



# GRAMPAW PETTIBONE

## Submerged

After a thorough briefing by the chase pilot, the flight of A-4B's departed an East Coast air station on a fam flight for the second pilot. The flight proceeded normally according to the fam syllabus during the high altitude work and the practice touch-and-go landing at a neighboring field. After four practice touch-and-go landings, the chase pilot led his student back to the home field for a final landing, giving him the lead after setting him up for entry into the break. A normal overhead break was accomplished with a good approach.

During final, the pilot dropped his nose slightly but corrected his attitude and passed the RDO's position with an amber approach light. After touchdown, with approximately 6100 feet of runway remaining, flaps were raised and normal braking commenced. With only 3000 feet of runway left, heavy brakes were applied and the right tire blew. Shortly thereafter the pilot noted (for the first time) his air speed to be 90 knots, but failed to lower his hook for an arrested landing.

The aircraft ran off the end of the runway, hit a concrete drainage gutter and perimeter road, then became airborne for approximately 63 feet before passing through the boundary fence. At this point the aircraft again became airborne for 200 feet, struck the ground and bounced into a pond. The water was only three feet deep, but the mud on the bottom was extremely soft and the aircraft sank. It is strongly suspected that the pilot inadvertently advanced the throttle, thereby adding considerable power upon impact with the drainage ditch.

The pilot had failed to release the canopy prior to the cockpit's becoming completely submerged beneath the mud. The oxygen equipment performed satisfactorily.

He first attempted to jettison the canopy with the emergency release, then manually unlocked it and at-



tempted to force it open. In order to exert more force on the canopy, he stood in the seat and in so doing pulled his oxygen mask loose. After exerting himself to the point of hyperventilation, he found it difficult to exhale through the mask as the valves were fouled by mud.

In desperation he attempted to jettison the canopy by pulling the face curtain down to the first notch, taking

care not to pull it the full length. After this maneuver, an explosion was heard but there was no effect on the canopy. Being fatigued and realizing that there was little he could do, the pilot quietly awaited rescue. After a series of events in rescue attempts, the aircraft was winched from the mud and a somewhat exhausted but thankful pilot was rescued. The time from impact to rescue was 23 minutes.



*Grampaw Pettibone says:*

**Great jumpin' Jehosophat!** Failure to retard throttle to idle on initial touchdown; inattention to speed at distance markers; misjudgment of speed prior to reaching arresting gear; failure to lower hook for arrested landing, and several other errors could be written on this one. This lad's thorough briefing by the chase pilot before the flight just didn't get through. The Navy puts out many dollars annually to procure, install, and maintain distance markers and arresting/abort gear. To have a pilot absolutely refuse to use it is just plain discouragin'.

## Rescue for Real

Just off shore from a West Coast air station, the crew of a UH-25B was engaged in student aircrew training



exercises that included simulated no electrical/no ICS and an unconscious man pickup. After performing several successful and realistic simulated pickups, the chief who was assigned as safety crewman for the flight noticed the handle for the rescue hatch loose on the deck. He unbuckled his lap belt, moved aft and, in an attempt to properly stow the handle, tripped over the copilot's collective stick—also adrift on deck—lost his balance and fell unnoticed through the open hatch. As he fell, he grabbed the landing gear, but the wheel turned and he continued approximately 30 feet into the water.

The next thing the chief remembers is that his life vest was inflated; he had a cold wet feeling above the waist but no feeling at all in his legs.

Shortly thereafter, the aircrew trainee observed that the chief was missing and informed the pilot of the fact that he had fallen from the aircraft. The pilot immediately returned to the scene and made the rescue.



**Grampaw Pettibone says:**

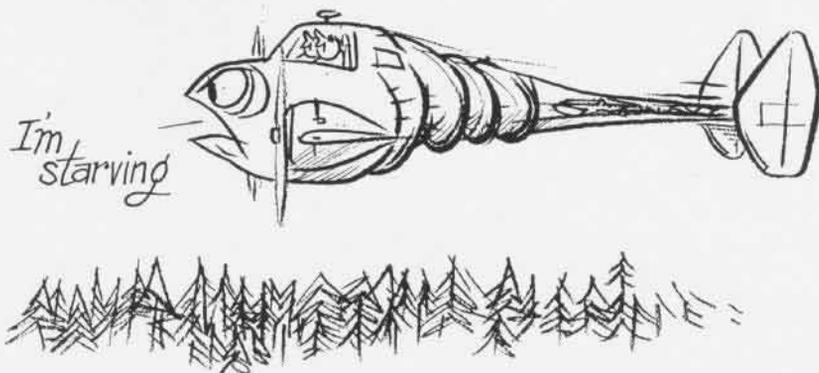
Oh, my achin' back! This chief probably received the shock of his life when he took that spectacular step. That is really the hard way to leave a helicopter. This well dunked lad is pretty lucky to be able to tell the boys about it at Happy Hour. He can also give out with some sound logic about not wandering around near an open hatch without a gunner's belt and the proper stowage of loose gear.

## Can Do

The crew of a CH-19E (HRS-3) helo was alerted for a rescue job at their Southwest Pacific island base. They were told that a Navy nurse, while out sight-seeing, had slipped on moss-covered rocks and fallen over a waterfall in a remote and relatively inaccessible area and was unable to move her legs. There were no roads which were passable, even for a jeep. Owing to the extremely heavy jungle growth, a helo was the only logical answer to the rescue problem. The crew manned their aircraft, lifted off and flew directly to the scene.

The nearest clearing suitable for landing was one and one-half miles downstream of the accident site, and the dense jungle and sheer cliffs in the vicinity precluded hoisting the victim.

The resourceful helo pilot set it



down in the clearing downstream and hiked back through the jungle to the waterfall, together with the doctor and corpsman who formed the rescue crew. They carried with them a Stokes litter and a one-man life raft.

The helpless accident victim was strapped in the litter, which was in turn strapped to the raft, and floated downstream guided by the helo crew, now doubling as swimmers, until the clearing utilized for landing the helo was reached.

The patient was then carried to the helo and flown to the Naval Hospital.



**Grampaw Pettibone says:**

Bust my buttons! It's good for the old blood pressure to read about a resourceful bunch like this helo TEAM! Even a helicopter has limitations and it's a sure sign of a pilot's professional proficiency when he backs off after due consideration of the situation and says 'NO'. This is sometimes the toughest of all decisions to make.

## Planned Prang

Two proficiency pilots departed an East Coast air station in a trusty Beechcraft after carefully calculating fuel required to complete the cross-country with two en route stops. Unexpected delays consumed precious fuel, including ground delay at point of departure, winds stronger than forecast, holding because of instrument weather, and identification turns owing to radio difficulties.

Fuel could have been obtained at the first stop, but the pilots did not take the time required to refuel; they wanted to make the second point of intended landing on time. They were also confronted with the fact that their home base closed at a certain hour, and they

wanted to make it back before then.

Throughout the last leg of the flight to the second point of intended landing, the pilot was concerned about the fuel, but, because he needed to get back to his home station before closing time and had a passenger to pick up, he neglected to realize how much time he had already flown that day.

Approximately seven miles out, the pilot notified the control tower of his dangerously low fuel state and was cleared for a straight in approach. The gauges at this time indicated .2 to .4. Three miles from the runway, the fuel pressure fell to zero and use of the wobble pump regained pressure only momentarily. Fuel tanks were switched and wobble pump exercised to no avail. The plane was crash-landed—gear and flaps up—in a rather thick forest.

The aircraft came to rest in an almost vertical position with the entire front half of the cockpit torn away. You could walk into the cockpit through the gaping hole on the left side. Neither pilot lost complete consciousness.



**Grampaw Pettibone says:**

Great balls of fire! However, this one didn't have an opportunity to end that way, for the only fuel available for a fire was in the pilot's cigarette lighter.

It's pretty difficult to imagine a couple of otherwise savvy guys working so hard to violate minimum fuel requirements as specified by the Navy, FAA, and sound operating procedures based on good judgment and common sense. So accustomed are these little power plants to an octane diet, they positively refuse to perform without it.

To say these young gents were lucky to walk away from this one is putting it mildly. Although the Navy has one proficiency type bird less, we should have two smarter aviators in the fold.