

Liberator Makes History Crosses Ocean in Sortie

London, Aug. 2 (CP).—In an unprecedented flight, an R.C.A.F. long-range Liberator on patrol from Newfoundland was diverted in mid-Atlantic and landed in Northern Ireland, the Air Ministry announced last night.

Air Marshal Sir John Slessor, air officer commanding-in-chief of the Coastal Command of the R.A.F., sent Air Vice-Marshal G. O. Johnson, air officer commanding the Eastern Canada Command of the R.C.A.F., a message saying:

"History has been made by Liberator 'Y.' It is the first R.C.A.F. aircraft to take off from America on an operational sortie and land in the United Kingdom. The commanding officer of this squadron attended our weekly anti-submarine staff meeting. I hope there will be many similar instances."

Captained by FO. W. H. Howes of Toronto, the Liberator took off to provide escort for a convoy and then headed for Iceland, according to orders. The weather became so bad that Howes decided to fly to England, but later he was instructed by radio to land in Northern Ireland, which he reached 15 hours 26 minutes after taking off. The flight was officially described as "uneventful."

The flight means that alternative

landing grounds on the two continents and in Iceland are available to squadrons patrolling the Atlantic and the completion of patrols formerly shortened because fog or cloud threatened to shroud the home base.

The Air Ministry News Service said the significance of the achievement is that, in addition to aircraft from escort carriers, long-range shore-based aircraft can operate with increasing freedom in an area once so productive for U-boats.

Previously a Coastal Command aircraft patrolling the North Atlantic thousands of miles from its base had been ordered to land in Newfoundland. Since then several planes from Iceland have been diverted to Newfoundland or Canada when adverse weather made the return flight hazardous.

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