

Winter Flying in Canada's Far North

Four Flights from Cochrane to Moose Factory on Hudson Bay Successfully Accomplished in Avro Machine.—Pilot's Story of the Experience.

DURING the past Winter a most interesting flying operation has been carried out by Canadian Aerial Services, Limited, Montreal. Four flights were made from Cochrane to Moose Factory, Hudson Bay. This operation was undertaken for the purpose of locating oil, reported in the vicinity of Moose Factory. The personnel and equipment were—W. R. Maxwell in charge; J. H. St. Martin, assistant; W. H. Cannon and J. Hyde, mechanics. The machine used was an Avro with a Le Rhone 110 H.P. rotary engine.

Aeroplane on Skis

The aeroplane was shipped from Montreal, January 19th, 1922, and arrived at Cochrane on January 28th,



Avro Aeroplane, Flown by Canadian Aerial Services' Pilots, just after landing at Moose Factory in the Far Northland. Note sled runners replacing wheels in landing gear.

equipped with skis which had been previously tested and found satisfactory under conditions at Montreal. On arrival the type of skis with which the machine was equipped was found unsatisfactory due to peculiar snow conditions. Due to extreme cold, snow falling in the Far North is in the form of sugar snow, i.e., particles of ice, not large soft flakes as in more southerly regions. This form of snow does not pack, with the result that a person walking upon it sinks immediately through almost any depth to the ground and it is very difficult to walk even with very large snow shoes. On the aeroplane being set up it was found that the skis had been built very much too narrow to permit the machine taking off, as the machine in taxiing would bury itself to the fuselage in the snow. New skis were therefore designed 14 inches in width and boxed in at the sides, to prevent side slipping into the snow. These skis having been tested and found satisfactory the machine was ready for the first flight on February 5th at 3.45 p.m. The engine was warmed up to get the oil circulating properly; baggage and equipment was checked over, consisting of the following: A double sleeping bag; provisions for two for one week; snow shoes for two; four gallons oil; twenty gallons gas; engine spare parts; complete tool kit. The story of the flight is best told in the words of Capt. W. R. Maxwell, the pilot in charge, whose report is, in part, as follows:—

Story of the Flight

"We took off into the North and climbed steadily until we reached the Abitibi River, at an altitude of 3,000 feet. The Temiskaming & Northern Ontario Railway are building an extension to the railway from Cochrane to Moose Factory. Their engineers are at present on location work, as far as New Post, half way. As we followed the River we noted below, the various snow shoe trails of engineers, and of trappers. Darkness was creeping down on us so we landed at New Post just at dusk. This was the first visit of an aeroplane to this Hudson Bay Post. On arrival at New Post it was found that the Abitibi River had been frozen to such an extent that the water being unable to float beneath the ice was overflowing with the result that the river was covered with a soft slush. On landing in this slush our left ski



Moose Factory Residents Visit Canadian Aerial Services' Avro Aeroplane which is Something Entirely New and Strange to Them.

was damaged. The snow caked up in front of the runner splitting it. The ski was taken off and an old Indian sewed the broken members of wood together with moose thong. A very enjoyable evening was spent at New Post. The old Indian chief who had repaired our ski drew and indicated on our maps many lakes to the East of New Post, none of which are shown on the Government maps.

"After refuelling in the morning from gas we were carrying, we had the Indians snow shoe a track some one hundred yards long, this on account of wet slushy snow. We took off without any difficulty and followed the river again. As we approached the Moose River, low clouds were encountered and we had to descend to five hundred feet. We circled Moose Factory and landed in the clearing just in the rear of Hudson Bay Store. Our arrival certainly surprised the inhabitants as many of them had not even arisen, it being Sunday morning.

"We were given quite a reception. In the evening we had a very nice game of bridge. Our total flying time in, was two hours and ten minutes. This trip by the ordinary method of travel, i.e., dog team, occupies on an average of eleven days each way. We refuelled in the afternoon, ready for our return flight.

"The Hudson Bay Factor at Moose Factory reported a very mild Winter with but fourteen inches of snow.