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tic to America • or I should not have flown it. In either case this was the day I would try. I could stare up at the ceiling of my bedroom in Aldenham House, which was a ceiling undistin? guished as ceilings go, and feel less resolute than anxious, much less brave than foolhardy. I could say to myself, 'You needn't do it, of course,' knowing at the same time that nothing is so inexorable as a promise to your pride. I could ask, 'Why risk it?' as I have been asked since, and I could answer, 'Each to his element.' By his nature a sailor must sail, by his nature a flyer must fly. I could compute that I had flown a quarter of a million miles; and I could foresee that, so long as I had a plane and the sky was there, I should go on flying more miles. There was nothing extraordinary in this. I, had learned a craft and had worked hard learning it. My hands had been taught to seek the controls of a plane. Usage had taught them. They were at ease clinging to a stick, as a cobbler's fingers are in repose grasping an awl. No human pursuit achieves _ dignity until it can be called work, and when you"" can experience a physical loneliness for the tools of your trade, you see that the other things--the experiments, the irrelevant vocations, the vani? ties you used to hold--were false to you. Record flights had actually never interested me very much for myself. There were people who L HOBBY HUT The Knitting & Craft Shop Commercial St., North Sydney, N. S. Tel, n'-Illt' Pure Wool & Synthetic Yarns Knitting Needles & Patterns Smocking Supplies Locally Made Ceramics Artists' Boards Sewing Notions Knitted Items Wide Range of Craft Supplies thought that such flights were done for admiration and publicity, and worse. But of all the records-- from Louis Bllriot's first crossing of the English Channel in nineteen hundred and nine, through and beyond Kingsford Smith's flight from San Francisco to Sydney, Australia • none had been made by ama? teurs, nor by novices, nor by men or women less than hardened to failure, or less than masters of their trade. None of these was false. They were a company that simple respect and simple ambition made it worth more than an effort to follow. The Carberrys (of Seramai) were in London and I could remember everything about their dinner par- ty--even the menu. I could remember June Carberry and all her guests, and the man named McCarthy, who lived in Zanzibar, leaning across the table and saying, 'J. C, why don't you finance Beryl for a record flight?' I could lie there staring lazily at the ceiling and recall J. C.'s dry answer: 'A number of pilots have flown the North Atlantic, west to east. Only Jim Mollison has done it alone the other way--from Ireland. Nobody has done it alone from England-- man or woman. I'd be interested in that, but noth? ing else. If you want to try it. Burl, I'll back you. I think Edgar Percival could build a plane that would do it, provided you can fly it. Want to chance it?' 'Yes.' I could remember saying that better than I could remember anything--except J. C.'s almost ghoulish grin, and his remark that sealed the agreement: 'It's a deal. Burl. I'll furnish the plane and you fly the Atlantic--but, gee, I wouldn't tackle it CONTINUED NEXT PAGE Ashby Medical Supply We Rent, Sell & Repair Hospital Equipment: wheelchairs, commode chairs, walkers, beds, canes (WALTER'S RENTALS) 4 SHERIFF AVE., SYDNEY (539-9616) Jeux Canada Games'87



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