

Reel C12,354/ C12,355/ C12,356

Number 34 Service Flying Training School, Medicine Hat, Alberta

March 14, 1941 - November 17, 1944

February 26, 1941

Wilmslow, England: No 34 Service Flying Training School was formed on this date under the command of G/C A ap Ellis CBE. The first echelon of the school consisting of 38 officers, four warrant officers and 639 airmen embarked at Gourock, Scotland per HMT Batory on route to Canada.

February 27, 1941

HMT Batory sailed from Gourock with the first echelon of No 34 SFTS. G/C A Ellis CBE was appointed officer commanding troops aboard and F/L T D Ross was appointed ship's adjutant. (From February 28 to March 9 shows en route)

March 9, 1941

HMT Batory arrived at Halifax.

March 10, 1941

The first echelon of No 34 SFTS disembarked. G/C A Ellis CBE, S/L C Scragg MBE and S/L H D Connor proceeded to headquarters Ottawa for instructions. The remainder of the personnel embarked in two trains for Medicine Hat with the exception of the following officers: F/O A F M McLean, F/O A Q Adams, P/O T Rhodes, P/O R E Sears, P/O A A Purkiss-Ginn and P/O K C Wales who were posted to Toronto and 50 airmen who were detailed to proceed on detachment to each of the SFTS schools at Macleod, Saskatoon, Calgary and Dauphin.

March 11, 1941

On route by train Montreal.

March 12, 1941

On route Lake Superior.

March 13, 1941

On route Winnipeg.

March 14, 1941

The first echelon of No 34 SFTS arrived at Medicine Hat and the reception given by the local townspeople was most impressive. No less than 40 private cars were at the station and conveyed personnel and their baggage to aerodrome in relays. Personnel of No 34 SFTS commenced to take over from No 108 party who were responsible for opening up the Station. S/L C Scragg, the chief flying instructor, and S/L Connor, senior account officer, arrived at Moose Jaw and it was with great regret that personnel heard that the commanding officer G/C A Ellis CBE had been admitted to Regina Central Hospital seriously ill.

March 15, 1941

Mayor Lang paid a courtesy call on the acting commanding officer W/C D A Gibson and offered on behalf of the citizens of Medicine Hat a welcome to No 34 SFTS. Personnel were very surprised at the fierceness of the blizzard which blew during the morning and some fears were expressed about the severity of the winters we may have to face in the future.

March 17, 1941

S/L C Scragg proceeded to Moose Jaw by air with two instructors, F/L G A Thompson and Sgt Shaw who brought back two Harvard aircraft. G/C D d'a A Gregg of No 4 Training Command lent us a Dragonfly which was flown back to Medicine Hat by the CFI.

March 19, 1941

F/L G E Thompson, P/O A A Perkiss-Ginn and Sgt Shaw were flown by the CFI to Moose Jaw and collected a further three Harvards which they delivered here. Dual instruction was given by the CFI to instructors. Five Ansons landed in the evening for refueling from Calgary. This caused a certain amount of difficulty as the bulk gasoline installation had not been got going. Three Fairey Battles flown by F/O White, F/O Boone and F/O Westphal arrived from Edmonton and stayed overnight.

March 20, 1941

The Reverend Cannon J F Butcher, rector at St Barnabus, the Reverend J S Bainbridge MM and the Reverend W F Butcher, Presbyterian, paid a courtesy call on the commanding officer. In the evening, a demonstration of basketball was given by two teams from Medicine Hat in the recreation hall. It was the first playoff of the Medicine Hat finals, Aces versus Grahams, and the latter won. Considerable interest was shown by personnel as the game is going to be taken up and played consistently.

March 23, 1941

The CFI took a TCA official and P/O Brandon to view the secondary landing grounds at

Holsome and Whitlaw.

March 24, 1941

Flying instruction commenced and the official course of ground instruction got underway.

March 25, 1941

The first dance at No 34 SFTS was held in the recreation hall organized by Mr H Millar of the YMCA in conjunction with the local Central Entertainment Committee. 150 ladies were invited and Mrs Cresswell's Orchestra provided the music. The dance was a great success and it is hoped that a similar entertainment will be given at least once a week.

March 27, 1941

On this day the Station was honored by a visit from G/C G G Banting of headquarters, Ottawa, who was met at Lethbridge by S/L C Scragg and flown to Medicine Hat. The purpose of his visit was to inspect the progress made since our arrival here. In the evening, a lecture was given in the recreation hall by Chief White Horse Mountain who was brought to the school by Mr Lakie of the local Central Entertainment Committee. The Chief told personnel a great number of interesting facts about Indian life and history and displayed a quantity of extremely interesting weapons and articles of ceremonial dress.

April 1, 1941

The second dance organized by Mr H Millar of the YMCA was held in the recreation hall. Some difficulty was caused by the fact that the band from the city was unable to turn up at the last moment but fortunately Sgt Shannon from the South Alberta Regiment very kindly brought out a combination consisting of his wife, Mrs Shannon, Sgt Fountaine, Sgt Hall, Messrs Harry Hall and A Morrice who very ably filled the gap. The lapse on the part of the dance band which should have come to us on this occasion brought home to us more fully the need for organizing our own dance band and steps are now being taken to push this forward as rapidly as possible.

April 12, 1941

Personnel were very pleased to hear the news of G/C A Ellis CBE that he had been discharged from the General Hospital, Regina on 6th April and was now convalescing satisfactorily and would no doubt return to the command of the unit in the very near future. Officers of the school were entertained by members of the Cypress Club in Medicine Hat of which they have all been elected honorary members.

April 19, 1941

On this day the acting commanding officer No 34 SFTS decided to throw open the school (in a

limited sense) to the public and to hold an “at home.” The Harvard machines, carefully roped off, were put on display in number three hangar and the parachute section was also on view. Link trainer work could be seen through the windows at the back of number one hangar and instruction being given to the pupils was amplified and could be heard by the public on loud speakers. Lectures in the CGI’s block on direction finding, armament and navigation were being given as usual. A microphone was erected in the watch tower connected to loud speakers on the hangars and in extending a welcome to the people of Medicine Hat it was pointed out that while it was impossible to put on a real flying entertainment for them as this was a working school and nothing must be permitted to interfere with the training in these important times, it was thought that they might be interested to see some of the workings of a service flying training school and to watch a typical afternoon’s flying, the sort of flying that goes on every day in our ordinary curriculum. A running commentary on the flying was given and a moment of excitement occurred when a flight of three Avro Ansons arrived from No 3 SFTS Calgary on a navigation flight and did some excellent formation flying over the school before making a landing. An invitation to tea in the officers mess was extended to the most prominent citizens of Medicine Hat and the mayor, Mr Lang, in an excellent speech of thanks, expressed their pleasure at having a Royal Air Force school so close to their city and hoped that the community of interests would “rebound to the benefit of all.” It is significant to note that in spite of the entertainment during the “at home” on this day the number of hours flown by the pupils was the second highest they had totaled to date, namely 115.40 hours.

April 28, 1941

It is with great regret that we have to record the first fatal flying accident at this unit when F/O A F M Maclean and his pupil LAC E Walton were both killed while night flying at our auxiliary landing ground at Holsom.

Accident Report—Circumstances of Casualty: F/O A F M Maclean was engaged with LAC E Walton in night flying exercises from Holsom aerodrome, Medicine Hat on 28/4/41. Shortly after taking off at 2340 hours their aircraft was seen to commence a slow turn to the left in which it gradually lost height, striking the ground in a field 3/4 of a mile from the aerodrome boundary. F/O Maclean died in the ambulance before admission to hospital. Aircraft Harvard II number 2719. Next of kin Mrs Angela Maclean, wife, 170 Whitmore Road, West Harrow, Middlesex, England.

April 30, 1941

Strength of unit: Royal Canadian Air Force—officers 1, other ranks 24; trainees 67; personnel other than RCAF—officers 38, other ranks 640; civilians 2. Number of aircraft on charge: 19 Harvards.

May 1, 1941

The funeral of F/O A M F Maclean and LAC E Walton was held with full RAF honors at

Hillside Cemetery, Medicine Hat, the escort party being in charge of S/L A L Brain and the service was conducted by the Reverend (S/L) A R Bradshaw. The funeral was attended by the commanding officer and all the officers and men not actually on duty.

May 5, 1941

A TCA Lockheed plane piloted by Capt Hatfield with two crew and ten passengers landed here on the way to Lethbridge owing to bad weather and some of the passengers were entertained in the officers' mess.

May 6, 1941

Information was received regarding the passage of wives and families to Canada. A/V/M D D McKean, United Kingdom liaison officer, wished all ranks to know that he has urged the authorities at home very strongly that the allotment of passages should be solely governed by the order in which they are received and no question of rank or seniority should secure preferential treatment.

May 9, 1941

F/L R S Spicer, F/O R J Ralph, F/O S R Jeffery, F/Sgt C H W Billinger and Sgt R H Lonsdale left for St John, New Brunswick to pick up the first Oxford aircraft for our next course which will be a "multi engine" course.

May 12, 1941

At a concert party held in the recreation hall, the Medicine Hat Little Theatre Association presented a short play entitled "Heaven on Earth." A very pleasant surprise was occasioned by the unexpected appearance of G/C and Mrs A Ap Ellis at this entertainment as the group captain did not officially take over command of the school until the 15th of the month. W/C D A Gibson, the acting commanding officer, introduced the group captain who made a speech thanking the little theatre association for their efforts and congratulating all ranks on the progress made during his absence.

May 16, 1941

An organ recital by AC1 F Godley assisted by Miss Betty Watkin, ATCM, was given in the Fifth Avenue United Church, Medicine Hat, in aid of the Station dance band fund and \$28.13 was raised. It is with deep regret we have to announce the death of LAC S K Yeomans, u/t pilot, in a flying accident in the early hours of today while he was solo night flying.

Accident Report, Circumstances of Casualty: LAC S K Yeomans was engaged in night flying training on 16/5/41 at Medicine Hat aerodrome and at approximately 0100 hours he was seen to take off after landing and after gaining a height of 200 to 300 feet he went into a steep climbing

turn to the right which developed into a diving turn. He attempted to recover from this turn but hit the ground before he was able to do so. He died in the ambulance shortly before admission to hospital. Aircraft Harvard II 2795. Next of kin Mrs L Yeomans, mother, Epsom Road, Leicestershire, England.

May 19, 1941

The first Oxford aircraft for our new course arrived today from Regina piloted by F/O Taylor. Another accident in which a machine was very badly damaged occurred during night flying when LAC D V Sizmur crashed in the Hillside Cemetery but was fortunately not seriously injured himself.

May 20, 1941

Five more Oxfords arrived piloted by F/O R J Ralph, F/O S R Jeffery, F/O Bisson, F/O Reeves and Sgt R H Lonsdale with F/L R S Spicer and F/Sgt C H W Billanger as passengers.

May 23, 1941

It was decided to hold a meeting in the YMCA for those interested in forming a model aircraft club. All ranks were grieved to hear of another fatal accident which occurred during night flying when P/O R E Sears and LAC C H Wylde were killed.

Accident Report, Circumstances of Casualty: P/O Sears was engaged with LAC C H Wylde in night flying practice on 23/5/41 at Medicine Hat aerodrome. At about 2130 hours, a temporary obstruction was caused on the flare path and the aircraft in the air were given the red signal by Aldis lamp. In spite of repeated signals, the aircraft containing P/O Sears descended to 150 to 200 feet and flew up the flare path with headlights focused on the obstruction. After the headlights had been switched out the aircraft gained height by about 150 feet then dived into the ground at a steep angle about two miles southeast of the aerodrome. P/O Sears was killed instantaneously. Aircraft Harvard II 2643. Next of kin Mr A J Sears, father, 9 Bryony Road, London W12, England.

June 3, 1941

We were glad to welcome the first lot of officers attached to the second echelon consisting of 197 men which has now arrived in this country. They were headed by S/L A N I Worger-Slade, F/L F M Ballard, F/L L K Dickinson and P/O J H Durant-Woodhouse.

June 4, 1941

A contingent of RAF personnel under the command of S/L A L Brain, chief ground instructor, paraded in a march in the city of Medicine Hat during the inauguration ceremonies of the Victory Loan week and was loudly applauded by the crowd on their every appearance.

June 9, 1941

This was a great day for our first u/t pilots course (course number 13 which has now been renumbered 12) when they completed their training and left this Station having been presented with their wings and brevets by the commanding officer G/C A Ellis CBE in a simple ceremony on the Station parade ground.

June 25, 1941

It is with regret we have to record that the standard displayed by the pupils of number 19 course in the periodical check examination held today is decidedly below that required for posting out from an EFTS course and a further series of extra classes has had to be instituted to give them the necessary proficiency.

July 3, 1941

We regret to announce the death of F/O B C H Simms and LAC B A Belcher in a flying accident here today, details of which are not yet available but will be added as appendices when ready.

Accident Report—Circumstances of Casualty: F/O B C Simms 88423 took off in Oxford V3268 at 1200 hours on July 3 to give dual instruction before solo to number 1164391 LAC Belcher B A. At 1220 hours Sgt Shaw, the duty pilot, heard a loud report and looked up to see white smoke pouring from the starboard engine followed soon after by flames. The aircraft was at about 4,000 feet and it then glided with the right wing down until he lost sight of it behind a hill. The aircraft landed downwind in a field with the undercarriage retracted and burst into flames with a cloud of black smoke. Both occupants were killed and the aircraft burned out. Next of kin Mrs B C H Simms, wife, Park Villa, Moir Road, Normacott, Stoke on Trent, Staffs England.

July 10, 1941

The commanding officer and a number of other officers left for Calgary in a special coach to see the Calgary Stampede, the annual event which is considered to be one of the most typical of these displays in the west. Special facilities for this trip had been arranged by the commanding officer with the CPR and the trip was much appreciated by those able to attend.

July 16, 1941

It is with very great regret we again have to record a fatal flying accident when F/L P J Lea and F/O A A Purkiss-Ginn flying with a pupil LAC D L Kennedy were all killed when their Oxford machine crashed at Vauxhall some 65 miles from the Station.

Accident Report—Circumstances of Casualty: At approximately 1000 hours on 16/7/41 a report was received from a Mr A L Hildenbrand of Vauxhall, Alberta, 65 miles due west of Medicine Hat, stating that an aircraft had crashed on his farm and that the three occupants were killed. The pilot of the aircraft Oxford AS494 was P/O (acting F/O) A A Purkiss-Ginn, a qualified flying

instructor. He was giving dual control to R16159 LAC Kennedy D L of number 19 course and P/O (acting F/L) P J Lea was acting as passenger safety lookout while the pupil was engaged on instrument flying. The cause of the accident is unknown and is subject to a court of enquiry convened by the air officer commanding No 4 Training Command. The aircraft did not catch fire either in the air or on the ground. Weather conditions were good.

July 18, 1941

The funeral of F/L P J Lea, F/O A A Purkiss-Ginn and LAC D L Kennedy was held in the early part of the morning at Hillside Cemetery, Medicine Hat. Later in the day the school was honored by a visit from Capt H H Balfour MC MP, Parliamentary Undersecretary of State for Air and vice-president of the Air Council. He was accompanied by his private secretary W W Wakefield, Esquire, MP and by A/V/M L D D McKean CBE and arrived by air to inspect the Station in the course of a tour of RAF establishments in Canada.

July 24, 1941

F/O G C Oxley-Sidey was posted here to take the place of the late F/L P J Lea in accounts section.

August 14, 1941

On this date the school was honored by a visit from A/C His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent KG KT GCMG KCVO who was accompanied by W/C Sir Lewis L Greig KBE CBO and A/C A T N Cowley ADC (AOC No 4 Training Command). His Royal Highness arrived at Medicine Hat at 1000 hours and was received at the CPR Station by the mayor of Medicine Hat, Hector Lane Esq and the commanding officer of No 34 SFTS G/C A Ellis CBE. After a civic reception at the town hall, His Royal Highness proceeded to No 34 SFTS and inspected a guard of honor of 100 airmen commanded by F/L A C L Askroyd-Stuart. His Royal Highness made a very thorough inspection of the guard speaking to approximately every fourth man. He was then conducted to Station sick quarters to commence his tour of inspection of the camp which included practically every building. During His Royal Highness' tour, he spoke to numerous airmen and was gracious enough to pose for various airmen to take photographs. On completion of the tour he took lunch at the officers' mess where further presentations took place of officers who had not previously been presented. The visit terminated at 1400 hours when His Royal Highness left by air for Moose Jaw. Subsequent to His Royal Highness' visit, the following letter was received by the commanding officer from W/C Sir Lewis L Greig:

August 17, 1941

Dear G/C ap Ellis

The Duke of Kent has asked me to write and say how much he enjoyed his recent visit to your unit. His Royal Highness was greatly impressed with all he saw and would like you to accept for yourself and convey to all concerned his warm congratulations on the efficiency of No 34

Service Flying Training School. He much appreciates the cordial welcome which was given to him and was very glad to have had an opportunity of talking to the officers and airmen.

Yours sincerely, Lewis Greig

August 31, 1941

Many of the airmen of this unit have been enabled to spend their leave among friends as the guests of cities or private residents in the following manner: an invitation was received at the end of May for airmen to spend a few days leave as guests of the citizens of the city of Nelson, BC. Mr and Mrs E L Staples offered hospitality to two airmen a week as guests at their S Diamond ranch, Skookumchuk, which is delightfully situated in the Rocky Mountains in British Columbia. Mr George Armstrong of Irvine, Alberta very kindly welcomed airmen to his ranch on the following dates and all enjoyed their ranching holidays and greatly appreciated the friendliness of their hosts. Mr Harris of Maple Creek, Saskatchewan who welcomed two airmen for each of the four weeks during July, Mr Frank Raser of Walsh, Alberta who welcomed two airmen on each of two weeks during August, Mr Charles Mudie of Thelma, Alberta who gave an enjoyable leave to four airmen for a week at the end of August and Messrs Douglas Nett, John Nett, Harris Garlough and H T Clarke of Eagle Butte, Alberta who have entertained eight airmen and have expressed the hope that others will spend their leave with them.

September 1, 1941

Number 27 course arrived on the unit, this course being comprised of 23 Norwegians and 38 English pupils. The Norwegian contingent was accompanied by three Norwegian officers posted as instructors.

September 14, 1941

Personnel of all ranks responded to the appeal from the government requesting that Sunday, 14 September be observed as a special day of rededication and reconsecration of ourselves for the cause in which we are engaged. The school church was filled to capacity at divine service conducted by the chaplain, the Rev S/L A R Bradshaw. The Rev F/L W F Butcher preached the sermon and the commanding officer read the lessons.

September 16, 1941

An Oxford aircraft piloted by 1385530 LAC Castle B V crashed on the aerodrome and it is with deep regret that we have to record that this pilot sustained fatal injuries. LAC Castle had completed one hour's pilot navigational training after which he was sent solo in Oxford AR937 to practice navigational exercises. On his first takeoff at 1550 hours he was seen to go into an almost vertical climb as soon as he left the ground and then did a stall turn to the left into the ground. The aircraft was completely wrecked, the pilot sustaining a fractured skull and broken legs and arms. Subsequent inspection of the aircraft revealed that the tail trimming was within half a turn of being wound right back. The aircraft was the same in which Castle had received

dual instruction from his instructor immediately before. A carnival dance was held in the recreation room by the airmen to which members of the officers and sergeants messes were invited.

September 29, 1941

Preliminary signals examinations for pupils of number 27 course were held and all the pupils passed the examination. Personnel generally are very pleased to see in orders that members of the RAF may visit the United States of America.

September 30, 1941

Number of aircraft on charge: Oxfords 87, 20 serviceable, 7 awaiting writeoff, 60 unserviceable, one of which repaired but not at unit, due in the main to lack of wheels.

October 2, 1941

The Station was honored by a visit from Chief Joe Crowfoot, chief of four Blackfoot tribes. The chief was accompanied by Mrs Crowfoot and Betty and Christine, his children, the latter of whom had presented a bouquet to HM Queen Elizabeth. Also accompanying Chief Crowfoot were Eugene Stabbed Last and Mary White Elk. It would be hard to say who enjoyed the visit most, the visitors or the airmen. Whilst the party were being shown around the Station the visitors posed with numerous airmen to have their photographs taken.

November 4, 1941

The wedding of F/O R W Williams and Fracoise Florette Labelle of Montreal was celebrated in the Station church. The service was conducted by the chaplain, the Rev S/L B H Howells assisted by the Rev F/L W F Butcher. G/C A ap Ellis CBE gave the bride away.

November 11, 1941

The Armistice Day Parade on the Station was composed of some 550 officers, NCOs and airmen under the command of the commanding officer. Prayers were read by the chaplain. Previous to this parade a detachment of 22 airmen paraded at Hillside Cemetery where wreathes were placed on the graves of airmen who had lost their lives since the arrival of this unit in Canada.

November 24, 1941

This morning a TCA plane on route from Regina to Lethbridge landed on the aerodrome owing to adverse weather conditions at Lethbridge. Passengers and crew were entertained in the officers' mess. Weather conditions deteriorated as the day went on. During the early afternoon it was impossible to see across the aerodrome owing to dust. Some 28 young ladies from Medicine Hat known as the Melody Maids entertained the airmen in the recreation hall this evening. It was quite refreshing to hear some singing other than "hot jazz" or "hillbilly songs"

and the Melody Maids gave a most finished performance.
November 25, 1941

The corporals of the unit gave a party in the corporals' club to the Norwegian corporals who are leaving at the end of the month. The party was a great success. During the evening the Norwegians presented the club with a very fine electric clock.

December 2, 1941

Owing to a pretty severe dust storm flying had to be canceled between the hours of 1330 and 1700. The wind obtained a velocity of 40 to 60 miles per hour and visibility was reduced to a quarter of a mile.

December 3, 1941

Once again, owing to dust, flying had to be canceled. Visibility was reduced to zero and the surface wind was between 55 and 70 miles per hour.

December 8, 1941

It is with deep regret that record must be made of a fatal flying accident this evening. R92759 LAC Pryor J, a pupil of number 29 course, when flying a Harvard airplane AJ763 solo, crashed about half a mile south of Holsom relief landing ground, the plane being a total wreck. The wrecked aircraft was found early on Tuesday morning.

December 23, 1941

It is with deep regret that a note must be made of a fatal flying accident. P/O R G Littlewood crashed his aircraft, a de Havilland tiger Moth, in the South Saskatchewan River just out of Medicine Hat. P/O Littlewood was ferrying the Moth from Calgary to Caron. The body was later sent on to Caron. This afternoon a party was given in the recreation hall for the children of the unit. The party was attended by 70 children who were each given a present and tea was provided.

December 31, 1941

Number of aircraft on charge: 84 Oxfords, 32 serviceable, 32 awaiting spares, 20 unserviceable under three weeks. 31 Harvards, 18 serviceable, 9 serviceable within three weeks, four awaiting spares, one Moth serviceable.

January 17, 1942

Satisfaction was felt today on the unit when the commanding officer announced that 100 pounds had been sent to the Lord Mayor's National Air Raid Distress Fund. The money had been contributed by the officers' mess, sergeants mess and airmen of the unit.

January 22, 1942

A fatal crash occurred on the aerodrome today involving two aircraft Harvard AJ828 and Harvard AJ761. 1291070 LAC Pring W R pilot with P/O O R G Blamires J6951 flying Harvard AJ761 swung when making an instrument flying takeoff and crashed into stationary Harvard AJ828 with P/O J G Hoar J7034 and 657257 LAC Markham E T. LAC Pring and P/O R G Blamires sustained injuries but P/O O J G Hoar and LAC Markham were both killed.

January 28, 1942

Two Harvard aircraft being ferried from Long Beach, California to Swift Current by pilots of the USAAC crashed in the district of Maple Creek with fatal results. This unit arranged for transportation of the bodies back to the USA and accommodated the remaining pilots of the flight.

February 10, 1942

Owing to the outbreak of further cases of scarlet fever, it was decided today to cancel the airmen's dance this evening. The commanding officer also announced that dances, cinemas, concerts etc were out of bounds to all ranks either in camp or in the city. Twenty four Tiger Moths proceeding from Calgary to Swift Current landed here this morning to refuel.

February 19, 1942

In October 1941, RAF Station Swift Current loaned this unit 32 Harvard aircraft. There was an acute shortage of Oxford aircraft here due to lack of spares and at that time RAF Station Swift Current was not fully operational. Today, F flight started ferrying these aircraft back to 39 SFTS Swift Current.

March 6, 1942

This evening the semifinals and finals of the boxing tournament for novices, team and individual championships were fought in the drill hall in the presence of a large number of officers and airmen of the Station and their guests. There were 24 bouts of hard fighting in which a very keen sense of sportsmanship was displayed. The commanding officer presented plaques to the winners in each weight and a cup to the winning team, maintenance wing A.

March 15, 1942

The strength of the unit was increased by the arrival on posting of 17 Polish and 35 English u/t pilots for number 51 course.

March 23, 1942

F/O J R Kilner of this unit won the Dominion marksman expert shield being the tenth to gain a possible 6,000. This is the fourth Dominion marksman expert shield to be won by this Station.

March 29, 1942

At the divine service held in the Station church this morning the sermon was preached by the Rev W/C J Rossie-Brown who is attached to No 4 Training Command, Calgary from Ottawa for a few months. He is always a welcome visitor to this unit.

April 3, 1942

Today the opening ceremony was performed of a photographic exhibition held in the council chamber of city hall, Medicine Hat sponsored by No 34 SFTS photographic club and proceeds of which are to be in aid of the Lord Mayor's Fund.

May 31, 1942

It is with regret that the death is recorded of 30602 Cpl Rene Leprou, Free French Forces, which took place in a flying accident two miles south of Holsom relief landing ground.

June 22, 1942

Three Hurricanes landed for refueling, their destination being Lethbridge.

June 24, 1942

A Hampden bomber on route for Patricia Bay landed owing to a shortage of fuel.

June 25, 1942

Noel Smith, commanding officer of No 31 EFTS de Winton, visited the Station.

June 30, 1942

Attached as appendices numbers XVI and XVII are photographs illustrating the problems sometimes encountered in salvaging a damaged aircraft. In this instance, a plane which forced landed on 30 May, 1942 some miles north of Medicine Hat and tore off the undercarriage, had to be transported across a narrow bridge. In order that the nacelles could be cleared of the sides of the bridge it was necessary to raise the plane off the tractor by means of the cranes, airmen having to sit on the bonnet of the lorrie to effect counter-balance. Number of aircraft on charge 123 Oxfords, 61 serviceable, 11 serviceable within three weeks, 51 serviceable over three weeks. Strength of unit: RCAF 7 officers, 51 other ranks; trainees 5 officers, 217 other ranks; personnel

other than RCAF 72 officers, 933 other ranks; three civilians.

July 2, 1942

The Station was visited by G/C S Sznuk, chief of the Polish Mission in Canada, accompanied by W/C Krasnodebski.

July 6, 1942

Sixteen pupils arrived, the balance of number 59 course including 15 Norwegians and one Czech, also two Norwegian instructors Sub Lt's Bugge and Henningsmoen.

July 3, 1942

This morning the pupils of number 51 course paraded on the parade ground to receive their wings which were presented by G/C S Sznuk. At this ceremony, wings of the Polish Air Force were presented by G/C Sznuk on behalf of the Inspector General of the Polish Air Force to G/C A Ellis CBE, W/C C Scragg MBE AFC, S/L R D Hexton and S/L A C L Ackroyd-Stuart. The Station band was in attendance at a wings parade for the first time.

July 17, 1942

A party of officers, a senior NCO and one LAC attended the funeral in Medicine Hat of Jas Mitchell, rancher.

July 23, 1942

The Station was visited by Mr Bernard Newman, the well-known author in his capacity as representative of the Ministry of Information.

July 29, 1942

The Station was visited by Mr W S Howland, chief of the southern bureau of Life and Time magazines. He was accompanied by G/C R R Hampton of No 4 Training Command, Calgary.

Editor: every possible item of the school is included in this diary— photographs, schedules of instruction, disposition of courses, air cadets etc.

August 3, 1942

This morning, the first of two senior officers' conferences was held at this unit at which commanding officers of all units within No 4 Training Command are to be present, each conference being of five days duration.

August 4, 1942

The weekly airmen's dance was held in the recreation hall, the Station orchestra providing the music. Oxford aircraft unit number nine piloted by 1028690 LAC Thomas J E of number 55 course, since transferred to number 57 course stalled on takeoff. The pilot of the aircraft sustained no injuries but the aircraft was badly damaged.

August 5, 1942

The Station was visited by Col Hoover, president of the Nelson Citizens' Committee, who are responsible for the reception and hospitality for personnel on this unit.

August 11, 1942

A hailstorm of unusual intensity passed over the camp at approximately 2300 hours. Hailstones the size of hens eggs punched holes through the mainplanes of 10 Oxford aircraft which were on the tarmac awaiting night flying. A number of window panes in various buildings were also broken.

August 28, 1942

This morning the pupils of number 55 course paraded on the parade ground to receive their wings which were presented by G/C A Ellis CBE. The Station band was in attendance. At this ceremony, W/C J Ambrus, on behalf of Gen Ingr, Minister of National Defence, Republic of Czechoslovakia presented to G/C A Ellis CBE the honorary Czechoslovakian flying badge number 105. W/C J Ambrus also presented the wings to the Czechoslovakian pupils. This evening the first aquatic sports to be held took place at the Robertson Memorial Swimming Pool, Medicine Hat. There were a large number of entries which combined with the keen competition shown resulted in a highly enjoyable evening.

Ed: countries represented at this school include Holland, West Indies, Canada, Scotland, Australia, Wales, England, Poland, France, Norway, Czechoslovakia, Ireland, Isle of Mann, Nigeria, Cypress, America.

September 16, 1942

A wedding was solemnized in the Station church between 817129 LAC H A Rennie and Gertrude Noble (spinster). The Station chaplain officiated.

September 19, 1942

Today the first athletic sports were held. There were a large number of entries and the competition was keen. The commanding officer's wife, Mrs Ellis, presented the prizes. The weather was fine and warm with the result that the number of spectators was great. A dance for

the airmen was held in the evening in the drill hall.

September 20, 1942

Church service was held at 0800 hours, 1000 hours and 1830 hours. The 1000 hour service was conducted by the Right Reverend L Ralph Sherman, Lord Bishop of Calgary.

September 21, 1941

The Station concert party "The Mad Hatters" gave a performance in the recreation hall at which the attendance of personnel was very good.

September 24, 1942

The Station concert party and orchestra left this evening for Nelson, BC to show their appreciation to the citizens of that city for their hospitality in entertaining some 800 airmen of this unit.

September 28, 1942

This evening Lever Brothers presented "Lifebuoy Follies" review in the recreation hall to an audience of Station personnel only. Harvard aircraft FE308 piloted by P/O G S C Swan with 1871 Pvt T Hetland as pupil caught fire whilst in a spin five miles west of Bowell, Alberta. The instructor and pupil made a successful parachute descent with no injury, the aircraft was gutted by fire.

October 1, 1942

The Station concert party returned from Nelson, BC with the qualifying knowledge that through their efforts the sum of \$682.82 had been raised for charity.

October 7, 1942

Three hundred personnel of this unit were sent to help quell a large prairie fire situated two miles west and eight miles north of Redcliff, Alberta.

October 10, 1942

A number of airmen were sent to extinguish a prairie fire which occurred just outside the boundaries of Holsom relief landing ground.

October 14, 1942

Oxford aircraft AS973 with 573871 Cpl Long M C S as pilot carrying out solo night flying

exercises hit a high tension line post at the camp boundary at 0200 hours on 14th October 1942. It was raining at the time and the pilot mistook the lighted high tension line near aerodrome for flarepath. Cpl Long was unhurt and the aircraft was classed as category B.

October 15, 1942

At 0200 hours on 15th October, 1942 three miles west of Bitter Lake, Oxford aircraft number AR833 forced landed on the prairie. 657600 Sgt Thompson J and 676385 Cpl Balmain H u/t pilot were uninjured and 658791 Cpl Bloxham D J u/t pilot was slightly injured. One engine failure was the cause of the accident.

October 25, 1942

Church service was held at 1000 hours in the Station church and was conducted by the Reverend Cannon Butcher. Today began the official changeover from Oxfords to Harvards between No 32 SFTS Moose Jaw and this Station. Numbers 61 and 65 courses were transferred to Moose Jaw and two courses were posted from No 32 SFTS to this unit. A number of instructors were also transferred between the two units. Seventy three pupils comprising number 67 course also arrived on the unit. Included in this number were three Poles, five Czechs.

October 29, 1942

At approximately 1330 hours on 29th October, 1942 a telephone message was received at this unit stating that an aircraft had crashed 28 miles southeast of Medicine Hat at about 1230 hours. The aircraft was Kittyhawk number AL136 and was piloted by R63907 WO1 A G Carless of No 124 Ferry Squadron, Rockcliffe, Ontario. Flying conditions at the time of the accident were very bad, fog being right down to the ground and visibility about 100 feet. The pilot appears to have been attempting to get below the fog and in doing so to have struck the ground at a place where a slight rise occurs. WO1 Carless was killed instantaneously and the aircraft was completely wrecked. This unit has been appointed to carry out the investigation.

October 31, 1942

Strength of unit—RCAF 6 officers, 63 other ranks; trainees 11 officers, 231 other ranks; personnel other than RCAF 71 officers, 942 other ranks; three civilians. Total number of hours flown during October 8,113. Number of aircraft on charge 60 Oxford IIs, 88 Harvard II, six Ansons II.

November 1, 1942

The hospitalization agreement with the Medicine Hat General Hospital whereby married personnel of the rank of corporal and below obtain medical services came into force today.

November 17, 1942

The commanding officer G/C A Ellis CBE left the unit to take over temporary command of No 4 Training Command, Calgary, the command of this unit being filled temporarily by W/C G Scragg MBE AFC.

Questions contained in the armament written supplementary examination for number 49 course:

Bombing

1. Detail the three course methods of finding wind velocity.
2. What would be the effect of the fall of a bomb if too much wind speed was set on the sight. Show by a diagram and also explanation.
3. What are the uses of the azimuth bracket? What are its advantages?
4. Give the bombing patten used on a practice bombing run.
5. What procedure would you adopt in the event of a hangup (practice bombs)
6. What are the uses of the form T-32?

Operational

7. Explain the meaning and the uses of stick bombing.
8. What are the most essential things to know when carrying out a low level bombing exercise?

Sighting

9. What effect does altitude have on gravity drop?
10. What is apparent motion and how is it caused?
11. How can relative and apparent velocities be proved?
12. Describe briefly how you would construct a wall diagram for a multi-gun fighter.
13. What tools are necessary to harmonize the guns of an aircraft? State their uses.
14. If you are attacking an aircraft at the same level head on, would you break off below, to the side or above? Give reasons for your answer.

Browning Gun

15. Give in detail the unlocking of the breech block.
16. Give the safety devises on the Browning gun and explain them.

Bombs and Components

17. What type of bomb and fusing would you use against the following targets: submarine, multi-story building, runways, tanks, mechanical transport.
18. What are the main fillings used in high explosive bombs? Give reasons for each type of

filling.

Pyrotechnics

19. What pyrotechnics would be carried in a Sunderland aircraft?
20. How would you prepare and load the three inch signals mortar for use?

December 4, 1942

At about 1110 hours on 4th December, 1942 Harvards AJ727 and 2731 collided in the air whilst carrying out air firing exercises. The accident occurred three miles northwest of Redcliffe, Alberta and both machines were totally wrecked. The occupants of the aircraft 66592 F/O S J Reed, 1320024 LAC Simkins H A and 980739 Sgt Buckley T G successfully landed by parachute.

December 25, 1942

At 1200 hours today Christmas dinner was served by the officers and senior NCOs to about 500 airmen. The airmen's mess had been decorated for the occasion and the Station orchestra was in attendance. At the close of the dinner, the commanding officer addressed the airmen. A choral service was held in the church at 1030 hours. Flying was canceled for today.

December 31, 1942

We are proud to record that since August, 1941 up to the end of the present year, the Station has donated the sum of 400 pounds to the Lord Mayor of London's Empire Air Raid Distress Fund, 100 pounds to the RAF Benevolent Fund and \$450 to the RCAF Benevolent Fund. In addition to these sums the Station has raised many hundreds of dollars for the Red Cross and IODE through the efforts of the Station concert party and orchestra in Medicine Hat, Nelson, BC and Fernie BC.

January 7, 1943

S/L Rees, Works and Building Section No 4 Training Command Calgary, Alberta arrived at the unit for the purpose of taking over development at Holsom, Alberta and Whitlaw, Alberta from the Department of Transport.

January 21, 1943

No flying was possible again today due to the weather conditions. The strength of the unit was decreased by the departure of 44 personnel to Moncton, New Brunswick prior to repatriation. The Station individual boxing championships were held in the drill hall this evening, the prizes being presented by the commanding officer G/C A Ellis CBE. The Station military band was in attendance. A wedding was solemnized in the Station church at which the Station chaplain

officiated between 612218 Cpl R H Woolford and Miss Freda Betty Lutes.

January 22, 1943

Sixty five pupils of number 65 course at this unit paraded in the drill hall this morning to receive their wings. The disposition of the course was as follows: 6 pupils to No 3 FIS Arnprior, Ontario; 3 pupils to No 1 FIS Trenton, Ontario; 10 pupils to No 31 GRS Charlottetown, PEI; 3 pupils to No 1 OTU Saguanay, PQ; 4 pupils to RCAF Little Norway, Ontario; 39 pupils to No 31 PD Moncton, New Brunswick.

February 3, 1943

The Station was visited by A/C A L Paxton DFC, United Kingdom Air Liaison Mission, Ottawa, accompanied by G/C G G Banting of the UKALM and G/C F J Fogarty DFC AFC and G/C C H Flinn of No 4 Training Command Calgary, Alberta.

February 10, 1943

The Station was visited by Sir William Glasgow, Australian High Commissioner for Canada accompanied by A/V/M G R Howsam MC the air officer commanding No 4 Training Command Calgary, Alberta and S/L T O'Brien, also of No 4 Training Command.

February 15, 1943

This evening the Station was entertained by the Swift Current (No 39 SFTS) dramatic society who presented the three act comedy "French Without Tears."

February 17, 1943

This evening the final of the interhut ice hockey championship was played in the Medicine Hat Arena. The winners of the trophy which was presented by Mr J C Beveridge were the sergeants.

February 28, 1943

The Station was visited by F/O G Beurling DSO DFC DFM and Bar, the Canadian air ace who gave a very interesting talk to officers, airmen and air cadets.

March 11, 1943

It is with deep regret that we have to report the death of 1270304 AC1 Fowler M B as a result of an accident on the aerodrome of this Station. At about 2145 hours on 11/3/43 AC1 Fowler who was engaged in flare path duties was struck by Harvard aircraft number 63 which swerved off the runway whilst taking off. Fowler was seriously injured and subsequently died.

March 15, 1943

The funeral of the late 1270304 AC1 Fowler M B took place at Hillside Cemetery, Medicine Hat this morning and was conducted by the Reverend Monsignor McCoy.

March 22, 1943

Anson aircraft number 8262 which had been made serviceable after a forced landing at Rose Lynn, Alberta lost height on taking off again and struck the roof of a building and crashed. The Station was visited by A/C C P Symonds MD FRCP for the purpose of investigating nervousness of pupils in regard to flying.

March 27, 1943

The funeral of those killed in the crash at Rose Lynn on 22/3/43 took place this morning at Hillside Cemetery and was conducted by the Station chaplain. (Ed: it is very odd that these names were not recorded in the diary).

May 3, 1943

The Station was proud to learn today that it had been awarded the quarterly efficiency pennant and thus having won the distinction of being the most efficient single engine school under the combined air training organization for the first quarter of this year.

May 14, 1943

The graduation of number 73 course took place this afternoon on the parade ground. The wings were presented by the air officer commanding No 4 Training Command A/V/M G R Housam MC who also at this ceremony presented the Minister's Efficiency Pennant recently awarded to this unit.

May 15, 1943

The Station sustained a great loss today in the departure of W/C C Scragg MBE AFC on his posting to the United Kingdom. W/C Scragg has been chief flying instructor at this unit since its inception and his keenness and energy has been a fine example to both officers and men.

June 3, 1943

The newly formed Station dramatic club gave its first presentation this evening in the recreation hall, a three act play entitled "Love From a Stranger."

June 6, 1943

The Station was visited by A/V/M C D Meredith CB CBE AFC, air officer commanding Rhodesian Air Training Group accompanied by W/C J Davison, Southern Rhodesian Air Liaison officer who carried out an inspection of the unit.

June 10, 1943

Forty of the 75 air bombers attached to this unit since 29th March, 1943 left for No 31 B&G School, Picton, Ontario on posting to that unit.

June 12, 1943

It is with regret that we have to record a fatal flying accident. 787296 LAC Savik J, a Czech u/t pilot this afternoon engaged on low flying practice whilst making an approach at R1 aerodrome stalled and dived into the ground from a low altitude. The machine was completely wrecked and the occupant killed instantly.

June 15, 1943

Two flying accidents occurred today. The second accident with F/O E L Johnson, instructor, and LAC Morris H J A, pupil occurred after landing. After running on the runway for about ten yards the aircraft wobbled and then swung violently to port and the pilot noticed that the port wheel had come off. The pilot took corrective action to the swing and managed to stop the aircraft without further damage other than that which occurred to the axle and brake drum when it came into contact with the ground.

June 20, 1943

The Station was visited by the Honorable Frederick Jones, Minister of Defense for New Zealand accompanied by Mr R M Firth, acting high commissioner for New Zealand in Canada and G/C T W White, chief air liaison officer, New Zealand mission. The purpose of the visit was to meet and interview all New Zealand personnel on the unit.

July 3, 1943

An officers' dance was held in the recreation hall and proved a complete success. This also marked the opening of the new addition to the officers' mess reading and writing room which it has been decided to open to ladies daily between 1200 hours and 2100 hours.

July 4, 1943

At the new ball park, Medicine Hat, personnel of No 34 SFTS gave an exhibition soccer match in which teams representing England and Scotland were the opposing factions. Scotland won by

five goals to four. The proceeds of the collections at this game were divided between the Lord Mayor's Empire Air Raid Distress Fund and the Greek War Relief Fund.

July 7, 1943

The school was honored by a visit by A/C D V Carnegie AFC Director of Flying Training at the Air Ministry, G/C F J Fogarty of the United Kingdom Air Liaison Mission and G/C C H Flinn of No 4 Training Command. The visitors expressed themselves as well pleased with the flying training at this school.

July 19, 1943

More distinguished visitors arrived at the unit for a brief visit today in a "Commando" aircraft (C-46, Ed) these being A/C/M Sir Christopher Courtney KCB CBE DSO, A/M Sir William Welsh KCB DSC AFC, G/C M Lowe, Maj Gen Barney M Giles, chief of staff of the United States Army Air Forces, Col Hubbard and Maj Harper, also of the USAAF. They made a brief but comprehensive inspection of the training in progress and after lunch left by air to resume their tour.

July 29, 1943

Last month the Station "Mad Hatters" review was presented to No 39 SFTS Swift Current and today the latter school paid a return visit with their exhilarating review "Dickery Dockery Doc." Personnel of this unit had an evening's excellent entertainment and their unstinted applause must have been a source of much gratification to the promoters and company of the review. The exchange of concert parties between the two units tends to promote a spirit of friendly rivalry and puts each party on its mettle. The same applies in the exchange visits by sports teams and it is hoped to encourage this healthy rivalry as far as the exigencies of the service permit.

August 5, 1943

The unit was honored today by the visit of His Excellency Baron Silvercruys, the Belgian minister to Canada. The main purpose of his visit was to present wings to the graduating class, course number 79 of Belgian pupils but as he arrived on the previous day to the graduation, he attended the wings dinner and addressed the pupils there in company with the commanding officer G/C A Ellis CBE. The entire company attended the pupils' dance held after the dinner in the recreation hall.

August 6, 1943

A pleasurable surprise was given today's graduation ceremony of number 79 course by the presentation to G/C A Ellis CBE of the Belgian Military Cross First Class by Baron Silvercruys after the latter had presented wings to the graduates of the course. The whole Station joins in wishing the commanding officer hearty congratulations in this well deserved award of the

Belgian Military Cross First Class.

September 9, 1943

This evening the recreation hall was the scene of a talent contest with a number of personnel of this unit competing on the stage. Several excellent turns including a impersonations, popular songs, tunes on the piano and piano accordion were given. AC2 M Betts was declared the winner, his entry in the contest being a comic monologue on the life of himself as an airman. At the close of the contest the Station orchestra played several tunes and at the end of the evening's entertainment the audience were in a gay mood.

September 11, 1943

It is with deep regret that we have to report the death of GB122750 F/O K R Taylor in a flying accident which occurred at 1800 hours on 11 September, 1943 ten miles south of Medicine Hat aerodrome. At the present moment it would appear that the aircraft went into an inverted spin during essential dual exercises and struck the ground. The pupil pilot 1424981 LAC Crekillie A F made a safe landing by parachute.

September 15, 1943

The Empire Club in Medicine Hat, a club for the benefit of all service personnel in and around Medicine Hat was transferred to its new location today. This new club has been made possible by the interest and initiative of a) a certain number of male citizens who recognized that the existing accommodation in the old club was entirely inadequate to meet the needs of service personnel in and around Medicine Hat b) the mayor and council who have given rates and utilities free and c) by the remaining civilian members of the late Cypress Club who were willing to forego their privileges of membership until after the termination of war. The club is filled nightly by service personnel and a long-felt need has at last been met.

September 25, 1943

A golf team from this unit visited No 7 SFTS Macleod, Alberta and played that unit's golf team in a golf tournament. At the conclusion of the tournament it was found that No 34 SFTS had beaten No & SFTS by eight matches to nil. No 34 SFTS scored another victory this day, this time at Calgary when the Station cricket team played that of No 37 SFTS. This unit won by 80 runs, the team scores being 188 and 108 runs respectively. The two outstanding members of this unit's team on this occasion were Cpl D Jones of the accounts section who scored 67 runs and LAC C R Ashton of the servicing squadron who obtained six wickets for 16 runs.

October 7, 1943

This evening the Station's brains trust gave the first demonstration of its capabilities before a packed recreation hall. The personnel forming the brains trust were S/L B H Howells

representing ecclesiastical questions, F/O B Rhodes technical questions, Cpl A K Tinkler sociological questions, F/O T R S Lawson MBE service questions and Mr W King, the YMCA supervisor questions regarding Canada and geography generally. WO H Stallworthy was chairman and master of ceremonies. To obtain questions for the brains trust to answer, a box was placed in various prominent positions on the Station in which personnel could drop their questions. Thirty percent of these were finally selected as suitable for use. One or two questions were asked the brains trust which caused debate both amongst the brains trust and the audience, several questions were submitted which caused debate amongst the brains trust themselves. This type of entertainment proved very popular with the personnel. Following the final question the Station orchestra played a selection of jive tunes which lasted for about 40 minutes.

October 17, 1943

Holsom R1 was the subject of a visit to this unit today by W/C Bull of Air Force Headquarters.

October 22, 1943

This evening the section photographic club opened its annual exhibition in the city hall of Medicine Hat. A large number of exceedingly fine photographs were exhibited and all of them showed a keen eye for beauty, detail etc.

October 29, 1943

Today marked the occasion of the graduation of number 85 course and as this was the last time members of the Royal Norwegian Air Force would be graduating from this unit Capt A Roed of the RCAF presented the wings. Following the award of wings, Capt A Roed of the royal Norwegian Air Force presented to G/C A Ellis CBE the Norwegian national flag in recognition of his services in training RCAF aircrew personnel.

October 30, 1943

This morning a signal was received from No 4 Training Command, Calgary notifying this unit that for the second time it had been awarded the Minister's Efficiency Pennant for the period July to September, 1943.

October 31, 1943

Trainees: RAF 19 officers, 136 other ranks; RAF u/t air bombers 17 other ranks; RCAF 8 other ranks; Royal Australian Air Force one officer; Royal New Zealand Air Force one officer; allied nations—Norwegian one airman; Dutch two officers, 13 airman; Czech two officers, 20 airmen; French two officers, four airmen; Polish two airmen; Belgian 20 airmen.

November 11, 1943

Remembrance Day parades were held at this unit when the Station chaplain conducted prayers. After the parade the commanding officer, Station chaplain and other officers proceeded to Hillside Cemetery, Medicine Hat where 34 wreaths of poppies were laid on the graves of late officers and airmen of the unit. The commanding officer and other officers then proceeded to the Cenotaph in the city of Medicine Hat where a wreath was laid by the youngest member of the service from this unit.

November 17, 1944

G/C D Iron OBE administrative officer at No 4 Training Command headquarters Calgary on behalf of the air officer commanding No 4 Training Command visited this unit today for the purpose of presenting the unit badge recently approved by His Majesty the King and also the Air Ministry's Efficiency Pennant awarded to this unit for the second time this year.

November 20, 1943

Upon completion of low level bombing exercises Harvard aircraft number 2627 crashed at Bowell, Alberta and burned out. P/O T McCloghry, captain and F/O E Toothill, pupil were in the aircraft but except for a bruise on the bridge of P/O McCloghry's nose neither of the occupants were injured. This was a category A crash.

November 30, 1943

Now that the amenities of the Station for the benefit of officers and airmen have been completed, appended hereto as appendices XLVII to LXXXVII for record purposes are photographs showing interiors of the buildings, housing, recreational and other facilities. The decorations of the interiors have been done voluntarily by personnel of the unit in unofficial time and the cost of interior decorations, furniture etc has been paid for from non-public funds with no cost whatever to the public with the exception of the officers and sergeants messes where a certain amount of public furniture is issued. Great credit is due to the airmen in showing such an interest in order to bring up to a high order their indoor recreation and other facilities in the camp.

Ed: excellent photographic record kept of this school.

December 25, 1943

In accordance with the traditions of the Royal Air Force, senior NCOs were entertained in the officers mess and then the officers in the sergeants mess. At 1215 hours the commanding officer, officers and senior NCOs served Christmas dinner to over 500 airmen in the airmen's mess. The Station orchestra provided music during the meal and afterwards the commanding officer spoke to all ranks thanking them for their good work, loyalty and devotion to duty during 1943. It is considered that several years life of the commanding officer's fountain pen nib

passed away in the space of a few minutes whilst he was autographing menu cards after dinner and it is felt that we witnessed a great feat of physical endurance nobly borne.

December 31, 1943

It is considered that a record should be made in this unit's daily diary in regard to the voluntary subscriptions given by all ranks of the unit since its formation in February, 1941 in order that the benevolence and spirit of all ranks may not be overlooked. The total amount given is \$11,587.85, the Stirling equivalent of which is 2,612 pounds 16 and 5 and the following amounts have been given to the deserving causes specified: Lord Mayor of London's Empire Air Raid Distress Fund \$4,430 sterling equivalent 1,000 pounds; Canadian Red Cross \$2,316 or 522 pounds; Canadian Legion \$1,216 or 274 pounds; Independent Order of Daughters of the Empire \$470 or 106 pounds. Beyond these amounts and those shown in appendix XXXV this unit subscribes \$25 per month to the Medicine Hat branch of the Canadian Red Cross Society to be devoted to the blood clinic in this city and also \$100 each month for the benefit of His Majesty's Forces Empire Club of Medicine Hat.

Ed: all of the trophies of the school are included here in photographs
January 1, 1944

A small section of the permanent staff was transferred today to the relief landing ground at Holsom and half the senior course also went there for 14 days armament training. For the convenience of all personnel now stationed at Holsom R1 the operators of the bus service between No 34 SFTS and the city of Medicine Hat inaugurated an evening service for the transportation of Holsom personnel to and from Medicine Hat.

January 6, 1944

Members of number 38 draft now being repatriated to the United Kingdom were entertained at a dinner given in the airmen's mess this evening. The commanding officer G/C A Ellis CBE in addressing the company thanked the draft for their loyalty and devotion to duty and on behalf of all ranks presented a watch to 642499 LAC Cryer S in appreciation of his services with the Station band and as leader of the Station dance orchestra for nearly three years. The Station orchestra provided the music at a formal dance in the recreation hall which followed the dinner and it was unanimously agreed that the whole evening had been a great success. A fitting end to nearly three years stay in Canada.

January 9, 1944

It is with deep regret that this unit has to record the deaths of Sgt Mallin F G instructor and LAC Dick T pupil in a flying accident today at Holsom, Alberta. Accident Report: Harvard II AJ756 cause of accident unknown, location Holsom, Alberta.

January 13, 1944

A cinema show was given at Holsom tonight for the first time by the YMCA and it is hoped to make this a permanent feature at the relief landing ground henceforth for the entertainment of this unit's personnel stationed there.

January 28, 1944

The ENSA concert party visited this unit this evening and gave two performances of a review called "See for Yourself," an excellent entertainment very much appreciated by all ranks of the Station. This is only the third time ENSA concert parties have visited this unit during the three years the Station has been opened and in view of the excellent entertainment such parties give for the benefit of all ranks it is felt that ENSA should visit stations such as this one far more frequently, at least six times per year as we are situated in the prairies where no talented entertainment from outside the Station is available. All ENSA reviews are clean, of good variety and first class talent and all ranks are most enthusiastic when they visit this unit.

Cover information from ENSA program "See for Yourself"

For RAF bases British Commonwealth Air Training Plan ENSA presents "See for Yourself" with Norma Terrace, Claude Horton, Rowan Tudor, Gene Cameron, Theodore Walstrom, Marguerite Jakenov, Leonora Brouner and Robert Fenemore, Manager. The New York ENSA committee 137 West 48 Street, New York City, American branch of Entertainment National Services Association Inc acting on behalf of the Department of National Service Entertainment, Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, London.

February 15, 1944

This week the airmen's dance proved to be a mixture of waltz, jive and tango. Visitors agree that the Station dance band improves with every dance. One tango was encored six times by the very large gathering. W/C C F C Coaker repeated his lecture to the officers on "Mess Etiquette." The subject of this evening's discussion group had the apprehensive title "Shall I See You in the Dole Que?" The question of post-war employment is one that concerns us all and the sooner we face its issue the sooner we shall see its solution.

February 19, 1944

The commanding officer received a letter from the Lord Mayor of London acknowledging receipt of 100 pounds, proceeds from the unit's Christmas pantomime "Babes in the Wood" in aid of the Empire Air Raid Distress Fund. The Lord Mayor expressed his thanks for the thousand pounds raised altogether on this unit and conveyed New Year's greetings to all personnel.

February 29, 1944

It was decided to form if possible a light opera society on the unit and it was hoped to encourage such a venture through the already existing concert party.

Ed: these folk took their dramatic productions very seriously and there are all kinds of photographs of same included in the diary.

Flying badge awarded posthumously to 1673025 Sgt Dick T Royal Air Force on the authority of air officer commanding No 4 Training Command, Royal Canadian Air Force, 9 January 1944. (Sent to next of kin)

March 1, 1944

A boxing tournament was held in the evening at which various teams on the unit competed for the handsome trophy cup. The best fight was the catch weight contest between Burke and Hichens, both of SHQ and the light-heavyweight match between Oliver of maintenance B and Gysseis of F and I Wing. The redheaded, stout-hearted Gordon of SHQ impressed all with his gameness and sportsmanship and won the prize for the best boxer. The commanding officer G/C A Ellis CBE presented the winning trophy and the individual prizes which took the form of attractive and appropriately designed plaques.

March 2, 1944

G/C A Ellis CBE commanding officer of this unit received today a telegram from A/V/M G R Housam MC air officer commanding No 4 Training Command thanking him for the gift of \$450 forwarded on behalf of the officers and airmen of No 34 SFTS for transmission to the Royal Canadian Air Force Benevolent Fund.

March 9, 1944

An unusual form of entertainment was held in the recreation hall tonight at 2000 hours dividing itself into three parts: a) brains trust, b) musical appreciation and c) spelling bee. It was the intention of the brains trust to deal with a variety of issues but the question first drawn from the hat evoked such interest and curiosity that the rest were allowed to lie in folded oblivion. The wording might have been better. "Will women in industry constitute a menace to ex-servicemen after the war?" betrayed a timorousness hardly worthy of the brave new world. Since no woman was present perhaps it didn't matter and her amused indifference must remain an imagined tantalizing thing. The gay tunes of HMS Pinafore dispersed any clouds of controversy and a joint recital followed with F/O Wilson playing the piano and LAC Homenuk the violin. These two are old favorites and match each other well. At the spelling bee the accounts section matched the orderly room and whereas the orderly room were confident enough of their intelligence to rely entirely on their LACs the accounts section trusted mostly in their NCOs. The contest opened with suspicious ease but soon found itself involved in tongue-twisters like

“ipecacuanah” and “mnemonic.” General knowledge questions were flung into the proceedings to confound the unwary and a very enjoyable evening ended with accounts winning by a margin of three points. The victory, however, was rather dubious since one of the decisions in their favor conflicted with the authority of the Oxford Dictionary.

March 10, 1944

Ten RCAF flying instructors arrived from No 13 SFTS North Battleford, Saskatchewan on temporary duty. Owing to the increased intake of pupils occasioned by the closing of other SFTSs these instructors have been loaned to this unit.

March 12, 1944

A fire broke out at the MT repair shop at 1115 hours this morning. The fire section was on the scene within a few seconds and after 20 minutes had the fire under complete control. A PBY 5A aircraft was forced to land here at 1430 hours on account of snow and poor visibility. This large aircraft was a strange inmate of our hangar and its tail barely cleared the roof.

March 14, 1944

Celebrating the third anniversary of the arrival of the RAF at Medicine Hat the airmen held a dinner in the airmen's dining hall at 1930 hours followed by an informal and highly enjoyable dance in the drill hall. The officers and senior NCOs did the waiting at the dinner which consisted of soup, veal and vegetables, apple pie and ice cream. It was noted that the nursing sisters were in big demand as waitresses. Everybody was in a festive mood and as soon as the dinner was over they went to collect their partners and the dance was on. To the great delight of the crowd the commanding officer conducted the Station dance band for part of the evening and while dancing with Mrs Ellis led and encouraged everyone in singing the words of the old time dance tunes. His remarks during the interval, when among many other things he dealt with the hospitality and interest shown in the unit by the citizens of Medicine Hat, were received with hearty applause.

March 22, 1944

The finals of the inter-hut basketball knockout competition took place tonight and proved a very interesting game. Both teams had earned their right to this occasion by winning their qualifying games in no uncertain fashion. Hut 14/2 had an international flavor with two Fighting French, one Canadian and several Belgians in the team and had shown great keenness and a welded unity throughout. They proved too good for the officers mess though the result of 8 points to 6 showed how closely the match was played.

March 23, 1944

No 1800332 LAC Brown P C number 95 course was carrying out precautionary landing practice at Holsom R1. When coming in to land the port wheel tire burst. He took off again at once and

returned to the main aerodrome where he made a one wheel landing after signaling the control tower concerning the damage. The landing was skillfully affected and damage to the Harvard was minor. No 93 course held their graduation dinner and dance this evening. The commanding officer made a typical fighting speech in which he told the graduates that they had received the finest possible pilot training. He was well aware that they had had to work hard, they had to continue to do so and was up to them to fit themselves for the task ahead of humbling the Hun and getting even with the little yellow devils. He paid tribute to the Allied nations that had been concerned for so long with the training on the unit and expressed pride in their association with the common cause.

March 25, 1944

In connection with the forthcoming formation of the SBA flight the first SBA set was installed today in one of the unit's aircraft and successfully air tested. The beam was completed at Whitla R2 in February but was not calibrated awaiting the installation of SBA equipment in Harvard aircraft. The beam at Whitla R2 was calibrated this date and found to be in good condition.

March 30, 1944

The commanding officer was pleased to be able to inform all ranks today of the news that W/C S C Scragg MBE AFC was fit and well and a prisoner of war in Germany. W/C Scragg was chief instructor at this unit from the date of its formation 26 February 1941 until 24 March 1943 and was previously reported missing after a raid over Germany.

April 4, 1944

The VD film "It's Up to You" was shown today to personnel of this unit at 1330 and 1430 hours. A new Station record for total flying hours in any one day was reached with today's total of 565 hours 25 minutes. Once again the Station recreation hall was filled to capacity at the airmen's weekly dance. It was an informal event in the best sense of the word. Girls from the city took the lead in demonstrating to their partners the strange but attractive gyrations of the adventurous new world and then followed with superb ease the sedate but equally attractive dances that originated beyond the Atlantic. Midnight came too soon and with it the end of the dance to the regret of all personnel.

April 9, 1944

The SBA flight is now fully established with 10 Harvard aircraft. There are 13 instructors fully trained in SBA flying instructional duties (one squadron leader and 12 flying instructors).

April 11, 1944

There was a meeting of the photographic club at 1800 hours. F/O A J W Barker and his fellow enthusiasts conspire in their darkroom with a mysterious aloofness and fanatical intensity of Tibetan priests at their most solemn, gesticulatory rites. But we like the results of their "dark

magic.” The discussion group advocates when Parliament hesitates. This week’s question “to what extent should pre-marital guidance and medical examination be made compulsory” was one calculated to summon Petty Officer A P Herbert MP from his patrol boat on the Thames. The group was final and forthright in its conclusions: medical examinations, it declared, should be compulsory and marriage prohibited to those subject to congenital disease and those mentally deficient.

April 13, 1944

The recreation hall was filled to capacity for the talent competition held tonight. Mr King, YMCA supervisor, was in charge of the arrangements and introduced each artist as he appeared. The variety of talent was bewildering. There were violin solos, Negro spirituals, accordion solos, imitations of various animals and birds, impersonations of well known people, juggling, tap dancing, humorous singing, piano playing high brow and low brow. Out of all these, LAC Glyssels, a Belgian pupil pilot, was considered a worthy winner, his powerful deep rich voice singing the Robeson Spirituals was very moving. He accompanied himself.

April 19, 1944

The Station was very proud of a recital given tonight at the United Church by two of its star musicians, F/O R W Wilson and LAC W Homenuk. It was an exceedingly well balanced program and drew a packed audience. After playing “O Canada” Ray Wilson opened with a dextrous toccata and fugue of Bach’s on the organ followed by “Jesu Joy of Man’s Desiring” and Percell’s “Trumpet Tune and Air.” Then followed Grieg’s Sonata Number 2 in G Minor Opus 13 with Wilson at the piano and Homenuk on the violin. It was sustained and beautifully executed and delighted the ears and satisfied the judgement. After it, a man might reasonably expect a respite but Ray Wilson went on to play the Beethoven “Moonlight Sonata.” His touch was liquid and certain and some people consider it was his best playing of the night. The second half of the program opened with Homenuk playing a Cansonetta of Tschaikowski’s and Bach’s “Air For the G String.” His technique is excellent and his execution confident and clear. Homenuk, making his last entrance smiled to kill and indulged in fireworks and Wilson, taking his cue, pulled out all the organ stops for a crashing “Finlandia.” The audience gave them a well-deserved and resounding ovation, a mark of their appreciation for an evening of rare excellence and pleasure.

April 21, 1944

Course 95 graduated today on the parade ground after the commanding officer had made a full inspection of the Station parade. It was a beautiful morning, hot if anything, and several members of the public made it their pleasure to come out and watch. With a total of 65 pupils graduating, several of whom were allied with unpronounceable names, the ceremony was somewhat protracted except for those receiving wings and their admirers and friends. However the Station military band beat up the flagging spirits with undiminished vigour and nobly led the march past.

April 24, 1944

F/L L Whiteside's long awaited Station Review opened tonight in the recreation hall at 2000 hours for a run of several nights. The airmen were their own guests this evening and as usual led the entertainment with robust and ready fun. Free of the restraining influence of wife or lady friend, the crackle of their laughter made merry havoc of the parodies and jests that were flung from the stage at the expense of themselves and their superiors. This firework display that develops between players and their audience on these occasions is one of the joys of a service show.

April 27, 1944

The air officer commanding No 4 Training Command A/V/M G R Housam MC arrived in his Lockheed this evening in preparation for his inspection tomorrow. He was accompanied by S/L Marshall, his PAC and W/C O'Brien. With the commanding officer, G/C A Ellis CBE and other senior officers, they dined with Col Bull at the POW camp, Medicine Hat, Alberta.

April 28, 1944

Whilst engaged on a night flying cross country flight, F/O R Crawshay, navigation instructor, was unable to discover whether the undercarriage was locked down. He rocked the aircraft without success and instructed his pupil number 1621801 LAC Mellor A of number 99 course to fire a red Verry light through the chute to indicate he intended to land on right side of flare path. F/O Crawshay noticed the cartridge burning in the bottom of the aircraft close to the starboard fuel tank and instructed the pupil to bail out, landing the aircraft successfully later when the fire had subsided. The aircraft Harvard No AJ942 sustained only minor damage and the pupil was only very slightly injured.

May 3, 1944

The yeomen of Holsom were seen occupying their leisure moments today throwing the horseshoe on a pitch that has been erected on the grass opposite their barrack hut. The gardens around their quarters are now dug and planted with flower seeds. Every evening the ritual of watering of these takes place with steadfast hope and considerable faith.

May 5, 1944

A yellow smoke hung over the prairie today like the pall of a London fog. It originated in a colossal forest fire somewhere to the northwest. A Harvard aircraft from No 2 Wireless School, Calgary and an Oxford from Penhold were reported lost and this unit was requested to take part in the search. Owing to poor visibility and the low ceiling it was impossible for aircraft from this unit to fly. Several Ansons from No 8 B&G School, Lethbridge, taking part in the search landed on the aerodrome here on account of continued poor visibility.

May 6, 1944

Reports reached us from Holsom that in view of a special bus taking a number of airmen to attend cinemas and shops we might expect to see a number of gopher-like expressions in town tonight.

May 7, 1944

In the evening the Holsom football club played their first match against hut 9A of the main camp. Although hut 9A won by four goals to one, the game was decidedly more even than the score. The football field at Holsom has been made entirely by personnel there. It is good and even and a credit to their enthusiasm. The W and B Section gave their valued help in making goal posts.

May 12, 1944

Big game hunting at Holsom today terminated rather odorously with the bag of one skunk.

May 14, 1944

In the afternoon G/C C A Davidson of No 4 Training Command headquarters and the commanding officer inspected the relief aerodromes at Holsom and Whitla. Noticeable improvements are apparent at both R1 and R2 and the hard work put into these stations is showing its reward both in the amenities of the buildings and in the activities of the personnel stationed there. The gardens have prepared against the flourishing season and we await their appearance of fairness in the prairie wilderness.

May 18, 1944

At Whitla relief landing ground there was an accident today involving Harvard aircraft FE407. The pilot instructor number 1018246 F/Sgt Alford A M was carrying out an SBA exercise with pupil pilot number 1814849 LAC De Marnefla. On coming in to land he failed to see until the last minute another aircraft that had landed correctly into the wind and in taking evasive action to avoid this aircraft he struck the ground sideways and wrecked his undercarriage. There was no injury to personnel.

May 21, 1944

Harvard aircraft number 2737 was involved in a category D crash when F/O P J B Pall, flying instructor, and number 1563488 LAC Fella A A pupil pilot landed on a night flying aircraft test in conditions of almost zero visibility due to dust storms. A violent squall sprang up as the aircraft was landing and changed the wind direction 180 degrees with a result that the pilot landing downwind was unable to pull up before reaching the edge of the aerodrome. He applied his brakes and nosed over. There was no injury to personnel.

May 23, 1944

The discussion group vacated its seat of judgement this evening, relaxed its stern countenance, put by its gown and donned its housecoat and entered our homes to share our modest cup of tea. "What sort of homes would we like after the war?" So we told that august body just what we thought and felt. We spoke about sinks and bath tubs and how we were impressed by many sensible improvements we had found in homes over here. We liked their central heating but we still wanted a coal fire. We disliked the narrow corridors they made for us at home and the hidden steps on the ground floor. It annoyed us how coal trailed across the carpet when it was delivered. We wanted somewhere to put our bikes and prams. Oh, and why was the larder always where the hot water pipes shouldn't be. It was funny, though, how nobody saw what a good thing built in cupboards were.

May 28, 1944

At the Fifth Avenue United Church this evening, the Station male voice choir made its first appearance off the Station. The whole of the service was conducted by service personnel, F/L A J W Barker leading the prayers, F/O A J Gray read the lesson, and the padre gave a stirring address which drew high praise. The anthem chosen by the choir was Dudley Buck's "Lead Kindly Light" and was followed by a solo from Handel's Messiah by LAC Rawlings. As a vesper, "Inspire Oh Lord Our Men Who Fly" was sung. It was used in the Battle of Britain memorial service at Cairo Cathedral and was written in a London tube train by A/V/M E B C Betts DSC AFC and proved a most fitting inclusion to a wholly RAF service. The church was filled to capacity.

May 30, 1944

A ceremony unique in the history of this unit took place at 1100 hours when Mrs R V Hansel, formerly Miss Mary Georgina Pingle of Medicine Hat and the widow of the late Maj Ralph V Hansel of the United States Army Air Corps was presented with the United States Air Medal posthumously awarded to her husband. The presentation was made with full ceremonial dignity by Brig Gen Dale V Gaffney and the citation was read by 1st Lieutenant John R Beatty, aid to General Gaffney. The General was attended by Col Robert F Brua, Lt Col Paul E Griner, Lt Col Henry Waller, Capt Frank Cochipinti, Capt Robert Hardy and Capt Herman Wittig. A guard of honor of 10 enlisted men was present and they flanked the table covered with the Stars and Stripes on which the decoration rested. Brig Gen Gaffney and his officers were met by the commanding officer G/C A Ellis CBE and the chief instructor W/C W T F Wightman DFC and were conducted to the parade ground where in view of a parade under the command of S/L K V Gilling they were received with a general salute. The Station military band under its bandmaster Sgt Duncan J played the "Star Spangled Banner" and at the same time the American flag was broken from the masthead. Mrs Hansel was escorted by F/L T R S Lawson MBE and accompanied by her father and mother Mr and Mrs G W Pingle, Miss Lorraine Gershaw, Miss Marjory Parrish and Mr and Mrs L Maher, friends of Mrs Hansel. It is interesting to note that the late Major Hansel had already been posthumously awarded the Order of the Purple Heart.

He was also an early graduate of this unit, graduating with 19 course, the second course to graduate from this school, passing out very high in order of merit. Major Hansel eventually qualified as an instructor successfully passing the Central Flying School course at Trenton, Ontario on 5th November, 1941 having been commissioned on 9th August, 1941. From 5th November, 1941 until 29th May, 1942 he was an instructor at the school from which he graduated, that is, No 34 SFTS Medicine Hat, Alberta. The late Major Hansel retired from the RCAF on transfer to the United States Army Air Corps on 29th May, 1942, eventually reaching the rank of major. He proceeded overseas and during the course of combat operations over enemy occupied continental Europe he made the supreme sacrifice.

June 1, 1944

It was sun and blue sky for the visit of His Excellency the Governor General and Her Royal Highness Princess Alice today. Accompanying them were His Excellency's secretary Sir Sholdham Redfern KCVO his ADC, S/L P E Leith DFC and Miss Vera Grenfell, lady in waiting to Her Royal Highness. The commanding officer of this unit G/C A Ellis CBE met the Royal party at the city hall where they had motored after leaving their special train and brought them by car to No 34 SFTS.

June 4, 1944

It was announced on the radio that Rome had been captured, mostly intact. The Station team is doing well in the fastball league this season although the foundry are still leading. No 34 SFTS beat the Suffield team today 10 to 4.

June 5, 1944

The evening was quiet and ominous and the radio announced that the Germans were reporting furious bombardment by the Allies of the French coast at various points. Shortly before midnight, it was announced from London that the Allies had effected a landing on the Normandy coast near Cherbourg.

June 6, 1944

Today was a scattered to broken high cloudy sky with sunny morning and scattered lower cloud at 6,000 feet during the afternoon. News of the Allied invasion of Europe was the one topic and concern of the day. The landing has been effected nine miles or so in depth at a width of some miles. The Channel must have been solid in ships as the giant armada of 4,000 major ships, without mentioning smaller craft, crossed over and the air cover of over 11,000 front line aircraft would have been stupendous. The centenary of the YMCA was celebrated this evening in the recreation hall and took the form of a birthday party. The commanding officer paid tribute to the excellent service given by the YMCA and complimented the supervisor Mr W King and his staff and those who had gone before for the splendid efforts they had made at this Station. The commanding officer then called upon his men to participate in prayer and dedication on behalf of

our comrades in the new invasion forces. It was an impressive sight to see how the airmen answered the call of their commanding officer and it was obvious that many of them were thinking of old members of the unit who even now might be doing their best to make the invasion a success.

June 12, 1944

A telephone call received this morning from the RCMP at Leader, Saskatchewan stated that an aircraft had been seen to crash into the cables of the ferry at Estuary, Saskatchewan and embed itself in the South Saskatchewan River. The only part of the aircraft visible was a portion of the tailplane. Apparently the ferry was crossing at the time. On checking up aircraft on this unit it was found that Harvard IIB BW205 piloted by P/O E L Overton, flying instructor and 1814847 LAC Van Rillaer J, pupil pilot had not returned to this unit and was overdue. A maintenance party under S/L C W R Baker found the aircraft extensively broken up by the force of the impact but they managed to salvage most of it and confirm that it was the missing Harvard from this unit. They could not find the bodies, however, and it was thought that the swift current swollen by the recent heavy rain had carried them downstream. Search is proceeding and S/L O'Day from No 4 Training Command headquarters is investigating the accident.

June 17, 1944

The body of P/O E L Overton was recovered today by the RAF guard 25 miles downstream of the scene of the fatal crash on Monday, 12 June at Estuary, Saskatchewan. Later, that of LAC Van Rillaer was found three miles downstream of Estuary ferry. The bodies were identified by the medical officer of the unit and were brought back to Medicine Hat after release by the Saskatchewan authorities.

June 18, 1944

The Reverend Cannon Butcher of St Barnabas Church, Medicine Hat took this morning's divine service in the Station church. It was his last appearance with us before his retirement to the coast. Drawing attention to the ribbons being worn by those assembled before him Cannon Butcher reminded personnel that he too had seen service as his ribbons showed and he was not ashamed to hold his head high amongst them. He bade them set their faces like flint against the forces that threaten to disintegrate moral life and exhorted them to maintain their ideals. He referred them to the passage just read by the commanding officer about "setting their treasure beyond the corruption of moth and rust" and encouraged them to anchor their loyalties on the enduring principles.

June 22, 1944

The sergeants mess dance in the recreation hall tonight was disappointingly attended probably because of poor advertisement but lack of numbers did not deter those present from enjoying the evening to its full. It might indeed be said that the small attendance was an advantage since it

left ample room for the dancers to display their ballistics on the usually crowded floor. An innovation to the RAF personnel present was a Canadian square dance led by F/Sgt Sadler RCAF. It is feared that by the end of this dance rules had been entirely confounded and it is quite certain that the dance was ad-libbed very much out of its true form. However, everyone had so much fun trying that it was all well worth while.

June 25, 1944

Holsom R1 held its first social evening and friends and attachments arrived by bus at 2000 hours when one of the airmen pianists set the toes dancing in the airmen's mess. Refreshments followed and beer and a few concert tunes were given by some of the talented after which dancing was resumed including a Highland reel. The bus rolled up at midnight to take friends home and everyone seemed to have enjoyed the evening, especially the camp commandant.

June 30, 1944

Whew! What heat! Quite a breeze accompanied it but proved to be just hot air sucking up all the moisture it could find. Though near expiration at the end of the day, we were thankful to find ourselves still alive.

July 23, 1944

At this morning's service in the Station church our padre S/L M S Flint preached his last sermon before leaving for the Bahamas. The male voice choir was there under Cpl Morgan and every seat was filled. Consequently the walls resounded with the lustiness of the singing and in place of the usual psalm, Dudley Buck's arrangement of "Lead Kindly Light" was sung by the choir. Taking as his text a modern translation of St Luke's Gospel chapter 8 verse 39 the padre delivered an outspoken address on these words, "Go home and show how great things God hath done for thee," expressing the hope that our return to the old country and recounting all our experienced in Canada we might all be able to echo the words of the text.

July 25, 1944

The word crowded is now becoming superfluous in referring to the airmen's weekly dance in the recreation hall and this Tuesday was no exception. The almost universal regret of the local inhabitants over the announcement of the impending disbandment of the unit is hardly shared by the proprietors of the two city dance halls. The evening dance ended once more with regret and many promises between the guests and the staff to "see you at the dance next Tuesday."

August 2, 1944

Experience has shown that the announcement of sports day is enough to set the temperamental powers that govern weather on a course of obstructing the smooth running of the event. The faith and innocence of human nature is such however that it prepares and organizes itself in

blissful disregard of this possibility. And so it was that we saw the tents and marquis erected, the hurdles positioned, the jumps and the obstacles in place, the heats run off and on the morning of the day chairs brought out for the public to sit on, tables to set off the prizes and take the refreshments, starting pistols collected and finishing tapes, microphones and all impediments. In the fever of engrossed activity that immediately preceded zero hour it was unobserved how the clouds gathered across the blue and billowed their threatening canopy above our heads. The rain, when it came, fell heavily on a forlorn field of anxious officials putting the last minute touches to things before the guests and competitors arrived. Disappointment passed like a wave across us as it seemed that the sports were ruined before they had begun. Whether it was the pretty display of summer frocks at that moment boarding the buses in town or some imperative need of showers in a spotless corner of the land or just one of those inexplicable mysteries of fate that barred Hannibal's entry into Rome will never be known but whatever it was that intervened on our behalf drew off the rain with satisfying suddenness and brought up the dust and the sun. Moose Jaw ran a fine but poorly contested mile relay against a scratch Station team that had been conjured to make up for cancellations of other teams but the inter-squadron mile relay proved a most exciting race with P/O Scott breaking the tape at the last minute. He was undoubtedly the athlete of the day and thoroughly earned the Victor Ludorum trophy which is awarded to the best individual on the field. Of course he belonged to No 1 quadron flying wing and of course No 1 squadron walked away with the points and the inter-squadron cup. In addition to Scott they had Eboue, son of France's most distinguished Negro, the governor general of French Equatorial Africa. His muscular dusky figure never failed to interest the crowd for its watchful concentration.

August 3, 1944

W/C R A Kendrick of the United Kingdom Air Liaison Mission is a familiar and welcome visitor to this unit where so many and various Allied pupils undergo training. On this occasion he brought with him Maj de MacMahon, French military and air attache and Cmdr L Le Normand, French naval attache who interviewed French trainees at present undergoing training at this unit and any disposed here from elementary training pending posting to SFTS vacancies.

August 4, 1944

A double motive served to justify tonight's officers mess dance—the imminent departure of the two nursing sisters who had been looking after the commanding officer during his illness, and the forthcoming graduation of several army officers who on account of extended courses have now been with us many months. It was a still balmy evening with sufficient light for the surrounding background of rough prairie to acquire an attractive silhouette of loneliness as the couples sauntered to and fro taking the air where the mess lights shone cheerful patterns through the curtained windows onto the gravel below and the music of Alf Coggins and his orchestra drifted across with the faint nostalgia of enchantment that distance endows. Inside where the wine-stimulated atmosphere drew the incoherent chatter of the glassy eyed youths and their provocative maidens through the tangled skeins of heavy cigarette smoke it was all color and hubbub except among the graver members holding weighty council on the passing world. These

last appeared to derive an enviable clarity of brain from the glass of beer in their hand whose still strength seemed to contain the untold richness of deep experience.

August 8, 1944

In a letter of thanks for the receipt of a further 200 pound donation to His fund, the Lord Mayor of London remarked that the present raids by flying bomb have resulted in very heavy demands on the fund and that it was due to the support that he got from people like the commanding officer that he was able to meet these demands. Contributions to the fund from this unit now total 1,300 pounds. A storm of Titanic proportions, even for the large scale magnificence of this country, provided the airmen's weekly dance with its most eloquent testimony of popularity and adherence. Lightning and thunder mounted a scene of wrath that fitted the thought executing fires and oak clearing thunder bolts of the mad Lear's vituperative Hurricanes and brought down the torrential rains to drown the cocks and drench the steeples with a violence of destruction. Hail of size and fury hither to but legendary to those of us out from England lacerated the lawns and crops and market gardens with merciless precision. In face of such supernal controversy the maidens of Medicine Hat might be expected to excuse themselves from attending tonight's dance but their pioneer ancestry was not easily daunted and they matched the occasion with an Amazonian spirit that scoffed dismay. Their gaiety and cooperation turned what might have been a dismal failure into a glittering success and their unexpected presence in such numbers on such a night was a sparkling tribute to the merits of the orchestra which received encouraging heart thereby and expressed its unmistakable admiration in a manner appreciated by all playing as it only can at the top of its tip top form.

August 10, 1944

Lt Col Jan Ambrus of the Czechoslovak legation arrived from Ottawa today for the purpose of presenting wings at tomorrow's graduation. Czechoslovak pupils figure large among the Allied graduates and comprise two officers and seven airmen. Col Ambrus enquired after the health of his old friend the commanding officer and was taken down to his residence for a chat. Later he attended the graduation dinner which was held in the airmen's mess this evening. A very fine meal was served by the messing staff and was followed by the toast to the King. LAC De Mevius proposed the toast of Belgium, LAC Schuk-Colben for Czechoslovakia, Sgt Contie for France and LAC Van Oostergetel for the Netherlands. Throughout the dinner the Station orchestra enlivened the proceedings with well known selections.

August 11, 1944

It is so long since the last graduation, 21 April 1944, that we wondered if we were out of practice. However the turnout on this very lovely day was well up to standard and the parade could be termed a big success. Number 99 course had been at Medicine Hat long enough to make many friends and acquaintances, several of them determined to be in time for the presentation of wings and arrived on the unit fully an hour before the ceremony was due to start. Cars turned up from all directions until congestion in the parking area assumed the proportions

of a derby or New Market Meet and the gates emitted a steady stream of people onto the parade ground to watch the squadrons assembling. Flags of Allied peoples colored either side of the Ensign and made a brave display opposite the graduating number 99 course which provided such a truly representative gathering of the United Nations. The army officers are an occasion in themselves and have in the past encouraged the public to expect a superlative demonstration of the niceties of drill. Nor did they disappoint today.

August 17, 1944

The depleting of the Station began today when 68 airmen left for No 31 PD Moncton, New Brunswick on the 0055 hours train for the east. After two years or so in Canada they had made many friends and there was much regret at their departure though they took with them and left behind them vivid and happy memories of their stay. This was number 29 draft.

August 27, 1944

A/C Carnegie RAF Director of Flying Training visited the unit today and on his tour of inspection paid particular attention to the intelligence library and synthetic instructors.

September 1, 1944

Letter from AOC No 4 TC: Daily diaries - RAF schools: AFHQ has ruled that the diaries of disbanding RAF units are to be written up to the date of departure of last personnel and submitted in triplicate to this headquarters regardless of whether they cover a full months period. A general retrospect and review of the Station's activities might be made an interesting feature.

September 2, 1944

Owing to an outbreak of poliomyelitis in the USA no air force personnel are allowed to proceed to the States on leave or pass. This is a great disappointment to those who had planned their trips and were on the eve of departure. It looks as if the Canadian Rockies and the great cities of the coast and the middle west are about to be inundated with hordes of thwarted Hollywood fans and frustrated New York night clubbers.

September 8, 1944

As a result of the extended period of training number 101 course has been with us since the end of February and during the six months have contributed to many of our winter and summer activities. People of Medicine Hat have shown continued kindness and hospitality to personnel of this unit and number 101 course was here long enough to foster much interest and enjoy many expressions of friendship. Consequently it was no surprise that a goodly number of the public, especially the fair sex, were already at the parade ground as the band played the general salute.

September 10, 1944

F/O Ken Cook delivered an entertaining address upon the pitfalls which await the unwary upon their return to the United Kingdom; habits of speech and custom unwittingly adopted during a tour of duty in Canada supply a surprisingly large number of opportunities for misunderstanding, amusement and faux pas. However, in spite of the trouble which will beset us, most of the company resolved to take the opportunity of returning to the UK and look forward to such an event with hope albeit tightly sealed lips.

September 19, 1944

The closing down of the unit increases the moral need for entertainment while it intensifies the difficulties of providing it. The Mad Hatters final production "Take It Easy" came in for more than the usual run of bad luck. Alf Coggins, producer and director, had conceived an ambitiously colorful review, touching the story of our unit's stay in Canada which he implemented to the extent of writing the complete libretto, setting the songs and drafting a cast and calling a rehearsal. It was a gay and happy creation with moments of wistful appreciation for the interest taken and hospitable care taken of us by the citizens of Medicine Hat. It said "hello" and "goodbye" and recalled for us the many vivid memories we shall be taking back with us across the Atlantic.

September 22, 1944

G/C A ap Ellis CBE resumed command today after a spell at the Col Belcher Hospital, Calgary, Alberta. Camp commandant at Holsom R1 since last spring, F/O R G Wingfield was posted to No 31 PD Moncton today for repatriation to the UK.

September 28, 1944

Mrs S F Carr of Brooks, Alberta was so impressed with the Mad Hatters show "Take It Easy" when she came to see it that she decided there and then to engage the entire company to give performances in her own town.

September 30, 1944

We woke this morning to scenes of Christmas. As far as the eye could see the snow lay under an overcast of from 8,000 to 10,000 feet. Tonight saw the dress rehearsal of the very last show that it will be possible for the unit to produce. The Prairie Players have put on many plays in the recreation hall and provided a very creditable standard of production and performance and in their last venture they have chosen Noel Coward's "Hay Fever" with Grace Coates in the principle role. At Brooks, Saturday's performance was in the form of a matinee at 1430 hours and the attendance was somewhat marred by a heavy fall of rain and snow during the previous night continuing into the morning. This did not deter the party and although the microphone refused to work for them the show was put over with the same gusto as on the previous evening.

The kindness and hospitality of the people of Brooks is hard to describe, it was so freely given, so complete and so much in advance of anything experienced by the party in Canada. After the show on Friday night, a midnight banquet was given by Mrs Carr and her lady helpers in her home to the whole of the company. It was a master piece of organization and the delicacies provided would have made the mouth of the Lord Mayor himself water. After tonight's show it was the intention after the stage properties had been taken down and made available for transport for the whole of the party to go to the local dance but this was called off due to the absence of heat in the hall. Mrs Carr immediately put her house at the disposal of all and located as many damsels as she could find for partners. By midnight the party was in full swing and 24 couples were counted at one time dancing on her beautifully polished floors. Then the band arrived and the climax of this part of the evening was reached when they set up their instruments and really went to town. From here on the party moved from house to house finding always the same open hearted generosity and welcome awaiting them at each place. Nothing was too much trouble and it was open house everywhere so that it was a very sad party saying goodbye the following morning. A special tribute must be paid to every member of the party, all of whom worked like Trojans against great odds with a cheerfulness and devotion which had to be seen to be believed. Two ladies especially from Medicine Hat, Mrs Joan Hays and Miss Adrienne White, have deserved well from all ranks of this unit for the assiduous and ungrudging way in which they have given their time and their talent on behalf of our entertainment here. Mrs Hays has been a constant inspiration and a joy to watch and to be associated with in Prairie Player productions. Miss White has given her sweet voice to the enjoyment of our concerts and our dances and she has now gone on to wider fields of opportunity at the Toronto Academy. It is fitting that unstinted encouragement and help such as we have been given by these ladies should be recognized and the inscribed silver plates indicate what those who have gone and those who still remain at "34" feel and appreciate.

Ed: this diary contains photographs of nearly every building on the base.

October 1, 1944

Indian summer on the prairie must be one of the finest climates in the world. The poplars are all gold and cool sunshine steep the pleasant earth from a blue untroubled heaven.

October 2, 1944

The CPR's commitments with movements of prisoners of war have necessitated postponing the effective date of number 31 draft's posting. There is quite a panic around the camp tonight when a signal came through instructing number 31 draft to proceed on the 5th instead of the 17th of the month. Several people made stray calculations as to the whereabouts of their luggage and what things they wanted to buy.

October 3, 1944

Organization Order No 451

Information: curtailment of the BCATP permits the closing of certain SFTSs. It is the intention to disband No 34 SFTS Medicine Hat, Alberta. No 34 SFTS Medicine Hat, Alberta is to become inactive 3 November 44 and to disband effective 17 November 44. Course 105 is to graduate as planned effective 3 November 44. Intakes for all subsequent courses have been canceled.

October 5, 1944

Tonight number 103 course held their graduation dinner in the airmen's mess followed by a formal dance in the recreation hall. F/O I C Cowan DFC (RCAF) senior pupil and top graduate acted capably and effectively as toast master and after the toast to the King LAC De Smet proposed the toast to Belgium, LAC Nagy to Czechoslovakia, Cpl Eboue, son of the eminent African Chief, proposed the toast to France and LAC Maison-Pierre to the Netherlands. G/C A ap Ellis CBE then rose to address the course but before doing so he referred to the death of a pupil in the course R57997 F/Sgt McKay W B who lost his life in a flying accident on 1 July, 1944. All present stood for a moment in silence as a last tribute to him. The commanding officer gave a resume of the course's progress and went on to outline the training achievement of the unit over the years of its existence here, a very creditable performance which drew loud applause. The commanding officer then referred to the large number of staff personnel going that day to Moncton for repatriation. He was saying goodbye to many who had played a big part in the training of number 103 course and previous courses. Pupils of number 103 course should realize it was not they themselves who had made them what they were, it was the staff who had made them. He was very proud of the staff of "34" and had been since the unit started in 1941. The saddest day would be when he said goodbye to the last of them. Heartily thanking all who were going that day, cooks, members of the band and all the others, he wished them good luck and said goodbye and God bless them all.

October 6, 1944

In view of the specially arranged visit to this unit of His Excellency the Baron de Silvercruys, Belgium ambassador to Canada, the parade for 103 course was announced to take place at 1430 hours. This is not the first occasion that we have been honored with the gracious and charming personality of the Baron de Silvercruys, a year ago he officiated at the graduation ceremony of number 79 course when 14 of his countrymen graduated. It was an ideal afternoon for the parade, sunny with the autumnal slant that gives warmth rather than heat. The townsfolk came as usual to provide their colorful background of interest, on this occasion in bigger numbers than the generous estimate of our seating preparations had allowed for due in some measure no doubt to the increased attraction of the event as the date of our closing draws near. Disbandment and the depletion of our staff is apparent in the thinness of the attending ranks on parade and deprive the day of one of its most cheerful characteristics, the ubiquitous and untiring band. Last night's draft had carried off most of its components and all that could be mustered effectively from those

that were left were LAC Sharp, the trumpeter, and LAC Hodgetts, the drummer.

October 11, 1944

This morning we made an attempt to immortalize the inclusion of the words “squadron formation” in the syllabus for SFTS’s. F/L A N Werner and F/L R Y Cannon led the outside sections whilst F/L J D F Penrose not only had the honor of leading the whole affair but also the comfort of knowing that he had both the easiest and safest position of the lot. We had no trouble at all in finding passengers of every degree from W/C F Wicks MBE our CEO and F/L G L Cox, flying wing adjutant downwards. After a preliminary discussion in the course of which most of the differences of opinion were ironed out, we got off the ground shortly after 1030 hours more or less all at once and without mishap no doubt to the great relief of the aerodrome control officer F/L S Pike. Once in the air things went well. We went through the maneuvers decided upon beforehand, S/L F J Aldridge giving instructions to ensure that no one was out of position while the photographs were being taken. We made out runs between the camp and the sun so that we could have the camp or the town for a background and indirectly for the edification of the inmates of the internment camp. Rumor has it that these were sufficiently impressed to take the formation for a task force efficiently and specifically sent over to quiet any dissatisfaction. Everyone was particularly careful to get as neat a formation as possible at this stage, especially in the squadron V for Victory. At least one run was made over the aerodrome in each case, in course of this we passed over the town several times and from subsequent accounts the towns people were duly impressed. From the leader’s position the formations looked very good and everyone appeared to be pleased. From an instructor’s point of view it was a very welcome change to do something themselves instead of telling others what to do and as this was practically the last flying to be done on this unit we felt we should make a parting gesture if only for the benefit of the Wehrmach.

October 13, 1944

At 1000 hours two RCAF operational aircrew gave us a talk on some of their experiences on torpedo bombers. F/O C A Fyfe, wireless operator air gunner, spoke first and told us that his squadron used to search the Mediterranean for enemy shipping, flying only at night and using ASV for detection. Moonlit nights were best when they could shadow the enemy convoy and go into the attack from the moon path. Usually the first indication of this kind of torpedo attack was the white foam from the torpedo itself. F/O R M Summerville, pilot, followed with a talk on daylight torpedo bombing and escort work with Beaufighter aircraft. The opposition, he said, was always very strong and they lost quite a few aircraft though he emphasized that these losses were mainly the result of thoughtlessness on the part of the pilot and forgetfulness of instructions and training received at AFU where there were experienced pilots in a position to pass on really valuable tips to any people who took the trouble to listen.

October 15, 1944

The corporal’s club held its last social evening tonight. With the passing of each successive

event the recording of them becomes tinged with greater regret until one cannot attend or even contemplate a social evening such as this one without memories crowding in and until the mist of sickly sentiment so blinds normal common sense that even corporals resemble gentlemen. One missed the strident tones of Cpl Chris Jones while the presence of the wives of several departed corporals brought even sharper to our mind those who had already left our company for the land where a social evening is not necessarily an opportunity to exhaust one's liquor permit for the current month and where fortunately they are unknown.

October 16, 1944

Tonight the officers' mess held its last guest night while there was yet sufficient of its members on the unit to represent all those who had benefited singly and communally by the kindness of the citizens of Medicine Hat in the three and one half years of the Station's existence. His worship the mayor and two of his aldermen were invited, the Dominion Member of Parliament, the vicar of St Barnabus and citizens to whom we as officers and as a unit had been especially indebted. As the PMC hammered silence and drew himself to his height he forgot then remembered with charming emphasis the presence of the nursing sister among the officers and gentlemen and prayed silence for the commanding officer. All eyes turned to the top table for we knew that in a real and in a unique sense, No 34 and all it stood for, its reputation, the spirit of pride, and happy affection for it that had inculcated its ranks throughout the years of its existence had been due to the leadership and example, the zeal and the resource, the tireless energy and the patient and personal interest of G/C A ap Ellis CBE. The commanding officer began by welcoming the mess guests and expressing his regrets that the mayor and aldermen were unable to be present with us on account of important council business. He would like, he said, to preface his remarks with a brief recital of this unit's origin. On 26 February, 1941, No 34 SFTS was formed under the command of himself and the first echelon of the school consisting of 38 officers, four warrant officers and 639 airmen embarked at Gourock on a Polish boat the HMT Battery on route to Canada. On 9 March, 1941 Halifax was reached and Medicine Hat on 14th when the process of taking over from opening party No 108 immediately commenced. The day after was a fierce blizzard, dreadful and awful introduction to weather conditions on the wide open spaces. However the warm, unstinted generosity of the people of Medicine Hat more than made up for the inhospitable elements. No less than 40 private cars were at the station to convey personnel and their baggage to the aerodrome in relays and to take officers and airmen back to the wide welcoming comfort of city homes. Since the day of arrival, words cannot convey what the good citizens of Medicine Hat have done for us all. In England we do what we can. Food isn't easy but we do our best. But here in the west people do everything, everything. It was difficult to realize that the days of our existence here were numbered and that this was the last time he would be addressing them all like this at such a function but looking back over the road they had traveled he could not help feeling proud of the record of achievement. The 39 courses trained at this unit had turned out 2,190 graduates flying a total of 352,000 hours. Against the expected wastage figure of 12 percent the 8 percent figure of this unit was congratulatory small. Our Allied pupils numbered 447 and our graduates have gone on to earn 68 honors between them.

October 19, 1944

F/Os J L Crawford and W R Smith were posted today to No 5 OTU for a course on Liberators. SBA training ended today as did the work of a flight under the direction of F/L G N North which had been in operation since 25 September 1944 for the purpose of converting single engine instructors to multi engine aircraft.

October 20, 1944

A quiet has fallen upon us, tangible and profound and all the more eerie for the ghostly Harvards that come and beat up the aerodrome piloted by ghosts of erstwhile posted instructors whose grinning features betray neither fear of court marshal nor consequences of D-14. All flying training ceased today.

October 26, 1944

The last course to be trained on this unit number 105 held their graduation dinner tonight when about 180 people, pupils and guests, were present. G/C A Ellis CBE opened with grace and after an excellent meal proposed a toast to the King which was followed by a short interval. When proceedings reopened, representatives of the various Allied nations proposed toasts to their several countries. LAC De Ligne of Belgium spoke first and expressed his gratitude for the one and one half years of training spent with the RAF and his appreciation of the Station and of the commanding officer. He had learnt to admire the British and their traditions which sentiment was also that of the Belgian people as a whole. In proposing the toast he asked us to rise to the King of the Belgians, at present captive in Germany, and unable to join in the fast moving liberation of the nation. Cpl Brandler of France and LAC Bortnowski of Poland followed with speeches in similar vein. A toast was proposed to the Allies and the response was made by LAC De Gerlocke of Belgium whilst another was proposed by LAC Crabtree of Canada to which the response was made by F/O MacKenzie. LAC Cooper, "welcoming our guests," expressed his admiration for the commanding officer G/C A Ellis CBE and congratulations upon his remarkable recovery. He gave thanks and his appreciation for the instructors and their great patience.

October 29, 1944

It was becoming that W/C (Rev) B H Howells who was Station chaplain for "34" for the greater part of its existence should conduct the last service held in the simple friendliness of the Station church. As is his custom, G/C A Ellis CBE read the lesson, appropriately Paul's charge to the Elders of Ephesus, taken from the book of the Acts of the Apostles. At night in St Barnabus Church the commanding officer presented the RAF Ensign from this unit to the rector of the church, Rev L J H Pearson, for placing in a space provided in the chancel. The Rector passed the Ensign to W/C B H Howells for dedication and following this simple but impressive ceremony our late padre preached a valedictory sermon.

October 30, 1944

Dakota aircraft DC-3 landed here today with Brig Gen D F Gaffney USAAF aboard. Our beautiful bowling alley has introduced many airmen to the fascinations of the game but its services terminated today with its closing for cleaning purposes.

October 31, 1944

All over the camp draft 32 are busy like bees getting themselves cleared and collecting their kit. The next move will denude us almost completely of any moving left on the camp. A gracious leader was printed in today's Medicine Hat Daily News bidding us all goodbye and good luck.

Ed: photos here include the buildings at Holsom. Hangar had a control tower on the corner. Other buildings included an H barrack, 8 bay garage, pump house and reservoir, coal compound, detonator store (tin clad building), practice bomb fusing hut, night flying equipment store, belt filling room for guns, fire hose reel station, works and building section workshop and accommodation. At Whitlaw, an accommodation building (L shaped), combination control tower-guard house-garage, main beacon and hut for the beam approach, inner marker beacons, outer marker beacons, fire equipment shed, generating unit. Bombing range at Bowell—the air to ground bombing range, quadrant shelter (two story observation hut), right hand quadrant shelter, latrine, air to ground firing range, elevated quadrant shelter (two story narrow buildings).

November 1, 1944

Flying wing closed their orderly room and vacated their premises today though flying facilities will be available and the meteorological service continues operating until and including 3 November 1944.

November 2, 1944

If yesterday we were a mausoleum, tomorrow we shall be a cemetery for the great silence of the north will have reclaimed all but the remnants of its ancestral territory. Our fitters and mechanics that peopled our little community with so much humor, originality and talent transferred their entertainment with tonight's draft of 300 to other less sunny localities. Most of us have been in Canada long enough to feel the pull of the west and the fascination of its open spaces. An hour or so before the train was due to puff itself out, a group of airmen were to be seen singing their way around the town visiting familiar haunts to the mild astonishment of the proprietors and waiters whose reassurance returned as in every instance the visitors marched out in the same orderly fashion that they had entered. It is true that their high spirits denuded the city of five Union Jacks among the clustered constellations that bedeck the environs of the City Hall. The only person who seemed concerned about their appropriation was the chief constable and even his punctilious soul was put to rest with their recovery at Winnipeg.

November 3, 1944

No 105 course was reduced to witnessing its own graduation without the comforting addition of a supporting parade while the cold wintry weather deprived it even of the surveillance of the sun. However the graduates worried little about that as they assembled in the drill hall. Sufficient for them the arrival at last of the day that would bestow upon them the award their training had merited. It was a briefer ceremony than usual and if the last course graduated and paraded to the tin iteration of a single drum No 105 course was denied even this unstirring accompaniment. However leave and the prospect of a glimpse of kith and home saw them shake the dust of our unit from their feet without malice.

November 5, 1944

Our erstwhile Station church is now a shell with all its fittings stripped and only the alter space conveys in its simple dignity the purpose of the building. Scars indicate where once the roll of honor stood. This wooden panel containing the names of our dead is being transferred to St Barnabus Church, Medicine Hat where it will be erected in the chancel. A metal memorial plaque has been constructed for placing in the church underneath the panel and bears our crest upon it and an inscription.

November 17, 1944

The group captain, accompanied by his adjutant F/L T R S Lawson MBE, his senior administrative officer S/L G W Baxter and equipment officer S/L P P Butler attended a council meeting presided over by the mayor in the city hall at 2000 hours on Monday, 20 November, 1944. After introducing the group captain and his officers to the councilors, Mayor Lang briefly explained the primary business of the council which was to present the group captain with a suitably inscribed remembrance recording the city's appreciation of the cordial relations which had existed between the citizens and all ranks of No 34 SFTS since its inception with special mention of the excellent behavior and deportment of all ranks. Since that wintry night of March, 1941 No 34 SFTS has seen 39 courses trained and 2,188 pupils graduate of whom 447 were Allied. Out of the intake of 2,593 pupils, 226 ceased training and 169 were transferred making a wastage of 8 percent. 1,591 RAF pupils passed out, two Royal Australian Air Force, 124 RCAF, 24 RNZAF and of the 447 Allied pupils one was Argentinian, 74 Belgians, 4 Singalese, 94 Czechs, 3 Danes, 48 Dutch, 40 French, one Lithuanian, 146 Norwegians and 31 Poles. By kind permission of the rector and wardens of St Barnabus Church, Medicine Hat, the panels bearing the inscribed names of personnel killed on the unit and erected by us, their comrades, in the chancel of the Station church have now been transferred to St Barnabus Church where they are put up on the north wall of the chancel. Below the names is a memorial plaque. Above the panel, a plain wooden cross stands in simple dignity. On Sunday morning 26 November 1944 this memorial is to be unveiled by the commanding officer G/C A Ellis CBE. Before the Ensign covering the panels has been broken the commanding officer will read out the names that appear on the panel of those who flew with us here and gave their lives on active service. The last post will be sounded then the unveiling takes place followed by reveille from the trumpeter. The

rector will lead us in prayer for those who gave their lives in the cause and for their families who have been bereaved and will preach a sermon of dedication. A hymn ends the service, our last tribute to our dead who sleep here when we have gone. Tonight our Ensign came down and the group captain's pennant so we are without existence though very much alive, consigned to the never-never land of Hades, the place of the shades known to antiquity. Our crest and motto have been returned to the archives. No doubt when we have earned our passage out from this nebulous state and regain the substance of a body our crest and motto will be brought out again to shake off its dust and take the air and renew its wings like an eagle and be our inspiration. In order to remind us of our keepsake and to enshrine it in our hearts we include its image in the last appendix of our last record of a now former condition of existence.

Saalum non munus mutatum