

## Editorially Speaking

### GROUND INSTRUCTIONAL SECTION

"A good place to rest during the mornings before a hard afternoon of flying, or to recover during the afternoon from an arduous morning in the air—and, of course, a much more comfortable place on cold, wet, non-flying days than the average flight room."

If you are a keen follower of the remarkable exploits of P/O Prune, of "Tee Emm" fame, or if you dangle on the words of wisdom which flow from his friend Sgt. Straddle, you will recognize at once the inspired source of the above description of G.I.S. If, on the other hand, you are one of the many graduates of the Training Plan who found benefit from the instruction received at the G.I.S. of your E.F.T.S., and S.F.T.S., or if by chance, you are at present a pupil striving to qualify for the coveted "Wings", it is probable that you have a different appreciation of "Ground School."

#### Value of Ground Training

The value of Ground Training should not, of course, be difficult to appreciate. It should be obvious that any individual who is to be engaged in His Majesty's Service, flying valuable aircraft, must obtain some grounding in the subjects allied to flying. During the course of training, the entire interest of the pupil is usually devoted to flying—the sound of an aircraft passing overhead is enough to distract momentarily, most pupils from the lecturer to whom they are grudgingly listening. The business of sitting in a lecture room listening to some miserable individual lecturing on the theory of some aspect of a subject in which you are not particularly interested, seems ridiculous when there are perfectly good Harvards or Yales—or who knows, maybe an Anson?—sitting on the tarmac waiting to fly. Yet some day, somewhere, the knowledge of that little bit of theory of that subject in which you are not particularly interested, may be the factor which will decide whether you will go forward—or live long enough—to fly Spitfires, Sunderlands, or who knows, maybe a Lancaster.

Ground Training is important. In the Training Plan exactly the same number of marks is allotted to the Ground Training programme as are allotted to the Flying Training programme. It is not possible to become a "Service" pilot in the full sense of the word without satisfactorily completing and passing in both phases of the training. So, those of you who treat G.I.S. lightly, and who have the idea that you can make the grade without attention to G.I.S.—get wise to yourself. (For those worshippers of P/O Prune, the advice is to "dedigitate" before you find yourself a member of "Tee Emm's" Most Highly Derogatory Order of the Irremovable Finger.)

#### Point of View of the Pupil

From the point of view of the pupil in training as Aircrew, the instruction which is available to him at S.F.T.S. will prove invaluable at O.T.U. and later in operations. The figures, which unfortunately are confidential and cannot be quoted, of the "ceased training" at O.T.U., either by lack of ability to reach the standard required, or as the result of accidents during training have shown that with a negligibly small exception, the personnel involved have occupied the bottom positions in their preliminary ground training.

It is possible for a backward—or should it be "dumb"?—pupil to fly an aircraft and fly it reasonably well, under the conditions of fair weather, clear skies and wide open spaces of the training schools of Canada. It is possible for a backward—or should it be foolish?—pupil to pass all the flying tests to which he is submitted without an appreciable difficulty and to scrape through his ground training. That pupil will become a Service Pilot—the

question is only for how long? Just so long as he does not find himself in any circumstances which will require him to use his brain, and dig up some rescuing knowledge which was made available to him during his training. There is no need to quote examples; a little thought on the part of anyone will bring numerous instances to mind.

Presumably, there will come that great day when most pupils will graduate from training school, be it S.F.T.S., C.F.S., or O.T.U., and find himself out in the mighty vastness of the Service—a fully fledged pilot. He may find himself in a Recco Squadron; maybe he will end up in a Night Fighter Squadron, he may even have the good fortune to become an Instructor. In any case, he may have the idea that he has done with ground school—from that point on, the decision to continue training on the ground, is left to the individual. If he is satisfied with his own knowledge and ability, well and good, he will have no one to blame for his future shortcomings but himself. On the other hand, if he has any interest in himself, he will work continually to improve his scanty knowledge. The Ground Training staff will no doubt be only too willing to help.

So pilots, embryo, and full fledged and feathered alike, give thought to the question of ground training. It has a place, the Training Plan, a very considerable place. If the fates decree that you give a lecture in G.I.S. (horrible thought, isn't it?)—take some pride in the job. Your efforts will be reflected in the pupils you turn out. If you are a pupil required to spend half your days in G.I.S., take an interest in your work, buck up your ideas—your efforts will be rewarded by the added enthusiasm and interest of your instructions, and at some later unpredictable date, may be your salvation.

If you wish a thought left with you—"Don't be a Ground School Prune."

### COURSE 56

Course 56 is leaving Borden. Better classes have gone before, better classes will come after. There will be few more representative, and none with a better spirit.

In a group of this kind it is difficult to find one person who will freely admit that he takes anything seriously. "Toujours gai" is the style. Laugh today—tomorrow flying will be washed out. Yet each of the sixty odd who now wears his wings knows within himself that he has shouldered a grave trust.

We are the finished—but untried—products of a great training plan. The selfless labors of countless men and women have gone into our training. Untold sums have been cheerfully given by taxpayers for the establishment and upkeep of our training schools and equipment. And the hopes of hundreds of millions of free men—conquered and unconquered will ride on our wings.

A few of us deserve the "well dones" that all of us get. The rest of us can pay for them later. Many of us were children, in one way or another when we enlisted. Most of that is gone—the rest is going.

We know there is a tremendous job to be done. We know that we shall have to be good to approach the men who have gone before. We know now that "only 100% is passing", and that "just dyin' ain't enough."

With deep thanks to everyone who has helped in our training we go on. We are proud, we are happy, and we'll be worthy of the trust.

NEXT ISSUE FEATURES  
The Men Who Keep 'Em Flying  
MAINTENANCE SQUADRON

### Officer Commanding Ground Instructional School



The "Contents" page of this journal includes a column headed "Editorial Board," under which the first entry is "Chairman—S/L J. McCulloch." I had believed that the occupation of this exalted position would have carried with it certain immunities, but apparently I was wrong—the Editor insists that a word from me must be included in this number of the magazine, featuring Ground Instructional Section.

Any message which I can possibly write for the Station personnel must be a personal one. My stay at this Unit is of long duration, and I have seen the entire population change over and over. It has been a privilege to be here, to have had the honour of serving under five outstanding Commanding Officers; to have been permitted to work with and to know so many fine fellows of all ranks.

Camp Borden is the Number One S.F.T.S.—to me it is the Number One Station—to us all, its traditions, its background, its wonderful, unparalleled "Borden" spirit should be a source of inspiration and a spur to bigger and better efforts.

*J. McCulloch, Squadron Leader*