station assisted by staff drawn from local labour and trained on the spot as launch crews, and for maintenance work. When the flying-boat routes were expanded during the last war a special recruiting drive was made for crews, and a Marine Training School was set up alongside the flying-boat training school at Vaaldam near Johannesburg. At home, women were recruited and were retained as coxswains until the closing of the war-time bases and the return of the B.O.A.C. staff from the fighting services.

The Corporation's fleet now consists of craft ranging from 60ft pinnaces to 16ft dinghies, for control, fire control, towing and for conveying passengers and freight to and from aircraft. Control launches are equipped with radio and crash equipment and are used to ensure that the alighting area is clear and that aircraft can alight or take off safely. In some cases the duties of fire prevention and control are combined but the fire controlling launches are generally 38ft ex-R.A.F. seaplane tenders fitted with twin diesel engines and a powerful fixed fire pump. In addition, the alighting area must be kept free of plant growth and the launches are employed to keep the water clear of floating vegetation. Such control and fire fighting facilities would normally be the responsibility of the airport authority and not of the aircraft operator, but as is well known some local authorities are unable to accept such responsibility and expenditure, and in those circumstances B.O.A.C. operates the equipment as agents for the Ministry of Civil Aviation. Pontoons, into which the flying boats are "warped" by power operated winches, have been installed at Southampton and Alexandria. As they are installed at other bases so the necessity for marine craft will diminish.

"A Girdle Round the Earth"

Boeing B-50, Using Flight Refuelling, Circumnavigates the Globe in 94 Hours

To a Boeing B-50 strategic bomber of the United States Air Force goes the distinction of being the first aircraft to fly non-stop round the world. The distance covered—23,452 miles—is about 1,500 miles less than the earth's equatorial circumference.

Bearing the name Lucky Lady II, the B-50 left Fort Worth, Texas, at 11.21 a.m. on February 26th and touched down on the same runway at 9.21 a.m. on March 2nd (Central Standard times). She had been refuelled in flight by pairs of B-29 tankers over the Azores; Dharan in Saudi Arabia; the Philippines; and Hawaii. British equipment, supplied by Flight Refuelling, Ltd., was employed. Kelvin, Bottomley and Baird, Ltd., were responsible for a number of the refuelling instruments.

The announcement of the flight came as a complete surprise, secrecy having been rigidly maintained since a sister aircraft, attempting a similar flight, had come down in the sea on February 25th with an engine on fire, having covered 1,000 miles.

Under the command of Capt. James Gallagher, the crew of fourteen were greeted on return by Mr. Symington (Secretary of Air), General Vandenberg (Air Chief of Staff), General Lemay (Strategic Air Commander) and Major-General Ramey (Commander of the Eighth Air Force). Official pronouncements described the flight as "part of a continuing programme of flight-refuelling training flights, which will be flown to all parts of the world," and as proof that "the whole world is within range of America's atom-bomb sights."

Except that it was adapted for flight refuelling, the B-50 was standard and carried its armament of twelve 0.5m guns, but no ammunition or bombs. One Wing of these machines is already in service (Lucky Lady belonged to the 43rd Bomber Wing) but many of the 350 ordered remain to be delivered. A direct development of the B-29 Superfortress, the B-50 is described by its makers as being "75 per cent new in design." Structurally more efficient, it is distinguishable from its predecessor by the massive cowlings for Pratt and Whitney Wasp Major 36-cylinder engines and by a fin five feet taller than the B-29's. The all-out speed is about 400 m.p.h., and with normal fuel tankage a five-ton bomb load can be carried for 6,000 miles. For shorter ranges ten tons can be stowed.

The B-50's performance is especially interesting, because the type is the bomber counterpart of the Stratocruiser airliner, as ordered for B.O.A.C. Details of wind and weather during the flight are not available, but the average speeds for the various legs were: Fort Worth-Azores, 250 m.p.h.; Azores-Dharan, 270 m.p.h.; Dharan-Philippines, 242 m.p.h.; Philippines-Hawaii, 242 m.p.h.

After the completion of the historic flight it was announced that a B-29 tanker failed to return to its base in the Philippines after refuelling the B-50.

An outstanding feature of the installation is the extensive system of communication, the control for which is decentralized by means of six radio panels, one at each crew station. This arrangement permits each crew member to select and mix together (with individual volume controls) the output of separate receivers, to select any of the transmitters and, in the case of the radio-operator, to use either V/T or R/T on the transmitter selected. In addition, intercommunication between crew members is provided as a continuous service, irrespective of any other service in use at the same time.

Mr. C. Nelson, of the B.O.A.C. sales department, will shortly be flying the second of these machines out to Allahabad. During a three-week stay in India he will acquaint the Indian pilots with the characteristics of the aircraft.

BALLIOL CRASH INQUEST

VERDICTS of "accidental death" were returned at the inquest, held at Tettenhall on March 2nd, on Mr. R. Lindsay Neale and Mr. Peter Tisshaw, who were killed when (as reported in Flight of February 19th) a prototype Balliol 2 crashed near Wolverhampton on February 3rd.

Mr. J. D. North said that examination of the wreckage suggested that the windscreen might have been broken—possibly by a bird—and the cockpit inclination was 45°. The coroner said that no evidence of negligence had been found, and that the Balliol (which, according to an A.I.D. witness, had done less than 50 hours' flying) was completely serviceable.

The Ansons have a striking black and yellow identification scheme.