

RECORD FLIGHT BY LANCASTER

Powerful Bomber Reaches Australia

SYDNEY, Friday.—Dropping through a mantle of blackness the first all-Australian bomber crew to return home from active service abroad landed to-night in a heavy Lancaster bomber on a New South Wales air-field with the lightness of a Moth. The Lancaster is the largest plane ever to land in Australia. It was captained on the flight by Flight-Lieut. P. S. Isaacson (22), D.F.C. and D.F.M., of the R.A.A.F., of Melbourne, and will make exhibition flights over Australian capital cities.

The Lancaster was flown to Australia by the famous Australian Pathfinder crew, whose members have made many hazardous flights over Axis targets. Pilsen, Stettin, Milan and other distant targets, have been visited by these young Australians, whose work has been so highly meritorious that they were invited by the British Air Ministry to join the select company of Pathfinders.



Fl.-Lt. Isaacson.

These were the crews which led the way to the targets to be bombed, and illuminated them with flares and incendiaries, so that the bombers following would be assisted to pin-point the targets to which they had been assigned.

The Prime Minister (Mr. Curtin) said to-day that the arrival of the Lancaster marked an important point in Australia's aviation history. The fact that it was flown here by a wholly Australian crew was also significant. He welcomed the Lancaster crew and passengers to Australia. Their presence should stimulate interest in the war effort, and emphasise the miracle of Britain's recovery from the defensive to the offensive role in the war against aggression. In the realm of heavy bombers Britain held the lead.

Three such types are now constantly in use making tremendous blows against Germany and Italy, said Mr. Curtin. First of the line was the Stirling; then came the Halifax and then the Lancaster. Of this trio of superb heavy night bombers the Lancaster was the latest and best. After its tour of Australia the Lancaster would visit New Zealand. Recently a similar Lancaster was on show in London, and was most helpful in raising a £150,000,000 loan.

The Lancaster had been flown to Australia via the Atlantic, Canada and the Pacific, thus creating a world record, for it was the first occasion an aircraft had been flown by one crew over this long and hazardous route.

Beside its crew it carried the controller of repair and overseas supplies, Lord Burghley, and Group-Captain C. B. Wincott, R.A.F., of the British Air Mission in Washington. Lord Burghley was the former British and Olympic



Lord Burghley.

games 120 yards hurdler champion. Group-Captain Wincott visited Australia some years ago on loan from the R.A.F., and during his stay here was in charge of the fleet co-operation flight.

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Weight of Air Power

Official visitors were greatly surprised at the immense size of the craft. The visitors were welcomed on behalf of the Commonwealth Government and the people of Australia by the Minister of Air (Mr. Drakeford), Minister of Air Production (Senator Cameron) and the Minister of War Organisation of Industry (Mr. Dedman). Air Commodore Marsden and other senior R.A.A.F. officers were also present.

Lord Burghley said that Britons had a very warm heart for Australian airmen. "This Lancaster is one of the best bombers ever conceived," he said. "The Lancaster gives back with interest what the Luftwaffe gave to London early in the war. It struck terror into the hearts of the Germans, and some day may cause consternation in Japanese territory."

Lord Burghley said that the crew were wonderful. "We have been poring over an atlas for the last few hours," he added, "but the boys landed us on the very door step." He praised the wonderful co-operation they had received from the United States Air Force.

Asked about Allied air operations in the Mediterranean, Lord Burghley said that he would not be drawn into questions of high strategy. "But you can take it from me," he said, "that our big raids on Germany and Italy are decreasing in a great degree the flow of munitions from enemy factories."

Lord Burghley stated that he had gained many valuable impressions from conversations with members of the Australian Parliamentary Mission in England, and he had brought greetings to the

Prime Minister (Mr. Curtin) and Senator Cameron from Sir Stafford Cripps.

Group-Captain Wincott said that there was no doubt that the Allied bombing attacks on Germany were an important factor in the change over from defensive strategy to aggressive offence.

The captain of the Lancaster, Flight-Lieutenant Isaacson, said that bombing was everything it had been "cracked up to be." It seemed to him that the enemy had never thought that the free nations would ever reach their present bombing strength. The Italian defences in particular were not strong enough to prevent the Lancasters from getting through.

Flight-Lieutenant Isaacson has raided Germany 39 times and Italy five times.

"Italy is just a piece of cake, but the opposition over Germany is considerable," he said.

"In my opinion it is wrong to say that Europe is an impregnable fortress. I think that within the next few months the Allied air forces will become so strong that nothing will be impregnable against them."

(Further Reference on Page 2.)

AGE 5.6.43

GIANT BOMBER ARRIVES

Avro Lancaster
In Australia

SYDNEY, Fri: An Avro Lancaster, one of Britain's giant 4-engined bombers, arrived in Sydney today from England after a flight across the Atlantic, Canada, and the Pacific.

It brought to Australia Lord Burghley, Controller of Repairs and Overseas Supplies, and Group-Capt C. B. Wincott, RAF, of the British Air Ministry in Washington, who visited Australia some years ago on loan from the RAF.

The machine, which was in charge of Flt-Lt P. S. Isaacson, RAAF, of Melbourne, and which was flown by the famous Australian Pathfinder crew, whose members have made many flights to Axis targets, created a world record, because it is the first time that an aircraft has been flown by the one crew over this long and hazardous route.

"Arrival of the Lancaster marks an important point in Australia's aviation history," Mr Curtin said. "The fact that it was flown here by a wholly Australian crew is also significant. I welcome the Lancaster, the crew, and passengers to Australia."

The Lancaster will make a number of exhibition flights over Australian cities.

"We are looking forward to the day when we can direct more help to Australia in the fight against the Japanese," said Lord Burghley, in a special interview in Brisbane earlier today.

Landed Like Moth—Back Page

ARSES 5.6.43

LANDED WITH LIGHTNESS OF MOTH

Giant Lancaster's
Arrival in Sydney

SYDNEY, Friday.—The giant Lancaster bomber which arrived in Sydney today from England (see page 1), bringing as its crew the first all-Australian bomber crew to return home from active service abroad, landed on the airfield with the lightness of a Moth.

The machine is the largest aircraft ever to visit Australia, and there was a spontaneous gasp of surprise from official visitors as it came gently to a standstill.

Lord Burghley and Group-Capt C. P. Wincott were welcomed on behalf of the Commonwealth Government and the people of Australia by Mr Drakeford, Air Minister; Senator Cameron, Aircraft Production Minister; and Mr Dedman, War Organisation of Industry Minister, and senior RAAF officers were also present.

Lord Burghley, who looked fresh after his long flight, said that Australia was a wonderful country, and Britain would always have a warm heart for her. Australian airmen were held in affectionate esteem abroad. He said that he had come to Australia to discuss aircraft production questions and to see the aircraft industry Australia had built up from nothing.

PAYING NAZIS BACK

The Lancasters, he said, were one of the best types of bomber that the inventive brain of man had ever conceived, and they were now paying back with heavy interest what the Luftwaffe had given to London early in the war.

"Terror has been struck into the hearts of the Germans, and some day perhaps the Lancasters may cause consternation in Japanese territory," he said.

Paying a tribute to the navigational skill of the crew, Lord Burghley said they had been poring over maps for several hours, but he had been landed right on the doorstep. Members of the US forces had co-operated in every way during the voyage out.

Questioned about Allied air moves in the Mediterranean, Lord Burghley said that he would not discuss questions of strategy. He would say emphatically, however, that the British heavy bomber raids on Germany and Italy were decreasing the flow of munitions from Axis war factories.

Group-Capt Wincott said that there was no doubt that Allied bombing attacks on Germany had been an important factor in the strategical change-over from defensive to aggressive offensive.

EFFECT OF RAIDS

Flt-Lt Isaacson, captain of the Lancaster, said that bombing was everything that it had been "cracked up" to be. It seemed to him that the enemy had never thought that the free nations would ever reach their present bombing strength. The Italian defences, in particular, were not strong enough to prevent the Lancasters from getting through.

Isaacson, who has raided Germany 39 times and Italy 5 times (Turin on 4 occasions and Milan once), added: "Italy is just a piece of cake, but the opposition over German targets is considerable. I think that within the next few months the Allied air forces will become so strong that nothing will be impregnable against them."

The giant Avro Lancaster bomber is reported as the backbone of Britain's air offensive. The Stirling and the

Hallifax were the first of the big bombers to go into service, and then came the Lancaster, the greatest weight-lifter of them all, and reputed to be the best bomber so far built in any country. It can carry a load of 8½ tons, a heavier load even than the Stirling, and an 8,000lb "block-buster" bomb is less than half its full load.

Most Lancaster raids have been carried out at comparatively small cost, for, with a speed of nearly 300 miles an hour, it is difficult to intercept at night, and it spends little time over its target. It derives its speed from 4 Rolls-Royce Merlin engines. The Lancaster is also very heavily armed, having 4 machineguns in its tail turret. It is built by the famous firm of A. V. Roe. Britain now has many squadrons of Lancasters.

CHAMPION HURDLER

Lord Burghley, eldest son and heir of the Marquess of Exeter, was dual inter-universities' hurdles champion of Cambridge for 3 years, and won the Olympic 400-metre hurdles in 1928, as well as many other races in England and abroad. Born in 1906, he married in 1929 Lady Mary Theresa Scott, sister of the Duchess of Gloucester. He has been the member for the Peterborough Division of Northamptonshire since 1931.

Flt-Lieut Peter Stuart Isaacson, DFC, DFM, is the only son of Mr and Mrs Arnold Isaacson, of Queen's rd, Melbourne. Educated at Brighton GS, he enlisted in the RAAF in December, 1940, and trained in Australia, Canada, and Britain. He took part in the big raids over German industrial targets last year, and was awarded the DFM in November, when he was a flight-sergeant. He was awarded the DFC last March. Flt-Lieut Isaacson will be 23 in July. His mother is a captain in the AWAS, of which his sister, Joan, is also a member. His father, who served in the last war, is a member of the VDC.

MEMBERS OF CREW

Other members of the crew are: Flt-Lt Robert Stanley McFarlane Neilsen, DFM, 22, of Kembla Heights, NSW, navigator; Flt-Lt Alan Vickery Ritchie, DFM, 30, of Canberra, bomb aimer; Plt-Off Michael Donald Delaney, 34, of Sans Souci, NSW, flight engineer; Plt-Off Erle Melville Copley, DFM, 29, of North Perth, WA, wireless operator; Flt-Sgt Joseph Grose, 22, of Leabrook, SA, wireless air-gunner; Flt-Sgt Archie Flexmore Page, 21, of Plenty, T, wireless air-gunner; Cpl Claude Spencer, of Alphington, V, fitter.

Mr Drakeford, in welcoming the crew to Australia, said he regarded the advent of the Lancaster as more than a visit to stimulate interest in this country in the gigantic strides which the RAF had made in the war to date. Bombers like the Lancaster would be among those aerial giants which would batter the Axis to its knees. It was a splendid thing to know that the crew of the visiting Lancaster consisted wholly of young Australians. They were members of the first, wholly Australian Pathfinder crew.

POWERFUL AIR FIGHTER

Arrival of Avro Lancaster

SYDNEY, Friday.—Eight Australian airmen distinguished themselves as a crew in creating a record by bringing to Australia the four-engined Avro Lancaster bomber in a flight across the Atlantic and Pacific. (See Page 1.)

The all-Australian crew of the Lancaster comprised:—

Flight-Lieut. P. S. Isaacson, D.F.C., D.F.M., of Melbourne, captain; Flight-Lieut. R. S. McF. Neilsen, D.F.M., of Kembla Heights, N.S.W., navigator; Flight-Lieut. A. V. Ritchie, D.F.M., of Canberra, bomb airman; Pilot-Officer M. D. Delaney, of San Souci, N.S.W., flight-engineer; Pilot-Officer E. M. Copley, D.F.M., of North Perth, wireless operator; Flight-Sergeant J. Grose, of Leabrook, S.A., wireless air gunner; Flight-Sergeant A. F. Page, of Plenty, Tas., wireless air gunner, and Cpl. C. Spencer, of Alphington, Vic., fitter.

The Lancaster is an Avro product—avro and colted. It is a long-range heavy bomber, powered by four Rolls Royce Merlin 12-cylinder V type liquid cooled engines, developing 1250 horse power, but other engines, notably the Bristol Hercules (1600 horse power, 14-cylinder double row air-cooled radial engines) are sometimes fitted.

The Lancaster weighs 27 tons all up, and carries a bomb load of more than 8 tons. It is considered one of the most efficient heavy engined bombers in existence. It has top speed of about 300 m.p.h., and in accordance with traditional R.A.F. policy is heavily armed and well able to give a good account of itself against enemy fighters. It has four gun turrets—nose, dorsal, ventral and tail—which together mount ten Browning machine guns of .303 calibre. It has a range of some 3000 miles.

The first official mention of the Lancaster in air operations was on April 17, 1942, when twelve of them made the now famous daylight raid on Augsburg.

Reputation of Crew

The Minister of Air (Mr. Drakeford) in a statement to-night, said that by its participation in the non-stop blitz of Germany and Occupied Europe the recently formed No. 460 R.A.A.F. Lancaster Bomber Squadron, of which Flight-Lieutenant Isaacson and his crew were members, had built up an enviable reputation. The squadron figured prominently in recent heavy raids on Duiseldorf and Dortmund. In the latter the weight of bombs dropped was 2000 tons, being five times greater than that which the Luftwaffe ever dropped on London. The squadron has taken an important part in many other R.A.F. offensives against German and Italian war and U-boat production centres and yards. In March the squadron dropped 400 tons of high explosives and incendiary bombs. During that month the Australian crews bombed Berlin three times, Essen twice, Hamburg, Munich, Nuremburg, Stuttgart, Duisburg and St. Nazaire, and carried out a number of mine-laying sorties. Recent awards to members of the Australian Lancaster squadron brought the total number of decorations earned by the unit to 24.

Welcoming the crew to Australia, Mr. Drakeford said he regarded the advent of the Lancaster as more than a visit to stimulate interest in this country in the gigantic strides which the R.A.A.F. had made in war years to date. As he saw it, it was a definite portent of victory. Bombers like the Lancaster would be among those aerial giants which would batter the Axis to its knees.

Mr. Drakeford said it was a splendid thing to know that the crew of the visiting Lancaster consisted wholly of young Australians. They were members of the first wholly Australian Pathfinder crew. Their efficiency was ample proof of the excellence of their spirit and soundness of their training that they could make such vast ocean hops, and the nonchalance they had shown was a tribute both to themselves and to the aircraft they flew. The arrival of the Lancaster went beyond this. One of the post-war problems of prime importance was civil aviation. That these young men should so easily overcome such vast distances in a land plane built for combat, rather than for civil consideration, pointed to the time when lessons learned in wartime flying could be admirably adapted to peacetime travel.

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HUGE BOMBER ARRIVES

Lancaster Lands in Sydney

Flown by an all-Australian crew, one of the huge Avro Lancaster bombers, which are a major weapon in the Allied air-invasion of Europe, landed in Sydney last night.

The four-engined bomber will make exhibition flights over Australian capital cities.

The British Controller of Repair and Overseas Supplies, Lord Burghley, has come to Australia in the Lancaster. He is a former British and Olympic champion hurdler.

The Lancaster's journey to Australia, via the Atlantic, Canada, and the Pacific, is officially claimed as a new world record for a one-crew flight over such a route.

The arrival of the Lancaster was announced by the Prime Minister, Mr. Curtin, who said that it was flown here by a famous Australian "Pathfinder" crew, whose members had made many hazardous flights over Axis targets.

"Pilsen, Stettin, Milan, and other distant targets have been visited by these young Australians, whose work has been so highly meritorious that they were invited by the British Air Ministry to join the select company of 'Pathfinders,'" Mr. Curtin said. "These were the crews which led the way to the targets to be bombed, and illuminated them with flares and incendiaries so that the bombers following would be assisted to 'pin-point' the targets to which they had been assigned.

HISTORY MAKING

"The arrival of the Lancaster marks an important point in Australia's aviation history. The fact that it was flown here by a wholly Australian crew is also significant.

"In the realm of heavy night bombers, Britain holds the lead. Three such types are now constantly in use, making tremendous blows against Germany and Italy. First of the line was the Stirling, then came the Halifax, and then the Lancaster. Of this trio of superb heavy night bombers, the Lancaster is the latest and best.

"After its tour of Australia, the Lancaster will visit New Zealand. Recently a similar Lancaster was on show in London, and was most helpful in raising a £150,000,000 loan."

Mr. Curtin announced that Group-Captain C. B. Wincott, R.A.F., of the British Air Mission in Washington, had arrived in the Lancaster. Some years ago, on loan from the R.A.F., he was in charge of the Fleet Co-operation Flight in Australia.

AUSTRALIAN CREW

The Minister for Air, Mr. Drakeford, announced that the crew of the Lancaster was:—

Flight-Lieutenant P. S. Isaacson, D.F.C., D.F.M., of Melbourne (captain); Flight-Lieutenant R. S. McF. Neilsen, D.F.C., of Kembla Heights (N.S.W.) (navigator); Flight-Lieutenant A. V. Ritchie, D.F.M., of Canberra (bomb-aimer); Pilot-Officer M. D. Delaney, of Sans Souci (N.S.W.) (flight engineer); Pilot-Officer E. M. Copley, D.F.M., of North Perth (wireless operator); Flight-Sergeant J. Grose, of Leabrook (S.A.); and Flight-Sergeant A. E. Page, of Plenty (Tas.) (wireless-air gunners); and Corporal C. Spencer, of Alphington (Vic.) (fitter).

Flight-Lieutenant Isaacson is 22. He was trained in Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom.

He was awarded the D.F.M. in No-

Its top speed was about 300 miles an hour, and it had a range of 3,000 miles.

It had four gun turrets, in which were mounted 10 Browning machine-guns, and carried a normal crew of seven. Its principal dimensions were: Wing span 102ft, length 69ft 6in, height 20ft 6in.

By its participation in the non-stop blitz of Germany and occupied Europe, said Mr. Drakeford, the recently-formed No. 460 R.A.A.F. Lancaster Bomber Squadron, of which Flight-Lieutenant Isaacson and his crew were members, had built up an enviable reputation. It had taken part in many raids on Germany.

OFFICIAL WELCOME

Lord Burghley and Group-Captain Wincott were welcomed by Mr. Drakeford. Others present at the airfield were the Minister for Aircraft Production, Senator Cameron, and the Minister for War Organisation of Industry, Mr. Dedman.

"We are looking forward to the day when we can direct more help to Australia in the fight against the Japanese," Lord Burghley said in an interview. He said that he had come to Australia to see the aircraft industry the Commonwealth had built up from nothing, and of which he had heard splendid reports. More than anything else, he was anxious to discuss matters of mutual help; and it was much better to do that on the spot than by correspondence.

Lord Burghley said last night that the Lancaster was one of the best bombers ever built. The Lancasters were now paying back, with heavy interest, the Luftwaffe raids on London.

"Terror has been struck into the hearts of the Germans and some day perhaps the Lancasters may cause consternation in Japanese territory," he said.

British heavy bomber raids on Germany and Italy were decreasing the flow of munitions from Axis war factories, Lord Burghley added.

Paying a tribute to the navigational skill of the crew, he declared that the aircraft had landed "right on the doorstep." Australian airmen were held in affectionate esteem abroad, he declared. On the journey they had received full co-operation from members of the U.S. Air Force.

Lord Burghley brings greetings from the British Minister for Aircraft Production, Sir Stafford Cripps, to Mr. Curtin and Senator Cameron.

"ITALY PIECE OF CAKE"

The captain of the Lancaster, Flight-Lieutenant Isaacson, said that the enemy had never thought that the free nations would ever reach their present bombing strength. The Italian defences in particular were not strong enough to prevent the Lancasters from getting through. Mussolini had never visualised the creation of an aircraft such as the Lancaster.

"Italy is just a piece of cake. But the opposition over German targets is considerable," he said. "The Lancaster without doubt is the best bomber in the world."

Flight-Lieutenant Isaacson said that he was proud to be the captain of the first Australian bombing crew to return home.

A bottle of French champagne, 1928 vintage, which had been placed in the plane before it left England, was presented by the crew to Air Force officers who met them at the landing field. With its contents a toast was drunk to "a happy landing."

Big Bomber In Sydney

A Lancaster heavy bomber, flown by an Australian crew across the Atlantic, Canada, and the Pacific, reached

The Lancaster was captained by Flight-Lieut. Peter Stuart Isaacson, 22, D.F.C., D.F.M., of Melbourne.

His crew comprised:—

Flight-Lieut. Robert S. M. Neilson, 22, D.F.M., Kembla Heights, N.S.W. (navigator); Flight-Lieut. Alan V. Ritchie, 30, D.F.M., Canberra (bomb-aimer); Pilot-Officer Michael D. Delaney, 34, Sans Souci (flight engineer); Pilot-Officer Erle M. Copley, 29, D.F.M., North Perth (wireless operator); Flight-Sergt. Joseph Grose, 22, Leabrook, W.A. (wireless air-gunner); Flight-Sergt. Archie F. Page, 21, Plenty, Tas. (wireless air-gunner); Corporal Claude Spencer, Alphington, Vic. (fitter).

The passengers were the Controller of Repair and Overseas Supplies and former British and Olympic champion hurdler (Lord Burghley) and Group-Captain C. B. Wincott, R.A.F., of the British Air Mission in Washington.

Praises Plane, Crews

In a speech when the plane landed, Lord Burghley said:—

"We've had a wonderful trip. The Lancaster is one of the best big bombers ever made.

"It has struck terror into the hearts of the Germans.

"The Australian Lancaster crews are upholding the highest traditions the Australian people can desire.

"They go out over Germany night after night.

"Munition production, particularly aircraft production, is going splendidly in Britain at present.

"I have no doubt that big British raids on Germany have interfered considerably with the enemy's production.

"Britain is now returning with interest the air blows Germany delivered against her.

"But it takes more than good bombers to do that—it takes good bomber crews."

Raid "Pathfinders"

Flight-Lieut. Isaacson and his crew were rated "Pathfinders" by the British Air Ministry. "Pathfinders" lead the way on big raids and guide following planes by dropping flares and incendiaries on the target.

Flight-Lieut. Isaacson has raided Germany 39 times and Italy five times. He has raided Turin on four occasions and Milan once.

"Italy is just a piece of cake," he said. The opposition over German targets, however, is considerable.

"Italian defences are not very strong.

"I remember many times poring over an atlas and thinking how marvellous it would be to fly back to Australia.

"It was a big shock to all of us when we were told we were to come home this way.

"We had not done the route before, and knew nothing of tropical conditions. Without the help of Americans at their bases on the way out we would not have made such excellent time."

Bombing "Rest Cure"

Flight-Lieut. Neilson said: "A bomb raid over Italy is really a rest cure. The opposition there is a bit thin at times, but a raid over the Ruhr is a different affair altogether."

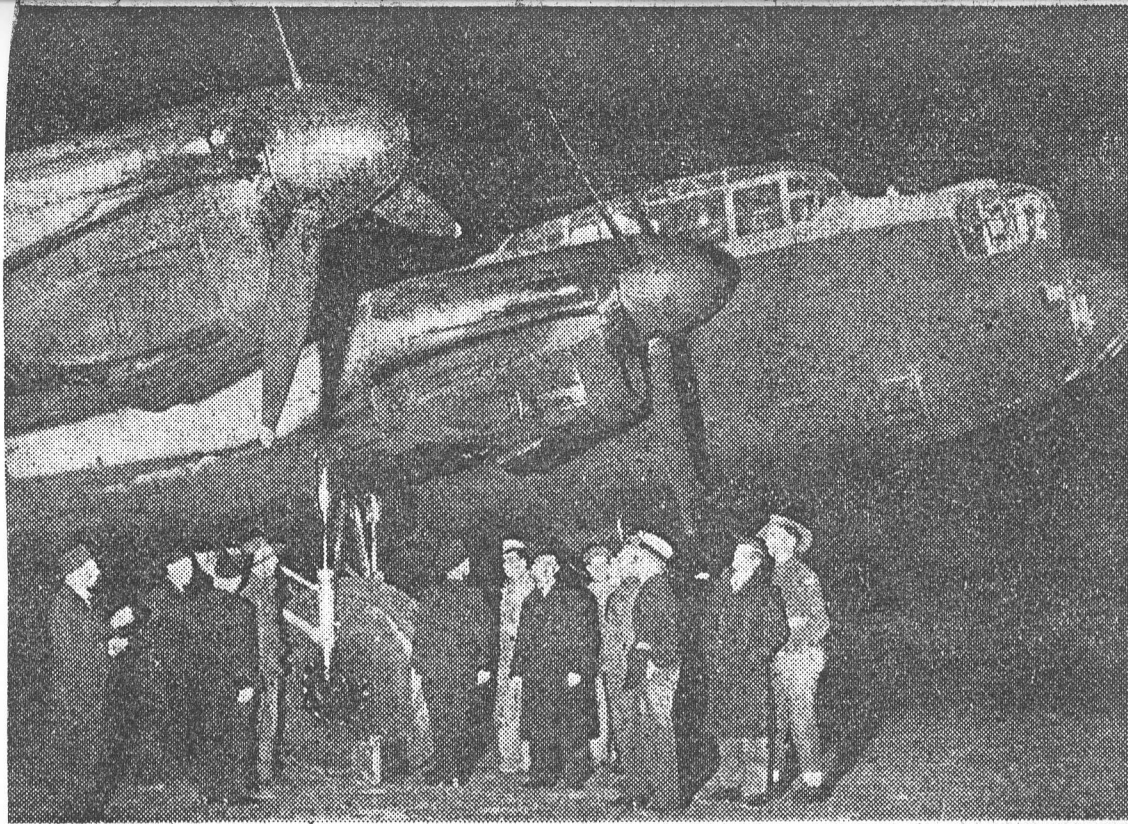
The Air Minister (Mr. Drakeford) said it was Mr. Churchill's wish that a Lancaster should be sent to Australia for public exhibition.

The crew brought with them a bottle of 1928 vintage champagne which had been presented to them by their commanding officer before they left England, and to be opened on their safe arrival in Australia.

They drank it ceremoniously soon after they disembarked.

The Prime Minister (Mr. Curtin) said yesterday the Lancaster had created a world record by flying to Australia from England across the Atlantic, Canada, and the Pacific.

"This is the first aircraft flown by the one crew over this route," he said.



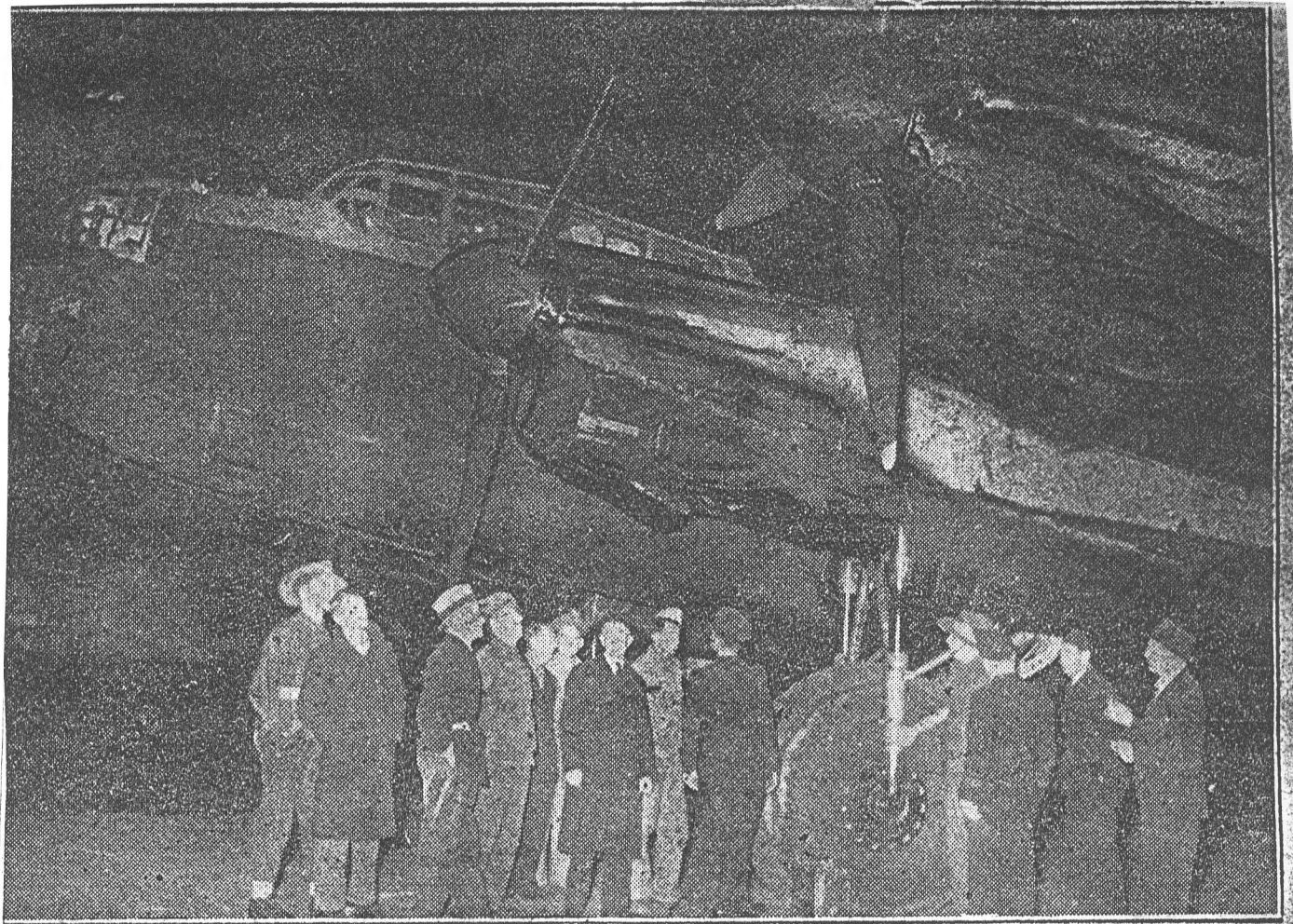
Top: Spectators dwarfed by the huge four-engine Lancaster bomber, which arrived in Sydney last night. It was flown from Britain by an Australian crew, and will give exhibition flights over Australian capital cities. Lower: Members of the crew being welcomed on arrival. From left: Squadron Leader K. Wood, the Minister for Aircraft Production, Senator Cameron, the Minister for Air, Mr. Drakeford, and the Minister for War Organisation of Industry, Mr. Dedman. Flight-Lieutenant P. S. Isaacson, D.F.C., D.F.M., captain of the bomber, is shaking hands with Mr. Drakeford. Lord Burghley,

SYDNEY MORNING HERALD 5-6-43



MIRROR (SYDNEY)
5-6-43

Australians flew Minister for Air (Mr. Drakeford) hastened



TELEGRAPH (SYDNEY) 5-6-43

• **GIANT FOUR-ENGINEED** British Lancaster bomber, first to be brought to Australia, photographed in Sydney last night: The bomber flew across the Atlantic Ocean, Canada, and the Pacific. It was manned by an all-Australian crew. The Lancaster will make exhibition flights over Sydney;



FLIGHT-LIEUTENANT PETER S. ISAACSON, of Melbourne, D.F.C., D.F.M., captain of the Lancaster, with a bottle of champagne presented to him by his Commanding Officer in England, to be opened upon the arrival of the Lancaster here.



LIEUTENANT-COLONEL Lord Burghley, British Controller of Repair and Overseas Supplies, photographed as he stepped from the plane on its arrival. Lord Burghley is a former Olympic hurdles champion.

GIANT BOMBER OVER CITY

Pleasure Trip in a Lancaster

BY A WOMAN REPORTER.

One of the huge four-engined Lancaster bombers, which, only a few weeks ago, was helping to pound Germany's war industries, flew peacefully in a pleasure flight over Sydney on Saturday afternoon; with empty bomb bays.

Flown by an Australian crew, it was the first of these bombers to come to Australia, and it was also the first and plane to cross both the Atlantic and Pacific oceans with one crew.

"QUEENIE THE SIXTH"

When I first saw the bomber—Queenie Sixth she is called by her crew, and she bears a red kangaroo with wings on the nose—it was resting on the tarmac after its long flight. It dwarfed other planes in the background.

Mechanics were making last-minute check-ups before the Governor-General, Lord Gowrie, and Lady Gowrie and the Minister for Air, Mr. Drakeford, were taken for a flight.

From where I stood beside one of the landing wheels, which was as high as my head, the bomb-aimer's turret and the pilot's cockpit towered 20 feet above me, and to have shaken hands with the pilot I would have needed a step-ladder. Looking down the long, slim, cigar-like fuselage, tapering to the stern, I could see the tail wheel 70 feet away.

"Just four Spitfires in a line" was the way in which one of the mechanics described the Rolls Merlin engines, which develop more than 4,000 horsepower.

Then the pilot, Flight-Lieutenant Peter Isaacson, D.F.C., D.F.M., wearing the little gold wings of the "Pathfinders," pulled himself up into the fuselage, followed by the flight-engineer.

LIKE TRAIN CORRIDOR

Other pilots, who so far "had not had the luck to pilot a Lancaster," were looking forward to making a flight in one. Several engineers, who had been working on the machine, crowded into the rear end of the fuselage; there were other pilots and navigators crowded into the wireless operator's room, and, looking around from my seat, one of three in the fuselage, it looked like the crowded corridor of a train.

I put on a helmet attached to the seat, and could overhear the crew talking to each other and giving orders on the inter-communication earphones. I noticed some emergency parachutes stacked nearby with some spare parts, but nobody takes any more notice of these than passengers on a ship in peace-time.

Taxiing easily across the aerodrome, which in this huge plane seemed to have had all the bumps ironed out, we swung round. There was a full-throated roar as the throttles were opened, the Lancaster quivered, and then we were swiftly gaining momentum. I felt the urge of the engines and was forced back breathless in my seat as we leapt forward. The speed was terrific as the tail came up. The load seemed to lighten, then we were airborne as the pilot "yanked" her into the air, and the sweep of the wings lifted us upward.

The sensation of flying in one of these big Lancasters after a Moth is comparable only to transferring suddenly from a launch to a Queen Mary. The steadiness was incredible.

Approaching Sans Souci the flight-engineer, Michael Delaney, tried to "spot" his home and the pilot nosed down. As we banked over the wing curved up proudly against the splendid ceiling of clouds far above.

The crew evidently were already bored with this "pleasure cruise," and I heard one of them ask "Where to now, Pete?" "How about a loop under the bridge?" Pete asked with a grin, but a "thumbs down" signal from the navigator discouraged him. Instead he made a steady turn around the north pylon.

CIRCLED THE BRIDGE

We circled the bridge, and as we gained height a little the streaming clouds rushed by. Then we nosed down again, and so easily did the ship answer the controls that I felt I could take over myself.

As we headed back to the 'drome the boys cracked some jokes about joy riding. I heard the skipper say, "So what—I can't see the runway. Okay, okay, I can see it now."

The flaps came down, and I could see the ribbon of the runway gleam in the last swift sweep of flight. We raced over the boundary fence, and I was conscious of the length of aeroplane behind me, although I was sitting amidships. There was still quite a lot of our 300 miles an hour left, and the ground rushed up to meet us. Then the wheels felt the stubborn earth, and we settled down sweetly.

The navigator near me uncrossed his fingers.

ARRIVAL IN MELBOURNE

MELBOURNE, Sunday.—Two and a quarter hours after leaving Sydney, the giant Lancaster bomber, which has flown to Australia from England, arrived at an airfield near Melbourne late this afternoon.

It had picked up in Sydney Mr. Drakeford, the Minister for Air, Mr. Dedman, Minister for War Organisation of Industry, and Mr. McVey, secretary of the Department of Aircraft Production.

SYDNEY MORNING HERALD

7.6.43