540ft ... 15 down, 30°. . . . Looks good. Down a half ... six forward. . . ." "Sixty-second light on . . . down two-and-a-half . . . four forward, four for-ward. . . . We're picking up some dust." At 2118 BST came the matter-of-fact words: "Contact lights. OK, engine stop. Tranquillity Base here. The Eagle has landed." Nearly as historic as Caesar's "Veni, vidi, vici" and certainly more widely reported. It was followed by the Houston reply, "We copy you down, Eagle. We've got a bunch of guys about to turn blue." Indeed, Houston could now release its collective bated breath.

And so did man land on the Moon, at 21hr 17min 42sec BST on Sunday, July 21, 1969.
Eagle had landed at Site 2 in the Sea of Tranquillity, four miles downrange of the predicted touchdown point (part of this deviation due to mascon-induced errors) and 37sec later than predicted. The ground here was flat, the spacecraft tilt being well within allowable limits at 4|-°. A thin cloud of dust rising to about 70ft, raised by the descent engine, did not obscure visibility.

But if the LM had stopped, work hadn't. A 3min window existed during which take-off and rendezvous with Columbia was possible. But Eagle was

Opposite page: The
emotive event of the
flight was the contact
of Neil Armstrong's left
boot with the surface of
the Moon; the first occa-
sion on which man has
touched another planet.
Above, Armstrong at the
bottom of the ladder

Above, the lunar module,
one face illuminated, the
rest in shadow. The
American flag is on the
right. Below right, Aldrin
walks towards Armstrong
and the LM