

Flt/Lt MARSHALL A JOHNSON

MARSH'S SCRAPBOOK



Plt/Off Gordon Crampton & Flt/Lt Marshall Johnson
Taken in London Ontario late 1980's



Graduation #4 Bombing and Gunnery School, Fingal Ontario. March 15, 1941
Back Row (left to right) Front Row (left to right)
Bill Gyant Saskatoon, Sask. Marshall Johnson London, Ontario
J.L.B. Martin Vancouver B.C. C.E.C. Robinson Toronto, Ontario
C.C. Young Speyling, Manitoba E.J. Stevenson Winnipeg, Manitoba
Ron Cadieux Ottawa, Ontario Casey Perry Tillsonburg, Ontario

The following are news clippings (saved by Marsh's mother) from London and St Thomas Canada newspapers. Note that, although it was not supposed to happen, on occasion the newspapers put stories to press about soldiers before the families had been officially notified. It was a terrible and not infrequent occurrence to pick up the morning paper and read that your son or daughter was dead or missing. These clippings are roughly in the order that Marsh's parents would have received them.

Are Entering R. C. A. F. ~

Two St. Thomas young men, Marshall Johnson, son of ex-Mayor and Mrs. A.W. Johnson Inkerman Street and Lorin W. Metcalfe, son of John H Metcalfe district Hydro Inspector, and Mrs. Metcalfe, 11 St. Anne's Place, are leaving Monday for the manning pool, Toronto, their applications for enlistment in the Royal Canadian Air Force having been accepted. Lorin Metcalfe has signed for pilot instruction and Marshall Johnson as co-pilot and observer.

REPORTING FOR DUTY ~

Sgt. Gun. Marshall A Johnson, son of ex-Mayor and Mrs. Angus Johnson, and graduate of the Fingal Bombing and Gunnery School, has arrived safely in England to report for duty.

Marshall Johnson Cables Mrs. Johnson, wife of ex-Mayor

Angus W Johnson received a pleasant birthday gift Tuesday. It came in the form of a cablegram from their son Sergeant Gunner Marshall A Johnson of the R.C.A.F., announcing his recent safe arrival in England. The message had been sent to arrive on his mother's birthday. Sergeant Gunner Johnson took his final training at the Fingal Bombing and Gunnery School.

Marshall Johnson Sends Soil from Iceland to His Parents~

Ex-Mayor and Mrs. Angus W Johnson now have soil from Iceland to add to their garden. It came in a letter from their son Sergeant Gunner Marshall Johnson, recent graduate from the Fingal Bombing and Gunnery School and the letter brought them the surprising news that their son and other airmen in the big contingent of Canadian forces who recently reached England were disembarked at Iceland for three or four days. Sergeant Gunner Johnson took advantage of the opportunity to write to his parents from Iceland, enclosing the sample of soil, a tiny Icelandic flag, and snapshots of the island. The first letter from him in England was also received from him this week. Sergeant Gunner Johnson

has been sending samples of soil to his parents as he went from place to place in his training. The red soil at Camp Debert, Nova Scotia is nothing to write home about, but Sergeant Gunner Johnson sent home a sample just to show what troops sent to that big military camp had to endure especially in wet weather. With Sergeant Gunner Johnson in Iceland and now in Britain is his pal, Sergeant Gunner Casey, of Tillsonburg. They graduated from Fingal together. In one of their letters they told about sleeping on the floor in huts while in Iceland. The huts were comfortably warm but the floors were not so comfortable. The letter from Iceland reported that the Canadian airmen reached there on a merchant cruiser part of a convoy of 50 merchant ships, that left in a British destroyer.

In case the newspapers forgot to mention it, were you aware that Marsh is the son of an ex-mayor? Marsh finds this pretty funny himself, not to mention a little irritating.

JULY 16, 1941 Mr & Mrs Angus Johnson receive the dreaded and devastating cable from the military stating their only son Marshall, was missing in action.

10 CANADIANS ARE ON CASUALTY LIST~ Marshall Johnson Officially Reported Nazi Prisoner! Ottawa, Aug.20 (CP)-

Ten Canadians today were reported by the Royal Canadian Air Force in official casualty list No. 64 as missing after air operations overseas. This brought the total number of dead and missing reported by the R.C.A.F. since war started to 557. Included in today's list were the names of two men previously reported missing and known to be prisoners of war.

Word was received by Mr. and Mrs. Johnson from the International Red Cross Friday, to the effect that Sergeant Gunner Johnson had been located and that parcels of smokes, food and clothing would be delivered to him as received. Sergeant Gunner Johnson is a graduate of the Fingal Bombing and Gunnery School going overseas early last spring.

ST. THOMAS FLYER IS WAR PRISONER~ Bailed Out and Dropped 10,000 Feet When Bomber Took Fire Over Bremen St.Thomas, Sept.5 -

Sgt. Air Gunner Marshall Johnson, son of a one time mayor of St. Thomas, survived a parachute descent from 10,000 feet over the city of Bremen to be made prisoner of war by the Germans. In a few graphic sentences he has communicated this information from a German prison camp to his parents. It was on his second operational flight over Germany, that anti-aircraft fire hit the bomber, setting it afire. Four of the five members of the crew bailed out at

10,000 feet, but the fifth member, Flying Officer J.C. Jenkins, was killed before the plane caught fire. Two members of the crew are now in hospital in Germany. Sgt. Johnson has requested his parents to send him woolen underwear, socks, sweaters and shirts, cigarettes and chocolate bars and biscuits. In his letter he mentioned that he has been making enquiries concerning Flt-Lt. Bob Willis, also a prisoner of war in Germany. Sergeant Johnson was reported missing in an operational flight of July 14, and soon after word came that he was interned in Germany.

The above article only goes to prove the old adage, "NEVER BELIEVE WHAT YOU READ IN THE PAPERS" it's all wrong, the truth can be found under the heading CREWS & LOSSES, BUG

Taken Prisoner, Marshall Johnson Sends Word from German Camp~ Two Cards

Received by Parents:
Operational Flight in July:
Red Cross Appreciated.
Two messages on post cards, one dated July 19, the other July 24 and both sent from a prison or internment camp named Dulag Luft were received by ex-Mayor and Mrs. Angus W. Johnson Saturday morning from their son, Sergeant Gunner Marshall A. Johnson who was reported missing following an operational flight in July

and subsequently was reported as being a prisoner. Evidently he had sent three cards since his internment in all, as the one dated July 19 was marked as being the second note. On the card dated July 24 he stated that he was leaving for a new camp the following morning. He reported on the card written July 19 that cigarettes and candies had reached him through the International Red Cross and were greatly appreciated. He stated that he was being treated well and added these words: I beg of you not to worry about me. No

details were given in the short messages about how he came to be taken prisoner, whether the bomber was shot down or whether he and other members of the crew baled out. Obviously he is thinking about the time that he will be back in Canada, for on the card sent July 24, he wrote, don't forget about the new car. In letters he sent from England before he started operational flights he discussed plans to purchase an automobile of his own when he got back to St. Thomas.

The newspaper is starting to wise up that were on to them, note how they try to sneak that ex- mayor thing in under a little different context.

Marsh Johnson's Chum Missing!~

Reported missing from an operational flight in the latest air force casualty list. Flight Sergeant William Leonard Maxim of Niagara Falls Ont., was a close friend of Sergeant Air Gunner Marshall Johnson on this city, now in a prison camp in Germany. They trained together in Montreal and were also in scarlet fever quarantine together. Cookies sent to the boy while in quarantine by Mrs. Johnson brought letters of appreciation from young Maxim and others.

Flier Makes Use of Time While Being Held in Germany~ St.

Thomas youth studies book-keeping and teaches English. St. Thomas, Feb 19- Sergeant Air Gunner Marshall Johnson, son of ex-Mayor and Mrs. A.W. Johnson, city, is making good use of his time in a German prison camp. He is studying book-keeping with the assistance of George Edwards, a fellow prisoner from Toronto, and plans to take a course in office management through facilities set up by Oxford University. He is learning German from Leonard England, an R.C.A.F. prisoner from New York, and is teaching a young polish prisoner the English language. You see I am not wasting my time, he writes. He reported receiving 32 letters during December, but only one parcel. A parcel of vitamin content chocolate received from City Clerk, Edna M, Bennett was greatly appreciated. His Christmas card was printed from a woodcut, designed and executed by another prisoner of war, Thomas Burke, and depicted four members of the active service lined up to greet Santa Claus who appears with a huge sack filled with Red Cross gifts.

Sergeant Marshall A. Johnson Admitted to Noted War Club~

Mr. and Mrs. A.W. Johnson Receive the Emblem Admitting Their Son to Caterpillar Club; Letters and Cards Received. Sergeant Air Gunner Marshall Johnson has been made a member of the Caterpillar Club, a membership which is restricted to those airmen who are forced to bale out. Flight-Lieutenant Robert Willis, son of Mr. and Mrs. G. I. Willis, city, is also a member of the Caterpillar Club. The pin or brooch, emblematic of the membership was received by Mr. and Mrs. Johnson in behalf of their son from England., Tuesday. It is an attractive little emblem with Sergeant Air Gunner Johnson's name inscribed on the back . Two small rubies are set in the pin to represent the eyes of the caterpillar.

Sergeant Air Gunner Johnson and other members had to bale out over Germany last summer, when the big plane caught fire while flying at a height of 10,000 feet. He has been a prisoner of war since then. In recent letters and cards received by his parents he reported that he had received no letters from his home folk and wondered if his parents had been informed of his safety. Dozens of letters have been sent by his mother and others through the International Red Cross. In a letter written on October 17 and a card dated October 27, Sergeant Air Gunner Johnson stated that the weather was becoming very cold but that he was quite well off for clothing, also toilet articles. He also reported that he was in good health and had suffered nothing more serious than a slight cold. He expressed the hope that his parents had not sent him flannel shirts. As a matter of fact, heavy blue flannel shirts were sent in one of the several parcels sent through International Red Cross. One letter sent to Sergeant Air Gunner Johnson by a friend was returned with a notation in German. The letter had passed the censor in England, but apparently the German censors were suspicious of it's contents or were unable to read English. It was simply a message of greeting and good cheer.

Marsh still has this pin but feels that "a good stiff glass of Scotch" would perhaps be more appropriate than a pin for those who bale out of flaming aircraft. (Seems a reasonable enough suggestion to me, except that Marsh thinks "any" occasion is sufficient to warrant a good stiff glass of Scotch.)

**Captive Airman Tells of
Menu for Christmas St.**

Thomas, March 7~

A Christmas menu sent home by a young St. Thomas airman, Marshall Johnson, a prisoner in Germany with 17 other Canadians, indicates that for one meal at least, the boys were reminded of dinner tables at home laden with the best of foods. Most of the meal was a result of efforts of the Canadian Red Cross and relatives and friends of the prisoners who sent parcels of food. The son of Mr. and Mrs. A.W. Johnson, Inkerman Street, Sgt. Johnson sent them the following Christmas dinner menu which he said was enhanced by wine, made by two Canadian prisoners, G. Bissell and A. Robertson. Hors d'oeuvres, salmon, potato crisps, sauce Hollandais, baked meat roll, potato sauce, creamed vegetables, sage and onions, Christmas pudding, cream and biscuits, cheese and coffee, cigarettes, beer and wine.

**PRISONERS MAKE TINY
SAIL BOATS!~**

Canadian Airman in Germany Race Craft in Swimming Pool! Airman who are prisoners of war in the big concentration camp known as Stalag Luft 3, in Germany, are making tiny boats from bits of wood and sailing and racing them in the swimming pool at the camp, in order to put in their time, according to a letter received Tuesday by Mr.

and Mrs. W.H. Machan, 23 Weldon Avenue, from their son, Sergeant Pilot S. Harold Machan.

There are about 2000 prisoners in the camp, largely Canadians, a recent letter from Sergeant Machan informed his parents. Food to supplement their prison rations appears to be the greatest problem of the prisoners, with food parcels arriving very irregularly. Ex-Mayor and

Mrs. A.W. Johnson also received a letter from their son, Sergeant Gunner Marshall Johnson, Tuesday. He is in the same prison camp. His letter was quite cheerful and he reported that he had received the third parcel sent to him by his parents. It was a long time in reaching him, but apparently it came in very good shape and was much appreciated. The arrival of a parcel from home is a great thrill for the prisoners.

THE STALOG LUFT 3, FITNESS AND RAQUET CLUB. A Swimming pool ??? I Hardly think so. I'll ask Marsh about this from a safe distance and let you know.

FOUR WORDS, Four words that tear the soul apart, Cruel words, like demons hissing: Four words that test the bravest heart: Your son reported missing. ~ **Endowed With Trust In God, Airman Now Missing Was Glad To Soar Without Sense of Fear! Special to the Star-Sarnia, July 9-** Mr. and Mrs. H.B. Thompson, parents of Sergeant Observer Fraser Thompson, missing in operations in Libya, today made public the text of his last letter, in the hope it will comfort the parents of other boys in the R.C.A.F. This is the letter: This is the last letter I shall write you from England. In a few days I will be on my way to fields yet unseen by me. Always as a boy I have dreamed of the East and at last I hope, these dreams are about to materialize. I have something now which I could have never obtained through any other means, something above a college education, or a quiet life at home. I have a deeper understanding of things and people: how they live, think and act. I have more confidence in my ability and I have been endowed with a trust in God that nothing, not even death itself could break. Fortunately I realize these things in time but unfortunately it has taken the war to do it. But, do not fear, no matter what happens. Remember, you have Bob (brother in R.C.A.F.) Look after him as you did us so when he is grown he can take his place in the world, proud and unafraid of what lies before him. Sometimes when I climb into my kite and we take off, kidding and joking, and climb into the heaven beyond in this war-torn world the fleecy clouds spread below as if by a magic wand, it makes me wonder. Below the world so saturated with blood, hatred and selfishness, while here in the ether blue, a clean crystalline linen exists, and as the night air creeps in, it makes you suddenly alive and glad to breathe for a few hours in a sacred world free from hatred. Even when I leave my work and rush back to my astrodome I always hesitate for a few seconds before I lift my sextant to gaze at the wonders of the heavens and God above me. But, all too soon we descend and we are back where guns, hatred and all evil exists. Always the cup of life and adventure was before me. Each time I held it I was tempted to drink deeper. Soon I shall see to its bottom and be content.

Hamilton Airman's Letter to Parents on Eve of Death Hamilton July 29 (CP) ~ Before he died **PO Bruce Gordon McIver** of Hamilton wrote a letter to his parents to be mailed when he did not come back. Following is the full text of the letter made public at the same time as a report that he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for heroism.

As I write this-my obituary as it were (rather novel to write your own)- I am not at all frightened at the prospect. The chances are about 20 to 1 that you will get your 200 hours in and we all believe that we will be one of the lucky 19, so by thinking that you feel quite at ease. **Jim Erly**, my roommate, has done 6 trips and it is really not as bad as you imagine. Really, it is easier to go on operations than it is to sit at home and wait for them to come back. I might seem to have not been kind to you both by throwing away all the hopes you had built up for me by giving me a university education, and then turning around and joining the air force. I know that you had always been so proud of my little efforts and successes in school work. Truly I did join thinking that I would be an instructor after finishing my course. All the rest of the fellows did in the course so I did what I thought best, and expected to stay in Canada. After getting to Toronto at overseas pool I knew then what was to happen and by that time I was reconciled to the fact and hoped that you were too-although I did not think it best to tell you and so spoil what little time there was left by having that hanging over our heads.

The letter said: Looking back on it all now, the Atlantic crossing, meeting the King and Queen, seeing England, meeting real men here in the air force-well, it has been worth it. I have certainly lived life to the full and to do that one must take risks. As you have been proud of me before, you have all the more reason to be proud of me now and the fact that you can hold up your head in anyone's company and no one can say a word against me, your son. I hope that will give you some consolation. For my own part if I had the chance to do everything again, I wouldn't have done anything different-which is something to say and to feel right in your mind about. I must be off now to do 'briefing'-to find out where we are going tonight, and get ready. I hope that you will never receive this letter, as it is only to be posted in case I don't get back.

Below is an unusual clipping from a local paper, in which a local St Thomas (near London Canada) public school has carefully documented the number of students who are serving in the war. Note that they are screening students for T.B.

Ex-Students of Collegiate Enlisted in War Total 671

Records of Service Well Kept and All Now Overseas Will
Be Remembered; Students to Write Letters

The last report of Principal N. J. Thomas of the St. Thomas Collegiate Institute gives a report of the number of ex-students who are now serving with the armed forces. The figures were first given out at the Remembrance Day service in the school, when the students were reminded that 26 ex-students made the supreme sacrifice in the war of 1914-18 and that 26 have been so reported in the present war. Other figures quoted show that in World War II 671 have enlisted — 624 men and 44 women. These were divided as follows: Army 287 men and 12 women; Air Force, 252 men and 20 women; Navy, 88 men and 12 women.

Those granted commissions are: Army 122, Air Force 83, Navy 21, a total of 226, or approximately one in three.

Serving outside of Canada are 249 ex-students — 245 men and 4 women.

Principal Thomas in his report noted: "The school is sending a package of 300 cigarettes to each of the 249 who are overseas. In addition to this, the senior students have undertaken to write, as students to ex-students, letters to all those who are overseas. The addresses are being distributed to these students in such a way as to assure at least two letters to each address on the whole list. The letters are being handed in at the school office and will be posted (air mail) from there."

Well-Kept Records

In this connection Principal Thomas comments: "We appreciate very much the very faithful and efficient manner in which Miss Eileen Judd keeps all these rec-

ords up to date. For example, we know that the address of each and every one of the 249 who are overseas has been checked by her for correctness within the last two or three weeks and that we are using the latest possible information for our parcels and letters. Only someone who has undertaken such a task can have any realization of the amount of time and effort involved."

Concerning the school cadets Mr. Thomas reported:

"We have 241 boys registered at the Collegiate for this school year. Twenty-six of these are members of the Air Cadets and 15 are members of the Sea Cadets. Under present regulations these 41 students can not parade in army uniforms. We have therefore, just 200 boys eligible for uniforms."

Physical, Eye Tests

Reporting on physical and eye tests Mr. Thomas wrote:

"Dr. E. B. Potts and Nurse H. R. Huston are at the school regularly on Monday afternoons and on Friday afternoons (2 1-2 hours in each case) to make the eye tests and the physical examinations of grade 9 students and other new students at the Collegiate. The T. B. tests have been almost completed. There are not more than three or four T.B. tests still to be made of students who were absent from school when the groups were done. It will take another five weeks to complete the eye tests and the physical examinations of all the new students. An average of ten examinations are completed on each afternoon that the work is being done. We are getting practically 100 per cent co-operation in this undertaking."

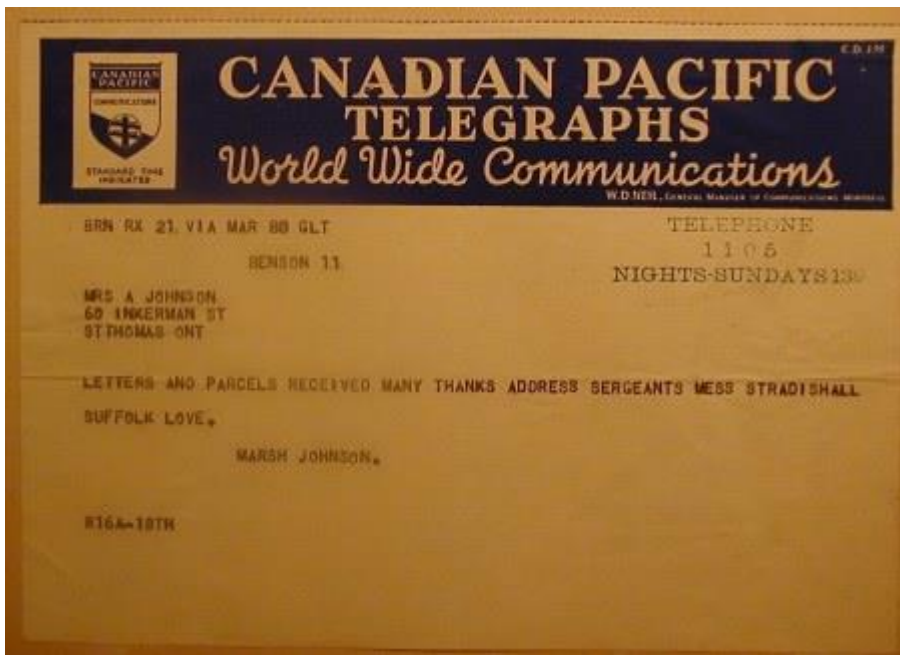
(Clipping from Marshall Johnson collection)

Air Navigators and Bombers Graduate



Classes of air bombers and air navigators are receiving their wings at No. 4 Air Observer School at Crumlin yesterday afternoon. London and district members of the graduating classes are shown above. LEFT TO RIGHT, TOP—The air bomber graduates: P. J. Hines, Waterloo; D. R. Miller, London; A. J. Low, Straiford; H. A. Wintermute, Belmont; P. H. Harris, Forest; F. T. McNabb, St. Thomas; C. R. Depper, Thamesville. BOTTOM — The navigator graduates: H. M. Whitcombe, London; J. E. Nixon, Woodstock; W. M. Robinson, London; E. E. Curtis, Wallaceburg; R. Stoneman, Windsor, and R. E. Goodland, London.

Judging from the sombre expressions on these boys faces, I am guessing they were out the night before doing a little celebrating.



Telegram home from Stradishall

More Canadians Arrive in England



Safe arrival of another large contingent of Canadian soldiers and airmen in England has been officially announced. The above scenes show the fighting men as they left an East Coast seaport on their perilous voyage across the Atlantic. In the upper photo Canucks wave a farewell to Canada as they mount the gang plank. A group of sergeant

pilots, graduates of the Commonwealth Air Training Plan, are shown below as they eat their first meal aboard ship. Inset, Pts. R. G. Golden, of Victoria Island, and Pts. H. T. Douglas, of Vancouver, do a little last-minute advertising for their home province by displaying a British Columbia apple through the ship's porthole.



P/O CRAMPTON G.



P/O JENKINS T. A.I.A.



Sgt. VENT R. A.I.A.



P/O JONES H.



P/O INSTONE R.



Sgt. JOHNSON M.

