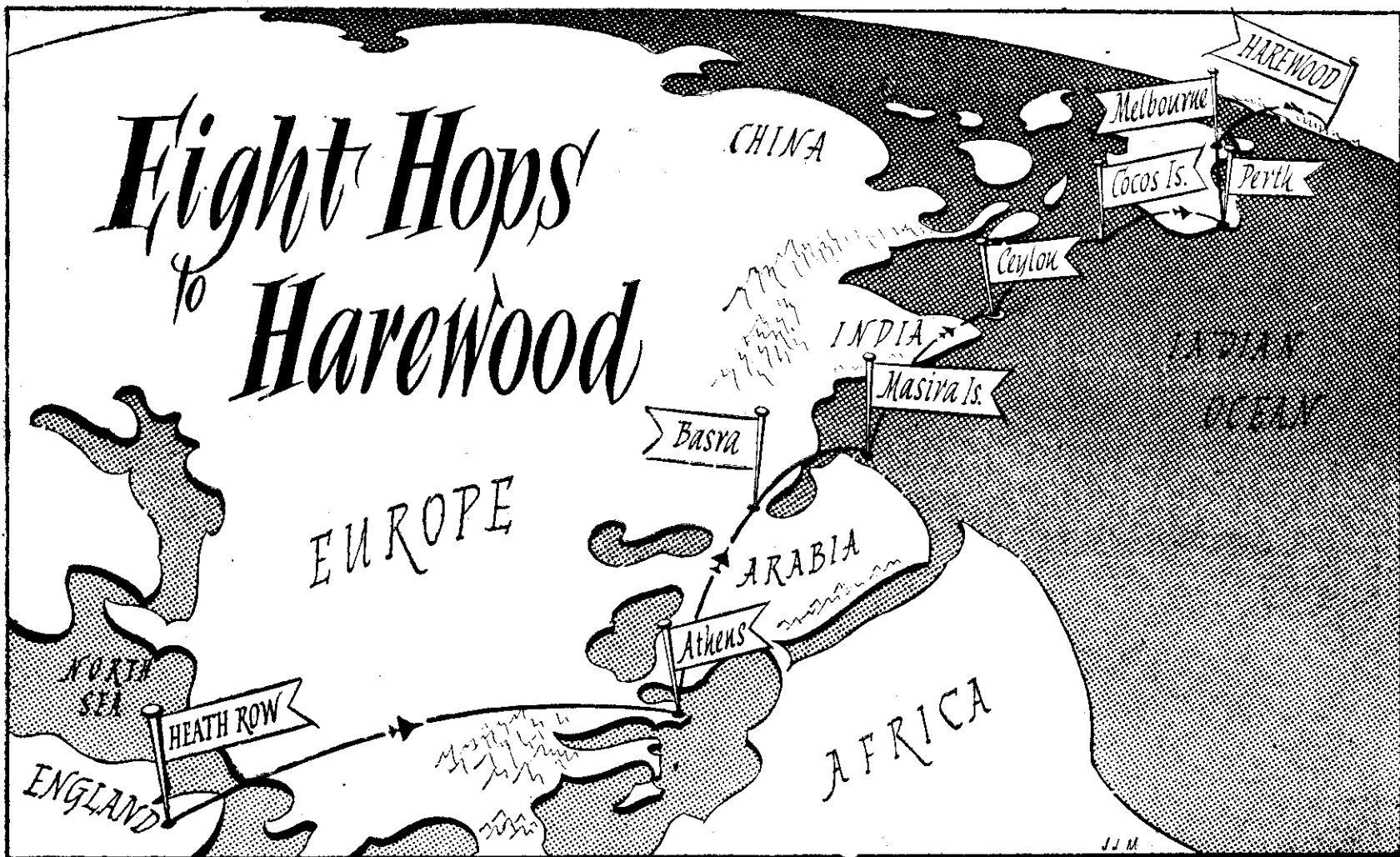




EIGHTEEN aircraft from six nations are scheduled to take off from London Airport on Thursday, October 8, on the first leg of a 10,000-mile race to Harewood, Christchurch. They will be competing for the Christchurch Centennial Air Race's £29,000 in prizes and for international prestige in the field of aircraft production. The winner of the speed section will also take the £1000 Harewood Gold Cup, a magnificent trophy of New Zealand gold, greenstone and rata wood.

New Zealand's entry in the race is a Handley Page Hastings transport of No. 41 Squadron, R.N.Z.A.F. It will

compete in the handicap section along with such aircraft as Britain's Vickers Viscount and the Royal Dutch Airlines' Douglas Liftmaster. The Hastings has a maximum range of about 3000 miles. It is powered by four 2000 h.p. Bristol Hercules engines and can attain 325 m.p.h. in level flight.

To ascertain the preparations required at stopping places, to practise quick refuelling and servicing, and to study weather conditions and flying fatigue, an R.N.Z.A.F. Hastings covered the proposed route in June. In addition to the normal crew of five the plane carried a duplicate crew, a ground servicing party, a meteorological officer, a medical officer and an air quartermaster.

It also carried 3YA's Talks Officer Arnold Wall—formerly an R.A.F. Group Captain—and his portable tape recorder. The two half-hour programmes which resulted are to be broadcast soon. Under the title of *Operation Air Race*, they will be heard from the four ZB stations and 2ZA at 9.30 p.m. on August 19 and 26.

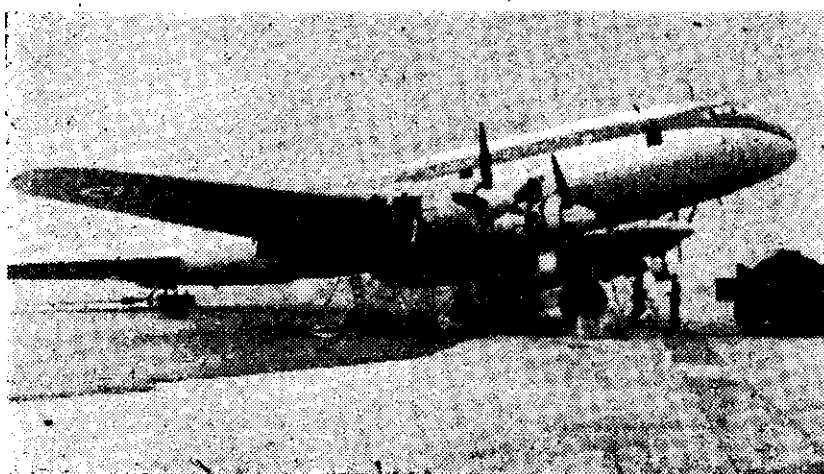
In the first programme listeners will hear crew members discuss the duties they will perform during the race, and in the second Arnold Wall describes the route and some of the picturesque stopping places. Wing Commander R. F. Watson, captain of the aircraft, outlines the broad plan of the operation and estimates the time the Hastings will take as two and a half days. When it takes off from Heath Row on October 8 the aircraft will carry 15 aircrew members, a servicing crew of eight, a meteorological officer, a medical officer, and two civilians. The last two will be Arnold Wall and W. Courtenay, a journalist from the Kemsley newspaper group, and at present a war correspondent in Korea. The number carried will not affect the plane's chances of success, as payload is taken into consideration in the handicap section.

In charge of the servicing crew on the survey flight was Flight Lieutenant J. D. Hurley, whose crew, according to Mr. Wall, could be seen getting faster and faster as the journey progressed. The navigator, Flight Lieutenant R. J. H. Myhill, points out that the shortest route—the great circle from Heath Row to Harewood—passes over Siberia and Korea, and is therefore impracticable.



ARNOLD WALL

The route chosen to conform best with the Hastings' speed and endurance requirements is in eight stages: from Heath Row about 1330 nautical miles to Athens; 1250 miles to Shiba, an R.A.F. base near Basra; 850 miles to Masira, off the south-east coast of Arabia; 1450 miles to Negombo in Ceylon; 1560 miles to the Cocos Islands; 1560 miles to Perth; 1450 miles to Melbourne; and a final 1300 miles to Harewood. The plane may not necessarily take the shortest route between these points. "Pressure navigation" will be used, and tail winds will be sought (continued on next page)



THE HASTINGS aircraft which will be representing the R.N.Z.A.F. in the Canterbury Centennial Air-race

N.Z. LISTENER, AUGUST 14, 1953.