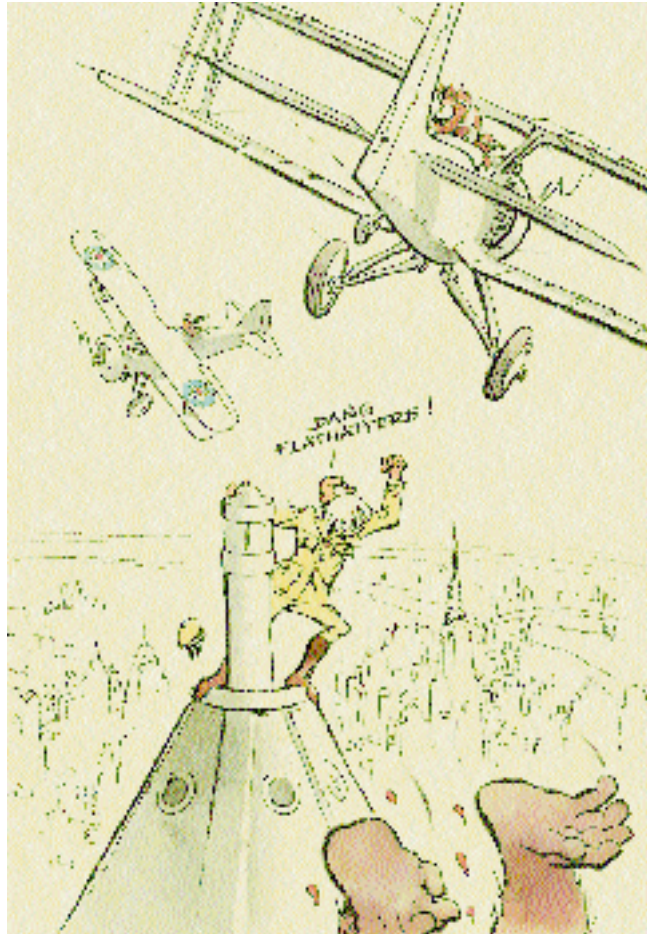


Stretching It

An F/A-18D *Hornet* was on a designated low-level training route, traveling at 420 knots, 500 feet above the ground when a large bird struck the seven o'clock position of the left intake. Portions of the bird penetrated the intake skin while other remains were ingested into the left engine. The bird also caused some damage to the engine compressor, but there was no evidence of a catastrophic engine failure or fire.

The portion of the bird which penetrated the intake skin damaged hydraulic, fuel and bleed air lines, as well as elements of four wire bundles. The damaged electrical wires caused the left engine fire warning light to illuminate immediately after the bird strike.

The crew initiated engine fire emergency procedures, including shutting down the left engine, but the fire light stayed on for about five more minutes. Evidence later indicated that arcing from the damaged wires ignited hydraulic fluid or fuel, causing a fire



forward of the left wheel well. Numerous cautions and warnings were triggered as a result of the bird's impact and securing the left engine.

The pilot began an emergency divert to one air base, electing to bypass another which was about seven minutes closer to his position. Twenty-five miles from the intended landing site, the left fire light went out. Twenty miles from the base, the hydraulic 2A caution illuminated along with an associated "flaps off" caution. The pilot was unable to extend the landing gear. He conducted an emergency gear extension, but the left main gear did not indicate down because of damaged wires. The pilot got into the landing pattern but felt a significant degradation in aircraft landing qualities, followed by complete loss of control. Both pilots ejected successfully; the aircraft crashed and was destroyed.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

It wasn't the fault of these pilots that a big bird bashed into 'em. Not much you can do about a



feathered friend who flies onto your track, especially when you're whistlin' along close to Mother Earth. But for the life of me, why bypass a perfectly good airfield to land at another? The *Hornet* flew for 15 minutes after the bird strike and before losin' control. This mighta been enough time to reach the closer airfield and save the crew from havin' to hit the silk. Coulda saved a precious airplane, too, don't you think?

Meet You at the Pole

A CH-46E *Sea Knight* landed at a civilian airport and taxied onto a parking ramp under the direction of a civilian taxi director. The copilot was at the controls and announced he was "coming right a little bit," and proceeded to do so without receiving acknowledgments from the pilot (the helicopter aircraft commander) or crew chief.

The pilot's attention was momentarily focused inside the cockpit when he leaned over to retrieve a dropped approach plate. The crew chief was concentrating on the right main mount due to the proximity of the helo to the edge of the prepared surface. The CH-46E was close to going off the edge.

As the aircraft continued taxiing, the pilot raised his head just in time to see a light pole located near the *Sea Knight's* one o'clock position. The pilot immediately warned the copilot and attempted to take the controls. However, the rotor blades struck the light pole and portions of the blades separated from the helo. This caused a severe dynamic imbalance. As a result, the aircraft turned over and burned. All three in the crew plus



the three passengers egressed safely, but several nearby civilian aircraft were damaged by fragmented pieces of rotor blade. The CH-46E was destroyed.

Grampaw Pettibone says:



Well, bust my blades and scratch a *Sea Knight!*

After examining this one, the investigators talked about danger "even in an apparently benign environment." When rotor blades are turnin', there are no benign environments!

Civilian airports have different rules for controllin' aircraft on the ground. Their taxi directors may

know where they want to spot you, but gettin' you there—'specially with wide-arcin' rotor blades on top of your flyin' machine—may not be in their training manual. Us military types have got to be extra careful on civilian turf.

Ole Gramps doesn't know why the copilot edged too far to the right. But he does know the crew chief was a qualified taxi director. So why not let the crew chief help safely guide you to where you need to go? There's a benign question for you.