

The Silhouette Owner

*The journal of the
Silhouette Owners' International Association*

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THE SILHOUETTE OWNER. The *Journal* of the SOIA is published monthly, and is sent to all members by post.

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Contents

FROM THE COMMODORE	4
SECRETARY'S NOTES	4
TEIGN FLEET	5
POOLE GROUP	8
FROM GRENADA by William Charles Julier	8
THE NORTH-WEST	9
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR	9

Never a Dull Moment

ONE might think that producing this little *Journal* was a kind of gentle fireside activity . . . At the moment we feel rather as if we had been navigating a Silhouette through particularly foul weather in the Pentland Firth, or perhaps off South Georgia, or some equally ferocious part of the earth's marine surface. Last month we had upheaval in the posts, with the general effect of a Force Ten blowing through the mails. This month we have snow, again delaying everything, and requiring dressing up in full oilskins just to get to the Post Office. So if the *Journal* is a bit late, please, we do our best. Horrid as it is to live through, February's severe weather has been at least a useful reminder to our comfortable urban lives of what seamen go through as a matter of course in helping to keep life going in Britain. They bring the grain we eat, the oil we burn, the ores that make our steel; and they carry back to the far corners of the earth the goods we have to sell to earn our living. Small-boat sailors, who go to sea for recreation, have some idea of what it means when we hear on the radio of a ship in trouble in Arctic weather and heavy seas. Most of our fellow-citizens nowadays do not. So it is worth remembering when you are shivering at a bus-stop, or when the car gives trouble by slipping on a snow-covered hill, that you are about a thousand times better off than the man enduring a snowstorm on the foredeck of a ship at sea. Of course modern ships are more comfortable than old windjammers, with somewhere down below to get warm. But crews don't live in comfortable quarters all the time. Things go adrift on deck, there is work to be done in bitter winds, and with thousands of tons of water crashing round you. And sometimes there is not somewhere below to get warm: the ship may be in bad trouble, and you



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may have to take to the boats. Our grandfathers lived closer to the sea than we do, seeing sailing barges on the Thames and up and down the creeks of the estuary, seeing ships using little ports . . . it was easier to understand that Britain lives by the sea. But though the complex society of today may find it less easy to understand, it is as true as it has ever been that Britain lives by the sea. The seamen who secure our livelihoods seldom get the recognition that they merit. So in hard weather on land, let us think of hard weather at sea, and say a prayer in our hearts "For those in peril on the sea."

Small Cruiser Races

DURING the summer Hampton Pier Yacht Club plans to hold one or two open races for small cruisers. The course will be about 12 miles long, and it is intended that it should be fairly easy. Silhouette owners are invited to compete. Will anyone interested please get in touch with the cruiser representative of the club, Mr. Michael Weeden, at Willow Court, Canterbury Road, Eddington, Herne Bay, Kent (Herne Bay 5022).

From the Commodore

THE other weekend I attended a pleasant party at the Teign Corinthian Yacht Club, my final outing in an "official" capacity. Clubs like the Teign Corinthian are marvellous in the way they show hospitality to the Association, and this was the local group's way of saying thank you. It was nice to see a large party who came up from Plymouth for the occasion. There were several fund raising activities, the proceeds of which went to the RNLI.

I mention all this because I realise that the *Journal* finds its way into many clubs, and I should like all concerned to know how much our Association appreciates all that clubs do for us.

Although the snow lies round about, the sun has been marvellous. Everywhere there are boats there are things doing - roll on the summer! -Cyril Guscott.

Secretary's Notes

THE first meeting of the National Committee to be held in 1969 will be at The National Liberal Club, Whitehall Place, London, SW1 on Saturday, March 15 at 2.45 p.m. Officers and representatives of every and any Group, are asked to note the date, time and place, and to make the effort to be present. Any member, who is willing to take a more active part in the Association's organisation, will be more than welcome.

Michael Weedon, of Willow Court, Canterbury Road, Eddington, Kent, writes to express the need for a Group to be formed in that area. Already he has one or two interested people living in the district: if other owners or members, with similar ideas, would write to him, and get a meeting together, then the National Committee will give every assistance in the way of finance, stationary, and publicity in these pages, to get a Kentish Group (or should it be a Group of Kent?) started.

Very pleased indeed to read Mr. Macdonald Spencer's explanation of the difficulties and inaccuracies of navigating by sun on the horizon method. While making no claims that this was an original idea, I have never seen anything about it in print before, and certainly was quite unaware that tables had ever been prepared. It can be appreciated how much error could be involved in the higher latitudes, but it must also be appreciated how much error creeps into the calculations of the amateur navigator, anyway, after taking a sight from the unstable deck of a small sailing boat. Another member writes, "Such tables do exist. I recently read an account of a single handed Atlantic crossing, achieved by checking sunrise and sunset, as the author could think of no other method without formal knowledge of the correct practice!"

There is a serious move afoot to organise a fund to purchase and refit interesting old boats to exhibit them for the benefit and interest

of the nation. Brunel's *Great Western*, which is now lying derelict in the Falklands, is one of the craft in question. No one can deny that the restoration of such grand old boats is a worthwhile scheme, but one's mind boggles at the cost involved. Yet how much poorer would we be as a nation if Nelson's *Victory* had suffered the same fate as the *Dreadnought*!

The short spell of mild bright weather that we enjoyed in the South East during January was the cause of one or two boats being uncovered from their winter cocoon, and a start was made on rubbing down in preparation for painting. But February's blizzards soon put a stop to all that, giving further proof to the weather saying "As the days lengthen, so the cold strengthens." With every watch and clock in the land telling a perpetual lie, it will seem that the days are lengthening fast.

The offer was made recently to tow home a newly-acquired second-hand boat, for an old friend recently, as the family bus is fitted with a ball hitch. But on arriving at the vendor's establishment we found that my own ball is of two-inch diameter, while the trailer had a metric size, of about inch and three-quarters! Small points, indeed, but worth checking before setting out on a longish run. R.A.G.

Teign Fleet

ON Saturday evening, January 25, a party of 18 members and wives met for dinner at the Chateau Bellevue, Totnes. This was followed by a discussion to finalise plans for our Bilge Keel Evening, held a week later on February 1 at the Teign Corinthian Yacht Club. We are fortunate in being able to use the Teignmouth premises for our winter



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All recognised groups appoint an ex-officio representative to the Committee.

The Silhouette Owners' International Association exists to promote the interests of Silhouette Owners throughout the world. The annual subscription is 20s. (USA \$5). Bankers: Westminster Bank Limited, Hornchurch, Essex.

meetings, and each year we show our appreciation by inviting TCYC members to a special party. Our efforts this year were directed to raising funds for the RNLI. We sold pens, books and tea towels from a special RNLI stall, and we organised a Lucky Number Board for prizes given by our members. During the evening Mr. H. J. White from Plymouth gave us a personal account of his experiences during a recent voyage to the Gironde in the Motor Sailer *Martessa* which was the subject of articles appearing in *Yachting Monthly* for October and November under the title *Biscay Ordeal*. We all sat enthralled and not a little awed as he retold his story of adventure and danger.

Our Commodore, Cyril Guscott, thanked Mr. White, and this was the appropriate moment to pass round the RNLI collecting boxes. The Teign Fleet is at present quite small, and we were grateful for the support given by a number of members of the S.W. Group who came over from Plymouth. As a result of the evening's activities, we hope to

Regional Groups

Regional groups of the Silhouette Owners' Association have been established in the following areas:

South-East.	<i>Hon. Sec. Stan Morgan, 19 Philbrick Crescent East, Rayleigh, Essex.</i>
Blackwater.	<i>Hon. Sec. A. V. Hudson, 1a Head Street, Gold-hanger, Maldon, Essex.</i>
South-West.	<i>Hon. Sec. A. Kennedy, 59 The Knoll, Marsh Mills, Plymouth.</i>
Exe Group	<i>Hon. Sec. L. Pithers, 16 Belvedere Road, Exmouth.</i>
Poole.	<i>Hon. Sec. E. R. W. May, 2 The Circle, Moor-down, Bournemouth, Hants.</i>
Bristol Channel.	<i>Hon. Sec. J. T. Daniel, Badgers, Backwell Common, Backwell, Bristol.</i>
North-West.	<i>Hon. Sec. Brian Heaney, Lower Lee School, Beaconsfield Road, Liverpool 25.</i>
Wyre and Morecambe Bay.	<i>Hon. Sec. Miss J. Wright, 22 Arlington Avenue, Blackpool.</i>
Lake District.	<i>Hon. Sec. T. K. Jones, Foxton House, Lowther Street, Penrith.</i>
Coniston.	<i>Hon. Sec. David Thornton, 47 Brackenley Lane, Embsay, Skipton, Yorks.</i>
Midlands	<i>Hon. Sec. E. G. Oldham, 206 Hagley Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham.</i>
Tees Bay.	<i>Hon. Sec. R. T. Swarbrick, 21 Raby Road, Stockton-on-Tees.</i>
Scarborough.	<i>Hon. Sec. Stephen Lushington, 3 Hetton Road, Leeds 8, Yorkshire.</i>

send a donation to the RNLI of approximately £10, but figures are not yet complete.

The next meeting will be in Teignmouth on March 1, when one of our members will talk on Self-Steering Equipment, which he has designed and installed on his own Vivacity. The last meeting of our winter programme will be on April 12, when our members will talk on "Skippers and their Boats," and we shall also decide on our summer sailing dates. Marjory Smith.

East Coast Display

INTERYACHT, of Woodbridge, Suffolk, have arranged to display a complete range of Hurley boats at an Open Day at Woodbridge on Good Friday, April 1. There will be opportunity for sailing trials, and any SOIA members who would like to go along are cordially invited. The boats will be on display from 11.30-17.00 hours. Woodbridge is a nice place for a day out, and this should be an interesting occasion.

Poole Group

OUR annual picnic and games at Studland on July 9 was blessed with fine weather, although the wind was somewhat boisterous. A good turnout of 12 assorted craft took part, and the magnificent prize (two shackles!) for the most runs scored at cricket was won by Ken Okey.

Sunday, August 4, saw the innovation of a new event, a Grand Fishing Contest. The enthusiasm on this occasion was immense: crews, armed with an astonishing variety of excavation gear, spent hours chasing elusive worms. Time limit for the contest was two hours, and it wasn't until the last second that Clarice Brook landed one Flounder, the winning fish. A three-day harbour cruise, planned for the August Bank Holiday, had to be abandoned owing to the terrible weather.

The last event for the 1968 season was the Annual Dinner, held once again at The Stagecoach, Blandford, on February 8, 1969. The AGM was held after the feasting. Thirty seven members and friends had an enjoyable time, and much appreciated the film show put on by Dave Bennett. In spite of snow and frost two members and their families travelled down from the Birmingham area—a heroic journey, which says a lot for the *esprit de corps* of the Poole Group.

At the AGM it was decided that the subscription to the Group should remain at 5/-. Members who were unable to be present, please take note. John Iles, the inventor of the fishing contest, has agreed to organise the events for the 1969 season, and details will be sent to all members in due course. E. R. W. May.

From Grenada

WE left St. Vincent on January 10 to sail to the Grenadines. We had a quick and wet sail across to Bequia, which is about 5 miles from St. Vincent. The day after our arrival at Bequia I was trying out some earplugs which I had bought for diving, when I surfaced just in front of a dinghy with an outboard. It ran right over me, and the propeller of the outboard lacerated my left ear—I had to have 16 stitches in it. Because of that accident we stayed in Bequia for a little over three weeks, while I was having treatment. We met a number of interesting people, including a man and his daughter who were sailing their Stella class sloop to Australia. We also got to know an American who was living on board his MacWester class sloop, and who was most hospitable. We left Bequia on February 4 and arrived later that same day at the island of Cannoun, anchoring there for the night. We sailed on next day, staying at Majero for two days, and stopping at the Tobago Cays, Prune Island and Union Island. We arrived at Carriacou on February 12, and after clearing Customs sailed round to Tyrrel Bay to anchor for the night. Shortly after our arrival a small German yacht named *Pru* came in. She was 25ft. long, and the lone sailor on board

told me that he had just completed a circumnavigation of the world. We left Carriacou on February 14 and arrived later that day at St. George's, Grenada.—William Charles Julier.

The North-West

THE Annual General Meeting of the North West Group was held at the Westminster Hotel, Chester on Sunday, January 26, with twenty-one members present. Chester is hardly the best venue for Silhouette sailing, but from experience it provides the best focal point for a business meeting of this very large Group.

The Commodore, the Secretary and the Treasurer all gave their reports, and all felt that the 1968 programme had been largely successful. The Beer and Sausage Party in April made welcome funds for the Group, and enabled the deficit on the Spring Bank Holiday Cruise to be covered without more than a mild heart attack by the Treasurer. This cruise had a fleet of 21 boats: a great achievement for such a scattered Silhouette population. In the Menai Strait the regular cruising weekends were sailed, although weather conditions were often unfavourable; a conspiracy was suspected because the cruises so often ended in Caernarvon rather than their stated ports.

In the election of officers, the return of the Committee en bloc was proposed from the floor and carried, but with the addition of Sam Roberts of Barnston, Wirral. Shortly afterwards the meeting was closed, and thoughts turned to new ventures for 1969 as members chatted in the bar or restaurant before their homeward journey. Brian Heaney.

Letters to the Editor

SOLENT GROUP. Anyone interested in the re-formation of the Solent Group is invited to write to G. R. Oliver, 52 Middle Road, Higher Denham, Bucks., enclosing a stamped addressed envelope. If sufficient interest is shown it is proposed to hold a meeting as soon as possible.—G. R. Oliver.

ALBATROSSES.—I wonder if some items from my Navigating Apprentice's Journal would be of any interest? I was having a look see at it last leave, and my, what funny spelling and happenings went on just 10 years ago. Nothing about Silhouettes though, but one or two good yarns. For instance. Place, Montevideo, 1960. We picked up the Pilot and proceeded up the channel leading into the harbour passing on the way in one of the old "Highland" boats of the Royal Mail Line. Her name, plain to see, was now the *Calpian Star*, to all intents and purpose in full commission, and nothing wrong with her, a trifle low in the water at the stern, perhaps, and out of the main channel; still her ensign was flying. Next day we left after having taken on bunkers during the night for the return trip across the South Atlantic, and by evening were clear of land. My fellow cabin mate had his radio tuned into the BBC Overseas Service for the news, and we were chatting about this and that when we shut up and listened intently to the news reader.

The crew of the motor vessel *Calpian Star* were flown home from Montevideo today after leaving their ship wrecked outside the port. Trouble started out in the Atlantic, according to one of the crew, when a fireman fed one of the albatrosses being carried from South Georgia to a zoo in England. Sometime after eating the pork pie offered it by the fireman the unfortunate bird died. Later that day a total power failure caused the vessel to stop for

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repairs, and while lying stopped, further damage was sustained when a submerged object damaged a propeller, and put out of action the steering gear. The vessel, being now unable to proceed at all, the Master sent for a tug, which towed the *Calpian Star* toward Montevideo. All went well and the vessel made the approach channel to the harbour, when, suddenly, an explosion in the engine room shook the vessel, ripping open the bottom and she began to settle. She was run ashore to one side of the channel and there she remains. One fireman was killed in the explosion and he is believed to have been the man who fed the albatross the pork pie.

That is approximately the news item as I remember it. The ship was there, and, I can assure you, still is. The *Calpian Star* now looks a little worse for the wear of eight years beating by the sea; her lifeboats are gone, and so are the canvas dodgers of her bridge wings. She is lower in the water, as she is gradually sinking into the liquid mud of the River Plate.

As a sequel to this item, I related the tale to the Master of the ship I was on last year, when I saw the *Calpian Star* again. He is a keen bird watcher, and no mean authority on natural life at sea, having written several papers on various aspects of it. A lecture, very interesting, followed on what he thought of the old wives' tales about the albatross, and what he thought in general of the author of the *Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner*, from which it all stems. A few details also followed on the method he uses to catch (horrified, I was) the birds to study them at close quarters. To catch an albatross is simple. When a ship stops at sea, the birds alight near the ship down wind. You float a piece of grub down to 'em, secured on a fish hook; the bird takes the bait in his beak, the fish hook catches inside the beak, and you reel him in. It does no harm to the bird, and once on the deck the hook is removed and the bird is surprisingly content to remain where he is, though one keeps well clear of the beak until it is secured with some Sellotape! Having made the observations one cleans the beak, and heaves the bird overboard from the highest point.

I learned a lot from that trip about the sea around me, and the life in it, but I'm afraid that when the albatrosses glide majestically past the bridge wing, carefully eying me, I silently wish them well, and a little shiver runs up my spine as the vision of the *Calpian Star* comes to my mind. — David Barnes, M.V. *British Gunner*, c/o BP Tanker Co. Ltd., Britannic House, London, E.C.2.

CONISTON GROUP.—I should like to pass on the Coniston Group's sincere appreciation for the award of the "Open Cruising Trophy." It really does give the group a flying start on which to build. Thank you. Incidentally I have been in contact with Mr. Swarbrick (of the Tees Bay Group, joint winners of the trophy) and arrived at a mutually satisfactory arrangement regarding the custody of the cup. —David Thornton, Coniston Group.

SMALL ADVERTISEMENTS

RATES: SOIA members announcements, 3d. a word (minimum 2s. 6d.). Trade notices 1s. a word (minimum 10s.). Please send payment with advertisement.

HOLIDAYS. New 6 berth caravans (Solent, Poole, area) on holiday site. Milford-on-Sea. Brochure, s.a.e. Sweet, Tolosa, Grove Road, Lymington, Hants. (Telephone Lymington 4335).

1969 RALLY. Wanted to Hire, Silhouette II, August 15-23, preferably Plymouth based. Austin Pybus, 82 Western Way, Ponteland, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Telephone: Ponteland 2431.

FOR SALE. Silhouette 1032 wood, Hurley built, 3 berth, cooker, sink, pumps, lighting, toilet, twin forestays, 3 headsails, Seagull Century, Avon dinghy, tent and cockpit covers, CQR, trailer, £400, Medway 46719.

FOR SALE. Silhouette II, No. 1662, 2 berth, glass fibre, 6 h.p. Johnson, new 1967, trailer, gas cooker and light, canvas cockpit cover, bow pulpit, 15lb. CQR, toilet box, table. All in good condition. Free delivery 300 miles. £475. A. Morton, Rowanlea, Alexandria, Dumbartonshire.

FOR SALE. Red terylene genoa, 18ft. 6in. luff, approx. 70 sq. ft. Two seasons use only. £12. Holmes, 8 Victoria Road, Aughton, Ormskirk, Lancs.

FOR SALE. Cockpit cover (hardly used) £5, cabin table (clamps to mast support) £2, four galvanised stanchions for life lines £3 the lot, 56 Broomfield Road, Beckenham, Kent.

FOR SALE. 3 berth glass fibre Silhouette II, No. 1623, Terylene sails, pulpit, anchor and chain, 2 burner cooker with grill, well laid out galley, calor gas lighting, bilge pump, 5 gallon water container, echo sounder, large tent awning, roller reefing, Seagull Century Plus with clutch £490. Tel. 13 Holland Way, Broadstone, Poole, Dorset. Tel.: Broadstone 4651.

FOR SALE. "Kommadore," a 20ft. 4 berth modified Silhouette to Robert Tucker's special design. Built late 1967. This attractive little boat is still in excellent condition. Specification: 3in. marine ply hull, Terylene sails, S/S rigging, silver Seagull Century Plus long shaft with clutch, cooker, 4in. mattresses, S/S sink, road trailer, etc., etc. £630. Further details—Austin, 14 Castlefields, Istead Rise, Northfleet, Kent. Tel. Southfleet 2847.

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FOR SALE. Silhouette II, Terylene sails, Stuart Turner inboard engine, several extras. £340. R. Sauer, 79 Springdale Road, Broadstone, Dorset.

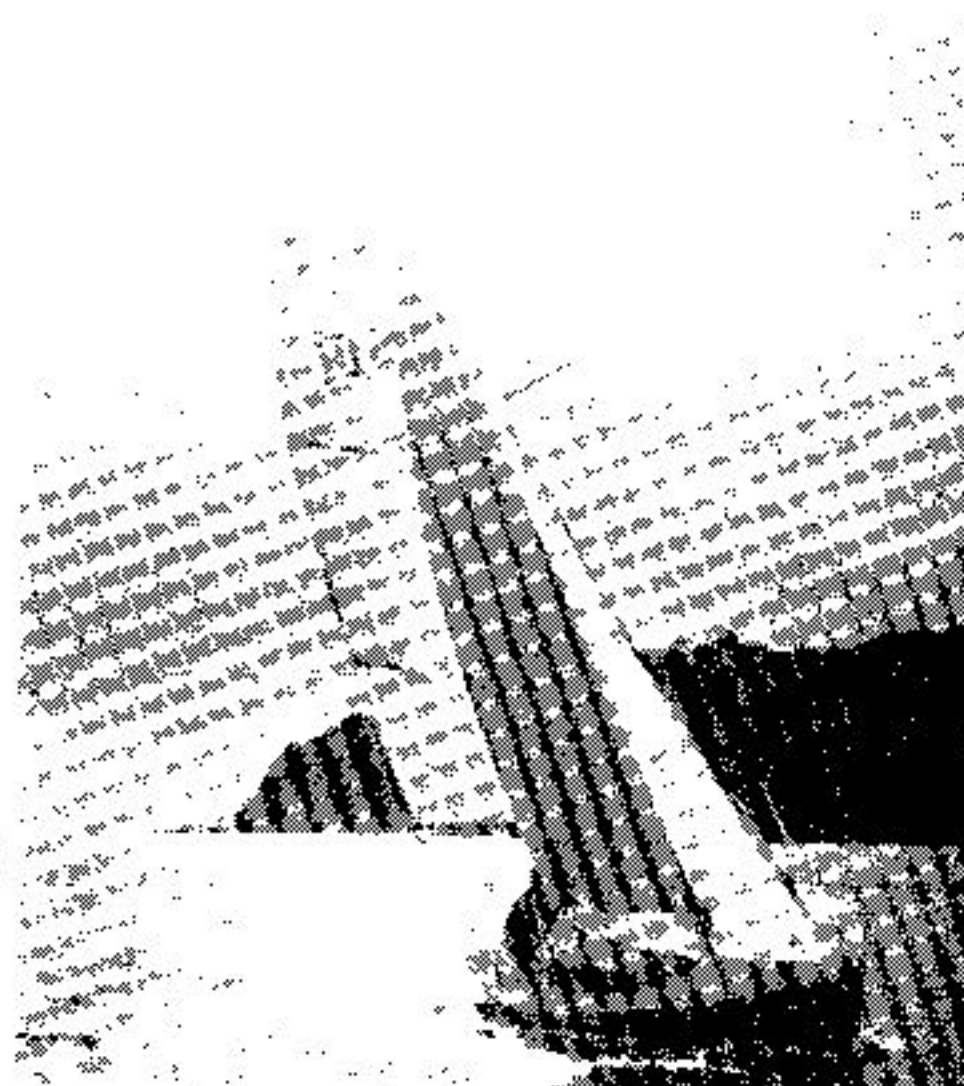
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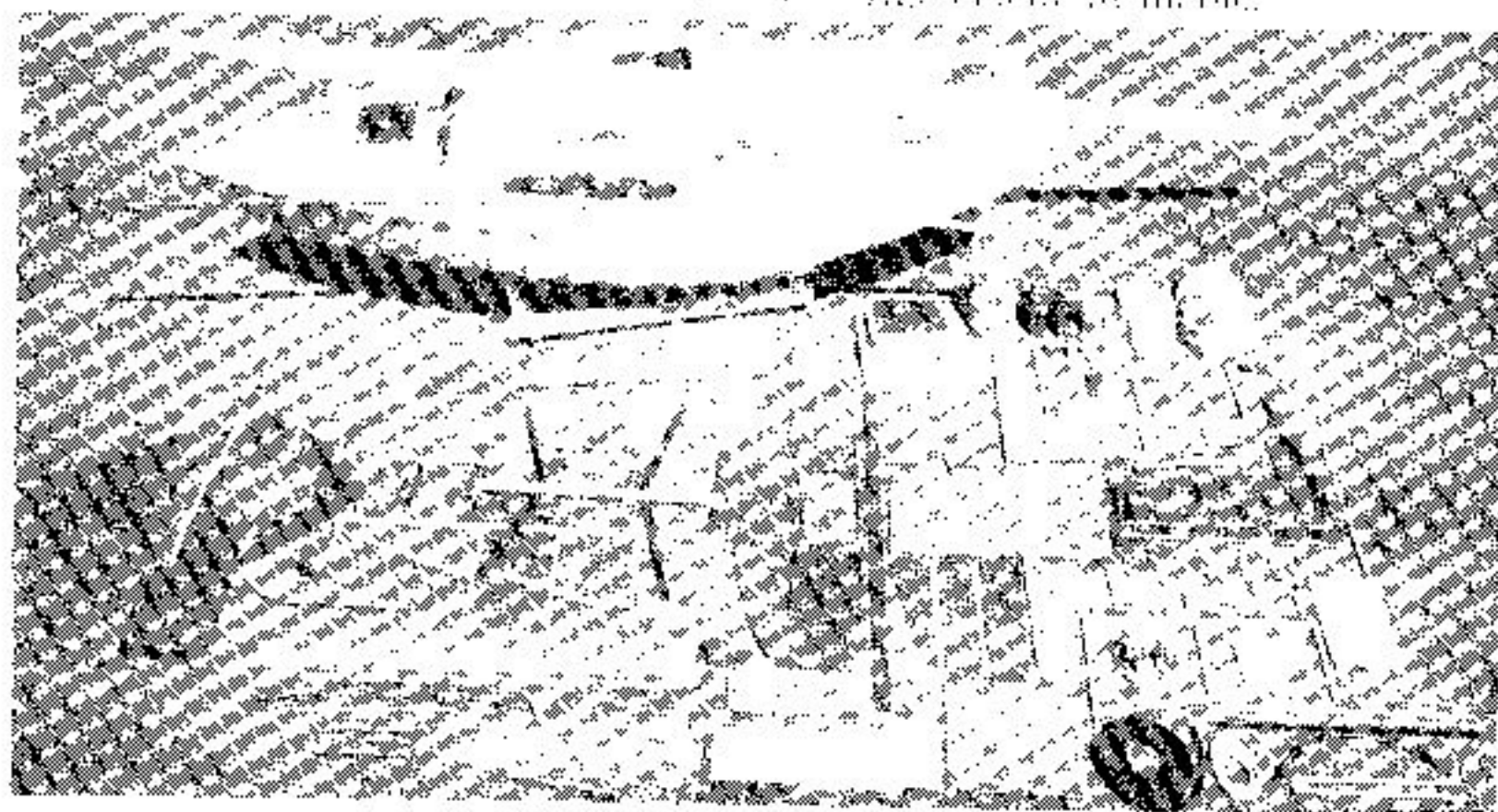
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