

Who was Harriet Quimby? I'll wager you 5,000 to 1 you don't know. The headlines of nearly sixty years ago are blurred and have passed from memory for the grown-ups, and were never seen by the middle aged and younger. Well, she was the first woman in America to hold a pilot's licence. She was a beauty and a famous newspaper woman and played both of these assets to the hilt. Who were the Moisant Sisters? Still you won't know. Well, they ran a flying school which taught Harriet Quimby to fly back in 1911, although at the time neither sister had a pilot's licence. They soon thereafter qualified themselves, and the three women joined together as an exhibition team. Harriet Quimby died in a crash of her plane before her flying career was three years old, but in the mean time, she had been the toast of two continents.

The question I have asked about Harriet Quimby and the Moisant Sisters, I could also have asked with assurance of almost equal results of a fairly long line of female early birds, as for example Ruth Law, the Stinson Sisters and Phoebe Ohmlie who reigned in the sky in the period between 1912 and 1922. They all accomplished outstanding feats in the flying machines of their days. And If you want to bring it a little more down to date, include Louise Thaden, Blanch Noyes, Nancy Harkness,



Helen McCloskey, Ruth Nichols and Helen Ritchey.

One more question. Who was Wilmer Stultz? In all probability you won't know. Back in 1928 Stultz piloted a trimotored Fokker seaplane across the Atlantic from Newfoundland to Wales. Whenever he was not handling the controls, his mechanic copilot, named Louis Gordon, was.

If I should now refer to Amelia Earhart, practically everyone of you could tell me a lot about her, some of which would be almost pure fiction. Some of you would tell me that she was the one who flew that trimotored Fokker across the Atlantic in 1928. She was only a passenger and, as she told me herself, for the sake of comfort she sat on the toilet seat most of the way across. The papers played her up big, called her the Commander of the flight, which she wasn't, and gave her credit for its success while Stultz and Gordon went into comparative oblivion. Stultz, as a matter of fact, was fond of his bottle and got killed within the year after this outstanding flight when he landed considerably short of the runway at Roosevelt Field, Long Island, where I later learned to fly. Maybe he saw two runways.

Let no one think that in what I have just said I am attempting to talk down Amelia Earhart. Far from it. For this particular flight, she was dug out of her work with the children of foreign born Americans at

Denison Settlement House in Boston. Mrs. Frederick Guest, a wealthy American born English woman by marriage had decided, following Charles Lindberg's flight, to be the first woman to fly the Atlantic. She worked to that end with a group including George Putnam, an American publisher and writer. When, toward the end of the preparatory program, she either backed out or was talked out of making the flight, George Putnam got Amelia Earhart as a Substitute. He needed her or some other woman for the publicity. Amelia had learned to fly about ten years earlier, but for financial and other reasons had practically given up flying.

No one knew more than Amelia how undeserved her fame was for that passenger flight with Stultz and Gordon. But it brought her the means and the connections, including George Putnam whom she married in 1931, to start out to justify her fame, and she did so in a big way. In 1932 she flew the Atlantic solo from New-Foundland to Ireland in her Lockheed Monoplane, being the first woman to do so. Thereafter until her death in the Pacific in 1937, she reigned supreme among women flyers.

Amelia organized the club of women flyers known as the "Ninety-Nine Club", and in 1932 asked me to join. Later during the World War II years, I had the honor to be President of that Club for two successive terms.



Its original ninety-nine members were about all the women flyers there were at the time. There are now, in this country, close to fifteen thousand women pilots and a preponderance of them are Ninety-Niners, which now has international size and importance.

During the last year of her life, I was closer to Amelia Earhart than anyone else including, I believe, her own husband George Putnam. She stayed with me at the ranch my husband and I own in the California desert for weeks before the start of her round-the-world flight, which ended in a take-off crash in Hawaii; and again she stayed with me while her plane was being repaired for her reverse direction flight, which ended in tragedy. My husband paid half the cost of repair of her plane. I knew her plans. We talked hours on end. I was fearful of results when change in direction of the flight was made. I got her to change navigators. When she left, she took with her in her plane a jackknife, fishing hooks and lines and a bright colored kite that I carried with me during my London to Australia race in 1934 against the possibility that I would get down in sea or in jungle.

Amelia's accomplishments were many during the last nine years of her life. They included transcontinental record flights, a flight to and from Mexico City and a flight to the mainland from Honolulu. They were





important in their day and kept her top place in aviation. But that's not what has caused her memory to remain so vivid. Three other women have successfully made about the same round-the-world flight within the past few years, and the fame connected with these flights was rather short lived. I have flown the Atlantic six times at the controls - four times in my own plane - and as to at least those four times, I never gave out word that I was going. The flights did not rate any publicity. Planes, engines, and navigational facilities are quite different now than they were when Amelia took off. Transocean flights are now almost by the minute, and even by private planes they are routine affairs. The routes that were blazed thirty years ago can be flown again and constantly are, but those early flights cannot be duplicated. A "first" often involves much that escapes the casual reader. I was the first woman to fly faster than the speed of sound. It's common place now with our first line military planes, and soon passenger will be flying faster than the speed of sound in the Supersonic Transport Planes being produced in England, France and Russia, as well as the United States. The feature about my supersonic flight was that at the time there was not a plane built that could do it in level flight, and only one that could do it at all. I did it in a full power

vertical dive from forty-five thousand feet. It was a rough ride that took only a few seconds. It took a split second decision as to when to pull out of that dive gently enough not to tear the wings off and fast enough not to hit the earth but after mach 1 had been achieved. Some years later when flying the Lockheed 104 Starfighter at more than twice the speed of sound and without a quiver or shake of the plane, I thought back to that harrowing "First". It was mighty good going for its day as was Amelia's eighteen hour transcontinental flight, even though passengers now make it in not much more than four hours. If it had not been for those early flights, progress in aviation would have been slowed up.

The memory of Amelia Earhart remains so vivid because she went down in a transPacific flight from Lae, New Guinea, to the Hawaiian Islands with a scheduled stop for refueling at Howland Island, a little beyond the half way point. Because the Government had built a runway for her use on tiny little Howland and a Coast Guard Cutter was stationed there for her arrival; because the Navy had a ship stationed half way between Lae and Howland and another half way between Howland and Hawaii; because the Navy with ships and planes turned on a full scale search for her and her navigator Fred Noonan that lasted several days; and because there was so




much confusion about radio messages received and sent, and so much front page publicity about the flight right up to its tragic end, the whole thing developed into a mystery which has carried on through the years.

Because a war with Japan was in the offing and Japan had a large group of mandated islands west and northwest of Howland, it was easy to think that Amelia and Noonan were on a spy mission for our Government. One of the moving picture companies played up this angle in a feature picture. My recollection is that the plot was for Amelia to get lost and land on one of the marshall group of islands so a search for her could be made in that area. The plot thickened so that in the end when Amelia learned the Japs were onto the ruse and would have grabbed her, she deliberately landed in the ocean so the search could go on anyway. The fact is that our Naval forces could not have entered the marshall mandated area in any event, and did not do so in their actual search. The fact is that only sea planes were crossing the Pacific in those days, and the desire was to get land planes started. No further reason for the Government's cooperation need be looked for.


There is a man by the name of Fred Goernes, connected with the television business in Northern California who, backed by a broadcasting



company and several newspapers, has spent a great deal of his time since 1960 to unlock the mystery of the disappearance of Earhart and Noonan. His search started when a woman, then living in Northern California but a native of the island of Saipan, told about seeing two American flyers in Saipan in 1937. She said she saw a two motored plane close to noon hour fly overhead and disappear in the vicinity of the harbor, and a little later she saw a group gathered about two white persons, one of whom she was told was a woman but dressed like a man and with short hair. The guards said they were flyers and she later heard rumours that the pair had been executed. She had told this story earlier to a U.S. Navy dentist with whom she worked during American occupation. The dentist was located and generally corroborated her story. That started Goernes on his search which over the years has taken him to Saipan, Guam and various other islands on at least four expeditions. He even searched the floor of the Saipan harbor and located the encrusted remains of a generator, apparently a duplicate of the one Amelia had in her plane. Only it turned out to be a Japanese manufactured generator, although a copy of a similar one manufactured by Bendix. He found what he considered supporting evidence that Amelia and Fred were imprisoned for a time, that




she died of dysentery and he was executed the following day and they were buried in a common grave. He located what he believed to be the grave site and dug up bones which he had examined by a University of California anthropologist. They proved to be the bones of several people. It was at this time I was contacted to find out if I knew Amelia's dentist. I did. We used the same one in Altedena. But before replying or checking with the dentist for records, I contacted Amelia's sister in Massachusetts. She said all the publicity was distressing to the family and they wished it would stop, and that I would not help fan the flames. So I did nothing. But my husband, who also used the same dentist, asked him if he could find Amelia's dental records. He tried and failed.



It finally became apparent to Goernes that other reliable evidence made it impossible to conclude that Amelia flew her plane to Saipan. But he believed that she was nevertheless there and continued his detective-like search. He published a book concerning that search in 1966. He proved nothing but stated his conclusions.

He believed and undoubtedly still does that Amelia and Noonan, when they took off from Lae, New Guinea, headed for Truk in the Central Carolina group of islands; their mission was unofficial - to observe

Japan air fields and fleet serving complex; that they had heavier engines, more fuel and more range than had been given out publicly; after passing over Truk and vicinity, they headed for Howland but got caught in weather without Noonan being able to get his bearings and with Amelia flying on dead reckoning; they finally contacted the ship Itasca at Howland when they thought they were two hundred miles out but were actually four hundred miles away from the island; that Amelia thought she had overshot the island and began circling to try and get an Itasca bearing; failing this she turned her plane north and west; when fuel was extremely low she sighted a small island, not in the Gilbert Islands as she had planned in the case of emergency, but at Mili Atoll in the southeastern Marshalls under mandate of Japan; they landed in a lagoon; they waded ashore; on or about 12 days after the flight began, a Japanese fishing boat transferred them from the island to a Japanese ship and they were taken with some intermediate stops to Saipan where they were questioned, imprisoned, and finally buried.



If I were on a jury and heard all of Goernes' evidence, I would have to vote for a verdict of "not proven" with a compliment to Goernes for his tenacity. He is off on his fifth trip as I write these words -




this time presumably to find the remains of the plane in the lagoon - although he has some evidence which he considered plausible that the plane was recovered by the Japs, transported to Truk and eventually was purposely burned on the airfield there.

I have my own reasons for not believing this story which I will dwell on later.


At this point I will only say that if Amelia was on a spy mission to make an air reconnaissance of the Truk area, our Government badly bungled the whole deal. Information is useless unless you receive it. To receive it at Howland, a tiny spot in the ocean, rather than at Lae was taking the extremely hazardous long shot when it was not necessary. It was no longer from Howland to Truk to Lae than from Lae to Truk to Howland, but one could hardly miss New Guinea, even with winds and dead reckoning. Without everything working in your favor, finding Howland would be like looking for a needle in a hay stack. Amelia had at least 4,000 miles of range. She could have taken off from Honolulu and flown to Howland and back again failing to find it. But she had no such safety factor on a 2,500 mile flight from Lae to Howland. She decided on the reverse direction flight while spending much time at our ranch

while her plane was being repaired. I questioned the advisability of this change at the time. I don't think it was the result of Amelia's own judgement. I had an impression then, which I still hold, that it was George Putnum doing for publicity purposes. Amelia in fact had some question whether the flight should be abandoned altogether after the crash in Hawaii. One day at the ranch, my husband and Amelia got stuck in the desert sand in an old car and while waiting to be dug out, Amelia asked Floyd whether he thought she should continue the flight. He replied that if she was doing it to keep her place at the top among women in aviation, she was wasting her time and taking a big risk for nothing, because nothing and no one would topple her from the pinnacle, but if she were doing it for the adventure and just because she wanted to, no one could advise her against it because no one could decide such a thing for her.



This much we know from the official records. The plane left Lae at noon New Guinea time, which was \_\_\_\_\_ Howland time. About a quarter or a third of the way it was in contact and on course. The Cutter Itasca was in contact with it at 2:45 am Howland time and

intermittently thereafter, but radio reception was poor. At 6:14 am July 2, the plane reported its position 200 miles out from Howland. At daylight the Itasca commenced laying a heavy smoke screen to indicate the Cutter's position. At 6:45 am the plane reported its position 100 miles out of Howland. At 7:42 am it reported its position apparently over Howland Island and short on gasoline and not sighting the Island. At 7:58 the plane reported circling and requesting bearing. At 8:00 am the plane reported receipt of the Itasca's signals but stated it was unable to obtain a minimum for a bearing. At 8:43 am Amelia reported being on a sunline - 157-337 - running North and South but with no reference point given. The weather in the vicinity of Howland was clear. At 10:40 am it was assumed by the Itasca that the plane was down and the ship got underway to search the area. It headed west by northwest. The sky was overcast in that direction and the Gilbert Islands were there as a possible refuge in an emergency. It searched the islands in the Gilbert group until July 16th when it was relieved of further duty by the Navy in the search operations. That's really all the hard evidence we have. All the rest is speculation such as confusion as to radio channels to be used.






It is evident that the plane was near its destination but lost and could not get its bearings or make a land fall.

And it is on the afternoon of July 2nd that I came into the situation. But before telling you about this, I must give a preface in order not to be misunderstood.

I don't believe in mediums or communications with the dear departed. I have never attended a seance in my life. I consider them pure bunk. My husband had been interested in years in what was known as psychic phenomenon. He did not believe in mediums either, but he, as a member of a committee, checked some on behalf of the Scientific American Magazine and otherwise, I would have no part of it. If God wants us to communicate with the dead he would not pick a medium to do the job for pay. But I had always had a strong sixth sense and rather successfully played my hunches. One night about in 1935, we attended a dinner party in New York and a man was there who was working on extra sensory perception for Duke University. He had some of his test cards along and wanted to try us out, presumably for entertainment. The cards, five in number, each with a different figure on its face were placed face down on a table behind a screen, and as the man lifted them one at a time,

I was to guess what card was lifted. I guessed them all correctly which, to the man, was astounding. Later, Dr. Rhine of the Parapsychology Department of Duke University wanted to work with me but I refused. My husband was equally astounded over this 100% accuracy at guessing the cards. The next morning, with my eyes closed, he held his fingers, with changes in number, behind my head and in each case I told him correctly how many he was holding up. So then he began working with me fairly regularly. I could read letters before they had arrived. I told him in New York about the sudden death of one of his associates in San Francisco several hours before he received the news. I called him in New York at midnight once and told him exactly what he had been doing from dinner time on, and what I said he confirmed as correct in all particulars. I even developed the knack of doing automatic writing. I would in this way tell of things going on around the world, but it always concerned the living and not the dead. I would become emotionally exhausted after each such experience but carried on for Floyd's sake because he thought I was delineating some new perimeters of the human mind.



It was during this period that Amelia Earhart came closely into my life. She too was very interested in extra-sensory perception and

had studied all that Duke University had to offer on the subject at the time. She was intrigued by my apparent capacity when called upon to tell what was going on at a distance. One night at the ranch, the radio told of a transport plane disappearing en route to Salt Lake City. She asked me to try and locate it. I did with names of mountains and roads and even the location of power lines and a pile of telephone poles. Neither of us knew the area which was in the mountains north and east of Salt Lake City, but she called Paul Mantz in Los Angeles. He got out a map of the area and confirmed all my descriptions. Amelia was so impressed that she drove into Los Angeles that night and took off for Salt Lake City the next morning. She conducted an air search of the area without results. But the plane was found next spring after the snow had melted right where I said it was. A little later, another plane failed to show up at its destination in Los Angeles. Amelia called me on the phone from Los Angeles and I told her where the plane was on a mountain side not far out of Los Angeles. I told her how many were killed and how many injured, and that some were already making their way down the mountain. She located it just where I said it would be and got the credit for being quite a seer.



All this convinced Amelia that if she were to get down on her round-the-world flight, I could locate her. We tried it on one of her trips across the continent. I told my husband where she was at different times during that two-day flight. He wrote it down and sent it to Amelia for verification. It proved out. The day following the start of her flight I was riding with Floyd in our car between the ranch and Palm Springs when I pulled over to the side of the road and said that Amelia was having a fire in her plane on the ground but it was being put out without much damage. The next day's paper gave us the report of that fire. I think it was in Phoenix.

George Putnam knew about most of these tests. As soon as he heard that Amelia had not reached Howland Island, he called me on the phone and came over to my apartment. We were both in Los Angeles at the time. This is what I told him as best I can remember. I wrote it down but tried unsuccessfully to find that writing among my files.

"Amelia out of fuel landed in the ocean northwest of Howland and not too far away. The plane is floating. Amelia is not hurt but Fred Noonan bumped against the bulkhead during the water landing and is unconscious with an injured head. There is an American boat called the

Itasca in the vicinity and also a Japanese fishing boat called the \_\_\_\_\_."

I can't remember the name of the Japanese fishing boat, but I think it was something like Maru or Mari. I had never heard of the Itasca at the time. The next day I told George Putnam the plane was still afloat and drifting eastward north of Howland. The next day I told George it was too late to rescue Amelia. I was very sad and also very disgusted that I had not been able to be more precise and of help. I went to the Cathedral and said a prayer for Amelia and lit candles for her. From that moment until now, I have never tried out my so-called extra-sensory perception. It did not rescue Amelia and I did most of the work against that possibility.

But you can now understand why I doubt the story by Fred Goernes. If he is right about Saipan, Truk and the Marshall Islands, then my findings at the time were all wrong, and they had worked out right too often. But when he reports that the man who was taken prisoner in Saipan had a bandaged head, I wonder. Apparently this was two weeks or more after the crash. Did my report to George Putnam about the injury get woven into the records some place? And when Goernes tells about the woman who still had short hair although well guarded into 1938 in her place of

confinement in Saipan, I wonder if the Japs gave her beauty treatments or she salvaged her beauty kit from the plane. She did not naturally have short hair and it would grown with the passing of weeks.



As for George Putnam, I never saw him again after that meeting on July 2, 1937 in my Los Angeles apartment. I resented him because I thought he pushed Amelia into this trip for money making purposes. Amelia could not write her contemplated book. But Putnam did - called "My Last Flight". He dedicated it to "Floyd" and went on to other marriages and money making schemes until death caught up with him, and of all places, he came down with his final illness in Death Valley.

Strangely enough, sometime after Putnam's death, someone mailed me a record of the conversation he had with a professional medium. It was apparently found among his effects. This medium reported Amelia and Noonan on their plane in the surf just off an island beach and with a bandage on Noonan's head. So you can take it any one of three ways and conclude that Noonan hurt his head. I wonder if this "message" got mixed up in someway with all the papers and in someway to some degree is the cause for Goernes' present search for the plane in a lagoon of one of the Marshall Islands.





Fame is fickle and funny.

Take Amelia Earhart for Example.

On June 18, 1928, she became worldwide famous overnight by simply riding as a passenger in an airplane flight across the Atlantic which left Newfoundland on June 17 and landed in Wales the following day. In her own words she was just baggage like a sack of potatoes on the floor.

Some ten years later, that is to say in June 1937, she became almost immortal by getting lost in a flight across the Pacific and going down in the ocean to a watery grave.

This chapter is devoted to Amelia who was a beloved friend of mine during the last few years of her life. Don't let what I have just said mislead you. When Amelia took that flight as passenger she was a licensed pilot but not competent to fly the ocean. When she met with death she was a competent pilot but still capable - as we all are - of making mistakes. She was always a finer woman than a skillful pilot.

How did Amelia Earhart happen to be "baggage" on that flight across the Atlantic in 1928?

Mrs. Frederick E. Guest of London, an American girl of the Phipps family in Pittsburg (married to an Englishman who had been Secretary of State for Air in Lloyd George's cabinet) wanted to be the first woman to fly across the Atlantic. She felt this would help in American-English relations as Lindbergh's flight the year before had helped so much in French-American relations. She had plenty of money and had bought from Commander Byrd of South Pole fame his trimotored Fokker which was having floats fitted to it at the East Boston Airport. She had

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hired a pilot and copilot and mechanic, but either she chickened out or her family talked her out of the flight herself, and she agreed that if the right sort of girl could be found to take her place, she would yield.

Hilton H. Railey dropped in to see George Putnam in New York in the Spring of 1928 and Putnam told him that Byrd had sold his trimotored Fokker to a wealthy woman who planned to fly the Atlantic although he did not know the woman's name. Putnam said it would be amusing to manage a stunt like that and asked Railey to find out all he could about it. Railey having learned from the New York attorney of Mrs. Guest that a substitute for Mrs. Guest was being looked for, contacted Amelia Earhart at Denison House in Boston, who at the time had a pilot's license but very little flying experience and could not fly on instruments. However, she agreed to go along, and George Putnam, acting on Mrs. Guest's request, agreed to act as the "backer" of the flight. Colonel Railey agreed to welcome Amelia in Europe and see her through what they all thought would be much publicity. Amelia met Mrs. Guest the first time when she arrived in England and then stayed on for several days being wined and dined by important people like the Prime Minister, Lady Astor and Winston Churchill. The publicity seemed bent on having it that Amelia was the pilot even when the contrary was stated. *And Amelia did not like the unearned publicity* Several thousand women cross the Atlantic the same way each day now, but in truth Amelia's flight was the first time that a woman had crossed the Atlantic by air, and such Firsts live on.

Another first that lives on is the first powered flight



by the Wright Brothers, but the plane was only in the air for something over 100 feet. And do you know whether it was Orville or Wilbur Wright who made that first flight? And I will guarantee you that practically no reader of this chapter knows the name of the pilot of this trimotored Fokker called the Friendship, or the name of the copilot, anymore than they know the name of the horse that Paul Revere rode. Well, the pilot's name was Wilmer "Bill" Stultz, and Lou Gordon was his copilot and mechanic. Stultz was a good pilot but he was given to excess use of <sup>alcohol particularly</sup> brandy. He received \$20,000 from Mrs. Guest for piloting this plane across the Atlantic and I am sure that Lou Gordon also got well paid. I have never known whether Amelia was paid or not but I feel almost certain she was, because as a social worker she had no funds when she left on the flight but when in London she bought a plane that Lady Mary Heath had just flown from Capetown, South Africa, to London, called an Avian, and she brought this plane back to New York, on the ~~ship~~ <sup>Steamship Roosevelt</sup> with her.

Railey who took on this job for Ameila was a public relations man with a firm that numbered among its clients such aviation notables as Richard Byrd, Clarence Chamberlin, Sir Hubert Wilkins, and Lincoln Ellsworth. He had an eye for publicity values and pushed Amelia for the flight when he noticed she had a rather striking resemblance to Charles Lindbergh and, therefore, could be made into a "Lady Lindy".

On the boat ride home from England to New York, where special receptions awaited Amelia, Stultz had prepared himself for the voyage with a case of brandy. His bouts with the bottle concerned





Amelia very much when they were still in Boston and again when they were in Newfoundland, but Gordon insisted both times that Stultz would be all right when he got into the air and in truth he seemed perfectly under his self-control during the flight from Boston to Newfoundland <sup>again</sup> and <sup>itself</sup> from Newfoundland to Wales. Flying ~~itself~~ was the substitute stimulant for him. In any event, about a year after his flight across the Atlantic, he landed a plane at Roosevelt Field, Long Island, a quarter of a mile short of the runway and was killed.

The public had taken to Amelia and she went on to greater and greater heights. She wrote articles, made speeches and public appearances and even endorsed a cigarette advertisement which caused her not to get an appointment as Aviation Editor of McCall's Magazine, but she did get a similar job on Cosmopolitan Magazine.

Incidentally, the skipper of the steamship Roosevelt on which they came home from England was Captain Harry Manning whom Amelia later employed as her navigator for her round-the-world flight, but later ~~for reasons not clear~~ she shifted to Fred Noonan. Fred Noonan had much experience in high speed navigation in airplane flights but also had had trouble with the bottle. Manning was an excellent navigator but had never navigated except on steamships.

George Putnam more or less took charge of Amelia's activities on her return from this "baggage" flight, and she had made for herself at least \$50,000 within a few months. Flying was now a part of her life and above all she wanted ~~to~~ <sup>To</sup> actually fly the Atlantic and thus redeem what she thought was a credit that had been given her for doing nothing. I thought of Amelia's first



flight when I flew my own Lodestar across the Atlantic four times and made a fifth crossing in a British bomber for delivery to the British Air Force in England. *And then a fifth flight in a Lockheed Jetstar* My own Lodestar flights were treated by me as so inconsequential that I never even let anybody know I was leaving, and there was not a word in the papers. They were just flights which I will tell you about later in this story. But Amelia's was a First. Four years after this so-called "baggage" flight she had perfected her flying, and in a Lockheed Vega plane flew solo from Newfoundland to Ireland, thus making good her determination to offset that first trip.

Amelia entered the first Women's Air Derby which has been an annual event since, and came ~~out~~ <sup>in</sup> third. She had flown across the continent during this four-year period several times and, incidentally, had had several crack-ups particularly during the first year or two. Indeed at one time during this four-year period she took up flying ~~in the~~ <sup>an</sup> Autogiro and flew it back and forth across the country as a promotion stunt for the Beech-Nut Packing Company, maker of Beech-Nut Chewing Gum. Beech-Nut was painted on the side of her plane. She was offered and accepted a job on the faculty of Purdue University working with the girl students and indeed the Lockheed Electra plane that she used in her round-the-world flight was acquired for her primarily by Purdue. She called it her flying laboratory, although research in the air seemed to be a rather small part of her flying activities.

In 1932, after her solo flight across the Atlantic, she was at the peak of her fame, and as Colonel Railey said in the Introduction to a book about her, her flights seemed to be stunts





without constructive benefit to the aeronautic industry. He answered the question of why she did it by saying she had to because she was caught up in the hero racket that compelled her to strive for increasingly dramatic records, bigger and braver feats that automatically insured the publicity necessary to the maintenance of her position as the foremost woman pilot in the world. He said she was a victim of an era of hot aeronautics that began with Colonel Lindbergh and Admiral Byrd and that shot "scientific" expeditions across continents, oceans, and polar regions by dint of individual exhibition.

I became acquainted with Amelia soon after her solo Atlantic flight, and I also knew a great many of the women pilots of that day. I am sure that any number of them were more competent as pilots when Amelia made her passenger-only flight, and there were some of them that were at least equally adept at flying when she made her solo flight. Ruth Nichols was going to fly the Atlantic solo but crashed while landing in Newfoundland and before she was well enough to try again, Amelia had done the trick. However, while Ruth Nichols had more get-up-and-go than many of the others, I never considered her as competent a pilot as most of the others. During these same early days when Amelia was capturing the daily headlines, she and Paul Collins and Gene Vidal formed the Ludington Airline and Amelia went about giving talks to women groups about flying. The Ludington Airline later became the Northeast Airlines and when Amelia lost her life, I was asked by Collins and Vidal to take her place on the Board where I have been ever since.

By the time 1936 rolled around, Amelia had given up various





and sundry of the money-making activities she had engaged in and was limiting herself pretty much to her work on the faculty of Purdue, lecture tours, and preparations for her round-the-world flight.

The flight was supposed to start from Oakland, California, and go to Honolulu, thence to Howland Island, thence to New Guinea and on around back by way of New Zealand, India, Africa, Brazil and home.

The Lockheed Electra had its passenger compartment fitted out as a navigation room in which also some extra gas tanks were put. She had enough gasoline <sup>to go</sup> at optimum cruising speed, ~~to go~~ about 4,000 miles non-stop. The only thing she did not like about her plane and equipment was the radio. I was making a flight with her across the continent in 1936 when we stopped at Wright Patterson Field and had lunch with a friend of <sup>hers</sup> ~~Amelia's~~. During luncheon Amelia said that she had been trying awfully hard but unsuccessfully to get a more powerful radio, and she was very unhappy with what she had. I urged her in no uncertain terms not to undertake the round-the-world flight unless she had the best of radio facilities, but she said she had so many commitments already made that the flight would have to go on irrespective of what she could do about the radio. Among other things she mentioned that Gimbel's in New York had paid her \$25,000 toward the expenses of the flight in return for her carrying for them 10,000 letter covers. I mention these things because it is my opinion that the radio was probably the cause of her death. Before she started on her last flight she stayed with Floyd and myself at our ranch for a long time and



we knew pretty well the details of her plans. On her first leg of the flight from Oakland to Honolulu she took Paul Mantz along as copilot and had both Capt. Manning and Fred Noonan as navigators. She had already determined to use Fred Noonan as navigator rather than Manning, not because Manning was not a wonderful man for he was all that, but because Fred Noonan had much more experience in navigation in airplanes at high speeds. I understood she took Paul Mantz along as a cover for having Fred Noonan along with Manning but that Mantz would drop out at Honolulu and one of the navigators would drop out at Howland Island.

On her take off from Honolulu for Howland Island, the plane got away from her while rolling down the runway and ground-looped badly causing one of the landing gears to be shorn off and one wing to be badly damaged. That was a most disappointing ordeal for Amelia. The plane was brought back immediately for repairs and a decision was made that, due to the seasons involved, the flight when resumed would start eastward and come back from New Guinea to Howland Island to Honolulu and then to the United States. While Amelia never told me so in so many words, I was convinced that the crack-up in Honolulu shook her up badly and she was extremely worried about taking off from Howland Island for New Guinea with a fully loaded plane. It had to carry gas for 2,500 miles with spare, whereas if she came the other direction she would land lightly loaded and would only have to take off with enough gas to take her about 2,000 miles. Howland Island was only about 1/3 of a mile wide and 2 miles long, and the runway was not in the same class as the one in Honolulu. Amelia had some doubts in her mind






about this whole flight, and while at the ranch and out riding with Floyd, she asked him what he thought about her continuing the flight. His answer was that if she was doing so to maintain her primacy in aviation, she did not have to make the flight because that primacy could never be taken away from her and, under such circumstances, he would recommend against the flight. But if she was doing it just because she wanted to, nobody should interfere. He had said the samething to me a year or two earlier when I was about to take off in the Bendix Race after midnight with a soupy fog in the sky, a plane that was vibrating badly, and with the contestant who had just taken off ahead of me killed in the attempt.

Amelia, after her plane was repaired, made a breakdown run from Oakland to Miami and started her world flight from there going first to Brazil then to Africa and on around eventually to New Guinea. For some reason quite without justification to me, she left the trailing antenna to her radio in Miami. Presumably she thought she would not need it and leaving it behind would save weight, but how she must have wished for that trailing antenna rather than just the loop when she was trying to contact the ship Itasca at Howland Island, because the trailing antenna would give longer range and clearer reception.

Also one thing I have never be able to understand is that a radio station finder had been installed at Howland Island for her use and benefit, but she had never been told of this installation and did not know it was there.

Amelia did not attain immortality because she lost her way






and lost her life as a result, but because of the mystery that grew up around that disappearance. The public, or at least the writers and the like who direct a lot of the public's thinking, would not have it that this heroine had been the victim of a mistake. First of all, the rumors were broadcast that she was on a spy mission for our Government and was supposed to ~~fly~~ <sup>over</sup> fly some of the Japanese islands to see if they were being fortified. A moving picture was made, in which Rosalind Russell starred, which cast Amelia in the role of a spy who got purposely lost so that our Navy and Naval planes could go in search for her and in so doing <sup>would</sup> take a look at some of the Japanese mandated islands. Then some people connected with the press or radio industry decided that she had flown to the Japanese island of Saipan. They dug up a woman who had been <sup>a child</sup> resident of the island in 1937 who said she <sup>saw</sup> ~~saw~~ a plane which answered to the description of the Earhart plane, fly over the ~~down~~ <sup>city</sup> and make a belly landing in the harbor. Later she saw a white man and a white woman, dressed as a man, brought ashore in charge of the Japanese soldiers and taken into a nearby woods where after ~~shots~~ <sup>shots</sup> were heard by her the soldiers returned alone. Another group <sup>of Americans</sup> claimed to know the burial site and indeed excavated and brought skeletal bones back to the United States which they claimed were the bones of Earhart and Noonan, but they proved to be bones of Orientals. Another woman on Saipan said that she lived nearby the prison where a white woman wearing trousers and having short curly hair was imprisoned for a long time, and one day she did not show up again and the authorities told this woman that the white woman had died of dysentery and had been buried,



Incidentally, the story about the Lockheed Electra going down in the harbor at Saipan was believed strongly enough by this group that on a mission they searched the harbor floor and indeed did find a generator which seemed to be of the type used in the Lockheed planes. It was brought back and identified as Amelia's generator by Paul Mantz who acted as her consultant. However, when the generator was sent on to Pratt & Whitney, the so-called makers, they said it was a copy of the Pratt & Whitney generator which had been made by the Japanese and had Japanese markings on it.

Then there was another group who said a twin-tailed plane like the Lockheed Electra had flown in and landed at the Aslito Airport on the island of Saipan about 24 hours after Amelia had taken off from <sup>Lae</sup>~~Hawaii~~. She had about 24 hours' gasoline supply. These Americans were part of the Marine group in Saipan in 1944 and claimed that the plane was in the hangar at the field in 1944, that it was seen in the air the next day and later in that day or the next was burned on the ground. The man who has this belief has never yet published his beliefs or findings, but he does say that he saw the plane on the field, outside the hangar and it had one soft tire. Also, if it was landed in that field in 1937 and was on the ground on that island for seven years without proper maintenance, that would not have been available, it seems certain to me that the corrosion from the salt water air would have destroyed the plane and made it completely unflyable even if the engine and other parts had held together that long. Some early residents of Saipan were found who said that they saw a white man and a white woman with short hair and men's clothing being taken from the





airport in motorcycle sidecars. If Amelia went to prison from there and was imprisoned several weeks or months before her death from dysentery, it might be asked how she got the scissors to keep her hair short and the curlers to keep her hair curly. Also, the photographic album was found on Saipan filled with pictures of Amelia in her flying clothes. You can make sure that if she left behind her trailing antenna in Miami to save weight, she was not taking along with her an album of pictures of herself.

Amelia, when I knew her, was a good pilot <sup>and a fine</sup> ~~She was even a~~  
~~better~~ woman. She was married to George Putnam, the man who ran the publishing house of Putnam & Sons, and she wrote her first book in the home of George Putnam and his then-wife as their guest. <sup>apparently</sup> She was <sup>^</sup> warned by many ~~apparently~~ <sup>they said</sup> about George Putnam who <sup>^</sup> would go to any lengths to get her to become his wife, and I formed, over the years, when I knew them both, as much a dislike for George Putnam as I formed an intense like and respect for Amelia. It is my opinion that he made a meal ticket for himself out of her and that this last flight around the world was his doing and not hers, and that if she had complete charge of her own decisions she would not have made this last flight at all. Early in the Earhart days, probably in the summer of 1933, I entered a woman's air meet out in Long Island and had a lot of fun flying a pylon race in a borrowed plane. George Putnam was there but not Amelia. He came up to me and spoke to me in a somewhat patronizing way and asked me what I was intending to do in aviation. I replied somewhat tartly that I was planning to take the halo off Amelia's head. George was down at the ranch on at least one occasion with Amelia





but usually she was alone. He also spent a couple of times in our apartment in New York with Amelia when we had agreed to help her with her finances on the first flight. We again helped with the repair job after the crack-up in Honolulu. I nearly threw George Putnam out of my ranch house one night I got so mad at him. He and Amelia had come down for a weekend after she had given a lecture in Pasadena. She was tired and I asked her if she would not like a bowl of milk toast. Her answer was an emphatic "yes". But when I brought it in to her she was slouched a bit in a big soft chair and started to sup the milk toast while in that position. George Putnam took her to task for slouching in the chair and said, "If you want to be a lady you must act like a lady.". I told him that he was out of place with such a criticism and he could not talk to her that way in my house. The fact is that after they left the following Monday I never saw him again until he rushed over to my apartment in Los Angeles when the news had come through that Amelia had not reached Howland Island.

George Putnam became known in news-photography circles as a "lens louse" because he managed to get into picture after picture with Amelia and loved the limelight, trying to get as much publicity for himself as he could manage. When Amelia flew solo across the Atlantic five years to the day after Lindbergh had done so, she had become a competent pilot, but I don't think navigation was ever one of her strongest points. In flying across the Atlantic from Newfoundland, if you keep the plane on a generally proper course and you have even the most general idea about winds aloft, it would be pretty hard to miss Ireland or some other part of the British Isles. The same was true when Amelia flew from



Honolulu to the United States. It would be impossible for her not to reach the West Coast, and steamships she knew about on the ocean surface as well as radio kept her quite accurately on course. The same was true of her flight from Mexico City to New York across the Gulf of Mexico. But when she flew from Los Angeles to Mexico City, which was quite a different navigational problem than flying from Honolulu to San Francisco, she lost her way and had to land on a dry lake bed some 60 miles short of her destination to get her bearings.

Amelia was one of the organizers of the 99 Club, an organization of women pilots, and she took a leading part in it during the early days of its existence. It was called the 99 Club because they only could get 99 members at the start. It now is international in scope and has several thousand members. Amelia was the one who asked me to join the 99 Club soon after I got my pilot's license in 1932. Later I became President of the 99 Club for two successive terms, but really did not accomplish much for these were the war years and we were just getting everybody to do what they could to help our military forces.

All in all Amelia became a national heroine at the same time that the national heroes included Lindbergh in aviation, Bobby Jones in golf, Babe Ruth in baseball, Bill Tilden in tennis, Jack Dempsey and Gene Tunney in boxing.

The honors that came to her were many. In 1932 President Hoover presented her with the Gold Medal of the National Geographic Society. Amelia also became close friends with President Roosevelt and Eleanor Roosevelt and gave Eleanor her first experience in






night flying. Mrs. Roosevelt decided to take flying lessons from Amelia, but finally backed out on the request of the President.

Amelia was 39 years old when she made her last flight which means that she would be well up in her seventies if still living today.

People seem to search for the mysterious in her failure to reach Howland Island. The real mystery is how Fred Noonan failed to navigate the plane to its destination because he was the navigator and she was only flying the plane. It is true that on one of the early legs of the flight from Brazil to Africa she disregarded Noonan's instructions and flew north to a place called St. Louis rather than south to a place called Dakar and had to reverse her course the next day because their fuel was at Dakar. You can make sure that she never made the mistake again of disregarding Noonan's instructions as to navigation. So why did Noonan fail in his task? Could it be that the tension of this difficult leg of the flight had caused him to fall off the wagon in Lae? I have heard this suggested and it is evident that the departure from Lae was postponed one day, but I have no reason to believe that Noonan was not <sup>Alert</sup> ~~suber~~ and in complete charge of his faculties on that approximately 2,500 mile flight from Lae to Howland Island. I have not done all the research that some of these groups have done who have been writing what I consider fiction and I don't intend to because I am satisfied as to what happened. But I have talked over the years with the Commander of the Itasca which was stationed at Howland Island with the man who was head of the aircraft carrier that joined in the air search, and with





I was rather unhappy to record in my book "The Stars At Noon" at Floyd's insistence that I had a very high degree of extrasensory perception, that Amelia was familiar with the subject and was convinced of my abilities. We worked together at this over a year and both believed that if she should get down en route I could tell where she was. George Putnam believed it too. As soon as he learned that Amelia had not arrived at Howland he called me in Los Angeles and asked me to locate her. I told him that out of gas she had landed in the ocean about sixty miles west by northwest of Howland Island, that she was still afloat and well although Noonan had struck his head on the bulkhead on crash-landing and was severely injured, that a ship by the name of Itasca was starting a search for them in the right direction but that they were drifting and finally that a Japanese fishing ship was in the general area. I gave George a report the next day that they were still afloat but the next day I reported they had gone down.

I don't ask people to believe my extrasensory perception. I don't expect them to. It is a subject that does not get my own sympathy. I will deal with it a little later in this chapter. Just now I will deal with the known facts which I think show what happened and puncture like a balloon all the fiction that has grown up about the plane and occupants. It is based on the radio messages, the weather and talks I have had with the Commander of the Itasca, the Commander of the aircraft carrier that joined in the search, and one of the pilots who lead in the search.



~~one of the pilots who participated in such search.~~

There are somethings that are clear and which nullify most of the fiction that has been written as fact about this last flight. In the first place, the messages received by two ships at sea showed that 800 miles out of Lae the plane was on course but probably flying into a head wind of 15 or 20 miles an hour. Both Amelia and Noonan had voice radio but only Noonan had telegraphic key. Nor could they transmit and receive with each other. Noonan had to send his messages to Amelia attached to a pole, or at the loss of <sup>some</sup> time *by climbing* ~~to climb~~ over gas tanks, etc., to reach the cockpit. The radio had a power of only 50 watts. She was trying to average 150 miles per hour but for this first 800 miles had failed to do so. It is a fact that Fred Noonan in trying to set his chronometers found that he could not calibrate them correctly because of interference from the Electra's 50 watt radio set. Therefore, when the chronometers were reading either slow or fast he knew he would not be able to obtain accurate celestial fixtures. By arrangement between Amelia and the Itasca she was supposed to report on radio at quarter past and a quarter to each hour. Her ~~frequencies for~~ <sup>by day</sup> ~~this were were 6210 kilocycles/and 3,105 kilocycles by night.~~ For telegraphic code by key Noonan would use 500 ~~kilocycles~~, the standard frequency used by ships at sea. The Itasca was to broadcast weather reports and forecasts and homing signals on the hour and the half hour. ~~and~~ <sup>To</sup> make sure everything was working correctly the Itasca tested signal strength with San Francisco then tried to contact the Electra but it was too early for such establishment of communications. Starting at a few minutes after midnight the Itasca kept transmitting





both by voice and key. At least 7 such broadcasts between midnight and 2:45 in the morning were not replied to by Amelia. Finally at 2:45 they heard on 3,105 kilocycles her voice, but the message was not understood because <sup>there</sup> ~~it~~ <sup>Two much</sup> was <sup>static</sup>, All they could make out was "cloudy and overcast". Having heard her, the Itasca then tried to establish communication but was unsuccessful. It checked its own signals by broadcasting to stations in the vicinity and its messages were heard throughout the Pacific area. At 3 o'clock <sup>and</sup> at 3:30, attempts were made without success. But at 3:45 Amelia was heard by voice saying, "overcast, will listen on hour and half hour on 3,105". At 4 am the Itasca gave the weather and asked for reply but got no answer. At 4:55 the Itasca heard Amelia but her message was garbled and unintelligible. They failed to contact her at 5:15 and also at 5:45. At 6:15 Amelia called in wanting a bearing on 3,105 kilocycles. She said she would whistle into her microphone so that the Itasca could get a bearing and added she was about 200 miles out <sup>from Howland</sup> according to her figures. The attempt to catch her bearing on the whistle was a failure. At 6:45 the Itasca heard Amelia say "Please take a bearing on us and report in half hour. I will make noise in microphone. About one hundred miles out." However her voice was on the air too briefly to allow time for a direct bearing. At 7:18, 7:19 and 7:25 a.m. the Itasca again tried unsuccessfully to contact her. At 7:30 Itasca asked her to acknowledge their signals on key but this was unanswered. At 7:42 Amelia's voice came through loud and clear saying "We must be on you but cannot see you but gas is running low. Been unable to reach you by radio. We are flying at altitude 1,000 feet". At 7:58 Amelia called in again. It was apparent she had not heard





the Itasca for she failed to acknowledge the ship's message. She said "We are circling but cannot hear you. Go ahead on 7,500 either now or on schedule time of half hour." At 8 a.m. Amelia said to the Itasca "We are receiving your signals but are unable to get a minimum for a bearing. Please take a bearing on us and answer with voice on 3,105."

I am told that if Amelia had counted ~~perhaps~~ rather than whistled the Itasca probably could have taken an accurate bearing on her, but the whistling was too much like static to be distinguished from static.

It seems apparent that during the night the sky was overcast and cloudy and Noonan was unable to get a fix on the stars, and apparently this was also true as to getting a fix at sunrise. Therefore, they had to depend on their radio and dead end reckoning ~~and the like~~. Dead end reckoning for about 1,500 miles to a tiny spot known as Howland Island would be like trying to find a needle in a hay stack. When they found that they could not get a fix on the stars and might not even get one at sun-up, Noonan should have caused the plane to turn back to Lae when they had plenty of gasoline for this purpose. It is apparent that the receivers in Amelia's radio sets were not working and she was not getting the messages from the Itasca. It is also apparent that she thought she had arrived at Howland and was circling to find it. In point of fact, the Itasca from daylight on for two hours <sup>had sent</sup> ~~sent~~ up a column of black smoke that could be seen from the south and east for a distance of more than 40 miles by someone in a plane flying at 1,000 feet, and from the north and west could be seen for only 20 miles. It is, therefore, apparent that they were off course by



at least 20 miles. When they finally sent in their final message that they were flying north and south on a given sunline, this didn't help the Itasca people a bit because no geographical point of reference was given, and one can fly north and south on a sunline at any time in any part of the world.

I have purposely given some of these facts to show that even apart from my own knowledge ~~later discussed~~, Amelia could not have landed on the island of Saipan. She would not have had fuel enough accepting the statement as true that she reached the vicinity of Howland, <sup>somewhat low on gas, had</sup> circled and then later flew up and down a north and south course. <sup>> what she thought was Howland vicinity</sup>

At the conclusion of the war with Japan, I was the first woman in Japan and while there I check all of the pertinent files, at General Arnold's request, and found nothing to indicate that Amelia had been captured.

Rear Admiral G.R. Donaho, Director of Naval Administration, while turning down a request of one of the investigators to go to Saipan to open the graves thought to be those of Earhart and Noonan, said "On numerous occasions the Navy has conducted thorough investigations in an effort to verify the many rumors over the years that Miss Earhart and Mr. Noonan were on Saipan or its vicinity. None of these investigations have uncovered any information which would conceivably substantiate either of them having been on this island."

I understand the George Putnam carried on investigations over a considerable of time but finally became convinced that Amelia having run out of gas had gone down into the ocean.





Amelia's sister, Mrs. Morrissey in finally rejecting request for visits from some of these investigators to bring her up to date said that she saw no point in their coming to her to tell her "another literally impossible and harrowing death story." "Amelia's plane went down near Howland Island because of radio failure - the Coast Guard Cutter could not home her in."

Some people tried to base this spy mission theory on the fact that our Navy went to so much trouble to locate her when she failed to arrive at Howland and <sup>also</sup> they helped her with facilities at Howland. The Navy in effect covered 900,000 square miles of air in this search. It must be remembered first that Amelia was a close personal friend of the Roosevelts and secondly that the Navy, Coast Guard and the like must have missions and exercises to keep in shape and good training and, therefore, this would be a complete answer to sending ships out on this search mission.

Some people who listened in on these messages that came through from Amelia to the Itasca said that she seemed hysterical in at least two of them. I don't believe this. Even if she knew that she was badly lost and probably could not recover ~~from her plane~~ she would not have been hysterical. In this connection,

~~As a close for this chapter~~ I quote the first verse of a poem Amelia wrote:

"Courage is the price that Life exacts for granting peace.  
The soul that knows it not  
Knows no release from little things:  
Knows not the livid loneliness of fear,  
Nor mountain heights where bitter joy can hear  
The sound of Wings."

~~I knew the minute George Putnam contacted me in Los Angeles that Amelia had gone down about 60 miles northwest of Howland~~





Now for the extrasensory part of this story.

As a youngster growing up, especially after I reached the twenties, I had very strong hunches which amounted to a sixth sense and which I found I could usually rely upon. But they meant nothing more than this until after I was married to Floyd in 1935. He had been a student of psychic phenomena since his college days, and had served on a committee of the Scientific American Magazine to check the ability and honesty of psychics. Floyd discovered that I would often fall asleep but into a somewhat unnatural sleep and while so asleep would talk freely and in detail about things happening at a distance. Then he discovered I could do this same thing on request while wide awake. We attended a dinner in a doctor's private home in New York one Sunday evening. One of Dr. Rhine's associates from Duke University was there and he had his marked cards along. As I recall there were five cards in each set, one with a star, one with a square, one with a circle and so on, and five sets in each pack. The pack was shuffled and put on the table one side of a black curtain. The person being tested was on the other side of the black curtain. I agreed to be tested. I did it twice. Each time I had a perfect score. According to the Duke University man, this was the only time it had ever happened. Dr. Rhine tried to get me down to Duke for further research but I refused. I did not like the idea of being psychic and asked Floyd to keep this information to himself. I had by now heard about the Salem witches and what happened to them. But Floyd and I worked together with remarkable results. Quite by chance I developed the ability to do automatic writing.

Then we became close to Amelia Earhart. I found out that she was a friend of Dr. Rhine and a student of his work and that she believed in extrasensory perception although she apparently had no



ability herself in this field.

Gradually she became aware of my own ability in this field and then we worked much together. The purpose was to determine if I could locate her if she should get down in her last flight. I gave her on separate occasions the location and details of two transport plane crashes. One she promptly verified. The other proved correct after the snows had disappeared the next spring. But alas Amelia was then gone. I kept track of her on one of her transcontinental flights and accurately. We were both convinced. But that does not mean I could rescue her and it proved out that I could not. Sometimes the information would come to me automatically but usually only when I put my mind to it - at least while I was awake. I could go on and on about these sessions between Floyd and myself - such as reading letters before their arrival - but I am only saying enough now to try and satisfy my readers that I located Amelia when she was down on the water. Because it proved to be of no help I have refused all attempts at extrasensory perception since then.