

THE STORY OF RICHARD ROE:

THIS is the story of Leading Aircraftman Richard Roe, a trainee at an Elementary Flying Training School "somewhere in New Zealand." He is a typical young New Zealander, a few years out of secondary school, one of the many thousands of keen youngsters who decided that flying was the job they were going to do in this war and, for better or worse, handed over their lives and destinies to the Royal New Zealand Air Force. If all goes well, it won't be long before he is sporting a pair of cloth wings, worth about three and sixpence in hard cash, but an insignia which he will prize above any other he wins during his flying career. In six or nine months' time, depending on whether he goes on to fighters or bombers, he'll probably be flying a Spitfire or a Hurricane or a Kittyhawk, or ferrying loads of high explosive to industrial Germany. Richard Roe, need we explain, is not the name of the trainee who appears in the pictures on these pages. Let us imagine that he is a composite of all the trainees at E.F.T. schools throughout the Dominion.

IT didn't take Richard Roe long to make up his mind that it was the Air Force for him. He had been crazy about flying ever since he was sixteen years of age—since, to be exact, the day he had gone out to his local aero club and, greatly daring, had splashed a lot of hard saved pocket money in a flight with mild aerobatics in a Gipsy Moth. Club flying, when he was earning three pounds a week as a clerk in an insurance company, had been beyond his means; he was quick, therefore, to appreciate that the Air Force was going to teach him to fly and pay him for it and keep him in a decent standard of comfort in the process.

Now, as a fully fledged Leading Aircraftman with fifty hours and thirty minutes flying time in his log book, he could look back with tolerant amusement at his initiation into the R.N.Z.A.F.; it had all been rather shattering at the time, no use denying it. The endless physical training and parade ground discipline; the struggle he had had to put his brain back to school to learn elementary theory of flight and the first principles of navigation. The P.T. was tougher than any training he had done at school, and he had dropped into bed

at nights with every muscle in his body complaining and his brain a jumble of great circles, rhumb lines, triangles of velocity, and methods of recognition of aircraft.

He had also been given the rudiments of such things as Air Force Law and the Official Secrets Act, and he'd begun to understand and appreciate the Air Force outlook on saluting and morale. In his spare time he had learned how to look after his kit and how to lay it out.

Language of Letters

At the E.F.T.S. came his first introduction to aeroplanes and the serious business of learning to fly. Here, too, he learned to speak the Air Force language of capital letters, and to comprehend automatically that the C.G.I. was the Chief Ground Instructor, the C.F.I., the Chief Flying Instructor, an A.S.I. an air speed indicator, E.T.A. estimated time of arrival, an A.T.S. an Advanced Training School, and so on through the alphabet.

Sleep has become the most important factor in his life; sleep to re-create his mind and body after the mounting strain of learning to fly. He's asleep long before the official lights-out at 11.15, and the hooter's insistent call to get up, in the cold dark just before dawn, is the least welcome summons of the whole day.

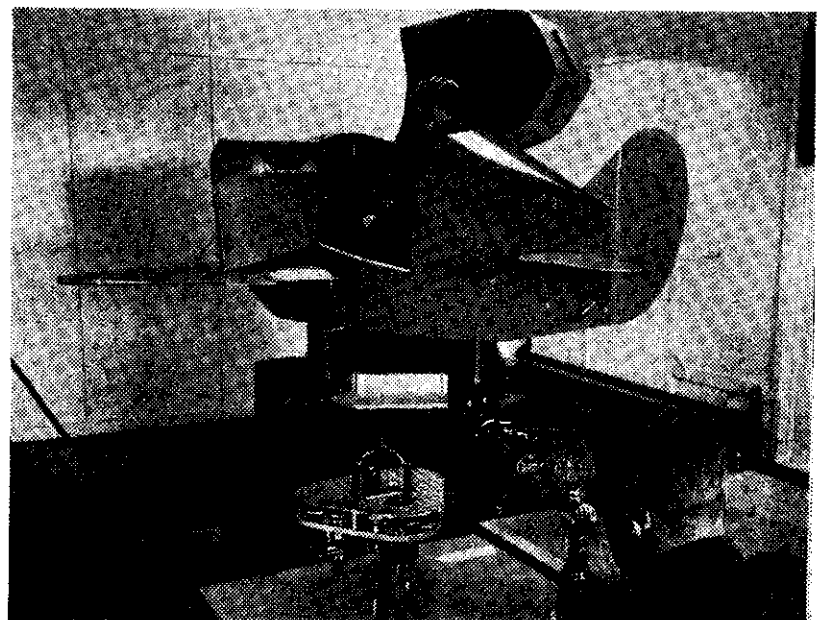


"RISE AND SHINE": A Leading Aircraftman at an E.F.T. School is out of bed and has his blankets and sheets neatly folded before it's dawn

Breakfast and the morning parade over, his day now consists of an almost unbroken sequence of lectures and flying, with short breaks for "smokos" and meals. Some days it's flying in the morning and lectures, with perhaps a spell on the Link Trainer, in the afternoon. Other days the order is reversed. The



OFF TO SCHOOL. A group of young airmen pilots leaving their barracks for the lecture room. These four are not long out of secondary school



INSTRUCTION IN THE LINK TRAINER. This ingenious machine houses full scale aircraft controls and is invaluable for teaching blind or instrument flying