

# CORRESPONDENCE

The Editor of "Flight" is not necessarily in agreement with the views expressed by correspondents in these columns. The names and addresses of the writers, not for publication in detail, must in all cases accompany letters.

## Long Time No "C"

Why BEA has dropped its C  
I fear is quite a question.  
Is CAA C.A.A.C.  
At Mr Fox's suggestion?\*

A.N.A.C., not TAA  
Would give the right inflexion;  
T.A.L.C. for TCA,  
To better its complexion.

But please, no more B.E.A.C.  
Just BEA will do.  
We've made short-haul air transport pay  
And made it cheaper, too.

A body that can do all that  
In working for the nation  
Has surely shed sufficient "fat"  
To lose its Corporation.

Ruislip, Middx

PETER W. BROOKS,  
Technical Assistant to Chairman, BEA

\*See letter from Mr D. K. Fox in "Flight" of September 9.

## Coanda's 1910 Jet Experiments

SOME time ago, Fritz von Opel's 1929 flight in a solid-propellant rocket aircraft was quoted as the first jet-powered flight by a man. It seems that the first jet flight could well be that claimed by Henri Coanda in December 1910. He built what might be termed a "piston fan jet"-powered biplane, in which a piston engine drove a ducted fan, the air impelled by which was mixed with fuel and, with the piston engine's exhaust gases, producing a jet stream. Coanda says he lifted the machine off the ground, but at too high an angle; the wing heeled over and he could not control the aircraft. He injected more fuel into the turbine, but this set the aircraft on fire; he cut off the fuel, the biplane stalled, and Coanda was thrown clear of the machine as it fell to the ground.

If this is a true account of what happened, the half-centenary of the first flight by a jet powered aircraft will fall in December this year. Coanda appears to have made a large number of other brilliant inventions, and is now working on a 500km/hr "flying saucer" to sell at the price of a medium-priced car.

Croydon, Surrey

T. R. SERVIAN

## Cross-Channel Ballooning

AS was to be expected, the recent balloon crossing of the Channel gave rise to considerable telephone querying here.

Our first intimation that such an event was taking place was a telephone call from a journalist on the South Coast on the morning of the take-off. He wanted to know when the Channel was last crossed by a balloon. Not keeping this sort of thing on my scratch-pad I started to look back through the volumes of your excellent journal and after a full morning of index-searching I came to the conclusion that the last time the crossing was made was reported in *Flight* on December 19, 1935, when one of 11 balloons from Gelsenkirchen landed at South Cockerington. In the Gordon Bennett Balloon Race in September 1933 a team from Dusseldorf landed at Berwick-on-Tweed (*Flight*, September 28). On February 14, 1929, you, Sir, reported that a balloon which had ascended from Bitterfeld "last Sunday morning" was beset by a storm during an inland cruise and finished up near Aberdeen under the impression that it was in the Netherlands.

Perhaps all of these may be dismissed as involuntary and as being over the North Sea; but I think a crossing mentioned in your issue of June 25, 1925, fills the cross-Channel requirements. Mrs John Dunville, accompanied by Capt M. Dunville (her son) and Cdr Baldwin made an ascent in the balloon *Banshee III* from the Welsh Harp, Hendon, at 1 a.m. on June 21 and landed near the Belgian frontier later that morning. This also clears up any queries about the last woman, the last mother, the last mother with her son, the last night trip, the last night trip by a woman and so on *ad nauseam*.

I hope I am right but I am quite ready (and willing) to be corrected. It certainly seems to be later than the crossing quoted by some reporters—that of 1913, when the Gordon Bennett Balloon Race competitors, aiming at Geneva, managed in one case to land near Bridlington, having started from the Tuileries. As a matter of interest, one of the competitors in that race was a Mr John Dunville in *Banshee*.

London W1

F. H. SMITH,  
Librarian, the Royal Aeronautical Society

## A Rain of Farthings

From AVM Sir John W. Cordingley, KCB, CBE, RAF(Retd).

YOU were kind enough to print my appeal to your readers to send unwanted farthings, now obsolete in our currency, to help this Fund. Your readers may now like to know that already we have received over 13,000 farthings. Bearing in mind the high cost of postage and stationery, and since many were sent anonymously, I should like to take this, my only opportunity, to thank all who have turned out their cupboards in this helpful way.

Nor all your readers sent farthings. Silver threepenny bits and other coins helped to produce a total of nearly £50. One postal order was accompanied solely by the message "With love." A reader who had no farthings sent £1, representing 960 farthings, following it up later with a cheque for a further £4. I was particularly touched by his regard for the RAF, since he described himself as "an old horse soldier of World War I."

Incidentally, among coins received were several minted in the reigns of George II, George III and George IV.

Every little helps, and the farthings will soon be doing good work for relief of distress among serving and ex-Service members of the RAF, WRAF, their families and dependants.

London W1

JOHN W. CORDINGLEY,  
Controller, RAF Benevolent Fund

## Australian Industry and the RAAF

IN regard to Mr D. C. Clayton's letter in the July 22 issue concerning Australian aircraft production: The facts are that the Australian aircraft industry supplied 3,500 aircraft to the RAAF in 1939-45, and 2,850 engines. Without Australian-built Tiger Moths, Wackett Trainers and Wirraways the RAAF could not have been trained for Pacific operations and the EATS system in Australia simply could not have operated at all. That is history—I have read Herington and Odgers several times. The Beaverbrook cable of 1940 and the subsequent allocations of UK-US aircraft to other theatres starved the RAAF—but in this connection I was referring to the Pacific. Of course the RAAF got aircraft to fight in RAF squadrons, or for the EATS squadrons formed by the RAAF for the German-Italian campaigns. But the Pacific War was another matter.

Vengeances and Liberators are mentioned in Mr Clayton's letter. The RAAF got Vengeances because an Australian Cabinet Minister was given them in Washington and did not realize they were of no use in New Guinea. Mr Odgers' volume of the RAAF Official History distinctly says that most of the hundreds of Vengeances were not used operationally and were actually withdrawn on General MacArthur's personal orders. The RAAF in the Pacific got Liberators only when they were replaced in the USAAF as heavy bombers by the B-29.

The RAAF in the Pacific was never given first-line, first-rate operational aircraft throughout the war—unless the Kittyhawk could be so described in 1942-43. The RAAF's Mustangs were not in operation until the very last weeks of the Pacific War.

In 1942-43 the RAAF simply could not have fought in New Guinea at all without home-grown Beauforts, Beaufighters, Wirraways and Boomerangs. There was nothing else to fight with except some Hudsons.

In other words, the RAAF was given weapons when it was fighting in Europe and Africa, but not to defend its own shores. The lesson thus learned is very deep in the Australian consciousness, and most vividly in the minds of all RAAF senior officers today, who saw this at first hand.

Melbourne

STANLEY BROGDEN

## Living Near London Airport

AS a long-suffering resident of south-west Middlesex I should like to take Mr Estill to task about his remarks [Correspondence, September 16] concerning the price of property near London Airport.

Local inhabitants are not trying to profit from a rise in the price of their property, nor are they trying to throttle the growth of London Airport as a world centre. All they want is peace and quiet. Most of us were born in this area long before LAP came into existence and, strange as it may seem, most of us like it here! Why should we move just because of short-sighted planning in the building of an international airport in a heavily populated fog-zone?

One shudders to think what might happen if one of the big jets goes the same way as the unfortunate Viking in Southall.