

10¢

# THE LONE EAGLE

JUNE

## FIGHTING ACE

**MARCH OF DEATH**  
A Novelette of Sky Valor  
By **GEORGE BRUCE**

FEATURING  
THE WORLD'S GREATEST  
**SKY FIGHTER IN**  
**ALIEN SKIES**  
A FULL BOOK-LENGTH  
WAR-AIR NOVEL

LT.  
**FRANK JOHNSON**  
•  
**BOB CLARE**

**COMPLETE SCALE MODEL PLANS OF THE BREGUET 14B.2**







# New 6-Volt TRINDL Electric ARC WELDER

© PATENTS PENDING

**Works on Storage Battery  
or 110 Volt Light Circuit**  
**A REAL WELDER**

Men, here is the hottest specialty item that has come along in years. A real honest to goodness electric arc welder that does a man size job. Built sturdily of the finest materials. Requires no mechanical knowledge—any one can use it. Every demonstration should make a sale. This new Trindl Electric Arc Welder is made possible by the invention of a low voltage carbon which gets white hot from the current of an ordinary 6 volt storage battery such as in your automobile. It only uses about 20 to 25 amperes of current which is about the same current drain as 4 head-light bulbs, yet develops about 7000 degrees of heat.

**MELTS IRON AND STEEL  
INSTANTLY**

The Trindl Welder is simple to use. Expert welding can be done by anyone. The Trindl Arc Welder is the only battery welder that, after a rigid test, has been approved by the Automotive Test Laboratories of America. It is ideal for making permanent fender repairs—also for broken castings, radiators, cylinders, water jackets, holes in auto bodies, hog troughs, boilers, tanks, milk cans, radios, batteries, etc. Iron, Steel, Brass, Copper and Tin can be worked on for a quick and permanent repair. The repaired part will be as strong as before.

## NEW 110 VOLT CONVERTER MAKES FULL SIZE PROFESSIONAL UNIT

This new converter is used on any 110 volt 60 cycle electric light socket in place of a storage battery. It is especially designed to be used with the Trindl Electric Arc Welder—**COSTS LESS THAN A GOOD BATTERY**—The combination makes a full size professional electric arc welder that everybody can use. Ideal for fender and repair shop needs. This is a sensation, not only in price but also in actual results. The converter represents the same fine construction and engineering skill as the arc welder. The complete outfit, including the transformer, is easily portable so that it can be brought right to the job.

**USERS SWEAR BY IT**—The price is so low that now anyone can afford to have a real welding outfit. Think of the profit you can make introducing this Trindl Welder and Converter—a simple five minute demonstration should make a sale to every interested prospect, especially when they hear the amazingly low price. Garages, radio and battery men, tinner, sheet metal workers, janitors, farmers and home-owners all need the Trindl Welder and Converter.

**ACT NOW!** There are big profits and a steady business waiting for you taking care of your territory for us. Don't let someone else get in before you—Send coupon Today.

**TRINDL PRODUCTS**  
2229-HM Calumet Ave., Chicago, Ill.



### FACTS

Here are just a few excerpts from the many letters of praise we have received from Trindl Electric Arc boosters.

"Please find enclosed for 12 welders by return mail for I am about sold out now. They are selling fine."—W. C. Anderson, Nebr.

"Received my Trindl Arc Welder and am both pleased and surprised."—Louis F. Glier, Ohio.

"Results are very gratifying with your welder. I am enclosing an order for 12 more Electric Arc Welders."—Nelson O. Lyster, Florida.

"I received my welder, and it is a regular repair shop in itself."—J. R. Harper, La.

"I sold 4 of your Trindl Electric Arc Welders in three minutes."—C. Gillies, Canada.

"I sold 9 welders in my first ten calls."—F. W. Stice, Iowa.

\$10.50 a day profit for you for only selling 6 Trindl Arc Welders. No matter where you turn, you will find people who will want to buy arc welders from you. Garages, shop men, radio repair men, farmers, home-owners, mechanics, janitors, all of them need Trindl Electric Arc Welders. Be the man in your territory to clean up with Trindl.

### MAIL COUPON NOW!

TRINDL PRODUCTS  
2229-HM Calumet Ave.  
Chicago, Illinois

Yes! Rush me free particulars of how I can make big money with Trindl Electric Arc Welders and Converters. This does not obligate me in any way.

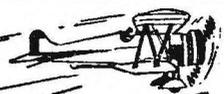
Name .....

Local Address .....

City .....

State .....

10¢ **THE LONE EAGLE**  
**FIGHTING ACE**



Vol. XIV, No. 3

BRUCE McALESTER, Editor

June, 1937

*A Full Book-Length War-Air Novel*

*Featuring the Lone Eagle*

**ALIEN SKIES**

By LIEUT. SCOTT MORGAN

*(Profusely Illustrated)*

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*Manuscripts must be accompanied by self-addressed, stamped envelopes, and are submitted at the author's risk*



**Read our companion air magazine: SKY FIGHTERS—10c at all newsstands**

# 6 WEEKS AGO SHE SAID: "HE'S TOO SKINNY!"



*Posed by professional models*

## NEW DISCOVERY GIVES THOUSANDS 10 TO 25 POUNDS - in a few weeks!

**I**f you seem "born to be skinny" —if you've tried everything to gain weight but with no success—here's a new scientific discovery that has given thousands of happy men just the pounds and solid heftiness they wanted—and so quickly they were amazed!

Not only has this new easy treatment brought solid, naturally attractive flesh, but also normal color, new pep, and the many new friends these bring.

### Body-building discovery

Scientists recently discovered that thousands of people are thin and rundown for the single reason that they do not get enough Vitamin B and Iron in their daily food. Without these vital elements you may lack appetite, and you don't get the most body-building good out of the food you eat.

Now one of the richest known sources of Vitamin B is cultured ale yeast. By a new process the finest imported cultured ale yeast is now concentrated 7 times, made 7 times more powerful. Then it is combined with 3 kinds of iron, pasteurized whole yeast and other valuable ingredients in pleasant tablets.

If you, too, need these vital elements to aid in building you up, get these new Ironized Yeast tablets from your druggist today. Note how quickly they increase your appetite and help you get more benefit from the body-building foods that are so essential. Then day after day watch flat chest develop and skinny limbs round out to natural attractiveness. See better color and natural good looks come to your cheeks. Soon you feel like an entirely new person, with new charm, new personality.

### Money-back guarantee

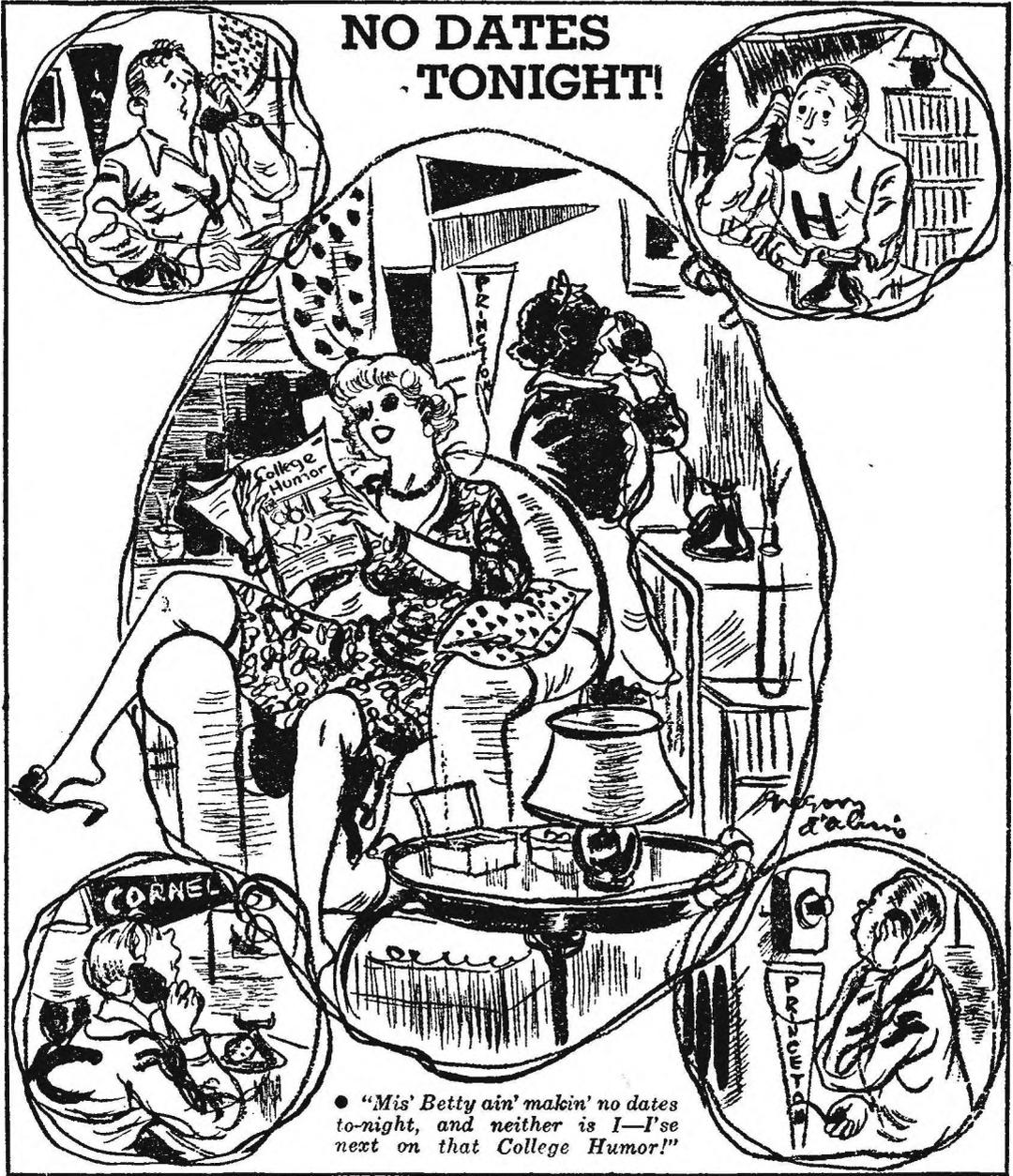
No matter how skinny and run-

down you may be from lack of sufficient Vitamin B and Iron, these new "7-power" Ironized Yeast tablets should aid in building you up in just a few weeks, as they have helped thousands. If not delighted with the benefits of the very first package, your money instantly refunded.

Only be sure you get genuine Ironized Yeast. Don't let anyone sell you some perhaps cheaper yeast and iron tablet, which is not the original Ironized Yeast that has been so successful. Look for "IY" stamped on each tablet.

### Special FREE offer

To start thousands building up their health right away, we make this FREE offer. Purchase a package of Ironized Yeast tablets at once, cut out the seal on the box and mail it to us with a clipping of this paragraph. We will send you a fascinating new book on health, "New Facts About Your Body." Remember, results with the very first package—or money refunded. At all druggists. Ironized Yeast Co., Inc., Dept. 775, Atlanta, Ga.



**SPECIAL!!**  
**NINE ISSUES FOR**  
**\$1.00**

SUBSCRIPTION DEPT., COLLEGE HUMOR      TFG  
 23 WEST 48TH STREET, NEW YORK CITY  
 My dollar is pinned to this coupon. Please send the next nine issues to:

Name.....  
 Address.....  
 City.....STATE.....  
 (Foreign, \$1.60)

# Make me Prove

THAT I CAN TRAIN YOU  
AT HOME FOR A

## Good Job in Radio



**Here's Proof**  
That My Training Pays



**OWNS PART TIME  
RADIO BUSINESS**

"I am a locomotive engineer with the B. & M. Railroad, and work part time in Radio. In the selling end I have made as high as \$300 in one month and have added to

that about \$100 in service work." **FRANK McCLELLAN**, 902 Elizabeth St., Mechanicville, N. Y.

**PARTNER IN LARGE  
RADIO SUPPLY HOUSE**

"Our concern has grown by leaps and bounds until it is today the largest wholesale Radio supply house in New England. We have established branches at Portland, Maine, and Barre, Vt. The N.R.I. Man travels the highway to profits in Radio." **REYNOLDS W. SMITH**, 1187-91 Elm Street, Manchester, N. H.



**DOUBLED SALARY  
IN 5 MONTHS**

"Shortly after I started the N.R.I. Course I began teaching Radio classes at the Spartan School of Aeronautics. After five months I was given a chance to join the American Airlines at a salary double that which I received from the school." **A. T. BROTHERS**, 2554 Hill St., Santa Monica, Calif.

**THIS  
FREE BOOK**  
Has Helped Hundreds of  
Men Make More Money

**I Will Send You a Sample Lesson  
FREE**

Clip the coupon and mail it. I will prove to you that I can train you at home in your spare time to be a **RADIO EXPERT**. I will send you my first lesson **FREE**. Examine it, read it, see how clear and easy it is to understand—how practical I make learning Radio at home. Then you will know why men without Radio or electrical experience have become Radio Experts and are earning more money than ever as a result of my Training.

**Many Radio Experts Make  
\$30, \$50, \$75 a Week**

Radio broadcasting stations pay engineers, operators, station managers up to \$5,000 a year. Spare time Radio set servicing pays as much as \$200 to \$500 a year—full time servicing work pays as much as \$30, \$50, \$75 a week. Many Radio Experts own their own businesses. Manufacturers and jobbers employ testers, inspectors, foremen, engineers, servicemen, paying up to \$8,000 a year. Automobile, police, aviation, commercial Radio, and loud speaker systems are newer fields offering good opportunities now and for the future. Television promises many good jobs soon. Men I have trained are holding good jobs in all these branches of Radio.

**Many Make \$5, \$10, \$15 a Week  
Extra in Spare Time  
While Learning**

Starting the day you enroll, I send you Extra Money Job Sheets. They show you how to do Radio repair jobs that you can cash in on quickly—give you plans and ideas that have made good spare time money—from \$200 to \$500 a year—for hundreds of fellows. I send you Radio equipment to conduct experiments and give you practical Radio experience.



**Money Back Agreement Protects You  
Save Money—Learn at Home**

I am so sure that I can train you successfully that I agree in writing to refund every penny you pay me if you are not satisfied with my Lessons and Instruction Service when you finish. I'll send you a copy of this agreement with my Free Book.

**Get My Lesson and 64-Page Book  
FREE. Mail Coupon**

In addition to my Sample Lesson, I will send you my 64-page book, "Rich Rewards in Radio," **FREE** to anyone over 16 years old. My book describes Radio's spare time and full time opportunities and those coming in television; describes my Training in Radio and Television; shows you actual letters from men I have trained, telling what they are doing and earning; tells about my Money Back Agreement. **MAIL THE COUPON** in an envelope, or paste it on a penny postcard.

**J. E. SMITH, President  
National Radio Institute  
Dept. 7F09 Washington, D. C.**



**GOOD FOR BOTH 64 PAGE BOOK FREE  
SAMPLE LESSON FREE**

J. E. SMITH, President, National Radio Institute,  
Dept. 7F09, Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Smith:  
Without obligation, send me the Sample Lesson and your free book about the spare time and full time Radio opportunities, and how I can train for them at home in spare time. (Please write plainly.)

Name..... Age.....  
Address .....

City..... State.....2FR

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# I AM A STRIP TEASE GIRL

*Many Men Wanted Me—but  
Few of Them Offered  
Me Their Love!*



**T**HE most garish entertainment which Broadway has to offer to pleasure seekers is the burlesque show.

When I graduated from Miss Willis' dancing school back home, I certainly had no thought of eventually landing in a burlesque show. And at that time I had never heard of a strip-tease girl, the main attraction of these shows.

I was seventeen at the time, and knew that I was as lovely as most of the girls whose photographs were displayed before the theatres on Broadway. Surely, I thought, there would be something for me to do.

So, full of ambition and hope, I went the endless rounds of the theatrical offices along the Great White Way. I was not discouraged when the first couple of weeks

failed to turn up a job. It was not until the little hoard of money that was mine dwindled to ten dollars that I began to worry.

Today, no one knows of those early struggles of mine. I finally made the feature spot in a big-time Broadway show. But I got there via the burlesque show—a strip-tease girl graduated from Zimsky's to Ziegfeld's.

Maybe it was because I was, at heart, a dancer that I came out of the runway chorus of burlesque and on to a sensational success as one of Broadway's highest paid stars.

Many things happened in my life from the time I stood before Dave Herman, stage manager for Zimsky's burlesque houses, trembling as his bold, black eyes

*Continue This Startling Personal Revelation in the JUNE Issue of*

**THRILLING**

# Confessions

!A NEW MAGAZINE OF TRUE STORIES FROM LIFE

Many Stories And Features **10c** Now On Sale At All Stands

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1938 1939 1940 1941 1942 1943 1944 1945 1946 1947



The leaders of the next ten years will largely be determined in the next ten months. Will you be one of them?

# Will You Be Clerk or Manager Ten Years from Now?

"SURELY, this could never happen to me," you say—"that I should be sitting at the same desk—be doing the same work—for ten straight years!"

But wait a minute—

Exactly that same thing has happened to thousands upon thousands of men. It has probably happened to men right in the company you now are working for. And—unless you fit yourself for a better job—there is a very good chance that it may happen to you!

Unthinkable? That's what J. N. Dixon of Columbus, Ohio, said to himself. Yet lack of training kept him slaving away at low wages for a long time.

### TRIPLES INCOME

Here is Mr. Dixon's own story—"Just after I returned from the war, one of your representatives found me plugging away at a bookkeeper's job in Marietta, Ohio. He performed a real service and explained to me the need of further training, and induced me to take the LaSalle training in Higher Accountancy. After a few months of study, I secured a position with the Trust Department of a National Bank. This was the stepping stone I needed to various responsible positions including handling of receiverships and other important duties. That quickly boosted my income several hundred percent."

### ANOTHER AMAZING SUCCESS STORY

If you think Mr. Dixon's success story unusual, please read what J. H. Krouse of Memphis, Tennessee, says. "When I decided to take your training in Higher Accountancy, I was a clerk. Today I am Chief Consultant Accountant for the U. S. Engineer's Office in Memphis, Tenn. Whatever success or recognition I have had, I owe to your training. I have had no other specialized training along this line. Your method of teaching is not only instructive but highly engaging. I have observed other courses, but firmly believe LaSalle has the best to be had anywhere."

Another bit of proof is Mr. R. P. Barthalow's experience. Mr. Barthalow is Chief of the Sales Tax Section of the Tax Commission of Ohio. A department which handles over \$50,000,000 a year. Mr. Barthalow attributes much of his success to LaSalle training.

### SEND FOR These Two Books and Start Toward Bigger Success

Need you hear more before you investigate the opportunities in Accountancy?

Or will you face the problem of your future NOW—and send to LaSalle and get further facts and particulars?

Without cost or obligation, the coupon will bring you two interesting books—one a 64-page book entitled, "Accountancy, the Profession that Pays"; the other "Ten Years' Promotion in One."

How about those next ten years—will you wait or will you START TODAY to realize the tremendous opportunities that lie ahead of you through sound and practical home-study business training?

Measure your grit and ambition by what you do with this coupon—NOW.

## LaSalle Extension University

LASALLE EXTENSION UNIVERSITY, Dept. 6329-HR CHICAGO

Opportunities in Accountancy—Check below and we will send you a copy of "Accountancy, the Profession that Pays," also copy of "Ten Years' Promotion in One," all without obligation.

Higher Accountancy: Leading to position as Auditor, Comptroller, Certified Public Accountant, Cost Accountant, etc.

Other LaSalle Opportunities: If more interested in one of the other fields of business indicated below, check that.

- |                                              |                                                         |                                             |
|----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business Management | <input type="checkbox"/> Law: Degree of LL. B.          | <input type="checkbox"/> Stenotypy          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Expert Bookkeeping  | <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial Management          | <input type="checkbox"/> Business English   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> C. P. A. Coaching   | <input type="checkbox"/> Personnel Management           | <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial Law     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Modern Salesmanship | <input type="checkbox"/> Modern Business Correspondence | <input type="checkbox"/> Effective Speaking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Traffic Management  |                                                         |                                             |



Name .....

Present Position ..... Address .....

# A PAGE OF "SWAPS"

Here's where you can exchange something you have but don't want for something someone else has that you do want. This is a **FREE** service.

For example, if you have a camera and don't use it, and would like to have a stamp album, write: "Have Eastman camera No. 1, Jr., make, 3 years old, good condition, will exchange for stamp album with 3,000 stamps, 25 countries.—John Smith, 49 Park Street, Albany, N. Y."

Limit your request to 25 words. No goods for sale listed, nor request concerning firearms or any illegal articles.

Type or hand-print clearly, submitting announcement. **THE LONE EAGLE** will not be responsible for losses sustained. Make very plain just what you have and just what you want to "swap" it for. Enclose a clipping of this announcement with your request.

Wrestling course, goggles, three old English picture albums, 1936 U. S. Motorist's guide, three formulas, new rain top coat (size 36), desk pencil sharpener. Want U. S. stamps. Mr. Reaach, 128 Cookman Avenue, Ocean Grove, N. J.

Have almost anything to swap for one, two or three tube short wave radio in A-1 condition. Just state what you would like to have. Richard Haley, 405 W. Second Street, Seymour, Indiana.

Have 80 power microscope, will swap for complete guitar course and strings and picks or typewriter, or what have you? Orville Goodwin, 1302 Howell Street, Seattle, Washington.

If you have a 3 x 5, 5 x 8 or larger printing press and type, I'll send you my movie outfit consisting of moviegraph projector, 200 ft. feature, 150 ft. Chas. Chaplin, 100 ft. Western, in perfect condition. O. B. Craig, 102-05 Jamaica Avenue, Richmond Hill, N. Y.

I will swap my Conn b flat trombone A-1 condition for your Conn, King, or another good make b flat cornet or trumpet. Allan Ivedetic, Box 416, Casselton, N. Dakota.

I have 16 mm. films, an Eveready pocket flashlight, flying model plans and a microscope. Will swap for microphone or earphones or what have you? Joe Roberts, Jr., 1410 E. 10th Street, Tucson, Arizona.

Have 150x mike; radio parts, tube checker (old model) magazines, and other things. Want 16 mm. projector or high power field glasses. Arthur Dawes, Hazleton, Iowa.

Have stamps (all countries and issues), movie star photos, radio equipment. Would like to have airplane magazine covers, war relics and aeronautic instruction books. Joseph Rotschi, 86-33 123rd Street, Richmond Hill, N. Y.

Have baseball suit and bat, real Irish cane, football, ice-skates, S. American coins, sharks tooth, tool chest, moulder set, Want medals, pilot helmet or any war relics. Bobby May, 60 Washington Street, Hoboken, New Jersey.

Have AnSCO speedex F 4.5. 2 1/4 x 3 1/4 case like new. Also violin, bow and case worth \$10. Want U. S. stamps, or? C. L. Hollman, Washington, Mo.

Have many stamps, United States and foreign coins, ball glove for left hander, few books, baseball, etc. Make me an offer. F. D. Prete, 1320 Cranston Street, Cranston, Rhode Island.

Want airplane photos. Have over 300 to trade. First 50 to write will get a photo of the 1936 Waco Cabin, Douglas O-38 Curtiss-Wright 16-E. Vernon Jacobson, 3853 Addison Street, Chicago, Illinois.

Will swap cigarette cards for stamps. Covers, Newfoundland, airmail, or? Write to C. Rillott, 23 Grosvenor Avenue, Grosvenor Street, Hull, England.

Have guitar, rare coin buying book, motorcycle, fenders, old bicycle for repairs, and books. Would trade for model engine (good condition) or short-wave set. Lloyd Williams, R. F. D. No. 1, Box 121, Foss, Oklahoma.

Will trade postage stamps from all over the world, watch, electric fan and model airplane kits, for used typewriter or? Joe Benton, Wetumpka, Ala.

All kinds of foreign stamps to swap for U. S. A. precancel, or British Colonies. George Reid, 30 Oak Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Have a '29 model commandaire 3 P.o.l.b. fuselage tall section, 3 panels, struts, flying wires. Also 2 International top panels. Will swap for glider, any make. Charles Schwartzler, 348 So. "E" St., Stockton, California.

Will exchange anything of value for 12" solid models. Joe Pietrolungo, 2219 So. Bouvier St., Phila., Pa.

Have ten volumes (complete set) of Hawkins Electrical Guide in perfect condition to trade for anything concerning aviation. Prefer world war plane souvenirs. Gaylen C. Johnson, 465 1/2 W. Colorado Blvd., Glendale, Calif.

Have 16 inch Vought Corsair flying model for three Liberty head nickels; also have seven valuable foreign stamps. Winton Redding, Route 2, Gettysburg, Pa.

Have new Eastman 16 mm. movie projector and three films. Want 5 tube portable radio. Thomas Traylor, 430 8th Avenue, Dayton, Ky.

I would like to get as many American stamps as possible, including commemoratives, precancels, etc. Have all kinds Canadian stamps. Alex Harris, 49 Emerald Cres., New Toronto, Ont., Canada.

Want United States stamps and foreign stamps and coins. Send at least fifty stamps. Will swap stamps 30 model plans. Send your list to Slo Sanela, R. F. D. 2, Interlaken, N. Y.

I have a fine pair of binoculars in good condition. Will exchange for a small complete model airplane gasoline motor (with generator). Robert Johnson, 3915 "D" Street, Detroit, Michigan.

Want camera, snapshots, newspapers, and magazines. Have Indian relics, postcard views, newspapers and magazines. Damar Wray, Rt. 1, Box 6, Kilmichael, Miss.

Swap: B battery eliminator, 2 tube battery set, radio parts, and radio diagrams for aviation courses or anything you may have to offer. John Grimm, 4506 A. McKinley Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri.

Have new album, stamps, sports equipment, books, magazines, other articles. Want stamps, magazines. Will exchange lists. Charles Lehmann, 3027 Westwood Avenue, Baltimore, Md.

Have U. S. world war aviation helmet, complete microscope and chemical set, pup tent, 16 mm. Keystone projector with 500 ft. film, league baseball, finger printing set. Want model airplane gas motor, all wave radio. Roy Trask, 65 Columbia St., Rensselaer, N. Y.

Have Lesbarjan player piano roll cutter. Anyone can cut rolls. No musical knowledge necessary. What have you? Wansborough, Hotel Martin, Kokomo, Ind.



I will train you  
for the BIG jobs  
IN RADIO AND  
TELEVISION...

LEARN AT HOME  
DURING SPARE TIME

QUALIFY for U.S. GOV'T. LICENSE

**Proof**

I operate at KGB, a CBS station, and also have a spare time service job at Sears Roebuck which nets me \$100.00 a month more. Then I pick up \$25 to \$40 a month on sale of tubes and parts. Lloyd Mitchell, Escondido, Calif.

Thanking you for what you helped me with, I found work in two weeks. I am employed at Radio Station WOOD and WASH.

Chas. A. Caldwell, Grand Rapids, Mich.

At present, I have six offers of jobs, ranging from \$60.00 per month to \$275.00.

Nell Anderson, Ellinwood, Kana.

I am now working a seven hour shift on transmitter at KRBC. I had no difficulty in starting in on a shift after the first day, thanks to FNT training.

J. B. Casey, Abilene, Texas

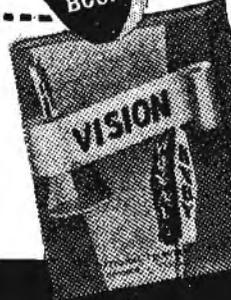
Crestline, from KGRV in Scottsbluff, Nebraska. I am employed here as an operator.

Earnest Neath, Scottsbluff, Neb.

I have secured employment as Radio Engineer for Lynchburg Police Station and during spare time I am at the local broadcasting station WLVA.

Jas. W. Johnson, Lynchburg, Virginia

FREE BOOK



EARN  
\$35  
\$50  
A \$75  
WEEK

Radio offers tremendous opportunities for qualified men. What's more, commercial television will quickly be demanding thousands of Trained men. Men who LEARN NOW will have a chance at the big jobs.

**TELEVISION BROADCASTS DAILY**

Television Station W9XAL, Kansas City, which we have owned and operated since 1932, broadcasts television programs every day of the year. The advanced discoveries and COPYRIGHTED information fresh from this Television Station, from our commercial station KXBY, as well as from our celebrated experimental laboratories form an important part of our regular study courses. No wonder First National Television training puts you way ahead of others and assures quicker success. *We know because we are doing all the things we teach you.*

**Full Time and Part Time Jobs**—Broadcasting Stations need more operators and technical experts as business increases. Many new stations are being built—and licensed operators make up to \$5000 per year. Spare time earnings up to \$10 and \$20 weekly. We show you how to earn while learning.

**LEARN FROM EXPERTS IN RADIO-TELEVISION**

My celebrated home study course embodies the knowledge of experts in the big field of Radio and Television. Men who have pioneered and spent years in research and development work. My course brings you the newest and exclusive practical information available only through our active engineers of our Commercial Radio and Experimental Television Stations.

**Simplified Modern Training—Easy to Learn.** Over 80 simplified, practical, highly illustrated assignments complete this intensely interesting home study plan—written by men who know. And that's not all—we teach you not only theory but by actual practice.

**Generous Laboratory and Experimental Equipment**—I have made it possible for you to have elaborate experiments and expensive equipment including Cathode Ray Tubes, photo electric cells, 6-tube high fidelity receivers (with both ear phones and loud speaker)... important and necessary equipment for carrying on your practical experiments... all yours to keep WITHOUT OBLIGATION OR ADDED COST TO YOU.

**Qualify for U. S. Government License.** Here's the ticket that opens the door of opportunity for you. A U. S. Government radio-telephone operator license which qualifies you for the big jobs. Get it the First National way.

**Don't miss this chance at SUCCESS! ACT NOW!!** Get all the facts about my great Radio-Television Study Course. You can earn while you learn! Write today and I will send you absolutely free, my new book entitled "VISION". This is your opportunity. Don't delay—Mail coupon now. **S. Q. NOEL, President...**

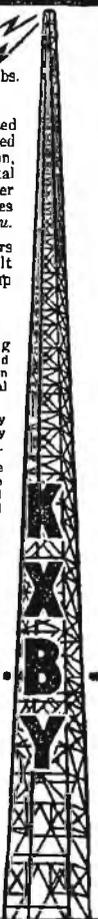
**FIRST NATIONAL TELEVISION, INC.,** TRAINING DIVISION, KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

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#### SPECIFICATIONS

Span .....47 ft. 7 in.  
Length .....31 ft. 10 in.  
Weight empty.....3220 lbs.  
Weight loaded.....5250 lbs.  
Wing area.....501 sq. ft.  
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12 cylinder water cooled  
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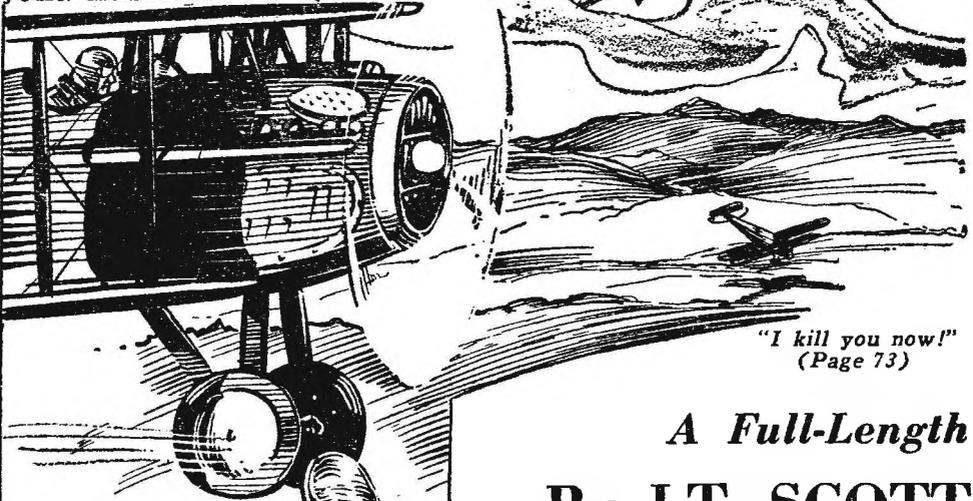
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JOHN MASTERS

# ALIEN



"I kill you now!"  
(Page 73)



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## A Full-Length By LT. SCOTT

Author of "Drome of the Damned,"

### CHAPTER I

#### Border Menace

THE rhythmic throb of the native orchestra sounded faintly through the warped door on the crooked balcony framing the *patio*. It reverberated through the little *cantina* on the edge of the desert, but its pulse-quickenning sound, smothered by a bolted door, was too low to drown the rasping snarl of the dark man who leaned across the wet-ringed table, and pointed a dirty finger at the smiling man who sat across from him.

"*Caramba!* cried the dark-skinned one, shifting the bandolier across his left shoulder, and with almost the same motion brushing his grimed

*John Masters Combats a Fiendish Hun Plot*



EL CHINCHE

### War-Air Novel

## MORGAN

"War Hawks," etc.

fingers across the stubble of his moist face. "The cursed *gringos* will be surprised when El Chinche and his men sweep across the Border. They shall taste our steel and keep tasting it until they are out of Texas and the rest of the Border states. Once again Mexico will become an empire of the west!"

"And you, *amigo*," returned the blond man at the other side of the table, "you will be the ruler of this new empire."

The blond man smiled faintly as he saw the Mexican rising to the well-placed bait. "You will be the ruler of this new nation," he went on. "Once again Mexico, as you said, will take it's rightful place on the western shores of the Atlantic. You will hold the western shore;



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*to Transplant the War Onto American Soil*

---

we will hold the eastern shore. You will be known as *el-el-*" The blond man paused, his brow wrinkled. "What is they call you now?" he asked.

"El Chinche," grinned the swarthy man, setting down his glass and wiping his bristling mustache. "El Chinche. The name strikes fear into the hearts of the *hacienda* owners, the *caballeros* and the *peons*."

"A queer name. What does it mean?"

"The Bug," chortled the Mexican as he reached across the table and filled the other's glass. "You wish to know why, *senor*?"

"Yes." The stranger touched the pulque to his lips and struggled to hide his feeling of distaste.

"They call me the Bug, *senor*," grinned the Mexican, "because I am everywhere! They never know where I might turn up next. I am like La Cucaracha. They know I am around but they can never catch me.

"I come swarming in on them with my *bandidos*, and then I am gone, and they feel sorry. Go down there"—he pointed toward the door through which the faint hum of the music was coming—"ask them about El Chinche. See their faces pale, and you will understand that I am known throughout the land. Try it, *senor*."

The stranger smiled. "It seems then that I have come to the right man with my plan," he said softly.

"That you have, *senor*." A frown crossed the Mexican's face. "But you still have to prove that the right man has come to me. I will not act until you have shown that you will do what you have said."

"Here is the first proof," smiled the fair man. He stood up and unfastened a leather belt which had been hidden under his vest. "In that"—he tossed it on the table in front of El Chinche—"you will find fifty thousand dollars in American

gold certificates. There will be more, if you serve me well."

El Chinche tore open the belt. His stubby, dirt-fouled fingers shuffled the crisp bills. "I hate the *gringos*," he murmured, "but I love their money."

**F**OR a moment the silence in the room was only broken by the rasp of the music in the *patio* below and the crackle of the bills as the Mexican stowed them away under his silver encrusted vest.

"*Senor*," hissed the bandit, "when will the first boat come?"

"In about a month," replied the tall man. He unfolded a map and spread it out on the table. "You name the place where it can land the cargo and it will be there."

El Chinche leaned his elbows on the table and screwed his wicked eyes into slits as he studied the map. His tongue flicked across dry lips as he made a show of studying the names along the western coast of Mexico. At last he placed a finger on a spot a few miles below the Border.

"But a boat such as we intend to send across cannot enter the Laguna Madre!" exclaimed the stranger. "And do not forget—there will be other boats following it. We must have a safe spot."

El Chinche grinned. "I will have men on the spot, men who know passage into the Laguna Madre. Have no fear. The cargo will be landed where no one will see."

"Will there be a level place from which planes can get into the air after they are assembled?"

El Chinche shrugged his shoulders. "*Senor*, I do not know much of these things you call aeroplanes. I have seen them flying across the Border in the United States where they train pilots who go across to the war. Will they be as good as those?"

The tall man made a motion of

impatience. "Better, El Chinche, much better. The planes you have seen will be playthings compared with those we will bring across in the ships. You are to supply the troops for the attack. We will supply the planes and the pilots."

"And then the *gringos* will run," laughed El Chinche.

"But you did not answer the other question," demanded the tall stranger with the steely eyes.

"I forgot, *senor*," rumbled El Chinche. "You wish to know if there is a level place for the planes. If they do not need more room than the planes at San Antone there will be plenty of room. Have no fear about that. I will have men clear the mesquite before the ship arrives."

The man to whom El Chinche had been talking glanced at his watch. "The car will be coming for me, *amigo*. I must get back to Mexico City where I can get in touch with my superiors in Germany. But before I leave I wish to warn you."

The Mexican's face clouded. "Who warns El Chinche?"

"I do!" snapped the stranger as he pushed the chair back. "I wish to warn you to beware of strangers, especially *gringos*. Do not talk to anyone about this."

"You need not be alarmed," grinned the Mexican. "I know of no *gringo* who is smarter than El Chinche."

"But I do," retorted the tall man quietly.

"Who?" snarled El Chinche.

"One they call the Lone Eagle," replied the stranger quietly. "I have reason to believe that he is in France at the moment. But from experience I will never again be surprised where I might meet him. He is dangerous."

El Chinche shook his head. "I have never heard of such a one, *senor*."

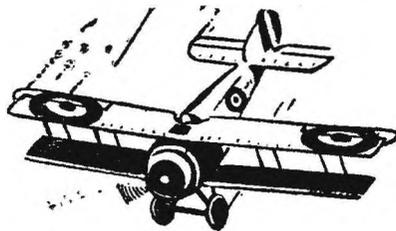
"But that does not alter the case," *amigo*," pleaded the tall man. "I warn you: dispose of any American

who might fall into your hands. This Lone Eagle, as he is called, has spoiled our plans many times. The war would have been over long ago if it had not been for that cursed American. He has fooled us too often."

**E**L CHINCHE threw back his head and laughed until his stocky body shook. He finally flicked the tears of mirth from his eyes and pointed a stubby finger at the tall one.

"An' you, *amigo mio*," he chortled, "you who think you are very smart—I mean your countrymen. You Germans who sought to beat the world to its knees are forced to come to me, El Chinche, and hire me and my *bandidos* to win this war for you!"

The tall one had not been in the Kaiser's diplomatic service for nothing. Long experience had taught him when to keep his mouth closed and when he opened it to say the



right words. He simply smiled and stepped around the table and laid his white hand on the soiled leather of the Mexican's vest.

"We ask your help, *amigo*," he began, "for we know that you and your men, backed by the planes and pilots we will send you, will engage the Yankees at the Border and drive them back, adding land to Mexico and prestige to the name of El Chinche."

El Chinche got up. His eyes narrowed to slits as he looked into the crafty face in front of him. "And while I fight the Yankees, as you call them, you will be able to carry

on over there. Yes, I know what you are after. I know that all you wish is for *gringo* troops to be held on this side to fight me. You cannot fool me, so how do you think this *gringo*, the Lone Eagle, could?"

The tall one cocked his head to one side suddenly and listened. The roar of a motor sounded across the desert.

"I leave you now, El Chinche," he said holding out his hand. "Spend your money wisely, be ready when the moment comes to strike. Gomez, my man at the government wireless station in Mexico City, will see that you are informed as to when the boat will reach Laguna Madre. In the meantime I expect you to call your bands together, consolidate them, and enlist all the peons you can. And remember, beware of the one known as the Lone Eagle."

The Mexican pushed out his great pudgy hand. "*Adios, señor,*" he smiled. "And if you see this Lone Eagle tell him to beware of El Chinche."

The car faded into the desert. El Chinche watched it from sight, then swung around to face the men seated in the *patio*.

"Porfirio, Lorenzo, Pepe, Eladio!" he bellowed. "Here, quick!"

The men gathered around their leader. Low commands were given. Men slipped away from the *cantina*, their silver spurs clanking on the stones. The thud of horses' hoofs became a dull patter as the riders sped across the yard behind the building, and disappeared along the tortuous trails winding through the cactus.

Within the hour El Chinche's followers were beginning to swarm, and a new menace to the Allied cause was sweeping into being on the hot winds of the arid Mexican desert.

And a tall military looking blond man seated in the rear seat of a car speeding toward Mexico City, grinned in triumph.

## CHAPTER II

### *Darkening Skies*



NOTHER day was almost done. The drab skies reflected no sunset, only a quiet merging of light into darkness.

Surging homeward just under the lowering clouds, speeding across the lines from a reconnaissance far behind the German lines, was a single mottled Spad, apparently the only ship in the sky at the close of another bloody day of warfare.

John Masters, better known as the Lone Eagle, was the pilot of the Spad. He sat there almost two miles above the shell-battered terrain, looking forward toward a swift return to his own tarmac, a short, but complete report, and then a rest.

For Masters was tired. This was his third trip across that day.

As he moved the stick gently to one side to counteract a bump his quick blue eyes narrowed and he became alert. There to his left, swinging out from behind a sloping bank of damp grey cloud, he saw a cluster of Fokkers.

His fingers tightened on the stick. His eyes flashed to the feed blocks of his Vickers. Then he turned slowly, keeping a watch on the flock of black-crossed ships which seemed bent on slipping into enemy territory. A puzzled look crossed his weather-tanned face.

"Thought maybe they were escorting an observation job or a couple of bombers," he muttered as he eased closer.

Then a couple of seconds later he saw a flock of Spads speeding west, evidently trying to reach their hangars before night slid over the land. He shook his head, more puzzled than ever over the action of the Fokkers.

"They're nuts," he growled. "They

see those Spads, yet they're heading that way, and on a lower level. Something dizzy about this."

He straightened out, following the German ships. The Fokkers angled over until the course would take them directly under the Spads. Wings began to waggle. Yankee pilots answered the signal.

Masters sat tensed, watching the little drama unfolding on his left. Tails went up. Noses went down. Twelve Spads streaked through the sky, heading toward the sinister green ships. The Fokkers banked, not toward the Spads but to the right, curling away in easy flight, enticing the Spads to follow.

That was when Masters slashed at the stick and curled in behind the diving Spads, who were following the course taken by the Huns.

"They want those Spads out of the way for some reason," the Lone Eagle muttered. He glanced around him, studying every billowing cloud. "Those Fokkers don't want a fight; they're just decoys, trying to clear those skies of Allied ships."

**B**EHIND, he heard the rattle of machine guns as the Spads opened up on the apparently retreating Fokkers. But Masters paid no attention to the fight slipping away in the distance behind him now. The odds were even; the Spads, if their pilots were any good, could give a good account of themselves.

Then he saw what he was looking for—a lone Halberstadt streaking toward the southeast. The ship was taking a course just the opposite to that flown by the Fokkers.

"If they were escort jobs they'd be sticking right by this crate," muttered Masters as he wheeled his ship in behind the two-seater.

Behind him he saw a flare in the gathering darkness. A ship had gone down, Allied or Hun he knew not which. And as a matter of fact

he was not particularly interested. His quarry at the moment was the ship in front of him, that lone Halberstadt which seemed so anxious to get away from the vicinity of the Fokkers.

One thing was certain. That Halberstadt was out to accomplish some dirty work. And it looked as if the Fokkers were drawing the Spads away from the vicinity so the Hal could get behind the Allied lines.

Masters shoved the stick forward; the nose of the Spad went down. His thumbs were poised over the Bowdens. He waited, every muscle on the alert. He only had a few moments to accomplish his purpose before it would be dark and the mysterious two-seater would lose itself in the gathering mist.

But before Masters could bring his guns into play the man in the rear cockpit of the Halberstadt opened up with his Parabellums and sent a withering fountain of fire out into the gathering gloom.

The Lone Eagle kicked on rudder without bothering to throw the stick over. His Spad skidded wildly, puffing his helmet out on one side as the wind tore at the straps.

Then he corrected the skid and in the same motion eased the stick over a trifle, just enough to place his sights over the fuselage of the ship looming up in front of him. His guns spoke. Two curving lines of grey streaked from the blazing Vickers and threaded the weaving Halberstadt. He saw the blazing slugs bounce along the long fuselage and then chew at the upper right hand wing. But only for a second. He was forced to break away to avoid a scintillating burst which snaked at him from the steady guns held in the fists of a determined observer.

"Have to get at him from below," thought Masters, pulling his ship over in a half roll. "That fellow in

the rear office doesn't even duck, and he knows how to handle a pair of guns."

Even in the half roll the twin streaks of fire from the guns of the Hun were following him around. Masters could hear them thudding against his fuselage, and twice he felt the impact as they smashed against his rudder.

Once again Masters unwound his Spad and sent it into a screaming dive. And once again it was give and take between the two ships.

**T**HE air was filled with the harsh scream of wings and flying wires, the clatter of machine-guns, the steady throb of thundering motors. And with the strange blood-curdling threnody, Death danced his sinister waltz, swinging around the tiny sky arena, reaching out, struggling to touch human flesh as he passed.

Two or three times the Lone Eagle felt the icy chill of the Grim Specter's breath over his shoulder. Only by quick thinking and faster action did he manage to avoid the touch which usually meant finis to the career of any airman. For Death played no favorites.

At the bottom of the nerve-tinging dive, Masters flattened out. He felt the Spad squash under him, then lift its blunt nose toward the slate-colored skies. Up and up he went, the pressure of the zoom forcing him tighter and tighter against the cushions. He caught the flash of the Hun's wings in his Aldis sight; then they were gone.

The German pilot, an old hand at this grim game of war in the clouds, had evidently sensed Masters' purpose the minute the Spad slipped by the two-seater. He had seen that maneuver before, and was not caught napping. The Halberstadt skidded, leaving the Spad an open target for the gunner in the rear cockpit.

In a flash, Masters' wings were

riddled. Hot slugs ate through his fabric and chewed a center section strut to shreds. The strut gave way with a crack like a pistol shot, and the flying wire sagged.

Masters' right hand went numb as a bullet crashed against his steel joy-stick and flattened with a sickening smack. Had the bullet hit an inch or two higher, the Lone Eagle would have been crippled.

The Hun's fire held steady, even as Masters kicked the stick over and with a frantic effort brought the nose of the Spad back to normal flight. It was only then that he managed to slip from the blazing web of death, and curl back under the wide-spread wings of the Halberstadt—the only spot which sheltered him from the guns of the alert Hun in the rear cockpit.

Masters grinned ruefully as he followed the frantic efforts of the pilot above to uncover him. But the Lone Eagle followed every move, always keeping directly under the weaving Hun ship.

"Like to see some of the would-be aces that think two-seaters are cold turkey tackle this bird," he muttered to himself as he kicked on rudder and banked with the other ship. "What a surprise they would have." Then he grinned. "And what a surprise I got!"

It was a waiting game. And while the Lone Eagle held his position he watched for the other man to make a mistake.

The gloom of the coming night was closing in tighter. The Halberstadt was fast becoming merely a blur.

But Masters kept close, despite the fact that his one wing, minus a strut, vibrated every time he swung with the grey shadow above him.

The exhaust stacks of the Mercedes were beginning to glow against the shadows. Masters felt certain that if darkness did close in before he managed to knock the



*"If you shoot I shall cut the rope," Masters said. (Page 45)*

other ship down, he would be able to follow it across France.

And as the Lone Eagle crept closer and closer, still aping every move of the German, he began to wonder. This ship, he felt certain, was on no ordinary mission. Two-seaters seldom worked in as far behind the lines as this one was. And the course it was taking, southwest, would not bring it over any important Allied fortification or munition dump.

Nor could it be dropping a spy. It was getting too far inland, and too far south for that. Spies usually came down with their parachutes much further north.

His curiosity made the Lone Eagle

all the more determined to nail that mysterious ship.

"Keeps on the way he is going, and if he has gas enough," the Lone Eagle thought, "he'll be in Spain."

He glanced from his quivering wing to the two-seater. The German ship was going into a bank. Masters' eyes narrowed, and instead of banking with the Halberstadt he put his nose down and curled off in the opposite direction.

"Now's my chance," he growled. "Banking will give the bird in the rear office another crack at me, and when he takes it—"

Holding the stick forward just a second to pick up a little extra flying speed, the Lone Eagle finally

yanked it back. The Spad's nose came up with a sickening rush. As he felt the nose come up, Masters listened, half expecting to hear a crack as the wing let go. But it held and he sighed thankfully.

Over his shoulder Masters could see the Hun in the rear office of the Hal trying to swing the guns on the ring. And he was just bringing them to bear as the Spad hit the top of the loop and came down from the unexpected quarter.

Still half on his back, looking down at the thundering Halberstadt from an awkward angle, Masters moved the rudder, swung the diving Spad's nose and finally centered his sights on the center section of the upper wing.

With a prayer of hope, Masters' thumbs hit the Bowdens, his guns began to bark. And above them he heard the angry chatter of the Parabellum as the Hun sensed his purpose and began to shoot before he had his guns in position.

The blazing slugs streaked from the hot muzzle cups on the Vickers in front of the Lone Eagle. He touched the rudder, correcting his aim until his bronze-coated slugs were painting a pattern of small holes along the fabric on the Hun's upper wing.

He could have drilled the observer from that position, for the nervy Hun, with his guns still only halfway around on the ring, had to fire at Masters from an awkward angle. Even at that his tracer was bathing the Spad in a vicious fountain of lethal death.

Masters had a grim purpose in what he was doing. Dead pilots or observers could give no information. But a cluster of well placed slugs in the radiator would send the Hun ship down for a forced landing, its crew alive.

The two-seater wavered, and although it was too dark to see now, Masters sensed that the pilot was

being bothered by a stream of hot water pouring from the riddled radiator.

"I've got him!" he murmured.

But in the same instant the flashing guns from the two-seater got him. He heard the smack, sensed the hiss as the pressure in his fuel tank let go. Then the acrid odor of petrol permeated the narrow confines of the Spad's cockpit.

"And he got me," snarled Masters as he reached for the petcock of his emergency tank.

The two-seater disappeared in the darkness as Masters fussed with the gas valve. He tore at it in desperation, but no life giving fuel poured into the thirsty cylinders. He was going down, knifing the darkness with a fluttering wing.

It was ticklish going, but as the Spad reached the lower level, Masters spotted an opening close to a dim ribbon which he took to be a road. He headed for that, and just as the last dim ray of light slipped over the western horizon he flattened out and managed a landing, bumpy to be sure, but one he could walk away from.

Trotting over to the apparently deserted road, Masters jumped across a ditch just as a khaki-clad figure appeared out of a communication hut on the outside.

"**D**O cars ever get this far, buddy?" he asked of the soldier.

"Not often," replied the shadowy figure. "Be one along any minute now."

"Good," said Masters slowly. "I just had a forced landing over there. Like to get a ride back to my field."

"Hell!" grinned the soldier. "It looks like its raining planes around here. A Kraut just set a big two-seater down back there. Missed the open by miles and landed on top of some practise trenches. Tossed the observer on his dome, out like a light. But the pilot skipped. Some

of the boys are looking for him."

"Where's the observer now?" asked Masters eagerly.

"They're bringing him out on a stretcher," returned the soldier. "Captain telephoned for one of the ambulances to come down."

The ambulance arrived just as the German observer was being lifted out of the communication trench. Masters lit a match, studied the blood-streaked face a moment and listened to the wild babbling of the unconscious man.

Then, turning to the ambulance driver who was helping to put the stretcher into the car, he said, "Take him to the emergency hospital at Brigade Headquarters."

"But—" the driver started to say something, but Masters held up his hand.

"Do as I say, buddy," he ordered. "I'll square you."

"Okay," growled the driver. Then Masters crawled through the narrow opening and took his place by the side of the injured man and the driver fastened the flap down.

### CHAPTER III

#### *A New Threat*



MASTERS, accompanied by Colonel Tremaine, chief of Yankee Air Intelligence, and General Viaud of the French Intelligence Service, sat by the side of the cot while the M.O. bandaged up the German who had been working the guns in the rear cockpit of the Halberstadt.

"He is no ordinary spy," said Viaud, "despite the fact that he is dressed in civilian clothes."

"No," said Tremaine as the M.O. straightened from his task. "Spies do not carry papers as this man did. How about it, Doc? He going to come around all right?"

"Just a slight concussion," said the medico. "Nothing serious."

"About the letters he carried, how is Yawger making out decoding them?" queried the Lone Eagle, not taking his eyes off the unconscious man's face.

"Talked with him a few minutes ago on the phone and he said the whole staff was on the job," returned Tremaine, fumbling in his pocket for a cigar.

"Good!" snapped Masters. "Then we should hear something soon." He paused and bent closer over the man on the cot. For a second he held his breath as he listened to the rambling from the German's swollen lips.

"Did you hear that?" he gasped. He motioned for silence as the man on the cot groaned.

"What did he say?" demanded Tremaine impatiently.

"I didn't hear all of it," breathed Masters. "But I'll swear he said something about having to catch a boat leaving for Mexico. What the devil would a Hun pilot be doing in Mexico?"

He caught the look that passed between Tremaine and Viaud.

"What's doing in Mexico?" the Lone Eagle demanded. "You two have heard something that I have not."

Tremaine hesitated, glanced down at the German and then back to Masters. "A report came in this afternoon while you were on patrol, John."

"Concerning Mexico?"

Tremaine nodded. "Seems that since the Zimmerman-Carranza affair, Chapultepec is trying to keep in the good graces of Uncle Sam. So the Intelligence Department at Washington has received a report that the bandit band have all quieted down, disappeared, I gather. And furthermore, the hacienda owners have reported that their peons are

slipping away into the hills. Looks for all the world like another revolution is going to start popping down across the Border."

"Is *that* all?" smiled Masters. "Why worry about their little one-horse wars. We've got a big one of our own to take up our time."

"That isn't all," said Tremaine, forgetting his cigar. "You remember old Baron von Kreutner, who used to be around the German Embassy in Mexico City as German Military Attache, don't you? Well, the report says that the baron has been recalled and his place has been taken by Major-General Steofner."

"Steofner! K-3!" exclaimed Masters. "Why he's one of the most valuable men in the Kaiser's secret service! He's no military man! And he's too valuable to bury down in Mexico—unless—"

"And that's just what's been worrying us," replied Tremaine.

"And now this," said Viaud, pointing to the prisoner, "verifies our suspicions that something big is brewing in Mexico. Can it be that the German government is once again making offers to Mexico, promising to return Texas, New Mexico and Arizona to them if they will start a war against the States? Carranza had too much of a shock the other time, that it sounds incredible."

"Don't you see?" shouted Masters suddenly. "Can't you see it now? They failed in approaching Carranza. This time they are probably working with the bandit bands that infest the country. Lord knows what they've promised if the bandits will keep the United States jumping along the Border. It ties up perfectly."

"But this fellow," said Tremaine, pointing to the German. "What was he doing flying behind the Allied lines if he is in on the Mexican plan?"

"What about the map I turned over to Lieutenant Saunders?" de-

manded Masters. "It had a spot the other side of Randan marked. I want to know why. That might give us the clue to what that two-seater was doing over here."

"We'll need a lot of clues, John," returned Tremaine. "I can't for the life of me see any connection between a man flying over here in France and a few poorly armed bandits in Mexico. Let 'em start a revolution, as long as they keep their firecrackers on their own side of the Border."

"But if Steofner is in Mexico he'll see that some fireworks are fired across the Border," said Masters grimly. "And another thing: Don't forget that some of our most important training fields are down there. The R.A.F. is using them, too. A bad accident to our equipment down there would raise Ned with our plans for keeping the Huns out of the air over here."

Tremaine shook his head. "I think you're wrong, John. I can't see anything to get worked up about. Washington just sent that report on to me as a matter of routine. Something's got to go sour in that quarter before I start worrying. I've got enough on my hands over here."

"And I'm going to get to work to keep anything from happening over there," Masters said, and was interrupted by the harsh jingle of a telephone in the next room. A second later an orderly called Tremaine away, to take a call.

**M**ASTERS walked to the unconscious German. Although he was certain that the eyelids of the wounded man flickered he gave no sign that he saw it.

"Still unconscious," Masters said aloud, but he turned and held his finger to his lips, warning Viaud to silence as he did so.

Just then Tremaine returned. He started to speak but Masters took him by the arm, motioned for Viaud

to guard the prisoner and then stepped from the room.

"They found a field outside of Randan," said Tremaine as soon as Masters had closed the door. "Couple of drums of gasoline and some oil. Caught a man waiting in the brush and wormed the information out of him that he was waiting for a plane which was to stop and refuel and then continue on to Spain."

"Spain?" Masters exclaimed.

"That's it," grinned Tremaine. "Looks as if the German was heading for Spain to carry on his espionage work from there. Got quite a corps of works down there you know, especially along the waterfront. So I guess the Mexico scare was all a false alarm."

Masters shook his head. "There are boats leaving Spain for Mexico, aren't there?"

Tremaine chuckled. "You're the damnedest man, Masters! Once you get an idea into your head you never let go until you've found the answer, one way or another."

"Can't help it, Colonel," retorted Masters. "That's what keeps me going. But I want to know why that egg was saying something about getting to Mexico. And the answer lies in Mexico, I feel sure."

"Want me to ask Washington to keep me informed?" asked Tremaine, relighting his cigar for the sixth time.

"No," replied Masters slowly. "I think I'll get on the job and keep Washington informed."

"Meaning what?" asked Tremaine looking up in surprise.

"Just as soon as I've had a look at the decoded messages this fellow was carrying, I'm going to slip over to Spain and have a look around. I want to know what he meant by that crack about a boat leaving for Mexico. Where's a sailing list?"

"Got all that in my files at Chaumont," replied Tremaine. "We'll

have to stop by there anyway to see the codes Yawger is working on."

"Let's go!" Masters moved toward the door.

"And the prisoner?" asked Tremaine.

"Take him with us in the ambulance," returned Masters. "He's conscious now. Caught him with his eyes open listening to what we were saying."

**I**N a few minutes they had the German back on a stretcher and into the ambulance. The three men crawled in with him and the car started the trip to American H.Q. at Chaumont.

"There you are," said Masters quietly, as he held the decoded messages out to Tremaine. "We're on the right track. Hell's own broth is brewing in Mexico."

Tremaine took the paper. His hand shook slightly as he moved to the light and read the first message:

To the Commander of the S. S. *Morales*:

The bearer is Major von Klaber. You have him on the list. Sail as soon as he boards. Orders will be given as to destination at sea.

Molte.

Tremaine's cigar jerked between his teeth as he shuffled the two papers. He started to read the second.

K-3:—

This is Major von Klaber who has been ordered to take charge of activities in the air. So far the enemy has no inkling of our plans. The L.E. is still in France. You will be successful before he can learn of the presence of our *Staffels* in M. His Highness awaits the first report of successful operations with eagerness. We are now looking forward to *Der Tag*. Great honor will be yours. Keep in touch with me through usual channels.

Molte.

"Damn!" was Tremaine's only comment as he laid the two messages back on the table.

Masters picked the two originals

up, folded them carefully again and put them in his pocket just as the general walked into the room.

The three men leaped to their feet and saluted. The American C.O. returned their salutes and motioned them to sit down.

"Just got a tip from Lieutenant Yawger that some important papers have fallen into your hands," he said quietly. "What's up? You gentlemen look as if the enemy had broken through on all fronts."

"They're getting through on a front we didn't expect them to," snapped Tremaine. "They've been pulling a fast one right under our noses, and if we don't work fast we are going to find ourselves up a stump."

"Serious as all that?" asked the grey-haired general, the lines on his face deepening.

Tremaine started with the message from Intelligence Headquarters in Washington, and explained the events as they tied together.

**W**HEN he had finished, the C.O. lifted his eyes, glanced at the three worried faces in front of him, and his own face mirrored their expression. He shook his greying head.

"This is far more serious than it appears on the surface, gentlemen," he finally said. "If they are really carrying out a last desperate attempt to win this war, Mexico would be a mighty logical place to pull off some wild scheme. The Border would be thrown into a turmoil. The citizens back home would demand that troops listed for service overseas be held at home and sent to the Border. And as you have said, with planes down there, they would no doubt attempt to disrupt our training program also. Pilots would be held back, pilots we need very badly over here."

"But could you not send men into Mexico and wipe out these bandit

bands before they reach the Border?" asked General Viaud.

The general smiled faintly. "I went down there with an army once. I chased Villa all over the desert, but he always seemed to be where I wasn't. And with help from Germany—I mean arms, ammunition and planes—there is no telling how serious the crisis might become. It will disrupt our plans for the coming offensive. We cannot afford to withdraw the troops we intended to bring over here and put them to fighting bandits along the Mexican Border. Neither can we afford to allow our citizens to remain defenceless in their homes down there along the Rio Grande."

As the General concluded he turned and looked into the steely blue eyes of the Lone Eagle. Masters smiled grimly, got to his feet, and turned to face the three officers.

"I'm leaving for Spain at once. But before I go, I would like to make one suggestion. There are planes, war planes I mean, being manufactured in the States at the present moment, are there not?"

The general smiled. "I see what you mean, Masters. You would like some of those planes shipped to the Border."

Masters nodded.

"A few Spads, and a squadron or two of D.H.9s," he said. "Instructors now working on the fields in Texas could be picked to fly those ships. Have a Spad and D.H. sent to every flying field. Let the officers get in as much time as possible to familiarize themselves with the ships, without knowing just why the order has been given. Have the planes concentrated on a field—let's say a spot far from a training flying field or city. I will work in Mexico, learn what I can, and if and when I need the planes, I'll contact them through the Border patrol. See what I'm driving at?"

The general looked up from the



*The Halberstadt hit the trench, tossed the observer out. (Page 22)*

notes he had been making on a pad and nodded. "I'll see that you are backed to the limit. When do you want these planes sent down?"

"The practice D.H.s and the Spads at once," said Masters. "Two weeks from now will be plenty of time for the others. I'm going to make a desperate attempt to get on the *Morales*, bound from Spain to Mexico."

"And this von Klaber?" asked Tremaine. "What about him?"

Masters thought a moment, then shook his head. "There may be men on board who know him. But I'll work it somehow."

"Just a moment, John," said the C.O. "I hate to ask you this, but I think it would be best, for your sake, if you don't go across the Border into the States. You're too well known in America and if there was a slip-up, your effectiveness as a secret agent might be ruined."

"I understand, General," smiled Masters. "It's going to be tough, if I get to Mexico, to be so close to home and not pop over for a visit. But I know you're right. By the way, is G-4 still at his post in Bilbao?"

Tremaine nodded. Then they all shook hands with the stalwart young American ace and a few minutes later the Lone Eagle was on his way to begin the most dangerous of his many precarious missions against the enemy to the Allied cause.

## CHAPTER IV

### *A Desperate Plan*



HE serrated peaks of the mighty Pyrenees loomed ahead, curling the dim horizon into queer wavy lines. Mount Orión, their landmark, shot its jagged head toward the stars alongside. The Bristol Fighter banked and took a course which placed the mountain range on its left.

Masters, seated in the rear cockpit of the two-seater, adjusted his parachute harness, saw that every buckle was tightly fastened, glanced over the side of the ship to see that the cone holding the precious folds was swinging free against the quivering fuselage.

As soon as they drew opposite the Cantabrians he would go overboard. The Lone Eagle wanted to avoid landing too close to Bilbao.

He sat for a moment looking straight ahead into the night. Directly in front of his eyes, just visible against the faint glow from the instrument board, was the helmeted head of Captain "Red" Nichols, the young Yankee pilot who had taken Masters into enemy territory on many of his previous missions.

"Stout fellow, Red," mused Masters. "Trust him to slip me over and get out again without running into a mess. And this trip should be easy. No Huns to bother him along this Border. This is one job old Red will find as easy as a Sunday School picnic."

At that moment, Nichols turned, smiled at his passenger, and pointed over the side, signaling that they were crossing the Border.

Then as if he had stumbled over a corpse in the dark, Captain Nichol's cheery smile froze, changed to a look of utter dismay.

At the same instant a slithering burst of sparks wove their way past Masters' head and rattled on through the taut fabric of the right hand wing.

The Spanish sending a patrol up! Masters leaped to his feet, slammed the folding seat into the frame, and in the same motion grabbed at the spade handles of his Lewis guns. He had never heard of an air patrol along here and he was sure they must be the first Allied ship along the Border in months.

Nichols was banking. Masters stood staring up at the stars, hoping

to catch some sight of the ship which had fired the surprising burst. His knees were pressed against the side of the fuselage, using a bracing wire to help him hold his place. He fingered the guns nervously, searching anxiously for the unwelcome Spanish patrol plane.

Suddenly he saw a star wink out. Then another. In a flash they were on again. Nichols was pounding on the cowlings and pointing toward the heavens on the right. There too, Masters saw stars erased and then become visible.

"More than one of them," he muttered.

He rapped on the cowlings between the rear office and the front cockpit. Nichols throttled back the motor and leaned toward Masters.

"What do you make of it?" shouted Masters. "Fired one burst an' then beat it. And there are more of them up there too. Better slide closer to the mountains; keep them from coming at us from two sides."

The pilot nodded. The Rolls broke out into its thundering peacen of power. The Bristol banked swiftly to the left, heading for the deeper shadows thrown over the world by the towering crags.

**I**T was then Masters caught his first glimpse of one of the strange planes which seemed to have been stalking them under the stars.

He heard the screaming rush of the wings first, the clatter of a surging motor, a scream of flying wires, then a stuttering burst from a pair of guns snickered across the top wing of the two-seater as a shadow went hurtling by.

"A Fokker!" Masters yelled. "Fokkers, down here!"

His keen eyes followed the dim blur, saw it zoom, curl over to come at them again. He did not wait. His guns swung easily on the mounting. His fingers pressed the trigger. Arms steady, body braced, trembling

slightly from the recoil of the blazing guns, Masters threw a long burst at the poised shadow.

The twin lines of fiery slugs converged on the blur in one well-placed burst. The shadow seemed to stop as if it had run up against a wall of steel. Then the clustering tracer appeared to be swallowed by a tiny well of flame.

Streaking toward the stars, the doomed ship leaped like a harpooned whale in a sea of ink. The shadow was gone, but that tiny tongue of licking flame remained. It grew, blossomed, and soon enveloped the Fokker which had reached the top of its death zoom, and was now plummeting toward the valley below.

As it flashed past the Bristol its fuel tank exploded. Sparks, hot metal, and flaming fabric shot out in all directions like a ghastly, Gargantuan display of fireworks.

But Masters was not watching the sickening sight. He had seen flammers before. He could never help pitying the poor mortals who had to sit in a cramped cockpit, strapped in, trapped, facing the wall of searing flame thrown back in their agonized faces by the wind. Masters was watching the skies, knowing that the flame of the burning ship would suddenly light up the black arena of death. His eyes, narrowed to slits, strained as he stared into the night.

"Another one!" he yelled. His guns swung, and as he opened up he heard the Vickers up front begin to chatter angrily. "They're all around us! We've stepped into a trap!" What the hell, he wondered, were Hun ships doing down on the Spanish Border? They couldn't be looking for a target for bombs.

He had no time for further thought. Tracers was flashing at the Bristol from all sides now, bathing it in a deadly fire.

The ship, under Captain Nichols' skilful hands, was weaving through

the hurtling shadows, drifting in and out of murderous bursts before they could reach any vulnerable spot.

Already, the skipper had managed to plant a telling burst in a shadow that had tried to cross the path of the Bristol. Another Fokker had met its fate at the hands of two brave American airmen.

Then, as the Bristol steadied for one split second, Masters swung his guns again. He could see a dim shadow high in the skies behind him. On either side of the blur he could see the fluttering blue of the exhaust ports on the Mercedes. The light grew brighter. Now he could see the blue-tipped flames as they shot from the hot cylinders and curved back with the slipstream. He waited half a second more, then pressed the trigger.

**T**WO minds seemed to be acting as one in that brief moment. The Spandaus opened up. Tracer met tracer, tangled in mid-air, then whisked on toward their respective targets.

The burst from the Fokker passed just to the right of the Bristol fuselage, cut a flying wire in half, grazed the motor cowling and crackled off into space. But the hissing cluster of lead from the Lone Eagle's guns held their course and found their mark, first in the whirling prop of the hurtling ship, then in the side of the Mercedes as the Fokker swerved under the terrific impact.

In a flash the ship was enveloped in flame. The sky was bright as day around the milling ships, and as he turned swiftly to survey the scene, an exclamation welled from the Lone Eagle's lips.

"Hannovers!" He pounded on the cowling and pointed as Nichols looked around. "Two-seaters! What the devil are they up to? Look, they're heading right into Spain!

The Fokkers were trying to turn us so we wouldn't spot them!"

"Maybe Spain has declared war," grinned Nichols as he throttled back for a second.

Masters shook his head as the light of the burning Fokker began to fade in the dark depths below them. "First Fokkers, then Hannovers, flying along the Pyrenees. What the thunder are they up to, anyway?"

A slashing attack from a pair of Fokkers brought him back to the business of the moment. For a moment or two he was hard pressed to keep the two avenging ships at bay, while Nichols swung from side to side in a desperate effort to evade the vicious attack.

Fokkers were coming in from all sides now, guns flashing, tracer scintillating against the star-studded curtain of the night. Another ship met a stumbling block in the form of a well-placed burst from the Lone Eagle's guns. It slithered away, seeking safety behind the velvet curtain of darkness, its pilot thankful that he had at least partial control of the riddled-crate.

Now the Huns were working closer. Tracer began to leap from below as Fokkers dived and zoomed under the Bristol. Nichols kept banking, trying to give Masters a shot over the side, to drive the ships off.

The Lone Eagle was kept on the jump, blasting away at dim shadows leaping at him out of the well of darkness. Then, swinging the mounting he began spraying the skies, first to the right, then above and then to the left with short rattling bursts. He made a quick change, tossing empty drums over the side and replacing them with full ones.

The fabric on the wings began to rip back, as burst after burst found the Yankees' ship. The Huns were determined to keep it from getting any further into Spain. Slugs

thudded and pounded on the fuselage, battering at longerons, tearing at wires, boring struts, filling them with splinter-fringed holes.

Masters turned and began to hammer on the cowling. "Cut the gun!" he yelled. "Cut the gun and drop out of this! Try and give them the slip! I've got to get over the side without being spotted. Then you can hedge-hop back across the Border."

But the Rolls continued to roar. The prop whirled in a faintly glistening arc, and the Bristol bored right on toward the towering mountains.

"Go down, Nichols!" cried Masters leaning across the cowling to slap the pilot on the back. "Go—"

The words were choked back by a cry of dismay. The head of Red Nichols lolled suddenly to one side, neck relaxed, ear almost touching the drooping shoulder. "Nichols! Nichols!" Masters cried.

**T**HE Bristol swerved.

"Nichols!" he cried again. But he knew it was no use. That head rolled on lifeless shoulders. And now he could see the pilot's face, and it was hidden behind a frothy mask of red.

Never again would Red take him across the lines and start him out on one of his grim missions, with a smile, a word of cheer, and a firm handclasp.

"You always wanted to go this way, Red," Masters murmured, as he reached back to unsnap his safety belt. "You always said that if you were going to get one you wanted it to be quick. No lingering death, no cripple for life. Well, you got your wish, old boy. And you never flinched."

Tracer still sought to find a spot on the now uncontrolled Bristol as Masters swung over the side and found the step. He clung there, ten

thousand feet above the ground as he reached over and touched his friend's shoulder.

"Here's where we part, buddy," he murmured. "You're going the way you always wanted to. Riding right in on your wings. I'm still on my way. I don't know where, but maybe we'll meet soon enough."

He let go, and as he dropped off into the night his hand flashed up in salute to the man who had just paid the inevitable price demanded by the gods of war.

The 'chute blossomed over him. He began to swing gently, moving further away from the Bristol and its dead pilot. He saw the tracer from the Fokkers still playing around the doomed ship.

"I'll make them pay, Red," he murmured as the ships disappeared from his sight in the night. "I'll make them pay!"

A few minutes later the Lone Eagle's feet touched Spanish soil.

Masters lay low, flattened where he landed, until he got the lay of the land. He was on the very edge of a town that he knew must be Bilbao. Just above him was a bridge. He made his way cautiously up the incline to the archway.

As he reached the center of the old stone bridge which had stood since the Fourteenth Century, he heard a cry come from the darkness just ahead of him on the end of the bridge nearest to the old section of the city.

He stopped. There came the thud of a blow, the scuffle of feet on the cobbles. Then, out of the night a figure was running toward him, followed by a trio of sinister shadows.

They caught up with the stumbling man just as he reached Masters' side.

"*Socorro! socorro!* They wish to kill me!" the voice cried in Spanish. Then the man stumbled and fell to his knees.

The pursuers were on the fugitive in a flash. Masters caught the gleam of a knife, struck out at the raised arm, but he was too late. He heard cloth rip under the sharp edge. There was a low groan and the man sank to the stones.

"*Socorro!*" The man cried once again before his voice was drowned in the blood welling from his lips.

Masters lashed out with fist and foot. His booted toe caught the wrist of one of the killers as he raised his arm to plant a knife between the sagging shoulders of the man kneeling on the stones. His fist caught the other flush on the mouth, sending him reeling back into the gutter.

**A** RMS flashed at the Lone Eagle from the darkness as he stood spread-legged before the badly wounded man. He took blows and gave them, striking at the sinister shadows, and hearing their curses as his blows reached their mark.

"If I only had a gun! If I only had a gun!" came a faint voice from behind him. Masters' flailing arms hesitated in mid-air and he whirled to face the kneeling figure. The man whose life he had saved was speaking and in English! There was also something familiar about that voice.

A knife ripped along Masters' sleeve, leaving the tattered cloth hanging in two, long shreds. A blackjack grazed his skull, bringing him almost to his knees.

"Hold tight, Buddy," he gasped as he lunged at the nearest of the attackers. His clubbing swing brought a man to the ground. A well placed kick crashed against the man's jaw and he stiffened on the slippery cobbles.

Now he only had two, but they redoubled the fury of their attack. Masters had to move fast, and strike swiftly to parry the blows of the

murderous dirks held in the clenched fists of the two men who were trying to bring him down.

He dropped another. Then ducked as a knife whistled through the air across his shoulder and dropped with a splash in the black water gurgling under the bridge.

He felt better; only one of them now.

Feinting with his left, he cocked his right to lay the remaining man low. But the fellow ducked, gave a low cry and turned and ran. Masters caught his balance, turned to face the man he had rescued, saying:

"Come on, stranger. Guess that cleans up that mess." Then he saw that the kneeling figure was gone; the spot was empty.

"What the devil!" exclaimed Masters. Then he leaned over the stone rail and looked down into the oily water slipping under the arches. "Hey!" he cried softly. "Where are you?"

"*Socorro!*" came the voice out of the darkness. Weaker now. Then came a faint splash, like thrashing arms.

Without a moment's hesitation Masters kicked off his wooden-soled shoes and dived over the parapet.

"Hey, Buddy," he cried as he reached the surface again. "Yell so I can locate you."

The choking cry came from his left and a little ahead.

Masters struck out for the sound and in the thin ribbon of wavering light, reflected on the dark water from the light on the bridge he saw a blotch. Four powerful strokes brought him to the sinking man.

"Hold tight," he commanded. "I'll have you ashore in a minute. Don't give up!"

It was a tight squeak. Masters' arms were tired from his struggle with the three cutthroats on the bridge. But he finally managed to

pull the wounded man up on a little stone dock.

"We've got to get out, of here," he gasped as the stranger lifted himself on his elbow, and tried to wipe the blood from his lips.

"Take me to Number Seven Calle St. Elena," gasped the stranger weakly. "Get my arm over your shoulder, and if anybody gets nosey make out I'm plastered. You're a Yank, aren't you? Know what plastered means, don't you?"

**M**ASTERS grinned to himself in the dark, pulled the bloody sleeve over his shoulder and heaved the man to his feet. Then they started toward the street. Despite the seriousness of his condition, the wounded man struggled to sing snatches of ribald song whenever they met anybody in the darkness.

Presently they reached Calle St. Elena. Masters found the house and under the wounded man's direction made his way down a winding alley and down some steps into a basement room.

"Find a candle on the chair, buddy," gasped the man as Masters lowered him to the floor. "I'll crawl over to my nest."

Masters lit the candle and glanced up at a narrow window. He was relieved to see that it was boarded up. Then he turned, held the candle higher and looked toward the bundle of rags the stranger called a bed, saw for the first time the face of the man he had just rescued.

"Morehouse!" he gasped. "Morehouse, old man! You're just the man I'm looking for!"

The man on the pallet looked up. His bloodshot eyes widened. "You're not really Masters?" he said dropping his voice to a whisper at the final word.

The Lone Eagle nodded and dropped to his knees beside the bloody figure of the Yankee secret

agent known to G.H.Q. as G-4. His fingers flew over the crusted clothes, began to work at the gaping wound in the man's shoulder.

"They pretty near got me, Masters," Morehouse grinned weakly. "If it hadn't been for you they would have."

"Who?" Masters held a glass of water to the man.

G-4 started to shrug, but the sharp pain caused him to stop and gag. In a minute he was all right again.

"They were getting suspicious of me," said G-4. "Thought maybe I had caught on."

"To what?" demanded Masters.

"To what was in those crates they were floating down the river every night. Been doing it for the past week. Every night around this time they begin bringing stuff down the river in big flat barges. Taking it out to a couple of ships in the harbor. One of them sailed the day before yesterday."

"Was it the *Morales*?" demanded Masters, quickly.

"No. The *Morales* is still loading." The man paused, coughed and then went on. "Having trouble getting a crew. Something fishy about that boat; nobody wants to sail on her."

"What was in the crates?" asked Masters eagerly as he bent over the man and adjusted the bandage.

"That's what I was trying to find out," said G-4. "I was going up the river tomorrow to see if I could locate where they were being packed and maybe find out what was in them."

"What made you suspicious of what was being loaded on the *Morales* and this other boat?" Masters asked.

"I'm sure I saw Huns going out in the tender," said G-4.

"Huns?"

"Yes. I saw them down at the Fisherman's Haven, a grog shop near the dock at the end of the street.

They were around for two days. They were dressed in mufti, but I'll stake my life they were German soldiers; officers."

"Any of them left on shore?"

"All gone. One bunch went on the *Castillian* and the others are on board the *Morales*."

Masters leaned back against the wall and sat staring at a crack in the ceiling.

Finally he said, "I've got to get aboard the *Morales*. Got to sail with her to Mexico."

"Mexico?" said the other, astonishment in his voice.

"That's the ticket," said Masters slowly. "The Huns are trying to pull a show in Mexico, to keep our troops at home. They'll put the Allies in a spot if they succeed."

"Then we were both working on the same angle," said the wounded American with a grin. "Only if it hadn't been for you they would have wiped me off the slate."

"I've got it!" exclaimed Masters suddenly. "You say they were having trouble getting a crew? Where are they recruiting them?"

"They're not recruiting a crew," replied G-4. "They're shanghaiing them; knockout drops or something."

"Good!" muttered Masters. "Just what I want if I can work it right."

"What do you mean?" asked G-4.

Masters turned to him and said, "Can you get back into France in your condition?"

G-4 nodded slowly. "Got a fisherman that takes me across the line. He lands me in a little cove just the other side of Fuenterrabia."

Masters nodded. "You get back to France. Get in touch with Colonel Tremaine as soon as you can. Tell him that I've shipped on the *Morales*."

"Taking an awful risk, Masters," interrupted G-4. "You'll be playing right into their hands."

"I'll make them play into mine

before I'm through," snapped Masters. "Just one more thing before I leave. Ask the colonel to send out orders that the *Morales* is not to be bothered under any circumstances. He can arrange it with the British and French navies. I want to follow this thing right through to the end."

"I understand," grinned G-4. "You're going to nail them right in Mexico where they're trying to pull this thing off."

"That's it," said Masters. "No use starting anything here. They've got a boat on the way now, an' Lord knows how many before that. Our only hope is to get them in Mexico and clean up the lot."

"Okay," replied G-4. "Better change that coat. It's sort of messed up. You'll find another one in that cupboard. Shoes, too."

Masters changed his clothes, stopped beside the secret service man on the paliet. "You'll be all right, if I leave now?"

G-4 nodded. "Good luck, big boy. You're tackling a tough assignment this time."

## CHAPTER V

### *Shanghaied*



MOKE in the Fisherman's Haven was as thick as the fog on the water of the harbor. It was midnight, and the place was almost empty.

Over in one corner a mechanical piano kept repeating a song which had been popular a year or two before. Near it, sitting idly by himself, making marks in the dirty sawdust on the floor with a pair of boots which didn't quite fit, sat the hunched figure of John Masters.

Disguise was nothing new to the Lone Eagle. Being alone was an old story. He always worked alone when possible. He had done so since the

first day he had joined the Yankee Air Intelligence under Colonel Tremaine.

Colonel Tremaine, by the way, was the real reason for Masters being a member of that daredevil branch of the service. Masters had come to France, having flown long before the war started, and holding a pilot's ticket with a very low number. He had hoped to join up with the newly organized Yankee Air Service and become a pursuit pilot.

But the sharp eyes of Tremaine had spotted the name Masters on the list of newcomers to France. And Tremaine's filelike mind held a record of a young American newspaper correspondent who had once been a member of the U.S. Secret Service and had made a name for himself in running down narcotic smugglers.

An order had brought Masters to the colonel's headquarters in Paris. It had taken a little persuasion, but Tremaine finally succeeded in winning Masters away from his original intention. The colonel had ever since considered that move the smartest he had made since taking over the post of Chief of Yankee Air Intelligence.

**M**ASTERS' foresight and nerve had on many occasions been the means of forestalling the well-laid plans of the enemy. The name of the Lone Eagle, which had been tacked on him by the newspapers, onto the elusive figure that flashed across the war-torn skies of France, bringing cheers from the Allies and curses from the enemy.

Only one of the enemy knew the Lone Eagle by sight and that was a beautiful woman, known on the rosters of the Kaiser's secret service as R-47. She alone had met the Lone Eagle face to face. Others had crossed his path, but they were dead, victims of their own mad schemes,

aided by the wit of the American who fought alone to aid the Allied cause.

And now, sitting there by himself, not in the uniform of an American officer of the highest rank, but in nondescript mufti, Masters looked around him, studying the men who lounged against the tiny bar or sat huddled at a table, heads bent together, voices whispering, eyes looking furtively over their shoulders every time a newcomer entered the Fisherman's Haven.

"More rum!" barked the Lone Eagle holding out his glass to a pidgeon-toed waiter. "My cursed boat has left for the fishing banks without me and now I am doomed to sit here on dry land until it returns."

"You like the sea, *senor*?" the waiter said.

"*Si, si!*" rasped Masters. "It is my life. I had hoped that by the end of this voyage to have earned enough to return me to my home. But now I must wait. And while I wait I will drink. More rum, I said!"

The waiter picked up the glass, shuffled through the sawdust to the bar. Through his fingers Masters saw him whisper to the hulking man who leaned amongst the glasses, as he waited for the rum.

Through lowered lashes, the Lone Eagle saw the big man slip something across the bar to the waiter. The man pocketed it before picking up the glass of rum and the bottle and ambling back to his table.

The Lone Eagle grabbed the glass the minute it had been set down on the dull top of the table, swallowed the fiery rum thirstily.

"You drink fast, *amigo mio*," smiled the tavern keeper. "You have sorrows to drown it seems."

"*Mas*," muttered Masters. "It is good. It helps me to forget my misfortune."

"That being?" queried the fat man.

"Doomed to rot on dry land while my comrades sail to the fishing banks," mumbled Masters.

"Would you like a voyage while you await their return?" asked the tavern keeper in a low voice.

Masters shrugged his shoulders. "On what vessel, *senor*?"

"The *Morales*," stated the tavern keeper leaning across the table. "A voyage to Mexico with general cargo and then a swift return with many *pesos* in your pockets."

**M**ASTERS leaned back in his chair. With half-closed eyes, he studied the red face in front of him. Then he shook his head.

"I have heard of that ship," he finally said. "It has an evil name, *amigo*. I have wondered why. Men shrug their shoulders when the name *Morales* is mentioned."

"What have you heard?" hissed the hulking figure on the other side of the table.

"Nothing, *senor*," smiled Masters. "I have seen men exchange knowing looks when the name of that ship is spoken, but no one will speak. No, *amigo*. *Gracias*, but I do not wish to sail on the *Morales*. I will wait for my comrades to return."

"But the pay is good," persisted the tavern keeper. "Much better than on any other vessel."

"Why should the pay be better?" demanded Masters, pushing his glass toward the man. "It is only a cargo boat." He watched the piglike eyes staring at him.

"Say nothing more about it, *amigo*," growled the big man. "I do not think you care for the sea as much as you say you do. You are like the others; much talk, little action."

"I am sorry, *senor*, I did not mean it that way," said Masters soberly. "But I only follow the example of

others. These are strange times, you know."

"Forget it," said the tavern keeper with a sly smile crossing his ugly features. "Here, have another spot of rum. I will treat if you will drop a *centavo* in the piano and liven things up a bit."

Masters got up and shuffled to the battered instrument, dropped a copper coin in the slot. Then, taking his time about pulling down the lever, he watched in a cracked mirror while the waiter took something from his pocket and held it briefly over his drink. Masters sang along with the brassy tune jangling from the piano as he walked back to the table. Then he prepared himself to take one of the most hazardous risks he had ever taken in his career.

He sat down, pulled the drink toward him and grinned at the man across the table.

"Your rum is good, *amigo*," he said, lifting the glass to his lips. "It is strong and fiery."

His nostrils widened. His eyes narrowed as his lips flashed open with a smile disclosing even white teeth. Propyl alcohol. He recognized the very faint smell only because he was looking for it. One drink would have the reaction of many ordinary drinks, he knew. Masters realized that a few minutes after he had allowed that glass of liquor to pass his lips, he would sink into unconsciousness.

The piano stopped with a rattle of discordant keys. Masters placed the glass on the table. "Another *centavo*, *amigo*, and we shall have music while we drink," he said.

"Let it go," growled the fat man, lifting his own glass to his lips. "Drink!" He reached across the table and tried to restrain the Lone Eagle as he got up.

But Masters shook his arm off. He wanted a moment to think away from the other's scrutiny. Could he afford to take the risk, he kept



*Masters was picked up and carried off (Page 50)*

asking himself. What if the fat one knew who he was and what was his mission? The Lone Eagle felt a chill course up and down his spine. But there was no other way. He had to get on the *Morales*. He had to get to Mexico and the *Morales* was his only chance.

The piano started as the coin tinkled through the slot. Masters swung away, and walked back toward the table and the glass with its fateful contents.

"Could fake it," he mused as he crossed the room. "But I might make just a tiny slip, just enough to tip them off and then the finish would come."

The fate of nations rested in that glass of liquid. The lives of thou-

sands. The peace of the world. He could not stop to consider his own life, now.

The Lone Eagle slumped into his chair. His hand was steady as he reached out for the glass, lifted it.

"*Salud!*" he said, looking at the waiter over the wet rim.

Then he tipped the glass, threw his head back and let the liquid gurgle down his throat.

He shuddered, set the glass down and waited.

The room began to spin almost immediately. The smoke drifted before his eyes, taking weird, wraith-like shapes. It seemed to be reaching for him with ghostly grey talons, engulfing him, wrapping itself around him with long, writhing ten-

tacles while the sawdust sank away from him. His head lowered toward the table. His hands dropped to his sides, fingers twitching faintly.

Then oblivion settled over him.

## CHAPTER VI

### *The Morales*



OPENING his eyes Masters blinked painfully, then shut them in an effort to stop the throbs racking his numbed brain. He lay back on a dirty blanket in a rough bunk. He tried to collect his scattered thoughts. Bit by bit the events of the past twenty-four hours came back to him. The fight on the bridge—G-4—Fisherman's Haven. The drink given him by the fat waiter.

A slow smile crept across the Lone Eagle's pale face. His fevered lips moved.

"If they only knew," he murmured. "If they only knew who it was they were so bent on shanghaiing."

Masters dragged himself painfully to his feet. He was so dizzy he could scarcely stand.

"What a head!" he growled.

He took a deep breath, moved toward the battered door, tried the handle and was not surprised when he found it locked.

"Let me out!" he yelled at the top of his voice. "Let me out!"

"*Silencio!*" hissed a voice outside the door. "Do you wish to wake up the whole harbor?"

"Let me out!" cried Masters again. "I must find the *Morales*, at once. I have a message for its captain."

The Lone Eagle heard the man leave the door then. A grim smile played across his features as he tore open the lining of his coat and removed a slip of paper which he had concealed there before leaving G-4's hut in Bilbao.

In a few minutes a key grated in the lock. The door swung open, revealing the burly figure of a man dressed in a blue uniform with the tarnished braid of a captain on his dirty sleeves.

"What is this you say about having a message for the captain of the *Morales*?" he demanded, motioning a guard inside and then entering himself.

"*Si, senor,*" said Masters. "I have a message for the *Morales*' captain. I must find the boat and deliver it to him at once. I should not have got myself drunk last night. I do not know how I got aboard your ship. I am sorry, but I—"

He stepped toward the door, but the captain grabbed his arm and threw him back against the bunk.

"What is the message?" he snarled.

Masters shook his head. "I cannot deliver it to any but the captain of the *Morales*, I tell you!"

"He is still drunk," grinned the man in blue.

"No, senor," said Masters, clinging to the bunk for support. "I am not drunk. I just wish to leave here at once and get to the docks."

"Crazy from the drink," growled the captain to the guard. "Where do you think you are, *amigo*?" he said to Masters.

The American scratched his head. "I think I went to the Fisherman's Haven last night, senor. I do not recall leaving there, but I must have wandered aboard your ship after I became so drunk." He stared at the man in blue. "I do not know where I am, but I wish to leave wherever I am so that I may find the senor captain."

The man in blue grabbed Masters by the arm and yanked him through the narrow doorway. "Look, fool!" he growled, pointing a gnarled finger.

Masters glanced at the lifeboat which hung, battered and dirty from a pair of rusty davits. He saw the

black letters S.S. *Morales, Tampico*, stenciled under the gunwale.

"What does it mean?" asked Masters, still feigning stupidity.

"Call it a lucky mistake, *amigo*," jeered the man in blue. "I am the captain you seek. You are aboard the *Morales*. Now give me the message."

"But I must be sure," muttered Masters. "The German said I must be sure."

"Who am I, Esteban?" the captain asked with rising impatience, of the sulky guard.

"The captain of this vessel, the *Morales*," replied the ill-clad sailor.

Feeling that he had carried his deception to the point where the captain believed that the owner of the Fisherman's Haven had made an error in shanghaiing him, Masters handed the message to the skipper, who grabbed it impatiently and tore it open.

"Bah!" snarled the captain as his eyes fell on the paper. "It is in their stupid code. Come, Esteban, bring the fool to the wheel house, I will decode it there."

**I**N the wheel-house, Masters rested against the chart table while the skipper busied himself over the paper, glancing every once in a while in a little red book and then making notations on an old, soiled envelope.

Masters knew what the message was. He, himself, had written those words, using the key which had been revealed by the American code expert back in Paris where the original message to the captain of the *Morales* had fallen into the wrong hands.

"*Caramba!*" the skipper exploded at last. "They order me to sail at once. The officer for whom I have been waiting was injured in an accident and will not sail till the next ship. And I must order my wireless operator not to transmit while en

route to Mexico, except to acknowledge receipt of messages from headquarters."

The captain scratched his head. "Always foolish orders! Always!" He ignored Masters, rushed out on the bridge and shouted for the watch on duty to up anchors.

As the chains rattled into the lockers, leaving a great patch of muddy scum on the bay, the captain returned to the wheel house, swung the telegraph connecting him with the engine room to half speed ahead. He then reached for the whistle cord and a low throbbing moan whirled out over the dawn bathed waters.

"But, Captain!" shouted Masters. "I wish to get ashore! The boat is moving!"

"And it will keep on moving, *amigo*," snapped the captain. "Emilio collected for you last night."

"Emilio?" queried Masters.

The captain laughed. It was a cruel laugh. "Yes, *amigo*, Emilio recruited you to sail on the new voyage of the old *Morales*. And an unpleasant voyage for you it will be if you do not stop your bellyaching and get forward."

He aimed a kick at the Lone Eagle. Masters laughed to himself as he leaped through the door. But aloud he sobbed: "If I could only swim! If I could only swim!"

A ship's officer made a pass at him. Masters ducked and half fell down the iron ladder leading to the fo'cas'le deck. There another mate took charge of him with an oath and set him to work battening down the forward hatch.

The wind soon set the rigging to quivering. The monotonous drone filled Masters' ears. Under foot he could feel the throb of the engines, and the thrashing screw as the *Morales* gathered speed and headed out to sea.

Within a few hours the coast of Spain was merely a green ribbon on the horizon.

"*Que tal?*" asked a sailor with a friendly smile.

Masters shrugged. "*'Sta bueno. Muchas gracias, amigo.* I am content. It was the drink which made me act surly yesterday. The drink was potent at the Fisherman's Haven. Never has a drink done that to me."

"Keep on working, *amigo,*" counseled the other. "And you will be all right. The ship is not so bad when the captain is sober. And he will stay sober this voyage, I think."

"Why this one, *amigo?*" asked Masters innocently.

A scowl crossed the sailor's features. "Another thing, *mes amigo,* it is not healthy to ask questions on the *Morales.* Nosey men get into trouble, much trouble. So obey orders, never ask questions, and your pockets will ring with *pesos* when you return to Spain."

"*Gracias,*" grinned Masters. "I will remember."

Masters was soon accepted as a full-fledged member of the *Morales'* crew. His work was hard. The watches long. But he grinned and took it. And on more than one occasion he managed to be on deck when orders for a task in the hold were given out. He soon knew the ship from stem to stern.

**I**N HIS mind he had the holds and their contents catalogued. He knew that holds Numbers 1, 2 and 3 were filled to the hatches with crated Hun planes, both Fokkers and Hannover two-seaters. But the emptiness of Number 4 hold puzzled him.

"I can understand about the planes," he mused to himself one night as he stood looking over the rail between watches. "They were flown across the Border to a secret field, taken apart, crated and sent down the river on the flat barges Morehouse spotted. Then they were loaded on the *Morales.* But I don't

understand why Four hold is empty. Must have expected a load of planes that didn't arrive. It's queer, damned queer!"

Masters turned from the rail and sauntered up to the tiny cabin where the wireless man sat idly turning the dials on the black panel.

"*Que tal?*" smiled Masters stepping into the little cabin.

"*Bueno,*" replied the operator, taking the phones from his head and laying them down close enough so that he could hear his call squeaking through the earpieces.

Masters had wormed his way into the good graces of the young operator and spent quite a bit of his off-watch time in the cabin.

"Anything new?" asked Masters as he watched the man scribble on a yellow pad.

"A message for the captain," said the youthful operator.

Masters pretended to adjust the fluttering curtain over the porthole. Through his narrowed eyes he glanced down at the yellow slip, his mind memorizing the stuff the operator was writing for the bleary eyes of the skipper. There was one word, then two figures followed by a strange signature—Dawn—30—30. Followed by the signature, U-29. It might mean a date with a submarine, he thought.

"I will return directly, *amigo,*" the operator said as he left the cabin with the message.

Masters nodded and stepped to the map hanging on the wall. His fingers wandered over the sheet, then stabbed at a point almost midway on the broad expanse of the ocean. "There she is," he thought exultantly. "Thirty-thirty at dawn. That must be it!"

Then turning back to the table, he threw the switch, twirled the antenna dial to the wave-channel he and Tremaine had always used. His fingers worked the key smoothly and

the spark went flashing across the gap.

"T-T-T-T-" he called. "T-T-T-T. Safe. Job progressing. Have situation in hand at the moment. Something planned 30-30 at dawn. Keep listening."

He paused, listened for footsteps on the deck, flashed out the letter M over the air and then threw the switch.

A few minutes later the wireless man came back and found Masters sprawled out in a chair dozing.

The operator looked excited. "You had better go down at once," he told Masters. "All hands have been called on deck. There's something up down below."

Masters hurried from the cabin, glanced at the eastern horizon where in a few hours the sun would come winging its way to make another day.

"Not far from that noted position now," he muttered. He noted, too, that the ship's speed had been reduced greatly.

When he reached the after well he found the place in an orderly turmoil, despite the fact that men were grumbling over being turned out at such an ungodly hour.

But the thing which held Masters' attention as he set about running a rope through a block attached to the forward mast boom, was the fact that the hatch to Number 4 hold was being uncovered. The answer to the empty hold was about to be solved!

When the maw of Number 4 hold finally lay open to the dark grey sky and the tackle on the booms adjusted, the men were allowed to go to the galley for coffee and, by the captain's orders, a spot of rum.

Masters, for appearances sake, went along. But in a few moments he was back on deck. He went to the poop and stood close to the taffrail, and while he pretended to splice a balyard, he kept his eyes

on the shadowy waves which raised and lowered the battered hulk of the *Morales*.

Something was going to pop soon, that was certain. Then he saw a light blink on the bridge, and knew that the big moment was near—they were signaling someone out there in the dark sea.

## CHAPTER VII

### *Rendezvous at Sea*



AWN finally came, and as the first ray of sun was seen on the eastern horizon, the lookout cried: "Periscope on the port bow!"

At the word "periscope" a gasp went up from the members of the crew who had come back on deck. For a few moments panic threatened on board the *Morales*. But a few well directed blows and numerous curses soon brought order to the clamor on the deck.

Masters kept his position and watched the green water pour off the hulk of a U-boat as it breached the surface.

It was, he saw, a cargo carrying sub of the Deutschland class.

He stood watching the two boats creep together. An officer came up on deck of the submarine as the hatch opened. "Stand by the *Morales!*" he commanded through a megaphone.

"Standing by, U-Twenty-nine!" came the cry from the bridge.

Other figures poured out onto the gleaming deck of the U-29. A gun came into sight and swung around to bear on the cargo vessel.

"Throw us a hawser!" was the next command from the U-boat.

Masters, at the command from the second officer, threw a line, watched a German crew pull it up on the deck of the U-Boat and then attach a hawser.

"A little more forward!" shouted the German commander. "I'm taking the stuff out of the after hatch. Be quick! I can't be playing here all day!"

The winches ground; the U-boat was pulled forward. The boom on the rear mast swung out over the submarine. The block lowered into the hold, guided by the hand of a German seaman. The donkey engine snorted. The rope began to coil back on the drum just below Masters. A crate appeared, swung a moment over the rail of the *Morales*, then disappeared into the Number 4 hold.

"So that's it," the Lone Eagle said to himself. "Couldn't transport enough bombs for the Hannovers by air, so they meet this sub out here in mid-Atlantic and load up."

The loading went on.

"Not enough to fill the hold, though," Masters thought. He started as someone nudged his elbow. "Look over there, *amigo*," one of the seamen with whom he had become friendly said.

**M**ASTERS waited a moment, then looked. Air whistled between his teeth. There, gently rising out of the heaving waves, were three more submarines! They slid toward the *Morales* like prehistoric marine animals, and hove to apparently waiting for the U-29 to finish unloading.

When the U-29 was through, the Germans cast off and moved to one side. Then another U-boat slipped up to the side of the *Morales*.

"Guns!" whispered the man standing beside Masters as the long, tapered snout of a .77 came swinging through the air. "What do we do with guns from the Germans? It is not our war."

But Masters was not listening to the low-voiced complaint of the man at his side. He watched guns being brought aboard and stored in the hold; then the wheels and equip-

ment which would make them ugly little weapons of offense once they reached the desert country along the Border. There followed cases of shells for the guns, case after case until, except for a narrow passage between bomb crates and shells, the hold was full.

The last submarine to discharge its cargo still clung to the side of the *Morales*, like a Gargantuan remora attached to a shark.

The German commander was shouting up at the *Morales* captain who leaned over the rail.

Masters moved forward. The time had come. If the German submarine captain asked for the Hun secret service man who lay in an American hospital in France, the Lone Eagle would be in hot water. For that man, von Klaber, was to have been on the *Morales*. It was the Lone Eagle's faked code message to the *Morales'* captain that had explained his not showing up for the trip. But the sub captain might have learned the truth.

Now Masters was directly under the bridge. He stopped, bent over and pretended to be cleaning one of the drains leading from the starboard scupper. His ears were attuned to every conversation along the rail, as well as to the one going on from the *Morales* to the U-boat. He waited, listening for the fatal name, von Klaber, to be mentioned.

Masters never knew why he glanced toward the port bow at that instant. As he did so he gasped audibly, then tensed.

For swiftly speeding toward the spot where he stood came two destroyers!

Masters' nimble mind worked fast then. This meant that the *Morales* would be stopped, then searched. Its cargo would spell the doom of the ship, unless Tremaine had given the word to all vessels flying the Allied flag, that the *Morales* was to proceed, unmolested. If this had not

been done, the Lone Eagle might never reach Mexico now.

He could give the cry now and warn the U-boats. There was a chance of doing some harm to the enemy.

But it meant the risk of spoiling his own desperate plan.

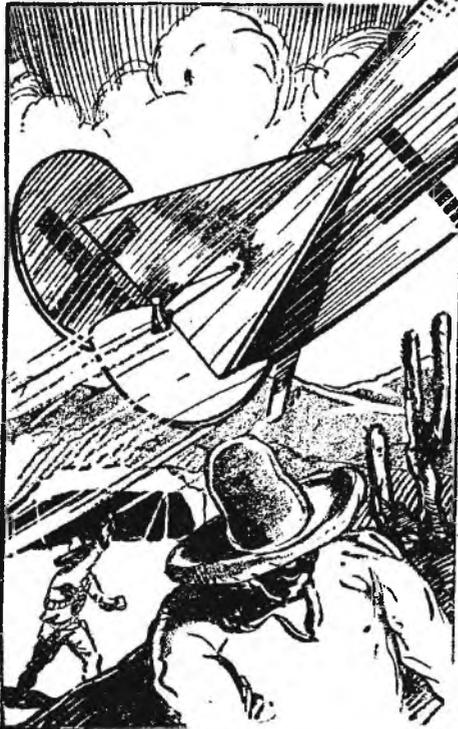
Suddenly he stiffened, and in the next instant he knew what to do. The U-boat commander had raised his megaphone. He called:

"I would like to speak to a man by the name of von Klaber who is no doubt aboard your ship. I received a mes—"

That is as far as he got. Masters' shout drowned out the last words.

"Destroyers on the port bow!" he cried at the top of his lungs. "Look! Two of them, and they fly the gringo flag!"

Consternation swept over the *Morales* and the U-boats. The haw-



A shot snapped behind Masters as he gave his ship the gun (Page 53)

ser let go at the sharp command of the excited commander. The other undersea craft were already moving away, their hatches clanging shut as their bows began to kick up spray. The sub commander did not finish his message.

"Full speed ahead!" cried the skipper of the *Morales*.

"No, no!" shouted the commander of the U-boat. "Half speed, you stupid fool! Try and screen us while we submerge."

But the skipper of the *Morales* had lost his head completely. The vessel gathered speed, leaving the submarines in full view of the destroyers. A second later a shell screamed over the vessel, throwing a plume of spray in the wake of the foremost destroyer.

"Batten down Number Four hatch!"

screamed the skipper, tearing down from the bridge like a madman.

But the two Allied destroyers swept past the *Morales*, one across her bow and the other across her wake, went on after the exposed submarines.

And Masters smiled as he watched a semaphore on the bridge of the nearest ship swing to flash a message across the boiling waters. His lips moved as he spelled out the letters.

O-K—M—O-K—M—O-K—M.

Evidently Tremaine had received his message. Masters sighed with relief.

He had a chance, now, of getting to Mexico.

He hurried to the rear well and helped the men draw the tarpaulin tight over the hatch and drive the wedges home. It was hard work to get it done right, for most of the crew were too occupied with watching the little drama being enacted out there on a spot in the Atlantic known on the map as 30-30. The destroyers were firing at the submarines.

"*Caramba, amigo*, look!" cried a Spaniard pointing to a spot where an ash can let go. The boiling water was subsiding. The foam was disappearing under a film of oil. Bits of oily wood floated to the surface and bobbed innocently on the waves. One of the U-boats had been squarely hit.

"That is war, *amigo*," said Masters grimly. "There are men dying down there, trapped in the flattened hulk of one of those submarines. Look! There is another! See it come to the top before making its death plunge!"

There, just astern the *Morales* a sharp bow was sticking its gleaming plates into the slanting rays of the rising sun. Water boiled over the catwalk and splashed back against the conning tower, as the big hulk sank for the last time.

## CHAPTER VIII

### *The Message*



WHEN the U-boats and destroyers had been left behind, Masters went to work in earnest. He spent long hours, the hours when he should have been resting while off watch, laboring mightily in the hot holds. He must not let the ammunition and supplies contained in the *Morales* be used against unsuspecting Americans along the Border.

Twisted strands of rope were suspended from the ceiling, fastened to nuts in the girders. Thinner strands ran at angles to these heavier ropes and to these Masters fastened candles which he had stolen from the ship's stores. The candles, tied in the middle, hung, wicks down, and halfway between the wick and the string which held them suspended, the heavier ropes pressed against the smooth surface of the wax.

"That's the trick," he muttered as he rigged up the sixth of his contraptions. "When the candle burns down a ways the flame will eat into the rope. When the rope burns through all hell is going to let go on the *Morales*."

He then proceeded to unfasten bomb crates and left the heavy eggs to the slings he had made in the heavy rope. The bombs soon hung suspended by their fins until they looked like six great bats hanging head down.

He stepped back and looked over his handiwork. "I'll leave the propellers on until I'm ready to start the fireworks. A little rough weather and those detonators might touch as the ship rolls. And that would spell finis for the *Morales* before yours truly could get off it."

He followed the same procedure in 3 hold, suspending candles over

a crate of Fokker wings. He tore the boards off the top of the crate, ripped some of the fabric loose and bunched it directly under the candle.

Then he went to hold Number 2 the next night, finished his work there between watches, and finally went back to his quarters, satisfied that if he could not reach hold Number 1, his work had been thorough enough to bring about the complete destruction of the *Morales*.

"Wish I could have nailed that first ship," he said to himself as he thought of the vessel which had preceded the *Morales* across the Atlantic. "That's more than likely got planes on, too, and it won't take many ships to raise Ned with our training squadrons in Texas. But I'll have to be satisfied with getting the *Morales*."

On the night before the *Morales* was to sight land, Masters completed his job in Number 1 hold.

Some time before coming off watch the next night, Masters heard the cry from the lookout and knew that off in the west, land had crept up from behind the star-fringed horizon.

**H**E crouched behind a bulkhead door, watching the port across the companionway grow lighter. Then when he could make out the brass rim, catching the first faint light of dawn, he moved to the door leading to hold Number 1. He slipped through, struck a match, lit a candle and stuck it on the side of a crate of bombs.

Soon he had the little propellers which held the safety catches down, spun off the pin. One by one he lighted the candles and stepped back to watch their flickering glow in the dark, cavernlike hold.

As he turned to leave, a creaking sound froze him in his tracks. The door was swinging open! Masters looked around him. There was no chance to snuff the candles. He stood surrounded by them, every one

lighting up his features like a tiny spotlight.

Then before he could make a move the third officer stepped into the hold.

"Throw up your hands!" he growled at Masters. "I have you covered."

Masters raised his hand and stood confronting the Luger clenched in the officer's fist.

For a second the puzzled officer could not make out just what Masters had been doing. But when he did, his face turned white.

"Quick!" he hissed. "Put them out! Quick, or I will shoot!"

"No, *amigo*," smiled Masters. "I do not think you will shoot."

"Why not?" gasped the officer, taken off his guard by Masters' daring reply.

Masters jerked his head toward his right hand which was upraised along the rope holding one of the bombs. "You see, *amigo*," he said steadily. "I have a knife in that hand. It has a sharp blade. True, I have been tearing the boards from bomb crates with it, and unscrewing the tiny propellers which make the bombs dangerous. But I do not think I have dulled the bit of steel. No, see how it cuts into the rope?"

"*Caramba!*" snarled the officer. "Are you *locus*? Do you wish to blow us up?"

"No, *amigo*," Masters went on. "I have no wish to do that. But if you shoot, I shall cut the rope, no matter which way I fall. You are clever enough to see that, are you not?"

Beads of perspiration stood out on the man's face. "*Amigo*," he pleaded. "I beg of you to lower your hands. I will do as you wish, only take that cursed knife away from that rope before you cut it and send us to perdition. Please!" He glanced toward the narrow door through which he had come.

Masters grinned. "You do not

have time, *amigo*. The bomb is set to let go on contact. Step forward and lay your gun there." He pointed with his toe toward a patch on the floor of the hold.

The man crept forward, never taking his eyes off the Lone Eagle who stood with the blade of his knife pressed against the rope. Then he moved back.

Masters moved then. He reached for the gun and tried to drag it toward him with his foot. It caught on a nail and would not budge.

"Steady," he cautioned. "I still have the knife's edge against the rope."

Then in a flash he lowered his hand from the rope and dived for the gun. The Spaniard dived with him, and both men landed with a thud on the floor of hold Number 4, between stacked crates of bombs and the cases of three-inch shells meant for the .77s.

They grappled. The man tried to raise himself to swing a blow at the Lone Eagle.

"Easy, *amigo*," gasped Masters. "If your fist touches one of those exposed pins we will go. You do not wish to become a mass of shattered flesh and bones, do you?"

The man hesitated, made a grab for the gun, and leaped to his feet. But Masters was on him, pressing his hands against his side. "If you should miss, and the bullet struck one of those bombs, *amigo*," he panted.

**E**VERY move the man made, Masters cautioned him of the risk he was taking in touching the firing pin of one of the suspended bombs. He soon had the officer insane with fear.

They circled each other, crouched low to keep from brushing one of the hanging bombs. The Spaniard slobbered with fear. His eyes rolled as he tried to keep them on Masters and at the same time watch the six bombs which hung overhead.

"Quick!" whispered Masters. "The one by your shoulder is slipping!"

The man turned to look, and screamed as Masters dived. They crashed together. There was a muffled explosion. A wisp of smoke curled up between them and wreathed the flickering flame of the nearest candle. A gurgling sob, then the stillness of death in the fateful hold of the *Morales*.

Masters got to his feet, gasped for air as he looked down at the figure of the third officer who lay with the Luger pressed against his throat, dead; killed by his own gun.

He glanced around the hold. The candles were sputtering merrily. Within an hour, unless they were discovered, their flame would reach the ropes holding the bombs. Then they would drop, and the bottom plates of the *Morales* would be ripped wide open.

Slipping from the fearsome place and barring the door again, Masters hurried to Number 3 hold. There he lit the candle suspended over the crate of Fokker wings. Then moved on hold Number 2. He tried to reach Number 1, but found the second engineer working at a valve near the door. He decided to let Number 1 go.

He came up on deck again. "What is that, *amigo*?" he asked of a deckhand as he pointed to the thin strip of land which was sliding by on either side of the *Morales*.

"The entrance to the Laguna Madre," said the man at his side. "It is said that El Chinche has a hiding place along the shore here."

"El Chinche?" demanded Masters, watching the bridge. "Who or what is El Chinche?"

"The most fearless and cleverest *bandido* in Mexico," said the other.

"I think I'd like to meet this El Chinche," smiled Masters.

"Cross yourself before you do, *amigo*," cautioned the other. "El Chinche is a bad hombre."

Masters started to say something, but the first officer stepped up to him, tapped him on the arm. "The captain wishes to see you," he said. "Come with me."

The Lone Eagle glanced behind him, saw two determined looking seamen, both holding stubby revolvers in their grimy fists. They were a guard to escort him to the bridge. There was but one answer to that—the Lone Eagle had been unmasked.

**T**HE captain stood by the chart table. Beside him stood the wireless operator who looked at the Lone Eagle as if he had signed his death warrant.

"You want me, Captain?" asked Masters, trying to be casual.

"Here," snarled the captain. "Read this. I do not think you are as stupid as you pretended to be the day you woke up on this vessel."

Masters took the yellow slip handed to him and read:

To the Captain, S. S. *Morales*:

Major von Klaber has escaped from the French lines into Switzerland. He reports that an American known to us as the Lone Eagle took his papers. We suspect that he used some ruse to get you to sail without von Klaber. Report at once why you sailed without von Klaber. Give us descriptions of crew, and how they came to sign with you. Suspect Lone Eagle is among them. Report at once before you make contact with party coming on board from shore.

Molte.

Masters looked bewildered, still acting his rôle. "Why do you make me read that" he asked. "I gave you a message which was handed to me by a stranger in Bilbao. I cannot be held responsible because some clever man discovered some scheme of yours and used me as an unwitting tool."

"You are clever, *amigo*," snarled the captain, thrusting another yellow sheet at Masters. "This will interest you."

Masters managed a quick look at

the ship's chronometer before he took the other slip of paper. He had half an hour to go yet if his calculations had been correct. He glanced down at the paper in his hand.

To Captain S. S. *Morales*:

Description of man who brought you message tallies to some degree with that of man we will give fortune to get our hands on. Place him in irons. Keep double guard over him day and night. Under no circumstances allow him to escape. Will pay huge reward for his return alive. If he makes attempt to escape kill him. Will pay high for his body. Get in touch with K-3; let him see your prisoner. Your mistake has been your fortune.

Molte.

"But what do they mean by Lone Eagle?" asked Masters, stalling for time. "I have never heard of such a one. There has been a mistake. You drug me and bring me aboard your vessel. Then you wish to hold me prisoner because I am here. There is no justice in that."

"Do not appear stupid any longer, *mi amigo*," leered the captain. "We have both made a mistake. Perhaps Emilio made mine, but I shall reap a rich harvest because of his blunder. And you—I think your mistake has cost you your life."

"It is not fair," muttered Masters. "You know I cannot be a spy, if that is what they mean. Did I not warn you of the approaching destroyers? If I was working for the *gringos* or their Allies I would not have done that, would I?"

"That is another thing that puzzles me," growled the captain. "Those destroyers. How did they arrive on the spot at the right time? My wireless man says they sent a message toward this vessel. The message was O-K—M. Now what did that mean?"

"There is somebody on the *Morales* who is in the pay of the Allies, and as you came aboard with this mysterious message that sent me sailing without the man I waited for, I have little doubt but what you are the man they are looking for."

The skipper motioned to the guards.

"Take him away. Have the engineers put iron bars across the door and nail them down. We will feed him through the grill."

One of the guards took Masters by the shoulder and tried to turn him toward the door. But the Lone Eagle shook off the hand and faced the captain.

"I was on my way to warn you, Captain," he said. "I may have been wrong, but I thought you should know. Your accusation, however, caused it to slip my mind."

"Warn me of what?" asked the captain suspiciously. "No more tricks, mind you!"

"I thought I saw a submarine following us through the passage," said Masters.

"A submarine!" gasped the startled captain. "Are you sure?"

Masters shrugged his shoulders. "It might have been the fin of a big shark, Captain. I did not wish to cause a false alarm and thought it best to call it to your attention. But these men came along just then."

"Go look, Pedro!" ordered the captain.

"It was on the quarter," said Masters as the man stepped to the door. "I never saw a shark's fin cause such a wake. It fairly boiled."

"*Caramba!*" snorted the captain. "It must have been a submarine! Sharks' fins do not make a foaming wake!"

**M**ASTERS looked up at the chronometer.

"Perhaps I could show it to you, Captain," he said slowly. "Let us step out on the bridge."

The captain nodded, motioned Masters through the door. "No tricks now," he hissed. "I will shoot you the minute you make a move!"

"There will be no need to shoot, Captain." Masters lips moved but what he was saying, or started to

say, was lost in a low rumble sweeping up from the after deck.

A sheet of flame and smoke billowed up from Number 4 hatch. The *Morales* quivered, then leaped under the impact. The taffrail went hurtling through the air to land with a splash a hundred yards or more from the doomed ship.

"It has struck!" screamed the captain. "The submarine has struck!" Then the wing of the bridge on which he was standing crumpled into a mass of twisted steel. The captain went upside with it and hit the water with a splash. Close behind him went his officer. A gust of searing air tugged at the wheel house and spun it around. The bow of the ship came up as the bombs began to let go in the stern hold.

Bits of iron screamed through the air. Flame curled around the structure of the doomed ship as bomb after bomb exploded. The plates were being driven right out of the *Morales*. Water splashed over the poop deck as the Laguna Madre entered the gaping hole made by the exploding bombs.

Then smoke began to curl around the edges of the forward hatches. Flames licked back through the vessel, fast turning it into a flaming inferno from one end to the other.

The crew cut the few lifeboats loose and let them fall into the debris-strewn water, then leaped in themselves, cursing, praying, fighting to get away from the holocaust behind them.

At the moment of the first explosion, Masters had twisted his arm through the rope of a life preserver hanging on the bridge. As the captain had disappeared over the side in the tangled mass of wreckage, followed a moment later by the officer, he jumped clear of the *Morales*.

He hit the water. As he came up an eye-bolt whirred through the air and struck him a glancing blow on the temple.

And that was all that Masters remembered of the destruction of the *Morales*.

He had done his work well; almost too well, for his own sake.

## CHAPTER IX

### *Tierra Caliente*



JUST as some of the survivors were hauling him into a lifeboat, Masters regained consciousness. They laid him on the floorboards and proceeded with the task of rowing ashore.

From their talk, Masters judged the *Morales* had already gone to the bottom of the Laguna Madre. One batch of supplies for the Huns was destroyed. But there was one ahead, and another was to follow.

As he lay there, shielding his aching eyes from the climbing sun, he looked over the men who had hauled him into the boat. They were all members of the crew. Not an officer among them. And for that Masters felt thankful.

When they reached the muddy flat which was the shore, the men carried him a little ways up the bank and placed him in the shade of a low bush. For a while he lay there, watching the men as they sat staring out over the water toward other boats which bobbed toward the shore. Now and then a couple of them ran to the water's edge and helped a comrade ashore.

Shadows began to drift back and forth along the beach. Masters looked skyward and saw the grim *zopilotes* circling the lagoon, watching for the dead to drift to land where they could swoop down on the bodies and tear into flesh with talons and hooked beaks.

"I better get out of here," Masters thought. "If one of the officers or the wireless operator comes ashore and recognizes me, I'll be food for

those buzzards, too, and I've no hankering for that."

On hands and knees he crawled silently into the brush and soon had some distance between himself and the gathering of survivors on the shore. When he felt that it was safe he got up and began to walk, and despite his weakened condition he did not pause until a familiar drone met his ears.

"Airplane motors!" he muttered as he stopped to listen. "Must be some of the ships brought over on the first vessel."

He turned toward the northwest, following the sound of the motors. It led him behind a low bank of sand, crowned with mesquite and cactus.

It took him most of the morning to cover the distance. Now and then he had to stop and hide while a Fokker droned overhead, swept on toward the Laguna Madre and in a short time returned.

"Every one of these birds is carrying bad news," he grinned. "Finding themselves short of supplies, I'm afraid."

He kept on. The going got harder. Cactus tore at his clothes, ripping them to tatters, scratching his hide with their wicked barbs. His lips, crusted with salt water, began to swell. His brain began to reel as the sun beat down in all its fury on his uncovered head.

The droning of the ships grew less and less. They seemed to be disappearing into the west somewhere behind the distant Sierra Madres.

By the time he had reached the crest of the hill Masters was nearly mad with heat and thirst. But when he crept between the tangled mesquite and looked down over the little tarmac, so cleverly hidden in the shallow valley, his mind began to function in high gear again.

"Got a road right from the beach to the field," he said as he fol-

lowed the marks of the tractors which led from the huts surrounding the piece of level ground to the distant shore. "Dragged the crates there and had mechanics on hand to assemble them."

**F**OR half an hour or more he lay watching the field. The sight of three Fokkers and a Hannover standing by a low squat hut intrigued him hugely. Finally he got up and stumbled down the slope, recklessly determined to find a means of destroying this new menace to Allied plans. A desperate plan forced his stumbling feet on through the sand, straight toward the secret tarmac of the enemy, situated there on the edge of what was known the world over as *Tierra Caliente*—the hot country.

"*Agua!*" he gasped as he stumbled across the field toward the hut. "*Agua!* Give a poor wounded sailor moisture for his parched lips."

A man rushed from a long shack in the side of the hill. And Masters' fevered eyes saw that it was a workshop. "*Agua, por favor,*" he sobbed.

He sprawled in front of the surprised man. But before he went down he knew that the man was a German.

And while he lay there he heard the man call for help. Soon he was picked up and carried into the hut at the corner of the field, and he heard a kindly voice caution against his drinking too much water.

At last the Lone Eagle lay back on the cot. A man whom he took to be a doctor stood looking down at him, and by his side stood a tall, hawk-nosed figure whose eyes seemed to gleam with the light of a fanatic as he listened to the mumblings of the American.

"You are from the *Morales*?" questioned the doctor as he held a gourd of water out to the Lone Eagle.

Masters nodded weakly and looked up into the steely eyes of the man towering above him. "Steofner!" he thought excitedly. "That's Steofner sure as shooting. I'm getting close!"

The man whom Masters had recognized as the brains behind this latest scheme of the enemy, began to pace across the room.

"I can't understand it, Doctor. This cursed Lone Eagle must have been aboard the *Morales*. Oh, if he was blown up with it, I shall be satisfied. I shall at least be able to report that I have accomplished something. The Lone Eagle is worth all their flying fields put together. Can't I question this man now, *Doktor*?"

The M.O. felt of Masters' pulse for a moment, then got up and motioned K-3 to his chair.

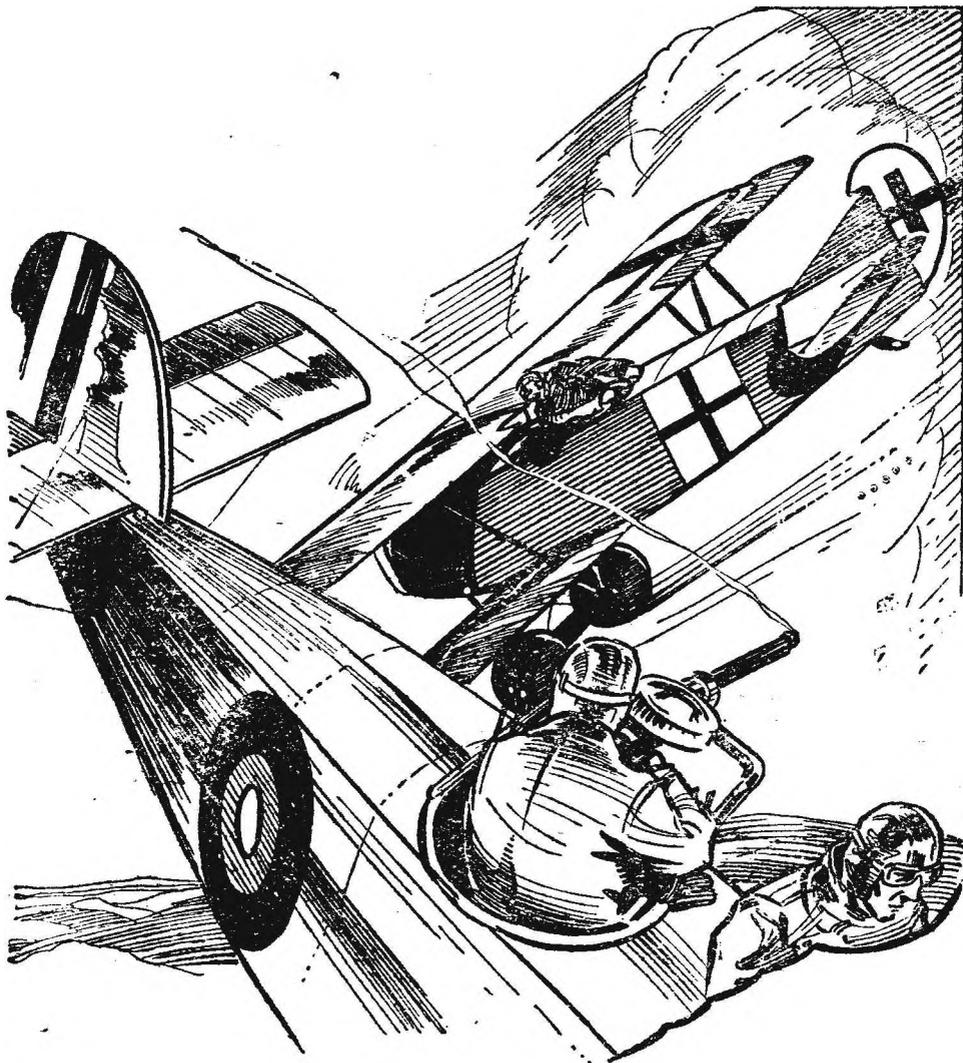
"Listen, *amigo,*" Steofner said in Spanish. "You were on the *Morales* when it blew up? Good! Now tell me where you were when it happened. Where were you on the vessel, I mean?"

Masters groaned. "*Mas agua,*" he pleaded. And when he had taken another drink held out for him by K-3, he rubbed his burning temples and looked up into the hard grey eyes studying his own.

"I was just below the bridge, *senor,*" he mumbled. "I was watching the captain who was swearing at some man that two of my comrades kept covered with revolvers."

"Splendid!" cried Steofner, his eyes lighting. "Splendid! What then?"

"I thought our captain was crazy for he kept accusing this man, who had been a member of our crew all the way over, of being—now let me see—I forget, but it was something queer. Some sort of bird was it, oh, yes. He called this man a lone eagle. The captain must have been drunk again. He sees all sorts of things when he has too much rum



*The Fokker was plummeting toward the valley below (Page 29)*

in him. Once he swore there was a whale with a bright green tail in his bunk. This time he was seeing birds."

Steofner interrupted impatiently. "And what happened to them when the explosion came? Did you see what happened to the captain's prisoner?"

The Lone Eagle faked a shudder. He said, "It was horrible, senor! I will see it to my dying day. He was cut in half by a piece of the after rail as it whirled across the

bridge. Then it spun on, scattering blood all over!"

"And the captain?" demanded Steofner.

"He was caught in the wreckage of the bridge," said Masters. "I just managed to leap to one side as it crashed into the water. The officer, too. Oh, senor, it was horrible! The captain's prisoner got it *muy malo!* He was cut in half just as if he had run into a saw!"

Steofner laughed. His hand patted the shoulder of the man ly-

ing before him. "*Mi amigo*," he said. "You have brought me the most wonderful news I have ever received. I shall see that you are rewarded. Give him anything he wants, *Doktor!*"

Steofner pranced excitedly across the room, came back to grab the M.O.'s shoulder.

"Think of it! The Lone Eagle is gone! It cost us the *Morales*, perhaps some of the pilots, and all of the supplies, but it was cheap. There are more ships. Wait till His Highness hears this."

But the M.O. was not enthusiastic. "You will leave him here then?" he asked, motioning to Masters. "He needs a rest even if he is a stupid Spaniard."

"By all means," cried Steofner. "Leave him here for the day. Give him some clothes left by the pilots. And then get Eladio to accompany him along the road to the beach. They can use him there."

"Then you are leaving?" the doctor asked.

"Yes I go to join the others," smiled K-3. "We have enough planes and men to strike the first blow. This crazy El Chinche is anxious to invade the United States. He does not know it, but he is putting his head in a noose. But what care we, so long as the cursed Americans get a fright and keep a few precious divisions over on this side to guard their Border."

The doctor shook his head. "Watch out for this El Chinche. I do not think he trusts you very far. If things go wrong he will slide a knife between your ribs."

Steofner drew himself erect. "Perhaps he will, but not until we have ruined the American training fields. If he waits until then I shall be satisfied. I will have accomplished a great deal. And now that I have been instrumental, indirectly yes, but in reality the means of dispos-

ing of this Lone Eagle, perhaps our men back home can think up a scheme to beat our enemies to their knees without his spoiling it. Yes, *Doktor*, I will be honored when this war is over. Historians will be forced to admit that Steofner was a name to be dealt with."

A mechanic appeared in the doorway. "Your plane is ready, sir. The motor is warmed and the rear cockpit is packed with the supplies you wish to take with you." He saluted Steofner.

"Good!" snapped the German. "I'll see you later, *Doktor.*"

**T**HEN the door closed behind Steofner and the M.O.

Masters was not to be caught in a trap, and besides he needed the rest. So he lay on the cot, relaxed. His eyes centered on the table, tried to focus on a map which he could see there. But he did not get up. Not even when he heard the motor of the Hannover belch across the field and leap into the air. A few moments later the M.O. returned with a bundle of clothes, laid them on the chair beside the cot and went out again.

Only then did Masters get up. He slipped from the ragged outfit which had gone through fire, water and then the thorny cactus surrounding the secret tarmac. He felt better as he pulled the new outfit over his frame.

As he buttoned the shirt he walked to the desk, glanced at the map and whistled.

"Never thought he'd be as careless as all that," he murmured as he looked at a line drawn from a spot close to the Laguna Madre, across the rugged mountains to a spot between two towering peaks of the Sierra Madre Mountains and a short distance from the Border.

"The headquarters of Steofner and this El Chinche! I'll be damned!

Chances are those squares across the Border mean refueling stations in case a ship runs out of gas." He bent closer, alert for sounds outside as he studied the map and memorized every detail.

When he heard footsteps along the hard flint path outside, he sat down on the cot to tie his shoe laces. A mechanic entered, gave him a searching look, picked up the map and went out again.

"Glad I didn't pick it up," he thought. "Would have spoiled my chances, sure."

He waited a while, trying to lay some plan by which he could reach Steofner and the bandit, El Chinche's secret base.

The starting of a motor outside gave him his cue. He picked up a Luger from the table, slipped it into his coat pocket and tore a hole in the lining for the long barrel. Then he sauntered from the office and walked around in back of the long workshop.

**H**E stood there a moment, poised, getting the lay of the land.

The hut was built of adobe, with a wooden framework to hold the slanting roof in position. And along the back wall was a small square opening which gave light to the workbench inside.

Slipping to the window, Masters looked inside. The place was empty. The three mechanics were out in the open, clustered around the Fokker, listening to the motor.

"Here's my opportunity," he muttered. "Now if I can just reach that blow-torch—"

A stick did the trick. The torch slid toward him along the littered bench. He soon had it, opening the valve and letting the gasoline run along the wooden shelf below the window. Then a match. A hot puff. A dull roar and the workbench, soaked with oil from past use, and

now running with gasoline, was a mass of flame.

"Fire!" yelled Masters tearing around to the front of the low building. "Fire!"

The three mechanics left the Fokker immediately and came tearing across the sand to the burning building. Masters started to run in the same direction, but on coming around the corner, he swerved toward the Hun crate which sat trembling on alien soil.

Shouts of men and the steady roar of flames mingled behind him as he kicked the chocks away. Then he slipped under the wing, keeping the fuselage between himself and the burning workshop. He was in the cockpit. The motor opened up as he slid the throttle forward. Then the sound of the flame and shouting of the panic-stricken men was lost in the pulsating throb of the Mercedes dragging the ship out across the sand.

Masters saw a tear spring in the fabric of the right hand wing, and knew that they were shooting at him. But he coolly swung his ship into the gentle breeze blowing across the arid land from the Laguna Madre, gave her the gun and took off.

A climbing turn brought him about, and he headed toward the northwest—and Steofner.

## CHAPTER X

### *A New Ally*



**R**AYS of the setting sun began to throw fresh patterns over the rugged slopes of the Sierra Madres as Masters sat crouched in his stolen Fokker, anxiously watching his gasoline guage and the country ahead.

He knew there were extra tanks in these planes, but unfortunately

the one he had taken was low on gas. He would need more fuel soon.

He studied the rocky, cactus-dotted terrain below, watching for a cleared spot in which he could get down.

"Rather do it while it's still light," he finally decided. "That's no place for a forced landing in the dark."

**T**HEN, as he rounded the shoulder of a mountain, his eyes spotted a tiny village nestled at the foot of towering crags. And a kilometer or two away from the cluster of huts he saw a fairly level field, wide enough for a landing.

In the same instant a terrific clatter came from somewhere just behind him. A queer pattern of holes began to appear in the taut fabric of his upper wing. Tendrils of smoke tangled before his startled eyes.

With a curse he slammed the stick over, kicked on rudder and went into a tight turn. Then he saw them.

Six planes were breezing down on him out of the sunset skies, Spandaus blazing, determined to blast him from the skies.

As he came around, Masters centered his own guns on the coffinlike nose of a Fokker. His fingers hit the trips. The Spandaus chattered, spewing lead across the brilliant space between the two ships. The prop disintegrated under the impact of the smoking lead, and became a thousand bits of gleaming wood, raining earthward toward the Sierra Madres which were turning purple in the evening light.

"That's one!" cried the Lone Eagle, and swung around again. He missed a Fokker by a foot and cut the rudder from another with a well placed burst.

The second ship went twisting down to bury its nose in a clump of branching cactus.

That left four Fokkers to be dealt with.

For at the moment he was so occupied with the Fokkers that he did not see the Hannover that came drifting above the battle.

The bumpy air was filled with crisscrossing trails of grey as Spandau answered Spandau. Slugs whined through the sunset skies, chewing at wood, embroidering clustered patterns in fabric, singing against steel, drawing closer like a net with death sitting in the center like a spider waiting for a fly.

Masters was everywhere at once. Four to one wasn't bad odds. He had faced worse many times and come through to hammer down the enemy defenses.

Coming out of a half roll, he caught the Fokker passing under him. His guns opened up, tossing clusters of lead into the surprised pilot, who locked up and saw Death leering into his blood-flecked face. Down he went, and Masters whirled to face the other three.

Masters' face was wreathed in a grim smile as he realized that he had almost made a fatal error in even looking at the wide field that was nestling ahead in the shallow valley.

He realized now that that was their base. If he had set down there he would have been a goner sure. But they had not waited for him. They had come up after him.

The three Fokkers started to pull away. It was then that Masters discovered the Hannover. It was coming down, diving with quivering wings, the gunner in the rear cockpit blazing away furiously with both guns.

Masters cut over in a steep bank to answer the challenge thrown at him from the Parabellums. He saw the man in the pilot's seat as the big ship passed him. It was K-3! If he



*Masters clung to the doomed ship, ten thousand feet in the air (Page 31)*

could get K-3, the whole plan would probably collapse.

But K-3 was no slouch at the controls. He handled that big Hannover easily, weaving from side to side, giving the man in the rear cockpit plenty of opportunity to blast away at the Fokker flown by the Lone Eagle.

This time Masters could not take up a position under the two-seater. The three Fokkers would pick him off if he attempted the tactics he had used back in France on the Halberstadt. This time it was a matter of dodging the Hannover crews' guns and trying to bring down the Fokkers. Then, if he succeeded, he might—



Sweeping in under the black-crossed ship, Masters zoomed, cut loose with his guns, saw chips fly from the three-ply fuselage, and without waiting, banked steeply in time to scare a Hun half out of his wits by putting a short burst right between his nose and the windshield.

The Fokker whirled away, while the still frightened pilot tried to get his wits back. Masters caught another one in that moment and sent it hurtling to the jagged peaks below, a flaming torch.

The purple shadows were lengthening fast. The earth was being covered by a royal mantle as the Hannover came around, and followed by the remaining Fokker cut loose with a vicious hail of tracer.

The slugs caught Masters from two sides. Death jibbered over his shoulder, but he carried on, grim determination setting the lines on his face.

"I want you, Steofner," he snarled, bracing the fountain of fire to get a full shot at the man who sought to ravage the land beyond the Rio Grande. "And I'm going to get you!"

**F**INGERS pressed the trips savagely. He ignored the Fokkers as he worked in closer to the Hannover.

K-3 tried to bank, but the clustered tracer of the Fokker sprayed his ship, battering at the wings, tearing struts to shreds, making Steofner struggle frantically to avoid the final burst.

The Hannover and the Fokker wavered at the same moment. The two-seater's fuel tank was riddled. A dim cloud of vapor was visible in the half light. Then it faded as the sun slipped swiftly below the horizon. The motor of the Fokker began to buck. Masters was losing revs. The ship began to settle under him.

"Got to go down," he thought. "But I got Steofner. He's through, for the moment anyway."

Then banking sharply, sticking his nose down to hold up flying speed, Masters swung away from the scene of the fight, leaving the surprised Fokkers undecided as to whether to follow their stricken leader or make an attempt at locating the ship which had winged its way from the Laguna Madre. They chose the former course.

They'd had enough of the Lone Eagle for the time being.

Masters managed to set down in the little field he had first spotted some distance from the village.

He got out of the ship, examined it with the aid of matches held in his cupped hands, and was soon relieved to find that his trouble was a magneto wire which had been clipped by a Hun slug. He repaired it, then set to work dragging his ship behind a hedge of organ cactus growing at the edge of the clearing.

On completing his task, he walked toward the west. He hoped to find the narrow mountain trail curling along the slope which he had seen before he ran into the Fokkers.

As his feet hit the trail a dark figure loomed up in front of him, flashed a crude lantern fashioned from a gourd and holding a candle for light. Masters reached for his gun. But the voice which came from behind the flickering light bore no malice or hate in its question.

"Who are you?" came the query in a kindly voice.

"I have just reached this spot," said Masters. "I look for food and rest."

"You are one of those who wish to bring bloodshed to this land, are you not?" came the voice from the shadows. "You just landed in a plane back there in the field?"

"Yes," Masters said trying to see the speaker. "I just landed here in a plane. But I did not wish to bring bloodshed. Instead, I am fighting to prevent it."

"You have a truthful voice," said the stranger. "A kindly face. You are not a hater."

"I hate only warfare," replied Masters. "But who are you?"

"Come," said the voice. "Follow me."

They soon came in sight of the village at the foot of the slope,

where lights were beginning to blink in the darkness.

Masters asked, "What place is that?"

There was a pause. Then the voice said, "It is the pueblo of hate, lust and blood. They have gone crazy down there. They follow the banner of El Chinche. It will lead to the destruction of our country, for El Chinche, in turn, follows a false prophet from beyond the seas, one who is learned in the art of hate."

**H**E stopped abruptly and Masters saw a low hut nestling in the shadow of a huge rock.

"Pedro," called the voice softly, "come down now. I have found him. He is not hurt."

A shadowy figure leaped from the rock. Then a boyish voice said fearfully, "You have brought him with you, Father! Are you not afraid that he will tell them in the *pueblo* that we hide here!"

"No, my son," came the quiet voice. "This one does not speak as one who has a lust for blood." To the Lone Eagle, he said, "Enter, friend."

A hand led him into the darkness of the hut. He heard a door creak to behind him. Then the candle was taken from the gourd and placed on the table in the center of the room.

"Rosita, food and drink for a stranger," came the quiet order. Masters turned to study his strange guide. There before him, touching the table with long delicate fingers, stood a black-robed padre, a gentle smile lighting a face lined with worry.

"You said that you hate warfare, my friend," said the padre. "You said you were fighting to prevent it. Please explain." The padre caught Masters' glance toward the

lad called Pedro. "Do not fear. If your mission is secret you can trust him. He hates them down there. He will give his life to prevent them ravaging his beloved Mexico."

Masters hesitated. He took the seat indicated by the padre. "I am not one of them, Padre," he said. "I am one from the States. I have nothing to do with this El Chinche, but I hope to stop his making a fool of himself and being led on a false course by this man who is one of the world's enemies."

"I know," the padre said sadly. "Please trust us. If we can help stop this thing which is about to blight our land we will do so even if it costs our lives. Will we not, Pedro?"

Pedro's eyes burned as he nodded.

"They killed his father and mother last week," said the padre.

Masters told the padre some of his story. When he had finished a girl entered from a shed in the rear of the hut and placed food before the three.

The smell of *enchiladas* frying had whet the Lone Eagle's appetite and he enjoyed his first meal of the day. As Masters was mopping up the gravy from his *enchiladas* with a piece of *tortilla*, the padre leaned toward him and said:

"My son, how can you, alone, stop this terrible thing?" His voice shook.

"I have stopped them before, Father," Masters told him. "Tonight I will visit the *pueblo* in an attempt to find out when they plan their raid. If I am successful I must get word to the Border patrol. I have already planned for ships with which to drive them off."

"Then you will be leaving us?" asked the padre.

"I must," replied Masters. "I should like to keep in touch with this German and his planes, but the

success of my plan depends on warning the Americans. They have planes hidden and ready to drive the invaders off, but they wait on a warning from me. I must find a way of getting my message to the Border patrol."

"Let me carry it!" exclaimed Pedro. "Let me carry the message to the Border! I am not big enough to fight against the men, but I can carry messages."

"But how?" demanded Masters. "It is such a distance to the Border and you are so—so small a boy."

"On Estrella!" cried the lad. "We have ridden more than that distance across the desert before, Estrella and I."

Masters glanced at the padre. The old man nodded. "He can do it if anybody can. Before they killed his parents and set the *hacienda* on fire, he was known as one of the best *caballeros* in the valley, despite his age and size. He rescued his sister. Brought her here on his beloved horse, Estrella. It was here that I found them."

"But I've got to get my information first, Pedro," said Masters steadily. "I've got to get into the *pueblo* and find out their plans."

"They assemble in the *cantina*," whispered Pedro. "I have seen them!"

"Who?" Masters said.

"El Chinche and this evil forger!"

"That's the place then," snapped Masters. "Have you something I can wear?"

The padre got up from the table and went outside. In a few minutes he was back with an armful of clothes. "Pancho's. He does not mind."

"Who is this Pancho?" asked Masters as he started to put on the clothes. "Can he be trusted?"

"Pancho is one of us," said the

padre. "He is a shepherd whose flock has been killed to supply food for the *bandidos*. He will do anything to spoil this thing and bring peace to the countryside again."

"Call him in," ordered Masters as he adjusted the crumpled sombrero to his head.

Pancho came in and stood in the flickering light of the candle. His eyes were wider than the usual *peon's*, his face considerably more intelligent.

"Can you get me gasoline and oil for the plane?" asked Masters, watching the man closely.

"Si señor!" smiled the peon. "Pronto!"

"You think he will be able to get them for me, Padre?" Masters said turning to the black-robed figure.

The padre smiled. "I am certain that you will find gasoline, oil and water by your plane before dawn, señor. For once, Pancho's one failing, his ability to steal, will stand us in good stead."

**W**HEN Masters turned, Pancho was gone.

"How do I look," he asked the old man as he put the last garment on.

"A perfect *peon*," the padre assured him. "I am sure no one will suspect."

Masters looked down over the soiled *serape* draped across the shoulders and almost covering the dirty white pajamas pants showing below the tattered fringe. He tested the sandals on his feet. They were a little loose, but they would do.

"You had better have some of these with you," said the padre holding out a handful of warped *cigarros*.

The Lone Eagle stuffed them under the folds of his *serape* and motioned to Pedro. "Let's start, son. Want to get there before midnight."

## CHAPTER XI

*La Cucaracha*

PEDRO in the lead, they wound their way down the twisting trail into the valley until they reached the narrow road leading toward the mysterious *pueblo*.

"We have a kilometer or two more, *senor*," said Pedro softly. "We must beware. Sometimes there are some *bandidos* along here."

"Keep your ears open, Pedro," Masters said. "We can't afford to get caught—not until I've got some information for my friends across the Border."

They trudged along in silence for a while, stopping now and then to listen.

"What is it they are all singing?" asked Masters as the sound of voices raised in song came to them occasionally. "It is a strange song. I do not recognize it."

"It is *La Cucaracha*," answered Pedro. "Their marching song. All the *bandidos* sing it."

And as they neared the village, Masters heard the strains of *La Cucaracha*, again, now with more volume, as if it were being sung in one gigantic chorus.

"They assemble in the *cantina* at the edge of the *pueblo*," said Pedro. "Where they go from there, I do not know. I see them go in, but very few come out. It is so mysterious. Perhaps they are killed in there, yes?"

Masters reached out and took the lad by the arm. "You better wait here, Pedro. I'll go on alone. If I get any information I'll come back and you can start out for the Border."

"Very well," agreed Pedro. "You will find me here by this white

trumpet flower beside the tall cactus. Whistle three times."

Masters moved away toward the village which was now echoing to *La Cucaracha*.

As he entered the village and stopped in front of the brilliantly lighted *cantina*, Masters pulled his *serape* up until it covered his face, leaving only his eyes exposed. He stood listening to the ribald song, shouted along the street to the tinkling accompaniment of the stringed instruments within the *patio* of the *cantina*, on the side of the hill.

"Looks like a fairly new building," he said to himself as he studied the structure nestling against the rocky hillside some hundred yards from the dusty highway. "Wonder why they didn't build it closer to the road like they do in most places."

Shadowy figures passed him, turned in the rocky lane leading to the strangely lighted house. And what puzzled him most was the number of carts, mostly drawn by oxen, which wended their way up the slope.

Watching his opportunity he leaped lightly on the back of one of the carts and rode up the grade. Behind him he could see others turning in and following.

"Big place to handle all this trade," he mused.

Then the cart stopped. He heard the driver curse softly at the delay. Masters jumped off and finished the short journey on foot, having joined a small band of *peons* who carried burdens on their stooped shoulders. Every one of them was singing or humming *La Cucaracha*, and before long Masters found himself unable to keep the tune out of his mind.

Worming himself into the middle of the group, Masters approached the wide door. The men stopped.

"*La Cucaracha*," they chorused, and he followed suit. An indolent guard smiled and waved them on.

He found himself in a hot stuffy room, reeking of *tequila*, the sour odor of fresh *pulque*, *ponche caliente*, and frying *enchiladas*. Men sat clustered around greasy tables, with plates piled high with food in front of them.

MASTERS lit a *cigarro*, sent the blue smoke to mingle with the streamers festooning the air, and moved on through the room, his keen eyes studying the faces of the eating men. At last he came out into a *patio* where a native orchestra was playing. The music alternated between soft, sleepy waltzes and the quick, blood tingling martial music of the land below the Rio Grande.

As the orchestra struck up the stirring strains of *Zacatecas*, the men began to stamp their feet, and continued the racket when the notes of *Las Gaviotas* drifted out across the damp flags.

Masters was thankful for the music. He kept to the edge of the *patio* and moved around to the far corner where he found a bench in the shadows behind a potted cactus.

Suddenly the music stopped. There was a hush. The eyes of the men lighted with anticipation. They were all looking toward a door behind the orchestra.

"What now?" Masters wondered and shifted his position, for a better view. The men were moving away from a long table in the center of the *patio*. A space was cleared amongst the glasses, littering its stained top.

A chord was struck on a guitar. The sound was picked up by other instruments, but not before a low musical laugh struck the Lone Eagle's sharp ears, stiffened him where he sat. For he had heard

that laugh before, thousands of miles away. And it sent a chill through his *serape*-draped body, now.

With a flash of skirts, and a whirl from a brilliant-hued mantilla, a woman leaped lightly to the middle of the table and struck a pose. She held it, smiling down at the assembled men, her red lips bared from her beautiful white teeth in a captivating smile.

Masters recognized R-47 in spite of her makeup. He was bewildered at the new turn of events. He had never expected to find the beautiful German agent here in Mexico.

The clever German spy was singing. Her voice was low, deep, sonorous. Her eyes sparkled in the flickering light above her raven black hair. Her lips smiled as she sang the marching song of the *bandidos*. Masters was hearing *La Cucaracha* sung by an artist, he knew.

She went through it once. The men were leaning forward, fascinated by singer and music. The eaters in the other room were crowding in through the doorway, their bodies swaying with the song.

"Now, *amigos!*" cried R-47. "We sing it together, as we will sing it when we march against the cursed *gringos!*"

Her hands kept them in time. The song billowed from their throats and the song of the cockroach almost lifted the roof of the *cantina*.

The men demanded encore after encore, until at last the woman had to beg off. She waved, threw kisses around the room and they leaped from the table to the floor.

Masters tried to get away when he saw that R-47 was coming toward him. But it was too late. He sank back, pulled his *serape* up to his eyes and leaned back in the corner as if he were asleep. His heart pounded. If R-47 should betray him to this

crowd, the cause was lost, and he would stand no chance of getting out of the *cantina* alive.

"You are late!" he heard the petulant voice of R-47 say. She had stopped somewhere behind him.

"I am lucky to be here, *Fräulein*," growled a voice from the shadows which Masters recognized as Steofner's. "I have bad news. Misfortune has fallen on our cause today."

"YOU mean—" R-47 did not finish. Her words were lost in a gasp.

"Yes, *Fräulein*, the Lone Eagle," muttered Steofner. "We will have to act swiftly. Even before this El Chinche reaches a position along the Border. Everything was going so smoothly. But now I am afraid I will have to satisfy myself with destroying the American flying fields and then getting out before this cursed American catches up with us."

"What has happened?" demanded R-47.

"This is what has happened, *Fräulein*," snapped Steofner. "The *Morales* was blown up this morning. Most of our pilots went with it. Not a single machine or gun but

what is at the bottom of the Laguna Madre. El Chinche is growling because I have only been able to land one shipload, and most of that was planes and bombs. Only one battery of .77s and maybe a thousand rounds of three-inch shells. The other ship, the *Palma*, will not reach Mexico for a week yet. And we need the stuff badly."

"But how do you know it was the Lone Eagle?" asked R-47 trying to keep her voice steady. "The explosion may have been an accident."

"No," said Steofner slowly. "They had the Lone Eagle in their hands a few moments before the explosion occurred. He'd got on the boat by a clever ruse. But the real blow is the fact that this morning I was sure that this American was dead. One of the sailors described to me just how the prisoner, who was being questioned by the captain on the bridge at the time of the blast, was cut in two by flying debris."

"And what makes you think that he is not dead?" asked R-47.

"Our workshop and all of our precious tools, including fuel for the next batch of planes was burned this morning."

[Turn Page]

## HIS NIGHT CLUB BILL WAS \$62!

"Goodbye, Sir" . . . "Thank you, Sir," says the head waiter fervently, as the little party of four leaves the club. And why shouldn't he—for a \$10.00 tip?

Think that's unusual? Not a bit of it. Young men are making lots of money—and spending plenty—these days. Young men full of health, full of snap and power. And you can bet your bottom dollar that these men watch their health like a hawk—that they see to it that their bowels move regularly. For no man can feel right and do his best if he is held back by the curse of constipation.

So if *you* want to step up your energy, if *you* want a quick mind and a vigor-

ous body, remember this one thing and never forget it—*see that your bowels move regularly!*

But the way you move your bowels is important. Instead of taking a laxative that disturbs your system and upsets your stomach, take gentle Ex-Lax.

Ex-Lax limits its action entirely to the intestines, where the actual constipation exists. It gives the intestines a *gentle nudge*, emptying the bowels thoroughly—but easily and comfortably. Ex-Lax works in such a simple, common-sense way. And it is such a pleasure to take. Ex-Lax tastes just like delicious chocolate. At all drug stores—10c and 25c. (In Canada—15c and 35c.)

"You mean the shop at Laguna Madre?"

"Yes, *Fräulein*," said Steofner. "And the men swear that it was the rescued sailor who started the fire."

"But Laguna Madre is a long distance from here," said R-47. "We have nothing to fear yet."

"The Laguna Madre is a long distance, yes," replied Steofner. "But this man is close. He stole a Fokker. They warned us by wireless. We tried to intercept him this evening at the entrance to the valley, but he shot down my men. I think only two escaped beside myself and my observer. No one could fight as that pilot did, except the Lone Eagle. I have one hope, however. I know his plane was struck. There may be a possibility of his having been killed in landing along the rocky slopes in the dark."

R-47 shook her head. "You do not know him as well as I do. Your hope is a vain one, *Herr Steofner*."

"It means that we will have to start our raid sooner," said Steofner firmly.

"When?" demanded R-47.

"I would like to take off tomorrow, but I cannot," replied Steofner. "I thought my plan was fool-proof and fell in with El Chinche's suggestion that the bombs be brought up by transport."

"So?" demanded R-47.

"And this fool El Chinche saw to it that his own three-inch guns and the shells are coming in the first loads. It will be sometime tomorrow night before the bombs reach here by the secret route."

"It was you who were the fool, *Herr Steofner*," smiled R-47. "Now that El Chinche has his guns, one false move on your part and your planes will be blasted to splinters. He has you in his power."

"I know it," exclaimed Steofner. "He already has a gun mounted on

the hillside overlooking the secret landing field. I will have to play along with him."

"And where is El Chinche now?" demanded R-47 coldly. "Perhaps I could get him to hurry the shipment of bombs along."

"He has gone, *Fräulein*," answered Steofner. "He is going through the mines. He will be in the open by dawn with his men. And while he marches toward the Border I must sit here and wait, afraid of my own shadow."

STEOFNER'S eyes fell on the form of Masters slouched against the wall, wrapped from face to foot in his dirty *serape*. The German pointed to him, said:

"A fine soldier, *Fräulein*! That is the sort El Chinche hopes to fight the Yankees with."

"I hope he does not understand German, *Herr Steofner*," said R-47 shortly.

"These stupid oxen have a hard time understanding their own language," Steofner laughed.

"Then dawn, the day after tomorrow, is the big moment?" the woman said.

"Yes," growled Steofner. "At least it is not the everlasting *mañana* one hears on every side in this stupid country. That is some consolation."

"And in the meantime, *Herr Steofner*," interrupted the woman with a sharp ring to her voice, "do you not think it would be well to post guards at the flying field, and perhaps a few to the mine entrance. I know this Lone Eagle. He is everywhere at once. It would be more fitting if he were called El Chinche. Why, he may be in this very room right now. I would not be surprised to find it so."

The German ace cursed harshly, said, "You are right! I am going to look into the face of every *peon*

and bandit in the place! We cannot afford to take chances now."

Stoefner turned toward Masters. The American tensed under the folds of the *serape*.

But a crowd of Mexicans surged forward at the same instant. Laughing and shouting as they surrounded Stoefner and his companion.

"Senorita!" they pleaded. "Sing again! Please, senorita, sing *La Cucaracha* again!"

Masters heard the rich full-throated laugh of R-47 ring out above the begging requests as he took advantage of the disturbance and slipped away into the shadows. His escape had been a narrow one, but he was thankful for the luck that had placed him on that bench in time to overhear the conversation between the two Germans. Because of that luck he had got hold of the information he sought sooner than he expected.

**H**E found Pedro waiting. They hurried along a dim path until they came to a deserted shepherd's hut. Inside, Masters got to work at once. By the light of a candle stub he wrote the message which the Mexican boy was to carry to the Border patrol. When he had finished it read:

Air attack to be made on flying fields in Texas tomorrow at dawn. Send Spads to patrol the line on the north of the Rio Grande. Have D.H.s loaded and ready to bomb bandit troop columns. Do not drop bombs except on signal from Fokker carrying strip of torn *serape* on rudder. I will try and divert El Chinche's men and turn them back. Have Navy Department order search for S.S. *Palma*. It is carrying planes and supplies. Have blown up S.S. *Morales*. Situation in hand, but need full cooperation from planes along Border.

"You will not be able to reach the Border until tomorrow, will you, Pedro?" asked Masters as he folded the message.

"No, senor," said the lad quietly. "I will reach it tomorrow noon, if I start at once. The padre will have Estrella ready to go the moment I reach our hiding place."

"Good," smiled Masters. "I said tomorrow in the message. Of course that will mean the dawn of the day after you deliver this to the Border patrol. They will be waiting for you. They have been warned to be on the lookout for a message from M. That is how I signed this note."

The boy nodded, tucked the note inside his sombrero. "I will go now, senor. Tomorrow it will be in the hands of an *Americano*."

"Much depends on it, *amigo*," said Masters, putting his hands on the lad's shoulders. "The friendship of two great nations, Mexico and *Los Estados Unidos* for years to come will rest on whether you deliver that paper into the right hands. The fate of many lives, the lives of your countrymen and mine, hang in the balance as you ride to the Border."

"And you, senor?" asked the boy. "You will remain here?"

"Yes, Pedro," answered Masters as they started back to the road. "I will remain. I still have work to do."

"You are a brave man, senor," smiled the boy as he held back a mesquite branch so that Masters could pass.

"And you, *amigo*, you are a brave hombre, too," the Lone Eagle said quietly.

They reached the road. "Take care, Pedro," cautioned Masters.

"*Muy bien*," answered the lad. They parted then, Masters heading back toward the *cantina*, where danger lurked on every side, Pedro going to where the old padre waited with the horse that was to carry him on the wild ride across the desert to warn the *Americanos* of the intended raid.

## CHAPTER XII

## Strategy



THE Lone Eagle watched Pedro disappear down the road, then turned toward the mysterious *cantina* perched on the side of the hill.

"Now I'm going to find out why it's all one-way traffic on the road to the *cantina*," he resolved.

The music was still in full swing when he reached the foot of the rocky lane. The steady stream of traffic still seemed to be going up hill and none returning. He fell in with a group, relieved his frayed nerves by joining in singing their marching song.

The group with which he was walking caught up to a couple of carts, passed them. Instead of carrying on, Masters fell back, then and stayed with the carts. Putting his shoulder to the wheel of a stalled cart, he pushed as if he were one of the *peons* in that party. By keeping well in the shadow of the heaped wagon, he managed to get around to the back of the *cantina* without being stopped.

Hidden by the low-growing brush he watched the carts approach the rear of the *cantina* and then halt. Dim, shadowy figures appeared from a spot near the rear wall of the building, hurried to the carts and began to pull the banana leaf covers off them.

Slipping away from his point of vantage, the Lone Eagle fell in at the side of a muffled figure who was lifting a load of leaves from a cart, and began to help him. Not a word was spoken between the two men as they worked. The *peon* seemed to take it for granted that Masters was one of the crowd.

Masters soon saw that his surmise was correct. Each and every one of

the lumbering two-wheel conveyances was loaded with either a three-inch gun, a spile of shells or part of a gun carriage! It was the secret transport of K-3 and his ally, El Chinche.

The men began to unload the carts. Masters slid an eighteen pounder from its bed of leaves and fell into line with those who had already picked up a burden.

He waited. There was a hush. The song was forgotten as a gate at the back of the *cantina* slowly opened. Then the line moved ahead and he with it.

He heard the gate swing shut behind them on creaking hinges. Before him the ground seemed to yawn, showing an entrance which appeared to lead to the very bowels of the earth. The line in which he marched was being engulfed, disappearing from sight as they entered the hole.

Following blindly, Masters crept after the stooped figure ahead of him and soon found himself going down a long ramp, covered with planks and cleated to give the sandals of the men a foothold. Electric lights hanging from cords began to throw dim, ghostly halos along the incline, giving the effect of three awkward files marching into the earth, when in reality there was only one.

"A mine!" said Masters under his breath. "Wonder where it leads?"

The gallery along which the burdened men were marching, suddenly branched. Masters stepped to one side as if adjusting his load to a more comfortable position on his shoulder. The long line twisted by. When the last man had passed him, Masters lowered his shell to the slippery mud, waited a moment and then followed the trail in the soggy ground.

Where, he wondered, were they going.

Puzzled, he slogged on through

the mud, following the mysterious trail which led into the depths of the earth. Once he came across a pile of empty packing cases, and from their marking knew that the wooden containers had once held rifles. He found another pile and still another. The long tortuous tunnel began to take on the aspect of an underground arsenal. But why they transported the stuff so far away from the surface continued to be a riddle.

Suddenly he stopped. A familiar odor hit his quivering nostrils.

"Cattle!" he said half aloud. "Cattle way down here."

Then he heard them, lowing faintly in the distance. A few yards more and he came around a turn in the tunnel. A little distance ahead he saw them.

On either side of the tunnel, standing docile under the dim rays of the light, in what Masters took to be the old stable where the former miners had kept their burros, were oxen. A quick estimate revealed the fact that there must be a hundred or more of the great beasts.

As he stepped forward, a figure came from behind what appeared to be a feed bin, followed by two other figures carrying huge baskets of grain.

"*Buenas noches, amigo,*" murmured Masters.

"*Bueno,*" replied the Mexican, pushing a fork full of fodder toward a great brown beast.

"What have you here, *amigo?*" he asked with a grin.

The *peon* laughed softly. "I play at being a *caballero, amigo,* but I would rather march on with my friends." He paused and shrugged his shoulders. "And I suppose I will have the task of helping to drive these beasts on. A nasty job, I can assure you. They'll start down every branch of the mine they come to."

"You will take them on, then?"

"Certainly," smiled the *peon* as he called to one of his helpers for more fodder. "It is one of El Chinche's clever ideas. The beasts will follow the men to the other end of the mine. There they will emerge into the open and become food for the army."

"I do not understand," said Masters. "Do you mean that this mine has an entrance somewhere beyond this?"

"Come, *amigo,*" the Mexican motioned toward a little shack by the side of the huge cavern where the oxen were stabled. "I show you."

**M**ASTERS followed him to the lean-to and watched the man pull a dusty roll of blue prints from behind a bunk.

"This, *amigo,* must have been left here when they abandoned the mine about twenty years ago. See," he said, pointing to a circle on the map. "This is where we are now. The tunnel goes on and on. It was once one of the greatest silver mines in the world. See, it finally comes out here."

"Ah," murmured Masters, his blue eyes alight with his discovery. "It comes out in that long valley. El Chinche will be able to approach the Border without having to travel many miles over open desert. Clever, is it not? You know, I wondered where we were bound. I had heard something about going after the *gringos*. But for a while tonight I thought perhaps El Chinche had made a mistake and was going to lead his army to fight the devil and his hosts."

"*Gringos* and devils, they are the same, *amigo,*" growled the *peon*, rolling up the map.

They left the hut. The keeper of the oxen said, "You understand now, *amigo?* Is everything all right to your way of thinking?"

"*Sta bueno, gracias, muchas gracias, amigo,*" smiled Masters. "You have been a big help."

The peon moved toward the feed bin. Masters stood rooted on the spot. His quick ears caught the low rumble of voices and among them he recognized the softer timbre of a woman's voice.

R-47! The thought sent a chill through his body. He could not go back the way he had come, now.

A telephone sent its shrill warning from the hut built into the timbers of the mine. The peon left his task and hurried inside.

When he came out, Masters was gone.

"*Amigo! amigo!*" cried the Mexican. "Where are you? Stop! They told me to stop everybody. There is a spy in the mine. Gonzales! Gomez! Lorenzo! Stop him!"

Masters splashed through the sloppy mud for some distance before he stopped, gasped for breath and listened. He heard voices ahead. Men were coming from both directions! He was trapped! Just when he was about to uncover the whole plan, he was to be caught!

**H**E looked around him, searching blindly for some avenue of escape, hesitating.

A shot decided him. The slug hit the rocks over his head, threw sparks and then buried itself on the muck.

Masters ran, stumbling and slipping. Another shot. This time the bullet ricocheted against the side of the tunnel, and stung his face with powdered stone.

Abruptly he came upon a tunnel that branched off to one side. With a prayer of thankfulness he ducked into it. It became dark as night when he left the lighted part of the mine.

Behind him he heard the rattle of shots and shouts. The two search-

ing parties had evidently come together.

He stopped and listened. They were coming down the branch now. He could see the dim light cast by waving torches. Weird shadows leaped from the mouth of the branch, looking like long talons trying to reach out and take the Lone Eagle prisoner.

"If I only knew where this branch leads," he thought. "If it goes to a dead end I am lost. I can't turn back now, but I've got to get out. I've got to!"

He knew now what he must do. When the Border patrol planes arrived he must be there to lead them to the tunnel.

Handicapped now by the fact that he was traveling in total darkness, while his pursuers had torches to guide their steps, Masters began to lose ground. He could hear the shouts coming closer. The long crooked shadows began to weave around him, confusing his steps, hiding behind grim, black shadows.

He lost his sombrero in his mad scramble to escape, clung to his gun and *serape* with difficulty.

The going got harder and harder. And for a while he did not notice why. The darkness hid the fact that he was traveling up a grade, and it wasn't until he turned to glance back at his trackers that he discovered how much higher he was than their glimmering torches.

Then a sudden draft of fresh air hit him, and hope lived once more in his heart. The shaft must be leading to the surface! If he could only hold out a little longer!

They were closer now. Once again shots began to whistle over his head, striking sparks and throwing splintered rock.

He stopped, lifted his gun and aimed it at the nearest torch, fired. A cry of pain and alarm echoed the shot. The torch dropped to the

muck, hissed and went out. He fired again. A yell greeted that one also, but more torches took the place of the fallen one. And the voice of R-47, rang through the tunnel as she urged the men on.

The tunnel grew narrower. He could touch either side with his elbows now. His peril grew greater. As soon as the crowd behind him discovered the situation, all they had to do was fire directly ahead and they couldn't help winging their quarry.

Just as the Lone Eagle felt that he could not drag himself another foot along the slope, he stumbled and fell. A sob welled from his throat as he tried to pick himself up. His feet slid from under him and brought him up short, but flat on his back.

**T**HEN a cry escaped his lips. But it was a cry of joy, rather than one of dismay.

For there directly overhead gleamed the stars, twinkling around a crescent moon like diamonds against a cushion of black velvet.

"I've got *them* now!" he yelled and scrambled on to the mouth of the half choked shaft. "I've got them cornered! The tables are turned!"

He grabbed at a big rock, tore it loose from the roots of a mesquite bush and sent it crashing down the littered shaft. A yell of fear sounded like music to his pounding ears.

"Stay back!" he yelled into the tunnel. "The passage is only wide enough for one man at a time, and I will pick you off one at a time if you try to come out!"

The shadows of the torches still flickered against the sides of the tunnel. But they did not come any closer. He glanced around him, spotted a hulking shadow just above the shaft.

Risking a surprise advance by the

crowd, he now had holed up, he jumped to the rock, put his shoulder behind it and pushed. It gave a little. Dirt rattled from its base and trickled down the shaft.

He stopped to catch his breath. Looking down the hole he saw, in the lights flickering along the walls, a moving shadow.

He fired one shot into the tunnel and the shadow moved back, got smaller, dropped from sight.

He listened to the vague murmur of voices, knew they were holding a whispered consultation.

"Think they'll keep me busy here while a bunch of them come around from the rear and cut me off," the Lone Eagle figured. "But I'll show *them* a trick or two."

He went back to working loose the big rock, taking advantage of its position on the slope and the fact that he was rolling it downhill.

It gave inch by inch. Then it began to move, slowly at first. It swayed, fell back, then finally let go its hold on the rocky soil.

The Lone Eagle stepped back and held his breath. Would it drop into the shaft or would its momentum carry it across the hole?

Hoping for the best, he gave it a shove, and it was on its way. It hit the edge of the shaft, bounced into the air and stopped with a rumbling thud. Sparks flew. A rotten timber snapped. A cry of alarm and a scurrying of feet sounded from below. A cloud of dust rose from the shaft and drifted across the face of the moon. Masters breathed a deep sigh.

"That's that!" he muttered as he wiped his face on the soiled *serape*. "They can't get out *that* way. And by the time they go around to the other entrance I'll be well on my way."

Picking up his gun, he slid down a pile of shale and started to back-track along the surface, heading for

the little hut of the padre, high up on the slope of one of the Sierra Madres.

### CHAPTER XIII

#### *Alien Skies*



USK was throwing its purple mantle over the hills. Far down in the valley, carts were still winding their way toward the sinister *cantina*, as the Lone Eagle slept the sleep of utter exhaustion in the little hut on the mountainside.

As lengthening shadows heralded the night, the old padre gave up his long vigil on the rock and came down to the hut.

"The time is approaching, my son," he said, shaking the shoulder of the man lying on a makeshift bed in one corner. "The shadows are falling."

Masters sat up, stretched wearily. "Thank you, Father," he smiled. "I feel better for that rest."

"It is good that you have had time to rest," the black-robed padre said kindly. "You have a grim task ahead of you."

Masters had only had four hours in which to rest. It had taken him all night and most of the next day to reach the hut.

The enemy had tried to cut him off, but he had wound his way down the mountain in the dark, reached the valley by dawn and then cautiously worked his way back up the opposite side of the slope on which the adobe hut nestled. Time and again he had seen his pursuers, but not once had they laid eyes on him. Being the object of a hunt was nothing new in the Lone Eagle's life, so upon reaching the hut, he had eaten and then fallen into a deep sleep.

"Did Pancho succeed?" he asked, trying to rub the stiffness from the calves of his legs.

The padre nodded. "He has two *botes* of gasoline by your plane, *amigo*."

"Two *botes*?" grinned Masters. "Lets' see, a *bote* holds about twenty litres, doesn't it? Forty quarts of gasoline. That'll be plenty. And oil?"

"About four litres, I think," replied the padre. "Water we can carry from the spring. Pancho is there now. He has been guarding your plane all day. He will not believe that such a heavy thing can fly."

Pedro's sister Rosita came in with food. Masters ate quickly. When he had finished he said, "I will go up to the plane now, Padre. I wish to look it over to make sure that it will be ready for the dawn."

Grey light was tingeing the east when Masters began to instruct Pancho in the mysteries of swinging a propeller. And the willing peon practiced until the sweat poured from his face, despite the chill wind of dawn.

"That will be enough, Pancho," Masters said finally. "We will wait until we hear motors in the valley. Then they will not be so apt to notice this one start."

Masters' eyes traveled back over the trim Fokker waiting on the leveled spot to leap into the air and throw its steel and fabric against the raiding Huns.

"Pancho!" he exclaimed. "I almost forgot."

"What is it, *senor*?"

"I hate to ask this of you, *amigo*. But I need the use of your *serape*."

"It is yours, *senor*," smiled Pancho. "I still have the one I wear on *fiestas*."

"But I must tear this one, *amigo*," returned Masters. "I need a streamer of *serape* fringe to tie on my rudder."

Pancho shrugged. "Do what you will, *senor*. If it will help to defeat our enemies I will gladly tear my *serape* to shreds."

"That's the spirit, Pancho," laughed Masters as he tore a bright strip of red and white from the edge of the *serape*. "My friends will know me by this. That is, if Pedro got through."

"Do not worry about Pedro, *senor*," grinned Pancho. "The lad will deliver your message. He knows the country between here and the Border as well as he knew his father's *hacienda*. Count the message as in the hands of the *Americanos*."

"I hope so," said Masters as he tied the gaudy strip to his rudder.

Then the padre and Rosita joined them. The four of them stood in front of the Fokker, their faces turned toward the hidden valley, listening for the first sound of a motor to break the stillness of the new-born day.

"There it is," cried Pancho suddenly. "Listen. There is another! Yet another!"

"All right, Pancho, do your stuff!" ordered Masters.

PANCHO glanced at Rosita to make sure she was looking, then strutted toward the nose of the Fokker.

"You have risen in importance, Pancho," smiled the padre. "Do not forget what I said about humility on the last Sunday I preached in the *pueblo*."

Pancho grinned and grabbed the prop. A few swings and the cold motor caught.

"May God go with you, my son," said the padre as he stood by the side of the Fokker and braced himself against the ragging slipstream. "Your shoulders are young to carry such a burden, but I know now that they are strong enough. *Adios!*"

He shook Masters' hand and stepped away. The Lone Eagle waved to Rosita. Pancho dragged the stones, acting as chocks, away, and stood aside with a proud grin splitting his features.

The Fokker moved forward across the stubby grass, rose quickly into the air, curving gracefully to the east just as the sun broke over the Sierra Madres.

Hugging the shoulder of the mountain, Masters swung northward to the Border, the crest of the ridge between himself and the Huns who were by now taking off from the secret airdrome in the valley. He had not seen them as yet, and wondered just how many ships he would have to contend with when the armada and his own ship broke into the open just this side of the Rio Grande.

Keeping low, he drove on. His guns were cocked and ready, but his ammunition belts were half empty.

"Have to make every burst tell," he cautioned himself. "Can't waste a single round. But I'm going to save one for Steofner. Get *him* and I'll break up the show."

Presently the shoulder on his left grew lower. The flatlands began to loom ahead.

There, in a break in the hills, he caught his first glimpse of the German raiders.

"Hannovers," Masters growled. "Extra tanks and lots of twenty-pounders, I'll bet."

He kicked the throttle full open. The Mercedes' full-throated roar blasted at his ears. The slipstream tore at his head until his scalp began to feel numb. He forged ahead, determined to beat the Hannovers to the banks of the Rio Grande.

As Nuevo Laredo on the Mexican side and Laredo on the American side of the Rio Grande, sprang into view in the morning light, Masters

banked and set a course toward the west.

Over his left shoulder he could see the flock of Hannovers, with an escort of ten Fokkers sweeping toward him.

"They're headed for San Antonio," Masters decided. "Probably plan to clean the fields up there and then head on toward Fort Worth and Camp Hix."

He glanced anxiously toward the north. Spads and D.H.s should be streaming toward the winding river by now if the Border patrol got his message. But there was nothing in sight.

Then he saw the streamered two-seater leading the German planes, swerve to one side, dip a wing in signal and lead the flight to cut across Masters' line of flight. They had spotted the Lone Eagle at last.

Masters climbed, raised his hand in mock salute to the Hannover. His fist threw the stick over. The Fokker leveled off, and before the two-seater could even bank away, Masters had flashed by, close enough to recognize the features of the man who sat at the controls.

It was Steofner, and a surge of satisfaction filled him.

**T**HE observer in the rear cockpit of the two-seater let go with a blistering drag. The funnel of smoking slugs passed behind Masters' rudder and lost themselves a mile away in the desert sand.

The Hannovers had seen the maneuver, and they had seen the burst thrown by the man in the rear cockpit of their leader's plane. Now that strange Fokker was coming toward them, followed by the two-seater.

As yet the Lone Eagle had not fired a shot. He glanced over his tail, saw the fraying strip of *serape* fluttering in the slipstream. Then he settled low in the cockpit.

The Hannovers split their forma-

tion, fanned out in a ragged line, to let the two planes come through.

Masters tore at them, then, his head lowered to the ringsight, his fingers ready to press the trips.

In one synchronized motion he kicked rudder, tossed the stick over and went into a climbing turn. He leveled out at the ceiling, stuck his nose down, and before the Hannovers could make a move his sights had flashed across the two end ships.

Masters' guns had chattered in two short staccato bursts of hardly a dozen rounds each. But that scant score of slugs had blasted into the motors of two black-crossed ships. Orange flame licked from their motor cowling, curling back hungrily toward the crew.

Two long streamers of black fouled the clear morning air. Two balls of fire ate at the mists along the south bank of the Rio Grande as the Lone Eagle drew first blood.

But in drawing first blood he also drew the concentrated fire of fifteen two-seaters and ten Fokkers.

"Tough contract I've taken on," he thought grimly. "Can't last many minutes without help." He managed one anxious glance toward the north, saw nothing but clear, open sky.

Back and forth along the banks of the Rio Grande the battle raged. It was a strange sight to those on the ground who thought the war was far across the Atlantic.

Masters was all over the sky, his guns white hot. Another Hannover went down. Then a Fokker limped from the battle and overturned on a sandbar in the middle of the river.

The Hannovers began to circle the Lone Eagle, while the Fokkers came down from above. Observers covered the area with twisting lines of grey, some of which found a resting place in the Fokker with the ragged streamer fastened to its rudder. The single-seaters kept

popping down from above, diving one after the other to sweep away this one barrier which stood between them and the success of their sinister mission.

The Lone Eagle's Fokker was hit in half a hundred places. The instrument board was a shambles of jagged metal and splintered glass. The fuselage was like a sieve. Even the piece of *serape* had been clipped in two by a cluster of bronze-coated pills.

Twisting, turning, skidding from right to left, Masters hurled his ship through the formation, fighting frantically to down Steofner before he, himself, went down.

But it was no use. K-3's men were guarding their leader well. A wall of flaming steel surrounded the man who was engineering the raid on American training fields.

**N**O matter which way Masters turned he was hemmed in by a sinister wall of steel. Hannovers on all sides; Fokkers above. And they closed in, pounding away with every gun that could be brought to bear on the *serape*-streamered Fokker.

Masters glanced around him, his keen eyes boring through the swirling mass of ships, searching the horizon over the Rio Grande.

"Why don't they come!" he prayed. "I need help now as I never needed it before."

But the heavens over the Border, save for a few scattered banks of fleecy white clouds, were clear. Not a speck was visible. The help he had hoped and prayed for was not forthcoming.

He looked over the side, kicked rudder to escape a vicious burst, and made a quick survey of the terrain below. The countryside revealed no indication of help being down there.

An appalling thought became a certainty in his tortured brain.

"They caught Pedro," he gasped.

"They must have. He didn't get through with my message. There isn't a chance of help coming. I've got to get out of this alone—do what I can to stop them."

Clenching his teeth until the muscles of his jaws ached, Masters set himself to the grim task of stopping the murderous *Staffel* of Huns that sought to invade the United States.

But his task was a hopeless one. The precious ammunition in his belts was running low. There were only a few rounds left, and with those few rounds he could not possibly halt a horde of black-crossed ships before they reached the banks of the Rio Grande, even if he did manage to out-fly them.

He sank lower in the cockpit, slapping the stick to left and right, kicking rudder, skidding, banking, spinning, zooming, through that tenacious flock of Jerry crates.

"There's only one chance," he sobbed. "Only one. If I can get Steofner. With him down, the flight might become disorganized."

Going completely berserk, throwing his ship around the hot sunlit skies with reckless abandon, the Lone Eagle scattered a pair of hurtling Fokkers, braved a thunderous hail of Hun lead from the rear cockpits of three Hannovers, and by a miraculous bit of flying, at last managed to curl his riddled ship in behind the lumbering job flown by K-3.

Paying no attention to the lead spattering around him from the other ships, Masters put his sights on the ship ahead of him. He knew that his ammunition belts were nearly empty. One more round and they'd be hanging loose, perhaps curling back, tangling so that they would not feed into the blocks properly.

Steofner was trying to pull away from the Fokker clinging to his tail. He glanced over his shoulder, his

face pale, distorted with rage, wondering why the American did not shoot. Twice he knew the Hannover must have been right in the middle of the Lone Eagle's ring-sights. But he did not know that Masters had less than a dozen rounds to each gun, and was working closer, determined to make those precious slugs count.

"I'll get you if I have to crash into your elevators!" Masters swore into the slipstream. "You're not going to cross that Border. You're not going to live and brag that you trimmed me. No, Steofner, you're going down, if I have to go with you!"

Slugs crackled around Masters' head. It was only a miracle that one did not bore through his skull, or a cluster of them rip his trembling body to shreds. For the Fokkers were concentrating their fire on this ship which had flashed out of the dawn to bar their way. They came at the Fokker carrying the shred of a *serape* on its rudder, from above and below, and from in front. But they did not come down from the blistering 'chute behind the Lone Eagle, for fear of overshooting their target and smashing a hail of lead into the Hannover flown by their leader.

Masters' eyes narrowed as the network of tangling grey converged on his ship. Flying wire snapped and curled back against the battered struts. Splinters flew away from the Fokker and turned crazy loops as they danced away in the slipstream. His feet danced in the rudder stirrups when a zooming Fokker caught him in its ringsight and drilled a pattern of black holes the length of the fuselage.

**B**UT Masters held grimly to his purpose. He slipped closer, corrected the angle of flight with a touch on the sloppy rudder, moved the stick to the left, leveled out.

"Now!" he muttered as his ringsight passed over the wide-eyed observer and centered on the man seated just under the wings. "It may be the last burst I'll ever fire, Steofner, but I'm glad I saved it for you!"

The Hannover tried to bank. The Fokker followed it, bucking a tornado of lead as it came around. The ship fairly danced under the impact of the blazing slugs.

Then Masters' tensed fingers clamped down on the trips. The two Spandaus up front opened up with a vicious snarl.

Four rounds crackled out before the belt hung free. Perhaps nine more rounds left. Nine precious slugs in each gun. Eighteen bronze coated slugs standing between Steofner and the Rio Grande. Eighteen bullets! Masters' last chance to get this man who had crossed the Atlantic to war on the United States.

Masters corrected his aim. Now his guns were blazing again, spewing all their hate into the weaving two-seater.

A smile of triumph flashed across the Lone Eagle's face, driving the blood back to his blanched cheeks.

"I've got him!" he shouted wildly. "I've got him!"

Then his guns were silent. He did not bother slapping the cocking handles. He did not even glance toward the feed block. He knew that his guns were empty.

But the Hannover had swung away, to begin a tortuous glide toward the ground. The remainder of the *Staffel* began to pour their spleen into the strange Fokker now that their leader was no longer in their line of fire.

"Come on!" Masters yelled. "Chase me to hell and gone! You'll only waste gas and ammunition, and you'll be that much longer in getting across the river."

As he turned, his eyes caught a glimpse of tiny specks hurtling out

of a cloud bank; tiny specks converging on the black-crossed crates milling around the doomed Fokker. At last! He yelled himself hoarse, although the sound was lost in the roar of motors. Help had come at last. Risking the utter disintegration of his battered ship, Masters began to swing across the sky. With empty guns, but with a heart filled with gladness. He had accomplished his purpose. Steofner was going down. And now help had arrived to finish the job.

Just as the concentrated fire of the Huns began to eat Masters' ship away, the storm broke out of the north. In the twinkling of an eye the sky was filled with flashing wings—Yankee wings—Spads and D.H.s all flown by men who had once tasted the thrill of battle back in France. Men whose nostrils had once quivered with the acrid odor of burning cordite on the Western Front before they were sent back home to become instructors.

The Huns broke to the four winds under the impact. Lumbering Hannovers locked wings and twisted to earth in their mad effort to escape the murderous onslaught of the Yankees. It was an utter rout. The Huns, taken completely by surprise, flung themselves in all directions. The muddy water of the Rio Grande splashed high, as bombers met the destruction they had intended handing out to American flying fields.

**T**HEN Masters' motor quit with a grinding sob.

As he set down between two towering clusters of cacti, he glanced over at a Hannover which had come down ahead of him and turned turtle.

Little tongues of flame were beginning to lick out from the hood. Tearing himself from his wrecked cockpit, Masters ran across the sand to the German plane. One glance told him the observer was dead. So

he put all his attention to yanking Steofner from the crackling flames.

As he laid the German on the sand, safely from the burning wreck, Steofner looked up. A weak smile crossed his blood-streaked face.

"You win," he murmured. "I am beaten. I took a chance. I led my men over before we were ready. I did not dare to wait for El Chinche."

As the German talked, the Lone Eagle's senses had been alert. He heard a warning crash behind him just a second before the hoarse, rough voice crashed into Steofner's words.

"*Caramba!*" came a roar from behind them. "I keel you now, you doublecrossing peeg!"

Masters leaped to his feet and stepped between the dying man and the Mexican who stood with a pearl-handled revolver in either hand.

"You won't have to," Masters said steadily. "The man is dying."

The Mexican stared back into the steady blue eyes for a moment. Then his thick lips curled back in a vicious smile.

"You speak to me, El Chinche, like that? You, who stand there unarmed? Who are you?"

Steofner spoke up then, his voice very faint. "I warned you of this man once El Chinche, but you bragged that you were smarter than any *gringo*. But you were wrong. He has spoiled our plans. No man has ever been able to beat him. He is the Lone Eagle."

A stunned silence followed. And finally the Mexican bandit leader broke it.

"So you are the Lone Eagle?" he said softly.

Masters' eyes were on the German who was just breathing his last. He bent down, closed Steofner's eyes before he answered the Mexican.

"Yes," he said quietly. "I am called the Lone Eagle."

"And who helped you to do this?" demanded El Chinche, waving a

hand at the burning plane, the dead German.

"I worked alone," replied Masters, watching El Chinche closely.

"Alone? You had no accomplice? You blew up the *Morales* alone?"

Masters nodded. The Mexican bandit leader looked stunned.

"You are a *gringo*, pardon, *senor*, *un Americano*?" El Chinche said suddenly, and his voice was awe-filled, respectful.

"That's right," returned Masters.

El Chinche suddenly broke into a body-shaking laugh. "And to think that a few moments ago I thought of fighting the whole of the United States! It was a mistake, *senor*. I listened to an oily tongue. For now that I have learned what one *Americano* can do, I shudder to think of what I would have been up against had I ever crossed the Rio Grande."

"Then you are going to give up this mad scheme, El Chinche?" demanded Masters eagerly.

"Yes! Yes, *amigo*! It was one sad mistake!" The bandit paused. "I was once a farmer. I think my place is back on the farm. It is funny, eh?"

"What's funny?" asked Masters.

"That a bug should have tried to fight an eagle, *amigo*. El Chinche will never forget, as he spends the remainder of his days fighting the bugs that infest his potatoes. *Adios, amigo*. A car is coming. I have no wish to meet any more *Americanos*!"

El Chinche and his men disappeared in a cloud of dust behind the scrubby sage, just a second before a battered car drove up and stopped beside the Lone Eagle.

**M**ASTERS' face broke into a grin as he saw the eager little brown face in the front seat beside the smiling driver in army khaki.

"Pedro!" he exclaimed. "Then you are safe!"

"*Si, senor*," said the boy. "And you—are you all right?"

Masters reassured him, then said: "I promised Rosita that you would return soon. And now you will go back to her a hero."

"As soon as Estrella is rested from the long journey, *senor*," the boy said soberly, "we shall return. But will you be coming with us?"

Masters glanced down at the dead German beside the smoldering wreckage of his plane. Then his blue eyes locked out toward the Rio Grande, glimmering hot now in the sun. The threat of invasion to the United States was a thing of the past. The crisis was over. The Border patrol would take care of rounding up the guns and the bandits. The United States navy would intercept the other ships.

For a few days he could rest before working his way back to France where the war was not over—where men were still fighting and dying. Inasmuch as he could not let his identity be known, could not spend a few days of rest on his native soil, he might as well accompany Pedro to the hut in the hills, from which he would eventually make his way back to the coast and to Spain, returning as he had come.

"Yes, Pedro," he said quietly. "I will return with you."

He glanced up at the Spads and D.H.s that were now moving in formation back toward the north. There was no sign of a German plane left in the air, but several spirals of smoke rose to the sky, mute evidence of what had happened to them.

Masters turned to the soldier in the car. "You have orders?" he asked.

The man saluted. "I am to take you wherever you say, sir," he said. "I am to follow your orders without question."

"Then drive us to the Border," Masters told him. "See to it that we are not stopped by the patrol as we cross into Mexico."

The man saluted and the Lone Eagle climbed wearily into the back seat with the little Mexican boy.

As the sun went down that afternoon, a single American soldier stood guard at the Borderline between Mexico and the United States as a tiny Mexican boy, sitting

astride a dusty little Mexican pony, rode into the hills.

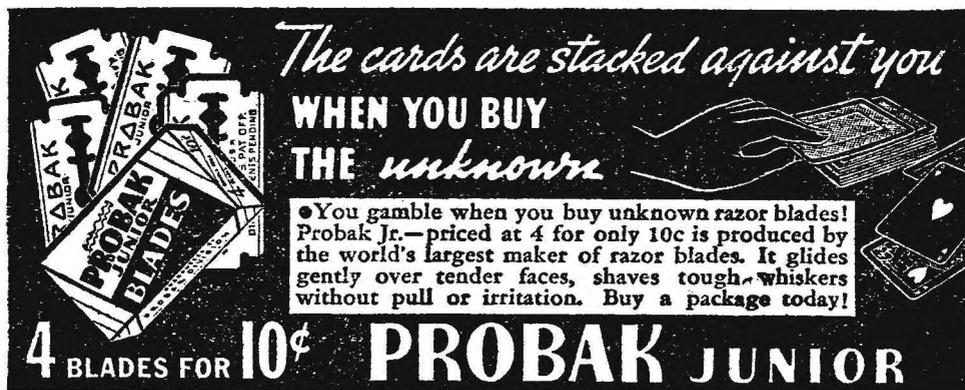
And no one, even with the wildest stretch of the imagination, would have believed it if you had told them that the bent figure riding a horse beside the bay was the glamorous, the dauntless Lone Eagle.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

## INFERNO OF THE SKY

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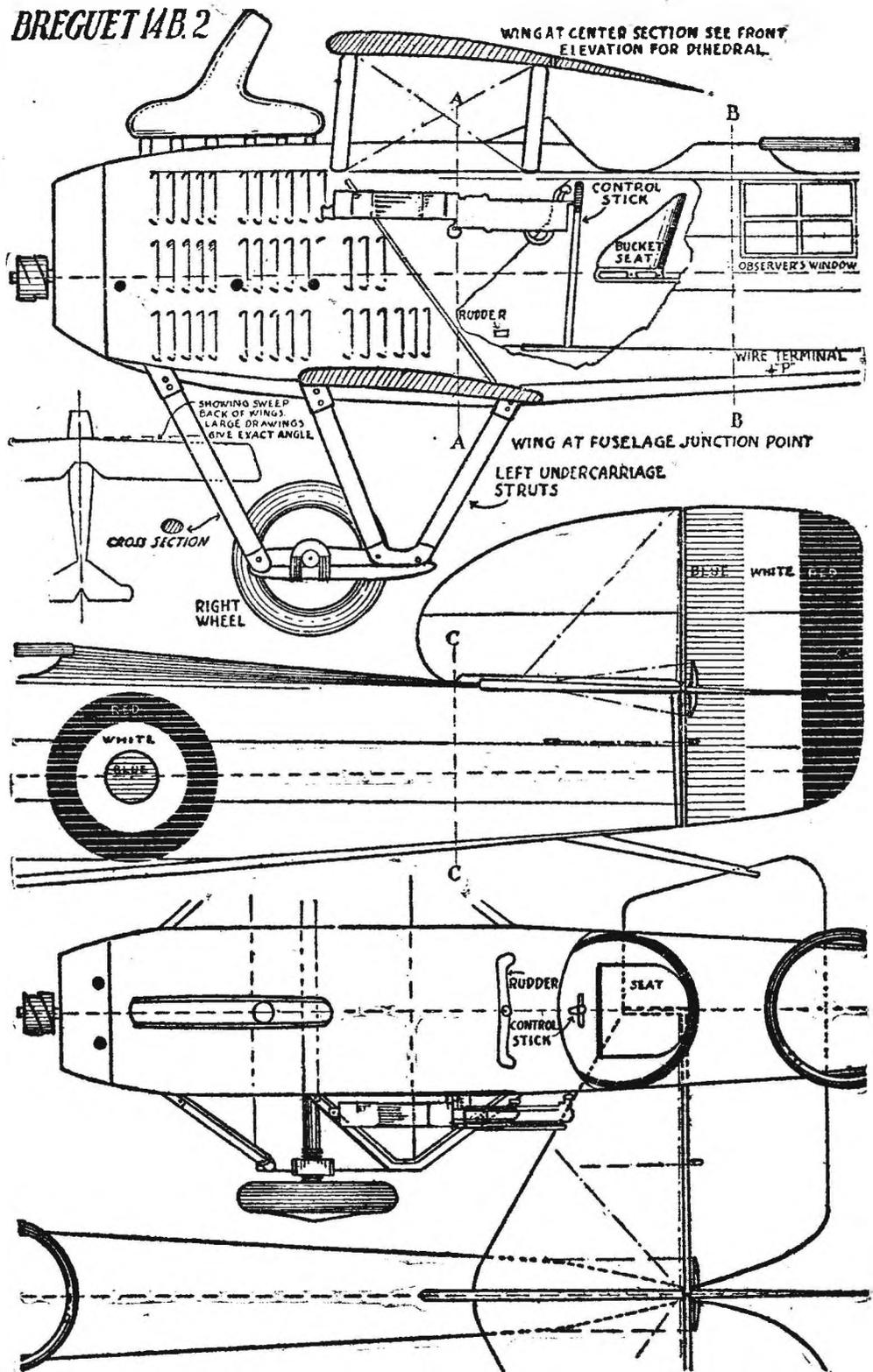
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# BREGUET 14B.2



Width top wing—5 ft. 11½ in. Bottom wing 5 ft. 9 in.  
Gap at wing tips—5 ft. 8¾ in.

#### MATERIALS

**B**ALSA of fairly hard texture will make a slick job of this plane. Soft pine is okay for you fans who want your edges knife-edged and husky enough not to dent easily. Pine is pretty difficult to handle if you haven't had plenty of balsa experience. You can handle a balsa job with a knife, a razor blade and a few pieces of sandpaper. The pine takes a few additional tools.

#### FUSELAGE

**THE FUSELAGE** is of squarish design and three cross sections are given in the drawings. The sides being flat will be easy. The slightly rounded belly and top are clearly shown. The simplest way to make the cockpits is to dig out both at once even to the small part separating them.

Then after you have the stick, rudder bar, etc., in place, shape a small piece of wood to fit back on the top of the fuselage. The louvres on the sides of the forward part at the engine may be made of small pieces glued on or they may be indicated as suggested later for the indicating of ailerons.

Use your ingenuity in constructing the gun ring and mounting over the rear pit. The observer's windows on the side of the fuselage may be cut out and covered with cellophane.

#### WINGS

**THE AILERONS** are on the top wings only and can either be cut out of the wing and fixed back on with thin tin hinges so that a definite separation is made thus simulating more closely the real thing or they may be marked into the wood with a nail or other semi sharp instrument to give a good effect. Only the top wing has dihedral. The bottom wing is straight. The parts of the lower wings that look like ailerons are merely equalizer flaps. Make these the same way you do the ailerons. As the bottom wing has no dihedral, it runs parallel with the ground from tip to tip, it may be made in one piece, thus saving the trouble of anchoring the two sections of wings to the fuselage.

To construct this one piece lower wing take a very thin knife or fret-saw and cut out a section of the fuselage at the bottom just wide and deep enough to accommodate the wing. The piece or pieces cut out may now be whittled and sanded on the rough side until the original outer surface fits flush and lines up with the original sweep of the belly of the fuselage. A little plastic wood or flet will smooth out the rough places.

A good way to make the ribs look like the real thing in a solid model is to first draw them on carefully in pencil then shape a piece of wood about two inches long that has a slight outward curve.

Wrap sandpaper around this curve and sand lightly in the area between the pencil lines indicating the ribs. This will sand out a series of gentle hollows with the ribs remaining as ridges between them. If the ribs have a tendency to become irregular hold a straight piece of wood against the wing to act as a guide as the sanding block is rubbed forward and back. Practice on a scrap of waste wood first to get the knack of the trick.

This stunt is a pretty delicate job and is not really necessary in order to make a slick looking model. It merely gives that super detail finish that makes the customers "Oh" and "Ah" to your heart's content. The secondary ribs "Y" and "Z" continue the whole length of the wings (only two of each are shown to prevent confusion) but it is suggested that these be left out as they barely show on real ships.

#### STRUTS

**THE STRUTS** can be shaped out of pine or made from those little sticks of hard wood your doctor uses to twist cotton swabs onto. He'll give up some for nothing if approached right. Any wood that is fairly hard will do. The real Breguet plane had shaped aluminum struts therefore they didn't have to be as thick as the conventional wooden war time struts. So when you make your struts keep them fairly slim.

Make all your struts at one time and match

them up for perfect length and thickness. This will assure you of lining up the wings with a minimum of effort. See terminal points for struts on plans for wings.

#### UNDERCARRIAGE

**THE UNDERCARRIAGE** struts were made of T shaped aluminum tubes anchored into shaped terminals at the fuselage. These struts, you will notice, are huskier than the interplane struts. Use same type wood for these as you do for interplane struts. A series of rubber lacing held the axle to the undercarriage. It is shown in two separate drawings.

Above the undercarriage is shown the tubular bracing in the forward part of the fuselage for you detail experts who may want to make a built up model instead of a solid scale model. The longerons in back part of the fuselage and the ribs in wings and tail are also included for your benefit. The shock absorbing mechanism has been slightly simplified in our drawings to give you the outside silhouette effect rather than to go into too much detail which would only be confusing.

#### WIRING

Thin piano wire is recommended for all wiring. Measure the length between the two terminals with a pair of dividers or compasses, then cut the wire one eighth to three sixteenths inches longer. This allows the ends to be inserted in holes sunk with a pin in the wood into which the wire is to be anchored. If the wires have a tendency to bow or bend after being anchored, make the holes deeper. A light coat of clear lacquer over the completed wiring will make it resist rusting indefinitely.

#### MACHINE-GUNS

**MACHINE-GUNS** out of proportion with the model have caused more headaches than any other mistake to model builders of World War planes. Therefore the accurate scale drawings of the Vickers and Lewis guns included in the accompanying drawings will once and for all solve your problem. Save these machine-gun drawings carefully. The German guns will appear in a subsequent article along with plans of a German war time plane. It is suggested that you make outline tracings of the guns for your actual transferring the drawing to the wood. In that way you won't spoil your data. Armament of the Breguet 14 B.2 specified by the manufacturer is one fixed Vickers on the left side of the fuselage, two Lewis guns mounted on a Scarff mounting on rear pit.

Plenty of gunners only used one gun on the rear pit, so, for simplicity's sake, only one is indicated. If you want two, mount 'em on the Scarff ring so that the drums just clear each other and connect the barrels at the point just behind the front sights with a thin strip of wood. Mount front sight on center of this strip instead of on guns themselves.

For the round barrel of the Vickers use dowel wood or a slim pencil and sand it down to size. The barrel of the Lewis is easily made from a match or bamboo.

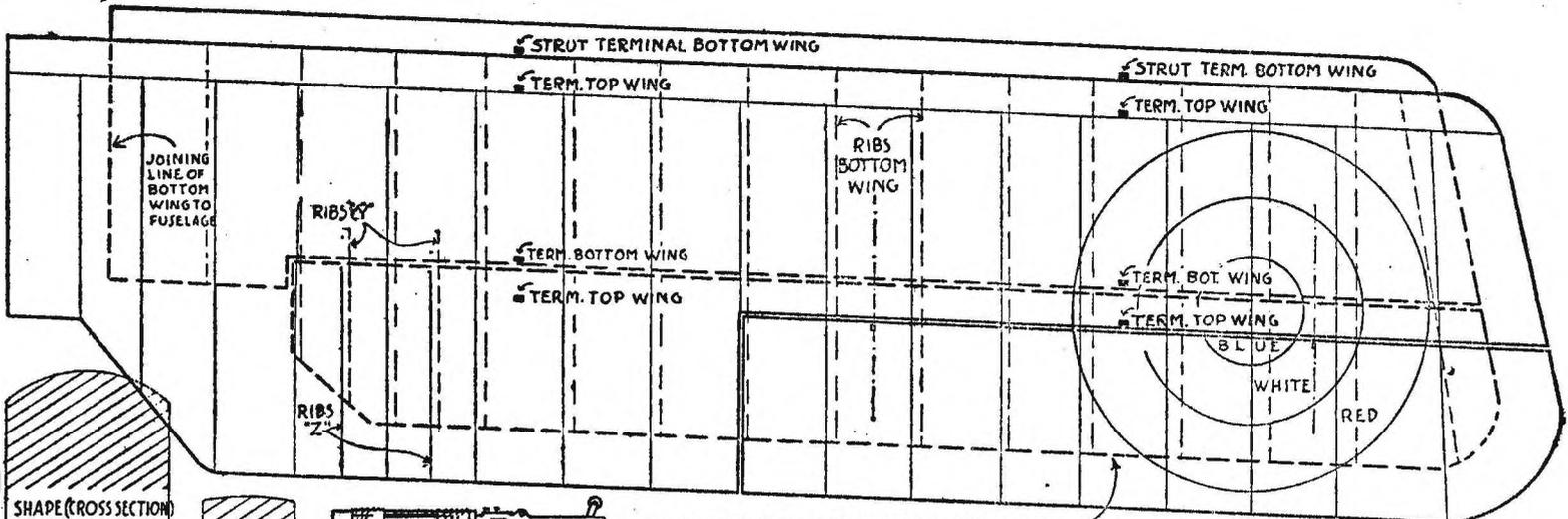
#### PAINTING

**LIQUID WOOD FILLER**, shellac or dope will fill the pores of the wood in preparation for the painting of the model. A dark olive drab color all over the plane will come close to the color of the Breguet, or you can use your own color scheme as some of the war aviators often did. Ask your model supply man for assistance on type of paint or lacquer to use if you are in doubt.

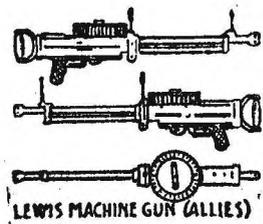
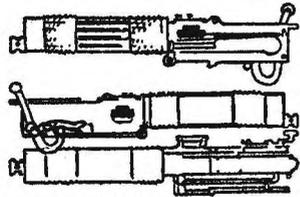
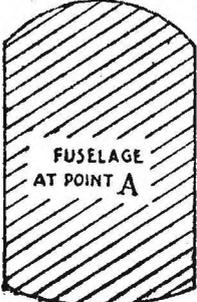
One or two coats of varnish or clear lacquer over the whole job will give added lustre if the paint sinks in. Some model builders prefer to paint the model after completion, others paint each part and let dry thoroughly before assembling. This you must decide for yourself.

#### INSIGNIA

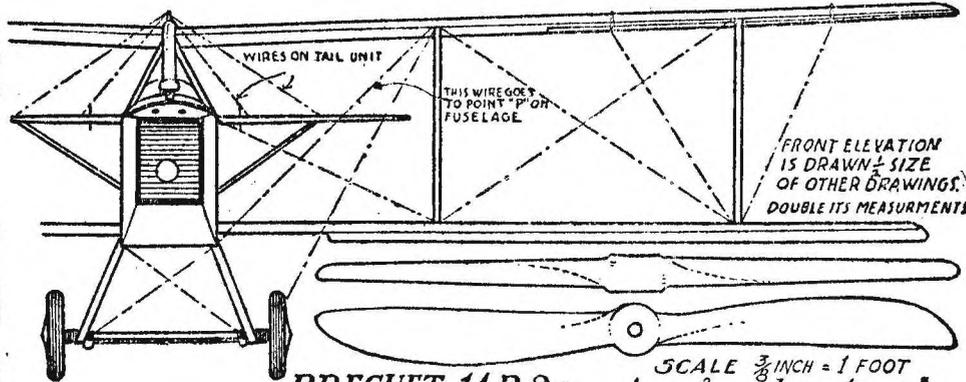
**FRENCH INSIGNIA** is given on plans, but as American squadrons used this plane too, you can use U. S. insignia if you prefer. Circles will then be: Outer circle red. Next blue. Center white. Tail stripes: Front stripe red. Next white. Back stripe blue.



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HEAVY BROKEN LINES ARE FOR BOTTOM WING



BREGUET 14B.2

SCALE  $\frac{3}{8}$  INCH = 1 FOOT

# *The* MARCH



*Men fell writhing  
to the ground*

## *A Complete War-Air* **By GEORGE**

*Author of "Trail to Glory,"*

### CHAPTER I

#### *Team Work*

**C**HET ROLFE whirled dizzily, his right wing tip digging into the empty space below his Nieuport, the N struts vibrating like snare drums and the cross brace wires screeching a mad symphony.

The Clerget in front of his face was white hot and smoking, and the scalding castor oil, flying from it in an endless spray, struck against his face and felt like the jabbing of countless red hot pin points.

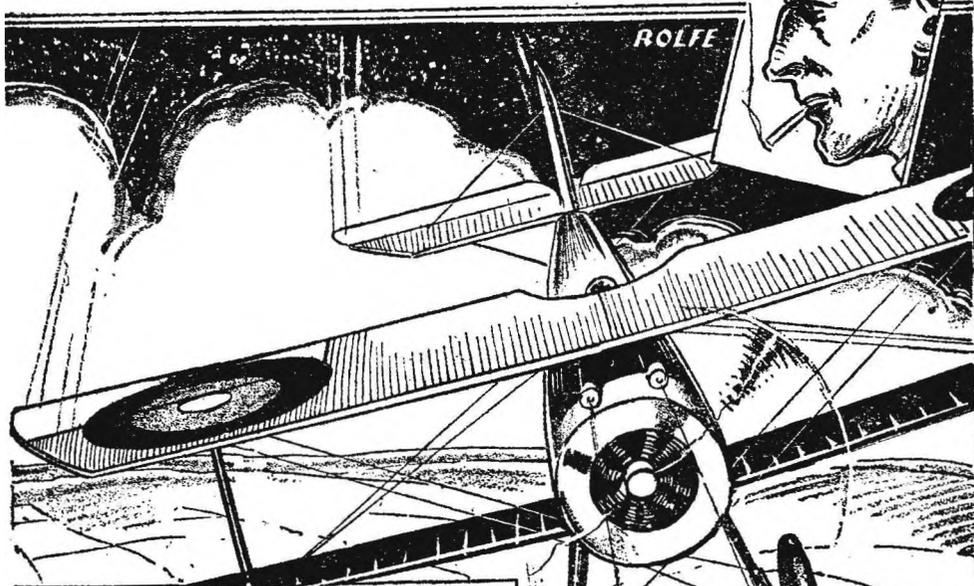
His goggles were running with a

---

*They Laugh at Fate, These Two, and Become*

---

# of DEATH



*Action Novelette*

## BRUCE

*"Sky Patrol," etc.*

film of oil, making vision a crazy, yellow, distorted thing. His mouth was hot and dry and the lump in his throat seemed to swell, hard, until it choked him.

He glanced over his shoulder to see if Paul was following. He made out the silhouette of a second Nieuport coming in on his tail, cutting in behind the Albatross D3 which was giving his own crate hell. A little, shaky something trembled in his chest. Good old Paul! Never late, never a wrong move; just barging in like that according to the plan, and using those Vickers like a Paganini handling a violin.

How many times had they played



---

*the Scourge of the Bloody Western Front!*

---

this game together, he and Paul Heston? Chet going out, cruising around until one of those red Albatross sharks took the bait and charged in. Then Paul, coming down from behind a cloud or out of the sun to blast the red shark out of the sky, before the shark was even aware of the existence of the second Nieuport.

Only sometimes the shark took a couple of nasty gulps at the bait before Paul got his guns in line, and was up close enough to turn loose the knockout. Those Jerries could shoot. They came in shooting. They went out, still shooting—and hitting, sometimes.

**T**HE empennage of Chet's Nieuport was only a mass of scar tissue to establish the accuracy of the German gunnery. Patches piled upon patches, like the scar tissue over the eyebrows and cheek bones of a battered old prize fighter.

The old Nieuport was battered and there were scars on her that did not appear on the surface—gouges in the longerons, splices, fractures. All of them from that little game Paul and he played with the Krauts. Some of her joints held together with bailing wire, just because there wasn't time to give her a good hospital job when she got hurt. But she flew. How she flew!

There was the shuddering staccato of machine-gun fire from behind. The little Nieuport staggered and shook. The nasty, ripping sound of slugs splintering wood and tearing linen mingled with the sobbing drone of the motor. A white spray of splinters flew from the camel-back behind Chet Rolfe's head.

A little bead of blood oozed out of the flesh of his neck where a splinter had pricked the skin. He threw the Nieuport over on one wing until the earth was parallel with his right ear, and rammed the

stick back into his belly. The active ship went around with a vicious twist.

Inside of Chet Rolfe's stomach it seemed that things were being tied in knots and squeezed, and in his brain there was a churning, frothy sensation of deathly nausea. It happened every time he wound up in one of those tight verticals. He expected it, but that didn't make it any easier to take.

The chattering of the Spandaus behind him seemed to vibrate against the base of his skull. He could feel the heat spouting out of those gun muzzles—stabbing flame pressed against his neck.

God, that Boche could herd a crate around! From the very first minute when the cross-marked ship had rolled over on its back and dived to attack the silly looking Nieuport, Chet Rolfe had known that no amateur handled the controls of that D3. The pilot in that Jerry was a killer. No wasted movements, no indecisions. And those guns spouting vicious, green flame, and the tracers and slugs cutting through the Nieuport's fuselage, while Chet played the part of the dumb cluck who was quite alarmed and annoyed by it all. Playing his little game until Paul should swoop down for the kill.

Hell! It would be a relief to turn around and take a crack at that cock-sure Albatross; to whirl suddenly out of the crazy maneuvers, and to burn the sky with a few bursts of Vickers tracers. But that wasn't the show. That was Paul's job.

A little flame, like the flickering of a match, spurted into life in the middle of the Nieuport's right lower wing. Chet Rolfe watched it for an instant with meditative eyes. Just a tiny light, glowing, being extinguished by the rush of the wind, and then, reborn, to feed on the

doped surface of wing. A tiny flame which could be a raging hell within another instant. He watched it, his body suddenly wet with cold sweat, and the hair on his skull writhed like live snakes.

The little flame flickered and went out. It left a scorched mark on the wing; black, ugly looking. That squarehead back there was mixing incendiaries in his belts!

He rolled the Nieuport abruptly on its other side, went up in a screeching chandelle with the wires trying to tear the fittings out of the wood. The wings sagged and groaned and the motor, for one instant went berserk and fought to rip loose from the mount.

He glimpsed the Albatross following. It nosed up with a rush. The sun touched its blood-red coloring, glowed, rippled. Little tendrils of smoke were snatched from the Spandau muzzles, shredded and twisted into extinction by the slipstream. The winged red shark with its round, beautiful belly, lunged upward, nose high, to cup off the precious space the Nieuport had gained in the maneuver.

Chet Rolfe grinned a little to himself. A vague grey shadow was plunging down out of the sun. Invisible, unless one knew where to look for it. It was coming like a grey bat out of hell, whipping in under the Albatross' tail. That was the way Paul and he whipsawed the Krauts. The last part of the picture was to get the squarehead climbing so that his speed would be reduced and he'd be a pretty, fixed target in front of Paul's guns.

Then it was curtains! Then it was "home James" and boy, fill up the cup again!

The sudden chattering of Vickers sounded in the heavens. Chet Rolfe turned his head. He saw the startled twist of the enemy pilot's neck. A twist, quick enough to break any

neck. He saw that enemy pilot's head dive suddenly under the edge of the cockpit. The controls on the Albatross were batted into a diving turn. Chips and splinters whirled out of the round fuselage and were gouged out of the wings. The white snake tracks of tracer spat across fifty feet of space, then ran into the blood red of the Albatross.

Paul Heston was right on top of the Jerry. He was on his neck, drowning that red shark in a sea of space. The Vickers were deadly, cruel things, firing in short, vicious bursts, like a fighter hitting an opponent with a succession of jolting right hand smashes to the chin.

The Albatross skidded wildly to escape the direct line of fire.

**A** THOUSAND feet up, Chet Rolfe whirled his Nieuport around, put a wing down in a steep bank and watched the fun. He saw Paul Heston crowding the red ship, and the frantic effort of the Albatross' pilot to escape.

Suddenly the red ship feinted, drew Heston out of position, recovered from a half roll, and streaked northward.

Heston, two hundred yards away, swung his grey ship on a dime, barged back to pick up the Albatross. But the red ship was streaking for the north, and it was beginning to outrun Heston.

Rolfe grinned. No fooling! That Jerry could fly, and knew all the answers. He moved the stick forward and poured the soup to his own engine. The battered Nieuport under him picked up speed with a rush, went down, screaming again, the motor stinking with heat.

He slanted in behind the Albatross, gaining because of the dive coupled with a full throttle. He touched the trips of his guns, smacked out a couple of bursts of five or six to clear the belts and to

heat the barrels. Then he was on top of the Albatross, behind it; the cockpit of the red ship was in his gun sight. His thumb jammed down on the trips. He could smell the acrid odor of burning powder. It crammed into his nose, was like having sensitive membranes rubbed with sandpaper. A couple of his tracers went through the red wings.

The Jerry turned his head, swerved his ship out of line. It cost him one second in his mad dash.

That second was all Paul Heston needed. He came up from under the red belly, pulled the stick back into his lap, held his Nieuport stalled against the sky, and ripped open that red belly from nose to tail with a single long burst from his twin guns.

The Albatross sagged in space, writhed, seemed to shake its head with sudden, staggering, blinding pain. An arm dangled over the edge of the cockpit, swung back and forth inertly. The head of the pilot was resting with the chin on the breast of the leather flying coat.

Then the controls went limp. The rudder banged back and forth, the ailerons flopped up and down. And the red ship spun once to the right, pulled out on its own inherent stability, got the left wing down and started to wind.

**F**LAME gushed from inside the cockpit and out of the base of the motor. The flame was like a dazzling blanket concealing the last ride of that Jerry pilot. A tremendous column of black smoke was born in the heavens, became a moving umbrella swaying gently.

The black handle of the umbrella went down and down with the red Albatross until it made contact with the far distant earth.

It seemed that the air about the Nieuports was blistering with the heat of the torch which had dived

swiftly and crashingly to the earth.

Chet Rolfe turned his face away from the sight. His insides felt suddenly like thick liquid. He was still groggy from the three or four minute wrestling match with that Jerry pilot. He wondered if he or Paul had touched off that red ship.

He saw Paul Heston at his right wing tip, flying close. Paul's hands were over his head. He was shaking hands with himself to congratulate Rolfe. He was grinning. The sun glinted on his goggles. Little heat eddies hung over the metal parts of his guns.

Chet waved his hand.

He saw Paul pointing toward the earth. He looked down. A dust cloud hung over a greysnake marching along a gash in the green of the earth. Paul made signs with his two fingers of men marching, made a square in the air with his forefinger and pointed to his own head.

"Squareheads marching" said the sign language. Chet studied the ground. Hell, they must have flown a long way into enemy territory! They were five miles inside the German lines when they picked up that Albatross, and the wind from the southeast would have pushed them farther into Heinieland.

There were troops, down there, infantry marching—

The nose of Paul Heston's Nieuport swung earthward. He beckoned Chet Rolfe an invitation to follow. Chet seemed fascinated by the dust cloud, moving so slowly along that snake track. Men marching. He glanced at Heston's ship, even as he pushed forward on his own stick and went down.

Life was just a twenty-four-hour-a-day party to Paul. There was a laugh in everything, even a burning Albatross, or machine-gunning marching men. This game he and Paul played was Paul's idea. He could still hear Paul laughing when he

had first explained the game. Sitting there in the 2nd's lounging room, Paul sitting on the end of his spine, his slender, good-looking legs pushed out in front of him, a cigarette smoldering in his fingers, a grin on his face, his eyes dancing, his blond head classic in its proportions and contours, in spite of the military haircut. Old Paul, with his fighting, cleft chin, and his delicate nose and bubbling sense of humor.

"All those Krauts look for soft touches. So do we. That's the way we get credit for victories. We wouldn't last ten minutes in this racket if *everyone* was equal as a pilot. It would be murderous to even get up off the ground. When you win, it's because you've licked a guy who knows less than you or has had less experience, or is not as good a flyer.

"Why, you don't suppose that Charlie Nungesser, or René Fonck, or Richthofen got that way by fighting guys their own size and weight? Hell, no! They go picking on the cripples because they know they'll live longer that way—and get more medals. This business of flying is to knock down as many enemy ships as possible with the least risk and loss to your own side. A ship is a ship no matter if a greenhorn is flying it, or an Ace. When it goes down it costs money and is hard to replace.

"So we're going to play us a little game, Chet, me lad. Double-team the opposition, we will. From now on the best flying pilot in this outfit is going to work with the best gunner. Only in different cockpits because you can tie a Nieuport into knots, and I can shoot the eye out of a gnat at fifty yards. We'll bring those specialties together, make 'em pay dividends and medals and things."

Chet Rolfe could hear his own voice asking, "How?"

"Simple! You're going to stooge

for me, see? Because you can fly better, you're going to play the part of the little boy who has lost his way, and is very dazed about it all. Every time we go out, you're going to give a perfect imitation of a greenie, out on his own in *the middle* of the great big war, scared senseless. You're going to be Little Red Riding Hood, to the Square-head's nasty old wolf. You're going to be the softest touch any Boche pilot has seen since they stopped fighting the Rooshuns. You're going to be so soft that even a Major would pick on you! You're going to lure them into grief!"

"And?"

"I'm going to be flying up in the nice warm sun where nobody will see me, and after about three minutes of your act, I'm going to come barging down on the tail of the Jerry who has warmed to his work, who can see another citation added to his list, and can feel the Iron Cross being pinned to his manly bosom. Then I'm going to bust him wide open before he tumbles to the act. And let that be a lesson to him!"

"What kind of a lesson?"

Paul Heston's grin went wider. "Why, never pick on cripples!" he said.

SO, the two had given five lessons in quick succession to the Jerries. Five ships in five days! It was sensational. But Paul had waved away congratulations.

"This is a team," he told the Major. "It's a cinch for me. Chet, here, sets 'em up and I knock 'em down. We work together. His job is a lot tougher, though. Mine is like shooting at sitting birds. But those sitting birds sure warm Chet's tail now and then. Boy, you ought to see Chet give an imitation of a youngster looking for the shortest way home! It's a riot! Sometimes I get to laughing so I can hardly see through the ring. He does everything

but jump out of that crate of his! It's a panic!"

Nice words from H.Q. and a medal for each. They were Aces together, now. The same as they had been everything together, from the beginning. And Paul, still laughing, took it all in stride.

## CHAPTER II

### *Marching Men*



OUT of the rush of the slipstream and the scream and whine of struts and wires, out of the fibre tearing drone of the engines, and the crazy, lopsided vision, the grey-green snake on the ground took the form of a multitude of men, a whole division, marching along the road, with its transport and artillery following in the dust cloud.

Chet and Paul could see the dull glint of coal bucket helmets, square shoulder tunics, the rifles, and the awkward looking boots. They could even differentiate between officers and men, and between field officers, who were mounted.

Suddenly the long column seemed to explode into a milling mass of atomic units, scurrying about, diving into the ditches beside the road, falling flat on faces, running aimlessly, like sheep, with white faces staring over shoulders as they ran, weighted down by rifles and full packs.

The artillery teams were swinging frantically in sudden wild confusion, and the drivers were standing in their stirrups laying the leather to the maddened horses. The animals reared, fought to tear loose from the traces, pawed at the air with front feet. The artillery outfit was a tangled mass of confusion in the twinkling of an eye, with wheels locked hopelessly and caissons and

gun carriages being dragged this way and that.

Officers rode about, waving arms, attempting to bring order out of chaos. Some of the troop lay on backs in the road, in danger of being trampled on by fellows, and pointed rifle muzzles at the two Nieuports, fired blindly. A machine-gun company fought to get its guns set up on tripods.

Paul Heston's Nieuport, wings flattened by the terrific speed, eased in the dive, so that its nose centered on the column of grey-clad troops. He was fifty feet off the earth, leaning forward in his seat, his head centered behind his ring-sight.

Suddenly flame squirted from those twin Vickers. Little spurts of flame that lanced earthward. Spurts of flying dust marked the path of the slugs vomited by the guns. Down there men whirled crazily, clutched at chests and heads, spun drunkenly, fell writhing to the ground. Horses trampled them; other dead fell upon them.

And Chet Rolfe went in behind Heston, riding in his wash, cut in his own guns, centered the road and the column in his sight and held down the trips as he ripped over the same track.

There were men piled up like fallen cordwood under his wings. There were men in the transports of death, fear and frenzy. Men impotent to meet this kind of attack. Men surprised into stupidity at finding an enemy ten miles within their own lines.

And Paul Heston skimmed the grass of a field beside the road as he banked his Nieuport around and went back over the column again, even lower this time, firing into the masses choking the road.

After him flew Chet Rolfe, seeing nothing but the whirling, distorted picture in his gun-sight. Firing until the guns sizzled and were too hot to touch and the belts snaked up and

around and up through the breeches.

Then they were climbing again with motors smoking. Up and up, boring into space, leaving the earth behind. Leaving behind, on the earth that ghastly scene of carnage, of screaming horses and writhing men.

Up and up they went, fleeing into the south before enemy airmen could follow. Jumping in and out of clouds, following the path of the sun, watching space under wings with narrowed eyes. Watching gas gauges and wondering if the fuel would hold out until they got back across the lines.

Black smears of Archie fire spread a barrage about them. They ducked back and forth between the bursts—counting six and changing course. Adding six and changing it again. Counting six, climbing, diving, skidding, to spoil the calculations of those gunners of the ground, all the while the flamed-cored black bursts of concussion broke in the heavens about them, and the impact of their explosions shook wings and created vacuums in space which threatened to blast the frail overtaxed Nieuports into extinction.

And then the tendrils—the other snake tracks of the front. The trenches—coiling, writhing, spreading as far as the eye might see, from horizon to horizon. Looking in a dozen places as if the crawling snakes had broken backs. The barbed wire, and the obscene, repulsive, rotting, festered space between the lines where terror and stink had bravely stalked hand in hand.

Then the back areas on the Allied side of the lines. Sitting, looking down on them Chet could feel the tension subside, his lungs expand. He took full breaths for the first time in an eternity.

And there, on the roads below, more men marching.

A brown stream of men in khaki, trudging the roads, moving into that

purple shrouded horizon over which the Nieuports had just flown. Moving at the snail pace of marching troops, the sunlight touching the naked bayonets with flame. The dust hovering over the column. Men marching always toward one destination—that sink hole of misery and mud which lay between the lines. Marching, through all the nights and all the days, up and up—

Chet Rolfe looked down with fascinated, hypnotized eyes. The column, stretching from horizon to horizon, disappeared over the edge of the world. Men marching—Something moved in his throat and there was a sudden brightness in his brooding eyes.

It was still there when he swooped down on the field of the 2nd and staggered out of his ship to walk across to the billets.

### CHAPTER III

#### *End of the March*



PAUL HESTON stepped out from under the makeshift shower, rubbing at his young, strong body with a tattered towel. The water was ice cold. Overhead in the crotch of a tree, an orderly poured bucketsful of water into a G.I. can. The bottom of the can was perforated by nail holes. The water squirted out of the holes. That made the shower. Not gaudy but effective. Heston's blue eyes were sparkling and the blood had rushed to the surface where he massaged himself vigorously with the towel.

He picked Chet Rolfe up bodily, tossed him under the shower, held him, squirming, while the grinning orderly poured in the ice cold water.

"Good for what ails you!" yelled Heston. "Makes hair on your chest! Gives you that manly feeling! Come on—take it!"

Then they were sitting in the billet, sprawled out, glowing from the bath, a hot mug of coffee in one hand and a thick meat sandwich in the other. Cigarettes smoldered on the edge of the table.

"Ah! This is the reward for living right!" Paul breathed. "Nothing in the world is as satisfactory to an empty stomach as a meat sandwich and a cup of coffee—may God forgive me for the insult—to wash it down, and a cigarette. That's living!"

For a long while after that neither uttered a word. Heston's eyes looked curiously at Rolfe's face, now and then. Rolfe's eyes were still filled with that brooding, bright light.

"S'matter?" asked Heston suddenly. "Somethin' you et, no doubt? How many times have I told you that pork chops are *not* the breakfast food your dainty belly requires? You've got to develop a more refined taste in food. That mince pie and steak was all right for breakfast back on the farm—but this is France, my boy."

Rolfe grinned a little.

Heston waved his hand. "Did we take that Squarehead out there a little while ago! Boy! Wherever he is, he's still trying to find out how it all happened, I'll bet. There he was with a cinch Nieuport and suddenly—*blowie*—*the* whole sky falls in on his dome."

"He burned," Rolfe said slowly. "He went down a flamer."

"And how! Just like election day in Podunk Corners. What a blast of fireworks! A real old four-alarm turnout. That Albatross was a cinder before it got down under a thousand feet."

Chet's voice was soft, thoughtful as he said:

"Wonder what it feels like to wake up in the middle of something like that? To have the world by the tail one minute and to be on the way out the next, hardly knowing what hit you?"

Rolfe's eyes searched Heston's face.

Young, sun-tanned, blue-eyed. The face might have belonged to a track man undergraduate. And the words coming out of his mouth, so empty of feeling, might have been born in the mouth of an executioner.

"I hope I never learn what it feels like!" laughed Heston. "I'm satisfied staying on the giving out end. After all, we thought this game up, didn't we? So we ought to be able to choose our own side of the argument."

"You thought it up," reminded Rolfe quietly.

Heston was grinning again. "And that Jerry column we ran into—boy! Hell will pop in Potsdam tonight! There will be six tons of paper used in explaining to the Kraut G.H.Q. how two little Allied airplanes got behind the lines and raised hell with a whole division of troops. The ones we missed probably died of indignation and fright."

**R**OLFE said in the same strange voice, "Men—marching—grey men—brown men—"

"What's eating you, kid?" asked Heston, puzzled. "You don't look like a conquering hero with a dozen decorations coming up. Snap out of it! We're Aces! The next thing you know the Brass Hat will be sending us back to Tours or some place to tell the young ideas just sprouting wings how we achieved our great success. They may even send us home to sell Liberty Bonds. That's usually what a guy gets for being a good little soldier. And could I make a speech about that!"

Rolfe's grin was fixed, his eyes staring.

"Come, come!" Heston kidded. "Tell Papa everything! What's eating you, little man?"

Rolfe climbed to his feet, paced the floor with slow strides. After a long while he faced Heston.

"Ever feel like a rat in a trap?" he asked, grinning whitely. "Ever dream that something terrible was going to happen to you and that you had to march right into the dark closet where the terrible something was waiting—that there wasn't anything you could do about it?"

"See!" grinned Heston. "There's the proof. Pork chops for breakfast does that to a guy! Lay off the heavy food. Now me—I never dream. I *never* have nightmares. Once I thought I had 'em, but the Doc said that it was a slight case of the D.T.s. For a minute I was worried, though."

Rolfe continued to pace the floor. He ignored the flippant note in Heston's voice. "Looking down at those marching men brought home something that has been in the back of my mind for a long, long time. Kind of made it crystal clear."

**K**AY, Swami—give us the dope out of the crystal," Heston said, but there was a curious restlessness in his eyes.

"Men marching," Rolfe said in a monotone, as if speaking aloud to himself. "Men marching—coming over the horizon. Coming like metal puppets being drawn into the field of an invisible magnet. Men from all over the world. Chinese from across the Pacific. Aussies from way down under. Canucks from the Canadian Rockies. Blacks from Senegal and Madagascar. Riffs and Moors out of Africa. Limeys from the British Isles. Frogs from France. Squareheads from Germany. Mujiks from Russia. Latins from South America. Yanks from the United States.

"Dust clouds hanging over their heads. Roads and fields under their feet. Heavy loads on their backs. Bodies soaked with sweat and rubbed raw by leather straps. White bodies. Black bodies. Yellow bodies. Red bodies. Olive bodies.

Thousands and millions of them. Marching. Coming through the roads of the world.

"Hardly knowing why they march out of the jungles of Borneo nor the farms of Dakota, nor the forest of Victoria, or the sands of the Sahara. Hardly feeling anything. Not wanting to march, and yet marching because that terrible, unseen, all-powerful hand is behind them urging them on and on toward the end of the road—toward the end of everything."

"Boy, I'm tired already," said Heston, with a lazy gesture of his hand. "That lecture on marching has got my feet blistered. I never was good at that walking stuff. Thank God, I ride to my funeral."

"We march too," said Rolfe in that low, vibrant voice. "Only we march in a different way. The magnet has us, too. We're like moths barging around an electric light, until they die of exertion or get burned to a crisp. We march, too, on air. The same thing sent us here. We're bound for the same destination."

There was a splintery silence in the room. "And there isn't anything we can do about it," continued Rolfe. "We could not break the step if we wanted to. We couldn't run out of the marching column if we had the impulse or the desire. Not even if we're afraid of what's going to be over the brow of the next hill we march across. We got to march over it because some power bigger than any man, keeps beating the drum and calling: '*Close up the ranks, there! No straggling!*' And we keep the ranks closed up, and keep marching, up hill and down, through darkness and sunlight—all toward the same place."

Thick silence fell, with Heston watching Rolfe's white, strained face, with the freckles on his fair white skin, and the play of light in the metallic copper of his closely

clipped, curling red crop of hair.

"Out there that one little strip of land—No Man's Land—and the whole world marching toward it. From both sides they come, marching always toward it. And that little strip of land, with its barbed wire fences that are like the jagged nerves of a coward, has eaten them all up, swallowed them, obliterated them, sucked them in. A strip of land that isn't big enough to provide the millions it has consumed with graves.

"Flame hides what is waiting at the end of the march. Flame and heat and the snap and rip of flying steel. For four years long columns have been choking the roads, going up to that strip. And they're still marching. More and more men—draining the world of flesh and blood—killing off the best of the males—the fit, the able, the physically perfect, the intelligent—because the unfit can't survive the march. The unfit are left at home to breed a new race of unfits, while the fittest go out to die."

Heston laughed strangely. "That sounds more like a bilious attack than pork chops for breakfast. Maybe you better see the Doc? Maybe you need a drink?"

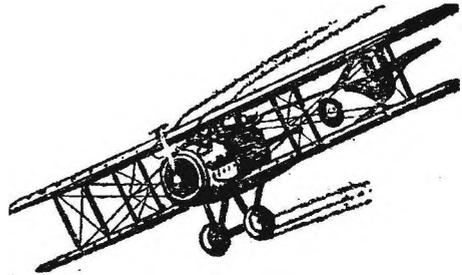
Rolfe's eyes were glowing as he looked at Paul Heston's face. "I don't need a drink," he said. "I'm not sick. I haven't anything on my stomach that's talking back. I just have a funny picture in my head. It's been growing there a long time. I just made it out, that's all."

There was another silence. Then Rolfe spoke again.

"One day I was riding along the road, about twenty miles back of here. I got lost with the side-car, turned on the wrong road. I went on for about five miles, until I got good and lost. Was in a hell of a stew. It was coming on to rain. Then I heard a sound like a saw in a sawmill, ripping through planks.

Around a turn in the road I came upon a huddle of buildings. There were a lot of men there—Frenchmen in fatigue uniforms. Some kind of a reserve of a pioneer outfit, working a sawmill. They were old men, but they were soldiers. I stopped the motorcycle to ask questions about the road.

"I noticed that these men were making things about two inches square out of lengths of lumber. A hundred or so were cutting notches in the two-by-twos, and piling them up in orderly rows. I wondered



what the hell was going on here, what that five hundred or more men were working on at the same time, cutting notches into two-by-twos, piling them up, painting the lengths white.

"I asked, finally, what they were building. One of the old men pointed to a pile of the finished product lying under a shed. The five hundred men were making crosses! White crosses—you remember, the kind they put up over a soldier's grave. I should have known that somebody had to make crosses—that somebody did. But the shock of it kind of hit me in the middle of the belly. To find five hundred men, working in shifts, night and day, doing nothing but manufacturing crosses to put over soldiers' graves.

**I** WENT away, fast. All the way home I was trying to figure in my head how many crosses a single man could make in a day,

and to multiply that by the five hundred men, and to multiply that by three hundred and sixty-five days a year, multiplied again by four years.

"Then I got to thinking of those men marching, and not knowing about those crosses being manufactured in the depths of the woods. And I suddenly understood that I was marching with them, and there wasn't anything I could do about it any more than they could. We had to go on and on, no matter what happened, to keep marching—always until we were ready for one of those little white crosses. Seeing those troops out there today, the ones we machine-gunned on the other side of the lines, brought it all back. All those men, marching to that strip of land. Then a couple of buzzing little Nieuports get a smack at them, and rip them to shreds with machine-gun fire, and they're ready for their little white crosses."

"Why, you poor monkey!" growled Paul Heston. "You've got the galloping jitters, and I didn't tumble to it. Look. What you need is a nice stiff drink. I'm the doctor, and if you don't take your medicine I'm going to toss you to the floor, kneel gently but firmly on your chest, and pour it down your guzzle. Now, will you be nice and take it—or must I resort to forced medication?"

The liquor gurgled out of the neck of the bottle—amber cognac into a tin cup. Rolfe sat there staring, the cup in his hand. After a while he lifted the cup, grinned at Paul.

"Well," he said, "here's to a soft billet and warm bedding at the end of the march!"

"Speaking of warm bedding," said Heston, "I got a line on a genuine pre-war feather mattress that I can get for a few francs. Want to go halves with me?"

"Sure! How much?" grinned Rolfe. "I haven't slept in a feather bed since I left home."

## CHAPTER IV

### *A Hero Is Born*



CHET ROLFE watched the red Albatross carefully. It was lunging along through space, overhead. A morning sun, white-hot and blinding, climbed steadily up the eastern wall of the grey heavens.

The Albatross was pretending not to have seen Rolfe's cruising Nieuport, or, if he had, to be completely ignoring its presence. The Kraut ship buzzed busily under the Copenhagen blue sky, pretending to be taking observations.

But Chet Rolfe knew that the pilot of that Albatross was watching him narrowly, waiting, observing, probably wondering that something as dumb as this could fly around. He knew that in a little while a second or a minute, that red-bellied shark would plunge suddenly out of its lazy maneuvering and would come ravaging down to gobble him up.

Chet looked back into the sun, squinted his eyes. The sun path was a sizzling, dazzling aura of radiance, impenetrable to the eye. Somewhere in that boiling glare, Paul Heston was hanging, watching this shark and minnow act, ready to pounce the minute the Albatross went for the bait.

Somehow it was all like a motion picture being re-run in front of Chet Rolfe's eyes. How many times had this same scene been enacted? It was like walking along a road in a strange country, and suddenly realizing that sometime, somehow, out of memory, one had seen this place and visited it before.

This same scene—the hot sun; the blue sky; the red Albatross; the patched grey shape of the Nieuport; the erratically handled controls—erratically handled by Chet Rolfe as

a part of the game he and Paul played with the Albatross. It was always the same, this scene.

He remembered Paul saying the night before: "You know, even though we know those Krauts do things automatically, at stated times, you wouldn't think they'd be so stupid as to go on falling for the same game, day after day. Hell, we've bumped enough of those Albatrosses by now to cause a general indignation meeting on the part of the Jerry high command.

"You'd think that somewhere in the German air somebody would tumble to the idea that they're getting taken for suckers. But they keep right on sending 'em out. Well, it suits me. As long as they send 'em out, we'll keep turnin' 'em back. It's nice work, and we make our own hours."

Grinning that lazy, confident grin, sipping the cognac, kidding—just being Paul Heston.

Little prickles grew along Chet Rolfe's pores.

**U**PSTAIRS the Albatross heeled over, stuck its nose down. The sheen of its prop became a silver blur. The scream of the BMW in its nose suddenly flooded space with a vicious whining. Above the whining sounded the whistle and screech of wires cutting solid atmosphere.

Rolfe batted the Nieuport into a staggering slip, turned to run. He kept playing the part, made the Nieuport stumble in a sudden panic, bob this way and that. And still the red Albatross bored in, deadly, swift, sure.

The staccato of gunfire sounded over the bedlam of the two motors. That old sound of breaking sticks and swirling, crackling whiplashes filled the air about Rolfe's head. Spandau slugs streaming through space, six inches apart, vomited out of flaming gun muzzles! Slugs thudding into wing surfacing, ricochet-

ing with a splintering sound from wing ribs.

He carried the Nieuport out of the line of fire, carried it awkwardly, as if by accident, and the Albatross changed course and followed.

Somewhere in the blind spot of sunlight, Paul Heston was watching, grinning at the spectacle, about to hurl his own Nieuport into the battle, to cap the climax of the little comedy—cap it with a withering burst from his own uncanny Vickers.

Down Chet went, with the Nieuport straining dizzily, plunging. Then back on the stick to send it zooming, so that the Albatross would follow—so that he could set up the target for Paul to riddle. How many times? Or was it still the first time?

The Clerget hobbing, the Albatross shooting up like a red rocket on its tail. The berserk chattering of machine-gun fire again, and the slugs boring through the after fuselage of the Nieuport.

And then Vickers chattering, pounding, driving rivets into a coffin for that Albatross.

Rolfe looked over his shoulder, whirled his ship. He saw Paul Heston diving and pulling up under the belly of the Albatross. He saw the green flare of flame from the muzzles of Heston's Vickers. He saw the Jerry turn, then skid his ship cleverly, saw Heston outguess the Kraut, head the Albatross off, rake it with two short bursts.

And then, down out of that same sun which had disgorged Heston came a red shadow. Its wings seemed bowed back along its fuselage by the force and velocity of its dive. It flattened at the bottom of the plunge, nosed upward with a surging rush.

Heston, intent upon the kill in front of him, never saw that second Albatross.

Rolfe, his brain chattering with a sentence Paul Heston had spoken

—“*You’d think they’d get wise to the fact they are being double-teamed and do something about it?*”—jammed the stick of his own crate against the fire wall, and yanked on the throttle. He dived recklessly to hurl his ship between this second Albatross and Paul Heston’s Nieuport.

And as he dived he knew he’d never make it. That second Albatross had things timed to a split second. Crazy impulses jammed Chet Rolfe’s brain. He screamed Paul Heston’s name. The chattering sounds in his head changed to laughter—crazy laughter. The double-teamers were being double-teamed!

At last those Squareheads were doing something about those lost Albatrosses.

Old Paul—the two of them—marching down the road together, like those Jerries they had machine-gunned, to find that suddenly they had run out of horizon, that there were no more hills in front of them to climb. This was the last valley.

Shudder and shock of hard atmosphere against wings. Then the clatter of his own machine-guns. All of it subconscious. Movement and action by rote, the while he stared at Paul Heston and tried desperately to get in a burst at long range to stop the drive of that second Albatross.

From above, the first of the Albatrosses was diving, tailing Chet, trying to blot him out of the fight.

And the ship tailing Heston got in under his tail. Paul turned in his seat, looked around just as the first slugs broke through the fabrics of his Nieuport. The Albatross was in close, driving those merciless bursts, short, sharp, jolting punches that wreck ships and men.

Then Paul Heston was falling, tumbling down out of the sky he had flown through so proudly and so confidently. Falling, a broken winged bird with the hinge pin of the right wing sawed away from the

fuselage. Tumbling, a sodden, whirling wreck, down through space.

The smell of picric acid filled the heavens as it belched from the guns in Rolfe’s Nieuport and from the two Albatrosses.

**P**ICRIC acid, hot metal, boiling oil, vaporized gasoline, all mixed in one odor—the stink of hell. As in a dream Chet Rolfe could hear the tramping of marching feet along the roads of the world, and the dust cloud hung over grey, dead-eyed figures.

And somewhere, in the wood below, five hundred men were fitting lengths of two-by-two together, making little white crosses. Five hundred men, times twenty-four hours, times three hundred and sixty-five days, times four years.

And the thudding feet of the marching thousands went on and on. Even as he looked down and saw Paul Heston spatter against the earth, Chet could hear them even as he saw a red smear, flaming and staggering after him, a red Albatross, gutted by gunfire from his own Vickers. The clumping of numberless boots filled his ears, even as he turned the nose of the limping, exhausted Nieuport toward the home field.

Chet tried to imagine a future without Paul Heston—an existence filled with nothing but the sound of marching feet.

The major put out his hand quickly and touched a pilot of the 2nd on the elbow. “Wait, leave him alone,” said the major.

The pilot’s face jerked. His eyes were soft. “But, Major, he said, “you can’t just leave him sitting there, eating his heart out, grieving like that. Somebody has to snap him out of it. Two days now, alone, just staring along the road watching the First Division going up.”

“Let him be,” said the major. “Nobody can talk a man out of a thing

like this. His best friend just died and Rolfe saw him go. Leave him alone."

The pilot looked at the major's face; a lined face, war-scarred, with grizzled grey at the temples and eyes which seemed strained from long watching of the heavens.

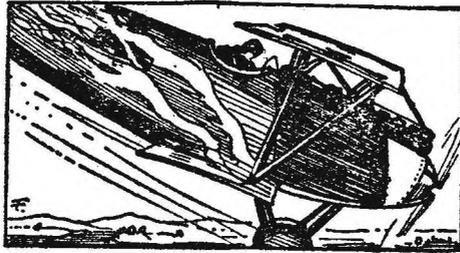
"What's he mean, Skipper, about having to keep marching," the boy asked.

The major shook his head. "I don't know, son," he confessed, staring somberly at Chet Rolfe's face.

"I don't know, but maybe I could guess."

Along the road the 1st Division marched toward the front, battle scarred veterans, swinging under the heavy packs, the hob-nailed shoes thumping in the dust.

And Chet Rolfe sat on a grassy bank beside the field of the 2nd Squadron and watched them, his eyes half closed, watching. It was as if he searched for a face among those marchers—a face he knew had stopped marching.



# FLAMING DOOM

*A Novelette of Sky Battle*

By **GEORGE BRUCE**

*Author of "Trail to Glory," "Sky Patrol," etc.*

*in the*

*Next Issue of THE LONE EAGLE*

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# The Story of the Cover

By EUGENE M. FRANDZEN

**P**OINTED spears and heavy clubs were important adjuncts to the combatants of ancient wars. So were machine-guns to the men involved in the late war. A club or a spear could be seen and dealt with promptly, but a steady curtain of enfiladed machine-gun fire mowing into the flanks of masses of ground troops is an invisible force that takes a terrible toll.

The Germans had these machine-gun nests infesting the battlefields. In an advance the German machine-gunners often inched their way ahead of their troops who were about to charge. In a retreat hundreds of machine-gun nests were left manned with grim-faced men to keep blasting lead into the advancing Allies until the German stuttering gun was at last silenced. Sometimes Germans were chained to their hot Maxim and Parabellum guns.



## *The German Maxim Gun*

The German Maxim gun was similar to the Allied Vickers. The Parabellum gun was distinctly an individual German type of weapon. The drum on the side held a rolled belt of cartridges. It was a heavy affair but was used with great success either as a ground gun or as a rear gun in airplanes. In another part of this magazine will be found three-view plans of the two popular Allied aviation guns. The Vickers and the Lewis gun. (See new feature on model building.)

For more than six weeks before the armistice was signed on a railway coach in the protection of a wooded area back of the Allied lines the Germans were hauling in their horns. Starting with a thin dribble of troops and guns the stream of tired disillusioned grey-green clad men trudging back into the Fatherland grew into a muttering horde of undisciplined individuals intent only in getting away from the hellish avalanche of Allied shells battering the last of the German resistance into the blood soaked ground.

Men murdered their domineering officers, kicked their former task masters, the non-commissioned officers, into unconsciousness, laughed and staggered on.

## *They Held Their Ground*

But not all of the German troops knew that they were licked, not even their commanding officers knew it, although most of them suspected the worse. Those were the units far in the front lines and in the strategic points which the Allies had not yet taken. Those men still held their ground with German stubbornness.

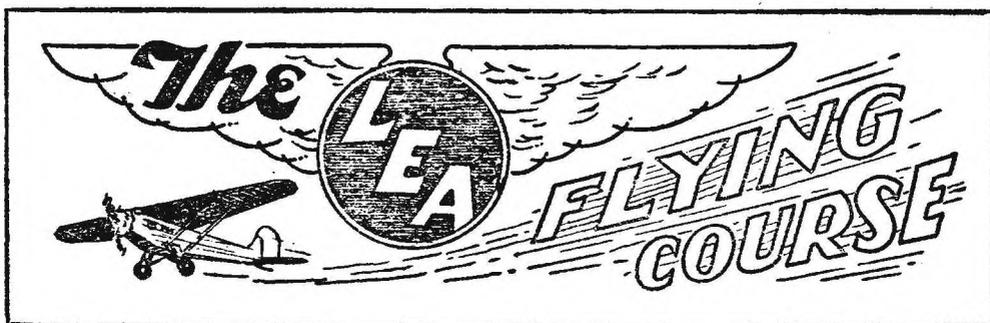
Knowing that their own officers would shoot them if they left their snarling machine-guns for a moment, they chose the gambling chance of staying with them, watching for the khaki clad Allied soldiers.

They had mowed down dozens of men who had attempted to get through a narrow pass their gun commanded. Time and again they had been in the center of raining high explosive shells sent over to annihilate them, but somehow the two had remained intact, remained to press their blunt fingers against the trigger of the murderous gun.

## *The Roaring Breguet*

When all else failed a Breguet plane zoomed into the air with only the pilot in the front pit. In the hurry of the take-off, the gas tanks were not checked. The big Breguet roared down on the machine-gun nest with its front gun spraying the ground around the German machine-gunners. Suddenly the exhaust from the engine ceased. Frantically the pilot jiggled levers. No use, the tanks were dry. He had not realized the force of his dive. He tried to lift the plane's nose. It did not respond.

*Crash!* It hit with splintering force between the advancing Allied troops and the machine-gun. The pilot was thrown clear. He came onto his feet with a gun in his hand. The flabbergasted Germans did not shoot once. They were glad it was all over. They had come to fear their own officers more than the enemy. They followed their captor docilely to the rear as the Allied troops smashed to victory.



## HOT AIR, AND THE LIKE

**N**OW, little chillun, if you studied your last lesson, you got a new conception of the air as a solid substance of a liquid nature, having weight and temperature and fluidity. You had to get a realization of those things, or what amount to a new way of seeing those old facts, in order to get a clear understanding of the relationship of your craft to the thing that supports it.

Today we're going to start considering our craft in its relationship to the medium

relationships is the difference in the weight of that same air at different temperatures.

We found that hot air, because it expands, weighs less than cooler air. That fact being the cause of winds, which are examples of air of different temperatures changing their positions in relation to gravity.

### AIR FORCE

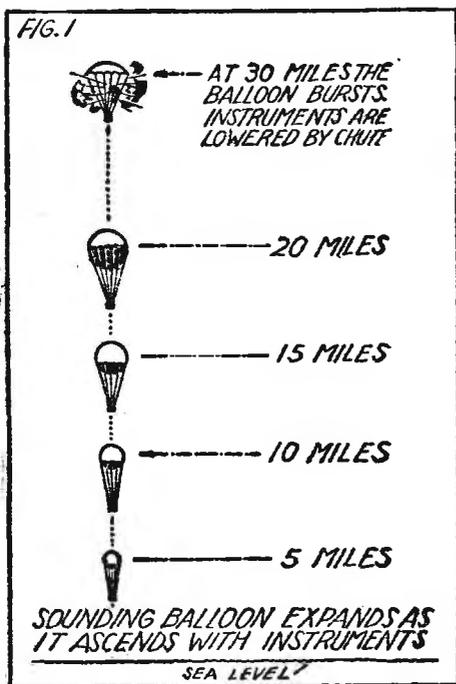
In passing, you might allow yourself to be properly impressed with the extraordinary force air will exert to accomplish this purpose, as demonstrated by hurricanes and cyclones. We capture and make use of this force when it is not too strong for us to handle and put it to work driving sailing ships, pumping water via windmills; nature uses it to spread the various seeds and pollen which breeds plants, and incidentally to spread disease—and we use it to carry us or our measuring instruments high into the air by balloons. And we either use it or fight it in estimating speed and distance in our aerial navigation, and in designing the shapes of our airplanes. All this activity and concern is a by-product of the force of the weight of air trying to react to gravity. So never forget the simple origin of all these things we deal with.

Which circles us back to the simplest balloon, a container of air hotter than that surrounding it.

### SMOKE RISES

Men must have long speculated on the fact that the smoke of their campfires went up. It was thought that it was the property of smoke itself that made it go up, rather than the simple fact that what happened was that hot air was carrying upward with it, the fine particles of burned matter. At any rate, the Mongolfier Brothers wondered why a bag of smoke wouldn't go up. In 1783 they tried it, the bag went up, and aviation was born.

This isn't the place for the history of man's flight, which you ought to read, but we are concerned here with the sustention of craft in the air. Eventually it was learned that it was the lighter weight of the hot air that caused ascension, and still further that there were gases which were more practical than air that had to be kept heated, and the practical use of these gases



in which it moves. And we're starting with the simplest of all aircraft, which is a globular free balloon.

### GOING UP

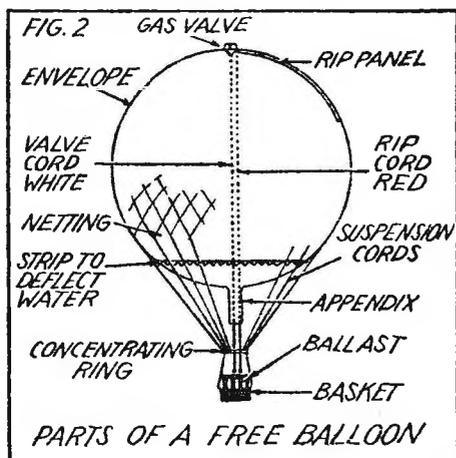
We have learned that a balloon would go up when the gas in it had less weight, or response to the attraction of gravity, than the air in which it floated.

It then follows, that the simplest of these

finally isolated hydrogen and helium as the best, the cheapness of hydrogen being offset by the danger of ignition, and the non-inflammable quality of helium being offset by its scarcity and great cost.

### THE SOUNDING BALLOON

Now, not in relation to time, but to simplicity, the most elementary balloon, other than a child's toy, is the sounding balloon used by science in gaining facts about the upper air. Having no human occupant to be affected by temperature and lack of oxy-



gen, it can ascend to heights not yet conquered by man.

A sounding balloon has the sole purpose of taking weather recording instruments up as high as possible, having them record temperature and pressure at specific altitudes and bringing the readings down safely. In our lessons, of course, we are primarily concerned with aircraft and their control, and such information as is necessary to better understand that task. So, the descriptions of these craft, although you might never have occasion to use them, do concern you.

### CONTROL SIMPLE

Therefore, the sounding balloon. Its control is the simplest of all. It consists of a gas bag containing a sufficient amount of gas to lift its weight and the weight of the instruments. The instruments are attached to a parachute which is stretched over the ball of the balloon itself, as though it were an outer covering. The balloon ascends carrying the instruments.

As the balloon ascends, we have learned that the gas expands on account of the pressure on the outside decreasing, which it does because there is less weight of air above pressing down on it. You could get up easier if you were lying down and there was only one man sitting on you than if there were two or ten. The idea's the same.

### EXPANDING GAS

So, the balloon keeps going up and the

gas in it expands, and keeps on expanding until the bag of the balloon can no longer restrain the pressure from within. The bag bursts, and the parachute drops the instruments to earth gently. And that, Lone Eagles, is the simplest control exercised by man over ascent into the heavens. (See Fig. 1).

Next on the list in point of simplicity of control over craft in the air is that of a spherical captive balloon occupied by man. Here, let's stop and correct a general impression that all captive balloons are kite balloons. They're not. I'll tell you the difference at the proper time.

A simple captive balloon has a bag big enough to support the weight of a basket containing a man and such tools as he needs to observe and report a terrain of restricted size. For such work in the World War they contained telephones, the wire descending with the cable which held the balloon captive. The cable was wound at its lower end upon a drum suitable for raising and lowering it.

The control of it, then, was restricted to that of a ground crew raising and lowering it on a cable. It was the victim of all gusts of wind and of the lightest breeze.

The next step was an improvement on the captive balloon, the one which properly deserves the name kite balloon. (See Fig. 3.) It derives that name from more than the fact that it was attached to the ground by a cable. Even the shape of it is involved in the distinction.

### THEY'RE CALLED SAUSAGES

A kite balloon is oblong, and thus it got its name during the war as a sausage. It also has a group of tail surfaces which look like inflated flippers and rudder. And attached to the tail surface are things that look like parachutes. They are called "godets" and their purpose is to hold the nose of the sausage into the wind. They act to steady the balloon just as the tail of a kite acts to steady the youngster's toy.

The cable is rigged to the sausage so that it rises in a slanting position, with its nose slightly upward. At the lower, or tail end is a separate compartment called a balloonet. It has a forward opening. The wind rushes into the balloonet and is trapped, and this creates sufficient pressure on the gas bag itself to keep it fully distended and so prevent it from buckling.

That is the rudderlike gadget you see, and it has side extensions, those like the inflated flippers, which are filled and keep it from rolling from side to side. Added to this is another air catching bag in an upright position, and this together with the little parachute tails, keep the thing headed into the wind which must therefore blow into the balloonets.

### MAN'S ODD PRANK

All these devices serve to make the pressure of the air against the sausage help support it and help keep it steady. That is, the wind is tricked by the mind

of man into working against itself, which annoying trick, for that matter, is played on a lot of us humans, ain't it, buddy?

So, we have a steadier aircraft which has a useful purpose in observation, but even so, did you ever ride a camel? A smooth, easy-going riding camel produces the same sea-sickness you'd catch in a Grade-A China-Seas typhoon, but without the drama to make it an adventure. And that, my friends, you might consider when choosing the Observation Corps. For the most comfortable kite balloon on a breezy day has all the attractions of riding a camel on the deck of a ship in the middle of a typhoon.

### THE FREE BALLOON

Next is the structure and control of a free balloon. (See Fig. 2.) We get back to the simplicity of a spherical gas bag, inflated with gas which furnishes all the lift. Over the gas bag or properly attached to it is a net or other means of suspending from it the passenger-carrying gondola.

Built into the top of the gas bag is a valve which opens and closes as necessary to let out gas. The valve is controlled by a cord that runs down through the bag to the gondola. There is also a ripping panel in the upper part of the balloon, and from it runs another cord of a color different to the valve cord. The rip panel can be jerked open to let gas out suddenly on landing or in emergency. It rips a hole in the top of the bag.

In the basket or gondola, the pilot carries bags of sand for ballast. In controlling the altitude of the balloon, the balance between the amount of lift of the gas and the weight of the sand is the deciding factor. If the pilot wants to come down, he valves out a sufficient amount of gas to decrease the lift to his needs. But if he wants to go back up again, as in case he were trying to land and were in danger of hitting an obstacle, he cannot recapture the gas, but had to decrease the weight of the load the remaining gas carries. So, by dumping sand he decreases the load and the balloon rises.

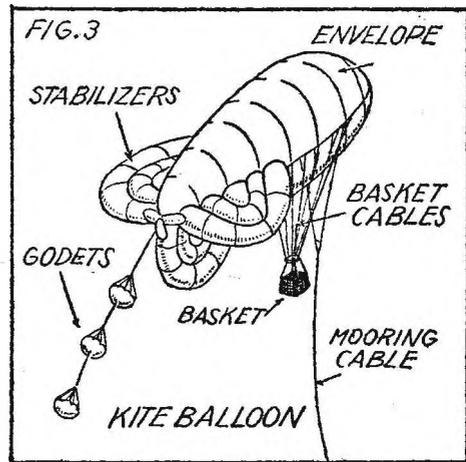
A free balloon, however, cannot go

against the wind. It is at the mercy of any breeze. Therefore, it is not a flying object, but a floating one. It cannot be steered in a given direction, and therefore its use is limited.

### A FORM OF NAVIGATION

However, it is one form of navigating the air, and as such, you now know how it acts in relation to the air, and how man exercises such control over it as its nature permits. Which is what we were concerned with during this lesson.

There are, however, ships whose life is of the same nature as that of free balloons,



but which have added to that, the necessary control of direction and altitude. These are the dirigible, or steerable, balloons.

We will tell you about diriging them next time, and in the meantime don't let me hear any of my pupils bearing down on the middle syllable of the word and pronouncing it di-rig'-ible instead of dir'-ig-i-ble, as any proper flyer knows it's pronounced.

The accent is on the first syllable as in dunking doughnuts. S'long.

—BRUCE McALESTER.

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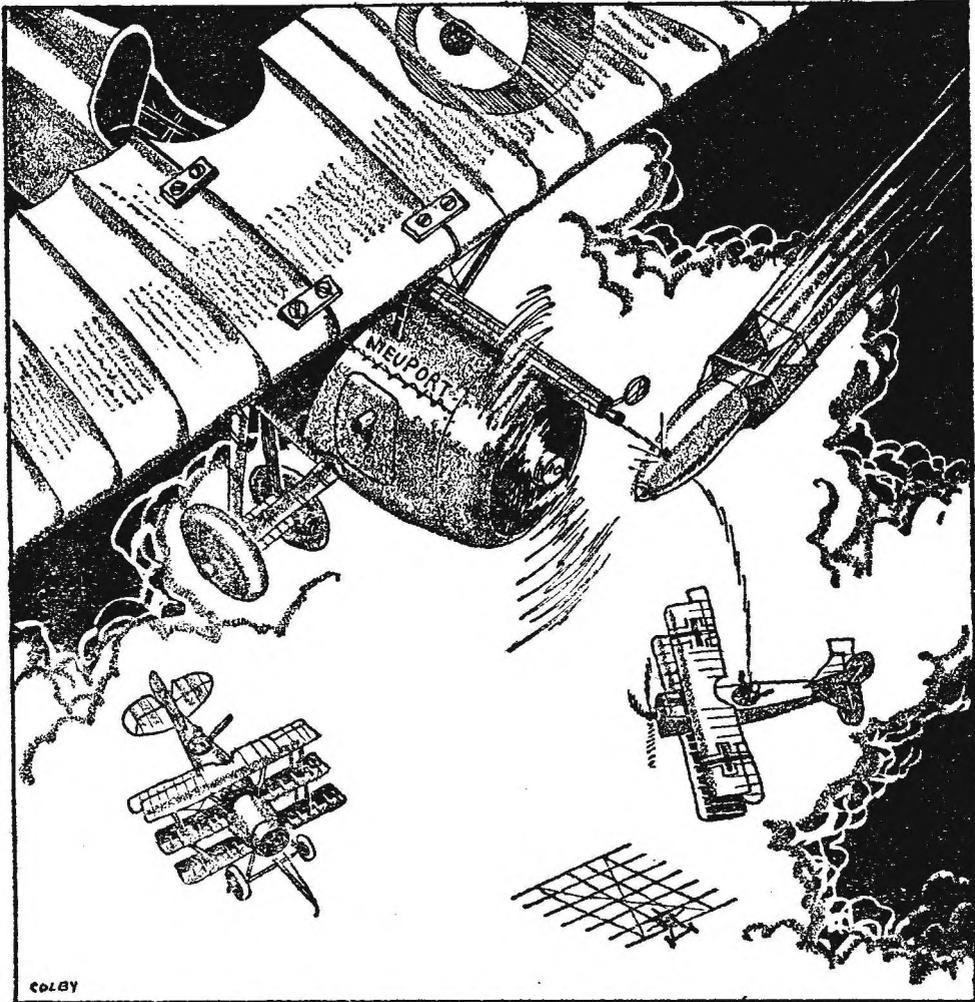
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# AIM AT THE ERRORS!

—and See How Many Hits You Can Make on this  
Cockeyed Nieuport! It's Great Fun, Gunners!



**T**HERE'S a machine-gun firing and no pilot in the cockpit! The Nieuport's wing is too high! There are bullets going through a bomb without exploding it!

All of these goofy things are happening in the above cockeyed art production. And there are plenty of other mistakes in it—but no more hints for you!

Find the rest of the errors yourself.

Here's how to do it:

Take a pencil and paper and then remember everything you know about war crates. Write down what's wrong in the Nieuport above, also what's wrong with the other two planes in the picture.

Then—after you've made your list and

not before—compare what you've set down with the list of errors we give you on Page 128.

This is one of a special series of topsyturvy pictures that test your knowledge of war-air flying machines.

If you're well up on your flying lessons, etc., and have been doing your best to understand the principles of war in the air, then you should come out of this test with flying colors.

Anyway, let us know how you made out, won't you? Thanks.

And, just to warn you again—you won't have any fun at all out of this if you look at our list before trying it yourself!

# The Skyway to Hell



Turner zoomed suddenly into  
an Immelmann

*Captain Dick Carey Signs  
on for a Suicide  
Mission!*

**By BOB CLARE**

*Author of "Hawk of the Mediterranean,"  
"Hawk's Business," etc.*

**C**OLONEL HILL read the message, then a frown broke the smoothness of the high forehead below his iron-grey hair.

Have stumbled onto information of vital importance. Send man to me at once by plane. This is last pigeon, dare not risk information with it. Small chance it will reach you. Am suspected and watched, cannot communicate through usual channels. If no one comes by midnight of the 28th, will know pigeon did not get through. Will try then to break through myself.

K-31.

"K-31!" the colonel said. "That's Johnson, over at Diedenhofen, isn't it?"

Captain Young nodded his bald head. "What d'you think is up?"

"God knows!" Colonel Hill struck a match for his pipe. "But it's something big. Johnson's one of the best agents we have in Germany, and he doesn't get excited over little things. When'd this come in?"

"Fifteen minutes ago," Captain Young said. "God knows how long that pigeon was on the way here—it was all shot up, poor thing. He'll be dead before morning."

"So will a lot of damn good men!" The colonel snapped savagely. "There's a war on around here, Young, there's no S.P.C.A. to stop it, and we've got to get a man over there to Johnson in a hurry." He pounded the desk with a healthy fist. "It's suicidal, but there's no other way! This is the twenty-eighth—the afternoon of the twenty-eighth at that! Johnson would never get through to us—Diedenhofen's thirty miles back of the German lines!"

Colonel Hill, head of Division Intelligence, known as the coolest, calmest man in the army, was, to Captain Young's amazement, still pounding the desk. "The worst of it is that the only man who'd stand a ghost of a chance to get to Johnson and get back isn't here! When is Captain Carey due back from England?"

The captain jerked to attention.

"Carey? Why, he reported in about an hour ago—he's around somewhere."

"Thank God for that!" Colonel Hill said fervently. "Send a man for him at once! We haven't any time to lose!"

Tenseness settled over the little room as they waited and the colonel intently studied a large map. Captain Young shifted uncomfortably in his chair.

And then the door was thrown

open, and Captain Carey's long legs and the big shoulders filled the doorway as he came in, his face smiling beneath his unruly blond hair. His broken nose was at first unnoticeable because of that smile, and because of an arresting quality in the man's eyes.

**H**IS tenseness lessened as Carey came across to the desk with his lazy stride. Captain Young smiled and his chair felt more comfortable. Looking up from the map Colonel Hill was once more the coolest man in the army.

As Carey drawled a slow greeting Colonel Hill took cigarettes from a drawer of the desk, handed them over. "Listen, Carey," he said abruptly, "something's happened over at Diedenhofen. This came in by pigeon half an hour ago." He passed the note across. "Johnson's got hold of something big! I know it's almost certain death to try to reach him—but we've got to try it. I'm sending you over tonight."

"Yeah." Carey inhaled luxuriously, and blew smoke at the ceiling. He seemed totally indifferent. "I reckon you better give me the dope on everythin' first, though. I been away for a couple weeks."

Colonel Hill turned the big map around. "Here's the terrain of the Meuse-Argonne offensive, Carey—the biggest concerted action of the war." He ran his finger along the map. "We started the morning of the twenty-sixth along a front of twenty-four miles. The whole First Army's engaged. They've pushed the Germans back some six miles—and they are still going."

His finger stabbed the map again. "They passed Bois des Forges—a regular death trap! They took Hill Two-sixty-two, Septsarges, and Very. They captured Malancourt, Vauquois, Nantillois. The Seventy-ninth took Montfaucon yesterday. Hellish country, too—woods and hills full of

heavy underbrush, and lined with treacherous ravines. We're shoving in every division we have—but they aren't enough! The French holding our left flank are weak—not enough reserves—and God help us if the Germans break through now! They're rushing reenforcements up back of Montfaucon—but if we can keep them on the move, keep up the splendid coordination of our attack, things may be all right."

The colonel sat back in his chair. "You see the situation. The rapidity of our advance is playing hell with communications in the rear. The three roads leading into the battle, terrain aren't enough—and if we had to throw reenforcements suddenly into some part of the line, it would be damn hard to get 'em there—provided we had 'em to send! That's what worries me about this message from Johnson. He's got hold of something desperately important. It's up to us to learn what it is—quick!"

"Uhuh," drawled Dick Carey's deep voice. "An' Diedenhofen's probably a hell of a hole to get into—worse to get outa. How do I find Johnson?" It was typical of him that he asked nothing else.

The colonel rapidly sketched lines on a sheet of paper. "The town lies like this. To the south, here, are fields and patches of woods; a mile or so from Diedenhofen. A plane might land there. Johnson lives in a little house on the outskirts of the place—about here." He drew a circle on the paper. "You can spot it by a tall group of Lombardy poplars—there aren't any others like them within miles.

"Naturally you'll find the place heavily fortified, Carey. You'll have to watch your step more carefully than ever before. I'm sending you into a death trap—I won't deny it. But you're the only man who has a chance of getting there—and coming back. A slim one, at that. Your experience, though, your perfect

German, and your coolness will make it almost a fifty-fifty shot."

The colonel turned to Captain Young. "See that Lieutenant Turner has his plane ready to take off for Diedenhofen by dark. Carey'll go without uniform, and drop out with a parachute. Turner's to hang around and pick him up as soon as he gets the information from Johnson."

The colonel took a hard pull on his pipe. "I wish I didn't have to do this, Carey."

Captain Dick Carey shrugged his big shoulders and lit another of the colonel's cigarettes. "Damn good skags," he said, and put the box in his pocket as he got lazily to his feet. "Be seein' you," he drawled, with his slow, broad smile. Then he was gone. . . .

**T**HE early darkness of autumn was settling swiftly when Captain Dick Carey came out of his shack. Off to the northeast the sky was red with the flashes of big guns. Their rumbling thunder shook the ground as Carey went across the tarmac to the waiting plane.

Colonel Hill and Captain Young were waiting for him. Lieutenant Turner was revving the motor, warming up for the flight. The exhaust was a stream of sparks as the motor roared at full throttle, then the pilot cut the switches.

"All set," he said quietly.

Carey glanced up at him and smiled. A good boy, Turner. The kid knew he was heading into hell, with a hundred-to-one chance of getting back, and yet he was willing—eager.

"Reckon I could pass anywhere for a old Jerry farmer," Carey drawled to the colonel as he patted his tattered, dirty blouse. "An' the old Colt is right here in the shoulder holster."

He took a long drag at his cigarette, stamped it out on the ground. The bulky parachute was fastened to the side of the ship and a minute

later he was in the rear cockpit pulling on goggles and helmet.

A greaseball swung the big prop, and the motor caught and burst into rhythmic life. The chocks were out, the plane moved forward. Then they were heading into the black north-east where big guns flashed and thundered.

The gun flashes were nearer as darkness hemmed them in and the Spad climbed swiftly toward the Front. In the distance to the north a town was burning with a ghostly glare. Time slipped by with only the roar of the motor and the wind in the wings to mark its passing.

The plane was flying level, eating up the dark miles. Dick Carey's mind kept pace with the engine, chanted an endless tune of time! All he wanted now was time—time to get to Diedenhofen, time to talk to Johnson. It was like Carey that he was not considering the danger he would face. As he always expressed it, he believed in starting the motor after he got in the plane, not before.

**N**O smile was on his face now, however. His mouth was a thin line and his eyes were narrowed to slits as he searched the air ahead. The German trenches were behind them—Diedenhofen was in front. This was an enemy air—dangerous air.

Turner was pushing the Spad hard—they'd be there any minute. Carey sat up higher in the cockpit, made sure the harness of his parachute was secure. And then suddenly his whole body stiffened. Four trails of red exhaust sparks dotted the dark sky—four German planes were diving down from the right!

Carey leaned forward to shout to Turner. Before he could open his mouth he was slammed back hard against the rear of the cockpit as the Spad stuck her nose straight up. Good boy! Turner had seen them in time! Carey braced his legs and

swung the machine-gun around on its Scarff mounting.

Fast as Turner had been, however, the German tracers were faster. They came in deadly little gleaming paths, sewed lines of holes across the wings. Carey swore as he warmed the gun and began shooting. If only he had that special little crate of his own here now! It was a hell of a helpless feeling not to be able to maneuver the plane—just sit and shoot as the Spad twisted and turned to break away!

Turner was handling the plane beautifully—but the Germans were too many for him. As Carey caught an Albatross squarely in his sights and let him have it, a cross-fire of tracers shook the Spad. Halfway up in a loop, the plane staggered and dropped back on its tail. But Turner wasn't out yet. He whipped the faltering ship off into a sideslip, banked sharply, and dived down to escape that withering fire.

The German plane Carey had caught was a flaming coffin on its way to the earth. In that ghastly light there could be no escape for the Spad. The Albatrosses were on its tail chasing it down. Turner zoomed suddenly into an Immelmann, and his guns were chattering death as they turned toward the Germans. Tracers crisscrossed in the night, wood splintered from wings and fuselage.

Up and back and down and across they played the deadly game of tag, and suddenly the light from the burning Albatross died out. The Spad was climbing with throttle wide now, desperately trying to lose the Germans. And Carey understood. No matter how badly Turner wanted to fight the boy was running away because he knew the seriousness of his mission, that reaching Diedenhofen was of paramount importance.

But the Albatrosses stuck, and suddenly they had the Spad boxed. Tracers leaped and spat from three

different directions, ripped through and through the racing Spad. Carey was shooting furiously now; the machine-gun was hot down to the trigger grip.

But even as he shot he knew it was too late. He felt the plane break its forward motion, felt instinctively that there was no longer a hand at the controls! Turner had caught that deadly burst! The plane was nosing over into the first horrible whirl of a tailspin—out of control!

Carey's one swift glance backward told him that the Germans were not following. They figured the Spad done for. It looked like the end—even to Carey.

With difficulty he raised and braced himself in the cockpit, but he could see nothing of Turner in the front cockpit. The tail of the Spad was weaving in dizzy circles as the downward speed increased with terrific force.

With agonizing slowness Carey managed to pull his body up until he was lying across the cockpit edge. But inch by perilous inch he slid forward. Only superman coolness, and his enormous strength kept him hanging on as the motor roared wide open for the black earth.

Seconds went by like years in spite of the sickening speed. Dick Carey did not know how far the plane had fallen; nor how far it still had to fall. He only knew that he must reach the controls before it was too late! And that determination carried him through.

Pushing Turner's limp body to one side, Carey slipped into the front cockpit. Expert hands found the controls. His mouth was set hard, his eyes were chips of glass as he fought that headlong dive. The speed at first was too great, but then, as slowly he forced the stick back into his body, the sturdy plane obeyed.

Wind was screaming through the wings and wires. Inch by scant inch the nose came up, and the Spad

groaned in every joint. But Dick Carey's skillful hands nursed it out until it was riding an even keel. He checked the instruments swiftly, and banked back into the north. The idea of returning without seeing K-31 did not enter his head. He had a job to do—that was that.

The lights of Diedenhofen were already pricking holes in the night. Grimly Carey took the Spad down in wide, flat circles; tried hard to pierce the darkness.

**T**HE wheels suddenly hit, bounced, and then he was taxiing across a bumpy field toward a line of trees. He ground looped the plane to put its nose into the wind, cut the switches, and hopped out quickly.

With two large rocks he chocked the wheels. There was not a second to be lost. The plane would have to take care of itself until he got back—if he got back!

Two hundred yards from the plane he rounded the edge of the woods. Diedenhofen was brightly lighted up a mile down the valley. A moment of study, and Carey was off in the direction of Johnson's house. Field after field he crossed, running headlong in the darkness. Through hedges and over fences, until he crossed a small stream. On the far side of an open space was a high fence, and back of that the tall Lombardy poplars!

Carey skirted the field, running noiselessly. He swung long legs to the top of the fence, dropped lightly to the other side—to find himself in the midst of German soldiers!

But before a man in that startled group could speak Carey had leaped back to the fence. A guttural order was uttered—cut off by the rapid bark of the big Colt as Carey fired into the closely packed bodies. Then he was over the fence and running hard.

Bedlam broke loose from the far side of the fence. Yells and startled

curses mingled with guttural orders. Carey heard them climbing the fence. But, with the breath pounding in his lungs, Carey was running along the fence to the right!

Thirty yards, fifty yards, then, like a dark shadow in the night, he vaulted back across the fence. Like the ghost of some swift-winged nightbird he raced beneath the trees for the house sheltering K-31. Back of him the noise of pursuit was fading.

The house was dark, but his rapidly tapped signals brought immediate response. The door made no sound as it opened. Carey stepped sideward through it. It closed at once, and a hand touched his arm.

"I had almost given you up," a low voice said in English. "I heard the shots—thought they'd got you!"

**C**AREY was busy reloading his gun. "What's the dope for Colonel Hill?" he drawled.

"A plot to murder Premier Clemenceau!" Johnson said succinctly. "They've discovered he plans a personal tour of the Front, and a trip to Montfaucon tomorrow! You get it? To show his appreciation of the success of the American Army Clemenceau comes to tour the Front. The Germans kill him—that wrecks the morale of the French, and it gives the American Army a black eye! They could not protect him! The Germans plan to get Clemenceau as soon as he enters Montfaucon. They'll—"

A heavy fist beat without warning on the front door. The next instant heavier blows were rained on the wooden barrier—evidently by rifle butts. The Germans were searching for Carey—were breaking in!

Carey felt Johnson's hand on his arm. "Quick! Out the back door! I'll hold them off as long as I can! Good luck, old man!"

Carey shook K-31's hand hard, and then he was moving swiftly through

the darkness toward the rear of the house. As he fumbled with the bolts of the back door he heard the crash of splintering wood from the room he had just left. And, deafeningly loud, came the thunder of Johnson's Colt. Six shots in staccato swiftness—and then Captain Dick Carey, his own Colt in hand, plunged into the night.

It was desperately hard to go on when he wanted to go back—back there with that gallant Johnson! The man was throwing his life away to make it possible for Carey to escape. Even as he raced for the high fence, he could hear the lighter shots from the German Lugers back there in the little house. Suddenly it was quiet—and Carey knew that the man known as K-31 was gone forever. What a hell of a damn *guerre* this was anyway!

He vaulted the fence and hit the ground on the other side, running. Almost a mile to go—then the plane! He crossed the little stream at one leap, ran straight ahead. They were already after him—he could hear the yells.

A searchlight lanced out from the darkness, arrowed across the fields. The night awoke suddenly to chaotic tumult. Running feet thudded through the fields, orders rose in hoarse shouts—and on a nearby road motorcycles broke into thunderous life.

But Dick Carey did not look back. He was running for more than his own life now. That meant he had to watch every foot of the way ahead, spot the landmarks he had noticed before. He couldn't afford to miss that plane now! His breath was coming harder and harder, laboring up from his great chest.

Bitterly he cursed the endless hedges and fences as he ran. More shots sounded from behind him, then two more searchlights were cutting wide swathes of light through the darkness. And, unceasingly, the

sound of running feet. Were they gaining? Were they close?

Carey was desperately trying to keep up the fast pace his long legs had set but he was tiring rapidly. And then the long line of trees that marked the position of the plane stood out ahead. One more field!

Halfway across it a sudden beam of light from behind caught him squarely. Rifles cracked singly and in bunches, and something white-hot seared the flesh of his left arm. Carey ducked and twisted—out of the light into merciful darkness!

The wide beam of light swept the field in an effort to pick him up; but Carey had gained the shelter of the trees, was running as he had never run in his life. Underbrush tore at his clothes, trees stood out of the night suddenly to block his path. Somehow he kept going, kept on until he was out of the farther edge of the woods, was racing for the plane.

Breathlessly he swung up to the cockpit, cut the switches on. Already the Germans were in the woods—he could hear their hobnailed shoes thudding on the earth. Dick Carey grabbed the big prop with his good arm, swung with every ounce of his weight.

The motor sputtered and died. Coolly Carey tried it again. He was facing the woods, and saw the first of the running Germans break into the open. The prop swung, hesitated, turned over. The engine burst suddenly into life and with that welcome roar in his ears, Dick Carey leaped for the cockpit.

A searchlight arrowed out from the dark woods. It caught the plane, held it fixed in its light as a butterfly is fixed at the end of a pin. A storm of lead tore through wings and fuselage as the Germans fired wildly.

But the Spad was thundering under full throttle as Carey settled into the cockpit beside the body of poor

Turner. There had been no chance to move him. The wheels swung, jolted with a wrench as they jumped the chocks—and then the plane was heading down the bumpy field at terrific speed. Still the searchlight held it, and still that fusillade of rifle shots sounded from the woods.

Carey lifted the Spad into the air in spite of it all. Climbing on a long slant for the Front, he held the stick with his knees while he slipped on goggles, with the throttle wide, and climbing straight ahead.

**I**T was a race against time now. Planes would be out after him any minute. And long before he reached the Front, word would have reached the German squadrons to block him off from France.

Carey's eyes were hard and his lips were thin as he stared ahead. That arm was stiffening now, but it was losing its numbness, and the pain grew. But the Spad was eating up the homeward miles, was poking its nose on and on toward good old American air!

Through the prop he could see the red bedlam of the trenches spreading out. Off to the east there was a faint suspicion of approaching dawn—the dawn of the day that was to see the death of Clemenceau.

That devilish plot had to be stopped at all costs, and Carey knew that he was the only man in the world who could possibly stop it. And then, as his eyes searched the sky ahead, he realized that if he did stop it, it would be in spite of all sorts of hell, for, diving down in a long line between him and the Front, were at least a dozen German planes!

With throttle wide the Spad tore straight ahead toward those deadly diving Albatrosses. With Carey it was a question of swift decision. His mind leaped at once to the only action. It wasn't what he wanted to do—but he instantly realized it was best.

He was going to run away from them—at least he was going to try. With Turner's body jammed in the narrow cockpit with him, handling the plane was itself difficult. Yanking the stick hard back into his body, he pointed the nose of the Spad skyward. The plane was almost standing on its tail as it went up and up.

Against the flaming horror of the Front the Germans stood out vividly. The line of Albatrosses were coming in swiftly. Carey measured the rapidly decreasing distance with keen eyes. Time seemed to stand still in the dark sky, and only the thunder of mighty motors existed in the world. Then down they came on their helpless prey like vultures.

The Spad was hitting its ceiling; Carey could feel the big motor laboring under the strain. Cool, with an inhuman coolness which always gripped him at a time like this, he measured his slim chances—then acted!

**E**NEMY planes closed in. Tracers licked little fiery tongues through the night, crisscrossed in delicate lines of death. Carey flashed one hasty look toward the east—the horizon there was getting lighter—dawn was on the way! In another few minutes his plan would never work. Now, while the Germans were spotting his position perfectly by the sparks from his exhaust, now, while it still was dark, was the time!

Carey shoved the stick forward hard, reached up and cut the switches! Gone suddenly was the roar of the great motor—and gone, too, was that telltale line of sparks from his exhaust! Like a hawk out of the upper reaches the Spad dived headlong down the night, and only the rising shriek of the wind marked its flight.

That dive was in the nick of time. Twin lines of holes crossed his wings as he dived. And then he was out of the swarm of German planes.

Until they picked him up against the light in No Man's Land, he was safe!

Down! Down! The wind was tearing things apart, the plane's impetus was choking him with its speed. Up rose the red hell of No Man's Land in his face, up rose the dark woods and the deadly ravines. Then he was slowly pulling out. The nose of the Spad came between him and the flashes of guns down there, and then he was passing over them, was skimming straight for home!

Suddenly another sound reached him above the rushing wind—the sound of thundering motors hot on his trail! A glance back told him instantly that he had been seen. The Albatrosses were diving with throttles open—were gaining on him!

Dick Carey cut his switches on. If the motor started, all right. If it didn't—well, it would be curtains for a guy named Carey, curtains for a famous Frenchman named Clemenceau, and God knew what else for the American Army! A star shell arched over and the glare of it caught him squarely. From behind, hungry tracers were beginning to catch up to him.

And then the motor broke into life, and Carey gave her the gun. The Spad leaped forward, holding a level course low above the earth. But back of him the Albatrosses hung on grimly. They were following him over the Lines!

But the Spad was eating up the air miles now, and spitting them out joyfully as back-wash from its big prop. The Germans were dropping back—this was no place for them, and they knew it. The Albatrosses were headed for Germany when Carey glanced back again.

"Not that it helps much," he told himself. "If I'm going to stop Clemenceau—"

And then his thoughts leaped swiftly. There wasn't time to get back to Colonel Hill, risk the relaying of his message to Headquarters.

He'd have to stop Clemenceau himself!

Already day was spreading its white light over the earth. Carey pulled the stick back, took on altitude. Except where swirling mists and fog covered the low places, the ground stood out plainly. He spotted the hill of Montfaucon, located Malancourt.

And then the road out of Montfaucon caught his eye. It was jammed with light artillery moving up along the partly camouflaged roadway. Past them a line of camions and trucks crawled toward the rear.

Carey took the Spad down carefully. His arm was a living ache, his head was bursting. He saw a level stretch along the road; he could land there.

As he swung the plane into the wind and throttled down, every truck horn in that long line blared suddenly. Men were running, pointing. Carey wondered—for a brief instant only.

Then he had jerked the stick back hard into his body and pulled the nose of the Spad up. Judas! He'd nearly landed in that torn-up field with only one wheel! That's what they were telling him down there—and he damn near didn't get it! It was the right one, eh? Okay, and thanks!

But how to land now! Every hour was precious; every delay dangerous.

Swiftly Carey realized that he must have busted a wheel when he jumped those chocks back at Diedenhofen. Still he couldn't stay up here in the air forever! He nosed the Spad down once more, waving his good arm to show that he understood about the wheel.

He saw men gather in little groups to watch. Carefully he brought the plane down in slow circles. Then heading into the wind from the north, he sideslipped the Spad and took the ground on the good left wheel.

The plane bounced once, and for a moment it looked as if the left wing was going to touch. Expertly Carey held the ship balanced until his speed had materially slowed. He could hold it on one wheel no longer. The wreck of the right wheel dug into the dirt, the Spad rocked and skidded around. Then it was stopping, and Captain Dick Carey was climbing slowly from the cockpit.

The crowd of truck drivers and transport men parted to let a short man in a captain's uniform through. Carey was leaning against the fuselage removing his goggles. The stocky captain stopped short.

"WELL, I'll be triple damned! I might've known it'd be you—making a fool landing like that! Where'd you come from this time?"

Carey grinned. "Shorty, you're too good to be true! This really your outfit?"

Captain "Shorty" Mathews ran a pair of keen blue eyes over the flyer. He stepped up and examined the wounded arm quickly. "You've got to get that fixed, buddy," he said. "Hop in the truck. We're in a hurry to get back to—"

Carey didn't give him time to finish. "Listen, Shorty, you keep this transport gang of yours right where it is! I've just come from Germany—the damn Jerries are fixin' to get old Clemenceau in Montfaucon today an' we got to keep him outa the place. So I say block the road soon's this artillery gets by—and block it good!"

"But—"

"But nothin'! I got to get back an' make my report—in a hell of a hurry! I'll send over for the plane, and that poor kid Turner. The damn Jerries got him!"

Captain Mathews studied him for a minute. "All right, feller. I'll probably catch merry hell, but I'll do it. And I'll give you a motorcycle to get back to your field."

His gang of hard-boiled truck

drivers didn't know the why nor the wherefore of their captain's new, crisp orders, but they liked the idea of being ordered to block a road and keep it blocked.

"Cripes!" said one driver. "Mostly it's gettin' cussed out for doin' that very thing—an' now we get ordered to do it! Boy howdy! I'll enjoy this business!"

Carey bummed a cigarette and paced the edge of the road impatiently. The guns going up toward Montfaucon still crawled past, but the end of the line was in sight. There was no telling when Clemenceau's party would be heading up, too. The road had to be blocked—right away! If that failed—

**T**HEN the last gun carriage passed. A transport man came up with a motorcycle. Shorty Mathews was bawling orders and truck engines were roaring as Dick Carey swung onto the motorcycle. He winced as a sudden pain went through his arm. "To hell with it!" he thought grimly. No time must be lost in getting to Colonel Hill with his information.

But fast time was impossible on this road! The farther along Carey got, the more congested it became. And that arm was bothering him a lot; it was hard to hold the motorcycle in a straight line. He passed a line of camions, barely missed hitting one of them. His head ached, his eyes burned.

If he had had sense enough to think about it, he would have known he was worn out, exhausted. But still that familiar chant rang through his head. He had to get back, make his report, and get up there in his plane to see that everything went all right!

He almost missed the turn-off on the road to Headquarters. Careening wildly, he took the side road and tore straight for Colonel Hill's shack. Dimly he saw the colonel scanning the empty sky. And then something happened to the motor-

cycle, and night settled peacefully upon Dick Carey.

When Carey opened his eyes he was in his own bunk, with head bandaged and arm bandaged, and Colonel Hill was standing over him. The colonel leaned forward eagerly.

"What did you find out, Carey? What did Johnson have to tell us?"

"Plenty," drawled Carey. "Gimme a cigarette, will you?"

The colonel not only gave him a cigarette, he held a match for him.

"Well, what was it?" he demanded. "You've been out for hours—I've got to know at once!"

"Johnson heard about a plot to kill Clemenceau," said Carey, and dragged at the cigarette. "The Jerries found out Clemenceau was goin' up to Montfaucon and they planned to bump him off. The idea was—"

"Kill Clemenceau!" Colonel Hill sputtered furiously, and gave it up. "My God!" he said, and sat down hard.

"Did they?" asked Carey.

"They did not!" growled the colonel. "But it wasn't our fault! Lady Luck protected us—and Clemenceau! Look at this!"

He pulled an official communication from his pocket, handed it to Carey; but before Carey could begin to read it, the colonel took it back.

"It's from GHQ—Pershing himself!" he said. "Just a nice juicy cussing out for all of us along here behind Montfaucon. The road was so jammed with transports that Clemenceau and his party couldn't get even close to Montfaucon! Pershing says we've got to snap out of it and put transportation facilities on such a basis that there won't be any more jammed roads!"

"He says Clemenceau has criticized the American Army severely because of this unfortunate incident!" Colonel Hill put the paper back in his pocket. "That's what I call luck of the highest order—especially when you get yourself

knocked out by a motorcycle after coming through God knows what kind of hell in a plane to bring that information!"

Dick Carey yawned: "I reckon Lady Luck an' me oughta split on that fifty-fifty," he drawled.

The colonel spun around quickly. "What do you mean?"

"Well, I figured that was the only way to stop that plot. Johnson didn't have time to tell me all the dope. The Jerries broke in on us—got him. There wasn't much time to do things when I finally got back over the Lines. Then I happened to run into an old sidekick who runs a transport outfit, an' I asked him to block the road pronto. Seems like he did it right well."

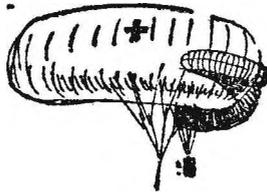
For a minute or two Colonel Hill said nothing in a very obvious fashion. He just stood there with his mouth open and stared at Carey.

"Boy," he said finally, "if you ever get a split with Lady Luck, it wouldn't be fifty-fifty. You'd get it all! You ought to have three medals for this—but I can't see a chance for you to get even one. We can pass the word along, however, and straighten General Pershing out on this business."

Carey smiled his familiar slow smile. "Hell, Colonel, I don't want any medal. What I want—and want bad—is a drink 'bout so long!" He gestured with his one good arm.

Colonel Hill looked at him a long time. When he finally spoke, his eyes under their bushy grey eyebrows were twinkling. "I'll get you a drink; I'll drink one with you. And the toast will be: 'To the rotten transportation facilities of the A.E.F.!'"

"Yeah," drawled Dick Carey, "I think motorcycles are lousy myself!"



*Next Issue: Exciting War-Air Fiction by* GEORGE BRUCE,  
LT. SCOTT MORGAN, F. E. RECHNITZER, BOB  
CLARE, METTEAU MILES, *and Others!*

**OVER 200 MILLION TOOTSIE ROLLS SOLD LAST YEAR**

**WORLD  
WAR  
PLANES**

# THEN & NOW

**MODERN  
WAR  
PLANES**

1—The Blackburn "Kangaroo" is one of the oddly named ships put out by the British Blackburn Aeroplane and Motor Co., Ltd., during the war. Despite the name "Kangaroo" seeming to suggest leaping tendencies, the ship was used very effectively in anti-submarine work patrolling the North Sea. It also carried out long range bombing assignments. The upper wings were much larger than the lower, the former's span being around 75 feet while the latter were only 47½ feet. The twin engines were Falcon Rolls of 250 h.p., each mounted halfway between the wings. A gun pit in the nose and another halfway between the tail and wings' trailing edges gave the ship good protection. The tail construction was of

1A—The Blackburn "Shark" is a modern Torpedo Spotter Reconnaissance Biplane. It may have either two or three seats and be either a sea or land plane. The metal monocoque fuselage has watertight compartments with the pilot's pit below the cutout center section. A large cockpit for navigator and gunner behind is connected by a hinged metal hood between. The wings may be folded easily by hydraulically operated latch pins. Ailerons are adjustable. A torpedo of about 1500 pounds is carried in crutches below the fuselage or its equivalent in bombs under the wings. A 700 h.p. Armstrong-46 feet.

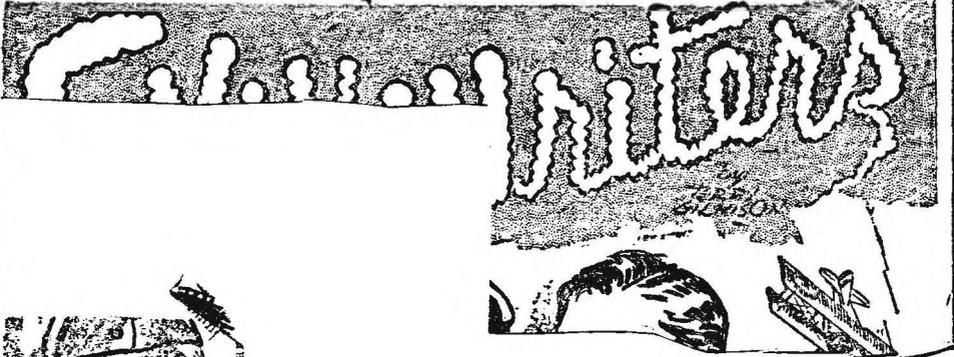
Siddley "Tiger" engine is used. It has a cruising range of 550 miles. The span is

2—The French S. E. A. firm, meaning Societe d'Etudes Aeronautiques, began manufacturing planes late in the war years, but they put out a very successful job in the model 4C2 despite their late start. It was a two-seater biplane with the cockpits back of the wings. The fuselage was square-cut in shape along its entire length. The Lorraine-Dietrich engine of 350 h.p. gave the ship great power for a reconnaissance plane. The wings of almost 40 feet span were held by a double bay of struts on each side. The fuselage was 28 feet long. The large triangular fin of the tail was characteristic of the design. The undercarriage had a pair of parallel spreader bars. The axle was fitted with rubber shock absorbers.

2A—The C. A. M. S. (Chantiers Aero-Maritimes de la Seine) airplane marine specialists are connected to the former S. E. A. by the modern Potes firm. The C. A. M. S. 65 is a bombing and reconnaissance flying boat. It is a twin engine single bay equal span biplane. The Gnome-Rhone air-cooled radial engines of 500 h.p. are mounted on N struts above the hull. The forward portion of the wooden hull is surmounted by an enclosure of the front observer's cockpit in which windows are inclined downward seats two side by side with a span of 67 feet.

ward. A twin Lewis is placed on a flexible mounting. The pilot's open cockpit with a span of 67 feet. A rear gunner is situated behind the wings. The ship is 48 feet 10 inches long

TEST YOUR WAR-AIR KNOWLEDGE -  
FILL IN THE BLANKS BELOW - C'MON YOU

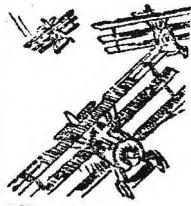


THE "THREE FLYING BROTHERS" OF R.F.C. WERE  
 1 J \_\_\_\_\_, CAPTAIN  
 AND LIEUT. A-  
 M=C \_\_\_\_\_

LIEUT. M \_\_\_\_\_  
 THE FAMOUS GERMAN ACE, WAS CALLED THE "EAGLE OF LILLE"



3 THE ABOVE IS  
 M \_\_\_\_\_



4 THE AMERICAN DOWN THE  
 ON HIS FIRST TERRITORY  
 J \_\_\_\_\_ S \_\_\_\_\_

BRITISH ROYAL AIR FORCES, THE WHITE RUSSIAN ARMY AND GENERAL WRANGEL'S THIRD ARMY.

The answers are on Page 125—if you MUST Look!

# WINGS *of* VALOR

*Black-Hooded Horror  
Hovers Over Men Hag-  
Ridden by Fear!*

By  
LT. FRANK JOHNSON

*Author of "Spads of Glory,"  
"Hell Above the Clouds," etc.*

**B**ILL McCALL paused outside the squadron mess hall, listened to the hum of voices inside the big room. There was a chorus of good-natured laughs, then a young, high-pitched voice holding forth earnestly.

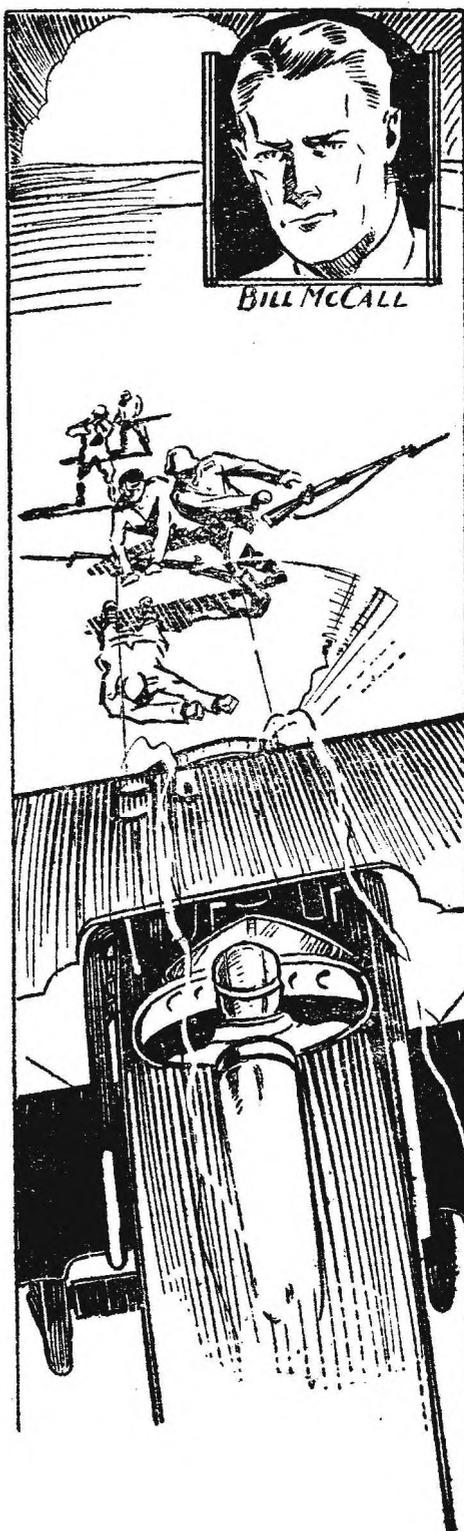
"I tell you, I'll bet my brother Kent could handle this Hauptmann Wolff!" the voice exclaimed positively. "You guys wait; sooner or later Kent will tangle with this Boche big shot, and that'll be his end. I got a letter from him today—"

"From Wolff?" a scoffing pilot asked maliciously.

"Naw, you dope, from Kent. I tell you—"

A huge figure materialized from the gloom beside McCall. "Young Campbell pinning some more verbal medals on his brother?" the newcomer chuckled.

McCall grinned at his flight mate, Steve Brendon. "Sounds like it," he replied. "That kid's a hound for



*A hail of bullets rained down*

punishment. In spite of the ribbing the boys give him, he's still always ready to pop off about that wonderful brother of his."

Brendon was big, and he walked with a flat-footed step that was a hangover from his pre-war days as a big town rookie cop. He grinned at the slighter McCall, nodded toward the door.

"Let's go in and get a load of this," he suggested.

Men made way for the two friends as they crowded inside the door. The room was well filled with a noisy group of officers. Cigarette smoke swirled in grey eddies; a raucous gramophone squawked determinedly until McCall silenced it with a well-aimed magazine. In the center of the room a second lieutenant was the focus of a ring of grinning pilots.

"What was in that letter?" Hal Maller asked casually. Maller was a slight, mild-mannered man; never drunk, never noisy. He was the last man in the squadron to be recognized for what he was—second ranking American ace, with a record of victories only slightly lower than that of Rickenbacker. Maller was popular with his squadron mates, and his scalp was badly wanted by the Germans.

**B**OB CAMPBELL turned to Maller, his face beaming.

"Why, Kent wrote that he was in Military Intelligence work, now. He may be working on this Wolff case right now!"

Bill McCall was watching quietly, grey eyes fixed on the slender Campbell. "How long since you've seen your brother, kid?" he inquired quietly.

"Six years," Campbell retorted. "You see, Kent was going to school in Germany when the war broke; he's two years older than me. He was doing some important research work there. And say! Did he have

a time getting out when the scrap started! He served with the English awhile, then when the U. S. A. got in, too, he transferred to our army. We've tried to get together, but orders have always interfered. Still I hear from him occasionally, like that letter today. Now that he's in Intelligence maybe he'll have a chance to get around here."

McCall nodded, and the others laughed. McCall had heard this story many times before from Campbell, as had the others. But somehow, looking into Campbell's young face and seeing the inner light that transformed it at mention of the brother, McCall had no desire to laugh. The youngster's obvious hero worship for his brother Kent seemed to the hard-bitten McCall to be something fine and true, something that the sordid war had not spoiled.

Campbell was fishing in a tunic pocket. He pulled out a photograph, handed it to McCall.

"He sent me this picture today."

McCall took the photo and looked at the clear-eyed smiling face on the card. Kent Campbell looked about Bob's age, in fact he bore a close resemblance except for blond hair where Bob's was dark, and the scar. The scar was long, running from the left eye in a great crescent down to the mouth, giving a perpetual quirk to the lips.

"Looks like you, kid," McCall said quietly. "Ugly gash on his face, though. How'd it happen?"

Bob Campbell nodded proudly. "He got that while he was with the English," he explained. "He was in the cavalry there and a Uhlan saber made that mark."

McCall felt that Campbell's face held a sort of pathetic gratitude. He, McCall, had refrained from kidding the youngster, something in which all the others save Maller took part. Campbell never showed anger or hurt, but McCall knew that the kid-

ding must get under his sensitive skin.

"Maybe this hooded guy will tangle with *Kapitan Wolff*," Steve Brendon was saying. "Wonder how that scrap would come out?"

"You'll never know," Maller scoffed. "Masked Marvel! Mystery Pilot! Anybody would think you guys were a bunch of tabloid news hawks. All this mysterious hooded bird is after is a bit of free publicity!"

"I ain't so sure," Brendon argued. "Nobody knows who he is, or what his game is. He might be French or English for all anybody seems to know. But he knows his stuff, that guy. Ain't he knocked down three Boche who were gettin' in our hair? Well, all I hope is, that he manages to down this Wolff, and the sooner the better!"

McCall walked out and Brendon followed. The big Yank had always had ambitions to be a detective, and now he gave his imagination full rein. McCall paid scant attention; his thoughts fixed on the German flight leader, Hauptmann Wolff, and the mystery pilot.

Wolff was doing plenty of damage and Allied Air H.Q. had sarcastically demanded to know why some Yank pilot couldn't stop the Hun ace. McCall wondered if the Black Hood would accomplish that.

The Black Hood was becoming a tradition. He came and disappeared in the black Spad, and apparently nobody knew his identity.

The idea of a masked, mystery pilot was both fantastic and puzzling. Yet McCall knew that the man existed, knew that he was doing good work. Those who had never seen the black Spad in action were inclined to scoff at the legend, but in general there were two theories: either the Black Hood was a disgraced officer who had been forbidden to fly and was using this bizarre method to avoid detection, or else he was a

member of Intelligence, with a different, definite purpose behind the masquerade.

"I'm gonna fly over to the base hospital at Neuilly and chew the rag with Arnold," McCall said abruptly. "There's a good field near there. Want to come, Steve?"

"Guess not," Brendon replied. "Give Pete my regards; tell him we're saving Wolff for him until he gets out."

McCall nodded. Pete Arnold was a member of the squadron who had fallen under the guns of Hauptmann Wolff and lived through the experience.

**F**IVE minutes later McCall's Camel shot down the field, into the air.

It was after midnight when he returned. He found the field boiling with excitement. Two great craters loomed on the tarmac, and between them was the wreckage of a Camel. In an adjoining field a crumpled mass of debris was ringed by watching Yanks. McCall saw a huge wing pointing like an accusing finger at the sky, and on the wing was a black cross.

"For the love of Mike!" McCall ejaculated. "What's been going on around here, Steve?"

Brendon's usually stolid face was alight with excitement. "You don't know what you missed!" he blurted. "A flight of Hun bombers were started over, headed for the ammo dump back at Marmotte. They'd have got there, too, and dropped their eggs if it hadn't been for Black Hood!"

"What did he do?"

"Nothin'," Brendon drawled. "Nothin' but pitch into those light bombers an' hold 'em back until we could get ships warmed and in the air! He downed that Rumppler there himself. We lost two ships, but the bombers didn't get past this field two miles. Murphy is dead, and Marsh is some

shot up, but the dump was saved, and H.Q. is all hopped up about it. They've offered a month's leave in Paris to the guy who'll come forward and prove he's Black Hood!"

"You guys are going screwy about this hooded guy," McCall scoffed. "How do you know it was he who headed the Huns?"

"We saw him!" Brendon insisted. "After we got up there, and he saw we had the scrap under control he disappeared, but I got a good look at him before that. He wore a black hood and black cloak. Anyway, the pilot of that Rumpler was alive after the crash, and he was cussing Black Hood, all right. You know who the Huns think he is? Maller! Yep, this Jerry pilot let that out. But I ain't so sure. I've got my own theory!"

"I'll bet it's good," McCall grinned. "Let's turn in; remember you're flying with me in the morning."

**T**HERE were four Camels in the early patrol next morning; the squadron was short of pilots. Bill McCall led it, and behind him were the ships of Brendon and two green replacements. McCall's arm flailed in the take-off signal, and the Camels blasted down the field and climbed swiftly into the cold morning air.

Bill McCall flew at point, and as the flight detoured widely in German air and turned to swing back toward Yank territory, his thoughts were of Bob Campbell, Wolff and Black Hood. He was still thinking of them when a half dozen Pfalz fighters came roaring down at them.

Instinct jerked McCall's eyes aloft, and he saw the thin-winged enemy ships knifing down like berserk thunderbolts. Smoke and flame blasted warningly from McCall's Vickers and his wings waggled. Already Brendon and the others were aware of their attackers, and were swirling up to meet them. McCall cursed savagely under his breath. He was outnum-

bered and half his flight were raw replacements. His orders were to avoid unequal combat if possible. But it wasn't possible now. The Yanks had to fight.

McCall kicked rudder and hauled back on the stick. The battered Camel thrust its nose skyward, and the drone of the Bently rose to a labored thunder. Scarlet lanced from his guns, once, again. The second Pfalz in the diving formation suddenly jerked violently, like a stricken hawk. Then its dive steepened, and it came screaming down through the thin Yank ranks. McCall, seeing the limp, crimson faced figure of the pilot, shuddered. The Pfalz went on down to crash in a spume of yellowish smoke and flame.

The next moment the two flights mingled in a mad skirl of flashing wings and spurting guns. Black crossed wings skittered past McCall so swiftly that they seemed but a shadow flickering down. But on the fuselage of the roaring Pfalz his trained eyes had caught a flashing glimpse of a familiar insignia. A grinning wolf's head! The insignia of *Kapitan Wolff*! At the sight McCall's heart clogged in his throat—not for himself, but for the two fledglings.

Five to four now, but not for long. Down below a Camel flew in aimless, zigzag circles. Then, like an eagle pinioning a bewildered dove, the Pfalz of Hauptmann Wolff struck and reeled away. The Camel, with a replacement pilot at the stick, flopped lazily upon its back, whirled from that into the tight spinning torture of a tailspin. Scarlet blossomed forth and the Camel melted in the flaming vortex before it reached the waiting earth.

But unexpectedly the second rookie scored a victory. The Boche who had lanced confidently in at the youngster found, too late, that he had caught a Tartar. The kid spun

in a neat Immelmann and the Vickers transfixed the gaudy Pfalz. Then, following his orders, the fledgling streaked for home. And no Huns were near enough to cut him off. McCall grunted with satisfaction; Brendon and himself were veterans, able to care for themselves.

He saw Brendon a mile away, holding his own against two Germans. Then tracer slammed down on McCall and he banked savagely. Again the grey streams of death plucked for his life. A darting glance showed Wolff above, riding his tail, and the remaining Pfalz hanging ready for a killing thrust.

A glancing slug cut a furrow across McCall's skull, and the rush of blood seeped into his eyes, blinding him. He swiped at it viciously, dug at his goggles. Even in that split second he knew he was doomed, knew that before he regained his bearings the Spandaus of *Kapitan Wolff* would riddle him.

But, strangely, the expected burst did not come. McCall ripped the goggles away, cleared his sight and stared above him. A Camel had darted between the German and McCall, had intercepted the lead meant for the flight leader. Discouraged by this new development, the German leader sheered off and turned toward home. A mile to the east a plume of smoke indicated that Steve Brendon had brought his own duel to a satisfactory conclusion.

McCall signaled groggily, and Brendon saw and came roaring back. The three Camels drove toward the home tarmac, and watching the third, McCall saw that his rescuer had been Bob Campbell!

What had Campbell been doing out there alone? He must have flown in direct defiance of orders. Then McCall remembered the way Campbell had come to him with his problems during his stay with 19. The kid was grateful for McCall's under-

standing and for the fact that he had taken him seriously. And now McCall realized he owed Campbell his life.

The kid appeared in great good spirits, for before the landing he banked clumsily to the left, circled the field before dropping down to the ground. McCall grinned; Campbell would never learn to pull a steep bank gracefully.

"What's the big idea?" McCall demanded after the Camels had been rolled into their hangars. "Who told you to go barging off by yourself? Don't you know it's against orders?"

"I know," Campbell muttered. "But I had a hunch that you guys were gonna run into trouble. So I just moseyed out to see."

**M**CCALL hadn't the heart to say anything. "I'll fix it with the major, but don't try it again."

"Say, did you hear what the Black Hood did last night with those Hun bombers?" Campbell demanded.

"Yeah, I heard," McCall replied. He watched Campbell curiously as the kid walked away. There had been a strange eager light in Bob's eyes at mention of Black Hood. Then Brendon came up and pulled McCall aside.

"Did you see what the kid pulled up there?" he asked excitedly. "Say, listen! This just backs up my theory that the Black Hood is really Bob Campbell!"

McCall jerked in surprise. This explanation hadn't occurred to him before. Then he laughed scoffingly.

"Well, I'll bet he is!" Brendon went on defensively. "Campbell was nowhere in sight last night when the bombing raid was pulled. And he's exactly the hot-headed, romantic type that would think of a stunt like that! And then just now; he was out ramming around on his own, and he dived in just like Black Hood did last night!"

"I wouldn't know about your theory, Steve," McCall said slowly, "but one thing I do know, I owe the kid my skin."

McCall was off flying duty for the rest of the day and he obtained permission to hunt amusement in Le-longe for the afternoon. He was astride one of the squadron motorcycles and heading toward the road when the drone of a fast flying plane welled out of the northeast. He paused, while excited cries rang across the field. Gunners appeared, running madly toward the gun pits along the border of the field. Mechanics scurried toward the hangars as pilots burst from the recreation room.

Then the ship appeared and lanced down at the field, Mercedes screaming wide open. The sun glinted on black crosses, and from the sand-bagged gun pits the field gunners began to pour a hurried fire at the diving Hun.

**B**UT the cowl-mounted Spandaus remained silent; as the Boche ship neared the tarmac the ground guns ceased firing. A hand flung something overside, and a bit of white thudded upon the field. With a screaming rush the Pfalz mounted into the sky, and McCall saw the wolf head insignia. *Kapitan Wolff* had paid the 19th a call!

Brendon was first to reach the message. As he stopped to read it, the Squadron Commander came running from his office. A moment later Brendon came trotting over to McCall.

"It was a message from Wolff," Brendon jerked. "It warned Maller, alias the Black Hood, that he'd die before dawn!"

"More melodramatic stuff," McCall jeered, as he sent the motorcycle rocketing toward town.

It was after dark before McCall returned. As soon as he had parked

his 'cycle he went in search of Bob Campbell. It had occurred to him that he hadn't really thanked the kid for what he had done on the morning patrol, and he knew Campbell was sensitive. Anyway, he wanted a talk with the youngster.

But Campbell was nowhere to be found. For half an hour McCall wandered about the field before finding a mechanic who had seen the kid take off in his Camel shortly after dusk.

"I didn't see where he went," the greaseball admitted, "and he didn't tell me. Seemed pretty excited and close-mouthed about something; just roared off without sayin' nothin'."

McCall was vaguely disturbed. As he waited, a growing hunch took control of him. If he only knew—then he remembered. Bob Campbell kept a diary; McCall had seen him writing industriously in it at the end of each day. There might be something there—

He dodged into Campbell's Nissen and rummaged ruthlessly through the kid's duffle. At last he found the diary and opened it to the last page. The entry bore that day's date, and McCall read swiftly.

"I heard from Kent today," Campbell had written. "The old chateau in the foothills near Raoul is now a Yank Intelligence advanced base. Kent will be there tonight at eleven, and I'm going to see him."

McCall cursed savagely, dropping the book. He raced out on the field and ordered his ship warmed. Something in his voice stung the indolent mechanics into instant action. Within ten minutes McCall was slashing through the night toward the mountains.

He knew the location of the ruined chateau well enough. Technically it was between the lines; rather, between where the lines would be if they extended farther into the hills. Just why he felt so sure something

was wrong, McCall couldn't say. But the indefiniteness of his errand did not hold him back. He crowded on the last ounce of power the big Bentley would take, and sat with eyes straining through the tricky light.

A brilliant moon bathed the silent earth with silvery light, making objects almost as clear as day. But he knew that light was deceptive, that if he landed he would need every bit of skill he possessed.

Watching the moving earth, McCall sighted the dark blot that was his goal. Up here the spasmodic boom of artillery came muted by distance. A Camel was down on the rolling field near the chateau, its clicking prop making a vague silvery circle in the moonlight. Everything else seemed quiet, peaceful.

Then as McCall cut his throttle and glided silently down, he caught sight of a moving blot of figures coming across the field. Light glinted on coal scuttle helmets, and without hesitation McCall cut in the Vickers.

As the hail of bullets rained down some of the antlike figures dropped to the ground, and the rest scattered toward the protection of the trees bordering the field. Rifles spat up at McCall as he contemptuously came into the wind and drifted in for the landing. Tiny rents appeared in the Camel's patched wings as McCall centered all his attention on setting the single seater down without crashing.

The landing gear struck, the ship staggered and bounced, then settled down and coasted to a halt. McCall leaped out, ran toward the chateau.

"Campbell!" he yelled. "Hey, kid, where are you! Let's get out of this!"

An answering hail came from the building, and a dark form came running. "That you, kid?" McCall cried.

Campbell came up, his dark hair

(Continued on page 120)



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(Continued from page 119)

ruffled and showing beneath the helmet, his thin face troubled. "How did you—" he began.

"Boche infantrymen are at the other end of the field," McCall broke in. "Get in your ship and let's beat it!"

"They've located the Intelligence base, laid a trap!" Campbell gasped. "I was to have met Kent here. He didn't come. Maybe—maybe he was trapped and captured before I came! He must have been, otherwise he'd have warned me!"

"No time for guessing!" McCall urged sharply. "Let's clear out of here. You go first; I'll cover your take-off."

CAMPBELL nodded, flung himself into the Camel, jammed on the throttle. The trim fighting bus bounded down the field and lunged up in a beautiful climbing turn. McCall gained his own cockpit and followed swiftly. He barely cleared the trees, and slugs zipped up at him. The other Camel was lining toward the 19th and McCall followed, overtaking it.

His eyes were suddenly hard and cold. He was remembering Bob Campbell's shining eyes as he had talked of his brother Kent. Then McCall did a very strange thing!

He steepened into a dive, and under his tense fingers the Vickers rippled into life and sent lead singing at the leading Camel's tail.

A surprised white face peered back at him, a wildly waving arm shot up. Again McCall loosed a savage burst. The Camel ahead of him staggered, came about with flaming guns.

Slugs slashed past McCall's face, plucked savagely at his leather coat. They whined and screamed from the Bentley's cowl before he could slip out of the hail. He thrust the Camel's nose down, then came up in

a steep vril. But the other was watching and alert. McCall's maneuver missed and the sturdy Camel reeled under the leaden punishment as the Yank flung it savagely through every aerial acrobatic he knew.

Steadily, relentlessly, the second Camel was forcing the fight. McCall writhed in his cockpit as a bullet ripped through the loose skin of his side. Another cut the chin strap of his helmet, and the driving slipstream snatched the headgear away. Blood trickled down into McCall's eyes, mingling with the sweat and oil that streaked his face. He slammed a burst into the enemy's tail assembly, saw the Camel stagger. Then abruptly it was above, flying even with him.

**M**CCALL'S hand flashed to the throttle, checking his speed. As the ship lost headway a dark blot moved past overhead. And at that split second McCall jerked his ship into a stall. Nose pointed up at the dark shape, the pursuit bus hung a quivering second before falling off into a spin. In that brief flash of time McCall pressed the Bowdens, held them while a steady shuttle of fire stabbed upward. As the last cartridge case tinkled overside, the plane above him staggered, went smashing down in an uncontrolled dive. A smashing impact heralded the crash.

Face grimly drawn, McCall glided earthward. The fight had taken place almost directly over the field from which he had taken off. A small body of men were emerging from the chateau, carrying something between them. At sight of the winged shape bearing down on them, they broke for shelter. The fresh belt in McCall's Vickers yammered through the breeches, and the slugs hailed over the dark thing on the ground, caught the running figures fairly. And this

(Continued on page 127)



### \$50 for a Story

"I am glad to tell you that I have been progressing rapidly with my course and have been able to dispose of a few stories and articles. My last story was sold to *Outdoor Life* and brought me \$50."

CYRIL E. GROZELLE,  
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Ontario, Canada.

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Have you ever tried?

Have you ever attempted even the least bit of training, under competent guidance?

Or have you been sitting back, as it is so easy to do, waiting for the day to come when you will awaken, all of a sudden, to the discovery, "I am a writer"?

If the latter course is the one of your choosing, you probably *never will write*. Lawyers must be law clerks. Engineers must be draftsmen. We all know that, in our times, the egg does come before the chicken.

It is seldom that any one becomes a writer until he (or she) has been writing for some time. That is why so many authors and writers spring up out of the newspaper business. The day-to-day necessity of writing—of gathering material about which to write—develops their talent, their background and their confidence as nothing else could.

That is why the Newspaper Institute of America bases its writing instruction on journalism—continuous writing—the training that has produced so many successful authors.

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# Around the Hangar



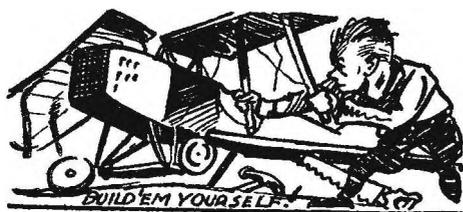
A Department

for Readers

**GREETINGS**—all you peelots, buzzards and parlor aces! How did you like the plans for the Breguet 14B.2 in this issue?

Many of you have asked for model-building plans—so here they are! And we're giving you something different too—accurate plans of World War planes that are easy to build! It's simple getting the plans for present-day ships—but the actual dope on those old warhorses is mighty scarce, and will be obtainable only in **THE LONE EAGLE**.

Build these models of actual fighting



ships that took part in the Big Fracas—it's the liveliest hobby in the world, guaranteed to bring you loads of fun!

## It's Up to You

There's another thing many of you kiwis have been clamoring for in **THE LONE EAGLE**—more modern stories. And you know us—we're here at the Home Hangar just to give **YOU** what you want!

This is **YOUR** magazine and its policy is up to you.

So far we've given you only the war-time exploits of the world's greatest sky fighter, John Masters.

But—

In the secret archives of Lieutenant Scott Morgan, far from prying eyes, repose the accounts of John Masters' exciting adventures **AFTER** the big guns stopped booming.

These yarns, which have never been told, are dynamite!

Thrills! Excitement! Suspense! The fate of nations in the balance! Stories of averted wars—stories of battles that never reached the front page of your newspaper!

They couldn't be told up until now—it would have been dangerous to make these events public.

Shall we shoot the works?

Again we say—it's **UP TO YOU!**

Each and every one of you—write me at once and tell me whether you would prefer to have John Masters remain on the front fighting the Boche, or to have him leave the theatre of the World War permanently and carry on in the service of America in post-war activities.

Remember—there'll be no turning back once Masters leaves the World War scene. We've loads of after-the-war stories to tell. When do we start?

I'm waiting for **YOU** to write me and sound the signal!

## News Flashes

The New York aviation show—which provided a grand time for the air-minded—produced a million dollars in sales of airplanes, and 200,000 people attended. Who says the Big City isn't air-minded?

Amelia Earhart, the aviatrix whose former activities have made her one of the most famous among feminine pilots, is planning a round-the-world jaunt in her Electra.

A safety program for domestic transport was adopted in Washington—calling for the use of all the latest modern improvements to prevent and fight air disaster. That's progress!

The eighth annual soaring meet will be held at Elmira, N. Y., June 26-July 10. Going to be around there?

During the recent disastrous floods, American airlines evacuated more than 1,000 people from the flooded area of Louis-



ville—carried 10,000 lbs. of Red Cross supplies into stricken areas—and performed other services too numerous to mention.

Following the example of such states as Michigan, Connecticut, Pennsylvania and Nebraska, four more states are planning establishment of aeronautic regulation and supervision of intrastate flying. These are Tennessee, Wyoming, New York and Missouri.

Oregon State Senators are seeking an appropriation for a state-owned airplane for use in patrolling forest reserves, transporting food and medicine in emergencies, and for the use of the State Inspector of Aeronautics.

**Airport Progress**

Have you a little airport near your home?

Tremendous progress is being made in dotting the landscape with airports. The latest appropriation for airport work is \$60,000,000. So if you haven't one now—there's a chance of your getting an airport before long, if Uncle Sam has anything to say about it—and he has!

The Municipal Airport in Los Angeles is to be vastly improved. Contemplated changes call for a better runway system, and provision of landing lights, radio beacons, hangars, waiting rooms and other facilities.

Other airports on which extensive work is being done, or has been completed, are those of Dallas, Tex., Chattanooga, Tenn., Charleston, S. C., Buffalo, N. Y., and St. Louis, Mo.

(Continued on page 124)

**LONE EAGLES OF AMERICA,  
22 WEST 48th STREET,  
NEW YORK CITY**

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(Print legibly)

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State whether you are a pilot, can fly, have ridden as passenger, or intend to become a pilot .....

Date .....

(Signature)

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If already a member check here

6-37

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If you are denied the blessing of a baby all your own and yearn for a baby's arms and a baby's smile do not give up hope. Just write in confidence to Mrs. Mildred Owens, Dept. Y, 532 Hanan Bldg., Kansas City, Mo., and she will tell you about a simple home method that helped her after being denied 15 yrs. Many others say this had helped bless their lives. Write now and try this wonderful happiness.

## Blood-Chilling Stories

In Every Issue of

# THRILLING MYSTERY

10c—At All Newsstands

(Continued from page 123)

If aviation progress makes your pulse beat faster—if you're fascinated by sky travel—if stories of heroism in the air thrill you—you should belong to THE LONE EAGLES OF AMERICA.

If you haven't joined yet, do so now. There's a coupon for your convenience on page 123.

No dues. No fees. Young or old, Americans or those living in other countries, men and women, young men and girls—all are welcome. The one and only requirement



is your enthusiastic endorsement of all forward steps in aviation.

### Portraits of Aces

Members of THE LONE EAGLES OF AMERICA are entitled to obtain, FREE OF CHARGE, twelve crackerjack portraits of World War aces. To get them, just send three name-strips from three front covers of THE LONE EAGLE, taken from three consecutive issues no more than a year old. Enclose six cents in stamps for mailing.

Two name-strips and ten cents in stamps, or just the name-strip on the cover of this issue and fifteen cents in stamps, will also do the trick if you're in a hurry.

### Letters! Letters! Letters!

Let's open our mail. It sure is swell, the way you Eaglets are corresponding with me regularly. That is, a large percentage of you. The rest of you—get the habit, please. A letter from every reader after every issue appears is what I want.

Well, the first missive to be unsealed this time is from John F. MacLeod, 1225 Willow Court, Jacksonville, Fla.:

DROME OF THE DAMNED was really swell. I enjoyed it very much as I enjoy all of your stories. However, I think THE FLYING COPPIN was the best yet. How about using your influence with Lieut. Scott Morgan—ask him to write some more stories with new inventions by which the Boche NEARLY succeeded in ending the war with their dastardly schemes. I think that everyone likes these stories best.

Next is Joseph Patrick Cantwell, of 66 South Olden Ave., Trenton, N. J.:

Let me offer you my congratulations on the fine features and stories in your magazine.

The writer who deserves the most credit is Lieut. Scott Morgan, who makes the Lone Eagle stories possible.

I'm enrolling in THE LONE EAGLES OF AMERICA. Keep up the good work.

Lowell Frumpton, Box 306, Reyaud,  
(Continued on page 126)

# The New COLLEGE HUMOR 15c Everywhere

# PEN PALS

Here are some new members of *THE LONE EAGLES OF AMERICA*—all air fans. Many others will be listed next month. The figures in the parentheses are the ages of all members.

Forrest Towle, 429 First St., San Rafael, Calif.  
 Bobby Dallason (13), 326 N. McKinley, Cooper, Wym.  
 Steve J. Balogh (14), 1692 E. 30th St., Lorain, Ohio.  
 Herbert Nosley (13), 3606 University Pl., Baltimore, Md.  
 Elbert Jones (14), Millekena, Colorado.  
 Lloyd Goldsmith (16), 215 Jefferson, Pueblo, Colo.  
 David Meyer (12), 180 University, Buffalo, N. Y.  
 Grant Stephenson (12), Whitevale, Ontario, Canada.  
 Edwin Sipes (18), Box 165, Vandergrift, Pa.  
 Joseph Breier (13), 4340 Linton Ave., St. Louis, Mo.  
 Douglas Redfield (13), 718 So. 2nd Ave., Maywood, Ill.  
 William C. Henke (15), 1520 Woodlawn Avenue, Indianapolis, Ind.  
 Howard McGinn (13), 192-16-122 Ave., St. Albans, New York.  
 Paul Turoy (14), 3625 Armitage, Chicago, Ill.  
 Dick Baer, 2206 Hollister, Madison, Wis.  
 Francis Russell (15), 12 Colbourne Crescent, Brookline, Mass.  
 Vernon Ryde (14), 1752 N. Wells St., Chicago, Ill.  
 Fletcher Riemann (10), 20B Sheridan Ave., Fort Riley.  
 James Averill (14), Buck Run, Pa.  
 Paul Williams (17), Coppenhill, Tenn.  
 Alex Sambor (15), 45 Cherry, Ware, Mass.  
 Demerest Schmitt (16), 513 Main St., Oregon City, Ore.  
 Roy Sewell, Jr., (11), 1050 Ponce de Leon Avenue, Atlanta, Ga.  
 Francelia Snyder (22), Sharon Springs, New York.  
 Mina Hormell (12), 1651 W. 218th St., General Delivery, Turnance, Calif.  
 Robert Anderson (14), 41 Robinson St., N. Cast, Pa.  
 B. Keiper (15), 205 E. 94th St., New York, N. Y.  
 Sam Dougan (13), Boorman, Water Loo, Wisconsin.  
 Lester Snyder (15), Spring St., Bedford, Mass.  
 Cecil Anderson (15), Trout Run, Pa.  
 Kenneth Warren Hammond (15), Snyder Lane, Stockton, Calif.  
 Arnold Lea (15), 109 Cambridge, Toronto, Canada.  
 Peter Santospago (13), 28 Rice St., Wellesley Hills, Mass.  
 Elmer Smith (20), 60 Wheeler Ave., Bridgeport, Conn.  
 Robert Donford (13), 613 W. Town St., Columbus, O.  
 John Wilson (17), 800 E. 3rd St., Fairmont, Minn.  
 Jimmie Brink (13), 1432 S. 34 St., Kansas City, Kan.  
 Walter Jimison (13), Stallo, Miss.  
 Bess Dillhoff (26), 2140 Pogue Ave., Cincinnati, O.

## ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 112

1. MAJOR JAMES, CAPT. WILLIAM, and LIEUT. ANTHONY McCUDDEN. Known for their skill and daring as flyers, the McCudden brothers made air history on the western front during the war. MAJOR JAMES McCUDDEN ran up a score of 57 victories and was decorated with the Victoria Cross.
2. Lieut. MAX IMMELMANN.
3. The MORANE "DESTROYER." This single-seater monoplane, the high-wing type of Morane, was one of the best fighting ships used by the French and British during the war. Powered by a 60 h.p. Le Rhone the top speed of this plane was 78 m.p.h.
4. Capt. JACQUES SWAAB.
5. Capt. BORIS SERGIEVSKY. Captain Sergievsky shot down eleven enemy planes and one observation balloon.

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### 135

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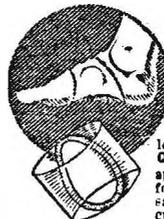
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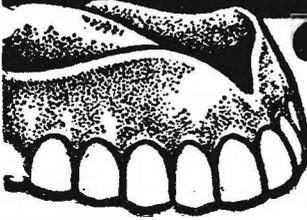
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for pile suffering. If you have piles in any form write for a FREE sample of Page's Pile Tablets and you will bless the day that you read this. Write today. E. R. Page Co., 421-B11 Page Bldg., Marshall, Mich.

# Mechanics AND HANDICRAFT

The Magazine of  
Science—Invention—Experiments

NOW ON SALE AT  
A NEW LOW PRICE  
**10c**

At All Stands

(Continued from page 124)

Quebec, Canada, writes in as follows:

I am a new and proud member of your organization and I am taking this opportunity to give you my opinion of your stories and departments. I am 21 and have been flying for three years, and next year I hope to have my own plane and be a pilot.

Right now, I'd like to say you have the best wartime stories out and don't I know it—John Masters is the king of them all as far as I am concerned.

I'd like to be a pen pal—anybody interested in writing me, please do so.

E. H. O'Toole, North Cottage, Meghara-morne, County Antrim, Ireland, says:

Since joining your club at the start of the year I have not missed a single issue of THE LONE EAGLE. All I can say is that your club is head and shoulders above all others.

I enclose three name-strips, please send me the portraits of the aces. And say, what about that insignia for members? We are very keen on it, so please hurry up.

I want to say in conclusion that THE LONE EAGLE has introduced me to some very dear pen pals, for which I will be ever grateful.

Now let's greet Billy Somerville, of 1446 South Water, Wichita, Kan.:

Look out, here I come in for a landing. I hope I'm expected as a Lone Eaglet. VERBOTEN SKIES and DOOMED WINGS were swell stories. I've been a reader for over a year. Keep on with the war-air stuff. I intend to be a pilot.

Load those ammo-belts and pull those chocks, I'm off.

James Bales, 139 Maple Ave., Excelsior Springs, Mo., sends us the following interesting letter:

I have read DEVIL'S STAFFEL and think it sure is a pip. I also read one of the best short stories in your magazine that I have ever read anywhere—TEN DAYS TO LIVE.

And now, getting to the subject of airplanes, I see by your department that the members are having a hot argument as to whether pursuits or bombers are best. I'll add my bit to the argument.

I think the pursuit plane is the best of the two because it has more zip and pep than a bomber. I like planes that are fast.

Clarence B. Brown, 707 North Broadway, New Ulm, Minn., lets us in on his ambitions:

I am planning great things for the future. In fact I am planning to make a round-the-world trip with a transport plane. If I had enough money I'd become a flyer right now and be "America's Youngest Aviator."

Also, I've written aviation stories and besides I originate plans for planes and gliders of my own. My latest is a plane eight feet long, rudder 2½ feet high, landing gear two feet from ground to fuselage, back swing 2½ feet on one side. Wing spread, 14 ft., 4 foot propeller and 1½ foot long cockpit.

We hear from India next—from A. L. Tomlinson, HQ Wing, 1st Battalion, Buffs (R.E.H.R.), Oulram Brks., Lucknow, India:

Well, Old Timer, I have finally decided to write to you. I have always been interested in flying, in fact in anything with wings on. Owing, I expect, to my service with the R.A.F. (Auxiliary Squadron).

I enjoy your magazine and would appreciate your adding me to your list of members. So—cheerio, all the best to you and THE LONE EAGLE.

George Holman, 1C7 Inkerman St., Bir-

Gayer

**COLLEGE HUMOR** 15c Everywhere

mingham 7, Warwickshire, England, shouts from across the seas:

I have just finished my second copy of THE LONE EAGLE and I think it is great. I should like a pen pal in Canada.

I have a new motto—it is, "Give me a copy of THE LONE EAGLE and I'll be happy." I reckon you ought to hang that Around the Hangar. So long!

There are loads more letters we've enjoyed reading—and some of them will be printed in the next issue. By the way—that next issue of THE LONE EAGLE—the gala August number, on all newsstands the first week in June—will be a humdinger! Look forward to it.

Featured is INFERNO OF THE SKY, a zooming, rapid-action novel of the Lone Eagle's further exploits in the World War by Lt. Scott Morgan. Also—FLAMING DOOM, a dramatic, exciting novelette by George Bruce. And stories by Bob Clare, F. E. Rechnitzer and other favorites. See you then.

—BRUCE McALESTER.

## WINGS OF VALOR

(Continued from page 121)

time there were none left to reach shelter.

He landed for the second time and ran toward the scene of the crash. The wreckage hadn't burned and McCall hauled a battered, almost unrecognizable body from the debris. For a moment he stood looking down at the man he had killed. Five minutes later he was back at the field, bending over the unconscious body of Bob Campbell.

Campbell was dressed in a German uniform, and there was a lump on the back of his head. Working with swift, deft fingers McCall removed the German uniform and placed his own Yank outfit on the unconscious pilot. Then, wearing only his coveralls and shivering in the cold air, McCall burned the Boche clothes. In a few minutes Campbell was conscious.

"What—what happened?" he asked dizzily. "I came to meet Kent. Someone struck me down from behind as I entered the chateau. Kent—where is he?"

"The Germans got wind of this  
(Continued on page 128)

# MONEY AND A BIKE!



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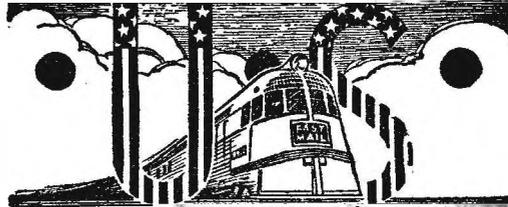
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is not a skin disease, says Dr. Hoermann, well-known Milwaukee Eczema specialist. If you have Eczema, sometimes called salt rheum, weeping eczema, milk crust, scald head, moist tetter, write for book of little-known facts FREE. Also learn about Dr. Hoermann's simple home treatment which has produced amazing results in his private practices. Dr. Rud. Hoermann, Inc., Suite 362, 2200 N. Third St., Milwaukee, Wis.

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(Continued from page 127)

place and laid a trap, kid," McCall said softly. "Your brother flew here to get you out and met a flock of Huns. One of them grabbed your Camel when Kent came down and strafed the field. And, kid, Kent was killed. Yeah, I saw the whole thing. But maybe you'd like to know—Kent was the Black Hood, the man who saved the ammo dump. Your brother was all right, Bob!"

"Dead!" breathed Campbell softly. "And he was the Black Hood? I felt sure of that all the time. But how'd you know?"

"There was a black hood and cape in his ship," McCall said quietly. "I was with him when he died."

"Gee!" even in the moonlight McCall could see the admiration that mingled with the grief in Campbell's face. "He was a great guy, McCall!"

They flew the Camel back, Campbell clinging to a wing.

"I can get part of this," Steve Brendon said later. They were talking in McCall's Nissen. "I can understand that Bob Campbell's beloved brother was, unknown to Bob, fighting with the Huns. But I don't get the rest of it!"

"Then listen," said McCall slowly. "Kent Campbell was really Hauptmann Wolff! You see, he'd lived in Germany long enough to either really sympathize with them, or else they

### LIST OF ERRORS

(SEE PAGE 99)

**LARGE PLANE DIVING DOWN FROM RIGHT**  
Machine-gun firing with no pilot in cockpit; Machine-gun too long; Sight should be on top of gun; Landing wheels too near together; Wing center section not in center; Wings held to center section with screws; One center section joint missing; Insignia not even; Wing ribs not parallel; Nieuport should have lower wing; Bullets going through without exploding it; Bullets continuing to hit Fokker pilot.

#### PLANE LOWER LEFT

One elevator balanced and other not; One aileron balanced and the other isn't; Pilot too far back; Pilot not looking ahead; No prop; One landing wheel larger than other; Landing skid turned down; No insignia; One set of struts not vertical.

#### FOKKER PLANE LOWER RIGHT

No landing gear; Three-bladed prop; Wing crosses not same; No shadow under right upper wing.

Better

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# STOP ITCHIN AND SCRATCHIN

According to the Government Health Bulletin No. E-28 at least 50% of the adult population of the United States are being attacked by the disease known as Athlete's Foot.

There are many other names given to this disease, but you can easily tell if you have it.

Usually the disease starts between the toes. Little watery blisters form and the skin cracks and peels. After a while the itching becomes intense and you feel as though you would like to scratch off all the skin.

## FOOT-ITCH (ATHLETE'S FOOT)

### Send Coupon-Don't Pay till Relieved

#### Beware of It Spreading

Often the disease travels all over the bottom of the feet. The soles of your feet become red and swollen. The skin also cracks and peels, and the itching becomes worse and worse.

It has been said that this disease originated in the trenches, so some people call it Trench Foot. Whatever name you give it, however, the thing to do is to get rid of it as quickly as possible, because it is very contagious and it may go to your hands or even to the under arm or crotch of the legs.

Most people who have Athlete's Foot have tried all kinds of remedies to cure it without success.

Ordinary germicides, antiseptics, salve or ointments seldom do any good.

#### Here's How to Treat It

The germ that causes the disease is known as Tinea Trichophyton. It buries itself deep in the tissues of the skin and is very hard to kill. A test made shows that it takes 20 minutes of boiling to kill the germ, so you can see why the ordinary remedies are unsuccessful.

H. F. was developed solely for the purpose of treating Athlete's Foot. It is a liquid that penetrates and dries quickly. You just paint the affected parts. It peels off the infected skin and works its way deep into the tissue of the skin where the germ breeds.

#### Itching Stops Immediately

As soon as you apply H. F. you will find that the itching is immediately relieved. You should paint the infected parts with H. F. night and morning until your feet are well. Usually this takes from three to ten days, although in severe cases it may take longer or in mild cases less time.

H. F. will leave the skin soft and smooth. You will marvel at the quick way it brings you relief; especially if you are one of those who have tried for years to get rid of Athlete's Foot without success.

#### H. F. Sent on FREE TRIAL

Sign and mail the coupon and a bottle of H. F. will be mailed you immediately. Don't send any money and don't pay the postman any money, don't pay anything any time unless H. F. is helping you. If it does help you we know that you will be glad to send us \$1.00 for the treatment at the end of ten days. That's how much faith we have in H. F. Read, sign and mail the coupon today.



Mail this Coupon

GORE PRODUCTS, INC.,  
890 Perdido St., New Orleans, La.

Please send me immediately a complete treatment for foot trouble as described above. I agree to use it according to directions. If at the end of 10 days my feet are getting better I will send you \$1.00. If I am not entirely satisfied I will return the unused portion of the bottle to you within 15 days from the time I receive it.

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