WE FLEW Without GUNS

By Gen. Benoist

This is a true story of the men who fly the "hump"—carrying passengers and cargo over the high Himalayas between India and China. Pilots call it the toughest airline route in the world.

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THREE CLOSE CALLS

XI

ENGINE trouble dogged me those last few days in February. The C-53 I had recently been assigned had developed a habit of coughing and sputtering and then one afternoon, about 75 miles out of Kunming, the oil pump shaft on the starboard engine broke. I switched off that engine, feathered the prop and brought the ship into Kunming on the good one.

The next morning the Chinese mechanic who had been working on my plane told me that the oil pump was all right; the trouble had been caused by a leaky valve cover. That was a little hard for me to believe, but I told him to warm up the engines and we would soon see if the pump was okay. The instruments indicated that it was.

An hour later when the ship was loaded and warmed up my new co-pilot, Jimmy Mar, T'sui and I took off. The fog was so thick as we went down the runway I couldn't even see the edge of the field. That in itself was nothing unusual, but the overcast was increasingly thick as we climbed. The altimeter read 14,000 feet before we got out of the clouds, and then we ran into heavy sleet and strong head winds. We were in that for about 15 minutes when the starboard engine shot a geyser of oil through its cowling and blanked out.

With that overcast running all the way down to the field I was going to have to go back on one engine and make an instrument procedural letdown!

WHEN we were fairly near the field, I called the control tower and told them that one of my engines had conked out and to clear the field, I was coming in on the other one.

"What?" the Army man in the control tower cried. "But, Captain, you haven't any visibility at all! I can't even see the end of the runway from the tower. I can't give you clearance for a landing like that!"

I laughed—not because it was the least bit funny, but because it was absurd. "Well, brother," I said, "you just damn well better give me clearance because I'm coming in anyway. I'm no Army pilot and you aren't telling me what to do."

We were about a hundred feet off the ground and, according to my calculations, heading right into the landing strip, when the soldier in the tower in wild excitement began shouting, "You've got it! You've got it! That's it! Let her down!" I dropped the gear and we came on in. It was as smooth a landing as I have ever made.

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BUT it wasn't the planes, I finally had to conclude, because only two days later I took off from Dinjan and ran into trouble again. Jimmy Mar was a pretty good boy, an American-born Chinese, well educated and bright as a dollar. In the short time we had worked together I had come to like him just about as much as I had liked Eddie Quinn, the Chinese who preceded him. So when he asked me if he might try a take-off that morning, I said, "Sure, why not?"

Jimmy took the captain's seat at the controls and I dropped into the co-pilot's seat.

Our wheels were just about to get off the ground—we were 800 yards down the runway—when the port engine started to race like wild and the ship slewed off to the left. At the same instant the gauge indicating the propeller pitch swung around to indicate only half power and oil began to pump out of it. I knew what had happened. The governor controlling the propeller pitch had sheared its pin. I yelled, "I've got it!" and Jimmy let go as I grabbed the controls and shoved the right engine throttle fully forward, pushing hard right rudder at the same time to correct the swing. If there had been any runway left I would have slapped on the brakes, but we were bearing down fast on the jungle out of which the field had been cut and our only chance was to try to complete the take-off on one engine.

We managed it, somehow, pulling off and up in a shallow climb with the right engine working for all it was worth, missing the tops of the trees around the field by scant inches as we fought to keep the fully loaded plane in the air. Once we got over that first hurdle of getting the plane up there, all we had to do was to make as short a circle to the right as we dared, and come in, still on one engine, for a landing.

When I climbed out of that baby I was shaking like a leaf. All I could think of was one thing, and as soon as I found Captain Woods, the chief pilot at Dinjan, I said it. "I've had enough, my friend. That's three close calls in less than a week. I'm takin' a vacation!"

"Woody" nodded thoughtfully, and after a moment he said, "Good idea, Gen. You've earned it. And anyway, I have six passengers for Calcutta. I'll give you a ship to fly down there and you can take these guys along with you . . ."

You earn your money with the C. N. A. C., but you've got to admit they're generous. They would give you all the snow in Tibet if they thought you would shovel it away.

(To Be Continued)

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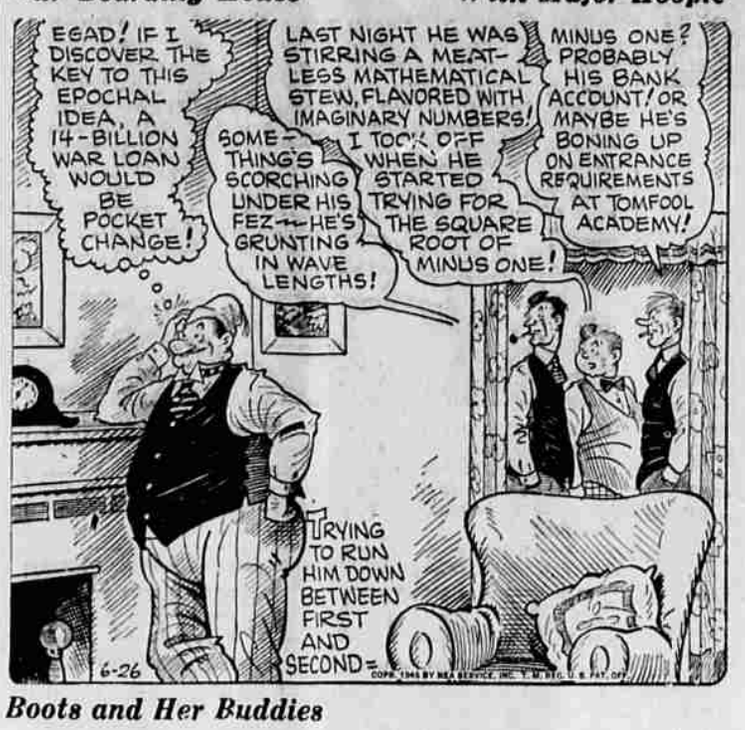
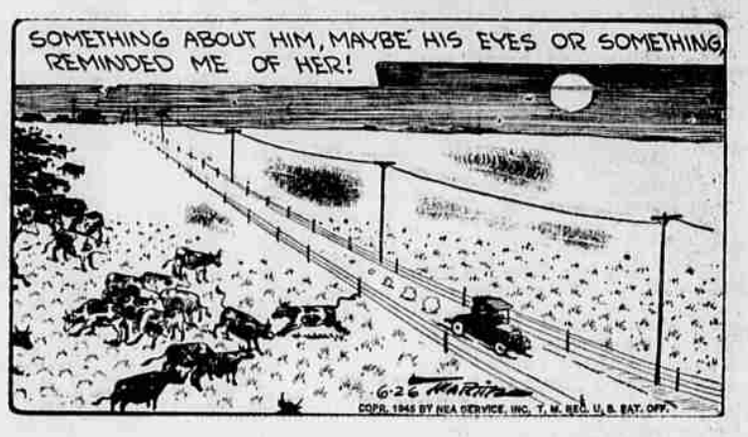
Our Boarding House — With Major Hoople



Out Our Way — J. R. Williams

Boots and Her Buddies — By Edgar Martin



Freckles and His Friends — Merrill Blosser

Red Ryder — Fred Harman

Wash Tubbs — By Leslie Turner

Alley Oop — By V. T. Hamlin

Play Togs

5003

By MRS. ANNE CABOT

Show off your golden tan—or acquire a smooth summertime tan in this dressmaker set of pleated shorts and softly-tied bolero jacket. Make it of white rayon sharkskin, striped seersucker, gingham or a bright floral print cotton.

To obtain complete pattern for the shorts and tied bolero suit (pattern No. 5003) sizes 14, 16, 13, send 15 cents in coin, plus 1 cent postage, your name, address and the pattern number to Anne Cabot, La Grande Evening Observer, 709 Mission street, San Francisco, Calif.

City News *In Brief*

W. Quaintance and Roy D. Grice, both of La Grande, collided last night near Fir street and Adams avenue, as Quaintance backed from the curb.

August Sperling returned yesterday from a business trip to Portland.

Harvey R. Meyer of Meacham was arrested Saturday by city police on a complaint charging immoral conduct and indecent exposure in a public place in the presence of a minor. He was taken before Justice of the Peace George Currey, who set his hearing for Wednesday.

Among those who went to Milton over the weekend were Kenny Goss, Max Kilgore, Bob West, Walter Smutz, Bob Madsen, Francis Rohan, Jim Baily, Ock Shoemaker and Bart Garrison.

Manuel Kenneth Erickson, Elgin, was arrested last night on charges of driving with four adults in the driver's seat and speeding at 45 miles an hour. He was cited to appear in the municipal court.

Motorist is Burned By Gasoline Flareup

Roderick Schriener of Walla Walla, Wash., was severely burned on his hands and face while working on his car yesterday. His clothes had become gasoline soaked and the backfire from the motor ignited the gas.

He was taken to Grande Ronde hospital for treatment.

Sports Bolero

8797
14-44

By SUE BURNETT

Sunback frock for garnering an enviable tan. For dress-up, add the jaunty bolero. Stunning in white with bold ric-rac for contrast.

Pattern No. 8879 is designed for sizes 12, 14, 16, 18, 20; 40 and 42. Size 14, dress, requires 2¾ yards of 39-inch fabric; bolero 1⅛ yards; 5 yards ric-rac to trim ensemble.

For this pattern, send 20 cents, in coins, your name, address, size desired and the pattern number to Sue Burnett, La Grande Evening Observer, 709 Mission St., San Francisco, Calif.

Send for your copy of the new spring issue of Fashion—just off the press. Book full of smart, up-to-the-minute styles, 15 cents.

Official Records

Water turned off, June 23:

W. A. Bunten, 2100 Fir street; Nylic Lewis, 1911 Third street.

Water turned on:

Stanley P. Miller, 1502 Z avenue; Gail E. Haynes, 1915 Cove avenue; Harry R. Moore, 1405 W avenue; Nylic Lewis, 1202 M avenue.

U. S. Naval Leader

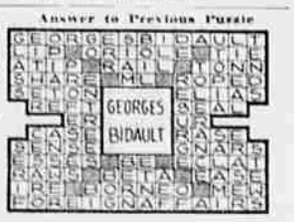
HORIZONTAL

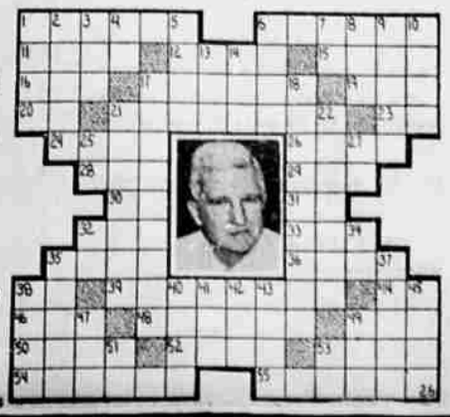
1,6 Pictured U. S. naval leader, Admi.
11 Dry
12 Play part
15 Great Lake
16 Corded fabric
17 Rat
19 Pedal digit
20 And (Latin)
21 Reiterated
23 Township (ab.)
24 English statesman
26 Tidings
28 Individual
29 Before
30 Exempli gratia (ab.)
31 Tone E (music)
32 Frigate bird
33 Dutch city
35 Brought up
36 Bird's home
38 Symbol for calcium
39 Faults
44 Either
46 Emmet
48 Oriental guitars
49 Boundary (comb. form)
50 Plant part
52 Network (anat.)
53 Goddess of discord
54 He commands U. S. naval forces in
55 Sally forth

VERTICAL

1 Rabbit
2 Mountain crest
3 Tear
4 Alleged force
5 Let fall
6 Lease
7 Symbol for tellurium
8 Skill
9 Tumults
10 Retain
13 Poem
14 Meadow
17 Traitors
18 Congested dwellings
21 Renovated
22 Mocks
25 Accomplish
27 Us
32 Symbol for iridium
34 Electrical unit
35 African tribe
37 Oriental gateways
38 Box
40 Mud
41 Summer (Fr.)
42 Rodent
43 Angers
45 Get up
47 Threefold (comb. form)
49 Morsel
51 Missouri (ab.)
53 Symbol for erbium

Answer to Previous Puzzle





Hold Everything

"Mr. 398470 to you!"