

Reel C12,356

**Number 36 Service Flying Training School, Penhold, Alberta**

August 22, 1941 - November 3, 1944

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August 6, 1941: West Kirby, England

The personnel of the first echelon of 36 EFTS consisting of 31 officers and 652 other ranks assembled between the fourth and sixth August at No 5 PDC West Kirby.

August 7, 1941: Gourork, Scotland

Personnel embarked on HMT Stratheden in the Clyde.

August 15, 1941: Halifax, Nova Scotia

HMT Stratheden docked.

August 16, 1941

Personnel disembarked and entrained in two trains leaving at 1330 hours and 1530 hours. S/L Maxwell and five other pilots were left behind at Halifax being attached to No 34 TC communication flight.

August 20, 1941: Penhold, Alberta

Trains arrived at Penhold between 1800 hours and 2000 hours and were met by S/L Sewell, officer in command 2A Manning Depot and his officers.

August 21, 1941

Personnel settled into quarters and shown Station by RCAF.

August 22, 1941

RCAF personnel leave and hand over buildings and offices.

August 23, 1941

G/C Farrington assumes command of Station, W/C Leggate CFI, W/C Mill OC maintenance wing and following officers assume duties: S/L Radford, senior administration officer; F/L Phillips, adjutant; F/L Jenkins, admin; S/L George, senior equipment officer; S/L Crawford, CAO; and S/L Kirsten, CGI.

August 25, 1941

F/O Toltschim delivered the first Oxford.

August 30, 1941

S/L Maxwell and five other pilots report after ceasing to be attached to No 4 TC communication flight.

August 31, 1941

Strength of Station: RAF officers 32, airmen 652, 52 detached. RCAF officers 2, airmen 46. RCASC officers 1, Army 1. Aircraft on charge three Oxfords.

September 15, 1941

Station band gave first performance at dance held by Penhold Women's Institute.

September 24, 1941

A full Station parade was held at 0830 hours on the Station parade ground, the group captain taking the salute at the march past.

September 29, 1941

Instruction of the first course of pupils commenced.

September 30, 1941

S/L Dale rejoined unit ferrying aircraft from Dartmouth, nova Scotia.

October 3, 1941

The sergeants mess gave their first dance inviting numerous visitors including a number of NCOs from the RCASC, Red Deer.

October 14, 1951

A/C Cowley AOC 4 Training Command visited the Station by air. P/O C H Lazenby, P/O M W Grierson-Jackson, P/O D J Aslin, P/O R W Bartlett, F/L E C Blower reported for duty as flying instructors.

November 14, 1941

Mr Ganett, administrator transport, inspected Innisfail landing ground on completion of runways.

November 25, 1941

Innisfail relief landing ground brought into operation. F/O Waterton, Sgt Loman, Sgt Gregory returned from Winnipeg with Oxford aircraft.

December 4, 1941

W/C M F G Mill DFM proceeded on temporary duty to No 2 Air Observer School, Edmonton, to discuss winter precautions. S/L I G E Dale accompanied W/C Mill.

December 18, 1941

Course number 29 composed of 64 pupils graduated and brevets were presented by the commanding officer. Appendix: Course number 29, composed of 64 pupils, graduated on the 18<sup>th</sup> December, 1941. The ceremony of presenting the brevets, which was done by the commanding officer G/C W B Farrington DSO took place in the drill hall at 1100 hours before a numerous company of officers and civilians including G/C W H Pool AFC MM, Lt Col Lister and local residents. This was the first course to graduate from this school. In addition to the presentation of wings, 655626 Sgt Catley M M was presented with a certificate of a mention in dispatches signed by the secretary of state for war. This mention in dispatches was promulgated in the London Gazette of 20<sup>th</sup> December, 1940 on which date the award of the Military Medal to Sgt Catley was also announced. Sixty eight airmen started the course on 28/9/41, four failed to graduate and their training was discontinued. Of the remaining 64 who graduated successfully, 18 obtained commissions, three recommended for retention in Canada as flying instructors and two recommended as navigation instructors.

December 24, 1941

Oxford aircraft AS523 crashed some 12 miles west of Bowden. The first pilot 945028 LAC Phillips and second pilot 1313133 LAC Bushell were both seriously injured. Both were pupils.

December 25, 1941

Christmas Day. A special Christmas dinner was served to the airmen by the officers and senior NCOs.

December 26, 1941

945028 LAC Phillips died in the Station hospital from injuries received in the accident to Oxford aircraft AS523 on the 24<sup>th</sup> December, 1941.

December 31, 1941

During the last five days of the month the average low temperature was minus 16, this caused great difficulty in starting and freezing of operating controls of the Oxford aircraft. Number of aircraft on charge 71 Airspeed Oxfords. Strength of Station: RAF officers staff 68, RAF airmen staff 1,007, trainees 130, ex-trainees detached 58, personnel other than RAF 45, civilians nil.

January 27, 1942

A draft of security guard arrived at this unit being posted from Toronto. F/O J R Houghton was officer i/c the draft and left to return to Toronto after reporting.

January 29, 1942

1313607 LAC White A S was killed as a result of a crash whilst piloting an Oxford aircraft on a solo flight. The accident occurred about 1 ½ miles east southeast of the aerodrome.

January 30, 1942

571644 Cpl Rider S died as a result of injuries received when the tractor he was driving overturned when entering a hangar. Number 31 war course graduated and were presented with their brevets. Appendix: Number 31 war course graduated on 30<sup>th</sup> January, 1942. As a result of the course being in quarantine due to some cases of scarlet fever the graduation took place without ceremony. The group captain presented the brevets and no visitors were present. The course obtained above average marks and reached a satisfactory standard. 58 pupils took the final examinations, of them 17 obtained over 75% aggregate and 56 over 60%. Two pupils failed in airmanship, both passed on re-examination. Three pupils subsequently were transferred to the next course. Three pupils were recommended for training as flying instructors. 18 pupils obtained commissions.

February 1, 1942

The Station choir gave a performance at the Garrison Theatre, Edmonton. The theatre was filled to capacity and several hundred people failed to obtain admission.

February 2, 1942

F/O Hill when taking off in an Oxford aircraft from Innisfail struck an unseen wire cable. The port airscrew and mainplane had to be subsequently changed but the aircraft continued its flight to Penhold and landed safely.

February 10, 1942

The first completely winterized Oxford aircraft arrived, number AT450. This is a new aircraft

constructed in England, the winterization being done at MacDonald's Aircraft, Winnipeg. The following features are incorporated: 1. Hot air from the exhaust fed direct to air intake 2. Separate hot and cold air intake shutter control for the cockpit for each engine 3. Air cooler shutter controls in cockpit for each engine 4. Aluminum disc over the front area of the lower part of the cylinders 5. Spoiler ring fitted behind towend ring 6. Improved cockpit heating 7. Oil dilution system installed 8. Carburetor temperature gauge fitted.

February 23, 1942

Promulgation made to the effect that channels had been established for remustering RAF personnel in Canada to air crew. Results good, approximately 10% of airmen on unit applied to remuster to air crew.

February 26, 1942

Eleven compressors have frozen completely. Serious defect was discovered in Canadian Oxford 1507, the centre spar being split and bolts screwing root and fitting were incorrectly located. The defects had been covered up by putty.

March 10, 1942

657470 Sgt Gulliver S in Oxford AS674 and 1197657 LAC Stevens R A in Oxford AR972, both carrying out solo landing practice at Innisfail at approximately 1500 hours when they collided on an approach. The aircraft piloted by Sgt Gulliver struck the tail of the aircraft piloted by LAC Stevens causing it to rear up, flick over and hit the ground nose first. Sgt Gulliver swung to port and opened his throttles and made a crash landing on the aerodrome ahead. He was unhurt and immediately ran to the other aircraft where he put out a small fire which had started and then began to cut LAC Stevens free. LAC Stevens was badly injured suffering from fractured skull and brain lacerations and died at 2230 hours. The runway in use was the 180 degree runway and the weather was fine with a strong sun. A court of inquiry is being held.

March 11, 1942

Accident Oxford T1314. During night flying this aircraft turned off runway too early and became bogged in soft ground up to wheel axles. The tractor was unable to tow it out and in the morning the aircraft was frozen into the ground. It was released by digging and lifting by crane and jacks. There was no damage to personnel or aircraft.

April 6, 1942

Summer training program: as from March 17 a program has been in force with a view to keeping training flights on duty throughout the daylight hours. For this purpose the day was divided into four sorties of three to four hours each and the night divided into two sorties. Each instructor was expected to do two day sorties and either one or both night sorties as required. The long

hours achieved in this way defeated their object however as both maintenance and pupil personnel became fatigued and their work suffered in consequence. Also it was difficult for the limited number of instructors on duty to keep proper control of flying in their flights.

April 24, 1942

Thirty six pupils proceeded on an educational tour arranged by AFHQ through No 4 TC in conjunction with the CPR. This was the first tour of its kind to be tried in Canada and was scheduled to visit most of the large towns in Eastern Canada as well as places of interest such as Niagra Falls.

April 26, 1942

Number 51 course commenced night flying and number 47 course inaugurated the first dual night flight cross countries. Two routes chosen were Ponoka, Stettler and Olds, Alex. Instructors reported them as very easy owing to the TCA route beacons and the perfect visibility on this night. Parachute flares were carried but no wireless since suitable sets are not yet available. Due to increased humidity slow running was badly upset and there were as many as 15 cases of engines stalled on the flare path.

May 29, 1942

W/C Rossie-Brown, senior OD chaplain RAF Canada, S/L W B Willan No 4 TC chaplain arrived by rail at 1200 hours.

June 16, 1942

A US transport plane, a Douglas C-3 (Ed: DC-3) carrying two civilian pilots, four officers and twenty enlisted men made a landing owing to bad weather and remained overnight.

June 17, 1942

Oxford aircraft T1139 received from No 16 TD and taken on strength. On inspection this aircraft was found unserviceable. The starboard mainplane was unserviceable due to extensive distortion of three ply covering. Suspect that point 8 mm ply used instead of 1 mm. Plane condemned by CTO and No 4 TC informed. Aircraft strength 105, effective 102.

June 18, 1942

F/O R C Pickering and 1317678 LAC Barnes S R were involved in a flying accident while carrying our single engine approaches on the main aerodrome. The aircraft concerned was Oxford X7042. The aircraft overshot and the starboard engine failed to pick up when the throttle was opened. It then cut out completely and the pilot was compelled to land straight ahead with the undercarriage down. Striking a patch of soft earth the aircraft turned over onto its back. The

cause of the engine failing to pick up was the complete oiling up of numbers three and five cylinders owing to worn cylinder barrels which showed an ovality of .010 inches and .012 inches respectively. The fuselage was broken off up to the instrument panel, the fin was crushed and both air screws were broken. The crew were uninjured.

July 8, 1942

Full flying in morning only as interstation and intersquadron athletic sports were held at Red Deer in the afternoon. F/L C Oakley returned by rail from No 34 SFTS Medicine Hat on completion of beam approach lecture.

July 10, 1942

W/C H W A Chesterman left by rail on posting to HQ Ferry Command, Dorval. S/L W J Smith assumes the duties of chief instructor in his place.

July 27, 1942

At 1830 hours whilst engaged in formation flying Oxford aircraft BG304 piloted by 1233726 LAC de la Mere changed from number three position port side to number two position starboard side and in doing so collided in mid-air with Oxford aircraft AS924 piloted by 1040096 LAC Forrest who forced landed uninjured. LAC de la Mere's plane crashed about two miles south of Penhold and the pilot was killed.

August 20, 1942

At 0030 hours at Penhold whilst night flying was in progress 116819 Sgt Amatt E M was pilot and captain of Oxford aircraft AS312 giving dual instruction to 1483508 LAC Hicks. LAC Hicks was at the controls when violent turbulent air conditions were encountered. Sgt Amatt took over the controls and brought the aircraft in to land. The aircraft touched down before the second flare but the wind simultaneously changed through 180 degrees and the velocity increased to 36 miles per hour. The pilot swung the aircraft to the right to avoid overrunning the runway but the aircraft skidded as it spun around to the right and went through the aerodrome boundary fence, dropped into a ditch and then struck the hard surface of the road which borders the aerodrome on the south side where it finally came to rest. Neither occupant received injury, the aircraft was a complete wreck.

August 23, 1942

At 2340 hours at Penhold whilst night flying was in progress F/O A Elliott as pilot and captain of Oxford aircraft ARX651 took over control of the aircraft when landing from 1483508 LAC Hicks at approximately 400 feet. The approach speed was 85 miles per hour and the aircraft touched down by number three flare. The ground speed of the aircraft was slow in dropping off after landing and in order to avoid running off the end of the runway he swung the aircraft to the left causing the starboard undercarriage to collapse. The occupants were uninjured except for

severe bruised right forearm sustained by F/O Elliott.  
(Ed: poor old Hicks hit the ditch twice in a matter of three days!)

September 9, 1942

At Penhold at 2235 hours on 9 September, 1942, number 1390412 LAC Harwood J L as pilot and captain of Oxford aircraft number AS330 was carrying out solo night circuits and landings. LAC Harwood commenced his first takeoff and when approximately 3/4 of the way up the runway heard the starboard engine spluttering and glancing at his RPM indicator noted that the starboard was giving only 1,400 RPM. LAC Harwood attempted to lift the aircraft over the aerodrome boundary fence at the end of the runway and at the same time retracted his undercarriage. The aircraft struck the fence and crashed onto the ground straight ahead and the port engine caught fire. LAC Harwood jumped clear and immediately after the whole aircraft caught fire and was completely burned out. The pilot was uninjured and the aircraft was a complete wreck.

September 21, 1942

1503946 LAC Tyrer J was engaged on solo training flight in the authorized local flying area of this unit in Oxford aircraft number X6880. On reaching 5,000 feet (amsl) he practiced turns onto the compass courses and this was the first occasion of which he noticed a small degree "play" in the controls. He then climbed to 6,000 feet (amsl) and carried out three steep turns and as he was pulling control column back during his third turn he felt the control column "give." He came out of the turn and flew straight and level before commencing to lose height in the direction of the aerodrome. His rate of descent was 500 feet per minute at ias of 120 miles per hour. At 5,000 feet he attempted to level out by pulling back on the control column but this had no effect and the aircraft commenced to vibrate very badly. The pilot throttled back, held the control column fully back and wound the tail trimmer fully back but the aircraft would not respond in any way. LAC Tyrer crashed into a field of growing oats and the fuselage broke in two approximately four feet aft of the door. LAC Tyrer was uninjured and the aircraft sustained the following damage: frail unit torn from fuselage, starboard mainplane cracked, starboard undercarriage collapsed and centre section damaged, starboard propeller broken off.

September 25, 1942

The commanding officer held a wings parade for course number 55. Seven are posted to instructor courses at Arnprior, five are posted to instructor courses at Vulcan and one to instructors course at Trenton. Fourteen are posted to No 1 GRS at Summerside, PEI, two to No 1 Y Depot Halifax and 12 are posted to 31 PD Moncton.

November 19, 1942

The commanding officer held a wings parade for number 59 course in the armories, Red Deer. The general public were admitted and several local dignitaries were present including the mayor

of Red Deer. Over 500 people attended.

December 13, 1942

P/O W F Young with number 1322898 LAC Holbourne E C was carrying out a dual navigation exercise in Oxford aircraft AS806. After one and a half hours flying, P/O Young checked his fuel contents on his gauge and switched on his auxiliary tanks. After a further ten minutes he rechecked on the gauge and saw that the fuel contents were getting lower and he decided to carry out a forced landing. He landed in a snow covered field with his undercarriage retracted near New Norway, Alberta. Neither occupant was injured and the aircraft sustained the following damage: both propellers damaged, both engine cowlings damaged, fuselage frames numbers one, two and three damaged, fuselage nose damaged.

December 25, 1942

Christmas Day was observed with the usual service traditions. Christmas services were held in the chapel and a short Christmas service was held in the Station hospital. At 1130 hours the senior NCOs were entertained in the officers mess and at 1215 hours the commanding officer, officers and senior NCOs went to the airmen's mess for the airmen's Christmas dinner. Over 300 airmen were present and the dinner was a great success.

December 29, 1942

Two Airacobras and one DC-3 on route to Edmonton landed on the aerodrome due to bad weather in the late afternoon. All three carried Russian markings. They were manned by American Air Force personnel who were accommodated in the Station for the night. They consisted of three officers, one sergeant and two privates.

December 31, 1942

Strength of Station: RAF officers staff 88; RAF airmen staff 953; trainees 152; personnel other than RAF 62; civilians nil.

January 15, 1943

Blizzard conditions which had commenced during the night continued during throughout the day. No work was possible on the runways as the high wind formed and reformed deep drifts across them. There was no flying day or night.

January 18, 1943

Weather fit for flying in the morning and although the compacted surface was somewhat bumpy, dual only flying was carried out by courses 65 and 67. Afternoon and night flying was canceled because with the temperature at minus 34 degrees Fahrenheit instructors and pupils were too cold in their cockpits, the latter being unable to absorb instruction. Pilots also experienced technical

difficulties with their aircraft due to the temperature as follows: a. brake pipe lines froze up and air pressure relief valves froze up causing high pressure. One pilot severed the pipeline in order to release the pressure. b. frozen snow thrown up by propellers during the running up of engines caused damage to skin of tailplanes. c. rudder bias gear froze up. d. undercarriage selector seized up due to excessive contraction of aluminum body of box. All gyro-driven instruments refused to function due to intense cold inside the cockpit.

February 4, 1943

Eight miles west of Penhold at 1230 hours, P/O R S Pearce in Oxford aircraft number AS211 whilst demonstrating precautionary landing in low flying area to LAC Sutton H C 999723 carried out normal demonstration with all vital actions. After leveling off for approximately 25 to 30 feet, air speed 75 miles per hour, engine revs 1,600, aircraft crossed boundary of selected field and instructor opened throttles to climb away, the demonstration being complete. The engines did not respond immediately and before the undercarriage could be raised or carburetor heat controls returned to cold to give full power, the wheels hit a rise in snow covered ground and the aircraft tilted forward shattering the propellers. Immediately, the aircraft settled down in the snow. Neither occupant was injured.

February 10, 1943

Modification to cockpit heating instituted to Oxford aircraft on this unit. This modification consists of diverting the starboard engine heat from rear of cockpit to front and results in the temperature to front of cockpit being increased by 10 degrees. All Oxford aircraft have been so modified. A further modification to increase the cabin temperature is being tested out. This modification consists of blanketing the exhaust muffles with asbestos cloth and thus prevent chilling of the hot air. Tests so far carried out show a considerable improvement in the cabin temperature. No 4 TC authority to modify all Oxford aircraft in this manner will be requested when further tests have been made.

February 20, 1943

The Deputy Inspector General, A/V/M A A L Cuffe arrived by air from No 4 TC Calgary at 0940 hours. He was accompanied by G/C C H Flinn, W/C S G Cowan, S/L T W O'Brien and F/L McGurk. During the morning the Station buildings were inspected including barrack blocks, kitchens, canteens, hangars, recreation hall and CGI block. Airmen's mess was inspected while the airmen were having the mid-day meal. At 1415 hour a parade was held in the drill hall and personnel were inspected by the Deputy Inspector General. This was followed by a march past, the Deputy Inspector General taking the salute. The remainder of the afternoon was devoted to inspection of Station administration and the examination of the report compiled in advance of the inspection.

Ed: the Station magazine is known as the "Penhold Log."

March 8, 1943

Night flying canceled owing to disbanding of night flying flight. Owing to recent postings of flight mechanics and fitters, insufficient personnel were available for the successful operation of this flight. Night flying will operate until further notice from numbers one and three flights.

March 25, 1943

Emergency message received from No 4 Training Command at 0800 hours to carry out a search for an aircraft missing on a cross country flight from No 3 SFTS Calgary to Rocky Mountain House. Search concluded at 1200 hours as aircraft reported found near Rocky Mountain House. Oxford aircraft numbers AS513 and 1512 A category crashes dispatched by rail to No 10 RD.

March 29, 1943

Flying commenced at 0800 hours but ceased at 1115 hours owing to poor visibility. The ceiling was 900 feet. Two TCA airliners landed during the morning owing to bad weather. Their passengers lunched and were entertained in the officers mess. Both planes left for Edmonton in the afternoon without passengers who proceeded by rail.

March 31, 1943

During the last three days of the month, 26 tailplanes were damaged by ice being thrown up from the runways.

April 1, 1943

Oxford aircraft Mk II X7146 delivered by air from No 1 AEI Dartmouth. Taken into stored reserve pending authority for transfer to service issue for this unit's use. Aircraft strength 107, effective 106 plus three stored reserve and two Menasco Moths.

April 6, 1943

Flying wing personnel were granted a 48 hour pass for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, flying to recommence on 9<sup>th</sup> if aerodrome can be made serviceable again by then. No flying day or night owing to unserviceability of aerodrome. Snow and ice conditions obtained together with patches of water. Large numbers of airmen were put to work using picks and shovels and 75 percent of the drains were uncovered. The snow blower and snow plough were also used.

April 9, 1943

Number 657938 Sgt Gover K L took off in aircraft X6555 to give 1394906 LAC Smith C W dual instruction and the aircraft was later observed to crash from a low altitude and burst into flames on impact about four and a half miles northwest of Innisfail. Both occupants were killed and tha

aircraft was totally damaged.

April 14, 1943

The funeral took place at Red Deer today for Sgt K L Gover and LAC C W Smith. A service was held at St Luke's Church, Red Deer, conducted by S/L the Reverend B H Sackett and the rector of St Luke's Church. The remains were interred in the Red Deer cemetery and the funeral party consisted of an escort party, a firing party, a bearer party, the commanding officer and officers and local friends.

April 23, 1943

At Penhold at 1615 hours number 1397855 LAC Dalton G was returning to the main aerodrome in Oxford aircraft number X6590 on completion of his third solo flight on type in rapidly deteriorating conditions. Owing to being balked on two occasions by other aircraft he was forced to carry out overshoot action and on the third occasion he made an approach and while touching down the wind swung through 180 degrees and in consequence (he) overran the runway and overturned on rough ground. The weather at the time was overcast at 1,000 feet AGL with hail and dust storm raging. Surface wind very strong and gusty to 50 miles per hour.

May 1, 1943

G/C H J Pringle AFC assumed command of No 36 SFTS vice G/C W B Farrington DSO.

May 2, 1943

S/L R M Hardy OC No 8 University Air Training Corps arrived by rail from Edmonton with 55 university air cadets for a fortnight's training on this unit.

May 5, 1943

Time expired Oxford aircraft number AS942 dispatched by air to Aircraft Repair Limited, Edmonton. Strength of aircraft 106, effective 99, time expired awaiting dispatch 3, crashed aircraft 4.

May 23, 1943

Dual flying only in the morning owing to high velocity wind and dust storms. These increased during the day and caused the cancellation of afternoon and night flying.

May 24, 1943

At Penhold at 2025 hours P/O J J Hyland in Oxford aircraft number AS565 took off to carry out a night flying test. The aircraft behaved normally and the pilot had every intention of passing the aircraft serviceable for night flying. As the aircraft was being taxied onto the tarmac the pilot

noticed a considerable quantity of smoke issuing from the vicinity of the starboard engine. This smoke was dirty gray in color but there was no sign of flame. The pilot immediately stopped the aircraft, switched off both engines and turned off the petrol. Another instructor in the meantime had boarded the starboard mainplane and reached for a fire extinguisher. The pilot obtained the second extinguisher from the cockpit and joined the instructor on the starboard mainplane and both attempted to extinguish the fire. The crash truck arrived but by this time the fire had got a good hold and the aircraft was completely burned out. The pilot was uninjured.

June 13, 1943

Number 1397797 LAC Young D V and number 1320346 LAC Stuart P J in Oxford aircraft number T1181 crashed one mile south of Rowley, Alberta. Both occupants were killed and the aircraft was totally wrecked. An investigation is being held.

June 28, 1943

At Penhold at 1715 hours number 180146 LAC Haupt A S, pupil pilot, swerved when taking off solo in Oxford aircraft number AS255 and collided with a tractor 150 yards off the runway. The pupil was uninjured but both aircraft and tractor damaged.

July 7, 1943

The cowling over the port oil tank on Oxford II aircraft BG289 came off damaging the port main plane and causing the pilot P/O R Wild to land with wheels up owing to the high approach speed. Neither he nor his pupil 1582593 LAC Kinsella sustained any injury.

July 14, 1943

Three and one half miles north of Eckville, 1730 hours: R182443 LAC Woodill J H and R168264 LAC Sutherland A G of number 79 course when flying in Oxford II aircraft AS734 were killed when the aircraft crashed. The aircraft was totally destroyed.

July 19, 1943

S/L (Reverend) W Bloxham (Chap), F/O W H Thomas and P/O H B Peters proceeded to Calgary for the cremation ceremony of the late R182443 LAC Woodill J H and R168264 LAC Sutherland A G.

August 7, 1943

No 87 course assembled consisting of 15 pupils from No 31 EFTS De Winton, 20 from 5 EFTS High River, 17 from No 33 EFTS Carron and 8 from No 3 M Depot Edmonton.

August 11, 1943

F/O S H C Scowcroft arrived on posting from No 38 SFTS Estevan and was allocated to the specialist flight as a navigation instructor. Recategorization tests by No 3 Visiting Flight continued. P/Os J Ismay, A H Todd, D Merry, G J Tonks left for No 1 IFTS Deseronto for a standard beam approach instruction course. The Station sports meeting was held in the stadium and was largely attended by personnel of this and neighboring stations and by the civilian population of Red Deer. Two of the events, the 100 yards and the mile were open and were won by representatives from A20 RCASC Red Deer and No 37 SFTS Calgary respectively. Two horse races were also run and received much popular support. The Kinsmen Club of Red Deer organized a totalisater to increase the funds of their "Milk for Britain" scheme.

August 18, 1943

Oxford II aircraft T1139 piloted by Sgt A D Smith who was accompanied by 1584869 LAC Cash P B struck trees during a precautionary landing demonstration owing to the failure of the engines to respond to the throttles and crashed. The aircraft caught fire and was totally destroyed. Both occupants were slightly injured.

September 7, 1943

A command performance for subsequent transmission on the wireless was given by Station personnel in the recreation hall.

September 10, 1943

A Station cricket team captained by F/L R A Milsom left for a week's cricketing tour in British Columbia.

September 23, 1943

A conference was held by the chief instructor concerning the formation of the beam approach flight.

September 26, 1943

Oxford II aircraft AS781 piloted by Sgt R Robson when giving dual instruction to 1583511 LAC Pickering W H lost an engine cowling in flight and resultantly sustained damage to the fabric of the starboard mainplane but nevertheless landed safely.

September 30, 1943

The flying hours for the past month amounted to 10, 098.40 surpassing the previous record for this Station by 1,400 hours. The exceptionally fine weather obtaining throughout the period,

only one night's flying was canceled, accounted to some extent for these exceptionally high figures. The fine weather has also no doubt been responsible for the remarkably good state of the health of personnel throughout the Station.

October 2, 1943

Preparations for winter recreational activities began with the formation of groups and clubs for music appreciation, drama reading, orchestras, concert party, male voice choir and badminton. Plans were laid down for a full winter program.

October 4, 1943

Fire week started and plans were made to hold demonstrations of fire fighting, lectures and practice alarms, daily warnings of fire hazards and other devices for making Station personnel "fire conscious."

October 6, 1943

Flying was restricted to dual only until 1400 hours owing to persistence of smoke pall. Full flying was authorized at 1400 hours as the smoke cleared but the second half of the night flying program had to be canceled when the smoke pall reappeared.

October 7, 1943

S/L J H G McArthur 37825 and F/L G A W Williams 60422 arrived from No 4 SFTS (Ed: Saskatoon) and AFHQ to assist in the formation of the new beam approach flight. Contractors completed extensions to the 310 degree runways and the construction of a new perimeter taxi strip joining the 310 degree to the perimeter at north end of 000 runways. Both 310-130 runways are to be used from now on. (Ed: these do not correspond to designators on the plan in the Pilots Handbook of 1942.)

October 13, 1943

Beam apparatus installed at Blackfalds became operative for air practices only. Air field not ready for use. BA trained instructors transferred from other flights where they had been supernumerary. Senior course over five hours behind owing to bad weather and frequent changes of instructional staff. Every effort being made by transfer of instructors and aircraft to flight concerned to graduate this course on October 29<sup>th</sup>.

October 17, 1943

A concert was given by a party from Calgary sponsored by Birks in the Station theatre at 1830 hours and was greatly enjoyed by a full and appreciative audience.

October 25, 1943

Unserviceable runways covered with ice and water prevented flying during morning. Water drained away by the afternoon and restrictive dual flying was authorized. Ice hockey, skating and an arts and crafts club were added to the program of winter activities. A Victory Loan film show was given in the Station cinema in the evening.

October 30, 1943

Rain and snow prevented flying from 0001 hours until dawn and from 0800 until 1030 hours. Full flying continued thereafter as weather conditions improved. In the afternoon 150 airmen took part in a military parade organized by the people of Red Deer in connection with the fifth Victory Loan drive. The squadron was commanded by S/L J B Linton 81651. G/C H J Pringle AFC 26064 took the salute at the march past and was accompanied at the saluting base by Col Burton-Willison, officer commanding RCASC A20 and the mayor and sheriff of Red Deer.

November 3, 1943

A total of \$50,250 in the Victory Loan campaign brings us to the point where we achieve our secondary target and beat the previous best total put up by an RAF school in the command. All sections are now over their original quota.

November 8, 1943

A full program of winter sports in the drill hall was published catering for all tastes and needs. It includes boxing, weight lifting, rifle club, basketball, cricket, unarmed combat, gymnastics and fencing.

November 9, 1943

The Station dramatic society which is holding regular play reading sessions began rehearsals of a microphone version of Dicken's "Christmas Carol" for presentation in the Station theatre at Yuletide.

November 22, 1943

Oxford II aircraft AS690 allotted to this unit and ferried from Aircraft Repair Limited. Oxford II numbers AS925, X6520, AS301, T1328 and X6552, all time expired, ferried to Aircraft Repair Limited and struck off strength. Strength of aircraft now: Oxford II 96, Menasco Moth 2.

November 24, 1943

GB1803056 LAC Maybe C R J while flying Oxford II aircraft BM815 on a solo cross country practice flight attempted to land three miles three miles southeast of Camrose. The aircraft struck some trees and crashed becoming a total wreck. The pilot, however, was uninjured.

November 25, 1943

“Centralized maintenance” came into effect. All inspection and repairs are to be directed from maintenance control room in number 6 hangar. A central tool store has been built to expedite the issue of tools, equipment etc. Average serviceability of aircraft remains above 70 percent.

November 26, 1943

A/V/M G M Croil CBE AFC, G/C D Iron OBE, 4 Training Command, and S/L Grant AFC made a surprise visit to this Station and the Inspector General made a tour of inspection.

December 10, 1943

A number of flying instructors were warned that in consequence of the reduction of the number of RAF schools in Canada they would be repatriated within five weeks. The male voice choir made a public appearance in a concert at Harmatton, Alberta.

December 16, 1943

The commanding officer, chief instructor and chief engineer officer left by air at 1630 hours for Calgary to attend a conference at No 4 Training Command on the use of relief landing grounds. The first of the Christmas festivities, a children’s party, was held in the recreation hall.

Appendix to Diary: Christmas at Penhold RAF Station

Christmas is first and foremost a children’s festival and in accordance with time honored Service custom, the officers and airmen of No 36 SFTS gave a Christmas party for the children of Red Deer, Penhold and other places in the surrounding district on 16 December. Some 150 happy kiddies sat down to tea in the gaily decorated recreation hall on the aerodrome. After the tea, presents were distributed to each child by name from the 15 foot high Christmas tree at the hands of a very benevolent old Santa Claus. Then the children themselves took a hand in the entertainment and gave an exhibition of dancing, singing and reciting, completing their performance with a charmingly executed nativity play. After the play, the Station cinema presented a program of Walt Disney cartoons and the children departed all happily imbued with the spirit of Yuletide.

December 19, 1943

The dramatic society presented a quasi-radio version of Charles Dicken’s “Christmas Carol” at 1900 hours in the Station cinema. It was produced by F/L F S Hudson, unit education officer, and was enjoyed by an audience of 200 persons.

December 21, 1943

A grand Christmas concert and pantomime was presented by the Station concert party, male voice choir and light orchestra in the Station theatre.

December 24, 1943

Christmas eve - night flying canceled but day flying continued as fully as possible with 50 percent reduction in staff and pupils on Christmas leave.

December 31, 1943

Month end review (appendix)

Station cinema: the Station cinema continues to maintain a high standard of current releases and is filled to capacity four evenings a week.

Indoor sports: the drill hall attracts a number of airmen and officers for badminton, tennis, indoor cricket, weight lifting, rifle range and basketball during the day and in the evening.

Music: the Station now has an excellent light orchestra which has been prominent in the Station shows put on in November and December. The dance band and military band have been practicing regularly and playing at unit dances and parades.

Concerts: the unit was visited by "Victory Varieties of 1944" under the auspices of the Calgary Coordinating Council. This show was very well received and greatly appreciated by a large audience. The Station now has an excellent concert party capable of putting on a good variety show of musical and comedy items. This month, its activities were devoted to the production of a grand Christmas concert and pantomime in which some 65 persons were involved, including the male voice choir and light orchestra.

January 1, 1944

Full day flying program carried out. F/Sgt J Moore 44541 awarded the British Empire Medal (military division) in the New Year's honors list.

January 2, 1944

F/O R E Lay 128576 and AUS427869 LAC Clarke M J when engaged in a cross country flight in Oxford II aircraft AS674 were killed when the aircraft struck a high tension, crashed and was totally wrecked. A drop in temperature caused a fall in serviceability attributable to sub-zero weather causing seals in oleo legs and buffers to shrink. This unserviceability is likely to increase with prolonged low temperatures unless suitable seals are supplied. The American and Canadian types shrink in extreme cold.

January 4, 1944

The R1 at Innisfail is out of use while disinfection is carried out and the instructors and pupils of F flight are now at Penhold.

January 7, 1944

Twelve instructors were warned for repatriation or for courses preparatory to proceeding to the UK. The loss of four of the eight flight commanders necessitates considerable rearrangements of the flights.

January 8, 1944

561902 F/Sgt Sampson F W granted the India General Service Medal with clasp "Northwest Frontier, 1936-1937."

January 13, 1944

A mystery drama "Ten Minute Alibi" was presented by the RAF Players, Bowden in the Station theatre and was much appreciated by a large audience.

January 28, 1944

A funeral service was held at 1430 hours at St Luke's Church (Church of England) Red Deer for 1605124 LAC Carter P A. The Reverend (S/L) W Blaxham assisted by the rector of St Luke's officiated. Bearers were pupils of number 93 course in which course the deceased pilot was receiving instruction. The burial took place at Red Deer cemetery with full military honors.

February 4, 1944

No flying by day or by night owing to snow fall. The aerodrome is unserviceable because of the presence of deep snow. The snow blower operated all day.

February 12, 1944

The Station male voice choir broadcast a program of songs from radio station CJCA Edmonton 1115 to 1145 hours. A recording was also made for rebroadcasting in England.

February 13, 1944

The Station male voice choir gave two concerts at the Rialto Theatre, Edmonton in aid of the Lions Club fund for the relief of bombed out children of Great Britain.

February 18, 1944

A fire broke out in the kitchen section of the airmen's mess probably caused by the accidental spilling of cooking fat on the kitchen range. The fire was extinguished in three and three quarter hours. There was extensive damage to the roof of the kitchen. Steps were at once taken to organize temporary cooking and dining accommodation in the drill hall. Assistance was given by personnel from A20 training centre RASC who provided mobile cooking stoves and a normal breakfast was served to airmen from 0700 hours. Members of "Flyers" association football team attended a dinner and dance at the Knights of Columbus Club Rooms in Calgary for the presentation of the Lon Cavanaugh Trophy, won by the Station in the Alberta Service Football League. The trophy was received by F/O W S Locke on behalf of the commanding officer and medals were presented to members of the team.

February 29, 1944

In all, 15 flying instructors have arrived from No 35 SFTS North Battleford (which has been disbanded) and an extensive rearrangement of flights has been carried out. Strength of aircraft as at 29 February, 1944: Oxford II serviceable 85, unserviceable 21, Menasco Moth 2.

March 7, 1944

Oxford II aircraft number X7122 piloted by P/O D Jamieson 153161 was making a normal landing at the R1 Innisfail when Oxford II aircraft number AR919 piloted by F/O C F R Wilson 136450 making a steep approach (single engine landing practice) landed on top of it. Both aircraft were seriously damaged but there were no injuries to personnel.

March 11, 1944

Full flying program carried out by day and night. The courses are behind schedule as a result of the bad weather during the last month and of the transfer of pupils from other RAF schools which are closing down.

March 13, 1944

It was announced over the wireless that this unit would disband on the 15<sup>th</sup> December, 1944. This information was later confirmed by a secret signal from No 4 Training Command headquarters.

S/L V G Scholefield 83586 proceeded by rail to No 31 EFTS De Winton for duties as president of a board of officers convened to take over buildings at Gladys Ridge (Ed: R1 for De Winton).

March 17, 1944

1606094 LAC Biggs K engaged in solo day practice of steep turns and precautionary landings in Oxford II aircraft number AS272 was killed when the aircraft dived into the ground three miles

west of Penhold. The cause of the accident is obscure. The aircraft was totally wrecked and destroyed by fire.

March 19, 1944

Mrs Jean Farquharson of Calgary visited the Station with the Calgary Ukrainian String Orchestra and party who entertained a large party with Russian dancing and music.

April 10, 1944

The bowling alley which has been built at the expense of non-public funds was opened today for the enjoyment of Station personnel.

April 11, 1944

S/L I D Corcoran C4948 arrived by air from No 4 TC to prepare to take a summary of evidence in connection with alleged low flying at No 401 Holding Unit, Swift Current by pilots of this unit.

April 16, 1944

A christening ceremony was held in the new Station chapel. Three children of officers on the strength of the Station, namely F/L J W T Amey, F/L W M Lewis DFC, and F/O R Pearce were christened by the chaplain, the Reverend S/L W Bloxham.

April 18, 1944

During the 20 weeks in which number 95 course has trained, no fewer than 58 new instructors were taken on the strength of this unit and a similar number were posted away.

April 20, 1944

A wings parade was held by the commanding officer when 60 graduates of number 95 course were presented with their wings. The proportion of successful candidates was a record for this Station at 96.7 percent.

April 23, 1944

A dedication service was held by the RC personnel in which the new Station chapel was dedicated to St George, the patron saint of England. The Reverend (W/C) E B Howard RC staff chaplain officiated assisted by Hon F/L S G Stewart, Station RC chaplain, who was also celebrating his 11<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ordination. The dedication ceremony was followed by a hymn to St George and by high mass, the first to be held at Penhold. There was a choir of airmen.

April 24, 1944

1625196 LAC Mann J pupil pilot and 1606838 LAC Flisher G R pupil navigator were killed when engaged on a cross country mutual exercise in Oxford II aircraft number AT464. The aircraft apparently dived into the ground at a steep angle and was burned out about 15 minutes after takeoff. The cause of the accident is obscure.

April 30, 1944

Strength of Station: staff RAF officers 127, airmen and O/R 1,036. Personnel other than RAF: RCAF 5 officers, 32 airmen and other ranks; nursing sisters 2 officers; RCASC one officer, 4 other ranks; CDC 1 officer, 4 other ranks; CPC three other ranks; meteorologists three civilians. Trainees: Royal Air Force 16 officers, 115 airmen and other ranks; Royal Australian Air Force one officer, 65 other ranks; Royal New Zealand Air Force 2 officers, 62 other ranks.

May 5, 1944

A heavy pall of smoke from forest fires, five of which were burning some 40 miles north of Edmonton, descended on the Penhold area in the middle of the night following a change in wind direction. Aircraft engaged in night flying were compelled to land at airfields south of Penhold, some as far away as Calgary. All aircraft except one were eventually accounted for and, as the missing aircraft had not been located by morning, a standard search was put into operation. No 2 AOS Edmonton and No 3 SFTS Calgary also carried out area searches. Pilots were greatly handicapped by the smoke from numerous forest and bush fires. Later in the day No 13 SFTS North Battleford and No 34 SFTS Medicine Hat were requested to search the areas allotted to their Stations. The missing aircraft carried an instructor and a pupil pilot and was last reported at 2335 hours on the 45<sup>th</sup> May, 1944 in the Penhold area. It was engaged in a cross country flight from Penhold to Bashaw and back to base.

May 10, 1944

S/L B J O'Day C3924 arrived by air from No 4 TC Calgary to conduct an investigation into the loss of an aircraft on the night of 4<sup>th</sup> 5<sup>th</sup> May, 1944. Shortly after his arrival, the aircraft Oxford II number X6734 completely burned out was discovered from the air in a wood some two miles south of the camp. The occupants, F/O D Merry 135135 and NZ435950 LAC Conway G D were dead.

May 11, 1944

A/V/M G R Housam MC C33 air officer commanding No 4 TC, G/C W A Dicks C1116 and F/L Smith, personal assistant, arrived by air from No 4 TC for inspection of the Station. A Station parade was held followed by a march past.

May 16, 1944

F/O A E Biscoe 129557 proceeded by rail to No 31 OTU Debert on posting for a Mosquito course.

May 22, 1944

The High Commissioner for New Zealand (Honorable David Wilson) and G/C White RNZAF arrived by air from Calgary. The High Commissioner addressed 60 RNZAF pupils who are training at this unit and the party left by air at 1635 hours for Calgary.

May 31, 1944

His Excellency The Earl of Athlone, Governor General of Canada, invested F/L F J S Garratt C6627 with the MBE awarded for initiative and devotion to duty in the performance of his work as works and building engineer.

June 8, 1944

R1 Innisfail: 1805133 LAC Smith S W landed at Innisfail on the conclusion of a solo cross country flight in Oxford II aircraft number AS704. Taxiing toward the hangar, the aircraft collided with a stationary ambulance and fire tender which were parked in the allotted space by the side of the hangar. The aircraft was damaged beyond economical repair, the pilot was uninjured.

June 12, 1944

Weather was bad during the morning. An attempt was made to fly bad weather circuits but rain and smoke reduced visibility below the limits of safety. There was dual flying all the afternoon. Night flying was canceled after the first detail owing to bad weather.

June 13, 1944

F/L J A Redington 52899 left the Station by rail for No 2 AGTS Calgary where a Stirling aircraft is to be available for inspection tomorrow.

June 16, 1944

A USAAF Dakota transport aircraft landed from Whitehorse, Alaska (sic) having failed to land at Edmonton owing to poor visibility. The RAF Players, Bowden, presented "Arsenic and Old Lace" in the recreation hall before a large and appreciative audience.

June 18, 1944

Ponoka Air Cadets visited the Station and attended divine service in the morning. In the afternoon they were all given short flights in Oxford II aircraft.

July 2, 1944

NZ4214286 LAC Lawrence J H was engaged in a formation flight in Oxford II aircraft number BG331. After attempting to land the pilot took overshoot action. On reaching a height of about 150 feet with the wheels up and the flaps down puffs of smoke were seen to be coming from the starboard engine. The aircraft then yawed to the right, the right wing dropped and the aircraft dived into the ground. The pilot was seriously injured and the aircraft was damaged beyond economical repair.

July 17, 1944

Five miles east of the village of Sylvan Lake AUS436951 LAC Delaney P E pupil pilot was engaged in practice solo stalls, steep turns, s/e landings and glide approach landings in Oxford II aircraft number AS260. The aircraft crashed through a belt of trees with the engines apparently not under full power. It seems that the pilot experienced considerable loss of control in yaw and severe tail buffeting. This probably occurred at about 2,000 feet above ground level. The tendency to yaw appears to have been to the right but the pilot's story is as yet slightly incoherent. He was seriously injured and the aircraft was damaged beyond economical repair.

July 18, 1944

C97283 Sgt Waddington H E, Canadian Postal Corps NCO i/c MPO1307 RAF Station Penhold, died suddenly while seated in a motor car in Red Deer, Alberta.

July 20, 1944

1345062 F/Sgt McCulloch D R and AUS441356 LAC Ingram J L were engaged in an armament exercise in Oxford II aircraft number AS640. During a left handed descending turn onto attack heading, the pilot suddenly saw three aircraft in formation flying toward him. There was insufficient time for avoiding action to be effective. The aircraft struck number two of the formation, Oxford II aircraft number AT589 piloted by AUS437593 LAC McKenzie J W. After the impact, the pilot of AS640 had difficulty in maintaining control because of damage to his starboard propeller and main plane. The pupil was ordered to jump which was done successfully. By this time the aircraft had lost so much height that the pilot decided that it was not possible to abandon the aircraft himself. He carried out a wheels up landing in a field with an uneven surface. The aircraft was damaged beyond economical repair but both pilot and the pupil were uninjured. The pilot of AT589 regained control after the impact and noticed that his starboard wing was damaged. Since he was able to control the aircraft he flew back to base and landed without incident. He had no knowledge then of the cause of the damage. A complete

rebuild of his aircraft will be necessary but the pilot was uninjured. Figures extracted for the information of the Visiting Flight reveal that this unit has had 75 new flying instructors since first January, 1944 and that during the same period no fewer than 16 flight commanders have been posted.

July 22, 1944

G/C H J Pringle AFC left the Station by air on posting to the United Kingdom Air Liaison Mission, Ottawa for duties as deputy liaison officer in chief. He had commanded this unit since first May, 1943. W/C W T F Wightman DFC is appointed to the acting rank of group captain and assumes command of this Station.

July 23, 1944

P/O D J Stewart 172377 while swimming at Sylvan Lake, Alberta got into difficulties and was drowned.

July 29, 1944

Two Airacobras of the USAAF landed on receiving instructions to wait at Penhold until the weather improved.

July 30, 1944

Notification received of the promotion to the substantive rank of flying officer effective 18<sup>th</sup> May, 1944 of P/O D J Stewart 172377 who lost his life on 23<sup>rd</sup> July, 1944.

August 1, 1944

Ten cadets of number 361 Beaverlodge Squadron with their civilian adjutant, Mr W H Lysne, 24 cadets from number 124 St Paul, Elk Point, Malaig, Glendon Squadron with P/O J Abrahams and 10 cadets of (Ukrainia Squadron) Derwent have arrived at the Station in accordance with the syllabus for the ACC summer camp.

August 7, 1944

Notification received that G/C W T F Wightman DFC has been awarded the Czechoslovak Honorary Wings by General S Inr, Czechoslovak minister of national defense in London in recognition of distinguished services rendered to Czechoslovak airmen.

August 20, 1944

A special train left the spur line on the Station conveying 96 airmen to Moncton for repatriation, 42 to No 32 SFTS Moose Jaw and 24 to various other stations along the route.

September 1, 1944

The weekly class in London matriculation, English and Mathematics, was held in the education section this evening. The last of the weekly meetings of the economic and economic history study group were also held this evening. Penhold has been fortunate in always possessing an energetic individual in charge of the educational section. Education, one must admit, has always been the “Cinderella” of the RAF services and indeed it is frequently difficult to mix education with war. Nevertheless the education officers here have had a good try and the results have been rather good as witness the many education events, lectures, talks, courses, films, plays, music which have taken place on the unit during its existence.

September 3, 1944

Seven pilots arrived from No 3 AGTS Rivers for a conversion course. So many attachments are now occurring that it is proposed to form a “conversion flight” to deal with such attachments, the necessary instructional personnel being taken from other flights.

September 8, 1944

Secret Communication: To Commanding Officer, No 36 SFTS, Penhold, Alberta  
Daily Dairy, August, 1944

1. The month end review of health should contain a reference to dental treatment.
2. The diary has throughout been careful and factual but as indicated in previous letters, decidedly dry and uninspired in style. More life and color could easily be infused.
3. Comments or constructive criticism, current or retrospective, would be valuable. During the Station’s career, many lessons must have been learned from experience and a synopsis of the suggestions arising therefrom would be very interesting.

H D MacKeen. W/C

A wings parade was held by the commanding officer when 59 graduates mainly of the Royal New Zealand Air Force of number 101 course were presented with their wings.

September 9, 1944

The Penhold Flyers met No 10 RD in semi-finals of the Alberta inter-service soccer match at Mewata Stadium in Calgary and met a resounding defeat. Now the Penhold Flyers have, ever since they started playing, held an enviable reputation for their quality in this game as well they might for the team has consisted of players from first class English soccer. However the latest draft put the team almost en bloc on the boat leaving something that scarcely equaled a scratch team to stagger into the semi-finals. And so the great Penhold Flyers fell in their last match and the local press added insult to injury to us in telling the world in general, and Calgary in particular, that for this particular game, Penhold had put into the field an especially strong team. Our sports department was not amused.

September 14, 1944

The last issue of the "Penhold Log" in the form of a souvenir and farewell issue fell into the hands of an eager public today. Under the heading "A Reluctant Farewell" the Red Deer Advocate in its issue dated 20<sup>th</sup> September, 1944 said this about the Log: "It is with keen regret that the people of the Red Deer district say farewell to the "Penhold Log," the magazine, published by No 36 SFTS Penhold and one of the best station magazines in the country. The final issue was a 64 page photographic record of the country and the Station and appeared last week. The first issue of the Log appeared in December, 1941 and each month since the Log has been a welcome visitor. It was fortunate in its beginnings. The first editor was A/C Martin, now serving with an RAF unit in France. His experience on the Edinburgh Evening News was invaluable in getting the new magazine on its feet. The cover and many of the early cartoons were drawn by A/C Roughton, formerly cartoonist on the London Daily Mirror. Right from the beginning the magazine has been almost if not entirely composed of original material written by people on the Station which has given it a character of its own."

September 17, 1944

A special CPR train ran from the spur taking 150 of the Station personnel on posting to No 31 PD for repatriation to the United Kingdom. The conduct of the movement was very good and apparently continued so across Canada resulting in a "strawberry" for the Station from O/C No 31 PD in the form of a very pleasantly worded note. Disposing of so many bodies across so many miles without undue damage and wear and tear of railway and Dominion property on route speaks rather well for the discipline of the airmen, especially if one tries to imagine their frame of mind at the long hoped for and now suddenly approaching opportunity of seeing wives, families, girl friends etc again after so long a break.

September 23, 1944

It is planned that as the number of personnel on the camp becomes smaller, only one cinema show will be given in place of the normal twice nightly routine. Recent programs have included a number of pre-release films, in many cases films being shown long before their Calgary display and a series of revivals has also drawn large audiences.

September 24, 1944

"Need we bother about Japan," was the subject matter under discussion at the meeting of the discussion group held this evening. The group, it may be assumed, was undoubtedly affirmative in its reply. In anticipation of winter, thousands and thousands (or so it seems) of storm windows are spread throughout the camp patiently awaiting erection.

September 29, 1944

The first fall of snow fell today - a strange and pretty sight to English eyes to see the trees in full

autumn bloom coated with snow.

September 30, 1944

Much interest is being shown in the precis of the British Government's white paper on discharge procedures and increases in pay for personnel taking part in the Japanese campaign. This has been displayed on notice boards in the camp.

October 1, 1944

As the unit enters upon its last month's existence normal routine work and events must in some degree give way to the preparation necessary to close the unit with some degree of efficiency and this will no doubt be reflected in the month's diary.

October 2, 1944

No 105 course arrived on bloc from Moose Jaw as the result of the advancement of the closing date of that unit and will complete their training at Penhold. Personnel consisted of 49 pupils and 18 instructors.

October 3, 1944

In the camp cinema there was an honest to goodness "first time in Canada showing" of a new Hollywood opus "Greenwich Village" with Technicolor and Carmen Miranda, both of which (or whom) go down with the airmen 100 percent.

Organization Order 452  
Disbandment of 36 SFTS Penhold, Alberta

Information: curtailment of the BCATP permits the closing of certain service flying training schools. Intention: it is intended to disband 36 SFTS Penhold, Alberta. Effective date: 36 SFTS Penhold, Alberta is to become inactive and disband effective 3 November, 1944.

October 4, 1944

The Station dramatic society put on their first performance tonight of "Outward Bound" which they will repeat tomorrow. Eyebrows were somewhat raised at the society's choice of play which is essentially a play requiring at least some thought on the part of its audience. All praise therefore to this clever little band of performers and their equally clever production. A special tribute too to the Red Deer woman whose portrayal of the Cockney in the play was a delight (especially as we gather the portrayalist has not even been within the sound of Beau Bells).

October 13, 1944

Kit inspections by sections in readiness for the closing of the unit were commenced today. This is quite a large job but the necessity for an adequate check of kit prior to personnel leaving this unit is fully appreciated.

October 18, 1944

A farewell dance was held in the drill hall this evening for all ranks and all personnel were able to bring friends up from Red Deer for the occasion. In conjunction with the dance, all messes kept "open house."

October 23, 1944

Today detailed instructions regarding the dispatch of personnel - and this includes practically the whole of the unit - to No 31 PD Moncton for return to the United Kingdom was published in routine orders today.

October 27, 1944

A number of RCAF personnel are arriving at the unit. These consist mainly of officers, airmen personnel have not yet arrived. These officers will form part of the incoming unit.

October 31, 1944

Disposal of aircraft: October 20, 1944, 20 Oxford aircraft ferried to RCAF Swift Current; October 21, 19; October 22, 21; October 23, 12. Flying hours 4481.