

GRAMPAW PETTIBONE

Borrowed Time

The first two planes of a three plane formation flight took off in formation, followed closely by the number three man.

At an altitude of 150 feet and just beyond the end of the runway, the number two plane started a cross-under to a position on the left of the division leader. The number three plane had fallen slightly below and behind the first two planes, and this pilot also started a cross-under to the left and added throttle to close in. As he pulled up into position he felt the propeller of the number two plane chewing into the rear control surfaces of his plane.

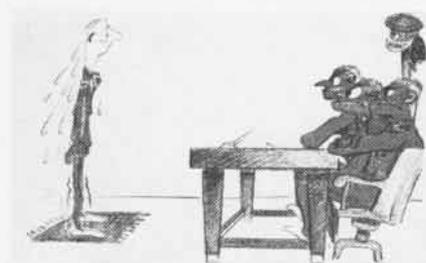
Fortunately after the stick was knocked out of his hand, he was able to regain control of the plane and he was able to climb ahead to an altitude where he could bail out over water. The division leader observed that the right elevator and most of the horizontal stabilizer on the number three plane were missing and the left elevator was chewed and partly gone. When the pilot slowed the damaged plane to 115 knots with 10° flaps down, preparatory to bailing out, it began to dive and zoom violently. What was left of the elevator was flapping up and down.

Just as he started to leave the plane, it nosed down sharply and half-rolled to the right. He was pinned against the fuselage for a minute and then thrown clear. He was picked up by a fishing boat after a few minutes in the water. Meanwhile the pilot of the other plane had effected a safe forced landing back at the field although his plane was vibrating so badly that his hand was injured in holding the stick.

Grampaw Pettibone Says:

Some people really work their guardian angels overtime. Cross-unders at an altitude of 150 feet are bad enough, but when they are made without a positive signal from the division leader and when two pilots each think they are supposed to occupy the same spot in the formation—that *always* spells TROUBLE. You fellows are living on borrowed time. . . . I hope you make good use of it. Why don't you form a "Society for the Prevention of Simultaneous Unsignaled Low Altitude Cross-unders"?

NO DOUBT you have wondered what *Dilbert* and *Spoiler* have been doing since the war ended. Unfortunately we can't give you a very favorable re-



port—at least not on *Dilbert*. For just a few weeks ago he turned up at Atlantic City to give the bathers a free thrill-free for them but pretty costly for the Navy.

Dilbert had a plane from a nearby Reserve Base and thought that it would be fun to put on an air show for the folks on the beach—just a little low altitude acrobatics and a bit of inverted flight. His engine started missing but this didn't deter *Dilbert*. The show must go on! Besides he remembered from somewhere that "this was a characteristic of the plane when inverted." When his engine quit altogether, he tried to glide to the nearest airport which was several miles away. However, he had very little altitude and didn't make it. The life guards swam out and pulled him in.

He is shown above explaining his actions to a Naval Aviators Disposition Board.

GRAMPAW'S SAFETY QUIZ



1. If you call in for an altimeter setting and reset your altimeter before landing, will it read zero when you land?
2. Is smoking permitted in Navy combat-type airplanes?
3. When is the application of brakes of greatest value in preventing a ground loop?
4. What restrictions govern the use of full combat power during authorized gunnery practice in first line service aircraft with combat power equipment installed?
5. Combat-power-equipped engines may be permitted to accumulate (a. 12 minutes), (b. 2 hours), (c. 8 hours), (d. 24 hours) of full combat power time between overhauls.

(Answers on Page 40)

Parachute Ten Commandments

Proper care and handling of parachutes is essential to assure maximum efficiency for this important class of equipment before the emergency arises. An Army flight officer who abused his parachute and who was required to write an essay on the proper care of the parachute is responsible for the following *Ten Commandments*:

I
Thou shalt not suffer thy parachute to become wet, moist, damp, watery, undried, humid, dank, dewy, juicy, saturated, soggy, muddy, dripping, soaking, oily, greasy, sloppy, sodden or otherwise contaminated.

II
Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's parachute.

III
Thou shalt not forget to carry adequate parachute harness to the aircraft, neither shalt thou forget to carry sufficient parachutes for all officers, enlisted men, enlisted women, civilians, or animals.



Pax Vobiscum
Ensign Doukes.
We know you'll miss
The rum and cokes.

IV
Thou shalt wear the parachute at all times when flying, soaring, floating, and when not in contact with the ground.

V
Thou shalt not abuse, maltreat, ill-use, scratch, maul, sit on, stand on, walk on, overtax, throw, pitch, toss, heave, slam, bang, jab, pelt, pick, cut, pierce, or otherwise mistreat thy parachute.

VI
Thou shalt always inspect, ogle, goggle, look-askance, peek, peep, peer, and pry at thy parachute to insure its being in good condition before checking it out of the parachute room.

VII
Thou shalt talk to no one who asks to borrow thy parachute for any reason whatsoever.

VIII
Thou shalt watch thy parachute in a military manner, keeping always on the alert for any inadequacy, "caput mortuum," disservice, rip, tear, faulty, loose, careless, slovenly, or otherwise unsatisfactory repack, neither shalt thou forget to respond promptly to bail-out signals when given while flying.

IX
Thou shalt not carry, hold, pick up, lift, fetch, transport, shift, bring, reach, or pass thy parachute by the metal ripcord handle, but shall always, eternally, forever, at all times and without fail, use the fabric strap that is provided solely for this purpose.

X
Thou shalt be especially watchful at night and during the time of flying and challenge anyone who flirts with, attempts to make free with, looks covetously at, or takes liberties with, thy parachute or thy neighbor's parachute and to quit thy parachute only after making contact with terra firma, terra cotta, macadam, Mother Earth, Father Neptune, dirt, sand, clay, gravel, or vegetation of any kind.

Fell Into a Grave!

An B5C had landed at a Chinese airport and unloaded its cargo. While taxiing out to the take-off position, the runway caved in under the right wheel. Inspection disclosed that the wheel was sinking into an old Chinese tomb. The airstrip was a Japanese-built asphalt strip currently used by the Chinese Air Force.

Four life rafts were placed under the right wing and inflated to take the strain off its wing tip, aileron and main spar. This prompt action minimized the damage.

 **Grampaw Pettibone Says:**

That's what I call using the old noggin. It's not everybody that can fall into a grave and come out smelling like a rose.

Passengers Wouldn't Jump

Two passengers and a crew member were killed in forced landing of the SNB pictured below. The pilot and one passenger survived, but were seriously injured. The order to "Bail Out" was first given at about 2,000 feet, but the passengers did not have their chute harnesses on and there was considerable confusion and time lost while they got into harnesses and buckled on their chutes.

The pilot was experiencing great difficulty in controlling the airplane due to its extreme vibration. He was helped into his harness by a crew member and states that he was ready to jump but none of the passengers had left the plane. He shouted again for them to jump and started looking for a possible landing spot in the rough terrain below. The area was hilly and wooded, with occasional clear areas.

Since the passengers did not jump, the pilot selected what he thought was the best available landing space and attempted a forced landing. Both engines were shut off in hopes of reducing the vibration which was so severe that the pilot thought an engine or wing might come off. The area selected for the forced landing was undershot and the pilot found himself heading for a fairly steep hill.

He dove the plane to pick up 100 knots and tried to hold off so that the plane would hit at about the same



angle as the slope and slide up the hill. However, when he tried to pull the nose up enough to match the angle of the incline, the aircraft stalled from about 15 feet and nosed down. The deceleration tore all the seats in the passenger compartment completely loose, throwing the passengers forward.

A careful inspection is under way to determine the cause of the extreme vibration which occurred after about two hours of normal flight. Preliminary investigation indicates that the vibration may have been due to structural failure within the starboard engine which was trailing smoke at the time of the forced landing.

 **Grampaw Pettibone Says:**

This is the sort of accident that makes me mad all over. A pilot who is busy trying to control an aircraft under these circumstances can't leave the pilot's compartment and pass out written invitations to jump. However, if the pilot had carefully instructed the crew and passengers before take-off to wear their harnesses, the confusion which ensued when the bail-out order was given would have been lessened and more time would have been available to abandon the plane.

As things stood, the pilot found himself in a tough spot. When the passengers did not jump, he had to land the plane under very unfavorable circumstances.

Get Down or Get Out

Two fatal accidents have occurred recently in the course of emergency landings due to fire. In both instances the pilots apparently did not realize the seriousness of the situation. One pilot flew past two suitable landing areas in an attempt to get into his home field, and the other made a complete circle of an army field with his plane on fire. Both spun in from low altitudes when the fire became very intense.

 **Grampaw Pettibone Says:**

When an airplane is on fire, there are just two things to do—either land it *at once* or *get out*. Personally I think the second choice is the best, provided the airplane is not likely to fall into a populated area.

Here's another thought to bear in mind. If you are making an emergency landing with a serious fire condition, be wary about lowering your wheels, even if you are going to make the runway all right. You'll get out faster if you bring it in on the belly, and in many planes the lowering of the wheels creates drafts of air through the plane which increase the fire and tend to bring it into the cockpit.

Hurried Exit!

The three action shots above were caught by an alert photographer who was stationed near the end of the runway when the F4U crash took place.



In this case the pilot banked sharply at low altitude to get lined up with the runway. The aircraft stalled in this turn and struck the end of the runway on the left wing tip. For a brief moment it slid directly towards the photographer, but as soon as it changed direction he began shooting pictures.

 **Grampaw Pettibone Says:**

I don't blame you at all for the haste with which you are leaving the plane, but I hope that next time you will take a voluntary waveoff when you overshoot the wind line. Remember—a lot of pilots get killed every year wrapping their planes up in tight low altitude turns in order to get lined up with the runway.

Rainmakers—Front and Center

Recently, two CFR flights were erroneously cleared. One clearance had no weather on it while the other had the weather of an alternate field. At the time of the flight clearances, the point of destination was under instrument conditions. Fortunately these aircraft were landed safely at the point of destination but under a 500-foot overcast with intermittent snow.

 **Grampaw Pettibone says:**

Yep, this is the type of discrepancy that often has led to disaster. These two cases are cited to represent an example of the manner in which weather accidents are born. In the interests of aviation safety all pilots and operations officers must comply with Aviation Circular Letter No. 26-44 and Flight Safety Bulletin No. 17-45.