



# grampaw pettibone

## Defensive Driving

A young instructor and a student pilot were part of a hurricane evacuation. They were scheduled to fly a T-28 Trojan to an Air Force base approximately 150 miles inland. The instructor had a considerable amount of experience in the T-28, with almost 1,000 hours in type.

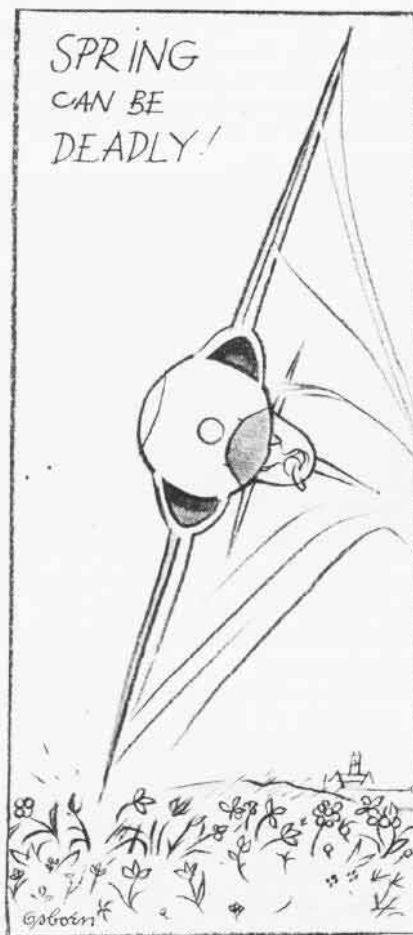
After considerable delay, the flight was cleared and became airborne without incident. The T-28 was directed to hold at an intersection short of the destination for approximately ten minutes, then was cleared to depart holding under radar vectors.

Radar gave the T-28 a vector of 320 degrees and a descent to 2,000 feet. This was the last UHF transmission received by the aircrew. After several minutes and no further UHF receptions, the instructor initiated a UHF call but no side tone or transmission was heard. The instructor then attempted to determine his position by tuning in a local VOR.

He received no audio identifier and there was no needle movement. There was an off flag on his indicator. The instructor then noted approximately 17 volts on his voltmeter. He assumed at this time that his generator had failed. He instructed the student to switch to battery-only position and number two inverter. Electrical control at this time was in the rear cockpit with the student.

The instructor set his transponder to code 7600, then to 7700, signaling radio failure and emergency to ground controllers. He secured his VOR and ADF to conserve battery power. He made several more attempts to transmit on guard frequency. The Trojan was still in actual IFR flight conditions. The instructor took physical control of the aircraft and commenced a climb.

Some time prior to 10,000 feet, the ICS system became inoperative. At



approximately 10,000 feet, the instructor gave physical control to the student and put his oxygen mask on. He then took control as the student put on his oxygen mask — at approximately 13,000 feet.

The instructor leveled off at 17,000 feet and shortly thereafter an off flag appeared in the attitude gyro. The radio magnetic indicator became inoperative and barber-pole indications appeared in the gear position indicators.

For approximately 45 minutes, the instructor headed north in an attempt

to reach VFR conditions. He then found a marginal VFR area between layers. Shortly thereafter the aircrew saw a dark contrasting area ahead and flew towards it at approximately 11,500 feet. They found a hole in the clouds through which terrain was visible.

The instructor made a descending spiral to approximately 3,000 feet and circled, searching for a feasible landing area. He determined that a stretch of highway was the most suitable and waited until traffic cleared the chosen section. He then executed a precautionary landing approach from 3,000 feet.

Touchdown was on a road with an upward incline and a slight left curve. Approximately 500 feet after touchdown, hydroplaning was experienced and aerodynamic braking used. As the aircraft closed rapidly on a tractor-trailer rig at the top of the hill, braking was utilized. The aircraft right main landing gear (MLG) left the road. The right wing struck a sign. The left MLG left the road. The right wing struck an embankment. The aircraft rotated clockwise very quickly. The nose gear sheared as the pilot lifted the gear handle. The left MLG folded as the rotation reached 90 degrees right of original heading. The aircraft came to rest 130 to 135 degrees right of its original heading. The pilots then exited the aircraft.



**Grampaw Pettibone says:**

**Great horned toadies! This was a close one. This lad stayed cool all the way. Reminds me of a duck — calm and cool on the surface but paddlin' like fury underneath.**

**The pilot's decision to climb the aircraft instead of descending into the soup below was sound indeed. Although we can "Monday quarterback" this one a lot, the pilot did do some things right.**

ILLUSTRATED BY *Osborn*

## Got to Get Home

Two F-4 *Phantoms* departed on a cross-country flight. The drivers were to attend a conference. The flight to destination was uneventful. The return flight commenced at approximately 1200. The first leg proceeded as planned, terminating at an AFB. There, the pilots examined the destination weather. It was forecast to be poor.

They decided to file to an intermediate point, check destination weather and proceed if practical. By the time they arrived overhead at the intermediate point, the weather at destination had improved, so the flight continued to that destination. On arrival at home field, the pilots were advised that weather was 200 feet broken, with two miles visibility in fog. The runway was reported wet. The *Phantoms* had 12,000 pounds of fuel aboard and the pilots decided to retain the entire amount.

The flight split up at 12,000 feet (cloud tops were 7,000 feet). It was now night. The leader was to make the first approach. He proceeded on the precision approach to one mile from touchdown. He deviated only slightly from the ideal glide slope and azimuth. At one mile the pilot began going high and to the right of glide slope. Approaching one-half mile, he was advised by the GCA controller

that he was "well above glide path, well right of course . . . if runway is not in sight, climb immediately to 1900." The pilot acquired sight of the runway and responded, "OK, got the field." Later he did not recall seeing the sequenced flashing strobe lights.

The F-4 was approximately 200 feet right of the center line. However, the pilot elected to continue. He attempted an S-turn toward the middle of the runway. He had the impression that his landing was accomplished on center line in the normal touchdown zone with the nose aligned with the runway. He felt that there was a very slight drift left. It was later determined that the right MLG touched down 375 feet from the approach end and five feet from the *right edge of the runway*. The left MLG touched down 75 feet further down the runway.

The pilot immediately deployed the drag chute and, recognizing a left drift, applied right rudder and aileron to counter the drift. He felt as if the aircraft were on ice and skidding to the left, out of control. He turned on the taxi light to better determine his position relative to the left edge of the runway. The left MLG departed the left side of the runway approximately 1,800 feet from the approach end and the right MLG departed the left edge 550 feet further down the runway. At this point the pilot notified the GCA

controller that he was off the runway and requested the crash crew's assistance.

The area adjacent to the runway was grassy but very soft due to recent rains. The aircraft began fishtailing through the mud almost immediately and the pilot secured both engines. The left MLG was sheared as it came in contact with the concrete base of a distance marker. The wing was punctured by the left MLG trunnion as it sheared, and the left wing trailing edge flap and aileron were damaged on contact with the ground. After the wing was on the ground, the aircraft yawed to the left and came to a halt. The pilot was not injured, but the aircraft sustained substantial damage.



**Grampaw Pettibone says:**

Great balls of fire! Get home-itis got another bird! No matter how much we preach about the accident potential on return to home plate we still have a few aviators who "know better." These gents had a long day, a heavy bird, combined with poor weather — a real set-up. However, this driver could'a prevented the whole situation by "going around" instead of attempting to salvage a bad approach. Granted the strobe lights may not have been on — so what! That does not prevent a go-around. There's no excuse for this one by a so-called "professional pilot." 'Nuff sed!

