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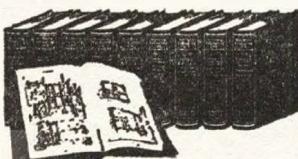
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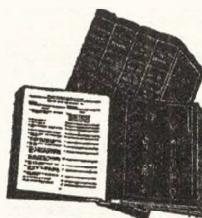
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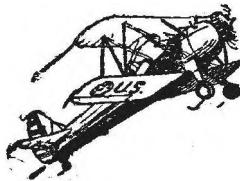
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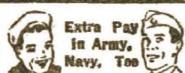
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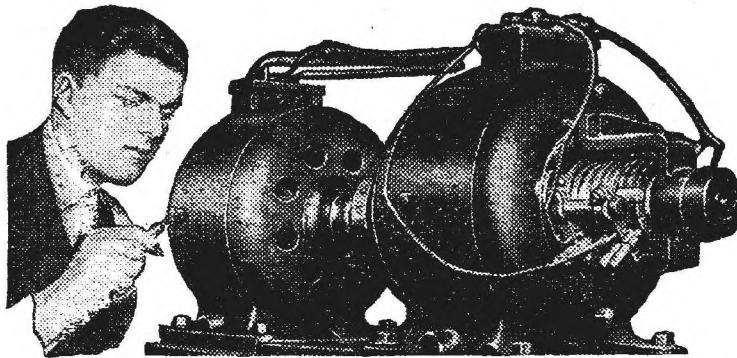
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LET'S GET THIS STRAIGHT



THIS WAR is being fought by a big Army. It's an army that is called the United States.

Millions of us are in uniforms and many more millions are not, but how we happen to be dressed isn't what's important.

What is important is whether every one of us is in this fight, giving it everything we have. Any less won't win.

Whether you're a soldier on the firing line, or are backing him up as a soldier on the production line, you're fighting for the same things.

The decision, whether or not we are to live in a decent world as free men in the years to come, is in the making now. It's up to you, Soldier.

A. Robert Smolensky

Colonel, G.S.C.
UNITED STATES ARMY.



The scarf slipped over the
Jap's head and crushed
against his larynx
(CHAP. IV)

West Coast Patrol

By **LIEUT. SCOTT MORGAN**

When Jap planes blacken the Pacific area, the world's greatest sky fighter goes into whirlwind action—riding the battle-scarred blue like an avenging eagle!

CHAPTER I

Storm Wings

THE western horizon belched ponderous black storm clouds into the sky over the Pacific. The wind which hurled them toward the coast picked up the sea and formed waves into jumbled heaving masses. The air was filled with the

mighty song of the gale. Great flashes of light streaked from sky to tossing sea, with the accompanying sound of planets smashing together.

And in a plane that dared to breast the storm, even after the gulls had sought cover, and fishing boats streaked to find harbor, sat John Masters, known throughout the war-weary world as the American Eagle. The

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John Masters Helps a Boy Hero Strike

Eagle, beloved by those who fought for survival, and hated by the murderous fiends of perdition who sought to trample free men under their blood-smeared heels.

In World War I he had fought against the oppressors and his coolness and daring had helped smash many nefarious Hun schemes. When the new scum of hate and madness, Hitler, Benito and the bandy-legged apes from the land of the Mikado had hurled threats at his beloved land of freedom, Masters had thrown himself into the conflict with fanatical fury. The raging *Fuehrer* and the now whimpering Benito had felt the slash of his claws. And the buck-toothed lads from Nippon were still licking their wounds after running foul of him on the West Coast of Australia.

Masters, at the controls of the storm-tossed Consolidated 28-5A amphibian corrected for a gust of wind, then glanced up as Phil Warren, his companion in arms, staggered sleepily into the control cabin.

"Holy smoke!" Warren slumped into the right-hand seat. "Thought you were riding the mountain ridges. Is that a storm or is night coming out of the west for a change? Soon there?"

Masters nodded.

"Ought to be down before it hits," he assured.

"Where?" Warren demanded. "Don't forget. This was the first nap I've had in twenty-eight hours. Did plenty of flying to get to Frisco in time. I don't even know where we're going or what for. How about giving out with a little information? What are we after this time?"

"U-Two-thirty-five," Masters said grimly.

"You mean the Nazis have got subs along the West Coast too?" Warren exclaimed.

Masters shook his head. "U-Two-thirty-five is something that will win the war, Phil. The nation that has one hundred pounds of it can rule the world."

"Are you kidding?" Warren said incredulously. "Don't tell me you know where to pick up a hundred pounds of this dope."

"We're going to pick up Professor Bohrneil," Masters said quietly. "Don't suppose you've ever heard of him."

WARREN glanced anxiously at the approaching storm.

"Has he got a pile of this U-Two-thirty-five?" he demanded.

"Not a pile. Perhaps an ounce and a half."

"An ounce and a half!" Warren exclaimed.

"But having that much proves he has the secret," Masters answered. "According to his last report to Washington he estimates he can turn out a hundred pounds of U-Two-thirty-five for a billion and a half dollars."

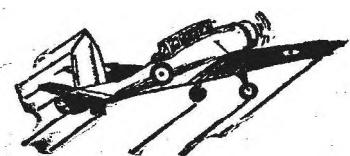
"Why the darned profiteer!" yelped Warren. "A billion and a half for a hundred pounds of U-Two-thirty-five! What would a guy want with a billion, to say nothing of the half? Think of the income tax he'd have to pay."

"That's what it will cost to manufacture that amount," Masters said. "Professor Bohrneil doesn't want a cent for himself. He wants to smash Hitler—to free his homeland, Norway. His wife and daughter are being held there. He has his young son with him at the laboratory. Been over here ever since this mess started, with the Gestapo combing the states for him. They know he's on the right track. If they got to him before we did, Hitler would have the world for sure."

"But what in blazes is this U-Two-thirty-five?" Warren demanded. "Is it a poison?"

"It's an isotope of the element Uranium with an atomic weight of two hundred and thirty-five," Masters replied grimly.

"Talk English," Warren growled.



the First Blow with a Secret Explosive!

"Don't start any of your encyclopedia chatter with me. I gotta get my information in words of not more than a syllable and 'a half. Don't bother trying to explain what it is. Just tell me what it'll do. Must be potent if they'll even consider it at a billion and a half a hundred."

"That would be dirt cheap, Phil," Masters answered as he glanced at the indented coast of British Columbia to check their course. If we had a hundred pounds of U-Two-thirty-five tonight the war would be over in twenty-four hours."

"Just how important is this stuff?" asked Warren.

"Well," Masters said, "one pound of U-Two-thirty-five would be equal to four million pounds of coal, or three million gallons of gas."

"Is it always figured in billions and millions?" Warren growled. "Say something in the thousands."

"Okay," Masters said soberly. "One pound would be equal to about fifteen thousand tons of TNT—about three hundred carloads of fifty tons each."

Warren studied the Eagle's face. "That's a heap of explosive. Is that what they're going to use it for?"

"At the moment, yes," Masters said, after he had waited for a peal of thunder to roll by. "But it can be used for power. A teaspoonful would drive a car ten thousand miles. It could be used for bombers, battleships, submarines and motorized equipment, with no refueling worries. One hundred one-pound bombs would end the war in a single hour! It would wipe out munitions factories, snuff out life over a great area. Just one hundred pounds!"

Warren whistled. "Gosh! And you could make bombs weighing only an ounce, couldn't you?"

Masters nodded. "And they would be equal to about a thousand tons of TNT. So we're on our way to pick up Professor Bohrneil and his son. If his sample proves to be the real thing, we'll get to work turning out the stuff to smash Hitler and his rats."

"You haven't mentioned where we're going to find him," Warren



said. "You did say something about the Gestapo fatheads combing the States for him. But a few more hours an' we'll be in Alaska."

MASTERS smiled grimly. "The professor was smuggled up here with his equipment and installed in an island hunting lodge. Figured he'd be out of their reach. He was, too, until the Japs stuck their noses into this mess. They're after him now. General Tremaine got a flash that they're going to make a pass at getting the secret. We've got to get there first."

Warren's eyes narrowed as they watched the scud torn from the waves and whipped into the screaming air. His lips formed a thin straight line as a jagged streak of lightning forked the gathering gloom.

"Everything seems to be adding up to a nice little party, doesn't it?" he said. "The Gestapo butchers, a secret they mustn't have, and the Japs trying to horn in. Say, if they got it they'd even have Hitler eating out of their claws, wouldn't they? Don't dare think of what they'd do to—"

He stopped short as the northern sky was suddenly lit up by a blinding flare.

"What a bolt that was!" he exclaimed.

"That couldn't have been lightning!" Masters shouted. "Seemed to come from the sea!"

The heavens were split by a roaring sound. And unseen arms snatched at the wings of the amphibian trying to hurl it into the sea.

"That was an explosion!" the Eagle cried. "Understand Phil! An explosion!"

Warren turned quickly. "Are you trying to tell me you got a hunch something has happened to this professor? That the rats have got to the bait already?"

Masters' face was pale as he stared toward the north.

"I don't know of anything powerful enough, except—except U-Two-thirty-five."

CHAPTER II

Queer Quislings



PROFESSOR BOHR-NEIL, of whom the Eagle and Warren had been talking, stood at the end of the wave-lashed dock, staring excitedly at a kite twisting and tugging at the thin braided wire leash.

"Are you not afraid, Father?" the lad at his side asked, his eyes on the kite dipping over a small spruce-crested island half a mile away.

The professor smiled. "This is the moment for which I have been waiting, Neils. Up there on the tail of that kite is salvation for the world. In that little half-ounce container is the instrument which will unite you with your mother and sister. And you ask if I am afraid."

"But the lightning, Father?" the boy asked anxiously as a forked tongue of flame hissed into the water.

"I am prepared for that." The professor pointed to the power-driven reel. "It's grounded. At a moment when the lightning strikes close, I will press this button. An electrical current will release the container of U-Two-thirty-five. It will fall on the old lighthouse foundation, the trigger neutron will actuate the U-Two-

thirty-five and there will be an explosion."

"But why wait for lightning?" the puzzled lad asked. "Why not press the button now so we can go into the lodge out of the rain?"

The professor kept an eye cocked on the hurtling storm clouds.

"Don't you see, Neils?" he explained. "If I press this button when there is a flash near us anyone on shore or near us on the sea will think lightning struck the island. There are enemies all around us. If I made my test on a clear day they would know it was a man-made explosion."

"I understand now," the blue-eyed Norse lad said quietly. "Only you and I and Edvard will know. Father, what has come over Edvard? He does not seem the same lately."

"How do you mean?" the professor asked.

"His voice is harsher," the boy said thoughtfully. "His eyes seem to have become harder. I feel that he watches us all the time, especially you."

"I had not noticed," Professor BohrNeil said quietly. "He never comes into the laboratory."

"I caught him there yesterday when you were down here adjusting the reel," Neils said quickly. "He said you had sent him for a switch."

"Yesterday?" the professor echoed. "I don't think I saw Edvard all day. And he would not know a switch from an anchovy. You must be mistaken."

Neils shook his head. "I used to like Edvard. He was fun when we use to fish for sea trout and salmon. He knew all about seals too. He would talk about them for hours. But now it seems almost as if he were angry with me."

"It must be your imagination, Neils," the professor said comfortingly. "I should not have brought you up here where you have no playmates. But I was afraid to leave you alone in the United States."

"You mean the Gestapo?" Neils asked. "Why would they bother me?"

"If they caught you"—the professor frowned—"they would attempt to bring me to terms by threatening to harm you. That is a dastardly trick of theirs. They knew I was on the verge of discovering the last few se-

crets of U-Two-thirty-five when we escaped from our homeland."

"But no matter what they threatened, you would not reveal your secret to anyone but the Allies who are fighting to free our people, would you?" Neils asked. He laid his hand on his father's arm.

"No, Neils," the professor said soberly. "And I thank God you are brave enough to say that. Yet you are a lad. They might find some means of wringing the secret from you if they guessed I have had you memorize every step in the manufacture of U-Two-thirty-five and the method of using it to beat Hitler and his foul brood. But you would not tell them, would you, Neils, no matter what they did?"

THE lad drew himself up stiffly.

"There is only one I would tell," he said proudly. "The man you said I can trust. We are waiting for him now, are we not?"

The professor nodded. His eyes narrowed as they scanned the skies.

"There is only one, Neils—only one. His name is John Masters."

"They call him the Eagle, too," Neils said eagerly. "And the things he has done are like the sagas of our vikings."

"Perhaps this storm has delayed him," the professor said quietly. "I had hoped he would arrive before I made my test. However the result should convince him."

The full fury of the driven rain beat against the two. Big, wind-driven drops of rain hissed into the heaving waters, throwing miniature geysers into the air.

"When I shout crouch behind these logs," the professor cautioned as the lightning began to hurl a barrage of crackling flame around the rock-bound island. "They will shield you from pieces of concrete from the old foundation."

"You expect pieces to be hurled way over here, Father?" Neils asked in wonder.

"And farther." The professor smiled as his thumb fondled the button switch. "Heretofore we have only been able to speculate as to the energy released by an atom. In a few mo-

ments I expect to know. Neils, in that little bomb dangling up there may be the instrument by which peace will be brought to the world! Ready, Neils! The time is here."

The lad ducked behind the log barrier and waited breathlessly.

"Keep well under the overhang, Neils!" Professor Bohrneil shouted above the lashing gale. "There may be—"

A forked streak of lightning slithered out of the hurtling clouds and struck the far end of the island. In the same instant the professor's thumb clamped hard on the switch and he strained forward to see the kite through the beating rain.

The clap of thunder, deafening in itself, was suddenly muted by a terrific awe-inspiring sound. The very air seemed to be plucked away by unseen hands. The foundations of the island trembled. The barricade of logs shifted slightly. Dirt sifted over Neils as he pressed his hands hard against his ears. Earth, sky and tumbling sea were lighted by an eerie light that lifted in a weird crescendo. Then all sound died away.

"It was horrible, Father," Neils said tremulously as he crawled from the shelter of the logs.

But before he could reach his feet his father gave him a shove that sent him sprawling. And none too soon. For a cascade of broken mortar swept over the island. When it stopped the only sound was the splash of the wind-driven rain.

Neils waited a moment, then stood up. His father's face showed that the results had been all he hoped they would be.

"The trigger neutron worked, Neils—just as I explained it to you. You must not forget, do you hear Neils? Why do you not shout? I cannot hear you if you speak softly in this storm."

"But I did shout, Father!"

"Louder, Neils." The professor smiled. "My, how the storm roars. It seems to pour right through my head. Neils, do you realize that soon you will see your mother and your beloved sister?"

"But, Father—" Neils shouted, then he stopped.

Realization of what had occurred

crashed through his mind. The terrific impact of the exploding U-235 had deafened his father! The demonstration had been a success, but would his father ever hear again? Neils prayed hard that the affliction be only temporary.

"See the size of those fragments!" the professor cried, pointing to the chunks of concrete that had been thrown across half a mile of open water. "There was a gram or two less than half an ounce in that bomb. . . . Think of it! We have the weapon by which Hitler and his cursed allies will be destroyed. Once more the world will see peace. It will be a long peace this time."

THE professor pressed the palms of his hands against his ears.

"They hurt," he muttered.

"Come, Father," Neils said, as he reached for his father's hand. "We will go inside. We will have Edvard make coffee. You must get dry clothes on and rest. Until the American comes."

As they came to the top of the slope on which the hunting lodge stood, Neils excitedly pointed to a little cove to the north.

"Look, Father!" he cried, "there is the Coast Guard plane. The Eagle must have arrived. I did not hear—" Neils caught himself. He remembered his father could not hear him.

The professor glanced at the plane moored in the cove. A broad smile erased the lines of pain from his face.

"Perhaps he was in time to see it. He must have been down or the disturbed wind would have torn his wings off. Neils, we must give him the news."

Father and son hurried up the path and into the hunting lodge. In the dimness they made out men standing by the kitchen table.

"Are you the Eagle?" Neils panted as he looked up at the taller of the men.

Suddenly his blood ran cold. For the man held a Luger, its tapered barrel pointing straight at the astonished professor.

"Edvard!" Neils cried in alarm. "What is it? Are these men not the Americans?"

"What Americans?" Edvard de-

manded quickly as he slipped beside the man with the gun. "You spoke of the Eagle. Do you mean the American Eagle? Quick, you little swine, speak up."

Neils' eyes flashed. He knew his father had not heard what Edvard said. The professor was looking around trying to figure out just who the three strangers were and why one of them carried a gun.

"I knew you had changed, Edvard!" Neils cried. "You have gone over to their side. You are a filthy Quisling! You have accepted their money to betray my father!"

"Quiet, you little *schweinhund*," Edvard snarled. His big fist lashed out and caught the astonished lad across the face. "It is your father with whom we deal. Keep out of the way or you will get hurt."

Giving Neils a shove, Edvard stalked across to the professor.

"Give us the formula, quick. The Fuehrer has use for your U-Two-thirty-five. Answer me! Do not stand there like an oaf." He raised his fist and struck the professor.

"Edvard!" Neils screamed. "Stop! He cannot hear you. The explosive deafened him."

"Bah!" sneered Edvard. "It is a trick. This will unstopp his ears."

The tall blond man struck again, driving the surprised professor across the room until he slumped in a corner.

"Speak up, Professor, or will we really have to work on you. My friends are experts."

"Edvard, please!" Neils pleaded. "Can't you see that he cannot hear a word? Wait for an hour or so. Perhaps his hearing will return."

Neils looked into the face of the man towering above him. He was fighting for time, for a precious hour in which the Eagle might arrive. And he was trying to find a clue in those hard gray eyes as to why Edvard had changed.

Until the last few days or so the tall blond man had been a simple, friendly soul. Edvard had been his fishing companion, a kindly man ready to do his every bidding. Yet that same man now stood towering above him, eyes gleaming with hate, revealing a cruel killer lust. It did not seem pos-

sible for a man to change so suddenly and completely.

"Edvard," Neil said calmly, "why have you turned traitor to your country?"

A snarl of rage frothed to Edvard's lips as he made a grab for the lad.

"Come here," he ordered. "Perhaps he will make the old fool talk. Switch off that cursed radio, Fritz."

For the radio, silent up to now, had suddenly broken out with a torrent of crackling static.

As the man reached for the switch a voice broke through the static.

"Calling John Masters. . . . Calling John Masters. . . . Urgent. . . . Urgent. Flash. . . . Calling Masters. . . . Come in, Masters."

Edvard leaped for the man who was about to switch off.

"Leave it on, Fritz. They are calling the Eagle. Listen!"

The radio went on, hoarse, as if it had a bad cold.

"Enemy aircraft carrier reported headed in direction of your destination. Repeating. Enemy aircraft carrier reported heading in direction of your destination. Fly Professor Bohr-neil to mainland at once."

"Ach Himmel!" exploded Edvard. "The Eagle and Baron Nagato! They are after the prize, too. There is no time to lose."

The man with the gun turned toward Edvard.

"What shall we do. We cannot fight both of them."

"We could deal with the slinking little Jap, but not the Eagle," Edvard snarled. "We will have to take the professor with us and deal with him later."

"What about the boy?" The man swung the Luger on Neils. "Shoot him?"

Edvard grinned. "Let Nagato find him. It will be a joke on the Jap. He will try to use the lad as bait. He will not believe him when he says we have his father."

"You are going to take the old one with you?" one of the other men asked. "What good will that do?"

"You obey orders," snarled Edvard. "I am in command. Fritz, get the motor started. I will tie up the professor and bring him along. You,



Masters clutched the lad close to him as tracers from the Jap killer sizzled past (CHAP. VI)

Herman give me a hand. Rudolph, keep that young cub away. Now *schnell*, we must be away from here before the Eagle arrives."

"Do you believe the Eagle is coming here?" Fritz asked in alarm.

"*Dummkopf!*" Edvard snarled as he yanked the dazed professor to his feet. "Did you not notice that the lad mistook one of you for the Eagle. And the radio. Do you want more proof? Would you like to meet this Eagle?"

"Ach, Gott, nein!" declared Fritz. "I have heard of that *verdammter Amerikaner*."

"Then hurry," Edvard barked. "The storm is breaking. We must land at the mine before dark."

"Where are you taking my Father?" Neils broke in. "Don't you dare harm him!"

"Silence!" roared Edvard. "If he is sensible he will not be injured. Out of my way. I have a little job to do."

Handing the beaten professor over to one of his Quislings, Edvard turned to the short-wave radio. In a moment it was battered junk. Giving the box a savage kick he hurried through a door. A crash of glass told that he was doing a thorough job of wrecking the laboratory in which Professor Bohrneil had developed the weapon by which he had hoped to bring the *Fuehrer* and his hellions of destruction to their knees.

And with the crash of glass and metal went Neils' dream of ever seeing his mother and sister again.

"Please, Edvard," he pleaded, as the Quisling came back. "Take me with you. Let me stay with my father. I won't be any bother."

"Fool!" growled Edvard. "You should be thankful I did not let Fritz send a bullet through your thick Scandinavian skull."

Neils tried to get to his father, but the professor's guard brought his boot up quickly and with a swift shove sent the lad sprawling.

"Father—Father!" Neils cried.

But his father could not hear him. He threw a look of warning over his shoulder as the two men pushed him through the door.

Neils ran to the window. He saw his father led down the path and put

aboard the yellow high-wing monoplane moored to the little float. He fought to stifle his sobs as the plane began to taxi over the choppy water.

And as he watched the air was filled with the throb of motors, many motors!

CHAPTER III

Paratroops



ASTERS' face was grim as he eased the throttles forward. His eyes were slits as they scanned the sky to the north where a thin column of smoke curled upward to meet the thinning storm clouds.

"Glad that's over!" Warren shouted. "Say, do you really think the Japs would have nerve enough to send a carrier so close to the West Coast?"

Masters nodded without taking his eyes away from the scattered clouds. "We're playing for big stakes, Phil. They'd give most of their navy for this U-Two-thirty-five of the professor's. And as I said, it would be a cheap price to pay. We've got to beat them. The white man will have reached the end of his tether if the Japs get it."

"An' he'll be dancing to a tune played by these little yellow devils," Warren growled.

"There's the island dead ahead," Masters said, after a moment.

"What's that column of smoke—a signal?" Warren asked.

"Hope it's a signal for us," Masters snapped.

Warren whistled softly.

"You think there might be a Fifth Columnist up around this way? . . . Hey, do you see that plane taking off?"

Masters nodded grimly. "Looks like a Canadian coastal survey plane. They use Stinson pontoon jobs. Check its course on the map. Just a matter of record."

Warren watched the Stinson get off the water and head north. He was about to mark the course of the Canadian job when the pencil was suddenly snatched from his fingers.

"Hey, what's the big idea?" Warren yelped. "That hurt."

"Quit squawking," Masters shouted as he threw the Consolidated over on one wing. "You got a break. That was a Jap slug. Get to the guns quick. Lookit them pouring after that Canuck!"

"Smoky hoke!" Warren howled. "Where'd they come from? Zeros! A dozen of them. Hey, there's a bevy of two-engined crates upstairs!"

"I see them," Masters called while he evaded a burst from a pair of low-winged hellions with the red disks of the rising sun on their wings. "Get going, or we're going to be well ventilated."

Warren slid into the forward compartment. Masters waited until he felt Warren was set, then threw the amphibian over on the other wing. He was just in time to avoid a funneling burst from the two crates which had also shifted position.

Raging because he had no gun with which to blast these yellow-skinned, slant-eyed devils from the skies, Masters fought to close in on the ships attacking the Stinson.

"Professor must have thought we weren't coming," he shouted through the inter-com. "Signaled for the Canadians to pick him and his boy up."

Warren's answer was a chattering burst from the nose of the Consolidated tracer connected with a Zero fighter. The ship staggered, then crumpled like a paper lantern. A streak of flame soiled the air just freshly cleansed by the storm. The plane hurtled toward the sea, leaving a scarf of angry black smoke to mark its course.

"There's one of the devils who has seen the last of our coast line," Warren yelled. "Kick a little rudder, and I'll get that other monkey!"

While Masters flew with almost automatic precision he kept his eyes on the strange two-seaters circling to the west of the island.

LOOK like Mitsubishi 'Ortori' jobs," he muttered as he wove through a quartet of Zero fighters and tried to get a position from which he could protect the Stinson's tail. "Wonder if they're planning to bomb the professor."

"Left rudder, left quick!" Warren was calling. "Got a couple of pigeons coming down on us. Give me elbow room, man! I gotta get them."

With both Pratt Whitneys at full throttle, Masters hurled the Consolidated at the Jap planes whenever they attempted to close in and pick off the dodging Stinson. Time after time he tried to call the pontoon job, but got no answer.

Warren unloosed his guns for another burst at the now wary Japs. Masters fervently wished he had taken another man or two along to handle the rear guns. With only Warren shooting he had to handle the big two-engined ship like a pursuit job.

Warren caught another of the Japs full in his line of tracer. When Warren was concentrating on the particular task confronting him he usually got results. And now he was hitting what he was aiming at.

"That's the ticket, Phil," Masters called into the inter-com. "Got to get that Stinson through. Soon as it's dark they will be safe. . . . Get that one coming down from the right! He's coming fast!"

Warren was pouring lead before the Eagle stopped talking. That he allowed enough deflection was evidenced by the sudden zoom of the Jap crate as it tried to get out of the net of tracer. It seemed to stagger, then fell off on one wing. Down it went, motor full on, guns yammering as it hurtled straight for the sea. It was a strange sight to see the hot lead from the Jap's guns marking the spot where the plane was doomed to hit.

"Pilot's dead with his thumb frozen to the button," Masters said quietly. "There goes a wing, Phil. It'll break up before it smacks in."

"Skip it—skip it," Warren yelled. "The others are ganging up on us. Get going, John!"

Masters fought frantically to keep his ship away from the Jap line of fire and at the same time cover the Stinson which appeared to make no effort to protect itself.

And as the Japs raged around him, the already one-sided battle became still more one-sided. The Japs were turning their full attention on him

with the exception of a couple of Zero jobs that continued to pepper away at the Stinson.

Masters began to pray for darkness. That at least would allow the Stinson to slip away from the yellow horde. What would happen to him would happen. The important thing was to get Professor Bohrneli away with his precious secret. Masters' own death would mean little so long as the slinking murderers who sought to rob the world of freedom were destroyed.

Fighting back with maniacal fury, the Eagle placed the big Consolidated job in position time and time again to let Warren get in a burst. But for every burst pouring from those forward guns the amphibian received three in return. The starboard wing was embroidered with tiny black holes, the trade-mark of the men from Nippon.

Then as the sun dipped its edge in the Pacific, painting a rainbow in the still storm-clouded skies, the three two-engined jobs drew closer to the island. At any moment now Masters expected to see the bomb hatches drop open and a cargo of eggs spill out on the hunting lodge.

PHIL WARREN'S gun opened up for a quick burst, then stopped.

"Look, John, look!" came Warren's warning cry. "Paratroops! They're trying to land on the island."

Masters forgot the Jap planesraging around him as he saw the three big crates spill their human cargo into the twilight. Four white chutes were drifting below each of the three circling planes. One even dozen Japs heading for the island on which the professor had his laboratory.

"Shall I drill them?" Warren shouted.

"Better concentrate on the three crates half rolling just to our right," was the Eagle's calm rejoinder. "Our job's to keep them from drilling us."

"Okay," Warren called. "I like shooting Japs even better than skunks."

Phil Warren only got a snapshot at his target before Masters was forced to swing away from a vicious burst of fire from above. The parachutes were drifting toward the island like gar-

gantuan chrysanthemums in the golden rays of the setting sun. And while the parachutists dropped the three two-engined jobs circled above to cover them.

As darkness came rushing out of the east the tracer began to look like fireflies on a binge. They hissed and streaked around the Consolidated, gnawing at metal, seeking human flesh.

Twice Warren was able to crack down on a Zero fighter and send it back to its carrier waiting below the sunlit rim of the world. And as many times, Jap guns cracked down on the ship being thrown around by the desperate Eagle.

"Hey, the Stinson's gone!" Warren suddenly shouted.

"Think it finally got away in that cloud bank to the north of us," Masters said, as he leveled out for a moment to give Warren a quick shot at a Zero fighter.

"What wouldn't I give for a nice thick juicy cloud right now," Warren said.

"Thought you were going to say steak," Masters grinned, despite the desperation of the moment.

"Shut up!" Warren snarled into the phones. "Since I fried that Jap a couple of minutes ago I sort of lost my taste for steak. Hey, they're easing up. How come? What do you think they're planning to do?"

"Got a landing party on the island," Masters replied, as he watched the Zero fighters turn and streak west. "That's what they came for, I guess. And these Zero boys either got the Stinson or it gave them the slip. I don't know which."

"So what?"

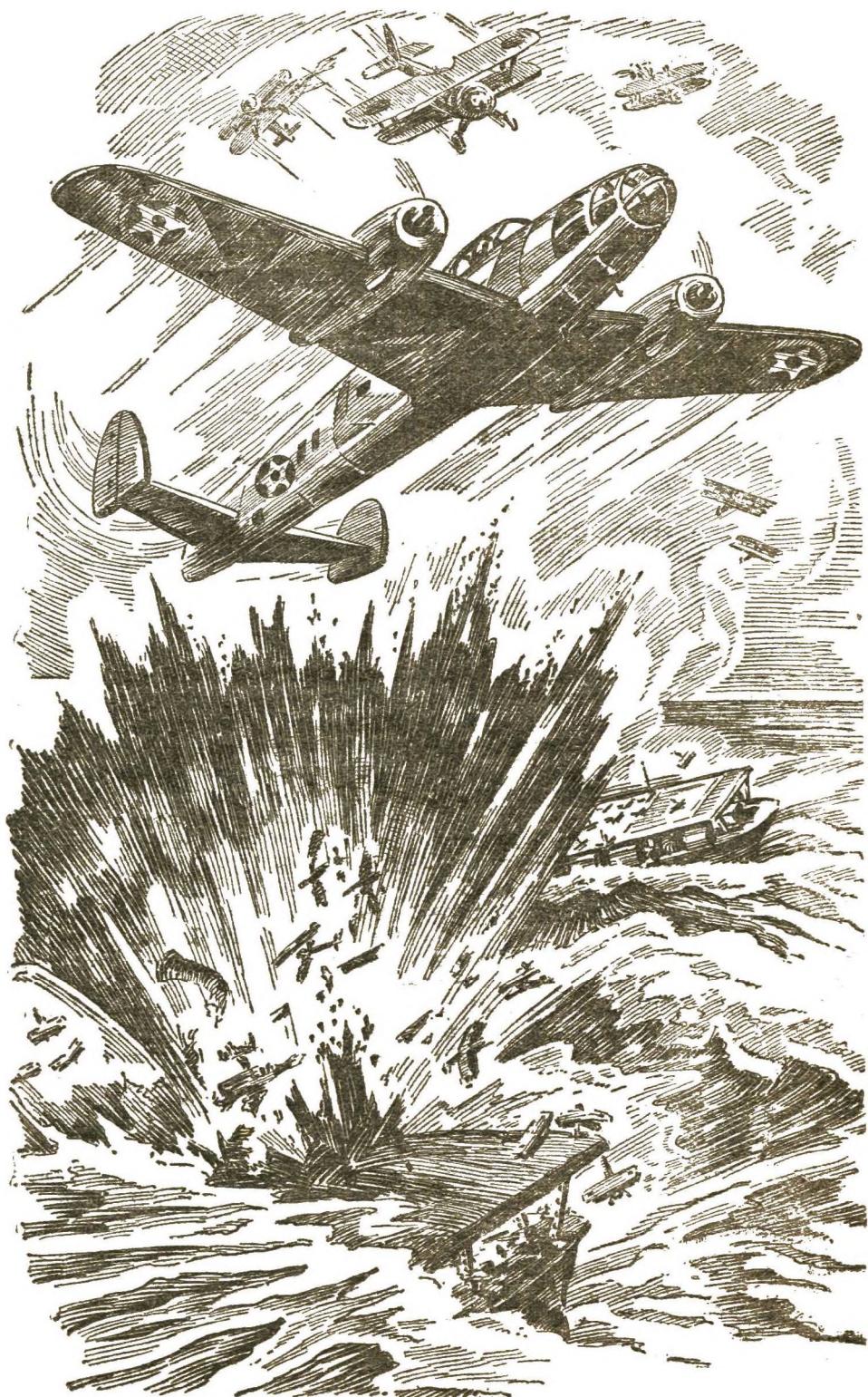
"We're going to land and see what it's all about."

"With a flock of Japs on shore?" Warren shouted in dismay.

"Only nine of them made it," Masters said calmly. "The other three fell short."

"Nine's still my unlucky number," Warren mumbled.

"Don't worry," Masters said. "We'll head west as if this is none of our business. Then we'll set down and come out to have a look. Come on back here. They've gone."



Masters yanked the plane up, and the world seemed to turn upside down (CHAP. XI)

CHAPTER IV

Two Men in a Raft

JOHN MASTERS put the Consolidated down in a spruce-fringed cove. While Warren moored the plane he looked over the ship by the fading light to see how much damage had been done by Jap slugs.

"We got off pretty easy, Phil," he said. "Pretty well ventilated but not a vital spot touched. A little patching and we'll be okay. How about a bite to eat?"

"Eat!" Warren yanked his finger out of a bullet-hole he had been exploring. "Maybe my hearing has gone haywire, but did you say eat?"

A grim smile flashed across Masters face as he led the way through the hatch. Warren crowded after him. "Boy, the old millennium has arrived when you forget action and talk about food. What have you got? Pickled auks sandwiches?"

"Roast beef," Masters said, as he yanked up the lid of the metal locker. "Sorry if you've lost your hankering for roast meat, Phil."

"I've got it back again." Warren grinned, and sank his teeth in a sandwich. "Coffee, too, eh? You're getting thoughtful for a change, John. How come?"

"It isn't thoughtfulness," Masters said, pouring steaming coffee from a thermos jug. "I figure it's easier to have a little grub on tap than it is to listen to you yap. Sorry, but you'll have to do without sugar. Couldn't risk being knocked down with any sugar on board. That would be wasteful."

"What's your plan?" Warren asked.

"Here." Masters handed Warren another sandwich. "Fuel up. You're going to have some exercise in an hour or so. We're going to break out the rubber raft and do some rowing."

"Figuring on visiting the island where those Japs are?"

Masters nodded. "Have to see what's up. I'm still a bit puzzled about that Stinson."

"Perhaps the Canadians heard the call we got," Warren said. "Figured

the storm put us down somewhere, so they stepped in and picked up the professor."

"Maybe." Masters got to his feet. "And maybe these Japs know nothing of the professor and this U-Two-thirty-five. Might be trying to set up a base."

"They'd pick a larger island," Warren mumbled. "An' how come they pick out the exact spot we were heading for?"

"That's another angle," Masters murmured. "And a good reason for us visiting them."

Warren finished his last sandwich and shook his head.

"Yeah, but suppose another storm comes up, like the one we had this afternoon. What wouldn't one like that do to us out there on a rubber raft."

"Want to swim for it?" Masters asked, and started to take off his scarf.

"I'll vote for the raft," Warren said quickly. "What are you doing with that—making a first-aid bandage?"

"Sort of," Masters said. He moved closer to the shielded blue light and tied a silver dollar in the exact center of the silk scarf. "This is first-aid for any Japs we might run across. Get the raft out. We'll shove off as soon as it's inflated."

When they had the life raft inflated and tied fast to the hull of the Consolidated, Masters checked the moorings and then came back to Warren.

"Let's take our shoes off," he said. "Be handier if we spill over, and if we don't we won't be making any noise when we reach the island. The unhealthiest thing I can think of right now is for the Japs to catch us."

"You sure think of the nicest things, John," Warren muttered, but he sat down and slipped his shoes off.

"I thought of bringing those sandwiches, didn't I?" The Eagle grinned.

"Which leaves Mamma Warren's boy with nothing to say . . . want me to take a gun?"

"This is a silent job," Masters said quietly as he slipped over the side to the bobbing raft. "Let's get going."

Warren followed Masters. He untied the painter and picked up the little oars.

"And now for a moonlight cruise without any ukuleles," he said as he shoved off....

Two hours later the two Americans pulled up in the lee of the island and sat listening. Out of the darkness came voices—Jap voices. But they could not make out what was going on.

"We'll have to go ashore," Masters whispered. "Pull up there by those rocks—just a bit to the left of that tall spruce."

Warren pulled the raft into the deeper shadows by the rocks. Masters reached out and held steady while Warren crawled ashore and grabbed the painter. Masters followed.

"Boy, does that feel good," Warren whispered. "I was wondering whether I would ever be able to straighten my legs out again."

Masters touched Warren's arm, signaling for silence. From the crest of the island a light gleamed. Now and then they heard the crash of wood and metal.

"Sounds like a dock walloper's picnic," he said. "Let's have a look."

Suddenly he grabbed Warren's arm. "Listen! Sounds like a boy talking. Good glory! Do you suppose they nailed the professor, after all?"

Melted into the shadows, they listened. The voice that reached them was a boy's voice, but steady and unafraid.

"Stop it! You are hurting me."

An answer in Japanese reached their ears.

"Come on," Masters whispered.

He pulled the scarf from his pocket and moved swiftly but silently toward the voices. After a few steps he crouched, trying to silhouette the figures against the sky. Then a flashlight gleamed and he saw a pale-faced lad who looked as if he had just been pulled out of the water. And holding the light, his back turned to the Eagle, was the squat figure of a Jap.

Masters crept forward, his bare feet making no sound on the pine-needle-strewn rocks. When he came within arm's reach of the unsuspecting Jap his hands lashed out. The scarf slipped over the Jap's head and tightened with a quick twist around the throat.

"Arwk!" was all the Japanese managed as the silver dollar knotted in the scarf crushed his larynx.

He slumped to the rocks. Masters snatched the pistol from his relaxing fingers while the lad retrieved the flashlight.

ARE you Mr. Masters?" the boy asked when Masters had pulled him into the shadows. "I have been waiting a long time."

"That's me," Masters said softly. "Are you Neils BohrNeil? Where is your father?"

"I am Neils, sir," the lad said quietly. "Edvard took my Father away. Oh, I hoped you would come sooner!"

"Who is Edvard?" Masters demanded. "And where did he take your father?"

"Sounds like a snatch to me," Warren broke in.

"Edvard was our servant," Neils explained. "He has been in the family for years. We trusted him, but he has turned into a Quisling. After Father set off the bomb this afternoon we came back to the lodge to find Edvard and some men waiting for us. They tried to make Father tell them about the formula. But Father had been deafened by the explosion and he could not hear what they said. They thought it was a trick, so when they heard on the radio that somebody they called Nagato was coming they took Father with them in the plane."

"Was he in that Stinson?" Masters exclaimed.

"I do not know the name of the plane," Neils said. "But it had yellow wings. It took off just before the battle started. Was that you in the big plane with two motors? You are a good shot, Mr. Masters."

"Hey," Warren growled. "I knocked those Jap planes out of the air. All he did was fly the ship."

"Pay no attention to him," Masters said, with a quick grin, but instantly sobered. "Who was it you said was coming? Did you say Nagato?"

"Yes, sir," Neils answered. "That's what Edvard called him. When he heard about the airplane carrier he said it must be Nagato."

"That puts a little more grease in the blaze," Masters growled. "Nagato is one of the cleverest intelligence operators the Japs have. Looks as if he's after U-Two-thirty-five, too. By the way, Neils—that explosion we heard and felt. Did your father do that?"

"Yes, sir," Neils said proudly. "It was wonderful! He said it was only half an ounce of U-Two-thirty-five. It blew pieces of that old lighthouse foundation way over here. It hurt my Father's ears so he could not hear. He hoped you would get here in time. But he wished to use the lightning to hide the fact it was a man-made explosion, as he said."

Masters turned to listen to the noise from the lodge.

"Then you think Edvard is a Nazi?" he asked.

"It is hard to believe, sir," Neils said hesitantly. "He has been in the family as long as I can remember. My Father and Mother took him in shortly after the other war was over. There were many German boys and girls who came to our town. Edvard was one of them."

"He wouldn't be the only one who bit the hand that fed him," Masters muttered.

"Quisling's a new way of saying skunk, isn't it?" Warren snorted. "Shooting's too good for his breed."

"Just a minute," Masters cautioned. "Did they say anything about where they were taking your father, Neils?"

"Edvard said something about getting back to the mine before it got dark," the lad answered. "Look, they have set fire to the lodge!"

"We'll have to beat it," Masters said, getting to his feet. "This place will be lit up like day pretty soon."

AS THEY hurried toward the rubber life raft a rocket shot into the air above the mounting flame. It broke in a shower of blood-red sparks that drifted out over the sea.

"That must be their signal for a boat," Masters said. He took Neils' hand and broke into a run. "When they find that Jap with a sore throat they'll begin to look for us."

The three of them piled into the boat and shoved off. Behind them the

burning lodge lit up the island like a beacon. And above the crackle of flame they heard voices shouting.

"Bet he won't answer for a long time," Warren snorted, and began to ply the oars. "That first-aid treatment of yours is darn tough."

When they had drawn away from the reflected light Warren rested on his oars.

"You know, John," he said, "I been figuring. That hideout this Edvard rat's got can't be so many miles away if they expected to make it before dark. Darn near dark when they pulled out."

"Darned if you're not right," Masters agreed. He turned to Neils. "Has Edvard ever left the island alone since you've been here?"

"No, sir." Neils answered thoughtfully. "We only went out on the water to fish. I was always with him."

Masters shook his head. "Queer," he said slowly. "Must have had the thing pretty well planned. I thought all tracks were covered when you and your father were shipped up here."

"But this Quisling could have kept others informed," Warren said as he resumed rowing.

"But the way Neils says he talked about the mine," Masters answered. "He must have contacted them at some time. At night, probably."

"I am sure he didn't," Neils answered. His voice trembled as he spoke.

"Gosh, kid!" exclaimed Masters. "You're cold. I forgot all about your being wet. Here, take my leather jacket."

"An' here's mine," said Warren. "I'm plenty warm pulling at these oars."

"Thank you," Neils said through chattering teeth. "I slipped into the water and hid between two rocks when I saw them coming down with their parachutes. If I had not sneezed that Japanese would not have found me."

The lad had wrapped the two leather jackets around his legs and body and leaned toward the Eagle.

"You will find my Father, won't you, Mr. Masters?" he said confidently. "You will not let them harm him, and besides you must see to it

that they do not find out how to use this U-Two-thirty-five. Hitler and the Japanese must be beaten, no matter what happens to us."

"Don't worry, Neils," Masters said reassuringly. "We'll save your father, and save U-Two-thirty-five for our side."

"I know you will," the lad said quietly. "I trust you, Mr. Masters."

"Nicest compliment I ever had, Neils," Masters said. "I'll do my best to live up to that trust. We older fellows are fighting so lads like you will have a better world to live in when you grow up."

"I know it," Neils said sleepily. "And when I am grown I will remember."

In a short time the weary boy appeared to have fallen asleep. Masters leaned toward Warren.

"Want me to row for a while, Phil?" he asked.

"Now if that don't tie everything!" chuckled Warren. "We're within twenty feet of the plane an' you're wanting to row. You're so thoughtful. Believe me, that kid might trust you, but I don't."

CHAPTER V

Yellow Wings

HE night was full of wings and voices. Planes were covering the darkened sea searching for the Jap aircraft carrier. The air sizzled with voice and code as radio men kept their ceaseless vigil patrolling the air lanes for some word of the men who had invaded the West Coast.

After a coded resumé of the attack on the Stinson, the landing on the island, and the capture of Professor Bohrneil by still unknown enemy agents, Masters contacted the Canadian coastal patrol.

"What did they say?" Warren asked softly so as not to wake Neils who lay wrapped in a pair of blankets in the cabin. "Got Quislings in their Coast Guard outfit?"

The Eagle pulled a map toward him. He studied it, tracing a course along the coast with his fingertip

"Plane CF-CGE has been missing for forty-eight hours," he said slowly. "Routine coastal patrol. Contacted control points down as far as Surf Inlet. Failed to report to station at Toling Channel. The Coast Guard believe their plane disappeared somewhere between Surf Inlet and Toling and became an enemy plane. We've got to find it at all costs."

"Then you're going to ignore this carrier?" asked Warren. "There'll be plenty doing out there."

Masters let his eyes roam over the blue section of the map.

"I sure would like to blast that ark out of the water," he said grimly. "But we've got to keep them from getting this stuff of the professor's. It's the most important mission we've ever been on. If they learn the secret we're through, and there aren't any two ways about that. And now with this devil Nagato in the picture we've got a job cut out for us."

"What'll we do with the kid?" Warren asked. "Doesn't sound like any Boy Scout picnic to me."

"He'll have to stay with us until we find where his father is being held. May need him on this servant angle, too."

"This fellow Edvard he talks about," Warren said. "Kid insists Edvard never had any visitors in Norway, or on this side."

"The Nazis are clever," Masters mused. "When they lay a plan they carry it out to the smallest detail. Sometimes that's what trips them up. We've got the thing narrowed down pretty well. Somewhere between Surf Inlet and Toling there's a bay or cove and near there is a mine."

"You mean we're going to hunt for a mine somewhere between here and there!" Warren exclaimed.

"Might not be so hard." Masters smiled. "I've a hunch it's an abandoned mine. Somebody in this neck of the woods will know of such a spot."

Warren nodded and stretched. "Hmm—maybe Edvard made a mistake when he mentioned 'mine' in front of the kid."

"Why don't you turn in for a while," Masters suggested. "I'll keep watch for a couple of hours and check over these bullet-holes again. I'll wake

you in time for us to be on our way by dawn."

"Think the Japs have pulled out?" Warren asked as he got up. "Fire's died down over on the island."

"I figure they've pulled out," Masters said. "But I'll bet they're wondering what happened to their friend, especially since his rifle is missing."

"This Nagato," Warren asked, as he lay down. "Is he a pilot?"

"Don't you remember him?" Masters smiled. "He was in the Oakland Sweepstakes the American Legion put on a couple of years ago. He won. Don't you recall the race?"

"The bird in the yellow job!" Warren said, sitting up. "Scared the other pilots out by darn near clipping their wings going around the pylons. Boy, do I remember him! Meanest-looking little cuss I ever saw. So that's what we're up against. Baron Nagato. Say, you've spoiled my sleep now."

"You asked for it," Masters said over his shoulder as he climbed out on the hull. "Sweet dreams, Big Boy. Dream our prop has stopped, with our friend Nagato on our tail. . . ."

AS THE first light of dawn began to crawl over the Coast Range Masters and Warren started the two Wasp engines. And while they warmed up, Masters dug another package of sandwiches out of the locker.

"What, no toast an' java?" Warren snorted. "You're slipping, John."

"I know it." Masters grinned. "I slipped when I tried to estimate your capacity. You finished the coffee last night. Phil, if you keep on eating the way you do you're going to look like Fatty Goering."

"He will look funny, will he not?" Neils said, and smiled as he bit into a sandwich.

"Feeling better, Neils?" Masters asked, much relieved because the color had come back to the Norse boy's cheeks.

"Very much, thank you," Neils replied. "And I will feel still better when you have rescued my Father."

"That's a job we're starting on right now," Masters assured. "Get your chute on, Phil."

"Think we'll need them?" Warren

asked, and glanced toward Neils. "What about him? We've only got two."

Masters yanked the zipper of his flying suit and took off his leather belt.

"Let's have yours, too, Phil."

Masters fastened the two belts just under Neils' arms.

"Now, Neils," he said quietly, "if we get in trouble, be ready to slip these belts under my parachute harness."

"I understand." Neils smiled. "We will jump together. If it were not for the plane I would almost wish we had to."

"Son," Warren said as he crawled forward, "you just don't know what you're talking about. You drop until you feel like your belly's comin' out your ears and when you stop it drops back to your heels, leavin' you hangin' on the edge of nothin' waitin' for somethin' to happen."

"Don't pay any attention to what that lug says, Neils." Masters laughed. "His stomach's usually so weighted down it couldn't budge. Okay, Phil, cast off. Neils, you sit up front with me . . . By the way, Phil, how much ammunition have you got left?"

"Not much," Warren shouted as the plane drifted away from the stump to which it had been moored. "You expecting to meet up with some more Japs?"

"Can't tell." Masters dropped into his seat and took the wheel. "They're all over the place."

The Eagle gunned the motors, studied the dials and then swung the Consolidated out on the glassy surface of the cove.

"Glad we've got a couple of miles to get off in," he muttered, as he eased the throttles forward.

The Wasps opened up with a roar. The big seaplane skittered out across the dawn-reflecting waters, carving a foamy trough in the mirrored surface. He jockeyed the wheel and finally lifted the Consolidated on the step. Then amid a smother of spray he pulled the plane into the clean morning air.

After a quick swing over the two islands in search of the Jap landing party, he turned his ship north.

"Must have been quite an explosion, Neils," he said, when they had left the smaller of the islands behind. "We felt it far to the south."

"It was thrilling," Neils said. "But at the same time horrible. I could not help but think of what it would be like if that little bomb fell on a city. You must not let them get it, Mr. Masters."

MASTERS nodded grimly, watching a bank of fleecy cloud drifting over the Pacific. Then his blue eyes left the cloud and began to scan the tumbled surface of the Pacific.

"See anything out there, Phil?" he asked over the interphone.

"Not a thing," came Warren's voice, now calm and businesslike.

"I'll keep my eye peeled toward the west," Masters replied. "You watch below for that Stinson. If you see anything the least suspicious yell and I'll circle."

"Okay," Warren said.

With the two motors throttled to conserve fuel, Masters flew along the rugged, indented coast at about five thousand feet. He watched the surface of the bays and inlets anxiously, hoping to catch sight of an oil slick which might give away the presence of a pontoon job. He made a quick survey of Aristazabal Island, then cut across Laredo Channel for the mainland.

"They're down there somewhere," Masters murmured. "Got to locate this man Edvard before Nagato does."

Neils looked up at him, his boyish face filled with anxiety.

"You are getting worried, are you not, Mr. Masters?"

Masters was about to answer when

Neils touched his arm and pointed upward.

"There are some planes, Mr. Masters. They look exactly like the planes which attacked you."

The Eagle took one look at the cluster of spots hurtling out of the towering white cloud, then hit the throttles.

"Phil!" he yelled. "Get ready to do some shooting. The Japs are making another pass at us."

"I see 'em!" Warren blurted. "Better get further inland."

Warren's suggestion was answered by a burst of tracer streaking across the course of the Consolidated.

Before the Jap could correct, Masters threw the wheel over and was banking away, only to feel the throb of slugs smacking into him from another quarter. As he came around a yellow Zero fighter tried to half roll with him. For a moment it looked as if the two ships would collide in mid-air. Only at the last moment did the pilot of the Zero swerve and lift his wing-tip from what seemed to be certain destruction.

And in that fleeting moment Masters looked into a pair of squinting eyes, eyes he remembered from one hot Fourth of July down in the States.

"Nagato!" Masters exploded, recognizing the cruel leering features of the Jap. "Phil, get that guy! It's Nagato."

Masters fought the controls in an effort to keep Warren on the Jap in the yellow monoplane.

"If I only had guns of my own!" he groaned. "If I only had a Spitfire or a P-Thirty-eight, I'd wipe that smirk

[Turn page]

NO FINE DRINK...



off his face. Sent those others out front to act as decoy, knew we'd be watching them come out of the cloud. Figured on a set-up, did he? We'll show him!"

With the other Zero fighters trying to herd him into position for the kill, Masters was forced to employ every bit of skill he could bring to command in an effort to keep from being blasted out of the skies. Warren was doing his best to keep the Japs at tracer length while Masters maneuvered the ship, watching, waiting for the canny Nagato to make a single slip.

But Nagato was not making any slips that morning. His job was to smear this Yankee plane that was interfering with his search for the Nazi Edvard. He had promised to bring the secret of U-Two-thirty-five to the Mikado, and he meant to, despite this man who had crossed his path twice in less than twenty-four hours!

CHAPTER VI

Marooned



ROUND and around the mile-high arena of death the ships battled. Twice Zero fighters felt the impact of Warren's well-aimed bursts. One of them exploded in mid-air, a torrent of flaming débris.

"Nice shooting, Phil," Masters muttered.

He glanced at the boy clinging to the co-pilot's seat. A smile flickered across his drawn face at the wide-eyed lad who seemed thrilled with the sky drama.

"He's got what it takes," he thought. "That kind is worth fighting for."

"Why don't you call for help?" Warren yelped during a moment's respite. "Must be planes of ours around—either that, or Canadian."

"Radio's shot up," Masters retorted. "We're on our own. . . . Hey, keep your eye on the ball. Here comes that yellow job. Nail him! You've got him dead on."

"An' that's all," Warren growled. "Not a morsel of lead in the cupboard. Nobody can say I wasted it though."

"Keep swinging your guns as if you

were trying to get a bead on him," Masters ordered. "Got to bluff them now!"

A packet of slugs crashed into the hull. Masters could hear them spattering their way toward the wings as he fought the controls. He couldn't see Nagato, but the Jap must be somewhere below, pouring in lethal slugs while his companions hosed the Consolidated from above.

As Masters' plane came around, Neils shouted:

"Look, Mr. Masters. Smoke! We are making a ring of smoke."

At once the control wheel went slack.

"That does it!" Masters called to Warren. "We're on fire, controls shot away, too. Better get going!"

"I got my ring half yanked now," Warren said calmly. "Port tank's rid-dled."

"Let's go then," Masters com-manded. "See if you can slip in for a set-down near that little lake that forms a right angle down there."

"Practically got my feet in it now," Warren said as he pushed the cowl cover aside.

"Drop plenty before you crack open," Masters warned. "This killer will pop you sure. Neils, quick, those belts."

Neils was clinging to the side of the hurtling plane with one hand while he held the unbuckled belts toward the Eagle with the other. Slipping the two belts through the webbing across his chest, Masters pulled them tight and buckled them. "Now, Neils!" he shouted above the roar of flame and guns. "When we tumble out, put your hand on this ring, but don't pull until I say the word. Come on!"

Unafraid, the little Norse lad slipped through first, dangling by the belts until the Eagle had come through. Then, with a quick kick, Masters propelled them away from the doomed Consolidated.

"Pull when I shout!" he called, above the rush of the wind tearing past them.

As they tumbled end over end, with Masters clutching the boy close to him in his steely arms, tracer from the guns of the yellow-winged killer slithered past them. Now and then

Masters caught a glimpse of Warren's chute floating like a lily pad against the blue background of the lake far below them. And as he turned with his face toward the heavens he saw a pair of flashing yellow wings.

"Now!" the Eagle finally shouted. His arms tightened, holding Neils in a death grip.

NEILS yanked the ring. The pilot chute unraveled, pulling the main fabric with it. Then as the silken circle bloomed above them, Neils looked up at the Eagle and grinned.

Masters and Neils slithered through tree branches and landed on the edge of a cleared knoll overlooking the lake. The Eagle unfastened his harness; the Japs up above were heading west again.

"Where is Mr. Warren?" Neils asked, watching Masters carefully gather up the billowing white folds of the parachute.

Masters looked around at the trees surrounding the little clearing. They made it look like a city of green cathedrals.

"This will get him," he said, and sent an ear-piercing whistle shrilling through the forest. An answer came back like an echo.

"Hey, Phil, where are you?" Masters shouted.

"Over here," came the answer from a towering hardwood tree at the fringe of the clearing. "Come and get me. I'm tired of perching up here like a blasted oriole."

"There he is!" Neils cried, his keen young eyes sighting the tree. "His parachute is tangled in the branches!"

"I see him." Masters was grinning as he made his way toward the tree. He looked up at Warren, swaying on a branch about twenty-five feet from the ground. "Didn't I hear you mention something about a man on a flying trapeze?"

"Yeah, an' I'm waiting for something to happen," Warren growled. "This branch is doing a lot of groaning. I'm expecting it to break any minute."

"You sure got a break." Masters grinned as he studied the situation. "Suppose you'd eaten your regular

breakfast this morning. You'd have come crashing through. Maybe you'll believe me when I keep telling you to stick to a diet."

"Nuts," Warren exploded. "Get me out of here."

"Hang on," Masters said, and started back for the knoll.

In minutes he was back, with Neils beside him, and with the white shroud lines he had cut from the chute. He tied the ends securely, making a long strand, then doubled it. Fastening a chunk of wood to the line he managed, after three attempts, to toss it over a thicker branch directly above Warren's head.

"Tie that around that thick waist of yours," he ordered. "Then cut the other shrouds free."

"Can you two hold it?" Warren asked anxiously.

"By snubbing it we can hold a ton and a half," Masters retorted. "That gives us a margin of half a ton. Get busy."

Working gingerly, Warren cut the shrouds one by one.

"Take it easy now," he cautioned. "You guys drop me an' I'll get mad."

"If we drop you you'll just splash," Masters said, and began to pay out the line.

In short order Warren was on the ground, rubbing his bruised legs and arms, while Masters helped Neils into the lower branches of the tree.

"Cut the cords carefully," he cautioned. "Then roll them up and drop them to me."

"What's the idea?" demanded Warren.

"We may need this cord," said Masters. "Pretty rugged country around here. We're sort of up the creek without supplies. Lord only knows how long we'll be before we even find a shack for cover."

Warren took his helmet off and scratched his head. He whistled softly.

"Yc mcan we may have to live off the land, eating berries and roots and stuff like that?"

Masters nodded, watching Neils busily struggling to untangle the chute from the limbs.

"You're going on a diet whether you like it or not, Phil. We haven't even

got a gun. Left everything in the ship."

"Blast that Jap's hide!" growled Warren.

"Maybe you'll thank him." Masters grinned. "A few days in this country an' maybe you'll discover that long-lost waist-line of yours."

"And get a lot of bunions," Warren muttered, as he helped Masters gather up the chute Neils lowered through the branches.

When Neils climbed out of the tree the three of them walked back to the knoll. Masters superintended the folding and tying of the two chutes. He sat down and motioned for the others to do the same.

"Might as well take inventory," he said. "I've got a good strong clasp knife and a pocket compass. What have you fellows got? I mean besides an appetite, Phil."

Warren felt in his pocket. He pulled out two chocolate bars and a crumpled cigarette pack.

"Holy smoke, just one left," he exclaimed. "Well, might as well smoke that now."

Neils had been going through his pockets and before him on the ground lay a collection of odds and ends.

"There is a broken jack-knife, Mr. Masters," he said. "Only one blade is good. Here are two small lead sinkers which I had better throw away, and three fish-hooks. Here is a button on which is printed the word 'Wilkie.' What is that?"

"Ancient history," snorted Warren. He let a cloud of smoke trickle through his nose, then flipped the cigarette stub away.

Neils leaped to his feet as if propelled by a spring.

"You must be careful, Mr. Warren!" he said, and ground the butt into the moss with his heel. "That is the way forest fires are started."

Warren shook his head. "Guess I'm going to be the step-child on this picnic. Everybody's bossing me."

"Neils is right." Masters looked pleased as he saw the boy stoop to make sure the cigarette was extinguished. "The enemy would bless you for starting a fire in this timber. You'd be doing a nice bit of sabotage. Lot of valuable wood around here, wood we

may be needing before this thing is over. Wish there was some way of drilling that into everybody's head. Conservation of timber is as important as saving gas, oil or tires."

Neils picked up the fish-hooks.

"We had better keep these, don't you think?"

"May stand between us and starvation," Masters said, with a nod. "Keep the sinkers, too. Let me have the knife. I'll see if I can get the blade out. May need that, too."

"Ought to be plenty of trout around here," Warren said, with an eye on the mirrored waters of the lake. "Always wanted trout cooked over an open fire and smeared with good fresh butter."

"You may get your belly full of trout," Masters said. "Then again you may not. If you do, there won't be any drawn butter, nor even salt. You'll be so sick of broiled trout you won't want to look one in the face again. Here, let me have those matches you're fooling with. Didn't I see the stub end of a candle in that junk you took out of your pocket, Neils?"

Neils handed over the candle.

"This will be our reserve," Masters said.

He knelt and cut a square of silk from one of the chutes, wrapped the fabric tightly around the folder of matches, and then lit the candle. After letting the wax drip over the silk he smoothed it with his thumb, examining every crease.

GUESS that waterproofs it," he said. "I've got an extra pack, and Neils has a few stray ones. This will come in handy in case the others get wet."

Then for a few moments Masters stood looking in all directions, lowering his eyes every now and then to study the compass in his hand.

"Well," he finally said, "we've got some traveling to do. If I remember correctly there's an inlet about twenty miles to the south. If we hit that we can work toward the coast."

"And how far to the coast?" Warren asked, busy swinging one of the chutes on his back. "Say, what's the idea of lugging these things along? Not figuring on doing any more jumping, are you?"

"To keep dew off that homely mug of yours," Masters said, and grinned as he swung the other folded chute to his own shoulders. "An' don't forget, those two chocolate bars are our emergency ration."

"Okay, okay," Warren retorted. "I was figuring on saving them for dessert after our first meal of trout . . . Lead on MacMasters."

CHAPTER VII

Primitive Life



THERE WAS about two hours before sunset when Masters called it a day. He estimated they had covered approximately twelve miles, and he was pleased, not about the distance covered, but because Warren and the lad had been able to hold up.

"Boy!" Warren moaned as he sat down and began to unlace his shoes. "Are my dogs singing the Huntsman's Chorus!"

"Not so fast, Phil," Masters cautioned. "Get some wood before you start to turn in. Got to have a fire if you're going to eat."

"Did you say eat?" Warren's look of exhausted anguish was erased by a smile.

Masters turned to Neils. "Let me have one of those hooks."

Neils untangled a hook from the lining of his pocket and handed it to the Eagle, who bent it on a short length of white line.

"So that's what you were doing." Warren grinned as he got to his feet. "I thought you were unraveling that shroud cord to weave yourself a belt. But what are you going to use for bait, faith?"

Masters tied the line to a short limber birch rod, then took out his handkerchief.

"Got some bait in here. Watch it, Neils." He handed the handkerchief to the boy. "There are a few grasshoppers and some bugs in there. I snaffled them as I came along. Now go to it. That pool just below the rocks ought to be full of trout."

"Would I love that detail!" Warren mourned. "Let my dogs dangle in the

nice cool water while I fished."

"You take care of the wood," Masters said quickly. "Then you can put your barking dogs in the kennel."

An hour later the three of them were sitting around a bed of glowing coals, watching half a dozen split trout sizzling above the coals.

Warren's eyes traveled from the browning trout to two birch-bark containers placed over the coals and held in position by two stones placed about six inches apart.

"Won't that birch-bark burn through?" he asked.

Masters shook his head and stirred the contents of one container with a stick.

"Soup's about ready," he informed. "Forgot to bring soup spoons so you'll have to use these small cups I made out of bark. May leak a bit because I had to use most of the balsam gum on the big jobs."

Pouring a cup of thick whitish liquid he handed it to Neils, then passed another over to Warren.

"If there isn't salt enough just whistle. Maybe Joe down in San Francisco will come running."

"What is it?" Warren asked as he sipped it experimentally. "Tasted better soup, but this sure is warming. Feels like it would stick to a fellow's ribs, too."

"Cat-tail soup," Masters said grinning.

"W-what?" Warren sputtered.

"Cat-tail soup," Masters laughed. "Pulled up some of those cat-tails in that swampy section behind the pool. Sliced the roots and boiled them. A bit on the starchy side, but there's nourishment, and that's what we need."

Warren sipped again, then glanced across the fire at Masters.

"For a minute I thought you were getting even for those auks."

"Better wash your cups out," Masters said when they had finished the soup. "I've got tea brewing."

While Neils washed the three birch-bark cups in the stream, Masters slid the fish off the green sticks on which they had been broiling and laid them on a slab of bark.

"There you are," he said quietly. "We eat community style tonight.

Phil, you better start on that three-pounder to give Neils and myself a chance."

AS WARREN and the lad began on the nicely browned fish, Masters filled their cups.

"This is more like solong than colong, but it'll do. You'll have to learn to like sassafras tea, and unless you've got your ration card you can't have sugar."

Until the fish were cleaned up, little more was said. Then Warren leaned back with a sigh.

"Not bad, John, not bad. Suppose you've got dessert for us, too?"

"Berry compote." Masters grinned broadly as he reached behind one of the chutes and pulled out a bark container held together by pine needles. "Blackberries and raspberries, to say nothing of an ant or two. Go to it."

When the berries were finished, Masters gave directions about making a small triangular framework of saplings and stretching one of the parachutes over it.

"There's our shelter," he said. "A few spruce boughs and a log reflector for the fire and we ought to keep warm tonight. This other chute, folded, should make a fair blanket if we sleep close together."

"An' will I be ready to turn in!" yawned Warren. "A long hike, a full belly, makes a man weary, dopey and sleepy."

"You better sleep between us, Neils," Masters said. "You'll keep warmer. If Phil snores, kick him."

Neils started to crawl in on the bed of boughs, then changed his mind. He came back and looked up into the Eagle's face by the flickering light of the fire.

"What's the matter, Neils?" Masters asked gently.

Neils felt in his pocket and took out a metallic object about the size of a lemon.

"This is the other bomb," he said calmly. "My Father said I should guard it with my life."

"Holy catfish!" Warren gasped. "Have you been stumbling over rocks all day with that thing in your pocket?"

"It will not go off unless the trigger

neutron is attached," Neils said. He took another gadget from his pocket. "You see, it screws in here. It contains a small battery and a coil. When it is set it actuates the trigger neutron on contact."

Masters took the bomb and examined it, fighting to hide his excitement, knowing that in his hand he held the salvation of the world!

"I was afraid," Neils said. "So many strange things have happened. I was sure I could trust Edvard, but when he turned traitor—well, I could not feel sure of anyone. I got the bomb the minute they went away with my father."

"You feel sure of me now?" Masters asked.

"Yes," Neils said quietly. "I have faith you will take me to my father and rescue him."

"I'll do my best, Neils," Masters promised gently. "We're all tired now. But tomorrow you can tell me more about how this thing works. Let's hit the hay."

Masters stopped to replenish the fire, then crawled in with the others. Darkness had already closed down on the great North Woods, and the three lay there silently listening to the forest sounds. From some distant lake the eerie laugh of a loon was wafted through the dark. A porcupine waddled by, his quills sounding like a bagful of dry sticks.

"Dog-goned noisy place, ain't it?" Warren snorted. "Listen! I hear footsteps. Somebody's walking around the camp."

"Deer heading for a drink," Masters murmured. "Go to sleep, will you? We're getting up at dawn tomorrow."

Silence settled down, but only to be broken by a long, high tremulous "Whoo-hoo-hoo-hoo-hoo."

"What was that?" Warren demanded. "Don't tell me that was a field mouse calling to its mate."

"That was a great horned owl," snickered Neils. "And do you hear that red fox barking from the top of the ridge?"

"Gimme the city," growled Warren. "At least a guy knows what the noises are all about."

Finally even the animals seemed to go to sleep. Masters had no idea how

long he had been asleep when a noise by the fire suddenly awakened him.

"What in thunder are you doing now, Phil?" he demanded as he saw Warren throwing wood on the fire.

"Trying to make light enough so's I can find my way down to the stream." Warren muttered. "I got to thinkin' about what that little bomb did to that island, an' if you think I'm gonna sleep with its mate you're nuts. I never was the kind to look for a quick way to the Pearly Gates. I'm—"

Warren's voice was lost in an ear-splitting wail. It rose in a blood curdling crescendo, then died away, leaving a spine-chilling echo to find its way along the dark ridges.

"What in blazes was that?" Warren wailed between chattering teeth.

"Just a lonesome wild-cat looking for a nice fat American," Masters said in disgust. "Come on back to bed and shut up."

"Where in thunder do you think I am?" Warren said from the other side of Neils. "An' I got me a handful of moss to stuff in my ears. If that bomb does go off, at least I won't hear it...."

The next day was a repetition of that first one; and so was the next following. They made good time in the trackless woods, but it was three days before Masters located the inlet he remembered seeing from the air. And still another day passed before they reached tide-water.

"Ought to find a boat somewhere," he said as they sat down on a sun-bathed rock to rest.

"Sure hope so," Warren growled. "My legs feel as if they're worn off to the knees."

"That's what mechanized warfare does," Masters smiled. "Softens you. Ever read of that jaunt Arnold took to get to Quebec?"

"I'll take the mechanized stuff," Warren retorted. "I don't mind airplanes at three hundred or tracer by the bushel, but I sure hate wild-cats spitting from the brush, or deer jumping up to scare the living daylights out of you. I'm civilized."

"That's debatable." Masters' grin broadened. "You look like a cave-man with that four-day growth of beard."

"How about yourself?" Warren re-

torted. "You don't look like any modern warrior with that bow and arrow you're toting."

Masters looked down at the bow he had cut from a piece of green hickory and then tempered over the flame of their campfires until it was like a length of spring steel. He picked up the arrow, tipped with the broken blade from Neils' knife.

"Got you a couple of good meals, didn't it?" he said. "If it hadn't been for those rabbits you'd look like a sack of bones."

WARREN was about to make another retort when Neils leaped to his feet and cocked his head.

"Listen!" he cautioned. "A plane or a boat coming up the inlet!"

The two men were on their feet in a flash.

"That's a plane!" Masters exclaimed, quickly reaching for the bundled chute by his side. "We can tear strips and lay out a panel on the rocks."

As he unloosened the knot the plane hove into view over the trees about a mile away.

"A Jap!" he cried, as he caught sight of the yellow-winged plane. "A Kawanishi seaplane! Quick—into the brush."

They leaped for the low branches of a spruce as the big seaplane began to circle slowly over the inlet.

"Looking for Edvard," Masters said, peering through the branches. "That Stinson must be in a cove around here somewhere."

As the big plane circled lower, Masters took out his compass.

"Mark it," he ordered. "If he lands I want to know where."

"He is throttled down," Neils whispered in excitement. "He is going to land."

"Think it's Nagato?" Warren asked.

"Yellow is the baron's trade-mark," Masters said. He drew a bead from the compass toward a towering spruce on a point of land about two miles away. "I figure Nagato's after the U-Two-thirty-five and will—"

"Parachutes!" Neils cried in alarm. "Four of them, going down. Listen! Someone is shooting from the ground. Oh, I hope father is safe!"

Masters frowned as he heard the chatter of light machine-guns. The seaplane swooped low and he heard the answering crackle of guns from the yellow-bellied Kawanishi.

Then the plane disappeared. A shot or two drifted toward them, then there was silence.

"Come on," said Masters. "Leave your packs. We're traveling light."

With the aid of a well-defined trail they covered distance rapidly and finally came to a low bank overlooking the cove.

"This is it," Masters whispered, as they dropped behind a gnarled wind-fall. "There's the Stinson moored to an old dock! The mine must be back there against the hill. We'll have to get closer."

"Looks as if everybody's left the seaplane," Warren said, glancing over his shoulder. "Better watch your step. We've got Nazis and Japanese to deal with now."

CHAPTER VIII

Allies of Hate



INGLE file Masters and his companions silently made their way through the trees. They did not pause until they came to a cluster of mine buckets crusted with flakey rust.

"Look," Warren whispered huskily. "Must be a shaft there in those alders."

Masters looked across the clearing at a group of men not more than twenty-five feet away. Six of them were Japs, some still wearing chute harness, and four were white men.

"There is Edvard!" Neils whispered excitedly. "The tall one with the close-cropped hair. But where is my Father?" Sudden alarm caused the lad's voice to tremble.

"That little bow-legged rat is Nagato," Masters said grimly. "Not taking any chances either. Four of his pals are heeled with those clumsy-looking Nambu light machine-guns. Listen! Nagato seems to be laying down the law to our friend Edvard."

"As I suspected," the Jap leader was fuming, "you sought to get this U-Two-thirty-five for yourself! You

broke a gentleman's agreement."

"Bah!" sneered the Nazi. "You came to the island the other evening expecting to capture the professor for yourself. You and your kind are the last to speak of honor, or a gentlemen's agreement. Only our *Fuehrer* knows the meaning of honor."

"That's a hot one," Warren growled. "Hitler and honor both begin with H, but that's as far as the similarity goes."

"Quiet!" Masters warned. "Those two rats may spill a lot of information."

"Where is the professor?" Nagato growled. "Speak quickly. I have no time to waste."

"You expect me to tell?" Edvard said calmly. "You would have me give up the secret I promised my *Fuehrer* would be his, the secret by which he would bring the whole world to its knees, including your greedy people?"

"I have ways of getting information," Nagato threatened. "Ways beyond the imagination of even your blood-thirsty Gestapo. Where is the professor?"

The tall Nazi shrugged. "If you were clever enough to find me, why can you not find the man you are looking for?"

"It was through your stupidity that I found you." Nagato smiled. "I, too, knew the frequency on which you transmitted your messages. There are six of our ships out there and all my radio men had to do was listen. A cross bearing and your hiding place was marked."

Edvard grinned. "You fear me so much you had to bring your navy with you."

"You fool!" sneered Nagato. "You forgot Dutch Harbor, and our plan to deal with the American base. When we have smashed the key to Alaska—"

"Yes, I remember there was such a plan," Edvard growled. "But we thought you had lost your nerve you have taken so long to strike."

"The world will know three days from now whether we have lost our nerve," Nagato retorted. "Our planes will lash the base into a froth of blood and débris. We will avenge the cowardly bombing of Tokyo! The next step will be the conquest of Alaska,

and then with the secret of U-Two-thirty-five we will bring the United States to its knees."

"But you fail to consider two things," Edvard said slowly, eyeing the men with the stubby machine-guns. "You do not know the secret of U-Two-thirty-five, nor do you know where Professor Bohrneil is."

"And what is the second?" Nagato challenged. "I feel confident I can deal with your first."

"The second is the American Eagle," Edvard said, watching the cruel face of the Jap. "He has already stuck his nose into this affair. That is why I returned here to lay low."

FOR a moment the Jap seemed staggered.

"Are you certain?" he finally said.

Edvard nodded. "It was the Eagle who held you and your murderous pilots off and allowed me to escape with my precious passenger."

A curse rippled between the buck teeth of the Jap leader. One of the Japs with the guns said something that brought Nagato up with a start.

"It seems that we both missed meeting this American," Nagato admitted. "One of my guards was found dead shortly before we were ready to leave the island. But to even matters I think I eliminated him the next morning."

"It would take a better man than you, Nagato," Edvard said, scowling. "If you could prove it I would almost be tempted to share this U-Two-thirty-five with you. Our countries at least would not dare attack each other."

"There will be no sharing," Nagato snapped. "The secret will be ours alone."

"That is your idea," Edvard shot back. "You have me in your power at the moment, but that does not mean I will hand the secret over to you."

Nagato shrugged and growled an order to one of his men. Even before he had stopped speaking the Nambu jerked, spewing a hail of lead into the body of one of the Nazis. The man crumpled without a sound and lay sprawled on the shale.

"Now"—Nagato smiled—"each time you refuse to answer, one of your comrades will taste Japanese lead. If

you are foolish, you will go, too. After that I at least have a day in which to search this spot. I am certain the professor cannot be far away."

Edvard turned slowly toward his three men.

"Verstehen Sie?" he asked slowly.

"Ja wohl, Herr Kommandant." Snapping erect, they raised their right hands and chorused: "Heil, Hitler!"

"You see, Nagato?" The Nazi smiled. "You cannot frighten men of our breed."

Nagato bowed, then straightened quickly.

"And where is the professor?"

The Nazis were silent. Their faces were pale, taut as they watched the gun come up. Once again it poured its lethal packet across the narrow space separating Japs from Nazis.

"It's murder!" Warren whispered. "Cold-blooded murder!"

"They're supposed to be allies," Masters said softly. "Think of what they'd do to us, their enemies."

Warren shuddered and held Neils so that the boy could not see the ruthless slaughter.

"I hope you have ammunition enough," the tall, thick-set Nazi said to Nagato. "For by the time you have even come close to finding the professor I suspect this Eagle will appear to spoil your plans."

"I tell you I shot him down the next morning!" Nagato bristled.

"You do not know him as well as we Germans do." Edvard smiled. "That man is capable of returning from perdition to gain his purpose."

Nagato grinned. "Again permit me to ask where you have hidden the professor? Quickly. My other men are pleading for a chance to practice with their guns."

The Nazis stood stolidly facing the Jap guns, until the silence was broken by a clip being emptied from one of the Nambus. Another Nazi dropped to his knees, tried to raise his arm in a last salute to the man whose fanatic doctrine had spilt the cup of hate over the world. But his arm dropped limp and blood instead of a "Heil Hitler" poured from his lips.

"Now," demanded Nagato, "will you live or will you die?"

Edvard glanced at his remaining companion. His eyes narrowed as he saw the blood drain from the man's face.

"Steady, Hans, steady. It is for the *Fuehrer*."

The young Nazi stumbled toward Edvard.

"Tell him, *Herr Kommandant!* I do not wish to die! Tell him!" The Nazi's voice broke into a scream of fear. "Look at them, *Herr Kommandant!* Why should we die like they?"

Edvard's face twisted with loathing as he hurled the man away from him.

"Shoot him, Nagato!" he shouted harshly. "Ich hasse feige Menchen. Shoot him! The *Fuehrer* would have it so."

"So you hate cowardly men, do you?" Nagato grinned. "Before I have finished, you also will plead for mercy."

"Shoot him!" Edvard shouted.

"You think I am a fool?" Nagato grinned widely. "I was sure there would be a weakling, one who would trade the secret for his life. You," he snapped at the Nazi groveling on the ground, "tell me where the prisoner is and you shall live. Otherwise—"

"Heinrichs, no!" Edvard shouted.

But Heinrichs was paying no attention to his *kommandant*. He crept toward the smiling Jap, his eyes wide with the fear of death.

"Where is the professor?" Nagato ordered.

"Heinrichs!" Edvard cried desperately. "It is for the *Fuehrer*!"

Masters's face grew taut as he slowly raised his bow and notched the arrow on the waxed string.

"I hate to do this," he murmured between clenched teeth. "But this is war. Millions of lives are at stake! Get ready to duck."

"Nagato?" Warren asked huskily.

Masters squinted along the shaft. "I've got to choose the squealer."

As the Eagle drew the arrow back to the broken blade with which he had tipped the shaft, the air was filled with flying débris and hurtling stones. The men in front of him were screened by a cloud of pulverized shale.

"Good-night," Warren gasped. "We're being bombed!"

Masters shook his head. The arrow had sped from his fingers in the excitement. Behind that settling cloud of smoke he heard a wild scream, then a rattling gurgle.

"Did you hit something in that Hun's pocket?" Warren gasped. "Maybe some U-Two-thirty-five?"

Masters' answer was lost in another explosion. He pulled the others back into the brush and tried to peer into the sky to see who might have appeared on the scene.

"It is the Eagle, Nagato!" they heard Edvard cry above the rattle of cascading stones. "The Eagle!"

THERE was a crisp burst from one of the Jap guns. Then Nagato was screaming orders to the men who had survived the holocaust.

As the smoke drifted away Masters stood up. Down in that little amphitheater of death lay the still writhing bodies of two Japs. Near them, his face beaten to a bloody froth, the body of Edvard lay crumpled across the prone figure of the Nazi who had been about to sell the secret for the privilege of living.

"Look!" Warren said breathlessly. "Your arrow got a Jap right in the throat. Must have been moving forward just as you let go. The explosion got the young Jerry."

"But what happened?" Masters asked. "Neils"—he turned to the lad—"did your father have another of these U-Two-thirty-five bombs?"

"There is only this one left," Neils said, touching his pocket. "Look, the Japanese is hurrying to his plane."

Masters choked back a curse as he saw a little life raft equipped with a kicker scudding across the cove toward the seaplane.

"Get those two machine-guns!" he ordered Warren. "Rip the clip boxes off the bodies and make for the Stinson. Neils, stay here and try to locate your father. We'll be right back."

Masters ran for the Stinson. By the time Warren came up with the two guns and two belts full of clips he had the motor going. Warren threw the guns into the cabin and crawled in.

"We'll warm up as we taxi out!" Masters shouted.

He waved to Neils, then cut out across the cove after the already moving yellow-winged job.

"That guy Edvard sure got a mouthful of lead," Warren shouted.

"Now all we've got to do," Masters said dryly, "is finish off Nagato before he carries out his threat to blast Dutch Harbor."

"Think they'd try it?" Warren demanded.

"They think they've got to get even," Masters said tightly. "To regain face after the no-hit game Jimmy Doolittle pitched against them."

"If I had a face like that rat Nagato, I'd give it away," Warren snorted. "Can't see why anybody'd hate to lose one like that."

"Got your guns set?" Masters asked, and Warren nodded grimly.

"Look out please, Mr. Nagato!" he said. "Here we come!"

Masters lifted the Stinson off the water and held it about ten feet above the shimmering inlet.

"We'll hold this position," he called over his shoulder. "Put us ahead of him and then we'll climb. All set?"

Warren patted the guns and smiled. He nodded toward the open window and laid the clips out in a row on the floor.

CHAPTER IX

Death Locks Wings



FOR A time Masters held a steady course above the inlet until the broad expanse of the Pacific began to unfold. Then he gently began to ease back on the wheel, lifting the nose of the plane toward the cloud-stippled sky.

"Those explosions have still got me puzzled," Warren called. "Do you suppose somebody else has horned in on this game?"

Masters shook his head. "My guess is the professor. . . Hey, we're about to connect with action. Looks as if Nagato's planning to open the game."

Warren rested one of the guns on the edge of the window.

"Figures there are no guns on this crate, so he's getting ready to play rough."

"Played plenty rough the other day even when we did have guns," Masters said grimly. "I've got a little kick left in this motor, but we'll have to depend on turning inside him. He's faster. Be ready to let him have it from either window."

Behind him, Masters could hear the deep-throated roar of the Kawanishi. He leaned out of the cockpit to watch it twist in position for a dive on his tail.

"Brace yourself, Phil!" Masters shouted. "I'm going to fish-tail plenty."

Down, down the big crate hurtled almost as if the Jap were attempting to sweep the Stinson out of the sky by sheer weight.

A couple of guns in the nose of the Kawanishi opened up. Masters' feet tensed on the rudder pedals. Tracer streaked through the sky, then began to inch toward them as the Jap gunner corrected deflection.

At the very last moment, even as a couple of slugs found his left wingtip, Masters jammed on full right rudder without banking. The Stinson groaned in agony as it skidded around, jamming both Masters and Warren against the side of the cabin. A quick kick in the opposite direction, another to the right, and he had the Stinson fish-tailing, almost in a stall.

The faster, heavier plane plummeted by with the roar of an express train, miscalculating entirely the speed of the trim little monoplane.

"Now!" Masters cried as his hand hit the throttle. "Give it to him!"

He banked, allowing Warren a clear shot at the Kawanishi as it leveled out.

Warren threw the wide-stocked Nambu to his shoulder and pressed the trigger. The gun jerked, throwing a clip of five slugs down at the seaplane. As Warren fitted a new clip he looked at Masters and shook his head.

"Don't know." He shrugged. "For a minute I saw five planes down there while the recoil knocked my head around. Couple more clips an' it'll fly off."

"If you didn't hit them they at least won't know we're armed," Masters assured.

"Bit my tongue, too." Warren scowled as he pulled the back of his hand across his lips and looked at the smear of blood. "Oh, boy, get ready! Here we go again."

The baron had his plane in a climbing turn. His guns were already spewing tracer in the direction of the Stinson.

"Now we'll play another game," Masters said grimly. "Nagato knows all the lessons in the book by heart. I'll show him some he missed in the appendix."

Sweeping in a wide berth around the Stinson, Nagato coolly looked the situation over. Then apparently satisfied that it was the same plane he had chased a few evenings before, he began to close in.

Masters threw his ship over and started to bank with the Jap when a crash behind him caused him to bring the ship back on even keel, then into a bank in the opposite direction.

"More Japs, Phil!" he cried.

Another splintering crash. He looked over his shoulder, expecting to see Warren lying on the floor in a welter of blood.

"What in Sam Hill's going on?" he asked when he saw the grin on Warren's face.

Warren pointed to a hole in the roof of the cabin.

"Just opening up a couple more gun ports. Got another in the floor. Now if I only had one in the tail I'd be ready to make this Jap guy think he'd run up against a new type ship. Watch it! Here he comes again. And I'm ready to let him have it sideward and up or down."

Masters waited tensely for the opportunity to let Warren give Nagato the surprise of his life. Stop this murderous Jap he must. For even if the Eagle did stand in the Jap's way in the matter of the professor and his secret, there was Dutch Harbor to consider.

Pearl Harbor must not be repeated up here on the last outpost of the West Coast. That base had to be protected at all costs. For some day, the sky above that base would be filled with planes following the sky trail so bravely blazed by General Doolittle and his stalwart men.

The *taka-taka-taka* of the Jap guns broke above the roar of the motors. The air crackled and snapped. The Stinson's left wing was being roweled by twin streams of silver-feathered arrows. The shuttles of hate and greed were weaving a veil of death around the Stinson.

"Bank!" Warren was shouting. "I've got a gun stuck through the floor."

Masters waited, risking a hail of buzzing slugs to make sure he had Nagato in position. Then he threw the ship over as if avoiding the swarm of death-dealing lead. At the same instant the gun clamped to Warren's shoulder ticked off five lightninglike shots.

As the last slug left the Nambu, Masters leveled off, threw the nose toward the water, then yanked the wheel back as the air speed indicator needle climbed. For a moment he hung in the top of a loop he purposely made awkward. And once again he heard Warren pour a flailing burst of five shots at the Jap plane.

"I think you hit him," Masters cried triumphantly. As he came out of the loop, he let the Stinson dive before half-rolling behind Nagato. As Masters spoke a burst of tracer wove a tracery of cobwebs against the blue. The rear gunner of the Jap plane was still pouring it to the Stinson.

"Dive!" Warren was shouting. "Dive and come up under him. I'll give him another dose."

With the throttle wide open, his prop screaming, Masters hurtled out of the cone of fire concentrated on him. He followed every move of Nagato's desperate effort to let his gunners hold the Eagle in their sights.

"Get ready, Phil!" Masters shouted. "I'm going to zoom, and level off right under him."

"Giving him both barrels this time!" Warren called. "You get me in position and I'll do the rest, even if they do knock my head off."

A QUICK glance showed Warren with both of the light machine-guns poked through the opening, with a wide stock clamped tightly against each cheek.

Nagato, sensing the Eagle's ruse,

had his ship in a tight bank. But despite the burst tossed his way, Masters followed Nagato until he was right under the Kawanishi. Then he hauled back, lifting the nose of the Stinson right up at the seaplane.

Nagato tried to turn away by digging on full bottom rudder, but could not before Warren had emptied both guns right into the fuselage of the Kawanishi.

"You got him!" Masters cried. "His motor—it's smoking. That does it!"

"Look out!" Warren screamed. "He's ramming us! Oh, glory! Here we go!"

Masters tried to avoid the seaplane's wing-tip, but it was too late. Nagato's desperate effort to foil him brought his nose low, slewing the seaplane around so that its lower wing was in line with the Stinson. The Eagle kicked rudder with a last despairing prayer. He tried to throw his left wing down in time to let him pass under the seaplane. But a pontoon caught him, clutching at the leading edge of his wing and driving through the fabric to tangle with the dural ribs.

Both pilots snapped switches to "OFF." For a single blood-chilling moment the two planes, with wings locked like the antlers of crazed stags, slowly revolved around each other and started downward.

"We're goners!" Phil moaned. "And look at that yellow devil grin. Figures he's done a good day's work for Hirohito when he gets you."

"He hasn't got me yet," snapped Masters. "Gimme one of those guns quick. You take the other. Got to shoot our way clear before he catches fire. Hurry! Don't you see he's smoking?"

Masters grabbed the gun pushed at him and shoved it through the window of the cabin. Nagato ducked as he opened up. He held steady, battering the dural spar and ribs with a full clip of five.

"Shoot the devil out of that spot," he shouted to Warren. "It's tearing loose. I've got to be ready to swing clear!"

Warren poured hot lead at the spot where the wing pontoon was tangled with the Stinson's wing.

"One more clip!" Masters called frantically. "We'll make it before we kiss the drink."

Warren braced himself and let another cluster of slugs fly. Dural, chewed to bits by bronze-sheathed slugs, flew in all directions. The wing-tip tore lose. The two planes fell apart, with a section of dural framework clinging to the battered pontoon of the baron's plane.

Masters snatched at the switch as Nagato curled away, leaving a thin scarf of black smoke. The motor coughed a gob of over-rich fuel, then caught.

"Will we make it?" Warren cried as the Stinson went into a spin. "Aileron's gone."

"See if you can get out on that wing strut, Phil," the Eagle ordered, as he jockeyed the plane out of the spin, only to have it fall into another. "Got to find some way of balancing."

"One way's as good as another, I suppose," Warren muttered. "See if you can flatten out so's I can get your door open."

MASTERS released the door latch and Warren scrambled over him. "I can hang onto the strut and brace my feet against the pontoon. That ought to give us resistance."

"Okay, okay," Masters snapped. "Get going. Water's coming up at us pretty fast."

When Warren had his position on the outside the wind resistance set up was enough to help the Eagle keep the plane under partial control. Bits of gleaming dural flew off the shattered wing and twisted away like silver moths in the sun. Alternately gunning the motor and throttling down, Masters was fighting to time the spins in order to at least hit the water right side up and going ahead.

He took a quick glance out of the window and saw Nagato's plane heading west, with a trail of black streaming behind it. Masters grimly marked the course. Then as he glanced down at Warren the tenseness faded from his face.

"Well, I'll be—" he muttered as he saw Warren risk being torn from his precarious position while he strug-

gled to tear the foil off a chocolate bar.

With expert timing, Masters gunned the motor. The Stinson slithered on a straight course for a split second, then let the air slip away from its wings as Masters yanked the throttle back and cut the switch.

The Stinson dropped. Its pontoon smacked into the water at the entrance to the cove. A smother of spray lifted in a solid curtain around the plane. It gradually righted itself until it lay bobbing on the mirrored surface of the inlet.

"Phil!" Masters called. "Phil, where are you?"

"Back here playing tag with a couple of seals," Warren called thickly.

Masters scrambled out on the pontoon and helped Warren up.

"Couple more feet and you could have qualified as a sub commander," Warren mumbled as he spat out a mouthful of water.

"Well, spit that chocolate out or swallow it," Masters smiled. "Hate to see anybody try to talk with a mouthful."

Warren pointed behind them. "Salmon are nibbling that chocolate by now. It's my teeth—they're all loose. Stock hit me smack in the kisser when I fired that last burst. Talk like a panty-waist."

"You mean you can't even eat chocolate?" Masters demanded.

Warren opened his mouth and wiggled his teeth with his fingers.

"Hurt too," he said thickly.

The Eagle patted Warren's shoulder.

"With all this dieting you're going to be in nice shape by the time we get back."

Warren shrugged and pointed to the distant shore.

"How?" he mumbled, pointing from the shore to the broken wing.

"We'll have a look," Masters said. "Only damage seems to be this pontoon strut. We can brace that with those two guns, then taxi back to the mine. Got to pick up Neils and his father."

Warren started to speak, but changed his mind. Instead he crawled back into the Stinson and handed Masters the two Nambus. Then he tossed

out a length of wire from the plane's emergency kit.

"These Jap guns sure are useful things," Masters said, as he finished lashing a gun to either side of the damaged strut.

Warren just nodded as he stood on the pontoon gingerly touching his loosened teeth.

"I'm sorry," Masters said, when he got back in the cabin and started the motor. "But you do look kinda funny. That lower lip of yours is swelling fast. You'll soon be able to pass for a Ubangi."

Warren pointed toward the head of the inlet where they had left Neils to look for his father.

Masters nodded, poured the soup to the motor, then motioned for Warren to take over.

"You taxi, Phil. Having something to do will help keep your mind off those sore teeth. I'll sit back and try to figure out our next step."

"Dutch Harbor," Warren said, as he took over.

CHAPTER X

Death Walks



HEN they taxied the Stinson to the log dock and tied up it was almost dark. Masters called Neils, and when the boy did not appear he broke out the plane's first aid kit and swabbed Warren's bruised gums with iodine.

"You'll have to take it easy on grub for a couple of days," he cautioned. "You look as if you'd run into a nice left jab. It's mush an' milk for yours."

"Where's the mush an' milk?" Warren smiled weakly.

"Where's Neils?" Masters said grimly. "That's the question right now. Hope he didn't wander off into the woods, or get lost in the mine."

Warren grabbed Masters by the arm.

"Look!" he said hoarsely. "The others are there, but Edvard is gone."

Masters whistled as he glanced at the dead Nazis and Japs. But the body of the man who had kidnaped the professor was gone.

"You sure he was dead?" he asked Warren. "Couldn't have been just wounded?"

Warren shook his head. "Face all gone," he said. "Brains all over the place."

"Neils!" Masters shouted again.

A loon out on the inlet laughed at him. An owl coming out for an evening hunt called "Hoo." An echo bounced back from the wall of spruce across the cove.

"Queer," Masters murmured. "Maybe we'd better build a fire. If he's lost, he'll see the light."

The Eagle unwrapped the waxed silk package he took from his pocket.

"Lucky I waterproofed these matches," he said. "I got almost as wet as you when we smacked in."

Masters built a small fire, using one of the rusty shaft buckets for a reflector. For a while he and Warren sat huddled over the warmth to drive away the chill that came with the northern darkness.

Suddenly Warren reached over and touched Masters. His eyes were wide, gleaming in the flickering light of the flame.

"Are you kidding me, John?" he asked after a moment.

"About what?"

Warren pointed to his jaw. "No infection or anything? I mean fever."

Masters studied Warren's face. "What's the matter, Phil?" His voice was filled with sudden anxiety, for fear that his friend was more badly injured than he suspected. He touched Warren's forehead. "What is it? You haven't any fever."

"It's Edvard," Warren mumbled as he glanced over Masters shoulder. "I saw him with his face shot away. But now he's standing right behind you."

"You're nuts!" Masters grinned as he turned to follow the direction of Warren's fear-stricken gaze. "There's nobody there."

"But I saw him," Warren persisted. "Just as plain as I see you. Look, John, there he is again. He's coming toward us."

Masters turned and leaped to his feet as if electrified. For there, coming slowly toward him was the tall, pale-faced man he had seen lying in a pool of blood a few hours before.

Only now the face was whole, not a smear of crimson froth.

"Edvard!" Masters gasped, realizing that for one of the few times in his life he was thoroughly shaken. "Is that you, Edvard?"

"*Jeg forstaar ikke Engelsk*," the man said, as he approached the fire.

"Edvard—Edvard," Masters said, pointing to the man.

The man nodded slowly. "Edvard," he said, tapping himself on the chest.

"Good glory!" Warren groaned. "I always wanted to see a ghost an' now I don't like it."

"Shut up," Masters said. "Something screwy about this. "Edvard—" he turned to the man. "Hvor, Neils—Neils—*forstaar*—Neils."

THE man nodded again, and motioned for Masters to follow him.

"Come on, Phil," Masters said softly. "This may be a trap, but we'll see it through. We'll at least find out how men can get their faces smashed by machine-gun fire and live to tell about it. Might find a cure for those aching molars of yours."

As the man stepped away from the circle of light Masters and Warren followed. They were forced to follow by sound rather than sight.

Then a light suddenly flared in front of them as their guide struck a match and lighted a lantern. He motioned for them to keep close, then stooped to enter a narrow opening partly overgrown with young alder.

"The mine entrance," Masters whispered. "Keep close, and keep your fists doubled."

The bobbing lantern threw weird shadows on the low walls of the tunnel leading into the side of the hill. It seemed ages before their ghostlike guide stopped before a shaft and motioned for Masters to get into a bucket attached to a windlass.

Masters picked up a stone and dropped it down the well of darkness. He heard a faint thud.

"About a hundred feet deep," he said to Warren.

Edvard smiled and pointed toward the bucket. "Neils, Neils," he said.

"You gonna trust him?" Warren demanded. "You gone nuts."

"I told the kid I'd come back for

him, didn't I?" Masters retorted. He looked from the bucket to Edvard. "Got to take a chance. You keep your eyes on that windlass handle. If he starts to let go, crack him one and grab."

"Yeah," snorted Warren. "Crack a ghost. That's a hot one. Let's beat it. I got to see a guy about a tooth."

Refusing to argue, Masters crawled into the bucket and motioned for Edvard to lower him.

"Watch him," Masters cautioned. "If you don't I may have something more to worry about than a few loose teeth."

"Watch a ghost!" Warren scoffed. "Suppose he fades. Ghosts do that."

"Then you better fade too," Masters said.

The creaking of the windlass grew fainter and fainter as Masters was lowered into the Stygian darkness of the shaft. Then the bucket bumped against the bottom. Masters crawled out and shouted up the shaft toward the glimmer of light far above.

In a few minutes he was joined by Warren.

"Feel better, Phil?" he asked.

"Being buried by a ghost should make a guy feel better," Warren mumbled. "I've seen you do dumb things, John, but this takes the blue ribbon."

"Hey, look," Masters said. "The lantern's coming down."

Before Warren could answer Edvard stood before them with the bale of the lantern caught in the crook of his arm.

"Kom," he said, and led the way toward a hole in the wall of the shaft.

THE two men followed close to the dim circle of light thrown by the lantern, until the shaft widened out.

"Mr. Masters!" Neils voice came out of the shadows before they could see him. "I was afraid you would not come in time."

"What's the trouble, Neils?" Masters asked. "And who might this be?" He jerked his thumb toward the man with the lantern.

"That is Edvard," Neils said soberly.

"But I saw Edvard's brains blown out!" Warren exclaimed.

"No," Neils said quietly. "That was Edvard's twin brother. We did not know about him. But the Gestapo knew, and they sent the other one to take Edvard's place. I knew something was wrong, but I could not tell what. I was so certain Edvard would not betray us. Edvard says he buried his brother on the hillside."

"Then I still got to meet my first ghost," Warren said, with a relieved sigh. "Boy, this Edvard sure had me guessing for a while."

"Where is your father?" Masters asked, and the boy's eyes filled with tears.

"He is dying," he said slowly. "The Gestapo men tortured him, trying to make him reveal the secret of U-Two-thirty-five. He could not hear them, at first, because of what the explosion did to his ears. And when his hearing came back, he still refused to answer them. But it was a Japanese gun that got him. It was Edvard and he who threw the dynamite."

"Dynamite!" Warren sputtered.

"Yes. Edvard managed to free father and get him to the surface. When the Nazi was about to tell the Japanese officer where father was, Edvard threw the dynamite which he found in the mine. One of the soldiers must have seen a movement in the bushes and fired. Father was hit."

"Where is he?" Masters asked.

"Edvard brought him down here again and hid him," Neils explained. "He hid me too, for fear they would find me. I told him you were friends, and he trusts you now. Because you trusted him."

"An' what a bit of trustin' that was," Warren growled.

"I know," Neils said quietly. "But, we must return to father now."

Neils led the way to a corner of the gallery opening out of the shaft. There Masters saw Professor Bohr-neil lying on some old sacking.

"I'm sorry I did not reach you in time, Professor," he said, dropping to one knee beside the dying man. "This might have been avoided."

The professor smiled weakly. "It is one of the fortunes of war. I have done my bit to help, now I must pass on to a place where there are neither friends nor enemies. Before I go, I

wish to entrust my two greatest possessions to your care—Neils and the secret of U-Two-thirty-five. With it I pray that peace will be brought to the world again, peace to my homeland, Norway, freedom to my people, to the mother and sister of my brave little son."

"Professor," Masters murmured, "until the day I can place Neils back in his mother's care I will be his guardian."

The professor felt for the Eagle's hand.

"Promise me, Masters, that through my son I will strike the first blow toward bringing peace. You still have the remaining bomb, Neils?"

"Yes, Father," Neils said, fighting to keep his voice under control.

"Good," the professor murmured: "Strike true and hard for freedom."

"Does he know the secret, Professor?" Masters asked anxiously. "Will we be able to use more than this one bomb?"

"He may not know what all the symbols mean," the dying man said, hardly above a whisper. "But I made him memorize each step. Take him to Doctor Weltner. He will be able to work out the process with Neils' help. Neils—where are you? Come close to me, my son."

Neils dropped to the side of his father.

"I am here, Father. With Mr. Masters' help I will carry on your work. With many of these small bombs of yours the Nazis will be driven from Norway, swept off the face of the earth. Do not forget, when Mr. Masters is not near, Edvard will always protect me."

"Edvard!" gasped the professor. "Where is he?"

"Right here, Father," Neils motioned for Edvard to kneel beside him. "Here is his hand."

"Mange Tak, Edvard," murmured the professor.

Tears were in the eyes of the man who had been brought up by the kindly Norwegian. He lowered his head and said a prayer in the tongue of the people who had taken him in as a boy, had fed him, clothed him when his own country was warstricken.

"Far vel, Neils," the professor whispered as he drew the boy close. "You are the head of the family. I leave it to you to bring happiness to your mother and sister again. Far vel, my son."

The professor's eyes closed.

"Come on, Phil," Masters whispered. "We'll leave Neils alone for a while."

Warren brushed his hand across his eyes.

"An' I was grumbling about a couple of teeth being loose."

When they reached the shaft, they found Edvard behind. Edvard struck a match and showed them a map, making motions that he had taken it from the body of his brother.

"Just what we need," Masters said quickly. "Let's see. You light another match when his goes out, Phil. . . . Ah, here it is. We're down on Gull Cove." The Eagle looked up at Edvard. "Radio—telephone?"

The big man nodded eagerly and pointed up the shaft.

"We'll try to contact Prince Rupert," Masters said quickly. "If we can get one of their PBYS we can still get to Dutch Harbor in time to keep a date with our friend Nagato."

"But you don't know which way he'll come in," Warren broke in.

"I checked his course," Masters said. "Figured with a crippled engine he'd taken the shortest route to the plane carrier he came from. I'll find him."

"Figuring on taxiing down the inlet tonight?" Warren asked.

Masters nodded. "Save time. Every minute counts. The plane we contact can pick us up at the inlet entrance at dawn. We can get gas here for the Stinson. The rats who stole it have plenty cached under the dock."

THEY were silent for a few moments. Then Warren spoke.

"I didn't quite get it—I mean this Edvard business?"

"The Gestapo simply knew where he was," Masters explained. "When the time came they had their agent, his twin brother, come up here, kidnaped the real Edvard and take his place, figuring the professor wouldn't notice. Came close to getting away

with it, too. Maybe if Nagato had not smelled the well-known Hitler double-cross it might have worked."

"They're the schemers, aren't they?" Warren growled. "Only their schemes are always so rotten."

"They're rotten clean through," Masters said firmly.

"What I'm wondering now," Warren said, "is how we were going to get out of this mine to keep our date with the simian stuporman."

Judging from the ease with which Edvard got down here, I don't think that'll be so difficult. . . . Here comes the lad."

Neils came to them slowly. For a moment he stood looking back toward the gallery.

"Some day I will return for him," he said softly. "But he would wish me to carry on now. I am ready, Mr. Masters."

At a word from Neils, Edvard went up the rope hand over hand. Then one by one he hauled the others to the surface.

"Neils," said Masters, "will you ask Edvard to lead us to the wireless?"

A few moments later John Masters stepped away from the wireless.

"There'll be a PBY at the entrance to the cove at dawn," he told Warren. "So let's get moving."

"Mr. Masters," Neils said softly as they started for the mine entrance. "You will not forget your promise, will you?"

"You mean about being my ward?"

"No, Mr. Masters," Neils said calmly. "I mean about allowing me to strike the first blow."

"I haven't forgotten, Neils," Masters said. "And when you do it, don't forget that you'll be helping to make it a better world for boys like you to live in when they grow up. Who knows—you might be the one to sound the knell of all wars."

"Should that be the case, then Father will not have died in vain, Mr. Masters. I would be willing to die, too, so other boys will not have to go to war when they grow up."

"We'll pray for that as you strike, Neils," Masters said solemnly. "Right now, we've got work to do before we can find the opportunity to strike that blow."

While Edvard and Warren refueled the Stinson, Masters and his young ally relashed the bracing on the damaged pontoon strut, replacing the machine-guns with a couple of short lengths of pipe.

Finally everything was set. The motor was warming up and with the exception of Neils everybody was in their place, ready to taxi down the inlet.

Neils finally appeared.

"I just wanted to reassure Father," he said quietly, as he crawled in beside Edvard. "He will rest easier now."

Masters nodded grimly and turned the nose of the Stinson west, where Nagato waited below the distant horizon.

CHAPTER XI

A Blow for Pearl Harbor



EVERYTHING moved according to schedule, and promptly at dawn the plane for which John Masters had radioed was waiting at the inlet entrance. The pilot who had flown the PBY from Prince Rupert picked up the three who were waiting, and with more hours of flying the Pacific they reached a base in the Aleutians.

For some time then Masters was in conference with the authorities, then once more he was over the sea, flying now in a B-25. Warren, as usual was the Eagle's co-pilot, but there was also a navigator, a radio operator, a bombardier, named Covern and two gunners.

A cold, sharp wind blew from west to east across the Aleutian Islands, whipping fog into long, writhing skeins of gray. Dark gray clouds scurried across the bay like dirty sheep, while birds screamed in anger at the crested waves which hid fish from sight.

"What they need up here is a Chamber of Commerce," Warren mumbled to the Eagle. "Lookit at what they did for Florida and California. This must be where bum weather is born. It's so cold my brain's numb."

Masters watched the bank of in-

struments on the dash of the B-25.

"How's the kid?" he asked. "Still sleeping?"

"Resting," Warren said. "Don't know how much sleeping he's doing, though. Kinda serious about getting a crack at the enemy, isn't he?"

"Hope he'll be able to do it," Masters said, as he took the course from the navigator. "I unloaded a fifty-pounder and slipped that little hunk of U-Two-thirty-five inside. Make it more accurate."

"But you promised to let the kid drop it," Warren said testily.

Masters nodded. "There's room in the nose for both Covern and Neils. Covern will work the sight and nod to Neils when it's time to push the button."

"I see," Warren said. "Want me to spell you? You've been on the job since dawn."

"Okay," Masters said. "You take it for a while. I'll send a flash to the base. Want to make sure they've got everybody on the alert."

"Where are we now?" Warren asked, as he took the wheel and settled his feet on the rudder.

"Here," Masters said, jabbing a forefinger at the map. "I figured Nagato was heading for here, right there at that blue pencil mark. If he wasn't bluffing the ships ought to be right down there somewhere—in that swirling bank of fog."

"And if he is, what then?" Warren asked.

"We'll head toward the base," Masters said quietly.

"You mean we'd run?"

Masters gave Warren a jibing grin. "Try not to be quite so dumb," he said. "We'd have to give the others time to come up. Can't hog the whole show for ourselves, can we? Besides, we've got a task force waiting just to the east. When I arrange a show I arrange it right, for special customers like Nagato anyway. I'm going to give him Pearl Harbor in reverse."

"Well, I sure hope you've figured right," Warren said, and grinned.

"Why?" Masters demanded.

"Because I just saw a nice big fat juicy Jap aircraft carrier through a rift in the fog down there," said Warren.

"Are you kidding?" Masters yelped.

"Take a look." Warren threw the ship in a bank. "There she is again. Got planes hung on her like tinsel on a Christmas tree. Oh—oh!"

"What now?" snapped Masters, trying to catch a glimpse of the enemy ship.

"We got company," Warren muttered. "I saw a pair of nice yellow wings flash down there. I think it's Mr. Nagato playin' puss-in-the-corner with us. The pleasure is all yours, Skipper. You take the wheel. I'll send that message."

"Don't forget!" Masters shouted as they exchanged places. "The code word is 'Neils.' Tell Sparks to hold it until they've taken a cross bearing of our position."

WARREN started toward the after compartment.

"Want me to wake the kid?"

Masters banked the ship gently and eased toward a low-hanging cloud.

"Might as well let him see the show from beginning to end. See that the men are at their posts. Friend Nagato and a couple of Zeros are trailing us."

"Okay." Warren grinned. "I need a bit of excitement to make me forget my teeth. They're cutting up again."

As Warren disappeared, Masters threw a quick glance over the instrument-board. As yet he had not seen the Jap aircraft carrier. But he knew that Warren had.

"Come on, you Japs!" he challenged, grinning. "Follow Papa and you'll see what Defense Bonds can do."

As he swung in a lazy bank and headed northeast again he caught a glimpse of a yellow-winged Zero fighter climbing to get into the cloud-scud above him. He wanted to hit the throttle, to drive the two Cyclones at full blast, but he dared not seem hurried if he wished his plan to be successful.

He had to lead the Japs into the net. Only then would he strike, only then would Neils send destruction hurtling down at the Jap carrier from which it was hoped light bombers would wing across the cold waters to destroy Dutch Harbor.

Fifteen minutes passed, minutes in

which he just kept out of Nagato's reach.

Then Warren returned, his face wreathed in smiles. "They're on their way!" he shouted. "Task force is closing in, too: Where's the yellow boy?"

"Back of us," said Masters. "Guess he isn't sure whether we've spotted the ships or not. Afraid to tackle us for fear he'll give the show away."

Masters was edging the B-25 closer to the clouds until he was directly under them.

"Pilot to Bombardier," he called through his throat mike. "Watch for target dead ahead in a few moments. Am going into cloud. Expect to be on tail of enemy plane when we come out!"

"Okay," came the voice of the bomber in the perspex bowl of the B-25's nose. "I'll get him!"

Masters suddenly eased back on the stick. The B-25 leaped into the overcast. Watching his instruments, Masters leveled out, then kicked rudder. He watched his turn and bank indicator, bringing the bomber around to reverse his original course. He held steady for a few minutes, then pushed the wheel away from him.

The B-25 blasted out of the cloud with both motors roaring. Quickly, Masters kicked rudder and banked. He came around until he was headed northeast again.

"There you are, Bombardier!" he called as a Zero fighter loomed in front of them. "Slap it to him!"

The gun in the nose of the bomber spewed a line of tracer that connected the two ships for one brief moment. Then just as suddenly the Jap plane literally exploded in the air, scattering a swirling mass of débris.

"Nice shooting!" Masters smiled and glanced at Neils who was leaning forward to look out of the window.

"When will my turn come?" Neils asked soberly.

"Soon," Masters said, as he zoomed toward the cloud again. "You better creep toward the front. When the bombardier signals you crawl up alongside him. He'll tell you when to work the release. I've set it so your special egg will be laid first."

"Thank you," Neils said, forcing a

smile to his drawn young face. "I hope I will not fail you."

AS NEILS crept forward, Masters ducked into the cloud again, then switched to the frequency the Japs used in inter-plane communication.

"Nagato," he called. "Nagato—this is Masters calling. Come in, Nagato. Let me know whether you're listening, or whether you're too scared. . . . Come in, Nagato."

"I am never too frightened to listen to the voice of the man I have sworn to kill," the sinister voice of the Jap said in the Eagle's ears. "What have you to say, please?"

"Just this, Nagato," Masters snapped. "You were so anxious to see how U-Two-thirty-five works I thought I'd give you a little demonstration. If you want to see what's going to happen to Tokyo just stick around. I'm official demonstrator for U-Two-thirty-five, the most efficient, the most colossal little cleaner upper you ever saw. Why, this little egg, weighing little more than an ounce, will do more cleaning up than all you and your murderous gang did at Pearl Harbor."

"Stupid Yankee bluff," Nagato retorted. "You do not know the secret. That is very foolish when you deal with Nagato. Where are you? You sit on shore and taunt me, hoping to frighten me away from my objective."

Masters was grinning as he eased the B-25 out of the cloud and dived for the fog swirling below.

"I'm down here, Nagato. Going to put on a real demonstration—on your aircraft carrier. Looks like one of the Kaga class. Anyway, it's carrying the bombers you're hoping to crack down on Dutch Harbor with. See me, Nagato? I'm heading right for it!"

The Eagle's phones were filled with blistering curses as he motioned to Warren.

"Here we go, Phil! The kid's going to let all Hades loose in a minute."

Warren pointed to a flock of Zeros pouring out of the thick stuff below.

"Look! They're spread right across the course."

"I guessed as much when I saw the

second—and smaller carrier," Masters said grimly. "The *Hosho*, I'd say. Loaded with escort planes. We'll deal with her later."

The B-25 hurtled on through the gray skies.

"On your toes, everybody!" the Eagle ordered over the inter-phone. "Bombardier, be ready to take over when I give the word."

"Bombardier to Pilot, ready. The boy is with me."

"Shield him as much as possible. We're going to catch it in a minute. Going in low to get target on first run. . . . Bomb bays open . . . Bomb bays open!"

"Bomb bays open, sir," came the calm answer.

Guns tore the air to shreds as Masters wheeled the B-25 through the formation of Jap fighter planes. Guns spat their answer from every port of the twin-engined bomber, Yankee lead challenging Nippon venom. Slugs rattled against the metal sheathing of the stocky American job, seeking to throw a barrier of lead across its path. But nothing was stopping Yanks that day, not even Nagato and the best he could throw against them.

"Take over!" Masters cried, as the B-25 lined up with the target. "Yell the minute he releases."

Sweat trickled across Masters forehead as he felt the bombardier take control of the plunging ship. Split seconds seemed like centuries as he watched the plane-crowded decks of the carrier rush toward them.

"Look, Phil!" he cried. "We're just in time. They're warming up. Why doesn't he let that egg go?"

WARREN punched the Eagle in the ribs and pointed toward the east.

"Ours!" he cried. "That smoke is from our ships."

"They're ours too," Masters exulted as he nodded toward tiny specks visible through a break in the lower strata of mist. "We timed it right! The U-Two-thirty-five will let go before they get here."

"Released!" came the frantic cry over the inter-phone.

Frenziedly Masters slammed home the throttles as Warren yanked back

on the wheels. With props feathered to get the most out of the raging Cyclones, the B-25 clawed for the ceiling, with Zero fighters clinging at every side, trying to pour in a clinching burst.

"Come on, baby, come on!" Masters pleaded as he took the wheel. "Every foot counts. . . . The blazes with tracer."

Then the world seemed to turn inside out. The waves far below them, flattened as if pressed down by a mighty gale. The fog poured toward a center, then sprang upward as if being drawn in by a pair of invisible lungs.

Every vestige of control was torn from Masters' grasp as the B-25 was caught in the maelstrom. As they whirled in giddy flight, Masters caught a glimpse of wings being torn from Zero fighters and their shorn fuselages plummeting toward the cold waters of the Pacific.

Exerting every effort the two men fought to bring the ship out of the man-made storm. The B-25 groaned at every joint. The wing spars squeaked and threatened to give way. The controls were useless as the altimeter rocketed toward the twenty-thousand-foot mark.

"Quickest climb we ever made!" Masters shouted. "If she holds together nothing will ever stop these ships."

"Looks like nothing's gonna stop us!" Warren exclaimed. "I can hear harps now. Ought to be in heaven in another minute, unless we make a local stop to let me out. Wonder what they get to eat in heaven?"

"Nuts!" Masters growled, as he felt the controls begin to bite at the still turbulent air.

"Not with these teeth." Warren grinned as he saw they were winning the battle. Then as Masters wheeled the ship into normal flight he leaned toward him. "You know, John, there's three things I don't want to do in this war, an' all three of them is drop bombs filled with U-Two-thirty-five. Not down low the way you did it, anyhow."

"Had to make sure," Masters breathed in relief. "But once is enough."

Neils crept into the control cabin, his face lighted by a broad smile.

"You were wonderful, Mr. Masters! You were wonderful."

"I was wonderful?" Masters gaped.

"Yes," Neils cried. "The way you stunted to keep away from that Japanese plane with the yellow wings. It followed us all the way up, but he could not catch you."

"Holy smoke!" Warren squeaked. "You get credit for the darndest things, John. Hey—the Jap with the yellow wings! Where is he?"

Neils pointed through the window.

"He's trying to ram us, John!" Warren yelped in alarm. "Boy, did you see his crate. Looked like somebody had been throwing rocks at it."

"Got caught in the same mess we did," Masters muttered. "Pretty stocky little job he's got to stand that. Hey, you up front! Watch for a shot. I'll put you in position."

AS NAGATO'S yellow job came around in a sloppy turn Masters half-rolled the twin-engined job and came down behind the Jap.

"His ship's knocked haywire," Masters grinned. "Couldn't take it the way this baby could. . . . Get him quick! He's going to make another try at ramming us."

The reply was a chattering burst from the forward gun. The tracer caught hold of the yellow-winged job. It staggered as if it had run into an invisible wall, then fell off on one wing. Behind it a column of twisting smoke formed a Gargantuan corkscrew.

"He's tried to clip his last wing," Warren said, watching the ship go down. "He's failed, so that's the way he wants it. Isn't bothering with a chute. . . . Say, talking about failing, what did we do?"

Masters pointed to a spreading patch of oil and débris on the water.

"That's all Neils left of the carrier, Phil. Nothing but toothpicks."

Warren made a futile attempt at whistling through his puffed lips, then gave it up. Instead, he reached out and clasped the smiling lad's hand.

"You did it, Neils. You did it. Your dad would be proud of you."

The lad's eyes misted, but he quickly brushed his hand across them and grinned.

"I am proud, too. There are not many boys who can say they have seen action with the Eagle. He helped me strike the first blow."

"Look at the follow-up, Neils." Masters pointed below where Yankee B-25s were raining bombs on the scurrying Jap ships, and knocking Zero fighters out of the sky. "There's the first real knock-em-down-drag-em-out battle. The word that brought them on the scene was 'Neils.' You struck first. Now our boys are finishing."

"And battleships, too!" Neils cried. "See them out there shooting? There won't be any Japanese ships left here, will there?"

"Don't think so, Neils," Masters said soberly. "An' I guess they'll think twice before they try another sneak attack on us."

"I'm so proud to have had a part in it," Neils breathed. "I will never forget this moment as long as I live. Mother will be proud too. Now she will soon be free. My sister too!"

Masters nodded as he turned the B-25 north.

"I'm proud of you too, Neils," he said, as he reached out and touched the boy's shoulder. "We'll go back to the base now and have a real meal to celebrate the occasion."

"Did you mention a meal?" Warren exclaimed. "What's on the menu?"

"Let's see," Masters took a quick glance at the fuel gauge. "The general's chef said there'd be crab bisque—boiled salmon with some special sauce, roast saddle of venison, pork chops, cranberry sauce, an' I think apple pie for dessert. Not bad for a gang who have been living off the country."

"I'd say that was perfect!" Warren cried. "Open up with some speed. We're practically crawling."

"What's your hurry?" Masters asked, as he took a final glance at the mopping-up job being done by the B-25s and the task force.

Warren scowled. "You big lug, don't you know I'm hungry."

"But the M. O. at the base said you were to stay on mush and milk for at

least a week yet," Masters reminded.

The smile faded from Warren's face.

He slumped down low in his seat and stared at the instrument board.

"What is the matter, Mr. Warren?" Neils asked.

"Everybody gets the breaks but me, Neils," Warren said mournfully. "You've just had the moment of your life. You'll be a hero when we get back to the base. But me, I'll be a dottering old kiwi who gets a bowl of mush an' milk . . . Saddle of venison! Boy, oh boy!"

"Don't mind him, Neils." Masters grinned. "If Phil could fight as well as he can eat I could retire and know

the war would be won in a couple of days."

"It will be won, won't it, Mr. Masters?" Neils asked anxiously.

"You bet!" Masters smiled. "An' we're the ones to win it. No gang of Nazi ringers will ever put us out of the game, eh, Phil?"

Warren winked at Neils. "I'll be weak, but I'll be in there slugging with the rest. We had our first inning today . . . But mush an' milk . . . Say, that's an idea. We'll drown Hitler and his bums in a vat of mush an' milk. Boy, I think I've got something there. Eh, Neils?"

Neils shrugged his young shoulders and grinned.

Coming Next Issue

THE FERRYING COMMAND

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THE FLYING DRAGONS

By LEW MARTIN

Right Here in Arizona, Valorous Chinese Fledglings Are in Training to Knock the Japs Out of the Air!

THE crusade against the Axis is making a melting pot of the world. Far-flung sections of the globe in Asia, Africa and Australasia, which had conceived of Americans only in the stock and somewhat ridiculous figures of Hollywood scenarios, are meeting our finest young men in the flesh and hastily revising their estimates.

And numerous sections of hinterland America, which looked askance and with suspicion on all visitors who failed to speak with the local twang or brogue are also engaged in forming new opinions of visitors from foreign lands.

Take Phoenix, Arizona—a town whose tradition until a few months ago was entirely that of the old West.

Today, at one of the largest air training layouts west of the Mississippi, student pilots from all over the British Commonwealth of Nations, nine Latin American countries, and China are going through their paces in preparation to engaging the air forces of Messrs. Hitler, Hirohito and Mussolini.

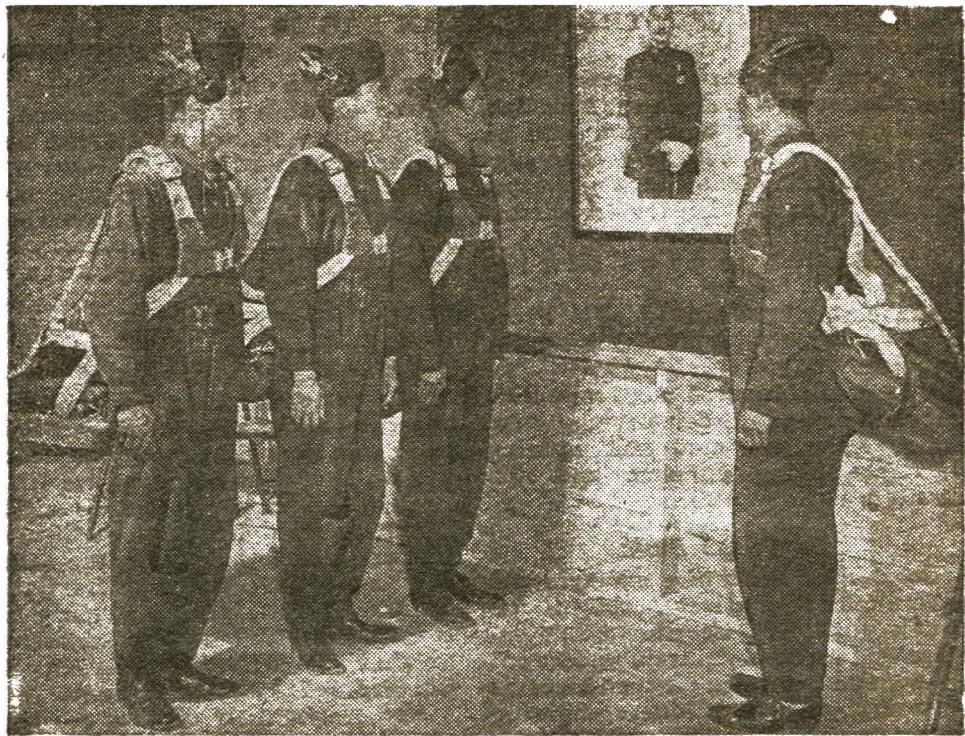
The Surprising Chinese!

Of these, the Chinese were the biggest surprise. Most Arizonans realized that the British boasted a civilization of sorts—and the fact that the state was once part of a Spanish province with traditions that still linger, made them aware of the fact that Latins are human too. But in the development of the West, the



Official U. S. Army Air Corps Photograph

Chinese cadets receive advanced flying instructions under the expert tutelage of American air instructors at Phoenix, Arizona. The Oriental students are given flight training identical to that proffered American aviation cadets. The only phase of training which will differ from the 35-week American course will be the instruction in military drill. Special Chinese officers have been assigned to accompany the students for the purpose of supervising martial training peculiar to the Chinese flyers. Upon completion of their instruction, the Chinese flyers will be commissioned as Lieutenants in the Chinese Air Forces and assigned to immediate service in the Far East. These cadets have been selected by their own officers after receiving preliminary tests and training in China. American military observers who have watched the progress of China's first contingent of cadets report that the men have shown an exceptional aptitude for flying. In this excellent shot Ma Chung Yung is shown at the controls with instructor in the rear flying.



Official U. S. Army Air Corps Photograph.

Left to right: Chou Tein Min; Wang Ping Lin; Shen Chang Teh and Lee Hung Ling are shown in full flying equipment gazing fondly and paying tribute to the picture of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, their hero.

Chinese had played but two classic and menial roles—that of laundryman and cook.

So, last November, when the first contingent of Chinese air cadets arrived to take courses alongside of their American and United Nations allies, inhabitants of Phoenix were amazed to find them alert, trim, well-mannered young men who could hold up their heads proudly in any company.

Oh yes, they knew that China, under Chiang Kai-shek, had been making a magnificent fight under almost unendurable conditions against the brutal soldiery and economic penetration of the sons of Hirohito for five long years. But China was a long, long way off.

Now they have seen, talked with, entertained and come to respect representative young Chinese just as the Chinese have come to worship Amer-

icans in the persons of Joe Stilwell and his aides and the fabulous Flying Tigers. They have enjoyed their good fellowship and watched with something close to awe the earnestness, intelligence and quickness with which these young Flying Dragons go about their work.

Thunderbird Field

The center of this great new training school for future Axis antagonists is Thunderbird Field, newly erected headquarters plant for all cadets, American and United Nations, in training in the district. Around it are four other fields—Falcon Field, where R. A. F. students do their stuff, Sky Harbor, focal point of the Latin American cadets, and Williams and Luke Fields, where the Chinese lads take basic and advanced courses respectively.

These youngsters have come a long

A SAGA OF COURAGEOUS FIGHTING MEN

way from their war-torn homeland to learn better how to shoot the Mikado's murderers out of the skies. All of them are veterans of the Sino-Japanese war, the bulk of them graduates of the Central Military Academy, China's West Point.

In 1938, the academy was moved in the face of Japanese aggression from Nanchung, capital of Kiangsi Province, to Chengtu, Capital of Szechuan Province.

The cadets endured a 600-mile hike in mid-January, conquering rain, snow, sleet and mud and fighting Japanese flying columns and air-strafers as they went.

No Cream Puffs

So, despite their nice manners and all-around friendliness, they're no cream puffs. Those who didn't endure this tremendous trek, underwent even more harrowing experiences as members of the Chinese fighting forces in the field. They aren't treating their trip to America as a vacation, but as a sacred opportunity to get training denied them in their homeland.

Conditions in China have been difficult for their aviation cadets—and for pilots as well. Planes were old and patched, and high-octane fuel rarer than gold. Once the Academy was hung on a mountainside, 7000 feet above sea level with only a few cloud-free hours a month. But all of these kids managed to knock together enough hours in the air to qualify for the rigorous standards of U. S. Army Air Forces training.

They take the regular United States Army course—thirty-five weeks of basic and advanced training at Williams and Luke and, later, in a special field in Massachusetts. Many of them have to learn the basic national Chinese language, Kuo Yu, before they can understand their Chinese instructors—China is a country of some forty languages and thousands of dialects.

In charge of them is Major C. J. Kanaga, a West Pointer who was attached for years to the American lega-

tion at Pekin and speaks Chinese like a native. He's proved a tremendous help to them in adjusting to the ways of the New World.

His director at Luke Field is none other than Captain Christy Mathewson, son of the Giant's baseball immortal. Young Christy, whose career as an active Air Forces' flyer was tragically curtailed a dozen years ago when he lost a leg in an automobile accident, has made a comeback worthy of his name and, after serving for a year at the military aviation school in Hangchow, China, is eminently qualified for his position.

There are, of course, some differences in the training the young Chinese receive and that of the American cadets at Thunderbird. Under Chinese officers, they get slightly different drill and discipline as demanded by the variations in the Chinese and American armies.

And, when their courses are completed, they don different uniforms with high collars and big sleeve badges and Chinese wings bearing the sun of China.

On With the Fight!

Graduated, they are accepted (almost without washouts, thanks to previous careful selection) as Sub-lieutenants in the Army of China and return to their homeland to carry on the fight against the Nipponese foe. They return to spread throughout the length and breadth of China the gospel of America and its industrial and aeronautical might.

Yes, for all of their nice manners, they are a grim and determined lot of young men, are being followed by other lots as alert and intelligent and earnest as themselves.

They are a fine and sturdy bulwark against the Axis. And as each new group is polished and trained and sent forth to battle, we can only quote the words with which Major General Ralph P. Cousins, Commanding General, West Coast Air Force Training Center, concluded his speech to the first graduating class.

"Go back and give 'em hell!"

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"Go back and give 'em hell!"



The great batlike form traced its crazy outline between him and the moon

GHOST SHIPS

By **JIMMIE GOODWIN**

Two enemies face young airman Alvin Bradshaw, but in one fell swoop he conquers both fear and Jap bombers who mysteriously menace an Australian island air base!

THE pilots of the Forty-seventh Pursuit Squadron were sleeping soundly when the weird missiles of death came singing down from a strangely silent sky.

There was no wailing of sirens, nothing to bring them to the alert.

Their first conception of the disaster came when the particles of shattered steel ripped viciously through the palm-thatched walls.

Lieutenants Jacobs and Mallory died instantly, in their bunks. Young Rennie Judkins staggered to his feet,

smiled weakly, and sprawled face downward on the rough floor. Confusion and death jammed the sweltering room.

The round, youthful face of Alvin Bradshaw stood out like an ashen disc in the ghostly light of the little enclosure. The groaning of the dead and dying stabbed cold fingers of fear into his soul. One thought predominated among his spinning, chaotic impressions. This was it! This was it! He was going to die here on this mean little island in mid-Pacific.

An island of gibbering, superstitious savages and strange, ungodly happenings. A place where grim death rained out of the night, hurtled groundward from planes that didn't exist. A land where the half-wild inhabitants threw themselves to the ground screaming voodoo chants while lethal missiles descended from unseen, unheard sources.

CURSING pilots stumbled out through the pall of invisibility that cloaked the flying field. Squadron Leader Ray Garrett pushed a contemptuous face close to Alvin's.

"Does mama's boy have nerve enough to take a plane up into the black?" he sneered. "Or is he going to run and hide behind the major's gold again?"

Alvin ducked his head and forced himself out toward a waiting P38. There was a blaze of anger on his deathly white face as he lifted the sleek, twin-motored fighter into the night. The fact that the squadron leader was right as far as his fear was concerned only fed the flames of resentment.

He flew with a tense rigidity, his eyes glazed, his teeth clamped hard together. He cursed at his panicky terror, fought against the soul-weakening nausea that had come unbidden when he had seen men die from a sky menace that they could not see, and against which they could not fight face-to-face. It must be, he thought, much like the fear those merchantmen out at sea must face, unarmed, never knowing when death would come out of the black night.

He tried to force his mind to give his muscular young body the fearless-

ness that he was sure was in the souls of the stern-faced men who piloted the crisscrossing planes about him. But some internal demon clawed him into a mass of quivering fear. If only he had not seen death come with such mystery!

One factor caused his chin to set in momentary sturdiness. Rennie Judkins had been one of the few friends among the men of the Forty-seventh who really understood him, who knew he didn't want to be yellow, that the fear that had come to him was something great and internally powerful he couldn't conquer.

Just a few hours ago Rennie had been joshing him about the girl back home. Now Rennie's body was crumpled in the crude, makeship hut below, cold in an unfair death that hadn't offered the chance to fight back.

Garrett's voice spoke huskily in through the ear-phones.

"Squadron Leader Garrett to Lieutenant Bradshaw." There was a note of derision in his voice. "We're going to take a squirt out over the mountains. Land your plane and see what you can do below. This is a man's job up here."

Alvin's staring eyes burned into the night. For just a second he considered snapping back at the bulldozing Garrett, but the thought of taking his plane out over the craggy, uncharted peaks in the blackness brought on the old nausea. The complete absence of any tangible enemy chilled his fear-ridden thoughts.

It was mad and irrational to give credence to the fantastic tales of the islanders. White men had disturbed the domain of the "Great Bwana," they chanted ominously. The Bwana in his wrath was causing destruction to be rained from the skies.

"Very well, sir," Alvin said meekly. "I—I'll obey your orders. . . ."

The watch on the tight little field was doubled. Planes were kept aloft throughout the night. Major Bates fumed about in a sulky, defeated mood.

"A man can fight anything that's material," he complained. "But this blasted black-magic business has me walking in circles. Screaming bombs whistle out of the night. But there is

no sound of motors. Ground spotters can see no trace of planes. I send my fastest pursuit ships up without results."

Later, inside the little radio building, Major Bates spoke to the dark-skinned, young operator.

"Corporal Mendonca," he ordered, "contact your brother on Little Shoe Island. Tell him to look sharp for enemy craft. Are you certain there isn't any cleared space on Little Shoe large enough for a landing field?"

The dark-haired corporal smiled tolerantly.

"I'm positive, sir. My family has lived on these islands for years. My brother and I used to follow our short-wave radio hobby out here even before we were drafted into the Australian service. There isn't room enough to set a pursuit ship down, let alone a bomber. You're wasting your time poking about Little Shoe."

Major Bates bristled. Strictly a militant leader, he was unaccustomed to having enlisted personnel offer suggestions. . . .

THE scouting planes held their lonely sky watch for a week, then the major ordered them to the ground. That night the ghost ships were over the field again. Bombs blasted huge craters in the runway. One of the hangar buildings went up in a billowing cloud of smoke and flame.

The twin spinners of the Lightnings snapped them into the air before the last rumblings had died away.

High over the field Alvin Bradshaw saw a great ghostly black shape slide by in front of his plane. He switched on the radio and started to call Garrett.

Then he realized what Garrett would think—what all the boys would think. Bradshaw was seeing things again. The goblins were scaring Al. Alvin was twenty-three, but looked eighteen. And the boyish curl in his sandy hair lent a more juvenile touch.

He flicked the contact shut and gritted his teeth. It had probably been a cloud he had seen. Planes didn't slide through the air like witches. They roared high and fast.

The next morning Major Bates faced the squadron stonily.

"You men will scour this island," he commanded. "Every inch of it." He turned to Division Leader Lieutenant Seward. "Your division will cover Little Shoe and the islands to the north."

He noted the rapidly bleaching face of Alvin Bradshaw and smiled encouragingly. "Keep your chin up, lad," he said. "You transfer to the second division and fly inland today." The major's snapping eyes wiped the smirk from the face of Squadron Leader Garrett. "It's a bit tough at first, Bradshaw," he consoled. "It takes some fliers longer to get their air legs than others."

Alvin dropped his head in shame, but the ashen pallor left his face. The major hadn't given his reason for ordering him to make the inland trip, but he might as well have shouted it aloud. All the boys knew why it was being done.

If the major had had his way, he probably would have said, "Garrett, take this sniveling coward with you. He's too spiritless to fly a plane over water. Every time he looks down and fails to see solid earth beneath him, he goes into a nervous funk and has to turn back. But I've got to give him special privileges because his old man was one of the hardest fighting soldiers who ever flew a Jenny over the Hindenburg line. Before he died, I promised to take his son under my wing."

The major turned briskly to Eddie Mendonca, the radio operator.

"Get in touch with your brother at Little Shoe. Tell him I'm sending some planes over the island. We don't want him making any mistakes like the last time when he nearly got one of our ships with his anti-aircraft guns."

Mendonca shrugged casually. "My brother is near-sighted," he offered. "He mistook one of your fliers for a voodoo plane."

The major's voice ripped the air. "Voodoo your grandmother! When we find those planes we'll find backstabbing Japs at the controls. The Great What-is-it the natives jabber about has nothing to do with the powder and steel that are ripping our airfield to pieces."

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The major took a short turn about. His face darkened.

"These sneak bombings are carried out for a definite reason. If we can make this field safe enough to be used as an advance base for Flying Fortresses, we can bomb Tokio proper. But we can't take a chance on basing Fortresses here while those phantom ships continue to endanger us. . . ."

FLYING over the close-matted tropical vegetation, some of the truant courage seeped back into Lieutenant Bradshaw's veins. It seemed unbelievable that the sun-bathed panorama could be a battle ground. That even now there might be lurking amid that jumbled foliage straggling Japanese soldiers—maybe a small company of them.

Hard-fighting Americans and Aussies had wrenched this island back from the Japs and surged on toward Tokio. The island had been thickly peopled with Japanese planters. It had been their fifth column activities that had betrayed the island in the first place.

The soothing drone of the twin Allison's brought back a trace of the boldness Bradshaw had known in the States—the bravery that had permitted him to offer his services as a flyer. He had known his father would have wanted him to do something about the affair at Pearl Harbor. And he had wanted to himself, earnestly.

The Lockheed sliced gracefully through the air above the vegetation-matted sides of a craggy canyon. Alvin Bradshaw spotted a small clearing and dropped the Lightning lower. Suddenly he clawed at the controls, fought desperately to right the plummeting plane. But the treacherous down-draft sucked him toward the jungle.

His stomach came up and enveloped his whirling brain. Death and a black wall of interwoven trees loomed starkly ahead. His clawing hands slapped wildly at the controls. He was too close to the ground to attempt to pitch the Lockheed above the clutching boughs when he realized the wings were once again grasping the air.

He let the wheels down and pointed

the stalling plane toward the grass-covered clearing. The luxuriant growth acted as an arrestor, clutched at the landing gear and brought the plane to a halt scarcely an arm's length from the jungle edge.

Cold perspiration beaded Alvin's brow as the Lightning bumped to a stop. He was miles from civilization. The jungle harbored an unbelievable variety of wild animals. The dwarfed Bushmen had but recently been partially converted from the revolting practice of head-hunting.

He snapped on the radio and screamed into the mike. A dead buzzing sound answered him. The towering bluffs on either side made his sending apparatus ineffective. He cursed himself for having separated from the rest and flown through the canyon.

He jumped from the cockpit and twisted the plane about so that it pointed back the way he had come in. There were no tall trees in that direction. Then he fell to his knees and started yanking the grass out by the roots.

When the jungle night settled about him, he was still working feverishly. He had almost cleared away enough grass to risk trying to lift the plane into the air. He scrambled into the cockpit. Then the old fear clawed through his system. What if the plane should fail to clear the bushes? The landing gear might catch.

He drew his service automatic and held it in his hand as the heavy darkness enveloped the plane.

The jungle came to life with blood-curdling sound. He imagined ghostly images crawling about on the fuselage. Once some snarling beast crawled under the twin tail boom and pawed about in the open space behind the nacelle in which he was crouching.

He held his breath, lest the harsh wheezing attract the animal. The snarling grew faint and receded into the darkness.

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heard the muffled throb of motors. Someone was searching for him.

He peered out through the blackness—wanted to build a signal fire—but his nerve was not up to the task of venturing out in search of wood. He snapped on the radio, ready to call for help.

Then the distant throbbing ceased abruptly. He flicked off the contact. He was evidently hearing things. It couldn't have been a plane. Motors didn't cut off in mid-air. He must have been dreaming.

His head had drooped forward and his eyes were closed when the faint rumbling sound reached his ears. It sounded as though some distant tribe of warriors was beating on muffled drums. Stories of mad fire-dances and cannibals shivered through his memory.

The strange, eerie whine seemed to emanate from every place at once. It filled the air about him. His lips peeled back from chattering teeth. He could think of but one thing. Voodoo! Eddie Mendonca, the radio man, had told him of the voodoo on the island. A strange fire had burned in the narrowed eyes of the radio operator as he had talked.

The whining grew louder, evolved into something Bradshaw knew he should recognize, but stark fear drove all reason from his distraught mind.

When the great batlike form traced its crazy outline between his staring eyes and the rising moon, he uttered a wild scream. The silent monster vanished as quickly as it had appeared and another ghostly shadow blended through the darkness with that ungodly wailing sound. He recalled the silent black form he had seen above the flying field.

His clamped teeth caused his breath to rush out in whistling gasps. First the imaginary motor sounds high in the sky. Then the strange drumming of the distant tom-toms. Now these wailing monsters that might have arisen from some ancient Oriental legend. He cursed himself for remembering fables of huge flying dragons that coughed fire and smoke.

Then the whole crazy picture changed with a canyon-shattering roar. The walls caught the deafening

thunder of powerful motors and slapped the ear-splitting sound from rock to rock. Blue lances of fire stabbed across the heavens.

The fear-blanching disc that had been Alvin's face suddenly darkened—took on the hard, leathery look that once had belonged to his flying father.

These black shapes sliding through the night were nothing supernatural. They were planes—enemy planes! Something that could be fought!

The ghostly wail had emanated from the whirring motorless propellers. The cavernlike canyon had amplified it and added a hollow banshee effect. The distant drumming had not been any jungle tom-tom. It had been the rumble of bursting bombs. Bombs that had probably taken the lives of his buddies.

A picture snapped into Alvin's mind. He saw Rennie Judkins coming up out of his bunk, smiling to the last.

THE roaring of the two Allisons was strangely out of place in the denseness of the jungle. The sweating night looked on as the fire-spitting craft lifted above the clutching grass. The surroundings seemed to sigh in relief as the frantic fingers of thorny brush succeeded only in ripping long scratches into the undercarriage.

Then Second Lieutenant Alvin Bradshaw was up above the ground blackness. He was slapping the sleek Lightning into a tight circle—a circle that would point the invisible propellers out over a frothy, ever-hungry ocean. And Alvin Bradshaw was laughing.

There was no cringing fear in the pit of his stomach when he realized that the fast-moving Lockheed was splitting the darkness above the ocean. He knew no desire to turn back. One thought filled his consciousness. Somewhere in the blanket of obscurity before him were the ghost ships, those fiendish monsters that were responsible for the deaths of his friends.

His fingers caressed the triggers. He wondered if there was any possible chance of his single plane knocking down one of the mammoth bombers. If he only had the rest of the

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boys to help out, they could spill the two big bombers into the ocean and collect for the damage they had just caused.

If he only had help! But of course! The boys would be up scouring the air for the bombers. He might contact them on his radio.

He snapped the switch.

"Lieutenant Bradshaw to any American who may be in the air," he pleaded anxiously. "Bradshaw calling. Please come in. Over."

There was a moment of silence, then a voice crackled in through his phones.

"What in thunder?" the voice said. "Who's bein' funny? Bradshaw's dead. He crashed somewhere in the mountains. Cut the horse play."

It was the cock-sure voice of Squadron Leader Garrett.

"Listen, you big ape," Alvin Bradshaw gritted into the mike, "when I get back to the field I'll show you who's dead. Right now there's more important business to be attended to. I'm ridin' the tails of the boogy ships. And this is no horse play. I'm out over the ocean due south of the cut in the mountains. The ghost ships are somewhere ahead, but I'll be on them in a minute."

"I don't know what the play is," Garrett's voice boomed back, "but I'm not falling for your game. Whoever you are, you're not Bradshaw. He wouldn't have nerve enough to be up over the water and he never gave me any lip, like a real flyer, in his life."

Alvin switched over. A hard unyielding grin swamped his face.

"Here goes Bradshaw after his air-legs," he chuckled. "Tell you guys about it tomorrow. Maybe you'll believe it then."

Far ahead he picked up purplish spits of fire. The exhausts from one of the Jap bombers. He ticked the radio off and checked his guns.

The lumbering four-motored flying boats drowned the smooth voice of the Allisons as he cloud-perched the Lightning above the trailing ship.

BRADSHAW had never actually contacted an enemy in mid-air. Suddenly he realized that the real thing was far different than blackboard diagrams in classrooms.

He knew a moment's revolt against rushing down from the dark on the unsuspecting Japs. But memories of Pearl Harbor and of Rennie dying in the darkened hut turned his face to a picture of grim determination.

He gunned the Lockheed up, then dropped the nose to center on the bulking blackness between the four churning motors. His wing guns rattled out a crescendo hail and the 37-millimeter cannon hurled explosive shells into the lumbering craft. He pulled out of the dive when his spinning props were within feet of the bomber's wing-tops.

A cannonade volleyed from the giant air-boat, lashing the air around Alvin into burning pocks of death.

He kicked the diving Lightning to one side in time to avoid the steel curtain that streaked from the rear turret. He nosed the Lockheed down and came up under the belly of the ship.

Too late he realized his mistake. Burning steel stitched a deadly pattern across his engine nacelles. One of the whirring props was nicked and the Lightning pitched oddly sideward.

That side motion saved Bradshaw's life. The stitching of death sewed a harmless semicircle behind his twisting body. He kicked left rudder and peeled off. Down—down.

The heavy darkness closed in with a cold dampness. The ailerons clawed at the air, pulled the Lockheed out of the dive with its retracted wheels skimming the lashing water. It was only after he had the Lightning back up above the bombers that he gave the matter any thought.

He caught himself wondering why he had ever feared the water. A flush of pride burned across his face.

The Lockheed stood on her tail booms and Bradshaw laughed as he pedaled her over into a dive toward the closest bomber.

The 37-millimeter cannon caused the ship to buck and tremble. A tiny flare whipped out near the nose of the huge bomber. The flare grew into a wind-forced finger of flame. The blaze spread rapidly, enveloped the entire ship. The giant wings broke off and the ponderous fuselage sent a tower-

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ing mountain of foam up from the sea.

Alvin shot the Lockheed ahead where he could see the fire-spitting stacks of the remaining bomber. He throttled up over the big-winged boat.

The prop on his left motor began vibrating wildly. He leveled off. A burst from the Japs below riddled his plane. He was losing speed and dropping closer to the steel-spitting ghost.

He wondered what the proper military tactic would be in his circum-

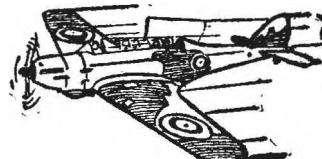
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THE flatness of the huge bomber's wings swept upward toward him. Then a bullet-fast streak of blackness shot past him. There was another and

The World's Greatest Sky Fighter Battles to Keep the Air Lanes Clear of Axis Treachery as He Helps the United Nations Supply Arms for Africa

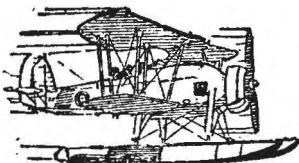
IN

**THE
FERRING
COMMAND**



A Complete Full-Length Novel Featuring the Further Exploits of John Masters

By LIEUT. SCOTT MORGAN



**THE YEAR'S MOST EXCITING
AIR ACTION NOVEL—PACKED
WITH HIGH-POWERED THRILLS!**

Coming in the Next Issue

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He cut the juice and depended on his right motor. The gunners in the bomber found his range. Slugs screeched about him, sliced through the cockpit. Death caressed him with fiery fingers, but there was no fear in his body.

another. Singing steel and fire converged on the Japs from several angles. The explosive missiles wrenching the craft to bits. It went down like a gigantic wounded bat. . . .

The single Allison coughed and sputtered back through blackness. Too many Jap bullets had found their mark on the Lightning. It slogged through the night like a river steamer.

Alvin coaxed the shuddering plane

ing mountain of foam up from the sea.

Alvin shot the Lockheed ahead where he could see the fire-spitting stacks of the remaining bomber. He throttled up over the big-winged boat.

The prop on his left motor began vibrating wildly. He leveled off. A burst from the Japs below riddled his plane. He was losing speed and dropping closer to the steel-spitting ghost.

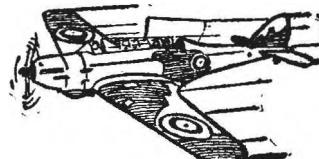
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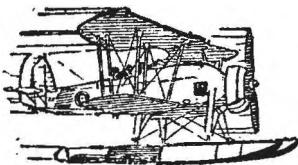
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onward, nursing it with tender hands, keeping it aloft by the force of his determination. But the altimeter dropped steadily. He flicked on the radio.

"It was nice of you guys to come to the rescue," he said with no show of emotion, "but it looks as though I'm going to have to set this crate down in the drink. The Japs shot most of my feathers off."

Squadron Leader Garrett's voice boomed back and Alvin thrilled at the warm friendship it conveyed.

"You're a good fighting man," Garrett chuckled, "but the devil of a poor navigator. We're flying over nice solid land now. I'll have the boys circle and drop some flares. You can pop your chute and go down into the woods."

Garrett's voice seemed to offer a back-pat of confidence. "Don't worry, kid," he said. "We'll find you tomorrow if we have to hack our way through with a bolo." The squadron leader's voice raised slightly. "Speaking of bolos, we had to take one away from Mendonca, the radio operator. He reverted to type and went voodoo crazy.

"The major wormed a confession out of him. He was in cahoots with

the bombers, thought they would drive us off his precious island. His brother had been hiding the bombers under a camouflage of fish-nets and palm leaves in a cove on Little Shoe.

"Mendonca would radio them and they would come in high up and cut the motors before they crossed the mountains. Then they would glide out in a big circle, drop their eggs, and sail back through the cut before they started the engines again."

A cluster of flares shot down from the circling planes and burst into brilliant life, bathing the canyon floor in dazzling whiteness. Alvin Bradshaw was half out of the cockpit, ready to take to his chute when he spotted the familiar grass-pulled runway in the clearing below. Back in the seat he contacted Garrett.

"When you guys come back tomorrow," he said, with a grin, "bring a two-seater job and a mechanic. I'm taking my plane down with me."

When the lowered wheels bumped to a halt close to the forest edge, Bradshaw cut the switch and grinned again, this time into the darkness that somehow seemed like an old friend.

"Take your time about coming back," he said, half to himself. "I've got a lot of lost sleep to catch up on."

Meet Observer "Owl-Eyes" Davencourt in THE BOMBER SQUADRON, a Rousing Complete Novel by TRACY MASON Coming in the November Issue of Our Companion Magazine, SKY FIGHTERS—10c at All Newsstands!

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THIS is a member of the Brewster family now used by the United States Navy. It is a bluntnosed fighter that rides the upper reaches at 302 miles an hour at 17,000 feet. It cruises at approximately 227 miles an hour, at that same altitude.

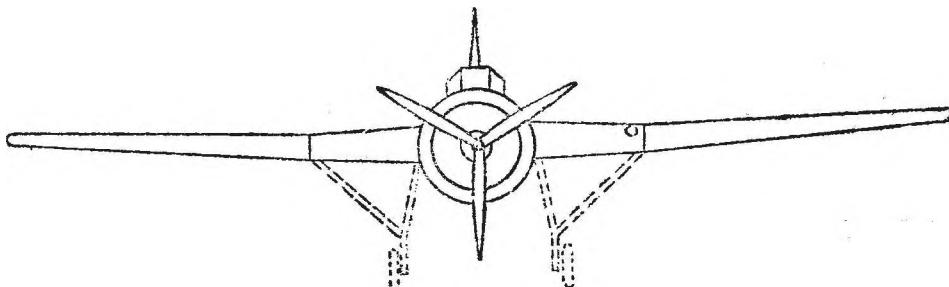
The ship is of all metal construction; tandem seating arrangement for pilot and gunner; hydraulically operated retractable landing gear and wings attached mid-fuselage.

The Brewster 138's ceiling is 30,000 feet and it reaches the roof at the rate of 2,200 feet a minute. Its cruising range, using only three quarters of its available power, is 776 miles.

S P E C I F I C A T I O N S :

Span	39 ft.	Weight empty	4017 lbs.
Length	27 ft. 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.	Weight loaded	5381.1 lbs.
Height	10 ft. 11 in.	Fuel	136 gals.
Wing area	259 sq. ft.	Oil	10 gals.

Engine: Wright Cyclone 750 horsepower



See it first in THE AMERICAN EAGLE

*An
Ambrose
Hooley
Howler*



One of the brass hats gets Bagby's fist in the chops

A Bargain for Blois

By JOE ARCHIBALD

*It's a great day for the 93rd Pursuits when
Muley Spink kicks the lid off a boiling Hun stew!*

IF ANYBODY ever earned a medal in the last war, it was yours very truly, Muley Spink, and it is a medal I will never part with as while I was earning it, Ambrose Hooley nearly got executed for treason. In fact, the Ninety-third Pursuit Squad-

ron, Major Bertram Bagby commanding, was nearly dissolved and put down in the books as the black sheep of the Air Corps.

It all started one day when I saw Ambrose come out of the groundhogs' barracks with a little mech listed on

the U. S. payroll as Corporal Alvin Snell. The little crackpot has an arm around the noncom and is shaking hands with him at the same time.

Ambrose Hooley is the kind of character who would look suspicious sitting in a church pew. His pan looks like it was made out of old flivver parts and remnants of a cavalryman's saddle, and the little turnip would rather get into a fight than into a limousine.

I cut across Ambrose's line of flight and ask him, does he think it looks dignified for him to be hobnobbing with the rank and file.

"I am not a snob like you, Muley," Ambrose says in a huff. "Snell is a very high type of character and went to flying school back at Kelly himself. The only reason he is not having mess with us, is that he could take up a crate but could never land one right. Anyway, you mind your own business, Muley, or you know what you will get!"

"I only think an officer should set an example," I sniff. "What are you up to? You have a funny look in your peepers."

"I am warning you," Ambrose says. "Or there won't be no look in both of yours. I will close them up like two saloons in a blue law town on Sunday morning.

"Muley, what is the best place to invest dough and git the most returns from it? After the guerre, I expect to have some to put into something."

THE little zany has me stumped. I says to myself, Ambrose has had a letter from Uncle Willie again, and that Muley Spink better be on guard. As Willie Hooley, in a way, is more deadly than a germ carrier.

"I hope whatever he has invented," I snap without mentioning names, "has radium mixed up with it, as the stuff eats citizens away who get too close to it too often, Ambrose."

"Ha," Ambrose says. "Don't you wish you knew, Muley Spink?"

We go over to the mess as good friends again as we ever will be, and who is there but some brass hats and they are from Intelligence. You can't tell that by looking at them, as they

all look as bright as the bottom of tar buckets. I guess it is U. S. psychology, as who would send out real-looking sly foxes to guard a flock of sheep?

A colonel starts beefing about the next big drive to take place on the front, and he says Intelligence officers and spies will have more to do with who wins than the doughs who throw hand grenades and shoot rifles.

"You know, Garrity, if we could only get the real truth of what is goin' on behind the German army. There have been Kraut prisoners who have spouted something about there being internal trouble in Germany.

"Maybe skilful propaganda, though, to put us off guard. Heard there was a new social party coming up. Seems the Junkers have been running the war and now there is a movement afoot—"

"It will never git nowheres," Ambrose says. "My Uncle Willie up and joined the Bull Moose party that time, but you know what happened to—"

"Shut your mouth, Hooley!" Bagby says. "Go on, Colonel."

"If we were sure it was the truth," the brass hat went on, after looking bottles of carbolic acid at Ambrose, "we would know the Krauts were not half as strong as they seem. We could get this push going two months ahead of time, instead of waiting for more men and supplies."

"If they are weak upstairs," Ambrose horns in once more, "then a fish can have chickens. You guys should be in the flying corps, huh, Muley?"

"Don't git me into anything," I snap. "I will not be badgered into offering to become a spy, Ambrose Hooley! Can't you see they are just hinting?"

"Oh, yeah?" the little tomato says. "They are wasting their time gettin' me in Intelligents, as I never got beyond the fifth grade. What do you think of the chances the St. Looie Browns have of winnin' the pennant this year, fellers?"

"I hear the fare has gone up on the Topeka and Santa Fee Railroad, too. Did I ever tell you of the bear I caught in the Ozarks? Well, one day—"

"Shut up, I said!" Bagby howls.

"Don't try and change the subject. And you all button your lips and listen to your superior officers, as look at the confidence Chaumont shows in you to let brass hats discuss things right with you."

"It is always customary to tell a guy who is to be hanged what day it is goin' to happen," Ambrose snaps back. "Nobody is kiddin' me. Anyways, I have a good reason to live after the war, as my future is about planned for."

"There are German spies working on this side of the war, Garrity," a brass hat says after Bagby threatens to clear the mess shack. "If they ever get hold of our plans, well, I hate to think—"

"Yeah," Ambrose tosses *sotto voce* at me. "I should think he would. With half a brain, it must be agony."

IT IS just the wrong thing to say. "I heard that!" the colonel yelped. "This squadron is a disgrace. It lacks discipline and *esprit de corps*, Bagby! These men do not reflect any sort of efficiency or respect for superior officers.

"This outfit had better perk up, Major, or it will be shaken up like a chocolate malted. A leader has got to know how to lead, Bagby!"

"It is hard to lead Spads against a flight of Heinies while you sit in a swivel chair," Ambrose goes on. "How would a football team score the last touchdown at the last minute to win the big game, when they knew their coach was sittin' in a barroom ten miles away? All C.O.s should not be too old to fly."

I never saw the Old Man madder. Bagby tries to hit Ambrose, which shows he has gone out of his mind, and he misses the little crackpot with a left hook and he spins around twice.

On the second time around, one of the brass hats gets Bagby's fist in the chops, and me and Ambrose are already on the way to the Nissen to get dressed for the first patrol of the afternoon.

"This Alvin Snell is a queer cuss," Ambrose says. "You know, Muley, I would like to get him upstairs by accident and hear him howl. Since

Alvin's eighth pancake at Kelly, his wind got up and he can't stand to get higher than a roof no more. Wouldn't it be fun to scare him?"

"There is only one other sense of humor like yours in the world, Ambrose," I says as I strap up my helmet. "It is in the jungle somewhere. Well, hurry up as we must go out and help Bagby get back in the good graces of the brass hats. It is really you that gives this outfit a bad name."

"Take out the only ace in the whole deck," the fathead sneers at me. "And what would you have left? It is me who has medals. Where is yours, Muley Spink?"

Sometimes you have no answer for Ambrose. I shut up and hurry to where the Spads are warming up. I see Ambrose slap Alvin on the back and whisper something to him, and the greaseball beams all over like a brand-new half dollar caught out in the sun. I feel still uneasier when I climb into the crate and goose the Hisso.

We go over toward Toul and just a bit beyond the Meuse, we spot three Krauts heading for Luneville, and we know they are after U. S. gas bags that are up to try and find out what is goin' on in the Jerry backyard.

The Albs put up an awful fight, worse than three Scotchmen who have been stuck up in a dark alley and who have got fully twenty cents between them.

We should have knocked off the Krauts before the twelve Fokkers got there, but Ambrose Hooley was way off form and must have been thinking of how much he was going to make out of Uncle Willie's latest mental fit.

The three Albs were holding their own with us when the sky rained the D7's, and so you can easily see what a dozen more meant to us. Four of the Vons barrel Ambrose near a big cloud and they nearly take him apart before they toss him in it.

When I see the little crackpot come out of the bottom of the cloud, he has lost a lot of Spad parts and I write him off.

"Bugeye" Boomer flies close to me and signals for me to go home, and Bugeye has three Fokkers on his tail

and I get half of what they throw at him. That is swell teamwork and I swear at Bugeye, even though he can't hear me.

I try never to look back on that awful dogfight, as it gives meague. I do not see Ambrose anywhere and because I figure they have slain the little mutt, I forget all odds and fly right through three Albs and two of them try and duck.

They form a merger instead and go down into the Meuse, hugging each other like two old maids left alone during a thunderstorm.

HWE get back, what is left of us. Bugeye should have thrown his Spad away instead of bring it home, as even a cootie couldn't have found privacy in it. I slide between two hangars like I was coming home with the winning run, and Major Bagby has to climb a tree, I come at him so fast in front of the mess shack. I finally wedge the Spad between two Nissens and climb out.

"What in hades happened?" Bagby wants to know.

"We got chased by orioles," Bugeye says. "They must have had young somewhere, as—"

"Don't get sarcastic!" the C.O. snarls. "Oh, it is a good thing the brass hats ain't here right now. Where is Hooley?"

"It will cost you maybe ten bucks to find out," I growl. "Mediums and seances cost like the very dickens, Major. If you see an ectoplasm flying about tonight, don't shoot at it. It will be Ambrose."

"Twenty-seven Krauts hopped us and if you think they are losing interest in the guerre, then you never had no principle. I wish there was a way out of this."

"Bah!" Bagby yelps. "Of all the sissies in the U. S., they have to send them to me. I—"

"Look," Bugeye says and I wish Ambrose had been there. "You can brag, Major. What chances do you take in this guerre? Muley, get papa his slippers and pipe and I will pull up his easy chair."

"I will stand just so much more of this reflection on my moxey!" Bagby

bellows, and jumps up and down like he is trying to break through a trapdoor. "Why, I shot down—what is that?"

"It is not a wasp," I says. "Why, I am seein' things. The first time in my life the law of gravity was defied, and I am here to see it. That Spad has one wing and the Hisso is grindin' nutmegs. Look, and only one wheel! It is Ambrose!"

"Who else would it be?" Bagby says and starts shaking his dome.

Ambrose Hooley always said he could get a bathtub off the ground if you put an outboard motor on it and give him two turkey wings to hold.

The homely little turnip comes in on one wheel and one shoulder blade, and fights the wreck all over the tarmac until he piles it up in front of the bomb-proof dugout.

Ambrose gets right out and drives his fist right through the fuselage, as if the thing was not banged up enough.

Major Bagby holds his noggin in his hands and runs into Headquarters to get a stimulant.

"I never had a worst day, Muley," Ambrose says. "Was Gotha bombers here while we were gone?"

"No. They are the crates we brought back," I says.

An hour later we heard that the Krauts knocked off most of the U. S. balloons, and also that Intelligence has been told that two big spies are on our side of the lines somewhere. If both are not caught, the big push will be in jeopardy, Bagby tells us when we gather in the mess late in the p.m.

"I wish I was in Picardy," I says. "Has anybody heard how our spies are doin' on their side?"

"This is a silly war," Ambrose sniffs. "It is like two pugs sparring at each other to find the openin'. If we have got any Intelligence officers over there, they are only shadow boxin'."

"If there is a third party in Germany, it will never be elected. After the way them Junkers went to work on us. Well, I think I will go see a guy."

We all forget Ambrose Hooley, which is a terrible mistake indeed. It

is like walking through the Malay jungles without thinking cobras are about. Major Bagby is in a terrible frame of mind and sits gnawing his knuckles and talking to himself.

Once I think he says, "I will show these mugs," but I was not sure.

About five-thirty we hear a Spad take off and it surprises us, as nobody ordered any of the crates out, seeing we only had four left that could fly. Major Bagby looks out the window, then opens it up and dives through it. We go out by the door and help the C.O. out of the big rain barrel he forgot was outside.

"Stop that little mug!" Bagby sputters and he sprays water all over us. "Where does he think—"

It is Ambrose going across the tarmac. Crouching on a wing and holding to a strut is Corporal Alvin Snell.

"I didn't think he would do it!" I holler. "Ambrose, you stop that! Gettin' the wind up on an ackemma is a dirty trick. Stop, Ambrose!"

I knew I was wastin' breath. I tell Alvin to jump but the Spad is going too fast anyway. Ambrose takes off and flies toward Nancy.

"I will bust him for this one!" Bagby howls. "I will personally do it with my bare hands and not by a book! He steals a Spad and half of our stock is washed out already. Did he give you any hint of where he was going, Spink?"

"What makes you think he'd bother?" I gulp and sit down and wait.

Ambrose is back in a half hour. He gets out of the Spad and he is as pale as an anemic dove. He walks a little shaky and does not say a word as he passes us on his way to his Nissen.

"Where is the greaseball?" Major Bagby yells at Ambrose. "You come here, Hooley!"

"Ah — er — somethin' awful happened," Ambrose says. "He fell off. I was up about two thousand and Alvin just let go. Who'd ever think—"

Major Bagby goes into a terrible tantrum and when he gets out of it, he says he was sure Ambrose had committed everything in his day short of murder and now he has committed that. He orders Ambrose Hooley to be put under arrest immediately.

"Y-you will be shot, Ambrose," I says. "What got into you, old pal? Speak to me. Look, Muley will try and save you. He can prove you are insane. If I don't, they will execute you!"

"I will say nothin'," Ambrose says. "Just get me a lawyer, Muley."

An hour later, we go to the groundhogs' barracks and help pack Snell's things. Bugeye Boomer is helping me, and Bugeye is digging into the bottom of Alvin's trunk to see if he had any old photos or things his people or his pals on the drome wanted.

Bugeye finds letters tied up in a package and they are all addressed to a Mr. Otto Oomlaut, Oshkosh, Wisconsin. There is a picture of a dame with the letters and it is signed by a Frieda Katzenheimer, of Milwaukee.

"Snell was a spy!" Bugeye yelps. "How did Ambrose know? Look, here is an old picture of Otto Oomlaut. It is Alvin Snell! We got to tell the C.O. quick. Sarge, run and get the Old Man!"

MAJOR BAGBY comes upstairs in the old stable and sees what Bugeye has uncovered.

"One of the big Heinie spies right with us all the time!" the C.O. trumpets. "Something smells bad, and ain't it funny he should be on a Spad's wing and didn't jump before it got goin' too fast. We will search Hooley and his hut! Come on!"

It was quite a shameful thing for even a tomato like Ambrose, to get suspected of being a spy. Ambrose sits on his cot and grins at us, so you see how I waste sympathy on the little moron.

"I shall apply for Intelligence," Ambrose says. "Sure, I caught on to Oomlaut. I took him upstairs and then dumped him. I know I should have made him stand trial, but there was a chance he would prove he was innocent. And, anyway, I lost my dome when I discovered his terrible secret. Can they get a jury to convict me, Muley?"

"How did you get wise?" Major Bagby says, his voice still lined with snake venom. "Think fast, Hooley!"

"I heard him talking in his sleep the

other night, Major. He said things in Kraut."

"How did you happen to be in the ground-men's barracks, Hooley? You are an officer—"

"I am very democratic," Ambrose says. "My gran'pa was a democrat. My old man, Uncle Willie an'—"

We do not get anywhere with Ambrose. Just as Bagby stamps out, three Brass hats and a captain of M.P.s arrive on the drome. The A. E. F. cop asks where is the suspect.

"It looks like it is all a mistake," the C.O. says, brushing things that are not in front of his eyes away from them. "Oomlaut was the spy and Lieutenant Hooley caught him getting away with a Spad."

"Hooley managed to get onto the crate before it took off and an awful fight ensued in the air. Well, when Lieutenant Hooley got back, Oomlaut was gone."

"Marvelous, Hooley!" a brass hat exclaims. "Can you remember about where you dropped him? We must find the body, as he must have had papers and plans on him. Just try and remember—"

I sit down and try to stop from fainting in front of everybody.

"It was in a canal," Ambrose says. "I am pretty sure. Near Luneville. He put up an awful fight an'—"

"You shall get cited for this," the brass hats tell Ambrose in unison.

I still hold my dome in my hands as I smell something in the air like cod-fish left out in the sun too long.

Ambrose says he would like to go to Commercy for a while, as his nerves are unstrung. Bagby lets him go.

For an hour I search our Nissen. Then I find where a board has been loosened in the floor. I lift up one end, and there is a little tin box that tobacco came in.

I open up the tin can and find the evidence of Ambrose Hooley's act of treason against his country. There are two letters in the box. One is from Uncle Willie.

It says he has a sure-fire cure for asthma but needs at least three thousand dollars for financing. He asks that Ambrose raise it if possible and says not to have any compunction

about how it is done, as would he pass up a fortune?

It is the other paper that will hang Ambrose if Muley Spink turns it over to Chaumont. It says:

For services rendered me by one Ambrose C. Hooley, Hutchinson, Kansas, I promise to pay him the sum of five thousand dollars after the war is over, depending on whether or not I, Otto R. Oomlaut, live through the war and that I, Otto R. Oomlaut, marry one Frieda Katzenheimer when I return to the United States.

I give my solemn oath and sign with my own hand, this document which is a promissory note and which is witnessed by and sealed by one notary public of Commercy, France.

Otto R. Oomlaut, debtor.

Jules DeDilletant, N. P.

Commercy, France. August tenth, 1918.

I SIT down and ooze worry water, and I could not have felt worse if I had cut my throat with a broken bottleneck. I ask Ambrose how could he do such a thing, and I vow to save him from the shooting gallery myself.

I says to myself, I can get him while he sleeps. Ambrose would rather die than let the world know his terrible disgrace, I am sure.

I hide the tin can and put the board in the floor back, and I walk around the tarmac eight times until six greaseballs start following me and tell me they will help me find what I lost. When I finally go into the mess shack, Bagby looks up from his plate.

"What do you think, Muley?" he says.

"About what?" I snap.

"I had to front for the traitor!" Bagby says. "The squadron's name was bad enough. Hooley is not to be trusted. I bet he dropped the spy down on German soil. Oh, to think the Ninety-third Squadron has a—"

"We'll make him own up when he gets back," I says in a voice as thick as Ambrose's dome. "I think he did dump Oomlaut by accident, and then he was lucky to find out Oomlaut was a spy all the time."

"Excuse me," Bagby says. "I am goin' to rest for awhile."

I wait up for Ambrose. I have got a little arsenic mixed with some chocolates. I will accuse Ambrose when he

comes in and tell him how I know he is guilty, after I let him eat three or four pieces of the slugged sweets.

But I fall asleep. In the a.m., while I am getting ready for the early patrol, Ambrose' is still absent from the tarmac.

"It is a good idea for you to desert," I says. "Don't stop until you get to New Zealand, you little renegade!"

Halfway to the mess shack, I stop like somebody has banged me on the pate with a mallet. Major Bagby is out near five Spads, and he is pushing Bugeye Boomer and the flight sergeant around and yelling something terrible.

"You heard me!" Bagby howls. "I will show these petunias who can't fly or not! I run this squadron and I give the orders. Trot out that other Spad and make it fast. Ha-a-a!"

"Bagby the Beast! That's what they called me when I flew with Lufberry. Bagby, the Killer of Cambrai! Get my slippers an' easy chair, huh? Hurry up or I will break you bums wide open!"

I hurry to my own Spad and forget the hot java. Bagby glares at me and his eyes are feverish. If you put the C.O. in the cellar of a house at the moment, he would have heated it better than a coal furnace.

I know he has been thinking of Ambrose all night and is almost as sure of the little crackpot's guilt as I am.

They trundle out a Spad for the C.O., warm it up, then help him into it.

"I'll show you bums!" Bagby says when he takes off.

"Well, don't just stand there," Bugeye snaps. "We are supposed to go, too. He will be over Berlin before we get to a thousand feet. Come on, guys!"

"That Spad!" the flight sergeant yelps. "I just happened to think. It hasn't gas enough in it to fly more than ten minutes, Captain! He got me so nerved up, I didn't remember.

"Oh, I better start for Switzerland in about two minutes. They'll bust Bagby for flyin'. He got orders not to —that tracer that nicked his dome once did something to his eyes an'—"

"Shut up!" Bugeye says. "Come on, we must save the C.O."

WELL, it is a good thing there is only a couple of Heinies upstairs when we get over enemy carpet. Bugeye Boomer and two other pilots start working on the crumbs and I look all over for a sign of Bagby's Spad.

It is a good bet that the Krauts finished the C.O. before we got there. But, anyway, if there is a chance to save him, I, Muley Spink will not pass it up. I get down low over an Alsation sheep pasture as I think I see a concentric circle down by some bushes.

"The nerve of Ambrose," I mumble as I go closer to the linoleum. "He knew all the time Oomlaut was of Jerry distraction, huh! The little liar—"

Then I spot the guy in the field, jumping up and down and waving his arms. It is Bagby and I can almost hear him yelping above the roar of the Hisso. I land in the pasture and Bagby comes running. Also some Boche doughs, who are only about a quarter of a mile away. They start shooting when I grab the C.O. by the hand.

"Hurry, Spink!" Bagby says. "I hear Germans."

"Get in the Spad and beat it fast!" I cry out. "I see you made a lousy landin'."

"The gas give out just when I had a Kraut lined up," the C.O. says. "I'll fix their wagons back at the tarmac. Come on and get aboard, Spink. We can both—"

"You are a great kidder," I says. "I don't know who is worse to be with, you or Ambrose Hooley. I will hold off the Krauts until you take off. Your guns are pointed right down into that bosky dell they have to cross."

"I order you, Spink! I—"

"Nuts!" I says and hop to the crumpled crate and get behind the Vickers. "Adoo, Major. I don't want to go back anyways. I couldn't stand the disgrace—I mean— Hurry up, you old turtle! The bullets are already hem-stitching the good bus."

"I shall never forget you, Spink!" Bagby says and guns the Spad across the pasture. "You are a brave man!"

He told me he said that later, as at the time I am spraying lead at guys wearing coalhods on their domes. They scatter for awhile and some of them sneak around in back of me and cover me like a blanket.

The Heinies throw me into a klink in a little village a mile away. They toss me some chow an alley cat would only sniff at and then lay down beside and starve to death. I kick it into a corner and sit down to think of Ambrose Hooley, who got everybody into a mess.

I wonder if he has reached the Channel yet, and hope a sub sinks him if he manages to get on a boat. Then a face looks in at me. It's under a coal-scuttle helmet and it is familiar. I turn my eyes away, then look back quick.

I blink and count my fingers. It is the ackemma I thought was killed. Otto Oomlaut, alias Corporal Alvin Snell.

Oomlaut catches my eye and holds a finger over his mouth. I slide up to the window and he says for me to wait until dark.

"You dirty spy!" I snap. What else could I do? Oh, yeah, I was thinkin' of runnin' down to the crossroads for some chewin' gum.

"I am a good U. S. citizen," Oomlaut says. "I can explain. How is Ambrose?"

"They will shoot him if I ever get back to expose him," I says tartly. "Oh, I know you bribed him as I saw the promising note."

THE bum walks away and I have to wait until dark. Then I hear a funny sound that the flat side of an axe makes against a bag of oats. The door is pushed open and in comes Oomlaut, dragging a Heinie who is out as cold as a mackerel packed in dry ice.

"Don't talk, Muley. Just listen," Oomlaut says between gasps. "Get his coat and helmet off and put them on. Then we will tie him up, gag him and put him in a corner. You will take his place on guard. When we get a chance, we will slip up to the house where there is three big Heinie officers.

There is only about six doughs left, as most of them have moved out. The Heinies are stayin' awhile because there is schnapps there and a swell-looking *fraulein*. Lissen, there is footste_s! *Raus mit, verdammt Yankee!* Kick him, Muley."

"I haven't tied him up yet," I says. "Stall that bum off."

A Kraut soldier looks in and grins as he sees me rolling the guard into a corner.

"*Das ist gut!*" Oomlaut says.

A few minutes later, me and Oomlaut are walking up and down in front of the klink. We get together and have a huddle. Oomlaut tells me why he wanted to come to France and why he was so disappointed by not getting into the Air Corps.

"Spink, I had to get to a certain town in Alsace. But it don't look like I'll never get there now. Ambrose dumped me in the wrong place. It is where Frieda's uncle's lawyer went just as the guerre started.

"Frieda's Uncle Louie made eighty thousand smackers in a brewery in Milwaukee, and he croaked just after his lawyer went to Germany to see his family once more before they died.

"Uncle Louie left Frieda all the dough but they can't find the will, as the lawyer took his copy by mistake when he sailed for Europe. Uncle Louie hid his private papers in a secret place in his house and only his lawyer knew where.

"So I got to get this Henry Schmidt, the lawyer, and get the will before he gets killed by a shell or something, or dies before the war is over. Frieda said she will marry me if I save her eighty thousand. So I had to do business with Lieutenant Hooley an'—"

"You couldn't have picked a worst partner," I says. "Otto—I mean, Alvin—you should be ashamed of such actions. Just joined up to get to Germany. You are a disgrace like Ambrose."

"For eighty thousand, what would you do?"

"Anythin'," I says quick. "Name it. I mean—Look here, Otto, you treat me with respect as I am your sup—"

"I could laugh, Spink. All I have to do is expose you an'—"

"Shake, Otto," I says. "I was kid-din'."

An hour later a truck picks up the doughs and takes them out of the little town. A big noncom shoots Kraut at Otto. Otto translates it to me.

"He says for us to bring the prisoner with us to the other truck," Otto says. "The Kraut brass hats are still there and I bet they are gettin' boiled."

We bide our time. Then Otto says it is the zero hour, and it is time for us to act. We advance on the long low hut and when we get to a window, we see the *fraulein* sitting on a *Herr Oberst*'s lap, and she is patting his bald dome. She uses her free hand to pour another Heinie another glass of the Teuton tiger sweat.

"They are big officers," I whisper to Otto.

"Yeah. They look like Intelligence orfisers, Muley. Get the potato masher and I will break in first. I will have the gun fixed on them and you threaten them with the masher."

"Could I go a little further?" I says. "This is not a high school play, Otto."

ITTO shakes his head.

"We mustn't mess them up, as it is their uniforms we want. At least I want one. You will have to drive the limousine and be just an ordinary Kraut. I will sit in the back seat and give the orders. Which way is Com-mercy, Spink?"

"We'll ask them for a map. Hurry up an' raid the joint, as I will have no knees in a minute. I would give the eighty thousand bucks to have Ambrose with me."

We crash the cottage. Otto covers the Heinies with a gun and I lift the grenade over my dome. The big Jerry with the bald noggin pushes the *fraulein* off his lap and yelps mutiny or something in his native tongue.

"*Gott!*"

"Peel off your monkey suit!" Otto says in German. "Keep the others at bay, Muley."

"If they lift an eyebrow, I will toss this thing!" I says. "Hurry up, Otto."

"Just the coat and the hat," Otto says to the big *Herr Oberst*. "That

coat would cover up the auto out there even, Muley."

Otto gets on the big coat and hat and then says for me to lead the way. I see a Jerry getting out of the Kraut limousine and it is the driver we have forgot to cover. He has a Luger and is getting it out for business. I throw the grenade.

"Oh, you darn fool!" Otto howls. "You wrecked the only thing we can git away in. Whoever made you an officer?"

"Only the hood is off," I snap. "The engine will still go. If there is two spark plugs left in it, I will see that it does. Get in and shut up!"

I get the big Mercedes perking and it goes down the road at sixty miles an hour in second, and the radiator is boiling over.

"There, you hit it," Otto complains. "It won't go three more miles without water."

"A shell hit us," I says. "Tell the first Krauts we meet at a filling station a Spad bombed us. Think of anythin'."

To make a long story short, we and Otto Oomlaut got as far as a Heinie airdrome when the boiler gave out and I says to give ourselves up. But Otto must have had Hooley blood in him, as he walks into a Kraut Operations office and demands transportation for himself and chauffeur to the nearest Kraut army headquarters.

We all pile into a Rumpler and when we are fifty feet off the ground, I slam the pilot over the conk with an empty ammo drum I find in the rear pit. I run the Heinie bus from the back seat and yell for Otto to hang on fast, as other crates are coming up after us.

It was an awful night. Anti-aircraft shells from the U. S. side nearly blow the Rumpler out from under our pants. We have to go down low and then U. S. machine-guns hammer us until we have to land upside-down near a woods. Yank doughs pull us out and demand to know who we are.

"I'll never be sure no more," I says. "Everythin' that has happened since Bagby took off is a lie. It couldn't happen. We are U. S. citizens and can prove it."

We reach the drome at four a.m.

Ambrose comes out of the Nissen in his skivvies and a pair of boots on, and he almost caves in when he sees the ackemma. Major Bagby hobbles up with one arm in a sling and enough gauze around his noggin to wrap up a mummy.

"You had a bad landin', huh?" I says. "Well, here is Oomlaut but he is not a spy. He told me everything but I won't tell what it was."

THE ackemma takes off his big coat and says it makes funny noises every time it moves.

"It must be lined with tissue paper or somethin'," he says. "I think I will just cut the lining away as I have a hunch, Spink."

"Lieutenant, if you please," I says in a huff. "You are in the army again, Otto."

"Alvin to you," Otto says and then pulls a lot of papers out of the big coat.

We all poke over them while Ambrose takes an aspirin, and they are not maps. They are flimsies with Kraut printed on them, and Otto says it is all about a revolutionary movement that is going on in Germany.

"I get it," Otto says. "It is propaganda the Heinie was smuggling to other Kraut officers. He was bustin' their morale, and who knows how long he has been doin' it?"

"Wow!" Bagby says. "Now we know there is trouble behind the Kraut army. Chaumont has been trying to prove it for three months. You will get decorated, Snell!"

"How can he?" I ask. "How would

you explain Otto being over in Germany?"

"It was me who did it," Ambrose says. "Me and Otto cooked it all up an—"

"You are a fathead!" Otto says. "You dumped me sixty miles from where I told you to. How could you explain it to the brass hats yourself, Lieutenant Hooley? You wouldn't dare, as if I told why—"

Bagby sits down and wipes sweat off his brow.

"Only one guy who can get a medal for this. Spink is the guy. Three of us went A.W.O.L. and so we got to shut up. Shake hands, Spink. At last you are a hero."

Ambrose groans and sits down.

"You and your Uncle Willie," I says to the halfwit. "Oh, I got wise to that loose board. I read both—"

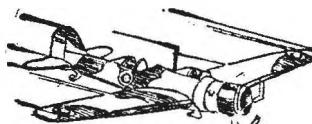
"Huh?" Ambrose yelps and runs for the Nissen.

"Where's he goin'?" the Old Man snaps.

"To hide the evidence—I mean, to git a drink, as can you blame him? How do you go about applying for the Intelligence Corps, Major? The first thing I will do is go and arrest Uncle Willie. If somebody don't, you can start sewin' on a white flag. He is poison, Bagby."

"Major to you," the C.O. says. "Well, I guess we saved the fair name of the Ninety-third, huh? Shake again, Spink."

"What did you think I have been doin' for the last six hours, huh?" I gulp. "If they come to decorate me, I'll be in my Nissen. What a war!"



Ambrose Hooley and Muley Spink Chalk Up a German Raider After an Uproarious Series of Oceanic Misadventures in

SEA SLICK

Another Humorous Story by JOE ARCHIBALD

Coming Next Issue

Model Fighting Ships

A Department of Accurate Aircraft Plans

How to Build the Bristol Single-Seater Monoplane

BACK in 1914 the assassination of Grand Duke Ferdinand of Austria gave the "incident" Germany had been waiting for to fan the smoldering embers of European hatred into the flaming First World War that raged for over four years leaving a never to be forgotten devastation in its wake.

Warfare today differs mainly in the set up now from that which existed then because of the natural modernization of war instruments and that all important comparatively new arm of fighting, the airplane.

Monoplanes Then and Now

Monoplanes were popular in the very early days of the First World War. Just to name a few of the 1914 war monoplanes, Germany had the Albatross, D.F.W., Fokker and Rumpler. France had the Deperdussin (forerunner of the Spad), Morane-Saulnier and Nieuport.

Great Britain seemed to favor the biplane more than the other countries but after all belligerents had definitely swung to the biplane she produced a slick little job which she shot into the Eastern front where it gave a swell account of itself. It was the Bristol Single-Seater Monoplane, your model plane for this issue.

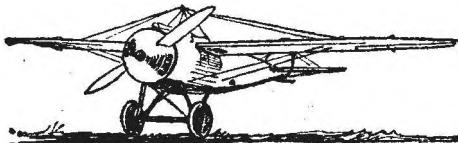
A Fairly Simple Job

Simple in line, a graceful looking job viewed from any angle, it ought to make a darned welcome permanent lodger in your hangar of model First World War Planes.

Taking a quick preliminary inspection of the plans you will see that you have a fairly simple building job

on your hands. The fuselage is round from nose to the front of the tail. You have only a single wing to deal with and the wire bracing is simple. But in these simple constructed models mistakes seem to pop out at one more than on a complicated ship.

The maze of wires and struts on a biplane have a tendency to hide any errors which might occur, so watch your step and don't let the good old knife slip. There is only



one place on plans where it was necessary to split them. Merely join the two "X" lines together and you have the complete top view of your model.

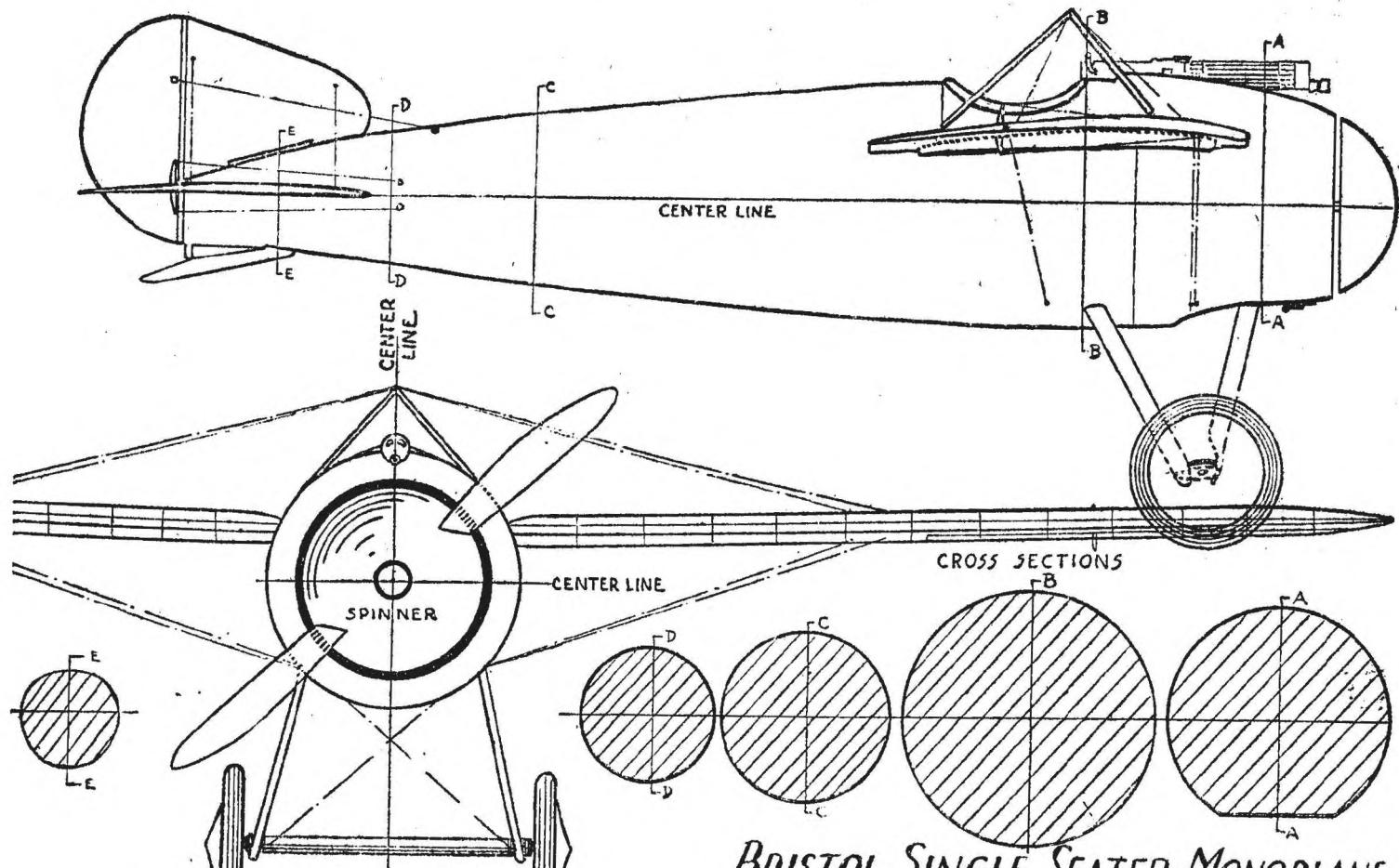
SPECIFICATIONS

Bristol Single-Seater Monoplane
Span of wing.....30 ft. 9 in.
Length overall20 ft. 4 in.
Height (maximum)8 ft.
Chord5 ft. 11 in.
Span of tail.....10 ft. 3 in.
Engine110 h. p. Le Rhone
Speed130 m. p. h.

Material

Balsa wood as usual will be the material for most of you for constructing this model. Soft pine having a straight grain can be used too. Piano wire for the bracing will be found most satisfactory. Ambroid for cementing wooden parts together is a good adhesive. Some sandpaper, a sharp knife, a razor blade and possibly a wood rasp will be a good working kit.

While we are talking of materials and tools let's consider power tools for model making. There are completely motorized



BRISTOL SINGLE-SEATER MONOPLANE

model makers' rigs on the market, made primarily for model makers of more complicated things than airplane models, but the main use of this gadget is the lathe and sanding devices. Then you can get a small lathe for as little as two dollars.

You can make your sanding disks and drums right on the lathe. Of course a small motor of an eighth to a quarter horsepower is needed, but you'll be surprised how cheaply you may procure a fair second-hand motor. Once you get this set-up, the additional gadgets you can incorporate with it for making special jobs seem limitless. The fuselage of the Bristol is round so a lathe would help a lot in getting a true surface on your fuselage, and a sanding disk would shape the upper curve of your wing nicely, while the sanding drum would fix the under side.

A drill fitted in a drill chuck would bore the hole in the front center of the spinner, and the wheels could be made too. Well, this harangue has been given because it contains a swell thought for some of you mechanically inclined builders.

Fuselage

The cross sections give you the shape of the fuselage at different points. Make the whole fuselage including the spinner in one piece. Make an accurate pencil mark where spinner separates from fuselage and cut it off. Now look at cross section "A". You will see bottom is cut off flat. Cut this section out watching side view drawing to get profile right.

Of course a line gouged in will indicate spinner separation from fuselage. Fill gouge line with black paint. From cross section "D" on back to rudder the sides of the fuselage flatten out slightly.

Wing

On the side view notice dotted line on under side of wing. This is the top of wing where it fastens to fuselage, a phantom view. As piano wire does not actually hold the wing in place as do the bracing wires in the real ship you will have to keep in mind a solid joint between wing-butt and side of fuselage letting the piano wires act purely as decorations. One way to accomplish this is to hollow out a hole about a quarter of an inch deep, slightly larger than wing-butt, then put a liberal amount of ambroid cement on wing and in hole and cement firmly in place, using some sort of temporary bracing such as a few magazines or books to keep the wing from sagging before cement has firmly set.

When you cut out the rectangular holes in either wing, cut the holes a little small, leaving your marks show on wing, then sand or cut back to this line. Do this before cementing wing to fuselage.

Struts

Matches or bamboo sanded to size will make good struts for the four-footed brace

over cockpit. Small holes drilled into fuselage at angles at which struts will stand will help anchor them and make a cleaner joint than putting a big gob of cement around their bases.

The undercarriage struts are simple, sink them into fuselage too, for a stronger joint.

Tail Assembly

Make rudder and fin in one piece and either cut apart and hinge, or leave in one piece. Get in the little slot at bottom of fin where it joins fuselage, it makes for super detail. The tail skid better be made of hard wood as it takes a lot of battering.

Machine-Gun

You get out easy this time; no twin guns, just a single Vickers machine-gun smack on the top of the cowling. Hollow out enough wood for the gun to lay nearly half hidden on top of fuselage.

Propeller

Make in two sections leaving each about an eighth inch too long. Anchor them in place as you did struts over cockpit. Be sure the two halves are lined up true when you look flat into them from the front and when you look down from the top.

Did you ever try to make a laminated prop? Well, here's the dope. Take two pieces of dark cigar box wood and two pieces of white wood, pine or any other similar light colored stock will do. Sand all pieces flat about the thickness of a piece of chewing gum, glue all four pieces together alternating light and dark strips. Let set over night under a weight. Then roughly shape propeller and sand to exact shape. Varnish, using a little turpentine for a thinner in varnish.

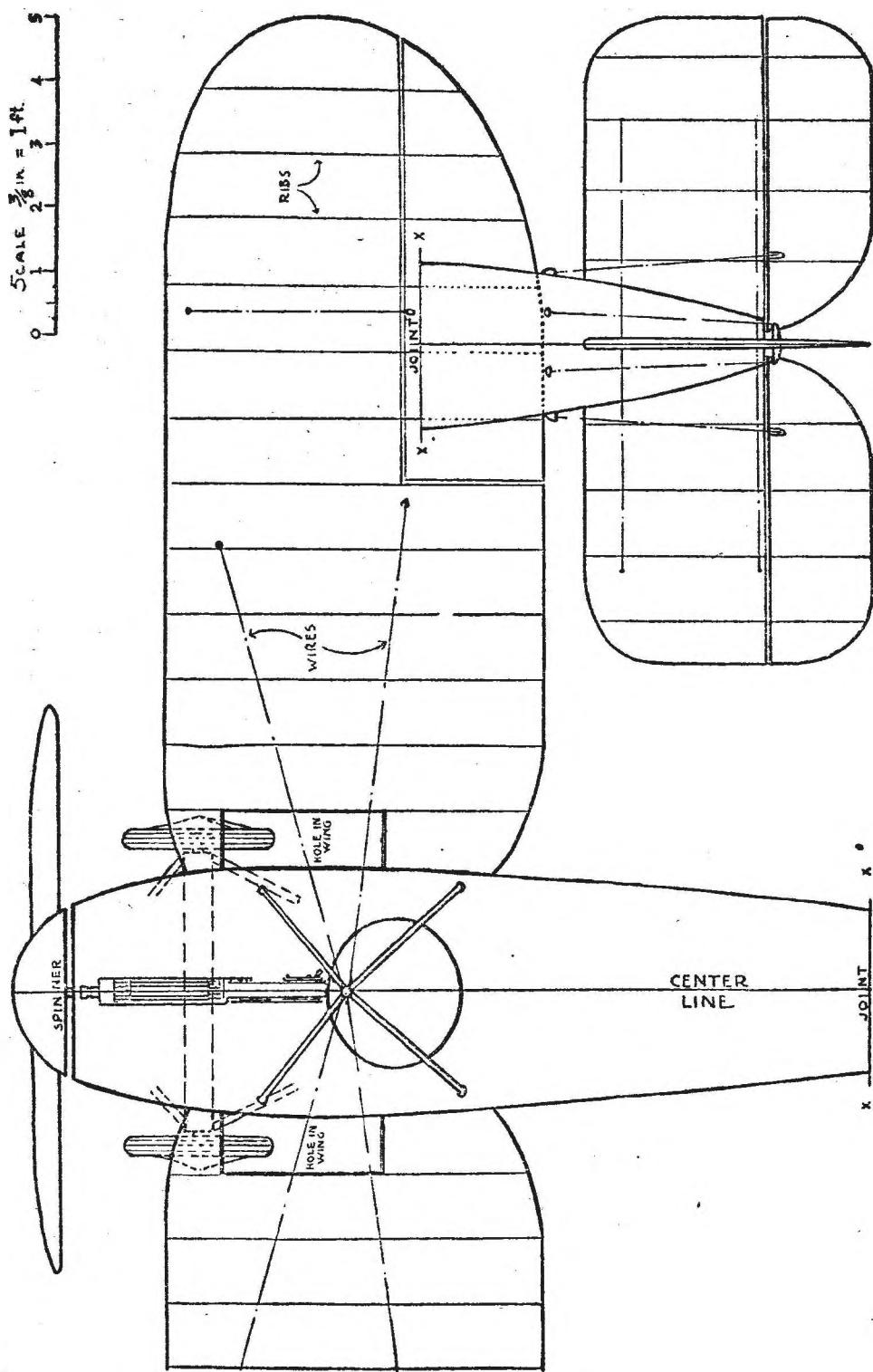
Let set a few hours, sand lightly with smooth sandpaper. Repeat this process about three times then watch the natives sit up and take notice when you flash that shiny prop at them. It sure looks like the real thing.

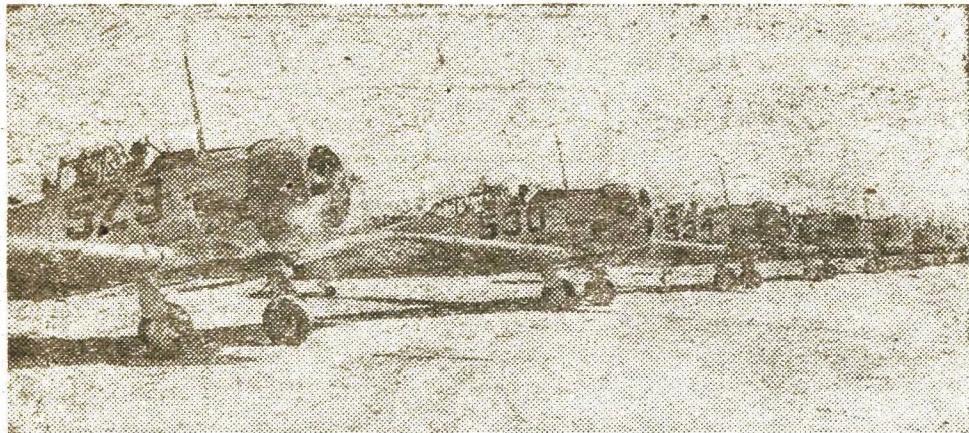
Assembly and Painting

Taking for granted you have all parts ready, checked and double checked, sanded till they are smooth, you are now ready to assemble. Place bracing under wing tips, cement wings to fuselage. Let cement harden. Fuselage can be anchored to a block nailed to a board to give it proper height. Next assemble undercarriage, last tail assembly. While model is still anchored to blocks cut piano wire and insert ends into tiny holes made by pin points. Cement in place.

Use a liquid wood filler to give a base that will take your paint or enamel without letting it all soak in. Several coats of paint or special model lacquer or enamel are usually needed to make a smooth glossy job. Use any color you like or stick to a fairly dark gray.

Scale $\frac{7}{8}$ in = 1 ft.





Photos courtesy of Southeast Air Corps Training Center, Maxwell Field, Ala.

ON THE LINE AND READY TO GO—Powerful advanced training ships are lined up at Maxwell Field before a routine training flight by cadets in the Advanced Flying School there. These ships, having retractable landing gears and 550 horsepower air-cooled motors, are only one step from the combat ships these young pilots will soon be flying.

GIVE 'EM WINGS

By **SAM MERWIN, JR.**

SPAWNED by the national emergency, bred in the frantic preparedness program and reaching full growth in war, is a vast sprawling collection of schools and airports radiating from Maxwell Field at Montgomery, Alabama, known as the Southeast Air Corps Training Center.

With its older brothers, the Gulf Coast Training Center, built around Randolph Field, and the West Coast Training Center, Moffet Field headquarters, it is father and mother to the thousands of fledgling fliers now being turned out in a belt line process for our rapidly growing air force.

As the newest of these great schools and the most rapidly put together, it is far and away the most interesting of them.

For, while there is nothing jerry built about Southeast, it has, of necessity, been constructed for quick effectiveness and has none of the frills and fol-de-rol of the others. It started from scratch.

No poverty-stricken Aladdin was more in need of a magic lamp than was this country in need of an adequate

Air Corps and pilot training system in 1940. The devastating striking force of air power had been proven beyond argument in the battles of France and Britain.

We had virtually no air power as measured by European standards. We had few planes and few trained military pilots, were even more lacking in trained observers, navigators, bombardiers and gunners.

Moreover, there was no lamp to rub. No genie would set an air force in our laps.

Time to be Practical

The army, which had heretofore shown a lamentable tendency to consider the doughboy superior to armored troops, and artillery more effective than planes as a bombardment weapon, had to do a lot of sweeping clean.

That this has been done and is continuing apace is born out by the appointment of airmen to virtually all the chief commands except those dealing with other specific departments.

It was time to be practical. The

Down Alabama Way, Our Flying Cadets Are Preparing to Ax the Axis—and They're Rarin' to Go!

giant Air Corps training program was inaugurated, and the Southeast Center was voted into being.

But when Major General Walter R. Weaver was put in command of the center, it consisted of nothing more than Maxwell Field, its present headquarters, and that post was at the time a tactical school.

Meanwhile, the training program was already under way, and the first batch of flying cadets, 104 strong, were rushed to Maxwell.

Other groups were to follow as fast as they completed their civilian training schedules. This was fine, but no one knew what could be done with them when they finished their thirty-week course and won their wings.

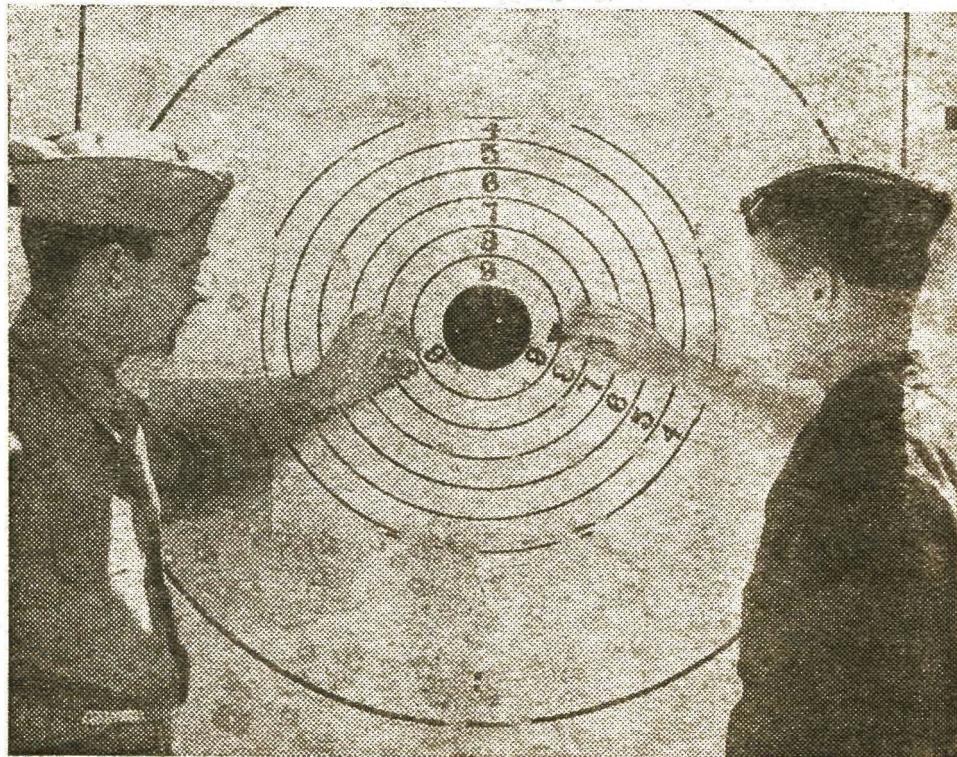
There was a job to be done. And it would have to be done with quick, quiet efficiency. Needless to say, the results were splendid.

Today, dotting the terrain from South Carolina to southern Florida and reaching west to Louisiana, forty-two air schools, seventeen of them already grinding out pilots, are in existence.

Six thousand pilots are in training today. Another seven thousand are being prepared for the course at the Replacement Center. As if this were not enough, 550 RAF cadets were accepted for training last June, and at present, their enrollment in the Center hits a neat three thousand.

Assembly Line Methods

Yet all this is only a drop in the bucket compared to what lies ahead. The government has advanced the program from 12,000 to 30,000 pilots per annum. But the assembly line has been created, and even now the augmented Air Corps personnel is roll-



INSPECTING THE TARGETS—Aviation cadets in the Southeast Air Corps Training Center inspect their targets after the firing is completed.

ing off the smooth-running educational belts.

In reading these telephone-number figures, it is well to remember that 30,000 flying officers are not just 30,000 fliers. Each of them must be physically perfect with a capacity for leadership and a flair for precision flying.

Accordingly, in making a third of this number of green young men combat fliers capable of defeating the war-seasoned Axis veterans, the Center has undertaken a truly titanic task.

So far, the potential quality of young America has been more than up to snuff, and the human reservoir seems undrainable.

The kids have shown an ability to learn fast and an amazing resourcefulness under all conditions. Call it discipline, mass production or what you will, it really works.

From every state of the union and from every walk of life, a new class goes into training every five weeks! They arrive with burning ambition, a minimum of luggage and a yen to fly. And it's up to the Air Corps to teach them as fast and as effectively as possible.

First, they get five to ten weeks of ground training at the Replacement Center.

During this period they never abandon mother earth except on stairs or in an elevator.

Later, they advance to elementary flying school, for another ten weeks, they learn the elements of flying in basic trainers. It is here that some forty per cent are "washed out"—most of them for an indefinable something called "lack of inherent flying ability."

Learning Aerobatics

Next come ten weeks in Basic Schools. The sixty per cent who have come through their elementary course with flying colors match their wits and nerves with more complicated and higher-powered basic trainers. And they learn aerobatics—the art of stunt ing that is so vitally important in aerial combat.

The pilot who has weathered these

courses is well on the road to wings.

Few are washed out once they reach the stage of advanced training, for all have mastered the elementals of military flying and acquired a first coat of polish.

In the Advanced Schools, the pilot learns formation flying, night flying, instrument flying and begins to specialize in the type of ship—bomber, pursuit, attack, interceptor, for which nature has best fitted him.

It is nothing out of the way for entire classes to survive this final course without a single muff. A recent class flew 3,866,100 miles without a fatality. This means that each of its 146 mem-

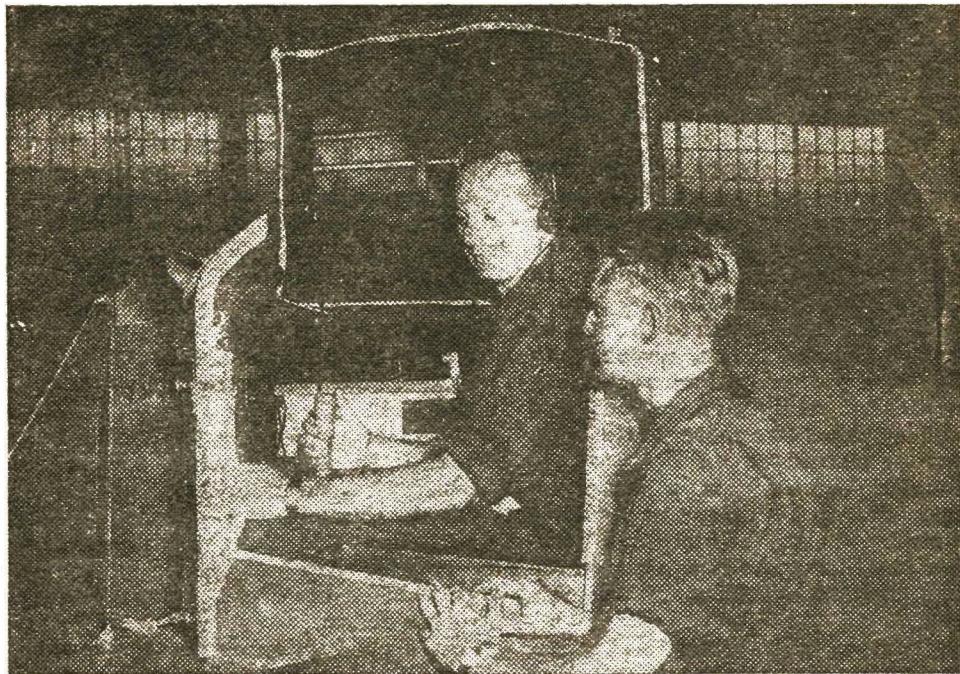


FLYING NIGHTMARE—The grotesque features of the latest type oxygen mask hide the confident expression of Flying Cadet R. S. Milner, of Carey, N. C., as he prepares to take off on a high altitude flight in the Southeast Air Corps Training Center. In addition to an oxygen tank in his ship, Milner carries an emergency oxygen flask in his pocket.

bers flew 26,300 miles, or more than the circumference of the earth at the equator!

What happens to the washouts? The great bulk of them are failures because of physical disability rather than misconduct.

They are still the elite of the nation, and the Air Corps cannot afford to turn them loose as was the custom in more rigid peacetime years. It needs



"FLYING" IN A HANGAR—Fliers have been known to fly their ships through hangars — but it's not considered a very safe practice. Down in the Southeast Air Corps Training Center, aviation cadets "fly ships" in the hangars every day — the ships, however, are only the link trainers in which the cadets learn to "fly blind." Exact conditions of flying are reproduced on the instrument panel in the link trainer, and experienced fliers will tell you that it's no easy job to keep one of these "ground ships" on its course.

every man it can get in view of the augmented program.

Navigators Are Important

Especially since the value of bombers—big, medium and light—has been proven so emphatically in the proving ground of war, these men are needed.

For, a bomber is manned by a crew, and a crew must be a team that functions as efficiently as a big-league baseball nine if anything like maximum results are to be achieved.

Bombers fly over vast distances to specific objectives, frequently at night. If they fail to fulfill their assignments to the letter, their trip is a hundred-per-cent failure. Hence, it is up to the navigator to bring them over the objective. He is the most important single man in the crew.

Once he has fulfilled his mission, the issue is planted squarely in the lap of the bombardier.

Usually in the teeth of anti-aircraft fire and interceptor trouble, he must lay his eggs where they will do the most damage. Again, the whole trip

is a failure if he comes up with a miss.

The observer must make certain that the navigator and bombardier are carrying out their jobs as ordered, and the gunners must ensure these technicians of maximum protection from enemy planes while they carry out their assigned tasks.

In a big bomber, therefore, the pilot is little more than a chauffeur. For, the four-motor jobs are not made for stunting, and the gunners do the fighting.

A Place for Washouts

It is easy for American youths to learn teamwork. They are taught it from the time they first go to school.

Unfortunately, thanks largely to the "Lone Eagle" tradition inspired by Lindbergh's epic flight to Paris fifteen years ago, there is a misconception in existence which makes the pilot and the pilot alone the big cheese under all conditions.

This "Lone Eagle" business just doesn't last long or rise high in suit and interceptor planes do their

fighting in formation these days. The lad who goes skylarking off on his own in a search for individual glory doesn't last long or rise high in America's service.

Thus, there are plenty of spots for the washouts—spots which their more fortunate mates often find themselves in later on. Navigation training, in fact, is the most detailed course in the Air Corps curriculum.

More than six hundred hours of study are needed before anyone can qualify as a precision dead reckoning and celestial navigation expert, and the course takes five more weeks than does pilot training.

Flexible Gunnery is a five-week course, during which the student learns how to handle thirty-and fifty-caliber machine-guns and air cannon, a high specialized item in the Air Corps.

Learning to hit a split-second target from a cramped turret while standing on your ear in a maneuvering plane is no mean trick.

Pilot washouts as well as pilots who pass these courses get commissions with the rest of their class. So they wind up with the same prestige and

pay. Which should lay to rest forever the old washout bogey.

Teamwork in Bombers

Bomber teams are trained as units, living together, working together, getting used to one another under all conditions, from the time they are assigned as an outfit.

In battle, they can't take time out to crawl around from post to post to find out what to do next. They've got to know their jobs and, equally important, know that each of their mates knows his.

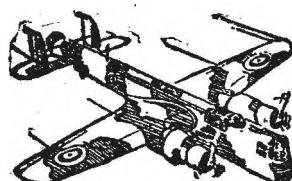
One bomber team, after completing training in Florida, took off on its first flight after induction.

They landed—you guessed it—in Australia. And their training stood up so well they suffered no mishap of any kind on the flight. Such trips are routine today.

Mass production or what have you, Uncle Sam's training methods are doing the job. And the pilots being turned out are, except for seasoning in actual combat, which isn't hard to get these days, at least the match of any pilots in the world. So keep 'em flying!

Read Our Companion Air Action Magazines

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SKY FIGHTERS
R. A. F. ACES
AIR WAR

NOW ON SALE—EACH 10c AT ALL STANDS

Around the Hangar



A Department

for Readers

HOW are tricks, pals? As we open this meeting the news is not too cheery but we have to remember that in order to get our dessert regular, we have to eat our spinach. Some of it has grit in it sprinkled there by the Japanese sandman and also by Rommel's tanks in the Libyan desert. But it will all come out in the wash, you can bet your last war bond on that, guys.

Adolph, we hear, is short of cologne since that bomber raid but what could make him smell good, anyway?

"Too little, too late," may be the answer to some of the Nutzie successes in the land of the characters who kneel to Allah, and that reminds us of what happened to Oswald Klipspringer, our old hutmate in the last war. Oswald called on his girl, Mona Lott, last night with a little spray of posies but a big flying cadet was already in her parlor putting a big bouquet of roses in a bowl.

"You come too late, with too little," Mona told Oswald.

Our Goat-Getter

Oswald is still trying to enlist and has bought a piece of Horace, the goat. Horace is in shape to go back to the air labs again



and the army wants somebody who understands Horace's temperament and physical attributes to go up with him and study his reactions.

Oswald took Horace up into the steeple of a Baptist Church on Long Island to get a preliminary diagnosis of the goat's constitution and Horace licked all the fresh gold paint off one of the bells. Oswald has to wait for three months to get his uni-

form as the goat will be in the animal hospital that long.

The war department sent Horace a biting letter accusing him of delaying the war effort.

One for the Book

We have heard about the effects of high altitude on pilots who go up into the stratosphere. Well, there is an interesting fact that proves that everybody who lives up high should not come down to earth too long. 100,000 natives of the Andes Mountains in South America come down to the lowlands every year to cultivate the soil.

They cannot stay longer than three months because the conditions would prove fatal to them!

More people died in the Bolivian-Paraguayan war because of low altitude than they did from bullets!

Hirohito's Borrowings

The Jappos remind us of a couple of neighbors who have borrowed all of our tools to work their gardens. Hirohito's air force has been using, according to reliable sources, Fiat B. R.'s, Focke-Wulf Condors, a prototype of the Douglas DC4, Messerschmitts and Heinkels.

The Nips are using the Oerlikon and Hispano-Suiza Moteur cannon. They have been living on the material sources of their present foes and also on their enemy's technical skill and ingenuity. They won't last.

Mail Time

All right, Frogface, dump the mail in our laps. He-e-y, don't submerge us without first givin' us a periscope.

Take all these postcards and letters off me and leave me just room enough to get my head out. Seems that a lot of the correspondents have been swatting the two termites that have been undermining the hangar. Jean LeCommer and Fritz Duval. No wonder we have not had an encore from them and we figure they have heard we do not have Walt Disney movies at the concentration camps, huh?

But let the customers speak for themselves as they are always right.

First we will take care of this neat bit of public relation-material from a soldier,



William H. Terry. (No relation to Bill Terry of the Jints, William?) Bill's address is a headache to a linotype machine. It is 369th Rgt., Nat'l Guard, 15th Infantry, Company C, Box 100, N. Y. Bill clicks his heels together, and says:

Writing you these few lines to let you hear from me. I wish to say that I am very sorry I could not write sooner, but I only got one of your mags today. I wish to say that I enjoy your mags very much, and I hope to keep on reading them.

I want to thank you very much for the membership card you sent me. You didn't spell my name right and I had all I could do to understand it. I think they are wonderful mags, getting better and better all the time. I am very interested in them and hope you will keep 'em rolling off the presses.

We have started off on the right foot as you can see. If the army does not know good stories of war, what other organization would you suggest? Thanks, Bill.

Let us know if the U.S.O. Nissens suit you? Well, so soon? The distaff side steps up quickly at this meeting and it looks like they have got over their shyness.

With so many of them working on bombers and tanks and other supplies destined to deflate a second Napoleon, they do not have to take a back seat to you coarser bipeds.

Meet Beverly Johnson, 41 Montrose Ave., Portland, Maine. My, my, do we know Portland! We have a towel and a shoe cloth from the Congress Hotel. But come on, Beverly, you tell 'em!

I am enclosing my coupon for membership in the club and also a stamped envelope for my membership card.

This is the first time I've written to this magazine, and I want to say it's swell.

Would you please list me as a pen pal. I'm sixteen, am five feet seven inches tall, have brown hair and blue eyes. I will answer all letters.

The stories are super. Are they real? They certainly look and sound it.

I think it is a swell magazine, and I recommend it to all readers.

Your testimonial is tops, Beverly. According to your description, we will bet one of our medals you are the belle of Deering High. Keep writing us.

A short one gets our okay for the number three spot in this department. Kenneth Lenz likes just about everything in THE AMERICAN EAGLE. Listen to the lad from Strasburg, Illinois.

I have been reading flying mags of all sorts for quite some time, and I find THE AMERICAN EAGLE is tops with me except for one thing, that you don't have enough World War I stories in it.

The L. E. A. Flying Course is worth more than the dime alone, and I would buy it just for that even if it did not have any stories in it. I am taking flying lessons and intend to get my license as soon as I am old enough.

I have enclosed my enrollment coupon and a self-addressed stamped envelope for a membership card.

Please list me as a pen pal. I am fifteen years old, six feet tall, and crazy about flying.

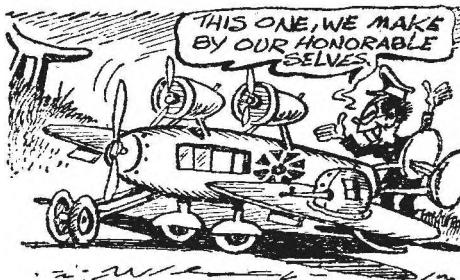
I'll try to answer all letters that come, but I cannot promise because I am very busy and all of my spare time is taken up flying.

I guess I'll have to sign off as the gas is getting low.

Keep-up-the-good-work.

Good luck with your flying lessons, Ken. In about ten years, everything will be upstairs and a lot of the highways will have to be torn up and seeded.

We don't know what old veterans like ourselves are going to do with a plane.



though. Right now we get air bubbles in our veins when we go up higher than a Philly left-hander.

Another Kenneth follows with a brief opus. Kenneth Tosh, 4145 Washington St., Holliday's Cove, W. Va. Okay for sound. Frogface! Get the amplifier set.

I've been reading your magazine for about two years and so far all the stories I have read are top-notch. But there is one thing I would like to know, WHY DO YOU PRINT SUCH TRASHY LETTERS SUCH AS THAT BOGUS FRITZ DUVAL WROTE? Evidently he hasn't read the newspapers lately. More power to Joe Archibald's stories.

I read his Ambrose Hooley killers and his other yarns regularly, in fact I wouldn't miss them. Here are my three headings, so please send me those World War I Aces pictures!

Joe Archibald got a gander at your letter and he has gone out to buy a new box of cigars. Nickel ones this time as he thinks your plug will give him an extra buck. They have put a ceiling on the little twerp's cigars. They have cut them down to a length of about nine and a half inches. Since the shortage of rubber, the stogies are not half as bad as they once were.

We printed Duval's folly just to show you customers you have to be vigilant. So don't throw away the lit gun.

We thought typewriters were frozen Anyway here is a neat communique from Larry Hensley who lives out where bomb shelters are hard to sell. 2709 West 10th St., Topeka, Kansas. Lucky Larry. Larry has a beef.

Say, what goes on here? I open the pages of the Summer issue of THE AMERICAN EAGLE and what do I find? You've gone quarterly. You can't do this to me.

The main story in this issue was good, but not quite up to past issues in my opinion. I especially enjoy Joe Archibald's stories. Yes, cigars and all.

Say, who does this "Fritz" Duval think he is? By the way, at the time I am writing this letter I don't see much fur flying what with those massive R. A. F. raids, and the Russians holding their own on the Eastern front.

Well, maybe Fritz has been reading the news which is date-lined Berlin. Somebody ought to check up on him.

Well, I guess that's all for this time. I still want your mag to come out more frequently.

Our companion aviation magazines should help you with your reading, Larry. Get acquainted with them—and you'll have plenty to read between issues of THE AMERICAN EAGLE!

We wish we knew who Duval thought he was. Maybe he thinks he is the guy Laval thinks he is. If it was a gag, we wish

it was on Fritz's big mouth. Now here is another bit of counter-espionage and this Duval better find the gopher hole Jean LeCommer pulled in after him. Raymond Dabler does not pull his punches. Raymond says:

I am not in the habit of writing letters to magazines, but when I saw this Nazi, Fritz Duval, piece of Hitler propaganda, I was so burned up I had to speak my piece. I hope you print this letter so he can see it. It is too bad he isn't in Germany with the rest of his Nazi pals who are being mowed down by the Russians.

I'll bet Hitler gave him a medal for writing that letter. All I can say is that I would like to meet him in a dark alley, and I wouldn't need brass knuckles either. If the F. B. I. haven't snapped him up by now, they must be slipping as this guy doesn't deserve to live in the U. S. with real Americans.

As far as your magazine, I think it is okay, and tell Joe Archibald I enjoy his stories more than any others in the mag. Keep Masters in World War II and leave out R-47 and also Warren. They are just so much excess baggage. I am enclosing a self-addressed, stamped envelope for the World War portraits, also the membership certificate for The Lone Eagles of America.

I took my first ride in an airplane when I was seven years old. It was an old D.H. that was practically a wreck. I am eighteen now and am going to enlist in the Navy Air Corps next Winter. That is all I have to say. Yours until one of Uncle Willie's inventions backfires.

Nice blitz for Duval, Ray. You think that kite you flew in at the age of 7 was a wreck? When you are in Washington and can get to the Smithsonian Institute, look at the one with Oswald's name printed on the tail. The patch on the top wing was cut out of a crazy quilt me and Oswald stole in a house in La Belle, France.

From J. W. Pruitt, 1404 Christine Ave., Anniston, Alabama, comes another slap at Fritz. It speaks for itself!

Well, well, first a LeCommer rat, and now a snake called Fritz Duval.

I think that maybe J. Edgar Hoover might be interested in these two and any others that dare to write you such trash. I can't see where he got the nerve to send his address, though it's probably faked. There are things called prisons for such guys! I'll bet he won't be around long, he'll wiggle back into the hole where he started from.

My temperature has just cooled down to normal now and I'd like to ask you to please put the swap column back in the mag.

I guess I had better land now and load up for another battle against any future attacks against the mag by poison pens and against Americans or the United Nations.

That'll burn the glycol out of the goon, J. W. But don't get too hot and lose your own cooling fluid as a guy like Duval is not worth a hospital bill. Thanks for writing us and don't throw your pen away.

Erwin Stasek asks for correspondents, mostly those who are on their way to a second front. See what you can do for Erwin. He gets his mail at 6333 N. Clark St., Chicago, Ill.

Let's have another soldier—pardon us—a Marine. This leatherneck that we would like to know better wants to get his hands on Duval. If he ever did! Anyway, Pvt. Ralph H. Ippert, Maintenance Div., Camp Elliot, San Diego, Cal., sends this right from the halls of Montezuma! Quiet here in the hangar for the Marines have landed and they will take you in hand if you

[Turn page]

Keep Faith with Them



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THE NAVY'S FIGHTING MEN**

TO HELP THE NAVY MAN and his dependents, his widow, his orphaned child and his mother, is the purpose of the Navy Relief Society. Now, with the risks of war, and a greatly expanded Navy, with a larger Marine Corps and the inclusion of the Coast Guard Welfare, the Society needs your help.

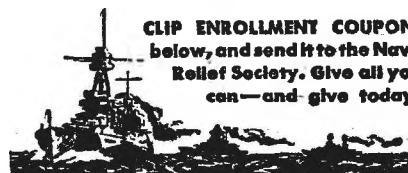
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Checks should be made payable to Navy Relief Society and sent to National Citizens' Committee, 730 Fifth Ave., New York City.

I want to help the Navy men and their families. Enclosed please find my contribution of \$.....

Name

Street

City State

sound off the wrong way. Let's all pay attention!

Today I happened to buy your mag, THE AMERICAN EAGLE. And as I was reading your article, Around the Hangar, I read about Fritz Duval. I got kind of sore. I am a private in the Marines and I think a sap like him ought to keep his yap shut before somebody parts his hair with a prop. And when he speaks of Germany being so almighty and powerful, why isn't he over there? It wouldn't be that he is yellow?

Well, he said if anybody didn't like his opinion to speak up. Well, I don't, and I'm speaking up. If this doesn't take up too much space I wish you would print it. And I would like very much to be a pen pal and I think that World War I stories are okay, so what do you say we have some?

I am in the hospital at this time, and I'm writing in bed, so excuse the writing. I think your stories are very good.

What put you in the hospital, Ralph? We bet three hundred gobs waylaid you. At that we will bet you only suffered a pair of broken knuckles. Shoot a couple of rounds our way again as soon as you get out of sick bay.

If we find Duval, we will crate him and send him to you. Could you ask for anything more? Good luck in the Marine Corps, pal.

Now comes another member of the armed force. Air corps! Pvt. Thad C. Stevenson, 3d Tech. S.S. (Sp) Barracks 532, Lowry Field, Col. Thad kind of needles Morgan. Put your flap down and come in, Thad!

I have been reading your mag for three or four years now on and off, and I find it pleasant entertainment as it appeases my vicious nature getting all the enemy killed off in each issue.

Germany certainly has a lot of evil scientists, but thanks to Masters there can't be many left.

Why not get a smart professor who can "secret weapon" the Japs and Germans to death for a while? Why not carry the war into Japan proper?

Well, that's all I can say, you've got a good column there. It's about the best part of the mag.

I'd like some pen pals so I can tell them all about the enlisted man's version of the Army Air Corps.

Morgan will take your hints, Stevie. We blush and take a bow for your kind words regarding our own column. We hope you get a commish inside of six months. Say, Lowry Field is the photographic section, isn't it? Know a brass hat named Goddard? Last time I read about him, he was a major. Knew him in Chicago when he was a cartoonist for the Solvay-Coke house organ. We must get on with the mail, Frogface. Take your nose out of that letter we know is from a doll.

Who? Miss Lulu Ausenbaugh, Crofton, Kentucky? We thought we got a whiff of blue grass. Thought it was cologne for a second but there isn't any more cologne, huh? What does Lulu says? Let's all read it.

Enclosed you will find a coupon and stamped self-addressed envelope for a membership card. Please send it soon, also list me as pen pal. I promise faithfully to answer each letter and exchange pictures with everyone. I'm seventeen years old, brown eyes, black hair, five feet 2 inches tall, and weight 120 pounds. I think THE AMERICAN EAGLE Magazine is the best of all.

Lulu, you wrote a "Lulu." The AMERICAN EAGLE is tops and you know your air magazines. Something tells us your mailman is going to get fallen arches and round shoulders toting all the mail you're

going to get. Thank you, Lulu, and please remember your old skipper likes mail, too.

Phew, Frogface, we don't seem to be making any kind of a hole in this pile of mail. We must hurry up and chop too much chin music out. A couple of vignettes from Odie Ughetta (Can that be right?) and Stuart Perry. Odie lives at Greggstown Rd., Bell Meade, N. J., and Stu hails from 4208 28th N.E., Mt. Ranier, Md. Odie isn't much longer than an ode but he gets over what is on his mind.

I have bought several of your mags now and I think they are swell.

There are many fellows who want Masters in the old war and many who want him in this war. Why don't you have him in one publication in the old war and the next in the new one and so on. Then everybody would be happy.

Oke, Odie. We'll see about Masters. And here's Stu:

Enclosed find my membership coupon, and name-strip from SKY FIGHTERS, THE AMERICAN EAGLE, and R.A.F. ACES which I hope you will accept. I certainly liked THE AMERICAN EAGLE the first time I read it, and I still do. The adventures of John Masters are sure super and so are the Ambrose Hooley Howlers. I am very anxious to receive the pictures of World War Aces.

We mark your letter, Stu, for the attention of Joe A.

Where were we, Frogface? Oh, yeah, hand us that one. You have rubber gloves on? That bad? And who are you to own rubber gloves at a time like this? You borrowed them from the medico. Well, we suppose we have to publish this delicious sample of slander, mayhem, libel, and criminal assault.

Calvin Chunn is the offender stepping up to the bar. We hope we have three other convictions against him so we can give him life under the Burn's law. Baumes, is it? This Chunn should live like anybody else but for how long? Just get a load of this bunch of sour grapes!

I have been reading your publication for some time, and I think it is terrible, etc. I object, I protest, and complain and should see my lawyer. Whoever made you a skipper of the Tarmac is beyond me.

So you were a great ACE in the last war, and yet you can't tell us your name and squadron. What are you so scared of? Are you a man or mouse? "Must remain incognito." Phooey! I'll bet you can't even distinguish an exhaust valve from an intake valve on an engine.

Why do you let them print modern novels, and why not the 1914-1918 stories? The time has not yet come for it and one can read modern war stories in local newspapers daily.

I hail from Honolulu, Hawaiian Islands and have written before so you can see I am not a stranger on your Tarmac. I would like to compliment (not you!) Lieut. Jay D. Blaufox on his articles and I hope he will keep up the good work.

You disgusted me at times—a great Ace, and your tin medals. I'll bet they all come from the 5 and 10 cent stores downtown. Why aren't you in the Philippines fighting the Japs? As you know, the situation over there is serious. What are you doing? Don't you think there should have been reinforcements sent over there? Why not send them more planes to drive off the enemy?

Mugs like you bragging how good you were in the last war and showing off your medals.

Guess I will close now and you better do something quick!

You can't scare us, Calvin. We were in a hush-hush squadron in the last guerre and we tried out new planes and guns and things before anybody else did.

If our medals are tin, it is because we won so many they didn't have time to make good ones and anyway it is not the gift but the spirit behind it.

You don't dare to write to Washington about us!

Now as for blaming us for holding up victory—tsk-tsk. Do you think we are that good? Maybe you have confused us with the prime minister or somebody, Calvin. And we would be fighting the Japs if we could find that Fountain of Youth and knock off about twenty years. How many wars do you want one guy to win?

We do agree with you in one respect, Chum-er-Chunn. The transportation of all those planes is the problem at the moment but just wait until they get there! But we have enough of trying to satisfy the likes of you. You didn't see Daniel Boone lick the Indians so he was a fake, huh?

Thanks for the spirits of ammonia, Frog-face. We are glad we made you take that first aid course. This one will take off the sting, huh? Give me it quick! Miss Joy Price, Red Jacket, W. Va., types a honey and makes us forget that people like Calvin exist. Joy wants NO romance in the Masters' stories. What goes here? We'll see:

I read your magazine, THE AMERICAN EAGLE, for the first time and I rate it tops above all others I have read. Tell Lieut. Morgan, for me, to keep John Masters in the present. That's where he belongs. And don't put in any romance in your stories, that would take the thrills out of them. But put John Masters in plenty of "Dog Fights," as that is what I like.

In them he explains about what he does while he is trying to bring down his opponent. Even though I am a girl, I wish I could become a combat pilot or a test pilot. The fellows that are flying now in the Navy and Army Air Corps ought to feel proud that they are men and have this great privilege of flying for the greatest country in the world.

Aviation is my hobby. I have a scrap book which I have named "Everything in Aviation." In it I put pictures of the different airplanes, parts of the airplane, and everything that goes with Aviation, and I also build models. The fellows that live in the cities ought to feel proud that they have the advantage to see airplanes every day and be around them. Here we see one about every two months. That's one advantage the city has over the country.

That so-called LeCommer—from what I gained from the other letters—must sure be a skunk. If he'd come down here, we'd fill him so full of lead, he'd look like limburger cheese. If he doesn't like the magazine, he can go jump in a rattlesnake's hole, that's about where he belongs.

I would like to have some pen pals and it doesn't make any difference where you live. I'll be sure and answer all who write. I am a girl nineteen years old, have light wavy hair and blue eyes. Adios till I hear from you.

A thorough job, Joy. We know one pen pal you don't want. LeCommer! Don't keep to yourself so much and write us more.

Comes up for our judicial perusal, three interesting quickies from satisfied customers. In order of their appearance we give you, Joe Dockry, 549—51 St., Brooklyn, N. Y. Sammie Hay, no address available at the moment, and George Hawn, Corpus Christi, Texas. Listen to these pals of mine.

[Turn page]



THIS SIGN HAS BEEN SCRAPPED!

If you are over 40, you know that this unwritten policy formerly faced you in many cases. Youth was preferred.

But not now.

War has placed a premium on you. You have advantages to offer an employer. You can get jobs—you can win promotion with your present employer. Today is your day to build yourself into greater responsibility and larger pay—for both war and post-war times.

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SOMEBODY BLABBED



BUTTON YOUR LIP!

Read

THE AMERICAN EAGLE
Every Issue

Enclosed please find my application for The Lone Eagle Club. I have also enclosed a stamped, addressed envelope for my membership card.

I enjoy THE AMERICAN EAGLE very much. Please give my compliments to Lieut. Scott Morgan and Joe Archibald on their excellent stories. I cast my vote to keep John Masters in the present war, but keep the short stories at the back of the book in World War I.

I hate to admit this, flap-ears, but the first thing I read when I get THE AMERICAN EAGLE is "Around the Hanger." —Joe Dockrey.

The other day I got hold of a recent issue of THE AMERICAN EAGLE. I always enjoy the stories in THE AMERICAN EAGLE and RAW ACES. I also am interested in "Around the Hanger." I am fifteen years old—weight 205 pounds—and have played tackle on the high school football team for two years.

I can hardly wait till I can join the Air Corps to get a crack at the "Japs."

Enclosed you will find a self-addressed envelope and fifteen cents. Please send me picture of World War I Aces. I also would like to have some peeps write me.—Sammie Haye.

I have read your book two times and it still rates first in all combat stories with me. I would like to become a pen pal. Some of your AMERICAN EAGLE stories are getting a little too fictitious. There should be more World War I stories, I think. Please enroll me as a pen pal.—George Hatton.

Flap-ears, Joe calls us. But he likes our stint so he is tops. He also likes Morgan and Joe A., which make us wonder if he really is kidding. Sammie is 15 and weighs 205 pounds and we wonder what they feed them on where he lives.

Hope you do not keep putting on beef, Sammy, or they won't be able to build a



You give to
someone you know
when you give
to U S O

kite big enough to hold you. Thanks for your letter.

George Hawn is a Scotchman with words but he tells us what he thinks is wrong with Masters in just a few lines.

Miss Dorothy Mill, P. O. Box 71, Green Cove Springs, Fla., sends us a letter and also one addressed to one Fritz Duval. Lack of space will not permit us to print all of her scathing message to Fritz but we give you an excerpt or two.

When I bought the Summer issue of THE AMERICAN EAGLE, I was entirely satisfied—until I read your reader's column. There I found a bit of insane drivel that burned me up—made me see red—nursed me—in fact, gentlemen, it infuriated me!

The cause of all this discomfort was, as you have probably guessed, the absolutely unfounded babblings of one Fritz Duval. Ugh! It's a shame that an otherwise enjoyable magazine should be ruined by such trash. I'm enclosing a copy of the missive that I mailed the dear little Fritzie, in order to show you, at length, just how it affected me.

If by any chance you should publish this letter in full or in part, is it possible for you to send me a copy of the magazine in which it appears? I'm very conceited and this is my only chance to see my name in print, since it is not an entirely common occurrence for people to read their own obituaries. Thanks!

"Dear Moran:

"If your letter was a gag, or was merely your ingenuous(?) way of getting to see your name in print, then you may ignore this letter. Otherwise, read it carefully, if it hasn't burned itself to a crisp before it reaches you...

"The letter to which I am referring, of course, is the trashy bit of debris which appeared in the Summer issue of THE AMERICAN EAGLE Magazine.

[Turn page]

HE HAS A JOB ON HIS HANDS

Take the Load off His Heart



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—GENE R. LEVANT.

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"You have a right to dislike the fictional John
Masters. In fact, I don't like his exploits, either.
They are too unreal: first, because the fortunes of
war do not favor anyone as he seems to be favored;
second, because (and this is the main reason) our
fatheaded enemies are too dumb to contrive plots
like the one pictured in ANZAC WINGS.

"It seems to me that Hitler's promise of a
'Mighty Spring offensive' has been worn a little
thin by now. June is June, the world over, and
now it is past June.

"I have a very strong hunch that you will be
pushing up the daisies very soon which some kind-
hearted 'Friend to Dumb Animals Society' member
might have placed on your grave. You smell too
bad for even Nature to cope with; but Americans
have gas masks for dealing with polecats like you."

You told him off, Dotty. Write us again
when you have Duval off your mind and
give us your frank opinion of everything
about THE AMERICAN EAGLE.

Frederick Lee, 2421 Charles St., Pitts-
burgh, Pa., calls our attention to a slip on
the part of the mech. dept. They tried to
make a citizen of Poughkeepsie out of him
but Freddy still prefers to be in a city
that is always blacked out. No place like
home, huh? We don't blame Fred.

Here is his mild kick, customers.

I wrote in some time ago requesting the privilege
of becoming a pen pal and a member of the Ameri-
can Eagle Club.

Today I bought my Summer issue of your maga-
zine. However, to my dismay, I found that you had
printed my name and address correctly; but had
printed the wrong city. You printed Poughkeepsie,
Pa.; it should have been Pittsburgh, Pa.

I am writing in now in the hope that you will
print my name again. I am going to enclose the
enrollment again.

Okay, Freddy? Let us know any time
they don't treat you right. Times is a-
wasting and we must give you another
group of letters for briefing. Here we have
John W. Scott, 209 West Hackberry, Enid,
Oklahoma, Bob Ralph, 26 Sandrock Rd.,
Buffalo, N. Y., and a strange character who
signs himself "The Black Wasp." No ad-
dress.

I missed the issue Jean Le Commer's letter was in, but I picked it up in a back issue shop. He
must be some sissy with a name like that. He
probably thinks he's all clean after his mud bath.
If he doesn't like it here, send him back to the
Nazis stooge, Laval. If he doesn't like my remarks
he will know my address if you print this. If he
doesn't want to come this far I know some people
nearer to him.

I would like to be listed as a pen pal. I enclose
coupon, and as for flying, I think I have read every
book published on how to fly. I have also been a
passenger.—John W. Scott.

This is the first time I have ever bought THE
AMERICAN EAGLE, AIR WAR or SKY FIGHT-
ERS. From now on I am going to buy every issue
of those magazines.

Enclosed are the covers of SKY FIGHTERS, AIR
WAR and THE AMERICAN EAGLE. Will you
please send me a set of famous World War Aces.
I am also enclosing a coupon and a self-addressed
envelope, and will you please put my name in the
pen pal column?—Bob Ralph, Buffalo, N. Y.

I have been reading your mag for about three
years, and I like it very much. I have a few com-
ments. They are:

1. Leave John Masters in this war. He is much
more interesting this way.

2. Put more World War I stories to accompany
the John Masters stories. Have more Joe Archibald
battle stories.

3. Try to get some guy who knows how to write
a better column than you do.

By the way, print this letter so that Nutzy
J. L. C. can be forewarned that I am just waiting
to grab him by the collar and beat the life out of
him. For the honorable J. L. C.'s information I am
six feet six and a half inches tall and weight 264
pounds, and I can whip ten times my weight in
rats!—The Black Wasp.

LeCommer won't dare, John. Forget about the zany! Everything has been attended to, Bob, as far as your request is concerned.

As for "The Black Wasp," your No. 3 suggestion had a sting in it. We are in a jocular mood today and will not call the attention of our legal dept. to it. We think you were, kidding, though. Go get me some fresh mud to put on the bite, Frogface.

Last but no least, comes a client who addresses us as a drip. He claims to be a poet and has written some verse to prove it. We must admit the guy has talent but we are short on space so can only give you one stanza of his stint.

We feel gratified that our humble column inspires Americans to such worthy effort. This reader, from Yonkers, N. Y., tells us not to print his name though. Don't hide your light under a bushel. Well, maybe you'll relent and let us print your name next issue!

After reading "Around the Hangar" in your April edition of THE AMERICAN EAGLE my heart was filled with "Patriotism." So I started to write. And would you believe it? When I stopped there right in front of me was a poem I just completed! I, when in school, was forced to read that stuff, and now, of all things, I had just finished writing one. I don't claim to be another Shakespeare, but I don't think it's half bad.

*You want the right to live as you please
For that, we've got to fight—
America! Get up off your knees,
We've got to build up might!*

[Turn page]

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That, my dear drizzle puss, is my masterpiece. And if you see fit to print it, please do not disclose my name.

A neat bit of Shakespearing, say we. We regret we haven't the room to set up your entire poem. Why not write us again and give us your reactions to THE AMERICAN EAGLE? And own up who you are!

That is all, Frogface. Take the letter-opener and lock it up in the safe as brass has a ceiling on it, too. We are way past our closing time right now and here we are already a half-hour late for our lecture on counter-propaganda before the Port Chester Contemporary Club. We also have to inspect a bomb-proof shelter in Valhalla with some motor corps girls.

We guess that you all know what you can do to help in this war by this time. Ten percent of your yearly take for war bonds is little enough and don't forget to fill the stamp books. It guarantees both your future and Uncle Sam's and we know a couple of parasites who have no future to speak of. The difference between being an American and a Nazi or Jappo is that you give a few dollars a month for bonds and they hand over everything they own but the kitchen sink, and we have an idea they had to give those up to put in Nazi bombs.

The Year to Watch

Sure, our side has had reverses and are still having them but we aren't thinking so much of 1942. 1943 is the year to watch Hitler and his lugs will start back-pedaling then and by '44 they will be on the ropes with the unoccupied countries yelling for the haymaker.

Common sense will tell you that U. S. production is going to sweep the Axis under the rug. Wait until Berlin, Dresden, Leipzig, Frankfort and other Kraut cities get what Cologne got, and they are going to get it! Tokio papers please copy, then lock up the presses and take to the hills.

(Concluded on page 96)



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PEN PALS



Here are some new members of *THE LONE EAGLES OF AMERICA*—all air fans. Many others will be listed in the next issue. The figures in parentheses are the ages of the members.

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 Jim Wilson (14), 612 East Second, Cogville, Ore.
 Private Jack Chorzy (22), 62 C. A. (A.A.), Regional Record Sect., Ft. Hancock, N. J.
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 Salvatore Zullo (12), 114 Nagle Ave., New York City, N. Y.
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 Lewella M. Lowe (19), 37 Stella Rd., Binghamton, N. Y.
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 Charles T. Gardner (17), General Delivery, Holtville, Calif.
 Private Edw. E. Wilderman (23), 120th O.B.S. Squadron, Box 550, Biggs Field, El Paso, Tex.
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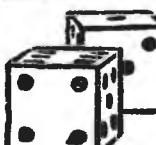
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AROUND THE HANGAR

(Concluded from page 94)

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Power Without Horses

Uncle Sam is going all-out on gliders—men are needed!

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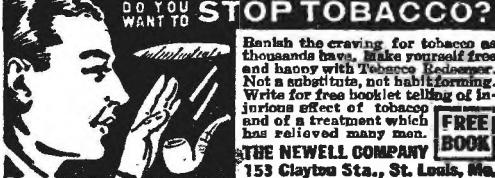
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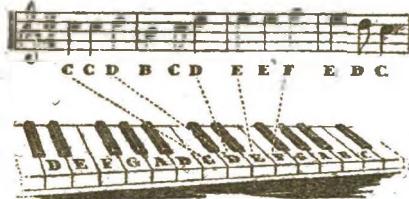
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