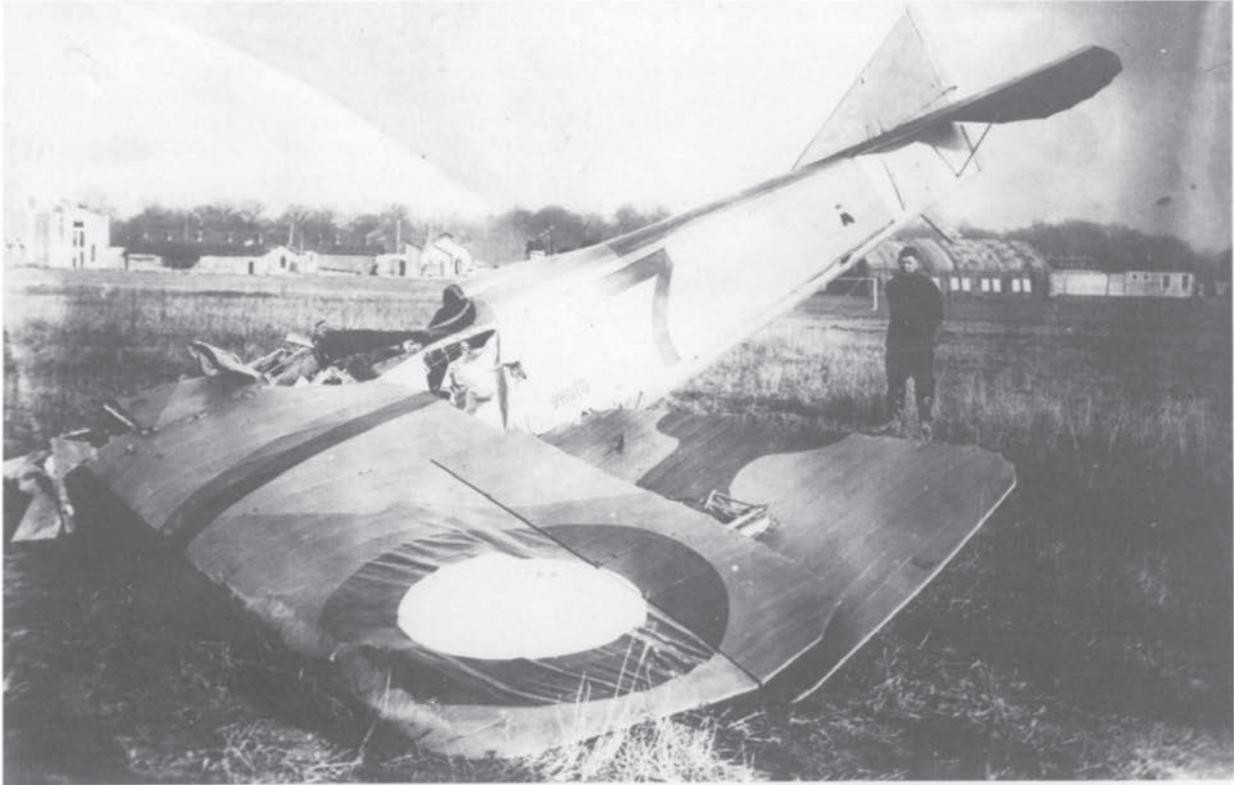


## More on the Birdmen



Being a freelance writer in my spare time, I have become used to receiving letters—ranging in tone from amused to outraged—pointing out errors, whether of omission or commission, which have cropped up in my articles, so my relish at seeing someone else dropping a stitch can be readily imagined.

On page 39 of the Summer 1979 issue Dennis Gordon identifies a mangled machine as "an (unidentified) observer plane." This is, in fact, a terminally-bent SPAD XIII C.1 fighting scout (to use contemporary terminology for what is today called simply a fighter). Due to the characteristics of the orthochromatic film then in use it is impossible to definitely determine the plane's national insignia, at least from the print as it is reproduced here, for the particular shade of blue used by both the French and United States Air Service (at least on aircraft acquired from France in the case of the latter service) often is so faint that it simply fades into the white portion of the cockade. Mr. Gordon may have been thrown off by the word, "Photo," painted on the fuselage; this appeared on many French aircraft, scouts as well as two-seaters such as the Salmson 2A2 appearing on page 36. I've seen an explanation for this, but don't remember where, so won't make a guess at the meaning and add confusion to the matter. One additional point: the American-built de Havillands were named "Liberty Battle Planes" by someone in Washington with a fondness for overblown labels, this due in part to their being powered by the American-designed and built Liberty aero engine. Their tendency to catch fire—the main fuel tank was located between the pilot's and observer's cockpits—when shot up earned them another sobriquet: "Flaming Coffins."

ROBERT L. TRIMBLE  
Hollywood, California

Ed. To defend Mr. Gordon's expertise, we must say that the editors created that caption. Plane type and function were the only things known, though—pilot, place, and date were not identified. We're glad, though, that the vague caption elicited Mr. Trimble's informative response.

Mrs. Patterson and I want to express our pleasure and appreciation for the interest you have shown in my experience over the front during World War I in France (Summer issue). I know there are not many people who have fallen six thousand feet in an aeroplane and still lived to tell about it.

I was the right-hand lead plane behind the photographer. There were five planes in our formation on a mission sent to photograph the German positions on our front.

I attribute my survival to the fact that I was unconscious in the plane, and when the plane crashed it did not break up. Also, the German soldiers (the Prussian Guard) took very good care of me.

ROBERT A. PATTERSON  
Havre, Montana

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To a 21-year-old collegian aspiring to be a journalist, Rufus Woods (Autumn 1979) was a genuinely glamorous figure, the very symbol of all-conquering hero. We encountered him in 1935 at the zenith of his fame, and were truly awed. At the time we were a summer time newspaper flunky.

This small town editor had battled since 1918 to make Grand Coulee Dam a reality, in spite of opposition from Spokane and other big city slickers. . . .

Woods of the *Wenatchee Daily World* had jawboned and showboated his way to the pinnacle, so it was no wonder he represented what a journalist could accomplish if he made up his mind to it. He fairly radiated personality and success. Every time we have gone to see Grand Coulee Dam we have gotten the feeling it's his monument and his name ought to be emblazoned on the concrete wall in letters 50 feet high. And every acre of irrigated land in the Columbia Basin ought to be part of what we'd designate as "Woods' Grand Park." What an inspiration he was!

HAL G. STEARNS  
Helena, Montana

On your story about the Culbertson-Plentywood stage (Autumn 1979)—I can remember when Hank Winch (brother of John, who was mentioned in the article) was also running the stage. The article told about keeping the stage horses in the Butterfield and Englebright's livery barn . . .

Jack Butterfield first came to Culbertson as a cook on

the Pool Roundup. He was a small dark fellow with a deep voice, a great horseman who had a lot of good teams. Had the first coal mine southeast of Culbertson . . . He married a woman from the redlight district south of the tracks. She was a worker . . . milked a bunch of cows and sold the milk. Sometime before 1920, they sold the livery barn and both went to Idaho. Jack and she split up after that.

Red Englebright was back to visit Culbertson in 1936 for several days. Had a wife and five red-headed girls, came up from Filer, Idaho, in a new car. Red was in the insurance business. Everybody wanted to know where Jack went, but Red said he never saw him after they left Culbertson.

HERBERT SPURGEON  
Medora, North Dakota

In the East we seem to be in a hurry to go no place all the time, talk fast and rush in ever diminishing circles . . . The Fall social season and the sudden intensity of business has really had me jumping.

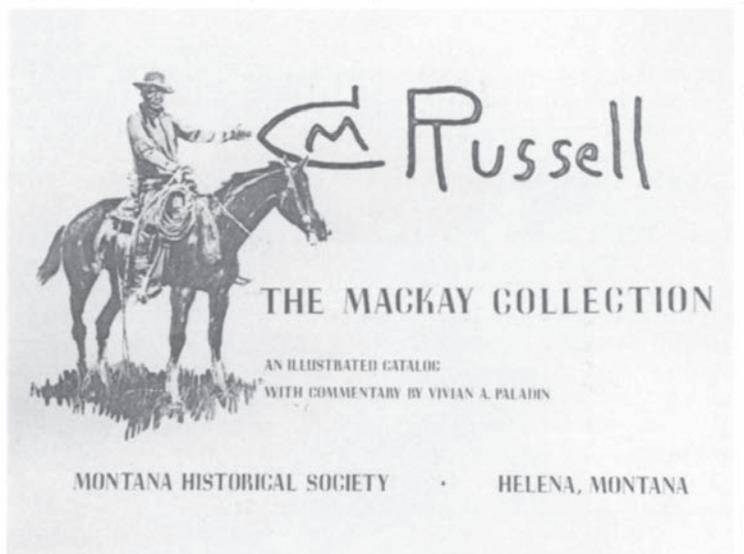
Today is a day to sit back and review things. I decided that today is *Montana Day* in my mind. Stop running like an idiot and pretend I am in Montana. It is a delightful escape, it is now 8:00 a.m. I wonder how long it will last, after the first five phone calls . . . ? I will look forward to seeing the *Montana Magazine*. It will help me escape.

HARRY VAN DEXTER  
Sewell, New Jersey

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WITH COMMENTARY BY

VIVIAN A. PALADIN



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