The prevention, detection, and suppression of forest fires received special emphasis in the latter part of the 1800's and the early part of this century. Fire prevention legislation was passed, the regulations were publicized, and fire fighters did what they could to reduce the damage done by forest fires. Nonetheless the magnitude of the problem was often overwhelming. The rapid growth of technology which took place during World War I made possible the application of innovations to increase the effectiveness of forest fire detection and suppression operations. The airplane was one such development which enjoyed initial, but unfortunately, all too short-lived success in British Columbia.

Although the use of aircraft for aerial forest fire patrols was considered as early as 1911 in Texas and, closer to home, examined by the Western Forestry and Conservation Association in the Pacific Northwest in 1913, the first such patrols were not made until the summer of 1915 in Wisconsin. A glowing report describing experiences there was published in the April 1916 issue of the only Canadian forestry magazine of the time, the Canadian Forestry Journal. The author stated that "the efficiency of an aeroplane in spotting forest fires is without doubt as practicable as any use to which it could be put," and that finding fires wasn't a problem so much as correctly ascertaining their exact location.

British Columbia Makes Plans

The successes in Wisconsin resulted in a growing interest which spread throughout the U.S. and Canada. No less an important figure than W.E. Boeing described the advantages of aerial fire patrols to the Western Forestry and Conservation Association in Portland, Oregon in the fall of 1916. Major K.E. Kennedy of the Royal Flying Corps addressed the Quebec Forest Protective Association on the same subject in February of 1918. Both speeches were reprinted in the Canadian Forestry Journal and served to arouse interest in B.C.

In fact, the Minister of Lands, the Hon. T.D. Pattullo, received an "inspiration" after conversing with an air service veteran who had returned from the European front. Such veteran flyers could, in Pattullo's opinion, provide an invaluable service in forest fire detection by aerially patrolling a territory three to four times as large as that which could be handled by one man on a ground patrol. A suitable aircraft and a willing pilot were all that was needed to test the scheme.

The First Plane

A contract was let by the Department of Lands to the Hoffman Motor Boat Co., a Vancouver boat-building firm which had made the transition to flight in 1917 with the construction of a single float seaplane known as the H-1. The Department of Lands' aircraft was to be a flying boat, popularly referred to at the time as a "hydro-aeroplane," and based on a Glenn Curtiss design. Consideration had been given to obtaining a surplus machine from the Royal Air Force but this was not feasible.

The aircraft, known as the H-2, was a two-seater biplane flying boat with a pusher configuration—the propeller faced the rear and pushed rather than pulled the plane. Construction took place during July and August of 1918 and, with the exception of the engine and some hardwood
components, utilized local materials. The frame was of Sitka spruce; the fuselage of one layer each of mahogany and Sitka spruce rivetted together with a layer of linen glued between; and the wings of the Royal Aircraft Factory "Six" design, made of unbleached linen and finished with four coats of dope and two of varnish.

The wingspan was 42 feet, the chord width (or width of the wings) was 5 feet, and 6 feet separated the upper and lower planes. The struts were also of Sitka spruce and on the underside of the tips of the lower planes, or wings, were two watertight metal cylinders to aid in balance and prevent the wingtips from dipping into the water. The six cylinder water-cooled Roberts engine developed 100 horsepower and could sustain speeds of up to 78 mph. When loaded with two passengers and fuel for 225 miles of flight the aircraft weighed 1,900 pounds. Climbing ability was rated at 3,000 feet in ten minutes. Construction costs of the plane were estimated at between $7,500 and $8,000.

**Expectations Dashed**

Initial test flights of the H-2 for the B.C. Forest Branch were carried out in late August by Flight Commander Capt. W.H. MacKenzie of the Royal Air Force. He pronounced it to be a "really excellent machine" which "will fly herself." Without hesitation the Forest Branch signed a one year lease with an option to purchase but their hopes proved to be short-lived.

While flying above Vancouver in view of thousands of spectators the H-2 crashed and was utterly destroyed during another test flight in the afternoon of September 4, 1918. The latest word from the European front took second place as the Vancouver and Victoria newspapers gave extensive coverage to Vancouver's first major and highly public air crash. At this time the mere sight of an aircraft overhead was still an event, an incident like this even more of one.

The pilot on the ill-fated flight was 23 year old Flight Lieut. Victor A. Bishop, a Vancouver resident on leave from his duties as a flight instructor at the Royal Air Force base in Southampton, England. A veteran of many crossings of the English Channel ferrying new aircraft to Paris, as well as battles at Vimy Ridge and the Somme, Bishop held a regular military permit authorizing the flight. Trouble in the peaceful skies above Vancouver was probably the last thing on his mind.

Ascending at 3:00 PM from Coal Harbour, Bishop flew over the city, Burrard Inlet, and English Bay. While over False Creek at an altitude of 1,200 feet the engine started to miss and the aviator considered heading for English Bay, then decided in favour of Coal Harbour and headed there. Before getting over the water the engine stopped altogether and the aircraft, at the wrong altitude and lacking enough forward speed to permit maneuvering, went into a spinning nose dive. The half-hour flight was about to reach a swift conclusion.

Just before the final impact Bishop looked down to see where he was going to hit and brace himself. The housekeeper was alone in a house at the corner of Bute and Alberni streets in the West End of Vancouver but she was soon joined by an aircraft and pilot. Lieutenant Bishop managed, more by good luck than anything else, to crash into the roof. Fortunately all was not lost. A throng of onlookers and souvenir hunters arrived on the scene, not to mention the police and fire departments. The owner of the house, a Dr. J.C. Farish, was nearby and quickly reached the crash site. He rendered assistance to the slightly wounded pilot and accompanied him in an ambulance to the General Hospital.

Dr. Farish's home suffered structural damage as would be expected, largely as a result of the heavy engine bursting through the roof and lodging on the attic staircase. For his part, Bishop suffered some 'acial cuts and slight injury to his back, and likely to his pride as well. While recovering in the hospital he said, with no small measure of understatement:

"Well, anyway, this is the first fall I have ever had, and I am free to say that it was a miraculous escape," adding that he was anxious to get back to France as quickly as possible as "... life away from the war zone has too many risks."

The Hoffar brothers were also on the crash scene swiftly and took charge of the wreckage, examining it and trying to keep the souvenir hunters at bay. The authorities kept the crowd back and contended with advice and suggestions such as that given by a Mr. Dunstone of Rosson Street who proposed that they collect pieces of the wreck and sell them to defray the costs of the brave Lieut. Bishop's hospitalization. The small children, when denied access to the Farish property, contented themselves with pilaging the neighbour's raspberry canes.

**Pattullo Takes Stock**

Ironically, the Hon. T.D. Pattullo, who encouraged the initiation of aerial forest fire patrols and had commissioned construction of the H-2 was engaged in a long distance phone conversation from Victoria to an office in the Pacific Building in downtown Vancouver at the time the biplane flew by. The office window was open and Pattullo "could hear quite plainly" the noise of the engine and propellor until just at that moment the engine faltered and the aircraft began its untimely and ultimate descent.

Pattullo later expressed deep regret over the loss of the plane, the cancellation of the aerial forest fire patrol program, and the swift demise of the proposed provincial air service. He said the government would make good the cost of the plane to the Hoffar firm and pay for the needed repairs to Dr. Farish's house. Given the multitude of uses to which an aircraft could be put when not needed for fire patrols, it was planned to have a new aircraft constructed as soon as possible. For reasons unknown, this remained undone and the honour of first discovery of a forest fire from the air in Canada was claimed by an air crew in Quebec on July 7, 1919.
As much as they were regrettable, air crashes were all too commonplace during the formative years of aviation. Nevertheless, the vast wealth of B.C.’s forests, the damage caused by forest fires, and the relative inefficiency of ground and water-based patrols combined to favour further developments in the use of aircraft in forest fire detection and suppression.

National Developments

In the spring of 1919 the Dominion government came under pressure to employ some of its “mostly idle” aircraft in patrolling Canada’s forests. The Hon. C.C. Ballantyne, the Minister of Marine and Fisheries and Naval Affairs, remained unconvinced of the desirability of such a proposal until pressed by the Hon. Jules Allard, the Quebec Minister of Lands and Forests, the St. Maurice Forest Protective Association; the Canadian Forestry Association; and the Aerial League of Canada. In response, two Curtiss HS-2L flying boats were flown from Nova Scotia to Lac à la Tortue, Quebec and forest fire patrol operations began.

Meanwhile, civil aviation was growing apace. In British Columbia a forest fire was detected from the air for the first time in late September of 1919. The aircraft, a Curtiss JN-4 named Pathfinder No. 2, was over Duncan on Vancouver Island when the pilot spotted a mass of smoke emanating from dense woods. After proceeding to the spot he circled to ascertain the nature of the fire and its exact location, then landed at Duncan to turn in a report to the Forest Branch which then took suppression action.

Dominion Air Board Activities

Coincidental with the June 1919 acquisition of the two HS-2Ls by the St. Maurice Forest Protective Association was a $5,000 gift by Great Britain to Canada consisting of 80 land-based aircraft, 14 flying boats, 12 airships, 300 motors, hangars, and other equipment used during the Great War. The United States also donated 12 HS-2Ls. A sizeable air fleet was suddenly at Canada’s disposal.

When the Air Board Act received assent on June 6, 1919 the Dominion Air Board was established to administer civil aviation in Canada. Staff were hired, Air Regulations written, and aeronautical maps prepared to aid navigation. The Air Board began to utilize the store of war surplus material and laid the groundwork for large scale air operations. An interdepartmental conference was held to study immediate aviation requirements and those involved made recommendations regarding placement of the fleet.

Accordingly, air stations were established at Vancouver, B.C.; High River, Alberta; Victoria Beach, Manitoba; Sioux Lookout and Ottawa, Ontario; Roberval, Quebec; and Halifax, Nova Scotia. While a number of the war surplus planes were sold to private concerns, the Air

\[\text{The potential uses for the airplane in forestry prompted these cartoons which appeared in the Canadian Forestry Journal in 1920.}\]
Board retained the majority for use at the bases across Canada. Private enterprise was left free to develop the potentials of aircraft use without hindrance but also without a great deal of help from the federal government.

**Vancouver Air Station**

The Vancouver Air Station was established at Jericho Beach in February of 1920 on land which had been a naval reserve belonging to Great Britain and subsequently ceded back to the province which then donated it to the Dominion government for use as an airbase. Canvas hangars, a concrete platform, and slipways were built in 1920 and 1921 and in the following year permanent wooden hangars and workshops were built.

As the creation of the Canadian Air Force by Order-in-Council soon followed on February 18, 1920, the flying from Jericho was actually carried out by members of the CAF under the direction of the Canada Air Board. The Air Board itself was reconstituted by Order-in-Council on April 19, 1920 with a mandate to regulate civilian aviation, conduct government flying operations, and organize and administer the CAF. The officers and men of the CAF were interchangeable with the Civil Operations Branch, which administered non-military civil flying.

Two types of flying boats were based at Jericho—the Curtiss HS-2L and the Felixstowe F.3. The Curtiss HS-2L was a pusher type biplane and carried a maximum of four people—usually just an observer forward in the nose seat and pilot and flight engineer side by side further aft. The craft weighed 3 1/2 tons, had a payload of 600-700 pounds, a wingspan of 75 feet, and the 12 cylinder 330 horsepower Liberty motor could sustain a top speed of 65 to 70 knots. Although somewhat temperamental (the engine would occasionally overheat and cascade hot water into the cockpit) the HS-2L gained the admiration of its crew. The riggers had a maze of bracing wires to keep in tune and used to joke that if a bird released in the midst of it all could find its way out then something wasn’t quite right.

In January of 1918 Frithiof Ericson, the Chief Engineer of Canadian Aeroplanes Ltd. in Toronto, went to England at the request of the U.S. Air Board to study the Felixstowe flying boat. Upon his return the factory was contracted to build thirty of the craft, known as F.3s or Great Americas, for the U.S. government. With a wingspan of 102 feet they equalled that dimension of the Lancaster bomber and nearly matched that of the Canso flying boat of later years. Two 12 cylinder Rolls Royce or Liberty engines were capable of propelling the aircraft to 87 mph although it took 10 minutes to reach 850 feet in altitude with four crew and a 1,000 pound payload. Twelve people and their gear could be accommodated.

No planes were assembled in time for active duty during the forest fire season of 1920 but in that fall an HS-2L was shipped by rail to Mara Lake near Sicamous and reassembled for ten days of testing. The initiative was taken by Vancouver Air Station superintendent Major Clarence MacLaurin. The purposes of the exercise, according to MacLaurin’s report, were to demonstrate to the Dominion and provincial forestry officials the potential uses of aircraft in transportation, ascertain which type of plane would be best suited to the area, study mountain flying conditions, test the performance of the HS-2L at different altitudes, and select a site for a possible subsidiary base.

Twenty flights were carried out between Ashcroft, Kamloops, and Mara, Nicola, and Mabel lakes between November 4 and 15, 1920. A wide variety of passengers...
was taken aloft. D. Roy Cameron mapped portions of the Railway Belt lands and noted access points for fire lighting purposes and G.P. Melrose, provincial District Forester at Kamloops, studied the North Thompson Valley. Other forest superintendents and fire rangers carried out reconnaissance work and the editor of the Kamloops Standard braved the cold weather just for the experience. Two notable passengers were Mrs. Meighen on November 5 and the next day the Hon. Arthur Meighen, Prime Minister of Canada, both for demonstration flights from Kamloops.

After the last flight on November 15 the HS-2L was dismantled for shipment back to Vancouver. This trial, the first operational use of an aircraft for forestry in B.C., was judged to have been very successful in spite of the cold weather. In MacLaurin's words in all of 1,728 miles flown "no unusual conditions were encountered and at no time did the machine approach being unmanageable or cause the slightest alarm."

**The 1921 Season**

In April of 1921 two more Great America F.3s arrived at Jericho for assembly and general use. The station's complement would then be four F.3s and six HS-2Ls, only two of which were assembled and in use, although that number increased to five by the fall. Both types of flying boats were to prove their worth in a variety of operations: forest fire patrols, fire suppression, forest reconnaissance and inventory, and aerial photography for the B.C. Forest Branch and the federal Department of the Interior; transportation and reconnaissance for the Geodetic Survey Branch; drug smuggling patrols for the Department of Customs; transportation and patrols for the Department of Fisheries; and a number of different surveys for other government departments were carried out in 1921. The provincial government was the major customer between May and October for forestry work and contributed $20,000 towards the operating costs of the base.

A reconnaissance of wind-damaged timber limits on south-western Vancouver Island was one of the first operations carried out in 1921. Initial estimates of damage from the January 29th gale ranged from 10 to 30% of the high quality timber and prompted the Deputy Minister of Lands, G.R. Naden, to personally inspect the area between Victoria and Port San Juan from the air to assess the situation. That flight and subsequent ones determined that the actual damage was closer to 1% and scattered between Sooke, Nitinat, Port Alberni, and Lake Cowichan. In all, 30 hours of flying covered nearly 5 million acres.

The provincial Forest Branch and federal Department of the Interior both employed the Dominion Air Board flying boats for detecting forest fires and transporting men and machinery to as near as possible to the site of forest fires. Pilots and aerial observers would determine the fire's location, size, and rate of spread as well as the timber type in flame or at risk. Topographic features which might influence the behaviour of the fire or be used to advantage during suppression actions were noted, as were access routes and availability of water. When possible they tried to estimate the number of men required to fight the blaze.

Additionally, flights were made over fires being subjected to suppression action in order to size up the effectiveness of measures taken and to assess the possibilities for improving further work. With no means of radio communication available yet, messages were either dropped from the aircraft or sent to the Jericho base via homing pigeons. An alternative would be to land, locate a telephone or telegraph office, and relay a message.

![F.3 and Forest Branch boat, the R.J. Skinner at Thurston Bay. Western Lumberman, July 1922.](image)

The HS-2Ls were multipurpose machines but the larger F.3 was specially set aside to transport a fire fighting crew, handtools, and a pump to fires on an emergency basis. Circumstances did not require its use in this capacity during 1921 but the concept was retained.

Although an HS-2L was stationed at Kamloops in the summer of 1921 and patrolled from there to Revelstoke, the south coast received emphasis as it contained the most valuable timber in the province. Major L.R. Andrews, the District Forester in Vancouver, estimated that the 800 to 1,000 logging camps in that district employed 10,000 to 12,000 men, had 350 to 375 steam donkeys and locomotives, and annually produced about 50,000 acres of slash—all of it a fire hazard. In addition there was the risk of fire starts due to land clearing operations, campers, travellers, and of course lightning.

To counter the threat of the 300 to 1,000 fires experienced annually on the south coast, patrols were carried out each Wednesday and Sunday during July and August. From Jericho Beach the outbound flight went as far as Bute Inlet and, after a pause at the Forest Branch station at Thurston Bay on Sonora Island, the patrol returned following the east coast of Vancouver Island as far south as Saanich Inlet. In all, 21 fires were detected on these aerial patrols in 1921.

These initial experiences with the use of aircraft for forest fire detection and suppression won many people over in both the provincial and federal forestry services. In
the words of B.C. Forest Branch Chief Forester Peter Z. Caverhill:

"What will be the ultimate future of the aeroplane, or seaplane, as used on the coast in connection with our work, it is impossible to even attempt to forecast. British Columbia, with its miles of coast line, its numerous lakes and rivers, offers the ideal operating area for seaplanes. From the many possibilities already demonstrated it is not too much to expect that in the future the use of planes in connection with general Forest Branch work will exceed even our most optimistic plans."

Such glowing optimism was provisionally endorsed by the Secretary of Dominion Air Board, J.A. Wilson, who added that:

"The machines available are all of them war-machines of obsolescent types. Most of the Stations are merely on the banks of rivers or lakes— without hangars, workshop accommodation, or other conveniences. If flying under these conditions can produce such satisfactory results, there is no doubt that when machines especially designed have been obtained, and when permanent structures for their repair and accommodation are available, the results will be beyond all question."

**The 1922 Season**

The forest fire season of 1922 was characterized by an extended drought, many fires, and very smoky atmospheric conditions which established themselves as early as June 1st and later in the summer made aerial navigation "difficult and sometimes dangerous." In this year the previous work was repeated and in addition the flying boats were used to convey fire fighters and other officials to, as well as transfer them between, forest fires.

One of the highlights of the season, at least for the participants, was an aerial inspection tour of forestry operations on the south coast which took place on June 27 and 28. With Major MacLaurin at the controls of an F 3 the Minister of Lands, Hon. T. D. Pattullo; the Deputy Minister of Lands, G.R. Naden; Chief Forester, Peter Z. Caverhill; District Forester, Major L.R. Andrews; executives of the Nimpkish Timber Company, and others flew as far as Kingcome Inlet and returned to end the flight at Nimpkish Lake. The press representative, the Editor of *Western Lumberman*, waxed poetic over the marvellous scenery and experience of flying "in the purest of air of brilliant sunlight" but ended his report on a more serious note:

"But on this trip the beauties are incidental to its practical side. Here in three or four hours flying can be seen the work that the Forest Branch is carrying on laid out before you like a great contour map. Here

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Air Board's F.3 ready to take aboard Ministry of Lands inspection party, in June of 1922. Left to Right: Major A. MacLaurin, Pilot; Mr. Naden, Deputy Minister of Lands; Couley, Relief Pilot; Clifford B. English, Superintendent Nimpkish Timber Company; Mr. P. Z. Caverhill, Chief Forester; Norman A. English, Manager Nimpkish Timber Company; Hon. T.D. Pattullo, Minister of Lands; Major L.R. Andrews, District Forester; Mr. F.R. Alley; Henry C. Copeland, Editor Western Lumberman.
such a ranger is at work making an inspection, over there ranger so-and-so has fifty men at work fighting fire. At this spot is such a timber sale. That fire started over there from such a cause, and so it goes until one grows dizzy trying to absorb all the information."

It was also during the fire season of 1922 that the F.3 flying boat received its first big test and passed with honours. A fire at Buttle Lake on Vancouver Island was reported on July 28th and it was estimated that ground travel to the site would take two days and require construction of 14 miles of new trail. By the time that could be carried out the blaze would in all probability be too large to control.

Obviously the F.3 was the solution. With MacLaurin as pilot it left Campbell River the next morning carrying a gas-powered portable pump, 1,200 feet of hose, hand tools, a 16 man tent, a camp outfit, provisions for 84 man days, and four fire fighters. In spite of being overweight with a 4,095 pound payload (useful load being 4,250), the machine made it to Buttle Lake easily and discharged its men and materials into collapsible boats to go ashore. Three more men were transported to the scene and after an all-night effort the fire was brought under control.

Ironically, just a few weeks earlier Major MacLaurin had made a plea for more aircraft. He stated that the three planes in running order were in almost constant use, the mechanics were working long and late hours, and the workload was sufficient to demand two additional machines. In fact the machines were considered to be obsolete when they were first acquired and only constant maintenance and repair kept them airworthy.

During 1921 and 1922 the provincial and federal forestry agencies were the major customers of the Vancouver Air Station. Out of more than 1,100 flights totalling 830 hours, covering 49,400 miles, and carrying 1,896 passengers the B.C. Forest Branch led the way with 231 hours of flight time over 14,114 miles and involving 423 passengers. The Department of the Interior ranked second with 142 hours, 9,182 miles, and 260 passengers. The majority of this flying was in connection with forest fire detection and suppression, secondarily general forest reconnaissance and inventory, and aerial photography.

The 1923 to 1926 Seasons

On January 1, 1923 the Air Board ceased to exist, being superceded by the Department of National Defense, with the Minister of Defense responsible for defense and all military, naval, and civilian flying in Canada. Civilian personnel either joined the new Canadian Air Force or left to pursue other endeavours. The "Royal" appellation was approved by King George V on February 15, 1923 and a reorganized Royal Canadian Air Force officially came into being on April 1, 1924. These changes did not affect the administration of civil aviation.

Although both forestry agencies made plans to utilize the aircraft in 1923 and successive years, only the Department of the Interior made much further use of the Jericho fleet. The B.C. Forest Branch had become disenchanted with the limitations of the obsolete HS-2Ls and Great Americas (both were unsuited to mountain flying generally as they has a ceiling of 7,000 to 8,000 feet) as well as the excessive costs of maintenance demanded to keep them functioning. Indeed the F.3s were not flown after 1923 anywhere in Canada.

Henceforth the B.C. Forest Branch employed the aircraft only on a casual basis for forest fire detection and forest reconnaissance, reimbursing the Department of National Defense for costs incurred. Just 45 hours of flight time were logged in 1924 and some of this was merely to drop fire prevention leaflets and conservation messages on logging camps and settlements.

The CAF was fully cognizant of the drawbacks of the existing fleet and in 1923 contracted for the delivery of eight Vickers Viking Mark IV amphibian flying boats which had been designed by Vickers in England in 1920. These machines were smaller, easier to handle and maintain, had a greater carrying capacity in relation to their horsepower, and a higher ceiling. By the end of 1924 the first Canadian-built Viking was still being tested by Vickers in Montreal. Six were eventually built in this country although others were imported from England.
The Vickers Vedette was the first commercial airplane to be designed and built in Canada to meet Canadian flying conditions. At the 1924 annual meeting of the Canadian Society of Forest Engineers a subcommittee was formed to consider aircraft requirements for forestry operations. Recommendations regarding the aircraft features desired were given to the Department of National Defense and taken up by Canadian Vickers for aircraft design and construction. The prototype first flew on November 4, 1925 and went to the Department of National Defense. The first of a total of sixty production Vedettes was built for Fairchild Aerial Surveys of Canada Ltd and rolled off the line in Montreal on May 10, 1926. It was specially designed for fire patrols, forest reconnaissance, and aerial photography and was greeted with enthusiasm by the aviation community. The RCAF took delivery of its long-awaited new flying boat that year in the form of four Vedettes.

The RCAF’s annual report for the fiscal year 1925-1926 complained of the handicaps resulting from the “lack of suitable equipment owing to the paucity of funds.” With regard to the Jericho station, that report as well as the one for the following fiscal year stated that the provision of more modern aircraft to permit greater efficiency in both civil and military flying operations was “an urgent necessity.” Apparently the new supply of Vedettes was slow to make its way across the country.

The coup de grace was nearly delivered to the Vancouver Air Station when, in 1926, its allotment of flying time was cut from 300 hours to 150. The staff of five officers and 21 other ranks was to be cut to two and nine respectively, with only two HS-2Ls available—one for regular service and the other to remain in reserve. With the provincial Forest Branch refusing to fund RCAF aerial fire patrols until more modern, reliable, and cost-effective aircraft became available and the RCAF wishing to enter into a cost-sharing scheme with the province to ensure the viability of the operations, this reduction in service and lack of new equipment sounded the death knell for regular and extensive use of aircraft in forestry operations in B.C.

Postscript

Elsewhere in Canada the RCAF fleet was still being used for forestry purposes by provincial and federal agencies and in Ontario a provincial air service was created in 1924 to take over from the failed Laurentide Air Service operation by absorbing its fleet and buying additional HS-2Ls.

The Canadian aircraft industry began to prosper from the mid-1920’s onward but the delay between the demise of the war surplus machines and the availability of new and reliable ones served to frustrate those agencies, both public and private, which had honestly hoped to make advancements in forest fire detection and suppression, and indeed in all other fields of forest management through the employment of aircraft.

While planes were used in British Columbia in the latter part of the 1920’s for occasional forest fire patrols and special projects such as spraying insecticides on pest-infested forests, the initial promise which aircraft seemed to hold was not attained until decades later. Similar applications of new technology took place following World War II and firmly established the aircraft, both fixed and rotary-winged varieties, in their present multiplicity of forestry roles.
• The One-Armed Whistle Punk
• Guardians in the Sky
• Industrial Timber Mills
• Olof "Tie" Hanson
• A Gyppo Logger's Wife