



After the airship had started the "low" moved across the British Isles and so R 100 got into northerly winds. The "high" in mid-Atlantic advanced, and caused westerly but light winds in its northern half.

rest of the summer. The winds round a depression blow anti-clockwise, so if R 100 could get to the north of that system, she would find an easterly wind which would blow her nearly half way across the Atlantic. Good weather in the British Isles is notoriously fickle and apt to fail us when we most need it, but we usually feel that we can count upon bad weather, though it is seldom in much request. But this "low" seemed to be inspired by an evil spirit. Having ruined the Test Match by staying where it was, it saw no reason for continuing longer in that same position. The thought that it might help a British airship by "staying put" would naturally be abhorrent to such a "low"; so it moved eastwards. The second chart shows the altered situation which Squadron Leader Booth had to face after he had begun to steer for the north coast of Ireland. Instead of an east wind he found a northerly one. The track of the course shows how he made the best possible use of this, turning somewhat to the south, so as to get what help was possible from the northerly wind.

The course so far had been as follows: At 3.45 the airship was nearly over Rugby, and at 6 a.m. she had reached Chester. At 8 she passed over the Isle of Man, at 9 over the Mull of Galloway, and half an hour later she passed the Maidens, which are rocks off the coast of Antrim a little to the north of Larne. She passed between the coasts of Scotland and Ireland, and at noon left behind the island of Rathlin, the last she saw of European land. The winds had kept her ground speed, or "speed made good," low. Until she got clear of the depression it varied from 46 to 48 m.p.h. The wind, partially on the starboard beam, was about 30 m.p.h. Apparently, though the reports are not detailed, the two engines in the aft car were not in use at this time.

In the rear of the fickle "low" lay a huge anticyclone, or "high," with its centre on the Azores. As the "low" moved eastwards until its centre was off our eastern coasts, this "high" advanced, as will be seen in the second chart, dated Tuesday, July 29. The northern circumference of this "high" lay just off the coast of Greenland. The winds round the centre of an anticyclone blow clockwise, but are not violent, and are accompanied by fine weather. Such winds would give no definite help in the way of blowing R 100 on

towards Canada, but they would give a minimum of resistance, and the accompanying circumstances would be pleasant. So Booth worked his way through the tail of the "low" and gradually came into the influence of the large anticyclone. Soon his speed made good went up to 60 m.p.h., and anxiety about the adequacy of the petrol supply began to diminish. By midnight on the first day the airship had covered about 1,000 miles of her journey and had used just over 2,200 gallons of petrol. On the second day R 100 met with her one piece of really good luck, though, of course, good luck would have been useless if the brains on board had not had the knowledge and skill to profit by it. The charts show that in the two previous days a "low" had been forming over the Bermudas. This now began to move eastward with some vigour. It, so to speak, hit the western circumference of the great "high" and dented it in. On Wednesday winds were blowing up from the south-east where the two weather systems lay side by side. By 6 a.m. on the Wednesday morning Booth had manoeuvred R 100 into this air current, and then turned her nose north-westward, so as to get the full help of the wind. By noon the ground speed had gone up to 85 m.p.h. The strength of the wind was then 30 m.p.h., and R 100 was flying well within herself. All along the airship had been receiving weather reports from surface craft, which seemed to be making a special effort to send reliable and prompt news to their mate up aloft. So Mr. Giblett was probably in a better position to forecast than were the meteorologists at the Air Ministry.

The report from R 100 issued at 6 a.m. on Wednesday did not reach the Air Ministry until the evening of that day. The airship had got out of wireless touch with England. The message was picked up by the station at Louisburg in Canada, and was transmitted by beam wireless to Cardington. It had not been expected that the change from connections with England to connections with Canada would take place so soon. Thereafter all messages were transmitted from Louisburg to Cardington. The change had been expected when the airship passed longitude 35, which is roughly about half way across the Atlantic.

The airship had been flying throughout at a height which varied from 2,100 to 1,200 ft. As the wind got behind her, so she reduced her altitude. She was reported to be behaving