

Reel C12,337

Number 5 Elementary Flying Training School, Lethbridge and High River, Alberta

July 1, 1940 to November 30, 1944

June 10, 1940

Organization Order No 29

Information: It has now become necessary to open the fifth elementary flying training school for the elementary training of pilots. This school will be operated by a civilian company using aircraft supplied by the RCAF. In addition to the civilian staff there will be a small RCAF supervisory staff. It is intended to form No 5 Elementary Flying Training School at Lethbridge, Alberta. No 5 EFTS is to open at Lethbridge on July 22, 1940 and will be operated by the Lethbridge Flying Training School Ltd under the supervision of an RCAF supervisory officer.

Aircraft: AMES is to arrange for 15 Moths (or Fleets) to be delivered to No 5 EFTS by June 24 or as soon thereafter as No 4 Training Command notifies that the company is ready to receive them. The remaining 12 aircraft are to be delivered by August 5. This will complete the aircraft establishment in accordance with appendix A.

July 2, 1940

Lethbridge, Alberta. F/O R F Gladden arrived.

July 3, 1940

F/L J L Berven arrived. Opened mail, mostly invoices.

July 6, 1940

Three carloads of eight Tiger Moths shipped last Thursday from Toronto. Mr Wilkinson and Mr Richardson, manager and secretary of the company here decided to see about change in sergeant's mess. Some fire extinguishers filled and placed in new buildings.

July 15, 1940

Investigated best means of arranging armament lectures and trying to obtain use of a machine gun. Unable to locate any. Investigated use of skeet and trap range at Lethbridge. Procured use of TCA hangar to store aircraft. TCA have allowed us to use their facilities temporarily.

July 19, 1940

Tested four Tiger Moth airplanes and flew them from the old airport. (Ed note - North Lethbridge, present site of Chrysler dealership) Cars containing aircraft in railway yards

guarded. Report made to Inspector General addressed to Calgary. S/L Murray arrived from Calgary and left a two-ton truck to be used as a crash tender.

July 22, 1940

Twenty five pupils arrived. Arranged quarters and issued bedding. Held roll call. Lethbridge Herald took pictures of pupils, requested not to take names or pictures of aircraft. Mr Watson of Lethbridge telephoned and said he had some sports equipment for the school. Cpl Stark took pupils to Lethbridge for haircut.

July 25, 1940

First flying instruction given this morning. New cook arrived for officers and NCOs mess. Two fire hose reels arrived and day latrines erected.

August 19, 1940

Twenty four students arrived from No 2 ITS Regina, Saskatchewan. F/O Montgomery and AC2 Crocker crashed at Wilson Siding approximately 1900 hours. Removed to Galt Hospital. Crocker in critical condition. Log books taken over.

August 20, 1940

AC2 Crocker died as a result of accident on 19/8/40. S/L Hampden phoned from Regina, suggested we put up as nice a show as possible for AC2 Crocker. Are to advise No 4 Training Command of place of funeral. W/C Bardon and F/L McKnight arrived from Regina to inspect crash and hold Court of Enquiry.

September 3, 1940

Locks on irrigation ditches opened and flooded sewage ditches. RCMP advised and are investigating.

October 10, 1940

Flying washed out on account of high wind, no flying in afternoon due to high wind.

October 12, 1940

F/L Sharpe delivered an aircraft from High River to this Station.

November 8, 1940

No heat in the hangar, engines hard to start in cold weather. Icing conditions at 800 feet. Heat

turned on in hangar at 2200 hours.

November 16, 1940

Aircraft 4058 crashed south of the Station. T/Sgt K Piper and LAC Sinclair J T both killed. Three 50 hour tests.

December 8, 1940

High wind. Instructors and pupils moved to High River to fly from that field. High wind stopped flying in High River. One plane forced down at Fort Macleod.

December 9, 1940

Due to drop in temperature there was difficulty in getting aircraft started at High River. Weather good at this Station. Aircraft returned from High River at 1430 hours. Flying continued here.

December 18, 1940

G/C G H Howsam arrived by air today. Six Tiger Moth aircraft put on a display for the opening of No 7 SFTS Macleod returning at 1745 hours.

January 9, 1941

Deputy Minister; Mr Duncan, and A/C A N Cowley and W/C Hampden arrived by air 2025 hours to inspect this unit. F/L K E Krug posted to No 1 EFTS Malton, Ontario, F/L R F Gladden assumes command of this unit. Flying hours 1. High winds 35 to 60 miles per hour.

March 14, 1941

Weather good, flying washed out at noon on account of muddy condition of the airport. Two fifty hour tests. Movies for March of Time being taken during afternoon.

March 28, 1941

Due to the bumpy condition of the air during the mid-day, the hours of flying were altered as follows: flying to commence at 0700 hours until 1100 hours and in the afternoon from 1530 hours to 1900 hours. During the morning flying one student LAC May J A had difficulty in the air with his machine and was doubtful about his ability to land. All accident equipment was rushed to the landing field and through the efforts of an instructor who took to the air, he was guided safely home. There were nine maximum possible flying hours today.

April 2, 1941

A heavy frost blanketed the ground this morning but the sky was clear and bright. The Auxiliary War Service Council was host to class 20 at the final hockey game in Lethbridge between Trail and Lethbridge at 2030 hours. Flying was washed out at 1700 hours due to a strong wind. R78619 LAC Lynas J was granted special leave of seven days in response to a wire that his mother was dying in London, Ontario. Through the spirited efforts of the airmen he was given transportation by TCA.

April 6, 1941

Mr S D Armour, Deputy Minister, visited the Station and accompanied by F/L R F Gladden flew to High River at 1330 hours to inspect the new Station under construction. (Editor's note: High River was an early RCAF base long before the war.)

May 1, 1941

Organization Order 123
Reformation and Relocation of No 5 Elementary Flying Training School

Information: It has now become necessary to move No 5 Elementary Flying Training School from Lethbridge, Alberta to High River, Alberta and convert it to a double elementary flying training school. Lethbridge will become a bombing and gunnery school on the completion of the present building program. No 5 EFTS is to move to High River and reform as a double elementary flying training school in time to reopen by June 21, 1941.

May 24, 1941

Smoke drifted down from the northwest and early in the morning visibility grew worse and flying was washed out. R78207 T/Sgt Smith V C and R86506 LAC Williamson on a routine flight were killed in a crash fifteen miles southwest of Kenyon Field. After a long search that lasted until nearly 1700 hours the wrecked machine was found in an isolated part of the Indian reserve. (Editor's note: Kenyon field is the name of the Lethbridge airport. The Indian reserve is the Blood reserve.)

May 31, 1941

A cloudy, rainy day and flying was washed out early in the morning. Maximum possible flying hours three. Aerodrome unserviceability nil. The strength of the Station at this date was officers 6, NCOs 6, other ranks 72. Number of aircraft 30; type Tiger Moth. Total number of hour flown 1,796.20.

June 2, 1941

Thirty five airmen in charge of F/O E R Hoover took part in the Victory Loan parade in Lethbridge at 1030 hours. The flight was headed by the Macleod RCAF band and Dorothy Bramley, drum majorette from California, who held the keen interest of the public with her acrobatics while on the march and skilful manipulation of the baton.

June 14, 1941

The British High Commissioner to Canada, Honourable Malcolm MacDonald, A/C A T N Cowley AOC No 4 TC Regina, and S/L C A Davidson, Works and Buildings, arrived at this Station at 1900 hours and were the guests of the officers mess until 2100 hours when the Right Honourable Malcolm MacDonald and private secretary left for Vancouver by TCA.

June 20, 1941

Another windy day. A farewell dance was sponsored by Mrs C A Long, Mrs T Y Love and Mr Ralph Johnson of Lethbridge and all personnel of the Station at the Marquis Hotel. A very pleasant evening was enjoyed by all.

June 23, 1941

Another extremely hot day, the mercury reaching 100 degrees in the shade. The last of the graduating class 29, six trainees, left on leave prior to reporting to No 3 SFTS Calgary.

June 27, 1941

Class 29 flew to High River, leaving Lethbridge at 0430 hours. F/O E R Hoover, F/O B C Taylor, F/O V M Terry, Sgt C W Fines, Sgt Kirby G L, and Cpl Glazier D H reported to High River.

June 29, 1941

Flying was in progress for the first time at High River commencing at 0600 hours and continuing all day. The only available water supply was in the airmen's quarters. All messing was handled in the airmen's mess as other quarters were not complete.

July 7, 1941

This being Calgary Stampede week flights were being given permission to visit the fair from 1300 hours to 2000 hours. Flights will attend daily in order of numbers, four and five attending tomorrow.

July 11, 1941

At 1930 hours an escort party and pallbearers escorted the body of R92059 LAC Daly J W from the undertaking parlours to the southbound train. The remains were bound for Los Angeles, California, the home of his parents.

August 4, 1941

Two flights, through leaving their hangar room very untidy and dirty, were given one hour of drill as a reminder that cleanliness must be practised and observed on this Station.

September 23, 1941

The opening day and this Station is a hive of excitement. Huge crowds gathered around 1100 hours. At approximately 1500 hours A/M Karod (?), A/C Cowley, A/C Leckie, G/C Banting, G/C Lord Douglas Hamilton and F/O W R Hamilton on arrival in a Lockheed were escorted to the reviewing stand directly in front of which were formed the trainees in a hollow square. The Macleod Air Force band in charge of F/O W W Coghill paraded on the right of the squadron.

September 26, 1941

No flying all day. The ground was covered with six inches of snow, the first fall of the season. The new course of trainees, 84 in all, reported from No 4 ITS Edmonton on the 2012 train last night.

September 28, 1941

Sunday the usual morning divine service was held and in the evening 50 or more trainees attended a social evening in the High River United Church. They were transported to and from High River by local citizens.

October 3, 1941

At 1430 hours the RCAF officers of this unit were invited to attend the showing of "Sergeant York" in the Prince of Wales Theatre in High River, Alberta as guests of His Royal Highness The Duke of Windsor. A guard of honour in charge of F/L R R Livermore waited at the entrance and gave the royal salute as the Duke and Duchess drove up. Then the invited guests followed His Highness into the theatre where an interesting film was enjoyed. (Editor's note: The Duke kept a ranch in the foothills near High River).

October 7, 1941

Word has just been received that the Duke of Windsor will visit the school tomorrow at 1315

hours. Invited guests will attend.

October 8, 1941

The time for the Duke's visit has been altered from 1315 hours to 1115 hours. The Duke arrived at the specified hour and in company with A/C A T N Cowley, G/C D Greig, F/L R F Gladden and the manager, Mr D K Yorath, made a hurried round of the Station. Then the Duke and his RCAF and civilian friends were entertained in the RCAF officers mess where the Duke shook hands with all present. Refreshments were served. Many were disappointed that the Duchess was not present. However, the Duke apologised for her absence.

October 17, 1941

S/L J R Frizzle reported to this Station in connection with navigation examinations. An excellent flying day. In the evening the trainees were given the first dance on the Station. Local girls were provided by organizations in the town. The music was supplied by the Station and proved very satisfactory. Coffee and refreshments were served at 2200 hours.

October 25, 1941

Excavation has begun on the rink and it is hoped that in a short time all will be in readiness for the winter pastime of hockey. Fifty seven graduates of course 37 left for Dauphin, Manitoba at 1815 hour by Greyhound bus to Calgary where they will entrain on the 2015 train. F/Sgt C W Fines was in charge. Fresh antelope has found its way to the cookhouse and all personnel are enjoying a change from roast beef.

November 27, 1941

An excellent flying day. The trainees were finger printed as well as the personnel. The weekly picture show was well attended. The DMS A/C R W Ryan and party, F/O Friesen G A, S/L A C Stone and pilot F/O J B Bisson arrived by Cessna at approximately 1600 hours. While landing the Cessna the undercarriage did not function. This resulted in two broken props.

January 8, 1942

A social evening was held for CSO R F Gladden by the RCAF officers and their wives and friends in the officers mess. A sterling silver cigarette case was presented to the CSO. The new CSO F/L W Smith was present and officially welcomed. A handing over ceremonial parade was called at 1345 hours. F/L Smith took over command of the unit at this parade.

March 3, 1942

The warm sun has practically melted all the snow. Spring evidently is just around the corner. The Victory Loan drive has netted to date \$5, 550 contributed by 88 trainees. More is

forthcoming.

March 28, 1942

The majority of course 48 left the Station on leave and reporting to their respective units April 12. The proficiency awards for course number 48 went to LACs Findlay and Griede. Some of CR 52 reporting from Regina arrived today.

April 16, 1942

A gusty day that washed flying out at intervals. Voting commenced at 0900 hours for the Canadian service voters of this unit.

April 20, 1942

A dust storm came up in the afternoon and grounded all machines. F/L W S W Breese reported to this Station and gave a lecture to the armament class on aircraft recognition.

May 1, 1942

Total strength: officers 8; other ranks 343. The officers of this Station were photographed in the mess at 1300 hours by Mr Lane, High River, Alberta. Lt D G McGregor, dental officer from No 4 Training Command, reported to this Station at 0900 hours for duty.

May 6, 1942

F/L W W Smith, CSO, F/O G M V Hanbridge, F/O R D Watt and three civilian instructors left by air with six Tiger Moths at 0700 hours for Prince Albert, Saskatchewan.

May 11, 1942

Aerodrome unserviceable on account of rain. Two flights were called out at 1330 hours to build up the dam west of High River. By 1600 hours all of High River west of the track was under water too deep for passenger cars. At approximately 2200 hours more personnel were called out to build up the dike gates protecting the landing field.

May 12, 1942

F/L W W Smith and F/O J Palmer flew provisions to a stranded farmer and his wife up the river. The river dropped one foot during the day.

May 28, 1942

Twenty five Americans left this unit by Greyhound bus at 1030 hours for No 2 Wireless School,

Calgary where they will wait to interview the joint Canadian American board.

June 22, 1942

Thirty three trainees arrived from No 16 EFTS (Edmonton) to be attached to this unit for completion of training. They arrived as a self-sustained unit complete with instructors and aircraft.

June 24, 1942

A board of officers composed of S/L W R Pearse C2142 president, F/L E R Hoover C4127, F/L A W Vanderburg as members and Mr D K Yorath, manager and Mr H Richardson representing the company, assembled this am for the purpose of handing over the aerodrome buildings and services at No 5 EFTS to the civilian operating company. Rain practically grounded all machines.

July 8, 1942

The picture "Manhunt" was shown to the students and was greatly appreciated. A tennis court is under construction and the hockey rink is well underway. Cinders are being used as a surface.

July 14, 1942

The Station is taking on a very neat, colourful appearance. A very marked improvement over a year ago is noticed. Shrubs, flowers and a good growth of grass has been well worth the effort. Max possible flying hours 12.

July 31, 1942

The total strength of the unit at this date is as follows: RCAF officers 7; RCAF airmen 17; trainees 237. The aircraft strength is as follows: Tiger Moth strength 73, serviceable 71.

September 6, 1942

A church parade was held at the United Church, Reverend J Bainbridge officiating. The parade formed up at the Station and was transported to High River, reforming at the skating rink and marching to the church. The parade created much local interest and all seating available in the church was used. The school closed down for the day.

September 9, 1942

The CSO, F/L W W Smith, was on an inspection of No 32 EFTS Bowden, Alberta, accompanied by the manager Mr D K Yorath. At 1140 hours, a report was received of an accident 2.5 miles north and 1.5 miles west of High River, Alberta. F/L A W Vanderburg SMO proceeded with the

ambulance to the scene and found the aircraft on fire with the occupants killed. The crash tender was called to put out the fire. Mr J Patten, assistant CFI, informed No 4 Training command that it was a Crane aircraft. At 1440 hours S/L R Byers, F/L G Gorrill and F/L J D Wallace arrived by air from No 3 SFTS Calgary to investigate returning by air at 1700 hours. The occupants of the plane were LAC Wicklem R J, LAC Merrical G S and LAC Lucas W A, all graduated of this unit. The civilian staff of No 5 EFTS deserve special mention for the assistance they gave. F/L W W Smith returned to this Station at 1730 hours.

September 11, 1942

Weather clear and sunny. The court of enquiry finished here and proceeded by air to No 3 SFTS Calgary at 1430 hours. The marriage of Barbara Adelia Hodgson and F/O John Duncan Stewart was performed in the officers mess at 1500 hours, Reverend J Bainbridge officiating. All members and honorary members of the mess were present. The graduating party for course number 60 was held at 1700 hours in the airmen's lounge. The proficiency award was won by R57519 Cpl Harman C C, a remustered fabric worker from No 3 Repair Depot, Vancouver, BC.

September 12, 1942

An inspection of the Station was made today by J L Apedale Esq financial advisor, civil flying school, Department of National Defence for Air, Ottawa, Ontario; Mr M A Seymore, president Canadian Flying Clubs; Mr G Morrison, assistant to Mr Apedale; S/L R F Gladden, No 4 Training Command; and the officers of the RCAF supervisory staff finishing at 1400 hours at which time a very successful meeting was held by them with all the department heads and the RCAF supervisory officers. Mr J L Apedale expressed his appreciation for the high efficient standard this Station had made in the EFTS field.

October 6, 1942

A routine day. The civilian company are preparing a stage for the Lifebuoy Concert party in one of the old High River flying club hangars.

October 8, 1942

G/C B F D Halliday, Officer Commanding Number 10 Repair Depot, visited this Station to view the clothes pressing setup here.

October 30, 1942

WO2 Fines C W was cleared from this Station on being posted to Davidson. There was a dance held by the NCOs in the evening at which the company made a very unexpected act of appreciation toward WO2 Fines in acknowledgement of his services. The managing director being away appointed Mr H G Richardson to speak for him and presented him with a leather

Gladstone bag. It is also felt the Station will miss this very efficient warrant officer.

November 6, 1942

Tiger Moth aircraft number 5926 instructor T/Sgt Lailey J W R100326 and pupil pilot LAC Yakimchuk J R150906 were unable to recover from a spin which started at an altitude of 5,000 feet. Both bailed out and were uninjured. The aircraft was an A category crash. The proficiency award for course 64 was won by Sgt Davies I H. He obtained 95 percent in navigation, the highest mark ever attained at this Station.

November 19, 1942

Rumours are active on the Station respecting the change to RCAF flying personnel which the supervisory staff are unable to answer. Where they (rumours) start is a mystery.

November 30, 1942

Aircraft on type November 30: Tiger Moth 62; Cornells 15.

December 1, 1942

The flying instructors were informed by the manager at the dinner yesterday evening that they would be recalled to the RCAF as of December 1, 1942. The RCAF staff have not received any authority to act. The weather unsettled and colder.

January 7, 1943

Weather favourable and mild. Due to shortage of orderly room staff, returns are not going out on time and the present staff are working over twelve hours daily. Arrangements are being made to take publications over by the civilian company to relieve some work from them.

Editor's note: there are several references to the relief landing field but no indication given as to where it was. Trace this down locally. Believe it was Frank Lake.

January 22, 1943

Temperature improved to 40 degrees below (from minus 52 yesterday). Washout except for weather check. Course 69 have only had seven 60 hour checks. Weather makes it impossible to finish them. Permission has been granted to hold for improved weather. All doubtful cases transferred to course 70. This gave 32 graduates, seven being posted to No 7 SFTS and 25 posted to 15 SFTS, 14 transferred to course 70 and four to No 1 Reselection Centre.

February 9, 1943

Another cold wave, flying restricted to dual in the morning. Heavy overcast and icing conditions cause washout at 1030 hours. Dual and solo in afternoon. No night flying. S/L W W Smith is spending every available minute with the new squadron commanders reorganizing the squadron and supervising the modification of the night flying flare path equipment.
February 12, 1943

One of the old direct entry pilots (wingless) was discharged on DRO number 9D Feb 12, 1943 "his services being no longer required". He did a very good job in the early days of the school but was unable to keep pace with progress or adapt himself to service conditions. He leaves with the best wishes of all.

April 11, 1943

Night flying was washed out at midnight due to wind. All the courses are on time, course 75 completing their examinations final. The landscaping of the aircraft recognition room has been completed and a great deal of credit is due Sgt W A Ostrom for his work in this area. The renovation of the officers mess has also been completed. A new signals area has been constructed. The School has taken on a contract with the RCAF for the repair and painting of the old buildings. This work is now being commenced. The surface water has all been drained from the aerodrome but the subsoil is still saturated making it impossible to use heavy equipment such graders etc.

June 12, 1943

C46ACR Collis B R M (AFHQ) arrived by PMC at 1400 hours from Calgary departing via PMC at 1800 hours for Calgary. The purpose of his visit was to ascertain criticisms on Cornells and matters regarding parts for same. Cornell FH7576 P/O G Sinclair J20579 instructor and R194621 LAC Lindsay G W were involved in a crash three miles east of the airport at 0900 hours. Both the instructor and the student were killed. Cornell aircraft FH819 was shipped to M and C Repair Depot at Prince Albert. Night flying only was carried out today.

July 16, 1943

The COs parade was held at 1300 hours during which the commanding officer read an official notice from AFHQ of the award of the DFM to Sgt McBeath H L u/p. During the march past the CO had Sgt McBeath in the saluting box and asked him to take the salute as the wing marched past. LAC Laughman RAAF visited the Station to gather material regarding EFTSs for a report to the Australian Government.

August 11, 1943

Swing Club was held and proved very popular but not so with female employees when airmen had to go to bed at 2030 hours. Course 84 still writing exams.

August 16, 1943

Maximum possible flying time 12 hours: actual 12 hours. The Elks dance hall in High River, Alberta was put out of bounds at owners request owing to building settling due to floods.
September 11, 1943

One accident, crash on aerodrome on instrument take off. Instructor F/O A G Jones and trainee LAC Haight W S course 86 - aircraft Cornell Mark I FH851. An "A" category crash. Both were pinned under aircraft when it struck ground through loss of thrust. Aircraft did not catch fire. Pilot and student were able to break coupe top and get out. A much wanted disciplinarian came in today, Sgt McColm A W S to help acting Sgt Jones, our only other "discip" with his many duties including the new duty fitness program.

September 17, 1943

We gave the boys a surprise on the commanding officers parade today - enter the No 5 EFTS brass band, 12 strong consisting of civilian personnel and cadets from those working on the Station. They were a complete success playing soft music when the commanding officer SL W W Smith AFC was inspecting the parade. Although nervous, increased in tempo and gusto before the parade ended. It smartened up the step considerably on the march past. A wonderful sendoff for the course 86 graduation class to be given at banquet tonight.

September 21, 1943

Weather good and clear, no wind. One accident or near accident. A student Sgt Westman, course 89, on first solo could not make a landing at relief field until twelfth approach. Finally landed safely. Time to land: one hour and thirty minutes.

September 25, 1943

All flying washed out from 1100 hours for Station's sports day and anniversary celebrations. Parachute jump and flying display in afternoon. No night flying detail. This being our second anniversary and everybody busy on last minute work to have all arrangements completed for the sports event, final arrangements for the carnival, entertaining of visitors, big dance at night etcetera. The second anniversary of No 5 EFTS ended quietly with a big dance in the recreation hall. A splendid day, hot and cloudless. Truly a fitting climax to two years of an enviable work by those responsible for the management and training program since No 5 EFTS entered the CTE.

September 30, 1943

Weather CAVU, relief field in use and northeast-southwest runways now open and in use at last. This should cut down our taxiing accidents. First aid examination on for all instructors. Personnel as of 30 September, 1943: 243 airmen and other ranks; 5 officers. Aircraft strength:

Cornell Mark I - 59, two unserviceable; Cornell Mark II - 17, ten unserviceable. Total hours flown during September: 8,440:20.

October 10, 1943

Sunday, no flying. All staff and trainees on a "48" except C Flight who were on duty watch and church parade. Two wreaths were placed on the grave of LAC Redwood R E W RAF1324380 of London, England which were sent to commemorate his death one year ago by his parents and friends. Photographs of the placing of the wreaths by C4137 F/L W H Coghill, the adjutant, on the grave were forwarded to his relatives with an appropriate letter of condolence by the commanding officer C878 S/L W W Smith AFC.

October 14, 1943

Weather turned cold in the morning. Ground personnel found it difficult to start engines as no heat in old hangar. New hangar not completed. It was found necessary to dismantle heating unit in old hangar owing to the foundation having sunk a matter of seven inches and as our tarmac crew is 75% girls, the resultant delay in getting engines started gave us the difference of one hour in the possible flying hours carried out. We had a visit from C14965 P/O A A Aldridge of No 3 SFTS, educational officer, who gave classification tests to our ground staff.

October 19, 1943

Course number 92 started flying. Heard a lot of beefing around the officers mess by the instructors about having to take aircraft recognition lectures as from today but as the first day's lectures are completed tonight they seem to be quite interested and it is hard to find a seat in the officers mess for aircraft recognition pamphlets.

October 22, 1943

Complete washout owing to snow, low ceiling and poor visibility, a good day to institute a new flying policy. Starting Monday, October 25, the old shift system is out and we install a straight eight hour flying day and instead of the two squadrons of four flights each we now have two squadrons of two flights each with a red and a blue group per flight with the innovation of an examining flight to standardise the testing of pupils on their 20 and 60 hour checks.

October 25, 1943

Flying washed out in the morning at 1130 hours for Victory Loan meeting. All personnel have to attend. The speakers were chairman D K Yurath, managing director of this School, who introduced all speakers who included W/C L P Kent C2250, command accountant, who represented No 4 Training Command and was the chief speaker for the RCAF personnel. The other notables were Mr A L Smith KC, well known Calgary lawyer, and our commanding officer. The rendering of songs by Miss Odette de Foras, who was accompanied by the Station band, who also entertained the Station personnel until the speakers arrived and was well

appreciated by the audience. In fact the whole program consisting of the Station band, numbers by the Station orchestra, movies and songs created an excellent atmosphere to start our drive off with a bang and put us over the top on the first day, paving the way for a record subscription from No 5 EFTS whose objective was \$30,000 on the fifth Victory Loan.
October 30, 1943

Wire received from the AOC of the award of the Efficiency Pennant for EFTSs to this Station. This pennant which is called the Minister's Efficiency Pennant is a coveted trophy that is hung to the flag pole for three months and is awarded to the most efficient school of its class for a three month period (July to September).

November 21, 1943

Sunday there was church parade for B blue flight. There was a big soccer game at 1430 hours between De Winton No 31 EFTS and this Station. The new sports field with new goal posts, lined with lime and rolled was in good condition. There was keen interest and the results favoured our team who won by five points the score being six to one. Two of the visiting team had injuries that were unavoidable, one chap with two cracked ribs when he fell on the ball and the other a broken finger. A return game has been arranged to be played at De Winton next Sunday. The visiting team were given supper and invited to the movie show "Something to Shout About" in the recreation hall at night.

November 26, 1943

Weather today was clear and visibility unlimited, a nice day for the commanding officers parade held on the tarmac in front of number 1 hangar. There were three squadrons in a hollow square with the graduating class Course 91 lined up front and centre. The graduating class was inspected and then marched past the commanding officer F/L Palmer J E DFM AFC. The course graduating were in the place of honour leading the parade. The Station band played the Air Force march past. One bad accident at 1645 hours "A" category crash 23 miles west of Nanton involving a/c Cornell Mark I FH835 with flying instructor R52034 WO2 Price N R and student R200782 LAC Yousie H. Word came of the crash at about 1930 hours while the banquet was in progress for the graduating course 91. The commanding officer left with the ambulance but as both the occupants of the plane had walked five miles for help in a very shaky condition, one with a broken nose and the other with a sprained ankle, they were taken to Nanton by a farmer and phoned in from there for the ambulance. Cause of the accident was loss of RPMs by engine on routine training flight making it impossible to hold height. Pilot carried out forced landing on hillside. AC struck heavily and swung.

December 22, 1943

Weather was clear and visibility unlimited. Today is a big day on the Station. It is the children's Christmas Tree Party at 1630 hours in the recreation hall. All children of both civilian and service personnel are invited and it was a big success with Mr H Fraser taking the part of Father

Christmas. About 100 children came and presents and a party helped put the children and their parents in a Christmas spirit for Christmas Day. As well as the presents, two Cocker Spaniel pups went to two lucky children and a funny incident occurred in the morning before the party. A search had to be made to get the two Spaniel pups for presents to the children and after a lot of trouble two good pups were purchased for delivery today. At about 1030 in the morning, a stray bitch that had come into the Station about two days earlier proceeded to the administration building to the front entrance and got inside to the lounge seat and had seven pups in front of a crowd of civilian and service spectators. The pups were well looked after as well as the mother. The breed is unknown, both for the mother and the pups, but seven lucky personnel got pups.

January 6, 1944

Weather clear but cool. All flying scheduled carried out and completed. Course 93 finished final examinations today and have practically finished flying. Course 94 has completed night flying. Away ahead on all courses and no accidents so far this month. Movie tonight "Princess O'Rourke." The contractor is working hard on officers new quarters and also has started work on enlargement of officers mess. F/O F Reynolds posted in today to take over navigation flight from P/O Bray R B.

January 19, 1944

A westerly gusty wind prevailed all day and only dual flying was done. A bad prairie fire started in the Hartell district about 25 miles west of the Station. Two bus loads of useful employment airmen were sent out to help beat out the fire and the crash truck was also sent. The fire was gotten under control about 1930 hours and the airmen were brought back to the Station and given a bang-up dinner and a bottle of beer. They were a tired, dirty lot of airmen when they came in but had done a good job as the wind was about 30 miles per hour and heading toward the Town of High River and the Station.

January 24, 1944

Weather still holds out clear and no wind to speak of. Night flying completed. We have our fingers crossed - so far no accidents this month, not even a small one and another extraordinary thing has happened. We have a course "wonder course" number 97, the first we ever have had that has soloed 100 percent and all passed their 20 hour check. If they should all pass ground and flying the directing manager has promised the biggest celebration that has ever happened anywhere (directing manager Yurath). The flying instructor, the ground staff and the students are all working hard to get the 100 percent "impossible" pass.

January 31, 1944

The end of the month and no accidents. Less students per instructor, new runways and ten weeks to finish a course may all have contributed to this factor and if course 97 finishes 100 percent it will tend to prove this supposition.

March 10, 1944

Flying washed out at 1130 for a graduates parade and word received that A/V/M Housam G R Air Officer commanding No 4 TC to arrive at 1330 hours by plane to present certificates to our first 100 percent course number 97. The parade was formed up in a hollow square on the tarmac of number 2 hangar and as the CO S/L W W Smith AFC was on leave and F/L J E Palmer DCM AFC was acting CO, the parade was taken by F/L J E Palmer and on arrival of the AOC the parade was called to attention and the general salute sounded. The ADM inspected the graduating class and presented certificates to the graduates and the honour student R222126 LAC McMullen C A was asked to remain at the saluting base by the AOC. At night a banquet was held in the airmen's mess, the AOC sending his regrets that he could not attend.

April 3, 1944

A fatal accident today, our first since the beginning of August last year. The pilot killed was P/O J O Christie DFC J17256 on a routine solo flight. It is thought he stalled on a gliding turn and spun in. The accident occurred three quarter miles south of Azure on the rail road track. An "A" category crash at 1715 hours, aircraft Mk II Cornell number 13880. An unfortunate incident to a man who won the DFC on operations overseas to come back and be killed while learning to fly. Weather was good, clear and no clouds and has warmed up allowing our outdoor sports and physical training program to get into high peak. Course number 99 graduates this week.

April 19, 1944

Weather has cleared. Course number 101 writing final exams. Useful employment constructing new hazards for the commando course and helping construct an old hangar into a stable for ten horses. We expect soon to secure these horses. Grounds are looking good and spring is just around the corner.

May 16, 1944

Night flying had to be washed out because of a terrific down draught over High River town that nearly brought disaster to planes taking off for night flying. This down draught preceded a storm front that did not quite reach the Station and the trainees had so much difficulty after taking off gaining altitude that in some instances near collisions over house tops was narrowly avoided only by turning away at great risk as planes were being forced towards the ground with a terrific down draught which seemed to be directly over the town of High River for a width of a thousand yards. The officers mess is now nearly completed with only a few minor furnishings required and meals have been served since last Saturday. The show tonight "Let's Face It" at 2000 hours.

May 27, 1944

Dual and solo all day washed out early as only one flight flying and opening of officers mess

tonight. Mess opened with a bang. The AOC A/V/M Housam from No 4 TC and G/C Fraser, Number 19 SFTS and many other notables from No 4 TC came down. The mess was decorated with great profusion with flowers of every kind. Everybody enjoyed themselves amid surroundings that gave off an atmosphere of gaiety and enjoyed a supper that was fit for a king. The complimentary remarks on the interior decorations and the general appearance of No 5 EFTS new officers mess from the Yurath monumental massive fireplace to the exclusive setting of the ladies powder room was such that even a dutchess would have turned green with envy at the Jacobian panelled ceilings and soft tones of clear varnished pine covering the walls of the main lounge with its furnishings of deep leather lounge, easy chairs and chesterfields, long coloured drapes and then the ante room and bar. This seemed to give off a restful cool feeling to a hot afternoon in the darkened windows and cream coloured furniture artificially lighted. At one end is the bar and its contents to add a fillip to a long hard day's work. Yes, we are proud of our mess at this Station, it is worth visiting.

May 31, 1944

Personnel strength as of 31 May , 1944: RCAF officers 67; airmen and other ranks 40. RAAF one officer. Trainees RCAF 24 officers, 176 other ranks. RAF nine officers, 49 airmen and other ranks. RAAF one officer. Aircraft strength: Cornell I 26 and one unserviceable; Cornell Mk II 54 and two unserviceable.

June 6, 1944

An historic occasion - the invasion of France commenced today at dawn English time. Flying washed out today at 1030 hours for the morning period. A general muster of all Station personnel was held at 1100 hours for prayer services for the success of this great venture. Movie tonight "Four Jills and a Jeep."

June 19, 1944

The barber shop opened today after being closed for nearly a month. Haircuts are now 35 cents, the days for haircuts being Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

June 21, 1944

Dual only in AM due to poor visibility and low clouds. Dual and solo in PM. A call for PNBs to remuster to WAG, AG or flight engineer has come in. So far the results for those taking a pilot course has been limited and the rush expected has not materialized although the inducement for an early posting overseas if remustering to AG or WAG.

June 22, 1944

Our Harvard arrived today, aircraft FS862. This is for the instructors' use and is a welcome diversion. Movie tonight "Tender Comrades."

July 18, 1944

The building of a new swimming hole in the river is nearly completed. This will be used by both town and service personnel. It has dressing rooms for both male and female, diving boards, raft and roped off portions for non-swimmers, the grading of banks and clearing brush etc being done by useful employment boys under the supervision of two officers who have finished their grading course. Swimming lessons for all flying personnel are arranged under supervision of the school PT and D sergeant and this pool is proving very popular and is a decided acquisition to the Station. It is located just above the bridge in the town of High River and is about two and one half miles from the Station on the Highwood River.

August 10, 1944

The weather was fine locally but a number of squalls with apparently some heavy rain not far away during the night. At night the weather cleared and flying took place under a clear star studded sky. Numerous applications have been received for harvest leave. The personnel are very enthusiastic about this matter and we expect to be swamped before the end of the week. F/L J E Palmer, veteran flyer of Western Canada, pioneer in Canadian aviation and formerly CO of No 5 EFTS still retained with school by operating company.

September 15, 1944

Today DROs has an entry: SOS C9218 F/L Palmer J E DCM AFC on posting to No 4 TC admin unit. This spells goodbye to F/L Palmer as a member of the RCAF as he is to be retired to the reserve. This we all here regret as he has been a member of 5 EFTS as a civilian instructor and then as an instructor in the RCAF thence to acting chief flying instructor and acting CO for eight months during the absence of S/L W W Smith AFC.

October 20, 1944

The AOC A/V/M G R Housam arrived by air to carry out an inspection of the Station. The Station flying operations were carried out as usual until 1200 hours. All Station personnel were fallen in for the AOCs parade, inspection and march past. The AOC introduced the deputy minister of national defence for air Mr Herbert Gordon who spoke to the personnel complimenting one and all for "such a fine Station." All personnel of the staff, civilian and service, were present in the recreation hall when Mr Yurath announced that the Station is going to close almost immediately. Everyone seems to be sorry the Station is folding up but pleased to get definite news giving them a better chance to plan for the future.

October 31, 1944

Flying was washed out during the latter part of the morning due to the weather but it was resumed at 1320 hours. LAC Williams L C K222543 of course 110A is the only student training

and the balance of the flying was done by instructors of refresher courses.

November 10, 1944

Flying washed out 1130 hours due to poor weather conditions. All instructional and practice flying is discontinued effective this day. Only incidental ferry trips will be made and they will not be recorded in this diary. A group picture was taken of the staff officers and various department heads. The final Station farewell dance was held in the rec hall. The dance was a big success and will long be remembered by the personnel. The party was also attended by the instructors who returned from TD at 2 FIS to clear this unit on posting to No 2 FIS.

November 11, 1944

Due to the small number of personnel on the unit, Armistice Day was observed by the placing of wreaths on the graves in the Highwood Cemetery. There was no service held.

November 13, 1944

The Station was a hive of activity with most of the personnel returning equipment etc and clearing in anticipation of sudden postings. Numerous instructors received word of proposed retirements. C6089 F/L Wheten, armaments, arrived by air at 1000 hours to supervise disposal of the explosives etc.

November 15, 1944

Effective this date No 5 EFTS is disbanded and the establishment has been withdrawn. The flying instructors have been posted to Claresholm, Vulcan, Pearce, Calgary, North Battleford and Shepard. There are 15 officers being retired from the Service and one officer successful grad of PSTS12 not yet posted. There is one sergeant (Link) not yet posted pending completion of transfer to US Armed Forces. The final swing club dance was held in the rec hall.

November 20, 1944

Officers and NCO dining rooms closed. Lounge rooms in both messes still open. Miss J Bartman SOS (our only civilian stenographer employed by the RCAF).

November 30, 1944

End of month. No 4 Training Command moving to No 2 AC. Farewell messages published in DROs from C G Power and A/V/M G R Housam. A movie tonight "Bowery to Broadway." The month end review is one of very few words. Anything that may be said would only be of the loss of personal friends whom we associated with at No 5 EFTS whose establishment was closed on the fifteenth of November and whose identity as a Station ends on the fifteenth of December. To many of those who went along from the beginning to the end of this Station and there are

many, both service and civilian, the closing is one of loss for in the four and one half years of its operation, no finer record of operation has been achieved by any similar EFTS station and to many the closing will end a chapter of happy associations and work well done for the country and the Empire and the Allied cause.

W W Smith, Squadron Leader

Officer Commanding RCAF personnel No 5 EFTS High River, Alberta