



GRAMPAW PETTIBONE

WHEW!

The sun had just set. In the evening twilight a Marine pilot was cruising his AD-4B at 9000 feet, in the clear, on a long crosscountry hop.

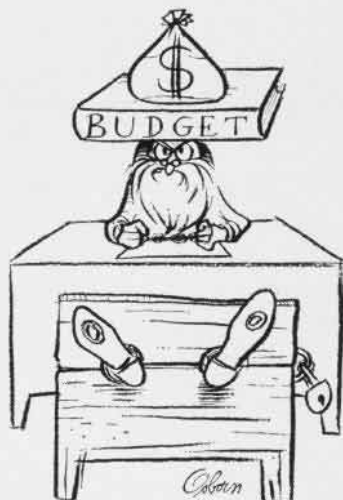
He was on auto pilot, had used up both external fuel tanks and was settled back to relax for the last stage of his trip, just over the mountains and then home.

Suddenly the engine surged and began to run rough. Instantly on the alert, the pilot disconnected the autopilot and scanned his gauges. Everything normal but torque had dropped. Flames and smoke began pouring out of the lower right side of the engine and along the cockpit canopy.

He started to open the canopy to bail out, but as smoke and flames came in the opening, slammed it closed again and quickly shut off his fuel selector. In four or five seconds the fire went out but dense black smoke continued to pour from the engine. While gliding down, attempts were made to broadcast "Mayday" over both airways frequency and Guard channel, but there was so much chatter he couldn't cut in on the conversations, so he yelled "Mayday, bailing out," gave his identification and position right on top of the chatter, then "in the blind." Guard channel got real quiet after that!

Unhooking his mask, radio cords, lap belt and shoulder harness, he attempted to bail out. As he stood erect, his APH-5 helmet blew off in the slipstream, for it had no nape strap, the visor was up, and the chin strap loose. Next he realized he couldn't get out, for something was holding him in. Looking down, he saw his right leg chute strap was passed through the handle of the Nav bag, which in turn was wedged under the seat! Sitting down, he unfastened the leg strap and freed himself.

The AD had meanwhile been gliding, trimmed up at 130 knots, wings level, down to 4000 feet. The pilot looked at the rugged terrain under him, de-



ecided he was too low for bail out now, and proceeded to retrieve his shoulder harness and lap belt and, strapped in again, prepared to ride the aircraft down!

He picked a highway to belly it in on but there were cars on the road, so he angled toward a plowed field he had also spotted. This field was small and there were houses on the far end. Fearing he was going to overshoot, glide direction was changed again, and he



headed for a small dirt road. A 30-foot stone chimney loomed ahead, just short of his expected touchdown point, so he banked the AD around it and hit immediately beyond on the dirt road, flaps down and gear up. Worried over his lack of a hard hat, the pilot threw his arms over his head to protect himself from a possible knockout blow. The *Skyraider* piled into a bank, and as it stopped the pilot jumped out, ran about 30 feet, and heard a "whoosh" as it blew up behind him. His injuries? Minor sprains and abrasions.



Grampaw Pettibone Says:

Gosh all fishhooks! You coulda been kilt!

It's just as important to preflight your own personal survival gear and doublecheck the way you're wearing it as it is to inspect your aircraft!

The nape strap for hard hats has been a *must* item for many months, yet here's a man who couldn't spare his helmet out of sight for the 15 minutes it takes a good rigger to put one on.

Of course, the decision to ride it down was yours to make, but 4000 feet was plenty of altitude for a safe bailout in your case. You better read the new "Bail-Out and Ejection Sense" book. You'll be around a lot longer and a great comfort to your grandchildren if you keep the good dope it contains fresh in your mind.

Man Overboard!

During a pre-dawn launch, a plane director aboard one of our largest carriers had passed an A4D *Skyhawk* forward from its position on the fantail. As the A4D taxied toward the catapult, the pilot had to blast on quite a bit of power to get over the #2 cross deck pendant.

Clutching his wands, the director went down on one knee to hold his position against the jet blast pressure, but found himself sliding at a fast clip along the smooth deck toward the fantail! Realizing that he was going over the side, he jumped to his feet and ran

off, still propelled by the jet exhaust, in order to have a better chance of landing feet first. He couldn't risk striking the water in a bellywhopper from the deck height of about 60 feet! The crewman popped to the surface clutching a lighted wand and attracted the attention of the already alerted plane guard destroyer with it. The destroyer reversed course, threw him a life ring, and launched a whaleboat for the rescue.

At the same time, a standby helicopter had been launched from the carrier, and using landing and hover lights, had pinpointed the man in the water. Lowering the rescue seat, the whirlybird crew snatched him out of the water before the whaleboat could reach him and returned him to his ship. Total time in the water, only six minutes.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Dip me in the briny deep, if you're not a lucky man! Just thinkin' of that drop off the flight deck in the dark makes my stomach muscles clutch up. You can thank your lucky stars that you're a member of a smooth running real team! Ol' Gramps tips his cap to both ships' companies, and the whirlybird crew. Passing the word fast and then doin' everything just right just doesn't happen by accident.

Million Dollar Gamble

A newly designated aviator was airborne on his first FAM hop in an FSU-1. He had performed the airwork required by the squadron fam card under the watchful eye of his very experienced chase pilot and had been cleared to enter the airfield traffic pattern for touch-and-go landings under Runway Duty Officer supervision.

His first approach was a wave-off for overshooting the groove, but a touch down was made on the second pass. The third and fourth passes were wave-offs, one for roll stabilization difficulties and one for being too high in the groove.

On the fifth pass, to be a final landing because of low fuel state, as the pilot passed over the ramp, the RDO called to say he looked good and to hold the attitude. Coasting up the runway at a height of about eight feet, he "eased off a little power" and rotated the nose slightly. Rate of



descent increased, and on the ensuing hard touchdown the left main landing gear collapsed.

A rather rugged rollout was made, crossing three runways and one taxiway. The pilot was uninjured, though shaken up.

Investigation revealed that this pilot had not made an aircraft landing in the 82 days prior to the accident. In the past 30 days he had a TOTAL of 1.0 hours "stick time" in a TV-2 on a two-hour hop and no other flights other than 3.9 of special crew time. The accident board noted that the pilot had attempted to maintain his proficiency, but no aircraft were available for him to fly.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Great Jumpin' Jehosaphat! I'm not lookin' at this young tiger, for he had no doubt of his ability to take that \$1,160,000 machine out and bring it back safely, but can you picture a C.O. sendin' a man out in a top-notch fighter without havin' him darn well evaluated by his best and most experienced pilots beforehand? There was a lot of supervisin' done after take-off, but *who* checked his flight records beforehand? Your old Gramps takes more care than that of who drives his new automobile—and it didn't cost anywhere near a million bucks!

Go-Man-Go

A brand new fighter pilot was tooling along on his second fam hop in an F9F-8 *Cougar*. After 45 minutes of slow flight to get the feel of the aircraft, the pilot initiated a simulated flameout approach to an auxiliary field. As he passed 11,000 feet at an airspeed of about 300 knots, he dropped his speed brakes. The *Cougar* immediately rolled

to the left, and as it hit the inverted position, the nose dropped through and the rate of roll increased. Normal spin recovery technique only slightly slowed the rate of roll. Manual and emergency trim controls were inoperative.

As the airspeed hit 400 knots in a 60° rolling nose-down attitude, the pilot, noting he was passing through 5000 feet, ejected through the canopy.

All automatic survival equipment functioned perfectly and his chute opened at less than 1000 feet above the terrain! The chute oscillated only twice and then he hit the ground about 50 yards from the burning *Cougar*.

The rolling hills in the area were covered with high grass and with nothing else available, this young man endeared himself to the Forestry Service by beating out a raging grass fire with his Mae West. His injuries? Some mild abrasions and a strained back incurred while firefighting.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Great horned toadies! This lad must of been thinkin' pure thoughts all week!

At 400 knots almost straight down you're covering just about 667 feet per second. If you decide to get out at 5000 feet like this lad, allowing a fast three seconds to get set and pull the curtain, two seconds in the seat, and a couple more for the chute to deploy, you'll find over 4500 feet of precious altitude used up. That's too close! A one-second delay would have made him a statistic.

On the way down, 10,000 feet is a good realistic figure for the GO-MAN-GO point if you don't have it under positive control, or are in an emergency

Ejection GO-NO-GO points make a fine bull session subject for the ready room on a foul weather day schedule.