



GRAMPAW PETTIBONE

Ready and Professional

An instructor from an advanced Navy training base landed at a midwest Air Force base at the end of a routine training flight. Shortly after his arrival, while he was waiting for his aircraft to be refueled, an Air Force F-106 called in with an emergency. With darkness falling rapidly, the Air Force pilot found himself with a complete loss of his altimeter and airspeed indicator. Additionally, a hydraulic failure was manifesting itself.

Becoming aware of the F-106 pilot's plight, the transient instructor immediately manned his partially fueled bird, launched, and was vectored to rendezvous and assist the F-106.

Navy flew wing on the Air Force and herded the wandering F-106 around to the final approach. Keeping the F-106 pilot advised of his altitude and airspeed, the obliging professional brought his charge in for a safe landing.



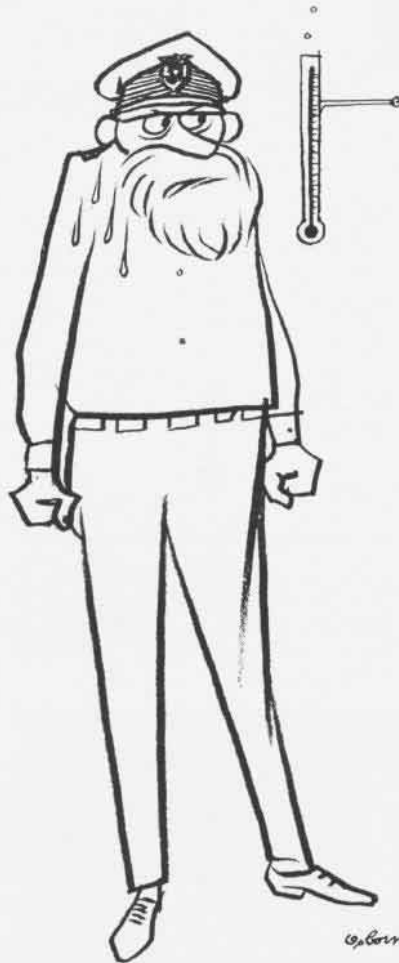
Grampaw Pettibone says:

Well done, lad. Your professional response made a happy ending to what might otherwise have been a spoiled day.

Spent Spad

At 1900, a group of *Spad* drivers began their brief for a night operational mission which included strafing, rocketry and bombing. Following the brief, the flight proceeded to the flight line. Pre-flight, engine run-up, take-off, rendezvous and flight to the target area were all routine and normal. They entered the pattern over the target and each pilot made one dummy and two live strafing runs.

During pullout from his second live run, this ace of *Spads* noted fumes in the cockpit and smoke around the engine. He checked the gas, mixture and fuel pump and switched to 100% oxygen. In a left turn downwind, he noticed

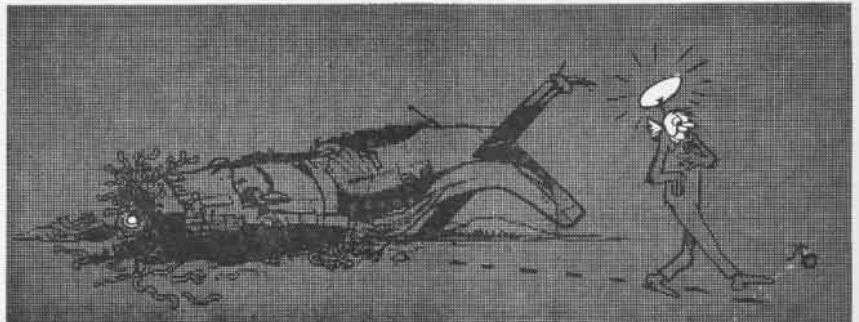


several backfires as afterfires from the engine with flames coming out of the starboard stacks. The driver of the sick *Spad* leveled the wings

and called the spotter plane to inform him of the situation. At this time, he was at approximately 7,500-8,000 feet altitude, indicating between 130-140 knots, and decided to shut down the engine by turning the gas, mixture and mags off. Another aircraft from the flight passed to starboard and notified the pilot that he had flames coming out of the right stack extending half way back on the wing.

At 6,000 feet in an attempt to gain altitude he tried a restart, but the engine continued backfiring and failed to develop power. At this point, an anxious wingman suggested bailing out. As he turned off the gas and proceeded with pre-bail out procedures, the distressed pilot noticed the ground coming up very fast and quickly attempted unsuccessfully to lower the flaps. Indicating 100 knots, the *Spad* impacted the ground.

Both wings snapped off on impact and the canopy tore loose as the fuselage skidded to a stop in an inverted position. The pilot's hard hat and oxygen mask were removed during the skid. After coming to a stop, he noticed an immediate pain in his right arm and left side of his face. Although his left arm was pinned beneath him, this youngster was able (with some difficulty) to unstrap with his right arm and crawl clear of the cockpit which was partially filled with sand. Strong odors of gasoline were present, but any existent fire had extinguished itself im-



mediately following the impact.

The fortunate flyer than walked away from the wreckage and attempted to ignite a day/night flare, but was unable to do so because of his injured right arm. Attempts to fire a pencil flare were also futile, however, he did manage to load his .38 pistol and fired five rounds of tracers.

An orbiting plane dropped a flare and a vehicle from the nearby target control tower arrived at the scene 15 minutes after the crash. The rescue helicopter arrived shortly thereafter and delivered the pilot to an NAAS.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Holy mackerel! This wasn't a close shave, it was a narrow escape. An injured arm and red face is a pretty cheap price to pay for a stunt like this. Our young intrepid birdman could've bought the farm pretty easy.

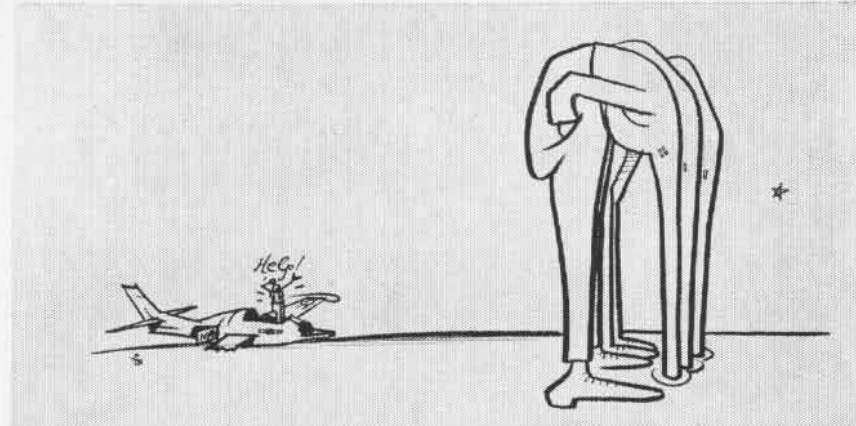
When that single engine turns to worms at night in the hills, there's only one smart thing to do and that's to go for the nylon let-down, providin' you've got enough altitude to make it worthwhile.

That old Spud is a mighty trustworthy bird and nobody hates to see a BuNo scratched from the list worse than your gray-haired friend, but to ride one in at night when you know there's nothin' but hills and rocks down there, just don't make sense. Bet this gent is glad he'd been thinkin' pure thoughts for the past few days, but it's a sure bet he plays it different if somethin' like this happens again.

Alpha to Omega

It was fam night at the local training field and a right good crowd was there. Ensign Alpha became airborne in his T-2A at 1845, all primed to perform his second night familiarization flight. He flew around the assigned course without incident and returned to practice night landings.

Initial entry into the pattern for runway 36L was uneventful and he added one touch-and-go landing to his score. After turning downwind, Alpha found himself behind Bravo executing very wide and deep approaches. Being extremely cautious, stalwart Alpha flew extra wide to maintain a proper interval in the pattern. As a result of this revolting development, he elected



to take three successive wave-offs rather than make less than satisfactory landings.

On the fourth approach, opportunity smiled and once again he effected a touch-and-go landing. Meanwhile, another aircraft (Charlie) entered the pattern just ahead of Alpha and behind Bravo. (Charlie had to fly a wide and deep approach to maintain a proper interval behind Bravo.) Bravo called at the 180 and entered final. Charlie, completely engrossed in his approach, neglected to call his position turning off the 180.

Alpha arrived and made his call, turning off the 180. Sufficiently jarred by this call, Charlie made his 180 position report although he was actually approaching a very deep 90 at the time. Alpha saw an aircraft land, which was Bravo. Hearing Charlie's late report off the 180, Alpha reasonably believed Charlie to be behind him and therefore concentrated on his interval with Bravo. (Charlie was wide to his starboard.)

The runway duty officer noted two aircraft close together past the 180, but failed to take any corrective action. As Alpha lined up in the groove, Charlie was about 50 feet above the runway and subsequently touched down immediately in front of Alpha, simultaneously adding power to take off. Caught in the jet wash, Alpha's steed pitched violently and drifted left.

Attempting to salvage his perilous plight, Alpha applied 100% power with intentions of waving off to the left. The port tip tank, however, contacted the runway approximately 10 feet inboard and 1,000 feet past the threshold. The

tip tank slid into the arresting gear chain and caused the *Buckeye* to roll to the right and pitch nose down. The nose gear was sheared off by the chain allowing the nose to contact the ground. Next the starboard wing came down and the starboard main mount struck the earth 10 feet from the edge of the runway. The gear sheared and the starboard wing buckled while en route to the final resting place 237 feet from the initial point of contact on the runway. Alpha, none the worse for wear, stepped over the side while the engine shut down of its own accord.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Sufferin catfish! This was sure no time for the supervisory types to bury their head in the sand, but it's pretty plain to see that tower personnel and the Runway Duty Officer thought they had better things to do. A youngster on his second night hop rates some help and supervision, but all hands concerned let him down.

Preventable mishaps like this one are needlessly sacrificing lives, dollars and aircraft that we can ill afford. Any one person in a responsible position that night could've saved Uncle \$860,000 and a training plane that's in mighty short supply. Remember, there's no vision like *super vision*.

Quaker Quote

It's been said before and an NASC engineer for ejection seat systems says it should be said again. The famous saying of "olde Quaker jet pilots" runs thus:

"Have faith in thy seat, brethren, and delay not its timely use lest ye join those who didst hesitate too long."