**The Nervy Girl Who Keeps ‘Em Floating**

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**PROBABLY** the most dangerous war job of all the hundreds of thousands held by patriotic American women is that of pretty, 24-year-old Adeline Gray - parachute tester.

It's all in a day's work for this blonde daredevil to make jumps from planes high in the sky with hitherto untried types of parachutes. She already has made 32 such dangerous trips from sky to ground.

The photographs on this page recently caught miss Gray at Hartford, Connecticut; right in the act of testing the world's first all-nylon parachute. The charming young lady with the steady nerves made a 2,000 foot leap to prove that parachutes made of this more-or-less new material were as good if not better than the traditional ones of silk.

Some 50 Army and Navy observers were on hand at Brainard Field to watch the veteran daredevil make the first "live" test after about a score of dummy tests had been made with the new chute to uncover any "bugs."

Before Miss Gray is allowed to make a jump with a new 'chute, a dummy, which automatically trips the ring that opens the big umbrella-like piece of cloth is dropped. If such tests are successful, then the blonde flyer is allowed to try out the new product in person.

Despite these manikin tests, however, jumping with a new type parachute is risky business because, obviously. the real air-worthiness of such new life-saving gadgets is not fully determined until it carried a live and wriggling body safely down to terra firma.

Miss Gray, however, laughs off the danger, saying that her job is the least thing she can do as her contribution to the war effort.

"It was just like riding down on a parachute made of silk," she said, calmly reeling in her aerial lifesaver and getting it shipshape as she walked along the field after bouncing on the ground without mishap. Sometimes parachutists land so hard that they sprain an ankle or break a leg, but Miss Gray knows the trick of meeting the ground just right.

The tests made by this wisp of a girl may be the forerunner of a constant flow of these new type parachutes for fighting men. American's stock pile of silk is steadily dwindling and there is no sign of replacement for some time to come. That's why the authorities may have to turn to the exclusive use of nylon to get fliers in disabled planes safely down out of the sky.

While Miss gray was dramatically demonstrating women's courage and skill high in the air,, her sisters in defense work were also showing, in a quieter but as effective a way, their all-out defense efforts. With nimble fingers and keen eyes they had created every part of the aerial lifesaver that the woman flyer used when she nonchalantly stepped out of the plane into empty space.

These women are in the employ of the concern responsible for the new type sky umbrella, the Pioneer Parachute Company of Manchester, Connecticut. This firm announced through J. Floyd Smith, a vice-president and chief engineer that as much progress has been made in the development of nylon during the past two years as had been made for silk for parachutes in 20 years.

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

With the calm courage of modern Amazon, Adeline Gray takes a skyward look before boarding a plane for her first leap in a nylon parachute.

The best of Uncle Sam's Paratroopers can't his the Ground Any More Skillfully than the Girl who tests their 'chutes.

The photograph above shows Miss Gray a Split Second after she bailed out on one of her jumps

The young woman who keeps 'em floating smiled with satisfaction at the success of her first trip earthward in an all-nylon parachute, and although she is no ardent feminist, she is proud of the fact that the 'chute was made entirely by feminine fingers.