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**FRENCH OFFICIAL REPORT**  
**REGOUNTS TALES OF HEROISM**  
**ON LAND AND IN THE AIR**

**Small Squadron of French Dragoons Charged and Destroyed an Aviation Park Within the German Lines**

**ONLY 10 FRENCHMEN OF 500 SURVIVED**

**Two Battles in the Air, in Which the French Aviators Showed Skill, Courage and Daring**

PARIS, Dec. 2.—The French War Office has supplemented its official statement with an account of the exploits of a Squadron of Dragoons during the early part of September.  
 "During the night of September 9," the account reads, "a lieutenant of the Dragoons, who had become isolated with his squadron in the midst of the German lines and had taken refuge at a farm, learned of the presence of a park of German aeroplanes on the road leading from Viviers to a factory between Soissons and Compeigne."  
**Big Detachment.**  
 According to the gossip of peasants, the aeroplanes had landed about seven o'clock in the evening, and had been joined about ten o'clock by an automobile convoy, consisting of from seven to nine machines, which had kept company with them during their flight.  
 "The lieutenant decided upon an immediate attack. It was then half-past two in the morning. It was proposed that two platoons on foot should approach as near as possible to the convoy, fire three shots and no more. A mounted platoon profiting by the consequent disorder, would hurl itself upon the automobiles, and charge with their lances those who sought to escape. Another mounted platoon was to remain in reserve at the factory."  
**A Daring Attack.**  
 "The two platoons on foot succeeded in approaching to within forty meters of the automobiles, and the challenge of the German sentinel was the signal for opening fire. Scarcely had the fire ceased, in conformity with the orders received, than the lieutenant in command of the mounted platoon charged at a gallop at the head of his men shouting 'Vive la France.'"  
 "Unfortunately the Germans were only partly surprised, and a rapid fire gun stationed at the head of the automobile convoy opened fire. The French officers were killed, and the platoon literally annihilated. Not one of the troopers reached the automobile. Seeing this, the lieutenant in command of the two dismounted platoons, also attempted an assault. The German machine gun was silent, the gunners having been killed at their positions. The French troopers hurled themselves upon the aviators.  
**Fought the Aviators.**  
 "They were in small groups and at once began a fierce interchange of shots at a distance of fifteen yards."  
 "The Germans who were crouching along the edge of the road, replied to this fire with great courage."  
 "While this was going on a detach-

ment of engineers, armed with tools, and having been previously instructed as to what to do, threw themselves on the aeroplanes. With sure blows from their pickaxes they destroyed the motors, the gasoline reservoirs and the running gear of the German machines. Furthermore, three automobiles, which contained a supply of gasoline, caught on fire and threw a glare of light over the scene.  
**French Losses Great.**  
 "Before closing the engagement, the French losses had been great, the courageous commanding officer wanted to engage the automobiles in the centre of the group from which the orders of the Germans had been issued, and which seemed to be occupied by the German commander."  
 While the reserve platoon was drawing back with the comparatively few men remaining in it, the French lieutenant, followed by three cavalymen, made his way up to this automobile and found himself face to face with two men, one of whom was an officer. The officer, perceiving his assailants immediately opened fire on the group of four men with an automatic pistol. The three cavalymen fell. The lieutenant received a bullet through the arm, but not before he had been able to discharge his revolver at a distance of a few inches against the chest of his adversary, who sank to the ground.  
**Lieutenant Knocked Out.**  
 "The German who was in the automobile with this officer, succeeded in landing on the French lieutenant heavily with the butt end of a musket, and the blow sent him spinning into the gutter of the roadway. Here he lay semi-unconscious for a few moments, but recovering himself, and with the assistance of another wounded man, the lieutenant succeeded in dragging himself to the shelter of a field of beets. In three platoons engaged only ten men came out of this engagement unscathed. They hid in a village and for three days lived within the German lines.  
 "Their deliverance came only on the 13th September, when a division of French infantry was victorious over the enemy.  
**Chased German Airman.**  
 Another recital this time of an aerial engagement, also was given out officially yesterday. It follows:  
 "Toward half past six on the morning of November 18th a sergeant of one of our air squadrons, having on board his aeroplane a lieutenant observer, was returning from a reconnaissance along the front. He was about over the French lines when he perceived a French flying machine in the direction of Amiens.  
 He at once started in pursuit of the enemy, but the speed of his machine was slightly inferior to that of the German and it was impossible for

him to overtake the enemy. In front of Amiens the German executed a series of evolutions to make possible the throwing of bombs, some on the aviation field and others on the village of Vailly. These evolutions made it possible for the French machine to come up.  
 "The Lieutenant opened fire on the Germans and discharged about one hundred bullets from his machine gun. The fire damaged slightly the German machine, but the Lieutenant was not successful in striking the pilot or any vital part of the mechanism.  
 "Nevertheless the machine descended to the ground.  
 "The French sergeant then approached another German aeroplane, this one of the Albatross type, which was flying over Vailly and prepared to attack it. The pilot of the Albatross, in a skillful and desperate manoeuvre made a rapid half-turn and precipitated his machine at full speed on the French aeroplane. The French sergeant to avoid collision, threw his machine back to such an angle that the rapid fire gun was detached from its fastenings and fell down inside the car. By the time the Frenchman had recovered his equilibrium the German machine had time to get away.  
 "At about this time another French aviation sergeant, who had just landed on the aviation field of Amiens from a reconnaissance along the front, perceived the machine of the enemy in the air over the city. Accompanied by a mechanic he took the air again and lifting at once to a considerable height he started in pursuit of the German machine, which had eluded the Frenchman by the desperate expedient of charging him. The second French machine came up with this German just as he was getting away from Amiens, and was successful in preventing him from getting within the German lines. He followed him as far as the region of Montdidier.  
**Fired on Him.**  
 The mechanic in this car fired two rifle shots at the German machine without succeeding in crippling it. In the meantime the German had not been idle, and the French machine had received three bullets, one of which had gone through the gasoline tank and another the seat reserved for the third passenger. Lack of ammunition made it necessary to abandon the pursuit.  
 "On reaching the ground the mechanic, who had gone aloft in such a hurry that he had not properly dressed himself, for a slight, found that he had one of his hands frozen.  
 "This same day, at a quarter before eleven in the morning, a French aeroplane carrying a corporal and a lieutenant went up to reconnoitre the defensive organisations of the enemy in the environs of Dombierre. This machine also encountered a German aeroplane.  
 "The pilot and the lieutenant, although armed only with revolvers, at once delivered an attack, but a bullet from the machine gun fired by the German crippled one of the wings of the French flyer, which was compelled to come to the ground at all speed. It was only by the exercise of great ability on the part of the pilot that a successful landing on the Amiens aviation ground was made. The French machine was not seriously hurt."

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