

The  
Lafayette  
Escadrille

By  
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on August 4. In conjunction with Serbia, Belgium, France and Russia, the five nations called themselves the Allies. Germany and Austria-Hungary became known as the Central Powers. In a historical instant, an immense conflagration had started with a startling speed and scale never seen before or since. On the Western Front, nearly 1.5 million German soldiers faced off against a coalition of nearly 1.3 million French, Belgian and British troops. On the Eastern Front, the numbers were almost the same as 1.5 million Austro-Hungarian and German troops matched up against 1.4 million Russian and Serbian troops.<sup>1</sup>

Surprisingly, the French went on the offensive first. Given the population disparity of 40 million French against 60 million Germans and France's loss in 1871, striking into Germany seemed foolish. The French plan was Plan XVII, and the idea behind it was that France would have to strike as quickly and as directly into the heart of Germany as possible to have any chance of beating Germany.

On August 10, 1914, the French attacked in force across the Rhine. The plan was straightforward enough, but the Germans were well prepared, and their planners had anticipated just such an attack. What was obvious to the French as the best way to strike into Germany was obvious to the Germans as well. On August 20, the Germans counterattacked with a vicious ferocity pushing the French almost completely out of Germany. Fortunately, just across the border, the French had the Vosges Mountains to fall back upon. Once they got there, they dug in and used the mountains to their advantage. The German attack stalled, but it did not really matter: they had clobbered the French. For the next four years, this sector of the front would barely move, and the French would never advance further into Germany.

The Germans had savaged Plan XVII and ripped it to bits. However, the world's attention had already shifted to the German advance through Belgium using the latest variation of the famous Schlieffen Plan. The plan was to knock the French out of the war within six weeks. Attacking neutral Belgium was treachery for sure, but wars are fought to be won, and the Germans were superb warriors. In this



way, one and a half million Germans descended upon Belgium and then France.

From August 17 to September 5, they rapidly sliced west through Belgium and then wheeled south toward Paris pushing back the Allied armies the whole way. Rather than get hung up on the well-defended Belgian and French fortress towns, German infantry simply flowed around them and then brought up heavy Skoda and Krupp siege artillery to reduce the fortresses to rubble.

As the situation developed, the British Expeditionary Force sailed across the English Channel and then squeezed in between the French V and VI Armies. The Germans advanced to within 35 miles of the heart of Paris, and it looked like France might lose to the Germans as they did in 1870. However, this was when things began to go wrong for the Germans. The German General Alexander von Kluck was supposed to take his I Army west and then south to encircle Paris. Instead, he went east in order not to create a gaping hole between the German I and II Armies. However, in doing so, the Germans exposed their right flank. It was a terrible mistake. Kluck might have gotten away with had it not been spotted by diligent Allied aviators. They warned their leaders who were able to exploit the new weakness, marking the first significant impact of aviation on the war.

Up to this time, the French, the Belgians and the British had fallen back almost non-stop. Even though the French government in Paris was panicking and contemplating evacuation to Bordeaux, it never collapsed completely. On September 5, 1914, the French and British launched a massive counter-offensive along a line that ran from Paris to Verdun, turning the tables on their German opponents. This was the Battle of the Marne. Over the next five days, they pushed the Germans back to the north and away from Paris. This gave the Allies a badly needed respite, which saved France for the time being.

As soon as the Battle of the Marne ended, the two sides raced to the English Channel in an effort to outflank each other. Neither side was successful. At this point, the Western Front stabilized into trench



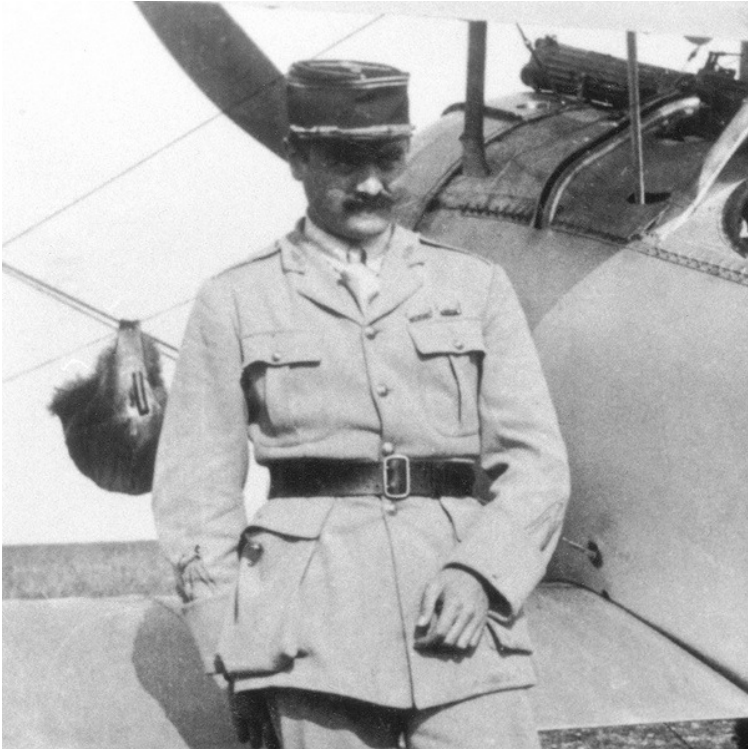
warfare for the next few years. This period featured battles of utter devastation such as Verdun, the Somme and Paschendale.

On the Eastern Front, the war was far more fluid. In the opening month of the war, the Russians advanced. However, on August 26-30, 1914, at Tannenburg, the Germans struck back with urgent fury, pushing the Russians out of Germany for the duration of the war. In the southwest, the Austro-Hungarians finally made great progress during most of the month of November 1914. The Serbians fell back in disarray and even lost their capital Belgrade. Then somehow, the Serbs staged an astonishing comeback and regained all of their losses within 12 days. There would be no quick end to the war on the Eastern Front either.

The troops on all sides went off to war exuberantly, hoping to get in on a great adventure. They expected a short war and thought that they would be “home by Christmas.” Instead, millions of them died, were wounded, maimed or taken prisoner. The war easily dragged on past Christmas, through 1915 and into 1916. During that time, many other countries including Japan, Italy and the Ottoman Empire joined the war. Propaganda posters, submarines, barbed wire, trench warfare and machine guns had all been used before on a smaller scale in previous conflicts. Now they came to the world’s attention in a grand way. New technologies like gas warfare, flamethrowers, air-to-air rockets, tanks and super artillery firing at targets 65 miles away unleashed new horrors upon humanity. In addition, rail guns, fighter airplanes, bombers, parachutes and Zeppelins all made their combat debuts during this war.

In 1916, the Central Powers and Western Allies fought epic battles at Verdun and the Somme. On the Eastern Front, the Russian launched the Brusilov Offensive. It was successful at first and then ground to a halt. Men got chewed up on both sides in unprecedented numbers and in brutal fashion. No end to the war was in sight. The British, French and Belgians were suffering badly on the Western Front. The United States was still sitting on the sidelines watching the war from behind the safety of the Atlantic Ocean. All sides needed good news,





*Figure 6: Bill Thaw  
(Greg VanWyngarden Collection)*

Bill Thaw was from a prominent and wealthy Pittsburgh family and was the fourth of five children. He was born in Pittsburgh on August 10, 1893 making him 22 when the Escadrille was formed. However, his thick black mustache, height and stocky frame made him look far older than that. Prior to the war, he had been a student at Yale University and then a flying instructor. He signed up for the French Foreign Legion on August 24, 1914, but was almost arrested for doing so when he returned to the United States for eight days while on leave.

Thaw first flew as a back-seat machine gunner for Escadrille D.6 starting in mid-December of 1914. He worked his way through pilot's training and was posted to Escadrille C.42 in March 1915 and then to Escadrille N.65 to fly Nieuports a year later. He had only



been with N.65 for a month before he joined the Lafayette Escadrille. It was while he was flying Caudron planes for Escadrille C.42 that he met Georges Thenault. Thenault spoke some English and he was the commanding officer of C.42. Clearly, his former commander impressed Thaw, and he proceeded to recruit Thenault to lead the Lafayette Escadrille.

27-year-old New Yorker Victor Chapman was a 1913 Harvard graduate who had moved to France to study architecture. His father was the noted author John Jay Chapman, and his grandfather Henry had been President of the New York Stock Exchange. Victor signed up for the French Foreign Legion while he was in London. He then spent a year in the trenches with the French Foreign Legion, getting wounded and watching comrades die all around him. In one case, one of them actually died in his arms. Chapman came from money, but never let it show, even when he was doing things like digging trenches. In fact, he was such a hard worker that on one occasion one of his French officers wondered if he had been a ditch digger prior to joining the French army.

In September 1915, he transferred to the French *Service Aeronautique*, flying back seat as a bombardier in Escadrille VB.103, until becoming one of the founders of the Escadrille. Chapman was a pious Roman Catholic, a cultural and religious facet to his personality he inherited from his half-Italian mother Minna. She idolized Victor, and he idolized her. His mother was a vivacious, popular woman who died in childbirth when he was just six. Her death affected him deeply, and he mourned her loss for years. More tragedies would befall him. His brother, two years younger than Victor, managed to get in harm's way all too often. On one occasion, it turned out well when Victor saved him from being crushed between two railway cars. However, later his brother drowned in the torrent of a river while he was with Victor. These tragic encounters with fate affected Victor deeply, and he grew up to become a silent, introspective man.



Victor was very close to his father, but once his father remarried, Victor became closer to his stepmother, Elizabeth, and it was to her that he wrote most frequently from France.



*Figure 7: Aerial view of Luxeuil Aerodrome  
(Gorrell's)*

The Escadrille's new base was at Luxeuil-les-Bains, a beautiful historic spa town ringed by thick lush forests. The dramatic history of the town included destruction at the hands of Attila the Hun in 451 AD, the Arabs in the 8th Century and individual destructions by the Normans, the Magyars and the Arabs (again) in the 9th Century. The large airfield was just two kilometers south-west of the town center, and the men had pleasant quarters at the city's Grand Hotel.

Everything was idyllic at first. Chapman described the base as follows:



*[It was] a fine one with numerous huge hangars and cabins in construction—more like grain elevators or shipping docks than anything I have yet seen... Near our cabin-bureau we found the autos of our escadrille which gave us a tangible idea of the realization of our hopes. Motor busses and trucks with gray bodies and brass head lights were lined along the field. I think there were twenty, counting two voitures legeres [light cars]. We are finely situated in this ville-d'eaux [spa town] — eat at the best hotel in town with our officers, live in a 'villa' on the hill with an ordinance to clean up, and bathe and drink hot waters. Meanwhile we wait for the Avions [airplanes] to be shipped. I would you were here to enjoy the countryside, the blossoming fruit trees, and the distant snow-capped hills.<sup>8</sup>*

Also at Luxeuil was a unit of the Royal Navy Flying Corps, 50 aircraft and 1,000 men strong. The British were flying Sopwith two-seaters in V-formations of up to 20 machines at a time, practicing takeoffs, landings and maneuvering. Elsewhere on the field, the French were flying Farmans and Breguet bombers. The entire place was dotted with anti-aircraft positions. It was an impressive sight, especially for the Americans who still lacked airplanes.

The regular grind of flying, with or without combat, was tough, and yet the pilots hardly complained. Since pilots could often measure life spans at the front in days or weeks, the little things in life like a great meal went a long way. Indeed, the Escadrille's historical records mentioned food more frequently than women or visits to great tourist sites. Chapman commented, "We had a most gorgeous lunch for our guests today,—[our cook] outdid herself. Eight or ten courses, it seemed, and we served up some good wine—*Rudesheimer* and *Pommard*."<sup>9</sup>





*Figure 8: The Lafayette Escadrille inspects a Bleriot training plane  
(Henry Lockhart Jr. Collection)*

Touching on some of the same themes, Thenault recalled the following:

*The [aerodrome was] biggest and most beautiful in France; it is over two miles long, entirely flat, surrounded by a circuit of high hills, the last outposts of the Vosges mountains.*

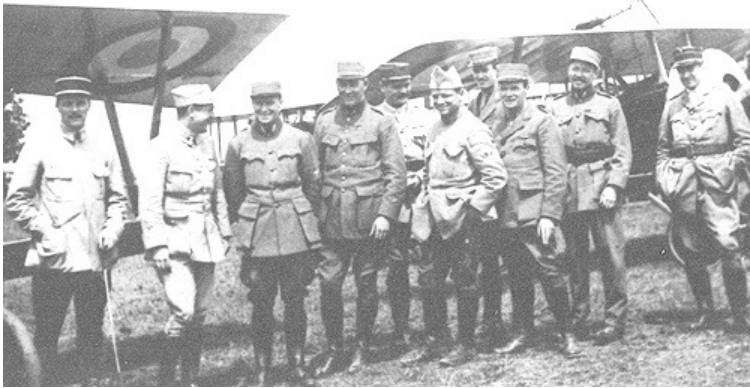
*The French used one end of it; at the other were grouped British airmen of the Royal Navy, Canadians, Australians, or South Africans...*

*As its name shows, Luxeuil was a thermal watering place, an old town with Renaissance houses, curiously carved. In one of the finest [French king] Francis I once spent the night, and the house still bore his name. Lt. de Laage lived there while I established myself at Baths' Hotel.*

*In the morning we all used to go down to the bath house and bathe in the pink granite pools where the elegant belles of Louis XV's reign had been wont to repair the weariness of court life. Most of our pilots stayed at the Hotel of the Golden Apple, a really good old French inn, where we used all to meet for meals.*



teeth out of a railway employee's mouth during a fistfight. Of course, Thenault bailed him out, and then Lufbery returned to the unit.



*Figure 18: Lafayette Escadrille at Behonne  
(Greg VanWyngarden Collection)*

*Note: From left to right are Alfred de Laage de Meux, Charles Chouteau Johnson, Laurence Rumsey, James McConnell, Bill Thaw, Raoul Lufbery, Kiffin Rockwell, Didier Masson, Norman Prince and Bert Hall.*

Leave time was precious and fleeting. Luckily taking the train into Paris only cost a few Francs and usually only took a few hours. Of course, there were many compelling reasons to go to Paris. First, because so many French men either had been killed on the front lines or were still there, Paris was full of widows and other women starved for male companionship. Second, Paris had benefited from approximately 1900 years of development to approach perfection and was considered rightfully by many to be the most beautiful city in the world. Even during the war, it was spectacularly beautiful, full of grandiose architectural masterpieces and the world's greatest art collection. However, the Escadrille's main hangout was not the cultural icons like Notre Dame Cathedral, the Arc of Triumph, the Louvre or the Eiffel Tower, which was by far the tallest building in the world and almost double the height of any structure that had ever preceded it. Instead, it was usually the six-story Hotel Chatham next to the Place Vendome where they gathered over martinis.



On one such trip into Paris, Bill Thaw read an ad placed by a Brazilian dentist living there who wanted to sell a one-month old lion cub for 500 Francs. The cub had been born on a merchant ship sailing the Atlantic Ocean from Africa to France. It sounded exciting and all of the pilots chipped in to buy him. Thaw took him to Paris' *Gare de l'Est* train station, boarded him in a passenger compartment on the train to Luxeuil and tried to have him passed off as an exotic African dog. As if anyone was really in doubt, a little squeaky roar quickly betrayed the cub's real identity. The frightened passengers and the train conductor quickly put an end to Thaw's plans, booting both him and his new cub off the train. Undeterred, Thaw quickly had a cage built for the cub, now named Whiskey, and Whiskey duly followed his new master to Luxeuil several days later, albeit this time traveling in the luggage wagon. Whiskey became a guest at the *Hotel Pomme d'Or* (Hotel of the Golden Apple) where the innkeeper's two daughters figured out what he liked to eat (which was bread and milk). The cub was quickly tamed, and then became just about everyone's favorite companion. Along with Thenault's Alsatian dog Fram, Whiskey became a constant presence on base.

Over the next few days, the Lafayette Escadrille upgraded to Nieuport 17s, a process that finished on September 23. It was often hard to tell one Nieuport from the next as the Nieuport 17 was essentially an improved Nieuport 11. In any case, the new type had a 110-horsepower Le Rhone 9 cylinder rotary engine. Instead of the cumbersome Lewis gun mounted above the top wing of the Nieuport 11s, the 17 sported a solitary 250 round belt-fed Vickers machine gun synchronized to fire through the propeller. The belt feeds could jam, but overall the gun was tremendously reliable, and above all, it did not require the convoluted gymnastics required to change drums as had been required Lewis guns. Machine guns heated up extremely quickly when being fired. The Vickers could theoretically fire off 250 rounds of ammunition in one burst; however, the longer a gun fired, the more likely it was to overheat which would cause the gun to jam. The solution to overheating was a water-filled metal casing surrounding the gun barrel,



which gave the Vickers gun (and other belt-fed machine guns) an extra thick appearance.

Also on September 23, Lufbery and Rockwell took off together in their new 17s and then went into combat as a pair over a village whose name was a mouthful: Hartmannsweilerkopf. Such German-sounding place names were typical in Alsace. The village was about 40 kilometers almost due east of Luxeuil. It was here that things began to go wrong. Lufbery's gun jammed as soon as he started firing, and so he decided that the best course of action was to turn back to a friendly aerodrome. Though he was attempting to leave the combat area, he still got hit by three German rounds. Rockwell followed Lufbery down long enough to watch Lufbery land safely, but then turned back toward Hartmannsweilerkopf. Why he did so is anyone's guess. It was a reckless thing to patrol on one's own. Perhaps he thought that he could pick up an easy victory. Soon enough, Rockwell started skirmishing with three German planes over the town of Thann, a few kilometers short of Hartmannsweilerkopf. It was there that the observer of an Albatros two-seater he was attacking shot him. His plane tumbled out of the sky, the wing separated, and he hit the ground within a few kilometers of where his first kill had crashed back in May.

Those who recovered Rockwell's body found that the Albatros had been firing explosive bullets. One of those had blown his throat open, probably killing him instantly. His death made the *New York Times* and other newspapers on the 24. Then he was buried the next day at the Escadrille's base of Luxeuil in a ceremony "worthy of a general." His final tally was three German airplanes confirmed, but there were other victories that he had claimed which had not been confirmed. He had survived just four months after his first kill, and now he was the second American pilot killed in combat in France. The French posthumously awarded Rockwell with the *Medaille Militaire* and the *Croix de Guerre* with two palms. The extra palms were each the equivalent of an additional *Croix de Guerre*. He was also promoted posthumously to *Sous Lieutenant* (Sub-lieutenant) which he had been recommended for prior to his death.<sup>56</sup>



Norman Prince also shot down three German planes, but on October 12 he crash-landed in the dark after tangling with some power lines. James McConnell described the incident:

*On the 12th of October, twenty small aeroplanes flying in a 'V' formation, at such height that they resembled a flock of geese, crossed the Rhine River, where it skirts the plains of Alsace, and, turning north, headed for the famous Mauser works at Oberndorf. Following in their wake was an equal number of larger machines, and above these darted and circled swift fighting 'planes. The first group of aircraft was followed by British pilots, the second by French, and four of the battle 'planes were from the American Escadrille. They were piloted respectively by Lt. de Laage, Lufbery, Norman Prince and Masson. The Germans were taken by surprise, and as a result few of their machines were in the air. The bombardment fleet was attacked, however, and six of our 'planes were shot down, some of them falling in flames. As the full capacity of a Nieuport machine allows but a little more than two hours in the air the avions de chasse were forced to return to their own lines to take on more gasoline. The Nieuports having refilled their tanks, went up to clear the air of any German machines that might be hovering in wait for the returning raiders. Prince found one, and promptly shot it down. Lufbery came upon three and he promptly disposed of them.*

*Darkness was rapidly coming on, but Prince and Lufbery remained in the air to protect the bombarding fleet. Just at nightfall, Lufbery made for a small aviation field near the lines, known as Corcieux. Slow-moving machines, with great planning capacity, can be landed in the dark, but to try to feel for the ground in a Nieuport, which comes down at about a hundred miles an hour, usually means disaster. Ten minutes after Lufbery landed, Prince decided to make for the landing field. He spiraled down through the night air*



*and skimmed rapidly over the trees bordering the Corcieux field. In the dark he did not see a high-tension electric cable that was stretched just above the tree tops. The landing gear of his airplane struck it. The machine snapped forward and hit the ground on its nose. It turned over and over. The belt holding Prince broke, and he was thrown far from the wrecked 'plane.'*<sup>57</sup>

Prince broke both of his legs and fractured his skull in the crash. His legs were actually set at the Lake Hotel in Gerardmer, France, but an undetected cerebral hemorrhage meant that the sand was draining out of his hourglass. Lufbery had shot down his fifth enemy aircraft on the same mission, making him an ace. Three days later Prince died of his injuries and was buried with full honors at Luxeuil as a squadron of airplanes dropped flowers from above.<sup>58</sup> Elliott Cowdin said that at least Prince “lived long enough to see his long-cherished ideas successfully carried out and the Lafayette Squadron at the height of its success.”<sup>59</sup> Two of Prince’s uncles were present at the funeral. They told Thenault “his death will not be in vain for hundreds of others in America will come to take his place. Even after his death he will be serving France.”<sup>60</sup> They were right: over the next two years, a flood of American aviators would come to France.

The Escadrille only had a week more in Luxeuil. Once again, it was time to move, and before going away, their British and Canadian friends gave the men of the Lafayette Escadrille a going-away party. “[They] all seemed to be sorry that we were going,” Laurence Rumsey wrote in his journal, probably feeling the same way.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Tucker, *The Encyclopedia of World War I: A Political, Social and Military History*, Vol. 2, 430-431

<sup>12</sup> Toward the end of the war, Roland Garros escaped from the Germans. He flew in combat for a period, but then was shot down and killed a month before the end of the war. The stadium for the French Open tennis tournament is named after him.

<sup>13</sup> Thenault, *The Story of the Lafayette Escadrille Told by its Commander, Captain Georges Thenault*, 24, 41-42. McConnell, *Flying for France with the American Escadrille at Verdun*, 83-84. In contrast to what Thenault wrote, James McConnell



wrote home that their first five Nieuports came already equipped with a solitary Vickers gun capable of firing five hundred rounds per belt.

- <sup>14</sup> Franks, *Nieuport Aces of World War I*, 34.
- <sup>15</sup> *U.S. Air Service Victory Credits World War I, USAF Historical Study No. 133*, 109-110.
- <sup>16</sup> *Nieuport Aces of World War I*, pp. 15-16.
- <sup>17</sup> Guttman, *SPA 124 Lafayette Escadrille*, 122.
- <sup>18</sup> Hall, *The Lafayette Flying Corps*, Vol. 1, 407.
- <sup>19</sup> Parsons, "A Tape Recorded Interview," 75.
- <sup>20</sup> Hall, *The Lafayette Flying Corps*, Vol. 1, 407.
- <sup>21</sup> Wynne, "Escadrille Lafayette," p. 80.
- <sup>22</sup> Chapman, *Victor Chapman's letters from France*, 167, 178.
- <sup>23</sup> Franks, *Aircraft versus Aircraft*, 29.
- <sup>24</sup> Thenault, *The Story of the Lafayette Escadrille Told by its Commander, Captain Georges Thenault*, 66. Thenault references the Fougerolle Villa as where the Escadrille was planning to spend its winter months without explicitly saying whether or not it was where they were already housed. The Willis B. Haviland Scrapbook of the Lafayette Escadrille identifies the address of the billet in Bar-le-Duc as 77 Boulevard de la Rochelle.
- <sup>25</sup> Hall, *The Lafayette Flying Corps*, Vol. 1, 324.
- <sup>26</sup> Correspondence with Franck de Magalhães, Directeur de Cabinet, Mairie de Chamalières, May, 2010.
- <sup>27</sup> Thenault, *The Story of the Lafayette Escadrille Told by its Commander, Captain Georges Thenault*, 50.
- <sup>28</sup> Hall, *One Man's War*, 167.
- <sup>29</sup> Hall, *One Man's War*, 178.
- <sup>30</sup> Thenault, *The Story of the Lafayette Escadrille Told by its Commander, Captain Georges Thenault*, 52-55.
- <sup>31</sup> Hudson, *Hostile Skies*, 67 and Hall, *The Lafayette Flying Corps*, Vol. 1, 255.
- <sup>32</sup> Hall, *The Lafayette Flying Corps*, Vol. 1, 266 and Gordon, "Dudley Hill of Escadrille Lafayette," p. 253.
- <sup>33</sup> Rumsey, "Training an Aviator in France," p. 266.
- <sup>34</sup> Rumsey, "Training an Aviator in France," p. 266.
- <sup>35</sup> Rumsey, "Training an Aviator in France," p. 266.
- <sup>36</sup> Balsley, "The Story of the Lafayette Escadrille As Told by Clyde Balsley, chasse pilot of the French Flying Service, to Paul Adams," p. 70.
- <sup>37</sup> Thenault, *The Story of the Lafayette Escadrille Told by its Commander, Captain Georges Thenault*, 58-60.
- <sup>38</sup> Chapman, *Victor Chapman's letters from France*, 41-42.
- <sup>39</sup> Balsley, "The Story of the Lafayette Escadrille As Told by Clyde Balsley, chasse pilot of the French Flying Service, to Paul Adams," p. 71.
- <sup>40</sup> Babbitt, *Norman Prince: A Volunteer Who Died for the Cause He Loved*, 34-35.
- <sup>41</sup> Chapman, *Victor Chapman's letters from France*, 27-28.



- <sup>42</sup> Hall, *The Lafayette Flying Corps*, Vol. 1, 196-198.
- <sup>43</sup> Hall, *One Man's War*, 149.
- <sup>44</sup> Rumsey, "Training an Aviator in France," p. 266.
- <sup>45</sup> Hall, *The Lafayette Flying Corps*, Vol. 2, 331.
- <sup>46</sup> Mason, *How High Flew the Falcons*, 126-127.
- <sup>47</sup> Hall, *The Lafayette Flying Corps*, Vol. 2, 36.
- <sup>48</sup> Hall, *One Man's War*, 162-163. Most photographs depict four to a side, but Bert Hall noted that the total number on Prince's plane was six. Perhaps he was mistaken.
- <sup>49</sup> Hall, *One Man's War*, 162-164.
- <sup>50</sup> Hall, *One Man's War*, 162-164.
- <sup>51</sup> Hall, *One Man's War*, 170. It is worth noting that in Hall's retelling of the story, it was Prince rather than Rockwell who was saved by de Laage. It was Hall who mentioned that the patrol was made of Prince, Rockwell and de Laage.
- <sup>52</sup> Hall, *The Lafayette Flying Corps*, Vol. 1, 83.
- <sup>53</sup> Hall, *One Man's War*, 63-64.
- <sup>54</sup> Hall, *One Man's War*, 64.
- <sup>55</sup> Hall, *One Man's War*, 65.
- <sup>56</sup> It is worth noting that Kiffin Rockwell is still buried in Luxeuil-les-Bains. However, his tombstone notes that he fell at Rodern, in Alsace, which is approximately 40 miles north of Thann and 35 miles north of Hartmannsweilerkopf.
- <sup>57</sup> Babbitt, *Norman Prince: A Volunteer Who Died for the Cause He Loved*, 60-62.
- <sup>58</sup> A number of Norman Prince's artifacts are on display at the Stephen F. Udvar-Hazy Center of the National Air and Space Museum.
- <sup>59</sup> Elliott Cowdin, "How the Famous Lafayette Escadrille was Started," 264.
- <sup>60</sup> Thenault, *The Story of the Lafayette Escadrille Told by its Commander, Captain Georges Thenault*, 87.
- <sup>61</sup> Rumsey, "Training an Aviator in France," p. 267.



## Fighting in the Somme

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On October 18, 1916, the Escadrille moved from Behonne northeast to a flat field at the edge of the forest a kilometer north of the village of Cachy. Other than the forest, the village of 100 or so inhabitants was surrounded by a patchwork of agricultural fields. Now they were in northern France. Specifically they were in the Somme, about six miles southeast of Amiens and two miles away from Villers-Bretonneux, which on April 24, 1918, would become the site of the world's first tank battle. The land immediately around the base was gently rolling, almost flattened agricultural land not far from the front lines. The facilities were correspondingly sparse: no great villa or grand hotels as had been at Luxeuil and Bar-le-Duc. Instead, they had a lone wooden Adrian barrack camouflaged under the tree canopy to keep it hidden from German observation and bombardment planes. "We are out in the country about 20 kilometers from Amiens, sleeping on the floor of barracks," reported Laurence Rumsey. "From here you can hear the big guns..."<sup>62</sup> But in spite of the noise and the barracks, their morale remained high, and, not surprisingly, they found that great food could at least partially offset the hardship of the Spartan accommodations. Consequently, the Escadrille busied itself in finding a wonderful chef, a task that they accomplished quickly. Now at least they had some creature comforts.

There were seven other escadrilles already at Cachy. They included Escadrille N.13, Escadrille N.3 Storks led by Major Antonin Brocard and Escadrille N.67. The Storks were France's greatest squadron and the home to legendary Georges Guynemer, the "Ace of Aces" of the French *Service Aeronautique* and the hero of France. Guynemer came to visit the Americans. He was quite the celebrity, and they delighted in taking photos with him.

McConnell remembered his time at Cachy writing:

*The eight escadrilles of fighting machines form a rather interesting colony. The large canvas hangars are surrounded*



*Note: This map depicts some of the training bases and other key locations mentioned in this book.*

Ravenel was too far behind the front lines, so on April 7, 1917, the Lafayette Escadrille moved forward northeast closer to the front to the former German aerodrome at Ham. Ham was a town of about 3,500 sandwiched between a bend of the Somme River and a lateral rail line running from Amiens southeast to Laon. In mid-March, the Germans had systematically destroyed the Chateau de Ham as well as the bridges in town; however, the aerodrome was in fine shape. South of the rail line was the hamlet of Eppeville. The aerodrome was actually much closer to Eppeville than Ham, so to name the aerodrome after Ham was misleading. However, aerodromes often took on deceptive names in instances such as this where Ham was much better known than Eppeville.<sup>82</sup> It flanked one end of the aerodrome, which meant, according to historian Herbert Mason, Jr., that “engine failure on takeoff could drop the airplane in the town square.” Furthermore, the deep railway culvert bordered the north end of the field. Being sandwiched in between Eppeville and the railway culvert meant that takeoffs and landings had to be quick and short and that there was very little room for error.<sup>83</sup>

Three new pilots arrived during the last two days of March. They were Kenneth Marr of San Francisco, Thomas Hewitt of Westchester, New York and William Dugan, Jr. who was from Rochester, New York.<sup>84</sup> Dugan had been a member of the French 170th Infantry Regiment and was a survivor of the horrors of Verdun. Marr was a well-liked jovial sort who had spent a great deal of time in Alaska who had signed up to serve in the American Ambulance Corps in early 1916. The three of them would combine to tally 700 days in the Lafayette Escadrille and then another 239 flying for the United States Air Service.

April 8, 1917, started poorly. Harold Willis and Edward Hinkle, whose nickname was “Grandpa,” had joined the unit on March 1. The “Grandpa” nickname was not without merit, even in a squadron that included many 30 plus-year-old men. Hinkle, of Cincinnati,



Ohio, was 40 when he joined the squadron. He had graduated from Andover in 1895, Yale in 1900 and then studied architecture at the University of Pennsylvania. He worked in Paris from 1901 to 1905, and therefore probably spoke French rather well. He returned to the United States in 1905. He signed up to fly for France in mid-1916, and then made his way through aviation training schools at Buc, Avord, Cazaux and Pau before being sent to the Lafayette Escadrille.<sup>85</sup>



*Figure 23: Ken Marr's Nieuport 17  
(Henry Lockhart Jr. Collection)*

*Note: The Nieuport 17 lies flipped over in a railway culvert. The ECP on the fuselage are Edwin C. ("Ted") Parson's initials, but the plane was never painted with the famous Indian head insignia. Parsons flew this plane from January 28 to March 22, 1917, but it was Ken Marr who flipped the plane on April 8, 1917.<sup>86</sup>*

Now on April 8, Hinkle took off on a familiarization flight in order to get to know his plane. This was very important as each plane, though produced using interchangeable parts, had nuances and kinks that often had to be worked out. Hinkle circled the field once and then came in to land, hitting hard on his right wheel, destroying it and the axle, making the plane drag to a halt on its right wing and splintering it. Willis was up next. He got into his Nieuport, tested out the engine by bringing it to normal flying RPMs, and then proceeded to test the



Vickers machine gun. The synchronizer failed and Willis shot his propeller off. Walter Lovell was third. He started up his Nieuport and the motor seized. Edmond Genet was fourth, and his engine popped a piston rod putting it out of action. All four planes had to be towed away one by one. Ken Marr was next. He took off, but then came in too low, hit a pile of torn up railroad tracks on one end of the field, flipped over and then skidded down the adjacent railway culvert providing at least something of interest for the railway workers on the job that morning.<sup>87</sup>

Without any help from the Germans, the Escadrille had knocked out five of its own planes in just one morning. Fed up with his pilots, Georges Thenault called off any further operations for the next few hours. However, in the afternoon, De Laage scored a double victory over the Germans and was then given the *Legion d'Honneur* on April 21. Lufbery forced a German two-seater down the same day. In the interim period, two things happened. The first was that the Escadrille unfurled an American flag it had received. It was the first time that an American flag had ever been unfurled in a European combat zone, and it just happened that a movie camera was on hand to record the event for posterity. Second was that while out on patrol with Raoul Lufbery on April 16, Edmond Genet was killed by a German anti-aircraft shell over St. Quentin, becoming the first American to be killed in combat *after* America's entry into the war.

While in Ham, the Lafayette Escadrille continued to transition from Nieuports to Spad VIIIs. The new planes trickled in very slowly. Eventually the name changed from Escadrille N.124 to Spa.124 in honor of the Spads, therefore letting planners know that the unit was a Spad-equipped squadron.

On April 23, Ronald Hoskier, flying with de Laage de Meux's orderly, Jean Dressy, was killed in a melee with three German machines. The two were flying a Morane-Saulnier Type L parasol, the Escadrille's only two-seater. It was the last flight scheduled for the Escadrille's parasol as it was due to be retired, but Hoskier and Dressy had begged to take it up one last time. The parasol was an interesting



looking plane. It was a harbinger of the way planes should be: one wing, not two. In the case of the parasol, the wing was actually above the fuselage rather than through the lower section of the fuselage or even below it. There was considerable logic behind this approach: given the same weight, power and other comparable characteristics, monoplanes could fly faster than biplanes. In fact, the early fighter planes had been monoplanes. The problem was that the early monoplanes tended to have structural problems with the solitary wing, and more than a few planes crashed when their wings came off. The second wing in biplane designs let the wings give each other structural support and gave the planes more structural strength in general. Certainly, Hoskier must have known all this. In any case, Hoskier and Dressy were chasing one of the enemy aircraft south of St. Quentin when their wing tore off sending them plummeting to their deaths and reinforcing every negative belief of the weaknesses of monoplanes. Their wrecked plane was hardly recognizable as an aircraft. Hoskier's parents, who had been working for the Ambulance Corps in France, arrived by train two days later to attend his and Dressy's funeral in the town of Ham.



*Figure 24: Grave of Ronald Hoskier and Jean Dressy  
(Henry Lockhart, Jr. Collection)*



*Note: The legend on the wooden cross reads, in French, "Here fell Ronald Hoskier and Jean Dressy, Died for France."*



*Figure 25: Ronald Hoskier's Funeral  
(Henry Lockhart, Jr. Collection)*

*Note: Hoskier was buried at Ham. Hoskier's mother is at center and his father is facing the camera. His casket lies at right, covered by an American flag. Dressy's casket was right next to Hoskier's.*

Charles Dolan, John Drexel and Henry Jones became the latest additions to the squadron on May 12. On May 23, the much beloved de Laage de Meux took off in one of the new Spad VIIIs, climbed to 250 feet before his carburetor failed, conking out his motor and sending him plummeting to his death.<sup>88</sup> There was some glory in dying at the guns of an enemy pilot, but to die for lack of a decent part was especially heart breaking. De Laage de Meux was replaced five days later by another French officer, Lt. Antoine Arnoux de Maison-Rouge.

By this point in the war, the Germans were operating Albatros D.III fighters. The Albatros D.III was armed with two machine guns, had 175-horsepower, was capable of 109 miles per hour and had an 18,000-foot ceiling. The Escadrille found the enemy planes to be outstanding, but though they were comparatively under-gunned, the



able to dive into the clouds and then turn toward home once again. But fate robbed him of his chance to escape, and he came down just inside the shell-cratered German lines. He crash-landed at about 3:30 pm, flipped his Spad into a shell hole, and then crawled out only to be shot through the lung. He fell back and then spent the next seven hours all alone, breathing laboriously without food or water as the days fighting continued around him and added new holes into the wreck of his plane. At about 10:00 pm, a quintet of German soldiers took him prisoner. The five of them escorted him to the nearest dressing station, which was a mile away. From there Eaton began an extended journey that would take him first to Landshut and then to Villingen. Both were German Prisoner of War Camps in Bavaria. Landshut was 75 kilometers northeast of Munich and Villingen was about 270 kilometers west of Munich. There Eaton would sit out the rest of the war.<sup>121</sup>

At almost the same time that Eaton was fighting for survival during his flight home, Biddle, Soubiran, Dolan and Wilcox met a new type of adversary. It was the Fokker Dr.I Triplane.



*Figure 42: A trio of Fokker Dr.I Triplanes.  
(Narayan Sengupta)*

*Note: These planes flew together in 2010 at the annual Amicale Jean-Baptiste Salis Air Show at La Ferte-Alais, France.*



They had heard about it previously. Furthermore, rumor had it that a Dr.I had shot down their friend James Norman Hall on May 7, while he was flying for the 94th Aero Squadron. Biddle relayed what happened next that afternoon:

*The four of us jumped on him at about 5000 meters and everybody had a few cracks at him, but before we got to close range he started doing all kinds of stunts so that he made the hardest sort of a target. The other men seemed to think we had him and did not follow him down, but I have seen this sort of thing too often to take anything for granted and felt sure the Hun was just throwing his machine around in order to get away and that it was not out of control. Hence I kept after him, shooting whenever I could get my gun about on him. It worked to perfection this time and I must have fired about a hundred and fifty shots, some of them at as close as 40 yards range, or even less. But all the time he was doing spins, renversements, etc., and all the tricks of the trade. I know perfectly well I hit his machine a number of times, but did not have the luck or rather, was not accurate enough to set it on fire or get the pilot. Once when I was diving seventy yards behind and above him, at high speed and plugging away, he suddenly pulled up into one of those steep climbs for which these machines are remarkable. I pulled up as quickly as I could without risk of breaking something, but the Hun ended up 75 yards above me, and rather had the advantage if he had used it properly. I put on my motor wide open, and by pulling my machine into a climb, was able to get my gun in line just as he started to turn. Gave him a blast and came pretty close; in fact, this was one of several times when I thought I might have gotten him. Anyhow, it seemed to give him such a thrill, that he fell on his nose and passed below me again, where it was a simple matter to dive after him once more. I chased him down to 2,500 meters and then being alone and not knowing where I was, on account of many clouds below, except that I was a considerable distance on the German side of the*



*fence, I had to give it up as a bad job. He got away all right for I saw him pull up and fly off home in a perfectly normal way.*<sup>122</sup>

It was too bad that the German had gotten away, but that it had was a testament to the amazing maneuvering ability of the Dr.I. On the other hand, the fact that the Dr.I did not get any shots off against Biddle may indicate some weaknesses of the type. Biddle concluded as follows:

*This new Hun machine can out climb our Spads but is not as fast nor as strong and on account of its light weight you can catch them easily in a dive. If, therefore, one remembers their one strong point and watches out for it, they should not prove as difficult to handle as some of the other German types.*<sup>123</sup>

Beyond that there were no significant results other than the fact that Charles Biddle himself was shot down on May 15. He had been specializing in enemy two-seaters, and was chasing one 600 meters above the ground when the observer in the back seat “did the quickest and most accurate bit of shooting” Biddle had ever seen. Enemy rounds drilled into his motor and knocked it out. They also wounded him above the knee. “He certainly got the best of me,” Biddle reported, “and I don’t feel at all vindictive about it, as it was a perfectly fair fight.” He came down in No Man’s Land in between the British and the Germans by Langemark, just a few miles north of Ypres. He was only about seventy yards from the German lines, but was lucky enough to get out without being captured or shot to pieces by them. British soldiers covered Biddle as he scrambled several hundred yards under heavy fire to safety.<sup>124</sup>

Tragedy struck the USAS on May 19 when the Germans shot down and killed Raoul Lufbery while he was flying for the 94th Aero Squadron. As the highest scoring American pilot alive, Baer was now the American “Ace of Aces.” His time at the front had gone brilliantly so far, but his fate was about to change.



On May 21 Baer combined with Hobey Baker, Christopher Ford and Charles Wilcox to knock down another plane, giving Baer a total of eight victories to his credit.

On the morning of May 22, a five-plane patrol including Baer, William Dugan, Charles Wilcox, George Turnure and Ernest Giroux took on eight enemy fighters from *Jasta 18* over Laventie, 33 miles south-east of Dunkirk in the direction of Lille. Dugan's guns jammed after just 10 rounds. Wilcox took on two fighters and reported sending one down in a *vrille* (tailspin). Turnure fought one down to 2,000 meters and reported it out of control. It was in this fight that Baer scored his ninth and last victory. The details were sketchy, but Giroux was killed. By 9:45 am, it was all over for Baer as the Germans shot him down too.<sup>125</sup>

Paul Baer had been America's Ace of Aces just four short days. His fate was unknown, but his friends assumed that he was in German hands as a prisoner. His tally was frozen from that point forward at an impressive nine victories. With those nine victories, he had done what no other USAS man would ever do: score almost one third of the USAS's 28 victories. Only Raoul Lufbery had done something similar by notching up one third of the Lafayette Escadrille's victories. Other American squadrons were finally at the front. Even then, the 103rd was still dominating the scoreboard with 14 of the USAS's 28 victories credited to it. Unfortunately, with Baer out of the picture, the 103rd would score only four more victories before the end of July, and the 103rd's dominance would now ebb away.

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<sup>104</sup> Hall, *The Lafayette Flying Corps*, Vol. 2, 161-162.

<sup>105</sup> The Biddle residence Andalusia is now a National Historic Landmark.

<sup>106</sup> Biddle, *The Way of the Eagle*, 145.

<sup>107</sup> Bailey, "L'Escadrille Jeanne D'Arc, SPA 124", 346-349.

<sup>108</sup> Harnish, "Paul Baer Scrapbook", p. 5-7.

<sup>109</sup> Hall, *The Lafayette Flying Corps*, Vol. 1, 184-186 and 103rd Aero Squadron "Total Casualties of Flying Personnel" and Bailey, "Escadrille SPA 103 Victory List," 256. This writer has been unable to find which German ace was shot down that day which might have fit Collins' claim.



- <sup>110</sup> Biddle, *The Way of the Eagle*, 159.
- <sup>111</sup> Biddle, *The Way of the Eagle*, 160.
- <sup>112</sup> Biddle, *The Way of the Eagle*, 161-164.
- <sup>113</sup> Biddle, *The Way of the Eagle*, 169-170.
- <sup>114</sup> Biddle, *The Way of the Eagle*, 170.
- <sup>115</sup> Hall, *The Lafayette Flying Corps*, Vol. 1, 103. The citation Baer received was issued on the 11th, but it was not specific about what the date of Baer's six-patrol day was, though it did mention that he had scored two victories during the course of that day.
- <sup>116</sup> Biddle, *The Way of the Eagle*, 178.
- <sup>117</sup> Biddle, *The Way of the Eagle*, 173.
- <sup>118</sup> Biddle, *The Way of the Eagle*, 174-175. "M\_\_\_\_" was perhaps Cord Meyer and "L\_\_\_\_" might have been Seth Low.
- <sup>119</sup> Correspondence with Elizabeth Eaton Doyle and Betty Thum, July 2010.
- <sup>120</sup> Gorrell's, Supplemental History, Series E, Vol. 27, 29.
- <sup>121</sup> Eaton, *Paul W. Eaton Diary*, 44-45. Eaton did not specify the type of aircraft he had fought, but as Biddle, Soubiran, Wilcox and Dolan fought Fokker Dr.Is that day, perhaps Eaton's adversaries were also Fokker Dr.Is
- <sup>122</sup> Biddle, *The Way of the Eagle*, 176-178.
- <sup>123</sup> Biddle, *The Way of the Eagle*, 178.
- <sup>124</sup> Hall, *The Lafayette Flying Corps*, Vol. 1, 127-128.
- <sup>125</sup> Gorrell's, Series E, Vol. 16, 16.



# Recovery and Resurgence

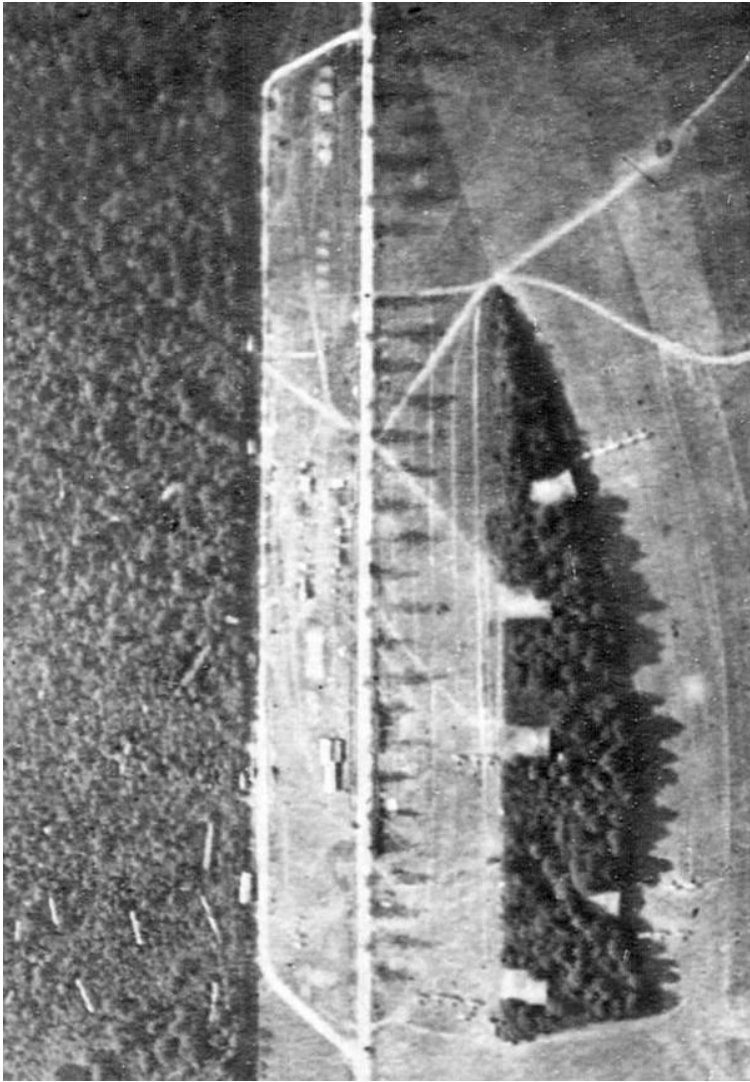
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The 103rd was clearly in need of some recovery time. Mother Nature provided that, sending enough rain to prevent operations for May 23 and 24. There were three patrols and one patrol on the 25th and 26th respectively, but they all returned with nothing to report.

On May 27, the squadron flew 21 sorties over three patrols. Once again, much of the fighting was over Mont Kemmel. Regardless of running into several enemy patrols and expending hundreds of rounds of ammunition, the 103rd did not put in for a single request for confirmation. The next few days consisted of patrols every day, but the missions returned with neither victories nor anything else to report.

Two new pilots, Charles Merrick and Frank Hunter, showed up on May 29 replacing Giroux and Baer. Hunter's full name was Frank O'Driscoll Hunter. His nickname was "Monk," but the name had nothing to do with him being a chaste or religious man. Instead, one of his relatives had likened him to a monkey when he was a little kid, and the nickname had stuck. Hunter was from Savannah, Georgia. Savannah was hot, sweaty and balmy with *average* high temperatures above the 70-degree line nine months of the year. It was also a masterpiece of city planning that seemed to show up in every book on architecture. The historic center dated back to the time that it had been founded as an English colony in the 1730s, and the city's neatly ordered town squares were almost without comparison in the United States. Savannah did not quite touch the Atlantic Ocean, but it was a large port located about 15 miles from the sea. Hunter might have been from the Atlantic coast, but he was ruggedly good-looking and appeared to be every bit a Wild West Cowboy. Hunter was blessed with such good eyesight that even decades later in life, he still had better than 20/20 vision in one eye. He also had a fascinatingly diverse background being part Welsh, part Irish and part Jewish; in fact, one of his ancestors had been Charleston, South Carolina's first rabbi.<sup>126</sup> Hunter had transferred into the 103rd from the 94th Hat in the





*Figure 49: Aerial view of Vaucouleurs Aerodrome.  
(Gorrell's)*

*Note hangars in forest below and barracks in forest above. This photo is oriented with north at the top and shows the aerodrome in late afternoon. The road went left to Vaucouleurs and right to St. Mihiel, 20 miles away.*



The 103rd had been without success since Edgar Tobin last scored on August 1, 1918. Fittingly, Tobin was the first to start scoring again, which he did on August 10, 1918. Tobin led a six-man evening patrol that departed Vaucouleurs at 7:05 pm. They climbed up to 4500 meters on a path to Pont-a-Mousson (northwest of Vaucouleurs) and then west to Flirey, north to Thiaucourt, west to St. Mihiel, back to Thiaucourt, back to Pont-a-Mousson and then finally southwest back to Vaucouleurs landing an hour and twenty minutes later at 8:25 pm. It was on the last leg around Thiaucourt that Tobin was attacked by a “Fokker biplane” (probably a D.VII) at 8:05 pm at 3000 meters. Nothing came of that fight, but then five minutes later, the six Americans came upon a pair of Fokker biplanes at 3500 meters and another pair above them. Tobin went after one of the two at 3500 meters squeezing off 75 to 100 rounds at it, sending the plane down into a vrille. The plane descended into the heavy mist, and the Americans were unable to witness what happened next. They were convinced that it must have crashed and requested a confirmation. The confirmation was received. Two of the other Americans went after the other Fokker, but then abandoned the fight when the upper pair of Fokkers zoomed in to join the fight.<sup>130</sup>

Tobin was quickly proving to be the 103rd’s most interesting flyer since Paul Baer had gone missing not quite three months earlier. That he was the one to resume the squadron’s scoring was not too surprising. What was surprising is that at the end of the day, his Spad was only one of seven still in commission. The remaining 10 were out of service for one reason or another. One had carburetor trouble, one was “turning up motor”, another was waiting for a windshield, another for a propeller hub and two wheels, another for a spark plug bushing, another for a new thermometer cable, and so on. Of the eight experimental and instructional planes, only one was in commission. The Spad XIII was one of the war’s greatest aircraft, but no one in the USAS could say that it was reliable at this point.

A New Jersey pilot with the unusual name of Van Winkle Todd went missing in combat on August 11. He and fellow 103rd Aero Squa-



dron pilots George Furlow of Rochester, Minnesota, Eugene Jones and Edgar Tobin were flying together on a morning patrol when this happened. They took off from Vaucouleurs at 9:05 am and then at 10:05 am ran into a black Fokker biplane sporting a white tail escorting two checkered Albatros two-seaters. Visibility was poor, but even then, a fight unfolded at 3800 meters with one of the Albatroses going after Todd. Todd fired back and appeared to hit the German plane, but the Albatros got the better of the exchange, and Todd went into a vrille. The fight was not over yet. Tobin unleashed his guns at Todd's attacker, sending *it* into a vrille. The reconnaissance report stated that Todd and Tobin fired about 600 rounds in all without specifying how many Furlow fired.<sup>131</sup> However, all three Americans shared credit for the victory, which turned Tobin into an ace. Thus over the two month period that ran from June 9 to August 11, Tobin had received full or partial credit for every victory confirmed by the 103rd. It is worth noting that not only was Tobin an ace, but he was also the first ace from Texas. Tobin and Furlow did not know it at the time, but Todd survived his crash and was taken prisoner.



*Figure 50: Captain Biddle's Rumpler  
(Painting by Michael O'Neal)*

Charles Biddle, who had been shot down in No Man's Land in May returned to action a month later. However, he returned no longer



with the 103rd Aero, but as the new commanding officer of the 13th Aero Squadron. He quickly scored two more victories on August 1. But one of his most remarkable victories was when he put a machine gun burst into the backseat of a Rumpler on August 16, killing the observer. The pilot, knowing that the situation was hopeless, allowed Biddle to escort him down otherwise intact to the French side of the lines near Nancy giving Biddle his sixth official victory.<sup>132</sup>

On August 17, one of the new pilots named Stuart Edgar was killed in an accident on takeoff. It was such a pointless way in which to die. He had just joined the squadron on June 6. Ironically, the last member of the 103rd to die was Warren Hobbs who had joined the same day as Edgar.

On August 21, Eugene Jones, working with two pilots from the 213th Aero Squadron, scored a victory.

The next two weeks were quiet. The weather was merely partially to blame as it kept the 103rd from flying on only three of those days. The 103rd sent up numerous patrols, but without any results. It was not just a lack of opponents that kept combats down. The 103rd was short on pilots and planes that were in working condition. For instance, for the period of August 10 to August 31, there were between 19 to 27 Spads on hand every day. At the same time there were between eight to 17 pilots on hand. Therefore, on average there were 23.25 planes on hand, but an average of only 13 pilots to fly them. Even worse was the fact that the average availability of the Spad XIII's was 7.66 per day. For the same period, there were 214 sorties (which included 65 trial runs), 18 combats and only the three aforementioned victories. The bad thing about uneventful patrols was that scores did not go up for either the squadron or the individual pilots. The good news was that they kept their losses down as well. August ended with Stuart Edgar and Van Winkle Todd as the only casualties for the month. Losing Edgar and Todd was more than offset by a flood of new pilots who arrived from August 23 to August 29. In fact, there were nine new arrivals and they included Lafayette Flying



Corps veterans Lawrence E. Cauffman of N.471 and Livingstone Irving from Spa.159.



*Figure 51: William T. Ponder  
(Greg VanWyngarden Collection)*

On September 9, the 103rd received a new player who would soon become an ace. He was William T. Ponder, a good-looking, athletic, Dartmouth graduate from Magnum, Oklahoma. Though he had just joined the 103rd, he was hardly a rookie. In fact, he was a seasoned combat veteran who had already flown for two French escadrilles and had scored three confirmed and two unconfirmed victories with Spa.163.<sup>133</sup> While at Dartmouth, he had played football well enough to have the university pay his tuition. He had also lettered in basketball and field hockey.<sup>134</sup> In 1917, Ponder paid his own passage over to France to join the Ambulance Corps, but while waiting for enough



William Dugan	3/30/17	5/31/18	x												
Thomas Hewitt	3/30/17	9/17/17						x							
Courtney Campbell, Jr.	4/15/17	10/1/17			x										
Ray C. Bridgman	5/1/17	8/15/18	x									4	4		
Charles Dolan	5/12/17	10/16/18	x								1		1	1.0	
John Drexel	5/12/17	6/15/17						x							
Henry S. Jones	5/12/17	6/9/18	x						1				1		
Antoine Arnoux De Maison-Rouge	5/28/17	10/6/17						x							
James Norman Hall	6/16/17	3/31/18	x			x			1		2	1	4	1.3	
Douglas MacMonagle	6/16/17	9/24/17			x										
David Peterson	6/16/17	3/29/18	x						1			4	5		
James Doolittle	7/2/17	7/17/17						x							
Robert Rockwell	9/17/17	10/18/18	x												
Louis Verdier-Fauvety	10/6/17	2/18/18						x							
Christopher W. Ford	11/8/17	6/29/18	x								2	1	3	.6	
<b>Totals</b>			<b>12</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>41</b>		<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>4.7</b>



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