GRAMPAW PETTIBONE

Go Ahead and Live

Shortly after take off, the engine of an F4U was heard to commence cutting out, followed by complete failure. The pilot started an approach to a clearing within easy gliding distance, but apparently changed his mind and began a steep turn back towards the field. The airplane stalled and spun in and the pilot was killed.

Grampaw Pettibone says:

At a time like this you always have two choices:

1. **You can lock your shoulder straps and land in the general direction that you are headed—and live to tell about it, or—**
2. **You can wrap it up in a turn back to the field and run the risk of spinning in or flying into the ground for lack of altitude . . . *usually fatal.***

Statistics show that if you make contact with the ground or water in a normal landing attitude and have your shoulder harness locked, you'll probably be able to walk away from your forced landing.

Remember, NEVER LOSE FLYING SPEED!

Don't Commit Suicide

"Dear Grampaw Pettibone:

"In reply to your request for narrow escape stories last month, here are the details of an experience I had about four weeks ago.

"On a routine training hop five *Corsairs* had just completed a break-up and joined up again, when the leader decided to return to base. The weather wasn't so bad, but to the West in the direction of the base there was a large cumulus-type cloud rising to about 10,000 feet. We started our dive and entered this cloud at about 3,000 feet. I was flying number three position in the first division. We were doing about 300 knots and in a 45 degree dive, when I happened to glance at my altimeter which read below 1000 feet and was spinning fast. Without even thinking I immediately horsed back on the stick and at the same instant my division leader and the other wingman hit the water and exploded.

"As I leveled out I saw that I was just above the water and all the time I thought, and I guess the division leader did too, that the base of the cloud would be around 2200 feet. Actually it extended right down to the water in a rain squall.

"Thanks to that glance at the altimeter, I am still walking around today.

"I hope that this proves of interest to you.

"Sincerely,
"ENS. A. W. PRICE, JR., USN"

Grampaw Pettibone says:

It certainly is of interest to me and should be to all pilots who don't want to collect on their life insurance right away. The division leader showed extremely poor judgment in taking a five plane formation down through the overcast in a deep dive. In this case it appears that it would have been easy to fly around the cloud rather than down through it.

It's a lot better to be safe than sorry. My advice to you wingmen is to break off on your own when your section leader pulls a stunt as foolish as this.

GRAMPAW'S SAFETY QUIZ

1. **A tachometer is an instrument which indicates the speed of rotation in revolutions per minute of (a) a propeller, (b) an engine.**
2. **Why is the use of oxygen on night flights above 5,000 feet required?**
3. **If you were flying as wingman in reduced visibility and you suddenly felt as though you were in some unusual attitude, what should you do?**
4. **Concerning right-of-way of similar type aircraft, when two aircraft are on crossing courses at approximately the same altitude, which aircraft gives way?**
5. **What are the two mandatory signals in carrier landing operations?**

(Answers on page 40)

Let's Get the Word!

An R4D loaded with 5200 lbs. of inflammable cargo was scheduled for a routine inter-island hop. The plane commander subsequently stated that he had not been aware of the inflammable nature of the cargo when he elected to use this flight to check out another pilot.

Shortly after take-off, the Plane Commander cut the mixture control to the port engine to simulate an emergency condition. The co-pilot, who was flying the plane from the left seat, went through regular single engine procedure, feathering the port engine and calling the tower for an emergency landing. On the final approach the wheels were lowered and locked but the hydraulic pressure did not return to normal after this operation. A hurried effort was made to restart the port engine, and as it gave a surge of power the Plane Commander signaled for the co-pilot to take it around again and for the Plane Captain to retract the wheels. A few seconds later it was discovered that the left engine was not actually delivering any appreciable amount of power. Both throttles and the prop controls were pushed all the way forward, but the aircraft continued to lose altitude while the speed dropped to 70 knots. A forced landing was effected straight ahead on a fairly flat coral area. The plane hit with the right wing slightly low, skidded 90 degrees to the right and burst into flames. The aircrew escaped with very minor scratches, but the plane was a total loss.

Grampaw Pettibone says:

Some people just never get the word. Back in July 1945 a technical order was put out (BuAer Technical Order No. 60-45) prohibiting just this kind of foolishness. Here's what it says:

"Except in an actual emergency multiengine aircraft shall not be operated at an altitude below 500 feet above the terrain or water with any propeller fully feathered."

If that order doesn't prohibit practicing single engine landings with one prop feathered, I'll eat it. Since then the 500-foot minimum has been cancelled as an inadequate altitude and 6000 feet substituted therefor (BuAer Technical Order 8-46).

The correct and safe way to practice simulated single engine landings is by retarding one throttle to about 12 or 15 Hg. This will closely approximate the "feel" of single engine operation. The propeller

should be left in full low pitch, mixture auto rich, switch on, and fuel selector on. If you do it this way and keep an eye on your cylinder head temperatures, you've got reserve power available in case your "good" engine fails to bring you around.

Incidentally if you want to practice this maneuver with a full load, use sand bags, not *cellulose nitrate paint thinner* for ballast.

Say It Again!

Sitting behind an L.M.D. (Large Mahogany Desk) a good deal of the time and flying very little is definitely a bad combination for any aviator, so a friend of mine wrote in a letter. His experience may serve as a warning for other pilots who are desk-bound.

While flying in "sunny" California, he and his co-pilot ran into some "unusual" weather. Approaching his destination he called the tower for instructions but was unable to contact them. Communication troubles and low visibility made him uneasy about other aircraft that might be flying in the area and about the possibility of a mid-air collision. Actually there were very few planes in the air. Not having communicated with the tower he circled the field to pick up the wind direction from the wind tee and to decide which runway to use. During the final approach, his co-pilot shouted something which he did not understand. The co-pilot shouted again but the message still did not register. As he came in he realized that the landing was "hot" and that the aircraft was not slowing down. By using full force on his brakes he managed to stop the *JRB* at the very end of the *6000* foot runway. The pilot then realized that he had landed downwind with the wind blowing at 20 knots. Great Jehosephat!

Comment—**Thanks, my friend (senior pilot, too) for confessing to o!d Grampaw so that others who fly too seldom may learn again. Granted conditions were not ideal, but there were two of you—you and your co-pilot. Two heads and two pairs of eyes are better than one. You analyzed your case very well after the hop and your moral has a lot of stuff in it that other senior pilots, no matter how old or how many hours logged, should think over. As you so aptly put it, "BEFORE TAKING OFF, AGREE WITH YOUR CO-PILOT THAT SENIORITY IS NO COVER FOR STUPIDITY AND THAT AT ALL TIMES A POSITIVE WAVE-OFF SIGNAL SHOULD BE GIVEN WHEN THE SENIOR PILOT MAKES AN ERROR." Your experience, fortunately, ended happily and here's hoping it will be of value to many others.**

Carburetor Icing

Citizens living near a Reserve Base heard the intermittent sputtering of an airplane engine and then they saw a plane crash and sink into a nearby river. All this happened so suddenly that nothing could be done to save the pilot or the aircraft. The investigation revealed the following vital facts:

1. The pilot landed downwind, bounced off the water and crashed nosedown.

2. The pilot's shoulder straps were not locked, resulting in his being knocked unconscious and subsequently being drowned.

3. Aerology reported occasional light rain in the area.

4. Carburetor pre-heat air control handle was halfway between "Cold" and "Warm" positions.

5. The pilot of an SNJ, circling over the scene of the crash, encountered icing difficulties at 1000 feet. He immediately applied full pre-heat, thus correcting the dangerous drop in manifold pressure.

Grampaw Pettibone says:

Too bad! Carburetor icing, poor ditching procedure and failure to lock shoulder straps were the principal causes for the death of this pilot. This kind of accident can happen to anyone, but it also can be avoided. In the first place, ICING was the direct cause of the crash. Even the witnesses heard the engine sputtering as the pilot attempted to reach the river.

In order to avoid icing conditions in the carburetor, you must know the type of carburetor used in your airplane. In this case it was a float type in which carburetor air is warmed by hot air entering from the exhaust manifold shroud. When descending to lower altitudes at reduced power settings, and when there is a great deal of moisture in the air, you must use *full* pre-heat. Put the control lever full down in the "Warm" position. Take a look at Flight Safety Bulletin 10-44. It is good insurance and doesn't cost you a dime.

And those shoulder straps! They are there for your safety—USE THEM. The proper use of shoulder straps has prevented a goodly number of pilots and passengers from being killed; straps have reduced and/or prevented serious head and facial injuries. If you are knocked unconscious, your chances of escaping from a sinking or burning airplane are practically nil. Get familiar with these safety precautions and you'll grow whiskers like ol' Grampaw's.

Showing The Army How To Do It

The pilot of an F8F landed at an outlying field. After talking to an Army P-38 pilot he made a normal take-off and immediately after passing over the upwind end of the runway at an altitude of 75 feet, attempted a barrel roll.

Beneath this stone
Lies Ensign Banks.
There was lots of gas
In the other tanks.

The aircraft scooped out and crashed, bursting into flames.

Two months before this accident this very pilot, the operations officer of his squadron, published a squadron memorandum to all pilots stating: "All stunting, tail chasing, or simulated combat will be performed above 6,000 feet. Low flying or flat-hatting will not be tolerated; this is construed to include any maneuver performed at such altitude so as to endanger the pilot, plane, property or personnel on the ground."

Grampaw Pettibone says:

Seems to me a fellow ought to practice what he preaches. Be smart boys. When any of you get the urge to pull one like this—DON'T.

Don't Overload Your Plane

Investigation following the crash of an SNB-2 revealed these facts:

1. The pilot had orders not to carry more than five people on the flight, but picked up two additional passengers for the return trip, despite the fact that there were only five chutes and five harnesses aboard the plane.

2. The total weight of passengers, baggage, miscellaneous material, and fuel was approximately 3000 lbs. at take off on the return flight.

3. That while the airplane was not actually over the load limit, it was heavily loaded and the distribution of the load was highly contrary to a favorable balance for this type aircraft.

4. That the plane crashed a few minutes after entering an area where visibility was restricted due to smoke from extensive grass fires.

Comment:

Since there were no survivors or witnesses to this crash the cause cannot be definitely determined. It is, however, very probable that the unfavorable weight and balance condition combined with the sudden shift to instrument flying was the principal crash factor.

The aircraft apparently hit the ground at very high speed and in a steep right spiral. It is quite possible that the tail-heavy condition was aggravated by a movement of personnel just after the pilot went on instruments. There is some evidence to indicate that one of the pilots had left the pilot's compartment and was near the rear of the cabin at the time of the crash.

BuAer Technical Orders 82-45 and 83-45 and Aviation Circular Letter 104-45 established rigid weight and balance requirements for the operation of Navy planes, particularly for those which are easily loaded improperly due to cabin size, etc. The strict enforcement of these regulations by pilots and clearance authorities will prevent other accidents caused by improper loading.