

Daily Magazine

Air Fighter's Courage Need Only Exceed Foe's, Says This French "Ace"

Americans, Like French, Temperamentally Suited to Flying, Says Lieut. Georges Flachaire, Who, Having Downed Seven German Planes, Is Here Instructing Our Young Aviators.

By Marguerite Mooers Marshall

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"An aviator need not be really brave," Lieut. Georges Flachaire told me, with quiet modesty and an expressive flip of long, slender brown fingers, "but he must be less of a coward than his enemy."

Lieut. Flachaires of the Sixty-seventh Squadron of the French Flying Corps, after two and a half years of brave and distinguished service in the western theatre of war, is now serving as an instructor for our young aviators in the big school at Mineola. He has won many decorations for valor, although he shrugs, smiles and remains unperturbably silent when he is asked about them. But he admits that he brought down seven German planes—two more than the number required for making him an "ace." He flew in practically all the big battles on the western front, and says carelessly that he has engaged "in sixty-eight or seventy air fights—I cannot recall just the number."

But the most interesting thing about him, to my mind, and the circumstance most reassuring to all the mothers, sisters and sweethearts of our own young flyers, is that in all his two and a half years of hard service Lieut. Flachaire has never once been wounded. On a single occasion, he says, the back of one hand was scratched slightly, but I could see no scar when I talked with him yesterday. He is in town for the Official French Aerial Warfare Exhibit in the Anderson Galleries at Park Avenue and 69th Street, where may be seen "Le Vieux Charles," the original aeroplane with which the greatest of all the flyers, Capt. Guynemer, downed twenty-two of his fifty-five victims.

"My first and most interesting experience in the air, the day when I brought down my first plane, convinced me that it is necessary to be only a little more courageous than he against whom one fights," Lieut. Flachaire continued calmly. "After I had been up a little while a German plane came for me. But it did not get very near, and, although the gunner shot at me, the bullets went very wild. I was almost sure that the pilot and the gunner were nervous. I started after the plane and it began to dodge. Finally the pilot must have lost his head altogether, for he actually came down in the French lines—was not disabled, but simply made a landing there, as if he were over his own front. Of course I followed him, although I was flying so swiftly and with such force that I could not land properly and my machine was wrecked. I escaped uninjured, and plane, pilot and gunner were captured."

"You see, I was not particularly brave," tall, good-looking Lieut. Flachaire insisted with a smile and an inimitable facial gesture of hands and shoulders and staccato brows. "And really that is the most interesting experience I have had. I can think of nothing else at all thrilling. Yes, I have killed men; one has to kill them to bring down the plane, and I captured six besides the first one I have just described. But it is very simple. One tries to fly above the enemy plane and to get as close as possible so that the shooting may be accurate. Yes, they shoot in return, but what of it? I have received bullets in my machine, but in me—none!"

"When the battle is plane against plane it is not difficult. Sometimes, however, five or six will try to down one, and then it is necessary to depend on manoeuvring and what you call 'stunts.' But the German aviators are fair fighters and brave fighters, although the Allies undoubtedly have control of the air."

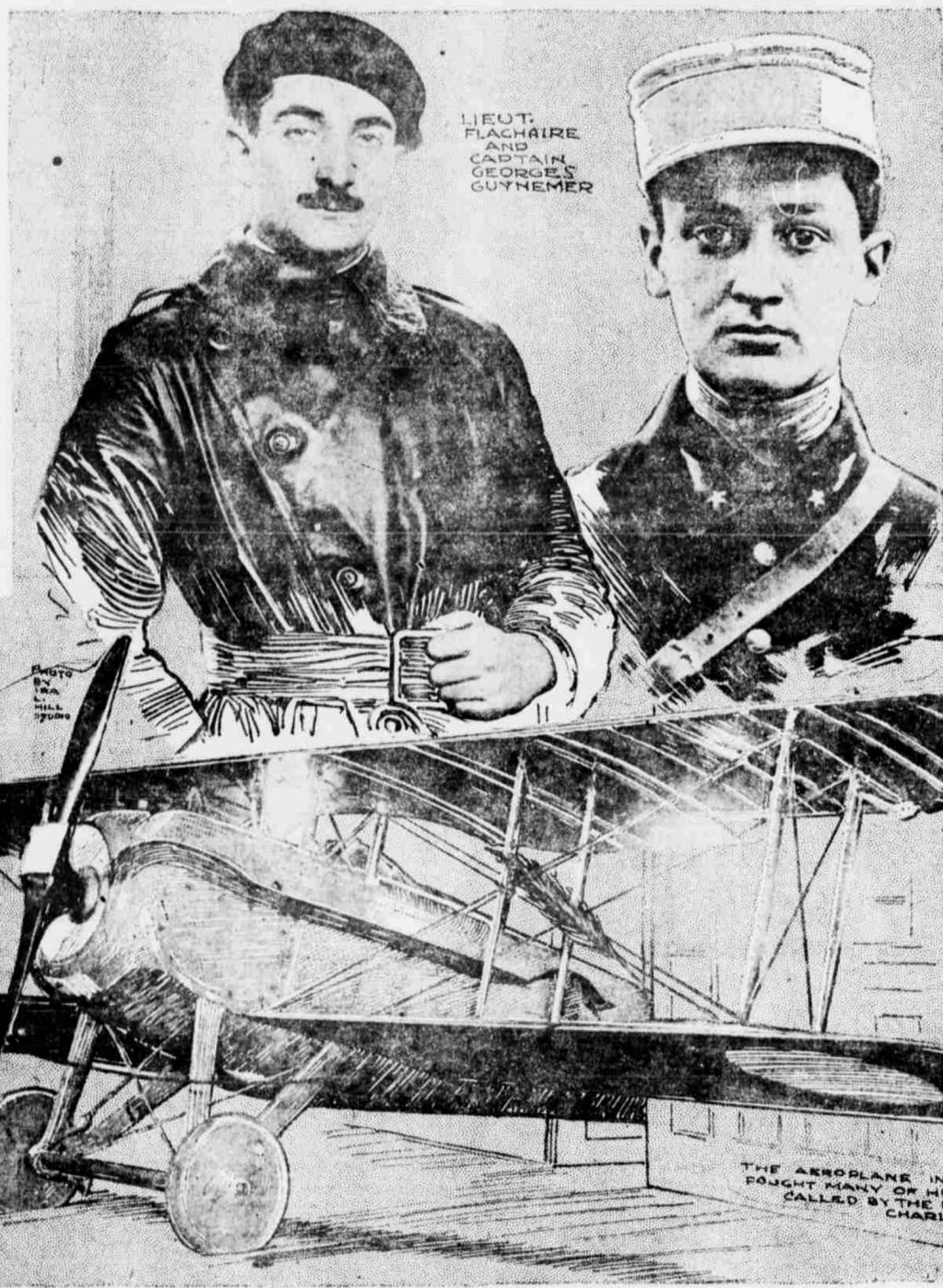
Since this most politely reserved and matter-of-fact of aces refused to talk any more about himself, I asked him what he thought about American airmen. His pleasant face, with its regular features and cool, blue eyes, lit up with cordial enthusiasm.

"The Americans make a great success as flyers," he said. "They have established fine records and there will be more of those. One of the ways in which you can help and are helping us most is by giving us aviators and machines built in this country."

"Undoubtedly there is something about flying which makes a special appeal to the American, as to the French, temperament. Flying is adventurous; it requires intelligence and initiative, as well as coolness and a little courage. Young men make good flyers, because they do not spend time thinking about what may happen. We never did that in France. When we were not in the air we talked, laughed, played, amused ourselves. We thought of our flying simply as

Guynemer's Famous Warplane Now on View Here

"LE VIEUX CHARLES," IN WHICH FRENCH AIR KING DOWNED TWENTY-TWO OF HIS FIFTY-FIVE GERMANS, A FEATURE OF FRENCH AERIAL WARFARE EXHIBIT.



LIEUT. FLACHAIRE AND CAPTAIN GEORGES GUYNEMER

THE AEROPLANE IN WHICH GUYNEMER FOUGHT MANY OF HIS AIR BATTLES, CALLED BY THE FRENCH "LE VIEUX CHARLES" (OLD CHARLIE)

Independence Declaration Not Signed July 4, 1776, But Four Weeks Later

A Curiosity of American History That Trumbull's Famous Painting of the Declaration's Adoption Has Been Misinterpreted and Its Title Changed to "Signing," Causing Popular Error Regarding Date.

By Philip Robert Dillon

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ONE of the most persistent popular errors of the people of the United States is the belief that the Declaration of Independence was "signed" on July 4, 1776. The plain facts about the Declaration and the subsequent "signing" are as follows:

Thomas Jefferson was the Chairman of the sub-committee appointed to draft the Declaration. The other members of this committee were Roger Sherman, Robert Livingston, Benjamin Franklin and John Adams.

On July 2, 1776, Mr. Jefferson, as Chairman of this committee, presented to Congress the report of the committee. He had himself, with his own hand, made a "fair copy." This report was taken up and debated all that day, and next day—the 3d of July—in oppressively hot weather, a number of amendments were made, striking out passages and substituting others.

Finally, on July 4, the Declaration, as amended, was ready for a vote. The President of Congress, John Hancock, put the question in about the same manner as such questions are put nowadays. He said: "The clerk will call the roll on the motion to adopt." The clerk did call the roll, and each member present answered "Aye." Then the President announced that the motion to "adopt the Declaration is carried." There was no "signing" by anybody on that day, unless the President and Secretary signed the minutes of the session, which included other matters in addition to the Declaration. This signing by President and Secretary, if it was done, is all the signing that any legislative body ordinarily requires. It was not until July 8 that the Declaration was read aloud ceremoniously to the public, and then there was no announcement of the names of those who had voted for it.

On July 19, fifteen days later, Congress ordered that the document be "fairly engrossed on parchment, with the title and style of 'The Unanimous Declaration of the Thirteen United States of America,' and that the same, when engrossed, be signed by every member of Congress." This was done.

It was on Aug. 2, 1776, that most of the members wrote their signatures upon the parchment. A number signed later. Seven who were members on that 4th of July did not sign at all. Their names are Clinton, Alsop, R. Livingston, Wisner, Willing, Humphreys and Rogers. Their terms had expired and new members took their places. The names of the seven who signed but who had not voted for the Declaration are Thornton, Williams, Rush, Clymer, Smith, Taylor and Rose.

Much of the popular error about the date of "signing" is probably due to the painting "Declaration of Independence," which was executed for Congress by John Trumbull, finished in 1818, and hung in the rotunda of the Capitol at Washington, where it still hangs. Millions of copies of this painting have been circulated by publishers of engravings, magazines and newspaper publishers. Possibly, excepting "Washington Crossing the Delaware," it is the most familiar picture in the United States. Yet, strange to say, it seems that the mass of the people, including many editors, have not closely observed it. The picture shows the sub-committee of five standing at the President's table, Mr. Jefferson speaking while holding in his hand a paper, evidently explaining its purport to the President. Nobody is signing anything. A quill pen sticks out of an ink bottle—a bit of furniture.

In spite of the clearness of the painting and the plain title which the painter gave it, engravers early began to change the title. Harper's Weekly of July 3, 1858, printed a full page reproduction of the picture over the title "Signing the Declaration of Independence." Probably the editor got the title from an earlier engraved sheet or from some school text book. Even now text books are printed showing the picture as the "Signing," and many of our leading newspapers reproduce it with the word "Signing" in the caption.

To repeat: Trumbull's painting is just plain "Declaration of Independence," and the "signing" was done on Aug. 2, 1776.

WHAT HE'D DO.

In a first-class compartment of an express train a testy old gentleman was sitting next to a young man who seemed to be in high spirits over something, beguiling the time first by whistling and then by humming. The old gentleman was evidently annoyed and became irritable. At last, when his neighbor burst out with, "I wish I were a bird," he could forbear no longer, and exclaimed excitedly:

"I wish to goodness you were young man. I'd wring your neck," Baltimore Sun.

NO RACE SUICIDE HERE.

The population of Japan is increasing at the rate of about 675,000 yearly.

Interned French Artists Paint Life in German Prison Camps

Sufferings and Isolation Endured by Germany's Captives Recorded on Canvas by Talented Poilus, Many of Whom Are Handicapped by Infirmities.

By Will B. Johnston

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SOMEWHERE in Switzerland is a little group of valiant souls, relics of what were once valiant French and Belgian soldiers. They are human scrap, the hopeless incurables who have poured out the sweat, red wine of youth in the great war and now await in exile repatriation, for that kinder liberation—death.

These men are artists whose flowered talents and ambitions were arrested, blighted and crushed by Prussian plague and Kruppianity. They come from German prison camps and have been encouraged by the Swiss to work that is designat their "intellectual property."

Bravely struggling against infirmities, they have produced a number of paintings, etchings and sketches which have been brought here by the Swiss-American Committee for the Relief of Allied Prisoners and are on exhibition at Knoedler's Gallery, No. 634 Fifth Avenue.

The paintings are especially interesting as the first intimate pictorial record of German prison camp life to

your apartment uptown. One prisoner reads an old French newspaper to his homesick companions. Two wear wooden shoes, which seem to be the style. And with all this woodwork the most surprising thing is that the Germans have not indulged their passion for whitewash. But then they need all of that for the Kaiser.

Rauet also has a sketch called "Causette au Grillage," which shows the inmates of a German camp restriction. A soldier stands forlornly pressed against a wire screen barrier trying to talk to his wife. This is an exterior and indicates the character of the prison checks, the crazy corduroy walks (more Black Forest), muddy grounds and general atmosphere of desolation.

Henry Rogero, French, has six prison pictures of Camp Holminku, but his work shows a mind obsessed by the tragedy of his experience there. One canvas is a bitter indictment of German cruelty in the treatment of her prisoners. This large composition represents a bearded French prisoner tightly roped to a stake. He stands in a strained position, bound by the waist and knees, with his arms stretched awkwardly back around the post, his hands lashed together. The sun is shining behind the shoulder of a mountain in the background, and it last rays glid the tortured poilu's outline, suggesting the ending of a perfect German day.

Another Rogero is as gloomy as Poe, with a ghastly prisoner

framed by his prison door. The figure, with utter dejection in every line, lifts an anguished face toward the moon, the one connecting link between him and his beloved France, his battling countrymen, his home, his wife, his children.

Piet Gillis, Belgian, displays the most artistic talent in the collection. His "Gray Time in Germany" is a charming wet landscape away from prisons, and he makes the "time" look just as gray as we hope it is, with no spots on the sun and long may she rain.

Henri Bing, French, has eleven prison sketches. "La Neige au Camp" looks as if they have coalless Mondays only seven days a week at the prison camps there.

Capt. M. Amisault shows some Russian prisoners locked together singing in close harmony. If a Russian can ever be in harmony, and joyously playing balalaikas, an instrument of torture a few degrees deadlier than the ukulele. And when a Russian plays his "Home, Sweet Home" on a balalaika it must sound just as sweet as new mown murder and homelike a la Russe.

Altogether, in this exhibition it is the human rather than the artistic appeal that impresses, and you think beyond the pictures, with sympathy for those exiled brave, to whom we civilians owe such a debt of gratitude.