

BY "COMET" TO JO'BURG

With a Comet scheduled by British Overseas Airways Corporation to start the world's first jet passenger air service, Pathe News detailed cameraman Ced Baynes to cover the historic trip. This is his story.

A few minutes ago I boarded the Comet together with other passengers making the trip to Johannesburg.

Captain Philip Brentnall took us off, with Flying Officer Charlebois (known to everybody as "Charlie Boy") as co-pilot.

Up to forty-thousand we shot to reach the Comet's best operating height, and headed for Rome, our first scheduled stop. Then I began to realise what a wonderful ship this was. Like all newsreel cameramen, flying is no novelty to me. But this was something new. There just wasn't any vibration. Before I'd really settled down, we were flying over the Alps. I think I got a shot of the Matterhorn over there.

Skipper Brentnall pointed out Corsica (that large mass of land) 70 miles away. At our great flying speed we were soon on the last few miles to Rome. In a few minutes Peter Panario was asking permission to land. We were over Rome ...

There was an hour's refuelling break scheduled.

I chartered a chariot for a quick look-see. I got as far as the Colosseum where lions used to eat Christians. They tell me you ought to see it by moonlight. Unfortunately we were due to take off at six ... as a matter of fact, I only just made it. The jets were warning up!

Next stop Beirut, Syria, then Khartoum, both of which I didn't see as we passed through during the night. But with daylight we were headed for Uganda in East Africa. Tony Smith our 'navvy' was busy; at our height and speed, calculations have to be bang on. We were looking out for Lake Victoria, the largest lake in Africa. There wasn't very much to see through the clouds, but they made a picture. I reckoned we'd done nearly 4,000 miles as I wrote up my log.

Lake Victoria on the northern end of which stands Entebbe our next stop. "Charlie Boy" prepared to ease the engines to the skipper's orders and soon we landed at Entebbe.

The weather reminded me of home. One of the things that strikes you on the trip is the change in airport personnel. But the sun was smiling - like some of the local girls - when take-off time came round and in perfect weather we left for Livingstone.

Stewardess Audrey Cartmell assured us "Everything's fine" as she served breakfast - she's always saying "Everything's fine." The Comet was riding as smoothly as a bird. But I soon had to get cracking again to catch the first sight of the Victoria Falls on the mighty Zambesi river, wider than Niagara and twice its drop.

We're heading in for Livingstone Airport now.

Johnny Johnson's engines had served us well. This was the last step before Jo'burg.

There was just time for a quick close-up of the mighty Falls, so, ignoring a couple of gentlemen with the inevitable souvenirs - which I'll bet weren't "all my own work, sir."

Can you imagine how Livingstone felt when he discovered these Falls - 100-million gallons of water pouring over a 400-foot drop every minute!

And then we were off again - on the last stage ... 600 miles to Jo'burg. It had been a perfect flight. At our speed we weren't in the air long enough to get bored. And then suddenly, it sprawled beneath us a fantastic city built out of the riches of the great Rand gold mines. Those white patches are the waste soil after the gold's extracted. And then we were landing. Britain had made air history again. The world now had its first passenger jet air service. Nearly 7,000 miles by jet!

I landed at Jo'burg full of smiles ... anytime I have to record history in the making again I'll travel Comet, please - every time!

RE/CW

With a Comet scheduled by B.O.A.C. to start the world's first jet passenger air service ~~London to Johannesburg~~ ^{Pathe News} detailed cameraman ~~God~~ ^{God} Hynes to cover the historic trip. This is his story ... A few minutes ago I boarded the Comet together with other passengers making the trip to Johannesburg. Captain Philip Brentnall took us off, with Flying Officer Charlebois - Charles Ray to all - as co-pilot.

UP

SC. 11. (CLIMB UP TO 40-THOUSAND WE START TO REACH THE COMET'S BEST OPERATING HEIGHT, THEN CLIMB)

and headed for Rome, our first scheduled stop. Then I began to realize what a wonderful ship this was. Like all newsreel cameramen, flying is no novelty to me. But this was something else again. There just wasn't any vibration. Before I'd really settled down, we were flying over the French Alps. I think I got a shot of the Matterhorn over there.

UP

SC. 20. Skipper Brentnall pointed out Corsica - that large mass of land - 70 miles away. Flying at our great flying speed we were soon on the last few miles to Rome. In a few minutes Peter Panaris was asking permission to land. We were over Rome ...

UP

SC. 26. With an hour's refuelling break scheduled for Rome, I chartered a chariot for a quick look-see. I got as far as the Colosseum where lions used to eat Christians. They tell me you ought to see it by moonlight. Unfortunately we were due to take off at six ... as a matter of fact, I only just made it. The jets were warming up!

UP

UP

50. 46.

Next stop Beirut, Syria, then Khartoum, both of which I didn't see as we passed through during the night. But with daylight we were headed for Uganda in East Africa. Tony Smith our 'navy' was busy; at our height and speed, calculations have to be bang on.

UP

50. 47.

We were looking out for Lake Victoria, now, the largest Lake in Africa. There wasn't very much to see through the clouds, but they made a picture. I reckoned we'd done nearly 4,000 miles as I wrote up my log.

UP

50. 50.

Lake Victoria on the northern end of which stands Entebbe our next stop. "Charlie Bay" prepared to ease the engines to the skipper's orders and soon we landed at Entebbe.

UP

50. 56.

The weather reminded me of home. One of the things that strikes you on the trip is the change in airport personnel. But the sun was smiling - like some of the local girls - when take-off time came round and in perfect weather we left for Livingstone.

UP

50. 67.

Stewardess Audrey Cartmell assured us "Everything's Fine" as she served breakfast - she's always saying "Everything's Fine." The Comet was riding as smoothly as a bird. But I soon had to get cracking again to catch the first night of the Victoria Falls on the mighty Zambesi river wider than Niagara and twice its drop. We're heading in for Livingstone airport now.

UP

UP

SC. 78.

Michigan

Jenny Johnson's engines had served us well. This was the last stop before Johannesburg - Livingstone, North Rhodesia.

UP

SC. 88.

There was just time for a quick close-up of the mighty falls so, ignoring a couple of gentlemen with the inevitable souvenirs - which I'll bet weren't 'all my own work, sir' - off I went. It was worth the trouble. Can you imagine how Livingstone felt when he discovered them? - 100 million gallons of water pouring over a 400-foot drop every minute!

UP

SC. 94.

And then we were off again - on the last stage ... 600 miles to Johannesburg. It had been a perfect zig flight. At our speed we weren't in the air long enough to get bored. And then suddenly, Johannesburg sprouted beneath us a fantastic city built out of the riches of the great Rand gold mines. These white patches are the waste soil after the gold's extracted. And then we were landing. Our Comet had made history and the world now had its first passenger jet air service. Nearly 7,000 miles by jet!

UP

SC. 105.

I landed at Jo'burg full of miles ... ^{next} and/time I have to record history in the making again I'll travel Comet, please - every time!

