

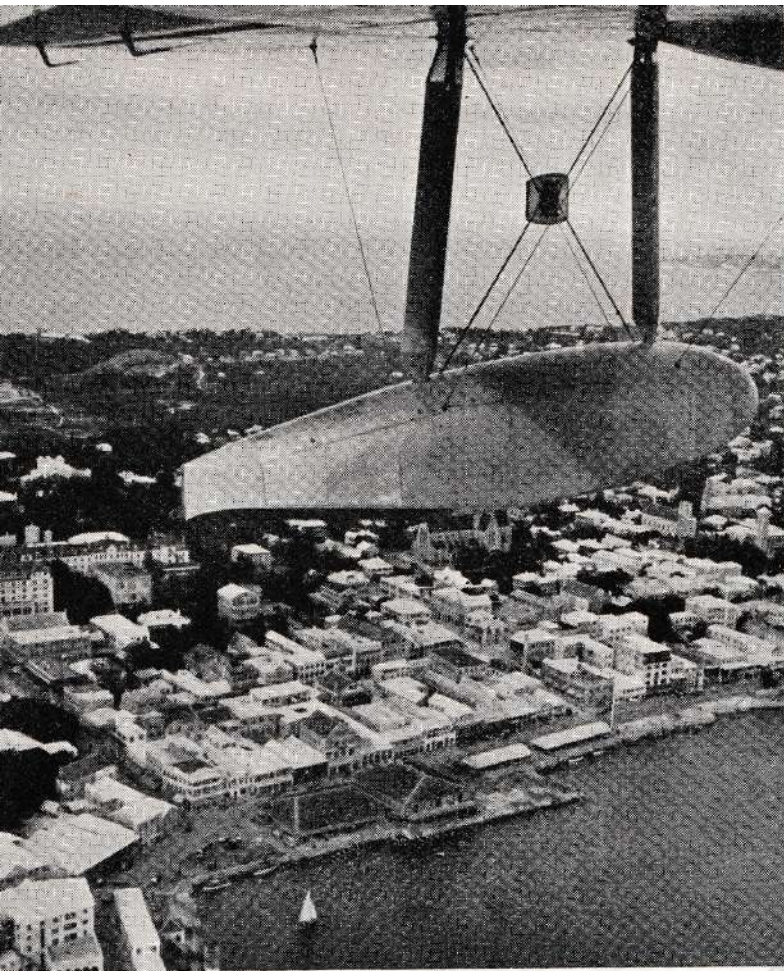
**IMPERIAL
AIRWAYS
GAZETTE**

FEBRUARY 1938 · NO 2 · VOL 10



MERCURY

M



Hamilton, Bermuda, from the Cavalier

TO BERMUDA BY AIR

A TRIBUTE BY AN AMERICAN AUTHORITY

We conclude the article by Mr. Lester D. Gardner which we began in last month's *Gazette*.

LUXURY IN THE AIR

' An hour or more passes so quickly and pleasantly that you have not walked to see the other compartments on the *Cavalier*. Let us start from the smoking room which is the forward cabin and walk toward the tail. A hallway divides the next section into two most important conveniences. On the left, behind swinging doors, are the bar and galley. Drinks are mixed and meals prepared out of sight and smell. A button at every seat enables a passenger to summon the steward. Stewards are frankly waiters and can be asked to render any service that a member expects in a club and assist in loading and unloading travelling bags. When not flying they can be useful at terminals. Stewardesses have to be trained nurses, among other requirements, and while they are as efficient in the air as stewards I have observed that some passengers do not like to see a young woman with such an education acting as a waitress and doing "chores" expected of a Pullman porter. There is no question but that stewardesses have great advantages over stewards in looking after women passengers. I predict that there may be both of the types on the larger aircraft of the future. That would make a perfect combination. On the other side of the hallway there are two lavatories, one for men and one for women. This prevents certain embarrassments arising and allows long occupancy for feminine "make-up" without inconveniencing the unbeautiful males. Imperial Airways provides towels sealed in transparent paper wrappers. The lavatory conveniences on aircraft have improved greatly in the last few years, and this advance is strikingly in evidence on the *Empire* boats.

' The next section contains three chairs, two on one side and a single chair on the other for some unsociable person who prefers to sit alone. All the chairs in the passenger cabins are adjustable to a full reclining position. In front of each chair is

a permanent table, half of which folds back. On this table we see passengers placing their books or papers, cameras or trinkets. Covered with a white napkin it makes a solid rest for serving meals.

CABIN ARRANGEMENTS

' One peculiarity of the *Empire* boats is that some of the cabins are on different levels, which gives them a modernistic effect. We mount two steps and reach what may be called the main cabin. As arranged for the Bermuda flights this cabin seats eight passengers on one side in four rows. On the other side is the famous promenade. Provision is made for installing three extra folding seats on this side when the need arises. On the sides where there are seats the windows are placed at the level of the eyes of the seated passengers, but the extra large windows on the promenade side are placed so that tall or short standing passengers can see the view while they relax after a few hours of sitting. Undoubtedly this novelty will be adopted generally in the large aircraft of the future so that passengers may secure exercise during the longer flights that are to come. Up another step brings us to the rear cabin, which seats six passengers, four on one side and two on the other. The four different cabins give more privacy and seem to permit more variations of viewpoint than in the railroad car type of seating. A door from the rear cabin leads to the large compartment which carries bags, mail, and freight. There is no bracing in this compartment and it extends to the rear tip of the *Cavalier*, giving the impression of extreme roominess. It also has the great advantage of giving access to one's bags during the entire trip. Of course the *Empire* flying-boats are also arranged so that they can be used for night trips. In the daytime the normal seating capacity is twenty-four, with eight extra seats in the smoking room and three emergency seats. At night, sixteen full-sized berths may be used.

LUNCHEON IN THE AIR

' It is now one o'clock and we return to the smoking room where we find our luncheon table set and the steward ready to serve from the menu, provided by the Longchamps restaurant in New York. People call it the two-hundred-mile luncheon for obvious reasons. Let us look at what is offered. Honeydew melon—"Yes, steward, we will have a Bacardi cocktail" and then cream of fresh pea soup. You might order roast sirloin of beef, but I preferred the cold cuts with fresh vegetable salad. I ask for a condiment just to test the versatility of the larder. The steward brings H.P. sauce. A strawberry tartlet and a *demi tasse* appear and then while we are munching Roquefort cheese on toasted crackers we receive a 'pony' of a fine old liqueur brandy. Could anything be more perfect in the way of service? This huge boat travelling comfortably at 165 miles an hour is as sound-proof as a slow moving automobile and the four Bristol *Pegasus* engines, which are rated together at 2,960 horse-power, transmit little or no vibration. The wings are joined to the top of the flying-boat and therefore permit unobstructed downward visibility in all directions.

' About three o'clock old air travellers knew that the pilot had commenced to descend slowly from the slight sensation in the ears, which is immediately relieved by swallowing. Four hundred feet a minute is the maximum that air transport machines are permitted to descend so that they often start coming down fifty or sixty miles from their destination. All the passengers peer ahead on both sides. Soon, someone sights the white caps which are caused by the sea breaking over the barrier reef which almost entirely surrounds the islands. The hundreds of islands that comprise the Bermuda group gradually take shape as they come nearer and nearer. The *Monarch of Bermuda* has just passed a break in the reef and is near the wreck of the large Spanish ship whose skipper used an old chart and thereby came to grief. Captain Dennison points down to the naval base and his home, which is on the north-western tip of the Bermuda crescent. We circle over the Great Sound and see Somerset, where Hervey Allen spent five years writing *Anthony Adverse*. The great hotels of Hamilton and Paget are now below and toward the south, Coral and Elbow Beaches can be clearly seen. To the west of the jagged shore line of St. George's dozens of islands are outlined as on a map. I think that it is probably true that the aerial view while circling Bermuda for a landing is one of the finest in the world. You are requested by the steward to take your seat while landing. Now the *Cavalier* is skimming a few

Our frontispiece shows a close up of the Short Mayo Composite Marine Aircraft now undergoing tests.

[London News Agency Photos Ltd.]

feet off the water and you hardly know when the great 18-ton flying-boat touches the surface. Gradually the speed changes—flying to water taxiing—and in a moment we reach the Imperial Airways base on Darrell's Island, which is only ten minutes' ride by launch to Hamilton. We step on the dock and are greeted by friends who flew down an hour ahead of us in the Pan-American *Bermuda Clipper*, which is moored a hundred feet away. These two marvels of aircraft construction will provide many thousands of passengers with the delightful experience of a cruise of 780 miles to Bermuda in five hours instead of the usual forty by steamer.

THE END OF A PERFECT JOURNEY

'We were in Hamilton by nine on Monday morning for our return trip; cleared from the office of Imperial Airways in a few minutes; shopped for a half hour more, and were taken by launch to the *Cavalier*. Before taking off I had the privilege of visiting the pilot's and navigator's compartments. The two pilots' seats and the bewildering array of operational equipment are much the same as you see on any large aircraft. But what impresses you particularly is that the *Cavalier* has an upper deck which extends back over the smoking room and lavatories. On this deck is a room for the ship's clerk, the radio operator, and a comparatively large room with a table on which the Captain can place his maps when plotting his course. I was interested to know that practically all the navigating is done by "shooting the sun." The directional radio is usually used only when nearing ports. To get down to the passenger cabins you use a ladder on the wall of the galley which permits the surprising appearances in the cabins of Captain Cumming or First Officer Richardson.

'At ten exactly we were in the air for our return trip. Owing to a forty-mile head wind and as everyone was glad to prolong an air trip on such a perfect day, Captain Cumming cruised at a normal speed which brought us to Port Washington at 16.00 hours.

'In closing, let me urge you to consider taking this delightful trip. After flying many, many hours over some of the most beautiful and scenic air routes of Europe and the United States, I can assure you that the air trip to Bermuda has a special charm that will give you something to remember and talk about for a long time.'

SPEED AND THE EMPIRE FLYING-BOAT CHRISTMAS DAY IN DURBAN—NEW YEAR'S DAY IN LONDON

This is not a story of the magic carpet but the true experience of the Captain and crew of the *Empire* flying-boat, the *Caledonia*.

They spent Christmas Day in Durban, flew all the way back from South Africa in the *Caledonia*, bringing the mail in time for them to spend New Year's Day in London.

CIVIL AVIATION

THE PRICE OF SPEED

A TIMELY LETTER TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES

Recently *The Times* newspaper published a letter from Mr. Harry Harper (the *doyen* of British aeronautical newspaper correspondents) on the subject of insensate speeds in air transport. We reproduce this letter with acknowledgments to *The Times*.

'Sir,—From a 30 years' study of flying might I submit certain considerations for those who, during 1938, will be designing and operating commercial aircraft?

THE CALL FOR A HALT

'For one thing I should like to be permitted to reinforce, with all possible emphasis, a recent trend in technical opinion which is calling for a halt in the pursuit of speed and still more speed in commercial air transport.

'We all know, of course, that speed is the keynote of civil aviation; but we should also remember that high speeds exact their price in the air, just as on land and sea. The reliability of the modern aero engine has been apt to make us forget the risk that may attend compulsory descents at high landing speeds; but such risks, and others associated with very small margins for error, need to be borne in mind when contemplating any considerable volume of all-the-year-round flying.

'I submit that if great nations now developing air transport could only be induced to come together and call a halt—even if only for the time being—in the never-ceasing cry for faster and faster commercial aircraft, it would give hard-pressed designers a chance to concentrate, among other things, on problems of controllability at slow speeds, and of taking-off and landing under adverse conditions.

THE HUMAN FACTOR

'In the constant speed-up of mechanism one needs to remember a fundamental fact, and this is that human brains, eyes, nerves, and muscles have their limits in speed and efficiency, and that when anything untoward happens, and everything becomes a matter of split seconds, we may have to pay a bitter price for our worship of the god of Speed—a worship which has, in certain directions aerially, threatened to become almost an obsession.

THE ECONOMIC ASPECT

'I submit, Sir, having watched civil aviation from its earliest days, that it is high time that world air transport paused to ask itself the question: "What is a really economic cruising speed at which to operate aircraft carrying commercial loads on any typical trunk airline?" Land and sea transport have been obliged to get down to "brass tacks" in such directions. Unpleasant lessons have taught that there is a speed which pays and a speed that very definitely does not pay. But so long as there is somebody to pay the piper, speed can be crowded on in the air in a way that would be utterly unremunerative under normal conditions. World air travel, however, cannot hope to live permanently in an unreal atmosphere of heavily subsidized speed. At present, in certain directions, the whole financial fabric is just a flimsy structure which, if heavy State assistance was withdrawn, would collapse like a house of cards.

THE JUSTIFICATION OF SUBSIDIES

'Commercial air subsidies are only justified if, as is the case with those of Great Britain, they are paid from the definite viewpoint of accelerating progress, and of enabling technical developments to be achieved in a few years which might otherwise take many years. That is the keynote of our British system. It means that subsidies are not regarded as a permanent form of assistance, and that every effort is being made, in British commercial aircraft, to effect at any given time the best combination of speed and pay-load capacity.

HOW MUCH LONGER?

'Of one thing I am certain. The time will undoubtedly come—and perhaps sooner than some people think—when certain countries find that the purses of their taxpayers will no longer stand paying for air speed as a form of national advertisement rather than as a normal commercial proposition.

'Sooner or later, in fact, air transport speeds will have to be stabilized on an economic basis—a basis providing adequate time-savings over other forms of transport, and the charging of rates which (while being regarded as giving value for money by the public) enable commercial airways to operate on a normal, profit-earning scale. And it is towards that goal that British air transport has been, and is, making all the progress that can be expected under the general conditions existing at the present time.

'I am, Sir, yours very truly,

'HARRY HARPER.

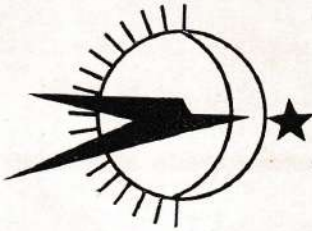
'Elm Cottage, Harriotts Lane, Ashted, Surrey.'

NEW BANGKOK-HONG KONG AIR ROUTE OPEN

The new Bangkok-Hong Kong route was opened on 19 December when the *Dorado*, one of the *Diana* class of air liner, left Hong Kong for Bangkok and the *Delphinus* left Bangkok to operate the service in the reverse direction.

This feeder service from the England-Australia route supercedes that which formerly operated from Penang to Hong Kong and will be once weekly in each direction, leaving each of the terminal points on Sundays. There is a night stop in each direction at Hanoi and the services arrive at their destinations on the following day.

The new route is 1,275 miles long as against the 1,500 miles of the former route via Penang and stopping places between Bangkok and Hong Kong are Udorn, Hanoi and Fort Bayard.



IMPERII VIAE EXPLORATOR VOLITO

IMPERIAL AIRWAYS GAZETTE

The *Imperial Airways Gazette* is published every month for the information of the agents of the company and for others who are interested in air transport. A copy will be sent free of charge every month to *bona fide* applicants from the Traffic Manager's Office, Imperial Airways, Ltd., Airway Terminus, London, S.W.1. School children must make their application through their Schoolmaster or Schoolmistress.

THE SERVICES OF IMPERIAL AIRWAYS

Full information about the services of Imperial Airways, of its associated companies and those for which it acts as agents, viz. the Belgian Air Lines (S.A.B.E.N.A.), the German Airways (D.L.H.) and Swissair, may be obtained from Imperial Airways, Ltd., Airway Terminus, London, S.W.1, or from Airways House, Charles Street, S.W.1. Telephone: VICTORIA 2211. Telegrams: 'Impairlim, Telex, London,' or from any office of the company. Airway Terminus is open day and night. The principal travel agents can also supply details of the times and fares of the services operated by these and other companies.

AS OTHERS SEE US

Imperial Airways recently received the following letter from one of its passengers who travelled in one of the *Empire* flying-boats:

'In so far as the boats are concerned they are definitely very comfortable and a great step forward. I have travelled with practically all the leading operating companies' aircraft and feel that the flying-boat is the first real comfortable proposition for long journeys. The freedom allowed by the additional space is a great asset and creates just that different atmosphere to the passenger. The Commander and his crew did me proudly, a very fine crowd.'

RECORD CHRISTMAS AIR MAIL LOADS 300% INCREASE

There was a tremendous increase in the Christmas air mail loads this year due, in the main, to the operation of the *Empire Air Mail Programme* on the Africa route.

It is estimated that for the six weeks before Christmas, the mail carried from this country to places on the Africa route amounted to fifty-five tons. The load in the reverse direction totalled twenty-five tons.

On the India-Australia route the mails from this country amounted to thirteen tons and the incoming mail to six tons. These figures mean that approximately ninety-nine tons of Christmas air mails were transported by Imperial Airways over one section or another of the *Empire* air routes. Christmas air mail loads for 1936 were thirty-four tons so that the increase was almost three hundred per cent.

BRINGING UP AIR PILOTS IMPERIAL AIRWAYS METHODS COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM

As a result of the huge expansion brought about by the inauguration of the *Empire Air Mail Programme*, Imperial Airways has had to increase the number of its pilots and to this end formed some time ago a special school for the training



In the Navigation School

of captains and first officers. This training is in the nature of a 'post-graduate' one and is only given to those who have already had long experience in air transport.

Recently *The Times* newspaper devoted an article to this school and we reproduce this article below with acknowledgments to that newspaper.

'In preparing pilots for the new long-distance work which will soon fall to them, Imperial Airways has taken the view that its officers should have experience of everything which may have to be done in and to their air liners. Those officers are expected to be pilots, navigators, ground engineers, and wireless operators. They join the company as pilots and everything else is added to them through the beneficence of the company. They go to school as soon as they join; they do school work as supernumerary officers in the aircraft; they return to school as they gain seniority; and they gain experience under the eye of the instructor in the course of subsequent voyages.

'The policy of bringing up pilots in the way they should go has led to the establishment of a full educational organization. It is devised primarily to secure those Air Ministry certificates which may add to the dignity and authority of the full-blown officer and also to relate the acquisition of knowledge to its application in the type of work the company undertakes. If, for instance, the life of the candidate for a ground engineer's licence is considered, it appears that he mixes lectures with practical instruction and with hard labour as member of a shift in the workshops; he goes for a few days to the works where the engines and air-screws are made; and then he is shipped in one of the liners as first officer, and, between voyages, he shares with the maintenance team the duty of tending the craft in which he flies.

'The practical advantages are evident, and this system is typical of all the courses of instruction. There are navigation pupils, engaged on set tasks, in many of the flying-boats which run almost daily out of Southampton Water. Some are junior officers practising astronomical observation and applying their refurbished mathematics to the working out of position lines and "fixes." Others are senior officers who have been years on the airways and are now busily engaged in turning second-class navigators' licences into first-class, so that they may

One of the Technical Classes



qualify as commanders of the ocean boats which will soon be plying regularly over the Atlantic and the Pacific.

LONG PREPARATION

'That qualification is one which demands a great deal of preparation. The second-class certificate is usually to be obtained after three months' study; the first-class may not be taken until a pilot has 900 hours' flying to his credit, and the school work may occupy six months. It may, in fact, be spread over a longer period. Senior officers cannot always be conveniently relieved of duty for six months, and some might suffer from surfeit if educational doses were too continuously administered in middle life. For their benefit part of the educational machine is removed periodically from Croydon to the Hythe base in Southampton Water, to coach returned officers until the time comes for them to take their next turns at the controls of a flying-boat bound for South Africa or India. 'Soon there will be urgent need of first-class navigators, for every aircraft which crosses more than 600 miles of sea must have one on board, and at present the company can boast only 14. Therefore, the school, under the direction of Squadron Leader G. E. Godsave, and its staff of instructors are arranging their work so that officers who have been flying for many years may be helped to conform to modern requirements, while the youngsters are being put into service with as much knowledge as they can reasonably carry and an examination habit which may help them later to acquire the higher qualifications.'

AIR TRANSPORT IN AUSTRALIA GREAT PROGRESS

A very interesting account of the progress of aviation in Australia appeared in a recent number of *The Chartered Accountant in Australia* which is the official organ of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in this Dominion, extracts of which we reproduce below with acknowledgments to that paper

PROGRESS IN THE AIR

'Within a year or two Australia will have been linked by air with every other Continent. The growth of civil aviation has been one of the most remarkable of all developments since the depression. It has brought with it a new stimulus to development, new facilities for commerce, and, as we must now realise, new responsibilities for the Australian people.

'Nowadays we read without surprise of the inauguration of new air services which a few years ago belonged to the realm of romance. But developments over the whole field have been proceeding so quietly that only those intimately concerned have been fully aware of the extraordinary growth of civil aviation. In only two years, for example, the aggregate mileage of all aerial services in Australia has doubled. It is now more than 23,000 miles, only about 4,000 miles less than that of all the railway systems. The services fly 6,284,000 miles a year, compared with 3,061,000 two years ago.

'There are now 17 aircraft companies in the Commonwealth, operating 49 services, and it is possible to fly completely round Australia, using only commercial planes. There are 740 licensed private pilots, 287 licensed commercial pilots, 248 registered aircraft and 203 licensed aerodromes. Last year 31,873 passengers travelled by air, compared with 13,378 in 1934. For a population of little more than 6,000,000 this is a remarkable record, which must place Australia in the forefront of the "air-minded" nations.

AUSTRALIA'S ADVANTAGES

'Australia is peculiarly adapted for air transport, and it was inevitable that our vast distances would encourage the adoption of the aeroplane for speedy travel. Particularly in tropical Australia, where land transport becomes almost impossible during a quarter of the year, the aeroplane has opened up avenues of development and communication never before contemplated. Mails and freight have increased enormously, and before long millions of pounds will have been invested in air transport. Even within the next twelve months, it is estimated, more than £2,000,000 will be invested in Australia in the further development of major air lines, the extension of subsidiary routes, the flotation of new companies, and the improvement of ground organisation.

'But possibly of greater commercial importance is the close linking of Australia by air with the rest of the world. The first

flight of the Empire service from London to Darwin was an epoch-making event. Yet within the next few months the development of the same route will have put that pioneer effort in the shade. In the meantime, Governments and private enterprise are planning further routes to place the Commonwealth into aerial communication with New Zealand, the United States and the East. Civil aviation, compared with land and sea transport, is in its infancy, but each year it achieves new victories and conquers new regions.

ENGLAND—AUSTRALIA AIR SERVICE AND FLYING-BOATS

'The London-Australia service was duplicated last year, and there is now a bi-weekly service in each direction. Commercial documents can reach London from Sydney in twelve days, but the service is apparently only an introduction to what is to follow. Long negotiations between the British and Australian Governments have resulted in an agreement for a new flying-boat service to begin next January. The scheme provides for an initial schedule of ten days from London to Sydney, and for a progressive reduction to seven days, three times weekly. As the traffic increases, the weekly number of trips will increase also. The present rate of 1s. 6d. per half ounce of mail matter will be reduced to five-pence per half ounce, with corresponding benefits to the business community.

'On the basis of not more than 40,000 lb. of mail matter a year, the Australian contribution will be £40,000 sterling subsidy and £32,000 sterling for mails. As the annual load increases, these contributions will increase until they reach a maximum of £50,000 for subsidy and £52,000 for mails. The Australian Government will pay also £30,000 for ground organisation. The agreement will operate for fifteen years, but for the first two years, as far as Australia is concerned, the flying-boats will be on trial. Preliminary surveys of the flying-boat bases have been undertaken by a special committee. One of them will be at Groote Eyelandt, that lonely outpost in the Gulf of Carpentaria, thus linking this newest instrument of commerce with the romance of Australia's great undeveloped north. Arnhem Land is forbidden except to those whom the Government approves, but soon this great aboriginal reserve, perhaps the last stronghold of the Australian black, will be just another section of an uneventful journey.

'Twenty-nine flying-boats will be required for the service, and they are now being turned out at the rate of one every three weeks. The last batch of Australian pilots and officers for the service are being trained in England and will return to Australia before the end of the year. . . .

ENGLAND—AUSTRALIA—NEW ZEALAND AIR SERVICE

'Plans for the service to New Zealand are based on co-operation between the British, Australian and New Zealand Governments. The New Zealand Government is reported to be eager to begin the service, but it was apparent early this month that no finality would be reached until after the Federal elections.

'Within Australia, the development of air services has been so rapid lately that a complete survey is impossible here. Among the outstanding achievements, however, are the establishment of a daily service between Tasmania and the mainland, the increase (as from the end of this month) of the Adelaide-Perth schedule to four one-day flights a week and the establishment of a service to New Guinea. The announcement last month of plans for a one-day service between Melbourne and Townsville drew attention to the enormous speeding-up which has taken place over most of the Australian air routes.

'Naturally all this progress would have been impossible without official help. The Government has granted subsidies to regular services covering about 12,000 miles, an increase of more than 100 per cent. over the corresponding figure at the end of 1932.

'All this development in the air has implications which Australians cannot ignore. In the first place, it is whittling away the last of our isolation. With London only seven days away and the East a mere step, we are closer to the world, economically and politically, than ever before. Just as faster ships and their wireless telegraphy thrust greater responsibilities in world affairs upon us, so air transport will bring its burden of swift participation in events abroad.'

THE SHORT HISTORY OF THE EMPIRE'S AIRWAY

We continue with the history of Imperial Airways which we began in the October (1937) issue of the *Gazette*.

1919

- 10 September The Supreme Council in Paris approved *The Convention as to International Air Navigation*.¹²
- 21 September Handley Page Transport, Ltd., began regular service London-Brussels.
- 29 September Postmaster-General announced that during the Railway Strike the Royal Air Force would operate as from 1 October a mail service (surcharge 2s. per oz.) between London-Bristol-Birmingham - Newcastle - Manchester -Glasgow. Service ceased 6 October.
- 11 October Handley Page Transport, Ltd., introduced luncheon baskets on its services—6 sandwiches, fruit and chocolate 3s. This was the first attempt at an aerial restaurant service.
- 13 October The shipowners and shipbrokers, S. Instone & Co., Ltd., began a private air service between Cardiff-London-Paris using a converted D.H.9a (pilot Captain S. L. Barnard) for the transport of documents and members of the firm's staff.
- 14 October The International Air Convention signed in Paris by eleven out of the thirteen nations which were parties to it: the United States did not sign it until 31 May 1920, and then with certain reservations. Japan signed shortly afterwards. Unfortunately no nations which were enemies of the Allied Powers during the war or neutral nations were asked to sign it. This Convention with its protocols forms the basis of international law on matters relating to air transport.¹³
- 30 October The *Advisory Committee on Civil Aviation* which, under the Chairmanship of Lord Weir, had been instructed by the Air Ministry to consider 'how best to organize Imperial air routes' (see 21 June 1919 in the January issue of the *Gazette*) issued its report, *Imperial Air Routes*. Recommended the establishment of certain 'main trunk lines' connecting Canada, Newfoundland, South Africa, India, Australia and New Zealand to the United Kingdom by air. The report also stated that such trunk lines 'would no doubt in course of time be supplemented, if not preceded by local' internal lines: that 'the proper place for initial action' is the route to India, and ultimately thence to Australia, 'to be followed by a service to South Africa and that the development of these Imperial routes' should be by private enterprise backed by State assistance.¹⁴
- 1 November The Controller-General of Civil Aviation in his first public report announced that 'the Cairo-Karachi' route has been opened for military purposes and will be available for civil traffic at an early date—that from Cairo to the Cape has been surveyed, and a chain of landing places established. A full reconnaissance of the route from India to Australia has also been completed. The report also added that 'it may be questioned whether civil aviation in England is to be regarded as one of those industries which is unable to stand on its own feet, and is yet so essential to the national welfare that it must be kept alive at all costs.' The Controller-General added that 'if this question is answered in the affirmative' then he considered that 'some form of direct Government assistance' was necessary.¹⁵
- 6 November Agreement reached between Great Britain and Switzerland for the operation of an air service between the two countries—'declared open on 1 March 1920.'

- 10 November Opening of official air mail service between London and Paris by *Aircraft Transport & Travel, Ltd.*—surcharge 2s. 3½d. per ounce.¹⁶ Captain Ross M. Smith, D.F.C., A.F.C., and Lieutenant R. M. Keith started to fly from London (Hounslow Aerodrome) to Australia to try to win the prize of £10,000 offered by the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia to be awarded to the first pilot and/or pilots to finish the journey in less than thirty days. They flew in the *Vickers Vimy* (G-EAOU)—familiarily known as 'God 'Elp All of Us'—and reached Port Darwin on 10 December and won the prize. This was the first flight from England to Australia.¹⁷
- 27 December Air Ministry issued statement about the ground survey of the Cairo-Cape Town air route (see December 1918).¹⁸

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- ¹² *International Commission for Air Navigation Convention Relating to the Regulations of Aerial Navigation, dated 13 October 1919*. Conférences Aéronautiques Internationales 15, bis, rue Georges-Bizet, Paris.
- ¹³ For a critical examination of this subject see *The Political Aspect of Commercial Air Routes*. Lieut.-Colonel H. Burchall, D.S.O., Royal Central Asian Society, 23 November 1932. *The Political Aspect of the Operation of International Air Routes*. G. E. Woods Humphrey. *Shell Aviation News*, September 1934.
- ¹⁴ *Report on Imperial Air Routes* (Cmd. 449).
- ¹⁵ *Synopsis of Progress of Work in the Department of Civil Aviation, 1 May 1919 to 31 October 1919*. (Cmd. 418.)
- ¹⁶ *British Air Mails: A Chronology of the Air Posts of Great Britain and Ireland*. Francis J. Field, Ltd., 1935.
- ¹⁷ *Imperial Air Routes*. Major A. E. W. Salt. John Murray, 1930, p. 52, et seq.
- ¹⁸ The statement was to the effect that the survey of the *Cairo to Cape Town Aerial Route* had been finished. On 1 January 1920 the Air Ministry issued through His Majesty's Stationery Office a "strip map" of the route (price 3d.) which gave particulars of the bearings and position of each aerodrome, the mileage and particulars about oil and petrol supplies.

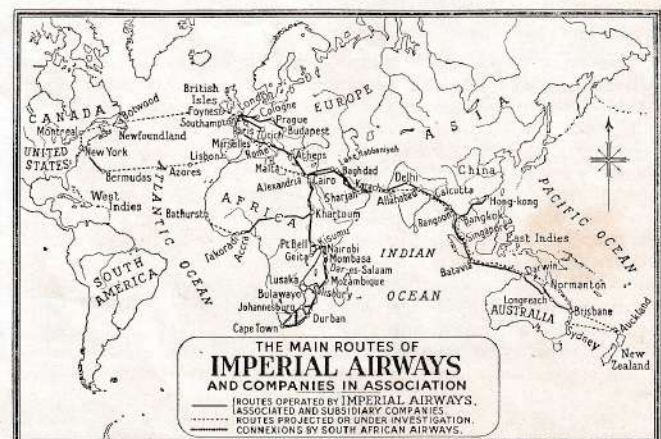
● STOP PRESS

OPENING OF THE EMPIRE AIR MAIL PROGRAMME BETWEEN GREAT BRITAIN, INDIA AND MALAYA

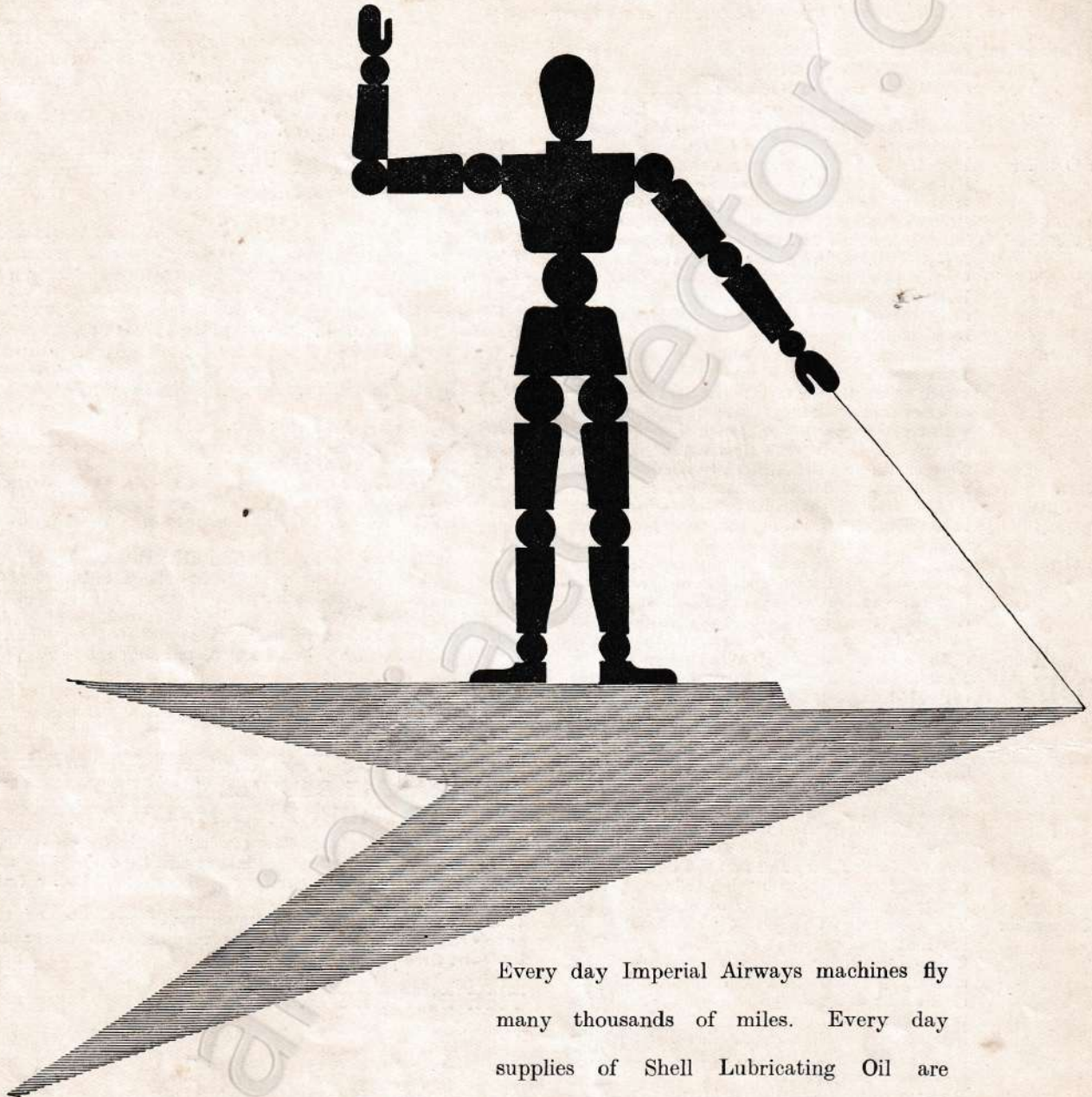
All first-class mails from Great Britain to Egypt, Palestine, India, Burma, Ceylon and Malaya will be carried by air beginning as from 23 February at the rate of 1½d. a half ounce.

This means the removal of the air mail surcharge and the acceleration of all letter and postcard mails on that route by from three to fourteen days.

THE EMPIRE'S AIRWAY



IMPERIAL AIRWAYS



Every day Imperial Airways machines fly many thousands of miles. Every day supplies of Shell Lubricating Oil are delivered to Imperial Airways to play their part in this great service—as reliably and efficiently as the Airliners themselves

SHELL LUBRICATING OIL