Six service police arrived from No 1 Manning Depot Toronto.

October 20, 1940

Protestant church parade to St Barnimus Church. Officer in charge F/L S C Black. G/C Issett of the liaison branch of the Royal New Zealand Air Force in company with W/C F C Seavill and W/C A H K Russell took the salute.

October 26, 1940

Seventy one Royal Australian Air Force and 70 Royal New Zealand Air Force trainees arrived, wireless operators ground.

October 29, 1940

Red Cross parade under S/L J S Williams. Two RCAF wireless air gunner flights, one RCAF wireless operator ground flight, one RNZAF wireless air gunner flight, one RAAF wireless air gunner flight joined the other militia units for a 3,000 strong parade through Calgary.

November 22, 1940

Graduation of first class of WAGs held at Station drill square. A/V/M Goble, Australian liaison officer, took the general salute after which the graduating class was marched back where W/C Hughes took the salute and inspected the class. 250 guests attended after which a short reception in the officers' mess was held. First Norseman for training purposes arrived at Curry Airport, Calgary. 173 Australian and New Zealand airmen reported for training.

December 4, 1940

F/O G W Richardson escorted 48 RNZAF and RAAF trainees to No 1 Wireless School, Montreal.

December 7, 1940

Eighteen Newfoundland WAGs reported for training.

January 5, 1941

F/L A C Heaven MC reported from Montreal and proceeded to command flying instruction of trainees.

January 6, 1941

Flying squadron was formed this date and F/L A C Heaven MC C1313 was appointed officer commanding, F/O W E Gower MC was appointed administrative officer. The following were appointed flight commanders: A Flight, F/O J M Limpp; B Flight, F/O C B Frith; C Flight, F/O H R Montgomery. Operations were commenced at Curry Airport, Calgary, Alberta. Norseman aircraft numbers 2461, 2462, 2463, 2464 and 2465 had previously arrived at the aerodrome from No 3 SFTS Curry Airport, Calgary, Alberta having been ferried from Montreal. During the day the following additional aircraft arrived by air from Montreal—Norseman 2466 and 679, Fairchild 636, 643 and 646.

January 16, 1941

S/L Cahill, command chaplain, visited the unit. The first class of wireless air gunners graduated from the unit. W/C A H K Russell took the salute. Boxing card held on Station.

January 17, 1941

S/L E L Miners ferried in an aircraft from No 1 Wireless School, Montreal. 61 wireless air gunners were posted to Fingal, Ontario for completion of training, 30 wireless air gunners were posted to Jarvis, Ontario for completion of training, seven instructors were posted to Winnipeg for the opening of No 3 Wireless School.

January 24, 1941

Flying squadron moved from No 3 SFTS Curry Aerodrome, Calgary, Alberta to No 35 SFTS TCA Airport, Calgary, Alberta.

March 22, 1941

As a result of the wonderful cooperation of all concerned another Station dance was held in the administrative building. This dance was considered by all to be an even greater success than the last one. The expenses of this dance were as before covered by canteen profits.

March 28, 1941

The No 2 Wireless School basketball team defeated the Hillspring All-Star team in an exhibition game in the school gymnasium. The Hillspring team had just won the provincial championship.

March 4, 1941

Owing to adverse weather conditions, seven of our aircraft were unable to return to TCA airport, Calgary. Two landed at Penhold, Alberta, two at Macleod, one at Carstairs, Alberta and one at Airdrie, Alberta. The latter aircraft returned later the same date. One machine was forced down about five miles northwest of TCA airport, Calgary and later in the day was able to leave but weather conditions necessitated landing at Currie Airport.

March 18, 1941

Eight Moth Monasco aircraft received from No 4 TC.

March 31, 1941

Total number of hours flown during the month 1,119.10. Aircraft on charge: Norseman 10, Fairchild 3, Moth 82C 2, Moth 82C 24. Total 39.

April 2, 1941

A/C R Leckie DSO DSC DFC (RAF) inspected the Station at 1500 hours. He was mainly concerned with training difficulties and supplies.

April 8, 1941

G/C A J Ashton, commanding No 2 Bombing and Gunnery School, Mossbank, visited the Station on an inspection tour to see how wireless air gunners are trained. He left for Macleod in the afternoon on board one of our Norseman planes.

April 11, 1941

Good Friday. Daily downtown patrol instituted from 1930 hours to 2359 hours. It was carried out by one officer, one senior NCO and two disciplinarian corporals.

April 17, 1941

Strong winds throughout the day again made it inadvisable to fly Moth aircraft. Norseman aircraft in service.

April 18, 1941

Five Moth aircraft assembled and made first flight, numbers 4845 to 4849 inclusive.

April 22, 1941

His Excellency the Earl of Athlone, Governor General of Canada, inspected No 2 Wireless School. He was received by W/C A H K Russell, commanding officer, A/C A T N Cowley ADC, air officer commanding No 4 Training Command, and Lt Col D Richie, Chief of Police, Calgary. A guard of honor i/c F/L F W I P Innes-Taylor and composed of Canadian, Australian, New Zealanders and Newfoundlanders gave the royal salute.

April 25, 1941

A graduation was paraded, the eighth entry marching past the commanding officer in squadron ceremonial, the remainder of the school marching past in column of flights. After the parade, the commanding officer awarded "sparks" to the graduating wireless air gunners. That evening the eighth entry left for bombing and gunnery schools at Mossbank, MacDonald and Fingal. 174 men graduated.

April 29, 1941

W/C C B Hughes, director of wireless training in Canada, inspected the Station.

May 5, 1941

S/L C F Falkenberg DFC command SOO arrived at this Station to arrange for the transfer of the flying squadron planes and equipment from No 35 SFTS at the Municipal Airport to No 3 SFTS

at Curry Field. This transfer was forced because the first echelon of RAF men is scheduled to arrive at 35 SFTS next week. However, accommodation at No 3 SFTS will now be far superior to what they were last fall as the new hangar built specially for this school is ready for use.

Editor's Note: No 4 Training Command is in Regina at this time.

May 5, 1941 Flying Squadron

The last of our Fairchild aircraft, number 643, was flown to Curry Airport, Calgary, handed over to No 10 Repair Depot and struck off our strength.

May 10, 1941

The officers of the RAF detachment scheduled to take over the Municipal Airport as 31 EFTS and who arrived in Calgary today were entertained at dinner in the officers' mess. The following RAF personnel were present: W/C N Smith, commanding officer; S/L A C Bailey, S/L C O Mosse MC, S/L O Scarborough.

May 10, 1941 Flying Squadron

The advance party of the RAF arrived at the CPR depot, Calgary at about 1345 hours and were met at the station by the commanding officer and other officers of No 2 Wireless School. The RAF party (31 EFTS) comprised about 350 airmen and 14 officers with W/C N Smith in command. Transport was loaned by the Wireless School to transfer these airmen and baggage to the airport, officers were entertained in our mess, tea and sandwiches were provided by our cooks for the airmen, and everything possible done to welcome them to Calgary. The contractors failed to complete the apron outside the hangar at Curry Airport as promised and it was therefore impossible to move our aircraft into the new hangar.

May 12, 1941

Work on the three tennis courts being built in the hollow between the airmen's and officers messes is proceeding satisfactorily. At present, the crushed stone foundation has been completely laid and wooden backstops are being erected.

May 17, 1941

The control tower reported at 0945 hours that the wind velocity on the ground was expected to increase to 40 to 45 miles per hour and consequently our pilots were advised by radio to return to the airport.

May 22, 1941

Norseman aircraft numbers 679 and 693 surplus to establishment were taxied from No 3 SFTS airport to No 10 Repair Depot and struck off our strength.

June 2, 1941 Flying Squadron

Our strength of pilots was increased by the posting of one additional generalist officer from Conversion Training Squadron, Picton, Ontario P/O E Browder C4634. The squadron is still seven pilots under establishment. We were advised that the services of one sergeant pilot from No 31 EFTS were no longer available. Tiger Moth aircraft 4305 which was loaned to No 31 EFTS on 15/5/41 was re-allotted to that unit and struck off our strength.

June 11, 1941

F/O J S Reid (admin) stationed at the recruiting office, Calgary, inspected the school. He was particularly interested in the training of WAGs as he is employed in recruiting men for these duties.

June 14, 1941

Under the supervision of the commanding officer and F/O R C Laughren (equipment) evergreen trees were planted and bare spots around the Station were plowed and sown with grass seed.

June 19, 1941 Flying Squadron

In order to maintain the interest of trainees during the period in which they are attending lectures etc at the wireless school, class 16Q was brought out to the flying squadron for the afternoon and given their passenger flying of one hour and an opportunity to inspect the squadron while class 12G is on air operating exercises. It was also arranged for them to attend a lecture delivered by an RAF pilot who has seen considerable active service in England during the present war. This is the first class of trainees given this opportunity but it is felt the results will justify a continuation to the change to the regular training program.

June 27, 1941

The Right Honorable W L MacKenzie King, Prime Minister of Canada, inspected the Station at 1035 hours. He was accompanied by Brig F N W Harvey VC MC officer commanding Military District No 13, Chief Justice Horace Harvey of Alberta, W/C H R Stewart and Maj. Anglin of the Governor General's Footguards, Ottawa.

July 10, 1941 Flying Squadron

A class of 33 trainees, class 16T, spent the day at the flying squadron to gain experience. After

familiarizing themselves with parachutes they were addressed by S/L A C Heaven on conditions to be expected in a theatre of war and then given a one hour flight each.

July 16, 1941

The Station band assembled to parade the new guard to the guard house and returned to the parade ground with the old guard after the changing of the guard.

July 21, 1941

Fifteen airmen who were previously on guard duty at this Station commenced their training as wireless operators (air gunners) and their duties were taken over by airmen posted from No 2A Manning Depot, Penhold, Alberta. 178 additional trainees arrived from various stations during the weekend and also commenced their training as WOAGs. The school baseball team is still at the head of the Calgary and District Baseball League and LAC Lewis (trainee) pitched a no run, no hit, no walk game.

August 1, 1941

The official opening of the new nine-hole golf course was an event of the early evening. As far as is known this is the only golf course in the Commonwealth Air Training Plan, constructed by RCAF personnel for their own use. (Ed: the one at Pearce showed up about 1943)

August 4, 1941

A/C His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent KCKT GCMG KCVO paid an official visit of inspection to the school. He arrived on the Station at about 1500 hours and was accompanied by A/C Cowley, Brig Gen Harvey VC MC, Lt R DeWinton RCNVR and other high officials of the services. He inspected the guard of honor and then visited the various classes and sections of the school. His Royal Highness paid particular attention to the Station hospital and was introduced to the staff and spoke personally to each patient. A number of our officers were presented to him in the officers' mess prior to his departure for Banff.

August 7, 1941

The YMCA arranged a concert with Station talent, vocal and musical. It was attended by 475 airmen. Motion pictures are held once each week and the average attendance is over 460 airmen. The YMCA representative also arranges free bingo games at frequent intervals and prizes are arranged for by the YMCA.

August 8, 1941

Menasco Moth aircraft number 4837 piloted by F/O A H Lawson forced to land in a pasture three miles south of Chestermere Road due engine trouble. The landing was made successfully

without injury to the occupants. The aircraft was dismantled and brought in by road. Menasco Moth aircraft number 4838 piloted by F/O A F Head was forced to land in a pasture approximately two and a half miles southeast of Calgary due to engine trouble. The landing was made successfully without injury to the occupants and the aircraft was dismantled and brought in by road. The cause of engine failure was the same in each case, that is, a broken exhaust valve stem allowing the valve head to drop into the combustion chamber.

August 15, 1941

While engaged in the search for a missing Anson aircraft from No 3 SFTS, F/L Innes-Taylor piloting Norseman aircraft number 2467 ran out of gas in the vicinity of Black Diamond, Alberta. He made a successful landing in a field where the aircraft was serviced and flown back to Currie Aerodrome, Calgary. There were no injuries to pilot or crew.

From "WAG Signal", newspaper of No 2 Wireless School

Reported Missing

Sgt Air Gunner John Stephen Lappin of Guelph near Toronto, one of those reported missing after air operations last Friday night was within a few days of observing his 20<sup>th</sup> birthday, his parents said today. Educated in Guelph, he graduated from high school in June, 1940 and the next month enlisted with the RCAF. He trained in Canada at Toronto, Brandon, Calgary and Fingal where he received his wings and chevrons in March. He went overseas shortly afterward and in letters home had told of many operational flights he had made over Germany. The youth was well known in Guelph as a hockey and baseball player of considerable ability. Sgt Air Gunner Lappin graduated with the second entry from this school.

October 29, 1941

A Halloween carnival was held in the drill hall sponsored by the canteen committee and the YMCA for all personnel and their ladies and approximately 1,600 attended. Each flight constructed game booths and those responsible for the event received the congratulations of the commanding officer. Our band, orchestra and old time band were in attendance. Assistance was secured from the girls of No 4 Training Command, the Red Triangle Hostess Club and the T Eaton Company. Every section of the Station played a part to make it a very successful evening social. Our transport busses and drivers were loaned in the evening to No 37 SFTS to assist in the transporting of personnel arriving from the United Kingdom.

October 31, 1941

Strength: officers 55, trainees 914, headquarters 475, civilians 140. Aircraft on strength: 24 Menasco Moth, 1 Menasco and 4 Norseman.



November 1, 1941

The YMCA supplied the school with a large quantity of excellent furniture which included Air Force blue leather upholstered chesterfields and chairs, lamps, smoking stands, writing desks and chairs. Owing to the delay in building the extension to the present canteen, most of this furniture had to be stored.

November 4, 1941

A spotlight turret trainer was installed on the Station. Owing to lack of proper accommodation, it was fitted up temporarily in the room used as a dining room for hospital patients.

November 10, 1941

LAC Brubaker was presented with honor student gold medal from TTS, St Thomas, Ontario. Moth aircraft number 4833 crashed north of Bearpaw in flames. F/O J Robinson C3021 was killed. R97644 LAC Gravell was seriously injured and died later the same day in the Colonel Belcher Hospital. No 2 Wireless School arranged a guard with rations, the flying squadron supplied forced landing equipment and S/L Heaven, F/O Anderson and F/L Burbank visited the scene of the crash.

November 11, 1941

Personnel of No 2 Wireless School participated in a downtown parade and marched past the cenotaph in connection with Remembrance Day services. A wreath of poppies was purchased by the school and placed on the city cenotaph. No 2 Wireless School headed the parade which consisted of personnel from the RAF and other RCAF units in Calgary. Our Station band also took part in the parade. The CO No 2 WS was in command of the parade. A committee of adjustment composed as under was assembled at No 2 Wireless School for the purpose of settling service estate of F/O J Robinson C3021 and R97644 LAC Gravell K M who died on November 10 as a result of a flying accident. President F/L J E Black and members F/O D E H Hurlbut and P/O J House.

November 12, 1941

Funeral services were held this afternoon from Jacques Funeral Home for F/O James Robinson and LAC K M Gravell who died on November 10 as a result of a flying accident. The Station band was in attendance and the funeral party was composed of personnel from this Station. Services were conducted by F/L H E D Ashford with F/L M S Blackburn assisting. After the services at the chapel the funeral party moved to the CPR station where the bodies of the two men were entrained for their respective homes for interment.

November 14, 1941

Our Station band provided the music this evening at the ice carnival staged by the Calgary General Hospital Alumnae Association. The event is an annual affair and was well attended. Our band was well received and much appreciated. Personnel of the flying squadron were paid during the lunch period in an all-time record of 11 minutes.

From the "WAG Signal"

Farewell, Padre

The Calgary Technical School has always reminded me of an old country castle as it stands sentinel on the north hill overlooking Calgary. If this was the impression it conveyed in peacetime, it is all the more true now. Today it has become a centre of great activity for each month it graduates scores of wireless air gunners. These are the men from whom we shall hear in the future when they strike their blow for freedom of all liberty loving people. And what men they are, strong, lithe, cheery, willing and eager to do their part when the time comes. It is not too much to say that the happiest moments of my public experience have been spent among the officers and men of No 2 Wireless School.

Editorial

We have at hand a newspaper report of the death of F/O James Robertson and LAC Gravell. It is a prosaic account and probably familiar to all of you. There is no complaint about the account, it is very good reporting. So much was necessarily left unsaid, the saving of which will not help F/O Robinson nor will it bring Carl Gravell back to life, yes, those things should be said. The accident so far as we know was one of those unavoidable things that do happen to people who are active in any line whether it be fishing or golfing, these things do happen. We express our regrets at the loss of a well-liked officer and a popular airman. We would like to offer respectful sympathy to the bereaved families but words can say so little and at times it is better to say less and think more. Carl Gravell was able to walk away from the wreck. He moved off a few paces and then went back to try to extricate his friend and instructor. While attempting to do so, the gas tank blew up and burned him so terribly that he died a few hours later. Men don't walk back into such danger for no reason at all. Of all the things that may be said for F/O Robinson, the fact that a pupil would take that risk for him is perhaps the finest thing that could be said. Carl Gravell showed the absolute ultimate in bravery in going back to what he knew was danger. Would that we were all made of the same stuff this world would be a finer place to live in. We can well imagine the kind of airman that he would have been had he been spared for the task he was being trained for.

A word must also be said for Mrs Francis Walsh. Her bravery in attempting to save the two men should not go unrecorded. She too knew of the danger she was facing and in facing that danger she was herself seriously burned. Who can say that a people endowed with those of such fortitude could ever bow to a foreign oppressor.

In Memoriam            JMM

Farewell, farewell our worthy friend  
Who fate decrees that we must part  
And life for you has reached its end  
You still shall live within each heart

Long as our airmen still may fly  
Your memory will never die  
We miss your unassuming ways  
The greeting of a friendly soul

You did kind deeds through all your days  
And nobly played in airman's role  
Though we shall never meet again  
Within our hearts you shall remain

We sympathize with those bereaved  
Our thoughts of him are linked with these  
For in his passing all are grieved  
Their sorrow every airman shares  
And many their sadness and their tears  
All vanish with the coming years

Farewell good friend of humankind  
The base is reached, your flight is o'er  
The great airways are left behind  
Forever gone the engines roar  
But from above there echoes still  
Their kindly voice and all goodwill

December 7, 1941

The YMCA staged another friendly hour in the Station auditorium this evening. Local talent provided the entertainment and the evening was a real success.

December 11, 1941

At 1100 hours F/O E Browder C4634 landed to advise that aircraft 4837 Menasco Moth was down in a damaged condition at Midnapore. R56876 LAC Ryan G F pilot and R86335 LAC Lowry E A WOAG passenger. No 3 SFTS sent ambulance and found LAC Ryan dead and still in the aircraft. LAC Lowry was badly injured and was removed to Col Belcher Hospital, Calgary and died later the same day. F/O Browder and RAF381201 LAC Hulme H E were nearby at the time of the crash and Hulme was a witness to the crash.

December 13, 1941

A Christmas party and entertainment was held in the auditorium for the wives and children of Station personnel. The hall was suitably decorated with the usual Christmas streamers and a very pretty illuminated tree. Entertainment consisted of short movies and a marionette show, the latter being staged by F/O and Mrs E Cohen C6460 and well received by the kiddies. Presents were distributed by Santa Claus (S/L M M RAF03144). F/L W E Gower MC C2426 was master of ceremonies and at the conclusion of the party refreshments were served to the gathering.

December 25, 1941

An excellent Christmas dinner was served the airmen on the Station numbering about 200. S/L Heaven and a number of officers and senior NCOs acted as waiters. Tipping of the waiters was not much in evidence but they were given the privilege of sampling the beer that was served to the airmen.

January 1, 1942

Christmas hampers were sent from Australia to Air Force Headquarters, Ottawa, to be distributed from there to all Australian personnel serving in Canada. Inside each hamper was a card giving the name and address of the donor. It has just been brought to our notice that one of the Australian trainees on the Station, A405959 John Webb discovered that his hamper had been donated by his brother in Sydney, Australia. The hamper was shipped from Malley's Ltd of Sydney, of which company his brother K P Webb is the general manager.

January 8, 1942

The first Fleet Fort Mk II number 3575 which was assembled at No 10 Repair Depot was delivered to the flying squadron.

January 21, 1942

The school skating rink, which has been illuminated by funds provided from canteen profits, was officially declared open. Airmen were given the privilege of bringing their lady friends to skate and the music, which was made available by the installation of a record player and loudspeaker, was greatly appreciated.

January 24, 1942

Our Station hockey team defeated a team from No 4 Training Command 7 to 1 at the Victory Arena, Calgary. A feature of the game was the play of LAC Kraeling, a WAG trainee from this Station who participated in almost all the goals scored by our team. He added six points to his already imposing individual total for the season. Our Station band was in attendance and

provided the music.

February 28, 1942

Aircraft on strength: 25 Menasco Moth, 9 Fleet Fort, 6 Norseman

March 9, 1942

Flying squadron making a survey of its personnel to ascertain the number of men interested in landscaping and gardening preparatory the squadron moving to Shepard.

March 11, 1942

The officers lost out to the Calgary Girl's Rifle Team in a rifle competition held this evening on the indoor range of the Station. The score was close, the ladies winning by 31 points.

March 24, 1942

Marksmen at the school with G/C E R Owens setting the pace have won 46 Dominion Marksman medals during the past few weeks as rifle shooting on the indoor range continues as the most popular leisure time activity on the Station. G/C E R Owen has recently qualified for the expert shield, highest Dominion marksmen award for the sporting rifle competition and more than 175 members are battling to also qualify. On the losing side of the ledger, the school has bowed in four matches to the Canadian Championship Calgary Ladies Rifle Club team. However, airmen at the school gained some satisfaction from their two matches with the girls in that they lost the first time by 48 points but in the second match were beaten by only six points indicating that they can hope for victory in future matches with the sharp-shooting ladies.

March 27, 1942

Installation of Turnbull Light Beam trainer unit complete with Fraser Nash power-operated gun turret completed in turret building.

April 6, 1942

A conference of educational officers from all the RCAF and army units in Calgary met in the office of Maj Balfour at MD No 13 Headquarters. Mr Donald Cameron, director of extension, University of Alberta, outlined the work and policy of the Canadian Legion Educational Services.

April 7, 1942

R109118 Cpl G Y Thomson won the Alberta amateur welter weight boxing championship held at Cardston, Alberta beating LAC Lock, Bowden Flying School, in one of the best bouts of the

provincial ring tournament. Thomson is a PT instructor at this school and at one time was a professional boxer but when he enlisted he became eligible to return to amateur ranks.

April 11, 1942

An officers' mess dinner was held in the officers mess, the Station band providing suitable dinner music. Later in the evening the officers with their ladies attended a dance in the ante room, the dance music being supplied by members of the Station orchestra. During the dinner, W/C S C Black MM O3144 RAF, chief instructor at this Station, who is leaving shortly for Y Depot, expressed his regrets at having to leave the Station which he has seen grow from a small unit to its present dimensions. He was largely instrumental in its phenomenal success and his posting is regretted by all personnel.

April 13, 1942

Fleet Fort wireless equipped aircraft numbers 3585, 3589, 3592 were delivered to the flying squadron from No 10 Repair Depot.

April 18, 1942

Our Station band took part in the campaign arranged by the Calgary chapter of the IODE "The Hurricanes For Australia Fund." Half hour programs were presented, the first being played in front of the Whales Hotel and the second in the Hudson Bay store, both in downtown Calgary.

April 24, 1942

Of more than usual interest to personnel on this Station, particularly those who have been here for some time, is the news that Sgt L A Willigar is missing as a result of air operations overseas. He attended No 2 Wireless School as a WOAG trainee in January, 1941 and shortly before he left on graduation was the winner of a Shetland pony in a draw staged by a local Calgary paper. On leaving, he presented "Midget" to the School and since that time she has been officially known as the Station mascot and heads the wing on all official parades.

April 27, 1942

Fleet Fort number 3591 piloted by F/O J M Simpson C3673 with WAG LAC Newell H NZ414888 taking wireless instruction collided at No 3 SFTS with Crane aircraft over the aerodrome slightly west of the main control tower. Crane aircraft crashed and the occupants were killed. F/O Simpson showed extreme presence of mind and control of the Fleet aircraft bringing it under perfect control. The complete starboard wingtip section and aileron of the Fleet were taken off in the collision. A court of enquiry met immediately to investigate the accident.

May 2, 1942

About 30 airmen of the Station were taken on a conducted tour of one of the major oil fields at Turner Valley this afternoon. The trip was made by bus and all participating were guests of a local citizen. Supper at Black Diamond.

May 7, 1942

Chaplains from all stations in No 4 Training Command concluded a two day conference held in the Palliser Hotel, Calgary, Alberta. Our Station chaplain (Protestant) F/L H R Ross attended and reported that the discussions arising from lectures given by selected speakers on special problems encountered by the chaplains was of great benefit. Mr Graham Watt, Station YMCA supervisor, attended the conference and delivered a paper on the subject "The YMCA and the Chaplain" which was well received.

May 8, 1942

The YMCA arranged a Mothers Day Greeting Service for Station personnel including the sale of Mothers Day greeting cards, taking flower orders and telegram service. These arrangements were taken advantage of by a large number of the boys on the Station.

May 9, 1942

The flying squadron completed arrangements for a military cooperation flight tomorrow. Personnel from this Station detailed to participate are S/L A Walmsley, chief instructor, F/L D J Thomson C1280, F/L A Strugnell 44935 RAF and F/L R P Mainguy C6985.

May 10, 1942

Fleet Fort number 3586 with F/L A Strugnell 44935 RAF as pilot and F/L R P Mainguy C6985 as wireless operator crashed while on operational patrol flight for Military District No 13. The crash occurred about 40 miles from the No 3 SFTS airport. The aircraft was destroyed and both officers killed.

May 15, 1942

Funeral services for F/L A Strugnell 44935 RAF (signal) and F/L R P Mainguy C6985 (sig) who died last Sunday as a result of an aircraft crash were held this morning. The funeral party was composed of personnel of this Station and was under the command of S/L R L McConnell C1992 DFC. The party formed up at Laydon's Funeral Home in downtown Calgary and the caskets were escorted to St Mary's Cathedral where the church services were held. At conclusion of this, the parade moved off to Burnsland Cemetery where the body of F/L Strugnell was interred. The remains of F/L Mainguy will be shipped to Trenton, Ontario for burial. A unit badge for this Station is being proposed and a novel plan to secure suggested designs from

personnel has been used. A competition with prizes contributed from canteen funds was launched and closes tonight. And whilst the board of officers has not yet expressed an opinion as to the winner, it is known that several submissions are very appropriate.

May 16, 1942

LAC Tonge, an Australian trainee at this school, won a trophy at the Musical Festival concluded this week in Calgary. He has a fine voice and has been much in demand by churches, clubs and societies ever since he arrived on the Station. His performance at the festival resulted in his being awarded first place in the Lieder singing class, a competition for vocal entries. Our Station golf course was well patronized this afternoon by Station personnel. As a result of the YMCA appeal for golf clubs, a few kind donations were received.

May 19, 1942

A long expected event took place this afternoon but unhappily the final result was not all that every member of the Station personnel had been hoping for. "Midget," our Station mascot, received her "bundle from Heaven" but the little fellow was dead. Much concern was felt over Midget's condition but with the help of the medical section it is now hoped that she will be all right in a few days. The "event" is over but an "addition" would have given a happier ending.

May 24, 1942

The mother of one of our trainees living in Vernon, BC received a photographic postcard of our lounge room from her son and deciding it lacked only one item to make it look like home, she expressed a large consignment of flowers.

May 31, 1942

Although the school have not yet been officially advised, it is understood that the six American GL pilots attached to the flying squadron were accepted for service in the American forces. These pilots have been of considerable assistance to the flying squadron. Civilian and service personnel: officers 63, trainees 856, HQ 508 (27 CTs awaiting posting), civilians 151. Total 1,578. Total hours flown for month ending 31/5/42: 1,131 hours 55 minutes. Aircraft on strength: Norseman 4, Moth 82CII 1, Moth 82CIV 12, Fleet Fort Mk II 13, total 30.

June 1, 1942

The construction of buildings for the flying squadron at Shepard are proceeding rapidly. Approval has been given by AFHQ for the construction of an additional anteroom and mess clerk's office for the officers mess.



June 2, 1942

A report from the flying squadron to the effect that the new Fleet Fort II aircraft are not giving satisfaction was forwarded to higher authority. The faults reported as common to this type of aircraft include a) poor visibility, b) ground looping, c) bumps in rough weather make it difficult for trainee to tune WT set and work, d) spinning, e) poor design and workmanship, f) not economical for work required of it, g) high maintenance cost, h) installation of WT equipment difficult.

June 10, 1942

For risking her life to rescue an airman trainee of this school from a burning plane which crashed into Big Springs school yard west of Airdrie last November 10, Mrs Francis Walsh, 29 year old Calgary school teacher, has been awarded the first George Medal given to a Canadian woman. The award was announced today in the list of King's Birthday Honors awarded in Canada on recommendation of the RCAF. The George Cross was awarded posthumously to the trainee, LAC K M Gravell of Vancouver who died from burns suffered in trying to rescue the pilot from the plane which crashed in the Big Springs school yard. It was Gravell who Mrs Walsh pulled away from the flaming wreckage. She rolled him on the ground and rendered first aid until medical help arrived. The pilot had been killed when the plane crashed. He was F/O James Robinson, 44, of Jasper, Alberta. But Gravell not knowing the fate of the pilot ignored the burning of his own clothing and tried to save his companion. "Had he not considered his pilot before his own safety and had he immediately proceeded to extinguish the flames on his own clothing he would probably not have lost his life," said the official citation. Mrs Walsh, the citation said, "displayed great personal courage and coolness under circumstances which were entirely strange to her and in the face of considerable danger from the gasoline fire ran into the wreckage and dragged Gravell from the blazing wreckage and rolled him on the ground and extinguished the fire on his person. With the assistance of her pupils, she then carried the injured airman to her schoolhouse, rendered first aid and sent for medical assistance. In carrying out this feat Mrs Walsh suffered burns about the face and suffered from shock but made no comments whatsoever regarding her own injuries which were not noticed and unattended to until after medical officers who had arrived at the scene of the accident had cared for the injured airman." This is the first time since the awards were established during the Battle of Britain that the George Cross and the George Medal were awarded in Canada. This list is also remarkable because the honors are awarded on recommendation of the Canadian Government directly to the King instead of as before on recommendation of the United Kingdom Air Ministry.

June 11, 1942

Cpl R Bell, a security guard at this unit, was notified that his son P/O G D C Bell who is stationed in England has been awarded the DFC. He qualified as a pilot at No 3 SFTS Calgary in the spring of 1941.

June 14, 1942

Arrangements were made to entertain a number of trainees at the Thomson Ranch near Black Diamond. Two of the Station busses and cars of Station personnel were used to transport the airmen and the event was a great success. Some of the New Zealand and Australian personnel felt they could show the local cowboys how to rope calves and ride the steers but will require more practice if they hope to take part in the forthcoming Calgary Stampede.

July 2, 1942

The YMCA arranged for the showing of the picture "Mutiny on the Blackhawk" in the school auditorium and Station hospital. Colored movies taken during the recent visit of RAAF and RNZAF trainees to the Thomson ranch were also shown. This film depicts trainees riding wild steers and roping calves etc and was greatly enjoyed. Ten New Zealand former trainees were struck off strength on posting to RCAF Station Vancouver, BC for repatriation. These airmen were "ceased training" on medical grounds, nine as a result of contracting rheumatic fever. At the present time there are 11 New Zealand boys in hospital, nine of whom have rheumatic fever and will have to be repatriated.

July 6, 1942

About 875 service personnel of the school took part in the annual Calgary Stampede parade in downtown Calgary which was held under ideal weather conditions. A feature of the parade was a float depicting the work of the school. The parade was led by the commanding officer followed by the school cowboy entry, the school mascot (Midget, the Shetland pony), and the school band and the wing. The YMCA again arranged for a cinema show in the Station hospital and auditorium, the feature picture being "You Can't Have Everything."

July 9, 1942

The North American champion trick riders, Monty Montana and his troupers, who are a feature attraction at the Calgary Stampede, made a personal appearance on the Station in the evening and gave a special show for the benefit of personnel. Our band were also in attendance.

July 10, 1942

The YMCA arranged for about 30 Indians of the Blackfoot Tribe who were in Calgary for the Stampede Week to visit the school. They arrived in their native costumes and war paint and entertained the airmen. At the conclusion of the performance they were given a special meal and suitable gifts.

July 15, 1942

Wireless instructors will be sent out to the squadron during the next few weeks for flying

experience in the various exercises given to trainees. This opportunity is made possible as there are no trainees on air exercises due to the lengthening of the WOAG course at this school from 24 to 26 weeks.

July 21, 1942

180 WOAGs have been taken on strength to commence course number 48. They comprise 116 RCAF, five RAAF, 52 RNZAF and seven GB trainees. These airmen are occupying one of the new 304 OR quarters recently completed. This larger entry is the commencement of the increase in trainees population at the school. Since the school opened, there has been a total intake of 3,781 trainees of whom 896 are under training and 503 have ceased training due to inability to pass the course. The total of trainees who have qualified at the school has reached the imposing total of 2,382.

July 27, 1942

Capt Frank Guy Armitage, an eminent English actor who has made a life-long study of Charles Dickens works, portrayed some of the queer characters of the eminent author to a packed and enthusiastic audience in the Station auditorium.

July 29, 1942

Our baseball team met a team of all-stars at Bowness Park. The score of 11 to 8 in favor of our team indicates we possess better stars. A sound film entitled "Spark Plugs in Aviation" was shown to mechanics attached to the flying squadron.

August 13, 1942

The school were awarded first prize and also a certificate of merit in the special class for the best garden entry in the Calgary Horticultural Society competition. Considerable credit for this achievement is due to the school as formally a large part of the gardens were sown thistle and clay.

August 15, 1942

LAC Roach, a New Zealand trainee who has so far defeated all the local tennis experts, met a young Calgary civilian in the finals. He won by a score of 6-1, 6-2 and 6-3 and was declared the champion Calgary player. The last seven Moth aircraft equipped with wireless were transferred to No 10 Repair Depot and struck off strength.

August 16, 1942

The Station was open to the public from 1500 to 1700 hours and the wonderful display of flowers was greatly admired. Our Station band also gave an outdoor concert which was

appreciated by a large audience, particularly so as it was one of the few hot and rainless Sundays in Calgary for some time.

August 20, 1942

Norseman aircraft number 698 on a four-hour routine ran out of fuel and was forced to land on a farm near Crossfield, Alberta. The pilot and passengers were uninjured and the aircraft undamaged. The aircraft was refueled and flown back to Calgary. Another pilot on a four-hour flight also ran out of fuel and landed at Vulcan airport. It will be necessary to cut down these exercises to 3 ½ hours to allow a greater margin of safety.

August 23, 1942

Five officers, our Station band and a squadron of about 150 airmen of the school were detailed to participate in the Decoration Day parade in conjunction with the Canadian Legion, Calgary. The squadron formed up in column of route directly behind the army and after an "eyes left" at the cenotaph they proceeded to the Union Cemetery for the decoration services.

August 8, 1942

Roller skating has been added to the long list of recognized sports available to airmen of this Station and was indulged in for the first time in the drill hall. Skates were purchased from canteen funds for the free use of airmen.

August 31, 1942

Aircraft on strength: Norseman 6, Fleet 21, Moth 1.

September 4, 1942

Army co-op exercises with ground strafing and low bombing practice carried out today and the exercise was declared a great success. Maj G A Knox, Capt Biggs and Sgt Maj Shillwall of the 3<sup>rd</sup> BN Irish Fusiliers took part.

September 10, 1942

A special graduation ceremony for the 38<sup>th</sup> entry was held. This class of 105 was the largest yet turned out under the JATP and one of the best. The event was given publicity in the press and about 3,000 people were seated alongside the parade ground. The parade was inspected by A/C G R Howsam MC accompanied by Mayor Andrew Davison of Calgary and Brig Harvey VC MC District Officer commanding Military District No 13. The special guests were the touring bomber crew P/O J D Highan DFC, F/Sgt Don Morrison, F/Sgt Archibald Loach, F/Sgt Carl Sveinsen, F/Sgt S C Lee. F/Sgt Carl Sveinsen is a past graduate of this school. P/O Johnny Highan DFC, pilot of the crew, presented the sparks after which the parade marched past the

reviewing stand and A/C Howsam took the salute. In the evening an informal banquet was held by the class at the Paliser Hotel and the bomber crew were guests.

September 14, 1942

All Fleet Fort aircraft were grounded for inspection and 15 were found to be unserviceable. W/C Dunphy of No 10 Repair Depot inspected the damaged parts and these are to be repaired by No 10 Repair Depot.

September 24, 1942

Number 3596 Fleet Fort Mk II crashed while on routine training flight. Occupants S/Plt A H Coalbran BG1332054 was killed. R132288 LAC McDougall J B was seriously injured. A court of enquiry is to be held.

September 29, 1942

F/L D J Thomson OC flying squadron and F/L W N MacKay engineering officer and F/L F A Parker adjutant flying squadron made a trip to Shepard to check progress and also to spot location of switchboard and telephones required. F/L R D Carter flew over in Norseman aircraft 2467.

Editor: lots of photographs of the splendid gardens at the Curry base.

October 13, 1942

Fort aircraft are reported as causing a lot of trouble due to throwing of oil. On inspection, some engines were found to be showing serious piston defects as well.

October 17, 1942

Fort aircraft 3609 crashed on runway on taking off. Apparent engine failure. Occupants were uninjured. After takeoff, engine dropped revs and pilot was forced to make an emergency landing. The landing was made on slope of hill and to avoid hitting ditch and fence, pilot applied rudder causing aircraft to ground loop. No 2 Wireless School RAAF defeated Irish Fusiliers 21 to 8 in an interservice rugger match. The Fusiliers traveled from Vernon for this game.

November 9, 1942

C C Hyndman and O H Harradaile, civilians with the National Film Board, Ottawa were visitors to the flying squadron in company with F/L L'Ani R O, press liaison officer from No 4 TC. They were here to film the WAGs from Australia and New Zealand in the course of their training. Pictures were made on the ground and also in the air. Norseman aircraft were used and three Fleet Forts were photographed. Evening entertainment included movies in the auditorium

“Courageous Australia” and “I Wake Up Screaming.”

November 11, 1942

Miss Merrick, ophthalmic assistant No 2 WS, was given a flight in Norseman 2467 (F/O Geiger as pilot) for experience in day flying. Also a night flight in Norseman number 2464 (F/L D J Thomson was pilot) for night flying experience.

November 17, 1942

A trip to Shepard was made by F/L D J Thomson, F/L R B Carter, F/L F A Parker and F/L W N MacKay for preparatory work required before a definite move is arranged. A tour of all buildings was made and notes made of matters requiring adjustment prior to transfer from Currie.

November 25, 1942

The movement order was received from No 4 Training Command to effect the move of the flying squadron and air operating section from its present location at No 3 SFTS to Shepard Aerodrome on December 1, 1942. Eighteen pilots proceeded to No 10 Repair Depot for ferrying Tiger Moth aircraft to Prince Albert, Saskatchewan.

November 27, 1942

The move to Shepard commenced today. Stearman aircraft being ferried by No 2 Wireless School pilots to No 10 Repair Depot (Ed-this would have been from a RAF EFTS, possibly 36 at Pearce). F/L D J Thomson and P/O C F Osborne proceeded to Shepard to prepare for opening of Shepard. Switchboard set up and in operation at Shepard.

December 4, 1942

Twelve ferry pilots reported to No 10 Repair Depot on temporary duty to ferry Stearman aircraft to Great Falls, Montana, USA.

April 14, 1943

Fleet Fort Mk II 3593 crashed four miles west of Delacour, Alberta and totally burned. Sgt T J H Doolan R149108 pilot and R176310 LAC Lunkie A A WAG were killed. The flight was a routine wireless training exercise.

May 6, 1943

Commanding officer held a full parade with the hoisting of our Victory Pennant. Fleet Fort a/c number 3602 took fire in the air and burned completely after a forced landing carried out six miles northeast of No 37 SFTS Calgary. R50735 Sgt C E Garbutt, pilot, was uninjured and AUS423801 LAC Margules M E received slight injury. All Fleet Forts were grounded pending the outcome of an investigation.

June 1, 1943

No 3 SFTS RCAF commenced night flying operations from Shepard Aerodrome. No 3 SFTS is supplying necessary equipment for flare path and personnel. No 2 WS preparing a night meal for night flying personnel with rations provided by No 3 SFTS. This puts Shepard field operating on a 24 hour per day schedule.

June 17, 1943

Fleet Fort aircraft Mk II number 3594 collided with aerodrome control tender on landing and completely washed out. Pilot R148113 Sgt Brewer D A was seriously injured. WAG AUS426936 LAC Winterflood T P escaped with only slight injury. Contact with control tender was terrific and R107756 LAC Paddock H C who was manning the tender was seriously injured.

July 5, 1943

1,100 men took part in Stampede parade from No 2 Wireless School, marched down from the school with the five bands to starting point. G/C Owen in charge of all parade arrangements which was a wonderful success. All personnel taking part in Stampede parade were given a holiday to attend the Calgary Exhibition and Stampede.

Ed: there appears to be at least one emergency landing per week of the Fleet Forts.

August 5, 1943

Fleet Fort aircraft number 3646 with P/O Cherrington as pilot and R197784 LAC Milligan H was forced to land at Alder Flats, Alberta this morning shortly after taking off from base. Wireless equipment became unserviceable and fog made it impossible to see ground for some time. They were definitely lost. The aircraft nosed up after landing with some damage but no injury to the occupants. This accident resulted in a full-fledged manhunt and several hours elapsed before the pilot was able to get word through as to the location of the aircraft.

September 3, 1943

Sixty New Zealand reported from New Zealand to start on 78<sup>th</sup> entry. P/O Richardson included in number.

September 6, 1943

Air Force Headquarters in Ottawa has suddenly decided to bring our pilot strength up to establishment and 13 newly commissioned staff pilots arrived and are presenting a real problem from an accommodation viewpoint. The top floor of the officers quarters has been given over to housing senior NCOs for some time and we are now faced with the alternative of placing NCOs on full living out allowance or unmarried officers, neither of which are very enthusiastic to live out in view of transport difficulties between here and Calgary.

September 13, 1943

History was written this morning so far as the squadron is concerned when P/O J D Myles J24833 and his WAG AUS424585 LAC Heath J D completed successful jumps after their aircraft Fleet Fort 3614 took fire in the air. They were on a routine wireless training exercise and the aircraft fired shortly after they were airborne. Both now belong to the Caterpillar Club and luckily are both around to enjoy that signal honor. Johnny Myles received second degree burns about the face and hands as a result of his standing on the port wing and keeping the aircraft in fairly level flight until the trainee could climb out on the wing with him. LAC Heath, although not particularly anxious to repeat the incident, suffered no injury. The aircraft was completely destroyed.

September 25, 1943

Aircraft serviceability is again slipping and we are perturbed considerably. Four Fleet Forts on which airframe time has expired were flown out this past week for overhaul. The Harvards which we had hoped would arrive are not forthcoming and while we understand Yale aircraft are on the way their delay in arrival would lead one to think that they are possibly being taxied out from the East.

September 27, 1943

Fleet Fort 3641 with R91726 Sgt Lee E W as pilot carried out a successful forced landing at Keoma today when motor temperatures rose tremendously high. There was no injury to personnel or damage to aircraft which was flown back to base later on in the day.

September 29, 1943

Fleet Fort 3650 with P/O L P Fraser J27522 as pilot and R203303 LAC Lay R W as WAG trainee crashed at 1530 hours this afternoon about four miles east of the airport here while on routine wireless training exercise. Both occupants were killed and the aircraft was destroyed by fire.



September 30, 1943

Fleet Fort 3605 with J27523 P/O M B Jones as pilot and R199450 LAC Geddes W trainee made a forced landing at Queenstown after the starboard gas cap became unlocked. There was no injury to personnel or damage to aircraft.

October 1, 1943

The day started off well but finished off rather badly in so far as serviceable aircraft are concerned there being three forced landings throughout the day. Fleet Fort 3604 with R104940 WO2 Stairs G W as pilot made a forced landing about three miles south of the aerodrome when his engine failed. The pilot suffered broken bones in both feet but the WAF escaped okay. The Fleet Fort was washed out completely.

October 4, 1943

Flying was at a bare minimum as a result of a decision not to carry out exercises with Fleet Fort aircraft, such decision being occasioned by the large number of forced landings, fire in the air etc which have occurred lately. The officer commanding has placed the whole matter in the hands of the command officer and No 4 Training Command headquarters, Calgary and a decision is being awaited. In the meantime, we are carrying on with Norseman aircraft. Fleet Fort 3581 with R164311 Sgt Warren C J as pilot and R131298 LAC Lucore W B as WAF forced landed this morning at the Vulcan airport when the oil line broke flooding the cockpit and obscuring vision. There was no injury to personnel and the aircraft was flown back to base after minor repairs had been effected. Fleet Fort 3647 smoked up while being flown today by R149113 Sgt Brewer D A with R184294 LAC Hembruff L M as WAG. Both occupants bailed out safely as the aircraft fired and both made successful landings near Bassano, Alberta. The aircraft burned on crashing and was destroyed.

October 28, 1943

Four more Yale aircraft arrived this morning from Guelph, Ontario being number 3367, 3378, 3398, 3428. This should improve our flying considerably.

October 29, 1943

Yale aircraft 3398 with J22736 P/O J Kennedy as pilot and R50753 F/Sgt Garbutt C E as passenger crashed two miles east of Midnapore, Alberta. Both occupants of the aircraft were killed instantly and the aircraft was totally destroyed.

October 31, 1943

Personnel strength: staff officers 80, airmen or other ranks 656. WD officers 4. Service personnel other than RCAF: CDC 4 officers, 19 airmen. Civilians 202. Trainees: RCAF 3

officers, 1,420 airmen or other ranks; RCAF WETP 204 airmen or other ranks. Aircraft strength: Norseman Mk IV 6, Fleet Fort Mk II 25, Harvard Mk II 2, Yale NA-64 11, Menasco Moth 2. 24 of the Fleet Forts are unserviceable. Number of hours flown during October, 1943—1,521.

November 6, 1943

Yehudi Menuhin gave free violin concert at No 10 Repair Depot for RCAF personnel. A large number from this unit accepted the invitation of No 10 Repair Depot to attend.

November 16, 1943

G/C Iron, No 4 Training Command, representing A/V/M Housam MC, presented the efficiency pennant to the Station. The Station was formed up on the parade square as a wing and the pennant raising ceremony with color guard was carried out. This is the second consecutive quarter this unit has been awarded the efficiency pennant. As a direct result of Fleet Fort spares, aircraft serviceability reached a new high today. Fleet Fort 3646 force landed at No 5 EFTS High River due to overheating and leakage of oil in the front cockpit.

December 2, 1943

Weather continues extraordinarily mild for this time of the year but with all we are managing to get the rink flooded. The boys were skating some this evening and an idea of the difficulty we are having in getting a proper sheet of ice may be demonstrated by the fact that a game of baseball was being played simultaneously.

December 15, 1943

Fleet Fort 3695 with P/O J H Inees J29304 as pilot and R196694 LAC Doherty R A as WAG trainee crashed six miles east of Rosebud, Alberta when engine trouble developed. Both pilot and trainee made successful parachute descents but the aircraft was a total loss.

December 16, 1943

Fleet Fort 3655 with R121320 Sgt Foster R G and AUS434921 LAC Murray A L as WAG trainee crashed six miles east of Calgary at 1040 hours after both occupants were forced to bail out when fire enveloped the engine. There were no injuries to personnel involved but the Fleet Fort is definitely an A category.

January 4, 1944

Our older staff pilots were shocked to hear of the death on the Northwest Staging Route of S/L I M McLean C578, officer commanding at Fort St John. "Murray" as we knew him was a staff pilot here for almost a year and a half and was very well liked.

January 13, 1944

Our aircraft situation continues to be a problem and our officer commanding flew over to No 10 Repair Depot, Calgary this morning to investigate the possibilities now advanced by No 4 Training Command that Oxford aircraft be made available to this unit for wireless training purposes. Should this happen, there are several matters which require attention not the least of which is hangar space to accommodate this larger type of aircraft. Fleet Fort Mk II 3606 with AUS421729 F/Sgt Hill D W and NX4214055 LAC Hume R J K as pilot and WAG trainee made a precautionary landing near Nanton, Alberta when the pilot noticed a considerable flow of gasolene into the cockpit. There was no injury to personnel or damage to the aircraft.

January 17, 1944

It seem almost definite that we are to be supplied with Oxford aircraft as six of our pilots proceeded today on temporary duty to No 36 SFTS Penhold, Alberta for an Oxford conversion course. Apparently it is intended that these six on their return will be utilized to check out sufficient pilots to carry on flying schedules with the new type of aircraft.

January 18, 1944

Our Station basketball team turned out "bang up" this evening and came out on the top of a score of 35-31 over the Yanks from No 37 SFTS. This win advanced our team to fourth place in the league.

January 26, 1944

Things are really looking up. Just before the close of flying today we received two more aircraft: Yale 3457 from No 6 Repair Depot, Trenton and Norseman 2463 flown in from Northwest Staging Route, Edmonton. One Fleet Fort had a forced landing.

Ed: during the month of January, there are 14 incidents or forced landings with the Fleet Fort aircraft.

February 6, 1944

Church services were conducted in the airmen's lounge. The Protestant services were supervised by F/L W R Ashford C8553 Chaplain P who has been posted recently to No 2 Wireless School. While he has only recently reported, he is felt to be an old friend in as much as his brother, S/L H E Ashford looked after the spiritual welfare of No 2 Wireless School for some time prior to his posting overseas.

February 21, 1944

Two more aircraft arrived from No 6 Repair Depot, Trenton those being Yales 3462 and 3436. Housing of aircraft is a real problem with the arrival of so many new aircraft and has necessitated a number being stored outside. High hope are held for the near future, however, as advice received today indicates that material for the new double hangar is on the siding at Shepard and work should get underway immediately.

February 29, 1944

Aircraft strength: Fleet Fort 19, Harvard 13, Norseman 10, Yale 33, Moth 2. Number of hours flown 3,251.20.

March 2, 1944

The much appreciated "darning hour" took place this evening in the YMCA lounge with the Yettes on hand. This group is made up of civilian girls working on this Station who donate their time once a week to darn the airmen's socks. The wool is supplied by the YMCA. Needless to say the generosity of these girls is much appreciated by all the airmen and many take advantage of the opportunity.

March 13, 1944

New hangar framework almost half done. This framework is built horizontally and later raised by a devise which requires an expert, so expert that there is only one such operator in the provinces.

March 24, 1944

A concert party of approximately 50 in number gave a concert as a windup to the Red Cross campaign at Chestermere Lake. Among the highlights were selections by the No 2 Wireless School band who played overtures and popular selections. LAC Forsythe of the Equipment Section brought his troop and performed with his noted roller skating act. Miss Jean Gilbert, noted pianist of Calgary, played a group of classical piano numbers and Miss Nana Canning gave readings. The YMCA supervisor was master of ceremonies and as well as singing solos, sang in duets with his wife. At this program which was given in a small community satisfaction is drawn from the fact that close to \$500 was raised for the Red Cross as well as bringing a better type of program to an isolated area. The \$500 so raised has not been included in the Red Cross total reported from this school.

March 29, 1944

From Calgary Albertan newspaper  
Airmen's Pony Mascot Listed Among Missing

It's more than two years now since Sgt L E Willigar promised Midget, the No 2 Wireless School Shetland pony mascot, that he would come back from overseas and return to Calgary to claim her. He was reported missing during air operations over France on April 18, 1942 several months after he won Midge or Midget, the Herald Sunshine pony, in a raffle here and donated her to No 2 Wireless School RCAF as official mascot. Midge was given her own little barrack block at the school. She had her own blanket, appropriately decorated with the RCAF insignia, and she headed all the official parades at the school including the one in which her master received his wings before going overseas to join the 101<sup>st</sup> Bombing Squadron, Royal Air Force. Maybe Midge became tired of waiting for Sgt Willigar, maybe she decided to look for him herself. At any rate Midge left No 2 Wireless School grounds Sunday night and hasn't been seen since. The boys at the school are anxious for the return of the pony. They have asked police to assist in locating her and now they are asking that anyone seeing a little black pony answering to the name of Midge and looking as if she was keeping an eye peeled for a sergeant wireless gunner, notify the guard room at No 2 Wireless School.

Flash! Midget returns. She was found gaily tripping on her way to the flying squadron at Shepard, 12 miles out of the city. Maybe she has flying blood in her. Maybe it was the good looking flying instructors or maybe it was pure mischievousness that prompted her into this thirst for travel.

March 31, 1944

Aircraft strength: Fleet Fort 6, Harvard 30, Norseman 10, Yale 38, Moth nil.

April 4, 1944

The sketchy maintenance given to roads under the jurisdiction of the City of Calgary and the Municipality of Shepard between the Station and town certainly is reflected in the serviceability of the MT vehicles. Frost is coming out in many places and axle deep ruts are left without attention. A deal of credit is due the drivers and servicers of the transports. Six Fleet Forts, the last of the Station's strength, were ferried to No 10 RD.

April 5, 1944

Beams in the new hangar are rising at an increased rate daily. Six are now ready for the bolt tightening process which will make them ready to take the stress of the hangar roof and walls.

April 6, 1944

Sparks parade was held at 1400 hours on the parade square with entry 78 graduating. This was the last graduation for the commanding officer G/C E R Owen who is leaving very soon on retirement.

April 7, 1944

Shepard: in this spring weather, with most personnel off the Station, the aircraft grounded and silent and blue sky and brown prairie tranquil, it takes an effort of will to force the mind back to causes and the tremendous world picture of which this Station is one of the affects and it is hoped one of the cures.

April 12, 1944

A silver tray and tea service were presented to the commanding officer G/C E R Owen from the officers and senior NCOs on his retirement from the service. An officers mess dinner was held at 1900 hours in the officers mess to which the officers of the flying squadron Shepard were invited. The dining room was beautifully decorated with spring flowers and a large "observers wing" made of daffodils, narcissae and carnations at the commanding officer's table.

April 15, 1944

G/C E R Owen C22 commanding officer left today on retirement from the service. He will be greatly missed by all the personnel and all best wishes from the whole Station go with him.

April 24, 1944

As spring advances, the warm air at noon creates "bumps" and makes life miserable for the student who is green to flying. Combined "bumps" with the fact that he rides with his back to the direction of the aircraft, the necessity of taking paper bags along is obvious.

May 6, 1944

The smoke was very heavy, visibility being reduced to less than one half mile. Flying washed out on instructions of regional control, Edmonton. Sgt Bird reported from south and west of Claresholm after spending the night in the bush. Aircraft and crew okay, was forced down by smoke. Officer commanding, chief engineering officer and guards left for the scene of the landing about 1400 hours.

May 7, 1944

Over 100 airmen enjoyed a musical hour which was arranged by the YMCA and the educational officer. The Station was fortunate in procuring Mr Dobson, a teacher at the Central High School who gave an interesting talk on poetry of flight. F/O H J Robertson, educational officer, introduced the speaker and expressed the thanks and appreciation of the audience at the conclusion of the program.

May 24, 1944

The old saying, "24<sup>th</sup> of May, the Queen's birthday, if we don't get a holiday, we'll all run away." We just didn't dare.

May 31, 1944

Appendix: Ninety one names on wireless school honor roll. An honor roll bearing names of 91 graduates of No 2 Wireless School who have been decorated was unveiled by G/C C H Flynn, senior air officer at No 4 Training Command, in the airmen's lounge at the school Thursday. Designed and executed by a local artist, Herbert S Roberts, the honor roll includes the names of LAC K M Gravell awarded a posthumous George Cross for an attempt to rescue his pilot from a blazing aircraft at Simmons Valley in 1941 which cost him his life. Decorated graduates, all wireless air gunners include 67 members of the RCAF, 14 of the RAAF, and 10 members of the RNZAF who among them hold 37 Distinguished Flying Crosses, 48 Distinguished Flying Medals, three British Empire Medals, one Conspicuous Gallantry Medal, one George Cross, one George Medal and a Belgian Croix de Guerre. "Such a list," said G/C Flynn, "is a very great credit of which the Station staff and pupils have every reason to be proud."

Calgary Herald, May 12, 1944

July 12, 1944

The Station grounds have now about reached their zenith of beauty. The Iceland poppies which bloom almost perpetually are supplemented by many summer flowering plants and well kept lawns and the whole presents a picture station. It makes officers and airmen with operational experience forget their previous makeshift accommodation and those without proud of their unit.

July 21, 1944

At night a very heavy rain and hail storm struck Calgary. Low spots were inundated and subways were filled with water to the height of eight or nine feet. Several cars were caught and completely submerged. The school from its vantage point on the north hill, while receiving full force of the downpour, suffered no damage.

July 29, 1944

Wireless School: Terrific is the only word to describe the combined wind hail dust and rain storm which struck Calgary this evening. Hail stones like small eggs pelted down, limbs were torn from trees and the skies and atmosphere were deep bronze in dust. Considerable property damage was reported but no personnel injury.

Shepard: A line squall hit the district about 1730 hours with a wind velocity which reached 85 miles per hour at its peak. All aircraft were in the air at the time. Thirteen made a safe landing at Shepard, the remaining 20 were distributed at High River which harbored 15, De Winton 4 and Vulcan one. Two of those which landed at De Winton FT265 and AJ970 received minor damage in the process.

August 1, 1944

Wireless School: Intensive and thorough training continues in face winning news which comes from all war zones. We are evidently making sure that this time the job will be thoroughly done and that we shall have of trained airmen too many rather than too few.

August 23, 1944

Another symbolic event in the series of events leading to the great climax toward which this Station as an integral part of the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan is working occurred today. Paris fell to loyal Frenchmen who have been organized underground since shortly after its occupation by "le Boche" and their hold was later strengthened by the entry of Allied troops.

August 25, 1944

Intensive training continues. Contrary to expectancy, the classes are getting bigger instead of smaller which taxes every Station facility involved to the utmost. The situation leaves little or no leeway for backward students, unexpected delays or a breathing period for staff between classes which latter hard working group feel that this in indeed the "total war" of Clauswitz.

September 4, 1944

The news from Europe over the weekend has been little short of sensational. We have advanced up the coast into Holland and at a speed which makes the blitzkrieg of 1940 look slow indeed. The news inevitably effects the morale and thinking of service personnel who are more and more pointing at the day when they will return to civilian life. They are again at a transitory stage after five years when everyone was adjusting themselves to the necessity of going to war. Labour day here affected only civilian personnel who had a holiday or may expect one later in lieu.

March 21, 1945

Organization Order 655

Disbandment of 2 WS Calgary and 2 WSFS Shepard Alberta

Wireless school training commitments have been sufficiently reduced to permit the disbandment of 2 WS Calgary, Alberta. It is intended to disband 2 WS Calgary and 2 WSFS Shepard, Alberta. 2 WS Calgary and 2 WSFS Shepard are to become inactive with the graduation of course 104 and 105 on 29 March 45 and are to disband effective April 14, 1945.

April 1, 1945

Ed: lots of repetitive information in the entries between this one and the last.

All messes were merged today in the airmen's mess. Officers, NCOs and airmen all have their special sections. Holy communion was celebrated with an attendance of 15. 36 Catholics



attended mass.

April 2, 1945

A special flag raising parade was held at 0745 hours in commemoration of the 21<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the founding of the RCAF. The CO addressed the parade upon the tasks which lay ahead of the RCAF. Procedure was agreed upon with the National Selective Service for the release of all employees upon disbandment of the school. From 1700 to 1900 hours the officers entertained the civilian employees and other ranks in the mess. A few hours flying was carried out in the morning and afternoon. Parade was held and working parties were detailed.

April 8, 1945

Remnants of a once large personnel attended the last Protestant and Catholic church parades to be held on this Station.

April 9, 1945

Midge, the pony, Station mascot since 1941 when she was won in a raffle by the late LAC later Sergeant Willigar was shipped to his parents in Parrsboro, Nova Scotia. The usual weekend prank of taking down the fire hose was executed again. It will be dried by the fire department and rehung.

April 10, 1945

After four years, the band was posted en masse to Gimli, Manitoba. They had contributed largely to Station atmosphere, their white belted uniforms and stirring music became a morale inspiring element to thousands of trainees and staff who called No 2 Wireless School home.

April 14, 1945

Official closing day. The majority of the work is done, inventory snarls have been unraveled. Personnel have all been posted. Civilians have been put through the protracted National Selective Service routine. In a word, men, material and equipment, the basic factors in any work, have been dealt with. A rear party has been appointed and it and a few others will do the final odds and ends inseparable with the Station's closing. Headed by the CO, a group of officers attended a memorial service delivered by Bishop H R Ragg of Calgary in the Pro Cathedral. At Shepard, MT cleared its inventory today and all vehicles returned to No 2 Wireless School. Employment of civilians ceased today. Special bus arranged for 1400 hours to take civilians off Station. Many sad farewells were noticed among civilian personnel. The closing of a station is rather a sad business.

From The Calgary Herald

## Discharged Midge—But Honorably Mascot Service Career To End In Nova Scotia Pasture

Calgary will say goodbye to a gallant pony when “Midge” the mascot of No 2 Wireless School leaves this week for Nova Scotia. Stationed at No 2 from December 1940 to August 1941, LAC Willigar of Parsboro, Nova Scotia took a chance on a Sunshine Fund raffle and found himself the possessor of a Shetland pony. No establishment could be found for the pony. Prepared for any emergency, however, the RCAF found a place for Willigar’s win. Midge was installed as the official mascot of No 2 Wireless School. She was stabled, groomed and fed by LAC Norrie of the fire section. A blanket was even designed for her use on official occasions. She participated in the commanding officers weekly station parades. She led Victory Loan and Stampeded parades and was scheduled to be in the forefront of the Victory Day parade. A year ago, Midge managed to sneak past the guard at the school and wandered two days undisturbed by Air Force blue. Found and returned to the school, a charge of being AWOL was dismissed for it was proved she had not had either annual leave nor a 48 for more than two years. LAC Willigar, owner of the pony, meanwhile completed his course and had proceeded to the bombing and gunnery school at Fingal thence overseas to active operations. On a flight over enemy territory Sgt Willigar was killed. His mother, Mrs E M Willigar of Parsboro, Nova Scotia has continued to take an active interest in Midge. Upon disbandment of the wireless school this week, the animal will receive her honorable discharge with the notation that her service conduct has been excellent.