

BRITAIN CALLING

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Outstanding event of the past few weeks, naturally, was the first non-stop crossing of the Atlantic by a jet aircraft—the historic flight of the Canberra on February 21 from Aldergrove, Northern Ireland, to Gander, Newfoundland. Not only was this the fastest crossing of the Atlantic, in 4 hours 40 minutes for the 2,100 statute miles against headwinds, but it was probably flown at a greater height than any previous record Atlantic flight. The average height maintained for the flight was 40,000 feet.

Radio Equipment: For its flight the Canberra was equipped with special Marconi radio equipment consisting of the Marconi A.D. 108 receiver, A.D. 7092A automatic radio compass and the A.D. 107 high power transmitter with the suppressed direction finding loop which was recently designed by Marconi engineers. The radiator for the high power communications transmitter was a special type of buried antennae which was designed by the Royal Aircraft Establishment in conjunction with the Marconi Company. Perfect communication was maintained with the Canberra when it was 1,500 miles out over the Atlantic and the navigator was obtaining navigational aid from the radio compass when the Canberra was 500 miles from the coast of Newfoundland.

The official announcement described the Canberra's flight to the U.S.A. as necessary for the policy of interchanging information about Service equipment.

Taking in the Laundry: Continuing the process of "taking in each other's laundry" which is so prevalent these days in the interests of re-armament and speeding up production, a substantial production order for the Merlin-powered Boulton Paul Balliol Trainer has been given to Blackburn and General Aircraft Ltd.

In Belgium, Avions Fairey is to build Gloster Meteor 8s to speed up deliveries for the Belgian Air Force.

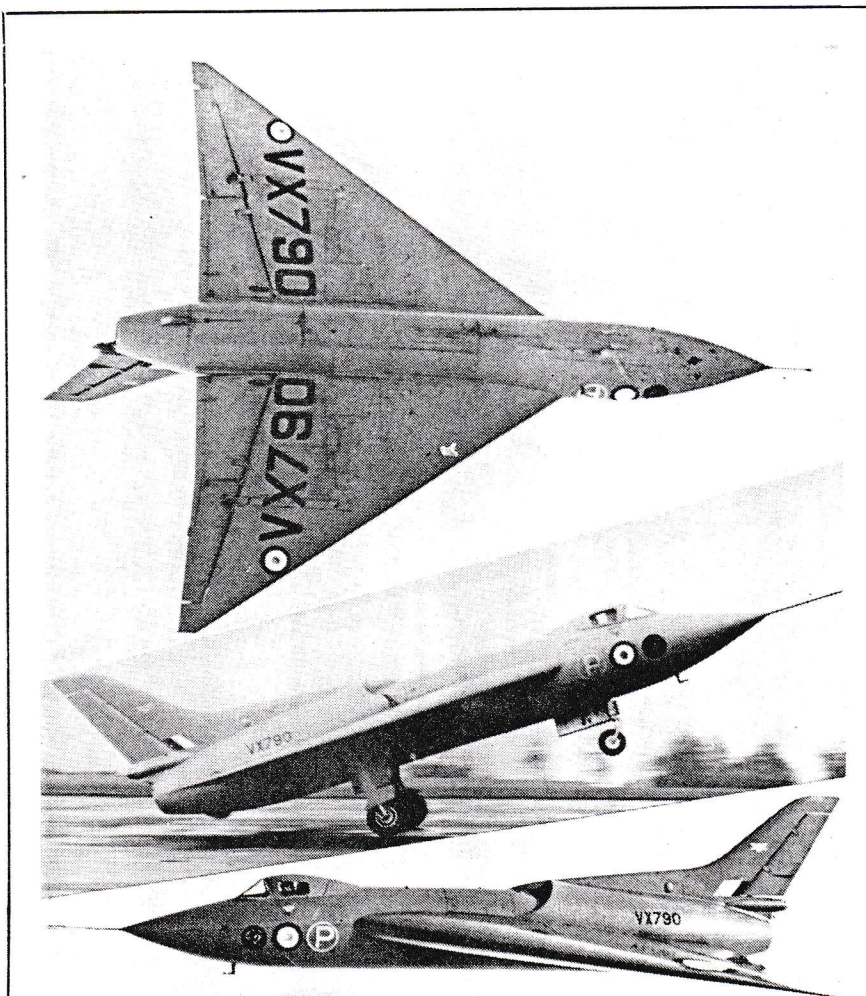
Another trainer which has been chosen by the RAF is the Percival P.56 side-by-side basic training airplane which was shown for the first time at the SBAC Flying Display

last year. Three prototypes have been built, two with Armstrong Siddeley Cheetah Mark 17 engines and the third with the Alvis Leonides. The Alvis-powered version has been chosen by the RAF. Whether the production order for this trainer is big enough to involve sharing with another manufacturer, is not known. The P.56 is to replace the Percival Prentic trainer in the RAF.

The Ambassador: British European Airway's first production Ambassador (to be known as the Elizabethan class) is now scheduled for delivery and final completion on April 28 and the second on May 26. The Corporation

hopes to start limited commercial services with the Ambassador early in June and to be operating full schedules with this type by August. Normal accommodation in the Ambassador will be for 47 passengers, with the four front rows of seats (18), facing backward towards a Pullman compartment in the middle. The two prototype Ambassadors and the production prototype have now flown well over 1,100 hours of test flying.

Further evidence that backward-facing seats are safer was given recently when a Vickers Valetta with 25 RAF cadets on board, returning from a visit to Sweden, crashed in a snowstorm near Stockholm. Although the second pilot died from his injuries and four other occupants were injured, the cadets escaped. Backward-facing seats are standard in the Valetta, and it looks as if before long this form of



TRICORN: The Avro Manchester 707B experimental delta wing aircraft is shown in three photos taken during flight trials. The ailerons on this machine are said to be very powerful and a high rate of roll is the result (top). The lower picture shows the 707B in level flight, while in the middle, one method of landing is demonstrated. Another method utilizes an anti-spin parachute to induce drag.