

“No Boundaries Upstairs” will be of special interest not only to military historians, political scientists, and defence analysts but also to all Canadians concerned about relations with our large southern neighbour and our continued joint participation in NORAD. The book is relatively short with a wealth of footnotes and an excellent bibliography.

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The Creation of a National Air Force: The Official History of the Royal Canadian Air Force, Volume II. W.A.B. DOUGLAS, ed. Toronto: University of Toronto Press in Cooperation with the Department of National Defence, 1986. xx, 797 p., maps, illust. ISBN 0-8020-2584-6 \$33.95.

This book is the second volume in the long-awaited four volume official history of the Royal Canadian Air Force. Like its predecessor, *Canadian Airmen of the First World War* (See *Archivaria* 12, Summer 1982) it was well worth the wait. Dr. W.A.B. Douglas, Director of History of the Department of National Defence, and his staff were faced with a task that was both more and less difficult than Volume I. They benefitted from the fact that the subject they intended to cover, the RCAF between the wars and its North American activities and operations during the Second World War, was to a very large degree under Canadian military and political control. Thus, a substantial volume of relevant official records existed, though it had to be located and the inevitable lacunae had to be filled. On the other hand, the sheer length of time and breadth of activity to be chronicled in one volume, however large, made the decision concerning the degree of coverage of any given aspect a daunting challenge. The response to this challenge has been a remarkably comprehensive work that leaves an occasional impression of unevenness.

The book is divided into four main narrative parts of roughly equal length. The first deals with the development of Canadian military aviation between the wars and the attempt to do the subject justice in 116 pages of text has resulted in one of the least satisfactory sections. To a criticism that it concentrates too much on policy and high level wheeling and dealing rather than activities and events, the reply could be made that seekers of a narrative history should instead consult F.H. Hitchins' *Air Board. Canadian Air Force and Royal Canadian Air Force* (Ottawa 1972). As a reference tool, the Douglas book offers either feast or famine. For example, information on the formation and activities of the prewar auxiliary squadrons is negligible in quantity. The procurement of the first RCAF bombers, Westland Wapitis, is enhanced by a not particularly relevant recollection from a senior air officer while the trials and tribulations in obtaining these aircraft and the fact that they were surplus machines discarded as obsolete by the RAF are ignored. Such omissions can undoubtedly be laid to the compression dictated by available space but it does enhance the perception of unevenness.

The next section describes the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, one of Canada's most important contributions to the Allied war effort. One's impression of this portion is coloured by the knowledge that the Directorate published F.J. Hatch's *Aerodrome of Democracy* in its Occasional Paper series in 1983. This earlier publication parallels and, to some degree, overlaps the Official History. The latter covers "the Plan" in full and accurate detail and wisely leaves the more human aspects to the companion work. This makes the inclusion of the training careers of two typical students sound a jarring note, out of character with the rest of the section. Of particular value is the placing of the BCATP in the context of Canada's overall war effort and the RCAF's in particular.

The subject matter of the first two sections has been covered in some detail earlier and elsewhere but the final two break new ground, do it extremely well and, alone, would be worth the price of the book. They cover the RCAF's activities in the defence of North America from 1939 to 1945 and, in the final portion, its specific role and operations in the Battle of the Atlantic. The two sections are interlinked. First, the air force's evolution in response to perceived needs and threats, and as affected by procurement difficulties, political dictates, and other wartime exigencies is covered. Also described are operational activities and deployments not covered in the subsequent section. It is a little disappointing to find the history of Western Air Command and operations in Alaska and the Aleutians described within the confines of twenty-eight pages but the whole section is very well done with a smooth and homogeneous treatment of the subject matter. I can fault it on neither completeness nor accuracy. This is hardly surprising as there is little available published material with which to compare it.

The real *piece de résistance* is the fourth section of the book which is on the RCAF in the Battle of the Atlantic. The text is primarily devoted to the development and operations of Eastern Air Command. The growth, triumphs, and blunders of Canada's aerial anti-submarine force are examined from the point of view of materiel and personnel, of strategy and tactics. This is all put into the total context of the German U-Boat anti-shipping campaign, particularly in the Northwest Atlantic. The result is one of the finest pieces of historical writing concerning air operations I have ever read. It avoids falling into either the trap of becoming a succession of "war stories" or that of becoming a dry tactical narrative conveying little of the real flavour of the bitter conflict. The activities of the RCAF squadrons serving with RAF Coastal Command are also chronicled in this section. While their experiences are competently narrated, the fact that their area of operations was on the other side of the Atlantic makes their story seem almost an intrusion in the primary narrative. It is not part of this review to summarize this section or its conclusions, but it is a most significant addition to the literature on what was the longest campaign of World War Two.

Other features of the book include five appendices. Two are textual, dealing with the Clayton Knight Committee for recruiting in the United States and with Ferry Command. The latter, which includes a brief summary of RCAF transport operations, could have been allotted more coverage. Possibly both these appendices could have been incorporated in the main text, but their actual treatment and location is not a handicap. The other appendices on senior appointments 1920-45, defence expenditures 1919-47, and Home War Operational Stations and Units are in list form. The last in particular is invaluable.

The source notes at the end of the book are up to the same standard as Volume 1 — very high indeed! The map content is not so lavish as in the earlier book, but the maps are

of excellent quality and more than adequate. The over two hundred photos are well chosen, but additional research or consultation would have resulted in captions that were more accurate and complete. To call the layout of the photo pages uninspired is grossly flattering. It opts for neither esthetic impact nor maximum utilization of space, but cleverly combines the worst of both.

All criticism of this book fades into insignificance when compared to its overall excellence. It has at last given us an adequately researched and competently written coverage of a largely neglected aspect of Canadian history. Its faults can largely be laid to the constraints of available space, and Dr. Douglas and his colleagues have carried out their mandate with both effectiveness and style.

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Strangers from a Secret Land. PETER THOMAS. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986. xiii, 319 p. ISBN 0-8020-5694-6 cl. 0-8020-6620-8 pa. \$32.50 cl. \$14.95 pa.

Strangers from a Secret Land is one of the more intriguing books to appear recently on pre-Confederation Canada. Emigration from Wales to Atlantic Canada is the subject of Thomas' work, and the emigrants themselves are the focus of the volume. In 1818 and 1819, the ships *Fanny* and *Albion* carried some one hundred and three hundred Welsh emigrants to Nova Scotia and New Brunswick respectively. The emigrants came from Carmarthen and Cardiganshire in west Wales; most were farmers and skilled craftsmen facing economic distress, and political and religious turmoil in their homeland. Many of the first group of emigrants obtained land near Shelburne, N.S., while the second group settled near Fredericton. Both parties lost some of their members to other destinations and neither was able to attract substantial reinforcements from Wales in later years.

For too long, the early peopling of Canada was explained through useful but narrow studies of emigration, settlement policy, and elite groups. Recent work on emigration, however, has analyzed the emigrants' own experiences; these publications have been the product of both academic and amateur historians. Peter Thomas, who is a professor of literature and not a trained historian, falls somewhere between these two groups. *Strangers* tells the story of this Welsh emigration in a powerful narrative that links past and present, and offers a compelling interpretation of the history of one Canadian immigrant group.

Strangers is not written in the analytical style now favoured by many historians but is presented as a dramatic narrative. Thomas chose first to describe his research in the style of a detective investigation and then to present his findings as a series of overlapping tales. The first chapter presents the mystery of a Welsh cemetery near Fredericton and follows the author in his frustrating, but ultimately successful search to identify who these Welsh people were. Then the tales begin: a chapter sets the scene in late eighteenth and early nineteenth century Wales; others follow the careers of the ship-owners who organized the migrations and the actual voyages to America. The tale of an emigrant from the same parish who returned to Wales is presented in another chapter, while the story of the Welsh settlements in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick is briefly recounted. The final tale