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FERRY PILOTS' HUGE MILEAGE

80 PLANE TYPES DELIVERED

By L. MARSLAND GANDER,
Daily Telegraph Reporter.

Col. Moore-Brabazon, the first Englishman to fly in this country and now Minister of Aircraft Production, recently addressed ferry pilots of half a dozen nationalities in a hangar at an Air Transport Auxiliary station during a visit of inspection. He commented on the remarkable growth of the A.T.A. Since the beginning of the war its members had flown 80 different types of aeroplane.

The C.O. of this ferry pilots' "pool," Cmdr. Gerard d'Erlanger, added that on any fine day now the A.T.A. move thousands of tons of aircraft and fly 100,000 miles.

Miss Pauline Gower, who commands the women's section, told me that the women pilots alone have flown between 3,000 and 4,000 machines, including several of the older operational types.

In the dark-blue uniforms of the A.T.A. there were Dutch, Czechs, Poles, a Spaniard, a Dane and a Chinese mingling with their British Empire colleagues. Most of the Americans are either civil air line pilots, "crop dusters" (aviators who spray crops with insecticide), or private owners, and they are flowing to this country in steadily increasing numbers.

NEED FOR VERSATILITY

Those accepted are trained into most versatile fliers. One former glider pilot, who before the war had done only 70 hours of flying, left in an aerial taxi to deliver a Wellington bomber, a Spitfire and an American Tomahawk fighter.

Pay for an experienced pilot is between £600 and £700 a year. The Americans, however, receive considerably more.

PILOT NO. 1 WITH THE FERRY FLIERS

MINISTER'S TRIBUTE

From Our Air Correspondent

Lieut.-Col. Moore-Brabazon made his first public speech as Minister of Aircraft Production to ferry pilots and ground staff of the Air Transport Auxiliary.

Speaking from a hangar at Ferry Pool the Minister, to whom Royal Aero Club certificate No. 1 was issued in 1910, said, "I speak to you as a father—as the first British pilot in this country."

He congratulated them on releasing hundreds of R.A.F. pilots for operational duties. He paid a special tribute to the woman pilots, "doing a spectacular job without publicity."

The Woman's Share

Women pilots alone have delivered between 3,000 and 4,000 planes—from factories to maintenance units and squadrons.

Among the Minister's audience were pilots from Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India, South Africa, U.S.A., Poland, Czechoslovakia, France, Denmark, Spain and China. During the last 12 months they have ferried 81 different types of Service aircraft.

Lieut.-Col. Moore-Brabazon revealed that on any fine day ferry pilots cover 100,000 miles and move thousands of tons of Service planes.