

Waterplane's Surprise Landing at Lyme Regis in 1912

Graham Davies 2019



The location of the above unused postcard ⁽¹⁾ is in Seaton in 1912, and not Lyme Regis as is written in pencil on the back of the card, but Lyme Regis does play a part in the story. The advertising board behind the plane says 'Frank Hucks Waterplane Co'. The card is published by local photographer, Charles Humphries, of West Street, Axminster.

In 1912, exhibition and passenger flights were given at various points round the coast in connection with the Daily Mail Hydro-Aeroplane tour. At Southsea M. Fischer piloted one of the new Farman hydro-aeroplanes recently delivered to the Frank Hucks Waterplane Co ⁽²⁾. Other venues, noted in the press, visited by the Frank Hucks 'water plane', included New Brighton, Skegness and Seaton.

Waterplane Flights - Lyme Regis's Surprise ⁽³⁾

'M. Fischer left Exmouth shortly after nine o'clock yesterday morning with his waterplane, presumably to attend Seaton Regatta, but about 9.30 he was at Lyme Regis, where he flew along the sea front in the direction of Charmouth, made a turn, again traversed the front, and alighted in the harbour. It was generally understood that M Fischer was under agreement not to fly anywhere else than Seaton between Weymouth and Exmouth. M. Fischer when asked for an explanation would not commit himself beyond saying that the wind was strong coming from Exmouth, and that he came too fast. Asked whether he intended to stay at Lyme, as the wind seemed to be getting stronger, the airman replied that he was waiting for his mechanic to come from Seaton, when he would probably get away again. A motor car conveying the mechanic arrived shortly before 10.30. The machine was subsequently carried out to the water, placed in position, and set in motion about 11 o'clock. M. Fischer made an easy circuit of the harbour and proceeded down the coast to Seaton.'

⁽¹⁾ Copy of postcard provided by Malcolm Brown

⁽²⁾ The Queen, July 27, 1912

⁽³⁾ Devon and Exeter Gazette, July 31, 1912