Back in the early days of World War II, primary Navy Flight Training consisted of five stages: A, B, C, D, and E. The D stage was the one we all looked forward to — AEROBATICS!

We were flying the Stearman N2S Kaydet biplane, fondly called the “Yellow Peril.” There were very few aerial maneuvers that couldn’t be performed in the Yellow Peril, and in the barracks at night we were always hangar flying the trainer. One maneuver restricted for the N2S was the “inverted falling leaf,” and several of the experts had all the answers of how to do it and they were more than happy to relate to the neophytes in our nightly discussions.

Still in C stage, I was always listening intently to the “experts” who had progressed to either D stage or the ones who had it made and only had a couple of hours of night flying left for E stage and then on to either Corpus Christi, Texas, or Pensacola, Florida, for intermediate and advanced training.

Terror in the YELLOW PERIL
BY ALBERT H. RICHARDS
(LT. USN, RET.)