

Ross & Keith Smith Landing Site, Charleville, QLD

This cairn marks the site on Ward Plain where aviators Ross and Keith Smith landed.

Location: Adavale Road, 19 km north, Charleville

GPS: Lat: -26.327222
Long: 146.0975

Inscription:

CAPTAIN SIR ROSS SMITH
AND LIEUTENANT SIR KEITH SMITH
LANDED ON THIS PLAIN ON THE FIRST
ENGLAND TO AUSTRALIA FLIGHT ON
THE 23RD DECEMBER 1919
ERECTED 67
THE MURWEH SHIRE COUNCIL



(Monuments Australia – Dianne Watson)



(Photos: Historic House Museum, Charleville, QLD)

After landing outside Charleville on 23rd December 1919, the area received heavy rains, making it impossible for the Vickers Vimy to take off from the soggy plain.¹

The Vickers Vimy engines needed major overhauling, and repairs were carried out at Ipswich Railway Workshops, where a new propeller was also made.²

Sergeants Grange and Chester, aviation mechanics from Melbourne³, arrived on 5th January 1920 to assist Bennett and Shiers with the repairs.

The crew departed Charleville on 12th February 1920 for Bourke, NSW.⁴

¹ Toowoomba Chronicle, 9 February 1920 (page 5)

² Singleton Argus, 5 February 1920 (page 2)

³ Riverine Herald, 6 January 1920 (page 3)

⁴ Evening News (Sydney), 12 February 1920 (page 4)