

GRAMPAW PETTIBONE

Take Off Emergency

The student pilot of an F4U that crash landed in a wooded area after engine failure on take-off writes:

"My first field carrier landing pass resulted in a wave-off to the right; the engine coughed and sputtered with the application of full power. Throttle was retarded immediately to 30", then prop pitch to about 2050 r.p.m. There followed a radio transmission from the LSO authorizing immediate normal landing if in trouble, during which time engine operation smoothed out.

"My reply indicated that now I believed the engine to be functioning normally and that I would attempt another pass. I continued to gain altitude during this conversation but at its close experienced a definite but smooth loss of power and began to descend immediately from an estimated altitude of 250 feet.

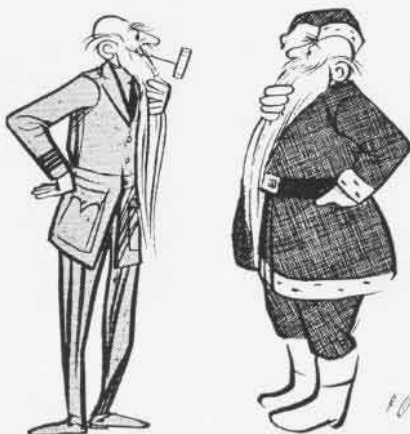
"I pushed the prop pitch forward and checked gas and gauges but found no indication of the source of the trouble. I shifted attention to raising the landing gear lever and flying the plane straight ahead for the landing. Just above treetop level I began raising the nose for the flare-out. The plane hit hard; I remember no details of the crash until I found myself stepping through a hole in the fuselage onto the wing and clearing the plane.

"I have no memory of cutting switches or unfastening my safety belt. I walked some distance from the plane and sat down, leaning against a tree and facing the plane. Assistance arrived promptly.

"Conclusions I have drawn from the accident:

"My concentration on the problem at hand—my check flight—made me reluctant to admit that the engine was actually failing, a situation aggravated by the smoothness with which the engine lost power, and left me a shorter interval of time to execute emergency procedure and exercise good flight judgment in the actual landing.

"Henceforth I will enthusiastically engage in any safety forum, lecture, or emergency procedure review class, especially the latter, as often as it can be repeated at the squadron and flight levels, so that these procedures will be instantly and completely available to my mind for application in the few



ALL GRAMP WANTS FOR XMAS IS MORE SAFETY!

seconds that exist for action in an emergency. The problem is not one of acquiring safety knowledge but of keeping it right at the fingertips.

"If I had worn an anti-buffer helmet, I would not have received my head injuries. Secure shoulder straps and seat belt prevented more serious injury.

"The cardinal rules of a low altitude emergency: (1) Maintain flying speed (2) Retract wheels, and (3) Land straight ahead, were observed automatically as a direct result of CQTU-4 training."



Grampaw Pettibone Says:

That's what I call taking a good, intelligent, backward glance at your actions in an emergency. Sure, you were a little slow in admitting that you had an emergency and were thus crowded for time, but you didn't forget the important things!

I wish that there were some way we could train Guardian Angels to shout, "FLY STRAIGHT AHEAD" and "KEEP FLYING SPEED" in emergencies right after take-off . . . 'cause my files contain over a hundred cases where pilots were killed when they tried to turn back to the field.

P. S. As Winchell used to say, "An orchid to CQTU-4." When a pilot does the right thing automatically, it shows that his training was plenty sharp.

Dept. of Utter Confusion

A Reserve Lt. (jg) with a total of 2.6 hours of recent flight experience in *Corsairs* joined the *Caterpillar Club* the other day when he found himself unable to recover from an inverted spin and bailed out at about 3000 feet. His statement indicates that he had some very droll ideas on aerodynamics and

that he didn't know the first thing about inverted spin recovery in the *Corsair*.

To begin with, he nosed over and attained an airspeed of about 270 to 280 knots and started his loop at 8000 feet. He says, "When the plane was almost at the top of the loop, I felt by the controls that it would not have sufficient speed to complete the loop, so I attempted to roll it out in an Immelman. This attempt failed and the plane started into an inverted spin.

"I immediately applied opposite rudder, but the plane continued to spin in its inverted attitude. I applied pressure to the stick but was unable to move it. During the short period of time the plane was spinning violently and losing altitude very rapidly, and I decided to abandon the plane."



Grampaw Pettibone Says:

This statement makes about as much sense as saying, "I was in a normal climb with my wings level when I felt that the plane was about to stall, so I immediately commenced a steep nose high turn to prevent the plane from spinning."

How a fellow could accumulate 1000 hours of flight time and not know that it takes more speed to do an Immelman than to come on around in a loop is beyond me. When you're on your back at 9000 feet, the easiest and simplest way to get some more speed is to let the nose fall through.

No wonder he couldn't recover from the inverted spin. He forgot to retard his throttle, and that is one of the most important steps in recovery from an inverted spin in the *Corsair*.

Looks to me like this lad could have used a little briefing on basic fundamentals of flying and some specific instruction on spin recovery before being allowed to check out in a *Corsair*.

The Other 2% Are Liars

Here's our comforting thought for the month:

"There are two kinds of experienced Naval Aviators:

- (1) Those who have been lost.
- (2) Those who are liars.

"If you're an expert navigator, you may avoid both categories for quite a while.

"If you do become lost, you have accomplished nothing unique. You're not even in danger provided you know your lost plane procedure. Just use it and come on home and lie about it!"

Fire Blasters

Proof that there are more ways than one to put out a fire turned up in two unusual accidents:

Case No. 1

Pilot was trapped in a burning airplane after a landing crash. Two jets were waiting for take-off nearby. When the pilot made no attempt to leave the burning aircraft, the jet pilot closest to the scene taxied his plane so that he was about fifty feet behind the cockpit of the burning craft. He then spun his jet around, held the brakes, and opened the throttle.

The blast, which is not dangerously hot at a distance of fifty feet or more, was so great that it blew the flames back and away from the cockpit, enabling other pilots and the fire chief to reach the unconscious pilot and remove him from the wreckage. The pilot of the crashed plane escaped with only a slight concussion and minor back injuries.

Case No. 2

The pilot of an F4U-4 experienced detonation during a carrier take-off. He retarded throttle slightly in an effort to stop the detonation, but neglected to jettison his external gas tank.

He had retracted his wheels and brought his flaps up to 30 degrees when the engine backfired loudly and quit. At this time he was about a mile ahead of the carrier and at an altitude of about 200 feet. The pilot spent a few seconds trying to locate the trouble and the Corsair quivered as it approached a stall. The pilot nosed over to regain control, and was able to keep his wings level but hit in a nose down attitude.

The plane and pilot appeared to sink immediately. Gasoline from the full belly tank ignited and covered an area with a radius of about 50 feet. When the pilot escaped from the plane and came to the surface he was surrounded by burning gasoline.

He ducked under water and started to swim out of the flaming area. At about this time the helicopter arrived at the scene and the blast from its rotor appeared to blow the flames away from the pilot as he came up for air. He was picked up in the sling and returned to the carrier in a matter of minutes.

The pilot suffered second degree burns on his face and hands. He was not wearing gloves because he had lost his and had not yet been issued a new pair.



Grampaw Pettibone Says:

Both of these pilots were extremely fortunate in having rescue facilities close at hand and in the first instance the pilot of the jet certainly deserves credit for exceptionally quick thinking in a pinch.

Gosh, I wish there was some way that we could impress every pilot with the importance of wearing gloves. Despite all the letters, orders, and cajoling that has been done on this subject, every few months I run across another accident where a pilot's hands are needlessly burned because he didn't wear his gloves.



Over The Sea Wall

The PBM got in this embarrassing position when a crew gave it a morning turn-up without securing the brake handles on the beaching gear or making sure that it was chocked on both sides.

During the mag check, the plane started to move. The thrust was too much for the tail tie down lines and they parted. The PBM continued over the sea wall and suffered major damage to the bottom of the hull and the port float.



Grampaw Pettibone Says:

I hear that just after this happened a huge neon sign lit up right in front of the PBM. The crew wouldn't tell me what it said, but I imagine the flaming letters spelled out the same word that pilots say right after a wheels-up landing!

Fetch the Aspirin

The pilot of an F7F-3N departed from MCAS CHERRY POINT on an IFR cross country flight to Tinker AFB in Oklahoma at 0528 EST. On his clearance form he had estimated that his true air speed would be 220 and that the mileage to destination was 900. He gave an estimated time enroute of 4 hours and stated that he had sufficient fuel for a 6 hour flight.

At 0800 EST he reported over Nashville, Tennessee at 10,000 feet in accordance with his flight plan. Nashville radio informed him of 40 knot headwinds at 10,000 feet and that the wind conditions were more favorable at lower altitudes. Inasmuch as VFR conditions prevailed over the balance of the route, the pilot cancelled his IFR plan and descended to 4000 feet.

At approximately 1015 when 70 miles east of his destination, the pilot switched to his reserve fuel tank with the gas gauge indicating 80 gallons remaining. He had drawn gas from each of the

other tanks until the fuel pressure dropped.

About five or six minutes later the fuel gauge flickered and indicated 40 gallons. The pilot realized that he would be unable to make Tinker AFB and headed for the nearest airport which was about 20 miles to the northwest.

At this time he was paralleling a highway, and he decided that it was suitable for an emergency landing. After instructing his passenger to tighten shoulder straps he landed on a clear, straight, stretch of highway. Just as he started his flare out, he struck a half-inch power line which he had not observed. The line, however, did not interfere greatly with his landing, and he rolled to a safe stop on the highway.

Additional gasoline was brought by truck from Tinker AFB and the pilot received permission to fly the plane off the highway as there was no practicable way of getting it to an airport. The F7F landed at Tinker AFB shortly before dark.



Grampaw Pettibone Says,

Fetch me another aspirin tablet!

Let's take a look at the findings of the Accident Board in this case. First of all they note that the correct distance from Cherry Point to Tinker AFB is 1005 nautical miles instead of 900. Second, the 825 gallons of fuel aboard was sufficient for only 5 hours and 15 minutes of flight at the most economical power settings instead of the 6 hours as stated by the pilot.

Third, the estimated time en route, based on wind information available to the pilot, should have been five hours instead of four hours.

Fourth, if the pilot had taken the time to compute these items correctly he would have realized that he couldn't file an IFR plan in accordance with CAA regulations, because he wouldn't have had sufficient reserve fuel to reach his alternate, let alone have the required 45 minutes reserve.

Last of all the board felt that the pilot showed poor judgment in flight in relying too heavily on his fuel gauge readings. The gauge checked out all right when flight tested and bench checked after the accident. However, the fuel readings on this type of instrument are known to fluctuate under varying conditions.

In the last five years I guess I've read 50 or more statements written by pilots who have run out of gas. It's a funny thing, but they all have one paragraph which reads pretty much the same. That's the one where they describe how fast the needle moved towards the zero mark during the last twenty or thirty minutes that they were airborne. Give yourself a break. Allow plenty of reserve fuel.



They're sounding taps
For Lieutenant Jones
Who rested his ears
By removing his phones.