

THE FLIGHT TO AUSTRALIA : Side elevation of the Martinsyde machine fitted with floats for the last stages of the journey

porpoise ; nor did the floats affect the handling of the machine in the air. The floats add about 400 lbs. to the weight of the machine, but no difficulty is experienced in carrying the full load.

Capt. Howell thinks the sea route from Calcutta onwards solves the difficulties of bad flying country and the complete lack of landing grounds, prepared or otherwise.

The Vicker's Machine

The machine entered by Messrs. Vickers, Ltd., is a standard Vickers-Vimy-Rolls bomber, which will be piloted by Capt. Ross Smith, M.C., D.F.C., A.F.C., and by his brother, Lieut. Keith Macpherson Smith. The machine is identical to those supplied to the Royal Air Force. It will be remembered that one of these machines was earmarked for the bombing of Berlin just previous to the Armistice. It is also similar to the machine used by Capt. Sir John Alcock, K.B.E., D.S.C., for his Transatlantic flight, except that for this flight a smaller petrol capacity is required. The engines used are the Rolls-Royce "Eagle," Mark VIII. The petrol is drawn from the main petrol tanks by two Vickers Mark II centrifugal petrol pumps, and delivered to the service tank, which forms a section of the top plane, from which it runs by gravity to the engines.

The maximum speed is over 100 m.p.h., but Capt. Ross Smith intends to throttle the engines down to a cruising speed of about 90 m.p.h. The weight of the machine empty is three tons ; when carrying her full load on this flight, consisting of 4 men, 516 gallons of petrol, 40 gallons of oil and 10 gallons of water, together with spares, kit, tools and sundries (adding another 800 lbs.), the total weight fully loaded will be nearly 5½ tons.

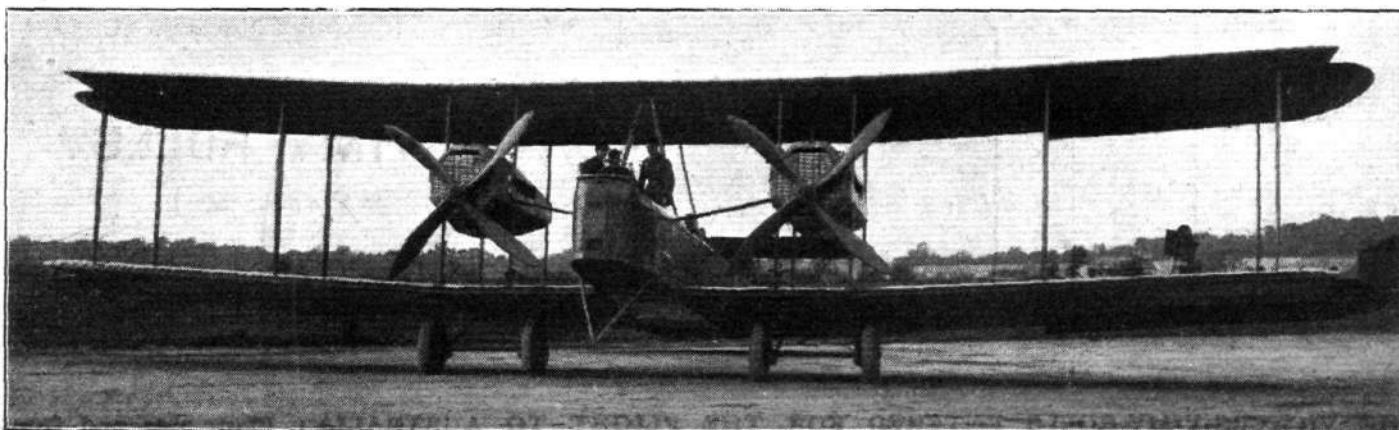
Capt. R. Smith and his brother, Lieut. K. M. Smith, were both born and educated at Adelaide, South Australia. At the outbreak of War, Capt. Ross Smith enlisted in the 3rd

Australian Light Horse Regiment as a private, and sailed with the first Australian Expeditionary Force, landing in Egypt in December, 1914. After four months on Gallipoli he gained his commission, but later on contracted enteric fever and was invalided to England. He rejoined his regiment in March, 1916, was afterwards sent back to the Sinai Desert, and took part in the battle of Romani during the last Turkish attack on the Suez Canal in August, 1916. In October of the same year he joined the 6th (Australian) Squadron, Royal Flying Corps, as an observer, qualifying as a pilot in Egypt in July, 1917. He then rejoined his old squadron, now known as No. 1 Squadron, Australian Flying Corps, stationed in Southern Palestine, and remained there until the Armistice.

In December, 1918, he accompanied Air Vice-Marshal Sir W. G. H. Salmond, K.C.M.G., C.B., D.S.O., and Air Commodore A. E. Borton, C.M.G., D.S.O., A.F.C., on the first flight from Cairo to Calcutta, and after arriving at Calcutta, proceeded with Air Commodore A. E. Borton on his reconnaissance for aerodromes in Burma, Siam, Malay States and the Netherland East Indies. He returned to England about a month ago.

His brother, Lieut. Keith Macpherson Smith, R.A.F., will act as reserve pilot and observer. After leaving school, Lieut. K. M. Smith joined the staff of Messrs. Elder, Smith & Co., Ltd., of Adelaide, and on the outbreak of War offered his services for Overseas with the Australian Imperial Force, but was rejected. Several renewed attempts to enlist in 1915 and 1916 met with the same result, but subsequently he underwent an operation which considerably improved his health, and afterwards proceeded to England by the P. & O. steamship *Medina*, which was torpedoed and sunk in the English Channel during the voyage.

On arrival in England he joined the Royal Flying Corps as a cadet, shortly after becoming a pilot of unusual ability,



THE FLIGHT TO AUSTRALIA : The Vickers-Vimy-Rolls entered for the flight to Australia