

LOVE AT FIRST FLIGHT

By CHARLES SPALDING AND OTIS CARNEY

CHAPTER XI

The instructors for this Luptan business were taken from the enlisted personnel—fine, kind-hearted men for the most part. Among them, however, were scattered a few asps. The title of instructor raised the sailor to temporary authority over the cadets who as commissioned officers would soon crack the whip themselves. The opportunity was too good to be missed. I won't say that Machinist's Mate Briggs, to whom I was assigned, abused the privilege. Rather he lived on it.

His welcoming blast was, "In peacetime you couldn't get into the Navy."

I muttered something about going fishing in peacetime and persuaded him to explain the instruments to me. Briggs knew the trainer inside out. He carefully went over everything, occasionally dropping a remark that clarified his position in regard to cadets.

"I know you ain't listening," he said in a sarcastic voice. "It's too much to expect."

"I'm listening," I said. "Don't look like you're listenin' to me," he said sullenly. "I am."

"You're all alike. You don't want to learn. I stand here and talk my bloody heart out, and I never found a cadet yet who listened. Jeez, when I think how the calyober of officers has dropped lately, I wonder if we'll pull through. Well, it ain't for me to question. I'm just a sailor takin' orders, doin' my job. I'll go on talkin', knowing damn well you ain't payin' the slightest attention."

It took some time to get through the lecture. Before we finished, Briggs arrived at the conclusion that I was "just like the rest of 'em. Got nothing but Sammy Kaye on your mind."

"I'm not very mechanical," I said. "Brother, you better get mechanical," he snorted, preparing to start me on the familiarization hop.

I climbed uncertainly into the trainer, put the earphones on, and pulled the hood down. It was hot inside. One dim light illuminated the instrument panel.

Briggs called over the radio, "Are you calm?" He insisted that his pupils keep calm.

"I'm calm," I said, fighting down the hysterical feeling that seizes me when pillows are clamped playfully over my head.

"You don't sound calm," said Briggs, and before I was quite ready he turned on the electricity.

"Hey!" I shouted. "Keep calm in there," called Briggs. "Remember the standard climb is five hundred feet a minute. Watch your instruments."

I looked at the instruments. They seemed to be watching me. "C'mon, take off," called Briggs impatiently.

I heaved back on the stick and jammed the throttle all the way forward. At this the instruments, which had been twitching in excitement, went hog wild. The whole panel went into a sort of Disney dance. The altimeter spun around dizzily. The rate of climb soared.

"You're climbing straight up all over the place," called Briggs in alarm.

When nothing else worked I beat both fists on the panel, remembering the classic cure for faulty radios. It seemed to prick the instruments on to even mad-

der revolts. "Straighten out!" bawled Briggs, who had never seen anything like this before.

It was out of my hands. I sat helpless, fascinated by the flitting, spinning mechanical ballet. All this time the air speed was being governed according to certain inexorable laws. It fell back and back until the trainer lost flying speed, and the entire cast plunged violently into a theoretical spin. Now all the instruments frantically reversed themselves. The artificial horizon momentarily came out of hiding, zipped across the glass, and went out of sight below. The altimeter drunkenly peeled off feet by the thousands while the rate of climb dropped as if it had been shot. The compasses reeled ecstatically, gay to the very end, and the air speed so recently shrunk to forty m. p. h. was now fat at two hundred and fifty.

"You better recover," called Briggs weakly. "According to the altimeter you are now eight hundred feet below the earth's surface."

Coincident with that crushing announcement the light on the instrument panel went out, leaving me in complete darkness. For a minute I hung peacefully suspended and undisturbed between two worlds. Then for no reason an image of the hellfire-and-brimstone sign that stood for years on a familiar road at home issued up where the instrument panel had been. I opened and closed my eyes. It was pitch-black, but the image of that sign stayed and grew brighter and larger until the red painted message filled the entire cockpit.

THE WORLD IS COMING TO AN END. ARE YOU READY?

The letters flowed filimly over me. I felt a giddy detachment. It didn't matter any more. The flight that was not a flight didn't matter, and the crash that was not a crash didn't matter. According to science I was whirling eight hundred feet underground, but what the hell! If you don't understand your environment, go beyond it. I picked up the microphone and called to Briggs in a low, pulsing voice: "The world is coming to an end. Are you ready?"

"I'll be damned!" said Briggs. "Tell Buck and Wilma," I went on.

"Buck who?" cued Briggs, coming face to face with his first albatross.

"Buck Rogers in the twenty-fifth century," I blared.

Briggs quickly snapped off the power and let me out. I started to apologize for my poor showing, but then I thought better of it. I walked off without a word. Briggs just stood and stared. What he had witnessed would never be spoken of with Lindbergh's crossing or Amelia's feats, but he was well aware it had a significance of its own. He never mentioned it again as long as I was there.

When I got to the point where I could keep the instruments under thumb, Briggs took a deep breath and proceeded to explain the basic principles of the radio range. He was ankle-deep in the subject when he stopped, pushed his sailor cap back on his head, and said belligerently, "Somehow I get the impression you're workin' against me."

"That's funny," I said. I had not understood a word of what he was saying.

"Teachin' this stuff to you is like hollerin' up a pipe," he said. He wanted to get angry. "All the cadets is ox dumb, but I can beat that by just sayin' the same thing sixty times over. They're goin' to be officers, y'know, so they get it by the sixtieth time, but with you it's like blowin' up a balloon with a hole in it. What's wrong with you?" he asked in despair.

"Come on, just once more," I coaxed.

Finally it came to me that a radio range may be considered as the compass field divided into four quadrants, two of which are

are N. You have to believe this because you can't see it. It is all done by radio, and anything done by radio you have to take on blind faith. The A quadrants are designated by the Morse signal dit dah, and the N quadrants by the signal dah dit. The volume of the signals increases as you fly toward the center of the range, so that you can tell in which quadrant you are. The center of the range is called the cone of silence. That is where everybody wants to be; at least that is where everybody on a radio range wants to be. You wouldn't be seen dead there otherwise. To prevent a disorderly stampede of aircraft to the cone of silence, from which point you let down to land, much complicated procedure has been set up. I don't like to think about it. It reminds me of the time our cook married a Mormon.

Besides this while you are locating yourself on the range, you're in communication with the radio tower. This conversation is carried on along highly conventional lines. "F'rinstance," said Briggs, "after you've received my message, you acknowledge it by saying, 'Wilco.' That finishes everything." "I say 'Wilco?'" I asked incredulously. "Yeah. Used to have to say 'Roger,' but they changed it."

"What was the matter with 'Roger?'" I asked, falling to see quite what motivated the revolution.

"I don't know. Just one of them things," said Briggs, accustomed to impermanence. "There was a big shake-up last winter."

I was never taken behind the scene, but I imagine that when Roger went, he dragged a lot of big names down with him. The day I had my radio check I was particularly alert. Even the most complex features of the range stood out clearly in my mind. It was the insight that comes in a lifetime. Briggs gave me an easy problem, and I sailed through the first part.

"Corpus Christi radio from Navy one-twenty. I have orientated myself in the southern N quadrant and am proceeding to intercept your western beam with an inbound heading of two hundred forty-eight degrees. I request the use of that beam. Go ahead."

"Navy from Corpus Christi radio. Permission granted. Go ahead."

"Wilco," I said. "Atta boy," called Briggs, who was pretty anxious to get me off his hands. "Keep it up. The graph looks great."

On his table was a recorder which traced the problem on paper. The paper was then handed in and marked. I was doing beautifully when a sudden jar threw the trainer completely off its course. The stick whipped over to one side. I jerked, but it was frozen. With a howl I tore open the lid and looked angrily for the oppressive influence. Resting against the wing, quiet-

ly admiring the room, was a dark and handsome South American officer, mustache and all. He had apparently just arrived and was completely engrossed by the ingenuity of the Northern Hemisphere. Many South Americans went through the station as part of the Good-Will Program. I never knew what his government told him, but I had my orders. "Amigo!" I cried warmly, holding out both arms. Before he could reply, I slammed down the hood and called to Briggs on the radio.

"Corpus Christi radio from Navy one-twenty. Get that gaucho off my wing, Briggs, before the whole problem is wrecked!"

"Navy from Corpus Christi radio. You know what Sumner Welles said," moaned Briggs.

"Wilco," I bawled, jamming up the hood again. This time the South American saw me burst through the hatch.

"You moss coom to my country," he said with a toothy grin. "We can supplement each other's economy, amigo."

"No habia ingles," said Manuel, grinning from ear to ear.

"There must be Pan-American solidarity, amigo mio." I jumped from the trainer.

"We have roobah," said Manuel.

"We have dinero."

"Amigo!" cried Manuel.

"Amigo mio," I said, going to Briggs' desk. The problem was scratched and blotched. I could not possibly pass. "Sorry," said Briggs sadly. "Forget it. We're just international pawns." Manuel grinned incomprehen-

Deep Gap News

Miss Hazel Maines spent the week end with Misses Marie and Virginia Brooks.

Misses Betty Andrews and Reba Rector spent Sunday night with Mrs. Jessie Brown.

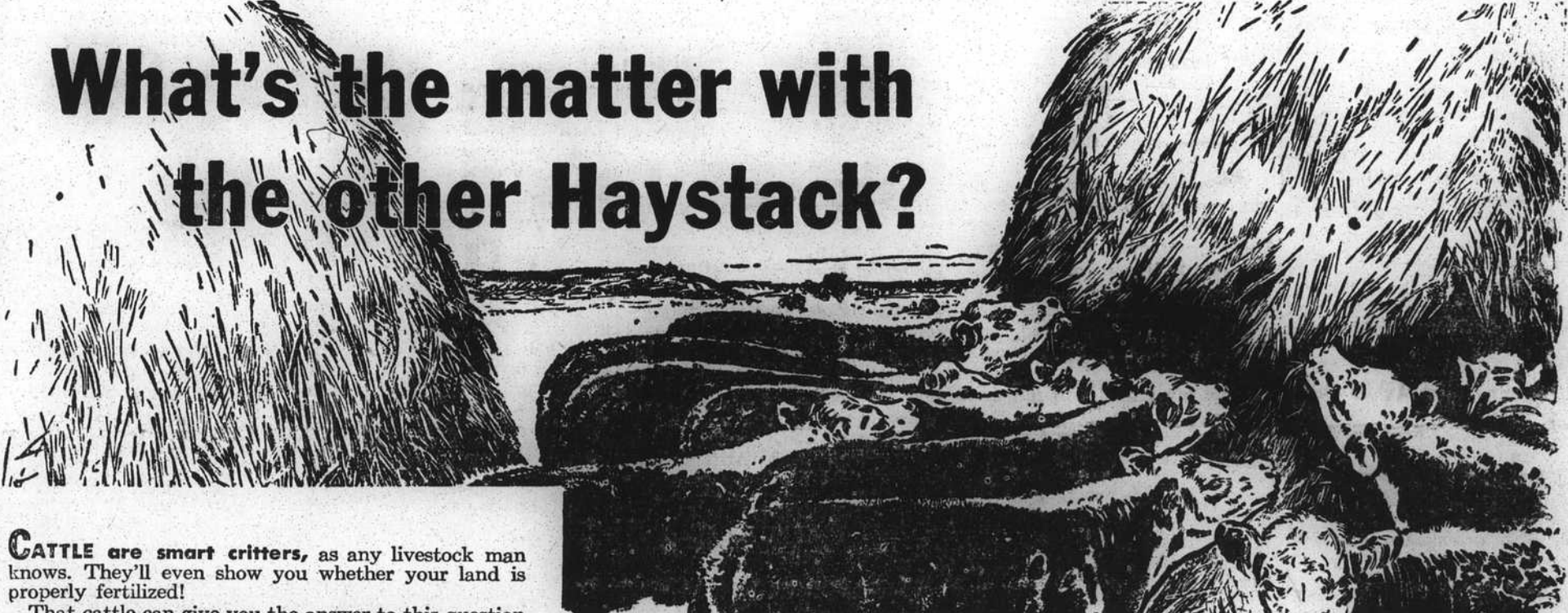
Mr. and Mrs. Cary Estep spent Monday with Mr. and Mrs. J. N. Brooks.

Johnny Brooks has been ill at his home here.

Reeves Brooks spent Saturday night with his aunt, Mrs. Etta Lou Edwards.

Blood spots in eggs do not indicate a diseased condition of the chicken laying the egg, says Prof. Roy Dearstyne, head of the poultry department at State College.

THE Alleghany News PRINTERS AND PUBLISHERS SPARTA, N. CAROLINA LETTERHEADS ENVELOPES STATEMENTS RULE FORMS & BOOKLETS



What's the matter with the other Haystack?

CATTLE are smart critters, as any livestock man knows. They'll even show you whether your land is properly fertilized. That cattle can give you the answer to this question has been proved by an experiment reported by Dr. Wm. A. Albrecht of the University of Missouri, which is illustrated here. The cattle were turned loose in a field in which there were two stacks of hay. The grasses were the same species; the curing was the same; they looked and smelled the same. But the cattle ate one stack and never touched the other. The hay from the stacks was analyzed in a laboratory. Then it was discovered that the stack the cattle liked contained much more calcium and phosphorus—two minerals cattle must have for good health. The good hay came from soil that had been treated with lime and phosphate. . . . The poor hay from untreated land. Minerals essential to both human and animal health come from the soil, are absorbed into plants and so get into the bodies of grazing animals. Human beings, of course, get their supply of minerals from plant foods like fruits, vegetables and cereals, and from foods of animal origin like meats, fish and eggs. Better soil produces better food, better livestock and healthier people.

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Oliver Kinzie, Cushing, Oklahoma, 19-year-old president of the Future Farmers of America with his friend and instructor, Dick Fisher (left).

THE EDITOR'S COLUMN So many important things are happening in the livestock and meat business that it is difficult for an editor to decide which to write about and which to leave out. Few people realize how much beef, pork, lamb and veal must be set aside by meat packers operating under federal inspection for the armed forces and Lend-Lease. As of January 7, 1945, 50% of all utility steers, heifers, and cows are set aside for the government canning program. The government will continue to call for 60% of the choice, good, and commercial steer and heifer beef carcasses, excepting extremely light weights; also 80% of the cutter and canner beef. Of the total pork meat produced, excluding lard, approximately 50% has to be set aside. Government priorities on "Good" and "Choice" lambs have averaged from 40 to 50% of the suitable lambs. Priority orders also apply to approximately 50% of the "Choice," "Good" and "Commercial" veal produced within specifications. Of course, such regulations are necessary in order to insure the proper conduct and winning of the war. Nevertheless, producers and consumers should know of these regulations as a partial explanation of why they are having difficulty in getting the supplies of beef, lamb, pork and veal which they want. F.M. Simpson, Agricultural Research Department

SODA BILL SEZ: That hens that cackle the loudest are often better at lying than laying. That he makes the livin', but it's his family that makes livin' worth while.

"The pig that pays" is the "extra" one that lives in an average litter. Baby pig death losses of from 30 to 50 per cent are far too high. They can be greatly reduced. Cleanliness is the first rule of profitable hog raising. Dirt breeds disease and parasites, so it pays to move young pigs to clean pastures and to keep them away from old pens and yards. Old dry bedding has been known to start dust-pneumonia. Cholera and erysipelas can be prevented by early vaccination, and transfer of diseases from newly purchased hogs can be controlled by a period of isolation. Observe common-sense rules and your pigs will live and grow. Feed them well and when your hogs are ready, you'll get your "profit" from the extra ones raised in each litter.



Martha Logan's recipe for GEORGE WASHINGTON CHERRY PIE

Make pastry using Swift's Bland Lard for shortening to insure flakiness. Roll out and line one-inch-deep pie pan. The filling is made as follows: 3 cups canned cherries; 1 cup sugar; 2 tbsp. flour or corn starch; 1 tbsp. butter. Combine cherries and dry ingredients and fill pie pan level. Cover with pastry—fill crust or lattice of strips. Bake at 425°F. for 10 minutes, then at 350°F. for 35 minutes longer.

"What Do You Know" answers: 1) 48; 2) turkeys and llamas; 3) 1050 miles. Swift & Company CHICAGO 9 ILLINOIS

LIVESTOCK AND MEAT

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