

as Canada's chief of staff, he became a recruit at the Camp Borden training ground for the Royal Canadian Air Force and successfully passed the stiff course of a military pilot. When the following year he resigned his post of chief of staff it was to take an informed and active interest in flying, and that interest was to do much for aviation in general.

He began by organizing light aeroplane clubs all over Canada, and after the movement got under way the Government assisted it by giving the organization a plane for every one it bought. This was a step to commercial aviation and MacBrien's general managership of the then largest air transport company in Canada. Airmail contracts for his company followed and aviation dominated his thoughts and actions practically up to his appointment as head of the R.C.M.P.

Upon becoming Commissioner of the Force it was but natural that General MacBrien's fresh vigour, his adaptation to modern needs, and his versatile capacity for efficiency should find expression in aviation. He liked flying and had the foresight to see how aircraft could be very effective in combating crime and carrying out the responsibilities of the Mounted Police. He employed this type of conveyance on more than one inspection trip of the Northern detachments and in 1936 made what up to that time is believed to be the longest single air journey in Canada—11,000 miles in a month, during which only five days were spent wholly on the ground. Few men in this country or elsewhere did more for the good of aviation than Sir James.

In 1932 arrangements were made with

the R.C.A.F. to conduct air patrols with aircraft based at several points on the east and west coasts and members of the R.C.M.P. acting as observers. All information such as location, direction of travel, names and so on of suspected rum-running vessels was broadcast to sea patrols of the Force's Marine Section, thus keeping it advised of the rum-runners' movements.

The tremendous worth of aircraft in police work was dramatically exemplified early that same year when an aeroplane cooperated in running to earth Albert Johnson, the so-called "Mad Trapper of Rat river"—a mysterious desperado who wantonly murdered Reg. No. 9669 Cst. Edgar Millen on Jan. 30, 1932, in the execution of his duty and shot and seriously wounded Reg. No. 10211 Cst. (now Cpl.) A. W. King, also S/Sgt. E. F. Hersey of the Royal Canadian Corps of Signals.

The affair began in July, 1931, when Indians in the vicinity of Arctic Red River, N.W.T., a tiny settlement on the upper reaches of the Mackenzie river not far from the Yukon border, reported to the R.C.M.P. that a recluse going by the name of Johnson, who was living in a lonely cabin some 15 miles up-stream from the mouth of the Rat river on the old Yukon trail, was interfering with their trap lines. Investigators from Aklavik Detachment sent to question the stranger and learn if he had a trapping licence were refused admittance to his cabin and subsequently, on New Year's eve, while trying to force an entry one constable was critically wounded by a bullet fired through the barred door. Determined now to capture Johnson, the police laid siege of the barricaded hide-out. A chase en-

The story of the R.C.M.P. Aviation Section. Re-established after the war to carry on peacetime duties, it now is an integral part of the Force's law-enforcement machine.
