

FIRST TESTS OF BRISTOL BOMBER

First tests of the Aircraft Production Commission's experimental Bristol Beaufort torpedo-bomber will be held on Monday over a test field near Melbourne.

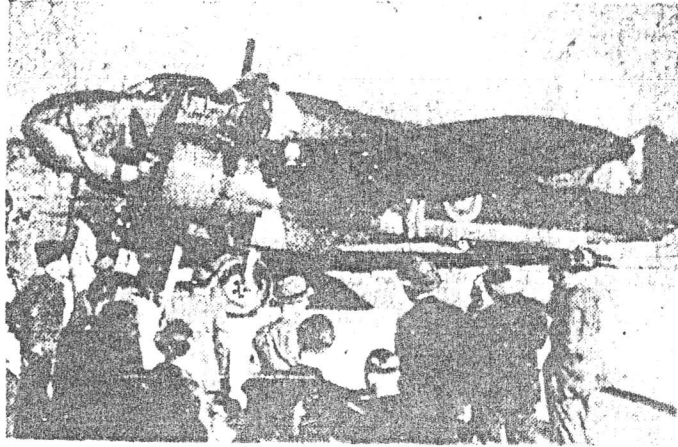
The machine will be flown by Squadron-Leader C. G. Lumsden, an expert English test pilot, who was selected for the job by the British Air Ministry.

After a "secret" test, it will be put through its paces during an official visit to the aircraft factory by Federal Ministers, including the Minister for Munitions (Senator McBride) and the Minister for Air (Mr McEwen).

Bristol Beauforts have been in service with the Royal Air Force for some time, but the first flight of the plane from the Aircraft Production Commission's factory will give alert sky-watchers nearby a view of the most modern warplane ever seen in Australia.

HERALD P.3.
MONDAY 3.5.41
SAT

FIRST PICTURE OF NEW BOMBER



PREPARATIONS TODAY for the first flight of the Aircraft Production Commission's experimental Beaufort torpedo bomber at a test airfield near Melbourne. Squadron-Leader C. G. Lumsden was the test pilot.

OUR FIRST BEAUFORT TAKES THE AIR

Over the heads of several hundred people lining the boundaries of the Aircraft Production Commission's factory near Melbourne, the first Bristol Beaufort torpedo-bomber soared today on its maiden flight.

Arrangements for the first flight were secret. Only a few service men, members of the staff of the Aircraft Production Commission and some privileged civilians were admitted to the flying field, but news of the flight spread to surrounding factories and workshops and a stream of cars arrived at the flying field about an hour before the Beaufort went up.

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The Minister for Air (Mr McEwen), the Chief of the Air Staff (Air Chief Marshal Sir Charles Burnett), the chairman of the Commission (Sir Harold Clapp), and a few other people inspected the Beaufort before Squadron-Leader C. G. Lumsden, an expert British test pilot, climbed aboard. For more than 20 minutes the new engines of the machine failed to start. When Squadron-Leader Lumsden finally taxied the Beaufort over the field to begin his take-off, the mighty slipstream from the motors raised huge clouds of dust.

The pilot allowed the Beaufort to take off gently and climbed slowly to about 2000ft. in a wide circle round the flying field before he flew over the fringes of the city to another flying field about 20 miles away, from which the machine will be given its serious proving tests.

The flight is the first fruits of a long-range programme designed to provide Australia with many of the most modern aeroplanes in service.

The assembly of the plane under production conditions designed to fit in with Australian industrial facilities, and to modified designs prepared to meet operational needs here, was only achieved after a number of unpreventable hitches due to war exigencies in England and the United States.

FIRST BEAUFORT IN SYDNEY

Speed Record Made

Australia's first Bristol Beaufort torpedo-bomber, which was test-flown in Melbourne two months ago, created a new Australian speed record on its first long-distance flight yesterday.

Although the engines were never fully extended, the machine flew from Melbourne to Sydney in the shortest time on record.

The Bristol Beaufort came into service in England only last year, and its speed is still on the secret list.

On its record-breaking flight yesterday the machine was piloted by Captain T. R. Young, an Aircraft Production Commission test pilot.

Three officials of the Commission accompanied Captain Young on the flight. They were the production manager, Mr. A. Lewis; the senior inspector, Mr. Bruce Woodman; and the experimental engineer, Mr. Arthur Webb.

Mr. Thomas Taft, a representative of the American Pratt and Whitney Company, whose twin-row engines will shortly be made in Australia, was also a passenger.

Great interest was taken in the new machine by about 100 employees of the Bristol Beaufort main assembly plant in New South Wales, for whose benefit the plane will be demonstrated during its stay in Sydney.

The machine was assembled in Victoria from components imported from England, but a substantial portion of the plane is of purely Australian construction. The Victorian assembly shop is now assembling other similar pre-fabricated planes. Subsequently the planes will be Australian-built.

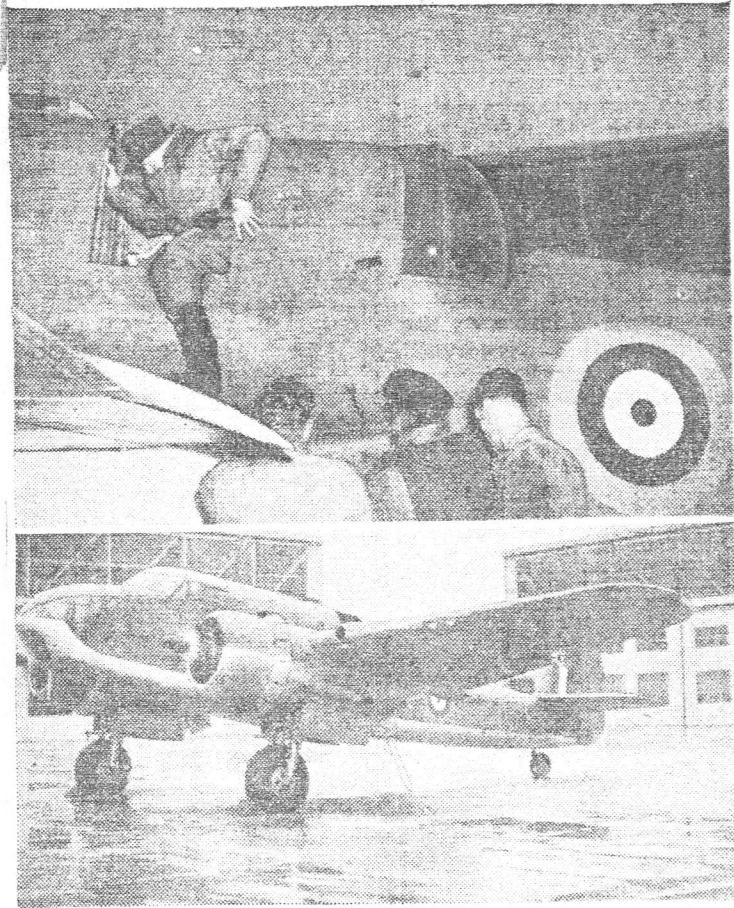
Bristol Beauforts equipped with torpedoes have already played a conspicuously successful part in the war at sea. They scored direct hits on a German "pocket" battleship off the southern coast of Norway on June 13 last.

Bristol Beauforts, using bombs, damaged the battleship Scharnhorst as she lay at the German naval base at Kiel on July 1, 1940.

SYDNEY MORNING HERALD

2-7-41

NEW BOMBER LEAVES MELBOURNE



An Australian-built Bristol Beaufort torpedo-bomber left Melbourne yesterday morning for Brisbane on a six-day tour of eastern Australia. Top: Sir Harold Clapp, chairman of the Aircraft Production Commission, who flew to Brisbane, entering the plane. Lower: The machine preparing for the take-off. The journey to Brisbane was completed in the record time of 3 hours 12 minutes.

SYDNEY MORNING HERALD 13.8.41

BOMBER'S TEST FLIGHT

Queenslander as Pilot

MELBOURNE, Monday.—Captain T. R. Young, a notable Queensland airman, will pilot the Australian-made Bristol Beaufort torpedo bomber, which will leave next week on a six-day tour of Eastern Australia. The tour, extending from Melbourne to Cairns, will demonstrate the bomber's long-range capabilities.

Captain Young was born in Brisbane, and is 42. He has been associated with aviation for 20 years, having joined the R.A.A.F. in 1921. After 2½ years he entered civil flying and was engineer-in-charge of the Q.A.N.T.A.S. Flying School at Brisbane for two years.

He has carried 22,000 passengers on joy ride trips, and has completed 11,000 flying hours. He created a world record for commercial airline operations by flying 3,000 hours in one machine in two years and five months, running a 99 per cent. schedule in all weathers.

SYDNEY MORNING HERALD
5.8.41

NEW BOMBER'S RECORD

Melbourne to Brisbane

BRISBANE, Tuesday.—Breaking all previous flight records in Australia, the first Bristol Beaufort torpedo-bomber to be assembled in the Commonwealth to-day flew from Melbourne to Brisbane in 3 hrs 12 mins.

Captain T. R. Young, a former Queensland Airline pilot, who now is chief test pilot for the Aircraft Production Commission, flew the aircraft.

The small official party, which included Sir Harold Clapp, chairman of the Aircraft Production Commission, made the trip wearing wool-lined flying suits and boots to keep out the cold.

Leaving Essendon airport at 8.20 a.m. in a freezing downpour, the big bomber was over Archerfield in warm sunshine at 11.32 a.m., its average speed for the 850-mile trip being 270 miles an hour. It passed over Sydney an hour and a half after leaving Melbourne.

For most of the trip, the aircraft travelled at between 8,000 and 10,000 feet, with the temperature as low as 11 degrees. It was so cold that the crown on the cap of Group-Captain A. H. Cobby, Director of R.A.A.F. Recruiting, was at one stage covered with a film of ice.

This afternoon, the bomber flew over Brisbane for an hour, demonstrating its speed and performance.

Welcoming the official party, the Minister for Home Affairs, Mr. Hanlon, said that, though Australia entered the war conscious that she was practically defenceless in the air, the country was now at the stage, thanks to the creation of the Aircraft Production Commission, where more than 1,000 Australian-built aircraft were in commission, and heavy Beaufort bombers were in production.

DEFENSIVE VALUE

Group-Captain Cobby said that, while the aircraft had put up a marvellous performance in flying non-stop from Melbourne, it was interesting to know that it had sufficient range to go on to Cairns. This showed its great defensive value.

Sir Harold Clapp said that bringing the Bristol Beaufort bomber into production in Australia had been no easy matter. It looked a simple machine, but it had as many headaches as parts and it had 33,000 parts. Australians, however, had proved once again that, put to any job, they would carry it through with determination.

Eleven more Bristol Beauforts were in the course of assembly, and nine were in the final assembly stage. One was ready to be tested as soon as Captain Young returned to Melbourne.

Before the end of next year, Sir Harold Clapp said, this type of bomber would be produced entirely with Australian raw material and equipment, with the exception of one component. Production of this type of bomber in Australia was a dream come true. Two years and a month ago he had been thrown into the job of chairman of the Production Commission, and to-day the Commission had 7,000 people working for it directly and indirectly.

(Picture on page 11.)

SYDNEY MORNING HERALD
13.8.41

6-DAY TEST FOR BEAUFORT

MELBOURNE, Sunday.—An Australian-built Bristol Beaufort torpedo and bomb-carrying aircraft will begin a 6-day tour of eastern Australia next week, to demonstrate the long-range capacity of the machine.

The Director of Recruiting of the R.A.A.F., Group-Captain Cobby, said on Saturday that the machine would leave Melbourne at 8 a.m. on Tuesday August 12, and fly direct to Archerfield aerodrome, Brisbane, where it would be available for inspection. The machine would be overhauled at Cairns, and make a non-stop flight of nearly 2,000 miles to Melbourne on August 18.

The flight itinerary is:—

August 12: Leave Melbourne for Brisbane. Demonstration flight over Brisbane in afternoon.

August 13: Flight to an R.A.A.F. station, return to Brisbane via Ipswich.

August 14: Flight to Toowoomba, Warwick, Stanthorpe, Casino, Lismore, Grafton, Evans Head, and return to Brisbane.

August 15: Flight from Brisbane to Rockhampton, via Gympie, Maryborough, Bundaberg, and Mackay.

August 16: Leave Mackay for Bowen, Charters Towers, Townsville, Ingham, Innisfail, and Cairns.

The bomber is fitted with twin American Pratt and Whitney Wasp type engines, each capable of developing 1,000-h.p., and has a maximum speed of more than 300 miles an hour.

On July 1, one of the machines made a new speed record for a flight from Melbourne to Sydney.

SYDNEY MORNING HERALD

4.8.41