

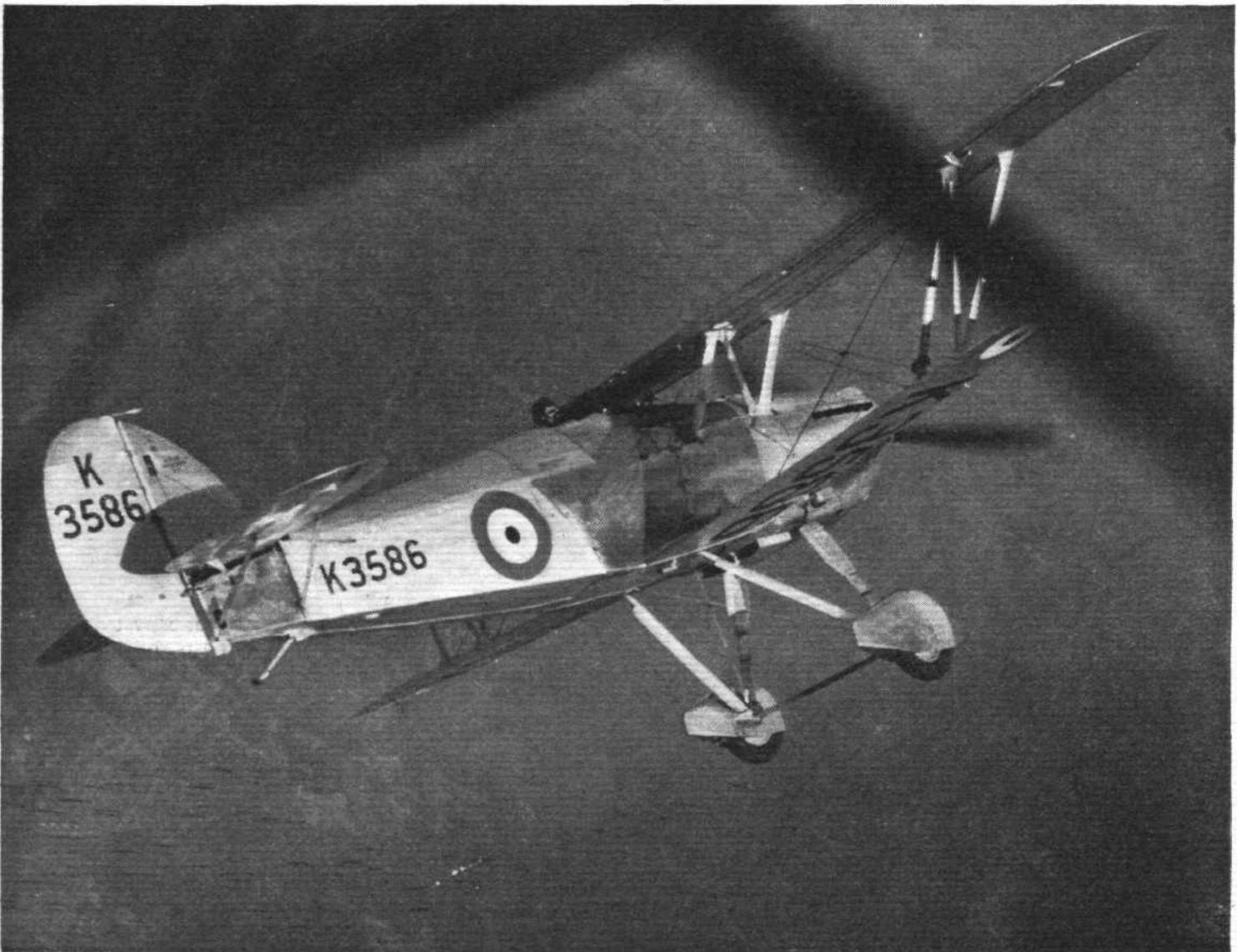
future we should pay homage to those gallant souls who, by their efforts, have "blazed the trail" so that in 1934 dozens of aeroplanes, large and small, fast and not-so-fast, can undertake the flight to the Antipodes without incurring undue risks. We should in the first instance remember those who first achieved success: Sir Ross Smith and his brother, Sir Keith Smith, and their two engineers, Bennett and Shiers. In four weeks, over more or less unknown country and through weather conditions of which no accurate knowledge was available in advance, these four struggled on heroically, sometimes faced with disaster, and ever facing the unknown. They ultimately got through, and the two brothers were very properly awarded knighthoods for their services. Flying claimed Ross, but Keith is, happily, still with us, and it must give him great satisfaction to watch the preparations for the England-Australia Race, and to know that he and his brother played a very important part in making possible the great race which is due to start from Mildenhall on October 20. Nor should we forget those whose efforts were not crowned with success, but who, for all that, did their best to link the distant commonwealth with England by air, some of them giving even their lives in the attempt.

It does not require great imagination to picture the main differences between 1919 and 1934 as far as the England-Australia route is concerned. To begin with, the aeroplanes of those days were a very long way from

being the efficient engineering triumphs which modern aircraft are. Weather reports and forecasts for the route were "sketchy" in the extreme. Wireless had not the range and reliability of modern equipment, and petrol and oil supplies had to be placed at suitable points by very special and expensive arrangements.

To-day the position is vastly different. Thanks largely to the early efforts made by a relatively few venturesome spirits, the air route to Australia is well established, with a complete ground organisation, meteorological service, and so forth. So much is this the case that those responsible for drawing up the regulations for the England-Australia Race were able to stipulate that all aircraft entered must conform to standards laid down internationally for the safety of aeroplanes. This fact alone makes the MacRobertson Race an outstanding event. *Flight* readers will be aware, although the large masses of the general public probably do not realise it, that most of the epoch-making flights, such as those across the Atlantic, have been made in machines loaded up to the very limit with fuel and oil. So long as the machines could stagger into the air, that was all that was demanded in the way of safety measures. In the England-Australia Race it is a very different story. Machines must, as we pointed out last week, be able to clear an obstacle 65.6 feet high in a horizontal run of not more than 656 yards. That effectively rules out the overloaded unairworthy machine.

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**THE MASTER HAND:** An impression of Mr. P. W. S. Bulman piloting the Hawker high-speed "Fury." The machine from which the picture was taken was also doing a banked turn. (*Flight* Photo.)