



Representing the last stage in a long "stretch," the Douglas DC-7C (left) is compared here with its immediate predecessor, the DC-7B; the latter, incidentally, is one of 40 "Golden Falcons" ordered by Eastern Air Lines. The Seven Seas has a length of 112ft 3in, 3ft 4in more than the DC-7B, and span has increased by 10ft to 127ft 6in; the new fin, taller by 2ft 2in, gives it a height of 30ft 9in. DC-7Cs now on order total 104.

CIVIL AVIATION . . .

inaugurated by Aquila's latest 48-seat Short Solent 4, G-AOBL *Aotearoa*, recently purchased from Tasman Empire Airways of New Zealand. R.M.A. *Aotearoa* was named by H.M. the Queen when originally launched at Belfast and was later used by Her Majesty to visit Tonga and Fiji from New Zealand during her Australasian tour.

For the inaugural flight, *Aotearoa* was commanded by Capt. James Broadbent, who still holds the Australian-England solo speed record, which he established in 1938 with a Vega Gull in 5 days, 4 hours. Broadbent, who is 45, has been flying for 27 years. He is now entering his 21st year of flying-boat service—a record believed to be unsurpassed. Broadbent has also flown Freighters for Silver City, a sister company of Aquila in the British Aviation Services Group.

Late rail connection and adverse winds (reports one of the 30 outbound passengers) delayed departure from 2030 hr to 2130, but the torch-lit flarepath at Lisbon was reached in four and a half hours at 0200.

The aircraft is refuelled at Lisbon to enable a quick turn-round to be effected at Las Palmas, and crews are slipped. The new crew takes the aircraft to Las Palmas and returns it to Lisbon, and the slipped crew take over again for the final leg to Southampton.

Take-off from Lisbon is at 0420 and arrival in Las Palmas 0840. At Lisbon passengers disembarked by launch for a snack in the flying-boat terminal while the Solent refuelled from a motor tanker on the Tagus. A launch was also used at Las Palmas, where the aircraft moored to a buoy in the picturesque harbour. Thus the

outward trip occupied 11 hr 10 min, of which 8 hr 50 min was spent in the air.

After a Canary Island sojourn of 2 hr 40 min (during which one learned, incidentally, that flats could be rented for £1 per month) the machine left at 1120 for Lisbon. Commander of the slip crew on the inaugural flight was Capt. J. N. Leedham.

Six of the outward passengers had hoped to become the world's first day trippers from Britain to the Canaries, but on arrival at Lisbon at 1600 we learned that blizzards in England suggested that a night out in the Portuguese capital would be more enjoyable.

The Lisbon-Southampton leg was completed next day in perfect weather in 4 hr 40 min. So the total flying time for 3,280 miles was 17 hr 50 min—an average speed of almost 190 m.p.h. despite 45-m.p.h. headwinds on most of the homeward flight. Throughout the trip the Solent cruised at an airspeed of 230 m.p.h.

ORDER-BOOK AMENDMENTS

AN order for 14 Convair 440 Metropolitans was announced by Braniff Airways too late for inclusion in the "order-book" feature published on page 61 of last week's issue. Two more 440s are reported to have been ordered by Alitalia, bringing the total number of Metropolitans sold to 81.

As several readers were quick to point out, we over-stated the number of L.1649As sold by Lockheed; the Air France order is for 12, not 20, of these aircraft, and the total sold to date is thus 36. The Electra "box-score" did not include the order announced a few days previously by National Airlines for 20, increasing total Electra sales to 104.

BREVITIES

PLANS for a fast new Qantas Constellation service between Sydney and London are reported from Australia. To be known as the Connoisseur Express, the service is due to begin on March 2nd. Operating once weekly, it will reduce present schedules by more than 20 hours, taking 52 hr eastbound and 54 hr westbound.

Captain A. L. Greenacre, chief pilot of West African Airways Corporation, will be responsible for operating arrangements of all W.A.A.C. aircraft on H.M. the Queen's forthcoming West African tour. As advisory commander to the Royal Flight, he will travel on the flight deck of the aircraft used by the Queen during the tour.

Lufthansa announce the appointment of Mr. Peter R. Easton as their Press and public relations officer in the United Kingdom. He will be based in the airline's London office at Empire House, 117/119 Regent Street, London, W.1 (Regent 1501).

Experimental forms of marking and lighting—consisting of chequer-board lighting, stub-bar board and lights, angle-of-approach indicators and a daylight cross-bar—have been installed on Runway 08 at Blackbushe. Details are given by M.T.C.A. in *Civil Aviation Information Circular* No. 136.

Following B.O.A.C.'s acceptance of the first two Bristol Britannia 100s, the appointment has been announced of Mr. E. J. Curwood as fleet engineering manager, Britannias. He is succeeded as fleet engineering manager, Stratocruisers, by Mr. S. R. Peek, formerly base engineer, Constellations.

Delivery of the three 16-seat de Havilland Herons ordered by Cambrian Airways is due to begin in March, and the airline plans to introduce its new aircraft to regular service on April 1st. They will be operated initially on the network of routes linking Cardiff, Bristol and Southampton with Nice, Paris and Dinard.

At a conference of American airport operators, held in Washington on January 12, a Douglas spokesman predicted that future

jet airliners would definitely have a higher noise level than that of present transports. This, he said, might come as a blow to airport operators; but though manufacturers had made inroads on the problem, and had arrived at a solution which would definitely bring about a reduction in jet noise, the level would still be higher than for today's aircraft.

The general sales manager of B.O.A.C., Mr. Gilbert Lee, was due to leave London yesterday on a 32-day world tour. During the tour Mr. Lee will preside at sales conferences in Hong Kong and New York and will discuss sales matters with Corporation staff at several other stations overseas.

Inauguration of a non-stop Super Constellation service between New York and Montego Bay is announced by Avianca, the Colombian affiliate of Pan American.

Provisional approval for the operation of a regular service between Yeadon Airport, Leeds, and London Airport has been granted to B.K.S. Air Transport, Ltd. The service, which is expected to begin in May, will initially be operated at a frequency of three return flights daily; approval has also been given for a service between Yeadon and Glasgow.

The five Ansons operated by MacRobertson Miller Airlines of Western Australia are being replaced by Doves and will shortly be sold; difficulty in obtaining Anson spares, now that the type is no longer in production, is the main reason for the decision. The first of M.M.A.'s Ansons entered service in October 1946 and now has more than 7,000 hours of civil flying to its credit.

Construction has begun of a "staff colony" for 600 employees of Air-India International and Indian Airlines Corporation and members of their families. Situated near the Air-India maintenance base at Santa Cruz Airport, Bombay, the colony covers a 20-acre site and will include 26 buildings, containing living quarters, a school, playground and shops; it is due for completion at the end of 1956.