

Reel C12,329

Number 3 Air Observer School, Regina, Saskatchewan and Pearce, Alberta

September 16, 1940 - June 6, 1943

July 26, 1940

Organization Order Number 41

Formation of No 3 Air Observer School

Information: It has now become necessary to open the third of the schools to be established for the training of air observers under the Joint Air Training Plan. These schools will be operated by civilian companies using aircraft supplied by the RCAF. In addition to the civilian staff there will be an RCAF supervisory and instructional staff. No 3 Air Observer School is to open at Regina on September 16, 1940 and will be operated by Prairie Flying School Ltd under the supervision of an RCAF supervisory officer. AMES is requested to arrange for eight TE aircraft to be delivered to No 3 Air Observer School by August 19, 1940 or as soon thereafter as No 4 Training Command notifies that the company is ready to receive them. A further eight are to be delivered by September 16 and the remaining eight by October 14, 1940. This will complete the aircraft establishment in accordance with appendix A. Training: No 4 Training Command is to arrange that the company's pilots are passed as competent twin-engine pilots and to ensure that they have sufficient knowledge of navigation to return to their aerodrome should the pupil make an error in navigation.

September 15, 1940

Arrangements made for messing and quarters for 42 air observers and permanent staff who moved into quarters at 1900 hours. Three aircraft arrived for the school, Ansons numbers R9870, R9875, R9882.

September 16, 1940

Regina, Saskatchewan, No 3 Air Observer School. This air observer school is the third of the schools to be established under the Joint Air Training Plan and is situated at Regina, Saskatchewan. The school opened September 16, 1940 and is operated by the Prairie Flying School Ltd using RCAF aircraft. In addition to civilian staff there will be an RCAF supervisory and instructional staff. All RCAF personnel will live in. The operating company will supply clerical and accounting staff, pilots and all personnel for the operation and maintenance of aircraft and equipment. S/L W A Murray is chief supervisory officer and commanding officer of all RCAF personnel. School opened with F/O Mirylees in charge of number 1 section and F/O Riddell in charge of number 2 section. F/O A S Mirylees appointed chief instructor.

September 24, 1940

A/V/M L L D McKean, chief liaison officer of the United Kingdom Air Liaison Mission and the Honorable C G Power, Minister of National Defense for Air inspected the school.

October 18, 1940

Visit of G/C G R Howsam and G/C L M Isitt, chief liaison officer of New Zealand mission to Canada and W/C F C Seavill RAF of the RCAF organization directorate, Ottawa.

December 6, 1940

The first graduating class presented the school with an autograph book containing the signatures of all trainees in the graduating class with the expressed wish that all future members of each class sign when they leave this school. (Ed-where is this book now?)

December 7, 1940

This school was officially opened by Justice P E MacKenzie for the Lt Governor in company with A/C Cowley, G/C Howsam and Brigadere W W Foster. A presentation by the Prairie Flying School was made to LAC Chappell C D R for having graduated first in his class. G/C Bell-Irving in charge of three Harvards from No 3 SFTS Saskatoon gave a display of formation flying and aerobatics.

Ed- there are a lot of "nil" entries throughout this part of the diary. Poor record keeping for history!

December 9, 1940

The graduating class departed for No 2 Bombing and Gunnery School Mossbank and a new class was started at our school.

December 25, 1940

Christmas day, holiday. The commanding officer and other officers held a reception at the officers' mess for the NCOs of No 3 AOS and the officers in training at No 15 EFTS. The commanding officer and other officers served dinner to the airmen in the airmen's dining room.

March 1, 1941

S/L R C Davis C183 assumed command of this school today and S/L J E Jellison C456 and F/O K W Shier C1842 proceeded on temporary duty to No 2 TC. The two latter officers will be posted to No 6 AOS Prince Albert effective 17/3/41.

March 3, 1941

Weather unfavorable for night flying. The Salvation Army hut which is located in one of the EFTS building was officially opened for use by Mayor Grassick of Regina. S/L R C Davis chief supervisory officer No 3 AOS, F/L R D Blagrove CSO No 15 EFTS, Brig W J Carruthers, Brig William Dray, Adjutant, E G Fitch of the Salvation Army, F/L Fergus Grant No 4 Training Command auxiliary services officer and officers of No 3 Air Observer School were in attendance. The Salvation Army lassies served tea. Forty two potential air observers were posted from No 2 ITS to this school on course 19 effective 4/3/41.

March 24, 1941

A cracked up Harvard plane belonging to No 32 SFTS Moose Jaw stopped off here for the night. It was loaded on a trailer and was in charge of P/O Stevenson.

March 31, 1941

One aircraft, Anson 6074 suffered some damage today when the oil line between the vacuum pump and engine fractured. The port engine seized and broke two cylinders in the crankcase. The aircraft was on a navigation exercise approximately 60 miles away when the engine failed but returned here on one engine without further mishap. Mr John Ross was pilot and R79556 LAC Westerman C F and R79562 LAC Price G R were student navigators. No one was injured.

Number of aircraft on charge (of this date) 15. Total hours flown for month 1,353.50. Strength of the school: officers and airmen staff 35; trainees 133; personnel other than RCAF 3; civilians 1.

April 4, 1941

Mr P C Parry, meteorological assistant, arrived at this school. The meteorological department has been overworked but fair weather is now expected.

April 5, 1941

The monthly dance at the officers' mess was a welcome interlude for the officers and friends.

April 7, 1941

The Air Force Act, sections 4 to 44 and KR (air) para 461 were read to the airmen with such additional information on drunkenness, AWL and superior authority as will assist to keep them out of trouble.

April 21, 1941

The publication of AFRO 370 of the reduction of subsistence allowance from \$1.70 to 70 cents for income tax purposes was hailed with gratification by all officers.

April 23, 1941

All work in classes ceased on this day at 1200 hours and a rehearsal of the wing inspection was conducted from 1300 hours to 1415 hours. When His Excellency the Governor General and party arrived at this Station at 1600 hours the wing, with S/L R C Davis commanding was formed up in review order and close column of squadrons. F/L R L D Blagrove commanded 15 EFTS squadron and F/L A B Mereleise commanded 3 AOS squadron. Accompanying the Governor General were Sir Shouldham Redfern KCBO, secretary to the Governor General; Lt Governor E A McNab, province of Saskatchewan; A/C A T N Cowley, RCAF; G/C D D A A Greig, RAF senior ADC; Cmdr E C Sherwood, RCN; W/C P R Hapton RCAF ADC; Lt D Lantier RCNBR. The wing marched past the reviewing stand in column of route. The civilian pilots of No 3 AOS and No 15 EFTS were formed up on the taxi strip each beside an aeroplane and were likewise inspected and the Governor General paused frequently to converse with several who were veterans of the last war. A squadron of Harvard aircraft from No 32 SFTS Moose Jaw gave a display of formation flying and aerobatics starting at 1620 hours and exhibited remarkable skill.

May 25, 1941

With the exception of a skeleton staff retained at the school all personnel attended a church parade in Regina. The protestant personnel of No 15 EFTS and this school were combined with S/L R C Davis in command. Formed No 2 squadron of the wing parade. The RC personnel from all units in Regina were combined in number 6 squadron with W/C J C Malone in command. The wing with G/C D D A A Grieg in charge was formed up on No 2 ITS main parade ground and marched in column of route, numbers 1 to 5 squadrons going to Knox Church and number 6 squadron to Holy Rosary Cathedral. The Regina Rifles band led the parade. At the Knox Church A/C A T Cowley read the text, S/L W B Wilson made the address, and F/L S C Scott offered the prayers. The Knox Church organist and choir supplied the music and songs. The congregation was entirely air force personnel with the exception of the band. The Roman Catholic divine service was conducted by S/L E B Howard.

June 2, 1941

The landscape gardeners are busy with ploughs, discs and shovels and the grounds already show a vast improvement. Spacious lawns have been laid out, shrubs planted and flower beds placed in appropriate places. The kitchen staff at the officers' mess has its own garden and flower plot with suitable decorations.

June 9, 1941

Defaulters have been put to good use acting in their spare time as sentries on the lawns and flowerbeds which have been recently planted.

June 15, 1941

Ten aircraft from this school left here on a navigation exercise to Currie Field, Calgary, Alberta, arriving there at noon and departing from Calgary at 1500 hours.

June 16, 1941

Eleven aircraft from this school made an extended trip to Cumberland House, Manitoba, Prince Albert, Saskatchewan and to Big River, Saskatchewan departing at 0830 hours and returning at 1700 hours. The party had dinner at No 6 AOS, Prince Albert.

June 18, 1941

A minor epidemic of diarrhea occurred this morning and many airmen beat a hasty retreat from the morning drill.

June 24, 1941

The Salvation Army Regina Citadel band entertained the officers and men at a band concert at 2000 hours. A magician was also in attendance and refreshments were served by the lassies at the conclusion of the performance.

July 8, 1941

Two of this school's Ansons numbers 6081 and 6187 were unable to land due to a thunderstorm and hurricane and proceeded to Broadview to stay for the night. The Prime Minister The Right Honorable William Lyon MacKenzie King inspected the personnel of this school and No 15 EFTS at 1230 hours. He was accompanied by his secretary Walter Turnbull, A/C A T N Cowley, W/C R C Stewart and Staff Officer Major E Anglin. The wing parade consisted of squadrons from both schools, S/L R C Davis in charge. It was drawn up in close column of squadrons.

July 13, 1941

The civilian staff of the Prairie Flying School and the officers and friends of our school had an enjoyable barbeque today at Hungry Hollow, situated some 16 miles northeast of Regina. It was a feast at which approximately 150 people devoured 180 pounds of veal in addition to beans.

August 4, 1941

The personnel of this school and No 15 EFTS formed the guard squadron on the occasion of the visit of A/C, His Royal Highness, The Duke of Kent KG, KT, JC, MG, KCVO at the Regina airport at 1130 hours. A flight of airmen from No 2 ITS formed the guard of honour. The Duke of Kent and his party arrived in three Lockheed aircraft and was met by A/C A T N Cowley AOC No 4 TC, His Honour the Lieutenant Governor, Mr Patterson Premier of Saskatchewan and Mayor Grassick of Regina.

August 23, 1941

Due to an epidemic of encephalitis and polio myalitis prevalent throughout Saskatchewan and Manitoba, the granting of leaves and passes has been curtailed temporarily.

September 13, 1941

Five visiting Beauforts in route from Montreal to Patricia Bay arrived at 1630 hours.

September 25, 1941

The fire fighting crew and crash tender were very prompt in answering an alarm for a small fire which occurred at the officers mess at 0700 hours. Eleven aircraft bearing officers and trainees from No 7 AOS Portage la Prairie arrived at this school at 1130 hours and departed at 1400 hours. A/V/M L S Breadner, chief of the air staff, arrived by air at the airport at 1900 hours. With the arrival of P/O J W McDougall, armament officer from Mountain View, Ontario, the instruction of bombing at this school appears to be getting into stride.

October 4, 1941

Four Airspeed Oxford aircraft numbers 3434, 620, 330 and 215 with F/L Betts RAF in charge arrived in the evening on route from Winnipeg to Penhold, Alberta and spent the night here.

October 16, 1941

The commanding officer inspected all personnel on parade at 0800 hours. Twenty-six Airspeed Oxford aircraft arrived at this school at 1245 hours with F/L Wood RAF in charge on route to Penhold, Alberta. One of these aircraft AT445 lost parts of the tail assembly by contact with another aircraft and spun into the ground on the edge of the airport. Apart from some instruments and engine parts the aircraft was written off. RAF 932825 Sgt James Wright, the sole occupant, was killed.

January 22, 1942

Our rink has been the scene of several hockey games recently. The officers defeated the NCOs

last night 3 - 2. Games between classes have also been interesting. The commanding officer held inspection this morning of all personnel at 0800 hours. Buildings and premises were inspected during the morning.

February 16, 1942

All personnel have had Wasserman tests during the last few weeks.

April 5, 1942

A wing parade to Darke Hall was held at 0845 hours. The officers and airmen attended an Easter Sunday church service in the hall.

June 24, 1942

The Station strength is increasing rapidly due to the change of curriculum at this school. Several sergeant wireless air gunners have arrived to continue their training at this unit under the new syllabus.

July 24, 1942

Movement Order Number 1
Relocation of No 3 AOS at Pearce, Alberta

Information: To provide the necessary accommodation to allow for the increase in trainees it is necessary to move No 3 Air Observer School at Regina, Saskatchewan to a new site. Execution: Effective date the move of No 3 Air Observer School to Pearce, Alberta is to be completed immediately the extra buildings are available for occupancy at Pearce, Alberta. Control: No 3 Air Observer School, Pearce, Alberta is to come under the Air Officer Commanding No 4 Training Command for all purposes subject to the terms of the contract under which the civil operating company is working.

August 1, 1942

Strength: officers 22; airmen staff 76; trainees 211. Personnel other than RCAF 17; civilians 3 for a total of 312. Aircraft on charge 36 Ansons, 1 Stinson. Number of hours flown for the month of July, 1942 - 2,788.45.

August 2, 1942

Twenty-six trainees reported to commence class 56. Ten of these potential air navigators arrived from No 2 ITS Regina while six arrived from No 4 ITS Edmonton and 10 from No 7 ITS Saskatoon.

August 3, 1942

F/L R P Opie C1440 assumed temporary command of this Station this week in absence of W/C R C Davis C183 who is attending conference in Medicine Hat, Alberta.

August 17, 1942

P/O P Lyons (air obs) is visiting the Station. This officer has returned from operational duties overseas and is relating experiences to trainees. Lectures from men with knowledge of combat operations are beneficial to trainees and also very interesting. The visit was well worth arranging and it is hoped more talks from men with knowledge and experience such as this one could be arranged.

August 21, 1942

While on a routine night navigation flight, Anson 6877 piloted by Ivan Bowman (civilian), wireless operator Sgt Insall L A NZ405766, and R118107 LAC Douglas W W, and R120744 LAC Davidson air navigators, crashed into Lake Chapleau, approximately 50 miles east of Regina. All occupants were killed. A court of enquiry is assembled with S/L Halls A J (RAF40384) of No 32 EFTS Moose Jaw as President. Captain C A Findlay CDC of no 4 Training Command Calgary was a visitor to the Station.

August 24, 1942

Funeral services for the occupants of Anson 6877 were conducted by F/L Dodgson of No 2 ITS from Spears Funeral Home today. The bodies of LAC Davidson L H and Sgt Insall L A were buried in Regina. LAC Douglas' remains were shipped to Vancouver, B C for interment. Mr Bowman's remains were taken to Maryland, USA. A funeral procession made up of a large part of our school accompanied the remains to the Regina Cemetery and buried in the RCAF soldier's plot. F/L Babbit of No 2 ITS handled the procession and the ITS band led the double funeral.

August 30, 1942

The first class of air bombers arrived to start training at this school. Nine from No 8 B&G Lethbridge, 12 from No 7 B&G Paulson, Manitoba and three from No 2 B&G Mossbank, Saskatchewan. Due to the lack of classrooms this class is operating in No 1 hangar. There are now 10 classes in seven classrooms.

September 6, 1942

Arrangements for relocation and movement of this Station to Pearce, Alberta are underway. Advance personnel will soon be leaving.

September 12, 1942

P/O J A Houston reported for duty as WAG instructor from No 36 OTU Greenwood. Forty-three trainees, 12 Staff and six officers departed today for Pearce, Alberta, this being the first RCAF personnel to proceed to the new location of No 3 AOS. F/L Ross (MO) also left for Pearce to open the hospital. Class 59 (bombers) are also reporting to Pearce as well as class 54 and 55 navigators.

September 20, 1942

Two Cranes have been added to the Station for interstation transport between Regina and Pearce. Seven aircraft departed for Pearce to commence flying at once at that Station.

No 3 AOS Pearce, Alberta, September 12, 1942

Movement of No 3 AOS from Regina to Pearce, Alberta commenced at reveille 0445 hours. The advance party of 55 airmen and five officers departed by rail from Regina at 0720 hours. During the journey the conduct of the airmen and trainees was at a very high standard. The arrival at Pearce was made at 2300 hours. Welcoming committee F/L J A Ross and Mr Ryan of Prairie Flying Schools Ltd. All airmen were fed and quartered by 0100 hours September 13, 1942.

September 24, 1942

Thursday: S/L Morkill and S/L Davies on temporary duty returned by plane from Calgary. The officers, airmen and civilian personnel of this Station were pleasingly entertained this evening by the Alice Murdock Review from Calgary. After the show, W/C Davis very fittingly expressed the appreciation of all personnel for the performance given by these young but talented artists.

October 5, 1942 (Regina)

P/O J D C Monroe was sos on posting to Pearce detachment. A large flight navigated to Pearce - departing early in the afternoon and returning at night. F/L Smitheringale accompanied the flight to Pearce and remained there for several days. F/O C W Thompson returned from Pearce to spend a few days here. It is reported that Pearce is "shaping up well" and when the building program is completed the final move should be accomplished without undue disturbance of training.

October 23, 1942

Wings parade for 15 graduates of course 59 air bombers was held today. Sgt N F McEwen R149447 of Dauphin, Manitoba passed first in class. This course trained in Pearce.

October 26, 1942

No 15 EFTS will shortly take over the guard duties of this Station. Movement to Pearce is slow and under a great handicap as buildings are not finished. Every effort is being made by the entire staff so that training will not be interrupted.

No 3 AOS detachment, Pearce October 4, 1942

W/C Davis CSO arrived by plane from Regina. Miss I Laing, nursing sister pending appointment to a commission, arrived on the Station. We have now received an additional number of aircraft which should solve our flying problems. The Lifebuoy Follies Review sponsored by Lever Brothers Ltd entertained the Station personnel at 2000 hours. A large and very appreciative audience thoroughly enjoyed these talented artists.

October 10, 1942

Saturday. No 3 AOS Pearce held its first Station dance this evening. We had several charming guests from Lethbridge and an enjoyable evening was had by all participants.

October 12, 1942

Monday: the following officers arrived on the Station from No 3 AOS Regina. F/L Thompson A O, F/L Shannon nav in charge course 61, P/O Munroe, air obs, P/O Boak (air nav) assistants. Course 61 air navigators commenced their studies today.

November 7, 1942 Regina

Flooding of the skating rink was commenced today. With continued cold weather a good sheet of ice should be available within the week. A check of our sports equipment reveals 10 sets of skates and boots in good condition, plenty of hockey sticks and a quantity of hockey pads. As it is desired that we have enough equipment for two hockey teams, more pads have been ordered and inquiries are being made concerning hockey sweaters and socks which appear rather difficult to obtain locally.

November 12, 1942 Pearce

F/L Dodgson, chaplain OD arrived by rail on temporary duty from NO 2 ITS Regina. F/L Jenkins (fire marshal) No 4 TC Calgary visited the Station. Carpenters are now making fairly rapid progress with the construction of new buildings. A Station dance arranged by Mr R Kelly, YMCA auxiliary services, was thoroughly enjoyed by all personnel.

December 5, 1942

The monthly officers mess dance was held this evening. A number of visiting officers from No 5

RC and No 16 EFTS were present and an enjoyable time was had by all. The first service hockey game of the season took place at 2130 hours in Queen City Gardens Regina between a team from No 2 B&G school Mossbank and a team picked from the Regina units of the RCAF which included two airmen from our Station. The final score was Regina 9 Mossbank 1. A return game is to be played in the near future.

December 21, 1942

It is the intention to move the school headquarters and courses 65 and 66 navigators and air bombers to Pearce on January 6, 1943. The Regina unit will then become No 3 AOS Detachment. Course 60 and 64 navigators will remain at Regina. Course 67 navigators and 67 air bombers will be posted to Regina reporting January 11, 1943. Course detachment will be maintained pending completion of construction at Pearce, Alberta.

December 5, 1942 Pearce, Alberta

Saturday: The officer personnel held their first party since the Station became No 3 AOS. The attendance was very good and among the guests present were W/C Davenport and W/C Brown, the commanding officer and chief instructor respectively Number 7 SFTS Fort Macleod, Alberta.

December 13, 1942 Pearce, Alberta

Sunday: F/L McDougall departed to Lake MacGregor on armament business. No bombing Lake MacGregor after 1500 hours. Returned 2359 hours. (Editor's note: this is the bombing range for Pearce - what traces remain?)

December 24, 1942 Pearce, Alberta

Thursday: F/L Cassidy RC padre from No 8 B&G called. Arrangements made for Christmas and Sunday mass to be held in classroom number 3. Cessna from Claresholm crashed and burnt just west of Monarch at 1450 hours. The only occupant LAC Monroe instantly killed. F/L Harris and Mr Yule went to the crash and took charge. Les Andrews phoned at 1510 to inform No 3 AOS of the crash.

December 31, 1942 Pearce, Alberta

Thursday: The skating rink is proving to be a popular recreational sport. The ice which had deteriorated with warm weather has been built up fairly well. The Station dance "ushering the old year out and the new year in" proved to be very successful and was patronized appreciatively by both civilian and service personnel. A goodly number of visitors were in attendance. Aircraft on charge Ansons 19, Cessnas 2, Stinson 1. Strength: RCAF officers (staff) 14; RCAF officers (WD staff) 2 (nursing sisters); RCAF airmen (staff) 69; RCAF trainees 83. Personnel other than RCAF: airmen (staff) 2, one RAF, one RAAF; trainees 15, eleven RAF, two RNZAF, two RAAF.

January 7, 1943 Pearce, Alberta

Approximately 150 personnel including 12 officers arrived by special train from No 3 AOS Regina at 2130 hours and will continue training here. Buildings are progressing slowly and although headquarters staff are now located at Pearce, four classes of trainees are still at Regina. No 3 AOS Regina is now a detachment with F/L D R Campbell as officer in charge. W/C R C Davis and F/L C W Thompson arrived by plane from Regina at 1600 hours to assume command as chief supervisory officer and senior administrative officer respectively. S/L D B Riddell arrived by rail and took over duties as chief instructor of the Station.

January 12, 1943

Warm weather has made the rink look like a swimming pool. PT and sports for entire school in full swing.

January 18, 1943

Coldest weather of winter in this district reports 50 below but unofficial.

January 22, 1943

Wings parade for course 65 air bombers was held at 1400 hours today in the drill hall. W/C R C Davis, Chief Supervisory officer, presented the wings. R B Yule, New Zealand graduate, was honor student and was presented with identification bracelet by Prairie Flying School Ltd. The class consisted of 10 RCAF, 11 RAF, 2 RNZAF and 2 RAAF graduates. There was no wastage in this class.

January 1, 1943 Regina Detachment

A very enjoyable New Years Eve party and dance was held in the officers mess last evening which was well attended by the officers and their friends. Novelties, games and a delectable lunch helped to round out the evening.

January 6, 1943 Regina Detachment

Preparations are almost completed for a further transfer of No 3 Air Observer School from Regina, Saskatchewan to Pearce, Alberta. Each section is busily engaged in packing equipment and fixtures, much of which will be transported to Pearce today by motor truck. All equipment and staff personnel in the school will be moved to Pearce with the exception of that required to continue the training of three navigator and one bomber course which will comprise the Regina detachment No 3 Air Observer School until late spring 1943.

February 2, 1943 Pearce, Alberta

Mr R W Ryan, manager of the Prairie Flying School Ltd, today advised that No 3 AOS would be moving back to Regina, Saskatchewan around May 1 and disbanding approximately July 1, 1943. Move would include civilian part of school as well as RCAF. Occupation of Pearce unknown at present.

February 3, 1943

Raymond Union Jacks who are in Southern Basketball League with this unit defeated our boys tonight at Raymond, score 60 to 42. F/L H Bouts, auxiliary services officer from No 4 Training Command visited the Station today.

February 14, 1943

Recreation and drill hall proving invaluable these days. Shows, dances, volleyball, basketball, and badminton are the main sports. YMCA services provide excellent entertainment and the Station is well supplied with talent.

February 16, 1943

Latest rumor states that No 2 FIS Vulcan, Alberta will take over this Station in a couple of months and a SFTS will occupy Vulcan. W/C Falkenburg of No 4 Training Command and W/C Harvey of No 2 FIS visited the Station today.

February 25, 1943

Commanding officers parade was held at 0800 hours and wing drill was practiced. S/L L J Dyte inspected one squadron and commented favorably on the drill. S/L J Laxdal returned from temporary duty in Prince Albert. The newly organized Station glee club gave their first concert this evening in the recreation hall and met with a very enthusiastic reception.

February 1, 1943 Regina, Saskatchewan

The officers of No 15 Elementary Flying Training School had lunch and dinner with us today in our mess. Arrangements have been completed for some time regarding the sharing of our officers quarters and mess with the officer personnel of No 15 Elementary Flying Training School until such time as the remaining No 3 Air Observer School personnel move to Pearce, Alberta when the entire Station is to be taken over by No 15 Elementary Flying Training School. In the meantime, No 15 Elementary Flying Training School officers' accommodations are to be turned into a hospital.

February 2, 1943

Word was received that Mk I Anson number 6351 engaged on a routine navigation flight from this school crashed at approximately 2035 hours tonight 15 miles east of Elbow, Saskatchewan. The official investigation has not as yet been completed but it would appear that the pilot experienced difficulty with the aircraft due to bad weather combined with the failure of all the flying instruments at the one time. He ordered the crew to abandon the aircraft and all reached the ground safely by parachute. The pilot R109454 Sgt Draper L A (on leave from the RCAF) and the wireless operator R109067 Sgt Meinosinger M M were uninjured. GB1543555 LAC Davison T navigator and R158021 LAC Wilson W H bomber both lost their flying boots in the descent and suffered frozen feet before reaching the nearest habitation. LAC Wilson had the presence of mind to wrap various articles of his clothing around his feet and thereby saved himself from much more serious injury. Both airmen were taken to the RCAF hospital at Davidson, Saskatchewan. Later reports have it that LAC Davison is suffering from seriously frost bitten feet while LAC Wilson is suffering from two frost bitten toes only.

March 3, 1943 Pearce, Alberta

F/O Nash C6930 reported from Regina, Saskatchewan detachment on posting as navigation instructor. Preparations have already started to disband after moving No 3 AOS back to Regina. No 2 FIS Vulcan will be taking over our Station at Pearce. W/C Brown (commanding officer) from Vulcan has visited the Station and inspected buildings etcetera prior to their taking over the latter part of May, 1943.

March 12, 1943

Preparations are under way for the disbanding of the Station. Equipment staff from No 4 TC are visiting the civilian company and personnel are being posted. Officers from No 2 FIS Vulcan who are taking over this Station are frequent visitors by air.

March 14, 1943

Basketball season finished and Pearce finished last in the league. Church services are conducted each Sunday and Mr Reverend Gilbert of Macleod is busy and interviewing Protestant personnel as well as arranging all services.

March 28, 1943

Chief Mountain Horse, a full blooded Cree Indian lectured on Indian life to the entire Station Sunday night in the recreation hall. A full movie show was also given for the entertainment of the personnel. Church parade for entire Station was held today at 1400 hours. F/L Gordon Brown (padre) from No 2 FIS Vulcan conducted the service. The Macleod RCAF band was in attendance.

April 3, 1943 Regina, Saskatchewan

A movement of courses from No 3 Air Observer headquarters, Pearce, Alberta to No 3 Air Observers School detachment Regina took place today when courses 69 and 70 navigators arrived at this unit at 2140 hours by rail. Officer personnel transferred to this unit with the courses were F/L W J Jones C6911 (nav), F/O K J Nash C6930 (nav), F/O C W Walker C8304 (nav) and P/O K A MacKirdy J14228 (nav). This leaves course 66 navigators only at the Pearce unit. This course will graduate from Pearce 16 April, 1943 after which the balance of the No 3 Air Observer School headquarters personnel not yet posted away will move back to the Regina unit. The Pearce Station will be taken over by No 2 FIS formerly at Vulcan, Alberta and No 3 Air Observer School, Regina will function until the three courses now under training graduate after which No 3 Air Observer School will be disbanded and the headquarters personnel will be posted away to various other RCAF stations.

April 3, 1943 Pearce, Alberta

Several officers departed for Regina with 54 airmen today being a movement of two classes and staff to No 3 Air Observer detachment Regina.

April 9, 1943

The civilian operating company, namely Prairie Flying School Ltd, are ferrying aircraft to Edmonton and Regina as flying is completed at this unit.

April 15, 1943

Wings parade for course 66 navigators was held at No 7 SFTS Macleod at 2000 hours this evening. The class consisted of 25 RAAF and 1 RCAF trainee. Only one wastage which was due to ill health. All graduates were posted to No 1 Y Depot Halifax. The parade attracted some 300 visitors from Macleod and neighboring towns and was unusual in that a class of pilots also graduated on the same occasion. Wings were presented by W/C Brown, commanding officer No 7 SFTS who addressed the graduates. LAC Nicholson passed first in class. Eight received commissions.

April 21, 1943

Six officers and 38 airmen proceeded to No 3 Air Observer School Regina which completes movement except for four men and two officers who remain at Pearce for a few days.

April 26, 1943

No 2 FIS Vulcan took over buildings of this station and an advance party arrived to handle movement of Station from Vulcan. Hospital staff are to remain and F/L R S Harris, senior medical officer, F/L J R Ross, medical officer, P/O D H Bowen and P/O O I Laing, nursing

sisters have been struck off strength of this unit and taken on No 2 FIS.

April 27, 1943

Today is "FINIS" to No 3 Air Observer School Pearce, Alberta. The unit started movement from Regina on September 12, 1942 and due to lack of accommodation the entire strength was never at Pearce. Classes have also been conducted at Regina and while great difficulty has been experienced, training has not been interrupted. Cooperation has been of the highest degree and all of the staff, while having regrets leaving Pearce, are anxious to carry on at any new units to which they may be posted.

May 8, 1943 Regina, Saskatchewan

An impromptu party and dance was held in the officers' mess again this Saturday. With the officer personnel being gradually decreased by postings, these parties are usually a farewell for one or more of our officers. F/L R W Shannon C5012 navigation instructor was struck off strength today on posting to No 2 Training Command, Winnipeg, Manitoba reporting 10 May, 1943.

May 13, 1943

A farewell banquet and dance for the officers of No 3 AOS and their friends was held in the main ballroom of the Saskatchewan Hotel on Thursday, 13 May. After cocktails in the Elizabethan Room, all present proceeded to the banquet room to partake of a very enjoyable repast. Toasts and after dinner speeches were the order of the evening. W/C J R Frizzle C375, as representative of the air officer commanding No 4 Training Command Calgary, Alberta, spoke a few words to the gathering on behalf of the air officer commanding. The remainder of the evening was spent very pleasantly in the Elizabethan Room and on the ballroom floor. It was an evening which will be long remembered by all present and befitting the memory of No 3 AOS.

May 14, 1943

Wings parade for course 68 navigators was held at 1500 hours today on No 3 AOS parade ground. No 2 ITS band supplied fitting music. Wings were presented to 23 graduates by W/C J R Frizzle C375 navigation officer from No 4 Training Command. Wastage for this course consisted of eight trainees. The honour student R106336 LAC Stephen G A of Winnipeg, Manitoba was presented with a suitably engraved bracelet by Prairie Flying School Ltd. Although courses 69 and 70 navigators are still under training at this unit, it is expected they will complete their training at No 2 AOS Edmonton, Alberta so that this is likely to be the last wings parade to be held by No 3 AOS.

June 6, 1943

S/L J Laxdal C488 chief supervisory officer was struck off strength effective today on posting to No 1 Air Observer School Malton, Ontario reporting 10 June, 1943 to take over command of that station. No 3 Air Observer School officially disbands today, authority No 4 Training Command operations order number 8 (file 23B12-3B-1) dated 27 May, 1943. Officers still awaiting postings are as follows: C7063 F/L A J Magrath (nav) (SR) officer in charge, C8862 F/L C W Thompson (admin) (SR) administrative officer, and C13285 F/O W T Kay (accounts) (SR) accounting officer. FINIS to No 3 AOS, A J Magrath F/L officer in charge No 3 Air Observer School, Regina, Saskatchewan.