



"B.O.A.C. Number 1", with its four Rolls-Royce Merlin 626s installed, at the head of Canadair's final assembly line.

# A Call on Canadair

## PART I: B.O.A.C. Fleet on the Stocks at Montreal

By H. F. KING, M.B.E.

TO inspect production of Canadair Fours under construction for B.O.A.C. I left London Airport in Constellation *Bedford* on the night of Sunday, February 13th. Though merely incidental, the passage to Montreal provided some interesting experiences of winter flying over the North Atlantic, warranting brief mention in this account.

Though every comfort and attention was accorded by B.O.A.C., difficulties dogged the flight from the start; whereas the take-off time was scheduled for 7 o'clock, *Bedford* was grounded until 10-15 by c.s.u. trouble and we were not in Prestwick until after midnight. An oil leak now delayed us until nearly 3.30 on Monday morning, at which time the steward broke the news to our tired and fretful company that Iceland—not, as we had expected, Newfoundland—would be our next stop. Faced with 100-knot winds, *Bedford* ascended in moonlight to 20,000ft and at 7.40 G.M.T. was on a G.C.A. approach through a snow-

storm to Keflavik (formerly Meeks Field). From the aircraft to shelter our way was fraught with the perils and discomforts of ice, snow, darkness and ferocious wind; but bacon and eggs, and coffee with tinned milk from its original container, worked such internal wonders that another three-hour wait was endured with a minimum of profanity. The cheery company of Mr. "Tim" Sims, of Canadair's sales staff, was a blessing indeed.

At last the "Connie" was poised at the runway head; but once again she was to be frustrated. As Captain Heron was in the very act of opening up the four Cyclone 18s, a snow blizzard of such density and force swept down the airfield that take-off was utterly impossible, and *Bedford* stood muttering until such time as fury abated and some view of the runway was temporarily offered.

For the next 8½ hours we were cruising in sunshine, mostly above thick cloud and against a wind which at one point reduced our speed to 167 m.p.h.; but by marvellous luck we were granted a view of Greenland—a forlorn, frozen and ice-encompassed land, compared with which Goose Bay, Labrador, where we touched down at 19.01 G.M.T., appeared a rest home. Here the thermometer stood at minus 8 deg F—a mere 40 deg of frost, and insufficient to deter us from remaining long enough in the bright, freezing air to watch an R.C.A.F. Dakota taking off on skis.

Deploring our inability to visit the nearby post of the Hudson's Bay Com-



Canadair and B.O.A.C. officials in conclave at Cartierville, Montreal. Mr. Emmert, vice-president of Canadair, is at the head of the table and Mr. Strawson, B.O.A.C.'s senior plant representative, is in the centre of the nearer group