

Historical Article

Falcon Field Unit Praised AZ REPUBLIC 2/20/43

Falcon Field graduated another class of Royal Air Force cadets yesterday, and already they're on their way to England.

Wing Comdr. Ashley Hall, of the RAF delegation to Washington, gave the principal address.

Commander Hall reminded the cadets they are "fighting for the individual man and his family as opposed to the axis philosophy of organized worship of state."

Calling attention to the fact that American and British cadets are training side by side at Falcon Field, he said "this sharing of schools, of instructors and of airplanes is getting together on the common job and the common purpose."

Revealing that the class he addressed tied for first place with another RAF school in the United States on the grueling, three-day "wings" examination, he paid special tribute to the directors and instructors of Southwest Airways for a "particularly good job."

He said it was important, not only that British cadets could train here, so far from home, yet enjoying the home life of friends and allies, uninterfered with by the enemy, but it also was important "that you can train here free from interference by the weather."

The cadets had passed in review and stood for inspection, and he congratulated them for their "rarely smart turnout both in general appearance and in drill and marching."

The newly commissioned RAF fliers also met Squadron Leader J. A. F. McClachlan, one of England's top fighter pilots, who gave a brief flying exhibition.

This RAF flier has 13 confirmed victories, eight probables, and has been decorated with the Distinguished Service Order, the Distinguished Flying Cross and bar and the C.B.K., the last a Czechoslovakian order. He is a veteran of the battles of Britain, Malta, Greece, Crete, Libya and Eritrea, and achieved many of his victories despite the loss of one arm.

Cadets specially honored were Cadet Wing Comdr. T. W. Briggs, Cadet J. F. Crowford, first in the elementary examination, and Cadet D. F. Buist, first in the "wings" examination.