TWO MONTHS and 16,000 MILES

The Story of an Out-and-Home Trip to India in a Short Scion (Pobjoy Niagara Engines) to Compete in the Viceroy’s Trophy Handicap

CROYDON-COLOGNE, 312 miles (21/1/36).—Took off from Croydon at 07.22 hours. After a short stop at Lympne made direct for the French coast, where there were patches of sunshine. Ground-speed check gave 140 m.p.h., flying at 2,000 ft. Great satisfaction.

Landed at Cologne just before a thunderstorm arrived; decided to stay, as weather too bad over hills to Frankfurt.

22/1/36: Cologne-Vienna, 485 miles.
—Left Cologne at 08.50 hours with good visibility and clear in the zenith, but clouds ahead. G.S. check gave 120 m.p.h., but later dropped to 108 m.p.h. Air temperature, 0°C. Continental ground stations were very patient with our slow and somewhat bad operating, for we had not yet got used to flying the machine and operating at the same time.

Raining hard at times, but clear in patches. Decided to stay under the murk, as we were not sufficiently skilled with the wireless to come in on bearings. Landed at Nurnberg, and stayed about an hour doing Customs and waiting for further met. reports to come through from Passau and Linz.

Left Nurnberg and Bradshawed through the valleys to Passau. Experienced slight carburettor freezing, which was easily cured by throttling back each engine in turn. Austrian Alps on the right very beautiful. Got in touch with Vienna, and found conditions O.K. Landed; surface poor.

23/1/36: Vienna-Niche, 452 miles.
—Left Vienna 08.43 L.M.T. Arriving Belgrade, weather gets worse and rain starts. Had to make a turn soon after unsticking due to hill behind hangars at west end of aerodrome.

Rain becomes heavy, real cold-front type. Bradshaw up valley toward Niche, but have to wait about for front to pass over before reaching it. Front slowly passes, but not quickly enough to allow time to get to Sofia before darkness; so stop at Niche—a garrison town; everyone very kind, but no English or French spoken except at English Serbian Mission, where they gave us an excellent and most welcome tea.

24/1/36: Niche-Istambul, 419 miles.—Left Niche 07.44 hours. Rather bumpy take-off. Weather marvellous.

This sketch map indicates the route flown by the Scion. A diversion on the homeward route is shown dotted. Certain small detours have been omitted, as the scale would not be sufficiently large to show them clearly.
not a cloud to be seen. Stayed at Sofia one hour; large aerodrome, but somewhat rough. Left Sofia, avoiding prohibited area round town. G.S. 138 m.p.h. Wizard! Crossed Turkish border prescribed height. Black Sea and Sea of Marmora visible. Had to go out to sea to avoid prohibited area. Moral effect of two engines very good.

Landed Istambul. Officials very polite, and no difficulties. Carried out 25 hours' schedule and general inspection on each engine. Everything O.K. Found that 25 hours' schedule took 3 1/4 hours, excluding plugs, as these were not touched.

25/1/36: Istambul-Aleppo, 698 miles.—Left Istambul 07.38 hours. Weather excellent. Greatly missed wireless, which had to be sealed over Turkey. Country not very nice for flying, distinctly mountainous, with snow on tops. Mt. Olympus, 70 miles to starboard, looks very impressive.

Stopped at Konia for fuel, resumed; climbed to 8,000 ft. over mountains, sighted Mediterranean, and soon afterwards landed Adana. Left there after a short stop for Customs and climbed to 8,000 ft. above the mountains behind Alexandretta, then down at a comfortable 120 m.p.h. to Aleppo. Landed on an excellent new runway, 1,000 yards X 30 yards, and were told that we were the first machine to land on it, as the final rolling had only just been finished that morning.

Through the Near East

26/1/36: Aleppo-Baghdad, 480 miles.—Left Aleppo 08.36 hours after having filled emergency tank. Took off with an overload of 115 lb. in 10 sec. at 1,300 ft. A good runway surface makes all the difference. Weather good, with a little cirrus. Euphrates soon in sight.

Landed at Baghdad; aerodrome large, but rough for our small wheels. Stayed a day to see town and carry out 25 hours' schedule; a few hours early, but it is the last chance before Karachi. Everything found O.K., with only a few adjustments necessary to clearances. Iraq officials very helpful and courteous.

28/1/36: Baghdad-Bushire, 534 miles.—Take-off good, considering long grass and bad surface. Ruins of Babylon seen on the right just before Basra. Country desert and uninteresting. Officials at Basra very efficient, and soon had us in the air again.

Anglo-Persian Refinery at Abbadan seen on the right, and soon afterwards one of their Rapides passed us in the opposite direction.

Followed the coast to Bushire and stayed at K.L.M. Guest House. Quite comfortable at this time of year.

29/1/36: Bushire-Gwadar, 866 miles.—Left Bushire 03.42 L.M.T. Soon after a refuelling stop at Lingeh we found that the port magneto was firing rather badly, so decided to go around the coast instead of across the bay. The trouble was found later to be due to a chafed H.T. lead, which was duly changed. Our first bit of bother. Landed Jask and had a little trouble with the Customs official, but, thanks to the Shell representative, things were smoothed over.

Jask to Gwadar was rather boring. At Gwadar, and put up at Imperial Airways' Rest House, where they were most courteous and friendly, but, before leaving, presented a most terrific bill for landing, attendance, and living and feeding, which, we were told, were their standard charges.

30/1/36: Gwadar-Karachi, 306 miles.—Left Gwadar 09.36 hours. Head winds all the way. At Karachi carried out 25 hours' schedule and check over airframe. Everything O.K.

The top picture shows the Himalayas snapped from the Scion; the outstanding peak is Mt. Kamet (25,645 ft.). The second shows the machine being refuelled at Bombay during the race. In the third, is a sunny scene on Madras Aerodrome, while the bottom snapshot is of H.H. The Maharajah of Jodhpur trying out the Scion with his personal pilot, Fit. Lt. Godwin, at the controls.
 Competing machines in the Viceroy’s Cup Race lined up on the aerodrome at Bombay. The Scion is fifth in the line.

The State Hotel, which is almost on the aerodrome, is certainly a pleasure to stay at, which cannot be said of many Indian hotels. His Highness the Maharajah of Jodhpur, a great sportsman, owns two Tiger Moths, a Leopard, a Monospar, a Gull, and a Comper Swift, and flies them all himself. Godwin, his personal pilot and chief instructor, and Samuels, his chief engineer, gave us a warm welcome.

2/2/36: Jodhpur-Delhi, 304 miles.—Easy journey over arid desert country. Two salt pans, a railway, and some huts to check one’s course. Supplemented these with a few bearings to give one something to do. When nearing Delhi at 6.00cst. saw the tops of the Himalayas 210 miles away.

Oil pressure tends to rise with warmer weather, an unusual but agreeable peculiarity.

5/2/36: Delhi—Jaipur-Jodhpur, 320 miles.—Left Delhi for Jaipur. A most picturesque spot. Upton, personal pilot to His Highness the Maharajah of Jaipur, showed us the sights, flew the Scion, and commented favourably upon its performance. Left for Jodhpur, arrived just before sunset.

7/2/36: Jodhpur-Limbdi-Bombay, 542 miles.—Left for Bombay. Flew over the Viceroy’s Cup course to Ahmedabad. Country very hilly around Mount Abu, and not at all conducive to successful forced landings. His Highness the Maharajah of Limbdi is over seventy, but thoroughly enjoys flying.

Then on to Bombay via the coast, which is fertile with plenty of vegetation. Carried out 25-hour schedule ready for race.

A Line Squall Alarm

10/2/36: Bombay—Secunderabad, 422 miles.—Had to climb immediately to get over the Ghats, which go up to about 4,000ft. on the course to Hyderabad. Mountain scenery quite impressive around beautiful lake. Hyderabad and Secunderabad sighted, and soon afterwards the aerodrome. No hangars, so had to picket down. Stayed at the Secunderabad Club; most comfortable. Just after dinner large thunderstorm with accompanying line squall sprang up, so rushed out to aerodrome in taxi to hang on to ‘plane. Got soaking wet to little purpose, as machine seemed quite firm.

12/2/36: Secunderabad-Madras, 315 miles.—Took off and saw very few landmarks for half an hour. Climbed steadily over wooded hills. Marvellous gorge in the middle, then down on to the plain with good flying country to Madras.

14/2/36: Madras-Bombay, 733 miles.—The Race. Ten starters. Ourselves off at 08.50 hours. Engines sounded very healthy. G.S. check shows 124.2, and a little later 126 m.p.h. against slight head wind.

Flew low, but after approximately one hour had to climb for hills. Mild rainstorm to starboard, afterwards reported as “terrific storm” in papers. Visibility excellent. Slowly down to Secunderabad for petrol and regulation 20 mins. stop. Run to Bombay rather uncomfortable, due to bump. Bits of hay, leaves, etc., seen floating in convection currents at 2.00cst.

Just before the Ghats passed two competing Moths, and a few minutes afterwards were passed ourselves by Vincent flying a Miles Hawk.

Over the mountains and down to Juhu. Found we were fifth. Changed a H.T. brush-holder which had given trouble on one magneto just towards the end. Heard that young Gazdar in the other Hawk had force-landed; very bad luck.

15/2/36: Left at 09.40 L.M.T. G.S. check gave 128 m.p.h. Soon started out to sea across the bay. Wind getting strong again, so came down low; got rather bumpy. Motors still going marvellously well. G.S. check showed 121 m.p.h. Landed Ahmedabad, and off again in usual ten minutes. Petrol and other officials very efficient. Stayed low until hills, and altered course slightly to avoid Mount Abu. Dust devils all over the place between Abu and Jodhpur.

Landed Jodhpur. Run to Delhi uneventful. Passed one Moth and the west-bound Atalanta going in the opposite direction. Finished fifth at Delhi, the finish of the 1,500-mile course. Engines still continued to run wizardly.

Over Himalayan Foothills

Thanks to the hospitality of Pinhorn, of the Aero Club, and Tymm, the D.C.A., our short stay in Delhi was very agreeable.

Made an interesting flight to Badrinath under Mount Kanet. The foothills and valleys of the Himalayas are certainly tough flying country. Two engines most acceptable.

26/2/36: Delhi—Jodhpur, 304 miles.—Left Delhi to Jodhpur quite uneventful. Spent a lot of time dodging kite-hawks which we saw on the convection currents. An H.P.42 had hit one a few days before, with unfortunate results to the struts.

27/2/36: Jodhpur—Karachi, 384 miles.—Tried some photographs of passing kite-hawks. Flew low, passed a few stray camels, but they did not move an inch; truly marvellous nerves.

28/2/36: Karachi—Jask, 608 miles.—Left Karachi 07.30 L.M.T. Flew at about 1,000ft., due to head wind. Karachi gave upper winds for Gwadar and onwards, which showed head wind increasing. Seemingly wild camels wandering about below; large cumulus to port and small dust devils on the ground. Landed Gwadar and soon off again after paying normal £1 12s. 6d. landing and attendance fee! Followed coast to avoid sandstorm, which was very thick within a mile from the coast. Further G.S. showed 70 m.p.h., and, when approaching Jask, 65 m.p.h. Landed into 40 m.p.h. wind, and picketed down firmly to rings set in concrete.

29/2/36: Jask—Baghdad, 1,100 miles.—Left Jask 06.15 L.M.T., and thirty minutes later watched sun rise over mountains to starboard.
FLIGHT.

Stayed at Lingeh 1/2 hours, and then left for Bushire. Approached Bushire and landed. Everything seemed much greener than on the outward visit. Decided to make Baghdad direct, so filled emergency tank and hurried through Customs formalities. Took off slowly but reasonably well considering overload. Snow-covered mountains for 11 flying hours—our best day's run. Baghdad, Flat, marshy country with fairly good check, but supplemented these with W/T bearings from Basra and Baghdad to make doubly sure.

4/3/36: Baghdad-Khan-Zabib, having done 1,200 miles in exactly a day. Left Baghdad 12.27 L.M.T. Kept one or two early checks and some bearings to supplement them. The desert here is the real desert that one always reads about in novels, etc., and around Rutbah, the country gets higher and a little sand desert that one always reads about in novels, etc., but supplemented these with W/T bearings from Basra and Baghdad to make doubly sure.

5/3/36: Baghdad-Khan-Zabib, 550 miles.—Left Baghdad 12.27 L.M.T. Weather not too good, doubtful if we would get through Dragoman Pass. Arrived there with clouds down on the top. Could not see through the gorge, so decided to turn back. Tried again in an hour's time and got through O.K.

6/3/36: Belgrade-Vienna, 316 miles.—Left Belgrade just before lunch and had comfortable flight, in good weather at first. Demonstrated machine to interested parties at Vienna.

7/3/36: Vienna-Brunn, 68 miles.—Waited some time for low cloud to clear. Saw the Danube for the last time and soon afterwards reached Brunn. Spent night with friends. Very pleasant.

8/3/36: Brunn-Zlin-Brunn, 96 miles.—Went over to Zlin to see Bata's boot factory. Marvellous organisation. Quite good aerodrome; excellent hangars and restaurant. Going over, had to Bradshaw in the valleys, but weather was clear for return trip. Landed at Zlin, and got a wonderful view of sun-topped mountains. Run to Sofia smooth and uneventful.

AN ANGLO-GERMAN VISITOR to CROYDON

The Heinkel He. 70a, which has been bought by Rolls Royce Ltd as a flying engine test bed, photographed last week at Croydon. At present it is fitted with the 410 h.p. Kestrel V already a standard unit in the R.A.F. Later this will give way to more "push rush" types. The excellent form of the nose shows up to advantage in this picture.