

U.S.A. May Hoist Her Flag on Christmas Island

VALUABLE BASE FOR FLIGHTS TO NEW ZEALAND

From Our Own Correspondent

WASHINGTON, Monday.

CHRISTMAS ISLAND, which claims attention each Yuletide for its name, gains new distinction this year.

It may be placed under the U.S.A. flag as a vital military and commercial airport, according to plans being discussed here.

This coral atoll of the South Seas is on an air line from Hawaii to New Zealand, and plans already are under way to begin this service with passenger and mail airplanes.

Honolulu, centre of Pacific air services, is 3900 miles from New Zealand. The projected new service would be from Honolulu to Christmas Island (1200 miles), Christmas Island to Pago Pago, Samoa (1200 miles), and Pago Pago to Auckland (1500 miles).

The advantages of Christmas Island as a strategic base for naval operations have long been apparent to the Navy Department, which has sponsored several research expeditions there.

Growing interest has been manifest among the Navy's high command since the development of trans-oceanic flying.

Official Government maps note that both

the U.S.A. and Great Britain claim Christmas Island, now only a copra colony, but destined perhaps to be one of the world's greatest airports.

The British stake their claim on the fact Captain Cook first recorded the existence of Christmas Island. Contrary to usual belief, the discovery was not made on Christmas Day, but on Christmas Eve, 1777.

At various times American then British groups occupied and claimed the island, valuable only for its guano fertilizer.

Father Rougier, a French priest of Tahiti, built up the coconut plantations.

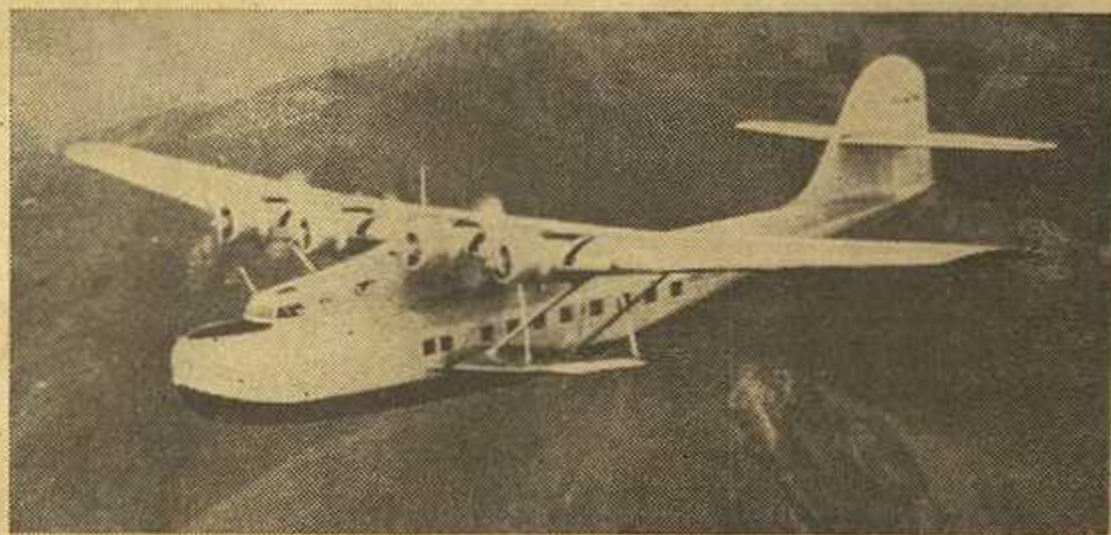
He colonised the island with South Sea Island labourers, and laid out towns with the unoriginal names of London and Paris.

There are less than 100 natives there now, directed by Paul Rougier, a nephew of the old priest, who died only a few years ago.

Christmas Island is 40 miles long, 35 miles wide, and has a magnificent lagoon for the landing of seaplanes.

The land is at an average height of but 15 feet above the ocean.

A field for land planes could be graded with little effort.



THE CHINA CLIPPER, one of the type of air liners which will fly on the Honolulu-New Zealand service.

Earthquake Damage to St. Mark's

Time, tides and earthquakes threaten the under-structure of the Basilica of St. Mark's, Venice.

Thirty-four years ago an earthquake caused the collapse of the Campanile, or original bell tower. Serious fissures were discovered in the foundations. Cracks opened in floors and walls.

After the recent earth shocks, almost invisible fissures appeared in some of the old "wounds." Architects fear that they portend more trouble.

New U.S.A. Cars Guard Against Crash Risks

By ROBERT WALLING,
"Evening Standard" Motoring
Correspondent

AMERICAN motor manufacturers are designing their cars in such a way as to reduce the risk of injury in case of accident. All sharp edges are finished with rubber. Knobs on instrument boards are set deep in the panel; windscreen-wiper controls are of rubber; bodies are all-steel and in one piece; instrument panels are set high so

LET YOUR CHRISTMAS WINES BE BRITISH WINES