## The Free Press' Short Story

port, will he?"

ene must be abroad."

fail to see him?"

pose it's a foreign?"

Gerry smiled ruefully.

grunt escaped him.

hardwood?"

awed voice:

«Gerry's square face had drained

"The poor boy will be frightened stiff.

out to sea. If some one doesn't pick him

"What made this plane start? Some-

"I agree with that though I think he

must be a madman to start without get-

They returned to the small window

"Gerry. I'm positive there's no one on

"Certain!" Wilford replied. "I watch-

Trimotors don't land by themselves!"

ting in the pilot's seat. How could

Gerry boosted Wilford to give him

this plane except ourselves."

up-" Wilford coughed nervously.

JOHN SCOTT DOUGLAS

SKY TRAP

TRANGE!" Gerry Fry said in big ship wabbled free in space, zooming an awed tone as lowered the for altitude. marine glasses. "Not a sign of life around the trimotor. Suppose the color. "Wh-why did Gilbert scream?"

pilots are in trouble, Wilf?" . Wilford Parker, with lips pursed, stared "Frightened, perhaps. I don't think the perplexedly from the airport at which he was employed across the opalescent ours. Really can't see how it could." waters of Biscayne Bay. Halfway between the distant Florida keys and the shore a big trimotored hydroplane rooked listlessly on the glassy swells Fifteen minutes had passed since it had landed; fifteen minutes in which Gorry Fry, Wilford, and the latter's younger brother, Gilbert Parker, had waited for a distress

signal directed to the airport. Rough-hewn, square-jawed Gerry, had called at the Skyways Airport, south of Miami, hoping to find an opening for another pilot. Curtailed business resulted in another refusal. He was about to depart when Wilford pointed out the peculiar behavior of the big hydroplane...

"Maybe they're fixing something," piped Gilbert. "Possibly." Wilford agreed without con-

viction; 'but it seems strange to me they wouldn't come in to the port. I'm going to ask Mr. Graham if I can taxi was not one to make wild statements. out there and offer assistance."

When he left to see his employer. Gerry studied the drifting hydroplane again with the glasses. Powerful though they were, he could not distinguish eitherpilot in the control chamber.

"It's all right." Wilford said, a moment later. "Mr. Graham said to go out and investigate."

. "May I go, too?" Gilbert asked eagerly, "Sure," Wilford grinned. "Come on

Gilbert and Gerry squeezed into the ed it land and there was no boat near it fore cockpit of & moored hydroplane. while Wilford climbed into the rear. Tossing over the mooring rope, he started the engine, revving it up in snarling spasms for several minutes. "Rocking" the hydroplane into deeper water, he pushed forward on his stick and went

clapping across the glassy swells. Deliberately holding speed down, Wilford did not take off. He taxied instead toward the mysteriously-motionless hydroplane. Diamond spray broke over the pontoons as he approached the keys. Cutting his "gun," he permitted his ship glide toward the trimotor at an angle Parallel to the bigger hydroplane, they

"Hello." Gerry called.

come to rest.

No reply: After waiting for several pilots of the trimotor remained silent. His bronzed brow clouded as Gerry stared back at Wilford.

"What do you make of that?" "Maybe they're hurt. Perhaps we'd

better go aboard to see" Gerry unfastened the safety strap holding himself and Gilbert in the cockpit and clambered down onto a wing. hydroplane teetered precariously. Gilbert climbed out onto the other wing, and the ship gained a more even balance.

door. "Hello," he called.

Still no reply. With some difficulty. Gerry climbed through the door from the top wing. He held the door open while Wilford followered. The passenger-cabin was empty. Gerry stepped over to the door connecting with the pilot's compartment, but it

knitting. "Perhaps we'd better climb up wicker passenger chairs from the outside and look in the pilot's compartment."

through the small window which gave | should dive " to the pilot's compartment. When he

"Impossible!" Gerry jumped to thewindow. Vision was limited but he would serve them. Not even a para- me believe you went out there for any able," Roger suggested. could see no one in the compartment. The blood pounded in his temples at cated that the hydroplane could not be that moment as the three motors burst in regular commercial use. into song No pilet in the hydroplane. Gerry walked over to the door again; and yet the motors roared Propellers his heart heavy Destruction lay ahead.

droned in a rising crescendo. The 'ri- when this pilotless ship crashed. He, a motor vibrated like a live creature theensed pilot, was powerless to do any-For several moments, Gerry stared thing because he was unable to get into through the window into the empty oun-; the control room... The small window. partment in glassy-eyed disbelief. This would hardly have admitted his head. was impossible a nightmare! Slowly his had he cared to break it. The door was shocked brain began to function. Night-, their only solution, and it was locked, mare or not, the trunctor was regume up. With glazed eyes. Gerry looked out.

Earth and water had flattened out with "Let's get out of here," he cried altitude. Almost directly below was a hoarsely. Gerry sprang toward the closs small watch tower that looked like a ed door, only to be tighted by a scream muniature lighthouse, except for its locafrom Gilbert. At the same instant, Wil- tion. The white sand beach was gone

ford gripped his arm. from before it, and high piles protected a "Too late, Gerty! It's moving!" Mov- little dredged-out harbor from the enthe trimotor was, with that faint rocking croachment of sand on the north and servation indicative of taxying on water, south sides. Several hydroplanes were Together the two young men jumped drawn up to a pier in the miniature to the glass plate in the door. Their own harbor. ship was no longer visible. Long swells . "Whose airport is that?" Gerry asked were lashed into white foam by the big in a flatted tone. pontoons. The tail rose as the trimotor | Wilford joined him at the window.

"Don't know, Gerry. I tried to taxt in Pontoons clapped more harshly; and there one time to find out, and I never the drone of the propellers had changed met such a cool reception in my life." to a high-pitched bussing sound. Pre-"Hmmmm!" Gerry muttered, in a grim sently water-suction was broken, and the attempt to keep up his spirits. "Looks as

if we might get a warm reception/this time. Especially if the tank should explode when we strike that tower."

> This remark was prompted by the strange behavior of the pilotless ship With as little ceremony as it had displayed in taking off, it banked over sharply on the rightly-wing. It a pilot had been at the controls, they could have assumed he was banking for a landing. Now it could mean anything, with the probability of a crash. A crash either on land or water, for striking water at high speed is just as disastrous as striking

The motor began to slow down as the spirals grew bigger and bigger with the ship's descent. The uncanny sensation swept over Gerry that a pllot was at the controls, a phantom pilot who meticu-Wilford swallowed, with difficulty. lously guarded their lives and was directing the hydroplane to a safe landing. wing of this plane could have struck Nonsense, of course, but the feeling persisted, and he could not throw it off. Everything about their descent was studied, practise. No sudden jolts, no feeling He won't even know how to taxi to the that the ship was in reality out of con-

"No; and the tide will be carrying him The hair rose on the back of Gerry's neck as they came closer and closer to the water. Was it possible that the controls had fallen into the correct positions for a safe landing? Inconceivable! Wilford waited resignedly in one of the

> wicker chairs, his head in his hands. to sea," he said huskily, without raising | ger, better fruit. his head; "I wouldn't mind so much."

Gerry turned, his mouth stiffening. The better view. Finally Wilford said in an iridescent swells rose before his smarting eyes as the big trimotor nosed down, and the engine cut out. Short of gas! Well, of the tree-is the wrong way to seek that might prevent an explosion!

Opening his mouth to expostulate. Gerry closed it again Wilford Parker expected the big ship to nose down into periment Station. the swells for a crash landing. Nothing "There are a lot of wires and other of the sort! Suddenly the nose came up that the greatest number of large, wellgadgets I've never seen before on any slightly, and the next instant the ponplane. In fact, the whole pilot's com- toons bit into the water. Strangely partment is different from any Tve ever enough, the motor started again, as seen. I don't know if I could operate! though the phantom pilot intended to this plane if I could get in there. Suptaxi to shore. Weak though he was at the unexpected escape, Gerry observed "Hardly," Gerry said slowly. "Experi- that the ship was moving into the little mental plane, more likely! But where harbor between the rows of piling. did the pilots go after landing this crate?

"What do you make of it?"

Are you sure a boat didn't pick them Two pilots were standing on the little. then. And none approached it after it out, and died, two other men came down is greater exposure to the sun. the spiral stairs of the tower, and hurried "They must along the pier. They bore a slight rehave been taken off-by a boat approachsemblance, though the foremost was ing from the keys' side of this plane. young and pink-cheeked while the man behind him was older with white hair.

Gerry could hear: Gerry started. "I get what you're "It was a success, Roger-a success!! driving at. If this is an experimental With my invention, airports will be able port." Wilford protested. "They'll vouch plane-" Gerry stopped, and frowned. to direct planes to a landing by radio, for me. And Gerry Fry's my friend." Won't do, Wilf! No one would be crazy without the pilot doing a thing! This enough to invent a plane which would final experiment proves its efficiency! We the older man snapped. "Undoubtedly land and take off by itself. Think of the have had planes of all sizes take off and the sheriff will be but that's another hazard of landing on boats, on land; any- land, and finally this trimotor. What thing. Men, will you-" further proof do we need of its value. "It's more logical to suppose there's Roger?"

some starting device on this plane which "None Dad!" the pink-cheeked young works a little too readily. Perhaps mov- man cried exultantly. "I wasn't sure ing around the plane set it going. It's until we'd tried it with the trimotor, but certain we're going to crash if we don't that settles it. Now when we get it plans stolen before this device is pat- the level-thing airplane. Rising above it get into the control room and do some- patented-"

Suddenly Gerry dropped into a wicker "Right you are!" Wilf agreed tersely, chair and burst out laughing. "Not only, are we in danger of washing- "Of all the rummies!" he exclaimed.

out, but Gilbert is probably drifting out "Don't you see now, Wilf?" to sea in the hydroplane at this very ""I'm beginning to," Wilford grinned, only drew his arms closer together so dered if the weight was sufficient to hold "This was an experimental plane that that he felt dizzy with pain. He gave it down against the pressure of their Gerry moved over to the door of the old chap was using for radio-control ex- up his attempt to escape. it. Locked! Nothing was-left to do, but so many wires and so many different vacant room next to the control room smash it down if they were not to be controls in the pilot's compartment. Now Windows were all around, but the ground

hurled to destruction! Gerry threw him- we can go after Gilbert-" self against it and bounced back. He "I heard laughter."-the old intentor stood guard at the locked door, while the Gerry reached up and opened the cabin tried again, harder. The third time a cried suddenly. "Some one's in that other went for the sheriff." plane. Some one's trying to steal my "Don't kill yourself, Gerry. What is it plan!"

One of the pilots pulled the wing over help some one we thought in distress? "Hardwood nothing! Some aluminum the low pier so that the cabin door Look! Gilbert's heading right for the compound, I think. The woody appear- could be opened by the other pilot. Gerry open water between two keys!" ance is only paint. Maybe if both of and Wilford stepped out, and the old in- "If the hydroplane upsets in that

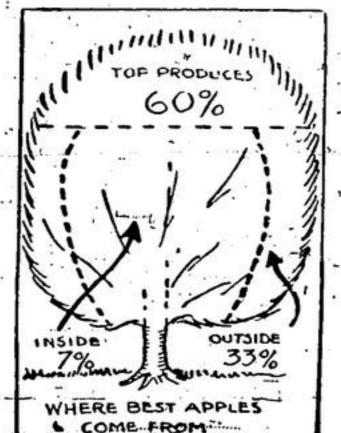
ventor's black eyes narrowed. Wilford sprang to Gerry assistance, "Seize them!" he commanded his pilots That inventor can't be so inhuman?" was locked. He called several times but and they battered themselves against the shrilly. -"The're the fellows who have "Some one has tried to steal his plans door panel until they were both sore, twice tried to steal my plans, breaking twice," Gerry remided his friend, "You "Funny" Gerry muttered his brows Finally Wilford dropped into one of the into my office—" The two pilots seized can hardly, blame him for being sus-

Wilford and Gerry from behind. "Trapped!" he muttered thickly. "This is a mistake!" Gerry snapped, same, he'll be responsible if anything "Gerry, we'll be skilled sure as anything "If anyone should be mad, we should, happens to Gilbert." Gérry threw up one Wilford was meanwhile glancing when this plane runs out of gas, or if if We went out in a plane to offer assist- of the windows, and shouted at the pair ance, and we were carried against our below

> "Rubbish!" snorted the old man very send your pilot out to pick him up." A hasty search revealed nothing that sharply. "Do you think you can make "I think that would be only reason-

Weekly

Garden-Graph Written by DEAN-HALLIDAY for Central Press Canadian



Pruning for better fruit

ON A TREE

only one or two favorite apple trees our garden, take a tip from the com

"Conventional" pruning-which is the practice of thinning out the top and outside branches of an apple tree in order to permit the sun to reach into the centre better fruit, according to trials conducted Waiting with pounding heart, Gerry at the Michigan State Agricultural Ex-

> The Michigan experiments have proved colored apples can be grown on the top! and outer portions of a tree if it is pruned by the new method. The experiments to rush into the radio-control room. also proved that the apples grown on are smaller in size and less in number.

This week's garden-graph shows the sections of the tree which grow good fruit and inferior fruit. According to Gerry clipped out. "I'm going to show "I don't," Gerry said with a pale smile. the Michigan experiments, 60 per cent. more mercy to your son than you've of the best apples produced by a tree shown to Wilford's brother. But I must low pier When the engine finally cut come from the top portion, where there have your help."

tower, men, and they can tell their pretty stories to the sheriff, and also explain "And they don't take off, ofther, do The older man cried so loudly that even why they have twice broken into my

"But I'm working for Skywards Air-

"Tosh! Would you know a dishonest water dropping away leneath him.

the boys toward the tower. Angry now bearing the white-faced vouth as being mistaken for a thief, Gerry tried Wilford had meanwhile tied the parts to break away. The pilot who held him of motors to the parachute. Gerry won-

pllot's compartment, and once more tried periments, ch? No wonder there were A minute later they were lodged in the

"What a mess!" Gerry said disgustedly. "Is this what we get for trying to

shark-infested waten Gilbert's gone! picious of intruders after that. Just the

"It's diving now!" Gerry exclaimed will. The hydroplane is floating some- "Sir, do you realize my friend's brothe turned his lean face was blank. "Gerry!" | "Quick, Wilf! See if there's anything where in Biscayne Bay right now, with is in that hydroplane drifting out to he cried thickly. "We're alone in this here we can use to catter down that Wilford Parker's young brother aboard." sea?" If you won't release us. please

chute could be found, which rather indi- other purpose than te-study my plane?. The old man snifted. Don't you see

what they're up to? They want to have that pilot away so they can break down the door and escape."

"Oh," said the youth, "I didn't, think

of that!" Gerry and Wilford continued to plead, but neither old nor young man paid any attention to them. They discussed another flight-with one of the single-motored airplanes. Roger argued that since two men had already made a flight in a radio-controlled ship, it would be safe for him. Finally his father gave his consent Roger climbed into an open cockpit

airplane, and his father climbed up the spiral stairs to the control room. Gerry and-Wilford watched from window, fascinated at the experiment despite the fear preying at their hearts. The motor burst into roaring life, and it began to taxi across the water, gaining momentum. When it seemed about to

break water-suction on the pontoons, one pontoon struck a floating log. The poontoon was smashed to fragments like a strawberry crate, due to the high, speed of the ship. Water-suction was broken, and the airplane was in the air, gaining momentum. Evidently the old inventor had not seen the accident; for they could tell by the clicking of switches and the buzzing of the radio mechanism that he was entirely concern-

ed with manipulation of the ship.

"It's all right as long as the plane's in "If it only wasn't for Gilbert, drifting mercial fruit-grower and prune for big- the air," Wilford said huskily. "But how'l it land? In pieces, most likely!" Gerry knocked sharply on the door.

> Look at that plane," he directed. The pilot evidently looked, for a cry pagaped him, and they could hear him running toward the radio-control room A moment later sobs could be heard.

> "My boy! My Roger!" the old man was saying. "He'll' die when he lands!" Gerry seized this opportunity to hurl himself against the door. It crashed outward, and he pushed aside the pilo

"Listen." Gerry cried, "have you s the lower and inner branches of a tree parachute around here?" Dazed black eyes raised to meet Gerry's The old man nodded.

"I'll have to have it, and a plane."

"I'll do anything "

"Watch your radio controls, then, and keep that plane on an even keel. Possibly I can do something; possibly

"McGarth," the old inventor said to the still-dazed pilot. "Give this young man anything he wants. And may God

Gerry wanted only an airpane, a parachute, a rope, and some parts of a motor he found lying near the water hangars. With these articles and Wilford, he set out, skimming across the water, and siapping the pontoons down hard to break "They look honest," Roger ventured their hold Presently he was off the

The subdued bellow of his motor was me, Roger. I'm not going to have my intensified as he zoomed, straight for at last, he sliced down again until he was The two husky pilots started to push abe to level off above the other ship

(Concluded on Pake Six)



to find a suit of red flannel underwear tune may produce. in Saskatchewan. Which may be too bad, revealing as it must that the pioneer days are passing. There was a fine bit of dash and color to a suit of red underwear, especially when it swung on the sort that can go through a night camped Post

SIGH FOR RED FLANNELS

in the river bottom with the tempera-

We suppose it would be pretty hard stand up against anything fate and for

Ture 40 below, the kind of people that wil

They had to be that kind of people to wear red flannel underwear, spiked like a

We doubt if it is possible, but it would line in the backyard. When we saw such be consoling to know that somewhere a suit flung to the breeze or snapping suit of red flannel still stabs the Sasand crackling with the thermometer 35 katchewan landscape into light and color. below, we knew that there were real say at Buffalo Horn, Lonesome Butte, sturdy, men abroad, the type that make Skull Creek, or in the remote fastnesses a country, that can stand hardship, the of the Lost Horse Hills.-Regina Leader-





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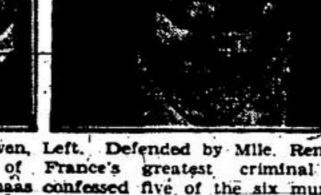
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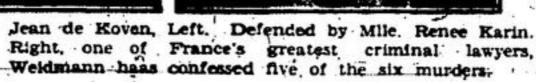
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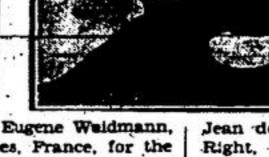














Once a resident of Wilkie, Sask., Eugene Weidmann, Jean de Koven, Left. Defended by Mile. Renee Karin. Centre, is now facing trial in Versailles, France, for the murder of six persons, including the American dancer, Weldmann hass confessed five of the six murders,