

## When Pigs Fly



*John Theodore Cuthbert Moore-Brabazon (later Lord Brabazon of Tara) was England's number one aviator literally as well as in deed. He learned to fly in a French Voisin biplane in 1908 and was issued Britain's first pilot's license by the Royal Aero Club in 1910. Brabazon's worldwide aviation "first" was inspired by the adage that, when something seems impossible, it will only happen "when pigs fly." He debunked this maxim by taking a piglet on a flight in a Voisin on November 4, 1909. His porcine passenger was flown over a 3.5-mile course in a wicker basket tied to the aircraft's frame.*

*During World War I, Brabazon was instrumental in the development of aerial photography. Between world wars, he became president of the Royal Aeronautical Society and a member of Parliament. During World War II, he was Minister of Transport and later the first Minister of Aircraft Production. He alienated some of his colleagues by saying that bombs alone would not win the war and denouncing the RAF's strategic concepts. An outspoken proponent of air safety, Brabazon was a powerful critic of risky aviation procedures, especially the use of flammable fuels in commercial airliners. He died in 1969 at the age of eighty-five.*