

gradual reduction of pupil intake and schools. In October, 1944, the closing of schools was accelerated so that the Plan might terminate, as scheduled, on Mar. 31, 1945. By the close of 1944 the number of B.C.A.T.P. schools had been reduced to 50 and those of the R.A.F. to 2; schools and units remaining on Mar. 31, 1945, were absorbed by the R.C.A.F. During the five years that the Plan was in operation approximately 360 schools and ancillary units had been established on 231 sites. From these schools had come 131,553 aircrew graduates to take their places in the R.A.F., the R.A.A.F., the R.C.A.F., and the R.N.Z.A.F. Thirty-eight out of every 100 graduates were pilots (49,808); 23 navigators, including navigators "B" and "W" (29,963); 12 air bombers (15,673); 14 wireless operator-air gunners (18,496); 12 air gunners (15,700 including 704 naval air gunners); and the hundredth was a flight engineer (1,913). The R.C.A.F.'s contribution was the largest, representing 55.4 p.c. (72,835) of the total; the R.A.F. provided 32 p.c. (42,110), the R.A.A.F. 7.3 p.c. (9,606), and the R.N.Z.A.F. 5.3 p.c. (7,002).

Behind these simple statistics lies a story of achievement unparalleled in Canadian history—a story written not only by instructors and pupils whose yellow-painted trainers were so familiar a sight in Canadian skies, but written also by service and civilian personnel working in offices and factories, doing all the tasks necessary to convert blue-prints into flying schools, get aircraft into the air and keep them flying.

Details of the Main Plan

Construction Engineering Program.—The initial burden of putting the B.C.A.T.P. into operation fell most heavily upon the Construction Engineering and Equipment Divisions of the R.C.A.F. Before pupils could begin training it was necessary to select sites, erect hangars and barracks, prepare runways and roads, and procure aircraft, engines, trucks, clothing, and all the other necessary supplies.

The small Construction Engineering Section of 1939 was expanded by recruiting engineers, designers and draftsmen from civilian life, and invaluable assistance was given by R.A.F. specialist officers who came to Canada early in 1940. When the Plan was initiated no standard design existed for hangars, accommodation buildings, mess halls and other structures. Plans for these and other buildings, which became necessary as technical training equipment was perfected (e.g., turret-training buildings), were developed chiefly at Air Force Headquarters at Ottawa, where 30,000 sketch plans and drawings were prepared and approximately 1,500,000 blue-prints issued.

The first contract was awarded in February, 1940; by the late summer of that year over 500 had been signed, involving expenditures totalling about \$60,000,000. The peak was reached in 1942 when 1,000 contracts were awarded for an aggregate expenditure of \$80,000,000. Thereafter the number decreased sharply until, in the last year of the Plan's operation, there were slightly more than 100 contracts for about \$4,000,000. Contracts ranged from large double-size flying schools to relatively small relief fields, and covered the construction of buildings of all types, the installation of water, electrical, heating and sewage systems, and the laying of railway spurs, runways, roads, parade grounds and footpaths.

Pre-war airfields served as a starting point for flying training, but it was necessary to enlarge them and construct many new ones and the required satellites. The Department of Transport undertook the construction and extension of runways and laid 35,000,000 square yards of asphalt or concrete, the equivalent of a 20-foot