



GRAMPAW PETTIBONE

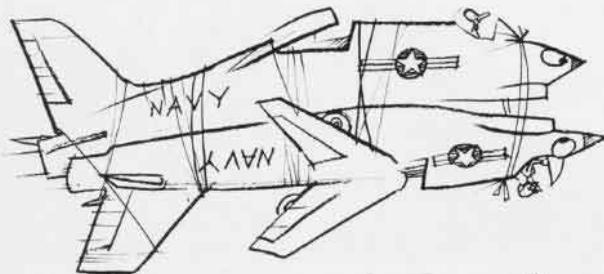
Real Wrong

On a beautiful summer day, two F-8E pilots departed a West Coast MCAS for a cross-country training flight to a midwest AF base. The flight was routine except that one of the pilots lost his radio en route. They both landed without incident at their destination.

Approximately 30 minutes behind them, another F-8E driver from the same squadron contacted the tower at the AF base and informed them he had an unsafe gear indication. As a precaution, he blew the gear with an air bottle and landed with no trouble.

The pilots of all three aircraft wrote up their gripes. AF personnel attempted to correct them but were unable to cycle the gear as there were no F-8 aircraft jacks available. The radio gripe was not corrected as repair personnel were unfamiliar with the F-8 radio pack and could not locate the trouble.

The following morning the pilots contacted the Operations duty officer at their home base for instructions. He advised them to bring the aircraft home if at all possible. It was decided that the pilot with the most F-8 experience would fly the aircraft with known gear problems and the no-radio plane would be on his wing. The third pilot took the good aircraft and proceeded on his way.



What a lash-up!



Merry Christmas!

gramp

Prior to departure, the pilots of the crippled aircraft decided they would change their destination to a naval air station 170 miles south if the lead pilot was unable to get his gear up. After takeoff, it was immediately evident that the gear would not retract so the flight leader changed course for the NAS. The wingman had no radio but assumed they were en route to the NAS, as this was the course of action discussed during the briefing.

The two aircraft proceeded on course at 7500 feet after informing the controlling center of the change in destination. The lead pilot experienced radio difficulties en route but

was able to contact the Navy tower several miles north of the field. He informed them of his trouble and told them that his wingman had no radio. The tower immediately advised the pilot that the air station was closed to all traffic as a National Model Aircraft Meet was in progress and suggested he land his flight at an AFB 25 miles west of the NAS.

Contact was established with the AF tower and the pilot stated his problems. The tower operator gave him the TACAN channel at the field and cleared him to the south runway. The flight leader proceeded north of the TACAN to be in position for a straight-in approach to the south runway, but unfortunately there is a municipal airport about six miles NE of the AFB. When it was spotted, the lead pilot set his wingman up for a landing approach. It should be noted that the wingman had no radio and knew nothing about the changes in plans and neither of the pilots had ever landed at any of the fields in that area.

The flight leader set his wingman up for an approach and signalled him to land first. At the same time, he informed the AFB that the aircraft with no radio was in his landing approach

with all gear down. The tower operator finally located the two *Crusaders* and quickly informed the flight leader that his wingman was landing at a municipal field with a 5000-foot runway and no arresting gear. There was no way to get this word to the F-8 pilot as his radio was out, but he was given a red light by the tower operator.

The wingman thinking he was in an approach to the naval air station and an 8000-foot runway, touched down fairly close to the end of the runway and rolled out, using maximum aerodynamic braking. Beginning to feel things weren't exactly right when he was unable to see distance markers, he began to brake lightly at about 110 knots. When it became evident that he could not stop on the runway, he applied maximum brakes but went off the end still doing about 40 knots. The aircraft went over a 40-foot embankment before it stopped—550 feet from the end of the runway. The pilot quickly evacuated uninjured.

The lead pilot, who was orbiting the field, informed the Air Force tower of the crash, then proceeded there and landed without incident.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Shades of Walter Mitty! If this fiasco wouldn't wilt the lily, nothin' would.

These lads darn near pulled all the stops tryin' to corner the poor judgment market on this one. After sittin' around talking themselves into flyin' two birds with known problems, they make the big decision to use a divert field without even checkin' the NOTAMS. This particular NAS had been closed to traffic all week.

It's downright hard to believe that a flight leader will go wanderin' around unfamiliar territory and set his wingman up for a landin' at a strange field without first identifyin' it.

Several pages could be written on this one but it would all boil down to two words—*poor headwork*. There's plenty of proof here that two wrongs never make a right and it's for sure that this fiasco ranks right along with anything Mitty ever pulled.

Folded Folly

During night recovery operations aboard a CVA off the coast, an F-8E was binged to a ready deck at an auxiliary landing field. Upon arrival

the wings of the *Crusader* were folded prior to parking because ramp space was at a premium. After receiving fuel, the pilot manned his F-8 for the flight to home base. Line personnel assisted him during start then directed the aircraft clear of the parking area, but did not follow standard procedures by signaling the pilot to spread the wings owing to the proximity of other aircraft.

As the aircraft cleared the parking area, the pilot was cleared to taxi to

He then applied approximately one-half negative "G" and the port wing spread. After repeating the procedure the starboard wing spread. During this maneuvering, speeds in excess of 300 knots were attained. With both wings spread the pilot lowered the wing normally and locked it. Everything now appeared normal, so he proceeded to his destination and made an uneventful landing. Luckily, the aircraft sustained only limited damage in the wingfold area.



the duty runway and while taxiing requested takeoff clearance. After being cleared, he lined up on the runway and made what he considered a normal afterburner takeoff.

After becoming airborne, the pilot suddenly became rudely aware that the aircraft was configured in an abnormal manner when he was unable to lower the wing. While attempting to determine his difficulty, he suddenly discovered that the wings were still *folded*.

As he wasn't having any trouble controlling the aircraft, he climbed to 10,000 feet and attempted to spread the wings but found that the wing spread handle would only go to one inch from the normal spread position.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Holy smoke! Some folk can get away with anything.

Here is an extremely well qualified gent with over 1100 jet hours who let self-annoyance due to a low state bingo get to him to the point that he violated the most basic rule in airplane driving—**USIN' THE CHECK-OFF LIST**.

This is sure not the first time that things like over-confidence, hurry and pre-occupation have come up as cause factors in a mishap, but it sure ought to be a good lesson to all throttle jockeys. When you really stop and think what can happen as a result of a stunt like this, you get a three "G" pucker standin' flat-footed right there at **Happy Hour**.