

Bull Flight

PHINEAS GIVES FRANCO A SPAIN IN THE NECK

By Joe Archibald

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El Shiek Sezzi Wil threatened to lop off von Raiserstropp's cranium after Phineas' bomb bouquet had scattered the Moor's marbles!

Kaiser Bill's Fifth Column boys were knocking noggins to cook up a Spanish omelet in the castanet land. But Senor Pilot Phineas' nasal tissues were assailed and he about faced to hassenpfeffer. Then the skullduggery pot boiled over and the Pinkham scion tossed a Castilian monkey wrench into the Boche back kitchen!

ON THE evening of July 7, 1918, a D.H.4 made a landing on the drome of the Ninth Pursuit squadron. Two citizens who spoke very good

French stepped out of the two-place crate and asked to be fueled.

"Ya come to the right place aw-right," Flight Sergeant Casey grinned. "That is Phineas Pinkham over there. Ha, ha!"

The crew of the D.H.4 did not catch on. Casey advised them to skip it and ordered his slaves to service the Frenchmen's ship. The pilot, who said his name was *Capitaine* Gaston Garou, fished a pipe out of his pocket and sniffed at

the empty bowl. He hurriedly ran an eager hand through his pockets again, searching for refill weed to plug the dudeen.

" Ah-h-h-h, ze *guerre!*" Garou shrugged and looked hopefully at three Yank officers who strode up. Major Rufus Garrity was one of them, and the Frog, on being introduced to the Old Man, immediately offered papers of identification.

"*Aves vous le tobacco ?*" Garou asked.

"Why-er-I am fresh out," the C.O. said. "Maybe I can get you some, *mon ami*. He-e-ey there! Anybody got some pipe tobacco?"

"Just ask if you don't see what you want," Phineas Pinkham said, hopping up fast. "Here is a new mixture I am trying out. You are trays welcome, *mon Capitayne*."

"*Merci, M'sieu*. You are what ees eet called in your contree? Ze life saving, *oui?*"

The Frenchman took a handful of the Phineas weed and crammed it into the pocket of his flying coat. Then he proceeded to pack his dudeen with it.

"You're fueled," Casey said, saluting smartly.

"Shut your big mouth, Casey," Phineas growled under his breath. "Git out of here!"

Capitaine Gaston Garou got the pipe burning and slid the little metal cap over the top of the bowl. His observer climbed into his office and Garou was not far behind him. Phineas stood and watched the

D.H.4 take off, a big grin on his freckled face. The crate was grabbing altitude in a hurry when Phineas turned to go about his business. His big peepers caught sight of something on the tarmac. The Boonetown miracle man picked it up. It was a little dark brown pamphlet and on the cover were letters that spelled out: LEARN SPANISH IN TWENTY EASY LESSONS!

"Why, them bums are heading for Spain," Phineas said. "There is no *guerre* there! I-aw-w-wk! Look at this, boys!"

"What's bitin' you?" Garrity shot at his number one gripe.

"Nothin' at all," Phineas sniffed. "Only it says on the bottom of the cover 'Hockstein an' Schultz, Munich.' That D.H.4 has got Heinies in it! They are horses from Troy an' that is the two-seater that went over to take pictures a week ago an' never came back. Where is my Spad? Somebody do somethin'. Just standin' here while two Krauts fly over France an'-!"

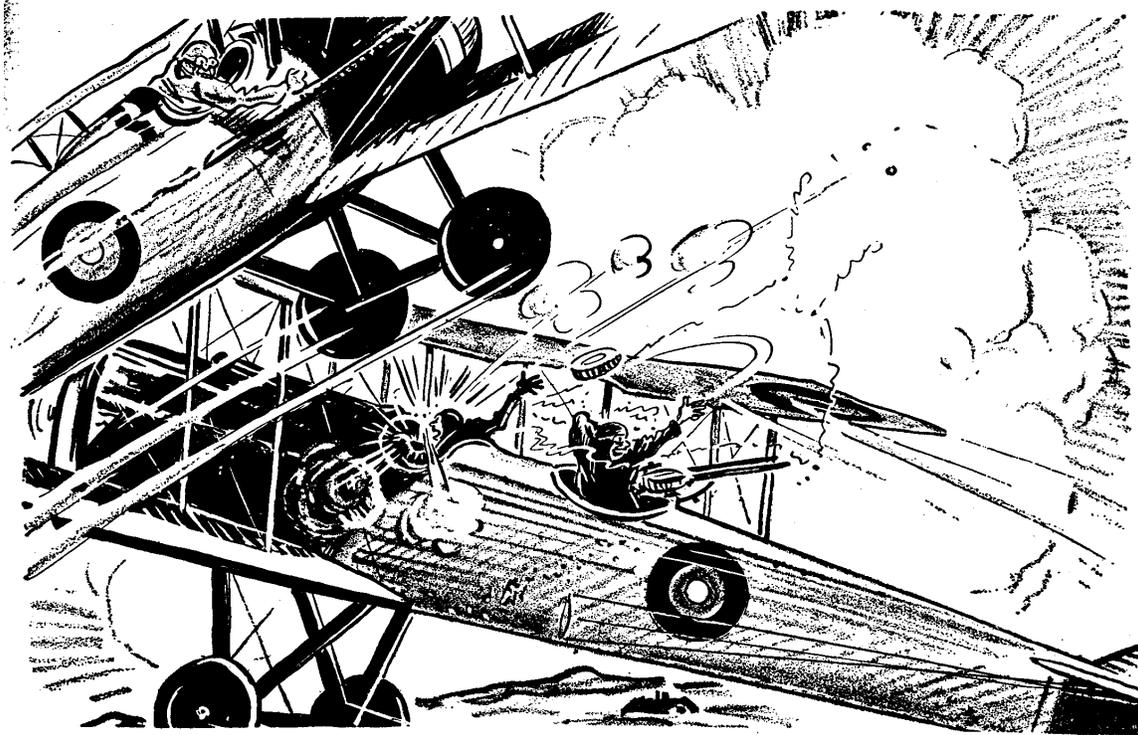
Major Rufus Garrity jumped as if a darnin' needle had been poked against his empennage. Rumors of skullduggery in Spain and across the Mediterranean had been spreading the length and breadth of the palpitating area for weeks. The North African tribes were fraternizing. Italy's Libyans, France's Moroccans and Algerians, and Spain's pet Allah Salaamers were said to be ganging up. A rug kneeler by the name of Sezzi Wil had been reading about Napoleon and the book had gone to his noggin. The

C.O. of the Ninth gave out orders in a hurry.

"You an' Gillis, Phineas," Major Garrity trumpeted. "Go knock them

squareheads down!"

"We are as good as upstairs," Phineas yipped and egged it to his Spad.



Kerb-o-o-m! The dudeen broke up and hot embers went back in the prop blast, settling on the back of the observer's fat neck!

LADY LUCK kicked a wheel off Bump Gillis' sky-buggy before it took off, and the Scot piled up against the ammo shack and came away from the wash-out on all fours, his marbles scattered to the four breezes that blow.

"I don't need no help," Phineas howled as he legged up to the Spad's office. "Adoo, bums. I'm off!"

The D.H. had a fair start but a Spad in those days had more power in its larynx than a Grand Opera

soprano. Over Bar S. Aube, the Kraut in the pit of the D.H. felt a prodigious tap on the shoulder. He twisted his coco and he saw his observer pointing back over the tail.

"*Ja, der Spadt! Undt so vhat?*" the German grinned, rammed his pipe stem between his teeth, and swung his goggles to the front once more. "Ah-h-h-h-h such *ein* tobacco-ein aroma, yedt!"

The Spad kept bridging the gap. The observer of the D.H. swung his Lewis guns on the Scarff mounting

and felt his backbone crawl.

Br-r-r-r-r-r-r-r-r-r-rt!

"*Undt* so vha-a-a-a-at, *hein?*" the Kraut at the Lewis roared and gave Phineas a counter punch that ripped merry Hades out of an aileron. He kept punching and the Jerry at the stick did some pretty maneuvering and shooting himself.

"They are not set-ups," the Boonetown pilot gulped. "There goes some more wing fabric. I will be sittin' in a Spad in the nude if them squareheads keep hittin' bulls-eyes! Take that you bums!"

Phineas missed. He knew he was "having one of his days when he could not have hit the side of a railroad roundhouse with a handful of gravel. The D.H. gunner was not missing and he took a piece out of the Spad's tail fin.

The Kraut pilot in the D.H. roared with unpleasant humor.

"*Ach, he ist nearly kaput, mein freund!*"

He put his pipe back between his teeth, sucked at the stem.

Kerbo-o-o-o-o-o-om! The dudeen broke up and hot embers went back with the prop blast, settling on the back of the observer's fat neck. He let go a fresh drum of ammo that the Lewis needed and it conked the pilot on the back of his big square head. The D.H. began doing tricks with its stick thrashing and the Kraut observer groped frantically for the dual column. It was not where it should have been.

Phineas was having his own troubles getting the Spad down to as

soft a piece of terra firma as he could find. He put it down in a field of barley just as the top wing began to spin around on the mid-wing struts. The thick growing grain checked the limping Spad's forward momentum.

Lieutenant Pinkham came out of the field and was amazed to see the *D.H.A* waddling to a stop not a hundred yards away. He saw the observer help lift an addled pilot out of the front office and spread him out on the real estate for first aid. Phineas had come from a long line of pioneers who could stalk an Indian at five hundred paces. Cat-like, the Yank pilot inched forward, a spanner wrench in his hand. The Kraut observer suddenly turned his head and straightened. His hand made a grab for his Luger.

Phineas threw the spanner and it caught the Lewis gunner right at the spot where he tightened his belt.

"It is the best shot I have made all day, haw-w-w-w!" Phineas exulted and confiscated the Jerry Betsy. "Now I must get these bums talkin' as soon as they pick up their marbles."

THERE WAS a pocket inside Phineas' flying coat. It was more than a pocket; it was really a sack, sewed against the lining and it contained the Pinkham stock in trade. He took a small flat bottle from this pocket and removed the cork stopper. He lifted the head of each groggy Boche and let brown liquid trickle down their throats. In a few minutes the crew of the D.H. was sitting up and blinking baleful orbs at the Yank jokesmith.

"Awright, you bums," Phineas said. "Take the stand as you are goin' to be grilled.

"Bah! We say nodding!"

"Haw-w-w-w! Suit yourselves as you have got poison in your giblets," Phineas said. "If you want the antidote, it is up to you. I have all day So---"

"*Hein? Poisoned yedt? Ach Gott!*" "Yeah. We git it out of lizards in the U.S. They are called Gila monsters. What was you goin' to Spain for, Fritzzy?"

"*Himmel*, I do not feel so goot," the Jerry pilot gulped, worry dew boiling out through his physiognomy.

"It acts in about an hour without the antidote. You suffer agonies an' worse."

"We vill talk, *mein freund*. We go to Spain mit her ship for bombing," the larger Kraut said. "Der Kaiser *undt* Spain *ist* making der bargain. I haff der message for Joachim von Raiserstropp who *ist* from Wilhelmstrasse. *Idt ist* in Spanish as *der* man Francisco Franco must readt it too. Here *idt ist*, *Leutnant*. I haff been learning der Spanish for *ein, zwei, drei* months so I tell you vhat *idt* says Donnervetter, I feel der cramps so quick. *Schnell*, der antidote, *Leutnant*"

"You got lots of time yet," Phineas said. "Tell me what you got there." "*Idt* says for Spain to nodt forget how der *Amerikaners* took Texas away from them in 1848. *Undt* nodt to forgedt what Dewey did to them at Manila *undt* to remember der Kaiser vill giff back Cuba to Alphonso if they help der Germans

win der war. *Undt idt* says for Spain to tell Mexico to make var on der *Amerikanishers* as there *ist* only a small army left in der U.S. *undt* it giffs maybe a million more sailing for France before Christmas."

"Why that dirty bum of a Kaiser!" Phineas yipped. "So all the Arabs in Africa are going to fight for him too, huh?"

"*Idt ist* all I know, *Leutnant*. Now der antidote. please!"

"Here it is," Phineas said, giving them the same bottle again. The Krauts gulped at the brown liquid which was nothing but cough medicine that Phineas' aunt Petunia had sent him during the cold months. No sooner had they emptied the bottle when three Frenchies came up and took a curious gander at the strange tableau.

"These are Boche," Phineas said. "Comprenny? They are spies. Poke them pitchforks into them an' take them somewhere and lock them up. I must go to Spain."

Sacre! Mon Dieu! We weel feex them up, *voila! Peegs! Chiens!*"

"You are on your own now, Krauts," Phineas grinned. "Maybe you will not get into no more Trojan horses, huh? It is two horses on *vous*, haw-w-w-w-w!"

A Frenchman spun the prop of the D.H.4. Phineas got the powerplant humming and took a look at the gas gauge. He had about enough pep juice to get to the next Frog drome. The jokesmith from Bar-Le-Duc hopped out of the D.H.'s office and instructed the Frogs to peel the suit off the Boche pilot.

While this was being done, Phineas discarded his own U.S. scenery and glued a black mustache over his upper lip. When he got back into the D.H. again, he wore the bogus French uniform from the Boche.

"Bong swat!" Phineas said as he kicked the D.H. away from there.

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Let us now take you to the Spanish hamlet of Guadalajara on the left bank of the Henares river. Here, a piece of skullduggery was afoot that was to threaten the ultimate success of the Allied cause, the forerunner of the present day bickering between Franco and Adolph Hitler. In the palace of the ducal house *del-infantado*, a pow-wow was being held between one Joachim von Raiserstropp and Francisco Franco, who was to climb aboard the Nazi bandwagon just twenty-one years later.

"*Si, Senor,*" Franco said after a sip of amontillado. "Weeth the *Americanos* sailing from their countree, their defense eet ees weak, no? So Mexico she declares war. Weeth the Moors an' their *amigos* sweeping across Africa, the Allies have to send one beeg army there, *si*. We declare war on the Allies here in Spain an' we attack Gibraltar. We promeese Sezzi Wil part of Spain after eet ees over, no? Ha, Ha! Eet costs notheeng to promeese, *amigo*."

"*Ja. Undt* Alphonso? You have made up hees mind if Spain goes to var, *hein?*"

"*Senor* von Raiserstropp, the

Bourbons they have what ees you call the hoemophelia. Wan little prick of ze knife an' notheeng stops eet from all ze blood running out. So !- I have ze firs' cousin of Alphonso where he does not know an' so Alphonso he does what we say. *Bueno!*"

"*Sehr gut, mein freund*. Now I show you what der Germans haff done. One plane *ist* already flying to Spain mit two Chermans in *idt*. Four captured Allied ships will come to Spain der same way. So Gibraltar *idt* will be bombed *undt* the Spanish army *vill* go through Portugal *undt* take Lisbon for der U-boat base. *Undt* all der vwhile the tribes of Northern Africa slit der throats of all unbelievers. *Bueno, Senor!*"

"*Si*. The great shiek, Sezzi Wil, arrives in Madrid in three days," Franco chuckled. "We geeve heem the big ovation. Lieutenant Ricardo Tortilla he drops the flowers from the plane as Sezzi Wil motors to Guadalajara. I have much wine for El Shiek an' dancing girls comeeng from Barcelona. I have everything nice."

"*Gott mitt uns, Senor* Franco."

PHINEAS flew on. He found an air field near Bourges and filled the D.H.'s tank. Hours later, not far from St. Cere, he landed near a road over which Frog trucks were rolling toward Bordeaux and he wormed enough petrol out of the mechanized cavalcade to get him close to the Spanish border. Here he dropped down in the shadows of the Pyrenees and took stock of his ticklish situation.

"This map the Krauts carried has got places marked in Spain. I bet it is where I get fueled. Haw-w-w-w!" Phineas quipped. "The last stop is in Guadalajara. It must be where I met the Kaiser's pals."

Phineas hopped the Pyrenees the next morning and landed on a drab flat stretch of Spanish linoleum near the town of Estella. He waited a half-hour before he saw a two-wheeled cart pulled by donkeys make its way across the field.

The Spanish citizens grunted and began to unload tins of petrol. One climbed up on the front of the D.H. and he carried a great tin funnel in his hand.

"Look, *amigos*," Phineas said after consulting the little book he took from his pocket. "*Alimento-vitualla*. No *mucho alimento* for *duo dia*, *comprennos?*"

A Spanish peon handed Phineas a bundle of newspaper and the Yank ripped it open and found two onions, a chump of dried bread, and a can of olive oil.

"What-no *spinacho?*" Phineas grinned as he waded into the strange fare.

The tins of gas were finally emptied into the D.H.'s innards and Phineas got ready for the next hop. "*Adios*," he yelped. "Don't take no wood nickelos. Oof windersign, *mein* double-crossin' froinds."

BACK in Bar-Le-Duc, Major Rufus Garrity paced the floor of his cubicle. *Poilus* in the back-area had found the wreck of the Spad but no Phineas. Evidently, the Krauts had

knocked him off and had then kidnaped him. Then again, they might have buried him somewhere in' the barley field. The Frog peasants who had dragged the crew of the D.H. away apparently had considered it of little importance to notify Frog military authorities. Be that as it may, no news of the battle over Bar S. Aube had been rep6rted.

"He's a dead pigeon," Bump Gillis said dolefully. "Last night I woke up and felt something in the hut. I went to the door and stepped on a rubber snake. He come back awright but not in the flesh."

"That Spad was a mess," Captain Howell said with an emphatic nod. "Them Frogs said it would take two months for a puzzle expert to get it together. Let's pack up his things an' send them back to Iowa."

"A guy can't just vanish, you dopes," Major Garrity growled.

"You're talkin' about Phineas," Bump snapped. "You think he couldn't? He is not human. He is psychic, a mystic, a magician, an' a ventriloquist - to say nothing of other things I can't think of. If he was dead we would not know it."

In Chaumont, Paris, Rome, London, and Washington diplomaniacs chewed their knuckles. German intrigue was cooking up something and all the Allied brain trusters were sure it was the biggest stew to come out of the Wilhelmstrasse kitchen. Reports from Libya and Algiers told of sulkings and poutings among the citizens who swore by Mecca. El shiek Sezzi Wil had crossed the

Mediterranean and he had not been seen in Marseilles or Paris. He had not registered at the best hotel in Rome, nor had he put his John Hancock to the register of the Crillon in Paree or the Savoy in London. Where was he, then? Allied brass hats did not dare guess, for they might guess too close.

LIEUTENANT PINKHAM, an hour out of Estella, leaned out over the edge of his office and took a gander at the carpet. The map he carried told him that he was at the end of his journey. Around the town of Pastcrana in the province of Guadalajara, a circle had been marked. Lieutenant Phineas Pinkham—alias Hauptmann Hermann Hansenpfeffer—swooped down and landed on a flying field where the two ships of the Spanish Flying Corps were roasting under big strips of canvas supported by poles. A big black car rolled across the tarmac just as the Boonetown pilot stepped out of his office.

"It is some staffel they got here," Phineas snickered. "I bet that old Nieuport burns olive oil an' has tracers soaked in onion juice. That other heap looks like a cross between a Taube an' a Spad."

The sedan pulled up and out of it stepped Joachim von Raiserstropp, Francisco Franco, and a tall, thin Latin in a uniform that put spots in front of the Pinkham optics. This was Ricardo Tortilla, the Spanish Ace of Aces who had been in only one dogfight—and that had been in an alley in Madrid. Ricardo Tortilla's epidermis was the color of a pair of highly polished cordovan boots and it

was adorned by a mustachio that seemed to have been drawn across his upper lip with a pencil. He smelled of gardenias and carried a cane.

"*Wie gehts*, El Capitan Hasenpfeffer," von Raiserstropp greeted. "You are ze French ovizer, *nein*? *Mucho* congratulations, *Senor*. Ha, ha!"

After a gab fest, Phineas was transported to Guadalajara and put up in a *posada* that was filthy with *paticos*. It was also the domicile of Ricardo Tortilla, the toast of the *Senoritas* of all Spain. Tortilla and the great Pinkham were left alone so that they might better get acquainted and map out the Spanish aerial offensive once war was declared.

Tortilla poured Phineas a slug of Madiera and talked of Sezzi Wil.

"El Shiek he comes here tomorrow," Tortilla said. "I have eet the honor to drop flowers from the *airplano* as he drives along the road *amigo*. I, Ricardo Tortilla, *Acio* of *Acios!*"

"Benno!" Phineas guttured. "The Moor the merrier, *si*? Eet ees el joke, haw-w-w-w-w!"

The quip sailed over Tortilla's head. He sipped his Spanish schnapps and then excused himself. He had a tryst with a sloe-eyed Mercedes, he said.

"I had plenty of dates with them," Phineas grinned. "But they was sittin' in the front of Fokkers. I talk English because you don't *sabe* Kraut and I don't *comprennos mucho Espagnola*. What would we foreigners do without English,

Senior?"

Ricardo Tortilla needed air. This visitor, from the North had him down. He walked out with apologies.

"An Ace, huh? I bet he never saw altitude over a thousand feet," Phineas sniffed. "He is the bull-flight leader awright. Now I got to think, as tomorrow is *der tag*. Shiek Sezzi Wil wouldn't like it if he was double-crossed. Going to drop posies on the bum an' make it a regular Mardi Graw. It is then or never for Mr. and Mrs. Pinkham's boy, as if another Heinie gets an Allied crate down here an' gets a gander at me—"

Phineas picked up his bag of tricks. Out of it he lifted six objects that looked for all the world like Spanish onions. In reality they were six torpedos that Phineas had purchased in Nancy in view of helping the Frogs observe Bastille Day.

"Somethin' would happen to spoil a guy's fun," the Yank muttered. "One was goin' under a Bridagier's Renault. I was goin' to toss one into Glad Tidings Goomer's kitchen an' one was to be dropped on a gendarme in Bar-Le-Duc. Well, there is fun any place if you look for it. I will see about this *Acio of Acios*. Haw-w-w! I will play the leadin' role in the grand uproar *manana*."

THE MIRACLE man from Boonetown hied to the palace of the ducal house *del infantado* early the next morning. Admitted into the presence of Franco and his guest from Wilhelmstrasse, "Hauptmann Hasenpfeffer" apologized for his poor German.

"*Idt ist* because I liff in Alsace so much, *mein freunds*," Phineas explained. "So as when der Kaiser needs me, I look like an' act like der real Frenchie, *nein?* How *ist* I fool der French when I land to get der petrol?"

"*Ach*, we Chermans are smartd, Franco," Raiserstropp beamed at the pinkish pretender to the driver's seat in old Spain.

"Der people, Seniors," Phineas went on, "clamor for der air *fiesta*. Der gross Hauptmann von Hasenpfeffer *unda Leutnant* Ricardo Tortilla flying over Guadalajara. Big crowds wait for El Shiek *undt* we *must* entertain them *undt* gedt them in der spirit for *le guerra*, *Ja?*"

"*Ja, mein freund!* Der proletariat must be in der mood. *Idt* is Junker psychology. Mitt flags flying *undt bands* playing *undt* der airplanes oferheadt. *Idt* shall be done, Hauptmann. Go to der air field!"

"*Bueno!*" Franco chimed in. "I weel summon the great Ricardo Tortilla. *Muy Pronto!*"

The populace of the region in and about the city of Guadalajara and Pastcrana had already begun to trek to points of vantage along the road that led to Madrid. Spanish *soldados* drove hither and yon in dilapidated jalopies heralding the *piece de resistance* concocted by Franco for their benefit. The Spanish armada of the air was going to pass in review over their noggins. *Viva Tortilla! Viva Hasenpfeffer, Acio of Acios!*

Senor Lieutenant Ricardo Tortilla strutted to his Nieuport on the tarmac at Pastcrana. Every move h made

was a picture. *Senioritas* threw posies at his sky wagon as he ascended to the pit and switched on.

Hauptmann Hasenpfeffer was just an also ran as he got into his D.H. He was playing second fiddle. But Phineas Pinkham knew he would be swinging the baton for the whole works when the aerial exhibition was over. Up in the blue soared Tortilla and the thousands along the roads cheered. At a thousand feet, Tortilla leveled the Nieuport and tripped his top-wing gun.

Lieutenant Pinkham lifted the D.H. to the same level and refrained from fancy stuff. He had a reason to pull his punches. The amazing exponent of all that was designed to fool the gullible of this world was quite certain he had Tortilla's number. When he landed back on the tarmac, he suggested that Tortilla accompany him in the two-seater.

"We will show them how we will bombo Gibraltar," Phineas said to Franco. Two *Acios* in wan beeg *plano*. *Senor* Tortilla weel fire the Lewis gunnos. It'll slay 'em, *comprennos* 'I"

Tortilla liked that. He climbed into the observer's pit and posed for the Castilian cookies. Phineas got under way and raced the D.H. across the field. He took it up to four thousand and swung his noggin around to look at Tortilla. The *Senior's* pan looked as if corn starch had been smeared on it. Its expression was that of a citizen who has found out he has swallowed a big *cucuracha-cockroach* to you.

"I knew it," Phineas snickered. "He is a phony." And then the Boonetown pilot threw the D.H. into a Spanish fandango, followed it up with a bolero, and piled on a tarentella. He side-slipped, zoomed, dived, and rolled-and when he got a look at Tortilla again, the Ace of Aces was upside down in his office, his undercarriage churning the air.

Phineas brought the D.H. back to terra firma where he could study in private Tortilla's reactions to the flying lesson. Ricardo looked like a very sick codfish when the Yank pulled him clear of the D.H.



Ricardo Tortilla looked like a sick codfish when the Boonetown Bam pulled him clear of the D.H.!

"Somethin' you must of et, huh?" Phineas sniffed. "What would you do if Krauts and Yanks was upstairs throwing lead at you, huh? Why, what you been through is only settin' up exercises for us Yanks-er- us real flyers, Senior. Haw-w-w-w!"

"Si?" Then *Senor* Ricardo Tortilla he take firs' *buque* to America, *amigo*. They do weethout Ricardo "even if he is wan great gran' son of

Santa Ana who ees licked by the *Americanos*. I get back to Guadalajara. *Adios, amigo.*"

"Well, somebody has got to drop them petunias an' things on the Shiek," Phineas reminded Ricardo.

"*Si?*" Ba-a-ah! *Valgame Dios!* I do not go up in that *plano* not once more. *Comprender, El Capitan?*" I go *muy pronto* to Barcelona an' buy the teecket for the boat. *Senor Tortilla* ees not so mad at the *Americanos* no more. He is wan happy *hombre*. Ha! Ha-a-a-a. Nutsios!"

"Well, I will drop the corsages then " Phineas sighed. "Where do I find 'the greenhouses, *amigo?*"

"The motor cars they weel breeng the flowers to the flyeeng fiel', *Senor*. Ah-h-h-h I will miss the *senoritas*."

"There are swell dames in the U.S.," Phineas said. "These cookies are squaws next to them. Well, hop in and I will take you back to the field. Act sick when you arrivos as that is your alibi. Haw-w-w-w-w I"

LIEUTENANT Phineas Pinkham, Fifth Columnist from Iowa, U.S.A., began his master stroke an hour after he had wished Tortilla a *bon voyage*. He painted big Maltese crosses on the D.H.4. That would how Sezzi Wil, Phineas had assured Joachim von Raiserstropp, that Germany meant business in dealing with the Castilians.

The flowers were delivered on schedule and Phineas arranged them n bunches. He put them into two big baskets, fastened each of these hampers on either side of the

front office of the D.H. He had strings attached to the big bouquets so that he could pull them out without difficulty. Then he was ready to go. And suddenly tumbled to the fact that it was July 14-Bastile day in La Belle France. Phineas consulted his watch. In ten minutes he would take-off.

Five miles out of Madrid, the big Rolls carrying von Raiserstropp, Francisco Franco, and El Shiek Sezzi Wil passed between two lines of cheering Spanish taxpayers. *Senoritas* tossed wild flowers and kisses at the bearded, turbaned, brown-skinned plutocrat from Riffland. Sezzi Wil beamed.

"By the beard of the Prophet, *effendi*," the Moor said to Franco. "You mak' Ali vary happy. Yes, he fight for Kaiser Wilhelm. *Allah il Allah!* The Druses an' the Arabians they weel be like the locusts!"

Phineas hopped off on schedule-and with little time to spare. Out of the haze to the North came a Bristol Fighter and the Boonetown pilot told himself that if a Limey or two was in it, then Dewey never licked the Spanish Navy at Manila.

Major Rufus Garrity's one man Diplomatic Corps skimmed over the Henares river and broomed the Castilian linoleum with his sharp peepers. He kept at an altitude of five hundred feet as he- droned over the turned-up faces of the *hoi polloi*. Phineas' eyes picked up the sleek black car carrying the axis actors. He pulled a bunch of fragrant posies out of the basket and let it go. He grabbed at another.

"The war will soon end,"

Raiserstropp said to Shiek Sezzi Wil. "We give you all of North Africa and a home in Spain. *Ach*, we Chermans-!"

Ba-a-a-a-a-a-ahg! Bo-o-o-om!

"Gott in Himmel!"

"Bismullah!"

"Madre der Dios!"

"By the beard of Mohammed, we are being bombed!" El Shiek howled. "Dog of a German! It is wan gr'at big double of the cross! "

"Donnervetter! Das bummer-!"
Bang! Bang! Ker-bo..o-o-om!

Phineas swung back again and dropped his last torpedo.

"Haw-w-w-w-w! Vive la France!"
Phineas yelped.

The last torpedo broke up right on the hood of the Rolls and a panic-stricken *Senor* let the jalopy dive into a ditch and turn over on its back. Inside the buggy a hodge-podge of nationalities set up an awful fuss. Shiek Sezzi Wil groped for his scimitar and von Raiserstropp yanked a Luger out of its leather. Francisco Franco said a prayer.

The occupants of the Bristol Fighter did not like the smell of things. The pilot figured that there were two many Maltese crosses on the Allied two-seater. Somebody had gone to too many pains in the decoration of that crate. And that pilot was bombing the biggest brass hat from the tents of Allah.

Phineas got ready to fight as he poked the nose of the D.H. toward the Pyrenees.

The three plotters managed to

crawl out of the wrecked Rolls. Sezzi Wil threatened to lop off two heads. He accused Franco and the Kraut of plotting his assassination, of getting him to Spain to give him the well known works. He was finished, washed up. Somebody would be sorry for arranging the run-around *fiesta* --and it would not be the Allies.

"You do not dare refuse, El Shiek!" the desperate von Raiserstropp ripped out. "Maybe idt giffs der murder if-"

"Pa-agh! What you theenk will happen, my fran's," Sezzi Wil bridled as he straightened his turban, "eef I do not return to my countree, hah ? They weel know I am assassinate, peegs! They weel come from Arabia an' Syria. The Berbers an' the Spahis an' the Tauregs an' the Riffs will swarm over Spain an' cut a million t'roats. They do not stop but go to Germany. I go back to Briskra now. Bah! Peegs of dogs !"

The driver of the Rolls staggered toward Joachim von Raiserstropp and handed him a folded sheet of paper.

"It come out of a bunch of flowers that blows up, *Excellencio!*"

The Kaiser's prize conniver opened up the message. It said:

"GUESS WHO! HAW-W-W-W-W!
P.P ."

Von Raiserstropp sank down on his empennage and massaged his thick noggin. El Shiek Sezzi Wil walked back along the road that led to Madrid and he was calling upon Allah to bring all his spleen down

upon the German Emperor. Francisco Franco talked to himself, assured himself that there would come another day. He was still young.

"Budt look up vunce, Franco," von Raiserstropp gushed out. "Das plane ist shoodting down der bummer! *Gott sie dank!* I hope it giff'ts him to us alife *undt* we can peel him limb from limb, *hein?*"

"Si, *Senor*. Maybeso we can show El Shiek where there ees beeg meestake, no?"

PHINEAS was taking quite a lacing from the Spandaus and Parabellum hitched on to the captured British Bristol. Bullets with his name on them tried to find a vulnerable spot in his torso but the great Pinkham was doing things with the D.H. that the manufacturers had not intended should be done. Phineas was figuring in a hurry, too. He had gassed up just before the parade from Madrid had started. That Bristol had apparently fueled at Estella and had not landed since it had taken on the pep juice. He would fool the bums. He gave the D.H.'s powerplant all it could take and kept going around in a dizzy circle. Phineas gradually climbed and so did the Bristol. Then something happened.

A Nieuport zoomed up out of a low-hanging cloud and reached for the ceiling. Phineas took a gander at it and said something stronger than "Oh shucks!"

"I get it," he yipped. "Tortilla got to hatin' himself and asked himself was he a mouse or a man and why

should he leave all them *senoritas* and throwaway such a nice uniform. He told himself he would show me a thing or two. He will be a bigger hero than The Cid if he knocks me off now. Oh-h-h-h-h!"

The Bristol crew saw the Nieuport, too. They had never been introduced to Ricardo Tortilla. They were not far from France and here was a Nieuport with Frog markings still left on its wings. The gunner took a poke at Tortilla's crate and he did not miss. The Spanish air force was on its way downstairs just as the gas in the Bristol gave out. Lieutenant Pinkham swung out of a circle and handed the Heinies a farewell kiss with his Vickers. The Bristol started for the carpet with an aileron dangling like a hang-nail.

"*Adios*, amigers," Phineas yelped. "If you git down to the real estate without no tail feathers, Ricardo, you will hit harder than Jesse Willard. Haw-w-w-w-w-!"

The flyer from Boonetown, Iowa, with about a pint of petrol in his D.H.'s tank, managed to hop the Pyrenees and slide down into France. He set down with a stick as dead as the Kaiser's chances of patching up things with the tools of Allah. He landed in an olive orchard and crawled away from a D.H. that had suffered a broken spinal column.

"All I need now is some celery," Phineas grinned wearily as he mopped dew of intense relief from his pan. "I wonder if the wars that come after this one will be so cockeyed. You cannot trust nobody in this one. Well, I believe I see a light over there so it must be a Frog

hick's house. If I can make it, I will know I have not busted both legs. *Marchon enfants, deela patry!*"

THREE DAYS later a strange bit of news seeped into Downing Street, London. It also crawled into the Quai D'Orsay in Páree. African doughboys, clad in bedsheets, had raided a French fort at El-Pillah in Morocco and had subdued a company of Legionnaires. The Allah criers had picked out those of Teuton blood in the garrison and had liquidated them post haste. All other members of the Foreign Legion had been spared. Word came shortly afterward that Alphonso of Spain had put a price on the head of a recalcitrant citizen by name of Francisco Franco. The dickering between the Arabs and the Kaiser had come to a head and had been duly lanced by a more mysterious peddler of intrigue than Lawrence of Arabia.

Who was this man? Where had he come from? Where had he gone? It was a certainty that Allied moguls did not suspect that it was a man who used to cause a furor in the Boonetown, Iowa, barber shop by putting sneeze powder between the sheets of the Police Gazettes.

Into the headquarters of The Ninth Pursuit Squadron near Bar-Le-Duc came information that a wrecked D.H. 4 had been found not far from Mauleon, Southern France. Twenty Maltese crosses had been painted on it.

"I don't believe what I'm thinkin'," Bump Gillis said as the pilots dabbled with mess. "We had

services for Phineas Pinkham and he has to be out West. I spent two nights wordin' that nice letter to his parents, too."

"If I remember right," Captain Howell put in, "we have had his funeral six times now. He-"

The mail arrived in the squadron car. Sergeant Casey brought it in, his face milky white. "I--er-sir, there is a letter there with handwritin' that looks familiar. D-Don't t-tell me w-who's you think it is. I don't feel g-good now. Ha ha!"

Major Garrity held up the letter in question. It was post-marked Toulouse, France. The Old Man began to shiver.

"If it is from that fathead, it come from the dead letter office," the C.O. said, ripping it open. He read aloud :

" 'Dear bums :

I am stranded an' need car-fare. The land lady here says she will give me two more days to pay up the rent or I will work it out. She hasn't washed a winder in years, so you see what a hole I am in. Call up Chaumont and tell the brass hats there will be no Moor trouble. Get it? It is a long story and there is no more ink in the bottle. This old dame must be some relation to Bump Gillis. If any wiseenheimer has at up my fudge an' cognac I'll settle with him. Waiting for sucker, I am your obedient servant.

P. Pinkham.

Wing Commander-Ex. Spanish Air Corps.' "

Garrity slumped down in a chair and took a long, deep breath. Pilots fought off the shakes. Glad Tidings Goomer hied to the kitchen to look for a bottle of cognac and one of

ammonia.

Bump Gillis chose the ammonia and mixed it with water. After he had gulped it down he started to laugh.

"That bum will get a surprise," he said. "He will have to dig down and find the argent to pay for that tombstone Babette bought. They won't take it back because they carved his name in it already. She won't believe he wasn't kiddin'. Ha ha I"

"Excuse me, f-fellows," Major Garrity said. "C-call me about F-Friday and get a good doctor who knows what to do with delirium tremens. Ha! Ha-a-a-a-a-a-a! Wing Commander-Ex, Spanish Air Corps. Ha I Ha-a-a-a-a-a! No Moor trouble. Ha-a-a-a-a-a!" As he went out, they heard him whisper, "I live it down!"

The pilots tipped-toed after him. They knew the Old Man would not be able to stand much more of the *guerre*.

THE END

Flying Aces, November 1940