

FOLLAND EJECTOR SEAT

"Dumbo" Willans Makes First Live Test

A SUCCESSFUL live ejection has now been made with the Folland lightweight automatic ejector seat. The test took place over Netheravon airfield on December 21st, when Maj. T. W. ("Dumbo") Willans ejected from the rear cockpit of a modified Meteor 7 flown by Folland test pilot Dick Whittington. The ejection was made at an airspeed of 150 kt at 5,000ft, with a wind of 15 kt. The sky over the dropping zone was almost obscured by broken cloud and few, if any observers on the ground saw the actual ejection. All around were dark, heavy cloud-banks. The bang was heard and watchers caught sight of the open parachute at intervals before Willans finally emerged from the clouds. He landed well and truly on the airfield, and the seat fell some distance away.

The Folland seat has a combined seat and parachute harness specially developed by G.Q. Parachute Co., Ltd., and the pilot wears the latest G.Q. 24ft lightweight canopy. About one second after ejection, the man is released from the seat; and, though both then have approximately the same drag, the seat is lighter and falls away behind him. Immediately after this, a small stabilizing parachute emerges from the main pack to steady the man in free fall and an emergency oxygen bottle in the pack is turned on. As soon as 10,000ft is reached in stabilized fall, a barometric device releases the main canopy. In the Netheravon test, of course, when the ejection was made below 10,000ft, the parachute was deployed straight away. A Folland leg-restraint has

been designed but was not fitted on this occasion. Firing is by pulling a handle above the head rest and drawing a protective blind over the face. An alternative firing handle is located on the front of the seat pan. During the test the seat separated after one second and the parachute was set to open three seconds later in order to allow clear observation of the working of the various elements.

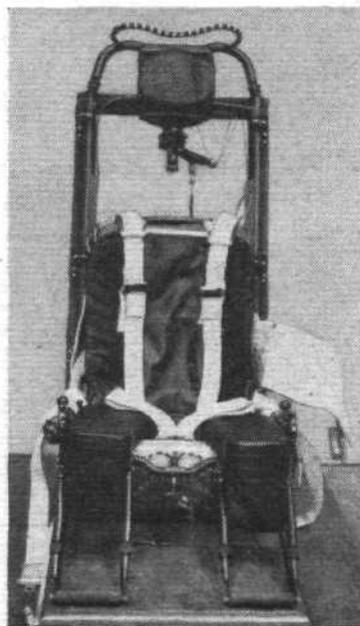
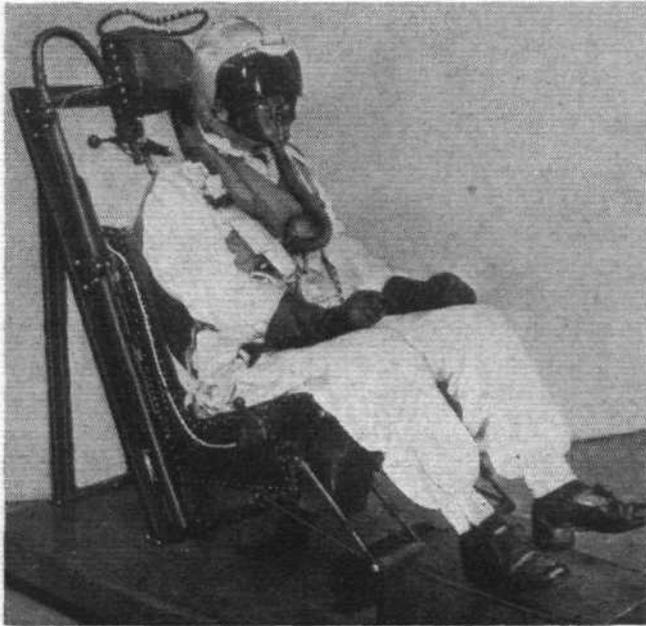
The Folland seat has been developed under a M.o.S. contract and follows the general engineering principles of the Swedish Saab seat which has been in use by the Swedish Air Force since July 1943—and which, the company states, is believed to be the first of all modern ejector seats fired by an explosive charge. With an 8-lb supporting structure attached to the aircraft, the new seat weighs only 47 lb. It is specified as standard equipment for the Folland Gnat.

Major Willans is a well known parachutist and is British representative on the parachuting committee of the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale, technical sales executive of the G.Q. Parachute Co., Ltd., and chief instructor of the civilian parachute school at Denham, Bucks.



Maj. Willans.

The light, clean design of the Folland seat is apparent in these three photographs, one of which shows the face blind being grasped for firing.



CANADIAN BRISTOL REORGANIZATION

SINCE January 1st, in accordance with the preliminary announcement made some four months ago, the business of the Bristol Aeroplane Co., Ltd., has been known under its three new titles—Bristol Aircraft, Ltd., Bristol Aero-Engines, Ltd., and Bristol Cars, Ltd.

On New Year's day it was announced that the Bristol Canadian interests are undergoing a comparable reorganization.

Hitherto, the company's affairs in Canada have been handled by two subsidiaries of the parent company—one controlling the original engine repair bases in Montreal and Vancouver and acting as the general sales organization, the other being responsible for the MacDonald Brothers' plant at Winnipeg.

Under the re-arrangement now taking effect, the Montreal, Vancouver and Winnipeg centres will be controlled by one company, the Bristol Aeroplane Company of Canada (1956) Ltd., which will be a subsidiary of the parent company at Bristol. The offices of the new company will be at Montreal, and the directors will be Sir Reginald Verdon Smith (chairman), R. J. Reynolds (president), A. Cdre. F. R. Banks, A.V-M. A. L. James, Col. P. P. Hutchinson, R. G. B. Dickson, W. R. C. Patrick and J. N. Baird.

The Boards of the three operating companies will be as follows:
Bristol Aero-Engines, Ltd. (Montreal).—Sir Reginald Verdon Smith (chairman), R. J. Reynolds (president), A.V-M. A. L. James (general manager), J. A. Limoges, D. R. McMaster.

Bristol Aero Engines (Western), Ltd. (Vancouver).—Sir Reginald Verdon Smith (chairman), R. J. Reynolds (president), J. H. Holt (general manager), W. R. C. Patrick, W. H. K. Edmonds.

Bristol Aircraft (Western), Ltd. (Winnipeg).—Sir Reginald Verdon Smith (chairman), R. J. Reynolds (president), W. S. Haggitt (general manager), R. G. B. Dickson, G. Lawson.

The story of Bristol activities in Canada began over 25 years ago, when the British company licensed Canadian Wright to overhaul and service Bristol engines in North America. In 1950 an office was opened in Montreal (the Bristol Aeroplane Co. of Canada, Ltd.) and the Wright operations were supplemented by a new Bristol engine overhaul plant in Vancouver. In 1951 the company purchased Canadian Wright and, the following year, constructed a large, modern engine overhaul and test plant in Montreal North.

The acquisition of the business of MacDonald Brothers Aircraft, Ltd., in 1954 expanded the Company's facilities to include manufacture of aero engine parts, and other aircraft components.