

PROFESSIONAL PASSENGER IS AIRPLANE JINX

Accidents Dog Footsteps of 'Hard Luck' Bates, Tramp of Air.

By Scripps-Howard Newspaper Alliance
WASHINGTON, Dec. 31.—There is a young man at Hoover field here called "Hard Luck" Bates. He is not a pilot, but an inveterate air passenger. Some fliers won't let him ride with them, and a few of the more superstitious won't even let him touch their planes. He just naturally brings bad luck to flying men, they say.

Bates used to be a bookkeeper or something at Hoover field. Laid off now during the dull winter season, he sort of "tramps" around the country by airplane, picking up rides here and there as long as the pilots don't know his history. He is liable to crawl out of a plane in Atlanta, or Chicago, or Kansas City just any old day.

The reason they call him "Hard Luck" is because nearly every time he goes up in a plane, something happens. He has been flying as passenger less than two years, and has been through five crackups, and never been scratched.

He took his first airplane ride at Fredericksburg, Va., in May, 1928. The motor cowl blew off, hit the prop, and broke it. A forced landing was the next thing in order, and the ship turned over and was washed out.

Last summer Bates was flying with Lieutenant Bernard Thompson of the army. Near Charleston, W. Va., a cylinder head gasket blew out, and they went down in the tree-covered mountains, and escaped unhurt.

Then he went down to Nokesville, Va., one day with Roger Scott, Hoover field operations manager. Landing at Nokesville they ground-looped and tore off a wheel.

Last fall he was flying over Virginia with Pilot Hank Pritchard and they decided to land in a school yard. They did, but hit a ditch, the plane went over and was wrecked. One wheel came up through the cockpit.

Hoover field got a telegram from

the sheriff there. It said: "Sending Bates back by train. Plane washed out." That meant, they thought, that he was dead. Poor old Bates.

A little while later Bates walked into the hangar, covered with mud and grease and carrying a bent propeller over his shoulder. They thought it was a ghost, but it wasn't. It was Bates.

But that didn't sour Bates on Pritchard, or Pritchard on Bates. They flew together again at Atlanta the other day. When they landed, the ship went up on its nose with a big smash. Nobody was hurt.

You can see now why some pilots won't carry Bates. Scott, of Hoover field, isn't afraid of him and carries him around here and there. But Jack Parker, formerly of Hoover and now flying in Baltimore, won't even let him sit in his plane on the ground. If Bates so much as touches the ship, Parker wipes it off before going up.

There are other superstitious about Bates. He was a friend of Tom Gurley, Pritchard's mail pilot. He stood in front of the hangar one day and waved to Gurley as he took off for New York. Gurley was killed before he got there. Some of the fliers forbid Bates to wave goodbye to them.

The reason he has a bad reputation for indigestibility is that it often taken at the end of a heavy meal, when the stomach already is overloaded.

GALES RAGE IN EUROPE; REPORT MANY DEATHS

Flood Waters Menace to Residents in France, England, Belgium.

By United Press
LONDON, Dec. 31.—Three more deaths were reported today from storms and floods which have raged since Sunday throughout the British Isles.

A cloudburst, accompanied by a terrific thunderstorm, broke over Bangor, Wales, flooding houses, the police station and the gas and electric plants.

The battleship Rodney, of 33,900 tons, was unable to leave Portsmouth harbor. Many ships were reported in distress off the coast.

By United Press
PARIS, Dec. 31.—Accompanied by a torrential rain, the storm which swept over France from England continued its destructive work Monday night, particularly in the

English channel and along the Atlantic coast.

A landslide menaced one section of Boulogne, tons of mud sliding into houses and hotels. At Versailles, a high tension cable wire collapsed in the gale, instantly killing a passerby.

The rivers Marne, Aisne and Meuse were rising dangerously.

By United Press
BRUSSELS, Dec. 31.—The inhabitants of Couillet, near Charleroi, were thrown into a panic Monday night when the dykes inclosing a vast reservoir, owned by the chemical works, burst under the pressure of heavy rains.

The storm partly demolished one railroad bridge, and flooded the cellars and ground floors of many houses. The population took refuge in upper stories.

One of the laws of Tibet is that married women must not make themselves attractive to men. Therefore they plaster their faces with black mud.

432 MILES OF ROAD PAVED BY STATE IN 1929

More Revenue Anticipated From Gasoline Tax Next Year.

Having completed the construction of 432 miles of pavement to give Indiana a total of 2,600 miles of hard-surfaced roads, the state highway commission has a sound basis for its claim that 1929 was the "greatest year in the department's history."

The present state system comprises nearly 5,500 miles of roads connecting virtually all county seat towns and important cities. Of this

total, 2,127 miles have been rebuilt with stone or gravel; 250 miles have been made dustless with oil and calcium chloride preparations, and approximately 250 miles have been graded preparatory to paving in 1930.

The 1930 program as outlined by John J. Brown, director of the department, provides for paving more than 500 miles; surfacing several hundred miles with gravel, and inclusion of additional county roads into the state system of maintenance.

Much of the work provided for in this program will be made possible by increased funds from gasoline tax collections, Brown said. This year, the 4-cent law went into effect in April and the department received only nine months' collections, under the statute giving it 3 of the 4 cents.

It is believed that, within a short

time, new highways will be constructed twenty feet wide instead of the regulation eighteen feet, as the annual increase in motor traffic, and the increase in speed along highways, has made travel dangerous on the narrow roads.

SEARCH FOR POISONED CAKE IS SUCCESSFUL

Crosses Border Into Canada; Wire Results in Its Seizure.

By United Press
WASHINGTON, Dec. 31.—The story of an international search for a missing fruit cake, accidentally poisoned with arsenic, has been made public here by the department of agriculture.

A housewife baked nine fruit cakes for sale. Calcium arsenic accidentally had been mixed with the

four. The first was eaten by a lady purchaser who became violently ill.

Analysis showed the presence of arsenic in the cake and a search was made for the cakes. Seven were found with little difficulty, but not before nine other people had fallen ill. The ninth cake proved elusive.

Determined to locate it, agriculture officials launched an extensive search. Many clues were traced before they learned the cake had crossed the border into Canada. A wire to Canadian authorities resulted in seizure of the threatening delicacy.

Young Hogs Weigh Heavily

By Times Special
..., Dec. 31.—Four hogs only thirty-two weeks old butchered here by John Caborn, had a total weight of 1,212 pounds and in addition to meat provide fifty gallons of lard.

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