

Revisits United Kingdom On Nuffield Scholarship

Following is the first of a series of excerpts from letters recently received by Mr. J. Lincoln Dewar, secretary of the Federation of Agriculture, from Flying Officer Archie J. Johnstone, of Burlington, now travelling in the United Kingdom on a Nuffield Scholarship which entitles him to six months study of agricultural conditions in the Old Country. Flying Officer Johnstone, who is on the reserve force, R.C.A.F., served overseas as a bomber-gunner in the Second World War. He is a son of Lt. Colonel E. W. Johnstone and Mrs. Johnstone, Burlington, and a nephew of City Councillor Edwin C. Johnstone. The excerpts given below are dated from Yorkshire, where he was stationed during part of his wartime service.

YORKSHIRE. Eng., April 16: The fine weather continues over the British Isles with hardly a break. With only one day's rain in nearly three weeks the soil has undergone several changes. First it was too wet, then the higher land dried and was suitable to begin work on. Later, lower and wetter soils were ready and now it is all almost too dry and there may be some soil drifting, particularly among the lighter soils.

I made several rounds on the grain drill in a thirty two acre field on Tuesday morning. By evening the sowing in the field was complete and the men were in another field. Work starts on the farms this time of year early in the morning and continues until dark if necessary. The farmer pays extra for overtime and double for Sundays and holidays. Of course there is a minimum of operation of Sundays and holidays but during seeding and harvesting if the weather is good, there can be no let up, because of the uncertain climate. Last year was the worst in some forty odd years and doubtful optimism is expressed for this season.

Seed potatoes are in scarcer supply this spring. Because of an unusually hard winter, large quantities were frozen in storage, even on Government Experimental Stations. The situation has been somewhat alleviated at Carr House, with a large truckload direct from Dundee, which arrived Thursday evening. The father north the seed comes from, the better it is thought to be and the higher the cartage, the more delighted the farmer is, because he feels he is getting better quality.

Sixteen acres of peas were sown here one afternoon recently and I was interested to see some fertilizer placement experiments carried on in the drilling of the

sugar beets. A few checks were left here and there, which may show whether the extra work and expense involved with the use of attachment is merited.

WARTIME MEMORIES

Every airman during the war, within miles of York knew Betty's Bar. I asked the barman if he had any souvenirs that he could let me have to send back to my old crew. He was sorry but he hadn't. We then fell to reminiscing about the War years, when Betty's Bar was filled to capacity each and every evening that there were no calls on "Aye, those were great days," he smiled quietly, remembering. They were that, for the place was crowded and the beer flowed freely as water, until the tables were too loaded to get anymore empties on, whereupon each airman sadly took his leave and made for the bus or taxi which would carry him back to his squadron. Here he would awake the next morning a sadder but not much wiser flier. For he knew, as everyone else knew, that as soon as the next stand came down, the performance would be repeated. Yes they were great nights, but the days were days of reckoning. York Minister of course dominates the York scene, but apart from a cursory inspection, most of us preferred to admire it from a distance, exhibiting a much more marked deference for the DeGrey Rooms, with its ball room and restaurant. Next to Betty's Bar, I think this was the service-man's idea of Valhalla.

Hitler's jets were just beginning to harass the Allied aircraft about that time, particularly the minute size Me. 109 which could only stay in the air a few minutes under power, then glide back to base. I got a first hand account of what it is like to be under attack from one of the aircrew. Our guns it seems were designed for defence against the slower powered piston type fighter, as were the hydraulics of the turret, which left our bombers unable to cope with the new warfare. The gunners tried manfully to ward off the attacks, but the jets had often made a pass before they could bring their guns to bear. As these jets were known to be mass produced, it was a sobering thought. He went on to tell his personal experiences, as only one serviceman will do, another, because he knows the world in general will not understand. I have heard a neighbor say after witnessing a film taken on "Operations," "I didn't like that show, because it couldn't possibly be true. No one could go through what those boys were supposed to have gone through." Perhaps not,



Flying Officer Johnstone

but a glance through the forward and dedication of Guy Gibson's book, "Enemy Coast Ahead," where he names his crews of the various Squadrons and what happened to each individual, might change this lady's mind. It might, and then again it might not, for in our country, fortunately, remote from the barbarity of war, it is difficult to visualize men dying in cold blood.

AT STONEGATE

And now to move on to Stonegate, which is York's answer to an antique hunter's prayer. Here you will find old brass and warming pans, coach horns, horse brasses, old lanterns and all the rest in an amazing array. Each year the Americans cart thousands of these items off home, but still there are more for the new crop of tourists the ensuing

season. One wonders in this land of skilled craftsmen, who is taking who.

Clifford's Tower is worth a visit and most certainly York Castle Museum. I shall leave the descriptions of these to the guide books. There is one thing that I would like to mention, however, and that is the Gallery of Agriculture in the above mentioned Museum. While here you will see a small button on the wall, which when pressed is alone worth the shilling which you pay to see the whole museum. On pressing this button a disc is set in motion and a recording of the several Yorkshire dialects is played. It is amazing what differences you can detect in say, the dialect of the Driffield area in the east compared with the Leeds dialect as spoken in the more heavily industrialized West Riding.

Now having had a quick look at unchanging York, I would like to return to Agriculture for a short time. Tuesday afternoon Mr. Archie Smart, Senior Lecturer (Agriculture), West of Scotland University, Glasgow, came to call on me. In America and Canada, he would be known as Professor Smart, but here in Britain as just plain Mister, with a large Capital 'M'. He is married to a local girl and is vacationing in Yorkshire at present. In the course of our conversation I asked him if he knew Andrew Hamilton, the only British farmer that I had met, when here during the war. He assured me that he not only knew Andrew, was a very great personal friend of his family.

I had met Andrew at a party at Eaglesham one night about ten years ago and was invited to spend part of my next leave at his home. He told me if I came he would take me over to see Sir Harry Lauder, who lived nearby and was a personal friend of the family. I regret not having gone

now, but I spent my next leave in Edinburgh, thinking that I would go to East Kilbride the next time, but as the war ended a month later, there was no next time.

Just another coincidence William Cairns stayed over night with Andrew, when over here two years ago, and was surprised to find that I had met him. Andrew by the way, was a Nuffield Student in America and Canada about three years ago and I am looking forward to seeing this young British farmer again.

FARM PRODUCTION

Mr. Smart is arranging for Fred and me to see the West of Scotland University Farms, when we go up there, also some of the better certified seed potato producers. This is an excellent time of year to arrive in Britain as we can follow the pattern of farm production from planting to harvest. As we would like to see how these potato men work in Scotland I hope we can arrange a visit soon. I had a note from my old landlady in Edinburgh this morning and shall call her by phone this evening. Let us hope that she is still taking overnight guests.

This brings us up to yesterday, when I went to the market in Malton again to see some of Mr. Nutt's bullocks sold by auction. They were bigish beasts and coomed very near topping the market, did you bullocks. From Malton it was only a few minutes to York with the heavy Jaguar topping eighty-five for a time. "She'll do better you know?" assured my host.

Over our lunch in the best restaurant in York, Mr. Nutt being in better than usual mood, possibly because of the upish prices received for the beasts at Malton, launched into a short autobiography.

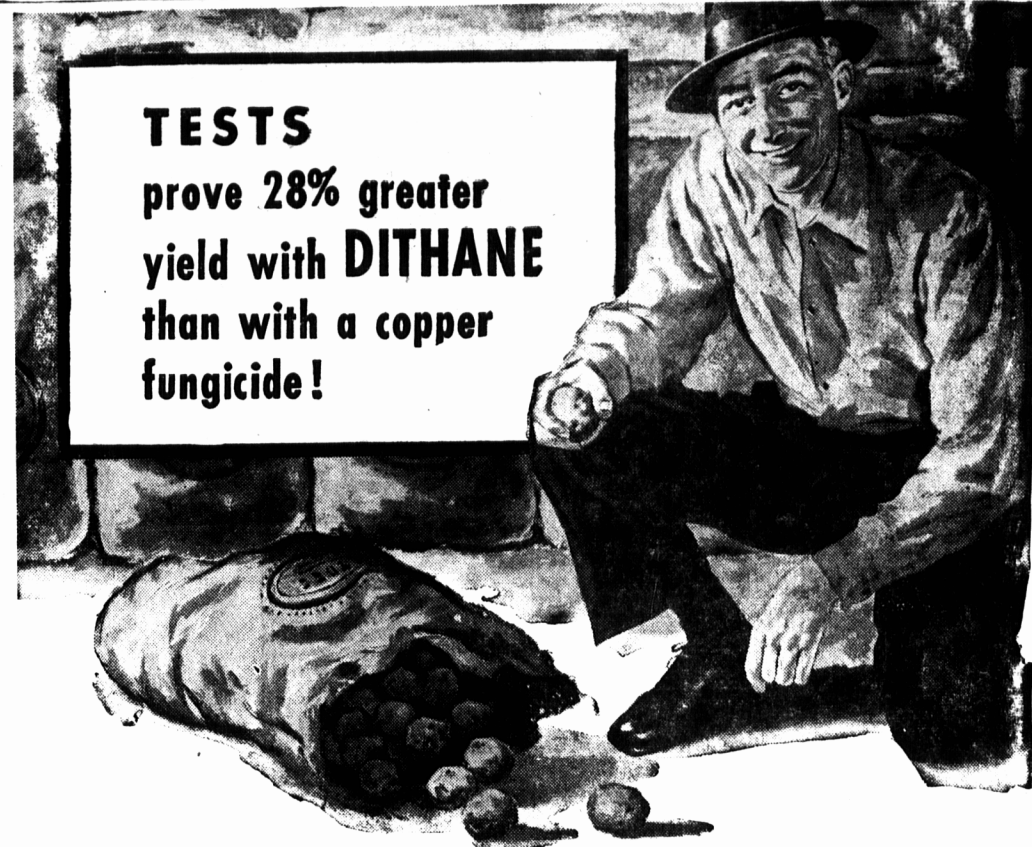
(To be Continued)

SEAWAY WORKER KILLED
CORNWALL, Ont., (CP)—David Gilbert Hanna, 37, of Ogdensburg,

N.Y., was fatally injured Wednesday while working on the St. Lawrence power project at nearby

Massena, N. Y. Hanna was struck by the shovel of a big clam. It was the first fatal accident of the

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