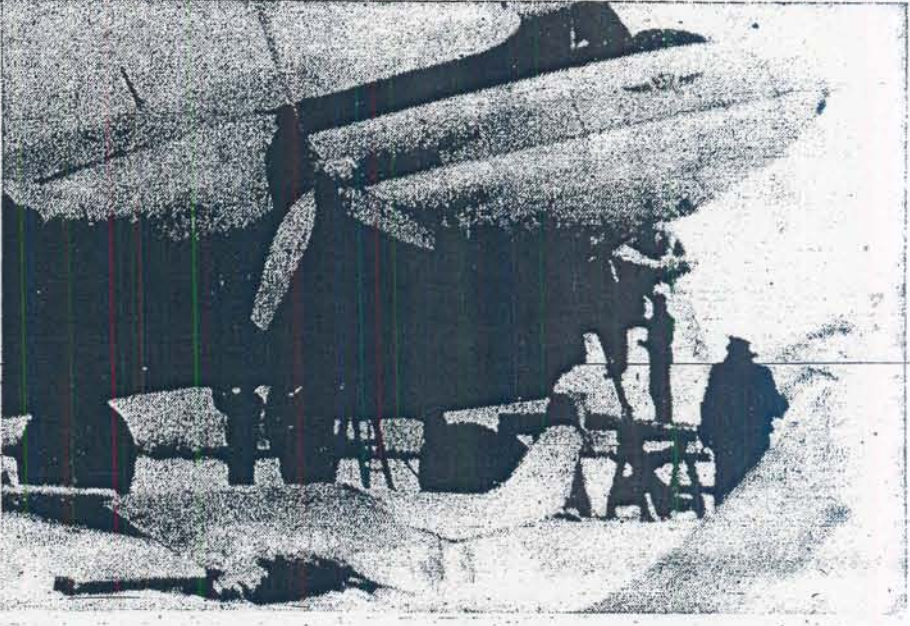
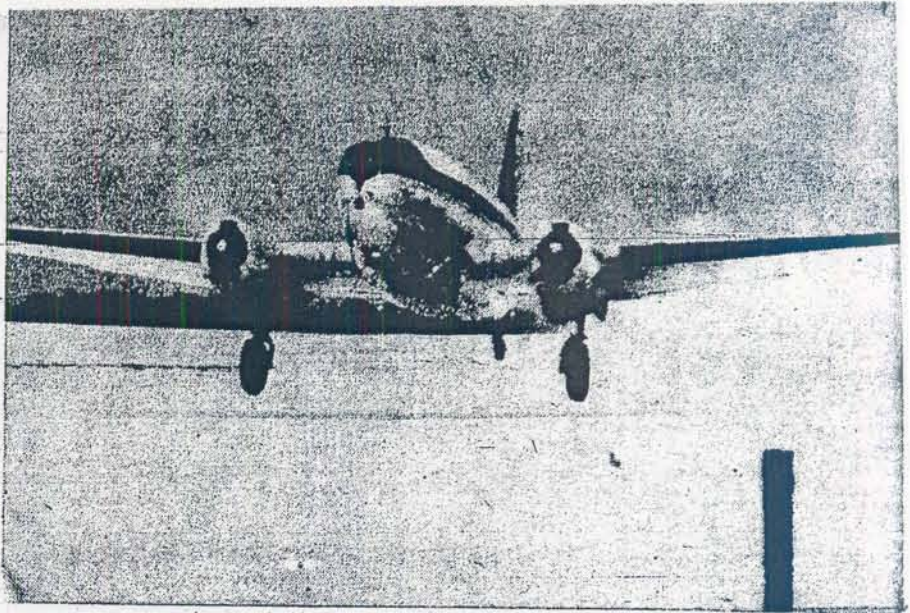


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TAKE-OFF OF N-59487 TOOK PLACE WEDNESDAY afternoon from an improvised air strip, west of Cobourg, on Charles Wilson's farm where it crash-landed on Dec. 20 with 44 passengers aboard. It roared down the runway, Upper Right photo, shortly after 3 p.m. Veteran 13,000-fly-

ing hours pilot, Capt. Charles Rector of Burbank, Calif., Top Left photo, wrote out his flight plan for Malton, changed it later to Trenton and landed there without incident. A new rudder fin was installed. Lower Left photo, by overhaul contractor engineers and final cable adjustment

made by Bill Bryson and Otto Schick, both of Toronto. General view of the pre-take-off activity is shown in the Lower Right photo; the bent port propeller, damage result of the miraculous belly landing, is shown in the foreground. —Examiner Staff and Smith Photos

US PLANE TAKES OFF FROM COBOURG

Peterborough Examiner JAN. 11 1952

Fog Halts Proposed Flight To Malton Airport For First Leg Of Trip Finally Given Permission To Land At Trenton For Repairs

COBOURG, Jan. 10 (ENS)—Blowing a blizzard of snow into the faces of the watching crowd, the C-46 airliner that crash-landed here December 20, took off at 4:20 Wednesday afternoon. Fitted with new propellers, a new rudder, and some minor parts, the plane lifted easily off the 2,500-foot makeshift runway on the farm of Charles Wilson just west of Cobourg. The crowd of 500 cheered the take-off. Not long after the take-off, the C-46 land-

ed safely at Trenton RCAF airport, where further repairs will be made. Originally, the plane was due to land at Malton, near Toronto, but bad weather ruled out the west-bound trip. Other landing fields were ruled out as the customs clearance papers were made out for Malton, but permission was finally given for the Trenton landing.

Pilot for Thursday's take-off was Charles Rector, 42-year-old director of operations for North Continent Airlines, Burbank, Cal. He was assisted by Gordon McBride, superintendent of maintenance for Major Airlines, also of Burbank.

Blown Off Course

In her wheels-up landing five days before Christmas, the C-46 landed safely with 44 passengers aboard. Blown off course over Lake Ontario, the plane had earlier lost radio contact over Toledo, Ohio.

In the murky light of a stormy day, on the morning of December 20, around 8 o'clock, pilots Bruce

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Plane Takes Off

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Smelser and Eddie O'Leary, the latter a Marine Corps pilot, both of California, spotted the welcome sight of land over the white caps of Lake Ontario. They swung about and through a rift in the clouds saw a snow-covered field just on shore.

They set the plane down and the 44 passengers aboard, including some half dozen children, felt a gentle bump as the plane, wheels retracted as a safety measure, slid to a stop on the belly of the fuselage. Earlier, Stewardess Sandy Daine of New York, her face masking the realization that tragedy might not be far off, told the passengers to fasten their safety belts—and pray. They came in safely on two wings, two dead engines and a prayer.

Within minutes after landing, the passengers and ship's crew were in the farmhouse nearby of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wilson where plenty of hot coffee and sandwiches and the warmth of a rural welcome restored everyone to normal. Soon all that remained was the ghostly, snow-draped plane out on the lonely pasture field. The passengers later in the day took other transportation to their destinations.

The air line company immediately got to work to plan removal of the ship. Earlier reports that the plane would be dismantled and taken to Trenton to be re-assembled and flown back to California turned out to be premature. Mechanics from Sanderson Aircraft, Malton, began the task of getting the aircraft ready for a takeoff. This past weekend, pits were dug underneath the wheel bays and the wheels lowered, and then a bulldozer pulled the plane up the slope to level ground. New props arrived on Tuesday morning and by nightfall both engines were operating.

There were more than 500 people out in the chilly morning Wednesday. They hung around, some going but more coming, until early afternoon. The plane's props were whirring. Up at the controls were Rector, his co-pilot, McBride, and Flight-Engineer John Weaver, of Newark. The motors were revved up and everybody felt that the plane would be rolling out on the prepared air strip levelled in the snow by a bulldozer. Officials of the Department of Transport were checking with Malton, first lap of the trip home to California, and at 1.30 pm word came through that fog had closed Malton in. DOT officials said that the plane could not take off.

All Off

Rector wondered about Ottawa but was told that the immigration and customs papers were made out for Malton. Rector was a worried man. The weather called for a rise in the temperature and that could mean soft ground and indefinite grounding of the plane. Provincial police, who kept the highway clear of traffic, told the crowd it was all off until next day, on the authority of the Department of Transport, and hundreds went home.

Rector and his crew envisioned the plane bogged down for an indefinite period in the mud when the temperature rose. They considered several alternative fields but they were ruled out because the customs clearance was made out for Malton. Finally after much enquiry, permission was received to land at Trenton airport and the plane took off for Trenton at 2:40 Wednesday afternoon. Incidentally that cemented international friendship.

Large Gallery

Most of the original crowd had gone home but others took their places and there was a large gallery when the plane taxied out from its resting place. The slipstream blew a blizzard of snow into the faces of the crowd. Out on the west fringe of the takeoff strip, three photographers, one of them from The Examiner, stood with cameras ready. Brakes on and flaps down the plane's engines roared as the power came on and then broke away. For about 250 to 300 yards the wheels rolled along the snow and then the plane rose. Due to the hummocks in the field, the plane had kept well to the west and the left wing overhung the west ridge of the air strip. News photographers shot their pictures and ducked for

safety as the plane roared scant feet overhead. Later at Trenton, Pilot Rector said he was worried about the people on that side of the field but had to keep to the west because of the condition of the takeoff strip. A bump and a wingover might have spelled disaster, a warning which provincial police uttered before the takeoff in urging the spectators to keep well clear of the takeoff strip.

The plane took off easily, headed west, banked lazily and then flew easterly over the heads of the crowd. And thus came to an end, as far as Cobourg was concerned, the big event in local aircraft history. Never before had such a large plane landed in Cobourg and never before had the town been so close to what might have been another major tragedy in aircraft history.