

**HE'S
REALLY
QUITE
A MAN!**

By Colonel Harold R. Harris

COMMANDING OFFICER, DOMESTIC TRANSPORTATION DIVISION, ATC

THE next time an airplane comes taxiing up to the ramp at your station and the pilot steps out wearing a uniform with stripes on the sleeves or bars on the shoulder straps of his shirt and with a cap insignia bearing the letters "ATC" don't ask him as a soldier did recently at one of our South Atlantic bases, if he is an officer in the Australian Tank Corps.

You'll be seeing this uniform a lot from now on all over the world. It is approved by the War Department for the civilian crew members employed by the commercial airlines under contract to the War Department. Together with Army crews, these men are flying cargo, mail and passengers and are training aircrews for the Army Air Forces Air Transport Command. To be technical, AAF Regulation 40-4 calls them "Air Carrier Contract Personnel."

Step up and get acquainted with one of them. You'll find he is quite a flyer, usually as good a story teller and a nice guy with it all. And although retaining his civilian status, he has earned the right to wear that uniform, just as much as any man in the Army Air Forces.

Because today the Air Transport Command is flying to places that yesterday were only names on a map—in India, the Arctic and China, over North Atlantic, South Atlantic and South Pacific, to give you a general idea. And these pilots of the Command have a personal acquaintanceship with the monsoon in the Far East, the sandstorms of the Sahara and the milky fog of the Arctic.

Remember the first time they turned you loose on cross country down there at Randolph or Ellington or Maxwell? Okay then,

The Air Carrier Contract pilot wears a different uniform, but it pays to respect him for the vital job he's doing.

just imagine how these pilots feel when the Air Transport Command has orders for a delivery of high priority material to some lonely mountain airport halfway around the world.

As one chief pilot expressed it the other day at New York's teeming La Guardia Field:

"A year and a half ago our company made its first flight from New York to Mexico City. For a month before the scheduled departure everybody in the company from the president on down was in feverish conference to iron out the details. Recently I got orders to survey a route to India for the Army. A couple of days later I went out, cranked up and took off. There weren't more than a handful of people who knew anything about it. They were all too busy sending planes to other remote spots to care about a new route that in ordinary times would have been enough to give everyone the jitters for a month of Sundays."

THE next time you meet one of these pilots take a good look at him. He was probably flying the mail or barnstorming passengers off golf courses when you were reading Boy's Life and wondering if you could talk the old man out of fifty cents to buy some balsa wood for that new model airplane you were building.

Like most of them, he probably has a

minimum of 2,500 hours of flying time, with the average being in the vicinity of 4,000 or 5,000 hours. Stack that up against the average of 300 or 400 hours for the Army Air Forces pilot.

Chances are he is a reserve officer and that he graduated from Kelly and Randolph back in the twenties or early thirties, when they really braced you, mister. Nine out of ten have applied for active duty and been told by Uncle Sam to stay put. They are more valuable where they are, flying vitally needed supplies and personnel to combat areas and training new aircrews here at home.

As an ATC man he has his own status in the organizational picture of the Army Air Forces. All air carrier contract personnel are directly responsible to the Commanding General, Air Transport Command. When they are in the field they are subject to military law and in the event of capture by enemy forces air carrier contract personnel are entitled to be treated as prisoners of war. To assure this status they are being provided with official War Department Certificates of Identification.

Pilots, navigators, division managers, station managers, assistant station managers and all personnel of equivalent responsibility will be accorded the same privileges as commissioned officers with regard to accommodations, transportation and messing, both within and outside the United States.

Listen to some of the stories these men can tell as they sit around of an evening.

Like the old timer who returned recently from way above the Arctic circle. He had to make a forced landing on a frozen lake in the wilds of (Continued on Page 24)

HE'S REALLY QUITE A MAN!

(Continued from Page 9)

northern Canada and he was there with his passengers for 39 days before the weather permitted rescue crews to get them out. For a month this pilot, his crew and his passengers had been supplied with food supplies by parachute. Equipment was dropped which permitted them to cut out a runway on the ice of the frozen lake. After their rescue, crews went in and flew the forced down C-87 off the ice.

Both the pilot and plane are still in the North Atlantic service, each of them graphic examples of the closely meshed coordination between the civilian and military personnel of the Air Transport Command.

If you've ever flown one of the commercial luxury airliners you'll remember up above the instrument panel where they had the cigarette lighter, just like the one on the dashboard of your car. Down over the South Atlantic recently one of these old airline pilots absent-mindedly reached up above his head for the lighter. Before he could drop the cigarette from his mouth the right motor conked out on him. He had forgotten that on ships being delivered to the Army such luxury items as cigarette lighters are non-essential. Where the lighter used to be is the control for feathering the props.

Little incidents like that keep them on their toes.

They have no guns on their planes even though they are often flying through skies patrolled by enemy planes.

"Yeah, we think about it some," one vet-

eran million-miler told me. "Hell, we even got it planned to stick broom handles out through the cargo doors to make 'em think we got machine guns if we ever get jumped. Maybe it'll scare 'em off."

As a matter of fact the only armament they carry is a forty-five for their life raft and a Very signal pistol. Not much use against cannons or lead-spitting fifties. But the Air Transport Command will tell you that their job is to deliver the goods and armament weight reduces precious pay load.

Sometimes their cargo is as dangerous as enemy planes in the sky. One pilot tells the story of carrying a load of 6,000 pounds of short fuse detonators, which is just about as dangerous as coming home to your bride of three weeks and telling her you dropped the family bankroll in a friendly game of poker.

"We showed up at this base," he says, "and the dispatcher tells me there are three Generals waiting to hitch a ride on to the next stop. 'You aren't afraid to fly so much brass in one load, are you?' he asked me.

"I think a hell of a lot more of my own skin than that of any General and I'm riding with it," was my answer."

However, the Generals failed to arrive in time for the scheduled departure so an Army chaplain, evidently having already made his peace upstairs, climbed in for the ride and slept peacefully the whole trip atop the detonators.

Overseas, however, isn't the only place you will have a chance to become acquainted with the new ATC uniform. They are approved for airline personnel in the vast transition transport training program and domestic cargo operation of the Air Transport Command. At Army Training Detachment fields these airline veterans are conducting the training program under the Army-approved curriculum prepared by the Airlines War Training Institute. On the regular cargo runs each veteran pilot will have two Army Air Forces trainees under his guidance, teaching them the important "know how" of transport flying. The gray matter and experience in transport technique tucked in between the ears of these air contract carrier personnel and now being conveyed to Army trainees is one of the most important con-

tributions of this country's airlines to the war effort.

The importance of this domestic air cargo operation cannot be over-emphasized.

It is a system that permits air cargo planes to operate schedules between the factories turning out vital parts and the modification centers, training units and air depots.

Frequently a plane is finished at the factory needing only one small part before it is operational. The part may be produced in a plant that is across the country. If parts of this kind can be picked up today by plane, delivered to the manufacturer and installed on the waiting plane, it may be flown to its destination with a minimum of delay. It may save five days in the time required to get an airplane into action. Adding these savings together often totals a month. A month saved getting a plane into combat may mean the difference between victory or defeat.

These pilots work hard, averaging 100 hours a month in flying, making daily trips of eight to twelve hours duration. On a round trip from a base in the United States and return they'll maybe be gone from a week to ten days, putting in a total of 35 or 40 hours of actual flying time in that period and covering up to 12,000 miles.

Submarines are a big worry to them, not only because of the danger U-boats represent but because it makes their blood boil when a German sub crew down in the South Atlantic mans the guns on the deck and waves for them to come on in and fight.

"And us without even a brick to drop on them," they moan.

But submarine scares furnish many a laugh, too, on cold icy nights at lonely bases across the North Atlantic route, as they sit around waiting for the weather to clear. They tell and retell the story of the crew flying a C-87 up an Arctic fjord last winter, under a heavy overcast, when they spotted what they thought to be two submarines firing tracers from their bow deck guns. They got out of there in a hurry only to find out later that their "submarines firing tracers" were a couple of whales spouting water.


They've had German aircraft chase them in the skies off England and icy runways crack them up in the Arctic. They have sweated in temperatures as high as 105 degrees and a few hours later been in the midst of a raging blizzard.

"Why we don't all die of pneumonia, I'll never know," more than one marvels.

So the next time you see an Air Carrier Contract man wearing the "ATC" insignia look at him with respect. Maybe he's forgotten more about flying than you'll ever know. And remember that fighting a war isn't all ribbons and fast pursuits and sorties with tons of bombs over the enemy. Remember that it takes supplies and men and vital materials to carry out these missions and they are needed in a hurry. It is the Air Transport Command's job to see that they are delivered there when they are needed. And this man is doing his part to see that they arrive on schedule.


He's really quite a man! ☆

AIR TRANSPORT COMMAND
(INSIGNIA OF AIR CARRIER CONTRACT PERSONNEL)





















KITTY HAWK MEMORIAL EMBLEM
"Achieved By Dauntless Resolution
and Unconquerable Faith"

(On Shoulder Loop)



ATC

(Cap Insignia)

WINGS (Above Left Breast Pocket)	BARS (On Shoulder Loop) (Shirt or Trench Coat)	STRIPES (On Lower Sleeve) (Blouse)
 SUPERVISORY OFFICER (Chief Pilot)		
 CAPTAIN (Pilot)		
 FIRST OFFICER (Co-Pilot)		
 FLIGHT NAVIGATOR		
 FLIGHT RADIO OPERATOR		
 FLIGHT MECHANIC		

PREPARED BY AMERICAN AIRLINES, INC.