

THE FLYING FRENCHMAN

A GREAT FLIGHT.

There was a shadow high up among the storm clouds of the southern sky—a blur in the mists like the passing of some phantom bird. It hovered for a moment over Moore Park, unobserved by the great crowds hurrying to see the Saturday afternoon football games at the sports ground, and then it was lost to view in the breaking storm. The time was 2.40.

But the coming of the thing had been seen by an anxious group of watchers by the lake. "C'est Guillaux!" they cried, "Il est arrive! Vive Guillaux! Vive la France!"

It was indeed Guillaux, at the end of his epoch-making flight from Melbourne with the mail. Instantly a match was thrown into a bonfire, and a dense volume of smoke arose, to guide the airman to his landing-place. From all directions the crowd—football for the moment forgotten—came splashing across the green, despite the efforts of the police to keep them back. The storm passed, and there was Guillaux, a thousand feet above the cheering masses in the sports ground. Nearer he came to the earth; twice circled around Moore Park, and then, with the people scattering for their lives, made a graceful dive and stopped a few yards from the marking bonfire.

He had covered the 582 miles between the capitals in a little over 9 hours, flying at an average speed of about 64 miles per hour. He had made only seven intermediate stops, half of which, according to the airman, were not necessary.

M. Guillaux was besieged. The lifting of the mailbag was the signal for another outburst of cheering, and a moment later the Governor-General, Sir Ronald Munro Ferguson, at the heels of a stalwart aide-de-camp, forced his way through the crowd to shake the airman by the hand.

Shoulder high, M. Guillaux was carried into the sports ground, where he was introduced to the State Governor (Sir Gerald Strickland), and as the band played the "Marseillaise" he delivered the special despatch from the Governor of Victoria.

At the invitation of Mr. E. Wagstaff, of the British Imperial Oil Company, the party retired to the basement of the grandstand, where the Governor-General, over a glass of champagne, wished the airman good health after his gallant flight.

M. GUILLAUX'S NARRATIVE.

"When I left Melbourne at 9.15 on Thursday morning the weather was beautiful," M. Guillaux said to a Sydney Herald reporter, as he divested himself of his dripping wet tri-coloured scarf (which had already been claimed by a lady en route), his white woollen helmet, and thick leather jacket. "But soon," he continued, "I encountered tempest after tempest, and before I arrived in Sydney I had experienced the roughest journey of my career. Any dangers? Once, beyond Harden, I was tossed about until I was air-sick, and on another occasion I was forced to descend to rest my aching wrists from the tugging of the controls. I was beset with perils, but at times the winds were in my favour, and then I raced northward at speeds well over one hundred miles per hour.

"At my departure from Melbourne I rose to 1000ft. and set my course across the mountains. I was soon lost in fog. The mountains were high, and I flew higher and higher. My compass directed me. But there was no calm in those high altitudes, as I had expected. I feared, also, that I would not find my first stop. After flying for half an hour I knew I must be near Seymour. Then I saw a blue rift beneath me in the clouds, through which I dived to earth. I alighted alongside the railway station. The first 61 miles had been covered in 45 minutes.

"It was a long stage of 84 miles to Wangaratta. I followed the railway all the way, and saw every station. There were 6000 people awaiting my arrival at Wangaratta, where I stayed for 40 minutes while my mechanic overhauled my Bleriot. The stage had occupied 1h 25m.

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"I did not wish to hurry. It was a long journey, and there were no records to be broken. I rose high from Wangaratta—15,000 feet—and the cold was intense. Just as I was approaching Albury the machine rocked and fell into innumerable air pockets. I alighted 35 minutes after leaving Wangaratta. It was not necessary for me to stop, but I had promised to lunch with friends, and I rested for nearly an hour and a half. Then I flew to Wagga in 70 minutes, and arrived at 3.30 o'clock, two hours ahead of schedule time. This was why there was no one to meet me. I saw two racecourses and a show-ground, then I saw a knot of people on a cricket enclosure, and I came to earth. But there were no familiar faces, nor was there any petrol. Somebody started my engine, and I flew to a racecourse. Then M. Repousseux, my manager, arrived in a hurry in a cab.

"So I lost an hour. When I left Wagga the wind was strong and right astern, and I covered the 84 miles to Harden in 60 minutes, which was, I think, my record speed from place to place for the journey. Three miles beyond Harden I encountered a strong contrary wind, and, fearing that I would not reach Goulburn before dark, I returned to Harden for the night.

"On Friday morning it was raining heavily, yet the people came in crowds to see me start, and I gave them a short exhibition flight.

"My manager telegraphed from Goulburn that I would be foolish to start, as there were no signs of the storm abating. However, at 2 o'clock I set out in pelting rain. After flying an hour I had only covered 20 miles, and was above Gatong. I was being tossed like a cork by the storm, and was violently sick. It was impossible to make any headway, so I turned the machine with the wind, and in a few moments was back where the people could not understand. The rain was a dead calm on the surface, but above the clouds were sending

"I left Harden at 11.30 on Saturday morning, and again I encountered winds and those mountains. I have experienced such a journey. A hundred times I was nearly capsized. The railroad was so tortuous that it was impracticable to follow it and keep the Bleriot steady against the wind, and I steered across country by compass. I passed over two big lakes (Lake George and Bathurst), but throughout the whole distance of 94 miles to Goulburn there was not an inch of clear ground, and had the engine failed my flight would have been at an end. As it was the journey occupied two hours.

"I finally left Goulburn at 11.5.

"It was impossible for me to land at Moss Vale. The people had lit a fire on the golf links, but there was not enough room. The ground appeared to be fringed with trees and a river, and I had to disappoint them by passing overhead at 100 miles per hour. Soon again I was in the clouds, steering by compass. I rarely saw the railway, but the mountain peaks were always in view. I had been forewarned not to arrive in Sydney before 3 o'clock, and I decided to descend. My map did not carry me any nearer to Sydney than 50 miles; but I saw a township in my path and alighted on some open ground. I found the place was Liverpool, and was very warmly received by Mr. and Mrs. A. Cloke; with them I had lunch. I had covered the 113 miles from Goulburn in 90 minutes, reaching Liverpool at 12.35 o'clock. After telephoning to my private secretary (Mr. Pitch) in Sydney I started on the last 22 miles of my journey at five minutes past 2. The wind was equally, and I was carried at a tremendous pace. I was soon over the Sydney suburbs, but I had a lot of time to waste before making my official landing, and this I employed cruising around above the city."

THE TWO DAYS' FLYING.

Thursday, July 16: Melbourne to Harden (352) miles in	4h 55m
Saturday, July 17: Harden to Sydney (230) miles in	4h 20m
Total flying time	9h 15m

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