

103801
51/17

CANBERRA DOES IT

All-night work on "Canberra" nears its end as her crew receive briefing for their delayed Atlantic flight. Conditions are not good, but Squadron-Leader Callard, the pilot, gets the weather report: O.K. but a 90 miles-an-hour headwind. Flight-Lieutenant Robsen is in charge of communications and Flight-Lieutenant Haskett will navigate. Damaged in collision with a seagull on the way to Northern Ireland, "Canberra" is a day late taking off on the first jet crossing of the Atlantic without re-fuelling.

Now she's ready and leaves the hangar under R.A.F. police-patrol guard. She's a top secret, a little "something" nobody else has got!

As she fuels up, her crew come out, ready for their 2,100 mile non-stop flight. They'll need all the fuel she can take. Most of the way they'll be flying eight miles up, so the crew are trying out new cold-weather clothing, including a waistcoat through which they breathe oxygen. Wing-tip tanks carry extra fuel. Now Callard waves O.K., the jets open up and as the blast hits the runway, "Canberra" taxis away for the start of her record-breaking flight.

Four hours forty minutes later she made aviation history for Britain.