

A FLYING OFFICER

A goodly portion of his leisure was devoted to his correspondence and journal. A weekly letter addressed jointly to his father, mother and sister, never once failed in crossing the Atlantic to his home in Canada. Other relatives and friends also received letters. The extracts which follow are his own account of his experiences in the air, and some of the other things which were of more than passing interest to this student in khaki.

Brasenose College, Oxford, Sunday, 1st July, 1917. The great thing this week is examinations, and if we are successful, our Commission. The extra amount of cramming that has been going on the last few days, reminds me of Osgoode Hall and Queen's. One of the most important subjects we have is rigging, and extra stress has been laid on it, so I have been doing a lot of scrambling in and out of planes, and through wires, and I flatter myself that rigging is one of my best subjects. I wish I could say the same about engines. We have four different types to learn, and they are pretty complicated affairs you may be sure. We had four hours of practical work on them, running them and starting them by turning the propeller, or "prop." This is usually done by a mechanic, but an officer has to learn how it is done, in case he has to make a forced landing, and then has to restart his engine to get home.

Photography is another branch of work taken up, but it is not very difficult. Some beautiful instruments are used with exceptionally fine lenses; they all work at about $f/4.3$. The cameras are fixed focus and we use 4 x 5 plates of a special kind. At the school are hundreds of interesting aerial photographs, which are used in conjunction with lectures. I am not giving away any great secret in saying, that probably every inch of the British front in France is photographed daily.

Possibly in my next letter I shall tell you to address all further communication to R. W. MacLennan, 2nd Lieut. R.F.C.

No. 8 Training Squadron, R.F.C., Somewhere in England, 7th July, 1917. R. W. MacLennan, Esq., 2nd Lieut., R.F.C., is addressing this letter to you from the Training Squad-