

Transport: Airwomen
March 8, 1937

When a plane crashes, the line which operates it can count on losing about \$300,000 (\$100,000 for the plane, \$200,000 for damage claims and loss of patronage). Other air lines simultaneously sustain losses, as public confidence momentarily wanes. Between Dec. 15 and Feb. 15 there were five crashes in the far West. This epidemic pyramided public reaction to a far higher point than usual.* For a while, traffic on United AirLines' run up the Pacific Coast was off 50% and patronage dropped all over the U. S. Last week, traffic was back to normal everywhere except on the Pacific, where United ruefully admitted that the public was still jittery. Last week, too, United was definitely launched on a new way to build up public confidence in flying.

In 1930, Traffic Manager Steve Stimpson of Boeing Air Transport reasoned that nothing would so impress air safety on the public as nonchalant girls flying constantly, that men would feel ashamed to be scared in their presence. In May of that year, Boeing Air (now part of United) hired eight hostesses. Today there are 270 hostesses in the U. S., flying daily on United, American, TWA and Western Air Express. Most air folk credit these girls with much of the normal U. S. public confidence in flying.

But this confidence is still largely masculine. Two-thirds of plane travelers are men. To stimulate U. S. women to fly, the now-extinct Ludington Lines made Amelia Earhart a vice president, set her to writing articles for women's magazines. United took two hostesses off planes, gave them desks in ticket offices to talk to their own sex. Last July, Eastern Air Lines went further, established a Women's Traffic Division, hired 35-year-old Marie Sullivan, tall, dark onetime General Motors branch manager to head it. TWA has a pretty onetime hostess named Ruth Rhodes doing similar work and last week United set up pretty, blonde, 32-year-old Helen Stansbury, widely-traveled onetime social worker, to run a Women's Traffic Division.

Air Executive Sullivan was last week lecturing to women's clubs in New Orleans and Houston, Air Executive Stansbury to women's clubs in Manhattan and Cleveland.

To the irritation of other plane personnel, both spend much time on such feminine travel specialties as arranging to serve babies their correct food formulae on long nights, instituting menus on planes, inspecting lavatories. Miss Stansbury thinks nothing of hopping 1,000 miles for a 20-minute lecture on the fun, speed and safety of flying. Said she last week: "I think our jobs are only the opening wedge in a major new profession for women which will grow steadily in importance as the time nears when everybody will fly as a matter of course."

Transport: Mourning Becomes Electro,

March 29, 1937

Between 1924 and 1933 the globe was girdled six times by aircraft. Last year, when Pan American Airways started carrying passengers across the Pacific, Reporters Herbert Ekins and Leo Kieran circled the globe on commercial aires. Soon after, Pan American's President Juan Terry Trippe and a party of friends also flew around the world on commercial lines. Last week, Aviatrix Amelia Earhart Putnam took off from Oakland "to establish the feasibility of circling the globe by commercial air travel" and "to determine just how human beings react under strain and fatigue." The plane was the \$80,000 Lockheed Electra bought and outfitted for her by publicity wise Purdue University as a "flying laboratory." With her as navigators she took three men, but not her publicity wise husband, who stayed at Oakland to sell her autographs at \$6 each.

After almost 16 hours, the twin-motored monoplane slid down at Hawaii with a new record for the jump. Next day, mechanics achieved a flurry of headlines by discovering "a potential disaster threat" in faulty lubrication of the propeller bearings. That fixed Flyer Amelia climbed aboard with two of her crew to take off for the 1,940 mi. hop to Howland Island. Down the ong concrete runway of Luke Field the ship shot at 60 m.p.h. Suddenly the left tire blew out. Lurching, the plane rumbled its landing gear, careened 1,000 ft.. on its bottom in a spray of sparks while he propellers knotted like pretzels. With sirens screaming, ambulances dashed he wreck just as Flyer Amelia stepped out white-faced. Said she: "Something must have gone wrong."

That night the mournful aviatrix booked steamship passage back to her husband in Oakland. Burbled he: "Only the grace of God saved them. . . . Only beautiful piloting saved them. . . . After her ship is repaired, Amelia probably will start the light over again from Oakland."

Transport: Pan American Down Under

April 5, 1937

There is still no way to get from California to China on a scheduled airline, but after three years of exploration and exploitation, Pan American Airways promises there will be April 21 when regular service is started on its 690-1111. hop from Manila to Hongkong. Meantime, last week the ship that is going to make this run was 9,000 mi. away in the Antipodes making the first test flight over Pan American's second great transpacific venture, the 7,000 mi. airway from California to New Zealand.

Three years ago, when Pan American started to lay out the China line, a small cutter steamed quietly out of Honolulu, headed for the South Seas with a crew of aviation experts. Months later they were back with reams of preliminary data about weather, harbors, landing bases. Still no mention was made of any airline project, for in New Zealand Pan American's representative, Harold Gatty, the quiet Australian who flew around the world with Wiley Post (TIME, July 6, 1931), was engaged in the ticklish job of persuading that British Dominion to give landing rights

to Pan American. New Zealand did not see why the U. S. should not grant her reciprocal rights. These have not been granted, but three weeks ago New Zealand capitulated, gave Pan American exclusive permission to fly into New Zealand from the U. S. Immediately the world's No. 1 airline swung its efficient organization into action.

Up from San Francisco climbed a brand new Sikorsky S-42B flying boat named the Pan American Clipper after the sister ship which made the tests on the central Pacific service. In command as always when Pan American starts a new project was its taciturn senior pilot, Captain Edwin C. Musick. With a six-man crew he buzzed uneventfully to Honolulu, slowing down to let Amelia Earhart pass undisturbed. From Honolulu, few days after Miss Earhart crashed (TIME. March 29), Capt. Musick again soared into the sky. this time turned southwest and faced the world's most ticklish navigation problem— that of finding a speck of land 120 ft. long, 90 ft. wide, and only three feet high, which no plane had ever seen. This tiny spot is Kingman Reef, discovered some 80 years ago by Captain John Kingman of the U. S. schooner Shooting Star. Other ships occasionally spotted it afar, but not until 1921 was it officially recorded by the U. S. S. Eagle.

In 1925 one W. G. Anderson planted three coconut palms there and the U. S. Geographical Survey finally put it on charts, but not until transoceanic aviation suddenly zoomed into commercial and military importance in 1935 did the U. S. formally claim jurisdiction over Kingman Reef. Some 1,100 miles from Honolulu, this coral atoll is part of the Territory of Hawaii, is in the exact geographical centre of the Pacific. Its five-mile horseshoe is awash at high-tide except for one patch of sand. But the barrier breaks the combers, provides a quiet lagoon which is a mid-ocean lake, perfect for a plane base. There Pan American's six-man shore-crew has set up a cottage under the three palms. In the lagoon lies the 6,000-ton S. S. Northwind, with a radio direction finder and a 35-man airport staff which laid out a runway channel with green and red buoys. Last week, eight hours after leaving Honolulu, having flown some 500 ft. over the sea at 140 m.p.h., the Pan American Clipper hit Kingman Reef right on the nose, lit on the light green waters of the lagoon, which, reported Capt. Musick, "stood out in sharp contrast to the dark indigo of the surrounding sea."

Next day the Clipper again buzzed southwest. This time Capt. Musick chose to fly at 8,000 ft., crossed the Equator and swept down after ten hours in the air to the "South Pacific's finest harbor," the boot-shaped bay of Pago-Pago (pronounced pango-pango) on the island of Tutuila in American Samoa. Some 1,600 miles from Kingman, American Samoa is a cluster of six islands, inhabited by 300 whites and 10,000 Polynesians who used to eat each other. Tutuila is the largest island, 16 miles long, crowned with the lush, 2,000-ft. peak of a mountain called "The Rainmaker." There three months ago a Pan American airport crew set up a base, installed a direction finder in an abandoned mission. Ever since, the natives have been in a dither. Last week, as the Clipper creased the smooth waters of the bay, outrigger canoes and praus by the score shot from the beach, full of kanakas in loin cloths and laughing, broad-faced vahinis in red Mother Hubbards. They clustered so thickly as to impede the big flying boat to the exasperation of Edwin Musick, for whom savage breasts have little charm and who hates anything out of routine.

Delayed by a sudden storm, the Clipper's, crew spent three days making surveys of Samoa,

finally got away for the test leg of the trip, the 1,800-mi. hop to Auckland, New Zealand, where the new line will tie up with a service Imperial Airways is soon to start from Australia across the 1,360 mi. Tasman Sea. This week the Clipper starts back to Honolulu and thence to Manila. Other planes will take up the testing of the new route, which thorough Pan American will probably fly for at least six months before beginning scheduled four-day service to the fourth best U. S. customer. New Zealand-Australia trade with the U. S. now amounts to \$10,000,000 a month. Quickest steamship passage is 19 days.

People, Jun. 21, 1937

"Names make news." Last week these names made this news:

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After flying from Dakar to Khartum, Africa, on a world-girdling flight, Amelia Earhart Putnam telephoned the New York Herald Tribune: "In the central parts of Africa that we've seen, highways appear entirely lacking."

Transport: Lost Earhart

TIME Magazine, July 12, 1937

"SOS KHAQQ! SOS KHAQ^! SOS KHAQQ!"

When these spoken signals came weakly to a powerful amateur radio set near Los Angeles one morning last week there was great excitement. Declared Operator Walter McMenemy: "It was Miss Earhart all right! I know her voice very well!"

Set on making a round-the-world flight, the world's No. 1 aviatrix cracked up in Hawaii in her first try three months ago. With her Lockheed Electro, patched up, she took off in the opposite direction June 1 with Fred Noonan, onetime ace navigator for Pan American Airways,* flew leisurely to South America, Africa, India, Australia with a minimum of newspaper or public interest. July 1 they left Lae, New Guinea for the "worst section"—the 2,550 miles of open ocean to tiny Rowland Island, where no plane had ever been. With typical stunt flyer's negligence, Miss Earhart did not bother to reveal her position along the way. The Coast Guard cutter Itasca at Howland heard from her about once an hour. Her final message said she had only half-an-hour's gas left, could not see land. She still gave no position and the Itasca's direction finder could not get a bearing because she had failed to adjust her radio to its frequency.

When it became apparent that the plane was down, the Itasca steamed hopelessly to the search without any idea where to look. Experts believed that the plane would float a long time if undamaged in landing and if the weather was good. But a Navy flying boat that set out from Hawaii was turned back by a severe, freakish ice storm. Then came the first faint radio signals, which soon were reported by amateurs in Cincinnati, Wyoming, San Francisco and Seattle, by the British cruiser Achilles in the South Pacific, by Pan American Airways in Hawaii. Though all that could be distinguished was a faint voice saying "SOS KHAQQ!" (the plane's call letters) over & over, and there was no indication whether the plane was on land or sea, south or north of Howland, the greatest rescue expedition in flying history speedily got under way at huge expense. From Hawaii at forced draft steamed the battleship Colorado, from San Diego four destroyers and the aircraft carrier Lexington with 72 planes, from Japan vessels of the Japanese fishing fleet. At week's end no one knew whether Miss Earhart was another Kingsford-Smith, who was lost forever in the Bay of Bengal, or another Ellsworth, who was found snug and happy in Antarctica after a two-month search which gave him more dramatic publicity than he had ever before received.

In Oakland, Calif., Miss Earhart's publicity-minded husband, George Palmer Putnam, went to comfort Mrs. Beatrice Noonan. Said he: "I have a hunch they are sitting somewhere on a coral island. . . . Fred's probably out sitting on a rock now catching their dinner with those fishing lines they had aboard. There'll be driftwood to make a fire. . . ." When this failed to cheer Mrs. Noonan, Mr. Putnam snapped: "It's this way. Bee. One of two things have happened. Either they were killed outright—and that must come to all of us sooner or later—or they are alive and will be picked up. Keep your chin up. Bee." Mrs. Noonan presently collapsed.

Amelia Earhart - One in a Million

TIME Magazine, July 19, 1937

Amelia Earhart was born 39 years ago in Atchison, Kans. Her father was a lawyer and railway claim agent. She went east to study at Columbia University, then west to be with her parents, who had moved to Los Angeles. In California. Amelia saw many more airplanes than in Kansas. The idea of flying excited her. Famed Captain Frank Hawks took her up for her first flight. In 1918 she made her first solo, after ten hours of instruction. Two years later she set a woman's altitude record of 14,000 ft.

Amelia Earhart and her mother went east in a canary-colored automobile. The young girl again studied at Columbia and at Harvard Summer School. She got into social service work, teaching soiled urchins at South Boston's old Denison House. One day the telephone rang and a voice asked her if she would go along as a passenger on a transatlantic airplane flight. The sponsor of the project thought it would be good publicity to take a woman along. Amelia said at once that

she would go.

Amelia Earhart thus made national headlines as the first woman to cross the Atlantic, with Wilmer Stultz and Louis Gordon in the Friendship. After that she settled down to learn flying as well as she could. She flew for fun, flew for publicity. While flying for Beechnut Products she made headlines by cracking up an autogiro, nearest thing to a foolproof aircraft. But she learned to fly so well that she became the world's No. 1 woman flyer, rolled up an impressive list of "firsts":

- ¶ First woman to fly the Atlantic.
- ¶ First woman to fly the Atlantic alone.
- ¶ First person to fly the Atlantic alone twice.
- ¶ First woman to fly an autogiro.
- ¶ First person to cross the U. S. in an autogiro.
- ¶ First woman to receive the Distinguished Flying Cross.
- ¶ First woman to fly non-stop across the U. S.
- ¶ First woman to fly from Hawaii to the U. S.

Amelia Earhart became a good friend of Eleanor Roosevelt who shared her belief that women should not stand in the shadow of men. In 1931 she married Publisher George Palmer Putnam, who never dissuaded her from flying wherever she wanted to go. Keynote of Mrs. Putnam's career was the title of her book, *The Fun Of It*. But she professed interest also in the scientific aspect of flying. She became a consulting member of Purdue University's faculty, specializing in aeronautics and careers for women, and last year acquired a Wasp-motored Lockheed Electra which was supposed to be a "flying laboratory" equipped with up-to-the-minute flying and navigating devices. The cost— \$80,000—was mostly provided by anonymous members of the Purdue Research Foundation but it was specified that the plane should be Mrs. Putnam's property.

One thing Amelia Earhart Putnam still wanted to do—for the fun of it—was to fly around the world. She started from Miami, Fla. on June 1 with Fred Noonan, onetime Pan American navigator. They made mostly back page news until last fortnight when they started across 2,550 miles of Pacific Ocean toward tiny Howland Island, failed to reach it. Last week the likelihood was approaching sad certainty that Amelia Earhart Putnam had made headlines for the last time.*

Several facts made it clear that much more than simple bad luck was involved. Before the hop-off, when capable Navigator Noonan inspected what he supposed was an ultra-modern "flying laboratory," he was dismayed to discover that there was nothing with which to take celestial bearings except an ordinary ship sextant. He remedied that by borrowing a modern

bubble octant designed especially for airplane navigation. For estimating wind drift over the sea, he obtained two dozen aluminum powder bombs. For some reason these bombs were left behind in a storehouse. The Coast Guard cutter Itasca, which had been dispatched from San Diego to Howland Island solely as a help to the flyers, would have been able to take directional bearings on the Earhart plane if the latter could have tuned its signals to a 500-kilocycle frequency. The plane's transmitter would have been able to send such signals if it had had a trailing antenna. Miss Earhart considered all this too much bother, no trailing antenna was taken along. Finally, the Itasca's, commander would have had a better idea where to look if the plane had radioed its position at regular intervals. But not one position report was received after the plane left New Guinea. In fact only seven position reports are known to have been radioed by the flyers during their entire trip.

When word that the Earhart plane was lost reached the U. S., Husband Putnam wired an appeal for a Navy search to President Roosevelt. But even before the message reached Washington, Secretary of the Navy Swanson had ordered the Navy to start hunting. By last week the search was costing \$250,000 a day. The battleship Colorado hove to off the Phoenix Islands, catapulted three planes from its deck. The flyers skimmed over Gardner and McKean Islands and Carondelet Reef, saw nothing but ruined guano works and the wreck of a tramp freighter. Thousands of startled seabirds fluttered up, menacing the propellers and forcing the flyers to climb. Some days equatorial squalls and vanishing visibility crippled the hunt, but on others the weather was perfect, visibility unlimited. By week's end the Colorado's planes had scanned more than 100,000 square miles. The Itasca, which inaugurated the search last fortnight, continued its futile patrol until fuel ran short. The minesweeper Swan put ashore a searching party at Canton Island, where last month a party of scientists viewed the solar eclipse (TIME, June 21). Meanwhile the aircraft carrier Lexington, with 62 planes aboard (instead of 72 as first announced) and an escort of four destroyers, sped out of San Diego at forced draft, stopped in Hawaii to refuel, arrived in the search area early this week. If the Lexington's great fleet of planes could not find the lost flyers. Rear Admiral Orin G. Murfin, coordinator of the search, planned to abandon it. Meanwhile the chance of finding the flyers alive, according to the consensus of searchers, was already down to one in a million.

George Palmer Putnam clung to his belief that his wife had come down not in the sea but on land, because the radio batteries, located under the ship's wings, would have been put out of commission in the water. Dozens of amateurs continued to report messages from the lost plane's radio, but Navy and Coast Guard radio experts doubted that any of these were genuine. One amateur who excitedly announced reception of a distress call was found to have been listening to the MARCH OF TIME'S dramatization of the tragedy from a commercial station.

Navigator Noonan's wife was cheered when she received some photographs from her husband, mailed weeks ago from the Far East. There was also a letter. Excerpt: "Amelia is a grand person for such a trip. She is the only woman flyer I would care to make such a trip with because in addition to being a fine companion she can take hardship as well as a man—and work like one."

* This week another crew of Soviet flyers was winging its way from Moscow across the top of the world toward an unannounced destination on the west coast of the U. S. Near the North Pole the three flyers radioed that "everything is in order."

Transport: Search Abandoned

July 26, 1937

Transport: Search Abandoned

Completing their first round-trip survey flights preliminary to regular transatlantic service, Pan American Airways' Clipper III and Imperial Airways' Caledonia passed each other one day last week high above the tossing wastes of the Atlantic Ocean. Both big flying boats were maintaining constant radio contact with British stations in Newfoundland and Ireland and Pan American bases in New Brunswick and New York. Few hours later the flights ended uneventfully. The Caledonia landed at Foynes in Ireland, continued to Southampton. The Clipper III landed at Botwood, Newfoundland, continued to Port Washington, N. Y.

On the other side of the world a far different story was coming to its close: the U. S. Navy's great search for Amelia Earhart Putnam and Navigator Fred Noonan, lost in mid-Pacific while flying round the world "for fun" (TIME, July 12, 19). While its commanders gritted their teeth and hoped fervently for no mishaps, 60 of the aircraft carrier Lexington's complement of 62 planes took the air near the point where the International Date Line crosses the Equator. Later the searching force was cut to 42 planes. One day the Lexington's 1,500 sailors roasted under a fierce sun and the aviators smeared their faces with protective grease; another day, tropical squalls sent planes scurrying back to the ship. At week's end, having swept an area roughly the size of Texas, the Lexington pointed home for San Diego.

In Washington there were definite signs that the curtain was coming down on what Correspondent Jay Franklin called "hot aeronautics" and "the prima donna type of aviator." The House Naval Affairs Committee prepared to consider legislation which would prohibit the Navy from undertaking costly searches for lost aircraft unless the latter were in regular commercial service or on missions of "unquestionable scientific value." Pilot Dick Merrill, who flies the Atlantic by dead reckoning, and Manhattan Columnist Mark Hellinger were bluntly refused permission to make a round-the-world flight. Snapped Assistant Secretary of Commerce Colonel John Monroe Johnson: "From now on no individual will be permitted to take off on any ocean or round-the-world flight that smacks of a stunt."

*Fred Noonan was navigator on Pan American's first survey flights across the Pacific. This week Pan American and Imperial Airways made first survey flights across the Atlantic.

People, Aug. 2, 1937

"Names make news." Last week these names made this news:

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For any clue or information which would "definitely clear up" the mid-Pacific disappearance of Amelia Earhart and her navigator Captain Fred J. Noonan (TIME. July 12 et seq.), her husband George Palmer Putnam posted a reward with the Pan-Pacific Press Bureau. Amount: \$2,000.

For her sixth birthday, Amy Morrissey

of Medford, Mass, received six Oriental gold and spun-glass bracelets, mailed to her from Bombay, India, by her aunt Amelia Earhart