

in August, 1945, directs and co-ordinates supply, equipment, aeronautical and construction engineering and aeronautical inspection services throughout the Air Force. Besides these, other higher formations were: No. 9 Transport Group (Rockcliffe); R.C.A.F. Overseas Headquarters (London, England); Air Member Canadian Joint Staff (Washington, D.C.); and the Air Attachés (Washington, D.C., and Paris, France).

The R.C.A.F., on Mar. 31, 1946, had five squadrons with ancillary units and 9,025 officers and other ranks still overseas. The grand total effective strength on the same date was 37,272, including civilians.

The R.C.A.F. maintains a Staff College at Toronto, Ont., where senior officers are trained for command and staff positions. At the School of Aviation Medicine, Toronto, Ont., there are facilities for consultant and specialist officers, laboratories for nutritional activities in relation to messing, a statistical section, well-equipped laboratories, a human centrifuge, a cold low-pressure chamber and a tropical room.

In aircrew training the tendency towards a high degree of specialization developed during the War has already shown signs of diminishing, it being considered advisable that each member of a crew should know as much as possible about the duties of the others. The same trend is noticeable in groundcrew training. In co-operation with the Navy and Army, the R.C.A.F. has standardized many trades and the same names for the same trades are being used throughout the three Services.

THE BRITISH COMMONWEALTH AIR TRAINING PLAN — A SUMMARY OF THE R.C.A.F.'S MAJOR ROLE IN THE WAR OF 1939-45

Historical Sketch

The battle of Waterloo, it has been said, was won on the playing fields of Eton. The historian of the War of 1939-45 may, with some justification, record that the air battle of Europe was won on the flying fields of Canada. This story can now be told in the proper perspective. For five years the Dominion was a great aerodrome where, in the schools of the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, over 130,000 aircrew were trained for service with the Royal Air Force, the Royal Australian Air Force, the Royal Canadian Air Force and the Royal New Zealand Air Force.

The Plan had its inception in an Agreement signed Dec. 17, 1939, at Ottawa, by representatives of the Governments of the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. The Government of Canada was designated as administrator of a co-operative air-training scheme capable of producing, when fully developed, 520 pilots with elementary training, 544 pilots with service training, 340 observers and 580 wireless operator-air gunners every four weeks. To meet this objective 3 Initial Training Schools were to be established, 13 Elementary Flying Training Schools, 16 Service Flying Training Schools, 10 Air Observer Schools, 10 Bombing and Gunnery Schools, 2 Air Navigation Schools and 4 Wireless Schools. In addition there were to be schools for the training of the necessary staff, and appropriate command, recruiting and maintenance organizations, embracing schools for air armament, aeronautical engineering, administration, equipment and accounts, flying instructors and technical training, as well as recruit, repair and equipment depots and a record office—a grand total of 74 units. The first three flying schools were to open in May, 1940, and all were to be in operation by the end of April, 1942.

The task thus entrusted to the Royal Canadian Air Force, which became the general manager of the Plan, was a tremendous undertaking. When the War began