

KINGSFORD SMITH

LANDS AT LEETON AERODROME TO-MORROW MORNING

IN HIS FOKKER MONOPLANE, "THE SOUTHERN CROSS"

As announced in our last issue, Air Commodore Kingsford Smith, the world's foremost aviator and the first Australian airman to cross the Atlantic, will be piloting his equally famous monoplane, the "Southern Cross," to Leeton to-morrow (Saturday) arriving here at 10.30 a.m. In addition to the ordinary passenger flights, there will be a special flight to Griffith, around the irrigation areas and return at 11 a.m. Book your seats for this long trip or short flights at Kerr's newsagency.

When the history of the present decade comes to be written, one of the most interesting chapters will be that about aviation, and first amongst the names of great pioneers of long distance flights will be that of Air Commodore Kingsford Smith. It is not many years ago since "Smithy" was a pilot of the West Australian Airways on the Perth Derby service, where his ability as pilot stood beyond question. After serving with the West Australian Airways for over twelve months, he purchased a Bristol Tourer—which is the wartime pilot's well-beloved Bristol Fighter, modified to carry two passengers in the one-time observer's compartment and, with his favorite engineer, the late Mr. Hitchcock, flew to Sydney with the object of carrying out a flight round Australia. His round Australia flight with Mr. C. T. P. Ulm first brought before the public an exceptionally brilliant pilot and navigator, and a capable long-distance pilot.

It is needless for us to recount all the magnificent flights that have been made by Kingsford Smith in his Wright Engine Fokker Monoplane, the "Southern Cross", but we will single out a few of his outstanding flights. First there is the Pacific flight—(3 stops) California to Honolulu, thence to Fiji, and from there to Brisbane; Melbourne to Perth and return; Sydney to New Zealand and return; Australia to England.

The "Southern Cross" is an American built Fokker Monoplane, powered with three Wright Whirlwind engines. Each engine develops 220 h.p. at 1800 r.p.m. and consumes 12 gallons of fuel and 2 pints of oil per hour, making a total consumption of 36 gallons of petrol per hour for the "Southern Cross" three engines.

After Kingsford Smith's flight from Australia to England, the "Southern Cross" was flown to the Fokker works at Amsterdam to be overhauled and prepared for the Atlantic flight. Whilst the machine was being

reconditioned Mr. Doc. Maidment of the Wright Company thoroughly overhauled the engines. Certain modifications were carried out on the machine, one of the most important was the fitting of continuous copper striping, secured by asbestos holders, around the edges of the wings. The copper is heated by means of an electric current delivered by a generator, which is wind propelled, and this eliminated to a large extent the formation and accumulation of ice on the wings during the trans-Atlantic flight. It was the accumulation of ice on the wings of planes which constituted such a grave danger to former Atlantic airmen. In addition the engines on the wings, both port and starboard were cowled and streamlined to offer the least wind resistance. Smithy then proceeded to Holland, and, after carrying out test flights flew the machine to England, and decided upon the personnel of his crew. Later, he flew to Ireland and waited reports from the meteorological department predicting favorable weather conditions. Tired of waiting he took off at Port Marnock (Ireland) on the early morning of Tuesday, 23rd June, 1930.

It is interesting to relate at this stage that the machine carried 1275 gallons of Plume Appotenic Motor Spirit and 27 gallons of Mobiloil. The fuel and oil carried at the outset of the flight weighed 4½ tons, and are the selfsame products that are marketed throughout Australia.

The flight of Kingsford Smith from Ireland to America was the first successful east to west trans-Atlantic flight by the Northern Route, (and this flight was accomplished in 31½ flying hours) and Kingsford Smith has once again proved to the world his capacity to carry out what is recognised as a most difficult and hazardous undertaking and has realised his ambition of flying completely round the world.

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We have heard the remark passed that there is no need for brave men to risk their lives in spectacular flights, but we all know of the great increase in airmindedness throughout America and probably the whole world, which followed Lindbergh's great flight from New York to Paris three years ago, and there is no doubt that the development of commercial aviation is given great impetus by the successful accomplishment of flights such as those carried

out by Amy Johnson, Kingsford Smith and Scott. They dramatically display the capability and practical utility of the aeroplane. Flights such as those carried out by Kingsford Smith show the general public, both in this country and abroad, that aviation has advanced to a far greater extent than is generally realised and undoubtedly history has proved again and again that the outstanding achievements of to-day will become the commonplaces of to-morrow.

After the trans-Atlantic flight, the "Southern Cross" was flown by "Smithy" to Oakland, California, and presented to Captain Hancock who was the financial backer of their Pacific flight, and Hancock, in turn, presented it back to Smith, and it was shipped to Australia, converted into a commercial, passenger carrying machine and used by the Australian National Airways, mainly for their Tasmanian service.

To-morrow the residents of Leeton will have an opportunity of seeing the world's most famous pilot and the most widely travelled machine.

The Vacuum Oil Company are supplying Plume motor spirit and Mobil oil for the Southern Cross.