

The Red Baron's Last Flight

www.aerostories.org

Rolf Steiner

Translation by R. Magnani

Manfred von Richthofen is to Germany what Georges Guynemer is to France. Beyond the patriotic fervour they generated, they both confirmed the advent of a new race of warriors, the cold-blooded, calculating and methodical fighter pilots. Unlike Boelcke, his mentor, Richthofen did not revolutionise air combat. He was not a genuine theoretician, not even a real leader; he may not have been a brilliant pilot either. But he strictly and precisely put into practice the set of rules he had devised for himself. His demise, in an arguably confused engagement, was received in Germany with disbelief and grief. To the British, it was a much needed "shot in the arm" for their somewhat harassed Royal Flying Corps. The sceptical German challenged that controversial version of the episode. Who actually shot down Richthofen? It is not easy to supply a plain, convincing answer. The question has been puzzling aviation circles for over eighty years, but, when all is said and done, is it such an important issue as some would make it appear?

April 21, 1918. It is daybreak on a chilly Sunday. A nervy mist, rising from the Somme Canal, shrouds the region of Cappy, a small village a few miles from Peronne. On the airfield, mechanics are already busy around the aircraft; these are all Fokker Dr.I triplanes, the formidable "Dreideckers", and all, of nearly

all, are painted in gaudy colours. Some are green or blue; others are finished in more or less intricate patterns of bright hues. The machine in the middle is mostly red, it is the Rittmeister's mount, the one most feared by the British, its pilot, Baron Manfred von Richthofen, is credited with 80 victories.

The Richthofen Circus

Cappy is in fact the present base of Jagdgeschwader 1 which the British have nicknamed. "The Richthofen Circus". There is nothing derisive in the phrase; they feel too much respect – and dread – to jest about it. The last knights of the Air are no more, they have been replaced by professional sky warriors, calculating, cold blooded and methodical "Serial Killers". Quite simply, like a circus, Jagdgeschwader 1 is frequently on the move; its personnel travels on a special railway-train, whose carriages are painted red, and every "ace" in the unit is entitled to his personal order.

The pilots arrive on the airfield. Richthofen is among them, wrapped up in this woollen-flying jacket, wearing his usual deerskin trousers, and the "Pour le Mérite" cross hanging from his neck. Hans Wolff is near him. The two pilots are chatting about a hunting party they have planned to attend in the Black Forest in three days' time.

Oberleutnant Karl Bodenschatz draws near and, stopping in front of Richthofen, lightly slaps his hand. It is a ritual that goes back to Jasta 11's times. Every other pilot then comes and slaps Bodenschatz's hand in turn, this hoping to ward off any ill luck that might befall their Rittmeister in combat, or, even worse... in some Berlin office! Indeed, it is rumoured that the High Command might take Richthofen away from the front and send him as inspector around the fighter units. The tragic fates of Boelcke and Immelmann are still rankling the "higher circles", and the German Air Force has no need for another martyr.

"Richthofen chair-borne! Heaven forbid, Bodenschatz quips, he must stay here with us". Richthofen bursts out laughing.

An east wind is rising. Within a couple of hours the fog will have lifted. As Richthofen heads towards his red triplane, a band comes out of the big tent used as a hangar and starts

playing a stirring march. What on earth is going on?

Bodenschatz bends to his Rittmeister's ear and, shouting over the din, explains that this has been arranged by the general commanding the military region to celebrate his eightieth victory.

Leutnant Löwenhardt's young Alsatian, Jasta 11's mascot, tries to clamber onto the triplane's bottoming. Richthofen helps him up, but once there, the animal starts shaking with fright. A mechanic steps forward and asks Richthofen if he may take a photo of him with

the dog. "Certainly not" Bodenschatz expostulates! He remembers that Boelcke, too, had been photographed just before what was to be his last mission. Since then, all German pilots have refused having their photos taken before take off, a superstition that will eventually spread all over the aeronautical world. But Richthofen does not believe in such nonsense, he shrugs and says "Don't bother me with your old wives' tales", pushing his orderly aside; he kneels down, hugs the dog's neck and face the camera for posterity – for eternity!

Stopping the gaps

Bertangles is a small village nestling between Amiens and Villers-Bocage. It is less than twenty miles from Cappy as the crow flies. The airdrome here is equally busy. Here too, mechanics are carrying out the same ritual as at Cappy, but they are British, and their charges are Sopwith Camels. As every morning for the fast few weeks, Captain Roy Brown got up racked with pain. The young Canadian suffers from stomach ulcer and can only swallow a mixture of brandy and milk with bicarbonate of soda. Major Charles Butler, the Commanding Officer of 209 Squadron, has repeatedly urged him to report sick, but Brown has always declined. It is the worst possible moment to leave the unit. Far from his mind the idea of adding to his score, already standing at 12 confirmed victories (plus over a dozen probable) but his unit cannot spare a single pilot. The Royal Flying Corps is being rather severely mauled by the German "Circuses" and every pilot, even sick or exhausted, is desperately needed.

A fortnight earlier young Wilfred May, known as "Wop" joined the Squadron, but this cannot be a substitute for a battle-trained pilot. Brown greeted May's arrival with pleasure for, as luck would have it, May was born in Edmonton too, and the two young men are close friends. But Brown's satisfaction was short-lived when he learnt that May's training had been curtailed in order to make good the losses on the Somme front.

Butler has agreed to May's posting to Brown's flight. For two weeks, Brown has dutifully

chaperoned him, often taking him over the front lines to familiarise him with "Archie" (anti-aircraft artillery) and teach him the rudiments of air combat.

It is now time for Wop to carry out his first real mission.

"Wop, I am taking you up with me today. Brown's face is haggard with exhaustion, sickness and poor diet; although he is only twenty four, he looks like a fifty year old man. I want you to get the feel of things, but you are not to take any chances. If we grapple with the Huns, I want you to keep away. If you happen to see a straggler below you, fine, you may dive and shoot a burst; if you miss him, don't climb back, go straight on. If there is a general mêlée, you stay out."

"All right!" Young May replies briefly, his thrill at the prospect of his airtight is slowly turning into apprehension; guessing, he can feel "butterflies in his stomach".

The mission today consists in patrolling the German sector along the road between Amiens and Albert, starting from Hangard, east of Amiens. The orders issued by Major Butler have been received with mixed feelings. 209 Squadron is to take off in mass formation to counter the Germans' new tactics. The British pilots generally prefer smaller, five-machine strong formations, which they consider more manageable, rather than those "shows of strength" mustering fifteen planes in three flights. But there is no discussing orders and Brown himself will lead the first flight.

Guess who is coming to fight!

About half past ten, the wind has swept away the last remnants of mist. The sun is coming out. The "Lords" will soon be here for the ball, Richthofen thinks. Seeing the officers hurrying towards their planes, the Rittmeister calls them back. They had better wait until the alarm is sounded before climbing into their cockpits. By sitting conformably in the meantime, they will feel more fit when it is time to scramble; it will not be long now. The phone rings, a few British planes have been spotted above the front lines.

Less than five minutes later, the first Fokkers are climbing away. Bodenschatz goes to the observation platform and peers through the glass. It is eleven o'clock sharp. He can see the six triplanes flying westwards, Richthofen leading the first section, Leutnant Weiss the second.

The Camels are following the Somme and flying over Corbie; above Cerisy they can see a few white puffs, an indication that there are "Huns" in the area, drawing fire from the British anti aircraft positions. It does not take Brown a long time to spot two English two-seaters which four Fokkers are trying to cut off from their lines. Flying higher, the Camels are ideally positioned, and they are still undetected

by the Germans. Brown waggles his wings, the agreed signal for attack. Excitedly, but somewhat incautiously, the fifteen fighters drive on their quarries. At the same moment, Brown catches sight of a number of dark specks to his right, slightly higher up. "Holy Heavens" he exclaims; other Fokkers are swooping down on them. To crown it all, it is the "Richthofen Circus". There is no mistaking them, a glance at their gaudy warpaint is enough. And, leading the attack, an unmistakable triplane: the Red Baron himself!

To make things worse a Staffel of Albatrosses joins the fray, to give the Germans the advantage in numbers.

With the Fokkers making any retreat impossible, the British pilots have no choice but to fight it out. A wild mêlée develops. As leader of the formation, Brown cannot get embroiled in any individual dogfight; his task is to be ready to assist any of his team-mates in trouble. And there is no lack of them. But the pilots of 209 Squadron are no sitting ducks: Mackenzie dispatches a triplane, Mellers obliges with a blue-tailed Fokker and Taylor sets an Albatros on fire. Brown then catches sight of May scoring his first kill on the outskirts of the main battle.

Where is Richthofen?

Jubilant, with the taste of blood in his mouth, May swoops down into the thick of the fray to get another victim. A red triplane drifts in front of his sights. He pulls the triggers so eagerly that he forgets one of the fundamental rules of air combat: never shoot long bursts. Retribution is immediate. Both his machine guns jam. There is no unstopping them, even when thumping on them. There is nothing else left to do but dash for home. He climbs back and heads towards the British lines. Suddenly he hears the unmistakable staccato of a reminded him of the old saying: "If you can hear the clatter of a machine-gun, fifty to one it is firing at you". Bingo! His machine is straddled with angry streaks of white smoke. May has no taste for the role of gunnery practice target. He yanks the stick, kicks the rudder-bar and the Camel tumbles to the left. He briefly glances behind him, and recognises the red triplane he has just missed. The muzzles of its guns are

rimmed with little red flames. The "Hun" has easily followed him in his turn and keeps shooting at him. A bullet grazes his right arm, but he has no time to feel the pain. Frantically he manoeuvres as best as he can to shake off the triplane.

The incident has not escaped Brown's attention. He follows the red Fokker in a dive. May is now only fifty feet above the Somme, tearing along the valley and expecting death any moment. The bursts are choosing in upon the Camel, with the Fokker barely 300 feet behind. And then, all of a sudden the shooting stops. The German's guns are silent. May look round. The Fokker has disappeared, as if by magic, what has become of it?

At the same time, Bodenschatz is asking himself the same anxious question: where is Richthofen? The Fokkers are coming in to land one after the other, but the red one is missing. Bodenschatz drops the telescope and rushes to

the field. Leutenants Wenzl and Carlus have climbed down from their machines; they take

off their helmets and their goggles and look around them. Where is Richthofen?

He is dead!

Wenzl recounts: "I had an unpleasant foreboding. We were nearing the front line and six red-nosed Sopwiths the anti Richthofen unit appeared. They outnumbered us, and we could not score a single hit. We could see the Rittmeister quite well as he flew closer with his section. But then six more "Lords" swooped down. As if we had been on a training flight, we all turned together into the east wind and broke the fight. We scattered above the front line before flying home. I had an odd feeling. As I was flying back, east of Corbie, I noticed a small plane on the ground; it had not been there earlier. I think it was painted red".

Hauptmann Wilhelm Reinhardt, who happens to be the Senior Commanding Officer at the time, orders Wenzl, Carlus and Leutnant Wolfram von Richthofen, Manfred's cousin, to take off at once and identify the reportedly red machine on the ground near Corbie when he lands at Bertangles, May rushes to his saviour. – Thank you, Brownie, you saved my life, that bloke was damned hard to skate off. Got an idea who it was, Wop? Brown asks. May shakes his head. I am not sure, but I think it was Richthofen.

May turns pale at once, he feels weak at the knees. "I think I need a pick-me-up". They make their way to the mess. The occasion calls for something special. May gulps down a double brandy and Brown... a double bicarbonate of soda. Thus fortified, they decide to go back to the scene of the action.

Wenzl is scouting around Corbie when he spots two aircraft that he cannot identify positively. Most probably Brown's and May's machines. Duly greeted by salvos of anti-aircraft fire from the British batteries, then chased by three Camels, he is compelled to turn back and, dispirited, to fly back to Cappy. In the meantime, Reinhardt has been busy on the phone, calling every German position in the area: "Has anyone seen a red triplane".

Pilots and mechanics pass all the possibilities in review, but no one is ready to accept the

idea of the Rittmeister's demise. In the end, Reinhardt receives some rather comforting information. An officer of the 10th Artillery Regiment has seen a red triplane land on Hill 102, north of Vaux-sur-Somme, he has seen British troops coming out of their trenches rushing to the plane and pulling it over the crest to the other side. At Cappy, everyone is relieved, Richthofen has not been shot down, he has crash-landed, he is alive then. In the afternoon the Headquarters issues an official bulletin: "Rittmeister Manfred Freiherr von Richthofen failed to return from a mission today, according to available information he has safely landed behind the enemy lines".

When they see the red triplane bounce awkwardly on the bumpy ground and stop inverted a few hundred feet away, the Australian gunners of the 5th Division jumps out of their trenches. Several of them rush to the plane to prevent the pilot from setting fire to it. But nothing is stirring inside the machine. A soldier peers into the cockpit, straightens up immediately and turns to his comrades. "He is dead!" All the gunners come over in turn to make sure. The pilot is still harnessed in his seat, the control column firmly held between his knees, and with his right hand resting on top of it. He has apparently used up his ebbing strength in his landing attempt

Only on the evening of April 23 are the Germans informed of the sad truth. An aircraft from 209 Squadron drops a small metal box with streamers attached on the Cappy air-drome. It lands right in front of the hangar, near the spot where Richthofen had his photo taken two days earlier. It contains a photograph of a grave with a wreath in the little cemetery at Bertangles, and a few clumsily typed lines that leave no place to doubt: "To the German Air Force – Rittmeister Baron von Richthofen was killed in air combat on April 21, 1918. He was buried with full military honours, from the Royal Air Force".

Who shot down Richthofen?

Killed in air combat, that is fairly obvious, but by whom?

What killed him is known: it was a bullet fired from a machine gun; but whose machine gun?

Understandably, the pilots in 209 Squadron are convinced Richthofen was shot down by Roy Brown. His report after the fight is quite definite about it. It suits the RAF perfectly as a morale booster, coming as it does after he heavy losses inflicted by the "Richthofen Circus" so this version is the one officially accepted. But the Germans are not so easily convinced, for obviously opposite reasons.

After the war the matter will be thoroughly researched, and not only by historians. Göring himself, who in the meantime has become head of the Luftwaffe, initiates a world-wide enquiry, reaching as far as Australia, with the interviews of surviving pilots and witnesses on the ground. But it only adds to the prevailing confusion. Testimonies contradict each other, except on one detail: at no time was Brown's machine in a favourable firing position.

The matter will remain unsolved for many years, and few aeronautical mysteries have generated such heated polemics. For one thing all the accounts given by witnesses – whether sincere or fanciful, are very subjective and are to be considered more as self-indications than as impartial relations of the facts.

All eyewitnesses maintain that Brown never found himself in the right position to shoot down Richthofen.

Little by little the various pieces of the puzzle are brought together. German soldiers, particularly those belonging to the 10th company of the 6th Artillery Regiment, as well as Australian infantrymen, stated that when the red triplane came down there was only one other plane in the sky, most probably May's machine. The triplane was then caught in heavy machine-gun fire from British positions, and possibly from German ones as well. Realising the danger, it broke combat in a violent banking turn, but it was too late. It was probably at that very moment that its pilot was fatally hit. It is the only logical explanation for the fact that the bullet travelled slightly upwards and laterally, from the right lung to the left nipple.

In his combat report, Brown stated that he attacked Richthofen from the right, but this was contradicted by all the witnesses on the ground, who were positive the Camel came in

from the South-East, on Richthofen's left side then. It is very unlikely that the Red Baron would have been able to chase May for nearly two miles, with a bullet through his heart, after Brown had tuned away.

On the "www.anzacs.net" web site one can not only read, but also listen to the testimonies from several eye-witnesses of that memorable episode.

Robert Buie, of the 53rd Australian Battery, reminisces: "I had a (Lewis) machine gun at that time, and Digger Evans had one, too. When they (the two planes) got nearer, Evans started firing, but the plane flew on. It could not fire at the same time, as I did not have a clear field of fire. But as soon as our plane left my field of fire, I started shooting straight at the German pilot. Some pieces flew off the plane and it slowed down. It fell a few hundred yards from where we stood. When we reached the spot, Richthofen was dead. That took place left of Corby, on the plateau rising above the Somme, and the plane landed near Vaire-sur-Somme. Contrary to what has been suggested by some people, the plane did not disintegrate in flight, but rather came down as if intending to land, although the wings and fuselage got severely damaged in the process".

Buie asserts that Brown's Camel no longer was in the area when the Red Baron was shot down. "No plane was chasing Richthofen. There only was Lieutenant May being chased by Richthofen. Two planes only. There was no third plane in my sights when I saw the two planes fly over the front lines about two miles from where I stood".

Sergeant Popkins, of the 24th Australian Company equally testifies!

"The two aeroplanes were about a hundred feet above me and I had to let the British machine fly past before I could start firing at the German. It fired about 80 rounds and the Baron banked to the right before turning round and diving towards me. I fired another 70 rounds and the triplane toppled to the left, crashing on a hillside less than thirty seconds later".

One cannot dismiss either the intervention of some unknown soldier firing a 7.7mm Lee Enfield. So the mystery will remain unsolved, unless the bullet that killed the Red Baron is retrieved and subjected to ballistic examination in order to establish its origin in an indisputable way.

Thus the Red Baron's death is still shrouded in mystery, and when all is said and done, does it

really matter if the questions about it are left unanswered?

The Red Baron

Manfred von Richthofen, the son of a Silesian Baron, was born in Breslau (Wroclaw) on May 2, 1892. His military career started early, when at the age of 11 he entered the Wahlstadt Cadet School. As a cavalry officer since 1912, he was serving in a Uhlan regiment in East Prussia when war broke out. But what hope was there for a Uhlan in a conflict that bogged down in trenches and when offensives petered out after a few hundred yards? He got bored. He then applied for a transfer to the air corps, where things were more exciting. On June 14, 1915 he was posted to Feldflieger-gerabteilung 6 in Saxony to begin training as an observer. Sent to the Russian front with Flg.Abt 69 he was back in Ostend in August. He fraternised with his pilot, Oberleutnant Zeumer, and was flying with him when he fought his first air duel, on September 1, 1915, firing his rifle at a British Farman. Two weeks later the two men managed to bring down a French Farman over the Champagne front, but as the plane fell behind its own lines, they were not credited with the victory.

Richthofen's career really took off when he met Oswald Boelcke. He chanced upon him in a dining car during a move to a new posting. Richthofen was deeply impressed by that young, collected and unostentatious Leutnant, whose fame was already spreading. He felt bold enough to ask him "Tell me how you do it! He laughed, rather tickled by the question, and replied: "It is very easy, really; I swoop down, I aim carefully... and they go down". I shook my head, thinking that it was exactly what I did, and yet, with me, they did not go down".

Richthofen decided there and then to become a fighter pilot. He got Zeumer to teach him the rudiments of piloting, and in November 1915 he joined the Döberitz flying-school. Clumsy and somewhat frail, he hardly managed to obtain his wings. Back to the front in time for the big Verdun offensive, he shot down a Nieuport on April 26, 1916, but once again his victim fell on the wrong side of the battle-line and was not confirmed.

In June his unit was posted to the Russian front, but Boelcke, who was then building up

Jasta 2, remembered him and offered to take him. Richthofen readily accepted. At last, on September 17, 1916, he obtained his first confirmed victory, a FE 2 B of 11 Squadron, RFC, shot down near Villers-Plouich. From then on, Immelmann, Boelcke, Voss and other aces were going to face a new challenger.

On November 23, his victim was none other than Major Lanoe Hawker, the greatest ace of the British Empire, and holder of the Victoria Cross. For that feat, after his 16th victory on January 4, 1917, he was awarded the "Pour le Mérite" cross, which he received from the Kaiser's hands on January 12. A few days later, Richthofen took command of Jasta 11 and took the opportunity to send for his brother Lothar.

On March 7, 1917, Richthofen's plane was damaged in action, and he had to crash-land behind his own lines. An officer of the engineers corps who had arrived on the site took him to his quarters in his car, and then entreated him to lie down for a while in order to compose himself. "This is not my first scrap, you know", Richthofen demurred, "Really, the officer went on, have you ever shot down enemy aircraft?" "Occasionally" the pilot admitted. That was a bit too vague to the officer's taste. "How many? Two?" "No, not two, Richthofen calmly replied, twenty-four". The officer shook his head, smiling: "No, no, I don't mean air fights, but machines really shot down, you know, hit in such a way that they crash to the ground". "That's exactly what I mean, too". Richthofen said. "What a braggart!" the officer thought. Still, he took the boaster to the mess for some refreshment. Before sitting down, Richthofen took off his flying jacket, revealing the "Pour le Mérite" cross hanging from his neck to the astonished officer... After a brief silence, the latter enquired about the pilot's name again, as he had not caught it well in the first instance... The overjoyed officer turned to the barman and shouted "Champagne!".

In April 1917, the British launched their Arras offensive. For the Royal Flying Corps it proved a complete disaster, later to be known as Bloody April. For every German machine

brought down, the RFC lost five aeroplanes. The average life expectancy of a British pilot fell from three weeks to... two days. Jasta 11 got the lion's share, claiming 89 victories, no fewer than 21 being credited to its leader. On April 13, Richthofen overtook Boelcke as leading ace. His brother Lothar's score was almost as remarkable, with fifteen kills in one month. On June 26, 1917, Richthofen took command of the newly formed Jagdgeschwader 1, composed of Jastas 4, 6, 10 and 11. It mustered 45 aircraft, Albatros D.V.'s and Pfalz D.III's. The average age of the pilots was under 22, its leader was 25.

On July 26, Richthofen suffered a head wound during a fight against FE 2D's of 20 Squadron. Already careful, only committing himself fully when he felt sure all the odds were in his favour, Richthofen became even more cautious after that mishap. Occasionally suffering from terrible headaches which impaired his physical condition, he nevertheless steadfastly declined all offers of a staff job, even when they came from the Kaiser himself.

But, what sort of a man was Richthofen, actually? The accounts given by the pilots who approached him disclose a complex personality. Afflicted with a degree of self-esteem bordering megalomania, he was jealous of those who strove to emulate him. If anyone in the unit was to shoot down an enemy plane, it could only be himself. With a superiority complex towards his men, he did not feel responsible in the least for the "rookies" who were posted to his outfit. His motto might have been "Do or die". And yet, he spent whole nights perfecting combat tactics based on teamwork rather than on individual performance. He seldom joined the party thrown by his pilots to celebrate, and then rather kept to himself, feeling he had little in common with them. Frugal

in his life style he evinced a very Prussian attitude towards discipline and military etiquette. He had few real friends, mainly those pilots originally selected by Boelcke, such as Kurt Wolff. His sense of humour was limited, and he never displayed his feelings, even to his mother. Where his brother Lothar thought a glass was half full, he would rather think it was half empty. It was he who borrowed from the theatre world the valediction "Hals- und Beinbuch" (meaning may you break your neck and your legs) and soon had it in general use throughout the German air force as a good wish.

Although, he was not a real leader, his pilots were so fascinated by him that to a man they were ready to lay down their lives for such a living legend. He was the symbol of victorious Germany, and elicited respect as much as awe. With him, air combat changed from chivalrous jousting to ruthless killing. He would say to his pilots: "It is no use raking the enemy aircraft with bullets; aim at the pilot, and don't miss him. If the target is a two-seater, aim at the observer first. As long as you have not silenced the machine-gun, don't bother with the pilot".

On April 21, 1918, Richthofen had his rendezvous with fate. His demise was a terrible blow, not only to the German Air Force, but to the German people as a whole, who literally worshipped him.

Wilhelm Reinhardt took over command of JG1, but the Luftstreitkräfte were never to boast another ace or charismatic chief comparable with Richthofen. The last commanding officer of that illustrious unit was Oberleutnant Hermann Göring, an ace with 22 victories and holder of the "Pour le Merite" cross since June 2, 1918, who went on to gain a different sort of notoriety a few years later.

Manfred von Richthofen's victories

1	17.09.16	FE 2b	11 Sqn	Marcoing	A DII D491/17
2	23.09.16	Martins.	27 Sqn	Marcoing	"
3	30.09.16	FE 2b	11 Sqn	Bapaume	"
4	07.10.16	BE 12	21 Sqn	Ytres	"
5	16.10.16	BE 12	19 Sqn	Ytres	"
6	25.10.16	BE 12	21 Sqn	Beaulencourt	"
7	03.11.16	FE 2b	18 Sqn	Loupart	"
8	09.11.16	BE 2c	12 Sqn	Beugny	"
9	20.11.16	BE 2c	15 Sqn	Guédecourt	"
10	20.11.16	FE 2b	22 Sqn	Grandecourt	"
11	23.11.16	DH 2	24 Sqn	?	"

12	11.12.16	DH 2	32 Sqn	Mercatel	“
13	20.12.16	DH 2	29 Sqn	Rollencourt	“
14	20.12.16	FE 2b	18 Sqn	?	“
15	27.12.16	DH 2	29 Sqn	non abattu	“
16	04.01.17	Pup	8 Sqn	Bapaume	“
17	23.01.17	FE 8	40 Sqn	Lens	“
18	24.01.17	FE 2b	25 Sqn	Rouvroy	A DIII D789/17
19	01.02.17	BE 2d	16 Sqn	Thélus	H DII
20	14.02.17	BE 2d	2 Sqn	Loos	“
21	14.02.17	BE 2d	8 Sqn	?	“
22	04.03.17	BE 2c	2 Sqn	non abattu	“
23	04.03.17	1 1/2 S.	43 Sqn	Vimy	“
24	06.03.17	BE 2e	16 Sqn	Vimy	“
25	09.03.17	DH 2	29 Sqn	Bailleul	A DIII
26	11.03.17	BE 2d	2 Sqn	Givenchy	H DII
27	17.03.17	FE 2b	25 Sqn	Vitry	“
28	17.03.17	BE 2c	16 Sqn	Farbus	“
29	21.03.17	BE 2f	16 Sqn	La Neuville	“
30	24.03.17	S.VII	19 Sqn	Givenchy	“
31	25.03.17	Ni 17	29 Sqn	Tilloy	“
32	02.04.17	BE 2d	13 Sqn	Farbus	A DIII 2253/17
33	02.04.17	1 1/2 S.	43 Sqn	Givenchy	“
34	03.04.17	FE 2b	25 Sqn	Bapaume	“
35	05.04.17	F2A	48 Sqn	?	“
36	05.04.17	F2A	48 Sqn	?	“
37	07.04.17	Ni 17	60 Sqn	?	“
38	08.04.17	1 1/2 S.	43 Sqn	Farbus	“
39	08.04.17	BE 2g	16 Sqn	Vimy	“
40	11.04.17	BE 2c	13 Sqn	?	“
41	13.04.17	RE 8	59 Sqn	Etaing	“
42	13.04.17	FE 2b	11 Sqn	Monchy	“
43	13.04.17	FE 2b	25 Sqn	H-Liétard	“
44	14.04.17	Ni 17	60 Sqn	Douai	“
45	16.04.17	BE 2e	13 Sqn	?	“
46	22.04.17	FE 2b	11 Sqn	Lagnicourt	“
47	23.04.17	BE 2e	4 Sqn	Méricourt	“
48	28.04.17	BE 2e	13 Sqn	Pelvès	“
49	29.04.17	S.VII	19 Sqn	Lens	“
50	29.04.17	FE 2b	18 Sqn	Inchy	“
51	29.04.17	BE 2e	12 Sqn	Roeux	“
52	29.04.17	Sopwith	8 Sqn	Douai	“
53	18.06.17	RE 8	9 Sqn	?	A DIII D789/17
54	23.06.17	S.VII	23 Sqn	Ypres	A DV D1177/17
55	24.06.17	DH 4	57 Sqn	Bacelaere	“
56	25.06.17	RE 8	53 Sqn	?	“
57	02.07.17	RE 8	53 Sqn	Comines	“
58	16.08.17	Ni 23	29 Sqn	Zonnebeke	A DV D2059/17
59	26.08.17	S.VII	19 Sqn	?	“
60	02.09.17	RE 8	6 Sqn	?	F FI 102/17
61	03.09.17	Pup	46 Sqn	?	“
62	23.11.17	DH 5	64 Sqn	Bourlon	A DVa 4693/17
63	30.11.17	SE 5a	41 Sqn	Moevres	“
64	12.03.18	F2B	62 Sqn	Cambrai	F DrI 152/17
65	13.03.18	Camel	73 Sqn	Cambrai	“
66	18.03.18	Camel	54 Sqn	Busigny	“
67	24.03.18	SE 5a	41 Sqn	Havrincourt	F DrI 477/17
68	25.03.18	Camel	3 Sqn	?	“
69	26.03.18	Camel	54 Sqn	Roye	“
70	26.03.18	RE 8	15 Sqn	Albert	“
71	27.03.18	Camel	73 Sqn	Albert	F DrI 127/17

72	27.03.18	FK 8	2 Sqn	Albert	F DrI 477/17
73	27.03.18	Dolphin	79 Sqn	?	“
74	28.03.18	FK 8	82 Sqn	Méricourt	F DrI 127/17
75	02.04.18	RE 8	52 Sqn	Moreuil	F DrI 477/17
76	06.04.18	Camel	46 Sqn	V-Bretonneux	F DrI 127/17
77	07.04.18	Camel	73 Sqn	V-Bretonneux	“
78	06.04.18	Camel	73 Sqn	Lamotte	“
79	20.04.18	Camel	3 Sqn	Hamel	F DrI 425/17
80	20.04.18	Camel	3 Sqn	V-Bretonneux	“

A = Albatros H = Halberstadt F = Fokker – specifies the type of aircraft flown by MvR.
 List by Norman Franks in “The Air Red Fighter” (Greenhill Books)

© Copyright Aéro-Éditions, 2001.