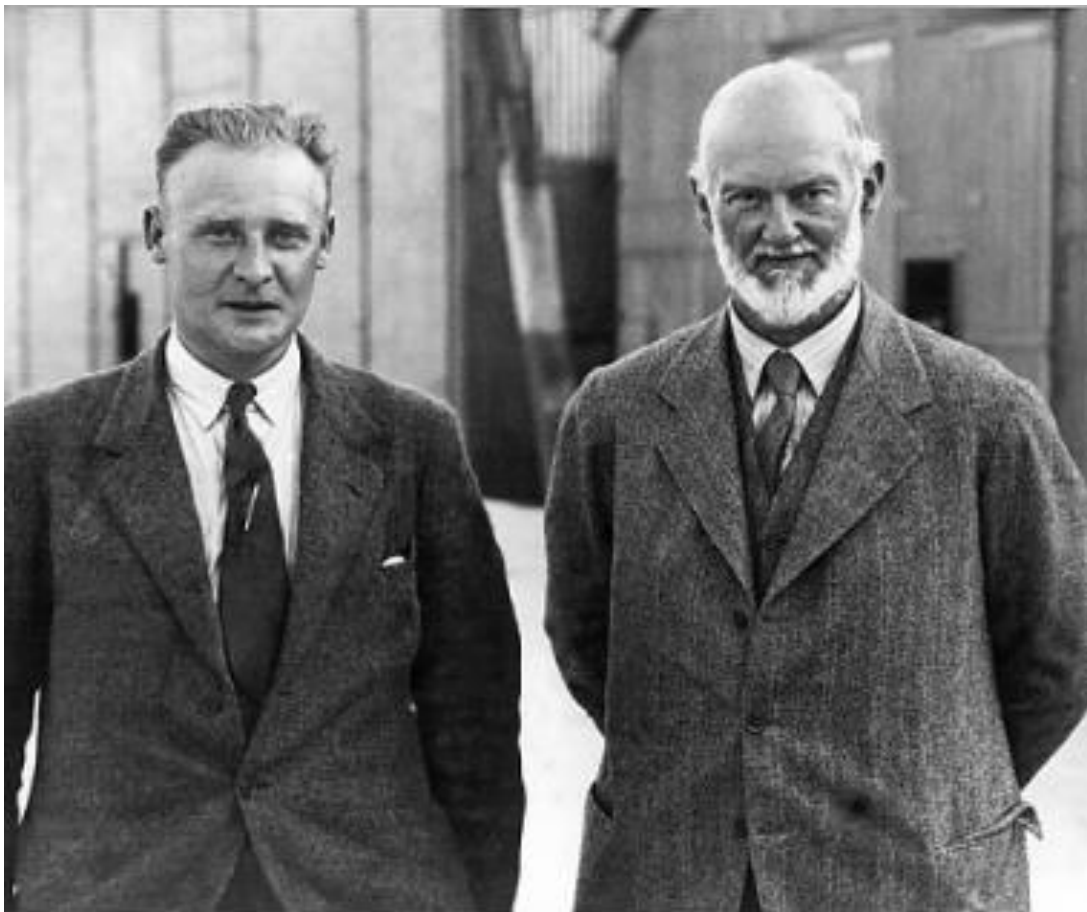


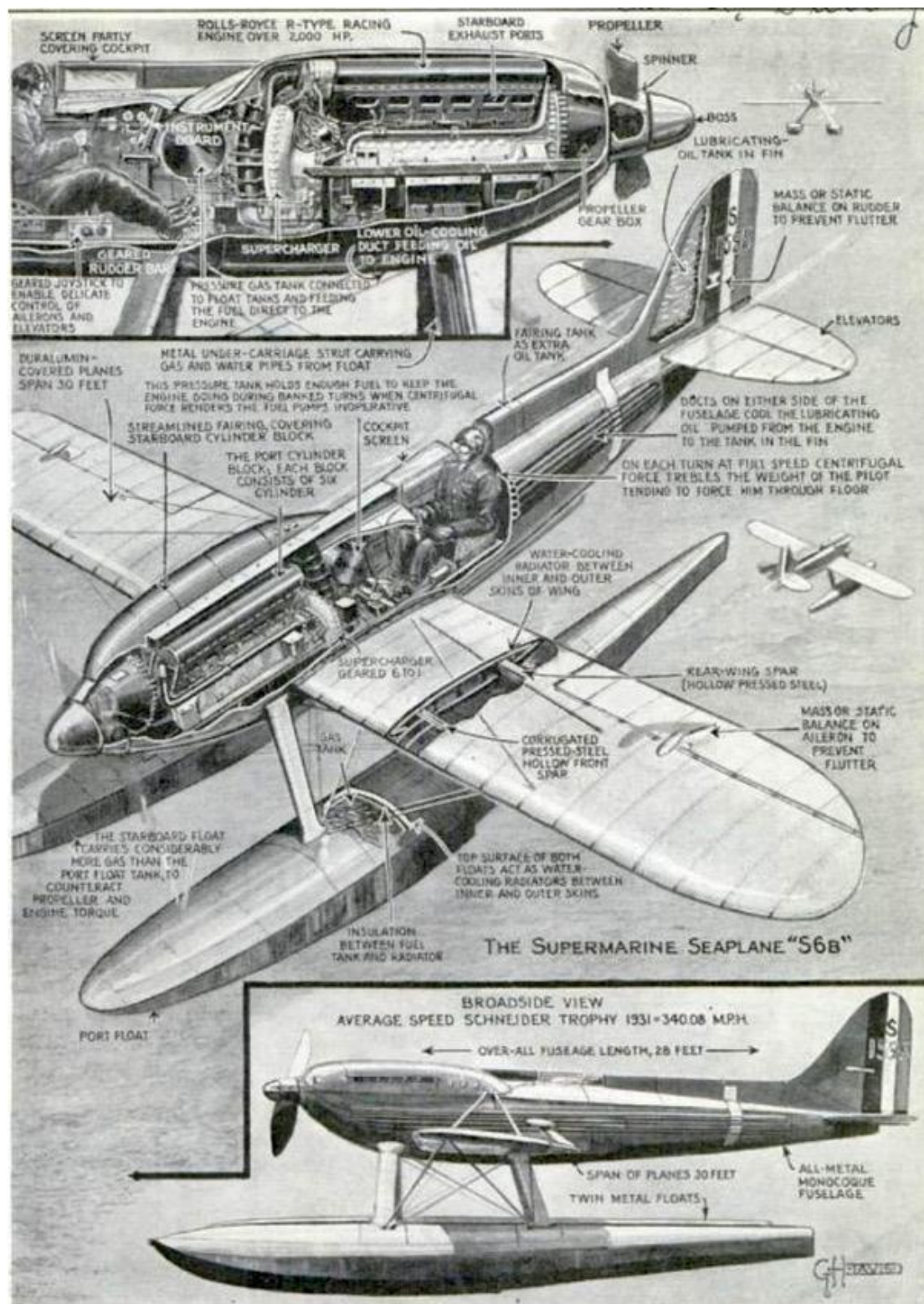
IN THE REAR-VIEW MIRROR

SIR HENRY ROYCE
THE SCHNEIDER TROPHY

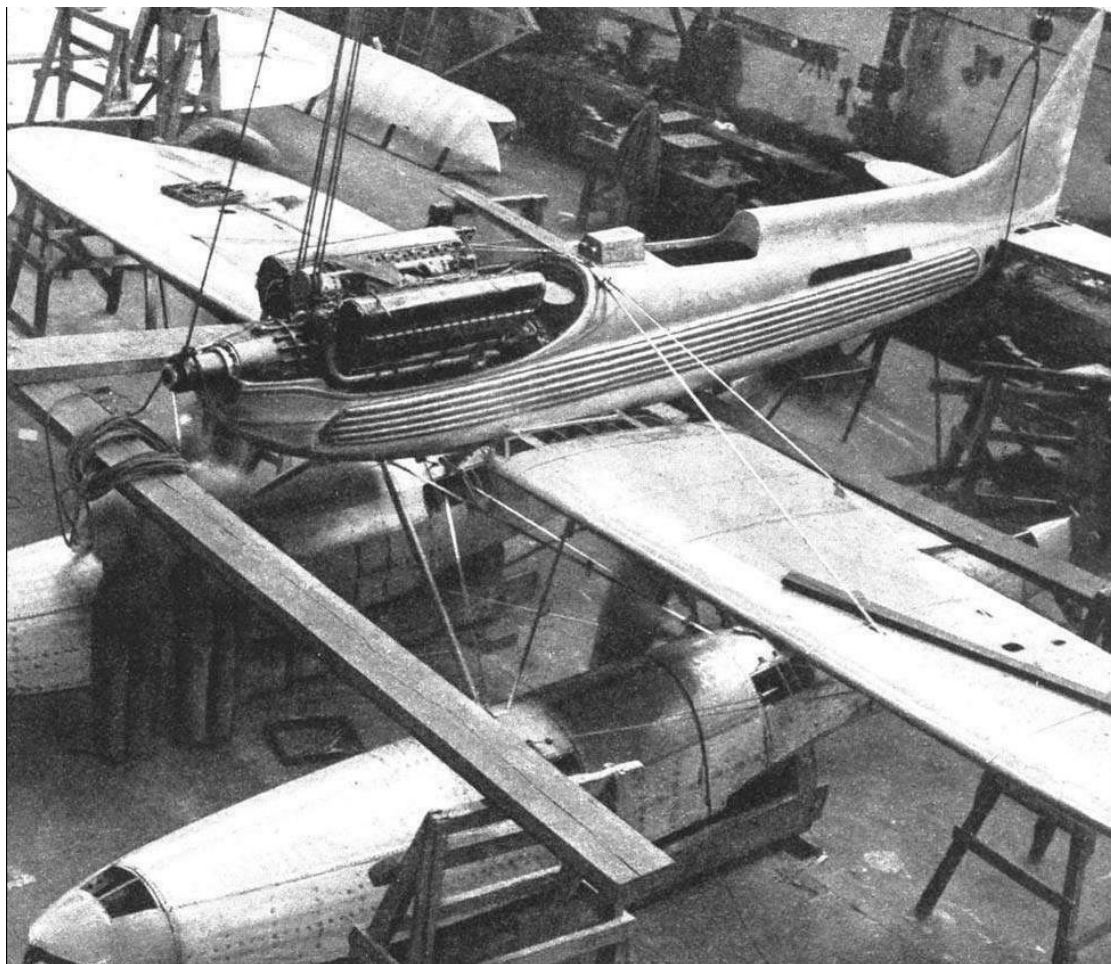


Reginald J. Mitchell (1895-1937) with Royce at the 1929 Schneider Trophy race for seaplanes and flying boats contested from 1913 to 1931. Mitchell an aeronautical engineer is best remembered for his racing seaplanes, which culminated in the Supermarine S.6B, and the iconic World War II fighter the Supermarine Spitfire. Their combined engineering abilities resulted in Schneider Trophy wins for the UK in 1929 and 1931.

The 1927 Schneider Trophy victory was achieved with Mitchell's Supermarine S.5 powered by a Napier Lion engine.



Cutaway illustration of the Supermarine S.6B by George Horace Davis.



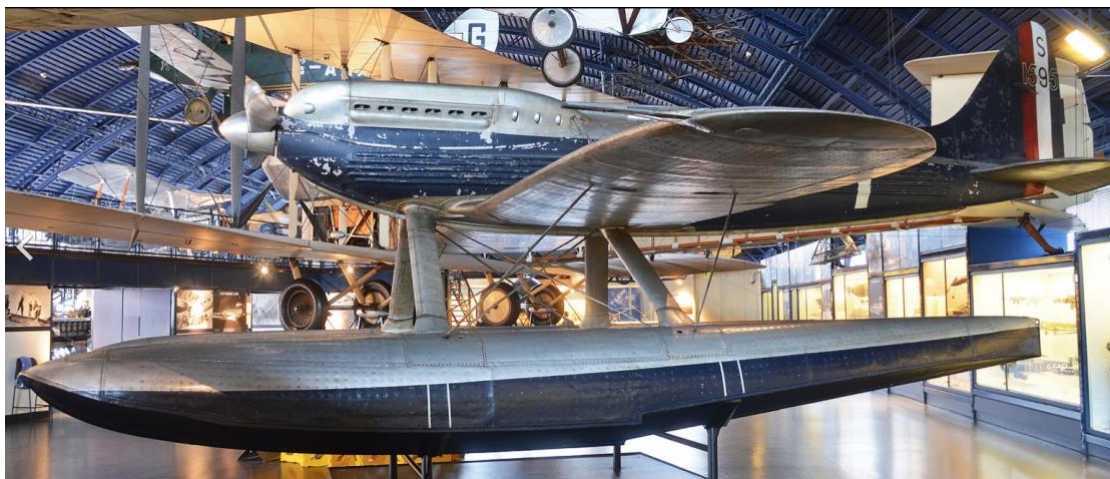
One of the two Supermarine S.6Bs under construction for the 1931 Schneider Trophy race showing the Rolls-Royce R engine.



Supermarine S.6B serial S1595 in which Ft Lt Boothman won the 1931 Schneider Trophy and Ft Lt Stainforth won the world airspeed record.



The other Supermarine S.6B serial S1596 in which Ft Lt Stainforth reached 379 mph towards the airspeed record. He subsequently established the record of 407.5 mph in S.6B serial S1595.



The Supermarine S.6B serial S1595 which captured the Schneider Trophy and the airspeed record for Britain is now in the London Science Museum.



Ft Lt J N Boothman (1901-1957) winner of the Schneider Trophy and Ft Lt G H Stainforth (1899-1942) holder of the airspeed record were each decorated by King George V with the Air Force Cross on 31 October 1931. They were both members of the Royal Air Force High-Speed Flight, 1931.

Above: They were collected from their hotel by Rolls-Royce in one of their Trials cars, 1930 Phantom II 129GN Barker limousine. These photographs were Boothman's personal images given to him by Rolls-Royce's photographer and then given to Tom Clarke by Boothman's nephew. Two show the car collecting Boothman and Stainforth from their hotel and the third is in Buckingham Palace entrance. [Courtesy of Tom Clarke]



The Royal Air Force High-Speed Flight, 1931. Ft Lt G H Stainforth is fourth from the left and Ft Lt J N Boothman is third from the right.



Rolls-Royce workers travelled by coach to watch the 1931 conclusive victory from Southsea. The importance of the 1931 victory is that it put Rolls-Royce at the height of its prestige with speed records on land, sea, and in the air. [Courtesy of Tom Clarke]

Royce was not present when Boothman captured the trophy but he did follow the progress of the race! Australian newspapers received this news, "London, September 15. A severe chill, contracted at Calshot, prevented the veteran, Sir Henry Royce, witnessing the triumph of the Rolls-Royce Schneider engines. He lay in bed in his home at West Wittering with a stopwatch and pencil in hand listening to hear Boothman's 'plane rounding the West Wittering pylon. When his friends arrived after the race to congratulate him and announced the speeds, Sir Henry smilingly produced his own lap estimates, almost identically corresponding with the official times."



Souvenir programmes of the 1929 and 1931 contests. [Courtesy of Tom Clarke]



The miniature trophy celebrating the 1931 victory which secured the Schneider Trophy in perpetuity for Britain. [Courtesy of Tom Clarke]

A personal recollection of Royce and the Schneider Trophy comes from Hugo Thomas Massac Buist (1878-1966). He was an aviation and motoring pioneer, who flew in one of the first planes piloted by Wilbur Wright. Buist was a friend of Rolls and was one of the passengers in the first Royce car in the Automobile Club's Sideslip Trials in April 1904. His account concludes with the famous Sir Henry epithet, 'Mechanic'.

He recalled of Sir Henry, "I used to meet him frequently during the 1931 Schneider Trophy race at Calshot, when his great 2,600 h.p. engine, as a fitting climax to his career, gave Great Britain not only the victory in the Schneider Trophy race, but also the world's speed record.

He used to drive into the station in one of his own Rolls-Royce cars, and talk to the pilots and to his own engineers. During the terrific strain of the last few days before the race there can be no doubt that his presence inspired the pilots and mechanics with confidence.

In conversation he was quiet and unassuming, seeming to prefer listening to talking. And he caused consternation among the Air Ministry officials by freely giving information about the Rolls-Royce racing engine to anyone who asked for it.

A characteristic touch, which stays in my memory, occurred when a small boy approached Sir Henry Royce one day at Calshot with the inevitable autograph book. The signature written was: 'Henry Royce, Mechanic.'

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