



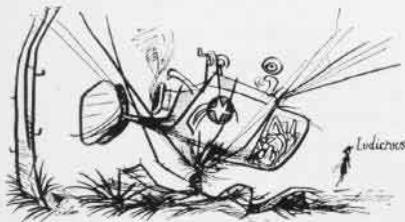
GRAMPAW PETTIBONE

Clobbered Chopper

While on a ferry flight, the pilot of an HTK-1 encountered some unpredicted headwinds. Unable to reach his original destination, he was forced to land at a small Texas town for fuel. To save time, he landed at the edge of town in a gas station parking lot rather than at the local airport, which, according to his chart, had no refueling facilities.

The manager of the airport, who happened to be at the filling station, informed the pilot that refueling facilities were available at the airport so the pilot decided to fly there to refuel. The area in which the 'copter was landed was rather restricted and necessitated moving the helicopter about 100 yards down one highway where it intersected another before there was adequate room for take-off. Across the highway, between the gas station parking lot and the desired takeoff spot, were two overhead lead telephone cables 18 to 20 feet off the ground.

Meanwhile the "flying machine" had attracted quite a crowd, and the services of a highway patrolman were required to flag traffic on the highway



and control the crowd. In this ideal movie setting, our hero, with the help of his crewmen, wound up his "chopper" and proceeded down the highway about a foot off the ground toward his chosen takeoff area.

As he neared the telephone wires, he attempted to set the helicopter down on the highway in order to taxi underneath. His reflexes were a little slow and before he accomplished this maneuver, the telephone wires in their inimitable way reached down and be-



came entangled in the 'copter's rotors. Needless to say, the helicopter lost the argument and wound up on its back practically demolished. Net Results: Four automobiles were damaged and three civilians injured by the flying debris, not to mention cutting off some of the town's electrical power.

Even
Brunhilda
calls me
HOT!



Grampaw Pettibone Says:

Great balls of fire! It's a wonder the local citizens didn't ride this fellow out of town on a rail! About the only correct decision he made on this trip was to land when he discovered he was low on fuel.

A glance at the *Airmen's Guide* which he had with him would have shown the airport was listed as having 91 octane gas and a 2800-foot gravel runway. I guess that would have been asking a little too much, though. Our hotshot had to land in a congested area in direct violation of his ferry orders.

This isn't the first time that a helicopter has run into telephone wires, but it's about the first time that the wires have been hit from below. Had this lad enlisted the help of some of the bystanders to help him push his machine to the take-off spot, he would have made out like a tall dog. He didn't TAXI under the cables, which at best would have allowed him about a two-foot margin of error, he had to try to FLY under for the benefit of the crowd.

Any time that there is any doubt, *don't*. Just remember that close ones are only good when you're playing horseshoes.

Potato Locker Bound

An AF-28 pilot was making an approach to a landing on a CVE. The approach was normal until he straightened out in the groove. At this point, close aboard, he received a "come-on" from the LSO but mistook it for a "cut" and cut his engine. As he did this, he dropped his left wing and started to slide left. [He no doubt was anticipating a cut.]

He then received a "Roger" followed immediately by a "forced cut", when his hook cleared the ramp. His reaction to this was full throttle, a half cut, right wing down, nose down, flare out, and touch down. [Yes, that's what the Accident Board said he did.]

The plane hit the deck with the port wheel about a foot inboard from the deck edge. The tailhook engaged number six cross-deck pendant. The wire parted and the hook picked up num-

ber nine wire as the plane started over the port side. The aircraft broke in two just aft the radar operator, the forward section dropping into the water, and the tail section with the ordnance operator aboard hanging over the side. All hands were recovered.



Grampaw Pettibone Says:

This lad must have been thinking pure thoughts all week to come out of this one with a whole skin. It beats me how anyone can take a "cut" on a "come on" and not wind up in the spud locker, but this lad did it.

When you are in the final stages of your carrier approach, it's a mighty good idea to decide on one course of action and stick to it. In this case the pilot couldn't decide whether to take a "cut" or a "wave-off" and wound up doing both with another "cut" thrown in besides.

This accident reminds me of a few snide lines about the LSO that a disgruntled aviator wrote some years ago: "Know ye the officer called "landing



signal," and trust him not for he is a doltish oaf and is poorly coordinated.

"He hath eyes with which to see but they are weak and he distinguisheth day from night only with exceeding difficulty.

"Yea, he waveth off Angel Donald saying, 'Land ye not on a pass which is so long in the groove'.

"Make him thy friend. When thou engagest in a game of chance, call thou not his two little pair with thy full house for he prizeth a winning hand above all things and he will love thee.

"Anger him not else he bringeth thee in low and slow and spinneth thee into the potato locker."

Anticipating a "cut" has caused many pilots a peck of trouble. In many other instances, the anticipation is almost as great as the realization, but not when you're making carrier landings.

Sad Situation

An experienced pilot with 4400 hours of flight time, 219 in type, clung tenaciously to the tail of a PV-2 which he had just ditched. The rest of the crew of seven, after successfully ditching the aircraft, became separated from the plane. The co-pilot kept one of the crewmen afloat. This crewman couldn't swim nor did he know how to inflate his life jacket.

The other four crewmen, none wearing life jackets, were trying feverishly and desperately to inflate a cranky old



Mk 7 life raft. Inasmuch as the Mk 7 was a strange piece of equipment to these lads, their efforts to locate the toggle switch were unsuccessful. About the time that Davey Jones was alerted to begin assignment of lockers, a helicopter and a crash boat hove into sight and rescued all hands.



Grampaw Pettibone Says:

Great horned toadies! How lucky can we get? It's quite evident that the required crew training, including check-outs in the safety and survival equipment, either wasn't being done at all or was being sadly neglected. It may be news to some of you but there's no substitute for your life saving equipment when you need it. When you are flying over water, you never can tell when you're gonna need it. Make a habit of wearing that Mae West, even though it may be a little uncomfortable. You can manage to support your family a good many more years that way.

What really makes my old blood boil is the reason for the ditching in the first place! FUEL EXHAUSTION, with over 500 gallons of fuel still aboard at the time of ditching!

After hearing the rest of the story, I'm about convinced that these lads scheduled this accident in advance of the flight. The co-pilot wasn't checked out in the airplane, and the plane captain wasn't qualified as such. The rest of the crew were apparently along for the ride.

The pilot was under the hood on an instrument let-down when the starboard engine quit. The pilot shifted the transfer valves to full tanks, but neglected



to turn on the transfer switches. When the starboard engine quit, the pilot called the plane captain forward to restart it while he lined up for a single engine approach to the field four miles away.

The plane captain was hardly qualified to pull chocks on a PV-2, much less to restart the engine. He put the transfer switch on "Manual", but about that time the port engine quit and he had to scramble to his ditching station because of the low altitude. A few seconds later, they were swimming.

In effect, all the plane captain did was to transfer fuel into an empty tank, when the correct procedure would have been to switch the fuel flow control valve to "By-pass" and fuel would have gone directly to the engine, probably in time to restart it before the port engine quit. Here again, the pilot put his faith in a man supposed to know the right answers.

Lads, take a tip from me. Don't EVER think that it can't happen to you. The warning flag is waving when you find yourself too lazy or in too much of a hurry to comply with regulations made for your safety. When you assume that your crew is checked out in the use of safety equipment, you are asking for trouble. When you assume they know the correct bailout and ditching procedure, you are in trouble. When you assume that your co-pilot knows all the answers, you are a dreamer. When you assume that he knows what to do in an emergency, you've had it. When you assume that your thousands of hours in the air makes you immune to accidents, you are a candidate for the deep six or the wrong end of a long green table.

Don't let them use this epitaph on your tombstone:

St. Peter heard
This lad explain
Just why he had
To ditch his plane

He said to Pete,
"I'll be quite frank
The gas was in
The other tank!"