

A WEEK IN THE LIFE OF ROBERT PARKER

Could this be the life for you? Read and find out

Robert Parker, 21, comes from Hammersmith and is Co-pilot of a Victor 2 serving with 139 Squadron stationed at Wittering, near Peterborough. He is a typical R.A.F. officer. This is a typical week in his life.



MONDAY

A.T.C. Cadets visiting station this week, spend day showing them round. Introduce to Group Captain, take on 4-hour conducted tour: hangars, control tower, runways, rifle range, etc. High spot for all concerned—flying cadets in Chipmunk: cadets can look down on whole area of station, get feeling of aircraft, see how controls work, come down feeling 10 ft. tall. (Remember own A.T.C. days with 336 Squadron). Like all visitors, cadets surprised at size and complexity of station, and fact that peacetime R.A.F. so busy.



TUESDAY

Flying exercise today. 0900 hours, get together with rest of crew (5 all told: captain is Squadron Leader, 30), receive brief. Plan is 5-hour flying and navigational point-to-point, to include practice bombing runs over three "targets". As Co-pilot do take-off calculations, make fuel plans. Pre-flight omelette (mushroom) in aircrew buffet, change into flying suit, check oxygen equipment and pressure jerkin, crew-coach to aeroplane. Pre-take-off checks, line-up, then airborne: For first 1,500 miles assume radar not working, astro-navigate by sun. Share flying 50/50 with captain; at end of trip bring aeroplane down from operational height to below cloud, hand back to captain for landing. Deliberate overshoot, on to circuit for 1 hour, practise 4 landings altogether, 2 each. On landing, spend 20 mins. chewing over technicalities with Ground Crew, then to de-briefing and pick up bombing score—not bad. 1830 hours, back to Mess for long relaxing bath, followed by leisurely dinner.

WEDNESDAY

Motor to Squadron offices to be on call with rest of crew for Q.R.A.—Quick Reaction Alert (on all V-force airfields, some aircraft always armed and ready, crews on standby). Chance to catch up on some desk-work—logging flying hours, writing to Schools about cadet visits, generally paper-working. Only possible comment, to think some chaps have to do this all the time!



THURSDAY

Crew still on standby, decide to get on with target study, when CLANG, bell rings, Tannoy speaks, whole crew leap into Q.R.A. car and out across airfield, bells pealing, lights flashing. Into cockpit, start engines, complete pre-take-off check. Armed aircraft now ready to go. . . . Then on telescrumble from Bomber Command comes word to stand down. Do so. Lunch, braised chicken. P.m., lecture on Air Force law.

FRIDAY

Morning in simulator (mock-up cockpit on ground can reproduce Victor 2 in all possible flight situations, test and develop reactions, give effect of whole sortie in quarter of actual time). Afternoon planning for Western Ranger flight (taking aeroplane 'out on its own' to Goose Bay, Labrador and Omaha). Check up on runway lengths at possible diversion airfields. Look forward to seeing new people, new places.

SATURDAY

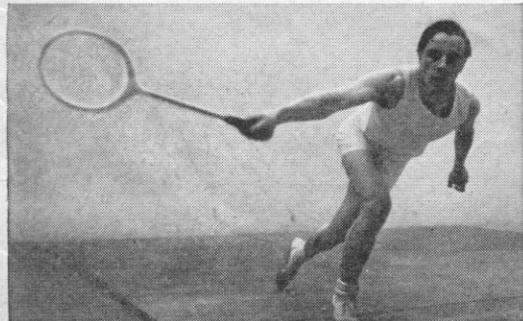
Usually go to London for weekend—visit parents, go on town with girl friend, fly club Tiger Moth at Redhill, etc. This time, have long standing engagement to lunch old schoolfriend in Leicester. Afternoon, visit local stately home. Evening, dinner out with Jarvis's (brother-officer and wife), live it up a little. Why not? Feel entitled.

SUNDAY

To married quarters where some of crew live, for coffee, and for some vigorous games with the children (Phew!) Then to Mess bar, for beer before lunch. Big crowd, very sociable. Read papers after lunch, then squash. Lose ignominiously, even in the R.A.F. you can't have everything. But seriously: who would swop a life like this?

Robert Parker went to St Clement Dane's Grammar School and joined the R.A.F. at 17½ on a commission initially to 38. Then he hopes to be invited to stay in until he's 55. Meanwhile, at 21, he gets more than £1,000 a year, he lives extremely well in the Mess, he has six weeks' paid holidays; and a job well worth doing.

FLYING OFFICER, ROYAL AIR FORCE



**ROBERT PARKER
IS A TYPICAL
R.A.F. OFFICER**

Think about the way he lives. And ask yourself: what other profession could give you such interest, such variety, such high standards of living?



The Royal Air Force

WHAT ABOUT YOU?

You may be leaving school this year. You may be in your twenties, with a job that hasn't turned out quite as you hoped. If you are between 17 and 26, with 5 acceptable 'O' levels including English language and mathematics, and can satisfy a Selection Board that you have the right qualities of intelligence, aptitude and leadership potential . . . think: you could be in the R.A.F., starting a whole new way of life, *this year*.

FILL IN THIS COUPON AND POST IT TODAY!

To Group Captain J. W. Allan, D.S.O., D.F.C., A.F.C., R.A.F., Adastral House (GR135), London, W.C.1. *Please send me details of flying commissions in the Royal Air Force and a free copy of the booklet 'Flying and You'.*

NAME

ADDRESS

DATE OF BIRTH

Please attach a separate sheet of paper giving details of the educational qualifications you hold or expect to gain.