

WE FLEW Without GUNS

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.

"SOME GUYS WANT TO WIN MEDALS"

WHEN we had returned to Dinjan after that first—but not last—safari in Tongswan, Al and I had met an old friend. We hadn't known he was coming, that he had signed on with the C. N. A. C. But there he was when we stepped into the lounge of the pilots' quarters that evening.

"Petach!" Al and I cried at the same time. For a good five minutes the three of us clapped each other on the back and cursed and swore and laughed and talked all together and, in general, acted like a bunch of nitwits. But then it's a long way from India to England, and that was the last place we had seen Short Stride Petach.

Petach checked out in short order as a full-fledged C. N. A. C. flight captain, and it was on March 11 that he and Fox and I took off in a three-plane formation from Kunming carrying a load of tin back to Dinjan. We had overloaded our planes with tin on that trip—that is, loaded them beyond usual capacity—because there had recently been little Jap activity in the south and the weather was good on that route. We could figure on flying at no more than 15,000 feet all the way across. Thus we would use less gas—and less gas meant more cargo.

FROM Kunming to the region around Yungping we encountered nothing but smooth flying weather. We held to an altitude of around 10,000 feet and rode along without threat from either

Japs or storms with a good 200 feet between our planes and the blanket of white clouds below. It was not until we hit the lower reaches of the Santsungshan range, about midway between Assam and Kunming, that we encountered the last obstacle. As we approached the 11,400-foot peaks near Tating and went into a slow climb to give those snow-capped hazards plenty of room, I began to feel the pressure of turbulent winds. With my controls set to climb I would feel the C-53 move slowly upward for a moment, then veer off to the right or left and drop quite suddenly, throwing the altimeter back anywhere from 100 to 1000 feet.

I was in the lead of the three-plane wedge formation and, looking back, I could see Petach and Fox having the same trouble.

To turn back or to seriously alter our course at that point was out of the question; we hadn't met obstacles serious enough to send us back to Kunming, and our gasoline supply wasn't sufficient to permit much searching around for an easier route. We stayed on the course, straining to gain altitude and bucking the winds. I picked up 11,000 feet at one point and thought I was in the clear; then a downdraft drove me down almost to 10,000 in spite of the fact that I held the ship at a 45-degree angle to take advantage of the updrafts rising against the sides of the hill. I had the controls practically in my lap and the air speed was down to only 90 miles per hour.

THE highest peak on the route we had mapped out was just west of Shueiching, 12,200 feet. As we approached that range the winds became more and more turbulent.

Then there was a long moment of smooth flying, and I thought

we had outdistanced the disturbed winds, when suddenly the plane lurched violently and we were driven deep into the over-cast. I knew that the 12,200-foot peak was almost within touching distance, and when the altimeter slid from 12,500 to 11,900 my heart was in my mouth. I could expect only one thing—a crash. I pulled the ship into a right-hand chandelle, belly flat toward the hill, nose high and wings at 45 degrees. I couldn't see a thing, the gray blanket of cloud was all around us, and I had a horrible feeling that a light had been snapped on in a darkened movie theater, there was a break in the clouds and we saw sunlight again—sunlight on the long and ice-crafted slopes of Shueiching, beautiful and gleaming, but much too close. We missed that peak by less than a hundred yards. As we climbed above it, our motors pulling hard into a wind that wanted to force us down, I heard Hung gasp. He was looking behind us.

I couldn't look then. I had to get the plane above the peak, into the clear; but I looked back in time to see Petach and Fox in their heroic fight against death. I saw Petach's ship miss the Shueiching peak by not more than twenty feet and I saw Fox crash into it, head on.

We could have gone back, Petach and I. We could have gone back when we saw Bill crash. But we could not have landed; we could only have seen the flames spring out of the ship and burn its occupants alive. We could have tried to land—and left two more ships and six more men to mark the grave. We could have been as heroic as hell—and as foolish. When Petach got drunk a few nights later he talked that way. "But what for?"

Skippy Lane was usually a pretty quiet guy, but that night when Short Stride began to sound off Petach really said a mouthful. "You've got to remember, Short Stride," he said, "some guys want to win medals—and some guys want to win wars."

(To Be Continued)

Our Boarding House



Boots and Her Buddies



Freckles and His Friends



Red Ryder



Wash Tubbs



Alley Oop



With Major Hoople Out Our Way



J. R. Williams



By Edgar Martin



Merrill Blosser



Fred Harman



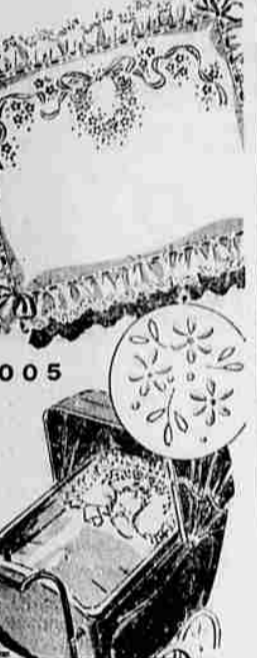
By Leslie Turner



By V. T. Hamlin



Baby Pillow



By MRS. ANNE CABOT

A young mother-to-be will appreciate this lovely embroidered pillow—it's perfect for the baby's perambulator or crib. And invalids like these small, pretty and dainty pillows too. They're just exactly the right size to tuck under one's head when one is ill. Use white nainsook or percale for the case—embroider the flowers in pink and the bow-knot ribbon in blue. Use lace edging for the ruffle and lingerie beading with narrow satin ribbon run through it as the final pretty touch.

U. S. Army Group

- HORIZONTAL
- 1,10 Depicted in insignia of U. S. Army
- Frontier
- 3 Laughter sound
- 14 Visionary
- 15 Hawaiian wreath
- 16 Onager
- 18 Girl's name
- 19 Company (ab.)
- 20 Plant part
- 22 Lire (ab.)
- 23 Facetious
- 25 Catcher of lampreys
- 27 Shrieked
- 29 Corded fabric
- 31 Merited
- 32 Peruvian city
- 33 Contended
- 34 Feared
- 36 Editors (ab.)
- 37 Kind of horse
- 39 Watchful guardian
- 40 Mine
- 41 Upper Eng-land (ab.)
- 42 Small herring
- 43 Aisle
- 47 Mine
- 48 Make a mistake
- 49 Peaks
- VERTICAL
- 1 Pursue
- 2 Hurry

City News In Brief

Clarence R. Knight, La Grande, and Burley J. Knight, transient, were arrested last night on charges of being drunk, and were held pending appearance in the municipal court.

Keith Province flew to Portland yesterday to get a new license for the Waco plane. A new engine has recently been installed in the craft.

Flying students who soloed this week at the local airport include Myron Fleser, Minam; Francis Wade, Elgin; Frank Sehiro, La Grande, and Earl Lincoya, and Bert Wright of Union.

Complete equipment for the horse ranch on the Minam has been flown in this season, including all the supplies and a kitchen range. The ranch is owned by R. E. Cavitt of Portland and is managed by Nan Christensen.

Merlin Johnson, pilot at the local airport, has returned from a trip to Lewiston.

Official Records

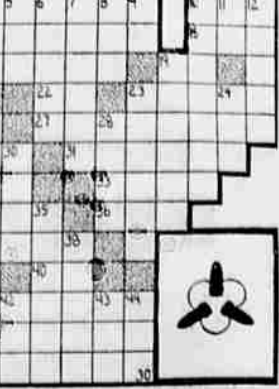
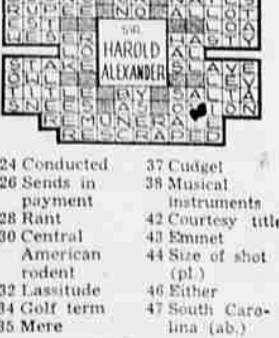
Building Permits: R. J. Pierce, erect one-story frame building as barn, on Lot 4, Blk. 37, Riverside addition, \$75.

Water turned off, June 28: Bessie Haehne and John Heath, 1807 1/2 Adams avenue.

Water turned on: Bessie Haehne and John Heath, 1807 1/2 Adams avenue.

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 St., San Francisco, Calif.

Answer to Previous Puzzle



Cherry Applique



8880 1-6 yrs.

By SUE BURNETT

A gay sun dress with bright cherry applique to delight her little heart. Tie on the brief bolero to prevent too much tan.

Pattern No. 8880 is designed for sizes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 years. Size 2, dress, requires 2 1/4 yards of 39-inch material; bolero 3/4 yard; 1 yard machine made ruffling to trim.

HIGH COURT RECESSES

SALEM, Ore., June 29 (UP).—The Oregon state supreme court recessed for the summer months today. It will reconvene in September, the day after Labor day. No cases will be set prior to that time.

Hold Everything



discord

54 He commands

Mr. 398470 to you!

"I don't know who he is, but he comes in every day!"