

HOLD HIGH THE TORCH OF FREEDOM



WHEN CLOTHES BECOME Uniforms

As the "survival war" develops, uniforms take the place of clothes. Not only armed services but civilian services require identification by uniforms...

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How Estates Of R.C.A.F. Members Are Settled

(This last of a series of three articles tells of the procedure followed by the R. C. A. F. in many details of that used by other services...

By JACK BRAYLEY Canadian Press Staff Writer OTTAWA, Jan. 16.—(CP)—A neat pile of books, a bundle of blankets, various articles of clothing, a docket of cards, a bottle of hair tonic, a stack of letters addressed in a girl's hand, and the burned-out remains of a watch—the personal effects of one of Canada's fighting airmen killed in overseas operations—lay along the big wooden bench.

A greying shipping clerk handed them gently as he transferred them to a packing case that is all but the burned-out watch. It will be held out of the package to spare relatives' feelings. However, if they inquire it will be forwarded to them.

This is the service's estates administration office, quietly handling one of the war's most delicate jobs.

After an airman, or for that matter, a sailor or soldier, has been reported dead or presumed dead, this big organization in central Ottawa goes to work—and sometimes they don't finish up until the early morning hours, and often they work through weekends.

The Air section, busier than the rest, is in charge of Sqdn. Ldr. C. Seagram in Toronto. Col. L. M. Pith of Toronto is general administrator, Capt. R. J. Pheasant of Toronto is in charge of the military section and Cmdr. H. R. Wade of Vancouver looks after the navy's interests.

On one bench, where an officer's cap sits atop a neat pile of clothing, is a violin, sheet music, two books of poetry and other articles denoting the tastes of a youth who might have been a great musician.

On the other side is a compartment containing a light-hearted youth's collection of poker chips, a couple of pawn tickets, a girl's ear-ring and a well-thumbed miniature Bible.

You can catch a glimpse of the filer's personality from these somewhat little piles. One has a stack of books of scientific subjects, another has a collection of minerals while a third is an album of stamps. All of them have these cherished letters from home and a lot of them have diaries.

The section gets in touch with the next-of-kin and the process of settling the estate is expedited. For this purpose, a special order-in-council waives certain probate formalities and no legal costs are incurred by the relatives. Bank savings, deferred pay standing to the airman's credit, war stamps and Victory Bonds can all be redeemed under special legislation.

Sometimes there is no will, or the airman has taken a wife overseas and his original will is no longer valid. This means some time must be taken in settling just who is the beneficiary.

When the settlement is complete it takes anywhere from three to nine months and in some exceptional cases has taken a year—the estate is distributed and the personal effects forwarded to the beneficiary.

Procedure Followed Here is the procedure, followed religiously, for disposing personal effects:—

When Pte. Sgt. Jones is reported missing station police, accompanied by officers at his base, gather his belongings and sometimes spend weeks tracing up articles he may have loaned buddies or are unaccounted for. An inventory is made and the articles and the inventory sent forwarded to a central depository.

Another check and inventory is made and an investigation is carried out where possible as to articles which appear to be missing. For instance, a check is made on an empty watch case, it is found that Jones wore it on his fatal trip. And the same goes for the pencil that matches the expensive pen he left behind. I. O. U.'s which may be cashed where possible, are cashed in where possible, and laundry is cleaned. Then the articles are packed, and with an inventory sent, shipped to the Ottawa office.

Here again the exhaustive check is made and here again any possible clues leading to the re-possession of Jones' articles are followed. An explanation is sought as to why they are not available. Here also letters and diaries containing information of value to the enemy are secured, and effects which might cause distress to the family are left out.

Then the package is expressed to the next-of-kin under special sealed wraps.

Many of the next-of-kin show their appreciation for the understanding treatment they receive by offering the airman's uniforms and equipment to Mrs. Mary Mathew's famous officer's kit replacement bureau in Central London. Here it is distributed to officers who have lost their kit through enemy action.

In The Navy An interesting sidelight on the disposition of servicemen's personal effects is the way it is handled in much the same manner as Army and Air Force but the rationales observe an old custom that is provided for in the King's regulations. Dating back to Nelson's days, the custom is called "sale before the mast" and is aimed at providing for widows and dependents.

The seaman's intimate possessions, like his watch, are forwarded to his next-of-kin, but less personal things are placed in a pile before the mast and officers supervise an auction sale. The men, anxious to provide for the shipmate's family, sometimes buy and re-buy his kit nankies or his socks, paying as much as six times their value. The sale is conducted with appropriate respect and its object is deeply appreciated and understood by the beneficiaries.

POST-WAR AVIATION LONDON.—(CP)—The Guild of Air Pilots and Navigators of the British Empire and the British Air Line Pilots' Association have issued a joint statement expressing their willingness to "encourage and assist" service men who decide to make civil aviation their future career.

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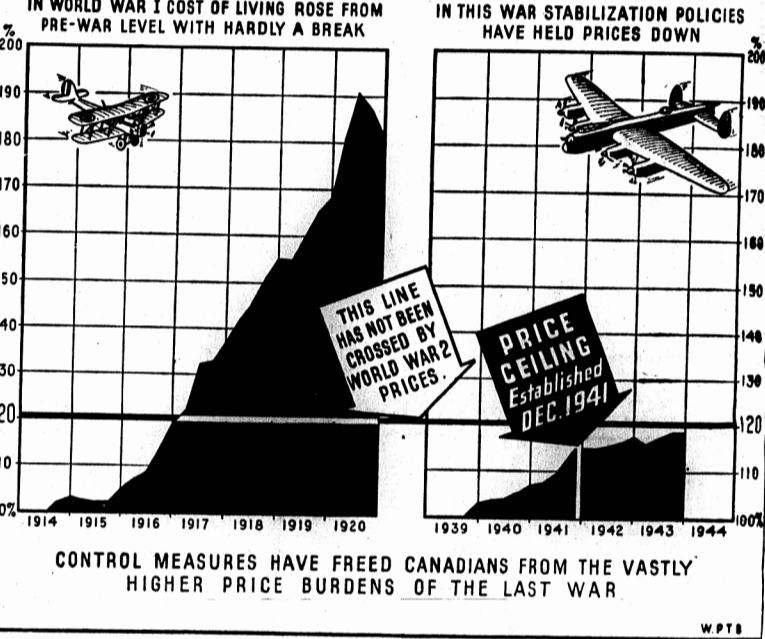
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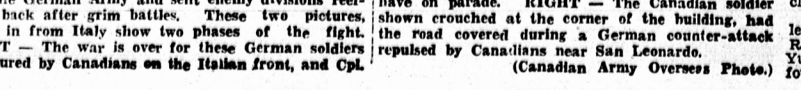
The above chart shows how price controls have worked in Canada in this war. Living costs have been held to less than 120 per cent of pre-war level...



A Canadian Chaplain, Major Roy C. H. Durnin in action on the Italian front. Comrades of the 4th, of Prince Rupert, B. C., is shown here conducting a simple burial service of a Canadian killed in the front.



Writing glorious chapters into the history of the war, Canadian troops in Italy have met the flower of the German Army and sent enemy divisions reeling back after grim battles.



W. R. Hardy, of Winnipeg, is telling their Sergeant-Major in fluent German how they should behave on parade.

Airmen Operate Santa Claus Express



The war being waged from Canada's front doorstep Newfoundland, didn't cease over the holiday season, but R.C.A.F. men and women stationed there found time to observe Christmas and New Year traditionally.

There was plenty to eat, and gifts from home, but what overshadowed everything else was the Santa Claus Express. Airmen at a remote bomber station brought a new kind of Christmas to 450 Newfoundland children.

They hired a train and picked up every child they could find along a 100-mile stretch of track. Airmen and airwomen went along and whenever they came to a house the Santa Claus Express put on the brakes.

The blue-clad emissaries of Santa would trudge through the snow and any children in the house would be bundled into their clothes and loaded aboard.

When every child had been collected the train returned to the R.C.A.F. station where the biggest Yuletide party ever given in Newfoundland continued for two days.

BIG CHANGE FROM GRANDMA'S TIME

LONDON, Jan. 18.—(CP)—You'd never know, as you watch the glamorous music at the Windmill Theatre in Piccadilly, that the creator of London's most undressed variety show is an elderly white-haired lady, Mrs. Laura Henderson, who recently celebrated her 80th birthday.

The fast, funny and risqué entertainment she is serving out daily to packed houses, maudlin, hadn't the slightest smell of the Victoria era which the gay old lady has her roots.

She's a sparkling little bit of a thing with a preference for mink, who looks at least 20 years younger than she is.

"Keeps me young—always in the midst of youth and beauty," she said, looking about at her troupe in the backstage of her theatre. "My girls, as I love to call them, are some of the most beautiful creatures in the world. It does me good to look at them. I'm sure it does everyone else good to see them too. Bodies like that are too lovely to cover up with clothes."

"There was a time 'Ma' Henderson, as the men in uniform call her, was shocked by legs. 'Oh, dearie me,' she said, 'when I was a young girl no one ever so much as talked about legs. We didn't know we had them—except when we took a bath. The first time I saw legs in the theatre—and they were black silk stockings too—I made my husband take me home I was so embarrassed. It was quite a shock.'

"But now, I'm much wiser. I say 'what's wrong with legs? A perfect figure is a lovely thing.' And from the applause at the Windmill the men in uniform think 'Ma' has something there."

GOLD IN AFRICA More than 40 per cent of the world's gold is produced in Africa.

MANY WOMEN ACTIVE IN BUILDING TRADE

LONDON, Jan. 18.—(CP)—England's home of the future may be the houses that Jill—no! Jack—built.

Many women are now working as painters, decorators, plasterers and electricians, and the prediction made by labor organizations is that rather than abandon their trades when the war is over, the number of women in the building trade will increase.

Contractors have stated that in many fields of building women show more skill in interior decoration, in electricity and in home planning than many of their fellow workmen.

LONDON.—(CP)—Col. J. J. Llewellyn, Minister of Food, said here recently that between January and April of next year everybody in Britain will get at least one pound of oranges from Spain and Palestine.



Here's action on the Italian front near San Leonardo di Ortona, as infantrymen of the 48th Highlanders of Canada awaited the order to attack by Platoon Commander Lieut. I. MacDonald, of Windsor, Ont. (with binoculars). These infantrymen include Sgt. J. T. Cooney, of Hanover, Ont.; Pte. Athol R. Downie, Sarnia, Ont.; Pte. G. E. Bernier, Sudbury, Ont.; Pte. G. R. Young, of Toronto, (with Tommy-gun); Cpl. T. Feraday, Toronto, and Bren-gunner Pte. S. L. Hart, Toronto.