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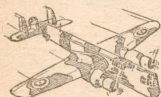
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FIGHTING ACE

Vol. XX, No. 2

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NO- NOT ME. I'M NOT GOING TO WASTE MY TIME. SUCCESS IS JUST A MATTER OF LUCK AND I WASN'T BORN LUCKY.

BILL SAID "YES" HE'S MAKING GOOD MONEY IN RADIO NOW



THIS N.R.I. TRAINING IS GREAT. AND THEY SENT REAL RADIO PARTS TO HELP ME LEARN QUICKLY

YOU CERTAINLY KNOW RADIO. MINE NEVER SOUNDED BETTER.

I'VE BEEN STUDYING RADIO ONLY A FEW MONTHS AND I'M ALREADY MAKING GOOD MONEY IN MY SPARE TIME

THANKS

OH BILL! I'M SO PROUD OF YOU. YOU'VE GONE AHEAD SO FAST IN RADIO

YES! I'VE GOT A GOOD JOB NOW AND A REAL FUTURE. THANKS TO N.R.I. TRAINING



TOM SAID "NO" HE'S STILL WAITING FOR LUCK



BILL'S A SAP TO WASTE HIS TIME STUDYING RADIO AT HOME



SAME OLD GRIND -- SAME SKINNY PAY ENVELOPE -- I'VE JUST WHERE I WAS FIVE YEARS AGO

GUESS I'M A FAILURE. LARKS LIKE I'LL NEVER GET ANYWHERE

YOU'LL ALWAYS BE A FAILURE, TOM, UNLESS YOU DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT. WISHING AND WAITING GET YOU ANYWHERE



I will Train You at Home in Spare Time for a GOOD JOB IN RADIO

J. E. SMITH, President
National Radio Institute
Established 25 years.

Radio is a young, growing field with a future, offering many good pay spare time and full time job opportunities. And you don't have to give up your present job to become a Radio Technician. I train you right at home in your spare time.

Why Many Radio Technicians Make \$30, \$40, \$50 a Week

Radio broadcasting stations employ engineers, operators, technicians. Radio manufacturers employ testers, inspectors, foremen, servicemen in good-pay jobs. Radio jobbers, dealers, employ installation and servicemen. Many Radio Technicians open their own Radio sales and repair businesses and make \$30, \$40, \$50 a week. Others hold their regular jobs and make \$5 to \$10 a week fixing Radios in spare time. Automobile, police, aviation, Commercial Radio; loudspeaker systems, electronic devices, offer good opportunities. My training includes Television, which promises to open good jobs soon.

Many Make \$5 to \$10 a Week Extra in Spare Time While Learning

The day you enroll, I start sending you Extra Money Job Sheets which start showing you how to do Radio repair jobs. Throughout your

Course I send plans and directions which have helped many make \$200 to \$500 a year in spare time while learning. I send special Radio equipment to conduct experiments and build circuits. This 60-90 training method makes learning at home interesting, fascinating, practical. I ALSO GIVE YOU A MOTOCYCLE, PROFESSIONAL, ALL-WAYE, ALL-PURPOSE SERVICE INSTRUMENT to help you make spare money fixing Radios while learning and equip you for full time work after you graduate.

Find Out What Radio Offers You

Act Today! Mail the coupon for my 64-page Book, "Rich Rewards in Radio". It points out Radio's spare time and full time opportunities and those coming in Television; tells about my Course in Radio and Television:

- ✓ J. E. SMITH, President, Dept. OD09,
- ✓ National Radio Institute, Washington, D. C.

Send me FREE, without obligation, your 64-page book "Rich Rewards in Radio" which points out Radio's opportunities and tells how you train men at home to be Radio Technicians. (Write Plainly.)

Name..... Age.....
Address.....
City..... State.....

shows many letters from men I have trained, telling what they are doing and earning. Real money back agreement. MAIL COUPON in an envelope, or paste on a penny postcard--NOW!

J. E. SMITH, President
Dept. OD09,
National Radio Institute
Washington, D. C.





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If you are looking for a **NEW** and **BETTER** way to make a living, take up Swedish Massage, for now you can learn at home. This interesting big pay profession was for years available only to a few. Its secrets were guarded jealously and fabulous prices were paid for instruction. This same instruction is now available to you at a mere fraction of the former price and you need not leave your present work until you have qualified as an expert and can command an expert's pay. The demand for **BOTH MEN AND WOMEN** has shown a steady increase and few, if any, have ever lacked employment.

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Use spare time at home to master a profession which has made thousands of dollars for ambitious men and women. Many graduates have completed their training in three months but you can take your own time, it need not interfere with either work or pleasure. All instruction has been prepared by the teachers in our famous resident school—the same material is used and a **DIPLOMA** is awarded upon graduation.

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PEN PALS

Here are some new members of **THE LONE EAGLES OF AMERICA**—all air fans. Many others will be listed in the next issue. The figures in parenthesis are the ages of the members.

- Daniel P. Cardozo (12), 55 Davis Road, N. Westport, Mass.
Warner Witte (17), 914 N. Washington, Chanute, Kansas.
Alan Cohen (14), 1006—9th St., N. E. Washington, D. C.
John Antaeol (25), 30 Cottage Ave., S.H.F., Mass.
Joseph Wood (18), 818 Kirkwood St., Wilmington, Del.
Melvin Snackin (13½), 4122 W. 10th St., Chicago, Ill.
Elmer Radin (17), 5230 N. Winthrop Ave., Chicago.
Bobby Stone (14), 3723 Gilbert, Dallas, Tex.
Neil Stringer (19), Waitaki, Tamaru, N. Zealand.
Victor Tench, Conrath, Wisc.
Del Roy Shanahan (10), 437 Northampton St., Buffalo, N. Y.
James McVey (13), 54 Main St., Glenboig, Co. Carbridge, N. Y.
Lester Adrianen (17), 1215 S. Chestnut, Green Bay, Wisc.
Jack Beckett (14), 916—16th St., Huntington, Va.
Ann Behrens (13), 1402 Avenue K, Brooklyn, N. Y.
Thomas Lee (13), 2111½ N. Highland Ave., Hollywood, Calif.
William Pearson (13), 1234 Waterman, Detroit, Mich.
Hubert J. Bouchard (14), 253 Valley Ave., N. W., Grand Rapids, Mich.
George Colligan (11), 392 Pearsall Ave., Cedarhurst, N. Y.
Bobby Lee Duncan (12), 1229 N. Walnut Grove, Bloomington, Ill.
Ted Tanton (21), Keefer, Strathroy, England.
Paul E. Pollock (26), 604 W. 10th St., Kansas City, Missouri.
Russell Lowens (15), Hackley School, Tarrytown, N. Y.
James Gilmore (16), 32-34 89th St., Jackson Heights, N. Y.
Quentin Sturges (20), Kennett Square, Pa.
Billy Wolfe (18), 900 Front St., Princeton, W. Va.
Mike Campoli (14), 564 S. 10th St., Newark, N. J.
Bob Roberts (12), 422 Cedar, Springfield, Ohio.
Muriel O'Brien (14), 21 Woodland Ave., Stamford, Conn.
Dan M. Mahar (18), Kwalley Farm, Cranbury, N. Y.
William Reckhouse (15), 1233 Monterey, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.
Fred Juergens (13), 14557 Artesian, Detroit, Mich.
Haydee Morejon (14), 1686 Madison Ave., N. Y. C.
John Gittins (13), 48-14—48th St., Woodside, L. I., N. Y.
Ace Chance (15), 1301 S. 6th St., Ponca, Okla.
Jack Conley (15), 504 Junction St., Elmore, Del.
Raymond Simonds (26), 620—9th St., S. S., Washington, D. C.
Martin Johnson, Jr. (16), 415 Johnson St., Stoughton, Wisc.
Harvey Pierce (29), 600 W. Flager St., Miami, Fla.
Dale Lucas (19), 1720 Arthur, Fresno, Calif.
Eddie Tammara (18), 813 Gifford St., Montreal, Quebec, Canada.
Eugene F. De Santis (17), 37 Allegheny Ave., West Allegheny, Pa.
Ray W. Penn (31), 679 S. 38th St., Louisville, Ky.
Wilbur S. Mundt (40), Box 57, Sunland, Calif.
Bob Olson (15), Box 459, Ellet, Ohio.
John Wise (17), 754 Greenfield Ave., Pittsburgh, Pa.
Thomas Kildore (12), 288 Hayward St., Yonkers, N. Y.
Ken Reynolds (13), Hamlet, Ind.
Anthony Mark (13), 115 Ontario St., Rochester, N. Y.
Mike Mark (13), 115 Ontario St., Rochester, N. Y.
Sam Ess (11), 108 Church St., Union, Mo.
Eugene De Stefano (14), 122 Glenn Ave., Sea Cliff, N. Y.
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\$40 a week*
EXTRA income

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HAVE YOU thought about home study? You look around you at your friends, neighbors and fellow employees: This one earns \$10 a week more than you—that one earns nearly double—a third, though appreciably younger than you, seems to be making better progress. Why? How can you catch up with them? You know that literally *thousands* of ambitious men and women have won substantial Success through using their spare time at home to master the principles and practice of their chosen lines. How can HOME STUDY help you make good?

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In 1900, only ONE person in 800 was a *high school* graduate. Today, one in every 837 is college trained. That's why you need so much more "on the ball" today than ever before. That's why American School has stepped up all its complete courses to include so much work of college level. You NEED it, to win out today!

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More than 150 noted educators, engineers and executives helped prepare American School courses. An *Advisory Board* of 20 outstanding authorities—each an active leader in his field—is consulted when our work is prepared or changed. A Staff of competent instructors—home study specialists—works closely with the individual student.

Courses are not prepared from the "academic" viewpoint—but from the *practical*. Although dozens of leading universities and colleges use the same texts, the primary aim of home study is to help graduates win **BETTER** jobs at **BIGGER** pay as **QUICKLY** as possible. Every course is geared to this end. Jobs and job requirements are analyzed, circumstances of the average student are weighed, then every course is *speed-tuned* to put the *Man in the Job* he wants at the **EARLIEST** opportunity.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Elec. and Gas Refrigeration | <input type="checkbox"/> Business Law |
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Address.....

DON'T let Rupture make you Look Old!

Not the rupture itself, but the *worry and fear* it can cause makes many a man and woman look old beyond their years. But this is one kind of worry that is *absolutely needless*. Right here and now we offer to *prove* that it's needless and it costs you nothing if you are not 100% convinced.

If you have reducible rupture, wear a truss, and still have to worry, there is just one reason—an old-fashioned truss that doesn't hold its job. A hard, gouging pad is making you miserable. You constantly fear your rupture will slip down. You feel your condition is growing worse and can never get better. You can't be normally active and, in short, you worry all day and dream your worries at night. Stop it!

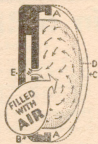
YOU WON'T WORRY WITH A BROOKS PATENTED AIR-CUSHION RUPTURE APPLIANCE!

If you knew the grand and glorious security and comfort of the Brooks Patented Air-Cushion truss, you'd be wearing it right now, instead of just reading about it. You would be feeling free as air to do whatever you liked in every normal activity, hardly aware you had a Brooks on, and with not a rupture worry in your mind. You see, with a Brooks your rupture is held securely in place by a patented, air-cushioned pad of soft, yielding rubber instead of a hard, gouging pad. That patented Air-Cushion is designed to flatten and cling in any position. It is so comfortable you can wear



THE FAMOUS BROOKS PATENTED AIR-CUSHION

- A—Pad which comes in contact with the body.
- B—Light weight disc which holds pad.
- C—Shows the shape of soft rubber pad before it is pressed against body.
- D—Dotted line shows how the pad flattens out under pressure, expelling air.
- E—Orifice through which the pad figuratively breathes as it adjusts to conform to different body pressures.



BROOKS CUSHIONS ARE MADE IN OVER 75 SHAPES AND SIZES

it night and day. That and the fact that the Air-Cushion holds like a hand gives Nature the greatest possible chance to close the rupture opening and free you from wearing any truss, the Brooks included.

YOU'D WEAR A BROOKS APPLIANCE ON TRIAL WOULDN'T YOU?

If complete deliverance from all your rupture worries sounds "too good to be true," don't let that stop you! BROOKS asks no man or woman, or parent of a ruptured child, to buy a BROOKS Appliance outright and "take a chance". No, we will send you a complete BROOKS appliance for a thorough trial. Wear it. Compare it. Put it to every test you can think of. Get your doctor's opinion. Then if you are not satisfied, if you don't bless the day you heard of BROOKS, the trial costs you nothing. Anyone can afford a BROOKS. It costs no more than many old-fashioned stiff trusses. Yet it is made up for you *individually*, after your order is received. It is never sold in stores or through mail order houses—only by BROOKS. Remember this and steer clear of imitations.

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Send for FREE Rupture Book and Amazing PROOF OF RESULTS

The more you know about BROOKS, the more eager you will be to try it for yourself. You wouldn't be human not to want such glorious freedom from worry, such comfort and the peace of mind, the fresh, rested feeling that we say will make you younger looking, happier and more efficient. Send for FREE Book this very day!

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Approved securities, equal to the full legal reserve for every Marquette policy in force, are locked in the vaults of the State of Illinois.

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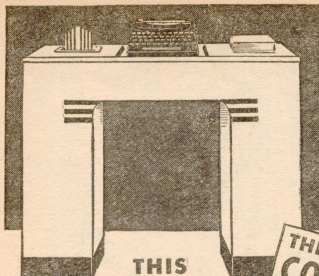
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A beautiful desk in a neutral blue-green fits into the decorations of any home—trimmed in black and silver—made of sturdy fibre board—now available for only one dollar (\$1.00) to purchasers of a Remington Noiseless Portable Typewriter. The desk is so light that it can be moved anywhere without trouble. It will hold six hundred (600) pounds. This combination gives you a miniature office at home. Mail the coupon today.

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To help you even further, you get free with this special offer a 19-page booklet, prepared by experts, to teach you quickly how to typewrite by the touch method. When you buy a Noiseless you get this free Remington Rand gift that increases the pleasure of using your Remington Noiseless Portable. Remember, the touch typing book is sent free while this offer holds.

SPECIAL CARRYING CASE

The Remington Noiseless Portable is light in weight, easily carried about. With this offer Remington supplies a sturdy, beautiful carrying case which rivals the most attractive luggage you can buy.

SPECIFICATIONS

ALL ESSENTIAL FEATURES of large standard office machines appear in the Noiseless Portable—standard 4-row keyboard; back spacer; margin stops and margin release; double shift key; two color ribbon and automatic reverse; variable line spacer; paper fingers; makes as many as seven carbons; takes paper 9.5" wide; writes lines 8.2" wide, black key cards and white letters, rubber cushioned feet.

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The Remington Noiseless Portable Typewriter is sold on a trial basis with a money back guarantee. If, after ten days trial, you do not wish to keep the typewriter, we will take it back, paying all shipping charges. You take no risk.

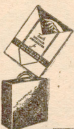


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ON THIS BARGAIN
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THE COMBINATION FOR AS LITTLE AS 10¢ A DAY

How easy it is to pay for this combination. Just imagine! Terms as low as 10¢ a day to get this combination at once. You will never miss 10¢ a day. Become immediately the possessor of this amazing combination. You assume no obligations by sending the coupon.



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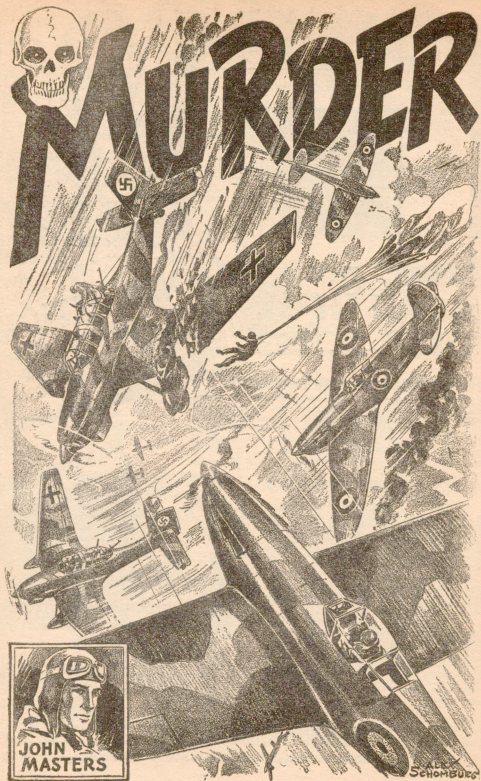
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465 Washington St., Buffalo, N. Y.

Tell me, without obligation, how to get a Free Trial of a new Remington Noiseless Portable, including Carrying Case and Free Typing Instruction Booklet for as little as 10¢ a day. Send Catalogue.

Name

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City State





The Junkers went into that last long dance of death (Chapter III)

A Full Book-Length War-Air Novel **By LIEUT. SCOTT MORGAN**

Author of "The Nazi Menace," "Phantom Aces," etc.

*John Masters, World's Most Famous Sky Fighter, Pits
Himself Against a Diabolical Nazi Suicide Squadron!*

CHAPTER I *Death Dives*

IT HAPPENED with the incredible swiftness of a bolt of lightning out of a clear summer's sky. One moment the battleship *H.M.S. Graemsey* had been riding at anchor in Scapa Flow, just opposite St.

Mary's. The next it was a twisted wreck of smoking gray steel, settling swiftly beneath the turbulent waters. Flame and steam vomited from the gaping gash torn through the deck plates right into the bowels of the great war wagon.

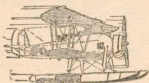
To John Masters, circling in a little Supermarine Spitfire over the big

When Raiders Peril British Sea Power a

British aircraft carrier *Ark Royal*, it seemed as if the low gray clouds just had split apart to allow a big black Heinkel 111 K to hurtle down on the doomed ship in one furious, roaring dive. A tremendous roar blasted the air, making the little Spitfire dance until it took all his skill to bring it back on an even keel. And what had been a proud battlecraft a moment before was now just another name added to the mounting casualty list of the British navy.

"They've got to get out of here!" Masters, known the world over as the Lone Eagle, cursed as he glanced anxiously at the ominous gray clouds. "They're inviting trouble by concentrating their naval forces here!"

Masters had been doing an escort patrol when disaster hit the ranks of His Majesty's Navy for the fourth



time in two weeks. First the battle cruiser *Reynard* had left Scotland for Scapa Flow. No word had been heard of it since. Then a U-boat, commanded by a German with lots of what it takes, had daringly slipped through the inadequate mine defenses and planted a torpedo in the steel heart of the *Royal Oak*. A week later the *Hart* was about to enter Hoy Sound under cover of night. Except for a terrific explosion and a flare of light seen by a pair of Stromness shepherds, and a tangled mass of floating debris, no inkling of the fate of the *Hart* had been learned.

NOW the 33,900 ton *Graemsey* had been sent to the bottom with an appalling loss of life. And by a single plane. A single black Heinkel

had sent one of Britain's proudest and mightiest ships to the bottom of Scapa Flow.

The Lone Eagle was waiting for the signal to set down, after escorting the monster aircraft carrier, *Ark Royal*, from an English port to its present berth. He had been asked by the Admiralty to take over this task, due to the terrible frequency with which the Germans had been blasting British naval vessels out of the water.

They knew how the *Royal Oak* had gone down, and despite the painful loss, were sporting enough to admire the nerve and daring shown by the top Nazi hero, Guenther Prien. But with the loss of the other two vessels still a mystery the high command was not a little jittery. They were certain the *Reynard* and the *Hart* had not been sunk by torpedoes or floating mines, for if they had, there would have been time to send out a message by radio. The ships had just disappeared, struck down by some unknown weapon devised by a ruthless enemy.

In their quandary, the British Admiralty had called John Masters, the American who had become the almost legendary Lone Eagle in the first World War, to escort the *Ark Royal* to Scapa Flow. Masters had thrown his lot in with the Allies after the *Athenia* had been ruthlessly sent to the bottom, with appalling loss of life.

Masters had been on that vessel, headed for home, leaving war-torn Europe behind him. But the torpedo which found its mark in the engine room of the big vessel, tumbling women and children alike into the cold waters of the Atlantic, had shocked him to the realization that frightfulness in this war was starting off just where it had ceased in the last. As he had stood at the rail of the doomed *Athenia*, he had then and

Nemesis Soars to Flay Sky Scavengers!

there decided to throw his lot in with the Allies. Once again he would fight against a foe that would stop at nothing to gain a desired end.

At a war council of the Allies, Masters had informed them of his grim decision. He had told them that he would not wear a uniform. Neither France or England could claim him as one of their own. But at all times he would be at their command, ready to fight with every nerve and fiber in his stalwart body, in the battle to sweep the madman of Berlin from power. He was no soldier of fortune, fighting for the love of battle. Instead, he had elected to be a crusader for tolerance. He had stepped into the fight against Nazism, and after a hair-raising experience had smashed the *Herr Doktor* who was responsible for the deadly curving torpedoes that always hit their mark. There would be no more.

Today, everything had gone according to schedule. The *Ark Royal* had left its English base under the cover of darkness and with the utmost secrecy. It had threaded the mine fields of the North Sea with a flotilla of destroyers dashing madly about. And above, riding the skies in a little gray Supermarine had flown John Masters, keeping lonely vigil.

A sigh of relief had slipped from him when he had caught the flash from the bridge that the ship was anchored and all was well. His fingers had slipped to the throttle as the calm voice of the commander came through his earphones to inform him that they were ready for him to land.

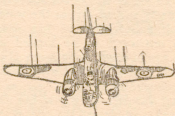
AND then in a flash the old warning was abruptly on him. That telltale prickling at the back of his neck that had foretold danger many times before. Masters' fists hit the throttle. The Spitfire leaped into a climbing turn as he screwed around in the tiny cockpit, trying to catch a

glimpse of the skies behind him.

That was when he saw it. It was already through the low gray scud, and with its twin Benz DB 600s yanking it through the late afternoon air in a screaming dive, the big Heinkel was hurtling right down over Scapa Flow. The big bomber would be over the *Ark Royal* before the Lone Eagle could bring his guns to bear on the black crosses!

Cursing with rage the American hurled his ship over on one wing in a desperate attempt to throw himself between the hurtling Heinkel and the Gargantuan aircraft carrier. But it was too late. The ship was past him, a blackened blur in the gray light. He hurled a quick prayer into the slipstream that the bombs would fall wide of their objective.

His fingers poised over the trips ready to send eight streams of tracer



from his Brownings the moment he had his position.

Everything on the *Ark Royal* was letting go. Pom-poms, the 4.5 inch guns were swinging into position to lay a screen of death across the sky in the event that other Huns were following this first bomber. The multiple machine gun nests were throwing a hail of hot steel up at the diving ship, trying to force it off its course. Two-pounders added their note to the cacophony of hate. The air seemed alive with twisting snarling tracer.

Other ships unlimbered their anti-aircraft stuff and began to toss death into the air. But despite the terrific

hail of fire the Heinkel kept on its plunging course. From just above and behind the big twin-motored job, Masters could see pieces flying off the wings and fuselage as slugs caught their target.

It was breath-taking, and the Lone Eagle could not but admire the nerve and skill of the German who would throw his ship through such a storm of lead. At any moment he expected to see the big job pull out of the dive and loose its bombs. But instead the crate with the blood-red swastika on its tail battered its way through the curtain of fire, and then with a blinding explosion lost itself in the middle of the *Graemsey*.

Masters was appalled anew as mangled bodies and great jagged chunks of steel plate cartwheeled through the air. The *Graemsey* seemed to buckle amidships, spewing black smoke and orange flame. Bodies splashed into the choppy waters of Scapa Flow, leaving red stains to spread across the waves.

"Couldn't pull out of his dive," Masters muttered as he looked upward to see if there were more Huns to follow. "Lost control and missed the *Ark Royal* completely."

At half throttle he threw his ship into a bank, and circled the spot where the stricken *Graemsey* was in its death throes. Bow and stern lifted toward the low-flung clouds like the closing blades of a pair of shears. Survivors leaped into the water to escape the terrible explosions still taking place in the ship's magazines. Then, slowly, majestically, the ship slid from view and all that remained to mark the spot was a patch of oil—and men who swam amid mangled bodies.

THE SAW the crew of the *Ark Royal* set about the grim task of rescuing the shattered remnants of the *Graemsey's* crew as he circled, trying to figure out by what miracle the *Ark Royal* had escaped. It seemed impossible, for the Heinkel had cut

right across the big aircraft carrier and buried itself between the fighting top and the single funnel.

"Controls must have jammed," he thought, as he tried to call the man in the director tower of the *Ark Royal*. "Sure missed a chance that would have made Goering swell his chest out as far as his stomach."

He finally managed to contact the bridge of the carrier and got permission to set down. Cutting the gun, he swung in over the escort destroyer *Wren*, and made for the long overhanging stern of the *Ark Royal*. He watched the lift and fall of the deck, and finally dropped in just at the edge of the landing circle. He felt the arresting wires, strung across the flight deck, grasp his wheels and bring him to a stop, and crawled stiffly from the machine.

All around him lay wet, bedraggled figures—men who had been pulled from the cold waters of Scapa Flow. Streaks of red trickled across the wide flight deck and formed puddles. Men moaned in agony as the M.O.s hurried about trying to give relief.

"Frightful sight, wasn't it, sir," murmured a young R.A.F. pilot who stood wiping his blood-stained hands on a bit of waste. "Poor devils! Ripped to shreds by this damned maniac Hitler and his gang of international brigands."

Masters nodded as he knelt beside a young seaman who was calling pitifully for his mother.

"Take it easy, lad," Masters murmured softly. "You'll be all right. We'll get you to your mother."

For a moment the youth's pain-seared eyes looked up into the kindly face of the Lone Eagle. "But what good will that do, sir? The bloody Huns will only bomb us there, too. I've got to live! I got to help stop them before they get to doing this to the poor women and kids in the cities! They've got to be stopped, I tell you!"

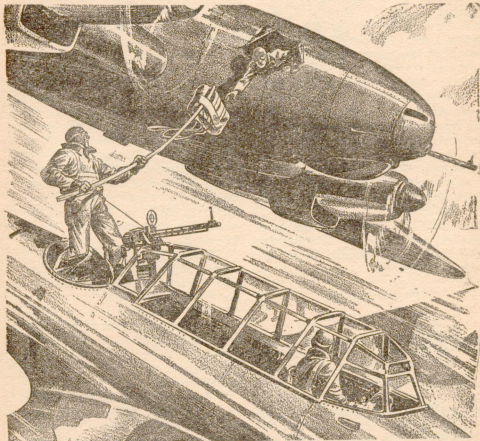
He struggled in the American's arms as if trying to get to his feet. He

did not know that he had no feet—only stumps of shredded flesh that poured his life-blood out across the deck.

Masters held the young fellow so that he could not catch a glimpse of what the Huns had left of his legs. And as he pressed the body gently, but firmly, back to the deck he leaned lower.

damn it, you make me believe you can fill it. You won't let them get near her. Then when I get out of blighty, ole Adolph will hear from Seaman Smythe. I . . . I feel awfully tired. . . . Feel sleepy like."

"Why don't you take a little shut-eye, then?" Master said softly. "Got to be in the pink for the day you take a shot at Adolph."



Masters' fingernail scraped the rough webbing (Chapter XIV)

"I'll stop them for you!" he said softly. "They won't get to your mother, nor to the women and kids."

The dying youth blew a mass of bloody foam over his shoulder. "On your word of honor?"

"On my word of honor," promised Masters.

The lad coughed a moment, then looked up. "It's a big order, sir, but

A SLOW smile spread across the youth's white face, and for a moment it lighted as if with some inner fire.

Masters' throat choked up.

"They'll be having tea home now," he said softly. "I can see the mater sitting by the fire. She's buttering a scone, an' putting gooseberry jam on it. Don't forget your promise, sir.

You'll keep the Huns from getting her, won't you?"

The eyes opened for one brief moment and held the Lone Eagle's.

"I'll stop them," answered Masters. "Now go to sleep. Soon you'll be sitting by the fire with your mother."

"Yes, sir." The boy smiled, fighting for breath. "I'll do as you say. A British seaman always obeys orders, doesn't he? Good night, sir. Don't forget . . ."

His head fell limp in the Lone Eagle's arms. Seaman Smythe had passed into the sleep from which he would never awaken.

Masters lowered him gently, then got slowly to his feet and stood looking down at the supine figure. His jaws firmed until the muscles knotted. His eyes narrowed as he looked toward the east.

"I'll stop them, Seaman Smythe," he murmured. "I won't stop until Hitler and his mob are cleaned out once and for all."

He raised his hand in salute to a man who had given his life for the cause, and strode toward the bridge of the *Ark Royal*.

CHAPTER II

The Photograph



IT WAS almost midnight before the big seaplane landed after a long flight from London and its passengers were assembled in the officers' reading room. At the head of the table, with a partial list of the *Graemsey's* casualties before him sat Winston Churchill, First Lord of the Admiralty. By his side sat the commander of the *Ark Royal*, who was thanking his lucky stars that his ship was still afloat.

In an easy chair close to the little metal fireplace Sir Neville Chamberlain sat tracing a design in the carpet with the point of his umbrella. But despite his apparent preoccupation

the grayed man was hearing every word said around the conference table.

"According to this list, gentleman," Churchill was saying, "our losses in this raid are three hundred and twenty men and the battleship *Graemsey*."

John Masters, who was sitting to one side, got to his feet and leaned forward with his knuckles resting on the polished surface of the table.

"May I say a word?" he asked sharply.

The first lord of the Admiralty looked up. His square face was lined with worry. His countrymen, already distressed over the loss of the *Reynard* and *Royal Oak*, had not learned of the loss of the *Hart* as yet, but persistent broadcasts from Berlin pertaining to the sinking of that vessel were adding not a little to his worries, to say nothing of this new catastrophe. He sat there for a long moment studying the face of the stalwart young American standing before him. At last he nodded.

"By all means, Masters," Churchill said slowly. "Knowing from the terrible experiences we went through in the World War, and the part you played in swinging victory to our side, we are ready to listen to you. Please feel free to speak."

Masters' blue eyes traveled from face to face, and finally rested on the bowed head of Sir Neville.

"I just wish to make a suggestion," he said slowly. "The enemy, besides sinking a great number of cargo ships, has sunk four of your naval vessels in two weeks. That is two ships a week. And unless you take steps I have no doubt but what they will be able to keep up that average."

"You have a suggestion, then?" Sir Neville Chamberlain looked up hopefully.

"Just this," said Masters. "I suggest that you take a leaf out of the army's book of experience. They learned their lesson at a great cost.

"And the results of that lesson are yours for the taking."

"I don't understand," Winston Churchill said slowly. "Land and sea warfare are two different matters."

"Not in this case," said Masters grimly. "When the World War started it was the custom to send attacking troops over in waves. On both sides the men walked practically shoulder to shoulder. And the loss was appalling. It did not take them long to learn their lesson, and soon troops were scattered in small groups. Instead of one big target for the enemy to blast away at, there were a hundred small ones."

"You mean we are to scatter the fleet we have concentrated here at Scapa Flow?" broke in Sir Neville, getting up and moving over to the table.

"Exactly," said Masters swiftly. "Don't leave them anchored here where the enemy can keep nibbling away at them with bombs and torpedoes. If you do—well, you soon won't have much of a fleet left. Your mastery of the high seas will be a blood-stained page in history."

"But that would be admitting defeat," snapped one of the admirals. "The English Navy has never run."

A SLOW smile spread across the Lone Eagle's face as he turned to the old sea dog.

"I hope you will pardon me, sir, if I say that right at this moment the English navy is running standing still."

"Poppycock!" exploded the admiral.

"Just a moment, gentlemen," interrupted Churchill. "Perhaps you are right, Masters, but what the admiral says is true. We would be showing the white feather."

Masters shrugged. "There are times—and I speak from experience—when it is the better part of valor to run. Remember the old adage—'He who fights and runs away, will live to fight

another day'. Gentlemen, do a little running now, moving around instead of keeping your ships in one spot, and when the day comes to fight, you'll have a navy with which to do it. Battleships aren't much good when they are down in the mud with crews of crabs scuttling across their torn decks. You know what the enemy accomplished this afternoon. If the *Graemsey* had been under way in the open sea, instead of anchored, it might still be afloat. I say again, move your ships and move them fast! The Lord only knows why the pilot of that Heinkel picked out the *Graemsey* instead of the *Ark Royal*."

Sir Neville laid his hand on Masters' shoulder. "Just a moment, Masters. Do you think that German pilot deliberately dived his ship into the *Graemsey* this afternoon?"

Masters shrugged. "I am puzzled about that. Despite all the stories you hear, men are not given to that sort of heroics. We've all heard rumors of suicide squadrons before. They cropped up in the last war. And they have started to appear in this one. Take the Poles, for instance. According to reports pilots were sent out to bomb Berlin or die in the attempt. But we all know that Berlin was never bombed, even if the Polish ships did come back with empty racks.

"And that scheme in October, nineteen-eighteen, when the Germans tried to get together a flock of U-boats manned by suicide crews for one desperate shot at your navy. Only a partial crew for one sub were assembled—mostly officers with an overdeveloped bump of patriotism. The seamen who refused were not cowards. They just wanted a fifty-fifty break with death. They didn't want it to be a sure thing. And frankly I don't blame them."

"Then you feel certain that it was an accident?" said Churchill with a gleam of hope in his beady eyes.

"I think the pilot tried to dive bomb with the Heinkel and his con-

trols jammed," answered Masters. "Dive bombing isn't all it's cracked up to be, as the Germans learned in Poland with their Junkers. They lost plenty of them when they tried to pull out at the bottom. No, I think that German was aiming for the *Ark Royal* which was anchored right next to the *Graemsey*. It was just a fluke, but an awful one, that he got the *Graemsey*."

Just then there was a gentle tap on the door. At the command to enter the photography officer of the *Ark Royal* stepped into the room. In his hand he held a piece of still damp paper about a foot square.

"I beg your pardon, sir," he said. "But one of the men snapped a picture of the German plane going down on the *Graemsey*. He asked me to develop it for him, and I discovered some rather startling things, so I took the liberty of enlarging it and have brought you a copy."

"Let me see it." Churchill reached out taking the photograph. "What is that you find so startling?"

"The nose of the plane, sir," said the young officer eagerly. "Most Heinkels have a nose covered with some transparent material similar to the stuff we use. But this one has its nose completely covered. And the pilot's cockpit is covered too. I am sorry that my enlarger is so heavy, or I could show you another interesting detail."

"What?" demanded the Lone Eagle as he stared at the photograph of the black Heinkel.

"When I swung the enlarger so that the negative was blown up on the wall of my room, I discovered that the covering of the nose and the pilot's cockpit must be metal, too, for I could just make out rows of small rivets. And the sheeting over the pilot's cockpit seemed to have only a small hole in it, no larger than the eye-piece of an Aldis sight. As far as I can make out there are no openings in the ship at all, nothing on the

outside but the motors and the wireless masts."

"My God!" Churchill exclaimed as he leaped to his feet. "Wireless. Do you think it is possible?"

"What do you mean?" Sir Neville Chamberlain asked slowly, staring at the image of the black-crossed ship that had sent the *Graemsey* to the bottom.

Churchill pointed to the metal-sheathed nose and pilot's cockpit. "Don't you see? Entirely different construction from the ordinary Heinkel." He swung around on the Lone Eagle. "Didn't you notice it?"

"No," said Masters. "The ship was past me before I saw it. After that, all I saw was the rudder until it smacked in."

"What do you think of this wireless idea, Masters?" asked Sir Neville. "I know our engineers have been trying to develop a plane that could be sent on long distance bombing raids. Do you suppose this is one of the terrible instruments of war Herr Hitler threatened us with?"

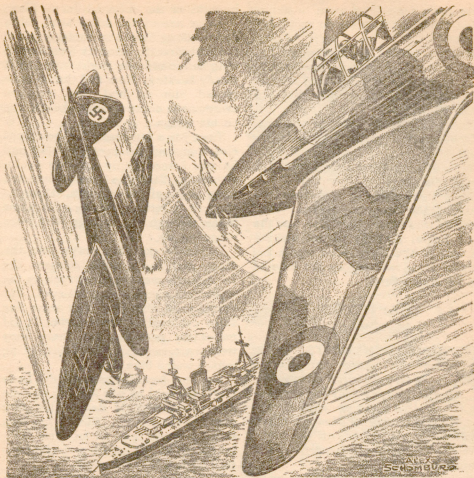
"It's an angle, Sir Neville," Masters said slowly. "Might be the answer to the disappearance of the *Reynard* and the *Hart*."

"To say nothing of the *Royal Oak*," interjected Churchill. "If they have wireless controlled bombers, why not torpedoes? A U-boat could lay outside the mine field and send a torpedo by remote control."

The Lone Eagle's lips firmed to a thin straight line as he looked from Winston Churchill to the photograph. The awful truth that what the head of the British Navy had suggested might be a possibility was taking root in his brain.

The old admiral who had been so pompous a moment before seemed to have been suddenly deflated.

"THEY have us," he muttered. "But, by gad, it isn't cricket to do your fighting by wireless. We should protest against it."



The Heinkel headed straight for the Elan's middle (Chap. VIII)

"It isn't protests that are needed now," Masters said quietly. "It is action, sir." He swung around on Winston Churchill. "How about scattering the fleet?"

"I'll have to return to London and call a conference at the Admiralty," he said softly. "Do you wish to come along?"

Masters shook his head. "My place is here, sir."

"I know," said Churchill quietly. "And every Englishman appreciates the fact that you have thrown your lot in with us against the madman of Europe."

Masters shook his head.

Sir Neville picked his umbrella

from the chair by the fire and joined them.

"I know we can depend on you now, as we have in the past, Masters," he said slowly. "I will feel a lot better on returning to London knowing that you are up here helping us. I wish I could broadcast that fact from one end of the kingdom to the other."

"Thank you, sir," Masters smiled. "But news of my fighting with you seems to have spread a little too fast as it is, although I doubt whether *Herr Goebbels* is broadcasting that bit of information to his people."

"Hardly," murmured Chamberlain. "But I am glad that *Herr Hitler* and his high command know about it. It

gives them something more to worry about. No doubt they are doing plenty of that."

Masters started to say something, but his words were lost in the raucous scream of the air raid alarms both on shore and on the ships in Scapa Flow.

Every face in the room went white.

One question raced through every mind.

Would it be the turn of the *Ark Royal* this time?

They stood there in fear-frozen silence. Only one man moved. And that one who went into action was the Lone Eagle. Already he was making his way to the flight deck where his Spitfire stood waiting by the side of the superstructure.

CHAPTER III

Eerie Battle



SEARCHLIGHTS from the shore anti-aircraft stations were already beginning to slice away at the low wind-driven clouds as Masters lifted his Spitfire off the flight deck, and curled into a

climbing turn.

Save for the long silvery fingers of the lights the Orkney Islands were a complete blackout. By the cloud-reflected lights, the Lone Eagle could just make out the road running from Kirkwall to St. Marys on the east and the gravel road west from Kirkwall, through Swanbister and on to Stromess just north of Hoy Sound. Below him the bitter cold waters of Scapa Flow were black. But he could make out a dark blob or two—ships that might be targets for a Hun raider.

Holding the nose of his ship up, Masters clawed for the clouds at full throttle. He had no intention of playing around below the scud this time. He wanted to be well above the clouds and from that position he could forestall any attempt by the enemy to get

in close to the ships in Scapa Flow.

As he neared the misty stuff being driven along before an easterly wind, the anti-aircraft batteries were beginning to pound the night with their steady barking. Now and then a light picked him up and then dropped away as the crews spotted the cocards on his wings.

Then for a few moments the clouds closed around the speeding ship and he was forced to fly entirely by instrument. Still the guns hammered away at the air around him, taking no chances at letting the invisible plane break through the barrage they were throwing up.

Suddenly the ship broke into the clear, and for a brief moment the Lone Eagle was thunderstruck by the sight that met his startled eyes. For there, dead ahead of him were five ships outlined in violet flame. It did not seem possible, yet there they were, twin-motored jobs, scintillating with a weird blue light.

For one dreadful moment the Lone Eagle thought he was looking at some new instrument of destruction sent over by the enemy. But as his own ship began to take on an eerie light he smiled at the solution to the mystery flashed into his mind.

Those five ships, as well as his own, had just passed through that bank of clouds. From all appearances the clouds were well charged with electricity, and static electricity was forming throughout the planes. Masters had heard Zepp commanders speak of this phenomenon, but this was the first time in his long career he had experienced it himself.

It was a strange, awe-inspiring sight to see those planes drifting through the air above the clouds, with blue balls of flame like St. Elmo's fire dancing on their wing tips and stubby wireless masts. That his own ship was equally well revealed to them was soon apparent, for the five ships swung around in perfect formation and headed his way.

A grim smile played across the Lone Eagle's face as his thumbs reached for the trips. The four guns in either leading edge were tipped with violet flame. And whenever he moved in the cockpit, or his body touched metal, blue sparks leaped across the gap. He tried the radio in an effort to keep in touch with the *Ark Royal*, but it sounded as if someone were frying eggs. He snapped the radio off and concentrated on the five ships speeding toward him.

"Junkers," he muttered as he braced himself for the charge. "Dive bombers."

THEY were fanning out, five smears of blue light streaking toward the hurtling Spitfire. Two were already firing, for orange streaks curved toward his ship.

Masters waited, watching every move made by the charging Huns. He wagged his wings as if uncertain about which course to take. The Huns started to close in fast, little realizing that the ship in front of them was flown by the dreaded Lone Eagle.

Then things began to happen with lightninglike rapidity. The Spitfire seemed to be at all points of the compass at once. The eight Brownings tossed away the little balls of violet flame and replaced them with glowing orange. Tracer sped through the night and caught one of the Junkers, smashed through the whirling prop and battered into the long, tapered engine cowl. Masters saw a flare of red leap from the motor and begin to eat its way back toward the pilot's cockpit, before he released his pressure on the trips.

And in the same motion the Spitfire was up and over in a half roll, coming down like a blazing fountain on another of the surprised Junkers. Masters nipped that one too, tearing a wing off with a well placed burst, and sending it down in a wild, twisting dive from which pilot and observer tried to escape by chute.

Like blue-winged pterodactyls flashing through a nightmare the four ships thundered across the skies, unleashing their venomous fangs of fiery hate at each other whenever the opportunity presented itself.

Below him, the Lone Eagle could see faint circles of light traveling over the clouds as the searchlights along the shore tried to pick up the battling planes through the scud. Far down there, acting like a winged shield, he knew the planes of the *Ark Royal* were making a vigilant patrol to keep enemy aircraft from reaching the ships anchored in Scapa Flow. No doubt many of the pilots would have liked to climb through the strata of clouds and join the fight, but like good soldiers they were following orders.

The three remaining Junkers were handled by experts—men who knew enough to hold their fire, and to keep out of the way of those Brownings in the wings of this ship that whisked around the sky like a thing possessed. They only attacked one at the time now, while the others tried to attract the attention of this pilot who seemed to be flying in a frenzy of madness.

Flame-lashed demons from hell were those four ships as they thundered back and forth over the Orkney Islands with their wings and fuselages bathed in that weird blue light. It was one of the strangest fights in which the Lone Eagle had taken part in his long and hectic career as an air battler.

Golden shuttles of death flashed back and forth on the dark loom of hate that night. Showers of tracer leaped from ship to ship and then on through the upper strata of clouds toward the stars. The drumming thunder of guns and motors reverberated through those two layers of scud, as Hun guns sought to sweep the Lone Eagle from the skies.

No matter which way the Junkers turned, John Masters was always in position to drive them back

toward the east. He had no intention of allowing them to reach Scapa Flow. And the harder he fought, the more determined the Junkers seemed to get over the Orkneys.

Two of the Junkers were coming down on him, one on each side. The third had disappeared in the black void of the night. Masters guessed the German must be somewhere underneath him, for he could not spot a third tell-tale flare of violet flame.

He tensed in his cockpit. His fist hit the throttle. The Spitfire leaped ahead, and then upward in a screaming zoom as the prop quickened its pace. Up, up, then over the little monoplane went. Then as it reached the top, Masters threw the stick over and kicked on full rudder. The ship responded at once, and came down in a long thundering dive at full throttle, with every gun yammering for Hun blood.

Down there, just below him, and standing on its tail was the blue-flame bathed Junkers. It, too had just reached the top of a zoom and its guns were pouring molten hate in the direction of the Spitfire. But not for long. Masters' Browning swept across the sky, caught at the whirling prop and blasted it into a thousand scintillating bits. He saw his tracer beat across the cowlings and right into the surprised face of the pilot, whose startled features reflected the blue flame leaping across the instrument board.

The pilot jerked upward in his seat, as if the hand of Death were trying to drag him out of the cockpit. The Junkers fell off on one wing, and as it went into that last long dance of death, one of the other Junkers swept in close, raked the Lone Eagle with a withering burst from the front guns, then swung to let the rear gunner open fire.

Tracer leaped along the fuselage of the Spitfire, bored holes in the cockpit cover, and singed the air in front of the Lone Eagle's face. The smell

of tracer filled the cockpit as Masters fought desperately to swing his ship out of the line of fire. Sweat poured from his face, despite the altitude, as the observer held his guns steady and tried to beat the monoplane down.

With a snarl of rage, Masters slammed the stick over, then back. The Spitfire, still hurtling along at full throttle, leaped into a climbing turn, then staggered as if it had run into a stone wall.

For one awful, heart-stopping moment, the controls went slack in his hand. The ship refused to answer his command as it swirled around in a giddy, flat turn. A chunk of wing folded back with a crash, and for a moment the left side of the cockpit was smothered. Then it tore away, carrying part of the cover frame with it.

Masters fought to bring his ship back under control. He could see now how disaster had overtaken him just when he was winning the battle. One of the other Junkers, taken completely by surprise at his lightning-like maneuver had held its dive just a split-second too long. The pilot had tried to avoid the crash, but it had happened much too fast for any man's reflexes to respond. The wing tip of the Junkers brushed that of the Spitfire. For one terrible moment the two ships swung around each other and almost crashed the second time.

THEN, to Masters, astonishment, the wing of the Junkers tore off completely, and the ship started to plummet toward the low bank of clouds underneath. Its blue lights faded as he fought to control his own ship. Around and around it went, scattering blue sparks as metal ground against metal. Off to the east the last Junkers was speeding homeward, its wing tips still aglow with the eerie violet flame.

Masters soon saw that it was no use trying to control the crippled ship. The shorn wing was making it

too unwieldy to make any attempt to fly it at all. No matter what he did it just kept going into a flat spin. The one thing left was the chute.

"Hope I hit soft ground," he muttered grimly as he unsnapped the safety harness, then shut off the petrol and switches. "This blackout business isn't going to be a help in picking out a spot to land."

He reached above him to slide back the transparent panel. A muffled curse escaped his lips. It would not move.

The guides had been badly bent when the wing tip tore off and smashed against the cockpit.

For one blood-chilling moment the Lone Eagle leaned back and looked up at the thing that held him trapped in the crippled plane, which was now swinging madly across the sky. He tried it again, yanking with all his might. But the cover refused to budge.

"Trapped like a rat in a glass trap!" he raged as he tore and punched at the cover.

But all he succeeded in doing was smashing some of the transparent panels. The braces still held.

And while he fought and struggled, the Spitfire hurtled earthward!

CHAPTER IV

An Icy Bath



MASTERS paused for breath and tried to collect his wits. His eyes hastily studied the thin bracing.

"It's do or die!" he thought. "And believe me I'm not ready to die just yet. I've got a job to do!"

Steadying himself, he drew his feet up under him until they were firmly planted on the seat. Then he raised himself, planting his strong broad back against the jammed cockpit cover as he strained upward. He felt the metal cross-bars cut into his back

as the sweat dropped from his forehead and blurred his eyes.

A brace creaked, bent—then snapped with a sound like a pistol shot. He began to yank and tear at the broken cross pieces. One by one they bent under his strong hands and ripped away. He felt the jagged glass gnawing into his flesh through his gloves, but bit by bit he loosened the metal strips until there was a space large enough for him to force his way through.

Guarding the ring of the parachute's rip-cord with one hand, he slowly pushed his way through the wrecked cowlings cover, and clung fast. He waited one brief breath and then let the spinning ship hurl him out into the night.

Over and over he tumbled. Once he caught a glimpse of the Spitfire in his mad cartwheeling through the dark void. Just a blur of violet flame. Then the lower bank of clouds engulfed him. The swirling mist shut off everything, and Masters prayed that it did not reach the top of the hills around Scapa Flow. He still held fast to the ring of the rip-cord, afraid to yank it until he was sure the spinning plane was well away.

Suddenly he burst through the clouds, out into the night. The clouds seemed to leap skyward. His arm tensed. His fist yanked the ring, then hurled it out of his way. The shroud cords unraveled as the pilot chute snaked them from the pack. A moment later he felt the terrific yank he had been expecting and heard the crack of the chute as it billowed open above him.

He swung giddily there between earth and sky for a moment while he jockeyed the shrouds, to halt his mad gyrations, and soon he was drifting slowly through the night.

"Now for a soft spot," he muttered as he looked down.

But the sight that met his gaze brought an ejaculation of dismay from his bleeding lips. There, a few

miles to the west he could see the searchlights still sweeping the sky, and right below him the dark heaving expanse of the North Sea.

He looked down at the sinister waves for a moment as the blood ran cold in his veins.

"Might as well have crashed with the Spitfire," he muttered.

It seemed as if the chute were dropping faster, almost as if in a hurry to drop him into those cold, angry waters. His hands reached for the shrouds automatically and started to slip the chute so that he would land as close to the dim, wave-washed shore line as possible.

His eyes measured the distance. As long as there was strength in his body and breath in his lungs he would fight his way through the choppy waves. Besides he had a promise to keep. And as he floated downward toward the North Sea, he felt the spirit of Seaman Smythe urging him to stop these Myrmidons of Hitler who deserved only the name of butchers.

H E COULD hear the waves reaching for him as he unloosed his harness, and prepared to take the cold plunge. He reached down, took off his shoes and let them fall. He was near enough to hear the faint splash into the chill waters. The next minute the waves engulfed him, washing over his body like a numbing blanket. He allowed his body to shoot far below the surface, only coming to the top when he felt certain that he was clear of the chute and its tangling shroud cords.

A shuddering gasp came from his bruised lips as he finally fought his way to the surface and shook the cold water from his eyes. Then as quickly as he could he slipped out of the heavy flying suit and struck out with long powerful strokes for the distant rock-bound shore.

His situation was desperate.

"God!" he panted after swimming about half a mile. "I'll never make

it! This water is numbing every muscle in my body."

But the faltering voice of a dying English boy kept driving him on. He could still see those glazing eyes, as they looked up at him, full of faith that he would keep his promise.

"I'll make it, Smythe!" he muttered through chattering teeth. "I'll keep fighting! But right now it looks as if we're going to eat scones and gooseberry jam together in the Great Beyond."

He felt himself weakening and cursed the chilling waters that were slowly but surely sapping his strength. And he realized that the current was steadily sweeping him south. Soon he would be opposite open water to the west with never a chance to gain the mainland. The will to fight was the only thing that kept his arms and legs driving him on.

Suddenly the water around him became mysteriously disturbed. To his left he saw a dark object tear through the waves, and stick a black, triangular snout into the air. White waves broke away and washed back toward him. He felt his body gripped by the turbulent waters and tossed about. He thrashed about wildly in the water, determined to fight to the very end.

Then something was under him, lifting him slowly but surely toward the surface. He heard water pouring in white-crested cataracts around him. His arms flailed the tossing waters, only to recoil as they touched an object that seemed to be a thin, wet tentacle.

"Good God!" he thought. "What am I into now?"

His thrashing knees struck something hard, something that lifted slowly and surely against his body. His arms struck an upright object, and automatically clasped it in a grip of death.

Spitting the water from his mouth, Masters saw the dim shadow of a conning tower rising above the water.

He could hear the hiss of air as the deck leveled off, and the ports were opened. He wanted to cry out a prayer of thanksgiving. But some unheard voice cautioned him to silence. Perhaps it was Seaman Smythe. He clenched his jaws to keep his chattering teeth quiet, and waited.

The conning tower lid slowly opened. The Lone Eagle held his breath, waiting for voices—voices which would reveal whether he was clinging to a British sub or one of the dreaded U-boats.

He lowered himself over the side of the boat until once again his body was almost submerged in the icy waters of the North Sea. With one hand he clung to a trailing rope, the thing that had given him the awful fright of a moment before.

FIGURES appeared on the small bridge. He could barely see their dim shadows silhouetted against the lighter clouds. They stood there in silence awhile, as the Lone Eagle heard something that sounded like a shutter opening and closing. But he could see no light. There was nothing to tell him whether the craft to which he clung belonged to friend or foe.

"There is her answer," suddenly

came a guttural voice from the bridge. "Swing over the boat at once."

Masters' heart sank. The words had been spoken in German. All thought of asking for aid was driven from the Lone Eagle's mind. He lifted himself slowly against the cold wet hull of the U-boat and strained his eyes toward shore. But he could see no signal, nothing that revealed the fact that the U-boat was expected, that somebody waited.

All memory of the cold was forgotten as his mind concentrated on this new riddle. He heard the small boat being slid into the water, and the rattle of oars. A desperate plan flashed through his mind, one by which he would not only reach shore, but perhaps find out who waited for enemy U-boats near Scapa Flow.

As silently as an otter the Lone Eagle swam toward the little dinghy bobbing on the waves beside the mysterious U-boat. Oarlocks creaked softly. Waves lapped against the sides of the dinghy. Salt water splashed into the Lone Eagle's face as he clung to the rear of the boat. Once or twice he heard that same clicking sound as if a picture were being taken by somebody in the boat. And each time he heard a mutter that

[Turn page]

 <p>BIG BOY TAKES A TIP</p>	 <p>BOB: Say, fellow, are you taking Ex-Lax? Thought that was for women and kids.</p>	 <p>JIM: Wrong, Big Boy! I've been taking Ex-Lax for years. It fixes me up fine!</p>	 <p>BOB: Oh yeah! Well, I'm pretty husky... I need a laxative with a wallop.</p>	 <p>JIM: Don't kid yourself! Ex-Lax tastes good, but it's plenty effective!</p>
 <p>LATER</p> <p>BOB: Thanks for the tip, pal! I tried Ex-Lax and it's the greatest stool!</p>	 <p>JIM: What did I tell you! It's the only laxative we ever use in our family.</p>	<p>The action of Ex-Lax is thorough, yet <i>gentle</i>! No shock. No strain. No weakening after-effects. Just an easy, comfortable bowel movement that brings blessed relief. Try Ex-Lax next time you need a laxative. It's good for every member of the family.</p> <p>10¢ and 25¢</p> 		

the answering signal had been caught from the dark shore.

"Hurry!" commanded a gruff voice from the stern of the dinghy. "You row like cadets."

"It is hard pulling tonight, *Herr Kapitan*," one of the seamen panted. "Perhaps the current is running strong."

"No stronger than usual," the man in command replied harshly. "You men are always soft when you return from leave. Pull harder. We cannot be all night."

And despite the danger of his position the Lone Eagle could not help but smile. He felt like a remora fastened to a man-eating shark, being dragged through the waters, while the killer sought a victim. Someday he hoped he would get the opportunity to thank the *Herr Kapitan* for the lift, and perhaps the key to this new riddle of a mysterious woman who had a rendezvous with a German U-boat along the rocky coast of the Orkney Islands.

WHEN the keel of the dinghy grated on the pebbly beach, the Lone Eagle let go, and slid silently through the water until he reached a jutting rock that would shelter him from view, while he watched for the meeting between the commander of the U-boat and this mysterious stranger on shore.

"You are late, *Herr Kapitan*," Masters heard a woman say from the shadow of a rock.

"My men were lazy tonight," the German U-boat commander laughed. "They complained that the rowing was hard." He paused a moment, looking up at the clouds. "Where are they?"

"They ran into trouble tonight," replied the woman. "There was a fight up there and planes fell. I heard only one fly back toward the east. Otherwise they would have been circling over the islands to attract attention to them while you landed. But

I think you need have no fear. It is dark, and people are still watching the sky for raiders. Especially after this afternoon."

"Then they were successful again!" exclaimed the German. "They got the *Graemsay*?"

"They did that, *Herr Kapitan*," said the woman exultantly. "But our *Staffel* of death missed a golden opportunity. The *Ark Royal* anchored alongside the *Graemsay* not ten minutes before the black Heinkel appeared."

"The *Ark Royal*!" exclaimed the German. He whistled softly. "But we cannot blame them. The *Graemsay* was the chosen objective, and they had no way of knowing that the *Ark Royal* would come to Scapa Flow. *Das ist ein Unglück, nicht wahr?*"

"Perhaps." The woman laughed a little. "But what is to stop them from blowing her up on the next trip?"

"Impossible!" exclaimed the German. "They are coming over tomorrow to get the *Elan*. I cannot get back in time to change the plans. But I can assure you my brother will see to it that the *Ark Royal* will go to the bottom before the week has passed."

"And where is the *Elan*?" demanded the woman. "She is not in the Flow."

"She is in the Firth of Forth," replied the German commander. "Too bad they do not keep all of their ships here. It is easy."

"You should get some of the glory for yourself, *Herr Kapitan*," taunted the woman. "You let this man Prien steal your thunder."

"That one!" exploded the U-boat commander. "You have never seen such a change in a man. He is puffed up so that a prick with a sausage fork would sound like a punctured tire since he torpedoed the *Royal Oak*. Come, have you the pictures? We must have proof to show our *Feuhrer* that my brother's scheme really works."

CHAPTER V

An Old Acquaintance

FOR a moment or two, as the Lone Eagle listened nothing was said by the two conspirators ashore. The woman had apparently handed the man a package and was getting a receipt for it. Then they sauntered across the pebbly beach and stood leaning against the rock behind which the Lone Eagle crouched.

"According to my brother's schedule the *Staffel* of Death will strike again tomorrow afternoon at exactly four o'clock," Masters heard the man say. "It is too bad you will not be there to see that one. The *Elan* is one of their finest."

"If you could only find some other way," murmured the woman. "It is murder."

"You are going soft, *Frau von Zenger*," laughed the commander. "They are only Englishmen. Soon they will find it hard to get men to go on their *verdämter* vessels. It is not murder—it is war. You hate them, do you not?"

The woman hesitated a moment. "I really hate only one," she said with a steely ring to her voice.

"The Lone Eagle?" queried the German soberly.

"Yes, the cursed American," snarled the woman. "I hate him more than ever now for sticking his nose into an affair that is none of his business. If it were not for him my daughter would not be in the hospital with a broken leg. She would be here, carrying on the work I have trained her to do."

"You have been here a month now, have you not, *Frau von Zenger*?" the *Kapitan* asked.

"Yes and a long month it has been," said the woman tensely. "Imagine me, a woman who has a castle of her own in the *Vaterland*, living in a dirty

hovel dug in the side of a hill. Living in filth like a half-demented pig, being laughed at by the brats of *Kirkwall* when I go in to market. It is a hard burden to bear. But it is our *Fuehrer's* command. However just as soon as my daughter is able she will be dropped here, just as I was, to take my place."

"I hope so, *Frau von Zenger*," said the German quietly. "You did your share of dirty work in the last war."

A wicked laugh slipped from the woman's throat. "But I still will not rest until this cursed Lone Eagle has been eliminated. When he is dead then I shall rest—not before."

The German U-boat officer stepped away from the rock.

"I must leave now, *Frau von Zenger*. But I will return at the same time the day after tomorrow. Then I hope you will have films for me of the destruction of the *Ark Royal*. That should be a blow to stagger them."

"The watchword for that night, *Herr Kapitan*?" demanded the woman. "We must use caution and change it every time."

The U-boat commander paused with one foot resting on the bow of the boat. He laughed softly.

"I will flash twice. You answer 'The Lone Eagle waits' and I will reply 'For death'. It will be a prophecy, I hope."

"That is excellent, *Herr Kapitan*! I shall enjoy reading your reply." The woman laughed.

"Then you still think it is murder?" asked the captain as he seated himself in the boat.

"You know why I say that," the woman on shore said tightly. "Why do you taunt me?"

"I was only thinking," replied the German. "We have been calling it the *Death Staffel*—why not *Murder Staffel*? Or better yet, the *Murder Patrol*. . . . Yes, I think the *Murder Patrol* would be a good name."

"It is not funny, *Herr Kapitan*,"

snapped the woman. "*Auf wiedersehen.*"

"*Auf wiedersehen, Frau von Zenger, I will report your good work. Till the day after tomorrow then, when you will have more and greater news to send back to our Fuehrer.*"

THE boat slid away in the darkness, and the only sound to be heard was the lapping of the waves against the rocks.

Masters crawled stiffly from his hiding place and stood looking into the shadows where the figure of the woman had so suddenly disappeared. A low whistle escaped his lips.

"So R-47 is back on the job!" he murmured. "Sorry about that girl of hers. Must have landed hard that night over the Zepp field. No game for women anyway."

He walked cautiously across the beach and finally found a path leading up over the cliffs, thankful for the exertion of the climb that sent his warm blood pounding through his thoroughly chilled body.

When he reached the top, he paused to rest his bruised feet and look out over the sea where, but for the good fortune of a mysterious U-boat's rendezvous with R-47, he might still be floundering, or more than likely floating face down—a new recruit for the legion of dead that Seaman Smythe had joined that afternoon.

"So it's the Murder Patrol," he muttered as he started across the wind-swept moor, keeping his eyes peeled in the hope that he would discover this hovel R-47 had mentioned. But the moor seemed devoid of any sign of habitation.

After a mile or two he slid down a gravel bank and found himself standing on a narrow road. He hesitated a moment trying to decide which direction would most quickly take him to a telephone. He finally struck off north.

He had only taken a step or two when a figure loomed up from behind

a clump of heather and flashed a light in his face. Another stepped up and held a gun to his ribs.

"An' who might you be, Johnny?" a guttural voice rasped out of the darkness.

"I'm a pilot from the *Ark Royal*," replied Masters as he tried to catch a glimpse of the faces behind the light.

The tiny flashlight lowered and traveled over his body. It came back to his face and held steady.

"Since when 'ave R.A.F. pilots been flyin' in mufti?" demanded the first one. "Seems kinda strange. Bloody 'uns come over an' try a blinkin' raid, an' then you comes a-wanderin' over the moor right after. An' barefooted. Now don't tell us you been fishin', Johnny."

"But I was in the machine that was fighting the raiders!" Masters exclaimed impatiently. "I was shot down, forced to use my chute. Landed in the water and had to swim for it. Take me back to the *Ark Royal*—the commander will identify me. I've got important information for him too."

"You'll tell it to the C.O.," growled one of his captors. "I don't mind a-sayin' I don't like the looks of you. It's been hours since the Jerries were over."

"But I had to swim, I tell you!" Masters tried to explain again. "And, my God men, I've got information that might save another battleship from the *Graemsey's* fate!"

"Maybe we'll be doin' something like that too," grumbled the man with the light. "I was just gettin' to where I thought this air raid patrol business was a waste of time, but maybe now—"

"You're wasting my time!" snapped Masters. "Feel officious because you're on ARP duty. But you're playing right into the hands of the enemy. A thousand lives are at stake while you're playing cops an' robbers. Where are you going to take me?"

"Kirkwall."

"How far is that?" demanded the Lone Eagle.

"Far enough. Come on."

"Got a car?"

"A horse and cart will do for the likes of you."

WITH the gun pressed close to his ribs there was nothing for the Lone Eagle to do but be led down the road. His captors commandeered a horse and a two-wheeled cart from a farmer and started for Kirkwall.

Masters fumed and fretted as the old gray horse jogged along the gravel road. But he had little doubt the men would shoot if he made a move to escape. But minutes were precious. A great ship—thousands of lives hung in the balance that night as the two ARP wardens brought the prisoner to Kirkwall to be questioned by their C.O.

"Your C.O. on duty all the time?" asked Masters after they had covered some miles.

"Be fishing this mornin', I guess," said the man with the gun.

"When will he be back?"

"About noon, maybe."

"About noon!" exploded Masters. "Good God, man! You don't realize what it means!"

"May be back sooner if the fish ain't bitin'," replied the man casually.

Masters knew it was useless to argue with them, so he kept quiet. In an hour or so the sun would start to rise out of the North Sea. Another day would begin. A day in which disaster might strike a foul blow at the British Navy again. The Murder Patrol would come flashing out of the east and men would die, blown to bits by this sinister scheme of the enemy.

"I've got to get away!" the Lone Eagle muttered to himself. "Can't risk being delayed while they wait for their C.O. Right now every minute counts in finding out the secret of these black Heinkels."

As the first gray light of dawn began to creep over the moor they came



*Masters' tracers beat into the cockpit
(Chapter III)*

to a fork in the road. Ahead of them lay a single, winding stretch of gravel. Behind lay two roads, one forking slightly to the east and the other toward the west.

"Where does that one lead?" he asked, indicating the more westerly of the two roads.

"St. Marys," was the terse reply. "Kirkwall's straight ahead."

Masters started to slump back between the two men.

"Got a smoke?" he asked.

The man nodded and reached into his pocket. It was his hand nearest the prisoner that was feeling around the pocket of the ragged tweed coat. That was the moment Masters went into action.

His body galvanized into sudden, lightninglike motion. His elbow went up, catching the startled driver full on the point of the jaw, driving him backward off the seat. Then with a tremendous drive from his legs he hurled himself against the man who was trying to get his old fouling piece into firing position. The surprised man catapulted off the seat and landed in the heather by the side of the road. Masters leaped after him and grabbed the gun.

"Get up!" he commanded. "And you"—he shouted over his shoulder at the man in the bottom of the cart—"you get down! Make it snappy. You've wasted enough of my time! This will teach you to be more careful if you ever get a real prisoner."

THE two men backed against the cart, their hands above their heads. They were sure they had bumped up against a desperate character.

"Don't be scared." Masters grinned. "I'm not going to harm you, not unless you fail to start moving toward Kirkwall in a hurry. Come on, get going. And if you find that fishing C.O. of yours, tell him he can find out all about me on the *Ark Royal*. Now scram."

As the two men hurried away, still a little afraid to take their hands down, Masters aimed above their heads and blasted away with both barrels. Then they really did start moving. And they didn't stop until they finally remembered that once having fired the gun it was useless as a weapon unless Masters happened to have a couple of ten-gauge shells. When they did stop they saw Masters lashing the old horse into a lumbering gallop as he headed down the road in a cloud of dust.

It was only a mile or so to Scapa pier, but the old farm horse covered that mile faster than it had ever traveled that distance before. When the Lone Eagle swung into the lane leading to the pier the nag was about ready to drop in its tracks.

He was out of the cart as the horse was sliding to a stop, and running toward the wooden pier.

"Get me out to the *Ark Royal* right away!" he demanded of a surprised petty officer who had just reached the dock in a fast launch. "Quickly! I've got important information."

The man's steady eye traveled over the wrinkled clothes and bare feet.

"And who might you be?" he asked.

"I'm a pilot off the *Ark Royal*," Masters said sharply. "Took off after those Jerry raiders last night and got dropped in the North Sea."

"What were you flying?"

"The Spitfire," snapped Masters, inwardly cursing the English caution that demanded a close study of every situation before making a move.

"Where were you when the *Graemsey* was blown up?"

"In the air—circling over the *Ark Royal* to be exact," Masters was thoroughly exasperated. "Any more questions? Or can I impress the fact on you that I'm on an important mission."

"Just one question more, matey," said the petty officer quietly. "Are you the Yank?"

Masters hesitated, then nodded. "If

you must have all the particulars, I am known as the Lone Eagle."

"Blimey, sir, why didn't you tell me in the first place?" cried the young officer. "Hop in!"

"Been trying to tell you for the past few minutes." Masters grinned as he leaped aboard the launch.

"Hope you'll pardon me," said the petty officer soberly. "But a man can't be too careful these days. An' you must admit you do look a bit queer—mufti, bare feet, and comin' up with that wreck of a horse the way you did. . . ."

Masters relaxed on one of the seats as the boat sped out over Scapa Bay.

"I'll try to make up to old Dobbin for it," he promised. "Buy him a month's ration of good oats."

CHAPTER VI

Red Tape



JOHN MASTERS was seated in the officers' mess on the *Ark Royal* eating a substantial breakfast. For the first time since he had leaped into his Spitfire the night before he felt

warm and comfortable. As he finished his third cup of coffee the commander of the *Ark Royal* came in, and ordered the mess steward to bring him a pot of tea.

"I've put your message through to London, Masters," the officer said gravely.

"Any answer?" Masters asked quickly.

A slow smile crossed the weathered face of the officer.

"We don't do things that fast in this country, although sometimes I wish we did."

"You gave them my warning that your ship is next on the list after the *Elan*?" Masters demanded, as he idly stirred the sugar in the bottom of his cup.

"Of course," muttered the com-

mander of the *Ark Royal* as he sipped his tea. "But the red tape that has to be cut before a ship can so much as lift an anchor is astonishing."

"You mean I'll have to bring in this R-47 before they'll give credence to my story?" exploded Masters. "They ought to know me by this time."

"But there are formalities, traditions and all," muttered the commander. "Everything must follow the proper channels, go through certain hands, and be initialed the proper number of times before a single move can be made."

"But what if the fleet were attacked right here in Scapa Flow?" demanded Masters.

The officer set his cup down. "There are emergency orders for every contingency," he said.

"All except the probability of being warned ahead of time that a ship is going to be blown up!" said Masters ruefully.

"That about sums it up." The officer drew a long breath. "I can assure you, I am more than anxious to get the *Ark Royal* out of Scapa Flow. It is too nice a target in such cramped quarters."

Masters got up, glanced down at the bathrobe he was wearing and then at the officer.

"Suppose your man has got my duds looking halfway presentable?"

His answer was the appearance in the doorway of a beaming little Britisher with Masters' tweeds neatly mended and pressed.

"'Ere they are, sir," he said, grinning. "But those shoes were a proper problem, they were. Sammy's got 'em. Six pairs, all your size, but different widths."

He jerked his head over his shoulder toward the lad who stood with the shoes in his arms, staring wide-eyed at the Lone Eagle.

"Good!" Masters handed the man a pound note. "When you two get off to go to Kirkwall go in to Hepworths

and get yourselves something. Now, where can I dress?"

In a few moments the Lone Eagle was back in the mess with a wide grin on his face.

"Shoes were a proper problem, sir," he said to the commander of the *Ark Royal*. "Believe it or not, it was the sixth pair that fit."

"And may I ask where you are bound for?" asked the commander. "I've been ordered to let you have a plane whenever you want it."

"Send some one ashore with me to square things with the ARP wardens and their C.O.," said Masters. "After I'm sure I won't be marched off to the jug again, I'm going after R-47. When I bring her back maybe we can use her to shear some of that red tape you were talking about."

"I'll go with you myself," offered the ship's commander.

THE Lone Eagle shook his head.

"Won't do. I'll be noticed too much if I appear in Kirkwall in your company. Anyhow, you may be needed here to pull up your mud hooks in case the Admiralty should see fit to heed my warning. And in the meantime have your communications officer knocking the ears of the operators in Whitehall with your messages. Try to impress on them that they've got to get the *Elan* out of the Firth of Forth! For once the British Navy has got to run. It may be the greatest navy in the world but it can't lick this thing the Huns have cooked up!"

Masters paused at the door and looked back at the commander for a brief second, then spoke.

"It wouldn't hurt to send a message to Sir Neville Chamberlain. Sign my name to it if you wish." He forced a cheerful smile. "Buck up, sir. At least we've got another day before they decide to crack down on the *Ark Royal*. A lot can happen in twenty-four hours. And the British Navy, you know, is never licked until

the last ship is sunk. Take a while to do that."

The officer raised his arm in a salute to the young American.

"Good luck, Masters! I know you will do your damndest to forestall them."

"Be seeing you." Masters grinned. "And I'll be bringing back the sharpest pair of red tape shears you ever saw."

He closed the door and hurried to the side of the ship where the launch was still waiting.

"Give her everything you've got, Mister," he ordered as he dropped to the cushions.

"You Yanks are always in a bloom-in' hurry, ain't you now?" the man said, with a grin, as he pushed the boat clear of the *Ark Royal's* towering sides and slammed the throttle on full.

On reaching shore Masters found a car waiting for him and ordered the driver to get to Kirkwall as fast as he could. In Kirkwall he stopped long enough at Hepworths to purchase a fleece-lined Burberry and then went on to the ARP warden's office at the end of the little flagged street. There he found an officer waiting to identify him, and two crestfallen wardens.

"We're awful sorry, sir," one of them mumbled as he twisted his battered cap in his fingers. "But we thought we was doing our duty, we did that."

"That's all right, men," said Masters. "And I want to apologize for that crack on the jaw I gave you, and the nasty fall from the cart. But I had to do it. I know you understand now, don't you?"

"We do that, sir." The lips of the man who had been careless enough to let Masters get his shotgun away from him twisted in a rueful smile. "If you care to, you can give us each a good swift kick. We was awful dumb not to know you was a gentleman, instead of a bloomin' spy."

"How would you like to help me

capture a real spy?" asked Masters. "One of the best the Germans will ever have."

"Where is he?" the man instantly demanded. "I'll wager no bloomin' Hun will get my gun away from me again. . . . Beg pardon, sir, I didn't mean it just that way."

"It isn't a he," Masters said dryly. "It's a she."

"Gor blimey!" muttered the fellow. "There ain't no lady spies on the Orkneys."

"Do you know any woman near Kirkwall who lives in a hovel dug in the hillside?" asked Masters.

BOTH men laughed.

"You must mean Crazy Liz. Say, Liz ain't no bloomin' Hun spy. She hates Hitler, she does."

"Children make fun of her when she comes in town to market?" asked Masters.

"Sure they do," said the man with the gun. "So did I when I was a kid."

"Has she been around here that long?"

"As long as anybody in Kirkwall can remember. Say, what are you drivin' at, Mister? Liz maybe daft, but she ain't one o' them spies."

"Easy," said Masters, laying his hand on the man's shoulder. "I've got a good reason for asking these questions. Just one more and then we'll be moving. Has this Liz of yours been in town lately?"

"I saw her only the day before," muttered one of the men. "She was crazier than ever. Said all the boats in Scapa Flow were chasin' the fish away an' wanted somebody to get up a petition to the king about it."

The Lone Eagle shook his head. "There's something wrong up at this Crazy Liz' place, men. I think we'd better look into it."

"Now if you think you're r'rt and there an' take that poor soul by to you're mistaken, sir," growled the man with the gun. "Me an' Alf bon't want no part in such doings, does we Alf?"

Alf shook his tousled head and glowered.

"But she may be in trouble, men," the Lone Eagle tried to explain. He turned to the officer who had been sent to identify him. "Can't you help me?"

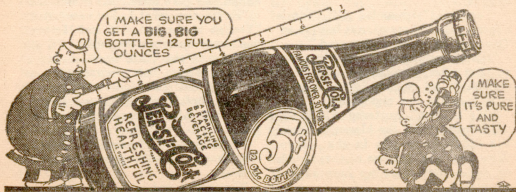
"Trust him, men," said the officer quietly. "I would go, but I think he has reasons for asking you to accompany him. I'll be responsible for what happens."

The two men looked at each other as if trying to transmit their thoughts on the question. Then they nodded in agreement.

"Good," said Masters. "Now you men rustle up a couple more shotguns and we'll start."

"Rustle?" asked Alf. "How do you rustle a gun? Maybe this one's too old to rustle."

[Turn Page]



"Oh, that's a Yankee term," said Masters with a smile. "It means get—you know, borrow."

"I know where I can get you the lend of a good double-barrel," Alf said, grinning back. "Only got one hammer though, an' you'll have to remember."

"I'm hoping the gun will only be used for a front," said Masters.

Alf glanced at the Lone Eagle, then at his companion.

"Wot the 'ell's a front, 'Orace? Hurt a gun any?"

"Damn if I know, Alf," said Horace. "But the officer said he'd be responsible. If the guns gets damaged we can collect for a new 'un. Come on."

"Anything else I can do for you?" asked the *Ark Royal* officer, as the two men disappeared.

"Just tell the driver to wait a few minutes," said Masters as he took a tiny tin box from his pocket. "I'll be out in a jiffy."

A FEW minutes later Alf and Horace came hurrying up the street. As they were passing Leonard's stationery store a tall figure turned from the window and accosted them.

"I say, my good men, where are you going with the weapons?"

The two men paused.

"A Yank down at Headquarters told us to fetch them, sir."

"I hope he has no intention of using them for a front, has he?" asked the stranger.

"I say, sir?" demanded Alf. "Wot's a front? He did mention it but me an' 'Orace don't quite understand."

"It's something you use when you go after spies," replied the man. "And you don't go putting your fists in your pockets for cigarettes."

"Gor blimey," muttered Alf in astonishment. "It's the bloomin' Yank! We didn't know you in that getup. Why you look like one of these lords or dukes wot come up here in the summer."

"Wouldn't recognize me, eh?"

Masters wriggled the sweeping mustache he had pasted to his upper lip and let the monocle he had screwed in his left eye drop into his open palm. "That's all I wanted to know. Come on now, let's get back to the car and get going."

As they crawled into the car, Alf plucked at the Lone Eagle's sleeve.

"I say, sir," he whispered, "wot is a front?"

"Just a bit of camouflage," said Masters, and settled back between Alf and Horace.

"Camerfladge," Alf said solemnly, "is the stuff they dirty ships up with so the Hun U-boats don't know which way they are pointing, ain't it?"

Masters nodded absent-mindedly.

A slow grin spread across Alf's face as he studied his gun.

"Blimey!" he muttered. "Get this thing smeared up like some of those boats that put in here during the last war, an' I'll think I'm shootin' at a hare and find I've blown 'Orace's brains out. That's dangerous, sir."

"Maybe I'll shoot at a hare first. Then where'll you be, Alf?"

"'Ell!" muttered Alf.

After about half an hour's ride the car stopped in the lee of a gorse-covered hill. The three men got out and started to climb toward the crest.

"Her place is just on the other side, sir," said Horace. "It overlooks Scapa Flow."

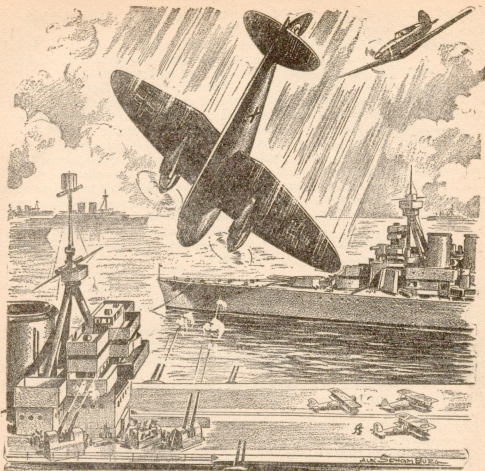
As they neared the top, Masters halted and gave them their directions.

"Now, remember," he concluded. "You go to the left, Alf, and Horace, you come up from the right. I'll go straight to the place and ask for a drink of water. You two act as if you were my beaters. Understand?"

"But there's one thing we forgot, sir," said Alf, looking down at his gun.

"What's that?" demanded Masters, who thought he had gone over every detail.

"The paint, sir."



Despite the terrific fire the Heinkel continued on its plunging course (Chap. I)

"Paint!" exploded Masters. "What in the world for?"

"You said we would be using the guns for fronts, didn't you?" queried Alf. "An' you said front was camer-fladge."

Masters whistled softly and counted ten while he stared up at the clouds.

"Listen, you two," he said after a moment. "I've decided not to use the guns as fronts. So skip it."

HORACE looked up the steep slope, then back at Masters.

"I'll be winded, sir. Bad enough to climb slow, without tryin' to skip it."

Masters' mouth popped open and then snapped shut like a steel trap.

"I'll need an English-American dic-

tionary before I'm through with these birds," he thought, then said aloud: "No, Horace, I didn't mean for you to skip up this hill."

"'E just meant to 'op it," said Alf. "Didn't you, sir?"

"That's right, Alf," Masters said patiently. "You got the idea. Now scram!" And as he caught a puzzled look. "Oh, 'op it—'op to it," he mumbled.

"Righto, sir!" they murmured in unison. "Come on, let's 'op it."

Masters took a deep breath, as the two men went off in opposite directions. Then he made his way slowly up the steep slope, every muscle tensed, every nerve on the alert.

On the other side of that gorse-

crowned crest he hoped he would find R-47, the most sinister, the most daring and ruthless of the enemy secret agents.

Much depended on the success of the hunt. It was not a hunt to kill. Instead, it was a hunt he hoped would end in the saving of lives; a hunt that would lead him to the secret of the Murder Patrol he had heard whispered about along the cold, dark shores of the North Sea.

But when he reached the top and started down the other side, what lay ahead he did not know.

CHAPTER VII

Partial Victory



IPPING into a slight dexterity, Masters paused in a clump of heather, made sure that his false mustache was in place, and screwed the monocle into his left eye. He stepped out into the open

with his gun slung carelessly under his arm.

Just ahead of him was the tumble-down hovel—the home of “Crazy Liz,” the men had informed him. And seated in front of it, with a ragged shawl pulled around her shoulders, sat a haggish-looking woman busily engaged in peeling a pot of potatoes.

“Good morning,” Masters said cheerfully, as he walked up the worn path to the door.

“Mornin’,” came the reply in a high-pitched voice that cracked at the end of the word.

“Could I trouble you for a drink of water, my good woman?” said Masters, affecting the drawl of a Britisher.

“Spring just down the hill apiece,” mumbled the old woman. “Help yourself, and don’t bother me. Can’t you see I’m busy?”

“Sorry.” Masters smiled. “My beaters did not tell me. I’m from one of the boats in the bay. Just got in

yesterday, so I’m a stranger around here.”

“Blasted boats scare all the fishin’ off,” snapped the woman, as her voice rose to a sharper pitch.

The old woman’s beady eyes traveled over the tall figure and rested on the gun he carried. Her old face wrinkled into a smile.

“You don’t look like one to do with a drink of water, my fine man,” she said as she got up. She shook the potato peelings out of her apron and two pigs and a dozen chickens set up a raucous battle for the scraps. “How would a spot of fine hill-stilled Scotch do? Shamus brought me a jug last night.”

“Splendid!” exclaimed Masters. “I had no idea I’d find an oasis in this desert of heather.”

“Come in, then,” she ordered sharply. “Where are your beaters?”

“Down under the hill,” said Masters. “I wounded a hare short time ago and they are sure they saw it go into a stone wall.”

“Good,” she snapped. “I’m not feeding good whiskey to the likes of them. Factory swill is good enough.”

She entered the smoky little hut ahead of him, and as he stepped across the log threshold he pretended to stumble. His outstretched hand caught at the back of the old woman’s head. The fingers clamped into the greasy gray hair, and when they came away, the hair came with it.

There was no outcry as the woman turned and her bent frame straightened. Her eyes flashed fire as she looked down at the gray wig in the Lone Eagle’s hand.

“So, R-47”—Masters smiled—“we meet again. Not a bad little bit of disguise. Even had the folks in town fooled. Might have carried it off if I hadn’t overheard you telling the *Herr Kapitan* that you lived in a place like this. . . . Come now, aren’t you glad to see me again?”

“You overheard what I said to the *Herr Kapitan*?” she demanded.

Masters nodded. "Johnny on the spot, you know. And of course I'm out to finish this fiendish Murder Patrol."

A BITTER smile crossed her face, as she faced him with her arms folded under the old shawl.

"You cannot stop them," she snapped. "Ship by ship, the British Navy will be blasted from the seas! This time victory will be ours."

Masters shook his head. "The jig's up, *Frau* von Zenger. You're through this time."

"You are mistaken, John Masters," she said steadily. "It is you who are through." Her shawl fell away from her shoulders and she stood in front of him with an automatic in her steady right hand. "I knew you were a Secret Service man when you stepped up to the door, but I did not dream that it was going to be my good fortune to rid my country of the Lone Eagle. The gun gave you away. Your disguise was perfect, but I can't imagine an English sportsman, such as you pretended to be, carrying a gun with one hammer missing, and the stock all scratched up. Now lower it carefully to the floor."

"Suppose I yanked it up fast, R-47, and blasted away," said Masters.

She shook her head. "That one hammer is still down. By the time your fingers reached it I would have you drilled five times. You would be dead before the gun was even half cocked."

"I'm glad I never underestimated you, R-47," the Lone Eagle said, as he let the old shotgun slide to the floor. "But let me add that you slipped up, too. Your disguise was also perfect, save for those potatoes. You were peeling too many for one person. I knew that there must be another around here—the real 'Crazy Liz.' Where is she?"

"Alive and well," taunted R-47. "Much healthier than you will be in a moment or two."

"What good will that do you?" de-

manded the Lone Eagle as he watched the gun held in the hand of the grim woman spy. "My men are coming up the hill. If you kill me, they will get you."

"No, Masters," said R-47 quietly. "I will kill you. Then I will kill them. Your body, I will hide in a hole down the hill apiece. Theirs will lie where they drop. Then I shall hurry to Kirkwall and report that you shot them and escaped. They will believe Crazy Liz. But even if I should die, it would be a glorious death, knowing that I have rid the *Fuehrer* of the man who stands in his way."

Masters shook his head. "I've always had a lot of respect for your judgment, R-47. But I'm disappointed in you."

"Why?" demanded the German woman. "Be quick!"

"I didn't think a person of your intelligence could be taken in by that little maniac. He will be the ruin of a wonderful country. I'm not fighting the German people—I'm fighting for them, in fact. My one objective in life is to stop this madman whose hellish lust for power has brought another war to plague civilization."

R-47's face grew livid. She raised the gun until it pointed right at the Lone Eagle's chest.

"Now that you have preached your little sermon you had better pray, John Masters," she said quietly. "You are about to die, not gloriously in battle, but shot like a dog in a little earthen hovel!"

Masters tensed. Every nerve was a-tingle as he watched the finger grow white across the knuckles as it exerted pressure on the trigger. He knew she would shoot. Her hatred of him was almost fanaticism.

"Good-by, John Masters!" Her smile was a wicked gleam. "It is not *auf wiedersehen* this time."

A COAL snapped in the little smoke-grimed gate, and the sound coupled with the tension made

them both start. But she recovered herself in a flash.

"Your nerves are jumpy, Masters," she drawled. "Ah, but I enjoy seeing you squirm, seeing the sweat pour down your face. Do your feet feel cold? Don't fret. They will soon be scorched by the flames of hell."

Her finger tightened on the trigger again, moved back. In a split-second the gun would bark and a chunk of metal would tear its way into the Lone Eagle's heart.

Crash!

The explosion was terrific in the little hut.

Masters felt something strike him in the chest as he leaped forward and wound his arms around the figure he could see so dimly. They went down with a crash, and Masters was surprised to find that he still had strength enough to twist the smoking pistol from R-47's grasp. And as he pushed himself to his knees he looked down and saw that she was crying—crying in a sort of frustrated hysteria. It was more like a sobbing cry of rage. He could not understand.

The room was full of smoke. Two figures dashed about, stamping and tearing at the interior of the hut. The Lone Eagle, still kneeling on the dirt floor, looked down at his chest. There was a hole burned in his Burberry right over his heart. Yet he felt no pain.

He could smell the scorched fabric as he touched the spot, expecting to find his fingers wet with blood.

"Come, sir," he heard Alf's voice shouting through the smoke. "We got 'er, an' a 'ellicat she is. 'Ey, 'Orace. . . . Now where did 'e go?"

"Hin 'ere, Alf," cried Horace. "She had Crazy Liz all tied up on er cot. Makin' a bloomin' prisoner out o' 'er!"

"What happened?" asked Masters, as he pushed himself to his feet, surprised to find that he did not feel weak.

Alf laughed as he held the raging R-47.

"We saw you in 'ere, sir. She 'ad you covered, an' we couldn't try a shot without shootin' you. So 'Orace slips hup hon the roof an' drops a twelve gauge shell downit the chimney. A proper racket it made, didn't it, sir? Blew coals orl over the bloom-in' 'ut. I say, looks like a bit o' flyin' coal burned your new Burberry. That's a rum go, now, ain't it?"

Masters grinned as he looked down at the charred edges of the hole.

"Much better than the hole she was about to drill there, Alf. Your shell went off just in time. Must have been what I thought was a bit of popping coal, when that shell came down the chimney. But I might just as well have been shot. I've still got goose pimples."

"Lor', you shoulda seen 'er jump," laughed Alf. "Put 'er bullet right through the ceiling. Laughed fair to splittin', I did. An' when the smoke shot out the chimney it scared 'Orace so 'e fell off the roof. . . . Ho, you got 'er, 'Orace. Told you old Liz weren't no spy, sir."

Horace came in leading an old woman who was the exact counterpart of the figure Masters had found sitting before the door. Only this time she was the real Crazy Liz, the poor half-witted soul whom R-47 had been holding prisoner while she carried out her grim masquerade.

MASTERS started to say something to her, but his voice was drowned out by the squealing of the two pigs and the frantic cackling of the chickens. Crazy Liz dashed to the door. She was back in a moment waving an empty pot before the eyes of R-47.

"You wanton waster!" she screamed. "Lettin' the pigs an' biddies eat my good pertaters." She started to lift the heavy iron pot to aim a blow at R-47's head, but Masters grasped her arm.

"Take it easy, Granny," he soothed. "I'll see that a whole sack of potatoes

are sent up from Kirkwall, an' anything else you might need."

The old woman dropped the pot on the floor and turned to the Lone Eagle. Her beady eyes squinted up into his for a moment and her wrinkled face broke into a smile.

"You're a fair 'un," she cackled. "How would you like a spot of Shamus' heather dew? I 'eard 'im bring a jug last night. This 'un 'ad my mouth stuffed full o' dirty rags an' I couldn't 'oller."

"No, Granny." Masters shook his head. "I accepted an invitation to sample some of Shamus' brew a few moments ago. It almost got me into trouble. But Alf and Horace could do with a spot, I'm sure of that."

"That scum!" she cackled. "Dish-water is their drink."

"But they saved our lives, Granny," said Masters. "Especially yours. They brought me up here just for that purpose. They're friends of yours. They defended you this morning."

"Now did they?" Liz exclaimed. "I always did say Alf an' 'Orace was the only gentlemen in Kirkwall. Of course they shall 'ave a drink of heather dew. But only one, mind you. I know how they can swill it down if they so much as get near an uncorked jug."

While Alf and Horace sampled the heather dew, Masters began to search every nook and cranny of the little hovel. There was something he wanted to find.

"Always carryin' my 'erb basket around, she was," mumbled Liz, as she filled her own glass for the second time. "Wager a shillin' she don't know one 'erb from tother."

"Is it here?" demanded Masters eagerly.

"There—just behind the chair by the hearth."

Masters grabbed up the basket, pulled out the bundle of dried herbs, and gave an exclamation of triumph.

"Just what I was looking for, *Frau von Zenger*," he said exultantly. "A

small infra-red outfit. You can flash signals to the U-boat and pick up the reply without being seen by any one unless they have glasses that will catch the ray. Keep your powerful little camera here, too, don't you?"

MASTERS looked at the little key connected to the black box fastened to the side of the basket. He pressed the key and heard the same clicking sound he had the night before.

"Had a hunch it was something like this," he said softly, as he turned to R-47 who was being covered by both Alf's and Horace's guns. "Just think. Tomorrow night I can flash a message—just four words. You know what they are, don't you, *Frau von Zenger*."

"Yes," she snarled. "And some day the answer will be right."

"Naturally," Masters agreed. "That is the one thing in life we can all be sure of. But have you stopped to think of this little detail, *Frau von Zenger*? I'll have to hand you over to the British authorities. You will be tried as a spy—and there can be little doubt about the verdict. For I imagine the English have never forgotten that you Germans thought the execution of Edith Cavell was just."

The faces of Alf and Horace darkened. They looked from their prisoner to the Lone Eagle.

"Is she really a 'Un spy, sir?" Alf asked.

"One of the greatest," Masters acknowledged, with a bow to R-47. "You two have done a good day's work, and I'll see that you get proper credit for it. Come along. We'll take her back to Kirkwall and hand her over."

Leaving old Liz trying to straighten up the mess that had been made of her hut, the three men started down the slope toward the car with their furiously enraged prisoner.

Alf and Horace kept an eagle eye on her. This time there would be no mistakes, no escapes. The glory of the world rested on their shoulders.

The Lone Eagle walked just behind them, urging them to haste. He wanted to get back to the *Ark Royal* as soon as possible. For although he had just finished a task that might excuse him from any further participation in the war, he still had a job to do, a promise to keep.

The capture of R-47 was just a part of that job. A greater, more hazardous task lay ahead—the elimination of the Murder Patrol.

CHAPTER VIII

The Murder Patrol Strikes



LIFTING the Hawker Hurricane off the flight deck of the *Ark Royal*, disappointment clouded the Lone Eagle's face. He had returned to the ship, after seeing that R-47 was in safe hands, to find that the Admiralty had wired that the crew of the *Elan* was on shore leave and that every effort was being made to round them up. Also that the matter of the *Ark Royal* was being taken under consideration.

He glanced at his wrist-watch as he threw the little ship into a climbing turn.

"Less than an hour," he muttered angrily. "Won't any more than have time to reach Edinburgh, if they're on time. Never saw them a minute off schedule yet."

He yanked up his trucks, as he straightened out, and then slammed the throttle of the Merlin II, 1,050 h.p. motor on to full. The gray monoplane leaped forward on a southerly course at better than three hundred and twenty-five miles an hour.

Roaring over Duncansbay Head a few moments later, past Wick and then out over the North Sea again, Masters began to scan the skies to the east, hoping to catch a sight of the Murder Patrol before it reached the Firth of Forth.

His lips were grim as he looked

down at the cold, gray waters below. By all rights, he should be floating down there. And if he had suffered the fate that he had been saved from by mere chance, R-47 would still be masquerading as Crazy Liz on a hillside overlooking Scapa Flow. And the Murder Patrol would claim many more victims before the red tape in the British Admiralty would be cut.

He was pleased when he hit the coast of Scotland right between Kingstown and Puckie. He roared over Banff and Aberdeen Counties, and headed in over the Braes of Angus. Dundee flashed by on the east, and the Firth of Tay was a dirty wet ribbon of reflected light.

Minutes had sped by. Precious seconds ticked along on his watch as he tried to keep a check on the sky on all sides.

Ahead of him now he could see the Firth of Forth, and the smoky haze over Edinburgh. He touched the rudder, put the nose of the Hurricane down for greater speed.

"There's the bridge," he muttered, as the great three-arched span of steel came into view. His anxious eyes scanned the ships lying to the west of the bridge. It seemed as if there were almost as many vessels there as in Scapa Flow.

And as he flashed over Dunfermline he saw the white puffs of breaking anti-aircraft shells as they stippled the air just below the skies. His quick eyes picked up the targets streaking out of the east.

"Heinkels!" breathed the Lone Eagle. He studied the formation a second, as his thumbs fondled the trips. "But no black ones."

Already bombs were dropping in the Firth, throwing great geysers of water into the air. Anti-aircraft was pounding away at the raiders from every ship and shore battery. But the Heinkels kept high, slithering in and out of the barrage, and always leaving a trail of bombs exploding below them.



"Didn't I signal that the Lone Eagle would be waiting—Herr Kapitan?" said Masters
(Chapter IX)

MASTERS kicked on rudder, slapped the stick forward and went cork-screwing through the formation of Heinkels. And when he flashed into the clear, a big Heinkel behind him began to vomit black smoke. Coming around in a climbing turn he saw the door of the bomber open and the crew spill out into the late afternoon air and drift earthward as their chutes cracked open.

"They're not the same type," he muttered, as he watched a formation of Spitfires sweep in on the raiders from the west and still another formation of "Defiants" hurtling down from the east, trapping the Heinkels in a barrage of tracer. "Haven't got those covered noses, or shielded cockpits. Not at all like the Heinkel in the picture I saw on the *Ark Royal*."

Leaving the bombers to the two formations of single seaters, Masters began to climb again. He wanted to get up there above the clouds that were being driven in from the east like frightened sheep. Up there, somewhere, he was certain that he would find one of the sinister black Heinkels that had caused the destruction of the *Graemsay*.

Up and up he went, muscles tensed, mind working feverishly as he sought some way of outwitting this latest machination of a ruthless enemy. In his short tour of the Firth he had spotted the graceful outlines of England's new and powerful battleship *H.M.S. Elan*. No ship in His Majesty's Navy carried the armament that the *Elan* had. Great fifteen-inch guns fairly bristled on her decks in masked turrets. Naval experts the world over considered her practically invulnerable against the attack of present day weapons.

But Masters had seen the quick, sudden destruction of the *Graemsay*, and he was grimly positive that it was no fluke that had sent the sinister black Heinkel diving through the steel plates of that vessel. He knew now that the enemy, under the leader-

ship of the maniac whom Germans acknowledged as their *Fuehrer*, had unleashed some new weapon of warfare; something against which no battleship could stand up.

The clouds were being packed into closer formation by the driving gale at ten thousand. Soon the sky was blotted from view by a heavy gray barrier of mist that seemed to boil and swirl as the Lone Eagle climbed toward it.

Then he hit it, his feet steady on the rudder, hand grasping the stick, lightly but firmly, and eyes glued to the array of instruments on the panel. It was only minutes before he broke into the clear and saw the great expanse of white spread out before him from horizon to horizon. Below him a rainbow made a perfect circle on the top of the sun-bathed clouds, and in the center of the circle was a speeding silhouette of the Hurricane in which he flew.

Masters glanced to the north, and to the northeast. But the sky was clear in that quarter. Then, as he swung to the south, an oath of consternation exploded from his lips.

"The Murder Patrol!" he exclaimed, as he saw the black rudder of a Heinkel disappearing in the clouds.

The Lone Eagle kicked on rudder with a snarl. The Hurricane heeled over in a split-S bank and went hurtling toward where the Heinkel had cut through the ceiling. The clouds were still boiling, due to the passage of the big bomber. Without stopping to count the cost of what might happen if the Heinkel was cruising under the ceiling, he went into a dive.

ONCE again he was in the mist, hurtling through with throttle wide open. The needle on his air-speed indicator leaped toward the five hundred mark, but he cared little. His one object was to catch that grim black crate with the bloody Swastikas on its rudder before it reached the *Elan*.

It was dark under the clouds when he broke through. Then his eyes grew accustomed to the night light, and he went slashing through the skies, prop screaming, motor roaring.

Below him he saw the wide expanse of the Firth of Forth. He saw flashes of light as the anti-aircraft guns let go; the great circles in the water where the bombs had smashed in. Tracer made a fiery fountain of lead over the arches of the bridge.

"There she is!" Masters yelled, as his eyes picked up the diving Heinkel. "Got to nail her before it's too late!"

Far up at the head of the Firth he could see the faint flash of wings as the defenders battled with the raiders. There wasn't a single ship around the *Elan*. It lay there at anchor on the dirty gray waters, a perfect undefended target.

The Heinkel was going down, both motors wide open. But the Hurricane sped after, its dive steeper, its motor yelping, its pilot daring as he practically stood on the rudder.

A fierce light of purposeful determination glowed in the Lone Eagle's face as he set his course right at the *Elan*, trying a short cut to the Hun's objective. From his experience yesterday he felt certain that the Heinkel would make a half circle and come in to take the *Elan* broadside.

It was a race against death, a race such as had never been witnessed before. A race between a single little wasp of the air and a great black vulture from the blood-fouled eyrie of the Nazis.

As he had expected, the big Heinkel started to swing around. He kept on the straight course, thus gaining on the sinister black ship.

"*Elan! Elan! . . . Elan!*" he kept calling into the mouthpiece fastened in his mask. "*Elan! Elan*, get moving. Drag your anchors! . . . Get going, for God's sake!"

Time and time again he screamed the fateful warning into the little transmitter, but the ship held fast to

her chains in the roadstead. The only indication that the warning of the Lone Eagle was heard was the concentration of fire across the path of the big Heinkel.

The black Heinkel was above him now, banking slowly and coming toward him, its blunt nose down, beginning to point right at the *Elan*. The movement of the big plane seemed slow and deliberate, almost overconfident of its ability to reach its objective.

The air was thick with tracer, pom-poms and flaming onions. Archie tried to form a cone of exploding shells over the battleship. And not a few of the whining slugs from the decks of the boats passed through the wings of the Hurricane. Men were blazing away in desperation down there, caring little who got hit, so long as they were able to throw a fiery barrage in front of this sinister black job that had appeared out of nowhere while everybody's attention had been centered on the fight between the single-seaters and the bombers.

MASTERS was climbing again. His nose was pointed skyward, and his prop was slicing the air along the Heinkel's course. He jammed on the trips with both thumbs and sent eight murderous streams of fire hurtling upward at the black-crossed Heinkel which had now completed its turn and was heading down the chute at the helpless *Elan*.

"God!" sobbed the Lone Eagle. "Why don't they get moving—even with half a crew!"

Like a winged David going out to meet a flying Goliath, the little Hurricane flew at the nose of the black Heinkel. Its eight guns hammered away in unison, and threw a converging line of fire right into the nose of the hurtling ship. But it was like a mosquito trying to drill the hide of a rhinoceros, for all the harm the Lone Eagle's slugs were doing. And as he drew closer he could see the bullets

splashing against the nose and cockpit cover like so much molten lead on a steel plate.

With a curse he shifted his course, and sent that funneling cone of fire into the prop spinner of the right-hand engine. He saw his slugs gnaw away, tearing the metal cap to shreds and then snarl at the thin part of the prop. The propeller let go, parts of it hitting the side of the control cockpit and bouncing away, without leaving so much as a dent.

He only had time for that one last drag before he was forced to pull away. As it was, it was close, too close. It seemed as if he could have touched the wing tip of the Heinkel as he flashed by and then went into a quick half roll just behind the plunging ship.

And as he went by, he had a split-second's closeup of the Heinkel. He saw those rivets, and the metal shields covering the nose and cockpit. He could see no crew, either in the cockpit or in the fuselage compartments. The big ship appeared to be empty, as far as human beings were concerned. It was like a black ghost ship, a craft of death flashing out of the blue.

As the Hurricane came around, Masters opened up again. This time he concentrated on the stubby wireless mast just behind the control cockpit. He saw his slugs dance around it, chew away at its base until it started to sag. But the ship thundered straight down on the *Elan* just the same. There seemed no way of stopping this hellish instrument of war!

He tried firing at the rudder, but his bullets just seemed to bounce away without doing any damage whatsoever.

"Even got the gunner's cockpit in the top of the fuselage covered," he snarled, as he unleashed burst after burst at the big black ship. "There just isn't a vulnerable spot."

With his guns smoking hot, his motor screaming as if in pain, and great patches of wing being torn

away by the fire of the ships down there on the water, Masters thundered after the black job. He tried everything. But with no effect.

Not even the rain of fire being thrown across its path from below seemed to have any effect on the black Heinkel as it thundered closer and closer to the *Elan*.

Boring in closer in his desperate effort to stop the Heinkel, Masters threw caution to the winds. He raked the wings, the fuselage, the waving rudder and the elevators from close range. His own ship bounced around like a leaf in an autumn gale as the slipstream caught at his wings, making it difficult to hold his target.

The chill of death ran through his frame as he saw that there was no way of halting this Murder Patrol, no way of stopping it from striking terror and consternation into the heart of the British fleet.

Then the horrible cataclysm struck the Firth of Forth.

One moment the proud *Elan* had been lying there at anchor.

A black Heinkel had hurtled out of the afternoon sky.

The next minute the two craft were mingled in an embrace of death, smothered by a mushrooming cloud of flame-tinted smoke!

CHAPTER IX

A Fish in the Net



THE Lone Eagle, riding the tail of the Heinkel, had tried to pull out as the Hun crate dug in. But he was too late. He had only managed to start the Hurricane in a zoom when the blow struck. In a flash, he was enveloped in that blanket of hot, smothering smoke. The acrid smell of burned explosives ate into his nostrils as he felt his ship grasped by some powerful, unseen hand and lifted skyward.

Over and over, he felt the ship being

whirled in the mad, giddy dance of death. To his right he heard a crash and caught a glimpse of a wing ripping loose and whirling skyward under the power of the explosion. A dull roar seemed to rock the earth's very foundations, and flying pieces of hot steel cut through the smoke like blazing pinwheels.

Masters had to fight desperately to get the slide over his head open. The smoke swirled into his open cockpit, choking, seeping through his mask, tearing at his lungs, as he battled his way to an upward position, and clung to the edge of the cowl.

Not until he felt the mad whirling begin to slow up did he let go and drop over the side. The chute shot upward instead of downward as it popped open. It swung crazily, as Masters struggled to control it and slip away from the lifting column that marked the spot where the *Elan* had been at anchor. Finally it stopped rising and began to settle. Masters grabbed at the opportunity to slip the chute and escape the rising pillar of smoke.

When he had drifted away from the billowing black cloud, he looked back and shook his head. The *Elan*, torn to shreds amidships, was settling, bow and stern coming up just as the *Graemsey's* had done. Once more, he could see black dots floating on the surface of the flame-bathed water, but not as many as before. This time more men had slipped across the bar and

entered that last haven of rest from which there is no return.

"If they had only listened!" he half sobbed, as he watched the *Elan* disappear below the water in a cloud of steam and smoke. "If they'd only got her out on the open seas."

Masters realized full well the difficulties besetting the British. Handling a navy the size of theirs was not a matter of snap decisions and making over-night jumps from haven to haven. Things had to be examined from every angle to make certain that they did not leap from the frying pan into the fire.

The men in the Admiralty were level-headed Britishers, men who could not be stampeded into hasty maneuvers, no matter how desperate the emergency might seem. For the very life-blood of the British Empire depended on that navy, and the blue-jackets who did not know that there was such a word as defeat. Unlike them, the Lone Eagle had had a sort of grandstand seat in this desperate battle against the mysterious black Heinkels. But he knew that when the moment came to strike against this unknown, unseen foe, he would have every British shoulder at the wheel, every official would be cooperating with him to the *nth* degree.

And while he settled to the water, drifting close to the side of a destroyer, his mind drifted northward to that great seagoing airdrome, the

[Turn Page]

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Ark Royal, as it lay at anchor in Scapa Flow. Would the red tape be cut in time to allow it to escape a similar fate? He wondered. He was certain of only one thing, and that was that he would fight with bitter determination to blast this Murder Patrol from the skies.

HE HIT the water and a few moments later was pulled aboard a destroyer.

"I'm the Lone Eagle," he said quietly, as the commander of the destroyer appeared. "Please let me use your wireless."

The officer shook his head. "Just got orders from the admiral. All wireless outfits are to be sealed until we get orders from the Admiralty. Censorship, you know."

"They're trying to cover up another blow dealt them by the enemy!" Masters snapped. "And how do they expect to keep this secret? It was seen from shore. The catastrophe in Scapa Flow yesterday could be covered easy enough by simply cutting communications with the Orkneys. But this—"

"Did you say—in Scapa Flow, yesterday?" demanded the officer. "Couldn't have been the *Graemsey*, could it?"

"Yes," replied Masters. "Why do you ask that way? Haven't you heard?"

"Not officially," replied the officer, as the first lot of wounded from the *Elan* were hauled up on deck. "But my wireless officer picked up a broadcast from Berlin yesterday afternoon, and that chap was saying that the *Graemsey* had been blown up in Scapa Flow with a great loss of life."

"What time yesterday?" demanded Masters.

"Just before tea time," replied the officer. "I recall distinctly that I was waiting for the tea call, when he told me about it."

"Good Lord!" exclaimed Masters. "They broadcast news of the sinking

of a ship practically before it happens. The *Graemsey* was sunk at that very moment."

The officer was incredulous. "I can't believe it! Thought it rather strange that orders came through to ignore the broadcast as propaganda. Mysterious, isn't it?"

Just then a man came up the companionway and stepped up to the officer's side. He said a few words in a low voice, and Masters could see the officer's face go white.

"It's happened again, sir," said the officer, turning to Masters. "They've just broadcast from Berlin that the *Elan* has been sunk in the Firth of Forth. Gave the time as four o'clock."

"That's when they struck," said Masters. "Four o'clock to the minute. I knew about it last night, and I warned them. But you saw what happened?"

"You say you warned the Admiralty?" asked the officer.

"Yes, I told them that the Murder Patrol would strike the *Elan* at four o'clock this afternoon."

"The Murder Patrol," murmured the officer. "I don't understand."

"Neither do I," growled Masters. "But I will before I'm through!"

MASTERS sat on a rock staring into the Stygian darkness that hid the North Sea from view. The restless waves pounded the beach and now and then threw a spray of salt water in his face. At his side lay the herb basket that R-47 had used to disguise the little infra-red blinker and the glasses by which similar rays could be picked up when they came flashing through the dark.

"Blimey, but it's cold, sir," Alf said from his hiding place behind another rock. "'Ow much longer?"

Masters glanced at his watch. "Not much longer, men." There were seven others in the little reception committee waiting for the *Herr Kapitan*. "If he's on schedule he ought to be surfacing soon."

While he sat there, lifting the lenses now and then to look toward the east, Masters felt some satisfaction over the events of the past twenty-four hours.

For one thing he had finally convinced the Admiralty that it might be a good idea to get the *Ark Royal* out of Scapa Flow, and assign her to some mission in distant waters. It was with no little satisfaction and relief that, long before dawn this morning, he had seen the big vessel with its escorting destroyers steam out of the Flow and head westward through Hoy Sound.

And when a black Heinkel of the Murder Patrol had come out of the clouds over Scapa Flow that afternoon, its target was gone, having put plenty of miles between itself and its former anchorage.

It was then that something happened that deepened the mystery more than ever. The big black Heinkel had seemed at an utter loss. Almost as if its guiding hand were missing. It had come down in its screaming dive, leveled out, and circled Scapa Flow, with Masters hammering lead into it from every angle. It had not evaded his fire, nor was it once returned. It was like a ship groping in a fog for a landing field.

This particular performance had lasted for a little over half an hour, then the ship had suddenly glided toward the water. It no sooner touched than there was a tremendous explosion that sent the water to piling up through the Flow and swamping small boats caught out in the open. That was all.

There had been no trace left, save for bits of fabric, none of which were much larger than a handkerchief. Not a single clue to how the plane was guided, or the why of its mysterious behavior, was left.

It just seemed that with its objective missing, the ship was at a loss as to what move to make.

"Haven't got their spy around here

any more to tip them off," one of the troop officers had said when Masters had set down again at Kirkwall. "We've got her behind stone walls where she can't do any more damage, or keep them informed about what ships are anchored out there."

Masters had mulled that statement over in his mind, and then in company with Alf and Horace he had combed the old lady's hut again, and the surrounding hillside, in hopes that he would find some sort of radio transmitter by which the Heinkels had been guided down on their target. But despite his painstaking search, no such instrument had been found. He had even tried questioning R-47, but had known he was doomed to failure before he even started on that tack.

"**W**ONDER if it could be some sort of television gadget," he thought. "I'm sure R-47 had no wireless outfit around here. Dead sure. Yet the minute the target is gone, and she is behind stone walls, the whole thing is a washout. Maybe we could beat them if we always knew what the target was going to be ahead of time. Swell chance of that, though. It was just a lucky break that gave me those two objectives."

He raised the lenses and looked out over the North Sea.

He felt the blood quicken in his veins as he caught two flashes repeated at intervals.

"Steady, you chaps," he called softly over his shoulder. "They're on the surface. I'm signaling to them now."

His fingers pressed the key. He heard the shutter covering the infra-red lamp click open and shut as he spelled out:

THE LONE EAGLE WAITS

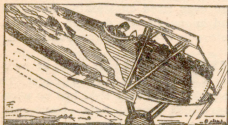
He waited, praying that there wasn't much difference between his transmitting and R-47's. The darkness seemed to weigh down on him like a smothering blanket as he peered

through the night. The light out there flashed:

FOR DEATH

"Okay, men," he called. "They're coming. Be ready when I give the word, but don't make a move before I do."

Masters watched through the glasses. Now and then he caught a couple of quick flashes and answered in kind. The flashes were getting closer. Now, when he strained for the sound above the lapping waves, he could hear the dull creak of oarlocks. Soon he could make out the dinghy moving across the water like a shadow.



He got down from the rock and moved into the deeper gloom along the shore. In his hand his gun was ready. The bow of the boat scraped along the pebbles. A tall figure loomed at the stern, and stepped over the two men at the oars.

"*Frau von Zenger!*" the captain of the U-boat called softly. "Where are you?"

"Right here, *Herr Kapitan,*" said Masters, stepping forward. "And I'd advise you not to make a move. That goes for your men, too. You're all covered!"

"Who are you?" demanded the captain.

"I signaled that I'd be waiting, didn't I?" asked Masters dryly.

"I don't understand," said the captain hesitantly, and Masters knew he was stalling.

"Didn't I signal that the Lone Eagle would be waiting, *Herr Kapitan?*" said Masters. "Or have you forgotten?"

"*Gott verdammt donder,*" mut-

tered the U-boat commander. "*Der Amerikaner. Where is she?*"

"In safe keeping, *Herr Kapitan,*" replied the Lone Eagle. "And before I forget it, I want to thank you for the lift you gave me the other night. I owe you a debt I'm afraid I shall never be able to repay. It was I who made the rowing hard for your men night before last. I was drowning out there when you came to the surface with your tin fish and rescued me from a wet grave. So I thank you from the bottom of my heart."

"*Ach, Gott!*" thundered the German. "So it was you!"

"So now that those little formalities are over, may I inform you that you and your men are prisoners of war?" said Masters steadily. "And for your sake I hope you have your uniform on, if you get what I mean. All right, men."

ALF, Horace and the others stepped out of the shadows, and covered the prisoners.

"But you will never take my boat," sneered the German. "They have standing orders that if I do not return in half an hour they are to submerge."

"I've taken care of that little detail, *Herr Kapitan,*" said Masters, holding his gun above his head and firing a single shot into the air.

As if by magic, a dozen searchlights knifed the darkness. Ten of them concentrated on one spot off shore, while two cast their rays to the beach, lighting up the little group.

"So yours was the U-Seventy-three," chuckled Masters, as he looked out over the lighted sea where the lights held the conning tower of the U-73. "I hope your men realize the jig's up. Five destroyers, dropping ash cans, won't be so healthy. . . . Yeah, there they come. See them lining up on deck? Cooperation from the Admiralty. . . . Bring them along, men. They'll be wanting to join their comrades for breakfast, won't they, *Herr Kapitan?*"

CHAPTER X

Glory Staffel



AS THEY started up the steep path leading over the cliffs, Masters stopped.

"By the way, *Herr Kapitän*, what is your full name? Matter of record, you know. Just so that we can notify your folks that you are safe, but a prisoner of war."

"*Kapitän Johann Lorentz*," growled the captured officer.

"Thank you, *Herr Lorentz*," Masters said calmly. "Then your brother, the leader of the Murder Patrol, must be a Lorentz, too. I'll have to do a little checking on him. Come along."

"*Das ist ein grosse Schwindel*," snarled the captain.

"Maybe it was a trick, *Herr Kapitän*," Masters said coolly. "But who should be a better judge of swindles than a man who has served under Hitler and his mob? By the way, you wouldn't mind telling me just what the Murder Patrol has in mind for their next show, would you? They didn't do so well this afternoon with the *Ark Royal*. The face of the man who does the news broadcasts in Berlin is going to be awfully red when he learns that his broadcast was a lot of baloney. I got quite a laugh out of *him* when he repeated at six."

"What happened?" demanded the captain.

"Wouldn't you like to know!" Masters grinned to himself. "Help you frame your answers better when the Intelligence gang gets working on you."

Dawn was breaking when Masters handed his prisoners over to a guard detail from the destroyers. He stood for a moment looking out over Scapa Flow, wondering if any one of those proud ships riding at anchor there had been chosen by the Murder Patrol for the next victim.

The helplessness of the situation

gnawed at his mind. Without advance information as to where the black Heinkels would strike, there was nothing he could do. He could not guard half a dozen places at once. And even if he were on the spot, he could do nothing. His experience over the Firth of Forth had proved that.

But one thing he did know. That was that his two brave allies, Pierre Viaud and Henri, were working for him in France. He had sent them a coded message, explaining in every detail just what the big black Heinkels looked like, and asking them not to rest until they had located the spot where the sinister black crates had their nest.

He knew that they were doing their best over the lines, and that Pierre would recruit the keenest-eyed pilot in France to help in the search. They had been reporting almost every hour, but up to now had been unsuccessful in their mad hunt for the Heinkel's airdrome. Masters knew, though, that if ever there were two men on whom he could rely to help him, that they were Pierre and Henri.

A smile of satisfaction crossed the Lone Eagle's weathered face as he watched the U-73 come into Scapa Bay with an English prize crew on board. Never again would that boat pick up pictures and transport them to some German seaplane waiting somewhere out on the North Sea.

BEEN a pretty busy time since we met, hasn't it, Alf?" he said to the islander. "One of these days the king's going to come up an' pin a tin medal on you two."

"Blimey," muttered Horace. "Hi thought 'e was a rich un. Wot's the hidea of using tin?"

"Hit's the war, 'Orace," broke in Alf. "They's 'ard put to hit for metal these days. An' besides, 'es only foolin' with yer. The king ain't got time for pinnin' medals on the likes o' we. Them's only for 'eroes wots done somethin' big. Lookit the Yank

'ere. No medals on 'im, an' blimey, 'es a proper 'ero, 'e his. 'Ow about hit, sir?"

Masters knew better than to get into any sort of discussion with his two new-found henchmen. He suggested a bite to eat, and the three piled into the car.

As they passed the old cathedral just outside of Kirkwall, Alf's one-track mind came back to honors and rewards.

"Hi sy, 'Orace," he said. "Hif the king was to say to you you could 'ave anything you wanted—now mind you, anything—wot would you tyke?"

Horace scratched his head a moment and looked back at the old building where the island royalty had been buried for centuries.

"Hi'd be bloomin' well satisfied with a chance to sleep," he said slowly. "Hi feel like Hi could sleep long has some o' them." He jerked a dirty thumb over his shoulder at the red sandstone building.

"Lor' blimey," said Alf. "Hit's just come to me. Hi ain't 'ad a wink o' sleep for two days. Let 'im keep 'is bloomin' medals an' let me sleep."

"That's wot Hi say," mumbled Horace.

He looked around at the Lone Eagle. The American was wide awake. There was no thought of sleep in his mind. All he could think of was the puzzle of the Murder Patrol and trying to devise some way of cracking down on it before any more men and ships had been lost. He knew full well that once the enemy realized what a tremendous success their scheme was they would be using it over land.

And while one part of his mind struggled with the problem of the sinister plot of the enemy, the other tried to recall why the name Lorentz was so familiar. He had an uncanny feeling that it might be the key to unlock the biggest riddle he had ever tackled.

As the car rolled up to the head-

quarters Masters had established at the Air Raid Patrol office, he was handed a telegram. He tore it open and, deciphering the code as he read, saw the first words of encouragement he had had in the past few days:

COME AT ONCE. HAVE LOCATED AIRDROME USED BY BLACK HEINKELS SIMILAR TO THOSE YOU DESCRIBE IN MESSAGE. WILL BE WAITING AT DUNKIRK.

PIERRE.

With a smile of triumph, Masters crammed the message into the pocket of his trench coat and turned to the two men who had been through thick and thin with him for the past forty-eight hours.

"I'm 'opping it, fellows," he said, holding out his hand. "But I'll be back soon. Then you can show me where your C.O. catches those big ones you've been telling me about. I'll be needing a vacation when this is over. Go home and get some sleep."

* * * * *

TWO planes circled high over German territory near the North Sea. Both ships flew without their riding lights. One was a Potez .63 "B2" flown by Pierre Viaud. The other was a trim little American-built Curtiss, tooled along by Henri de Laval, who had been a boy scout in the hectic days of the first World War.

Henri was flying above the Potez, and keeping track of it by the faint glow from the instrument panel. And as he fled along above and behind the speedy bomber he kept his keen young eyes peeled, watching for the tell-tale flare of Hun exhaust stacks. He dare not be taken by surprise. Nothing must stop the Potez from reaching its objective. Too much depended on the outcome of the night's business.

And in the Potez, Masters was leaning across the bomb cells talking to Pierre.

"You understand, Pierre," he was saying, "you fly right across this road

to the north of the field and cut back toward Kiel. They'll think it's just a one-plane strafe. Drop a couple of flares as if you were trying to take some pictures by night. That will give me a chance to get down while they are watching you."

Pierre nodded soberly as he glanced down at the map. "We will be there in a few minutes, John. The field I showed you in the photograph seems to be well guarded. So take care, will you?"

"Don't worry about me," said Masters, as he adjusted the parachute harness. "Just give me two days, an' if you don't hear from me by that time, come over and bomb hell out of the place. All I want is this guy Lorentz, just to make sure the Murder Patrol is finished forever."

"But if they should recognize you—" Pierre began. "If they should know you are the Lone Eagle?"

"It will not matter," said Masters. "If I get what I want. It will matter less—if they get me." He laughed a little as his hand touched a temple. "I am prepared if I have to pose as a German youth, Pierre. My own gray streaks in my temples—souvenirs from our last war—have been touched up. Otherwise, as you know, the years have dealt lightly with me. I was so ridiculously young in the World War that I can now stand up beside the German youths—if I have to—just so long as I can get near that drome. Pierre—don't worry."

He slid back the panel over the observer's cockpit, slapped Pierre on the shoulder, then slid over the side into the inky well of darkness. His chute cracked open and he began to drift earthward through the night, heading for the lair of the Murder Patrol and its mysterious leader—Lorentz.

As he neared the ground, the anti-aircraft defenses around Kiel opened up. Pierre and Henri were carrying out their part of the dangerous mission.

At last his feet hit the ground. He

dug his heels in and spilled the chute. And when he had gathered it in he pushed it under some thick, low bushes.

"Landed closer than I had planned," he murmured, as he caught the outline of huge hangars against the stars. "Not more than a couple of hundred yards away."

As he stood there, wondering which would be the best course to take in approaching the field, he heard the low murmur of voices. Listening intently, he soon found that they came from a small car parked on the road leading to the airdrome of the Murder Patrol.

"HANS, darling," a woman's voice was pleading, "must you join this *Staffel*? Were you not satisfied where you were?"

"But, Frieda," came an enthusiastic voice out of the shadows, "think of the honor of being chosen to be a member of our greatest *Staffel* of bombers. Why, the *Fuehrer* himself sent me the order to report here. On that field lies the greatest secret of the war. It is that *Staffel* that is wiping the British fleet from the seas. And Frieda, I have been chosen to have a part in that secret. You will be proud of me when this is over. It will be glorious."

"Ah, Hans," murmured the girl, "there is nothing glorious about war. No good ever comes of it. Only hate, ruin, grieving mothers, sweethearts, and crippled men."

"Hush, Frieda!" exclaimed the youth. "You must not talk like that. We must follow the *Fuehrer*. He will lead us to an all-powerful Germany. Promise me you will never speak of such matters again. Think of what would happen should someone report you to the Gestapo. Please, Frieda, do not make it any harder than it is to be parted from you. It will soon be over. When the British fleet is gone victory will be ours."

"But, Hans," sobbed the girl, "what

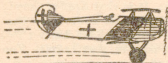
has happened to Rudolph Offenback, Peter Mulhousen, Herman Holbein—your friends, your companions? They, too, were chosen. Have you seen them since? Have you seen them wearing ribbons, or receiving any of this 'glory' That is why I am afraid to see you join this *Staffel*."

"It is part of the work, Frieda," said the young man. "Once a man steps on that field he is not permitted to leave for fear he might accidentally give the secret away to enemy agents. There are spies all over, you know. Even the stones have ears, they tell us."

For a moment there was silence. Then it was broken by the girl. "Good-by. . . No—no! It is not good-by. It is *auf wiedersehen*. I will pray every night for your safety."

"*Auf wiedersehen*, Frieda," murmured the youth: "I will walk. It is better that you do not drive me that far."

"Hans," murmured the girl, "step out into the beam of the headlights, please! Just so that I can have one



last glimpse of you—one last picture to remember you by. Then I will go back. I will try to be brave, Hans."

The man got out of the car, picked up a small suitcase and walked around to the front of the car. For a moment he stood there, tall, straight, and dark. His eyes sparkled as they stared into the bright beam. And across one cheek was a saber scar, probably acquired in some university. It pulled the youth's mouth slightly, but did not detract from his appearance.

"Good Lord!" muttered Masters. "That guy's the spitting image of me as I used to be! Just a change here and there and we'd be taken for twins! Mm—that scar, now. . ."

CHAPTER XI

The Patrol's Eyrie



ONLY a moment did that thought speed through the Lone Eagle's brain. Then the image of the young man was blotted out as the car went into gear, turned around and roared back down the road out of sight.

The young German stood there staring at the diminishing tail light until it swung around a curve in the road. And while he stood there, Masters was running noiselessly through the damp grass to get nearer to the field.

A desperate plan was formulating in his brain.

He pushed his way through the hedge lining the road and stood waiting in its shadow. Coming toward him he could hear the boots of the German as they bit into the road.

"Halt!" he commanded as he stepped out into the road and confronted the startled young German. "Who are you?"

"Oberleutnant Hans Schurz, reporting for duty."

"You have the pass word?" asked Masters gruffly.

"*Ja wohl, mein Herr*," the pleasant voice of the young man rang out. "*Ich hasse feige Menschen*."

"We all hate cowardly men," returned the Lone Eagle. "You have your papers ordering you to report?"

"In my pocket," replied the youth. "But I did not expect to be stopped and questioned here, *mein Herr*."

"Secret police," Masters shot back. "You came in a car. To whom were you talking so long?"

"To my sweetheart, *mein Herr*," stammered the youth.

Masters hesitated. "It was a long conversation, for one who has been ordered by the *Fuehrer* to report here. Perhaps you had better step over here and let me look at your pa-

pers. I will report that you have arrived."

The Lone Eagle led the puzzled young man toward the shadows. "Our office is beyond this hedge. I am expecting others, so I must hurry."

At the hedge the Lone Eagle halted. "Perhaps it will not be necessary to go all the way to the office," he said. "I'm very busy just now. If you show me your papers I can initial them to indicate that you have passed through."

The German set his bag down on the grass, unfastened the two top buttons of his tunic and reached for an inner pocket. As his hand came out, Masters' fist flashed forward and upward like a pile-driver. His knuckles caught the unguarded German flush on the jaw. The young man fell forward into the Lone Eagle's arms, unconscious.

It was not long after that Masters was walking briskly down the road toward the secret flying field. He was dressed in the snappy uniform of Hans Schurz, and carried the suitcase of the man who now lay well trussed up under a haycock in a field beyond the hedge. On his face was a scar that that was almost identical with that on the face of Hans Schurz—a scar that had been quickly made by a little manipulation with flexible collodium. The Lone Eagle always carried a small vial of the stuff for emergencies, to use on small cuts or the like. John Masters looked much

like Hans Schurz at a quick glance. The *Oberleutnant* had friends at the drome, of course but Masters had to take a chance.

"When I clear this mess up I'll drop a note and tell them where he is," Masters thought as he neared the guard house. "That girl will thank me, if nobody else does. . . . Wonder what they use pilots for? Didn't seem to be any in the black Heinkels."

HE WAS stopped at the gate by a sentry and a uniformed member of Himmler's mob. His papers were in order, he knew the password, and his face seemed to match the photograph pasted in the little identification folder. So he was directed to the Operations office.

"*Oberleutnant* Hans Schurz reporting for duty," he said as he stepped into the lighted office.

A tall, gaunt man looked up from the desk and studied him with a pair of brilliant eyes. What might have passed for a smile spread across the German's face, but his lips remained firmly pressed together, like a red welt across his features.

"Ah, *Oberleutnant* Schurz." The man pushed himself to his feet. "You are just in time for the feast. We celebrate another glorious victory today. This afternoon we erased another name from the rosters of the British Fleet. You heard the news

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College Humor

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THE BEST COMEDY IN AMERICA

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broadcast that was sent out to warm the hearts of our people?"

Masters had not heard it, and his heart was like lead as he nodded. He forced a smile to his face.

"Then you know that the *Grepsholm* has joined the others at the bottom. Soon his Majesty will need a diving suit to review his fleet, *nicht wahr?*" He chuckled as his eyes held the Lone Eagle's.

"You make good jokes, *Herr Reitmeister*." Masters grinned as he struggled to fight clear of the penetrating gaze of the sinister looking man in front of him. "The man in Berlin should broadcast it. It would make our people laugh."

Just then a buzzer sounded. The German slipped some papers into a folder, put the folder in a drawer and locked it.

"It is the dinner call, *Oberleutnant* Schurz. Come, you shall meet your comrades, and enjoy a good meal." His thin lips finally broadened in a smile. "And I have a surprise for them. Our *Fuehrer* is coming to pay us a visit tonight."

Masters' brain whirled as he was led into a large, well lighted room. He could still feel those weird eyes trying to bore into his brain, as the tall man began to introduce him to the members of the Murder Patrol. One by one he reached out and shook a hand that seemed wet and clammy. Not once did he meet a handclasp that belonged to a healthy man. And as he studied the faces he noticed the eyes of the men traveled to those of the big man. All except one or two. They, like himself, appeared to be newcomers.

For a moment he thought it strange that no one spoke to the supposed *Oberleutnant* as friend, and breathed a sigh of relief at the coincidence that must have sent Schurz' friends away in this vital night.

"Gentlemen," cried the man with the popping eyes, "take your places."

The buzzing of voices stopped. The

men began to move toward a long table in the center of the room. To his surprise, Masters saw that there were already men seated at another table under a dim light—silent men who stared across the white table cloth at each other without saying a word. Stranger yet, they were seated in the choice places at the head of the table, close to an empty chair. To all appearances they were the elite of the *Staffel*—privileged men who took their places before the others.

MASTERS had a place pointed out to him close to the foot of the table, and sat down with the others. No word was spoken as the men watched the tall, gaunt man with the fiery eyes, at the head of the table.

"Gentlemen!" he cried, as he held up his filled wine glass. "We have three new members of the elect tonight. Arise—we must toast them!"

Masters half expected to see the eyes of the men turned on himself and the other new members as the others got up. Instead, all attention was centered on three of those silent figures sitting at the other table. It was strange to see them there, remaining in their places while the others got to their feet, eyes alight with a fanatical fire.

"Gentlemen!" again cried the glittering-eyed man. "A toast to *Kapitan* Rudolph Offenback, *Oberleutnant* Peter Mulhousen, and *Leutnant* Herman Holbein! And to their glorious victory this afternoon over the great British battleship *Grepsholm*."

The Lone Eagle recognized the names—the friends of *Oberleutnant* Schurz of whom the girl had spoken. But why were they so silent?

"*Hoch!*" the men cried. "*Heil Hitler!*"

And to his amazement Masters saw the men bending toward three of the silent figures seated under the dim light. But there was no acknowledgment of the toast, no sign that the

men were pleased with the honor being accorded them.

"My God!" muttered Masters as he sat down with the others. "What is this? Those guys sit up there like statues, cold-blooded, haughty as if they disdained the acclamation of their comrades."

When the chairs had stopped scraping across the floor the man at the head of the table held up his hand.

"Men," he said, leaning over the table as if trying to hold every eye with his, "tomorrow we strike again. The British battle cruiser *Osprey* lies in the Thames estuary. Tomorrow we will sink a ship right in the British Admiralty's front yard. Are you ready to play the lottery? Are you ready to see whom good fortune chooses to receive the acclaim and glory of a thankful *Fuehrer*?"

"We are ready, *Reitmeister* Lorentz," chorused the men, leaping to their feet. "Let the wheel spin!"

Two orderlies wheeled in a strange contraption that looked like a Gargantuan skull mounted on a sort of carriage. The man at the head of the table pressed a button in the side of the skull. A strange whirring and rattling sounded throughout the mess room as the men sat tensed and waiting. Then the noise stopped. The tall man pressed another button and the jaw of the skull dropped slack. A number of small white objects poured into a sort of pocket in the lower jaw.

The two orderlies started to wheel the sinister contraption around the table. One by one the men reached into the open jaw and picked up one of the gleaming white objects and laid it on the plate in front of them.

As the ghastly thing neared him, Masters could see that the white objects were miniature skulls. He put his hand between those gaping jaws and picked up a tiny skull and laid it on his plate as the rest had done. He waited breathlessly while the strange lottery went on.

WHEN everybody had a skull in front of him, the big thing was wheeled away. The tall man with the burning eyes let his gaze travel from face to face before he spoke. His thin lips split, and looked like an ugly gash as he leaned forward.

"Crack your skulls, Gentlemen!" he ordered. "Let us see on whom Dame Fortune smiles tonight."

A queer crackling sound was heard the length of the table as men picked up the little skulls and cracked them like walnuts. Masters pressed his between his fingers. It gave, and then struck something solid. The white covering came away, and a gleaming black skull lay exposed in the palm of his hand. Up the table from him he could see a similar skull in the open fist of another man. And just a few places away to his right there was another.

"Now!" exclaimed the man at the head of the table, whom they had called Lorentz. "Will those with the black skulls please arise."

Masters got to his feet, followed by the two other men.

"Who has Number One?" demanded Lorentz.

The Lone Eagle paused, then spoke.

"I have," said Masters as he looked down at the gold figure, "1" engraved on the black forehead of the little skull in his hand.

"Two?"

"Here!"

"Three?"

"Here, *Herr Reitmeister*."

"Good!" applauded the leader of the Murder Patrol. "Number One shall be the pilot. Number Two the navigator. And Number Three the extra pilot, to take over in case something should happen to the first. We must always be prepared for accidents, you know." He motioned to the other table. "There are places that will be yours at that table from now on. Go to them." He waved Masters to a chair next to one of the staring figures.

"Your place of honor, *Oberleutnant* Schurz," he said.

Masters, still clutching the little black skull in his fist, sat down at his place near the head of the table. He looked across at the man opposite him. The man stared back with unseeing eyes. It was almost as if he were looking into the white, set face of a corpse. He glanced at the man on his right. He, too, sat there staring across the table with glassy, unmoving eyes. With his elbow he touched the figure's arm. It was stiff and unyielding. No living flesh was concealed by the sleeve of that uniform.

Then the Lone Eagle managed to catch a closer glimpse of the figure's face.

"Wax figures," he discovered in surprise. "Most perfect job I ever saw. Look absolutely lifelike."

He glanced again at this weird leader of the Murder Patrol, still trying to place the man. He had heard of him somewhere.

As the meal went on, Masters and his two new companions were the center of attention. In fact, it seemed as if the others were envious of the honor the grinning skull had spewed into their hands. A few lifted their glasses in salute, and smiled in a friendly way.

But despite the excellence of the meal, and the honor that seemed to be accorded him, Masters could not help but wish that it was the real *Oberleutnant* Schurz who was sitting in that chair. There was something sinister about the gathering, something that sent a chill like death sweeping through his bones. And the most sinister figure in the room was the grinning man who sat at the head of the other table.

MASTERS made a pretense of enjoying the meal. And as he ate the excellent food placed before him by quiet, sober-faced orderlies, who also served food to the wax figures,

he was thinking: "Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow you die."

It seemed to fit the present situation. There were plenty of good things to eat. The wine glasses were never empty. And as the liquor took effect, the crowd became more merry. There were smiles on every face—except on those of the waxen effigies seated at the table of honor.

Despite his precarious position the Lone Eagle went through his paces like a veteran actor, playing his part even in the very face of death. He waited patiently, listening, hoping to pick up some clue to the workings of the Murder Patrol. Never would he give up until he had wiped this foul nest of laughing vultures and their pop-eyed leader from the face of the earth. This cog in the bloody machinery of a ruthless enemy must be broken before he could ever rest.

He lit a cigarette after he had finished his dessert and waited for the big surprise of the evening. Once again he was to be face to face with the fanatical little *Fuehrer* who had turned the world into a caldron of hate. A grim smile slipped across his face as he recalled the last time he had faced that man in a little office by the side of a Zeppelin hangar. A silent prayer was in his heart—a prayer that he would be just as successful in this grim adventure as he had been that night.

He stared into the glassy eyes of the image across from him and wondered.

CHAPTER XII

Ordered to Die



EXACTLY as if an explosion or tornado had struck the mess room the door crashed open. Storm troopers dashed in and formed two ranks leading to the head of the table.

A moment later the short figure of Adolph Hitler, his eyes burning with

excitement and misplaced zeal, hurried between the two ranks of stalwart youths and reached the table almost before the startled men could leap to their feet, raise their right hand in the Nazi salute and scream "*Heil Hitler!*" in a hysterical chorus.

Masters was on his feet with the others. He was not the one to let a mere salute stand between him and success. His hand was up with the others. His lips moved and said, "*Heil Hitler!*" too.

The *Fuehrer* waved a nervous acknowledgment of the salute and immediately went into a haranguing speech that grew more exciting and hysterical as it went on. In rambling sequences he mentioned the hate of the Germans for the British, the justness of his cause against a people who refused the peaceful overtures he had made, the glory of war—the greatest honor being the privilege of dying for one's country—and the opportunity they had to emulate the men who had flown out before them to sink British battleships. He concluded with a half screaming paean of praise for the men who had, as he thought, sunk the *Royal Ark* the day before, and those who had sent the *Grepsholm* to the bottom that afternoon.

Through it all the men stood like ramrods. Not a muscle moved, not an eye blinked.

Masters could feel something electric passing through the room as the *Fuehrer* completed his blazing harangue. The little Austrian who held Germany in the palm of his hand turned to Lorentz.

"Who goes tomorrow?" he demanded brusily.

"The men with the black skulls step forward," ordered Lorentz.

Masters and the other two who held black skulls stepped forward to stand before the *Fuehrer*.

Hitler turned to one of his aides, took three Iron Crosses from the outstretched hand, swung around, and in three nervous motions fastened the

black metal baubles to the tunics of the men in front of him.

"All Germany envies you," Hitler said sharply.

He started to say something else, but stopped. His beady little eyes narrowed as they looked up into the face of the tall man at the head of the line. For one grim, nerve-racking moment Masters' heart dropped into his boots.

"Your name?" demanded the *Fuehrer*.

"Hans Schurz," Masters said fearlessly.

Hitler shook his head. "I only wish you were another, one whom you somewhat resemble."

"Why, *mein Fuehrer?*" asked the Lone Eagle, meeting his steady gaze.

"I would kill him!" snarled Hitler.

"I would tear him to pieces with my bare hands. If I only knew where he was, I would order this *Staffel* out to destroy him—smash him like your comrades smashed the *Ark Royal* and the other ships. But some day—some day the cursed Lone Eagle will be swept from my path!"

The *Fuehrer* swung around, and in a twinkling he was gone with his bodyguards. For one moment, two men whose one great objective was the destruction of the other had stood face to face. One, because he wanted to rid civilization of a cancer. The other, because he feared that one person stood between himself and the complete subjugation of the world.

AS MASTERS stood staring at the door that had closed on his greatest enemy, Lorentz touched him on the arm.

"You will come with me now, *Oberleutnant Schurz,*" he said quietly, as his fierce eyes held the Lone Eagle's.

Masters nodded. But as he turned to follow this mysterious leader of the Murder Patrol he steeled himself against any ordeal. One main thing now was to evade Lorentz' penetrating gaze.

"That bird's trying to hypnotize me," he thought. "Got to keep my mind racing all the time, so he can't plant a suggestion in it."

He took two steps and stopped. One answer to the riddle had flashed into his mind. "Lorentz," he muttered. "Lorentz. . . . That's the man whom psychologists have called 'the world's greatest student of the mind'! The man who knew more about hypnotism than any other living man! I'm glad I've done a little studying along that line. I begin to see the idea. Hitler whips them up into a fanatical frenzy, a sort of mass hysteria, hands out an iron cross before the job is done and the way is paved for this man to put on the finishing touches."

Swinging in behind the other two who were to accompany him on the flight of the Murder Patrol the next day, Masters entered a small green-paneled room. He was ready for the greatest battle of wits in which he had ever taken part in. He knew he would have to watch every step or he would find himself in the relentless clutches of this man who used his evil power to slaughter men by the thousands.

"Be seated," came the voice of Lorentz—smooth now—from behind a frame-work that held wires and lights. "Yes, right there."

A switch clicked. For a moment the room was in total darkness. Then three lights began to whirl on the frame in front of the chairs in which the men had seated themselves. Masters had cleverly maneuvered himself into the chair furthest to the left. He felt certain that Lorentz would start operations at the right. This would give him an opportunity to take his cue from the reactions of the other two.

"Now," came the quiet, almost purring command from the shadows behind the whirling lamps, "watch the lights directly in front of you. I wish to test your eyes, to see that they are in shape for the mission tomorrow.

Quiet please, and think of nothing but that light."

Masters kept his eyes toward the light, but centered just below the bottom rim of the brilliant circle. He picked out an imaginary spot in the shadows there, and thought of nothing but some way by which he could get to the final solution of this mad scheme.

The lights whirled faster and faster—the voice behind the frame began to talk—faster and faster, almost as it synchronized with the mechanism that drove the lights in their mad circle.

Suddenly the lights went out. Their place was taken by a dim glow of green in the far corner. Its rays were centered on a chair before a great oak desk.

"Will the first man please move over to the chair in front of the desk?" came the command.

Lorentz took a seat behind the desk. His face was revolting in the queer green light. He waited while the young German sat down.

"Now," said Lorentz, leaning forward across the desk, "let me see your eyes."

THE youth leaned forward. His eyes were already glassy. His hands were cold and wet, almost as if they had been held in Death's welcoming clasp.

"Tell me," said Lorentz, "what did you think of your *Fuehrer*? He was marvelous, was he not?"

"Glorious," muttered the youth, who had been well broken in for this occasion by the hypnotic methods the Nazis used to train their youth. His mind was receptive for the dastardly scheme of Lorentz.

"You are ready to die for the *Fuehrer*. . . . Repeat after me—'I am ready to die for my *Fuehrer*. I have no fear of death.'"

Without a second's hesitation the youth kept repeating the awful statement until Lorentz told him to stop.

"Dying for our *Fuehrer* is the greatest gift a German can make for the Fatherland," said Lorentz.

For a good ten minutes he kept pounding that one train of thought into the brain of the hypnotized youth before him. Then he told him to get up and leave the room by another door. As the lad reached the door, Lorentz pulled a small microphone closer to him on his desk.

"He is ready, Lothar," he said quietly. "You will have to work fast. There are two others, and they leave at dawn."

He went through the same line of suggestion with the second German. And as before, the supreme sacrifice for the *Fuehrer* was the keynote.

When Masters' turn came he was letter perfect. Not only in acting out his part, but with a solution to the grim mystery of the Murder Patrol. He knew now that these poor lads, brought by the German Propaganda Bureau, the fanatical, politically appointed teachers in the schools, and an everyday diet of the *Fuehrer's* glory, to a state where they were practically in a hypnotized state every day, had been sent out to die with their plunging Heinkels.

It wasn't hard to figure out now, once he had seen the inner workings of the Murder Patrol. A black Heinkel loaded with a full cargo of high explosives. Light bullet-proof sheathing over the nose of the ship and cockpit—and a hypnotized crew at the controls!

What instrument of war could be more deadly, more accurate, more fiendish? It was no wonder he could not shoot down one of the Heinkels. No wonder they always hit their mark. Only the hellish imagination of a warped mind could have devised such a scheme. Only a leader who was willing to murder his own men to foster his own ends would permit such a plan.

"A better name could not have been given it," thought Masters as he re-

called the words of the U-boat captain.

All this was racing through his mind as he answered the questions of the man behind the desk in a monotone. At last Lorentz sat back with a smile of satisfaction on his crafty face. He called the other man over.

"You are Number Three?" he asked. "The man who is to be reserve pilot?"

"Yes," answered the man in a dull voice.

"Now look, the two of you," said Lorentz, "and as you look, pay attention."

He pressed a button on the desk. The room was darkened.

Another light bored through the darkness and caught hold of a white screen on the wall. A picture appeared—a clear-cut view of a giant battle cruiser lying at anchor.

"THIS"—Lorentz walked across the room and pointed to the ship with a long stick, as simply and easily as if he were a school-teacher instead of a man sending his fellow countrymen out to a horrible death—"this is the British battle cruiser *Osprey*. It lies at anchor in the Thames Estuary. It is your target, your gift to the *Fuehrer*. You will fly high. Our meteorologists report that there will be low clouds tomorrow.

"Your navigator will give you your position and you will only come through the clouds on reaching a point directly over your objective. Once it is in sight you will maneuver your plane so that your dive will center on a spot just between the two funnels. Your plane will be covered with bullet-proof sheathing, and only a direct hit from a three-inch shell or larger should harm your control. You will hold your ship in the dive until it strikes the point I designated. Now repeat your orders. Number One first, please."

Masters copied the dull voice of his hypnotized companion and repeated

the orders word for word. Then Number Three repeated them.

Lorentz smiled. "Now study your target. And do not forget. Death is painless. Death is glorious. You are going to give your lives to the *Fuehrer*." He walked back across the room and spoke into the mike. "Are you ready, Lothar? Good! I will send them in."

CHAPTER XIII

Dawn Murder Patrol



WITHOUT protest, John Masters went through one of the strangest experiences of his life in that next room to which Lorentz sent him. He was ordered to strip, his uniform was neatly folded and put in the drawer of a big steel cabinet, and his name was placed in a slot in front. A sort of woolen pullover outfit was handed him, but he was told not to put it on until the old hunchback with the thick-lensed glasses had finished with him.

Masters sat on a bench and watched the queer operation of a plaster mask being made of his companion. Then the back of the head was made, and finally the neck and shoulders. After that the old artisan seemed satisfied with making measurements of the man's body. As fast as they were made, the casts were sent to another room, where they were no doubt put together and the complete upper part of the effigies were made, then painted and tinted to make them look life-like.

Soon it was the Lone Eagle's turn. And while he lay on a small metal table, breathing through a tube while the stuff on his face hardened, Lorentz entered the room and stood looking down at the man with hard, piercing eyes.

"They can't hear with that stuff on their heads, can they, Lothar?" Lorentz asked.

"*Nein, Herr Doktor,*" replied Lothar.

But the old fellow seemed to have forgotten that he had just been loosening the plastic at the back of the Lone Eagle's head. A flap of the stuff was loose enough so that Masters could just make out what was being said.

"Strange, is it not, Lothar?" the German murmured.

"*Was ist Herr Doktor?*" asked the man with the thick glasses.

"It is something I must make a study of," Lorentz went on. "So strange that these men seem satisfied only when I have these images made and placed at the table. Remember, I tried this scheme once before and as soon as their companions did not put in appearance they became nervous and restless, their minds began to wander, and eventually I lost control of them entirely.

"But now these effigies seem to satisfy them, something inside their brains seems to make them imagine that these things are their living companions. I thought I knew all about a man's brain, but this is a puzzle to me. I must continue my studies further. A new field of research seems to have opened up. Perhaps when I have finished with the British fleet I will have time to carry on in my chosen field. Then I shall do it. . . . I have made up my mind, Lothar. I shall do it."

"*Was, Herr Doktor?*"

"Dissect the brain of a living man, Lothar," cried Lorentz. "Cut into the cells while he is still alive. No, there will be no anesthetic to spoil its normal functions. And I know the very subject I would like to have for the experiment."

"Who?" asked Lothar as he ran his long slender fingers around the neck of John Masters to loosen the plastic.

"This one they call the Lone Eagle," exclaimed Lorentz. "The one our *Fuehrer* hates so much. I remember him from the last war. He robbed

us of victory—but he has a marvelous brain.”

He was interrupted by a knock on the door. A pale-faced orderly entered and held a message out to this grim-faced master of the Murder Patrol.

Lorentz took it. His face went white as he read.

LOTHAR!” he cried hoarsely as he crumpled the paper in his hand. “The seaplane has returned! They did not contact the U-Seventy-three. They searched all over the North Sea, and called by wireless for it. But there was no sign. You know what that means?”

the next morning as the Lone Eagle, dressed in the ill-fitting pullover, approached the big black Heinkel with his two companions.

Waiting for them was Lorentz.

“Repeat your orders,” commanded Lorentz as Masters came up.

Masters ticked them off without a mistake. His co-pilot followed suit.

Lorentz nodded. He turned to a mechanic.

“Are the detonators set, Fritz?”

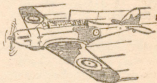
“Ja wohl, Herr Reitmeister,” replied the mechanic. “And I have just set the automatic control on the wheel detonators. If they should touch in less than one half hour after the ship takes off it will blow up. It will be

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“I hope not, *Herr Doktor*,” muttered Lorentz as he pulled the cast away.

“I am afraid so,” murmured Lorentz. “I am afraid he has gone down.”

Lothar stood with the cast in his hand a moment, as if studying the faint lines engraved there.

“If that is the case, *Herr Doktor*, you must try and derive some comfort in the fact that he died for our *Fuehrer*.”

For a moment the face of Lorentz darkened. He took a step toward the old fellow.

“If I thought you were trying to mock me, I would kill you, Lothar!”

A cold mist was being driven in long gray writhing ribbons across the flying field of the Murder Patrol early

impossible to make a forced landing without an explosion.”

Lorentz motioned for Masters to enter the big two-motored ship.

“You are to take off at once. Proceed directly to your objective in the Thames Estuary. Then do your duty for our *Fuehrer—vorwärts*.”

Masters climbed into the plane and went directly to the pilot's compartment. A dim light burned in the ceiling, for all other light was cut off by the metal shields over the cockpit. There were only two tiny slits in the metal shield to look through. Slumping down in his seat he revved up the two big Daimler Benz motors, wondering just how he was going to get out of this jam.

Presently the co-pilot tapped him on the shoulder and nodded. Masters

looked up into the pale face with the fiercely burning eyes, then reached for the throttles. The big motors broke into a roar. The Heinkel began to move. The death ship was in the air!

Masters held the ship steady for awhile, anxiously watching the white needle on the altimeter creep past the five thousand mark. He went through the first bank of clouds, started for the second, then changed his mind. He had a nice clear lane there, a sort of tunnel in the mist from which he could not be seen from either ground or sky.

Tossing the wheel over to his companion, Masters got up and walked toward the rear of his ship. The navigation officer gave Masters one look with his glassy, staring eyes, then turned back to his charts.

MASTERS tried every door, every opening in the big ship, but they were all locked on the outside.

"Hadn't quite counted on that," he muttered angrily. "Boy, he sure isn't taking any chances on his heroes taking a run-out powder, is he?"

He stood there in the darkened interior of the big Heinkel thinking hard. On all sides were huge bins filled with high explosives. Even the nose of the ship, that usually held a forward gunner, was covered with a metal shield and filled with sudden death.

He was trapped—in about the worse spot he had ever been in his life! Even the undercarriage of the Heinkel was wired with a detonator that would set off the charge should he make a desperate attempt to set the ship down.

"God!" he muttered. "There's enough stuff here to blow up a city. No wonder they make such a complete job of a battleship."

Again he tried to find a trapdoor that would open and give them some chance of escape. But he was sealed in with his cargo of death.

"If they'd only left the wireless," he thought, desperately seeking some way of getting out of the trap. "Then I could at least have given them the tip-off as to how the devilry is being done. Pierre or Henri could have a shot at Lorentz. An' he said I had a brain! Sure have put myself on the spot this time."

As he started back toward the control cabin, the navigation officer handed him their position, scribbled on a slip of paper. Masters read it, and was about to lay it back on the folding table, when his eyes fell on the pad and pencil.

He looked from the paper to the pale young German, pointed to the rear of the fuselage and said something too low for the man to hear. The German looked toward the rear. As his head turned, Masters was on him, winding his strong arms around the startled fellow's neck and cutting off his breath. He held tight until the man relaxed in his arms, then stripped off his pullover, tore it to long ribbons and tied the unconscious fellow up.

"You'll be all right in a few minutes, old chap," said Masters as he dragged the limp figure to the rear of the Heinkel. Then as he laid the man down, his eyes caught a glint of light. It came from a spot he had not examined very carefully—the gunners position in the belly of the big black Heinkel.

With all speed he climbed down in the narrow little nacelle. There he saw that the gleam of light came from one of the bullet-proof plates, bolted over the ports. It seemed to be loose. Either that, or the cross member to which it had been fastened was loose.

LYING down on his back, and bracing himself, the Lone Eagle began to drive away with his powerful legs. Bit by bit the plate loosened, under the impact of his feet. At last it tore free and went hurtling away in the slipstream.

Masters surveyed the opening and shrugged. "So what?" he growled. "There's an opening large enough for a man to slip through, but without any parachutes, what good does it do. I'm trapped just the same. Only thing I can do is warn them. After that I'll have to take it. But damned if it will be against a British ship!"

For an instant Masters toyed with the grim idea of turning north and giving one of the German pocket battleships a dose of their own medicine. But he gave it up.

Hurrying back to the control cabin he handed the co-pilot the slip of paper he had grabbed up as he rushed by the table. Then he went back to the navigation compartment and set about devising some means of warning the Allies and giving the information about the workings of the Murder Patrol. When he finished writing, he slid the two sheets of paper between the blades of a parallel rule, and slipped an elastic over it to hold it tight.

"There," he said as he weighed it in his hand. "That ought to give it heft enough so I could put it where I wanted it. Paper will show up as a pretty good marker."

He looked back at the navigation officer.

The German had come to, and was lying there quietly.

"Poor devil's brain can't figure out what it's all about," Masters thought as he examined the shreds of cloth he had tied the German up with, and readjusted the gag in his mouth. "I'll try and find some way, old fellow. May be robbing you of the chance to be a hero. But a dead hero's no good. Not even one who died for the *Fuehrer*."

Masters went back to the navigation compartment, gathered up what was left of the pullover he had torn off the German and prepared it for the next attempt. Then going up to the control cabin, he leaned over to the co-pilot and yelled for him to

trim the ship so it would fly by itself for awhile.

The German a little puzzled set the stabilizers, tested the big Heinkel for longitudinal and lateral stability, then got up and followed Masters to the rear of the ship.

It wasn't quite as easy this time. It was a hard struggle before Masters had the man helpless. It had been a battle Masters would not forget in a long time—struggling and battling with the powerful German in the explosive-laden fuselage of the big Heinkel. But he finally managed to get in a solid blow that dropped the co-pilot like an axed steer. He lost little time in tying the fellow up, and placing him where he would not be able to roll to his companion.

Bruised and breathless, Masters slipped back into his seat and yanked the wheel toward him. He glanced at his watch and whistled. It had all taken longer than he realized. If his calculations were right, Dunkirk should be directly below the clouds.

"Well, here goes!" he muttered as he reached for the throttles and slowed down the two big motors. "From now on I'm keeping my fingers crossed. Have to count on speed to pull it off."

HE STUCK the nose of the Heinkel down, and went hurtling through the ceiling. He came out right over the edge of Dunkirk and swung back east, heading for the little flying field where Pierre and Henri waited for word from him.

Surprise was what he counted on, and it worked. He was down over the field and had the ruler with his message slipped through the slot before even a prop down there was turning. Coming around fast he saw the ruler with the white streamer of paper land at the far edge of the field. As he straightened out, he gunned the motors in the old signal Pierre and he had always used when they wished to attract each other's attention.

He circled the field slowly, waiting for ships to come up. He glanced down at his fuel gauge. It was dropping rapidly toward the empty mark.

"The swine!" he cursed. "Don't any more than give a fellow fuel enough to reach his objective. That's what made that poor Jerry dig into Scapa Flow and blow himself up."

Suddenly a Potez roared into his restricted vision, then disappeared. Masters threw his ship into a bank and followed it around. It was just ahead of him. He throttled back as the ship went into a turn and cut across his path again. In the rear seat he caught a glimpse of Henri holding up a parachute.

"Good work!" Masters cried as he trimmed the ship again then set it on a course along the beach.

CHAPTER XIV

Warning From the Dead



HUSTLING to the back of the ship Masters threw himself into the gunner's nacelle and peered out through the opening he had smashed through. The Potez was coming up from the rear and gaining rapidly. He waited eagerly, hoping and praying that his plan would work. If it didn't, at least they knew the full story of the Murder Patrol and could devise some means of halting the damage it would do.

As the Potez came directly under the fuselage of the bomber, Henri stood up in the rear gunner's compartment. On the end of a long heavy stick, braced against the pull of the wind by a wire, he held a parachute toward the Lone Eagle. Twice the two ships drifted together without Masters getting his hands on the precious chute. Once his fingernails scrapped the rough webbing.

The third time he managed to get a grip on the harness. It was a struggle, but he finally succeeded in dragging

the heavy chute into the nacelle. Twice more the same maneuver was repeated, and with an encouraging wave, Pierre and Henri dropped away from the Heinkel.

Sweat poured from the Lone Eagle's face as he got the three chutes into the fuselage and made a dash for the controls. As he banked the ship around to take a northerly course he glanced at the fuel gauge. What he planned to do had to be done in less than ten minutes now, for that was as long as the ship would stay aloft.

When the ship was on its course, Masters ran back to the two men on the floor of the fuselage. It was only seconds before he had the navigator strapped in the first chute and was dragging him down into the nacelle. He shoved the German halfway out the opening and waited, with one hand clutching the ring.

"There you go, old man," he said, as he gave a quick push and yanked the ring free. "You'll clear the tail before she opens."

He did not wait to see whether the chute cracked or not. There was another man to be saved. He got the next one into the harness and through the opening in three minutes, minutes that seemed like as many hours.

"Now it's my turn!"

He hurried back to the control, swung the ship until its nose pointed due west, then shut the fuel lines just as the port motor began to sputter.

He slid the last few feet on his way back, and dropped into the nacelle. He had never been in such a hurry in his life as he was getting through that tiny opening and dropping away from the ship. He counted ten, then yanked the rip-cord with a sigh of relief.

"Boy!" he muttered. "But that was close!"

The big black Heinkel was heading west with its nose down.

"Be about the middle of the Channel when she digs in," he thought as he gauged the angle of the ship's

glide. "God! I hope there aren't any small boats around when she hits!"

Masters had just set his feet into the sand and spilled the chute when the Heinkel let go. The water heaved toward the clouds, then the terrific reverberation of the explosion smashed against the Lone Eagle's ears.

As he watched the waters fall back, with just a trickle of smoke to mark the spot where the ship had hit, he could not help but smile.

"Nickels to doughnuts that broadcaster's telling the German people right now that the *Osprey* has just been blown up," he thought, grinning.

GATHERING up the folds of the chute, Masters set off along the sand dunes toward Dunkirk. Only part of his job was done. The next step must be the complete eradication of the Murder Patrol and its fiendish leader—the man who sent others out to die while he reaped the glory. . . .

Masters was glad of the chance to get cleaned up, remove that annoying collodion scar, and get a much needed rest. But he did not rest long. In the late afternoon Pierre and Henri stood by the side of the big Potez, arguing with the Lone Eagle. They were making one last desperate effort to persuade him to drop the mad plan he had in mind.

"You have done enough, John," pleaded Viaud. "Why risk your life again? Let us bomb the place and wipe it out."

Masters shook his head. "I've got to go over again, Pierre," Masters said quietly. "Don't you see, merely bombing the place might not do the trick. If Lorentz should escape he would organize another Murder Patrol. He would continue to hypnotize those poor, blind kids who are already under the spell of Hitler, whip them to a frenzy to die for the cause. Think of what it would mean if he should send them over in larger groups! There wouldn't be an ammu-

nition dump, an airdrome, a battleship, maybe even a city left on our side of the lines. As long as Lorentz is alive we are at Hitler's mercy."

Viaud looked at Henri who stood rubbing his knuckles along the trailing edge of the wing of the Potez.

"Perhaps you are right, John. But I wish one of us could do it."

"Only I can do what I have in mind," said Masters. "Come on, let's go! It's getting dark."

A couple of hours later the Lone Eagle stood at the far corner of the airdrome used by the dread *Staffel*. It had taken all his skill at slipping a chute to hit his mark, but he had made it from ten thousand feet. Far off to the north he could hear Pierre and Henri dropping their eggs on the sheds around Keil again, as they had done the night before.

He glanced at his watch. A grim smile lighted his face.

"Got an hour or so before they sit down to eat," he said to himself. "Give me plenty of time for what I have to do."

Slinking from shadow to shadow, avoiding sentries patrolling the field, he slowly made his way toward the group of buildings that housed the Patrol and onto the long darkened building next to the Operations office that housed the mess. He found an unlatched window and crawled in. From a kitchen some distance away he could hear the rattle of dishes, pots and pans. The evening's feast was being prepared for those who were to go out to die for their cold-blooded *Fuehrer*, without a single chance for life.

Silhouetted against a window across the room he could see the motionless heads of the effigies, and knew that his own image—with Hans Schurz' scar—was amongst the macabre banqueters. Slipping off his boots he hurried across the room, lifted the wax figure from the chair he had himself occupied last night, and carried it across the room to

where an old-fashioned upright piano stood.

He laid the wax figure on the floor quietly, swung one end of the piano away from the wall, and then pulled the image into the little niche. Working swiftly he stripped the figure of its uniform, and put it on himself. Then with the aid of his tiny flashlight and mirror and with his makeup kit, he transformed his face, replacing the collodion scar and touching his face up with grease paint so that it took on the stiff immobile appearance of the wax image.

"That ought to do the trick," he said softly as he examined his face to make sure he had not forgotten the slightest detail. "Now for the toughest job I've ever tackled."

Pushing the piano back in place to hide the wax figure, he moved swiftly across the room and took his place at the table, and set his muscles with an old Hindu trick he had learned from a fakir in India. He sat there in the strange company of men who had died that "glorious" death for their power-mad *Fuehrer*, and waited.

Soon the hall was lighted. Orderlies bustled about, filling the wine glasses with which the living were to toast the dead. Men came close to him, but his disguise was perfect, his frozen attitude defied detection.

One by one the hypnotized members of the Patrol came in, men who had been put under the evil spell of Lorentz, but had not as yet drawn a black skull. They were like living dead as they walked around the room, talking in that same dull monotone Masters had heard the night before. Smoke from cigarettes, cigars and pipes began to permeate the atmosphere, adding a sort of protective screen for the Lone Eagle's grim masquerade. Suddenly the voices stopped. To a man they turned toward the door as the sinister leader of the *Staffel* entered, his eyes alight with fanatical fire.

"Be seated, gentlemen," said Lorentz. He stood at the head of the table, while his half-conscious minions took their places. "A toast," he said lifting his glass. "A toast to three of you who have joined the company of the elect. 'Oberleutnant Schurz, Leutnant Froebel and Leutnant Ehrlich! And their victim, the *Osprey*!'"

"*Hoch!*" the men shouted. "*Heil Hitler!*"

Lorentz motioned them back to their seats, a triumphant smile on his face.

"Tonight," he exclaimed, as the men looked toward him, expectant gleams in their staring eyes, "the wheel of fortune spins again. But this time it will have many rewards. For tomorrow we strike a blow from which England will never recover, or the world forget!"

LORENTZ paused to let his words sink into the receptive minds.

"Tomorrow at dawn our *Staffel* goes out to strike, not at one single objective, but ten! By tomorrow night England will be ready to accept the peace of our *Fuehrer*, out of the goodness of his heart has offered them before."

"*Heil Hitler!*" chorused the men.

"Tonight," Lorentz went on, "there will be ten sets of black skulls in the wheel. Each skull will bear the name of an objective. And gentlemen, the great prize of the evening will be our main objective, the British Admiralty itself! Men, we are going to strike right at the heart of the British Navy! When you are through, nine great battleships will lie at the bottom of the sea. The proud buildings of the Admiralty in London will be a pile of smoking rubbish!"

"We will bring the war-loving British to their knees—knees that already tremble due to the glorious work of your *Staffel*. And tomorrow

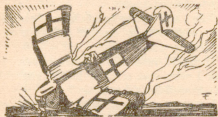
night our beloved *Fuehrer* will be able to announce to his people that the peace he has so earnestly sought is a reality. There will be pride in his voice as he tells his countrymen that it was you who brought him victory."

"*Heil Hitler!*" shouted the men again as their numbed minds were electrified by this hysterical outpouring. "We are ready, *Reitmeister* Lorentz!" They leaped to their feet. "Let the wheel spin."

The gaunt German motioned to the orderlies to wheel the great skull forward.

"From now on," Lorentz shouted, "this table will be a shrine at which a grateful nation will worship."

He touched the buttons. The wheel inside the skull spun. The lower jaw



dropped slack, and the orderlies began their grim round of the table with their lottery of death.

"Crack your skulls," commanded Lorentz when every man had one of the little white objects in front of him.

Hysterical shouts sounded on all sides as men found gleaming black skull with golden numbers on the foreheads nestling in their quivering palms.

"Call out your numbers," Lorentz ordered.

One by one, their voices shaking with hysteria, the men called out their numbers and the objective onto which they were to dive the next day. Burning eyes turned toward the pale-faced young pilot who called out that he had drawn the prize of the evening—the right to die in the smoking ruins of the Admiralty in

Whitehall, London. Babbling sounded through the room as the men tried to talk of what lay ahead. They were under the complete domination of this mad Nazi.

"One moment, gentlemen," cried Lorentz, holding up his hands. "There is something more to be said before the fortunate ones take their places of honor, at the other table."

The men quieted, looking toward the head of the table. Lorentz stood there with hands upraised as if about to pronounce a benediction over those who were to go out and die for their murderous leader.

"GENTLEMEN" — Lorentz moved over and stood by the other table—"one word more. The wheel of fortune has spun—"

"*Das ist ein grosse Schwindel,*" a dull voice at the left of Lorentz called out.

"Who said that?" cried Lorentz, staring at the stiff figures under the dim light.

"I did," answered one of the images.

"No, it was I," came a dull voice from across the table.

"You are wrong, it was I," insisted still another voice.

One after the other each image at the table spoke, confirming the words of the first.

"He fools you," came from another of the figures. "He sends you out to a horrible death, not to glory. He has you under his evil power. Shake it off. Resist. Try to use your minds. Try—try. Do not look at his eyes. Avoid them."

In a frenzy of surprise and fear Lorentz grabbed up a wine decanter and swung at the waxen head of the image next to him. There was a dull thud. Bits of wax flew in all directions, leaving a headless figure slumped in the chair.

"You have murdered me once, *Herr Lorentz*"—the dull hollow voice seemed to emanate from the shattered

neck—"You cannot do any harm to me again."

Sweat poured from the face of the German, as another figure spoke. His face was pale. He swept his long fingers across his frightened eyes. He shook his head and stared unbelievably at the waxen figures. For a horrible moment he thought his mind had cracked under the terrific strain of bringing the others under his complete domination.

"It is a trick!" he cried. "Someone is trying to play a trick on us. Pay no attention."

Desperately he fought to control the men who were looking from one to the other in astonishment at the words coming from the waxen figures they believed to be their comrades.

A voice was still trying to catch the attention of the men. But as Lorentz looked from face to face of the images not a lip moved. He knew he was being tricked and sought wildly for the perpetrator.

"It is a trick, I tell you!" he screamed as he lashed out at another head. It, too, flew into a thousand pieces of tinted wax. "These things are not alive! They are only images of your companions."

"They are our companions!" echoed the cry up and down the table. "You have told us so."

Wine flew like spattering blood as Lorentz lashed out again.

"See, they are only images! They are not alive."

Then to his utter amazement one of the images got slowly to its feet, and with eyes staring straight ahead, with unmoving lips spoke.

"We have been sent back to warn you of this man's evil power, comrades," said the figure. "He is a murderer! He sends you out, not to glory, but to death. Even now, retribution comes out of the sky to smash him, to free you of his foul power. Listen! Hear them? Now you know I am right!"

CHAPTER XV

Blazing Hell



NOT a man in the room moved. It was almost as if they were all waxen images as they sat listening. High above them in the night they could hear the faint throb of motors. They came closer with the roaring sound of an approaching hurricane.

"They come," said the tall straight figure, "not for you, but for him. They come to save you."

"Oberleutnant Schurz!" screamed Lorentz. "Oberleutnant Schurz—silence!"

Lorentz threw the empty decanter. It missed the head of the standing figure by an inch.

"You are trying to trick me, Schurz! You did not go on the mission assigned to you."

"I could not, *Herr Reitmeister*. It was I who was tricked last night and left bound in a haycock."

Lorentz whirled with a snarl of rage. There, standing in the doorway, was a young man, the exact counterpart, save for a suit of gray tweeds, of the man standing by the table.

"Who are you?" cried Lorentz, grabbing up a heavy water goblet. "Have you come to trick me, too? And who is that woman with you? You know there are no women allowed on this field."

"I am R-47," said the young girl calmly, as she shifted her weight on the cane she leaned against. "I heard about your work and knew that the Lone Eagle would eventually locate you. I left a cot in a hospital to fly here. And when I landed, I heard this man arguing at the gate to be allowed to enter. One look at his face and I knew I was too late."

"You mean—" Lorentz turned and faced the stiff figure standing by the side of the table.

"Yes!" cried R-47, Junior. "That is

the Lone Eagle! You, who are supposed to be the brain expert of the nation, have allowed yourself to be tricked."

"I can't believe it," muttered Lorentz.

"But it is he!" cried R-47. "His 'scar' does not fool me! Did I not meet him face to face at Friedrichshafen, when he spoiled the plans of the *Herr Doktor* and we lost the plans for his torpedo, the weapon that would have ended the war by this time. This broken leg of mine—That is his fault, too." Her voice rose in hate. "Why, I have been brought up to hate this man! All my life my mother has instilled hatred for this American in my mind. She trained me in mind, body, and soul so that some day I could bring him crashing into the mud and slime where he belongs!"

Lorentz shook as he looked from the beautiful young German girl, whose every glance, every move revealed the hate and loathing she had for the man who stood motionless at the "table of honor."

"Hear them?" she shrieked, as she jerked her coal-black head toward the droning sound of the motors. "Once again he has timed things with his wonderful precision. But this time he fails!" She hobbled closer to Masters. "You are the Lone Eagle! You cannot deny it."

Masters stood there, swallowing hard. The strain on his throat for his ventriloquist act had been terrific. At last he spoke, with no sign of fear of those piercing eyes of Lorentz.

"Yes, I am," he snarled, but he was speaking to Lorentz, not to young R-47. "I have beaten you at your own game, Lorentz. You will never be able to impregnate the minds of these men again with your foul, murderous schemes. See them? They distrust you. You have lost your power over them. I have saved their lives, and in doing so have saved the lives of thousands of British seamen—and the

lives of thousands of women and children. I have kept a promise I made the day your poor slaves sank the *Graemsey*."

NOT a soul moved. He held them almost as if he himself were hypnotizing them.

"And those planes, Lorentz. It may interest you to know that many of them are from the *Ark Royal*."

"The *Ark Royal*!" screamed Lorentz. "I sank that ship!"

Masters smiled as he shook his head. "No, Lorentz. I foiled you that time. I foiled you again this morning. And I have foiled you again tonight. There will be no raid on the Admiralty or on the British fleet tomorrow morning. For tonight, the Murder Patrol, as your brother so aptly called it, will be wiped out."

"My brother?" Lorentz said huskily. "He is—alive?"

Masters nodded and glanced at the girl. "And if it will make you feel any better, *Fräulein*, your mother, the original R-47, is alive, but in a safe place."

"You swine!" cried young R-47, as she limped across the floor with her cane raised. "I will smash your body to a pulp!"

"Not this time, *Fräulein*," Masters laughed, as he threw the nearest wax figure at her. "I have work to do."

As the screaming woman tried to untangle herself from the waxen effigy, the first bomb smacked into the airdrome. The building quivered, and the lights went out.

Wild pandemonium raged in the darkened mess, and another bomb smacked in. The heavens above the little building seemed to be alive with screaming wings and roaring motors. The earth shook as the bombs let go. Shouting men made a wild dash for windows and doors.

Masters fought with the rest to gain the open, not because he was afraid of the bombs, but because he had seen Lorentz make for a door the moment

the first bomb hit. He finally gained the outside and found the field lighted up as if it were day, as the ships above dropped parachute flares to the right and left.

"There he is!" he shouted, as he caught sight of Lorentz making for a Junkers standing at the end of the line. "His own personal crate. Had nerve enough to paint it black."

The Lone Eagle started toward the hangars. His keen eyes had spotted a Heinkel single-seater, a trim little white job standing close to the office.

"R-47's," he muttered. "Only a woman would think of painting a war crate white."

A mechanic leaped in front of him as he approached the ship, but dropped under two smashing blows of the Lone Eagle's fists. He scrambled into the cockpit and jammed down on the starter. The Junkers Juno woke up and began to spit blue-tipped flame through the exhaust stacks. He kicked on rudder as the throttle went forward. The ship swung, its three-bladed prop glinting in the bright light of the flares.

Explosions smashed at the field all around him as he took off. Directly ahead of him he could see the grim black Junkers boring into the night. That ship held the man he wanted, the man he hated—the murderer, who sent young Germans to die in the flaming wreckage of their targets.

AND as he lifted the ship into the air, he grabbed at the wireless mouthpiece, twisted the dial to the Allied short wave and began to shout.

"Pierre! Pierre! This is Masters. Pierre! Don't send a ship down for me. I'm in the Heinkel HE One Twelve. Just taking off. Go ahead and bomb!"

"Good work, John!" came the reply. "We are giving them hell!"

"Work isn't finished yet," snapped Masters, then dropped the mouthpiece and centered his attention on the Junkers.

His fast little ship was gaining on it now, forcing it back over the field. Below him, bombs were exploding like fiery chrysanthemums. The whole field seemed alive with flame. And the mess room threw flames high into the air—flames fed by melting wax, the last of those grim effigies.

Flashing across the path of the Junkers, Masters lifted his ship into a zoom. He looked down into the cockpit of the two-seater and grinned. There was no danger in the eyes that looked up at him now, for they were filled with fear, not power to numb brains.

"I've got you now, Lorentz!" snarled Masters, as he went into a half roll and went thundering down on the square tail of the Junkers with his guns hammering. "Your hellish work is over."

He caught the elevators in the blazing claws of his tracer and held on. He saw them battered by whining slugs, weaving, wavering, then falling apart. The next instant the nose of the Junkers dropped, straight at the big hangar on the end of the line. Masters caught a glimpse of big metal-sheathed noses in the wide doorway. The black ships of the Murder Patrol, loaded and waiting for dawn.

"Look out!" he screamed into the wireless mouthpiece. "Zoom! Everybody up. All hell's going to let loose in a minute. Up—for God's sake."

He dropped the mouthpiece and threw his ship into a zoom. Below him he saw the doomed Junkers hurtling straight at the building in a dive. Down and down it went, nose boring right at the flare-lighted roof.

"A dose of your own medicine," grimly thought the Lone Eagle. "Didn't have time to pick up a chute, and now you've got to sit there and take it. How do you like it, sitting there watching your death rush up to meet you? Not any fun, is it, Lorentz? Going out the same way you sent the others. Or is it glorious? . . . God!"

The ejaculation escaped the Lone

Eagle's lips as the whole building seemed to fly skyward in a mass of flame as the explosive-filled Heinkels let go. The explosion seemed to rock the very foundations of the Universe. Drifting flares were snuffed out like candles, but not before the Lone Eagle had caught a glimpse of buildings and trees going down like so many ten-pins, all collapsing in the terrific holocaust.

It was some time before flying in the turbulent air was easy. Around him were gathered the ships under the command of Pierre Viaud and Henri. To the right, the formation from the *Ark Royal* was just cutting away and heading for the North Sea.

"Anything else, John?" Pierre had

man by the name of Lorentz, has been hoist with his own petard."

"Splendid, Masters, splendid!" exclaimed Churchill. "All England will rejoice, and I assure you I will place credit where credit is due."

"Skip that part of it please, sir," replied Masters. "All I ask is that you take care of those two men up in Kirkwall who helped me get to the root of this thing."

"Certainly, Masters," said the First Lord. "Give me their names."

"All I know is that they're Alf and Horace," said Masters, grinning. "But I have no doubt but what all Kirkwall knows who they are by this time."

"I'll tend to it at once, Masters,"

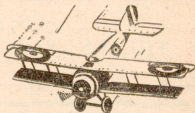
*Ambrose Hooley and Muley Spink
Are Headed This Way*

in

FILET OF SOLOS

A Rib-Tickling Howler by JOE ARCHIBALD

COMING IN THE NEXT ISSUE



just asked over the wireless. "I hope your job is completed."

"Just one thing more, Pierre," Masters said. "Just a little job."

HE SENT a call to the British Admiralty out into the night and when they replied he asked to speak to Winston Churchill. In a few moments the harassed First Lord of the Admiralty was at the transmitter in London.

"I just wish to inform you that the job has been completed," Masters said. "Your Navy need have no further fear of the black Heinkels. With the aid of some of your pilots from the *Ark Royal*, I have just cleaned out their dirty little nest, and their leader, a

said Winston Churchill. "But I do wish you would allow my government to repay you for the able assistance you have given us."

"Nothing doing, sir," answered Masters. "I'm in this fight as much as you people. My reward will be victory for France and England over Hitler and his gang. . . . Oh, yes, and one thing more, please. Will you please convey my greetings to your prisoner, R-47? Tell her that I have won again."

"R-47!" exclaimed Churchill. "Haven't you heard?"

"You haven't shot her?" exploded Masters.

"She leaped off the destroyer that was bringing her to London for trial," explained Winston Churchill. "She

must have been drowned, for the boat stopped, and the area was searched by the ship's crew, but they could not find her. I am afraid the career of R-47 is ended, Masters."

Masters shook his head. "She takes a lot of killing, sir. I would have to see her dead body to believe she was gone. She'll show up again—never fear. In the meantime, there's another one to take her place—a hell-cat, too. Wanted to brain me tonight. . . . Well, good night, sir. I just wanted to be the first to give you the good news. I'll drop in and tell you the complete

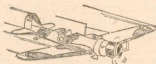
story when I get over to London."

Masters signed off, and sat back. His head rested against the leather pad as he looked up at the twinkling stars.

"No, you can't make me believe R-47 has gone," he murmured. "But at that, I'd have hated to think that it was me that put her in front of a firing squad. Damn if I wouldn't."

He glanced around at the riding lights of the other planes, took a look at his compass, and then set his course for Paris.

"I'm like Alf and 'Orace," he murmured. "I just want to sleep."



COMING IN THE NEXT ISSUE

THE LONE EAGLE in NORTH SEA TERROR



At last I've found a winning blade!
That Thin Gillette's the finest made.
Designed for close, clean, easy shaving,
It's also time and money saving!

New kind of edges on steel
hard enough to cut glass!



4 for 10¢
8 for 19¢

The Thin Gillette Blade Is Produced By The Maker Of The Famous Gillette Blue Blade

THE STORY OF THE COVER

THE tensile strength of human nerves has never been ascertained. The breaking point of a human fiber has never been discovered. None has ever been stretched on a micrometric mental gauge to learn of this breaking point of human nerve fiber because no such machine has ever been conceived.

Because man hates his fellow man, he has devised ways of smashing human morale. Through the process of waiting, killing a little; waiting more; killing more; waiting again; holding back; going forward; drawing back again; attacking; retreating; attacking again; destroying; healing; destroying; again, he has learned something of how little human nerves can stand.

And this is man's present method of satisfying his hate; practised in this second World War; this war of aerial fighting ships of speeds almost as fast as sound; dropping death, disease and devastation with the lightest finger pressure on a Bowdoin control.

Fiery Nazi Legions

Out of the bellied Nazi hangars on the islands of Sylt, of Borkum, of Norderny in the North Sea came flashing Messerschmidts, Junkers, and Heinkels bearing the crest of the fiery Nazi legions and loaded with bombs for the destruction of enemy shipping. Aiding mine laying forays on the British Naval anchorages and sea lanes, they destroyed seaport towns, and murdered women and children whose only prayer both day and night was for peace.

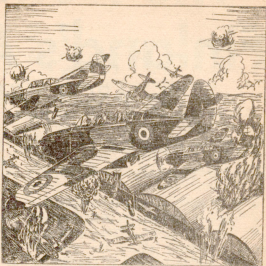
Then out over the cold and bleak North Sea, Britain sent her answer to the challenge. Nazi air raiders must be stopped, Nazi air bases must be destroyed if the North Sea is to be kept open, and the blockade of the German Navy be successful.

They had waited long before replying. They had kept the Germans wondering what method of retaliation would be resorted to. The German's now were becoming nervous; tense. They tightened, then relaxed. The *Englischer* would do nothing; they were afraid!

They were fearful lest Germany would wreak greater destruction.

British ships lay under cloud-swept skies hanging ominously over the North Sea, whose thunderous waves battered the German ramps. Then the skies grew black, and Nazi countenances seeing red, blue and black colored vultures overhead, grew blacker and their hearts pounded feverishly as their legs carried them frantically off the field to safety.

Hawker Henleys swept furiously down upon the brown hangars below which housed the German fighting ships and



heavy-throated roars of thunder suddenly reverberated for miles across the sea.

Fury Is Unloosed!

Explosion followed explosion so closely as to almost overlap. Fragmentary bombs blasted the Nazi tarmac below to pieces, sending the concrete runways over every corner of the field as Messerschmidts, Junkers and Heinkels mixed with broken mortar and cement.

Nazi pilots rose into the air to meet the horrible onslaught of lightning-fast fury that tore over their heads. Many of them tore into the ground instead, under the weight of exploding iron.

Hangars opened midroof, and huge tongues of blood-red flames coughed and sputtered angrily as they tried to reach up to the roaring death that flung across the Nazi air base.

Hawker Henleys dived in echelon and then "peeled off" as each aimed for a separate section of the field, speaking with chattering guns that ripped through the very vitals of the Nazi pride of airports. Here and there across the field lay a dead German pilot under his shattered plane; a plane that a moment before shone in magnificent Nazi splendor and now lay a heap of smoldering blackened ruins.

Anti-aircraft spat at the invaders but black puffs blew harmlessly high over the Hawker heads. A pair of Junkers tried valiantly to defend the base below but their efforts, weakened by the success of the surprise attack, were to little or no avail. They were brushed off like flies from a sugar-coated doughnut.

A few moments more and the Hawkers reassembled in echelon and roared out over the North Sea toward England; their

(Concluded on page 107)

The Truth About Finland's Air Force

By ARCH WHITEHOUSE

Author of "Aircraft Carrier Pilots," "The Eyes of War," etc.

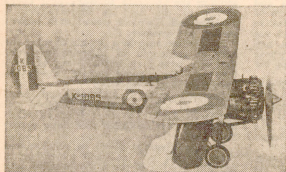
Straight-from-the-Shoulder Talk About One of the Pivotal Factors in Europe's Mad Scramble for Power!

IT IS perhaps hard to understand the sudden interest in the republic of Finland until we consider what a gallant effort she put up against the onslaughts of the Soviet Russian military and naval power in the early weeks of the great war of the snows. Prior to Russia's invasion of Finland few people knew where Finland was located. In most American minds it was a small nonde-

Russia and that it is often cold there and that their soldiers sometimes wear white uniforms and fight from skis and ice skates. Finland is "poor little Finland" to most people but as a matter of fact, Finland has a far greater area than the British Isles. It has an area of 149,926 square miles and a population of over 4,000,000 people of whom 89.4% speak the Finnish language.

Few also realize that Finland is one of the most completely independent countries in the world. It boasts of fine cities, splendid communication and transportation, a democratic form of government, and no country in Europe is so wealthy in forests except perhaps Russia.

Considering all these facts and conditions then, it is quite understandable why the country is so completely unified in a common cause. It has a single language and a single religion (Lutheran)



A few Finnish fighter squadrons are equipped with a modernized version of the Bristol-Bulldog, a type particularly suited to their geographical conditions.

script nation which for some strange and unaccountable reason was paying its "war debts" regularly. Just what Finland had to do with the last war was a mystery few considered important enough to delve into.

Even now few can accurately state where Finland lies. They know it touches the western borders of

and enjoys universal suffrage of both sexes.

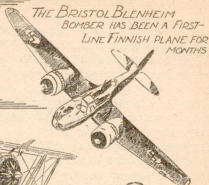
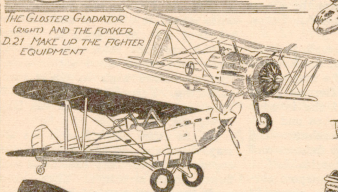
It might have been understandable that the Finns fighting on their own ground would be able to make a firm stand against the Russian military forces for a reasonable length of time. It is an old military axiom that the attacking force must expect

PLANES USED BY FINLAND'S AGES.

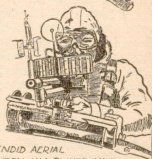


FINLAND'S SWASTIKA AIR INSIGNIA IS NOT THE NAZI EMBLEM. THE SIGN IS AN ANCIENT SUN SYMBOL KNOWN IN EGYPT AND ATHENS CENTURIES AGO

THE GLOSTER GLADIATOR (RIGHT) AND THE FOKKER D.21 MAKE UP THE FIGHTER EQUIPMENT

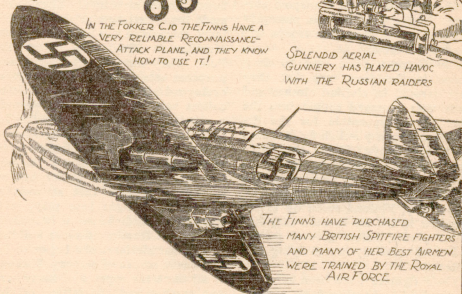


THE BRISTOL BLENHEIM BOMBER HAS BEEN A FIRST-LINE FINNISH PLANE FOR MONTHS

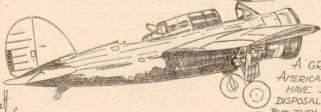


SPLENDID AERIAL GUNNERY HAS PLAYED HAVOC WITH THE RUSSIAN RAIDERS

IN THE FOKKER C.10 THE FINNS HAVE A VERY RELIABLE RECONNAISSANCE-ATTACK PLANE, AND THEY KNOW HOW TO USE IT!



THE FINNS HAVE PURCHASED MANY BRITISH SPITFIRE FIGHTERS AND MANY OF HER BEST ARMEN WERE TRAINED BY THE ROYAL AIR FORCE



A GREAT NUMBER OF AMERICAN BREWSTER FIGHTERS HAVE BEEN PLACED AT THE DISPOSAL OF THE FINNISH AIR FORCE BUT THEY MUST COME AND GET THEM

Especially Drawn for THE LONE EAGLE by Arch Whitehouse, the Author of this Article

to lose at least three times more than the defenders. Then, we discovered that the Russian Army was as much of a "phantom" power as the much advertised German Air Force and we also discovered that the Russian soldier was no better equipped in 1939 than he was in 1914 and 1915, but we hardly expected to see the Finns stand up to the Russian Air Force in the way they have.

Perhaps it might be well to look over their record against the Russian Bear with wings. In the first place, when Russia tried the German game in the initial smash of the invader—dropping sabotage troops and machine gun units by parachutes—the Finns promptly sent up fighters and drove off most of the Russian A.N.T. bombers fitted out as transport carriers. The ground troops promptly rounded up the parachute troops and imprisoned them.

The German game was to drop troops in the same way, but they were dressed in civilian clothes and those who managed to get into the clear were responsible for the destruction of many Polish fields, hangars and runways. Those that were caught were executed by the Poles because they were in civilian clothes and therefore classifiable as spies.

Secondly, Finland stood up to the Russians in the air because they had better planes, better ground service and most certainly better flying personnel.

Their fighters have been officially credited with shooting down twenty-four Russian bombers within two days. Their bombers have made successful attacks on Russian air bases and the one against the Russian air stronghold at Murmansk is an interesting example of their courage and vigor. In this raid they actually destroyed sixty Russian airplanes by means of small incendiary bombs. To cover up this gallant action the Russians denied that such a raid had taken place and then later declared

that the machines had been lost because of a fire due to a faulty fuel supply tank. Later on the Finns bombed an air base at Paldiski, leased by Estonia to the Soviet.

Small But Efficient

It might be interesting then if we studied the Finnish air set-up to see what makes it click so well. After all, they are not a great air power in the accepted sense of numbers. They have never stood out in aviation or scored high in the record gathering. Few Finnish air pilots have made the headlines in the last few years.

On the other hand, Russia has always been the big bad wolf of European aviation. They have built and flown giant machines. They have made brave attempts at the long distance records. They have flown from Moscow to California across the Pole. They have to all intents and purposes established important meteorological air bases in the Arctic to collect weather reports and provide a special meteorological service for their long-distance transport lines.

Russia has pulled the German game of laying a heavy blanket of secrecy over her military air power, but we all know by now that as soon as secrecy is brought into play, it is usually an indication of weakness. As soon as Russia set about building up a great air force she began to lay the smoke screen of secrecy. Through it all came the reports of many serious crashes and the failure of this type and that type, but still the secrecy was kept on and eventually the world began to believe that Russia actually had a great military air arm.

One or two long distance flights and attempted long-distance flights helped put the "mystery" over, and by the time the Russian bear began to threaten Finland, his air force had become even greater than that of Germany. Finland's task seemed

Coastal reconnaissance is carried out by sea squadrons equipped with the Avro Anson. It is also used as a trainer for pilots who are to fly the fast two-engined Bristol Blenheim.



hopeless once the Russians began to bomb Finnish towns and cities. For one thing no one had ever heard of a Finnish Air Force.

The Finnish Air Force

But, strange to relate, Finland did have an air force. True, it was not a large air force but what it lacked in numbers it made up for in equipment and personnel. For instance, late in 1939 Finland's air force was composed of approximately 100 first-line planes. On paper this does not appear to be worth consideration, but Finland's opinion of a first line plane happened to be very high and included such planes as Fokker D.21s, Bristol Bulldogs, Bristol Blenheims, Blackburn Ripons and Avro Ansons. They also had a few Italian Fiat and Caudron fighters as well as some smart Fokker C. V. two-seater fighters. This was back in 1937-38 remember, not 1940.

The Finnish Air Force is controlled by the Chief of the Air Force and his Staff. The Chief of the Air Force is under direct operational command of the Commander-in-Chief and for administration, under the Minister of Defense. Since 1932 the Chief of the Air Force has been Major-General J. F. Lundqvist and the Chief of the Air Staff is Lieutenant-Colonel J. O. Alameri. The Air Force itself consists of the Air Staff, three Air Regiments, one Naval Cooperation Squadron, a Central Flying School, a School of Mechanics, an Aircraft Depot with a Test Flight bureau, and two Anti-Aircraft Regiments. It is interesting to note how

they have combined their anti-aircraft measures to cooperate with the flying forces, a point which is worth consideration.

A Finnish Air Regiment comprises three ordinary squadrons. Each squadron consists of three flights of six planes each, so there are eighteen planes in each squadron.

Their Central Flying School located at Kanhana offers ground training and has the Air Force Cadet School where reserve officers are trained. In addition this school takes care of the training of special non-commissioned pilots and another non-commissioned reserve pilots' school.

It also takes care of the training of gunners and observers.

Variety of Planes

Their first Air Regiment is composed of Army Cooperation squadrons which used, prior to the outbreak of the war, Fokker C. V. two-seaters. The second Air Regiment is composed of Fighter squadrons and today these organizations are being equipped with the best that Britain, France, Italy and the United States can provide. A number of Brewster navy fighters originally designed for the U. S. Navy have been released for Finnish use if the Finns can find a way to get them over there. It is quite possible of course that they may be picked up by British merchantmen and delivered direct to the Finns.

They have also put in an order for many British Spitfires and since these are coming off the assembly lines faster than British fighter pi-

lots can be trained, it is most likely that they will be delivered first. At present they are actually using British Gloster Gladiators, biplane fighters which have been used on the Western Front and which have remarkable maneuverability as well as a top speed of over 250 m.p.h. In addition they have a number of Fokker D.21s, single-seater low-wing monoplanes powered with Bristol Mercury engines. These have a top speed of 270 m.p.h. and carry a very complete assortment of machine guns and air cannon aboard.

Finest Fighter

This latter machine, to the writer's mind, is one of the finest fighters in the world. In the first place it is utterly devoid of trick gadgets. It has been designed as a fighter, not something beautiful to photograph or fly in formation for the newsreels. It is a simple model to standardize, replacements are easy and repairs none too difficult to make. The Fokker D.21 has a fixed undercarriage and thus does away with a lot of unnecessary machinery and equipment for the pilot to worry about.

Then, the D.21 is well armed, a feature that few fighters today can offer. It can be fitted with one 20mm air cannon and four 0.3 caliber machine guns. Or, it can carry a special 0.5 machine gun synchronized to fire through the airscrew and two special fixed machine guns in the wings. Another arrangement is to place two 20m/m air cannon in the wings and two fixed machine guns in the fuselage, synchronized to fire through the prop blades.

Another feature about the D.21 we like as a modern military plane is the fact that it can be fitted with any one of three available engines. It is stressed to take the Bristol Mercury, the Pratt and Whitney Twin-Wasp Junior or the Wright "Cyclone." These are all important points to the

Finns who have to take their equipment where they can get it.

They Like Guns

The Finns like guns. They have four on the Gladiator and it is obvious that they are out-fighting and out-gunning the Russians in spite of all the reports of the sterling qualities of the Russian fighters and bombers.

Their observation types are most suitable for their work. They can be quickly fitted with pontoons for the lake regions or coastal work, or with skis for winter ground conditions. The Blackburn Ripon, for instance, appears with wheels, pontoons or skis. The Fokker C. V. is also powered with the same Bristol Mercury motors as their Fokker fighter, so they have very little trouble with adaptation or the training of mechanics for overhaul and replacement jobs.

For land reconnaissance and bombing they have the smart Fokker C. 10 powered with a Hispano-Suiza and the noted high-speed Bristol Blenheim. They have bought large numbers of Blenheims, and the Finn pilots seem to use them like twin-engined fighters. The Fokker C. 10 is a high-speed two-seater biplane which can be used for attack work or light dive-bombing. It is a sturdy well-designed ship involving a clever amalgamation of native spruce, metal dural and fabric.

For instance, the wings are composed of silver spruce spars fitted with plywood ribs and they are partly covered with plywood or sheet bakelite which adds considerably to the strength of the wings. The upper wing is built in one piece and can be quickly removed and replaced with the release of a few bolts. A small amount of fabric is used in the wing coverings also. The lower wings are made in two halves on two spruce spars and covered with plywood, bakelite and fabric.

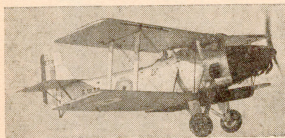
The fuselage is built up of seamless, cold-drawn, autogenously welded steel tubes. The forward section and the entire roof of the fuselage are covered with quickly-detachable dural and aluminum panels. The rest is covered with fabric. From this, then, one can see that repairs can be quickly and easily made. Bursts of bullets do not splinter and fracture important metal parts in the wings, and repairs and replacements can be made by carpenters and joiners without ripping the whole structure down.

Engine Adaptability

Here again we also find that the machine has been built and stressed for several types of engines. It can

very complete radio set, cameras and bomb-dropping equipment. Top speed is 220 m.p.h. fully loaded at 13,000 feet.

The details of the Bristol Blenheim have been so widely advertised that complete mention of them is hardly necessary here. The British claim it is the fastest medium-type bomber in the world, the more recent versions of it with the high-speed nose doing near 300 m.p.h. The Finns have the ordinary type with the two Bristol Mercury motors which is rated at 225 with a full load. But here again the Finns have improved on the armament. Photographs of their models disclose that they have double the number of machine guns the Brit-



The Finns make fine use of the Blackburn "Ripon" torpedo bomber against Red Russia's surface fleet. Many of these planes were purchased some time ago and are used by them as sea base squadrons.

take the Hispano-Suiza *moteur-canon* engine, the Rolls-Royce Kestrel, the Gnome-Rhone 14N-01 radial or the Bristol Pegasus radial.

Guns galore appear in the makeup of the C.10. They can slip in one or two machine guns synchronized to fire through the prop or one automatic 20m/m air cannon when the Hispano-Suiza engine is fitted. The observer has two 0.3 caliber machine guns set on a compensating mounting in the aft cockpit. In normal flight these guns can be tucked away inside the fuselage.

In addition she carries two bomb racks accommodating 440 lbs. of bombs each.

The cockpits are heated in winter, a feature which must add considerable comfort in Finland's Arctic climate. They are covered with a suitable transparent hatch and carry a

ish planes carry. It is believed that it was with planes of this type that they carried out their raids on Murmansk and Paldiski.

High Interest in Aviation

Few readers probably realize also that Finland produces some planes of her own. The State Aircraft Factory at Tampere builds many machines of foreign design under manufacturing licenses. During the past year, the factory under the guidance of Professor Martti Levon constructed and tested many Fokker C.10 and Fokker C.21s and in addition they designed and produced the very efficient Tuisku two-seater advanced trained biplane which is being used in the Finnish training schools. In addition, they also produce the new Vilma two-seat light training biplane which has many of

the American Fleet trained points about it.

The interest in aviation in Finland is also heightened by the Club of Aeronautical Engineers which has a small factory in Veljekset where they have designed and manufactured a small light single-seater monoplane powered by the American 37 h.p. Szekely engine. This machine is a high-wing monoplane using a strut-bracing system and a small monocoque fuselage. The wings of this ship are carried on a plywood-faired strut in the middle of the center-section. The wings fold back for stowage and it is known as the Viri.

This club founded in 1933 draws together all Finnish aeronautical interests and they gather to submit and exchange ideas and design light planes for private and amateur flying, and what is more, they actually design and fly such planes. Their Viri is a splendid example of what can be done under such arrangements.

But there are other angles in all this. Machines, organizations and systems are not enough. As so many military experts have stated time and time again, there is no place for bravery against the modern weapons of today. Finland is not putting up such a stand against Russia because she is brave. It is because of the superior equipment she had to start with and the manner in which that equipment was used. The Russians, as individuals are as brave as any other nationality. No nation has any corner on individual courage. Men are brave because they are built that way and men are brave under varying situations. One type has courage in the air but would retch at the prospects of engaging in a bayonet charge. Some men see nothing

to be afraid of in submarine life and yet would tremble like cowards in the basket of an observation balloon.

Specialized Training

Finland has a fine class of men to draw from but they are no braver than other nations of the same civilized standard. They have done what they have done so far because they were well trained and understood military discipline. Their airmen were for the most part trained in the stiff schools of the British Royal Air Force and these men returned to Finland and carried out the same system and in most cases used the same types of planes. They had a full and rounded training, from light trainers to giant flying boats, a training that can only be given by an air service that is fully and completely separated from the Army and the Navy.

They too have a unified air service and it works independently of the Army or the Navy. Finland, too, has used what equipment it has to do the right job. The gunners have been specially trained as gunners, not simply as slipshod mechanics who are stuck into a turret because someone has to shoot the extra guns. They are real gunners and get a course of training equal to that of the pilots. They are first trained as gunners, then radio-operators and aerial cameramen.

They get a reasonable amount of navigation and bomb-dropping to round out their training, but they are first and foremost aerial gunners, trained to shoot down enemy planes from the gun turrets of multi-seat military planes—and that is one of the reasons Finland has played havoc with the Red Air Force.

COMING! More Up-to-the-Minute ARCH WHITEHOUSE Features

Fokker Fodder

By ROBERT SIDNEY BOWEN

Author of "Whacky Waters," "Flying Whiskers," etc.

Food was piled on the table, Huns laid out on the floor



MAJOR JACK HARMON, C.O. of the Eighty-fourth Yank Pursuits slammed the phone receiver back on the hook and a beautiful red spread from the collar of his tunic up to his hair line. Then presently he jerked his head around to the orderly sitting in the corner.

"Go out and wait for Lieutenant Cox," Harmon snapped. "When he lands, bring him in here at once!"

The orderly ducked out and Harmon glared at the desk top and muttered things unprintable under his

A Big Appetite Is Pilot Cox's Weakness Until a Tail-Spin Drops Him into the Frying Pan

breath. Some twenty minutes later the door opened and close to two hundred pounds of wind-bronzed pilot oozed inside. Bill Cox grinned and flicked a finger to his cap in a trick salute.

"You wanted to see me, Major?" he asked.

Harmon swallowed, counted ten to himself, and then nodded.

"I do!" he said curtly and leveled a stiff forefinger. "Just what the hell are you trying to do, Cox, work up a rep for me that I starve my pilots, that I cut down the food around here and stick the extra dough in my pocket?"

The pilot's eyes widened in injured surprise.

"Heck, no, Major!" he exclaimed. "What in the devil caused you to think—"

"Twenty-five Squadron just had me on the phone," the major cut in harshly. "It seems that you force-landed on their drome a while ago with a couple of missing cylinders. They fixed you up but in the mean time you stayed for lunch. And, according to Major Blake, you damn near ate them out of house and home. What's more, you made some crack about not getting enough grub here at Eighty-four!"

"I was only kidding, Major," Cox said, and tried to soften it with a grin. "Hell, it was just about feed-bag time. Well, I figured that—"

"Skip the details, I know them by heart!" Harmon rasped. "This happens to be the umpteenth time you've forced-landed at other dromes at just about meal time. Cut it out. Just pull that forced landing gag once more, and I'll bounce you back to Pau in nothing flat. Now, beat it!"

Harmon waited until the door closed on Eighty-four's biggest eater, let out a long sigh and shook his head.

"If he wasn't one of the sweetest pilots in France," he grunted, "damned if I wouldn't make a present of him to the Huns. He'd eat them into suing for peace in a week."

With another sigh for emphasis Harmon tore into the mess of paper work on his desk. Half an hour later, however, he was interrupted. The

door pushed open and no less than Colonel Tracey, C.O. of Wing, came striding inside.

Harmon secretly crossed his fingers and prayed as he saluted and greeted the senior officer.

"Didn't expect you today, sir," he smiled. "Any special reason for this courtesy?"

"A very special reason," the other nodded and dropped into a chair. "I've got a mighty important job for six of your best pilots, including yourself, of course. I might have gone to some other squadron in Wing, but after careful consideration I decided that Eighty-four had just the pilots for this job."

"As you know," the colonel said presently, "extensive preparations are being made for a general attack tomorrow by our troops against the Basel sector. Now, in the middle of the spear-head of the attack is the Basel swamp. A damn dirty piece of ground to cross, and should the Huns bog us down before we cross it our chances of success would be cut in half right then and there. You follow me?"

HARMON nodded.

"Now," the colonel continued and spread a map on the desk. "Now, there is one way we can make certain that German strafing airplanes won't bother our advancing troops. That's to have our planes drive them off. So—"

"Quite true, sir," Harmon interrupted quietly. "However, that swamp section is a good twenty-five miles from here, and even with my pilots working in relays it's doubtful if we could keep ships in contact with the ground troops continually. We'd have to return here for new loads of ammo, and Cooper bomb. And . . ."

"Don't you suppose I know that?" the colonel barked. "Exactly the reason I'm here, confound it! Now, be quiet, and pay attention. Here, where I've got my finger, is the southern

end of that swamp. Well, there's four or five acres of hard ground next to a strip of woods. There's an old weather-beaten building there.

"Now, you are to pick six of your best pilots, including yourself, and set yourselves up on that field as a shock unit. You can fly over all the ammo, bombs, and food you'll need, and when the drive starts tomorrow you'll work out of that field until our troops have crossed that swamp section. You get the idea?"

Harmon had to admit that he did, and he also admitted to himself that it was a damn good idea, even if it had been born in the colonel's brain. Half a dozen pursuit jobs working out of that small field could do wonders for the benefit of the advancing ground troops. It was almost like flying off the parapet of a trench at zero hour.

"When do you want us to start work, sir?" he asked.

"At once," the colonel ordered. "You'll have to make several trips to get all your supplies over. I want you to be set and ready by late afternoon. Too damn bad a bomber can't get in there to take all your supplies in one load, but the field is so damn small only pursuit ships could get in and out of it. And even then there's no room for more than half a dozen of them. Good luck, Major, and don't worry, you and your pilots will be mentioned in dispatches tomorrow."

An hour later Harmon had selected the five pilots to accompany him and had explained the plan to them in detail.

"Now," he concluded folding up the map, "if there are no questions, we'll get started. Well?"

The grim-faced pilots shook their heads and walked over toward the waiting S.E.5s. They had been loaded to the loading edges with extra ammo belts, and stuff, and it was certain proof that Harmon had selected pukka pilots when nobody crashed, taking his over-loaded ship off the field.

Four times the special shock unit flew to the emergency field, and when finally the sun started easing down over the western lip of the world the six aerial adventurers had dug in at the pin-head sized field, and made themselves as comfortable as possible. Now they had only to wait for the morrow and the zero hour of the Yank attack.

However, as Harmon made his umpteenth check of everything he was far from a satisfied man. There was a feeling of faint dread in him. A bit of a puzzle he couldn't figure out himself, but didn't want to mention to the others in case it might build up an increased sense of uneasiness in them. Each knew he had a real man's job to do the next day and it wouldn't help any to worry him.

JUST the same, Harmon was damn nervous inside, and for good reason. In short, on each of the four trips they'd made to the field he had sighted German Fokkers. What's more, he'd spotted them as belonging to Baron von Stolz' brood, a gang of war flying veterans who were always ready to scrap, even though they were German.

Yet, those Fokker pilots had sheered off, kept at a very safe distance, and not once made an attempt to close in for battle.

The thought was still taunting Harmon's brain when he rejoined the others seated on the ground in front of the battered building and smoking cigarettes. Perhaps Mullins, "A" Flight leader, was a mind-reader, or perhaps he'd been thinking thoughts, himself. At any rate he stared hard at Harmon and spoke the thought aloud.

"Why didn't those tramps pick a scrap, Major?" he said. "You saw them, didn't you?"

"I did," Harmon grunted. "And I'm wondering plenty, myself. Maybe they had an off day for courage."

"Fat chance!" spoke up Young, a

red-headed member of the group. "That's the only thing I can say in favor of von Stoltz and his bums. They definitely aren't yellow."

"Then why didn't they make a pass at us?" Mullins persisted. "Overloaded as we were, they could have raised hell in six different languages."

"You want to know what I think?" Cox spoke up, taking a banana away from his face. "They didn't attack because they're smart."

"Afraid of us?" Major Harmon asked caustically. "Nuts! That banana's gone to your head, Cox. Incidentally, cut the eating. We're all on emergency rations, here."

"No, I don't mean they're afraid, sir," Cox said. "I mean, they're smart. It's like this. We thought up this neat little idea, and we've done all the hard work. I'll bet that its von Stoltz' idea to cash in on it, that's all."

Harmon sat up straight, then relaxed with a grunt of disgust.

"You mean come down and establish themselves here?" he asked.

"Yeah, sure," Cox nodded and waved one hand. "There's ammo, bombs, grub, and everything else here for a shock unit. Just think of the hell raising half a dozen of von Stoltz' pilots could do working out of here tomorrow instead of us."

"They could do plenty, yes," Harmon nodded. Then with an edge in his voice, "Except for several things! Those machine guns we've mounted here just in case they try to take the field from us. Better stop trying to think, Cox. The six of us here could hold off the whole German army, to say nothing of half a dozen Fokker pilots trying to land and take charge."

"You're dead right, sir," Cox nodded and gazed eastward. "Only, I'm wondering about another angle. What's going to stop them from taking over tomorrow while we're out on strafing patrol?"

Harmon sat up straight again, and this time with a yelp of alarm.

"By God, that is something!" he

breathed. "All six of us will be helping the troops, and there won't be a damn soul to protect this place. Von Stoltz could land some of his bunch, and—"

Harmon more or less choked on the rest and stared flint-eyed at his pilots.

"Our heavy eating pal has had a brainstorm," he said slowly. "And damned if he hasn't belted the nail on the head. Von Stoltz is smart, and maybe he has just that idea in mind."

FOR emphasis the C.O. nodded, snapped his fingers and stood up.

"On your toes, fellows!" he snapped. "There's still some light left. We'll go back to the field, and each of us fly a mechanic back on the wing. They can hold the field tomorrow while we're out doing our stuff for the ground troops. Come on!"

Ignition switches were snapped up, props were twisted, and presently the six Yanks went piling back to Eighty-four's field. They stayed for about fifteen minutes until six greaseballs volunteered for special duty and climbed up on the wing stubs of the S.E.5s. Then the six ships roared up into the air and eastward for the fifth time.

Flying in the lead as usual, Harmon unconsciously kept his free hand jammed against the already wide open throttle, as though in doing so he might get more speed out of his ship. There was a tingling at the back of his neck and a strange tightening in the pit of his stomach. Not being a believer in crystal-ball gazing he tried to brush it off as excitement of the moment.

However, when he came within sight of the emergency field and started to cut his throttle for the glide down, he knew for sure that that mysterious thing which science has called, a sixth sense, for the want of a better explanation, had been at work in his system.

There, lined up in front, were six German Fokkers at the strip of woods

that bordered one side of the emergency field! And a couple of seconds later six German pilots manned the machine guns the Yanks had set up and began blasting away at the S.E.s. Harmon cursed savagely through clenched teeth, started to jam his ship down into a whirlwind vertical strafe dive, and then suddenly realized he had a white-faced greaseball standing on the lower right wing stub and clinging frantically to the center section struts for support against the propwash.

With a groan, Harmon pulled up out of his dive and went banking away from the shower of bullets being spewed upward. Each of his pilots had a mechanic on the wing and it would have spelled their doom to dive down and try to take the field by storm. Even without the mechanics it would be practically impossible to recapture the field. And with the mechanics it was plain suicide.

Blind rage flaming up in his brain, and his heart sliding down into his boots, Harmon gave the signal and led the flight back to Eighty-four's field. There they unloaded the mechanics and looked at each other helplessly. No one seemed able to think of anything to say. That is, no one but Cox. He looked very unhappy.

"A hell of a lot of good it does, me being right," he groaned. "Gosh, when I think of them tramps eating all that stuff we lugged over. Major! Let's go take it away from them. Dammit! They can't do that to us!"

Harmon glanced at the shadows of night racing up from the east, started to shake his head, but checked the movement as he suddenly saw a car come sliding around the corner of the end hangar. There was a little flag on each of the two front fenders and that meant Colonel Tracey was in the car. Harmon took one look, swallowed hard and leaped for his ship.

"I'm trying it, anyway!" he shouted.

"If you others want to come, okay!"

They did, and the roar of revving engines once more blasted across Eighty-four's field. Like six bats out of hell, Harmon and his pilots went high-balling eastward to strafe hell out of the emergency field and take it back by hook or by crook. But, they didn't have a chance! That is, they didn't have a chance to even strafe the field. They didn't because when they reached the air space over the field they ran smack into a German bomber with a strong Fokker patrol. The bomber was easing down inch by inch for the small field.

ONE look at the big ship and Harmon knew that it wasn't loaded with bombs, or anything like that. On the contrary it was loaded with mechanics. Mechanics to hold the field while its pilots were in the air tomorrow worrying hell out of the advancing troops. Perhaps the bomber would crash getting into that field, but it was worth a crashed bomber if some greaseballs could be landed safely.

One look, and Harmon let out a howl of rage, and went wing-whamming downward, both Vickers guns blazing.

"The hell you will, tramps!" he belted. "If we can't, you can't!"

Lining up the nearest Fokker in his sights he practically knocked it clean out of the world in a savage blast of shots. Cutting away he tried to get in close to the bomber, but the bomber's pilot had opened up his engines and postponed a tricky landing on the field. He had banked around and was heading hell bent eastward as fast as his twin props could churn the air.

Unable to get to the bomber Harmon gave all of his attention to the escort Fokkers. They were from von Stolz' outfit, and were not flown by any yellow-bellies. And so in less than no time, the sky deeply shadowed by approaching night, became a whirlpool of twisting and turning bullet

spitting metal hornets of death. Shouting and cursing at the top of his voice Harmon tore into everything with German crosses on the wings. And he had the satisfaction, at least, of seeing three Fokkers go down under his blazing guns.

By then, though, night had settled down for keeps. The ground below was little more than a lot of smudgy blurs to Harmon, and as he took a second or so to pull out of the scrap he saw that the fight had drifted far to the north. Even if they did drive off the Fokkers they'd never in God's world find that emergency field in the dark. And added to that it was getting so dark he could hardly distinguish a Fokker from one of his own S.E.5s.

For a long moment he hesitated, then yanked his Very light pistol from out of the cockpit rack and fired three green lights over the side. At the same time he took one more last bullet blast at a Fokker and then banked eastward. One by one his pilots closed in to take up formation position behind him. That is, one by one until they totalled three. Harmon stared at them, prayed hard, and clenched his free fist in a helpless gesture. Cox and Young, the redhead, were not among those present. The instant Harmon landed on Eighty-four he asked the inevitable question.

"Anybody see what happened to Cox and Young?"

There was silence for a moment, and then Flight Leader Mullins spoke up.

"Young went down a flamer," he said in a hollow voice. "The last I saw of Cox he was flying east like hell after that bomber. I didn't see him after that."

Nor had anybody else, and as Harmon walked slowly over to the mess his heart was heavy with dread. No sooner had he entered the mess and ordered a drink than Colonel Tracey came boiling in.

"What the devil's been happening?" the senior officer roared. "I thought—"

"So did I!" Harmon cut him off curtly, and told the story.

COLONEL TRACEY looked as though he was going to throw a fit, and, in fact, came damn close to making good.

"I'll try again at dawn," Harmon said evenly. "We'll—"

"Tonight!" Colonel Tracey shouted. "Tonight, hell!" Harmon roared back. "We wouldn't be able to find the damn field now. We'll try at dawn, and if you don't like that idea, then—then break me, and be damned!"

The colonel's eyes flashed anger, then he took a look at the group of grim-faced pilots watching him closely, and shrugged.

"Very well, at dawn, then," he said in a weak voice. "And God! I hope you make it."

It lacked just an hour to dawn when Harmon and five pilots climbed into their ships. All night the entire squadron had stayed up in the mess hoping against hope for a phone call saying that Cox had simply run out of gas chasing the bomber, or had force-landed on the American side. However, there hadn't been any phone call, and everybody knew that Cox was gone, for good. A prisoner, or a flamer, nobody knew which. Nobody felt like guessing.

"We six will try it," Harmon said tight lipped, just before he gave the signal for the take-off. "If we miss, then six more will try it. Okay, give them hell, fellows. Just think of Young and Cox!"

An hour later Harmon had his flight at an altitude of ten thousand feet over the isolated emergency field. There were six Fokkers down there, lined up in front of the strip of woods just as they had been the evening before.

Six noses dropped as one, and six Hisso-Viper powered S.E.5s went wing screaming earthward in a surprise attack. Eyes glued to the ground, Harmon rested his thumbs on the trig-

ger trips waiting for the first German pilot to come bursting out the door of the battered building and make for the defense machine guns. But no one came out. In fact, nothing happened until Harmon and the others were less than a thousand feet off the ground.

Then a figure did come busting out of the building, and when Harmon saw it he let out a wild yell of dumfounded amazement and jerked his thumbs down from the trips. The figure was not that of a Hun. On the contrary it was over two hundred pounds of Yank pilot named Cox, with a napkin tucked well into his collar. In less than no time Harmon landed, leaped from the pit and raced over to grab hold of the hefty pilot.

"You, Cox!" he shouted, still unable to believe his eyes. "What the devil happened? How in hell do you happen to be here?"

"Yeah, it's me, Major." Cox grinned, and jerked a thumb toward the battered building. "Come in and have a look."

In a daze, Harmon and the others followed Cox inside. And once there they pulled up stiff with more amazement. At one side of the room was a huge table piled with food. And on the other side of the room, on the floor, were six angry-eyed German pilots bound hand and foot.

"It was this way, Major," Cox's voice broke into Harmon's spinning thoughts. "I went chasing after that

bomber last night but couldn't catch it. Met a couple of Fokkers on the way back, and one of the bums nicked my fuel line. I had to force-land. Honest to God, I had to this time, sir! And so I headed for the swamp.

"I guess I sort of got thinking of these bums and all this food. I sat down in the swamp okay, but had to quit the ship. It was kind of dark, and when I got here these guys were piling into our grub. Well, I had my automatic, and—well, I sort of caught them by surprise. I had them tie each other up. I was sort of hungry so I had a bite. Must have fallen asleep, I guess. Anyway, I just woke up. But, boy, am I glad you weren't more Huns!"

"Yeah, guess you are," Harmon said, and grinned. "I hear the grub in a Hun prison camp is lousy. Now, take my ship and tear back and have Colonel Tracey send over some two seaters with mechanics. This time we'll stick here."

"And I guess I'd better bring back some more grub, huh?" Cox suggested hopefully.

Harmon glanced from the stack of half emptied dishes to Cox's stomach and shook his head.

"No!" he rasped. "One more mouthful and you'd explode to blow us and this field right off the map. Get going, and come back the same weight you are now, understand?"

Cox sighed unhappily and went outside.



World War Model Planes

A Department of Accurate Brand-New Plans

HOW TO BUILD THE ALBATROSS D-3

THE Albatross D-3 of the German World War air force was one of the most efficient fighting craft the Boche fliers had to fight the Allies with. There were earlier Albatrosses and later ones, but the Albatross D-3 was, for its period, probably the finest.

One or two of the earlier planes were faster by a few miles but their climbing and maneuvering ability were inferior to that of the D-3. The ability of the slower plane to be jerked in and out of intricate fast maneuvers was considered more desirable than faster speed.

Richthofen, Boelke and many other German aces of the World War days used Albatross planes in their sky battles. The 160 h.p. Mercedes motor in the D-3 was one of the best engines ever turned out in Germany. It was water cooled, and putting the radiator in the upper wing in the right side of the center section allowed the designers to streamline the nose of the ship, thus giving it its sleek effect.

There is no doubt that some of the constructional details of the Albatross D-3 were patterned after the French Nieuports.

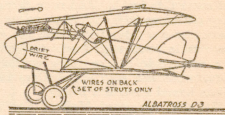
You model builders will find that if you take pains in building the Albatross D-3 you will have one of the sleekest ships of the World War in your hangar. The shaping of the top wing will take some additional care and planning on account of its tapered wingtips and the flare back from

a straight trailing edge of the ailerons.

The engine shows, so there again is additional work, but additional interest and detail is given to the finished model and it makes up plenty for the extra work. The tail surfaces give a big, husky effect, and the cigar-like fuselage gives you a chance to show your skill in a real shaping job.

All in all, you have the chance of a lifetime in this model. You'll have to take it slowly and keep your interest at top pitch at all times. Try to visualize the whole sweeping effect of the fuselage as you are shaping small areas of its curved surface. Keep checking on the proportions.

Remember there are only three dimensions; length, up and down thickness and side to side width. All curves are founded on these measure-



ments. If you slip on any of these master measurements, you're in the doghouse for keeps unless you break out a fresh piece of wood and start over. Always keep your model a little too fat at all points. Remember the sandpaper can massage it down to its right shape easily.

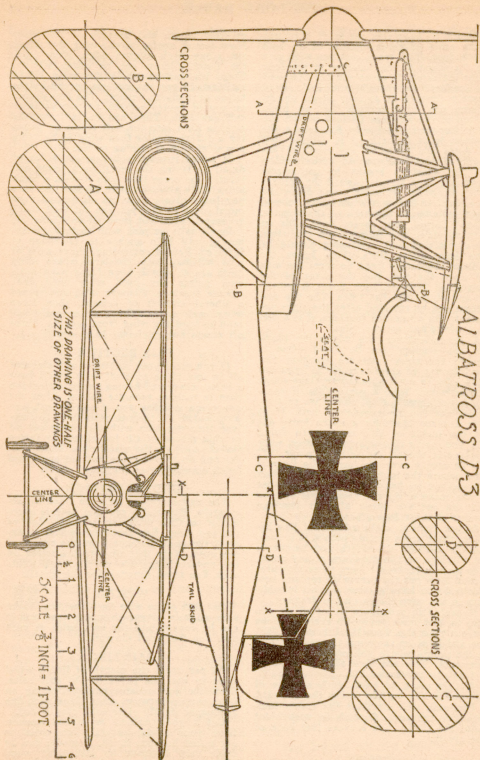
SPECIFICATIONS

Length24 ft.
Span, upper wing29 ft. 8 in.
Span, lower wing28 ft. 9 in.
Span of tail8 ft.
Height10 ft.
Engine160 h.p. Mercedes

FUSELAGE

Make the fuselage and spinner of the propeller all in one piece. When completed take a fine saw (a hack saw is good) and cut the spinner squarely off. This ensures spinner and the fuselage meshing in a good fit. In the drawings you will find the fuselage split at lines "X" and "Y." This is

ALBATROSS D-3



necessary to keep this series of drawings to the scale of three eighths of an inch to one foot. The cross sections will give you the shape of the fuselage at the four places indicated. It gives you the views of the fuselage as though you had sliced squarely through it at four given places.

From the cross section "D" on back, the top of the fuselage flattens out on top till it becomes absolutely flat where the elevator joins in back of it. Notice that the sides are flattened out most of the length of the fuselage. At cross section "A" the fuselage begins to get nearly round and as it travels toward the spinner or the propeller its sides round more and more until it becomes a perfectly formed round cylinder at the back of the spinner.

Don't forget your center lines. One on the side view, one through the top view. All visualizing and measuring should be done from these lines. This keeps the fuselage absolutely lined up from the side and from the top. Get the shape of the sides first. That is, look down from the top and shape the flat sides. The top and bottom can be rounded after the sides are correct. On a rounded fuselage, it is a distinct advantage to use "jigs."

A jig is a form into which the block you are shaping can be fitted when it reaches the shape you are working for. For instance, at cross section "D" you can make a jig to determine the fuselage shape at this point. Take a piece of stiff cardboard and trace half of the cross section, either the top or the lower half. Now, with a razor blade or a sharp knife cut out the inside of this tracing. In doing this you get a frame, which, when your fuselage is shaped correctly at point "D" will fit snugly over the form. The jig will show where the high spots are easier than any method we know of. You can see that if you make a jig for each cross section you can get the shape of your fuselage correct at these four places.

If you want to make additional jigs between these cross section points, it is easy. Merely measure the width and height of the fuselage on the drawings at any point, then make a rectangle from these measurements. Now put the curves on top and bottom and you have a cross section in addition to the ones shown on the drawing.

Repeat this procedure as often as you care to, and from your own cross sections cut out your jigs. Now label them "E", "F", etc., and label on the plans the same letters at the points where you made your measurements. You are now all set to shape a fuselage professionally.

A thin piece of balsa with a piece of bamboo at the bottom makes the tail skid.

Pinheads will simulate the rivets indicated in the nose. Scratch in with blunt point the circles and louvers just back of the rivets.

WINGS

The top wing is made in one piece. Cut a rectangular piece of balsa including the

greatest length and breadth of the wing. Now cut off angles of the wing tips. Next cut along back aileron edge. Now from the inner aileron cut to other aileron. Shape top and bottom of the wing. When satisfactory you can cut out curved indentation over pilot's cockpit. The two shapes on top of center section are the radiator and gas tank. They can be indicated by sinking lines into the soft balsa, by painting a different color than wing or by using pieces of thin aluminum or tin.

If metal is used you can get a lot of detail by laying the metal on a board and scratch the cross lines into it with a blunt point. This gives a ripple surface. Be sure you leave plenty of room all around your metal piece so that you can cut your shape accurately after you have all details nailed.

Small nails or pins with their heads removed will help anchor lower wings to fuselage. Before cementing, shove nails or pins halfway into fuselage where wing butts are to attach, then force wing butts over points and push wing until flush against fuselage. Remove wing and spread a liberal amount of cement, then force wing back again. The pins or nails will tend to hold the wing from sagging. Make all struts out of fairly hard wood.

TAIL SECTION

If you make your stabilizer and elevator all in one piece to start with you'll have a better chance of having a symmetrical job than in making separate pieces. After the one piece satisfies you it can be cut into three parts. Fit the two stabilizers to fuselage then use pins with the heads cut off or thin pieces of tin for hinges to fasten the elevator to the stabilizers. Make rudder and fin in one piece and cut apart and finish assembling as suggested above.

UNDERCARRIAGE

The undercarriage must be lined up accurately. Especially see that axle is absolutely parallel with the leading edge of the top wing. See that each wheel is exactly the same distance from the center of the nose. Note that the bracing wires on the undercarriage are on the back struts only. See small drawing for this detail.

WIRING

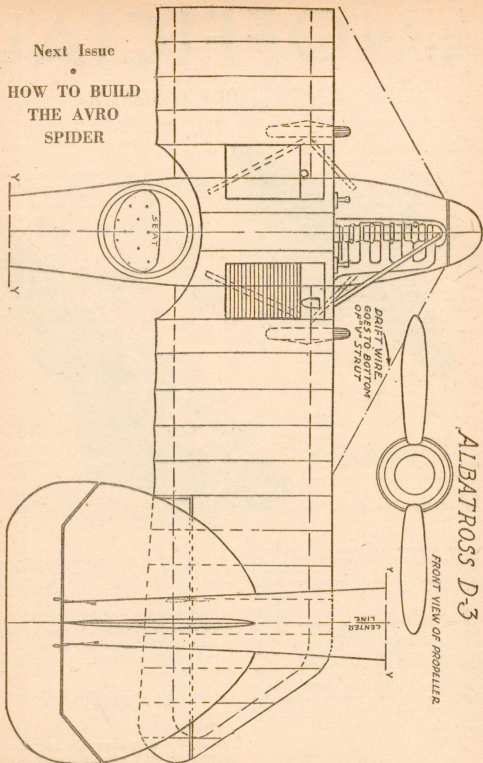
Use thin piano wire for all wiring. Make wire slightly longer than you need and it can be forced into the soft balsa at each end. See the small drawing.

PAINTING

As per usual use plenty of liquid wood filler to seal the pores of the soft balsa. Give the job several coats allowing an hour or two between coats. Sand with fine sandpaper lightly after each coat is dry.

Get a good enamel or model lacquer. Give your model several thin coats to get a fine lustrous finish. A model can be made very effective by just using wood filler on the struts and then giving them a coat or two of thin varnish. Do not use any lacquer or enamel on them.

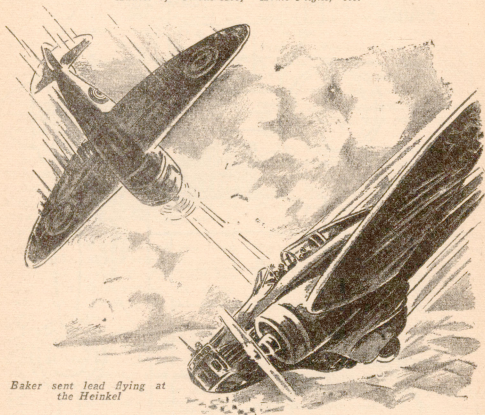
Next Issue
 •
 HOW TO BUILD
 THE AVRO
 SPIDER



UNOFFICIAL

By JOHNSTON CARROLL

Author of "Circus Ace," "Home Flight," etc.



Baker sent lead flying at the Heinkel

Jeff Baker, Newshawk, Sees Flaming Red and Engages Himself in a Furious Air Combat of Life and Death!

JEFF BAKER, Aviation Editor of the New York Press Syndicate, turned off the shower adjoining his London hotel room, grabbed a towel and dried his body. Throwing a bathrobe about him he lighted a cigarette, spewed a lungful of smoke into thin air and grunted contentedly.

"Just the Hawker-Seymore outfit to see," he murmured, "and then back home to the good old U. S. A."

With a happy nod for emphasis he went over to the door, opened it and picked up the morning paper. The banner headline hit him right between the eyes.

ENGLAND DECLARES WAR ON GERMANY

He didn't bother to read the details because he wasn't terribly surprised. Like everybody else in London, he knew that it was bound to come. How-

ever, he hadn't expected it so soon. Not on this particular Sunday morning anyway. He threw the paper away and began to climb into his clothes.

"Looks like you're just getting under the wire, kid," he grunted aloud. "A photo finish, you might say."

An hour later he walked across the lobby to greet a typical Englishman who had entered the hotel and had gone straight to the desk.

"You had me worried for a bit, Parsons." Baker grinned and shook the man's hand. "Afraid you might not show up, considering what's in the papers. Have a drink?"

"Much to early, Mr. Baker." The Englishman smiled, shaking his head. "And I have some disappointing news for you."

Baker had a faint idea of what he hinted at, but he hesitated to ask whether it was true. For a moment he stared at Parsons, who was the Public Relations Counsel for Hawker-Seymore Aircraft, Ltd.

"I think I can guess, but shoot, Parsons," he said, finally.

PARSONS sighed wearily.

"I'm afraid we'll have to cancel your inspection of the factory, Mr. Baker," he said. "There are certain regulations now that we're at war. Do you understand?"

"No, I don't," Baker said bluntly. "Naturally, I wouldn't write up anything you wouldn't want me to. And the new Hawker-Seymore 'Scout' isn't any secret. I just want a good look at it, a picture or two, and some general dope about its performance. What's wrong with that?"

"Not a thing," the Englishman admitted. "This isn't Carver's idea, though. He's under Air Ministry jurisdiction, now. It's not right to have the plant over-run with persons who don't work there, eh?"

"Who says I'll overrun the place?" Baker grunted. "It won't take me more than a couple of hours."

"I agree with you," Parsons sighed. "Rules and regulations can be stupid, of course, but it's the principle of the thing. If Mr. Carver admits one, no reason why he shouldn't admit a dozen."

"Is he at the plant, now?" Baker asked.

"This day of all days, naturally," Parsons said.

"Then let's go," the Yank said. "At least I can try out my sales talk. No harm in that."

Parsons protested, but it wasn't any use. Baker lead him outside, grabbed the first cab and snapped the address at the driver.

A little over an hour later they arrived at the plant, got out and Parsons lead the way into the office of the president of Hawker-Seymore Aircraft, Ltd. Two men in civilian clothes, but with military stamped all over them, were with Carver when Baker and Parsons entered the office. The Hawker-Seymore head looked annoyed for a split-second and then smiled a greeting.

"Good morning, Mr. Baker," he said. "I see you came out anyway."

"Don't blame Parsons, sir," the Yank begged. "He tried his best to stop me, but I came anyway. Thought I'd try to convince you that I'm not a German spy."

"Colonel Anderson, and Major Blake, of the Air Ministry," Carver said and nodded to the two men in civilian clothes. Then nodding at Baker, "Mr. Baker, Aviation Editor of the New York Press Syndicate. I don't fancy you are an enemy spy, Mr. Baker, but I'm sure Mr. Parsons explained the point."

"He did," Baker said. Then leaning over the desk, "Look, Mr. Carver, I've been in Europe for the last four months. I've visited every aircraft and engine factory in every country. And—"

"Every factory?" spoke up Colonel Anderson.

"Well most every one," Baker

grunted. "But what I'm getting at, is this. I've got practically all the dope on all European aircraft. It'll be one of the best syndicated series we ever put out. Now, your company is the last on my list. I don't want any secret information. Not a bit of it. Besides, your new scout job isn't a secret, exactly. I don't want any of your welding secrets, or all the dope on the new cooling system, you employ for high altitude work. Just a general idea. Heck, I'm sailing for home day after tomorrow. Now, what do you say?"

CARVER said nothing. He looked at Colonel Anderson, and the Air Ministry official shook his head.

"Sorry, Mr. Baker," he said. "Can't be done. Right now no English aircraft company is interested in American sales."

"They will be in time," Baker argued. "This war isn't going to last forever."

"I certainly hope it won't," the colonel said. "Nevertheless we cannot give out any information on anything. This company isn't a private concern, now, you know. Government."

"But just let me look it over!" Baker insisted. "I'm not asking to fly it, like I did the other ships."

"Sorry, Mr. Baker," the colonel said stiffly.

"But what harm will it do?" Baker pleaded.

Colonel Anderson shrugged wearily. "Sorry, Mr. Baker. Would you mind excusing us, now? A bit busy, you know."

All of Baker's newspaper instinct urged him to hold his ground and argue it out. Cold reason told him it would be no use, however. Not with Colonel Anderson. His type couldn't be softened up in a blast furnace.

"Thanks a lot, for nothing!" Baker growled and stormed out of the office.

Once outside he headed down the road to the village where he could get

transportation back to London. At the end of a quarter of a mile he pulled up to a halt and stared across the broad expanse of the test flying field of Hawker-Seymore. There were a dozen or more planes on the line, most of them with their props ticking over. All of them were the new Hawker-Seymore Scout jobs. He stared at them hungrily, and scowled at the men in Royal Air Force uniforms hovering about the ships.

"Rules and regulations, nuts!" he snarled. "And I used to think that there was red tape in the Yank army. Hell, these beef eaters invented that sort of thing. There she is, and the mugs won't even give me one close look. For two cents, I'd—" He emitted a string of fiery curses.

It helped a little to get the words off his chest. However, it wasn't a case of thought and action becoming one. Perhaps at first, but when he saw the squad of English sentries that hung about the field he changed his mind. There might be some regulation requiring those sentries to shoot first and ask questions later.

He growled to himself as he continued on down the road to the village. The dope on the Hawker-Seymore Scout would make his European aircraft survey complete. Of course, the omission of the Scout wouldn't spoil his series. Probably it wouldn't even be noticed, but that wasn't the idea. When Jeff Baker did something, he did it in spades. But that English colonel—

Reluctantly admitting defeat, he went to the village garage and hired a drive-yourself. He had the day to kill, and this was a section of England he had planned to tour in his spare time. Well, he had nothing but spare time, now, until his boat sailed for New York. Maybe driving around would help him think of an argument that would gain him Colonel Anderson's confidence.

Seven hours later he was on England's southern coast, near Hastings.

The zigzagging tour he'd made had given him a whale of an appetite. But he couldn't get the Hawker-Seymore Scout out of his mind. He decided to stop at the next village, get himself something to eat, and then head back.

SUDDENLY, he braked the car to an abrupt halt and stared wide-eyed upward, then to the southeast. Even as he did he heard the faint wail of the air raid sirens coming to him down wind. Dots to the southeast at first, but then they gradually took on definite shape and form. German Heinkel bombers flying low and fast! Baker's heart leaped, and chilled a bit. The low altitude of the onswEEPing bombers told him that London wasn't the objective. No, too low. It was undoubtedly a *Blitzkrieg* raid on the English coast. Perhaps a show of Hitler's contempt for England's declaration of war.

The instinct of self preservation, more than anything else, caused Baker to leap out of the car and head for an open field nearby. Having flown in the last war he knew full well the urge pilots got to strafe a car whenever they spotted one. The onrushing bombers might not even come that far inland, and might not even spot his small car.

"But this lad likes to play it safe," he stopped the argument, and leaped over the fence.

When he was close to the middle of the field, he suddenly skidded to a halt and glanced to the north. A squadron of six British planes was screaming down out of the heavens, heading straight for the nine bombers that were now less than three miles from the coast.

"A grandstand seat, first row, no less," Baker grunted. Then catching his breath, he let out a wild yell. "And how!" he boomed. "Those jobs are the Hawker-Seymore Scout!"

Even as he shouted the words one of the diving British planes seemed to falter for a moment. Then it zoomed

off to the side. It looked as though its pilot had either fainted, or was drunk. Baker held his breath and watched as the trim job flip-flopped this way and that about the sky, losing more and more altitude with each passing second. Unless a miracle happened the plane was going to crash. Impulsively Baker jerked his eyes from it and glanced at the other planes. Not one of them had turned back. There were enemy bombers ahead, a job to be done. The "cripple" would have to take care of himself as best he could.

Baker shifted his eyes back to the "cripple," and shouted with relief. The crazy gyrations of the plane had ceased. The ship still lunged about the sky a bit, but the pilot was making a desperate effort to get his high-powered charge under control. A moment later the roar of the engine died to a soft mutter, then the plane nosed down into a gentle, flat glide. Baker saw that the plane was going to land in the field in which he was.

He raced to the side to give the pilot a clear field to land on. Then he spun around and fastened his eyes on the plane. Lower and lower it came. For a split-second Baker was afraid it was going to undershoot the field and clip the tree tops at the lee end. The pilot goosed his engine, however, lifted the ship clear, and then sailed down and leveled off. It was a heavy landing. Baker watched for the wheels to buckle and the ship to ground loop. But the Hawker-Seymore Scout hadn't been made with toothpicks and piano wire. It bounced three times then clung to the ground and rolled to a stop. Baker already had his legs in motion.

HE SKIDDED to a halt by the plane, climbed up on the fuselage step and hauled back the tri-plex cockpit cowl. The young English pilot in the pit groaned and slowly turned his head to meet Baker's gaze. Pain-whitened lips drew back in a brave but sad smile.

"Blasted luck!" came the half whispered words. "My side, I think. Can you help me get to a hospital?"

"Sure thing," Baker clipped. "I've a car here. Take it easy." Then he stepped down to the ground.

Two farmers were running toward him. He waved his arm for them to hurry.

"Help me get him out," Baker said. "Is there a hospital nearby?"

"At Curry, three miles along the road," one of them said.

"Good," Baker grunted. "I'll get my car. Ease him down onto the ground. Gently, now."

It was but a matter of minutes for Baker to rip away enough of the field fence to admit his car. The farmers had the pilot on the ground when he returned. The man's face was white and strained, but he managed an apologetic grin.

"Bit of a nuisance, what?" he murmured.

Baker grinned back at the pilot.

"Nuisance, my eye, brother!" he said. "You're Santa Claus. Okay, men! Up with him, easy."

They got the injured pilot into the rear seat and made him as comfortable as they could with their coats. Baker motioned one farmer in with the pilot, and the other to the wheel.

"No need to over-load it," he said. "Besides, I'm a pilot. I'll switch off his engine and wait here. Get going."

The farmers hesitated, but a groan from the sick pilot jarred them into action.

"Right you are," grunted the man at the wheel and got the car moving.

Baker watched until they were well along the road toward the town of Curry. Then he spun around and dashed over to the Hawker-Seymore Scout. He studied its trim, sturdy construction for a moment, his technical eye not missing a thing.

Climbing into the cockpit a blinding thought struck him.

"Why not?" he breathed eagerly. "The chance of a lifetime. It *will*

make the series complete, you dope. Get going!"

Even as he spoke the words he released the wheel brake and gently eased open the throttle. The supercharged Napier in the nose growled out its power. The ship quivered, moved forward faster—faster. Baker's blood danced, then froze as the field fence came streaking toward him. He eased back on the stick, zoomed clear of the obstacle.

He bolted upright in the seat as he suddenly remembered something. God, yes! There had been a raid! He twisted sharply and scanned the heavens. There wasn't the sign of a single ship. But at the speed modern war planes flew they could be over your head one minute, and way down over the horizon the next. Then his blood froze.

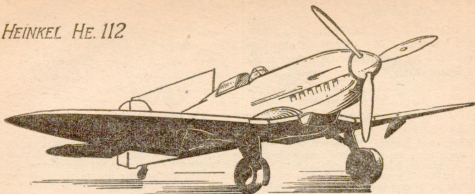
The savage yammer of aerial machine-gun fire had suddenly blasted against his ear drums from above. He looked straight up, and saw that the business end of an ugly twin engined Heinkel bomber was dropping down on him faster than light. One section of his tri-plex cowl became a criss-cross mess of tiny cracks, and half a dozen holes appeared in the "Dural" skin of the right wing, not three feet from his cockpit!

"Hey, nix!" he howled, and slammed the stick over.

THAT was a mistake. He didn't know the sensitiveness of the Hawker-Seymore Scout. During the next few seconds the plane nearly turned itself inside out before he got it under control. A flying mistake, perhaps, but it unquestionably saved his life. The German bomber pilot over-shot his mark and went roaring on by. Split-seconds later, though, the huge craft whirled around surprisingly fast and came boring in again with its nose gunners blasting away.

For a brief moment Baker debated
(Continued on page 109)

HEINKEL HE. 112



The Ship of the Month

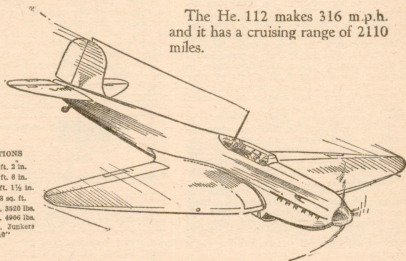
GERMANY'S Heinkel He. 112 is a speedy single-seater fighter built along sturdy lines. It is a low wing cantilever monoplane with the wing roots swept up where they join the metal fuselage. Two synchronized machine guns fire through the propeller and two fixed guns in the wings fire outside the disc of the propeller arc.

The fuel tanks are in the center section of the wings. The radiator is below the engine. Six bombs of twenty-two pounds each may be carried under the outer wings.

The He. 112 makes 316 m.p.h. and it has a cruising range of 2110 miles.

SPECIFICATIONS

Span 29 ft. 2 in.
Length 29 ft. 6 in.
Height 13 ft. 1½ in.
Wing area... 189 sq. ft.
Weight empty .. 3520 lbs.
Weight loaded.. 4966 lbs.
Engines: 670 h.p. Junkers
"Jumo 210"



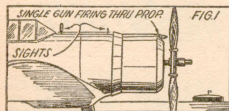
See it first in THE LONE EAGLE

The LEA FLYING COURSE

MORE ON AERIAL ARMAMENT

NOW, my Eagles, those of you who were with us at the last lesson know what makes an automatic gun shoot. You thus can quickly grasp the details of the mechanism of any type gun that is handed you, merely by tracing out its action.

So, in one hand we have a pair of motored wings which we understand and in the other we have a gun which we un-



derstand. Put them both together and they spell murder. Today we'll put them together. But let us take a quick look at what led up to the present-day armament.

The Revolving Mount

When the Allies first learned to fix a machine gun on the top wing of a ship, the Germans topped them by inventing the revolving mount. The fixed gun would only shoot in the direction the ship was headed, but the revolving mount opened up new territory. With a gunner besides the pilot, the ship could then shoot in several directions. A not uncommon stunt in those days was to shoot off a few of your own bracewires in the excitement of battle. But still, the revolving mount opened up new horizons.

Then Tony Fokker, the Dutchman who was designing ships for the Germans, invented the first interrupter gear for synchronizing the gun through the prop, and the airplane became a vicious thing, spitting lead bullets at the enemy at the rate of 400 a minute.

Which brings us to the first variation in the basic principle of the machine gun. Now, with an airplane motor to give you power, you don't need your escaping gas from the barrel of the gun. In fact, there is a simple reason why it is not the right power to use.

Under Motor Control

In firing through a propeller traveling at varying rates of speed, the problem is to have the bullet cross the path of the

prop while the prop is not at that point, otherwise you would shoot your own prop off instead of the prop of the enemy. If you timed the gunfire separately from the motor, and at a constant speed, while the prop was of variable speed, you would be certain to hit the prop with a bullet. (See Fig. 1.)

Therefore it is imperative that the rate of speed of the firing of the gun be under control of the motor—that is, actuated by the motor itself. Then when the motor slows down, so does the firing, etc.

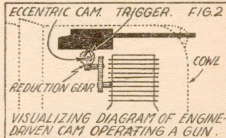
How is this done, when a motor is traveling, say, at the rate of 1200 revolutions a minute? Let us take that figure for the motor, and say that we want to fire 400 shots a minute through the prop.

One Turn in Three

Now, if the engine is turning at 1200 revs a minute, and has a simple two blade prop, there is a prop blade passing in front of the gun muzzle twenty-four hundred times a minute, since both ends of the blade must pass a given point to make a complete revolution.

In short, a gun must fire once every time the motor makes three complete revolutions. Our task is to operate the gun on this basis. We can forget the speed of the motor and of the gun, and just work on the fact that the gun is to fire once every time the motor turns over three times. That simplifies matters somewhat.

If you go back to your Lone Eagle's flying lesson in which we told you the simple principle of the gasoline motor,



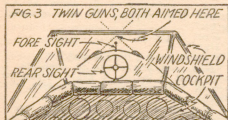
you will remember that the intake and exhaust valves of a motor are timed properly by working on a cam shaft.

The Cam Shaft

To refresh your memory, a cam shaft is a shaft that has bumps on it called ec-

centrics, which revolved somewhat off center. So, when a cam shaft makes a revolution, the eccentric cam makes an off center revolution and pushes a pushrod up out of its way. This pushing motion operates the pushrod, or anything else you want to operate once or more times for each revolution of the shaft.

Now if you put a reduction gear on this shaft, which might be a spiral screw gear or a toothed wheel, you could operate a shaft off the first one so that the new one would turn a complete revolution only



once for every three times the original one on the motor turned over.

The result in either case is that you have a shaft turning a complete revolution every time the motor turns over three times. If you then put an eccentric cam on this shaft, you can operate another mechanism with it once for every three revolutions of the motor. In this case we hitch it up to our Lewis gun and make it do the work that the escaping gas did in the original weapon. (See Fig. 2.)

Adjusting Speed

If we slow down the motor we slow down the firing of the gun accordingly, and if we speed up the motor we automatically speed up the gun to one third the same rate of speed.

That is the mechanical principle of operating the gun from the engine. It is refined, of course, by various devices. The modern gun, for instance, has the proper number of revolutions translated into pulsations of oil in an airtight container, and the pressure of the oil pulsating at intervals synchronized with the motor actuates the gun.

This will instantly remind you of the pulsations of the exploding gas in the gun's recoil chamber, and from there on the work of the mechanism is the same.

Two-Gun Planes

In the modern fighter, there are usually two guns set one on either side of the cowl in front of the pilot, both shooting through the prop, and aimed by a single sight between them. The guns are set close to the motor, and the operating mechanism, with its oil pulsations furnishing the power, like hydraulic brakes, is very close to the engine for the purpose of catching the heat from the motor to keep the work-

ing parts from freezing in cold weather and high altitude.

The fixed guns on a ship are usually operated only by the pilot because they can only be aimed by directing the nose of the ship itself at the objective. They are generally set so that their fire will converge with the axis of the ship at a point 200 yards ahead of the ship. (See Fig. 3.)

The Sight

The sight, usually called the ring, is composed of a large metal ring with a smaller, concentric ring within it, supported in position with radial wires. This is the rear sight. The front sight is a bright bead, set so that when the bead is seen by the pilot directly in the center of the rings, the bullets from the gun will arrive on the target, allowing for trajectory, 200 yards ahead.

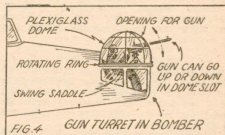
So much for the fixed guns. Any ship carrying more than one man, however, becomes released from this restricted direction in which it can be lethal. While the pilot covers the enemy in front of him, the other man or men must cover the rest of the field. So we have our fighting ships designed with turrets and revolving gun pits to cover the tail, the area overhead and the area at the sides as well as below.

"Free Guns"

These guns are plastered all over the ships, according to design, from the nose to the tail, and are referred to as "free guns."

They are not restricted to machine gun caliber, but some of them fire 2-pound explosive shells. More of them later. A free machine gun uses drums up to 97 rounds of shells, larger ones being harder to handle easily, although otherwise practical.

The machine gun turret in an airplane is designed to provide a mounting on a high speed ship in a manner enabling the



gunner to cover the greatest possible area around him, while giving him complete and free action. It is usually enclosed with a transparent material to protect him from the wind and yet give him an observational view of all the area he has to protect. (See Fig. 4.)

Balanced Weight

The gun and the gunner's seat in the
(Concluded on page 108)

Around the Hangar



A Department

for Readers

WELL, peclots, you've finally made McMahan say "Uncle!"

Who's McMahan, you ask? McMahan, peclots, is one of that great body of public servants whose simple daily deeds are described by the noble words which adorn the facade of New York's Main Post Office: "Neither rain nor snow nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds."

McMahan, in other words, is our letter-carrier.

Year in and year out, McMahan has been bringing us our mail—the letters you peclots, you faithful Lone Eagles of America, write to this department, suggesting, praising, panning, etc.

McMahan's back is strong, and he's



used to our heavy mail. Never a word of complaint did you hear from his lips, and he was wont to say:

"When bigger mailbags are made, McMahan will carry 'em. If Bruce McAlester can read 'em, McMahan can deliver 'em."

What's Behind it All?

But McMahan has at last said "Uncle." The other day, dropping a huge sack to the floor of his office, wiping the sweat from his brow, and throwing back his broad but weary shoulders, he eyed me straight and said:

"Bruce, I swear 'tis the whole world that must be writin' to you these days for the simultaneous purpose of ruinin' your eyes and breakin' me back. What is behind this devilish conspiracy to give me lumbago? Answer me straight, now, Bruce McAlester, or I'll apply for a route-change that'll mark the sorry end of a beeyootiful friendship!"

"Sit down, Mac," I said, "and I'll tell you all about it."

"Tis you who should know better than

to ask a mailman to sit while on his rounds," Mac rebuked. "I'll take it standin' up."

"C'est la guerre, Mac," I said.

"Huh?"

"C'est la guerre, it's the war."

"Okay, you don't have to translate, I know what it means—I heard it enough back in 'Seventeen. C'est la guerre, eh? Which one?"

"Well, that's just it, Mac. There was a World War, and there's the present one, and now there's a kind of war between them going on."

"What—a war between wars?"

"That's it. Some readers want stories of the last war and some want stories of the present war, and that's why the mail is so heavy. There, I've given it to you straight. Satisfactory?"

McMahan shouldered the now empty bag and moved to the door. At the door he turned and looked at me from beneath his bushy brows.

"Sherman was right," he grunted. "See you tomorrow."

Take Over, Readers!

And that, peclots and kiwis, is why I'm turning this month's department over to you. You've got the run of the hangar. So tune up and take off!

A vote for the present:

Dear Bruce:

I have just finished reading THE NAZI MENACE in the February issue of LONE EAGLE, and believe it is the tops of them all.

Incidentally, I VOTE, for having John Masters in TODAY'S WAR. The old WORLD WAR is past history.

Cordially yours,

Wendell James.

R. F. D. No. 1
Sharon, Penna.

A vote for the past:

Dear Bruce:

Will drop you a line to tell you that THE LONE EAGLE is the best I have got a hold of yet. But I like the old ones best, for "them were the good old days."

104 McGhee St.,
Rome, Ga.

Bill Crayton.

And so it goes, turn and turn about:

Dear Bruce:

Please keep John Masters in the present war. I think THE NAZI MENACE is very good.

286 Friedle St.,
Whitaker, Pa.

Kenneth Shay.

Short and sweet so far, but here comes a bombshell from the nation's capital:

Dear Bruce:

I have just finished reading your story of THE NAZI MENACE in the February issue of THE LONE EAGLE, and personally, I think it's pretty bad.

The stories of THE LONE EAGLE during the World War were very good, and I never missed an issue. Many of the other magazines about the air during the World War had switched to modern stories. I was sincerely depending on THE LONE EAGLE to keep me informed of World War facts and adventures.

When these stories were printed about the Lone Eagle, I could understand them and believe that they really could have happened, but these Modern Stories, wow! One can hardly realize how they could possibly happen, since they are supposed to be going on right now.

I fully realize that these stories are purely fictional, but even so, they are nowhere near as exciting and thrilling as the stories of the World War. Most of us younger readers know very little, if anything, of the last war, and are interested to continue finding out new facts about it.

The readers can keep up with the modern war through the newspapers and other sources, but have no such ways of finding out about the last war. They are depending entirely upon magazines such as yours for this information.

I hope you will sincerely consider my letter, as these are my most wholehearted sentiments. I don't know what you will do with these letters, but I would consider it a great favor if you would let me know of others who have viewpoints contrary to mine.

Yours, for the return of World War stories,
Jack "Doc" Brucken.

2009 Perry St., N. E.
Washington, D. C.

We're still groggy from that one, so we'll follow it up with an antidote:

Dear Bruce:

By all means keep THE LONE EAGLE in today's war. It's much more exciting than those "horse and buggy days" with all the new inventions, like Herr Doktor's latest invention to steer bombs and torpedoes.

This R-47, the second, sounds very interesting. I certainly am glad that we're in the good old U. S. A. 'cause if we were over there, the Better Publications Co. wouldn't be printing THE LONE EAGLE and SKY FIGHTERS.

THE NAZI MENACE is a very good story when it comes to action. Your article on Aerial Armament is very educational as I learned a lot from it. I save all the pictures in the LEA Flying Course.

By the way, I'm interested in getting letters from my fellow eagles.

Well, I'll have to be taking off. Contact! So long!

Horace Klaffter.

92 Carman Ave.
Cedarhurst, N. Y.

And here's another!

Dear Bruce:

I am only a lad of fifteen but I served six months in the Canadian Army, then was discharged as under-age.

I enjoyed reading THE NAZI MENACE and think this new role of THE LONE EAGLE is more colorful and daring than that of former times. My two brothers, who are now in barracks here in Toronto, asked me to express their appreciation of your putting one of their favorite characters into this up-to-date war.

Your faithful reader,

David Boyd.

57 Hastings Avenue,
Toronto, Canada.

Here's a World War novel fan:

Dear Bruce:

Please write more stories about John Masters

(Continued on page 104)



We are so sure that you will like Listerine Shaving Cream, that we offer this 20-shave tube absolutely "free and postpaid." We don't even ask you to share the mailing costs.

How can we afford to do this? Experience has proved that this offer works to our advantage. The cream seems to sell itself. Men who get the sample apparently remain steady customers . . . like it so well they talk about Listerine Shaving Cream to others. You can see what happens when newly made friends begin working for us that way!

Send for your sample now. See how much faster it lathers . . . in hot water, cold water—even ice water. Note that we have a really moisture-laden lather, which stays up right to the end of your shave!

The regular tube at 35¢ gives between 130 and 175 shaves! Any drug counter has it—as well as Listerine Brushless Cream.

Or send for the free size, today!



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It's one good safe way to put more healthy activity into kidneys and bladder—you should sleep more soundly the whole night through. But be sure to get **GOLD MEDAL**—it's a genuine medicine for weak kidneys—right from Haarem in Holland. Don't accept a substitute.

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If you believe in the POWER OF PRAYER—if you desire a **HAPPIER LIFE** of Love, Health, Peace, Prosperity, Success—we invite you to clip this Message now and mail with 3c stamp for full information about the Wonderful Work our Group is doing—and may do for you!

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(Continued from page 103)

in the first World War, as I enjoy them more than I do those dealing with the new war.

Yours truly,
A. Longe.
520 9th St. S. E.
Washington, D. C.

And here is a fifty-fifty verdict, sort of:
Dear Bruce:

I have been reading your magazine for two years, and I really like John Masters in the first World War, although **THE NAZI MENACE** is all right.

A faithful reader,
Donald Baker.

A flock of letters voting for a modern Lone Eagle:

Dear Bruce:

THE NAZI MENACE is a grand story and much more interesting than the excellent World War stories. Bringing in R-47 again was clever. Play her up more and bring in more women to John Masters' life.

Louis J. Weldner, Jr.

656 Palo Verde,
Pasadena, Calif.

Dear Bruce:

The February issue of **THE LONE EAGLE** is the best I've read so far and I hope you keep John Masters in the modern war.

I don't see why some of these peckets are crying over this. Why don't they buy your companion magazine **SKY FIGHTERS**?

Bob Olson.

Box 439, Ellet, Ohio.

Dear Bruce:

I firmly believe you should keep **THE LONE EAGLE** in the war of today, with a World War story now and then to break the monotony.

John Wise.

759 Greenfield Avenue,
Pittsburgh, Pa.

Dear Bruce:

I just read the February issue of **L. E. Oh, boy!** **THE NAZI MENACE** was a crackerjack. Just keep John Masters in the war of today—keep up the good work.

Signing off,
The Ramblin' Kid.

Union, S. C.

Dear Bruce:

Please keep the new war novels going. We have enough guys fighting the old war, so please keep the new ones coming. Thanks.

Art Karzy.

2317 Russell St.,
St. Louis, Mo.

Dear Bruce:

I have just finished reading your new edition of stories of John Masters in **THE NAZI MENACE**.

I enjoyed your past **LONE EAGLE**, but I would enjoy the new series of the present crisis.

Yours sincerely,
Robert D'Aoust.

8 Champlain Avenue,
Ottawa, Ont.

Dear Bruce:

THE NAZI MENACE is a honey of a story. Keep **THE LONE EAGLE** in today's war. It seems more interesting with all modern equipment.

A Friend.

Dear Bruce:

As far as I am concerned, keep John Masters in the present war, for what's the use of reading about his fighting to end war twenty years ago when there is another going on now? However, I would decidedly give him a uniform. After all, both the French and British uniforms are khaki, and so why not let him wear the same unmarked uniform as in previous stories?

I enjoyed **THE NAZI MENACE** to a great extent, and could not seem to put the magazine down it was one of the best **LONE EAGLE** novels I have read and I have read the first one.

W. Aldrich.

Pomfret School,
Pomfret, Connecticut.

Dear Bruce:

I have just finished reading **THE NAZI MENACE** and I think it was great. Before reading it I was in favor of keeping **THE LONE EAGLE** in the first World War, but now I think that Masters should be kept in today's war.

Arch Whitehouse's article was very interesting and I liked **SABOTAGE FLIGHT** very much.
Edward Barent.

11 Penn. Street,
Natrona, Pa.

Dear Bruce:

My brother and I have read your latest story **THE NAZI MENACE**, and it was the best story we ever read. We think you should write more stories about the second World War because they are modern and we hate Nazism as much as you.

Sincerely,

121 Hunsford Street, Richard Bates.
Hartwell, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Flashes from Readers

Let's have more modern war stories.—Herman Ball, Glencliff, N. H.

I like **THE LONE EAGLE** in the new war.—Jack Simpson, Charles City, Iowa.

I wish you would continue to print these modern war-air stories. I'm looking forward to reading **MURDER PATROL**.—John Doyle.

Hope you will keep Masters in this new war.—A Loyal Fan.

Give us more like **THE NAZI MENACE**.—Guisti Rosani, Scott Field, Ill.

As a steady reader of **THE LONE EAGLE** I say: Let John Masters continue to fight in the present conflict.—Albert Casan, Covington, Va.

Keep John Masters in the present war, please.—Edward W. Cheney, Lawnside, N. J.

Answering your question, I would like John Masters to fight in the present war.—Donald MacGowan.

Now, to counter-balance the foregoing, here is a blast from the other side. Hold tight!

Dear Bruce:

I am very surprised at **THE LONE EAGLE**, an American, fighting while our government is doing its best to keep us out of this war. I am sure that there are more people than myself who are appalled by it.

I sincerely believe that you ought to leave him in the last war, when we weren't neutral.

Lee Durham.

Dear Bruce:

I think the stories of the 1918 War are the best. I don't like the new ones as well. I think Lieutenant Morgan writes slightly exaggerated stories, yet they are good fictional novels which sweep you away.

Safety Harbor, Yours truly, Charles Speight.
Florida.

Dear Bruce:

I read **THE LONE EAGLE** nearly every month. I tell you, **THE LONE EAGLE** just doesn't fit into this modern war. He belongs back in 1917-18. And R-47's daughter doesn't fit in either. Her mother was better. Please put John Masters back where he belongs—in the first World War.

Evinston, Fla. Yours truly, Paul Patterson.

Robert Main of Pasadena, California, says: "I don't know about the other readers, but I'd rather have John Masters back in 1914-18."

Says Herbert Farber, an old reader: "I would rather read of John Masters' experiences in the First World War."

(Continued on page 106)



Nearly everything worn or used must first be designed. Color and style influence their sale. Industry knows the importance of good looks in its products. In addition, magazines, newspapers, publishers and advertisers spend millions yearly for illustrations. The artist has become an important factor in industry.

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(Continued from page 105)

"Dear Bruce" (writes Leon Brown of Elwood, Indiana) "I like the Lone Eagle in the World War best."

Ditto, says Bernard Carr, also of Elwood, Indiana.

So there you have it, peels! Not all—oh, not all by any means, as McMahan the mailman can testify. I'd need the whole magazine to print all the letters that have come in. So far the present-day air novel fans seem to be in the lead.

Speaking of the old war against the new, what's your slant, peels, on the plans of model planes that are a regular feature of THE LONE EAGLE magazine. World War or present war? We've been giving you plans for models of World War planes. Shall we go on doing so? Or would you like the plans to go modern the way John Masters has?

Let me know, and although McMahan may groan and croak, I guarantee he'll deliver all the mail you care to send me. Let's hear from you!

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In every issue of **THE LONE EAGLE** we publish a new list of Pen Pals. (See page 6.) In this way you can make contact with new friends.

Our Next Issue

Get ready for thrills! Next issue we bring you John Masters in another exciting novel of today's war—**NORTH SEA TERROR**. It's packed with zooming action and breath-taking exploits from the first page to the last—and it takes place on the most important front of the present war. Up-to-the-minute, smashing drama in every scene—and John Masters at his fighting best all the way through!

In addition to this great novel, there will be an Ambrose Hooley howl by Joe Archibald—another model plane—a flying lesson—and many other special features of unusual interest. There will be a surprise feature or two, in addition to our regular departments. Look forward to the next number!

And while waiting, read the May issue of **SKY FIGHTERS**, which will appear between issues of **THE LONE EAGLE**. Our companion mag will feature **HELL'S SUBSTITUTE**, a complete air spy novel by Captain J. Winchcombe-Taylor that races on all cylinders! It's a grand yarn! So long—be seeing you!

—BRUCE McALESTER.

THE STORY OF THE COVER

(Concluded from page 75)

pilot's faces weary, but smiling victoriously as one or two glanced occasionally back at the ruins behind them. It was Britain's answer to Germany. And it was only the salutation of their reply. The body of the letter was yet to be written.

The Hawker Henley is one of Britain's best light bombers. Its top speed is said to be 272 miles an hour. Its job is varied. It can be armed to escort bigger and more cumbersome bombers, but one of its most important jobs is the destruction of airports, mine-laying trawlers, and other sea craft.

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THE L.E.A. FLYING COURSE

(Concluded from page 101)

turret are so designed that their weight balance each other, and their positions in relation to each other are such that with any movement of the gun and seat in unison, the gunner's line of vision remains in an unchanged relationship to his gun sights.

Thus, if the man swings the gun upward, the seat goes backward and down with the same motion, or if he swings the gun to the left his seat revolves equally to the right, as though he were sitting in a revolving dentist's chair aiming a gun, but not so painful.

Sitting, the gunner can cover the whole hemisphere above and on all sides of him, and standing, he can cover that portion of the hemisphere below him which his gun will reach.

In the larger ships, they have gun turrets in the floor which protect the lower hemisphere around the ship, and which may be operated by gunners lying down and operating the gun from a prone position.

Operated by the Feet

A gun turret itself does not operate by machinery, but is operated by the gunner manually so that there is less danger of mechanical breakdown. Or, it might be more correct to say it operates pedally, for the gunner swings around and into positions by the simple process of shoving the turret around with his feet.

The turret itself is a circular ring on rollers which will swing around by being pushed with the feet, like a baby's kiddy car; the saddle or seat suspended from it, and which swings with it; and the gun mount built integral with it.

Covering the turret will be a cylindrical metal frame covered with transparent material, and in which is the gun slot, all revolving with the man and the gun.

Other Armaments

There are other armaments on fighting ships, which we will take up later. There is a seaplane which launches a torpedo, there are guns which fire armor-piercing shells with delayed time fuses.

In fact, there are a lot of deadly things about a fighting ship, and we will eventually learn as much about them as we are allowed to know before we join the fighting wing.

—BRUCE McALESTER.

Next Issue

MORE ABOUT FIGHTING SHIPS

THE NEW COLLEGE HUMOR 15c EVERYWHERE

UNOFFICIAL

(Continued from page 98)

streaking down for a quick landing and safety. But when the smooth wing skin was once again punctured by bullets, he saw red.

"Yeah?" he jeered and yanked back the loading handles of the twin high-speed firing Vickers gun moulded into the curve of the engine cowl. "Not while I'm in this baby, you don't."

Tapping right rudder he started to swerve off, waited until the nose of the bomber swung around toward him. Then he braced himself and went slanting down in a vertical dive to the left. After he dove five hundred feet, he sucked air into his lungs and hauled back on the stick. His eyeballs rolled and stabs of white pain lanced his brain. Then the increased gravity force let go its grip on him. His eyes came back into focus and he saw the silvery fish-shaped belly of the bomber. Its pilot was trying to drop the nose and circle down after him.

Baker laughed and pressed both trigger trips. Light armor-piercing, explosive bullets began to spew out of the twin Vickers at the rate of fifteen hundred a minute for each gun. He saw the bullets rip into the nose of the plane, saw the effect they had along that silvery belly clear back to the double tail wheel. He cut his fire and streaked out from under so that the big ship wouldn't smash into him. But the big ship didn't fall. It kept right on circling around down after him. Baker felt like a hunter who has blasted away at a charging Rhino with BB shot.

Baker stared amazed for a moment, while bullets of hate winged their way towards him. He belted the stick, and went whamming out into the clear. Then he zoomed up, cursing savagely at himself.

"You fat-headed spy!" he grated. "You see everything and remember

(Continued on page 110)

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**SHIRTS
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(Continued from page 109)
 nothing. You know perfectly well
 that that type of bomber has double
 armor plating along the entire length
 of its belly. And you trying to get
 it down that way."

A blast from the bomber's guns
 punctuated his outburst of disgust.
 He dropped the nose of his ship and
 looked as though he were going to
 dive down and strike at the bomber
 from the side. That wasn't his idea,
 however, but he wanted the German
 pilot to think so. The German did
 and pulled up his own nose to make
 it a nose-to-nose affair. And at that
 exact instant Baker whirled into ac-
 tion. He yanked the Hawker-Seymore
 out of its dive, streaked straight
 through a scattering burst of shots
 from the bomber, and then he rolled
 over and went straight down like an
 arrow.

Too late the German pilot realized
 that he was trapped. The pilot tried
 desperately to haul up to a steeper
 zoom so that the nose gunner could
 do something. Too late! Engine
 howling, and twin Vickers spitting,
 Baker plunged straight down on the
 pilots' compartment. His first burst
 shattered the cowl of the compart-
 ment and pinned both the pilot and
 the relief pilot to their seats, stone
 dead.

BAKER then hauled back on the
 stick and zoomed upwards.
 When he had a thousand feet of air
 between him and the bomber he
 twisted around in his seat and looked
 down. The bomber was rolling over
 slowly like some huge-prehistoric
 bird killed in mid-flight. For a mo-
 ment it hovered motionless, then all
 hell let go in its insides. A solid sheet
 of flame shot a good hundred feet into
 the air. The back of the bomber broke
 apart, and the two halves went slip-
 sliding and tumbling earthward, leav-
 ing behind a huge trail of smoke and
 flaming debris.

"God!" Baker breathed softly.

"They even flame more than the old ones used to."

The sight of the two halves of the bomber striking the ground, and the swarm of people, who looked like ants, rushing cross-country toward the spot, pulled a string in Baker's brain, and snapped him back to reality. What a mess he was in. He'd swiped a Royal Air Force plane, taken it aloft for a test hop, and he engaged a German plane in combat and shot it down. He'd been forced to fight, but—

"But get rid of this plane—quick!" he yelled at himself. "It's your only hope, brother!"

Whether the idea was right or wrong didn't matter. He only wanted to get the plane down, and get away from it with no questions asked by anybody. Let the British wonder what had actually happened. Maybe some of them would guess—if they happened to read his syndicate series. He'd be three thousand miles away by that time.

Kicking rudder, he swung toward the west looking for a stretch of barren ground. He soon found what he desired. There wasn't a house anywhere near it. And by the time anybody seeing him land could get over, he would be well on his way by foot. He'd probably be on the boat for home before they got around to checking up on that car he'd had those two farmers drive off in.

A few minutes later, he cranked down the wheels of the Scout, nosed down to a level patch of ground, and leveled off. Not until his wheels were on the ground did he see it. Sweat broke out on his forehead. His heart jumped down into his boots. Another Hawker-Seymore had suddenly appeared. He must have sighted Baker and coasted in directly behind him. To take off and try to shake it was out of the question. But, maybe the English pilot would believe him. . . .

He came to a stop, and sat waiting like a man in the electric chair. The other ship touched ground, stopped.

(Concluded on page 112)



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(Concluded from page 111)

A helmeted and goggled figure jumped out and ran over.

"Damn fine work, Lieutenant—"

The Englishman stopped short, jerked up his goggles, and stared, dumbfounded. Just as dumbfounded, Baker stared down into the face of Colonel Anderson.

"Good God, you!" the colonel finally gasped. "I thought you were Lieutenant Strang!"

"He was wounded and dropped down where I happened to be, Colonel," Baker blurted out. "After I had him taken to the Curry Hospital, I waited by the plane. I—well I guess I got curious and took it up. A German bomber jumped on me. What could I do? I had to shoot it down to save my life!"

Colonel Anderson stood stiff for a full minute, then slowly shook his head.

"Damnedest thing ever!" he muttered. "Wouldn't believe it if I hadn't seen Strang drop out of the flight. And you? Good God, you shot down that bomber?"

"I did," Baker admitted. Then an idea struck him. "But you take credit for it, Colonel. I don't want any. Just forget about me and it'll be okay."

"I guess I'll have to take credit for the victory," the colonel grunted. "It would be a fine fix if the papers found out what happened."

"Thanks," Baker said and sighed with relief. "Want me to ferry this back with you?"

The colonel started to shake his head, checked it and gave Baker a keen look. He smiled as he spoke.

"Yes," he said. "Of course no one can stop you writing about the performance of the Scout, now. So you might as well have some pictures to go with it. I've some at the factory. Take off, and follow me back."

"I'm off, Colonel!" Baker grinned and reached for the throttle. "And, thanks!"

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fraction of the old way costs

*Simplified, quick Method brings amazing
results—over 700,000 students*

Have you ever dreamed of the fun you'd have playing some musical instrument? Pictured yourself doing many of the popular hits, movie theme songs, even classical numbers?

Then here's grand news for you! It's news of an easy, fascinating, simplified method whereby almost anyone can learn to play real music by notes in a remarkably short time! And what's more, you won't need a private teacher. You'll learn all by yourself—right in your own home. And best of all, the cost is only a small fraction of what it used to cost by old-fashioned methods.

No Special "Talent" Needed

You needn't even know one
thousands have learned to play

note from the other, for with the aid of this wonderful U. S. School of Music system of instruction. You learn to read regular notes—and to play them—just as any real musician does. You start right in learning to play real little tunes almost from the very start. Gradually you master more and more difficult ones until—sooner than you ever expected—you find yourself entertaining your friends—playing at parties—and having the best times you ever had in your whole life.

Easy as A-B-C

The success of this U. S. School method of musical instruction is due to two things. One is the fact that it makes

everything so simple—so crystal clear—so easy to understand. First it tells you how to do a thing. Then it shows you in pictures how to do it. Then you do it yourself and hear it. What could be simpler?

The second reason for the success of this system is that it is so fascinating. Learning music this way is like playing a game. Practicing becomes real fun instead of a bore as it used to be with the old way.

Free Booklet and Print and Picture Sample

In order to show how easy—how simple—how pleasant this course is, the U. S. School of Music has prepared for you a free Print and Picture Sample and Explanatory Booklet. No matter what instrument you select to play the Free Print and Picture Sample and Booklet will show you at once the amazingly simple principles around which this method is built. And how it will enable you to become a popular musician in a surprisingly short time—at an average cost of only a few cents a day.

If you really want to learn music—if you want to win new popularity—if you want to enjoy musical good times galore—fill in and mail the coupon below. Don't delay—act at once. Instruments supplied when needed, cash or credit. U. S. School of Music, 2944 Brunswick Bldg., N. Y. C.

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Piano	Guitar
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Piano Accordion	
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U. S. SCHOOL OF MUSIC

2944 Brunswick Building, New York City

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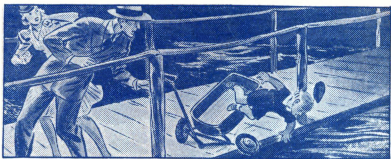
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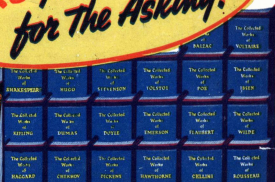
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