

**"ON TOP OF THE WORLD" - THE FIRST FLIGHT OVER MT. EVEREST:  
THIRD FLIGHT OF HOUSTON MT. EVEREST EXPEDITION MOUNT EVEREST - PURNEA - BRAY**

April 19, 1933

**BY AIR MAIL**  
PAR AVION



Miss Dollie Semple  
Novara House  
Novara Terrace  
Bray  
Irish Free State

Everest Flight Expedition  
Khanga House  
Purnea  
Bihar  
India  
April 21<sup>st</sup>, 1933

Cover carried over Mt. Everest by the **HOUSTON MT. EVEREST FLIGHT EXPEDITION** on April 19, 1933. Three flights were made on April 3, April 4 and April 19 with aircraft Westland Wallace G-ACBR and Westland PV-3 G-ACAZ. The third flight on April 19 was made without authorization, but was the only flight made under good weather conditions. Pilots were Lord Clydesdale and Flight-Lt. D.F. McIntyre with A.L. Fisher and Col. L.V.S. Blacker as photographers. Some 87 covers were carried on those three flights, covers from the April 19 flight being the scarcest ones. Mails were only accepted from expedition members. Cover posted after the flight in Purnea with special Expedition postmark of April 20 in blue and a Purnea cds of April 21, 1.30 p.m., with a letter (shown as reduced photo copy) written by E. Colston Shepherd, the Times correspondent who had the world wide press rights. One of two covers addressed to Ireland.

Dear Dollie

Your Auntie May told me before I left London about your collection of flown covers & thought you would like to have one sent direct to you from India. Here it is. I think you will find it a specially interesting one, not only because it is addressed to you, but also because it will bear the special cancelling stamp which has been made for this expedition. I hope you will like it. If you do get this safely & want to say thank you, I think you had better say it to Auntie May, because I am leaving here on Monday. And after all it was Auntie May who thought of it.

Best wishes to you

Yours Sincerely

E. Colston Shepherd





backside



**"ON TOP OF THE WORLD"**  
**THE FIRST FLIGHT OVER MT. EVEREST:**  
**THIRD FLIGHT OF HOUSTON MT. EVEREST EXPEDITION**  
**MOUNT EVEREST - PURNEA - BRAY**

April 19, 1933

Original letter written by E. Colston Shepherd, the Times correspondent who had the world wide press rights, addressed to "Dollie Semple, Novara House, Novara Terrace, Bray, Irish Free State". It is one of two covers from this expedition forwarded to Ireland.

Mount Everest Flight Expedition  
Darbhanga House  
Purnea

Bihar

India

April 21<sup>st</sup>, 1933

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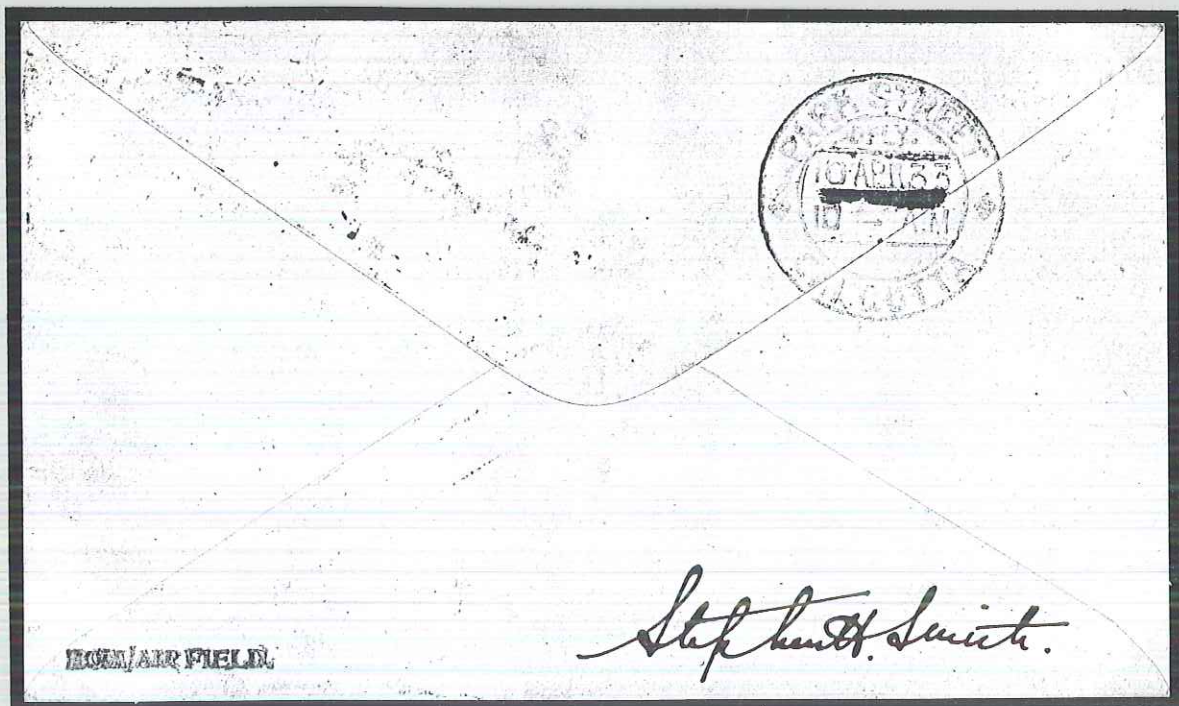
Yours Sincerely

E. Colston Shepherd



**"ON TOP OF THE WORLD" - THE FIRST FLIGHT OVER MT. EVEREST:  
CHARITY FLIGHT OF HOUSTON MT. EVEREST EXPEDITION NEAR MOUNT EVEREST**

**April 8, 1933**



Three flights over Mt. Everest were made by the **HOUSTON MT. EVEREST FLIGHT EXPEDITION** on April 3, April 4 and April 19, 1931, with aircraft Westland Wallace G-ACBR and Westland PV-3 G-ACAZ. The third flight on April 19 was made without authorization, but was the only flight made under good weather conditions. Some 87 covers were carried on those three flights. In order to raise funds for the R.A.F. an additional *Charity Flight* was made on April 8 by Air Commodore P.F.M. Fellows near Mt. Everest. It is said that again a total of 87 covers were carried at a cost of 21/- each. Those mails were handed over to Stephen Smith at 3.00 p.m. and were posted in Purnea at 5.00 p.m., with Calcutta arrival postmarks of April 10, 10.00 a.m. Special expedition label in red and blue and violet cachet produced by Stephen Smith.



**"ON TOP OF THE WORLD" - THE FIRST FLIGHT OVER MT. EVEREST:  
THREE FLIGHTS OF HOUSTON MT. EVEREST EXPEDITION OVER MOUNT EVEREST**

**April 3 - 19, 1933**



Press photo showing one of the expedition aircraft preparing to leave London, inscribed:

*"Londres 17. 02. 33: L'Expédition pour le Mont Everest a quitté Londres.*

*Les trois avions de l'Expédition anglaise du Mont Everest, dont le chef pilote est le marquis de Clydesdale, ont quitté l'aérodrome de Heston à Londres, à destination de l'Inde d'où ils doivent tenter leur premier vol au-dessus du Mont Everest: Photo représente un des avions avant le départ à l'aérodrome de Heston."*

Three flights over Mt. Everest were made by the **HOUSTON MT. EVEREST FLIGHT EXPEDITION** on April 3, April 4 and April 19 with aircraft Westland Wallace G-ACBR and Westland PV-3 G-ACAZ. Some 87 covers were carried on those three flights, covers from the April 19 flight being the scarcest ones. Mails were only accepted from expedition members.



April 3 - 19, 1933

THE TIMES OF INDIA

# AERIAL ATTACK ON EVEREST

## British Expedition

### RAPID PROGRESS OF PREPARATIONS

#### AERONAUTICAL COLLEGE FOR INDIA?

(FROM A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

Preparations for the attempt to fly over Everest are progressing rapidly. The expedition will involve the flight by two British 'planes carrying both survey and cinematograph cameras and operators, with the necessary auxiliary apparatus over the summit of Mount Everest. One of these 'planes has already been successfully tried out in England and has attained a height of over seven miles, two miles higher than the great mountain itself. This expedition, for the success of which every possible precaution is being taken, has as is well-known been made possible by the munificent generosity of Lady Houston and a powerful committee which includes H. H. the Maharajah Jam Saheb of Nawanagar, Earl Peel, the Earl of Lytton, Viscount Burnham, the Marquis of Douglas and Clydesdale, M.P., Col. the Master of Sempill, Colonel John Buchan, Colonel P. T. Etherton, Lt.-Colonel L. V. S. Blacker, and Wing-Commander A. H. Orlebar, Royal Air Force, has been got together. The expedition will have the advice and co-operation in India of Professor L. F. Rushbrook Williams and Mr. F. E. Rosher.

#### PRINCES' ASSISTANCE

The plans are in the hands of Colonel P. T. Etherton and Lt.-Colonel L. V. S. Blacker, who will be Chief Observer. The leader is Air Commodore P. F. M. Fellowes, and the India Office and the Government of India are affording invaluable assistance. With the close co-operation of the Air Ministry and the Royal Geographical Society and the personal interest of His Highness the Maharajah of Nepal and the Maharajah of Darbhanga, who has placed his residence in Purnea at the service of the expedition, the whole enterprise is starting off under the best auspices.

The object is to secure a series of air survey photographs, and data of geographical and scientific interest and if possible a film. The value of such an achievement in this sphere of research, not to mention the data which should be provided to assist the climbers who are to attack the summit, is obvious. The conquest of Everest by air should provide a stimulus not only to British aviation, but also for Mr. Ruttledge and his party when they set out on their even greater adventure. The machines to be used are expected to arrive at Karachi about March 7. They will there be assembled, tested and flown across to Purnea, where they are expected to arrive about March 18. There, under the hospitable roof of the Maharajah of Darbhanga, the expedition will await the most favourable

#### LORD CLYDESDALE

As has already been announced, Squadron-Leader the Marquis of Douglas and Clydesdale, M.P., will be chief pilot. The other 'plane will be piloted by Flight-Lieutenant D. F. McIntyre, A.A.F. Both are highly efficient officers. The aeroplanes to be used have been designed by the Westland Aircraft Company. Special oxygen breathing apparatus and electrical heating sets which have been put to the most stringent tests during the recent trial flights to high altitudes by the Bristol Aeroplane Company have been placed at the disposal of the expedition. Each aeroplane with its Pegasus engine is constructed to carry a pilot and a photographer, two cameras and duplicate pairs of oxygen and heating sets, and there should be a considerable margin of fuel above what is thought necessary for the flight. The climb to 34,000 feet occupies about 43½ minutes. Should trouble arise the machines will be in gliding distance of level country throughout the greater part of their journey.

#### A FILM COMPANY

It is worth noting that the organisers of this enterprise are endeavouring to take full advantage of the opportunities for development in India, of cinematography and aviation, in addition to their immediate object. A contract has been concluded with the Gaumont British Film Corporation, who are sending out a party of experts under the leadership of Sir Gordon Craig. The film aspects of India and Indian life, particularly in the Indian States, where they have been promised full co-operation by various Rulers. The film party is expected to arrive in Bombay on March 4th and they will commence operations immediately. Clearly there is illimitable scope for well directed filming in India by a company of such standing. Their full programme will be published later.

#### AERONAUTICAL COLLEGE

Another enterprise which is contemplated and for which the organisers are peculiarly fitted is the project which is being mooted of the establishment of a College of Aeronautical Engineering in India on the same lines as that which is conducted with such pronounced success at Brooklands, England. Several of the Indian States have expressed a desire to have such an institution within their boundaries. The College of Aeronautical Engineering was founded in England with the co-operation of the principal men in the industry and with the cordial assistance of the Air Ministry and it is controlled by the leading men in British aviation. It has been established for the purpose of providing a complete technical and professional training to equip young men of education for a successful career in civil and commercial aviation. With the rapid development of Imperial Air routes the products of such an institution must be in an ever increasing demand. Ground engineers, aerodrome managers and executive staff, supply services and all manner of technical posts are becoming necessary. It is impossible to over-estimate the value of an institution which will provide reliable training for men to fill these posts and many feel that in India, where aviation has obviously an immense future, there is an ever-increasing need for

# The Flight Over Everest

## FINE EQUIPMENT

In connection with the projected flight over Mount Everest, there are several points which will be of particular interest to engineers.

Planned by Colonel P. T. Etherton, who is honorary secretary in charge of administration, and Lieut.-Colonel L. V. S. Blacker, O.B.E., who will officiate as chief observer, the enterprise attracted the attention of that extremely rich woman, Lady Houston, who most generously afforded financial support and enabled it to become an all-British effort.

The avowed object of the expedition is to secure a series of air survey photographs besides data of geological and scientific interest and a cinema film, but behind it all there is a thinly veiled desire that the British flag shall be the first to conquer the world's highest mountain—and it is to be attempted with all-British equipment.

Two Westland aeroplanes fitted with Pegasus engines will be employed, and these will be equipped with special oxygen breathing apparatus and electric heating appliances which have their culminating points in the queer-looking costume



This is the combined oxygen and heating equipment which will be worn by the aviators on the flight over Everest. It has been designed by Sir Robert Gorman.  
—P. P. A.

that is illustrated in the accompanying photograph. The planes were designed to climb to a height of 34,000 feet in 43½ minutes, but this ceiling was greatly exceeded in tests flights made in England a few days ago.

Williamson-Eagle survey cameras will be employed for the taking of photographs.

Through the courtesy of His Highness the Maharajah of Darbhanga, the expedition will have its base at Purnea, some 160 miles from Everest, where there is a fine aerodrome, and its leaders are fortunate in having the advice and co-operation of Professor Rushbrook Williams and Mr. F. E. Rosher.

The chief executive officer and leader of the expedition is Air-Commodore P. F. M. Fellowes, D.S.O., R.A.F., and the pilots will be Squadron-Leader the Marquis of Douglas and Clydesdale, M.P., and Flight-Lieut. D. F. McIntyre, A. A. F.