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**Earhart’s Last Flight**

The twin engines of the Lockheed Martin Electra emitted a familiar growl, nothing to be alarmed about, although the fuel gauges were below what she expected. Amelia Earhart scanned the unending horizon of the Pacific Ocean, but there was nothing to see except the gentle swells of a grey sea, and the occasional crest of a creature peeking up above the waves… perhaps a whale. She was 22,000 miles into her journey as the first woman to fly around the world, and completing what might have been the most challenging phase—staying awake for the long journey from Lae Airfield in Papua New Guinea east to Howland Island, a “flat sliver of land 6500 feet long and 1600 feet wide,” Located smack dab in the middle of the Pacific (“Ameila Earhart”).

She looked over at her co-pilot, Fred Noonan, her only crew member. With 800 miles to go, they were both getting nervous about the possibility of making their destination.

“Fred, are you having any better luck with our navigation? The radio direction finder still isn’t lining up with our projected course.”

“I’m not having much luck with it—the needle is jumping all over the place… it’s like something is providing interference.”

There may have been a chance that her new direction-finding system, which had only just recently been installed before this flight, was unfamiliar to her. Her training had consisted of a brief conversation with a factory technician, and now 10,000 feet above the unforgiving ocean, she had discovered that the system was not as user-friendly as she had originally believed. Their fuel levels continued to drop. She zipped up the fur lined collar of her leather flight jacket to stave off the cold air at that altitude.

At 7:42 am Earhart radioed, "We must be on you, but cannot see you—but gas is running low. Have been unable to reach you by radio. We are flying at 1,000 feet [305 m]."

TO BE CONTINUED…

**Works Cited**

"Amelia Earhart." *American Decades*, edited by Judith S. Baughman, et al., Gale, 1998. *Student Resources in Context*, Accessed 14 Nov. 2016.