The author fixing a motorised Nikon camera on to a special jig bolted to the tail plane of a Tiger Moth. Straps were also attached inside the jig to give the camera a sort of safety belt should the main securing bolt snap under the strain.

several hundred feet. So far I haven't worked out a use for this, but one day it is sure to make the difference between an interesting picture and a lost shot.

During the American moon launches some cameraman used electric drives fitted to sound-activated switches. By adjusting these to a pre-determined decibel output they were able to get the cameras shooting automatically when the rocket engines reached a certain stage. The fixed cameras were able to work far closer than any human photographer would have been allowed. LIFE covering the launches used motor drive Nikons in nitrogen filled boxes—to prevent fire risk—on the gantry.

How reliable are motor-drives? My first has just gone in for a major overhaul after nine years' tough, continuous service. By tough I mean parachute drops, explosions and so on. Once I thought it had gone for good. Covering the landing, in a gravel pit arrester, of a Lightning fighter I used a remote control Nikon with a 21mm lens placed right on the edge of the pit. The fighter was ploughed into the arrester at 100mph to prove that the gravel could stop it safely. The plane was undamaged but the camera was. Next day I phoned Ranks for a repair and told the mechanic how the damage had been caused, feeling rather one-up on the accident stakes. 'Yes I had a Nikon hit by an aircraft yesterday', he said without sounding the least surprised.

It is that sort of camera.