

and getting angry
over the fact that Goodstone Aircraft Company
didn't put the identical parts on one manufacturing order.

Of course, it could have been worse —
Goodstone could have followed its usual procedure
and sent me 1 part on 1 manufacturing order and then,
when I had finished the part and torn down
all of the complex set-ups and sent back
all of the special tooling and cutters
for the job,
sent me the second identical part on a separate
manufacturing order.

FAN CLUB

Whenever Maintenance arrives
to work on one of our machines,
we make a point to gather about
the machine they are working on and stare at them,
munching apples and
leaning back with arms folded
elbowing each other in the ribs
as we crack jokes
at their expense,
chuckling and shaking our heads
and whistling the Laurel and Hardy theme
as the Maintenance men
sweat and strain and grapple,
turning and pushing and hammering
machine parts,
turning red with embarrassment
and cursing and having fits
because they know they must do a good job
if they don't want to endure
having us watch them all over again.

NOT AS EASY AS IT SOUNDS

Graveyard shift machinist
Gus springs at me the moment I arrive
at the beginning of my day shift
to take over for him,
shoving the part he is working on
under my nose
and rattling off with speeded-out-of-his-mind baggy-eyed
intensity,
"You can put the head on an 8-degree 42-minute angle to
go in on the Y axis and hold the 35 thousandths radius on
the A datum, well actually you can go in 100 thousandths
extra because of the 4-degree 12-minute angle on the B
datum, but you don't want to go past the middle of the

radius blending with the B datum, course later they'll have to blend it anyway because of the 220 thousandth fillet radius tapering down to 60 thousandths on this side and 50 thousandths on that side so maybe it doesn't matter, but I'd watch it. 'Course you could turn the part around and cock the head on the 4-degree 12-minute angle instead and come in the other way then you wouldn't have to worry about the 100 thousandths, but you'll have to stay away from the B datum wall so I don't know...." and the final buzzer blares making him jump and drop the part on the workbench in front of me yelling "Good Luck!" as he races off and I stare at his toolbox and finally understand why it has that sticker stuck to it saying, "KEEP IT SIMPLE STUPID!"

THERAPY

Our machine shop supervisor was always hiding behind posts or hurrying up and down the aisles, glancing about as if he were lost. He began to stutter and spend more and more time in the toilet stalls, until one day he climbed up onto one of our machines and began screaming that we were all against him.

We gathered about the machine he stood on and looked up at him in silent respect of his long overdue decision to deal with reality.

UNQUALIFIED

George was relatively new at Goodstone Aircraft Company, and he puzzled and frowned at our time-consuming, tedious attention to plus or minus thousandths of an inch tolerances on blueprints for various K-20 bomber parts always turning the handles furiously on his machine and making piles of metal chips 5 or 10 times as big as ours, coming over to our machines and shaking his head at our pitiful production and the close tolerances on our blueprints