

## Jumping Meridians

By LINTON WELLS and NELS LEROY JORGENSEN

If Jimmy wrecked the plane, he was to pay for it; if he broke his neck at the same time—all concerned shrugged their shoulders, waved their hands, and indicated that even that would not cause a break-up of the soviet states. It could be endured.

"Fair enough!" the American grinned. "Come on, Monsieur le Commissar. I demand that you bid me au revoir!"

That official was more than willing. The dilapidated Ford carried the entire party to the landing field—a circumstance which caused Jimmy to comment again on the difference accorded prisoners and persons of importance. He was conscious of a deep surge of delight and satisfaction at sight of the field, in his mind a vivid recollection of the last time he had seen it. He wondered whether the sentry who had captured him could see.

Carefully he inspected the ship in which he was to make the wild flight. It was a Junker, and he nodded approvingly; he knew the type well and had a certain familiarity with it.

Within half an hour, he and his pilot were ready to start. The propeller was turning over idly. Jimmy glanced over the field, a hint of doubt in his manner. Only one or two lights marked it; they were not sufficient for a take-off. He glanced at the Ford's headlights and had them switched on to their full power. These would have to suffice and provide the horizon for his ascent.

He touched the throttle and spark, advancing and retarding the motor to warm it. They would not land until dawn, he reflected, so landing lights would not be essential, once they managed to get off this dark field and into the sky. Frowning, he made ready; but with all his confidence in himself, he felt none too certain.

The most skillful of pilots would have hesitated on that strange field in a strange ship. Jimmy's face was set, even though he smiled as, leaning over, he tossed a hand in cheery adieu to the assistant commissar, and then taxied to a position at the farther end of the field.

Overhead was darkness. The ground was enveloped in the blanket of night. A scant three stars glimmered feebly in the purple vault above him. He turned neatly, took a deep breath, and advanced throttle and spark together. No matter what lay ahead, he had to get up.

Presently he was roaring back down the field, a trail of sparks shooting out from under his fuselage. His hands clung to the stick; the wheels of the ship touched and skimmed alternately. Then—it came!

A stone, carelessly tossed into the fairway, made the plane slip sidewise at an alarming angle. The landing gear having struck it, it bounded into the air. The reserve pilot gasped, white-faced, as he leaned over the cowl, his hands reaching out nervously for the wheel. But Jimmy, scarcely glancing at him, brushed him aside. It was a desperate moment.

At any second, now, the plane might tip forward on its nose, which would mean a ground smash—and death. Jimmy, his hands gripping the stick tenaciously—the only sign that he understood the dread possibility confronting him—drew it sharply toward his stomach. The ship reacted immediately; its nose pointed upward.

In the next second, however, he was rewarded by the sound

of a tearing crash and a thud against the tail. But he was clear of the ground. With every second he was gaining altitude. The final awful moment was passed. But he knew, even as he sought his height, that his safety had cost him the loss of his tail-skid; that tearing grind had meant nothing less than that.

Tomorrow morning, landing would be a precarious job. For the moment, however, he told himself, he was safe—free of Viatka; after all the dangers of the night, he was once more in the air, with the chance still before him of reaching Moscow, 600 miles distant—in time to catch the ship for Konigsberg. The morning could take care of itself.

Jimmy circled once; and then, using the lights of the Ford on the field below as his point of departure, set his course due west. The pilot, who had been staring at him as though he had taken flight with a madman, let a slow, understanding smile creep over his swarthy features; and then, with a sigh that was contented as the circumstances would allow, he dropped back in his seat and let his eyes close.

Meanwhile, Jimmy Brandon was so completely at home in the pilot's seat that driving became an automatic thing, and he let his mind run back over the hours just passed. Back—and forward, too, toward those to come. After all, he was still in the race; after even he had resigned himself before what had appeared to be the inevitable. It was a zestful thought; no matter what happened now, he knew he must win.

Someone had helped him. Chuck Harvey's message from Moscow had got to Viatka before the train connecting with the Konigsberg plane was due in the former city. In other words, no news of Jimmy's plight could have got to his friends through train guards or any of the passengers who had waited for arrival. Someone had wired ahead—someone had known enough to wire to Harvey.

If he could only meet her! thought Jimmy—that mysterious, elusive creature in black silk—his lady of narcissis noir! He doubted not for a single instant that it was she who had come to his aid again. Had he thought of the possibilities, he might have guessed that she would do this. She knew him, then—but she must know him, else how could she have done so much already for his sake?

Once the wiry, irrepresible Harvey had got the message, Jimmy could visualize what had happened. Harvey, of course, knew of his trip; it had been broadcast into every newspaper office in the world by this time. But Harvey couldn't have known, until it was morning and too late, that his friend was not on the train bearing toward Moscow over the ground below, even as the big Junker tore ahead through the clouds. The young correspondent had gone at once to influential friends, and from them, armed with papers of all sorts, to the Narkomindel—the Russian foreign office. Jimmy could imagine, realizing it all now at leisure, what the telegrams on the assistant commissar's desk must have contained.

He smiled. An instant later, the smile died on his lips as he thought of the reason for his predicament. Rogers! He no longer doubted it. It remained, of course, to be proved—a duty that he promised himself to attend to.

It was early dawn when the relief pilot tapped him on the

arm and pointed toward the west. Nosing the plane down slightly, the American saw in the distance, through a rift in the rose and blue mists of early dawn, the ancient spires and roofs of Moscow limned by the first golden lights of the sun.

His heart gave a little leap of excitement. Moscow! After Moscow came a civilization with which he was more than familiar—the last leg of this wearing journey. Despite the tenacity of his chilled muscles, he felt freed in an instant from the nervous strain of the past five hours of flight through Stygian darkness over the unmapped plains of Russia.

There had been times, once the long charge through space was under way, when neither he nor his companion had been able to distinguish even a ground light. Only the finely developed sense of balance in the two men had enabled them to keep the ship on an even keel. They had relieved each other at the stick at intervals, without conversation. Jimmy would give the control a shake and his companion, sitting beside him, would grip the wheel while he relaxed.

The night had been bitterly cold; Jimmy knew that the trip would remain in his mind for a long time. While off duty, he had spent his time massaging aching, tightened muscles and attempting to determine how nearly the plane was following the right course. Only an occasional star gleamed through the blackness—a star that made the impenetrable dark all the more real and palpable.

The broken tail-skid had been forgotten. That was a thing for the morning to take care of. Should he crack up the ship on making the landing at Moscow, Jimmy knew that every dollar he possessed would have to go to repair it. He gave little thought to his own danger; if he made his landing safely, he would be in time to catch the Konigsberg plane—for the present, that was all that mattered.

Barring a rail accident, of course, Rogers would also catch the plane. That would put them neck and neck again.

Three weeks, exactly 21 days, it had been since he and his arrival had shaken hands on the steps of their club on Fifth avenue. Jimmy somehow felt ages older; New York, in spite of the fact that he was nearing it, was worlds away. He was, strangely, in some new existence, in which even Frances had no real place. There was only himself—and the girl of the narcissis noir, who was part of this mad adventure.

Another week—only eight days at most, and the race would be over. Either he or Rogers would be standing on the same brownstone steps, and around the corner would be the brownstone steps of Frances Lassiter's home, where the final crown of victory, which was to have meant more than fame and international renown, would be bestowed.

Jimmy remembered looking forward to that moment, to the hurried dash around the corner that faced the park. Somehow, the thought lacked its accustomed thrill. He even mentioned the name of Frances aloud, in a little whisper, as he had been wont to do of old. Yet his pulses failed to respond.

Had he tired? he wondered. Or was he unworthy? Or was it only that the delicate odor of black narcissis arose in Cirean fumes to confuse his thoughts?

He shook his head with an abrupt gesture. There was work to be done. The sun came full over his shoulder, leapt free of the horizon, and Jimmy turned with a gasp at the beauty of the scene. Clouds sped by on a level with his keel, crimson and orange-tinted; below, the plains of Russia had taken on a misty, fairy-like web that made rainbows of the first rays.

Slowly he turned his eyes back. Moscow spread out before him, a vivid changing tapestry of the east, set like an ancient jewel in the Occident. He picked out the old towers and spires of the Kremlin, somnolent now with sleep and early dawn, wreathed in the gentle strands of mist still wavering between him and the earth; and upon sight of the broad landing field, he veered slightly to the left.

A few more minutes— There was only one hope for a safe landing. Jimmy surveyed the field from aloft for a full five minutes, his engine roaring over the tiny shacks at its edge, until he was certain that he had been seen. Then he pointed the nose of his ship into the wind, while the Russian pilot stared and held his breath.

The Junker commenced to settle in a long, graceful glide, its propeller barely revolving. Jimmy noticed with relief that one or two men had run out on the field. If they did not see his predicament, he was lost. At last, judging distance and balance with hairbreadth precision, his eyes narrowed to slits and his hands gripped to the wheel like steel bracelets, he placed the wheels of his undercarriage on the ground as gently as a bird lands.

The pilot beside him gave an involuntary gasp of admiration. Silently, Jimmy rolled across the field, his features set. His companion was sitting forward intently. Then the field mechanics, catching sight of the damaged tail-skid, ran forward. The great bird teetered backward and forward precariously; Jimmy fought to keep the tail clear of the ground.

One of the mechanics grabbed a wing. Another caught hold of the tail and ran along beside it. A third came up. Jimmy, with a sigh of relief, cut his switch and the giant ship stood still, unharmed. For a moment there was utter silence while the American and Russian stared at each other; then, slowly, a grin broke on their faces. The Russian put out his hand.

As he took it, a yell was carried across the field on the early morning breeze, and Jimmy heard his name in the first English voice he remembered for some time.

"Jimmy—Brandon!" He turned cheerily. "Chuck Harvey! Come here, you cub!"

Oil-spattered, red-eyed, haggard from want of sleep and the strain of the long night, Jimmy clambered from the cockpit of the Junker to greet the man who had relieved him as news correspondent in Moscow. Chuck Harvey might have been a younger replica of himself—cocksure, in a prepossessing, pleasant way, swaggering as D'Artagnan might have swaggered, and smiling a winning, white-toothed smile which took away all the sting of his utter self-confidence and implanted a new confidence in the same breath.

"I might have known you'd do it!" was his greeting. "After I'd got off the telegrams—and they were hot ones, by the way!—I started figuring out your position. Knew you had to make that Konigsberg plane, and I knew there was just one way you could do it—so I figured you'd take the one way if you had to break up the whole union of soviet states."

"I very nearly did," Jimmy returned. "It was your telegrams, though, that made this possible. They scared the assistant commissar so completely that all I had to do was make plans."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Chicago.—Baby Paul Boehme is "as normal and healthy as the average child" but his heart and liver are on the right side of his body. "It's a case of dextra cordia," says Dr. F. L. Hussey, who made the discovery, "due to an embryonic abnormality, but it does not affect him physically in any way."

romance. But dig into the details of it under the surface and you will find it packed with these qualities. Introduce the drought and hail, the untimely rains at harvest time, insect pests, credit difficulties, poor markets, inflation, deflation, and there begins to unfold to you not just a tale of plodding labor but something which is in the old myths of the heroes who went out to slay dragons.

In Australia there are at least 20 species of animals that are aviators—flying squirrels, flying opossums, flying mice and even flying bats.

### Some Marriage Dreams That Don't Come True

During the present season 25,000 prospective chorus girls applied for employment with New York city's theatrical producers. Most of them came from small towns and cities from all over the country. About 5,000 found jobs with "shows," good, bad and indifferent. What became of the other 20,000 it would be difficult to say. The average professional life of chorus girls is three short years and they may expect many weeks of idleness in this period. There always is an over-abundant supply of new ones to select from every fall. Perhaps 150 attain to speaking parts in plays in one season. The rest are rarely heard of again. Most stage-struck girls dream of brilliant marriages to men of wealth but that is an illusive dream. O. O. McIntyre, New York theatrical critic, says not more than ten chorus girls have married millionaires in the last ten years and most of these matches have ended in divorce.

Every department of housekeeping needs Red Cross Ball Blue. Equally good for kitchen towels, table linen, sheets and pillowcases, etc.—Adv.

Huh! Brown—Does your daughter read much? Black—Well, from the kind of magazines and books I see her bring home I should say not much.

### Large, Generous Sample Old Time Remedy Sent Free to Every Reader of This Article

More than forty years ago, good old Pastor Koenig began the manufacture of Pastor Koenig's Nerveine, a remedy recommended for the relief of nervousness, epilepsy, sleeplessness and kindred ailments. The remedy was made after the formula of old German doctors. The sales soon increased, and another factory was added. Today there are Koenig factories in the old world and Pastor Koenig's Nerveine is sold in every land and clime.

Try it and be convinced. It will only cost you a postal to write for the large, generous sample. Address: Koenig Medicine Co., 1045 No. Wells St., Chicago, Illinois. Kindly mention your local paper.

To Reclaim Peat Lands Plans for the reclamation of vast peat lands in Scotland are being discussed. It is asserted that if the task is undertaken it will mean great prosperity for the country. Efforts along this line have been made before with great financial loss to the promoters, but those back of the present scheme declare they will carry it through to success.

They're Peaches Constantine (to clerk in store)—I want a peck of apples. Clerk—Do you want Baldwins? Constantine—Sure. Did you think I wanted some with hair on?

Very Evident "That coat, sir, fits you like a glove." "So I can see! The sleeves completely cover my hands."

## It May Be Urgent



### When your Children Cry for It

Castoria is a comfort when Baby is fretful. No sooner taken than the little one is at ease. If restless, a few drops soon bring contentment. No harm done, for Castoria is a baby remedy, meant for babies. Perfectly safe to give the youngest infant; you have the doctors' word for that! It is a vegetable product and you could use it every day. But it's in an emergency that Castoria means most. Some night when constipation must be relieved—or colic pains—or other suffering. Never be without it; some mothers keep an extra bottle, unopened, to make sure there will always be Castoria in the house. It is effective for older children, too; read the book that comes with it.



No Choice Ganna—Men are fools to marry. Walska—Yes, but what else is there for women to marry?—Pathfinder.

### The Reflections of a Young Married Woman

are not pleasant if she is delicate, run-down, or overworked. She feels "played-out." Her smiles and good spirits have taken flight. It worries her husband as well as herself.

One woman said:—"I was in poor health for several years after I was married and not until I was advised to try Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription did I notice any improvement. A very small amount of this remedy gave me wonderful benefit, I became well and stronger than I ever had been. A year or so later came a baby boy—my only child. Now I am well and happy, so of course I always recommend Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription."—Mrs. Meda Cronk, 615 W. Pearl St., Savannah, Mo.

At your neighborhood store. Extra large bottles, liquid \$1.35; Tablets \$1.35 and 65 cents. Write Dr. Pierce's, Buffalo, N. Y., if you desire free medical advice.

Don't tender advice until you find out what kind is wanted.

## For Colds -



How many people you know end their colds with Bayer Aspirin! And how often you've heard of its prompt relief of sore throat or tonsillitis. No wonder millions take it for colds, neuralgia, rheumatism; and the aches and pains that go with them. The wonder is that anyone still worries through a winter without these tablets! They relieve quickly, yet have no effect whatever on the heart. Friends have told you Bayer Aspirin is marvelous; doctors have declared it harmless. Every druggist has it, with proven directions. Why not put it to the test?



The Perfumed Touch that makes your toilet complete  
**Cuticura Talcum Powder**  
The finishing touch to the daintiest toilet. Cooling, refreshing, and delightfully perfumed and medicated, it imparts to the person a delicate and distinctive fragrance and leaves the skin sweet and wholesome.  
Sold everywhere. Talcum 25c. Soap 25c. Ointment 25c. Sample each free. Address: Cuticura, Dept. B6, Malden, Mass.

**The Master Farmer.** L. G. Yochum, master farmer of Saunders county, is not without some little reputation outside the limit of his own locality. He served in the legislature once, a state cornhusking contest was held on his farm at another time and now he has been honored as one whose career in agriculture is worthy of special mention. But it is doubtful if he will ever be widely known as he deserves to be.

We are not so sure but that the story of Mr. Yochum's life would furnish more practical inspiration to the little boys in the white-roofed school houses which dot

Nebraska plains than stories of such men as Washington, Lincoln and other national heroes. These boys have a slim chance of ever becoming Washingtons or Lincolns but they have every chance in the world of becoming L. G. Yochums which means that they can become successful farmers and public spirited and admirable citizens at the same time.

The story of this master farmer is the story we so often like to repeat of the poor boy who achieved, if not riches, at least a comfortable competence. And he did it by the good old copy book method of thrift and diligence. On the surface it seems to lack thrill and

his Ohio home toward the west. He worked as a farm hand for a year in Illinois and invested his earnings in a ticket to Nebraska. He saved \$250 out of his wages as a farm laborer for the next two years. With this capital he undertook to farm for himself as a renter. It took him 28 years to achieve his ambition to farm his own land and when he did it, it was to subside a farm grown up, as he describes it, with sunflowers and cockleburs. In the 16 years he has farmed that land he has bought it to a state of cultivation which makes it one of the show farms of the state. This is a simple story. On the surface it seems to lack thrill and