

PHOTO SURVEY SQUADRON: The Minister of National Defence, Mr. Claxton, on December 2 announced that formation of a new photo survey squadron is planned for the RCAF. Actual formation date has not yet been decided, but the squadron is expected to operate next summer when aerial photographic work commences. The new squadron will join the two existing photo squadrons in the aerial photo coverage of Canada, and will be based at Rockcliffe air station, near Ottawa.

The new flying unit, to be designated 408 Squadron, will perpetuate the famous Goose Squadron, a wartime heavy bomber unit which operated in the RCAF's No. 6 (bomber) Group in England. It will fly Canadian-built Lancasters specially adapted for aerial photo work.

The RCAF's present two photo squadrons, 413 and 414, recently completed the greatest single season's operations since the task of photographing Canada from the air was begun in 1921. During 1948 over 911,000 square miles was covered by aerial photography, more than double the record set the previous year. For the first time, coverage was extended into the Arctic islands, all of Baffin Island being photographed. These aerial photos are turned into maps and aeronautical charts by the Department of Mines and Resources and the Army, and have many other uses, being used extensively in development of Canada's natural resources.

Two of the new squadron's eight Lancasters will operate next summer on Shorean-controlled photography, with which the RCAF has been experimenting. In the past, ground surveyors from the Department of Mines and Resources have been flown into unsurveyed areas to establish accurate ground positions, necessary before aerial photos of the region can be turned into detailed maps. Use of ground radar beacons together with airborne radar equipment enables each aerial photograph to be positioned. A network of such radar beacon sites for geodetic control has been set up in Manitoba and Saskatchewan during the last summer by the RCAF and Department of Mines and Resources, and next year's operations will utilize these. It is too early to determine to what extent this system of fixing the position of aerial photos will displace ground surveying, but it is hoped that 1949 operations may provide an answer. If the operations are successful, it is possible that great savings in time and money may be made in connection with mapping from aerial pictures.

HONORARY AIDES-DE-CAMP: His Excellency the Governor General has approved the appointments of Lt.-Gen. Ernest W. Sansom, CB, DSO, of St. Mary's, N.B., and Lt.-Col. George Patrick, ED of Ottawa, as Honorary Aides-de-Camp, according to an announcement on December 3 by the Minister of National Defence.

Lt.-Gen. Sansom succeeds Brig. W.A.I.

Anglin, OBE, MC, ED, who resigned as Honorary Aide upon his appointment to the Supreme Court of New Brunswick. Lt.-Gen. Sansom is a veteran of two wars. He commanded a battalion and won the Distinguished Service Order in the Great War, 1914-1918, and in the Second World War took the 5th Armoured Division overseas and later commanded the 1st Canadian Corps. He returned to Canada in 1944 and was named Inspector General in January, 1945, his duties in this connection taking him to Italy, Northwest Europe and the United Kingdom before the cessation of hostilities. He was retired in 1945 and since then has been living at St. Mary's.

Lt.-Col. Patrick recently took command of the Governor General's Foot Guards, Ottawa, from Lt.-Col. H.A. Smith, DSO, and now also succeeds him as Honorary Aide-de-Camp to His Excellency. (Lt.-Col. Smith has retired from the Reserve Army and is now living on the West Coast). Lt.-Col. Patrick served with distinction in both world wars and has always been active in the peacetime militia and Reserve Forces.

FEED GRAIN SITUATION: With 1948 production of the major feed grains substantially greater than in 1947, a marked improvement in the feed grain supply situation is indicated. Perhaps equally significant is the more even distribution of the 1948 production -- with central Canada turning out an excellent crop of coarse grains in contrast to the near failure experienced in that area in 1947, the Bureau of Statistics reports.

On a country-wide basis the net supplies of feed grains available per grain-consuming animal unit after allowing for estimated exports, carry-over stocks, seed and other uses, stand at 0.68 tons, about 25 per cent above the 1947-48 level. In only two years since 1941-42 have net feed grain supplies per grain-consuming animal unit exceeded the 1948-49 figure. The relatively satisfactory level of net supplies per animal unit for the current crop year may be attributed to two factors -- one being a decline in the number of grain-consuming animal units and the other a feed grain crop exceeding last year's by some 136 million bushels.

Supplies of forage should be adequate in nearly all sections of the country this season. The all-Canada hay and clover crop is down slightly from the 1947 level but this decrease is more than offset by a larger crop of alfalfa. Fodder corn production, too, is sharply higher than in 1947. The outlook for millfeed supplies for domestic feeding depends on the output of the milling industry and the extent to which millfeeds are exported. Production during the first quarter of the current crop year has amounted to 201,626 tons as against 260,909 tons during the comparable period of 1947-48.