

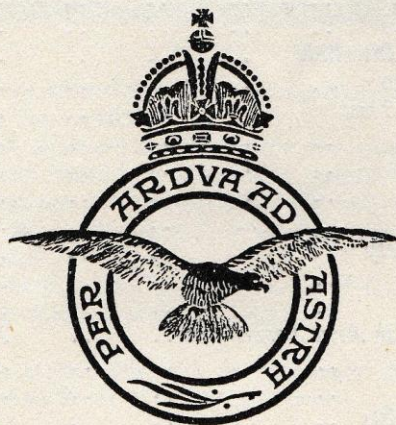
The Haltonian Magazine and the Daedalus

Volume 4 No. 1

Summer 1932

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THE
HALTON MAGAZINE
AND THE
DAEDALUS



VOL. IV, No. 1

SUMMER 1932

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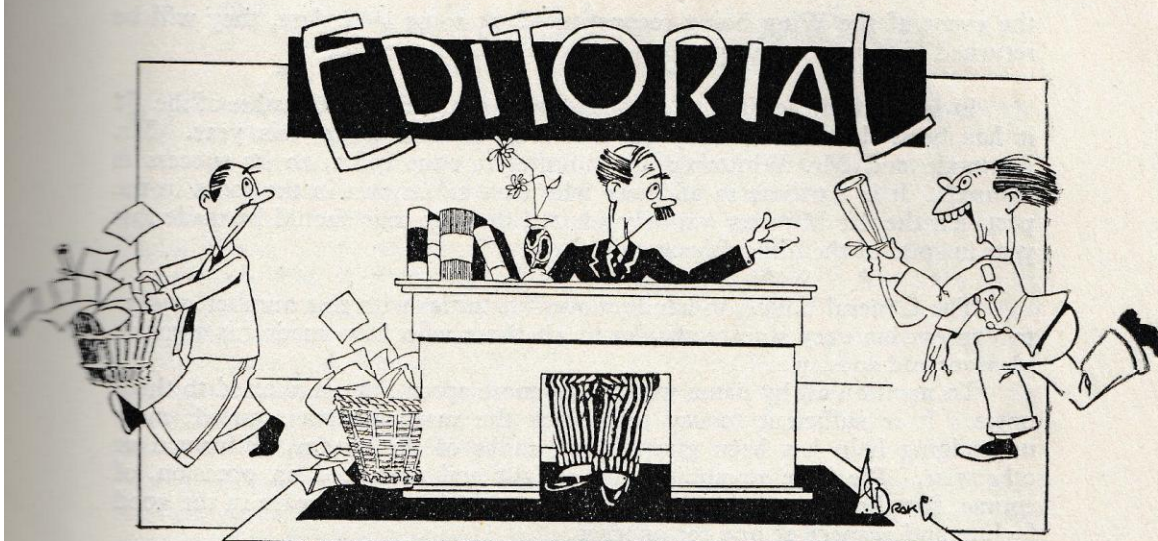
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WE wish to draw the attention of all our members to the question of their life on leaving the service.

In these days of many applicants for few posts it is essential that all possible qualifications should be acquired; ground engineering licenses, H.E.T. certificates, language certificates, etc., will help greatly, and as these can be got while men are in the R.A.F. it is foolish for any one to neglect the opportunity given him.

All necessary information can be got from the E.O.'s on stations or from the Honorary Secretary of the O.B.A. at Halton.

* * * * *

Many names have been added to the Honours Boards since our last number. The totals on each set of boards are now:

Cadetships, 52.

Honours, i.e. Commissions, "Mentions" and medals, 47.

Special Distinctions or Distinguished Passes at Flying Training Schools, 56.

We congratulate

Francis and Sanders of the 19th Entry on obtaining Cadetships.

R. G. Bowditch, D. I. Coote, and C. G. Lott, on winning Commissions.

Sgt/Pilot F. G. R. Lewis, Cpl. T. W. A. Bailey, and L.A.C. C. B.

Lindop, who have been mentioned in despatches, and

Sgt/Pilot F. J. Chudley, who has been awarded the Distinguished Flying Medal.

* * * * *

There are now eleven apprentices at Halton from the Dominions overseas.

* * * * *

No. 4 Wing has ceased to exist and the apprentices left in that Wing have joined either No. 1 or No. 2 Wing. This change has been brought about by the decision of the Air Ministry to reduce the number of apprentices under training. Such a drastic change must necessarily involve hardships and disappointment, and all Old Cranwellians and Old No. 4 men will regret it. They can rest assured that the traditions they created will remain and that No. 4 Wing has gone in name only. The many cups and trophies that they won are being kept at present in the officers' mess at Halton House, and in

the event of the Wing being reconstituted, at some later date, they will be returned to serve as an inspiration to the recruits of the future.

* * * * *

In spite of the additional expense owing to the fall in the value of the £1 it has been decided to carry out the Belgian tour again this year. Mr. Kermode and Mr. Whittaker are running it once more, so its success is assured. It is a tribute to all those who have taken part in the tours in the past that the Air Ministry strongly advised that the tour should be made this year in spite of the difficulties involved.

* * * * *

The General Editor, in handing over his duties with this number, wishes to express his very sincere thanks to all those who have made his work so pleasant and so easy.

To mention all by name would take more space than is allotted to these notes. It is sufficient to say that since the magazine was started, most ungrudging help has been given by all ranks of the service, uniformed or otherwise. We have squabbled and fought and disagreed on occasion, of course, but the outcome has been an increase and not a decrease in the good feeling and respect of one for another.

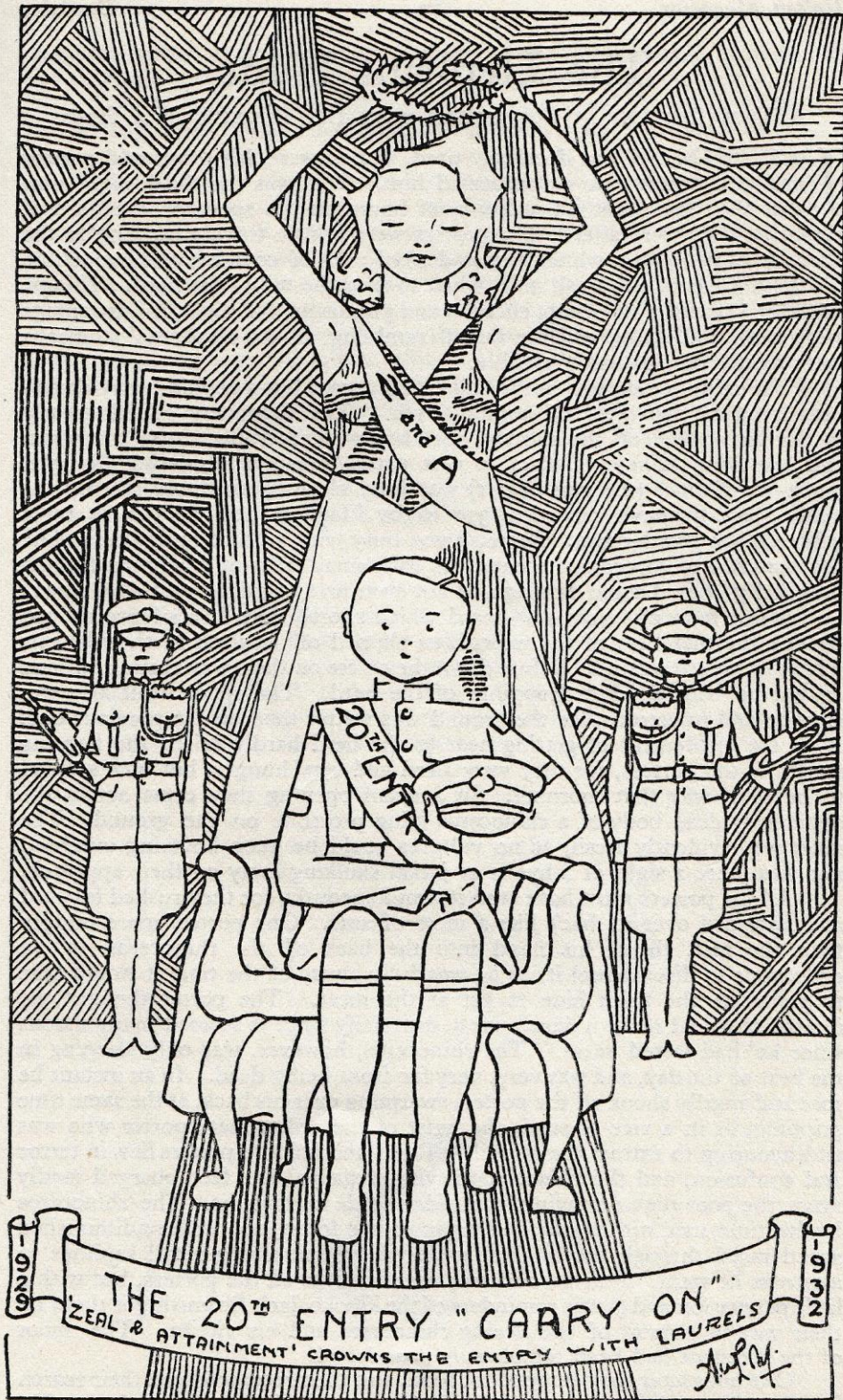
The General Editor says good-bye to the station and to apprentices, present and past, with great regret and with much gratitude for eleven years made happy by their help and goodwill.

He wishes good luck, hard work and happy days to them all.

* * * * *

We extend the welcome of the station to Dr. A. H. Robson, M.C., who takes over the post of Principal Education Officer on September 1st.





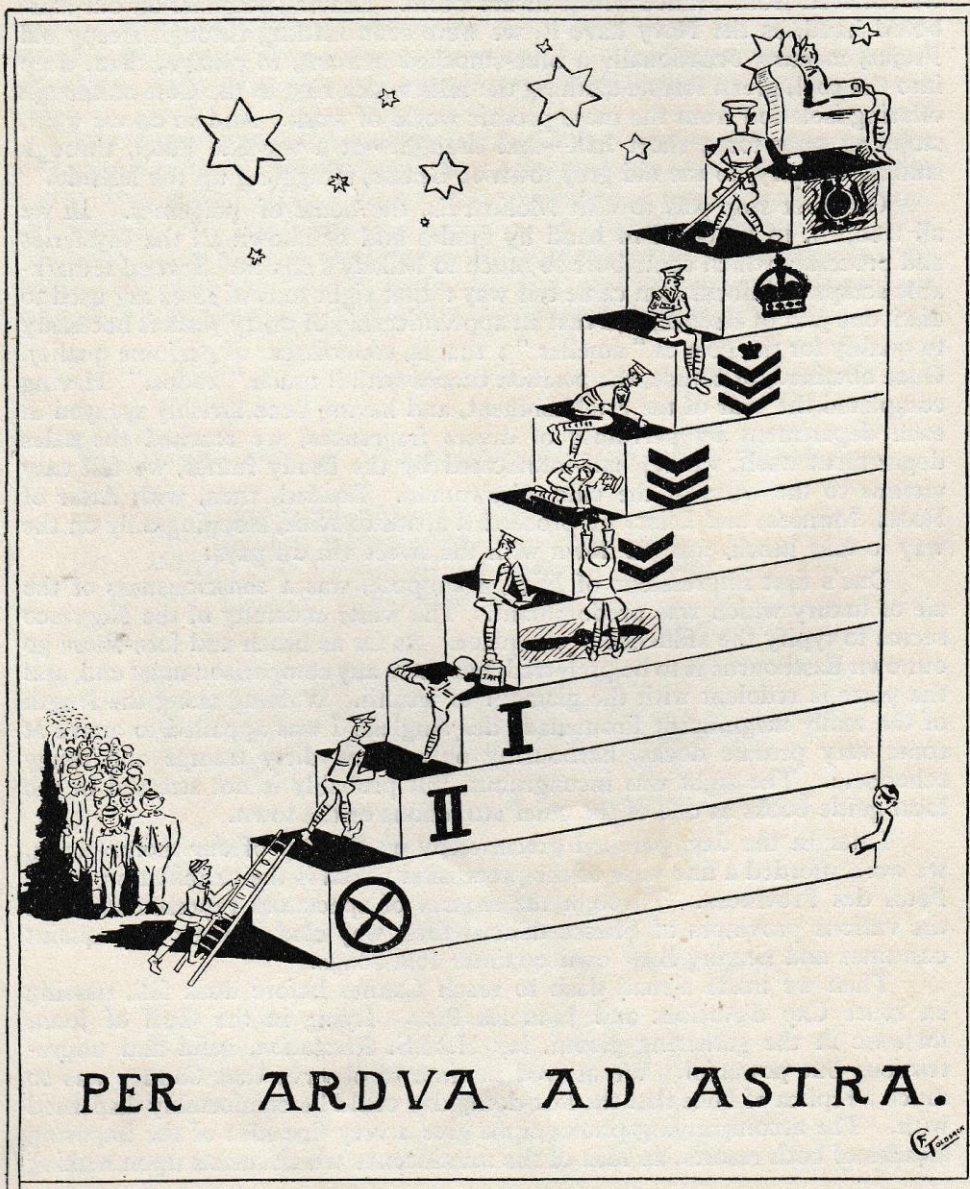
1920 THE 20TH ENTRY "CARRY ON"
'ZEAL & ATTAINMENT' CROWNS THE ENTRY WITH LAURELS 1932
A. J. P.

itself felt. It was a relief to have their brilliance softened by the failing light and to walk comfortably in the cool of the evening along the wide plage.

The Bay of Cannes is perhaps worthy of mention. Crowded with pleasure yachts of all conceivable types, both sail and steam, it presented the sort of spectacle dreamt of by the holders of Irish sweepstake tickets the night before the draw.

Tea was taken at a quaint little cafe on the shore, and then, tired by the heat of the day, we piled ourselves into our 'bus and away. Looking back on the circle of lights which ringed the Bay one was compelled to think ruefully of the lowly hammock which awaited those "who go down to the sea in ships." The drive back was broken by a halt in a little French town, which will remain a pleasant memory. There, to the strains of a mechanical piano, we drank deeply, stimulating the hilarity which carried us back to St. Maxime and the ship in a riot of mirth and song.

A. F. H.



Shorts, K.D.

TO the airman warned for overseas service, the term "Shorts, K.D." can mean but one thing—"Shorts, Khaki Drill." He may notice, on drawing his kit from stores, that some shorts are brown and some are of a delicate greenish hue, but apart from that "Shorts, K.D." remain "Shorts, Khaki Drill" to him, and he signs on the dotted line without a second's hesitation.

Soon after his arrival at his new station amid the glamour of the East, he begins to realise that the term Shorts, K.D., may mean more than he at first supposed. After a day or two, he divides the nether garments of the Squadron into two main groups—clean shorts and all the rest. Clerks G.D., "Day Blokes," Police and the Sergeant-Major keep their shorts strictly within the bounds of the first category. Fitters, riggers and all the other hundred-and-one different kinds of "oil rag" that keep the machines in the air compete with each other in the depth of hue of their nether appendages. Even as the waiter in a third-class restaurant knows the menu by the spots on the tablecloth, so does the C.O. know the trade of an airman by the colour of his shorts. A tale is told of a certain Sergeant-Major at Khartoum who, meeting a perspiring fitter returning from work, enquired, in the tone of voice used by S.M.'s all the world over when intent on a "catch," "And who gave *you* permission to wear grey shorts, my lad?" "They're not grey, Sir," was the answer, "they're light black!" Although one cannot vouch for the truth of this story, it gives a good idea of the general colour scheme employed by the hard-working airman.

Naturally, shorts must be supported about the waist. The means of effecting this end are many and varied. Some shorts are issued with a couple of belt loops affixed in impossible positions; you never pass a belt through these loops except to hang yourself. Some have a short strap and buckle at each side. In time these become entangled in the numerous projections on the Fairey III F., and become detached. The remaining ends soon assume a tassel-like appearance and impart a joyous air to an otherwise sombre article of male attire. Yet other shorts have a long strap and buckle at each side. The difficulty with this type lies in disposing of the dangling ends. Personally, I tuck them into the tops of my stockings out of sight. This type is also equipped with a chic button-over flap in the front. The effect of flap and straps combined is supposed to keep the shorts clear of the knees. The camp tailor, however, will affix a really snappy line in belts to any pair of shorts for a moderate fee, and the combined effect of buckles and straps which form the basis of his creation is really charming.

Some shorts are wide and some are narrow. Unlike Cæsar, the man—or possibly woman—responsible for the design of the standard type of shorts appears to have a positive dislike for fat men. At any rate, he certainly makes no provision for the corpulent in his size rolls. I'm sure nothing can be more annoying to an airman well blessed with *avoirdupois* than to hear that ominous "zzzip!" as he bends to tie his shoelace. Wide shorts are affected by Pilot Sergeants and others with money to burn. What a sight is a pair of wide shorts going down the road before a brisk breeze!

Then there are long shorts and short shorts; torn shorts and whole shorts; some with the left leg longer than the right, and some with the right leg longer than the left; church parade shorts and working shorts; some with buttons and some without; some with side pockets and some with breeches pockets; tight shorts and loose shorts; thin ones and thick ones, and—well dozens of different kinds; altogether a very complicated business.

“Navy Week”—an Interlude

“STEP up! Step up, ladies and gentlemen, to see the one and only specie of its kind!”

“This before you is the aircraft carrier H.M.S. ‘Outrageous’—this massive structure having a total displacement of—No lady! not that one—that’s the ‘Victory’—Nelson’s flag ship. Yes this is it—three parts out of water and with a lid on! ‘What?—looks like a caravan?’—I should say a covered wagon me’self—still—step aboard, ladies and gents—partake of tea at a shilling ‘per’—and see one of the mystery ships with the same bite!”

“This way, lady—”

“You are now in the lower hangar, ladies and gents—having the after lift-well at your feet, the seaplane platform behind you and the vast imposing interior stretching out before you! What’s that lady?—that little hook in the wall?—oh! that’s what we twist our clothes line around!

“To continue however, ladies and gents—walking down the hangar you will notice the petrol system pipes ‘there’—and also the water sprays for cases of fire!—What lady—you’d like to see the water spray?—I’ll see the commander about that for you later on!!

“On either side of us, ladies and gents, you notice the torpedoes carried by the aeroplanes on their little trollys by which they are put in position—What happens to the trolley lady?—Oh! they just let them run away on their own—At either end of the hangar, ladies and gents, you see the metal roller fire screens, and in the hanger itself two more huge asbestos fire curtains—Yes, lady! those in the hangar would make nice blankets! Continuing down the hangar, ladies and gents, we come to the foremost lift—No! lady—these lifts do not shoot the ‘planes off—only take ‘em up and down. These monstrous lifts, ladies and gents, weigh nearly 30 tons and carry a load of 5 tons, and in the corner over there you see several types of bombs used by aircraft.—That’s all right lady!—you can bring that one on with you if you like—it’s only a 230 lb. dummy!

“We are now going up to the top hangar, ladies and gents—prepare yourselves to see some of the world’s wonder planes!”

“There in front is the foremost hangar and lower taking-off deck—nearly blotted out with people having tea—you’ll all go there I ‘ope presently—but we will concentrate now on the main upper hangar—what’s that lady—what’s between the lower and upper hangar?—nothing I guess—only a deck and a floor you know!

“Above us, ladies and gents, we see the racks of spare planes hoisted up out of the way and further on spare seaplane floats—what lady—where do we keep the flying boats? Oh! we hoist them up above there too, when they come aboard!!

“There! ladies and gents! there you see something of modern achievement in aircraft—a single seater Fairey Flycatcher—no lady, Fairey Flycatcher not Godmother!—having an armament of two guns and an air cooled engine! What drives it lady?—that propeller in front—How did it settle inside here? I don’t know quite lady—it wasn’t here before dinner—I’ll ask the driver if I see him though!

“Next we come to a Blackburn Dart!—No lady—no relation to our feathered friends!

“This machine, ladies and gents, carries a torpedo and flies as fast as it can!—That small round engine and propeller on the side lady? Oh! that’s in case the big one breaks down—always a safety factor on these you know—

“Lastly we see another human triumph of skill, ladies and gents—called a Fairey Three F.—What do the three F’s stand for lady?—Fast, fearsome and fanatical, I think. This machine, by the way, ladies and gents, carries

three people and is exceptionally fast as the names imply lady! The pilot sits there and pilots it—the observer sits there and observes, and the wireless operator sits there and—er—well, he sits there!”

“Above this roof, ladies and gents, is the top deck—step into the lift and we’ll look round it—Going up—There before you, ladies and gents is the tremendous undulating plane—the huge expanse of iron plate—the flight deck!—Yes, lady, we do catch the sun nicely up here—when it shines!—Oh, the sides are the netted platforms where the men keep out of the way—Yes, lady! they have their meals there when it’s fine!

“In front of you and on the right hand side is the funnel and bridge and those wired supports—leaning out from the ship’s side—are to prevent the aeroplanes falling into the sea.

“What’s that lady?—No! we haven’t had a croquet set up here yet, but we bring our ludo boards here when it’s not too windy!!

“Now here we are on the foremost lift again! Yes, lady, the one you had a ride on just now—and no doubt the attendant will take you all down to tea in the upper hangar.

“Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen—what, lady—you want to see the scales they weigh the anchor on?—Sorry, mum—it’s being repaired just now—Good afternoon—er and thank you lady—I hope you’ve enjoyed the visit!”

Halton Ten Years Ago

IT is now ten years since the system of boys’ training at Halton was re-organised on lines very similar to those which are still in force.

Boy mechanics had been trained in fitting and rigging at Halton since 1917, and No. 1 S. of T.T. (Boys) was formed in 1919, but January, 1922, saw the arrival of the first half-yearly entry for training on a regular three years’ course.

514 arrived in January and 561 in September. Four such entries had already been entered at Cranwell during 1920 and 1921.

Where now stands the substantial barrack blocks were wooden huts, originally put up to accommodate the East Anglian Division. The huts at North Camp were first occupied, and these seemed particularly devoid of comfort to the young post-war airman who had not experienced the hardships of trench life. Cooking arrangements left much to be desired in the light of present-day equipment.

To-day’s playing fields were then grazing grounds for the cattle of neighbouring farmers. Football was played in the Dental field, and on one or two pitches in the park. But the lack of opportunities for field games did not hinder athletic training in other directions, and 1922 saw Halton carry off the Cross Country Championship with Corporal O. C. Clarke the individual winner. Halton also won the Inter-unit boxing championship and the Chief of the Air Staff Rifle Cup.

The General Hospital was housed in what we know as Sheppard Barracks. Conditions were difficult and the cold winter months of 1921–1922 will gladly be forgotten by staff and patients who experienced them.

A Cinema then stood on the ground adjoining the building now occupied by the Principal Medical Officer.

The terms Aircraft Apprentice and Wing were then unknown. “Boy Mechanics” were divided into the “Sections” which had existed in 1920. It is significant to note that of the four original sections into which the training establishment was divided, all but No. 2 were disbanded at some time or other. So in case of argument it can be ruled that No. 2 Wing (the descendant of No. 2 Section) is the oldest Wing, in so far as it, and it alone, has survived undisturbed since the S. of T.T. was formed.

War!!!

“WHO the deuce is kicking up that row at this time of night?”
“Oh, tea! Thanks.—Three o’clock did you say?—Seems I’ve only just gone to bed. What’s the weather like?—O.K.?—Good.”

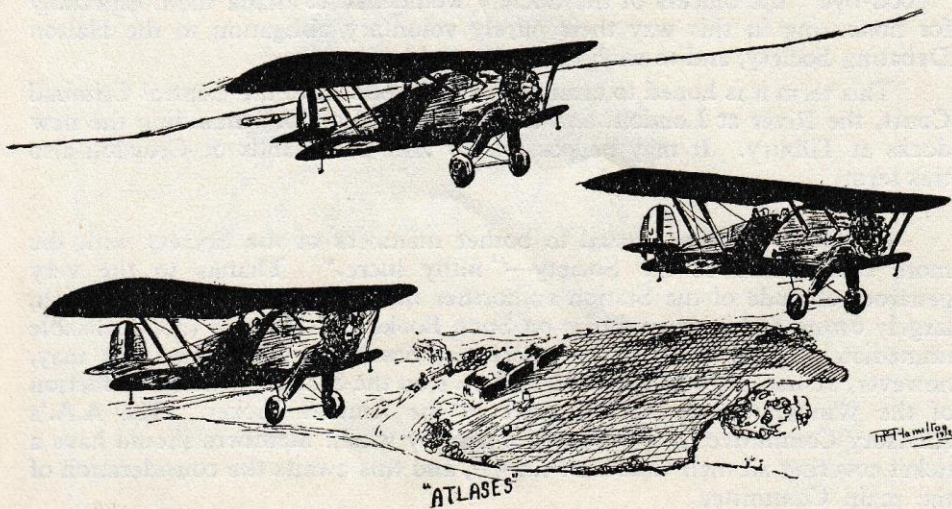
The start of the “Command Exercises.”—Three o’clock in the morning.—Dawn trying to break.—A quick sluice in cold water. (No time to fetch hot.)—A quicker gulp of the hot tea.—Clothes pulled on quicker than ever before.—A muttered thanksgiving that there are no laces to do up, as flying boots are pulled straight on.—Two sweaters (making things rather tight.)—A struggle into a “Sidcot” that seems too small.—Then ready.—No.—Blankets to be done up and labelled, in case we get “bombed out” and the squadron has to shift.—“Finished at last. Now for the ‘drome.”

A quarter of an hour to spare.—Rows of machines like faint halos in the dim light of the dawn.—Dark, shapeless forms on the tarmac.—Pilots awaiting the zero hour.—Hurrying black shapes, which are mechanics.—The hangars a blaze of lights!—“War” is on!

A roar as each engine is “revved” up.—Spitting tongues of flame from the open exhausts.—A cracking and spluttering as they are throttled back.—An eerie stillness as the last one is switched off.—The clink of parachute harnesses as pilots get into the cockpits. Then a lull charged with latent eagerness.—The squadron is “In Readiness.” . . . The piercing screech of a siren.—A series of crackles and then a roar as each engine “picks up.”—A quick glance around the dashboard.—A struggle to get the pin through the Sutton Harness.—A runner’s ghostly face in the light from the exhaust.—A quick look at a thrust message form.

Phantom shapes streak across the grey haze which is the ‘drome.—Wheel round.—Are silhouetted against a streak of gold, and fade to black specks.—The roar has become an undulating murmur.—The Squadron are “On Patrol.”

3,000 ft.—“The sun seems to have risen quickly.” Another 2,000 ft.—“It seems quite light now.”—Light grey rectangles bordered with darker grey.—An irregular darker patch which is a town.—A dark sphere above each cockpit.—Scarves, fluttering shadows, here and there along the line.



11,000 ft.—A bit chilly now.—The grey rectangles take on the appearance of fields and hedges.—Each head is craning over the cockpit for the first sight of the enemy. “Water getting a bit cold.” Shutters closed.—“Leader going through; better get in a bit tighter.” Quite clear above.—“How white and fleecy those clouds look; rather like stretches of Arctic snows. . . . Nine black specks!”—“The Leader has seen them?” “Yes.” A flick of his wings.—Full boost.—“Must be at least 2,000 ft. above them.” Our Leader glances to each side. . . . The Squadron is ready to attack.

Another flick of the Leader’s wings.—Nose down.—“See them easily now.”—“I wonder if they have seen us.” . . . Silver, red, white, blue; a dark head in front; the white chin of the rear gunner.—A pressure on the “stick.”—The sun comes down and around and is behind us.—Nose down again; not so steeply this time.—A red Very Light. . . . A squadron of bombers have been attacked!

A wave of the Leader’s arm.—His machine a blur in the sun.—Nose down again.—Shutters closed.—Into the clouds.—“It hardly seems possible this can be the white fleecy things we saw from above.”—14,000, 13,000, 12,000 ft.—“It’s getting darker now.”—“Must be coming through.”—Ah! The fields and hedges again.—Throttle and shutters open again.—The ‘drome to the West.—The Leader has “shut off.”—“Wish he’d ‘open up’ a bit; shall overshoot him in a minute.”—“That’s better.”—“He’s ‘holding off.’”—“We’re down.”—A burst of engines.—Running fitters and riggers.—“Did you get them?”—“Who were they?”—“Time for another before ‘brekker.’”—A quick cigarette.—Machines refuelled. . . . The Squadron is “Standing By.”

Really a most pleasant, if at first somewhat energetic, war.

G. R. A.

The School Exam.

After years of doubt and sorrow,
Hard work, headaches, swotting pain,
Think of all the years to follow
If our working is in vain.
Now we know we’ve backed a loser,
Missed our props, by one short head,
Are we moaning, turning boozier,
Do we weep all night in bed?

No; we smile, and whisper, “Bear up,
Three weeks’ summer leave to come.”
After that our green bands tear up,
That’s why we aren’t looking glum.
So, my boy, you’re young, be merry,
Life is not just one long grind,
Grin and bear up, hatchets bury,
Just say “missed it” what a “bind!”

BY A LOSER.

Tips for Airmen-Tourists

THE airman who finds himself either in Cairo or Helwan with a few days to spare, and who has seen the nearer sights, such as the Sphinx and Pyramids, Mohammed Ali mosque, or Ye Old Club Inn, will do well to gather together the toughest of his chums and arrange a visit to the Pyramid of Sagara.

There are two possible means of conveyance, each has many disadvantages, neither from the point of view of efficient transport has much to recommend it. First there is the moke, slow, uncomfortable, undignified and obstinate, and his attendant Wallad, whose vocabulary consists mainly of the word "Backsheesh" and other terms of endearment, of which, in his own interest, the would-be tourist should remain in happy ignorance. The extent of your generosity may win you any title from sheikh to son of a she ass, or even more verbosity.

The other mode of travel is by taxi, which, if sufficient time is spent in bargaining for a price, may be obtained for a whole day for one pound. If possible, the arrangements should be made a day beforehand, not forgetting to order the amount of liquid refreshment appropriate to the length of the journey and the unquestionably dry and arid nature of the country through which you will pass.

The starting point of your trip will be from Gizeh Tram Terminus or the Zoo, and you will travel some twenty miles down the west bank of the Nile.

If you are going by taxi there is every possibility that your driver will run out of petrol miles from anywhere, or that a tyre will burst without means of repair, the spare one, if carried at all, having already given up the ghost. It, therefore, behoves you to ensure that your car is equipped against such possibilities.

At a point almost opposite Helwan you will cross a sweet water canal, and your road is now westward toward the Sahara, through cultivations with opportunities galore for snapshots of local colour, and guides of unmentionable worthiness, who, however, are best ignored.

Thus you will arrive among the ruins of Great Memphis, now a shady palm grove.

Some few miles further on you will come upon the desert plateau where stand the Pyramids and tombs of Sagara, worship and burial place of the sacred Bulls.

Here you will do well to hire a donkey and reliable guide, being careful not to overpay either, and a final word, take your own candles!

NEMISIS EL IMSHI.

Finis

Mere Man, as such, will cease to be
When, on that Final Awful Day,
The Air and Earth, the Land and Sea,
Tremble.

No mortal eye shall see the last,
The damned desolation vast,
The crumbling ruins of the past,
Chaos!

All man's vain pomp, and petty pride;
The mighty power, for which he's tried;
This greed, for which he's schemed, and died,
Finis. E. W. J.