

NIEUPOORT FIGHTERS in action



Aircraft Number 167

DON GREER

squadron/signal publications

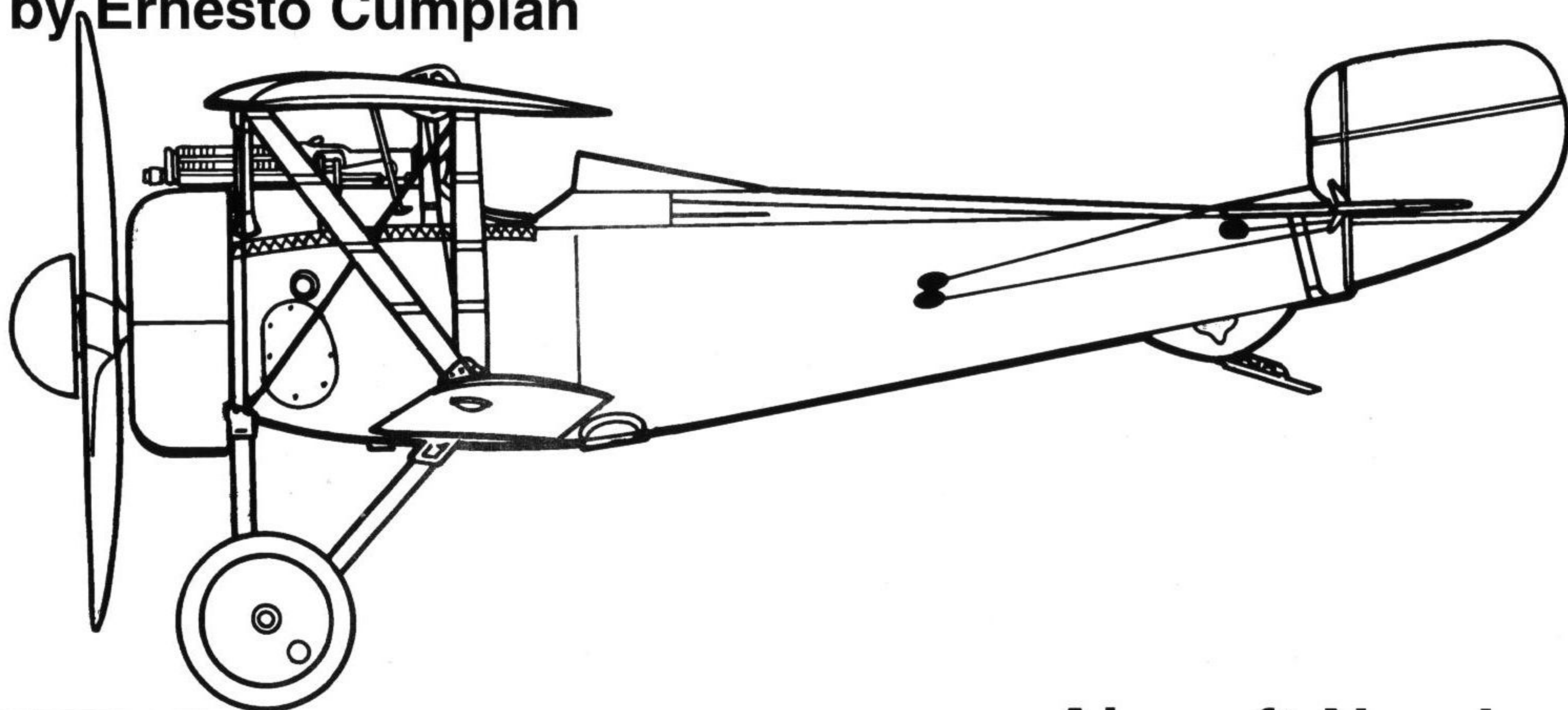
Nieuport Fighters

in action

By Peter Cooksley

Color by Don Greer

Illustrated by Ernesto Cumpian



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A Nieuport 28 of the American Expeditionary Force's 27th Pursuit Squadron chases a pair of Fokker D.VIIs over the front line, one of which is trailing smoke.

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Author's Note.

Edouard de Nieuport along with his brother Charles emigrated from Algeria to France and in 1905 Edouard began designing aircraft. Edouard de Nieuport (the brothers had changed the spelling of their name shortly after their arrival in France) had several successful monoplane designs to his credit by the time of his death in an air accident on 6 September 1911. His brother was killed in similar circumstances two years later. Fortunately the Nieuport business interests were immediately taken over by Henri de la Meurthe who founded the Society Anonyme des Etablissements Nieuport, a firm that was to produce a series of fighting scouts that would become legend during World War One, as well as preserve the change in spelling the Nieuport name to Nieuport, which had been adopted by both of the late brothers

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(Right) Nieuport 11 (3982) had the constructor's number 394. It belonged to No.2 Squadron of the Royal Naval Air Service and later No.6 markings were different on the other side as seen on page 11.



Introduction

That the Society Anonyme des Etablissements Nieuport under La Meurthe was flourishing in 1914 is shown by its several addresses, Nos. 46, 48 and 50 Boulevard Galleini and 15 Rue Camille Desmoulins, both in Issy-les-Moulineaux (Seine), and a flying school had been established at Villacoublay.

In January Gustave Delage was hired as the designer. His first project departed from the company's five previous monoplane aircraft in being a near sesquiplane with narrow chord wings supported by 'V' interplane struts, however, the lower half-wing, which was intended to provide the seated crew member with an improved downward view, would prove troublesome with a tendency to twist.

This new aircraft was a two-seat fighter designated the Nieuport 10B, the number indicating its relationship to the earlier Type 10 monoplane, and the suffix B indicating a biplane. The Type 10 would eventually be produced in two variants, the Nie.10AV and the slightly later Nie.10AR. The designations indicating respectively the position of the observer in relation to the position of the pilot, AV Avant (in front) and AR, Arriere (behind).

In order to fire a gun from the Nie.10AV, it was necessary for the observer to stand through an aperture in the upper wing with his weapon mounted on a spigot on the front spar, a position that was not altogether successful since it allowed no downward view and only a restricted view to each side.

Origins of this new two seater are said to have been laid by the smaller, but similar in appearance Nie.X biplane racer powered by an 80-hp Gnome rotary motor which Gustave Delage allegedly intended to enter in the 1914 Gordon Bennet race had it not been canceled with the

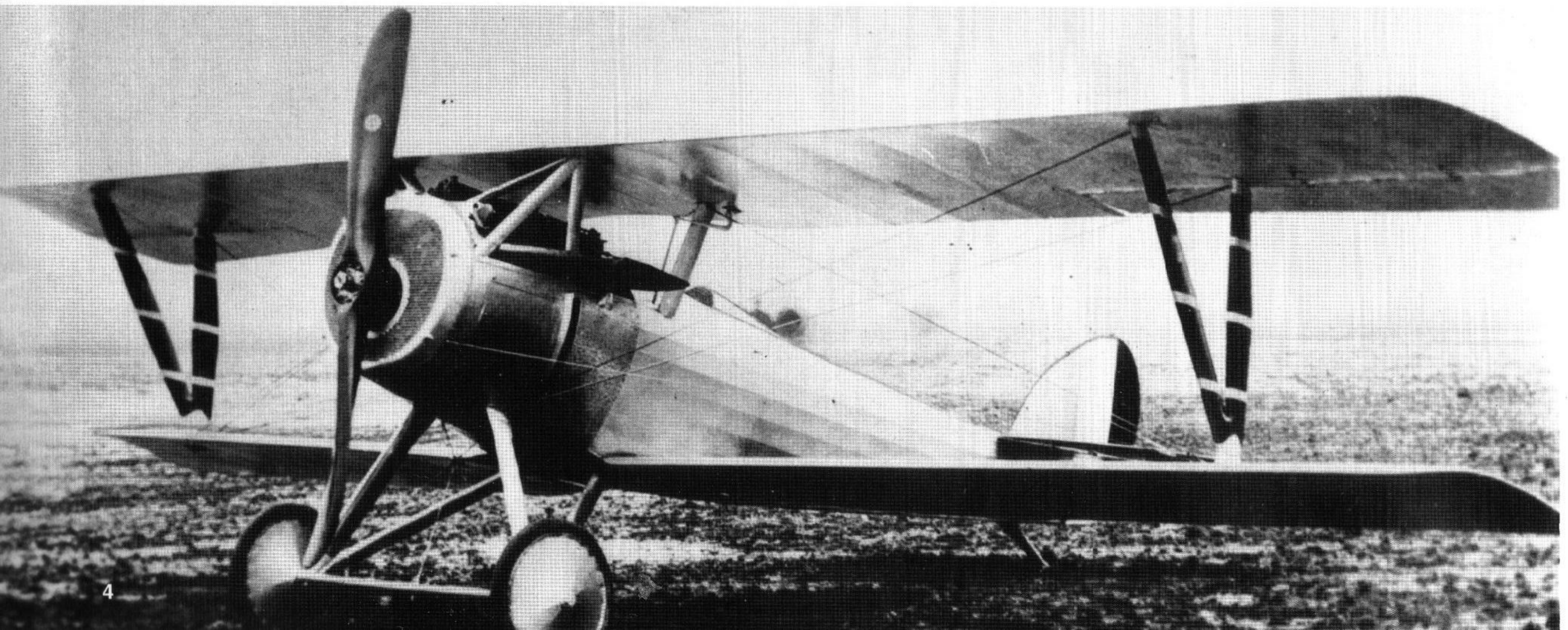
outbreak of World War One. Nevertheless, the Nie.10 was to provide the basis for the series of scouts which were to dominate the early years of air warfare during World War One. All were of a similar appearance that was not to change until the advent of first a triplane, and then the more conventional looking Nieuport 28.

Contemporary references to "Type 13" and "Type 15" Nieuport biplanes are at first confusing, but the explanation lies in the fact that these were alternative descriptions based on the total wing area, the so-called Type 13 metre being the Nie.11 and the Type 15 metre being the Nie.17.

That Nieuport single-seaters made their mark on Allied aviation history is well known, and the Nieuport dynasty was also seen as significant by the enemy with the result that captured specimens of all Nieuport aircraft were circulated to German aircraft manufacturers with orders to study the best features of the Nieuport design formula. Siemens-Schuckert doing this so exactly that their D.I aircraft design was little more than a copy of the French machine with a different engine installation and later a revised tail skid arrangement.

Meanwhile the lineage of Nieuport fighting scout aircraft was to become associated with such illustrious names as Ball, Campbell, Coppens, Franchome, Guynemer, Lufbery, Nungesser and Rickenbacker, carrying into battle the colors of not only France and Britain, but also Belgium, the United States, Italy and later Czarist Russia. Armament was usually a single

To counter the growing competition from the SPAD 7 a completely new Nieuport design was developed in late 1916 powered by a Hispano-Suiza liquid cooled engine and armed with a single cowl mounted synchronized Vickers machine gun. The new shape of the vertical tail was to be repeated on a number of subsequent scouts designed by Gustave Delage including the Nieuport 28.

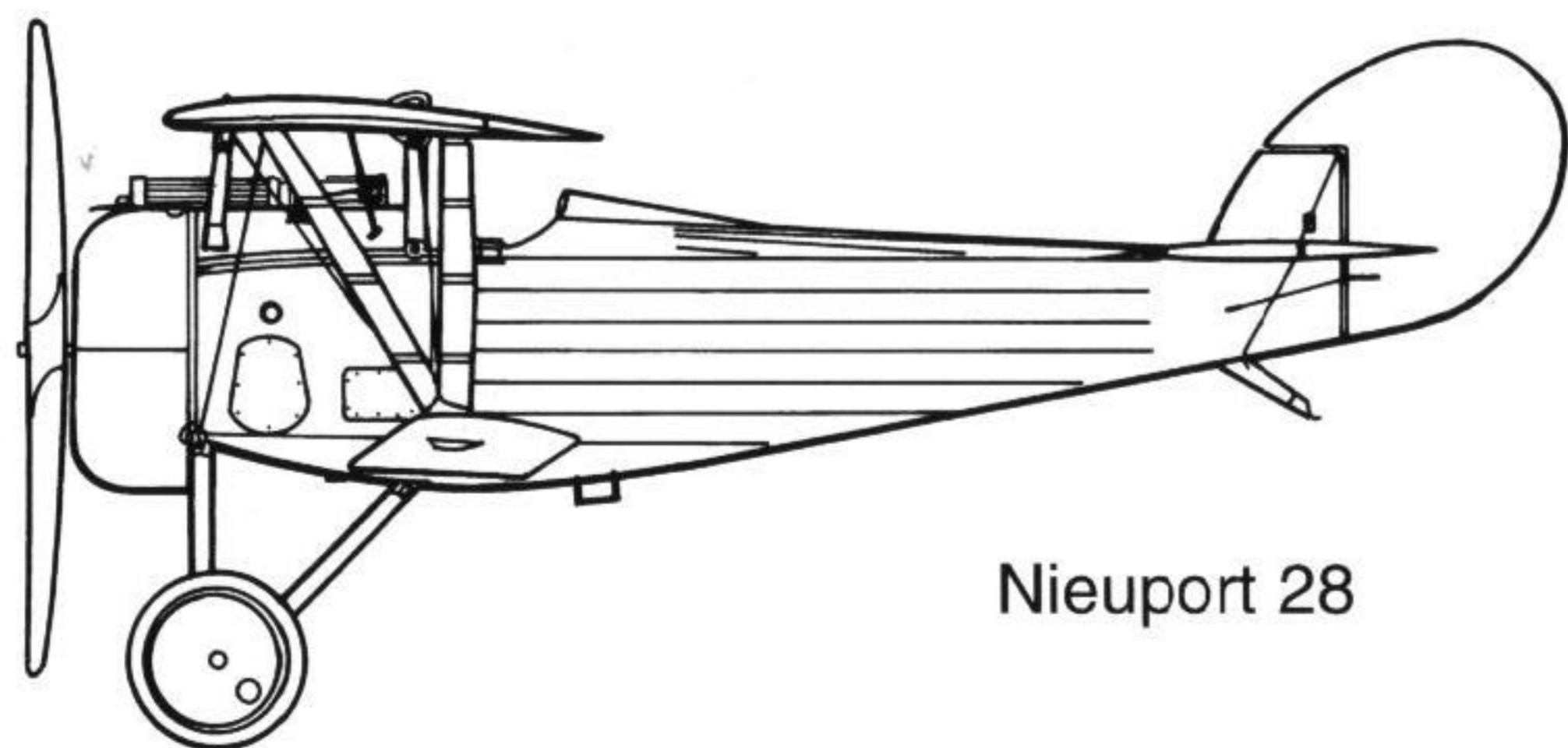


machine gun which, before the introduction of synchronization, was mounted on the upper wing. Nieuports were among the earliest warplanes to carry Le Prieur rockets — surely the precursors of modern missiles.

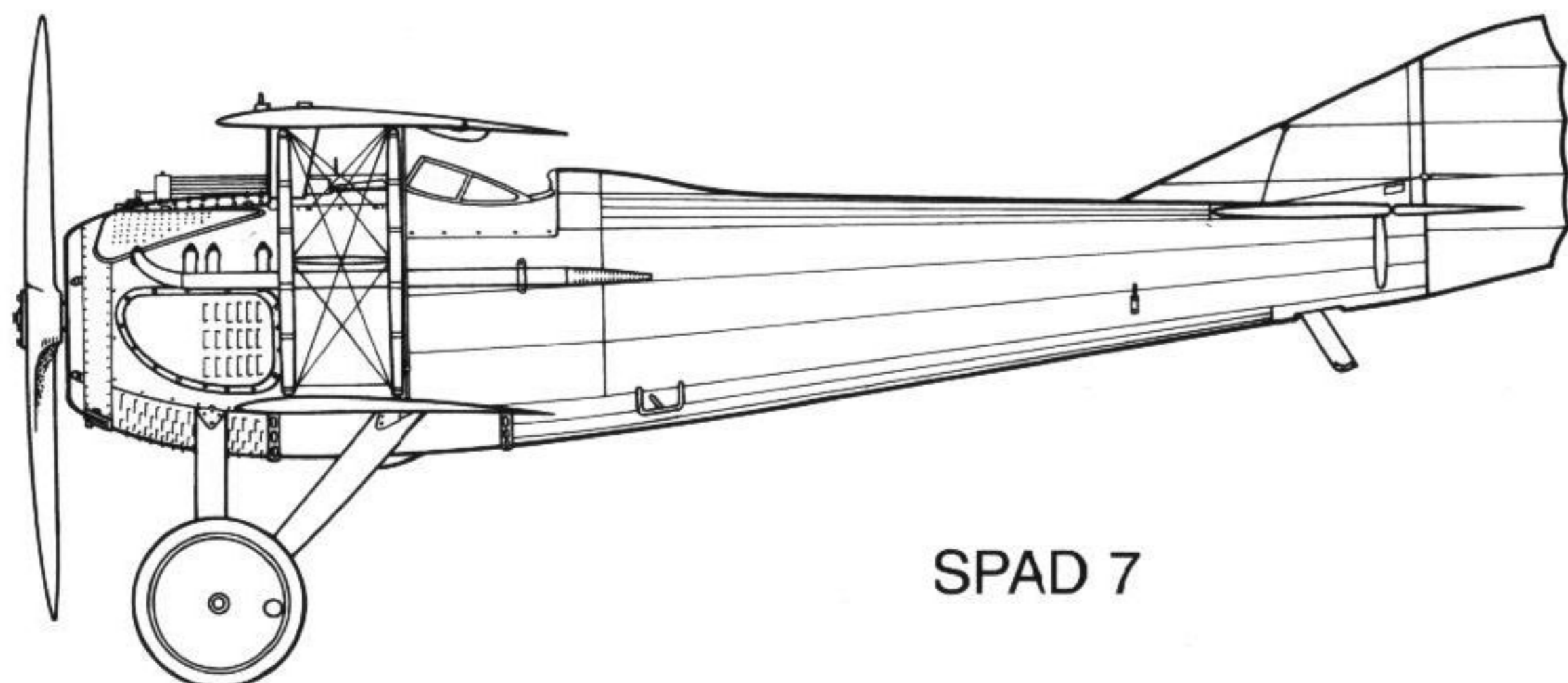
The first large scale use of Nieuport biplanes took place during the Battle of Verdun which lasted from the end of February 1916 until June, at which time France had about two hundred in service, despite the skepticism in official quarters that single seaters were of little military use. That this was groundless was proven by the renowned German ace Oswald Boelcke who described the Nieuport as “very fast and agile”. Boelcke had not succeeded in destroying one himself until 21 May when he shot down one near Morte Homme.

Much of the success of these early Nieuports may be credited to Sergeant Foster of No.11 Squadron of the British Royal Flying Corps (RFC) then operating in the Arras area. Foster in conjunction with Captain H A Cooper of the same unit had perfected the Foster gun mount which permitted the wing-mounted weapon to be drawn down by the pilot for upward aiming and changing the ammunition drum while still allowing the gun to be fired forward horizontally over the arc of the airscrew.

The period when Nieuport single seaters were in use in the greatest numbers was also when design variations were being introduced in proliferation. These modifications were scrupulously supervised by the builder’s Design Manager, Monsieur Legos, who not only oversaw changes incorporated during production, but also those introduced following recommendations from the front as well as faults discovered in the field. In this he was assisted by the Technical Staff of the Royal Flying Corps under the direction of General (later Air Chief Marshal) H R N Brooke-Popham, who during the Second World War was the RAF member of the Air Mission to Canada.



Nieuport 28



SPAD 7



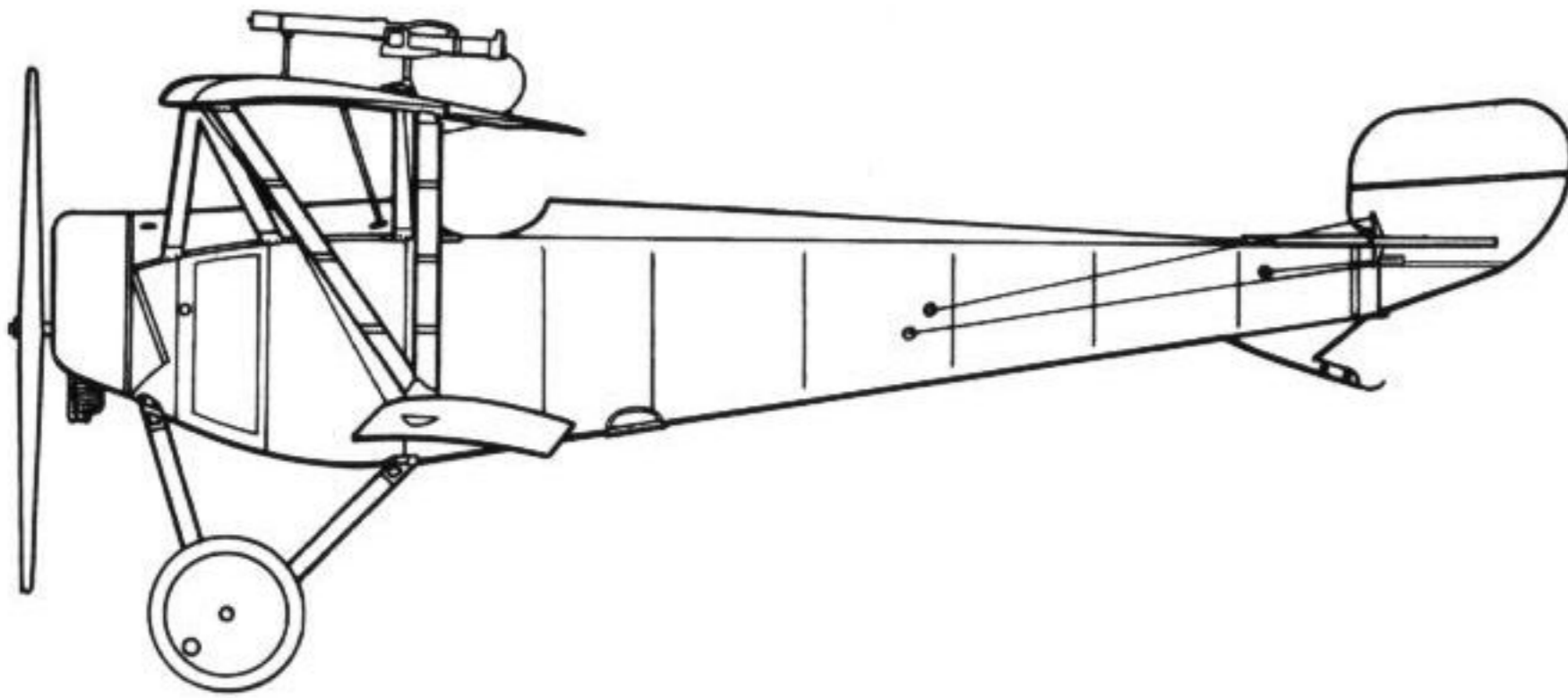
This Nieuport 17bis (N3204) served with No.6 Naval Squadron at La Bellevue about March 1917. Armed with the standard synchronized Vickers gun and powered by a Clerget 9B rotary engine it was lost in combat with Vzfw Riesinger of Jasta 12 on 6 June 1917. The Nieuport's pilot, Flight Lieutenant F.P. Reeves, was killed.

Another view of N3204 flanked by a Bessoneau hangar. The wheel discs are believed to have been red as is the cowling and fuselage band. The red fuselage band did not continue across the lower surface.

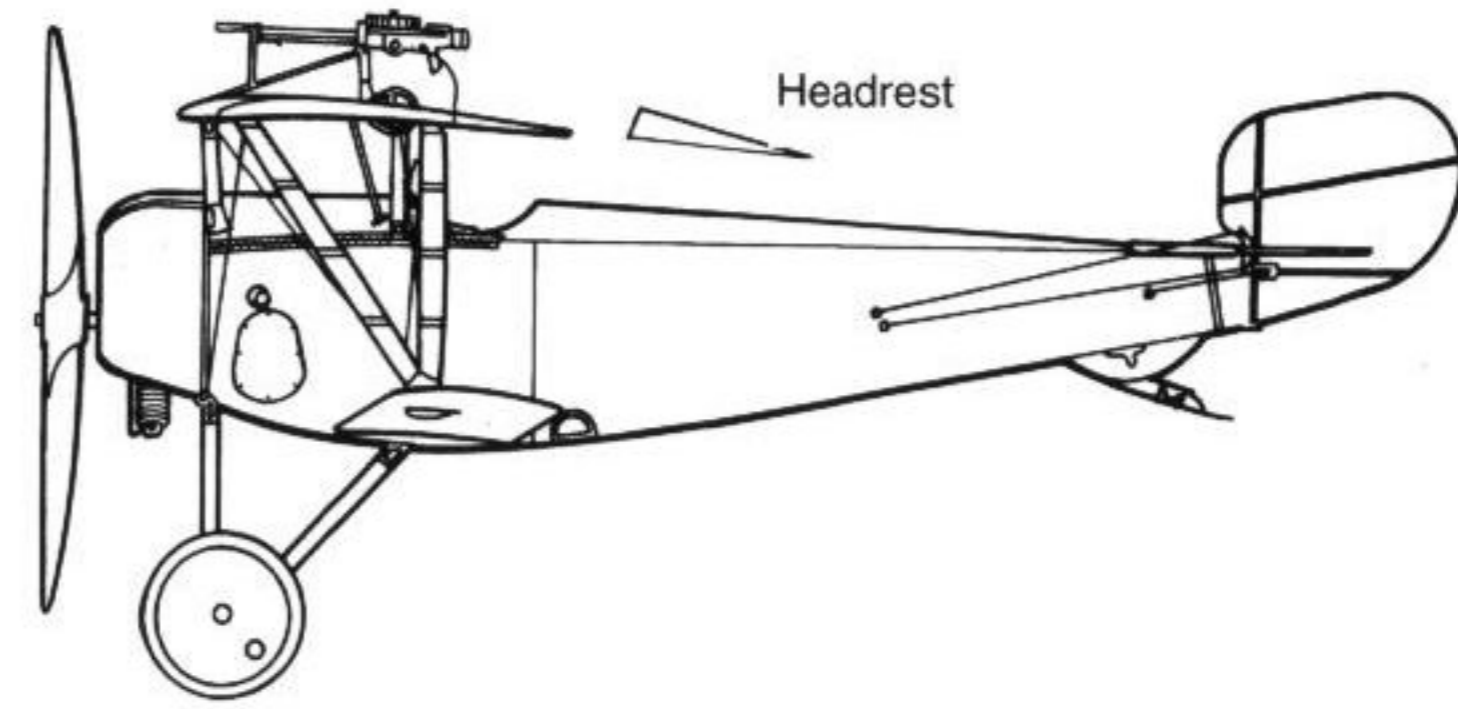


Development

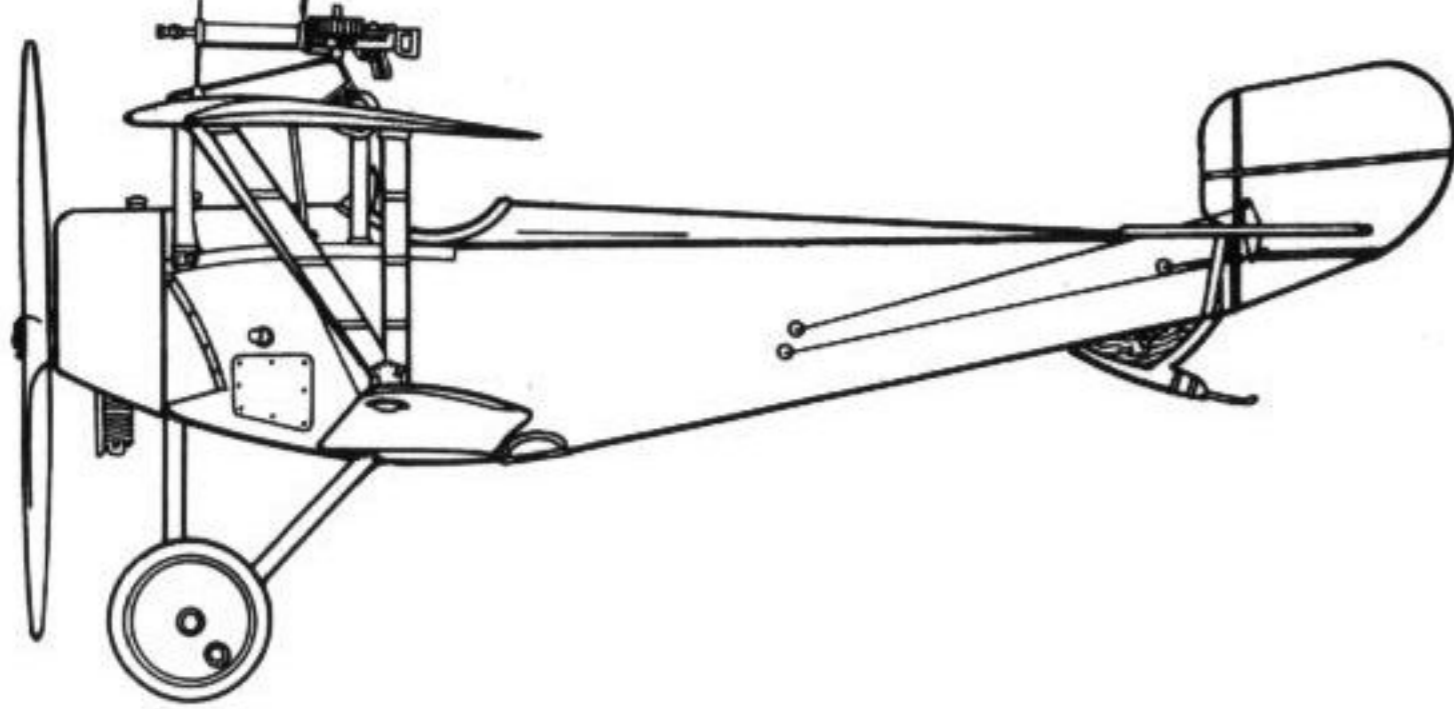
Nie 10



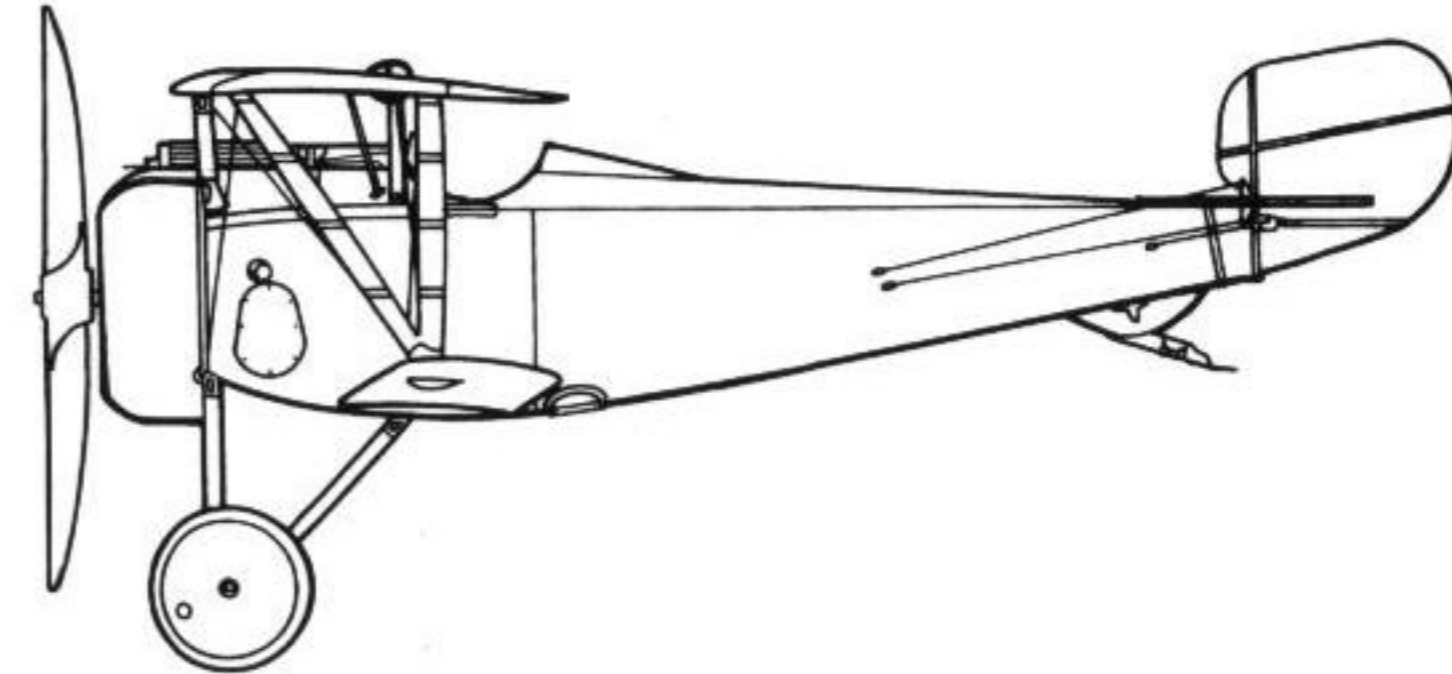
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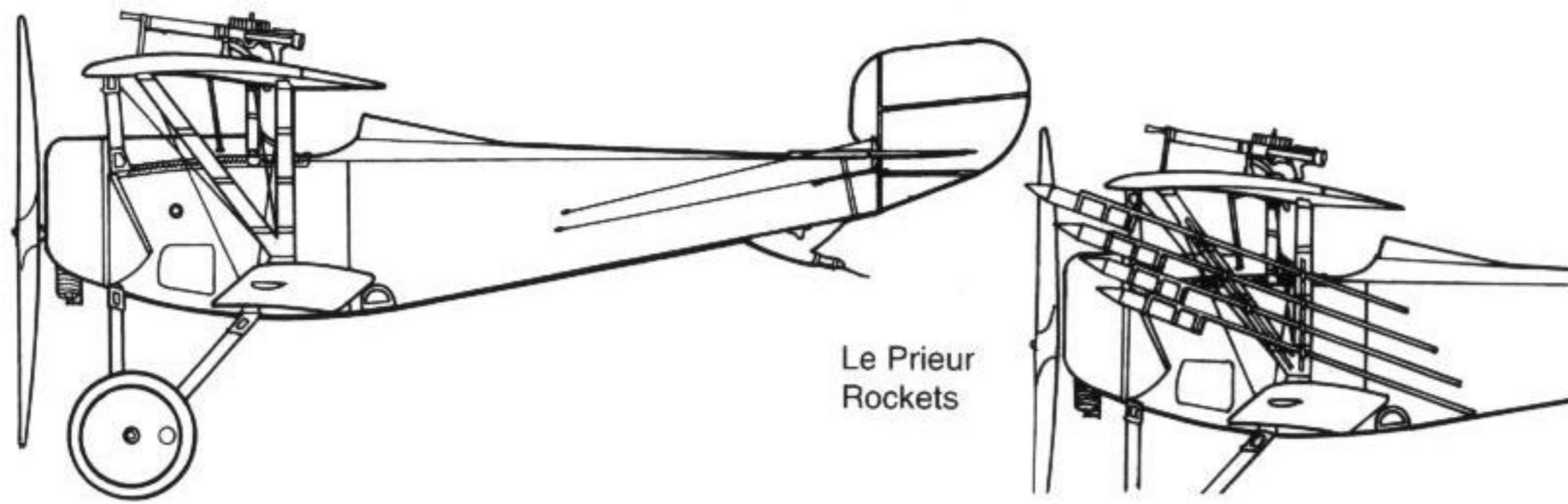
Nie 11



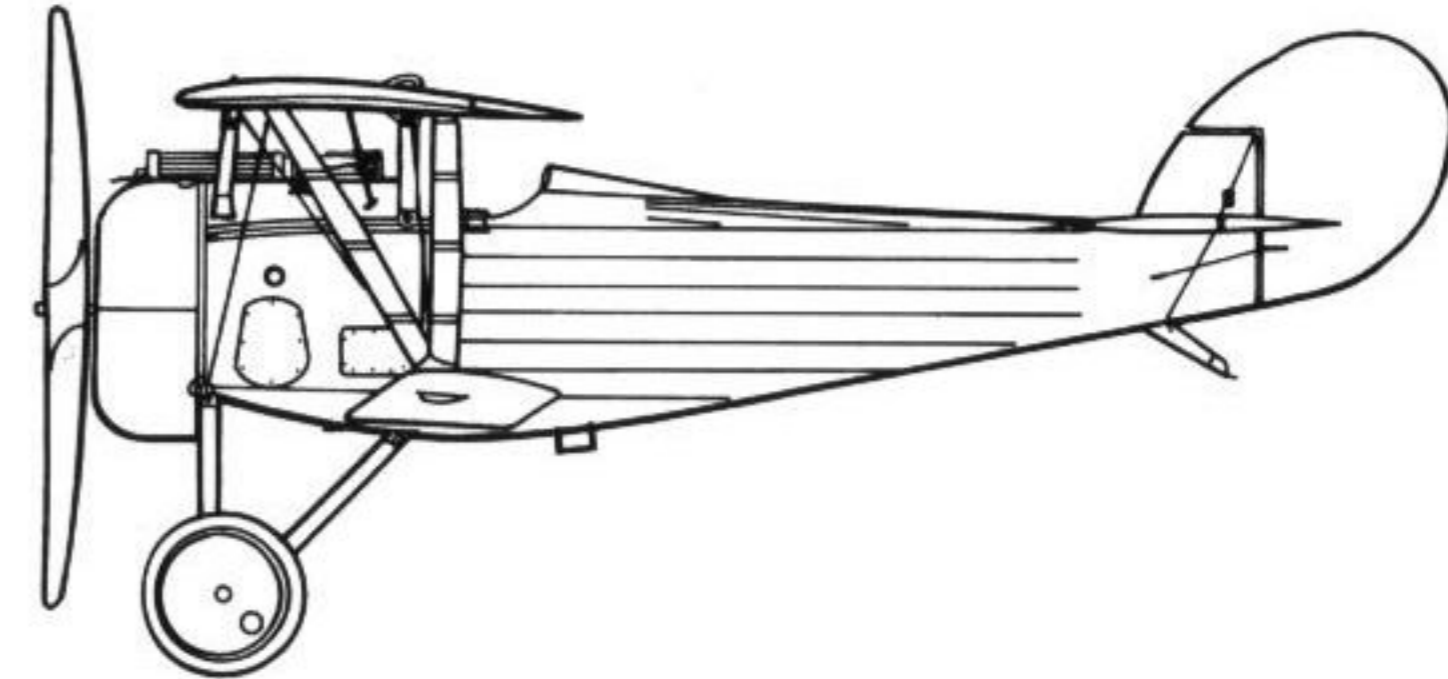
Nie 23



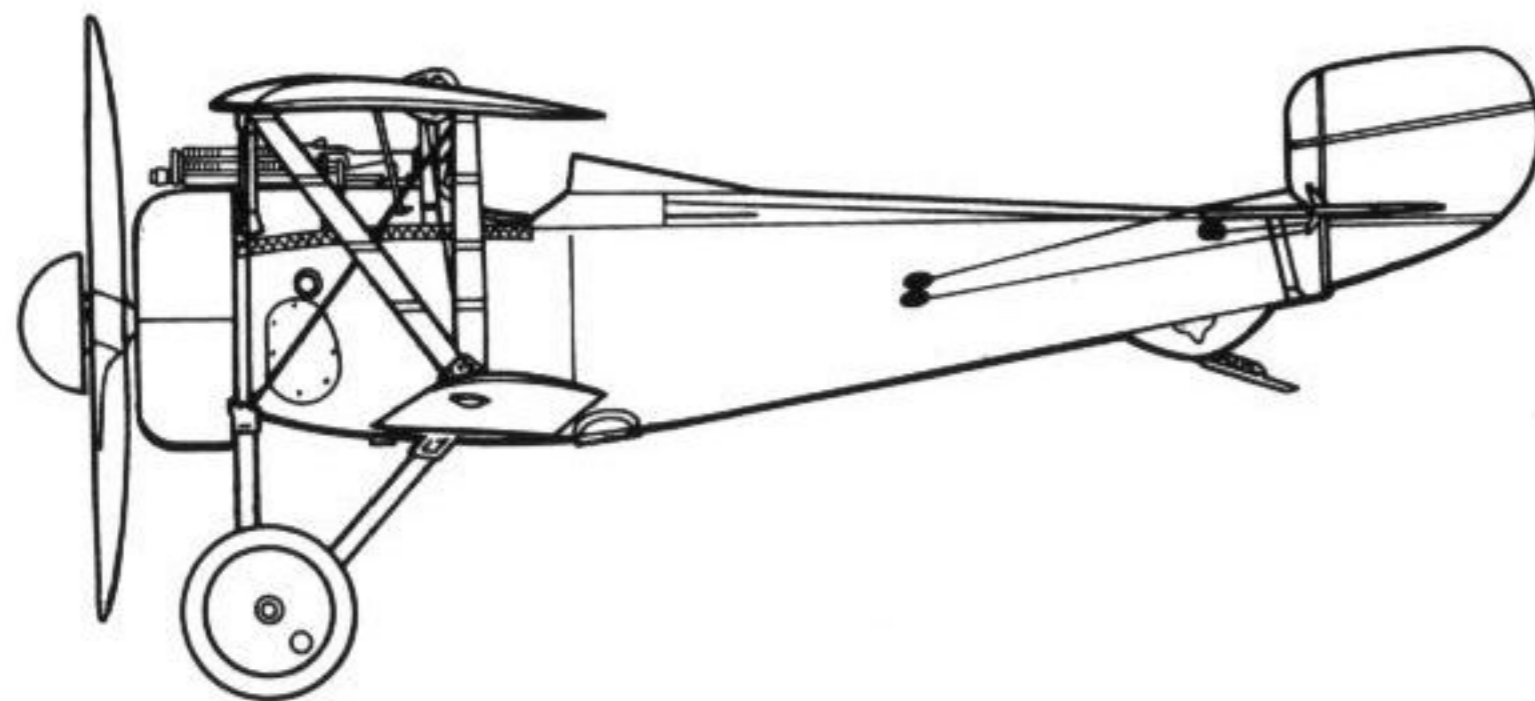
Nie 16



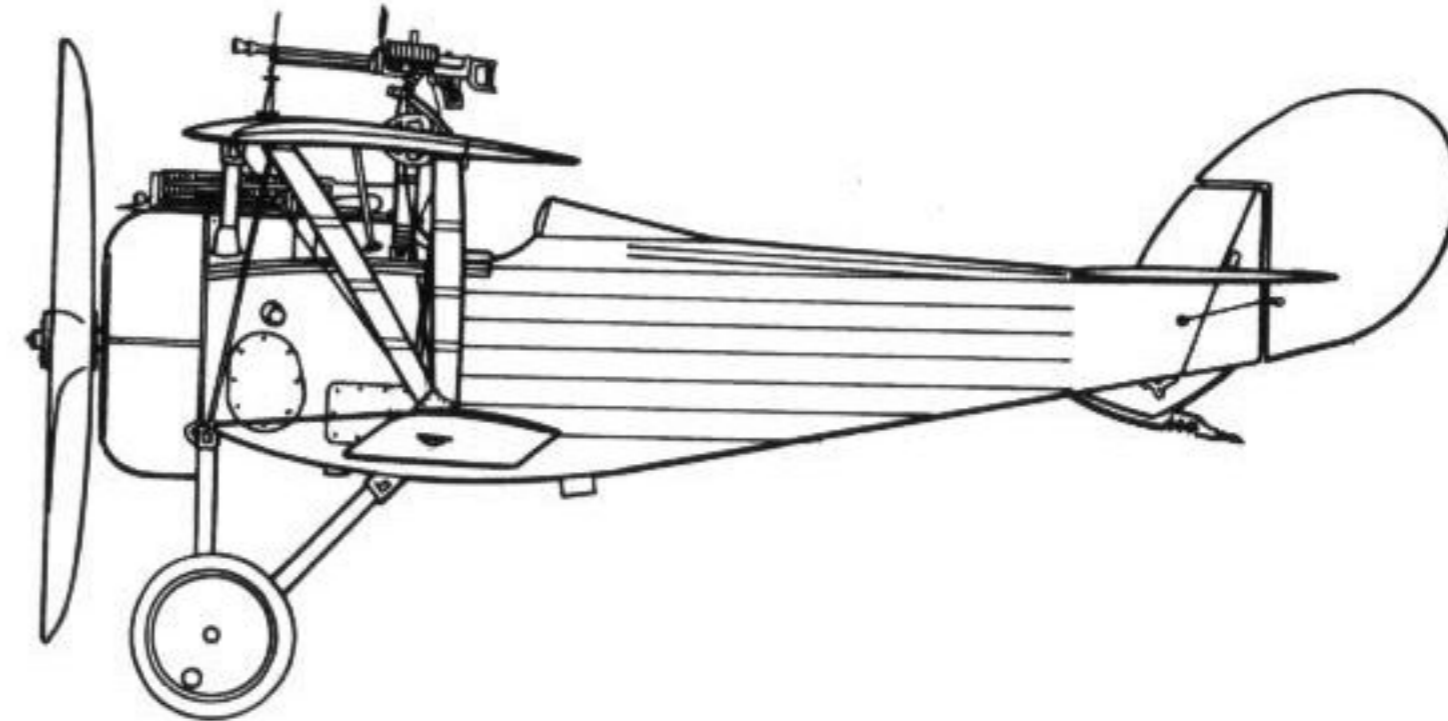
Nie 24



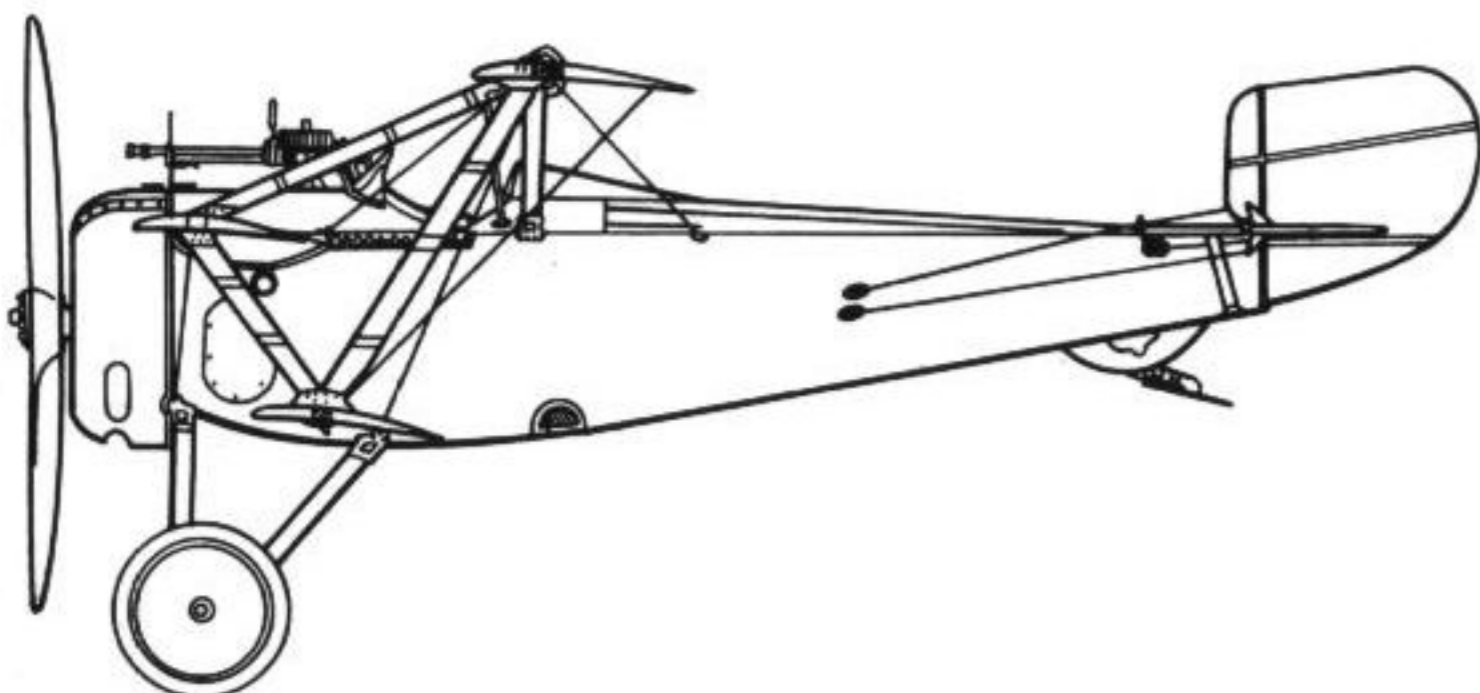
Nie 17



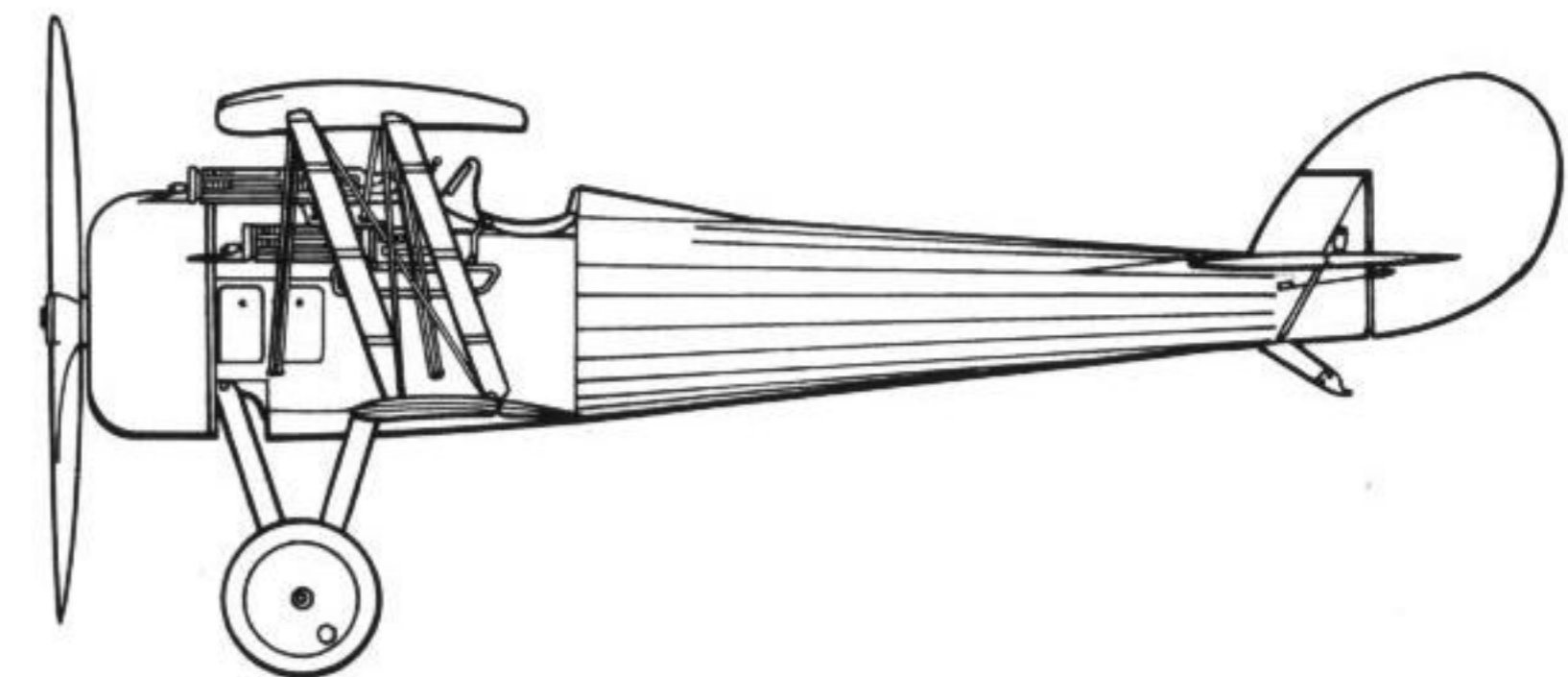
Nie 27



Triplane



Nie 28



Nieuport 10c1.

This single seat scout design owed much to the earlier two seat design, however, no known records have survived which clearly show how many of the Type 10c1 single seat scouts were simply modifications of production two seaters, although there are indicators to suggest that there were a number of two seaters modified to the single seat configuration.

One indicator was seen on the earliest single seaters, a number of which retained the fore and aft engine mountings of the earlier design, although this was quickly replaced by the more conventional overhung type of engine mountings common to the majority of machines of the period that were powered by rotary motors and specified for the Nie.10c1 design from the first.

A further detail indicating that the initial single seaters had airframes modified from the earlier two seat configuration is that the change in the center of gravity that would have been called for meant that the upper wing had to be rigged at a different angle so that the machine gun on the top wing center section would have had to be mounted differently in order that its line of fire was clear of the area swept by the airscrew.

Certainly some Nie.10c1 single seaters were locally modified from two-seat Nie.10s, this being true of those flown by the British Royal Naval Air Service and possibly others in use by the air arms of Belgium, France, Italy and Czarist Russia. Most of these two seaters were rebuilt into single seaters by simply having the forward seat faired over, an alteration that on some aircraft had been "unofficially done in the field", probably even before the emergence of the production single seat Nieuport biplane scout was delivered. Indeed it is known that all of the first Nieuport scouts which were of French manufacture and supplied to both Britain and Belgium after the summer of 1915 had originally been intended to be two seat observation aircraft and were only regarded as temporary fighters.

Similarly some true Nie.10c1s could be positively identified by their cut-down cockpit sides, a feature which, whatever advantages it gave, must have considerably added to the danger when a pilot stood up while attempting to change ammunition drums. The gun was above the upper wing center section mounted on a rigid rail, since this was before the introduction of the Foster mounting.

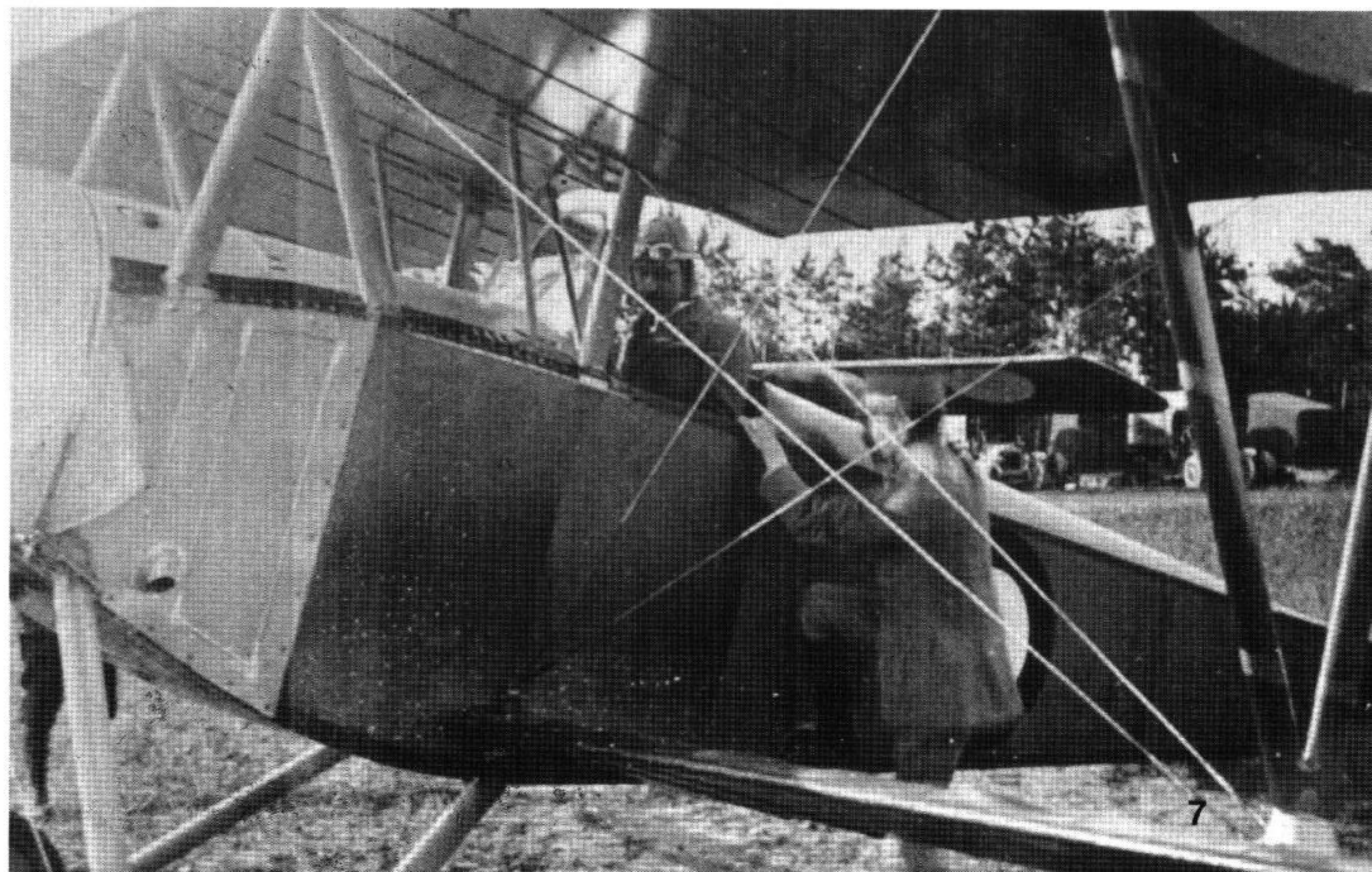
The time when these Nieuports were first used in action was during the period when pusher scouts were strongly in favor since they provided an uninterrupted field of forward fire. A number of trials to investigate how this could be achieved with a tractor aircraft centered around fitting a machine gun on the upper longeron at an angle to the line of flight and thus firing outside the propeller arc. At least one Nieuport is known to have been operated by the RNAS which was equipped in this manner with a Lewis gun on the starboard side augmenting the gun on the upper wing. The latter was usually dispensed with when an angled gun was adopted.

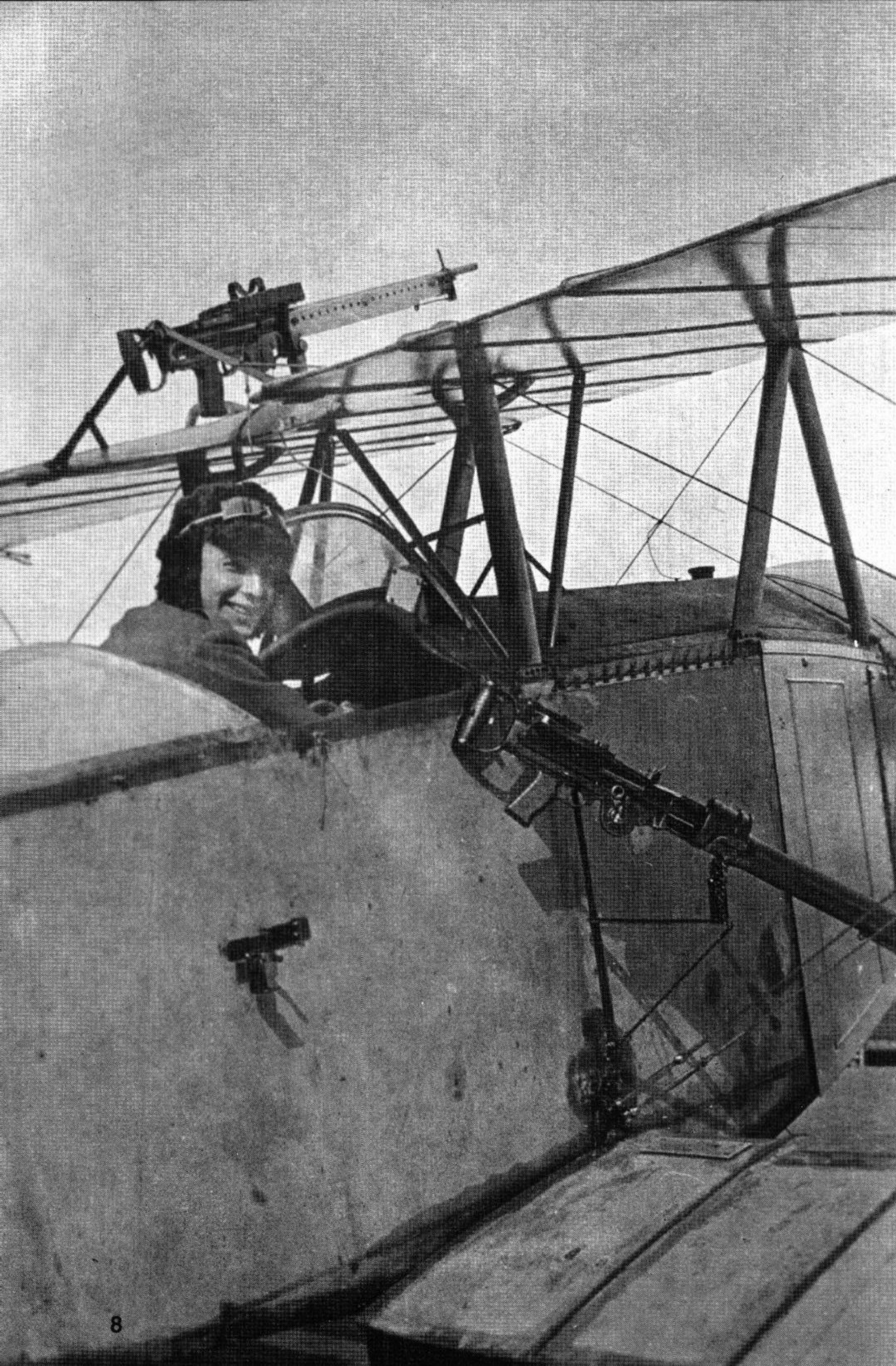
However, the Type 10 was not alone in being chosen for adaptation as a single seater, another was the two man Nie.12, one such aircraft was modified locally in this way was the Royal Navy's number 3172. Flown by Squadron Commander Richard Bell Davies who on 19 November 1915, despite enemy gunfire, successfully landed and rescued a stranded colleague near Imbros. Davies was awarded the Victoria Cross; only the second to be won by a British Naval aviator.



This Nieuport 10 single seater, wearing French colors, carries the number 237 on the rudder. The V struts can be seen between the upper and lower wing. Armament is a single, centrally mounted, overwing Lewis gun.

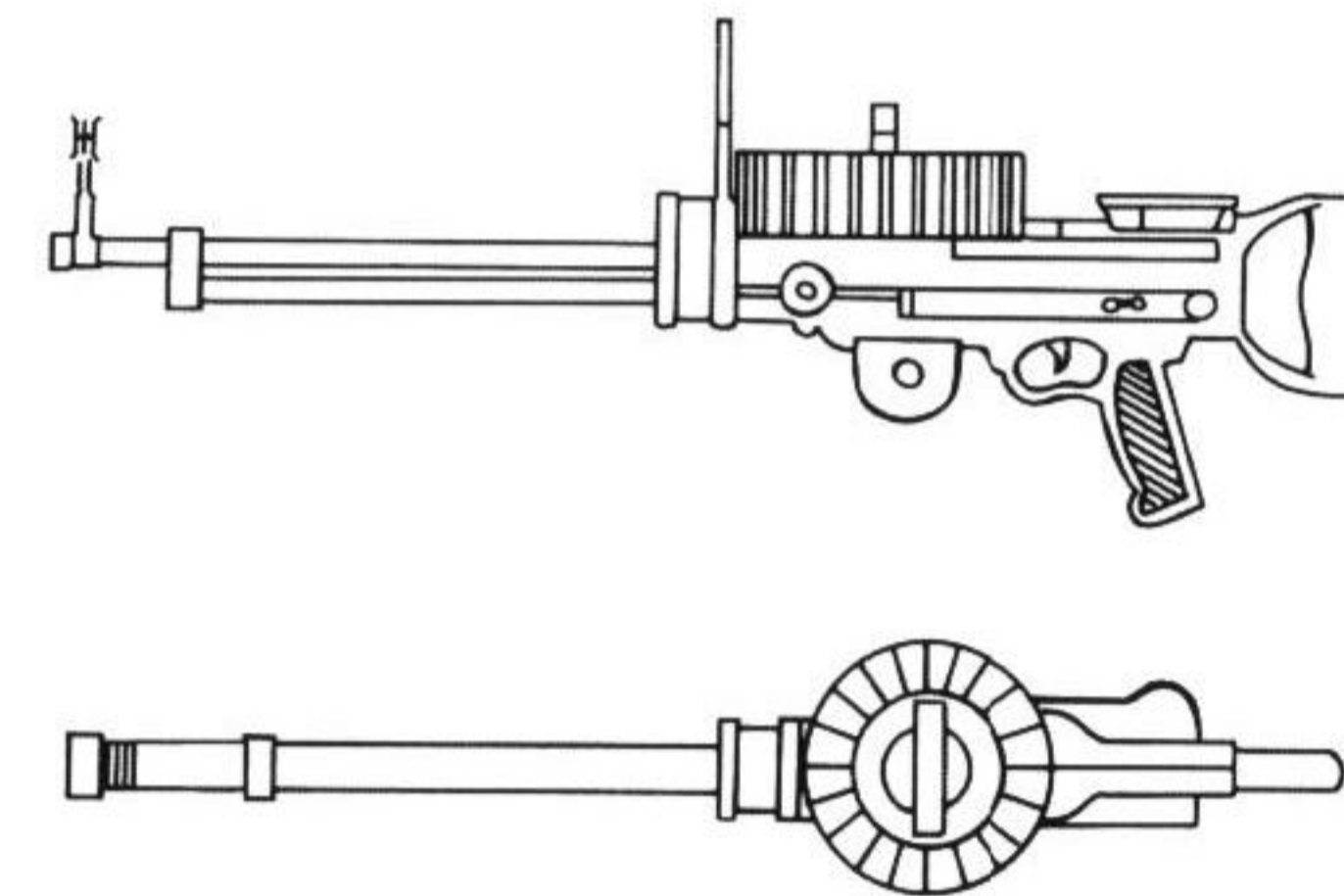
237 has a French roundel painted on the fuselage side, highly unusual for a French aircraft. Another Nie.10 stands in the background.



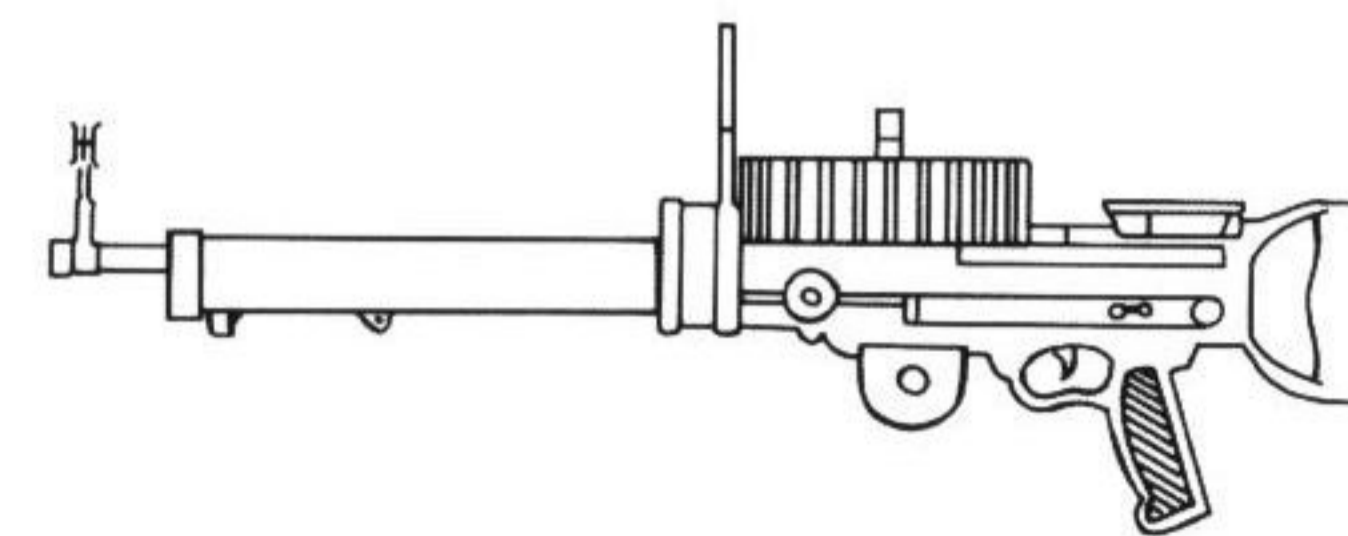


(Above) A carry over from the days of the two seater, the Nieuport 10 has the characteristic look of an elongated two seater fuselage.

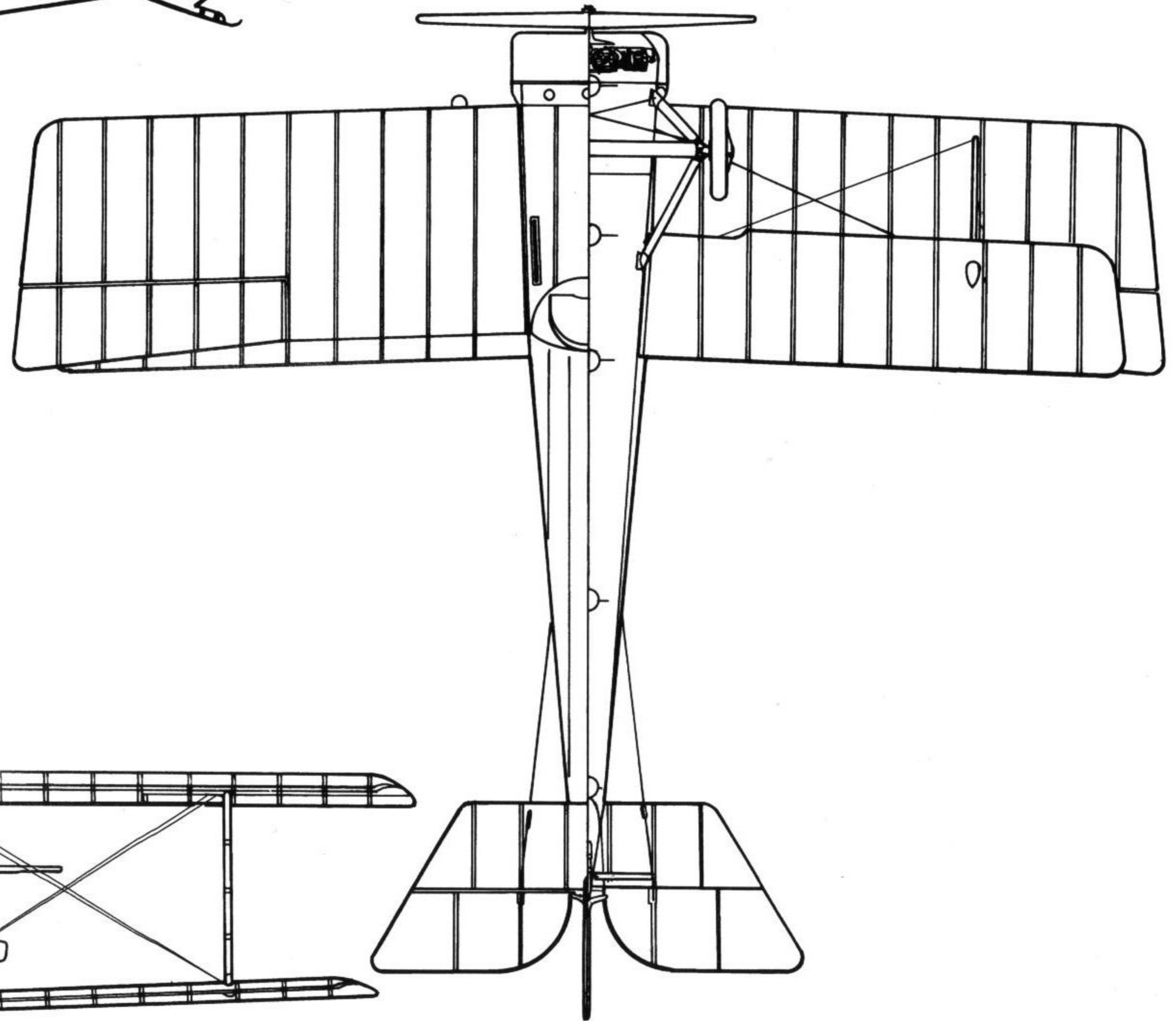
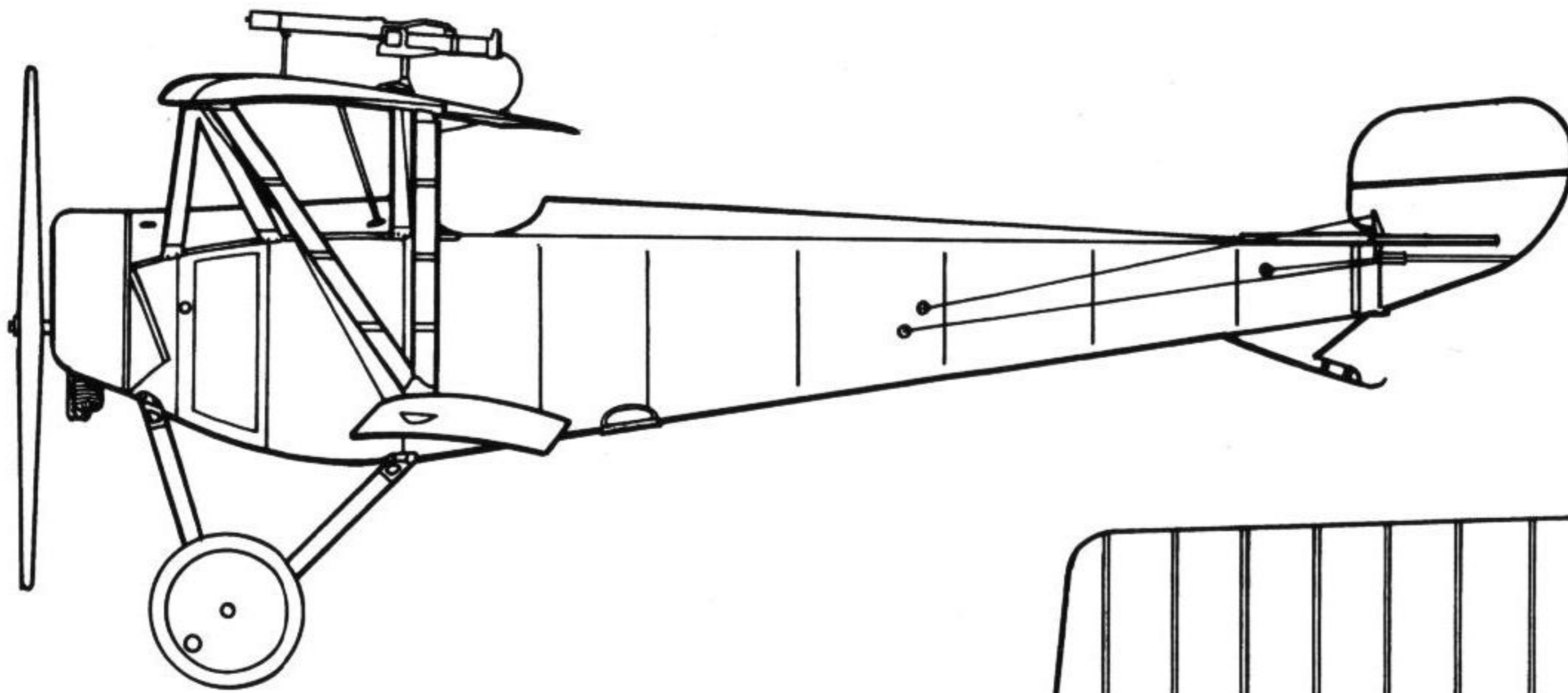
Lewis Gun



Lewis Gun With Jacket



(Left) A British Nie.10 flown by the Royal Naval Air Service. It is armed with two machine guns, one in the usual position mounted above the upper wing center section and the other gun positioned to fire obliquely outside the airscrew arc. This machine lacks the cut-away cockpit coaming found on a number of Nie.10s.

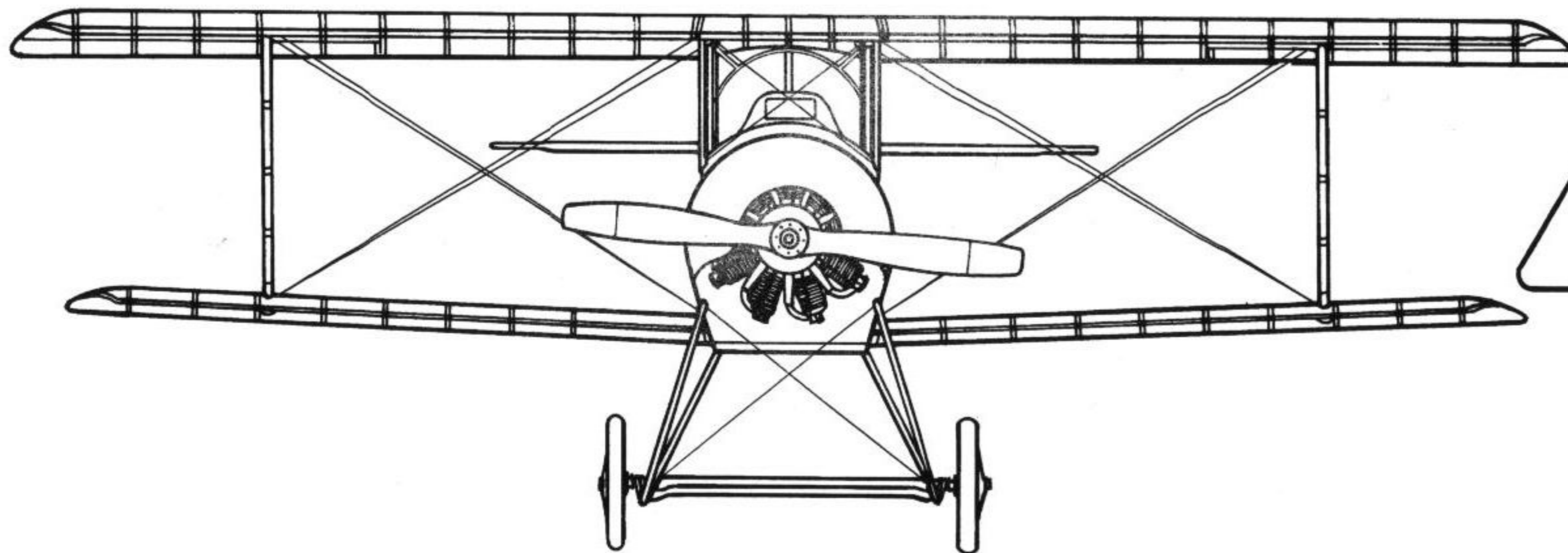


Nieuport 10C.1

Specifications

Wingspan 25 ft 11 inches (7.9m)
Length 22 ft 11.5 inches (7m)
Height 8 ft 10.25 inches (2.7m)

Maximum Weight Approximately 1,200 lbs (544 kg)
Powerplant One 80hp Le Rhone Rotary Engine
Armament One Lewis Gun Mounted on Upper Wing
Speed Approximately 92mph (149 kph)
Service Ceiling Approximately 15,500 feet (4,724m)
Endurance Approximately 2.5 hrs
Crew One



Nieuport 11c1. Bebe

A contemporary of the earlier Nieuport designs was the Nieuport 11c1 which was known as the Bebe because of its small size, or as the Type 13 for its metric wing area. The Bebe is historically interesting because it took part in the actions which turned the tide of war in favor of the Allies after the days of the "Fokker Scourge".

The majority of these small single seaters were armed in a similar manner to the Nie.10 designs — a single machine gun above the center section of the upper wing. The Bebe was powered by an 80-hp Le Rhone 9C rotary engine.

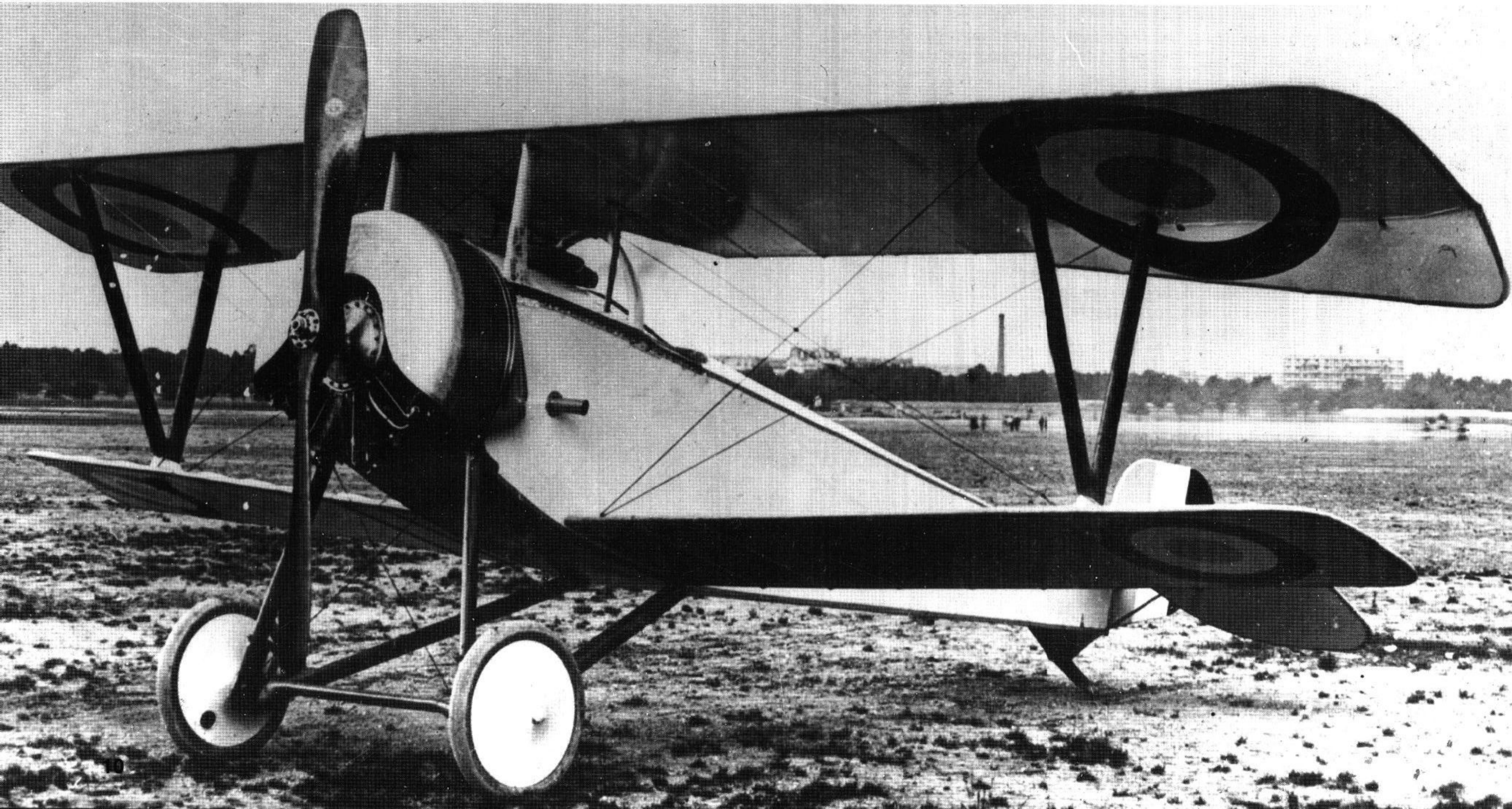
One of the earliest users of the Nie.11c1 Bebe is believed to have been the Royal Naval Air Service, but of the six said to have been flown by this service only one was a true Nie.11c1 Bebe. Numbered 3986, it is thought to be the machine personally tested by the renowned Commander C R Samson R.N. during July 1915 while he was in charge of No.3 Wing in the Dardanelles. He afterwards recorded that it "climbed like a witch".

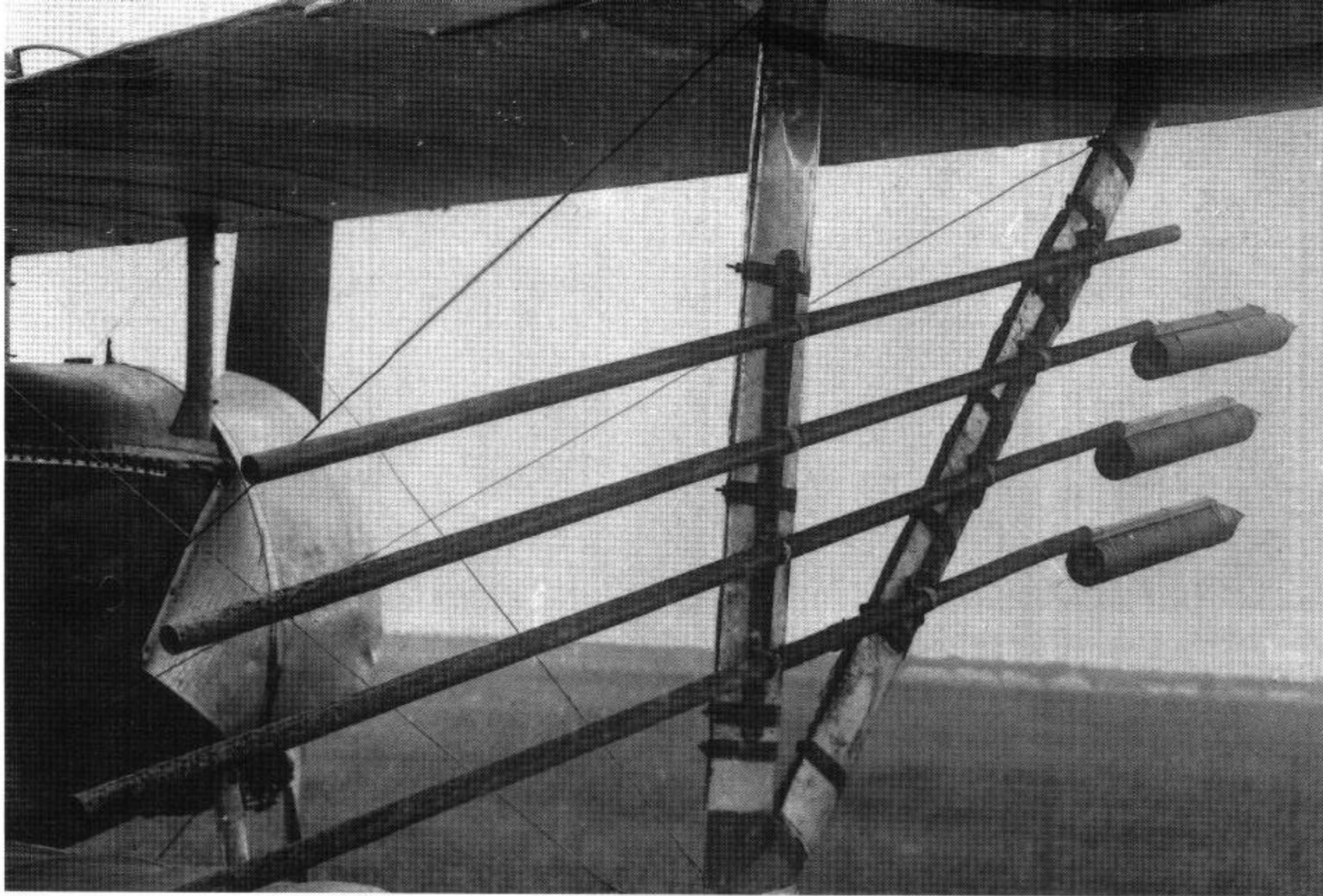
Aircraft of this type were also flown by Albania, Belgium and Russia. The 646 examples on the strength with Italy's air arm were all built under license by Macchi. Probably the smallest order came from Holland — five machines, although twenty Bebes were later license built by the Dutch.

Prominent aviators associated with the Nie.11 Bebe include Sergeant Lawrence Rumsey who frequently flew number N1290 while a member of the Escadrille Americaine and France's Lts. Nungesser and Navarre serving with Escadrilles N.65 and N.67 respectively in 1916.

The Nieuport 11 which was never used by the RFC had a reputation for being nose heavy and for breaking up in the air.

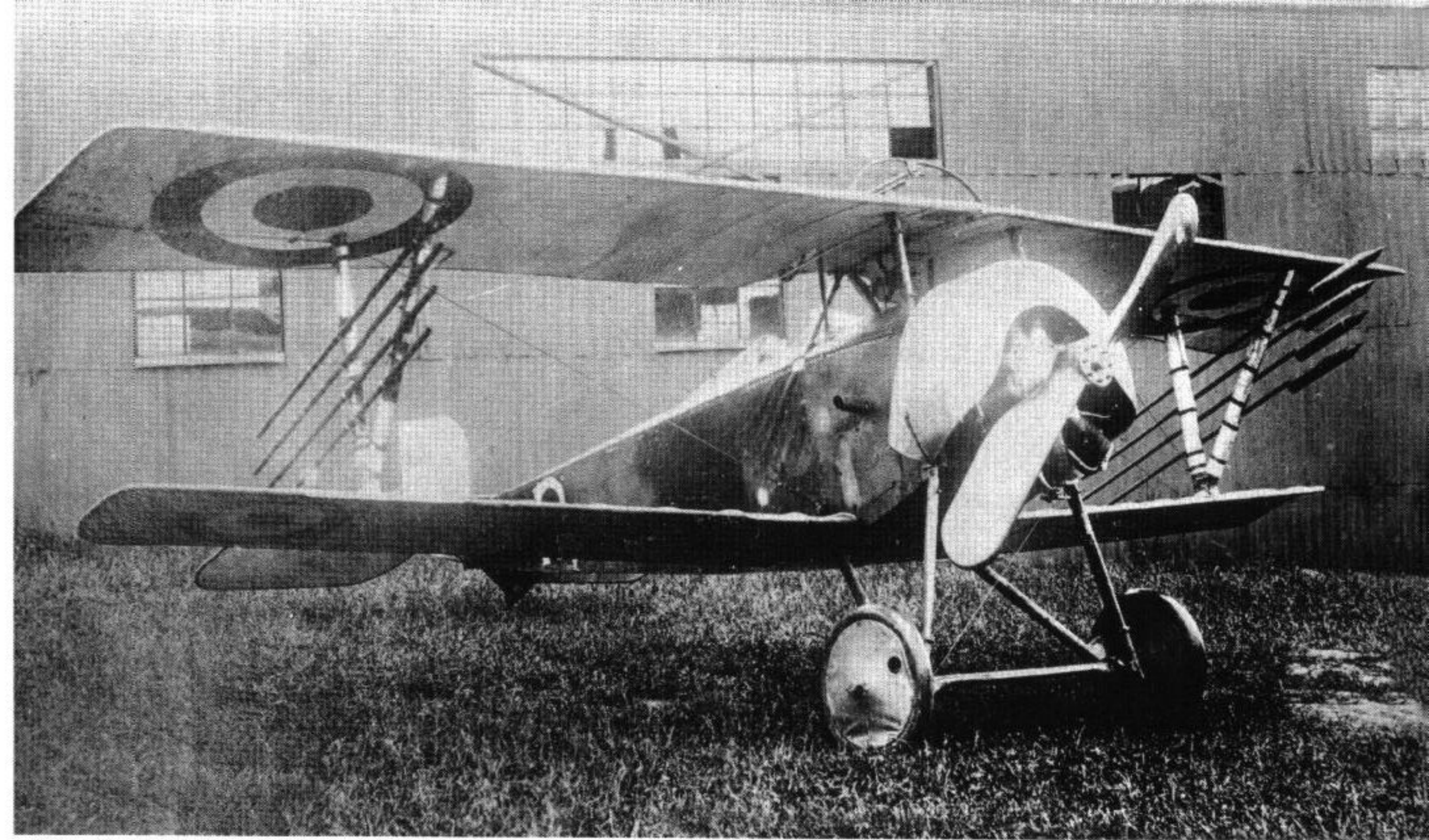
The unarmed and unnumbered Nieuport 11 prototype. The elevators were smaller than those which would later become standard and the spread of the undercarriage V braces are somewhat greater here. The rear center section struts just in front of the cockpit are an inverted 'U' shape, probably to improve the view from the cockpit. The national markings are French.





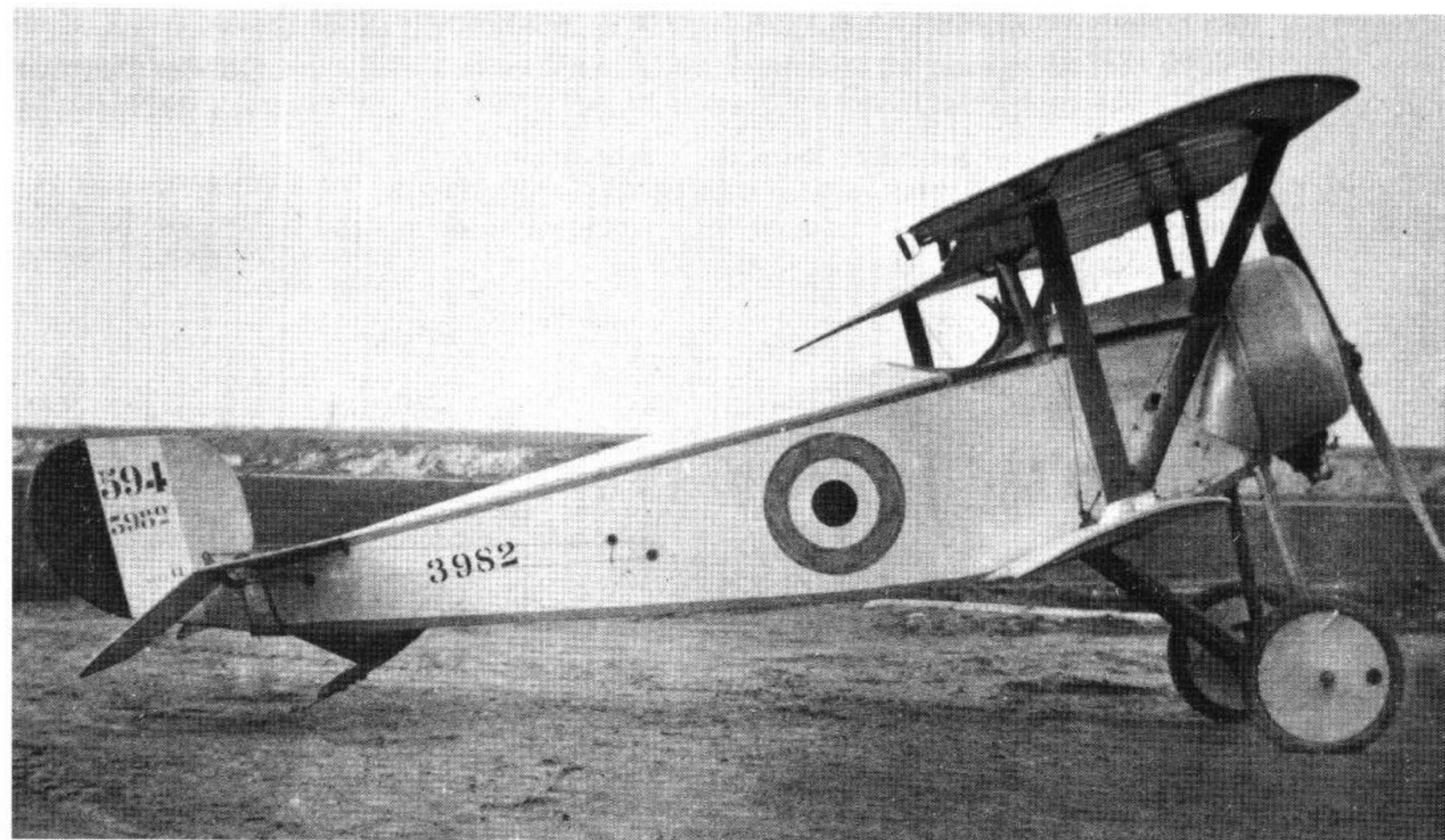
Some Nieuports were armed with Le Prieur rockets for attacks on kite balloons. These rockets were carried in addition to a machine gun which can be seen in its overwing mounting. The aircraft is N959 of Escadrille N.65. It was captured by the Germans on 22 May 1916.

One of the 450 Italian Nie.IIs built under license by Macchi. The entire undersurface of the upper wing is painted in the national colors of Italy being divided into equal areas of green (starboard), white (center) and red (port). The forward engine cowling is similarly segmented into equal parts with these colors.



The rocket armed N959 in German hands. The ornate letter 'R' on the fuselage side of N959 was the insignia of the pilot flying it at the time of its capture, Adjutant Henri Reservat. This machine was later test flown by a number of German pilots.

This Nie.11, armed with twin machine guns, was flown by No.1 Flight of 'A' Squadron, No.1 Wing, RNAS from Dunkerque during the Spring of 1916. Its British serial number, 3982 on the fuselage is repeated on the rudder beneath the original French identity 594. It is known that 593/3981 was similarly marked and flew with No.6 Squadron, RNAS in February 1917.





A comic personal insignia on an Italian Nie.11, number 2152 in 1916.

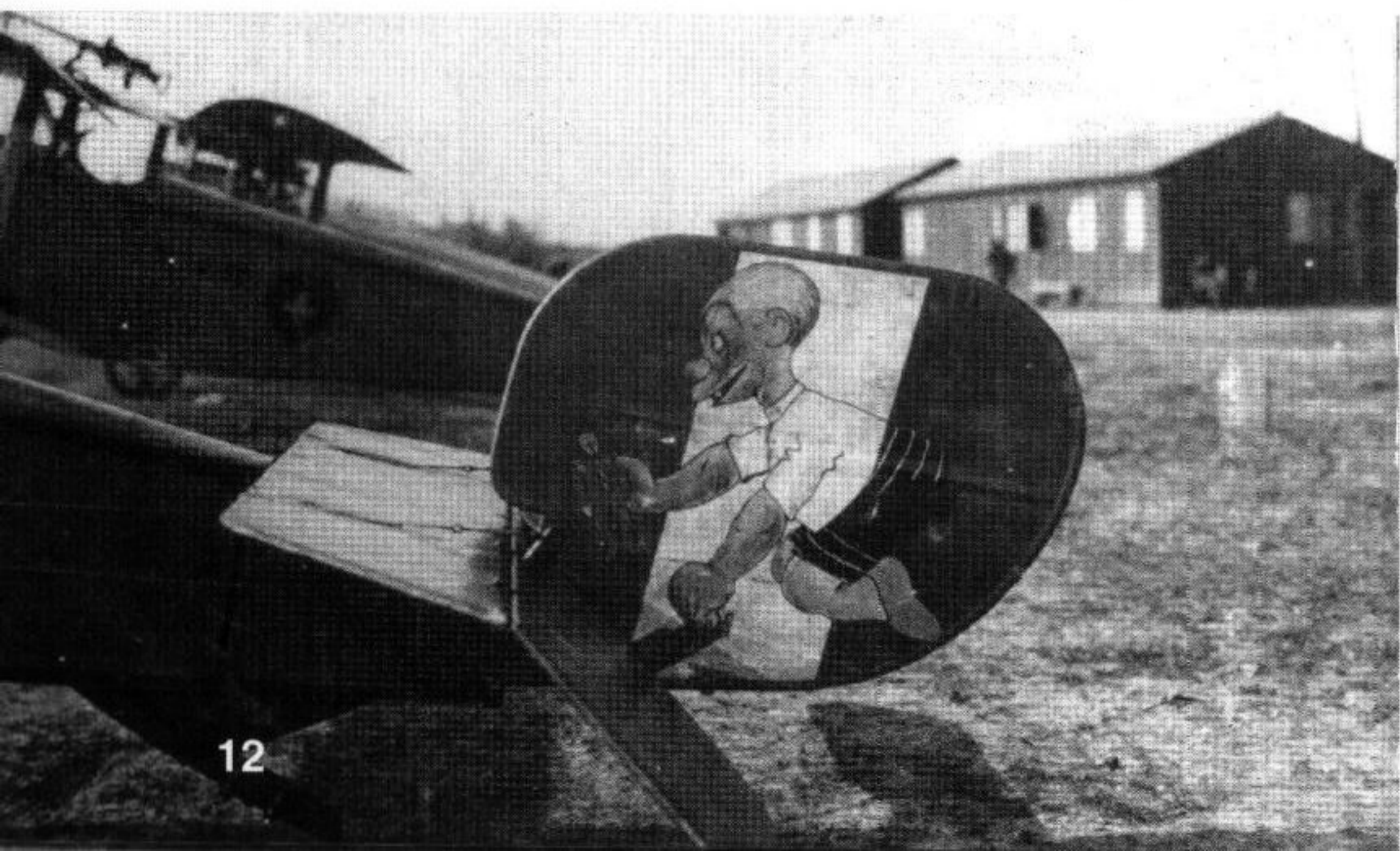


Repainted with the national insignia of its captors, this Nie.11 has had its armament removed. Other Nieuports which fell into Austrian hands were often renumbered and flown in action.

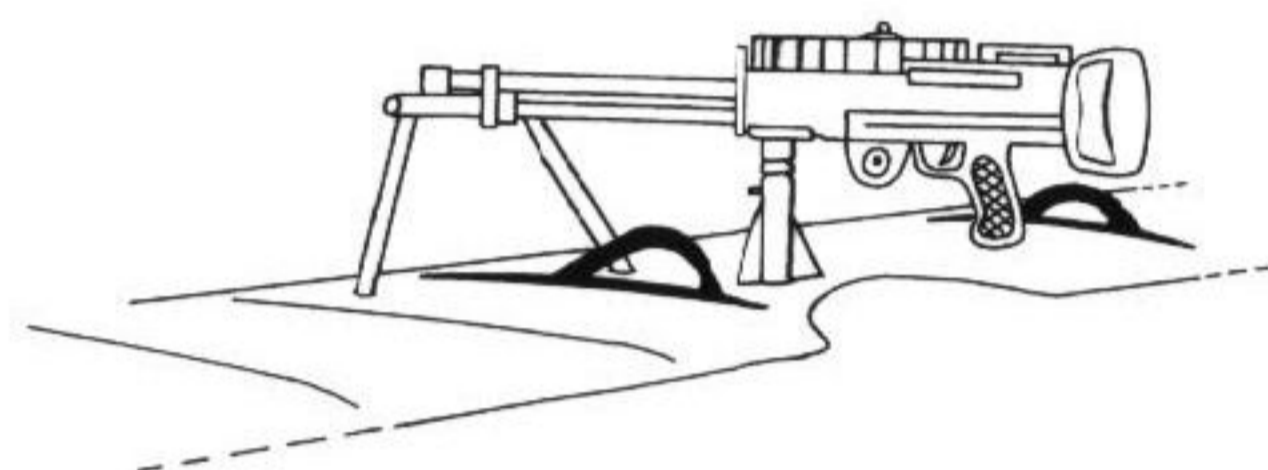


This French Nie.11 appears to have a revised, non-standard wing bracing system.

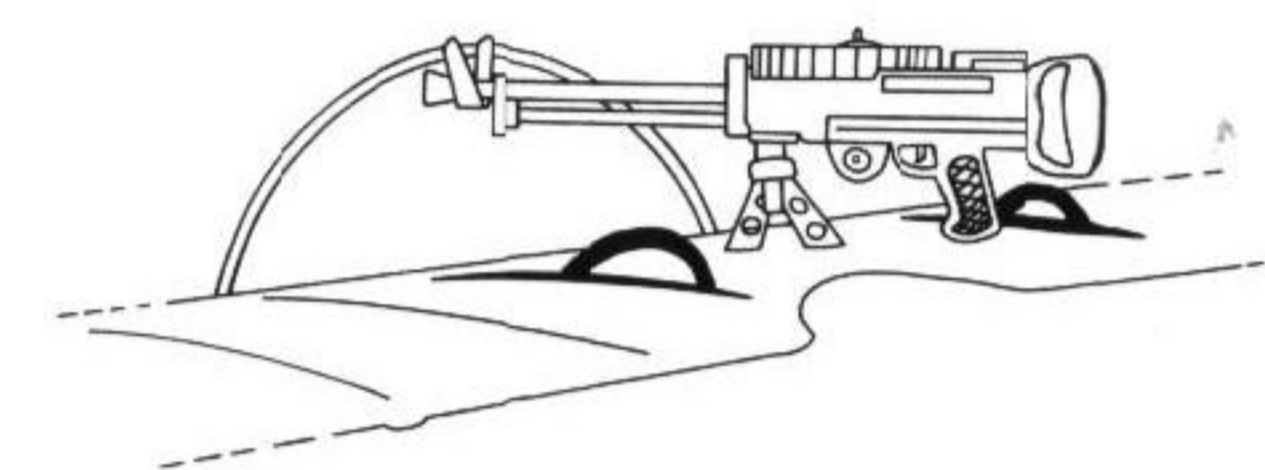
Another example of an Italian personal comic marking, this time painted on the rudder. The marking seen on the fuselage of the aircraft in the background appears to be a white cross on a heart shaped background.



Lewis Gun Mounts

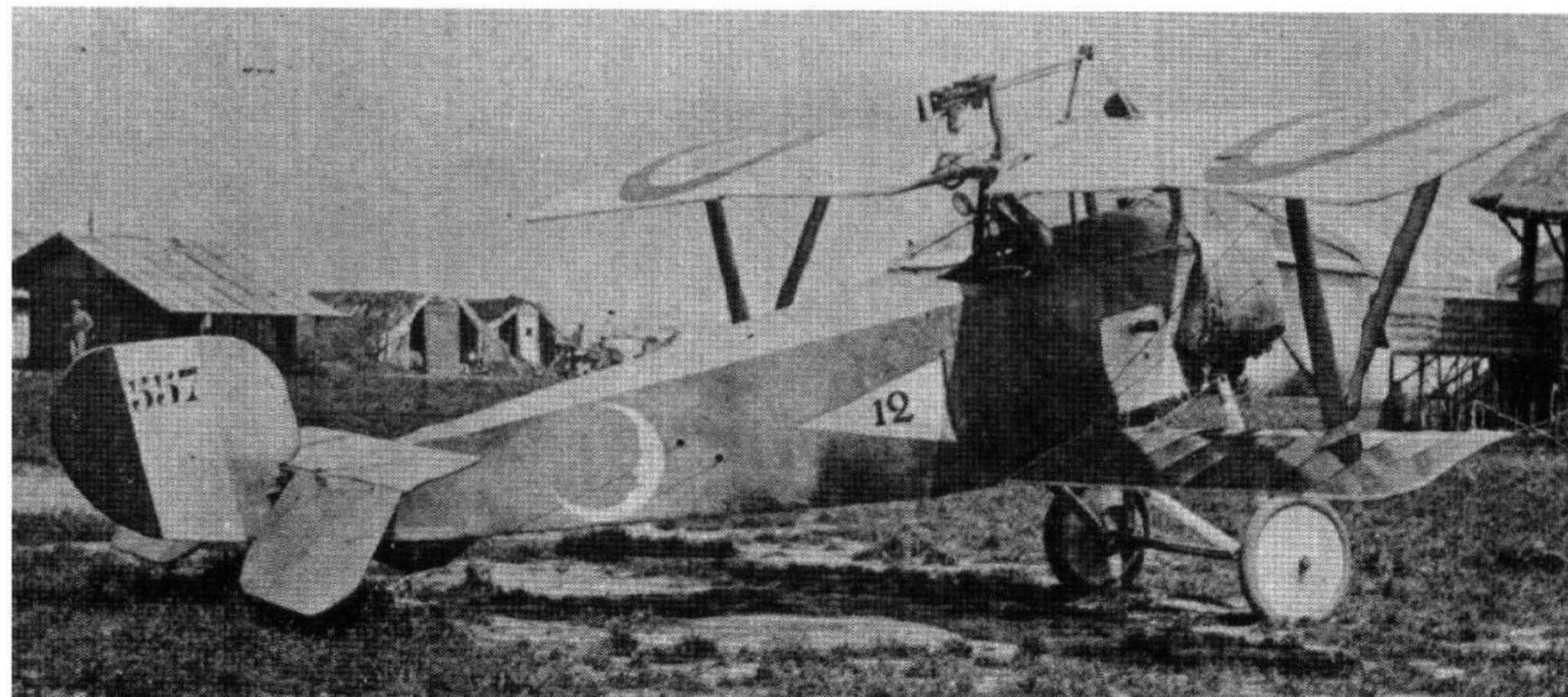


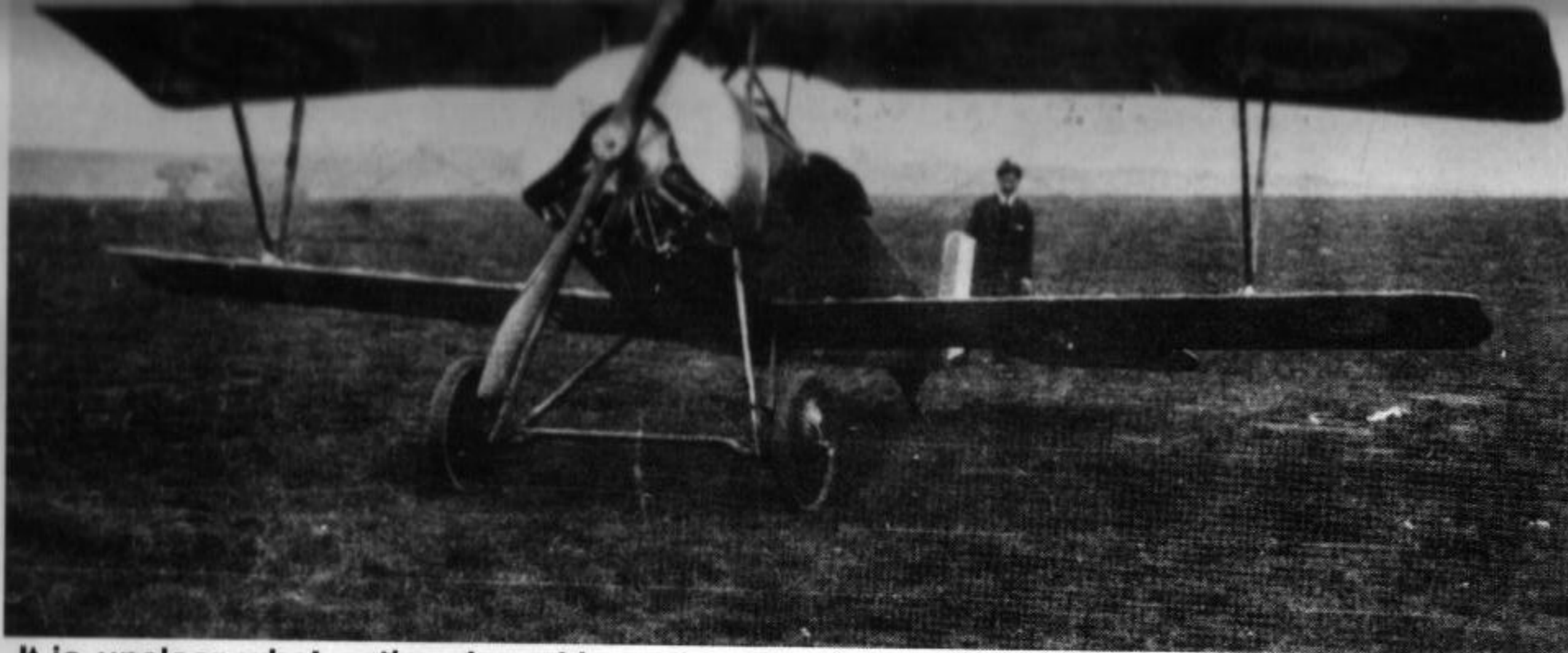
Center Section Lewis Gun on Stand and Mount



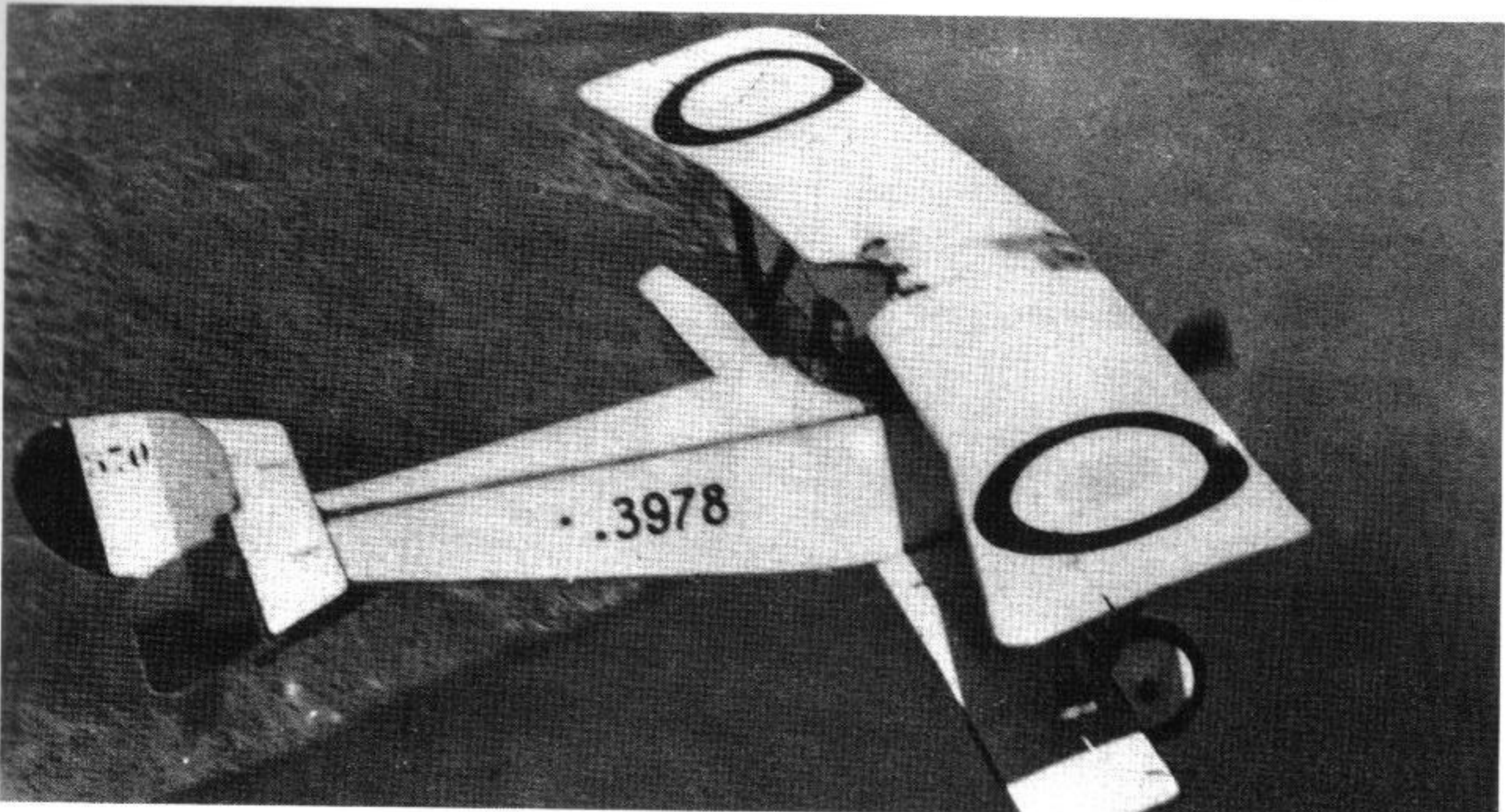
Lewis Gun with Airscrew Guard Rail

This Nieuport 11, number 557 of Escadrille N.12, wears the blue and white fanion which was the unit insignia. The number below the cockpit was red. The crescent moon, carried aft, is evidently a personal marking. The overwing Lewis gun is on what seems to be a Moreau mounting.

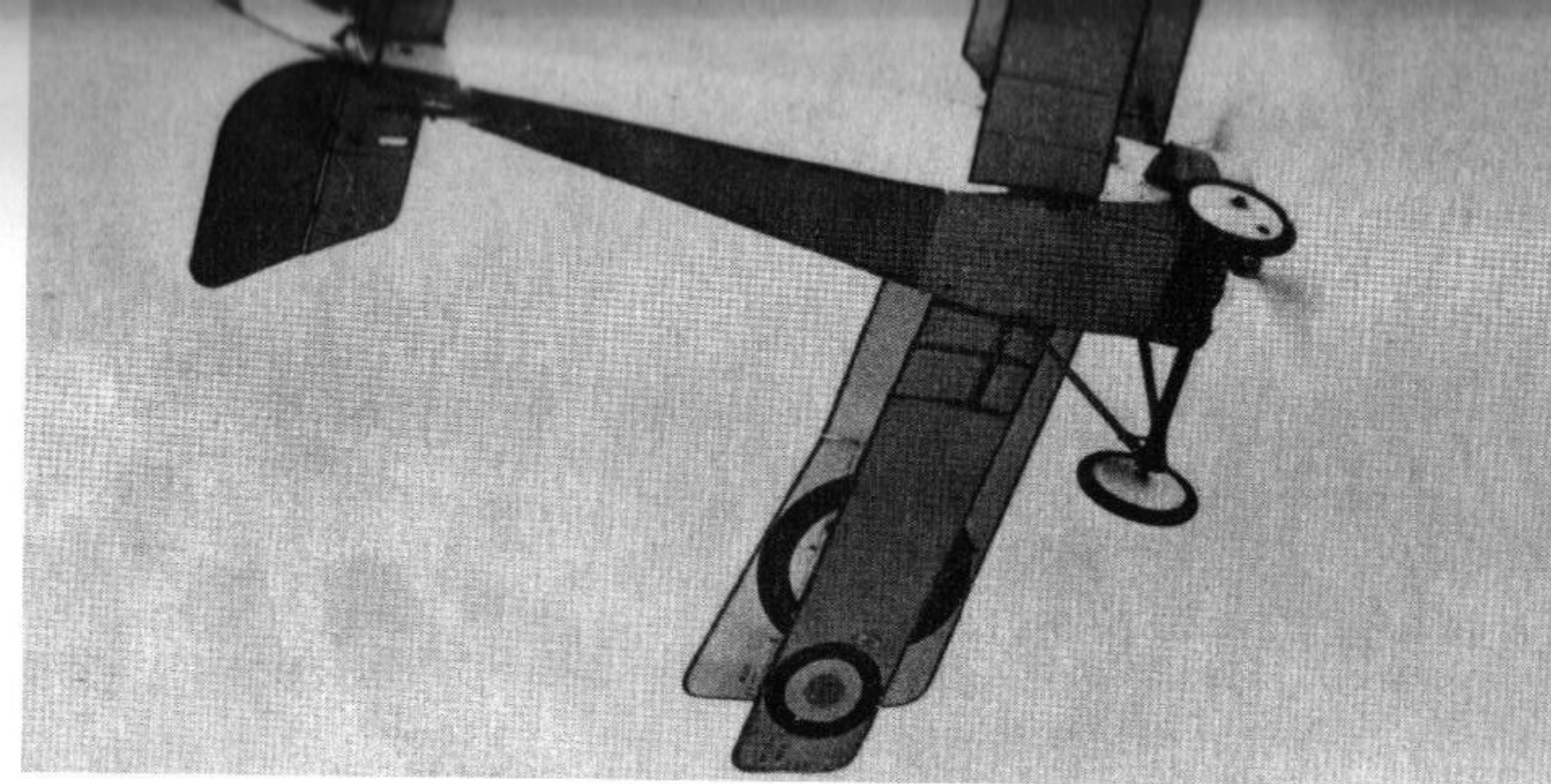
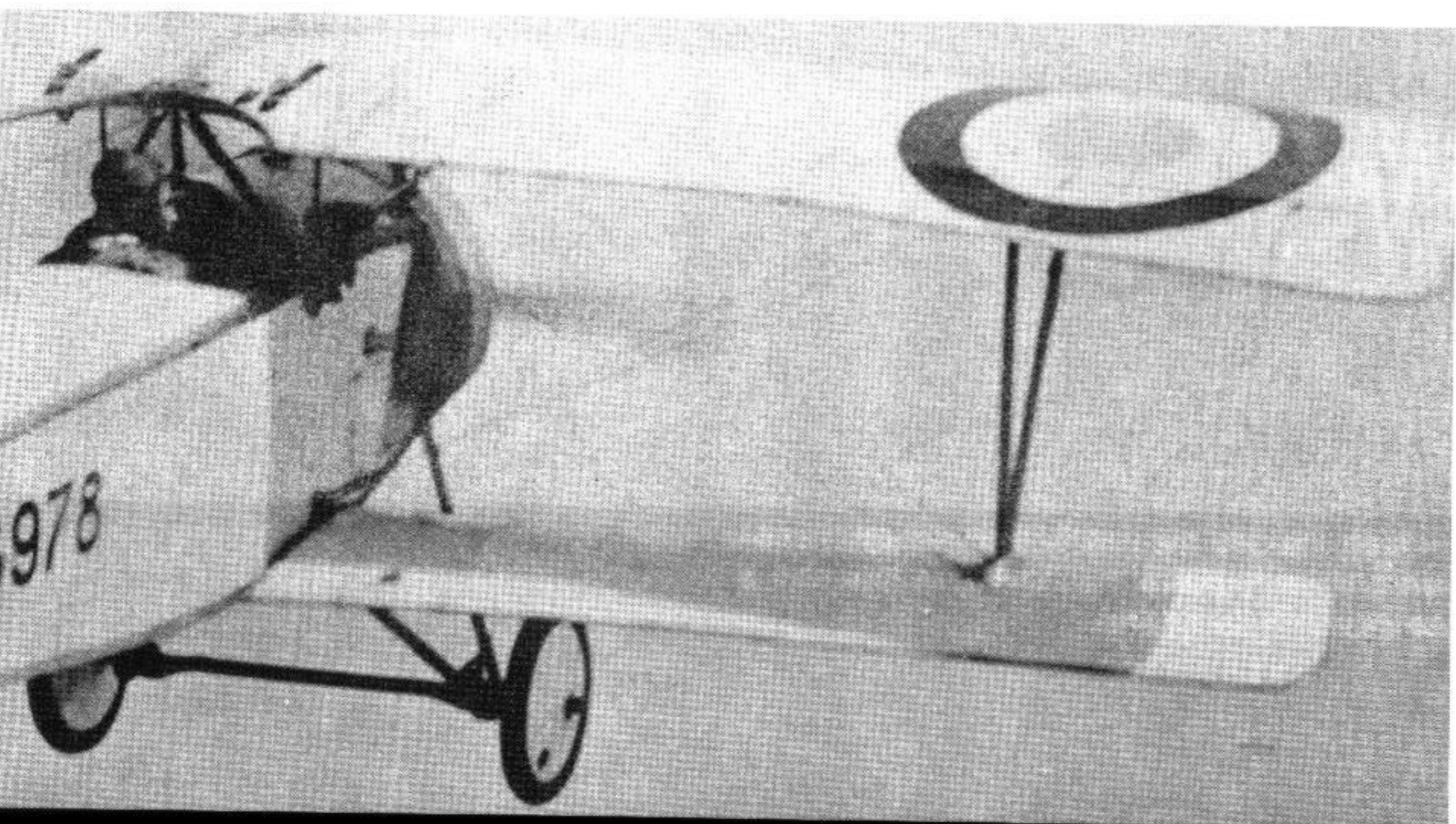




It is unclear what national markings this Nie.11 carries, but interestingly the aircraft is armed with twin machine guns. The wheel discs are believed to have been red.



A further view of 3978 showing its forward aligned Lewis gun mounted on the starboard center section struts.



A view of 3978 with its part numbers under both upper and lower wing tips and also showing part of the internal structure. Black outlines on the flying surfaces were a common Nieuport feature. The color of the elevators appears to be carried onto their lower surfaces.

(Left) Nieuport 11 (3978) of No.2 Wing of the RNAS at Imbros with the French number 370 on the rudder. The roundels used by the British RNAS had originally been merely a red circle with a white center, but a blue center disc has been added, in effect replicating French markings. The elevators appear to be red

Carrying the British serial 3976, with N565 on its rudder above the words "CHARGE MAX-IMA", this British Naval Nie.11 is believed to be at Imbros. In the background is a Breguet Type V Concors pusher. The RNAS had 35 of these, all but 11 were purchased directly from France.

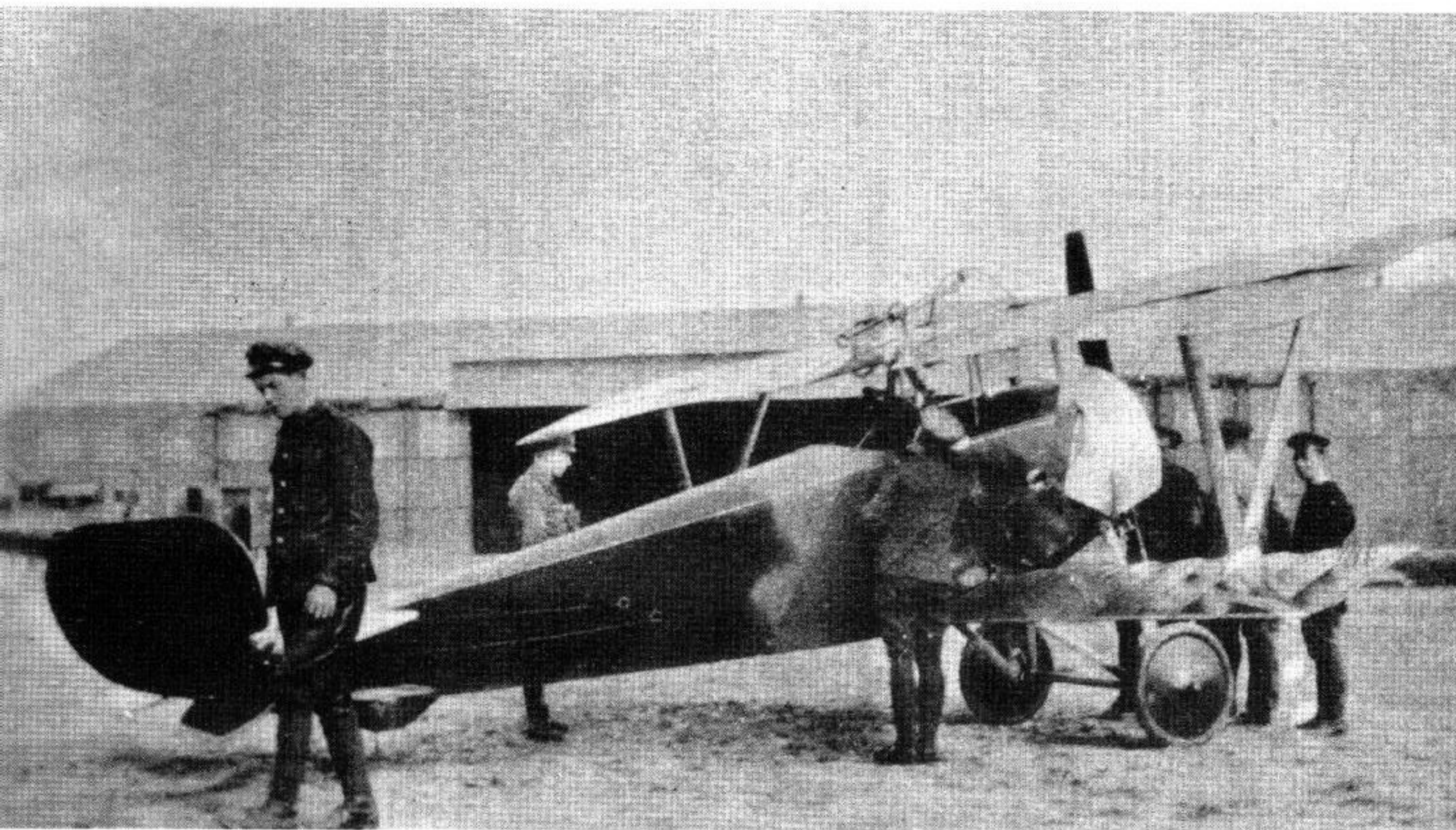




Belgian ace Willy Coppens in his Nieuport 11 which carries his newly introduced 'paper horse' insignia. The aircraft, armed with a synchronized Vickers machine gun has had a non-standard headrest and a small, circular rear-view mirror added.

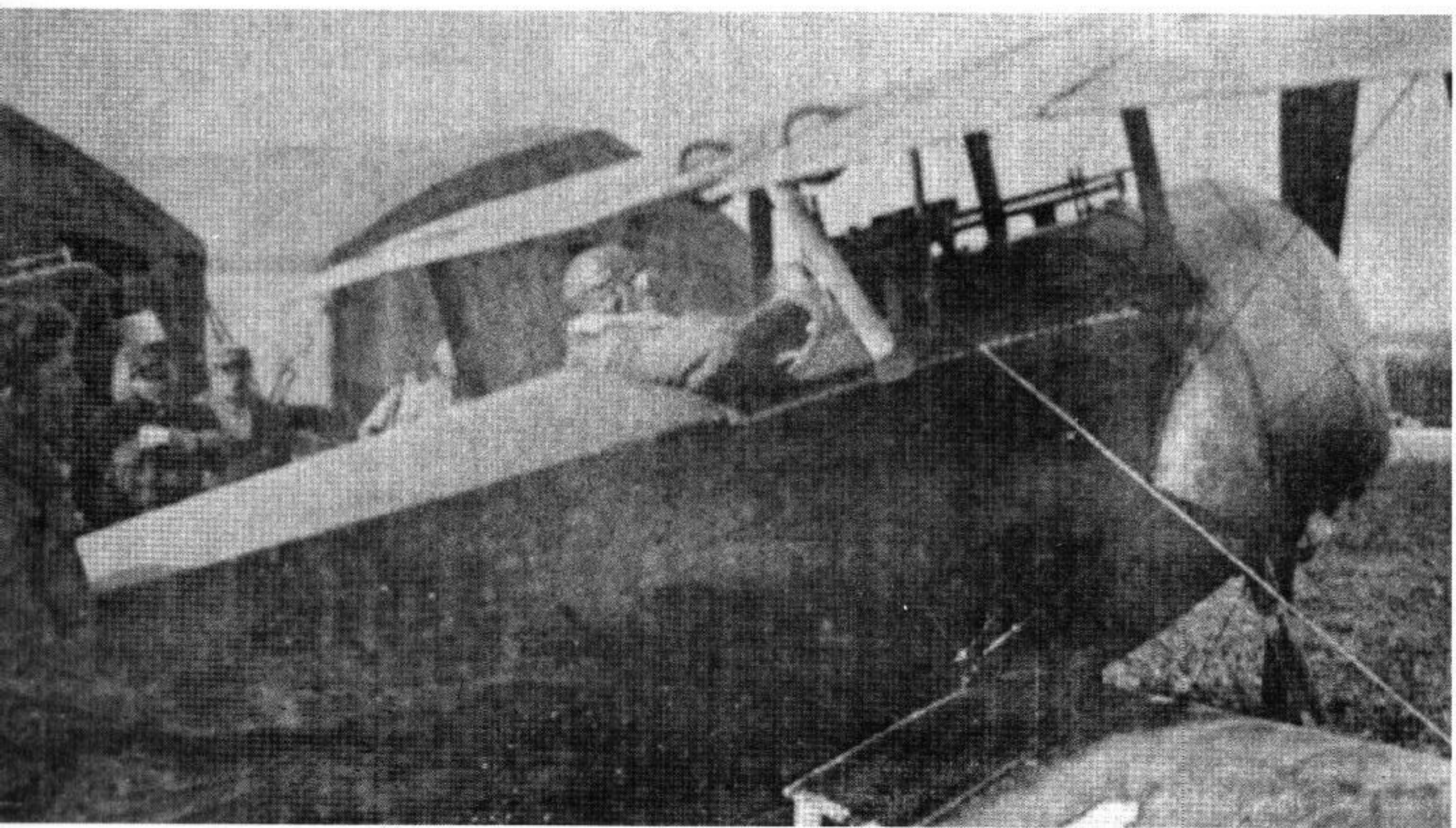


Another Belgian ace, Jan Olieslagers, stands by the Nie.11 of 1. *ere Escadrille* in which he claimed his first victory in 1915. The roundel, carried well forward is red, yellow and black.



A Belgian Nie.11 doped in a disruptive camouflage pattern that must have been somewhat compromised by the bright metal finish of the cowling. Belgian national colors commonly photographed as black on certain types of film.

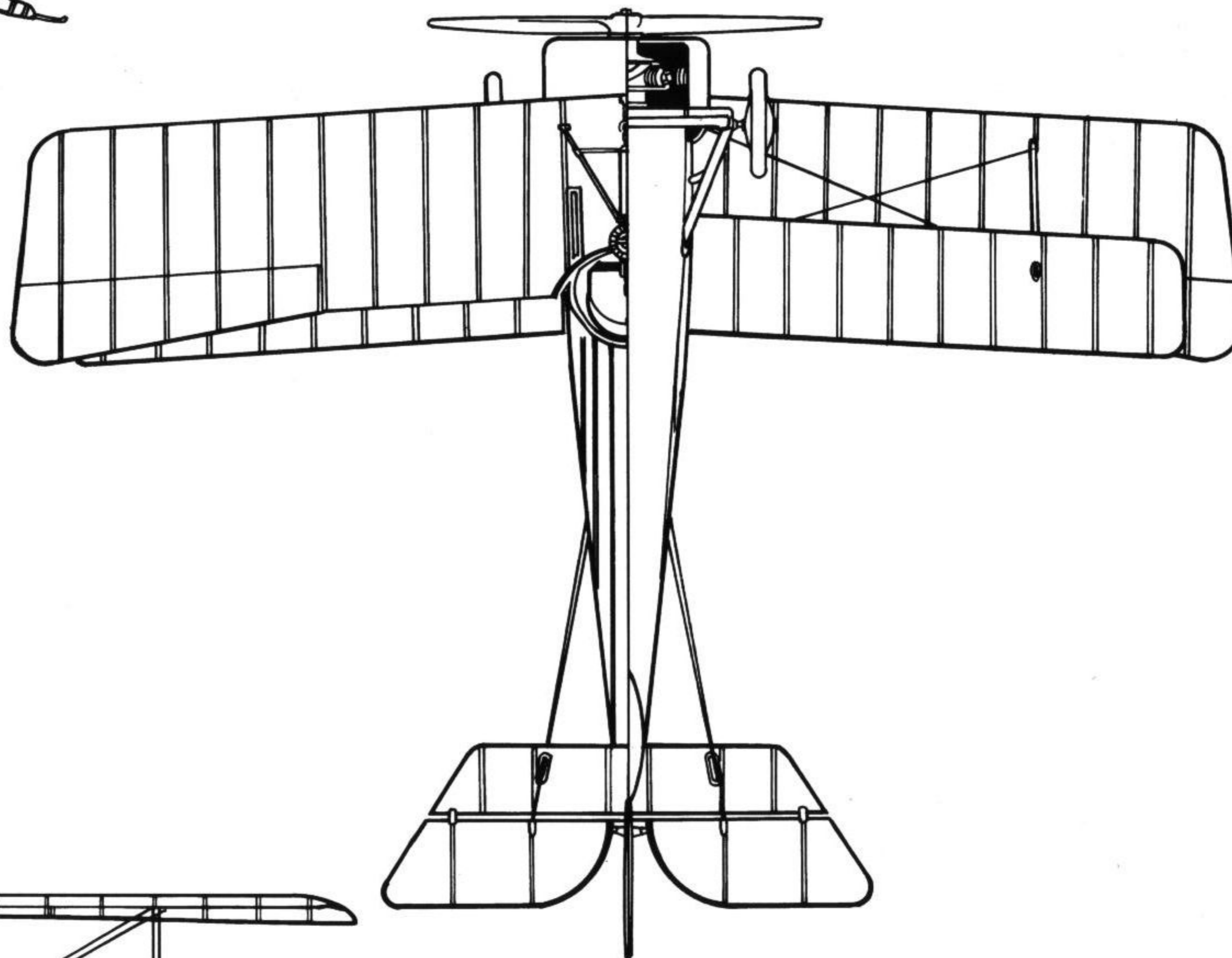
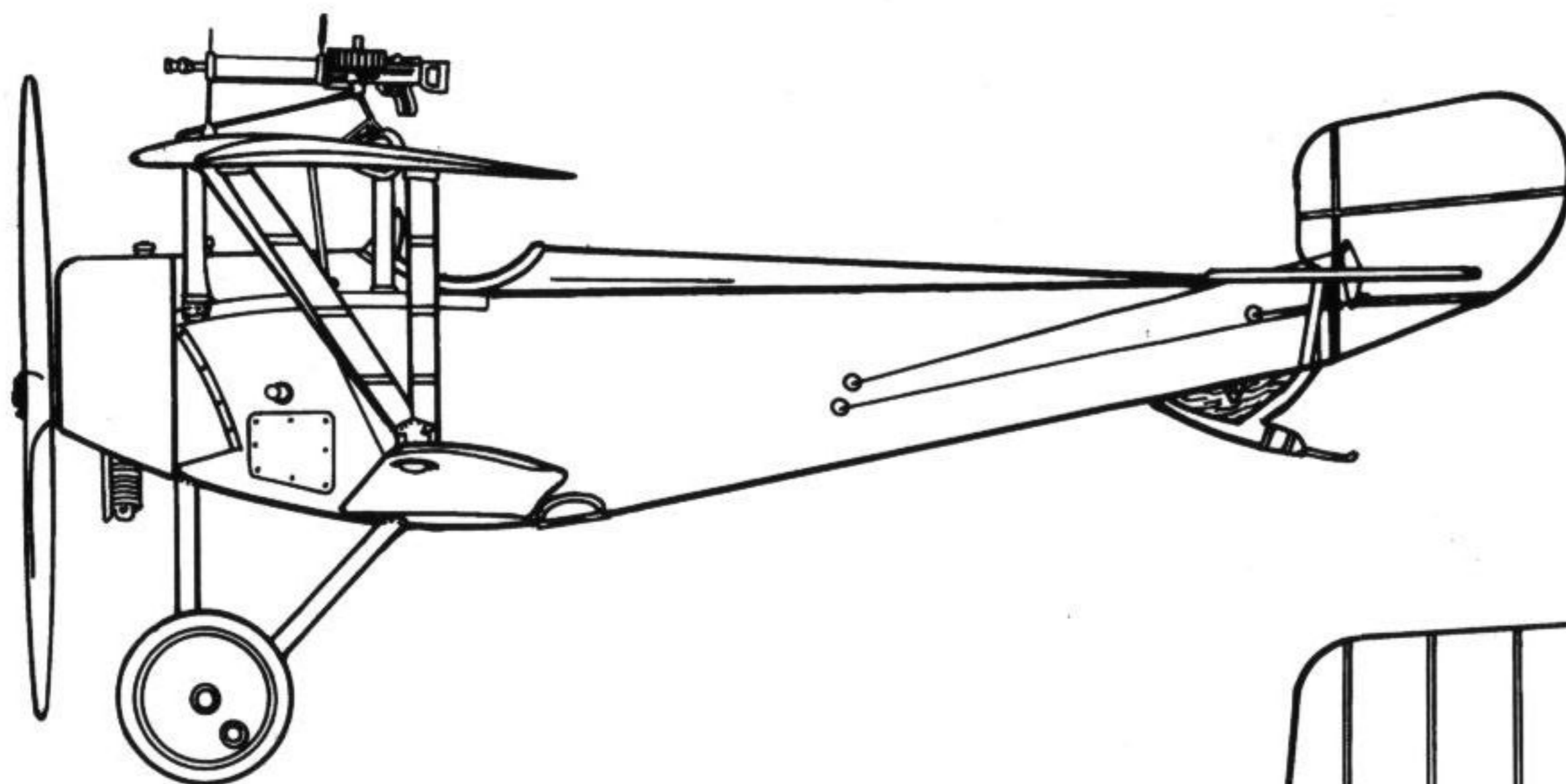
Jean Navarre, the first of France's pilots to be acknowledged an ace, sits in the cockpit of his Nie.11. Navarre wears a lady's silk stocking on his head, which he preferred to the conventional flying helmet.



One of several Nie.11s that fell into German hands and were test flown. The armament has been removed and a small cone de penetration has been added to the airscrew boss. The extreme inboard position of the national markings under the lower wing is unusual.

This Nie.11 (N1374), operating with a French unit in the Dardanelles, is having its 80-hp Le Rhone rotary engine serviced.

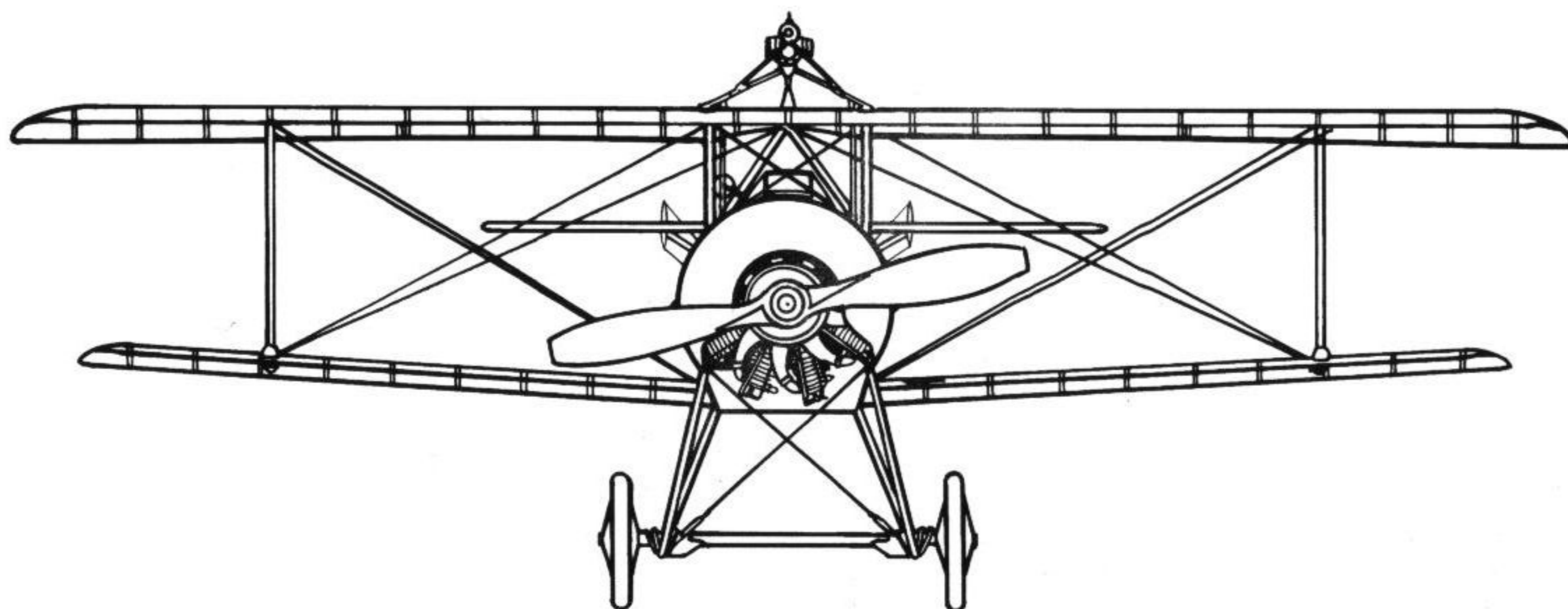




Nieuport 11c.1

Specifications

Wingspan	24 ft 8 inches (7.5m)
Length	18 ft .5 inches (5.5m)
Height	7 ft 10.5 inches (2.4m)
Empty Weight	705 lbs (320 kg)
Maximum Weight	1,058 lbs (480 kg)
Powerplant	One 80hp Le Rhone 9C Rotary Engine
Armament	One .303 Lewis Gun Mounted on Upper Wing
Speed	103.8 mph (167 kph)
Service Ceiling	16,400 feet (5,000m)
Endurance	2. hrs
Crew	One



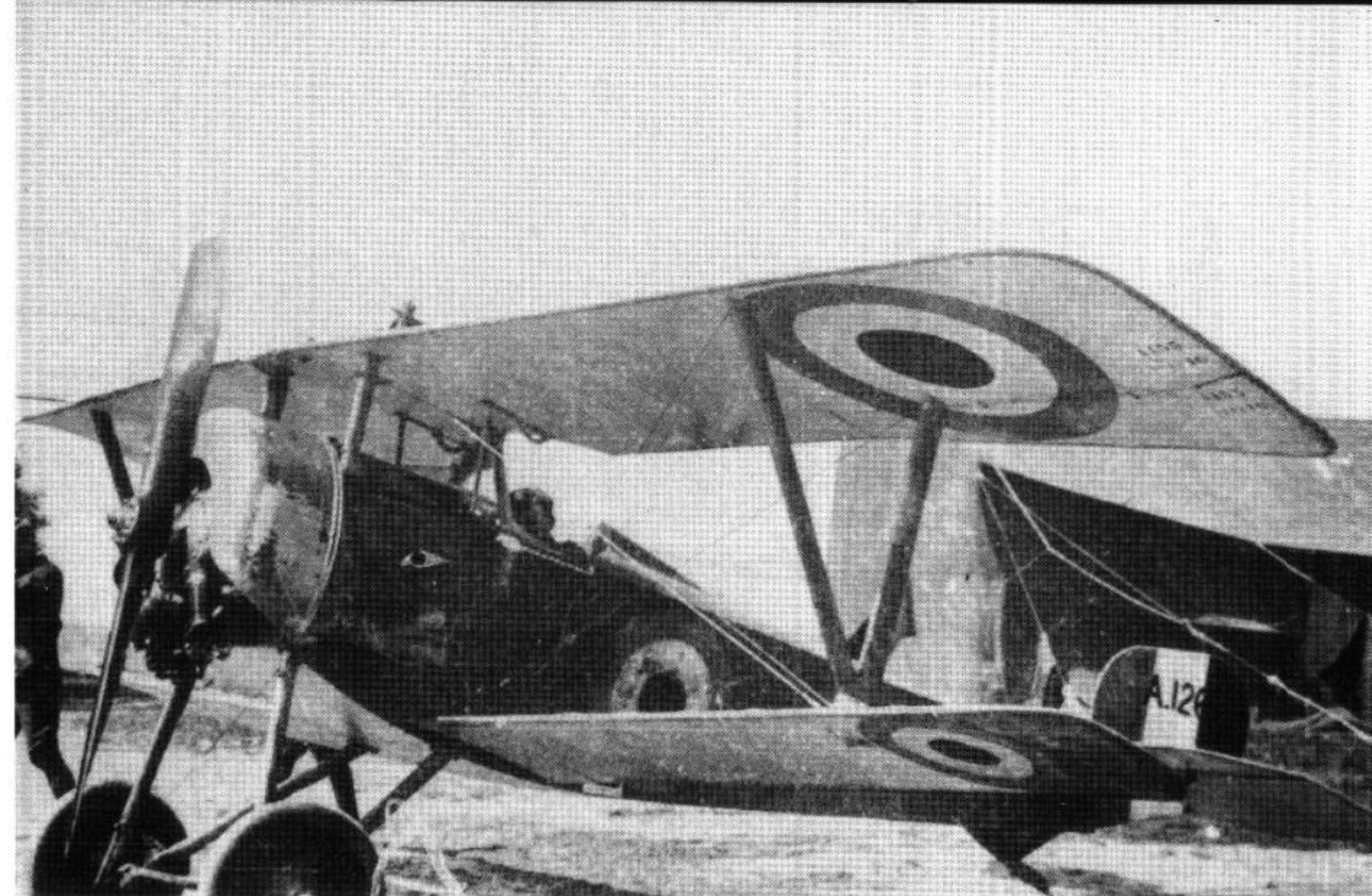
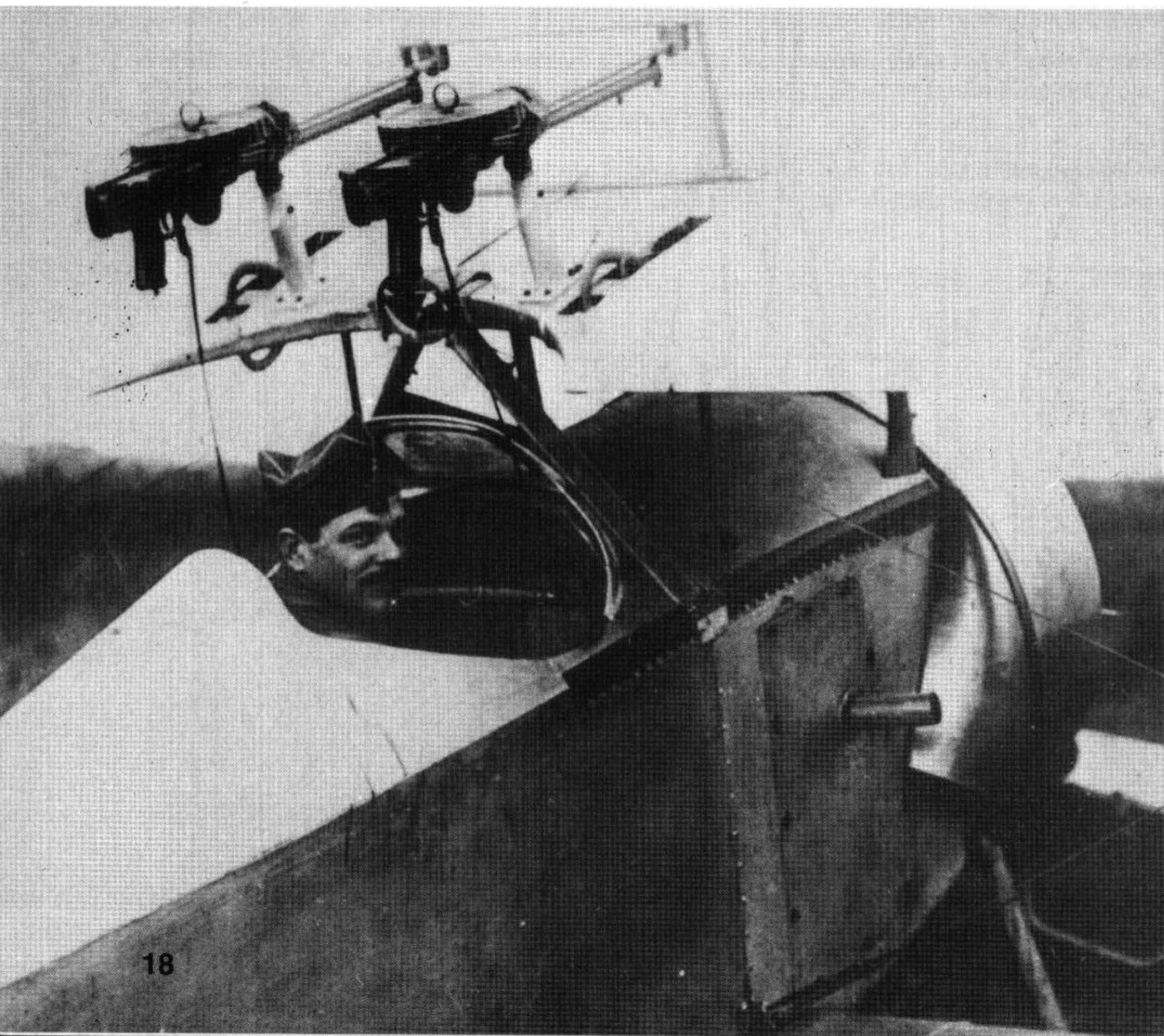
Nieuport 16c.1

This type may be simply likened to an Nie.11 'Bebe' fitted with the more powerful 110-hp Le Rhone 9J rotary engine. Apart from this there were few external indications of its individual identity apart from the access cover on the port side of the nose which was differently shaped from that of its predecessor. Some aircraft carried cowlings which had a separately manufactured leading edge, giving it a slightly different appearance. However, a helpful indicator showing the difference between Nie.11s and Nie.16s could be found on a large number of the latter flown by the Royal Flying Corps. These for the most part had headrests.

Some sources also state that a small number were armed with a synchronized Vickers machine gun on the cowling in place of the Lewis above the upper wing. Those aircraft operated by the RFC had the Lewis gun on a Foster mounting.

A few Nie.16s carried sets of eight Le Prieur rockets mounted on their interplane struts. This armament was favored by Squadron Commander G.R. Bromet's No.8 Naval Squadron when

Jan Qileslagers seated in his Nie.16c1. Before joining the Belgian flying service, he had distinguished himself as a long-distance motorcyclist and later taught himself to fly, winning a world endurance record of five hours, three minutes in 1910. He survived four years of war unharmed, being credited with six official victories, although more are believed to have been shot down.



British ace Albert Ball VC flew this machine numbered **A.126** early in his career, there is no known record that he achieved any victories while flying this particular Nieuport.

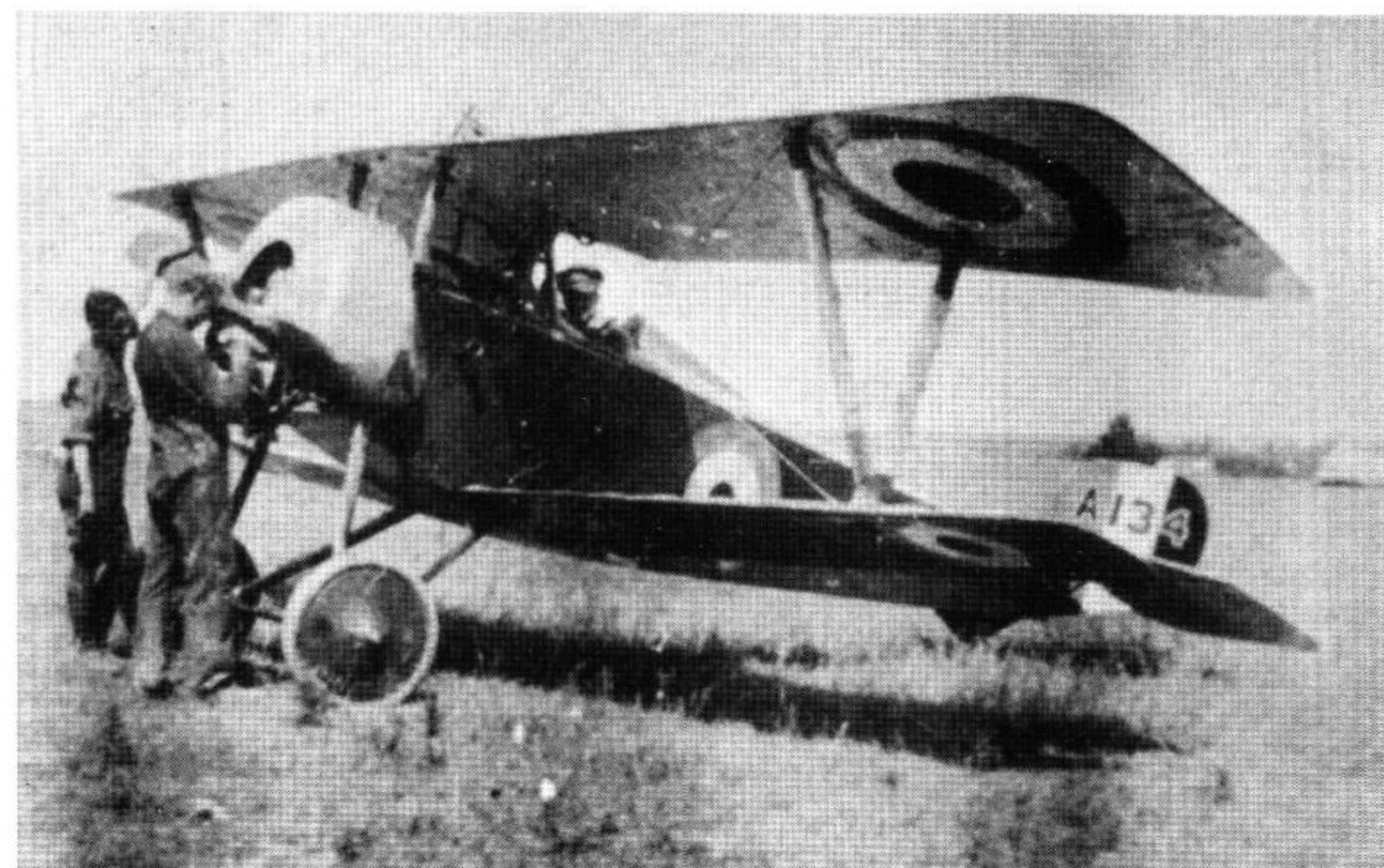
flying in support of the RFC on the Western Front between the end of 1916 and October 1917. No 8 was credited with shooting down kite balloons that were spotting for the Tirpitz battery.

Still more rare were the few Nieuports 16s (perhaps only one or two) that were fitted with cameras for fast photo reconnaissance missions. On a few of the Nie.11 the radii of the wing tip leading edges of some Nie.16s were smaller than of the majority.

The Nieuport 16c1 was in service with the RFC during 1915-16.

The British ace Albert Ball had had his first experience flying it on 15 May 1915.

Another of Ball's Nie.16s was numbered **A134**. While flying it with No.11 Squadron, RFC on 2 July 1916, he is known to have downed first a Roland C.II at 1730 hours and an Aviatik Type C thirty minutes later in the vicinity of Lens, France.



Nieuport 17c1.

The best known of the French produced Nieuports were alternatively known as "Nieuport 15s" from their metric wing areas, while to ground troops they were known as "Silver Hawks" from the aluminum dope with which most were painted.

Despite their resemblance to previous fighters from the same manufacturer, the Nieuport 17c1 was an entirely new design which incorporated experience gained with earlier sesqui-plane types and their successful use over the Western Front. This resulted in the construction of large numbers so that they quickly became associated with a number of First World War Allied aces, among them Raoul Lufbery who frequently flew number 1844, decorated with the head of a Seminole Indian on the fuselage side; Canadian Billy Bishop who favored a blue cowling for his B1566; Charles Nungesser who decorated both N1430 and N1896 with his "Coffin and Candles" insignia, and Georges Guynemer who marked his Nie.17 with an orange beaked, red legged, black stork.

During the years 1914 to 1918, design and equipment variations were common among the aircraft of all countries. One of the most prominent on the Nie.17 were non-revolving spinner-like *cones de penetration* on the airscrews of a few aircraft. Only rarely seen were the transparent panels on the upper wing center sections to provide an improved upward view. Similarly armament variations could be encountered on the Nie.17 such as a cowl mounted forward firing, synchronized Vickers gun, or sometimes a cowl mounted Lewis gun with an added Lewis gun mounted on the upper wing. Occasionally a pair of Lewis guns were mounted on the upper wing.

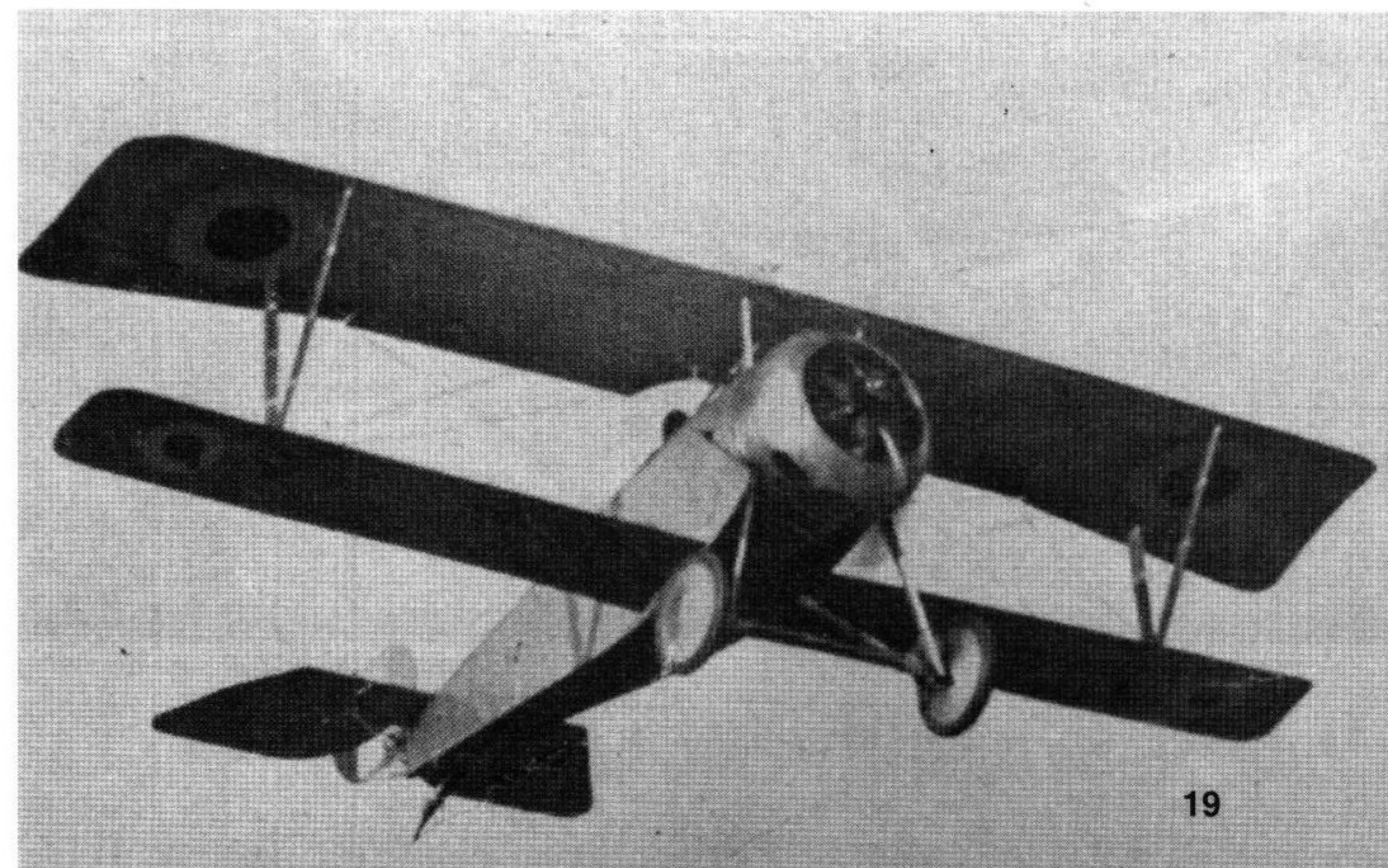
The first Nie.17s to reach the Western Front were those issued to Escadrille N.57 at the beginning of May 1916. The RFC accepted its first Nie.17s in mid-July, later a first order for 60 was placed, the type being used both in France and in Macedonia on the Balkan peninsula. Later the type was to equip the air arms of Belgium, Finland, Imperial Russia, Italy (which flew license built Macchi Nieuports) and the Netherlands. In the spring of 1918, the American Aviation School at Issoudon, which was entirely equipped with the type, purchased seventy-five additional aircraft for pilot instruction.

The United States was by this time no stranger to Nieuport designs and had already procured for use as trainers several hundred two seaters for instructional use, all derivatives of the Nie.12 reconnaissance biplane, including 173 81D-2s ('D' indicating "double command" or dual control aircraft), 147 80Es and 244 83E-2s (the latter having semi-dual controls in a "buddy" cockpit).

To solve the problem of the lower "halfwing" twisting under the stress of combat maneuvers or in a high speed dive that was associated with earlier Nieuports, the main spar was strengthened, and the general construction was made more robust and in some cases an additional member was added to the wing struts.



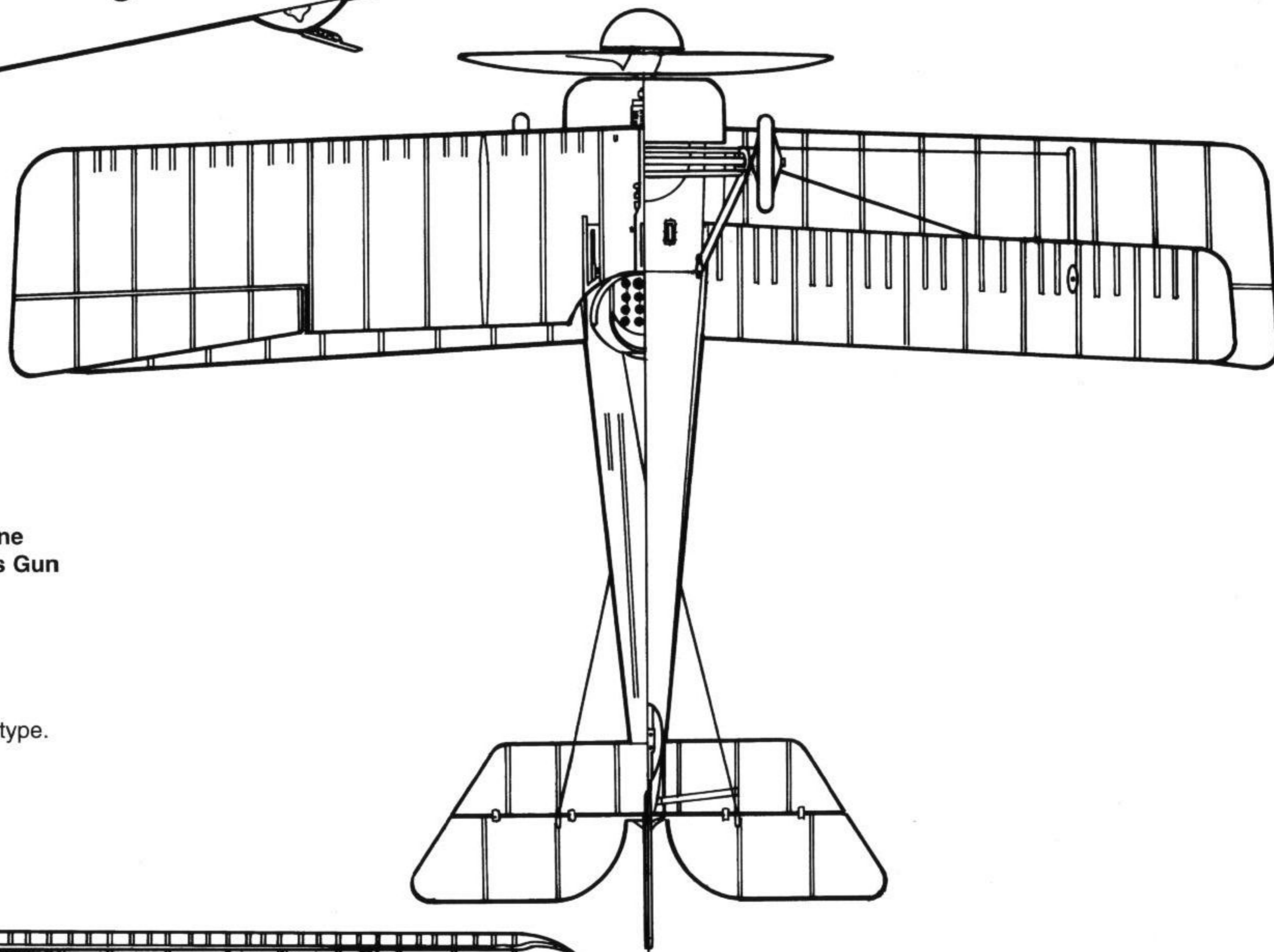
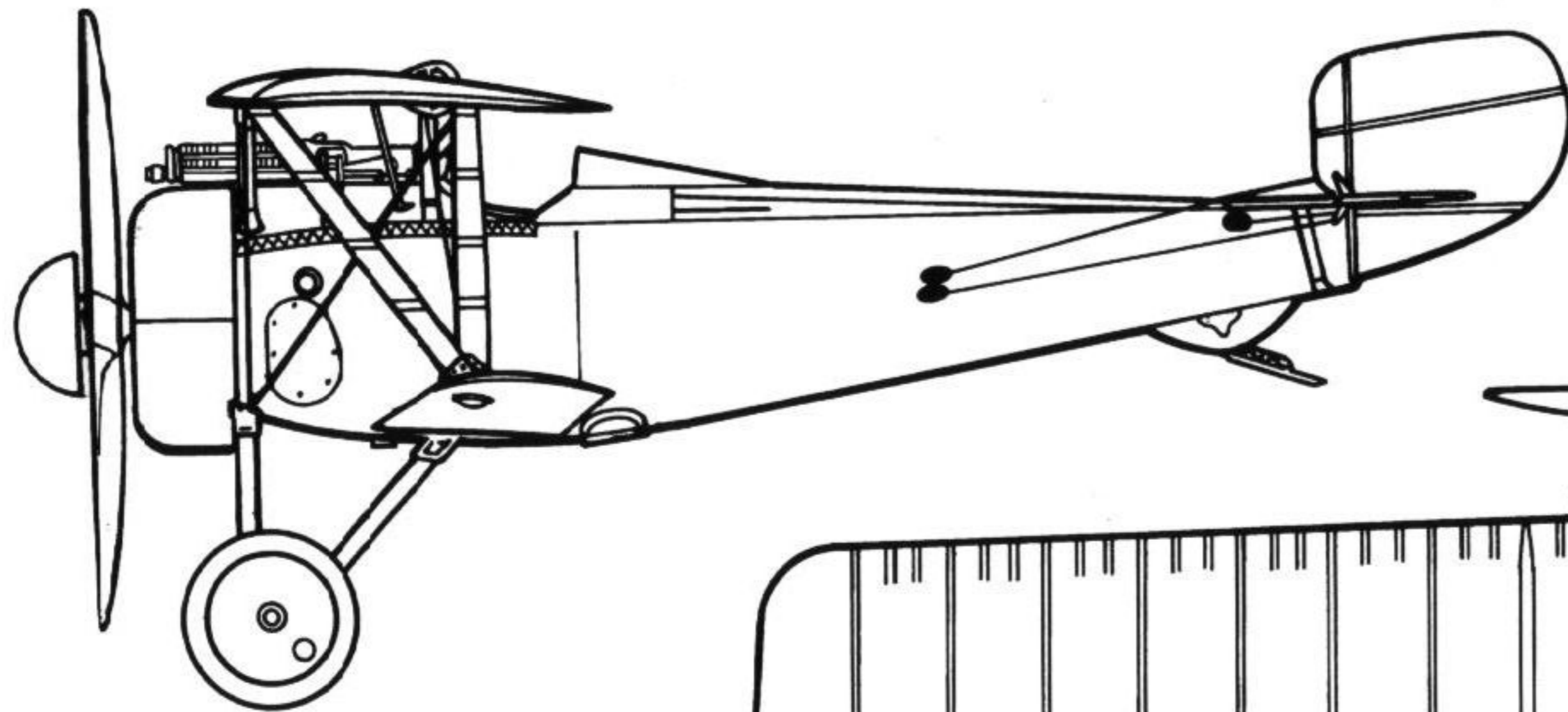
(Above) The French ace Rene Fonck, top scorer among French pilots stands by an Nie.17 of Escadrille N.3 known as Les Cigogenes the insignia of which was a black stork with red legs and yellow beak. *Albert Deullin*



(Right) An Nie.17, one of the single seat trainers used by a United States' flying training school in France, hence the retention of the tricolor roundels.



A French Nie.17 numbered N1539 with a fuselage mounted Vickers gun and an experimental venturi tube on the port wing struts.

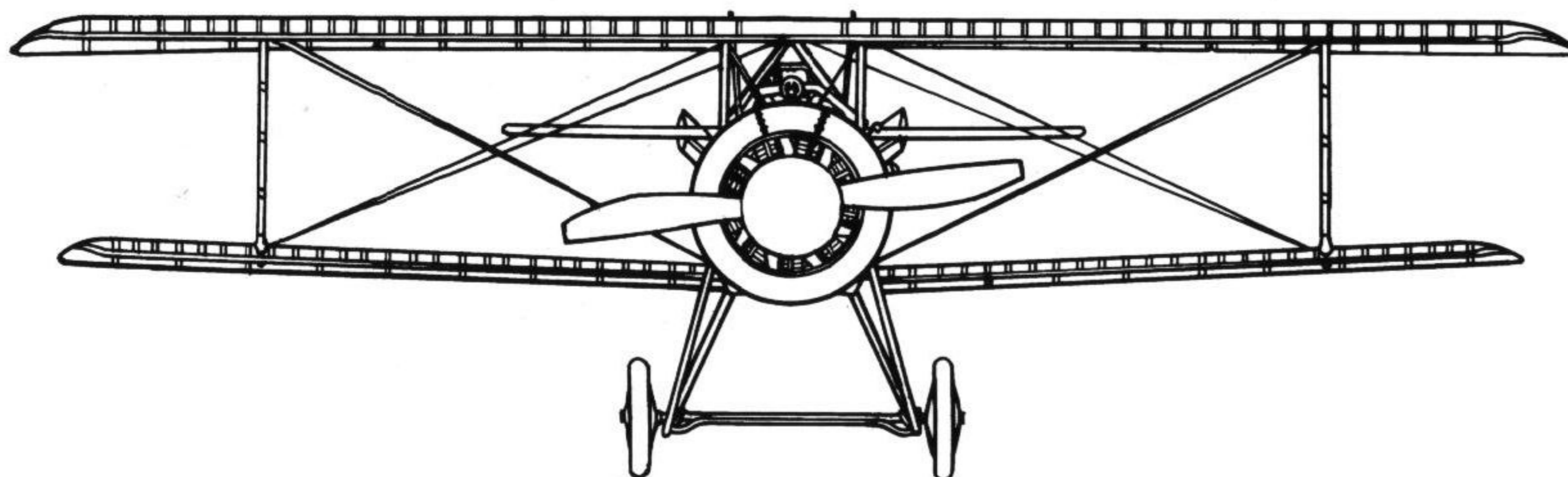


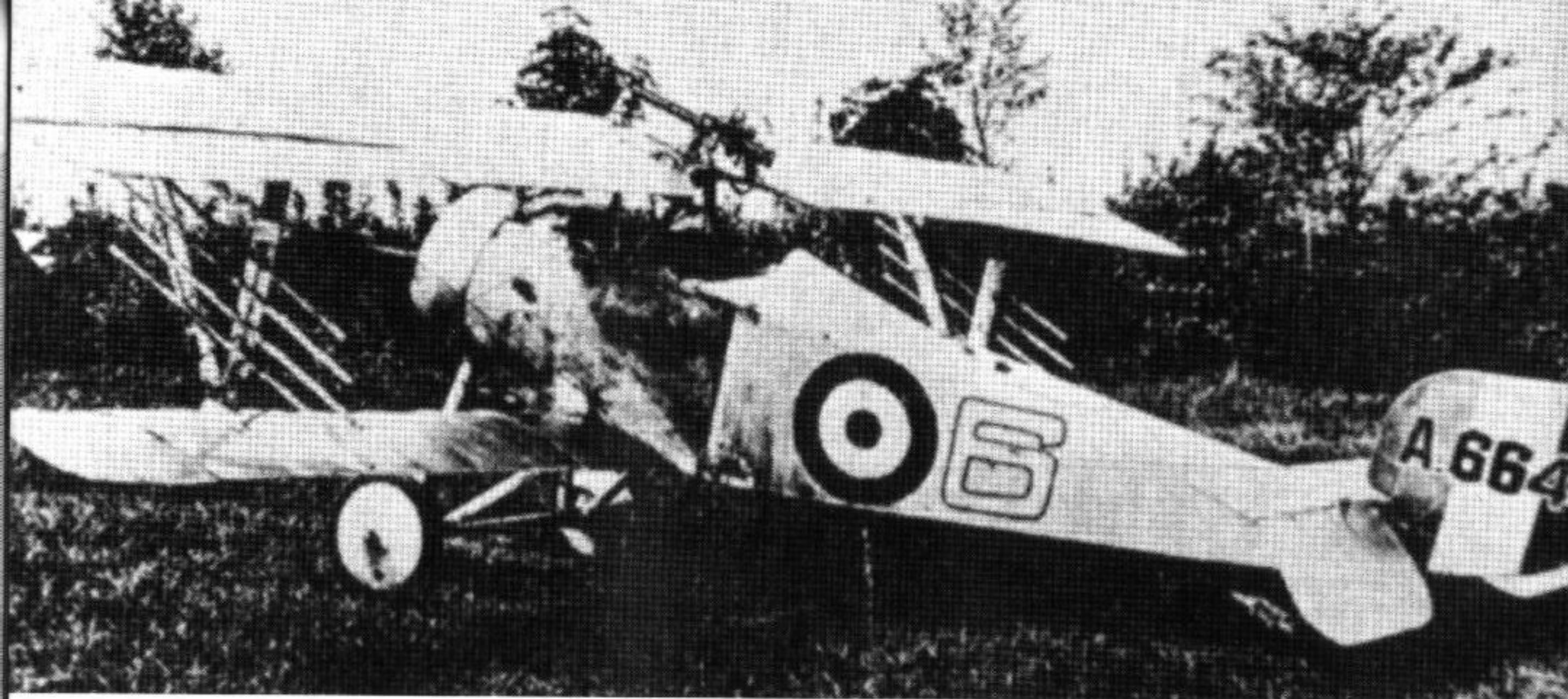
Nieuport 17C.1

Specifications

Wingspan	26 ft 9.25 inches (8.16m)
Length	19 ft .5 inches (5.8m)
Height	7 ft 10.5 inches (2.4m)
Empty Weight	827 lbs
Maximum Weight	1,235 lbs (560 kg)
Powerplant	One 110hp Le Rhone 9J Rotary Engine
Armament	One .303 fixed Synchronised Vickers Gun
Speed	103.8 mph (167 kph)
Service Ceiling	17,384 feet (5,300m)
Endurance	1.5 hrs
Crew	One

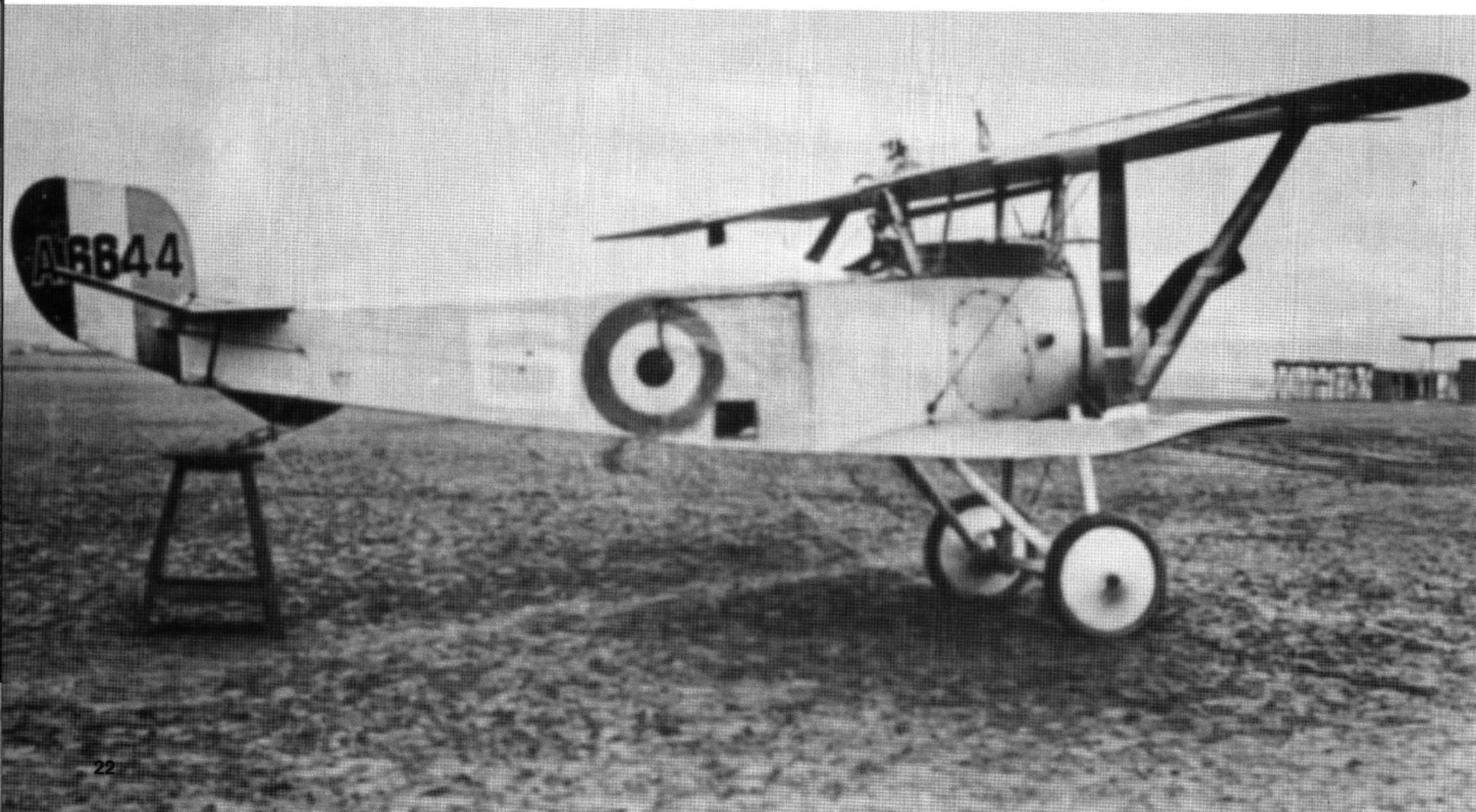
The *cone de penetration* was carried by only a few Nieuports of this type.

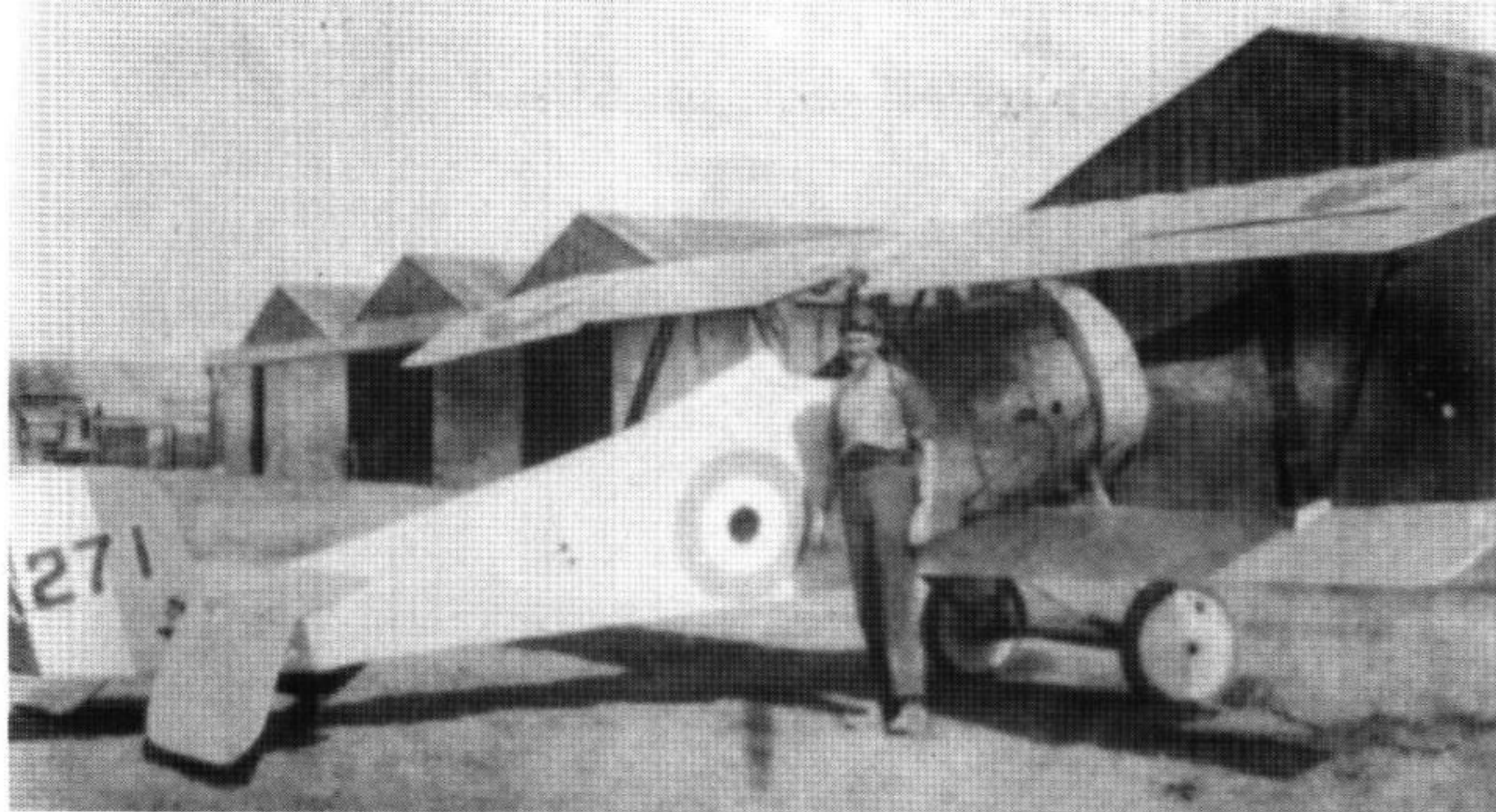




(Left) On 18 March 1917, three Nie.17s of No.1 Squadron RFC took off from Clairmarais to attack observation balloons, N6644 flown by 2/Lt T.H. Lines, B1638 piloted by Lt. L Drummond and a third piloted by 2/Lt M.G. Cole. All were brought down, 2/Lt Lines, the pilot of N6644 being taken prisoner.

(Below) The opposite side of N6644 after its capture showing slight marking differences when compared with the other side including a different style of rudder markings and the '6' without an outline. N6644 was equipped for photographic work as evidenced by the rectangular aperture for a camera lens just forward of the roundel





Seen at Suez in 1917, A271 (N2204) served with Nos.29 and 60 Squadrons, RFC. It had been dispatched to the Middle East on 7 September of the same year. Color is believed to be doped aluminum.

SWISS NIEUPOINTS

A number of Nieuport 17cls from the American Aviation School at Issoudon were later sold to Switzerland, but most of the Nieuports acquired by Switzerland were Nie.23c1s and Nie.28c1s carrying the numbers below and at right:

Type	Service Number
Nie.23c1	Nos. 601-05 Acquired in June 1917 and remaining in service until 1921 when the design was withdrawn following the results of trials involving No. 601 which was tested to destruction.

The insignia of Escadrille N48, the head of a crowing cock can just barely be seen on the fuselage side of this Nie.17 number 1930.



Three Nie.17s believed to belong to No.6 Squadron, RNAS lined up in the snow in front of a Bessoneau canvas hangar. The racks for ammunition drums on the fuselage just below the cockpit on these Nie.17s are unusual.

Type	Service Number
Nie.23c1	No. 607 Acquired from the United States in 1913 after it had been force landed at Solothurn with engine trouble.
Nie.28c1	Nos. 635-98 Fourteen unarmed machines acquired from French surplus stocks in 1923 and kept in use until 1930. No. 688 is preserved in Lucerne.

A mixture of Nie.11s and 17s at an American Expeditionary Force training unit in France during 1918. In the foreground can be seen numbers 719, 380 and 821.

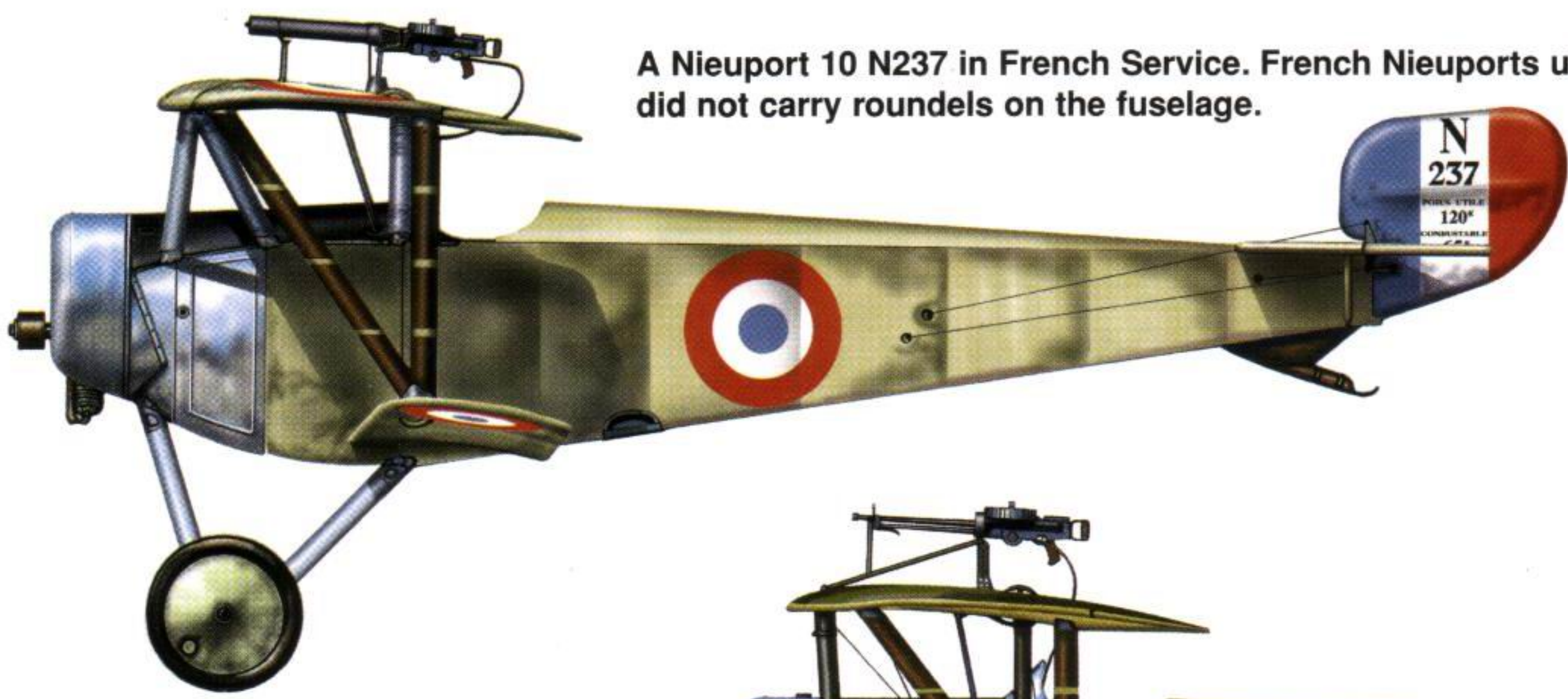




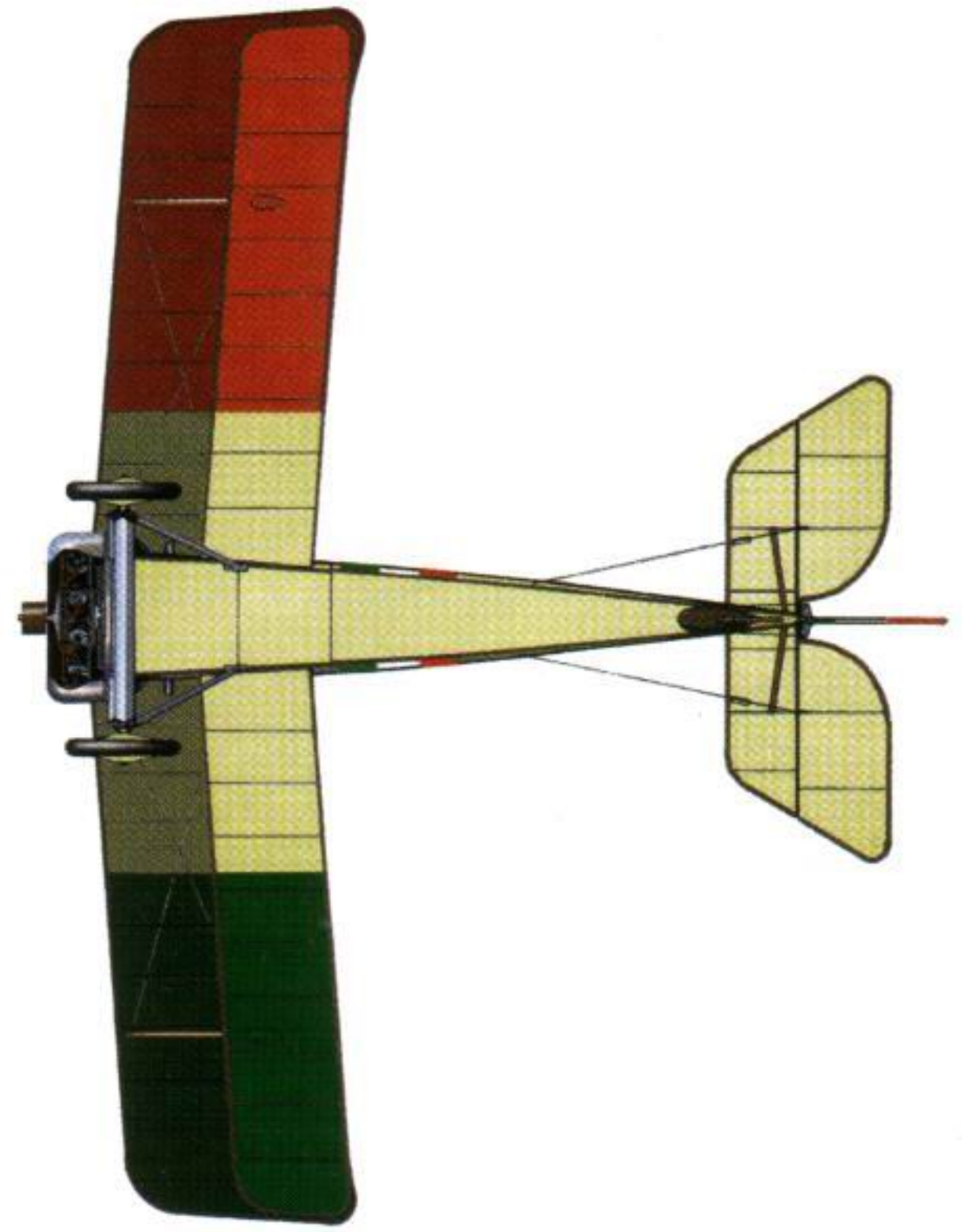
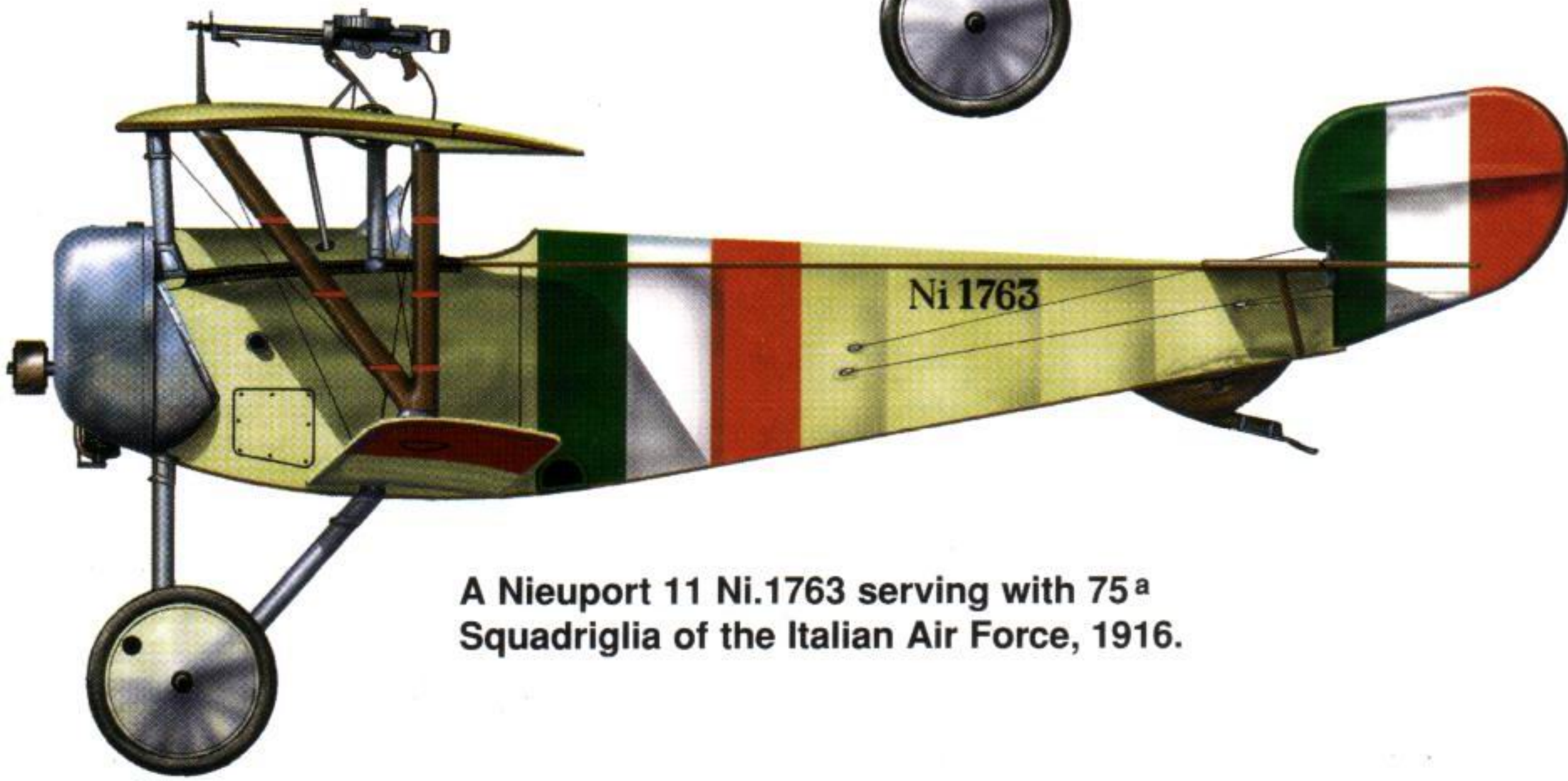
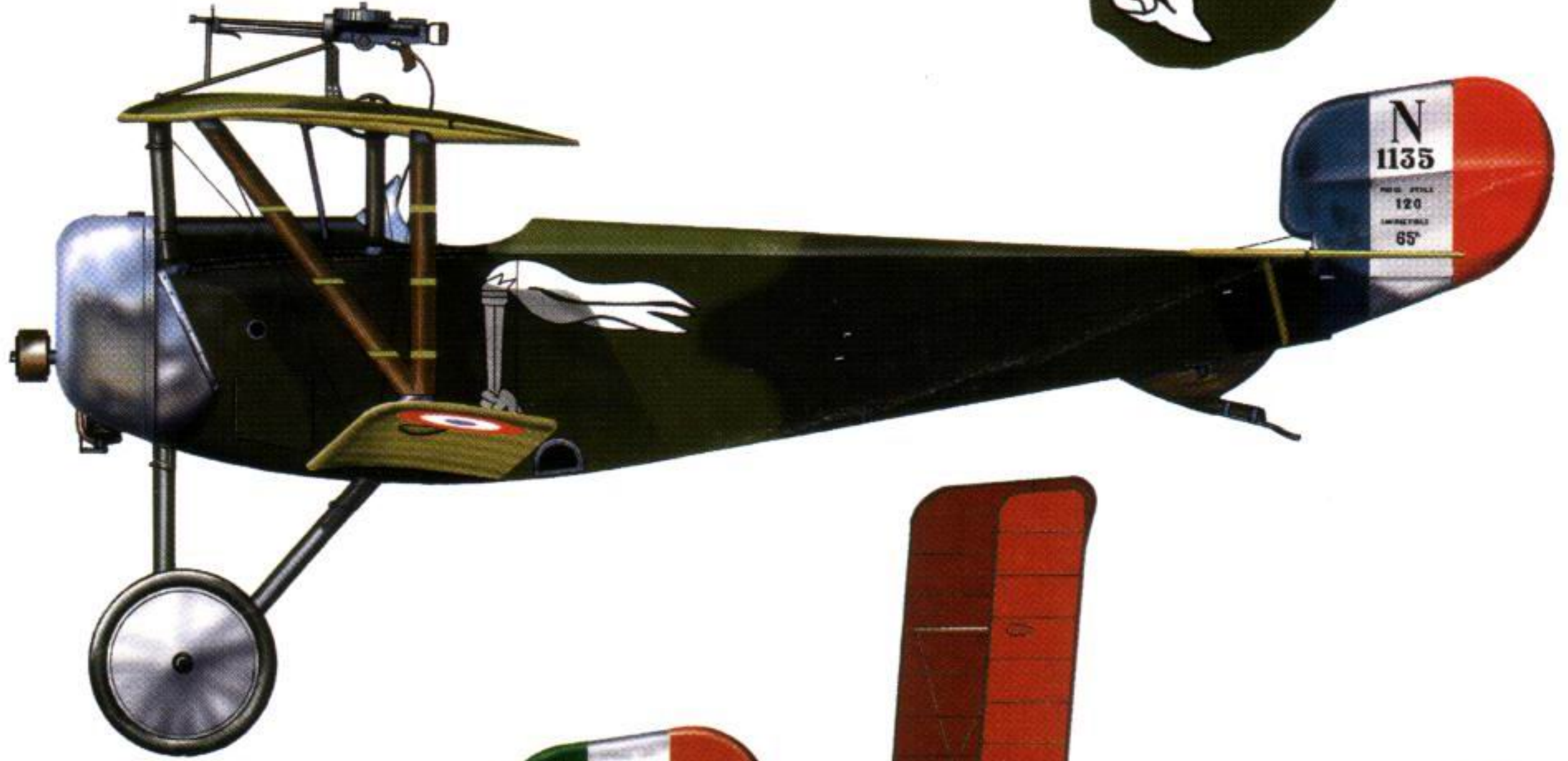
N2263 in French service was unusual by being armed with twin Vickers machine guns on the forward fuselage and twin Lewis guns on the upper wing center section. Belonging to Escadrille N68, it was one of the very few multi-gun Nieuports. A *cone de penetration* is carried on the propeller hub. The engine is believed to be a 130-hp Clerget.

This French Nie.17, numbered 1805 on the rudder, has been fitted with transparent panels in the upper wing roots above the single Vickers gun.

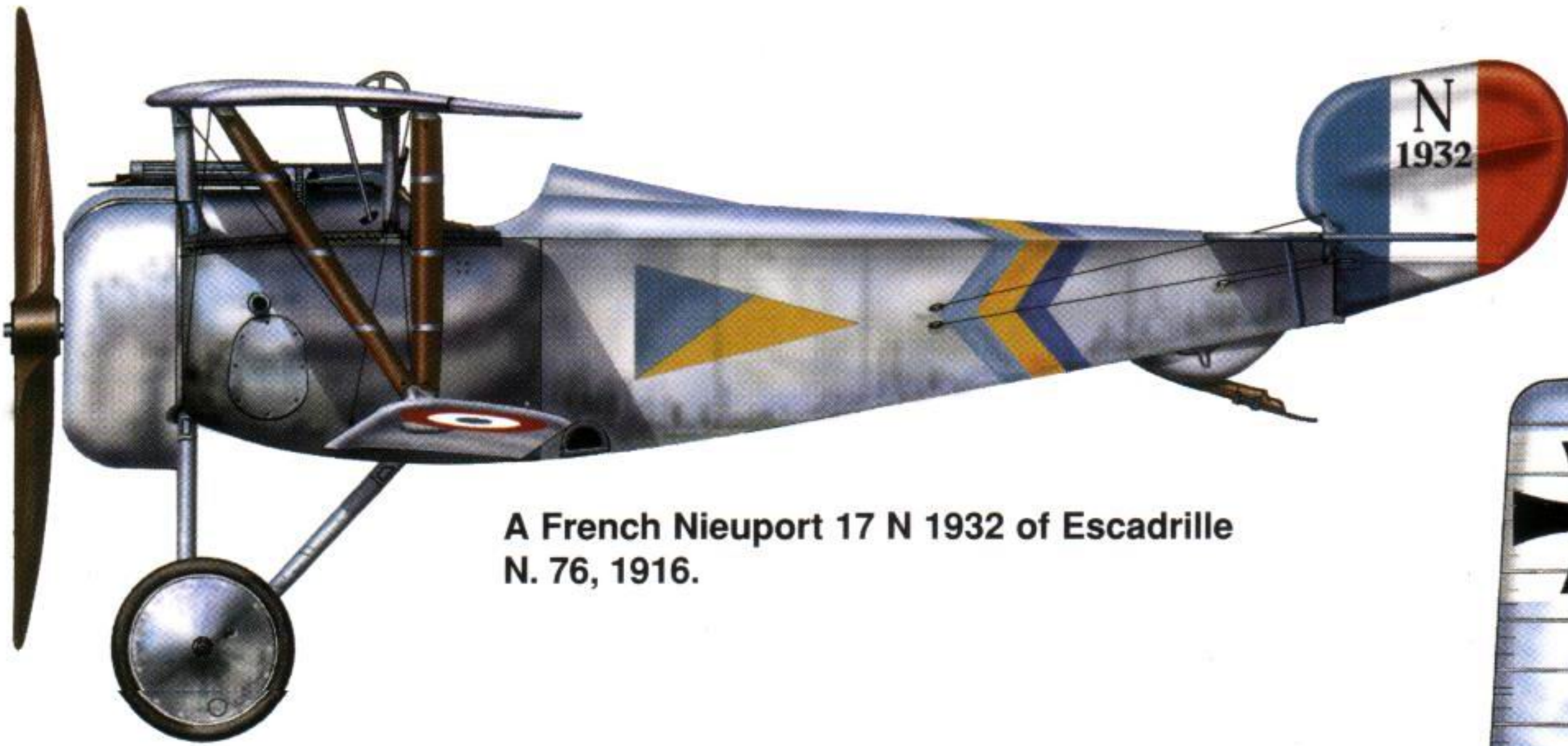
A Nieuport 10 N237 in French Service. French Nieuports usually did not carry roundels on the fuselage.



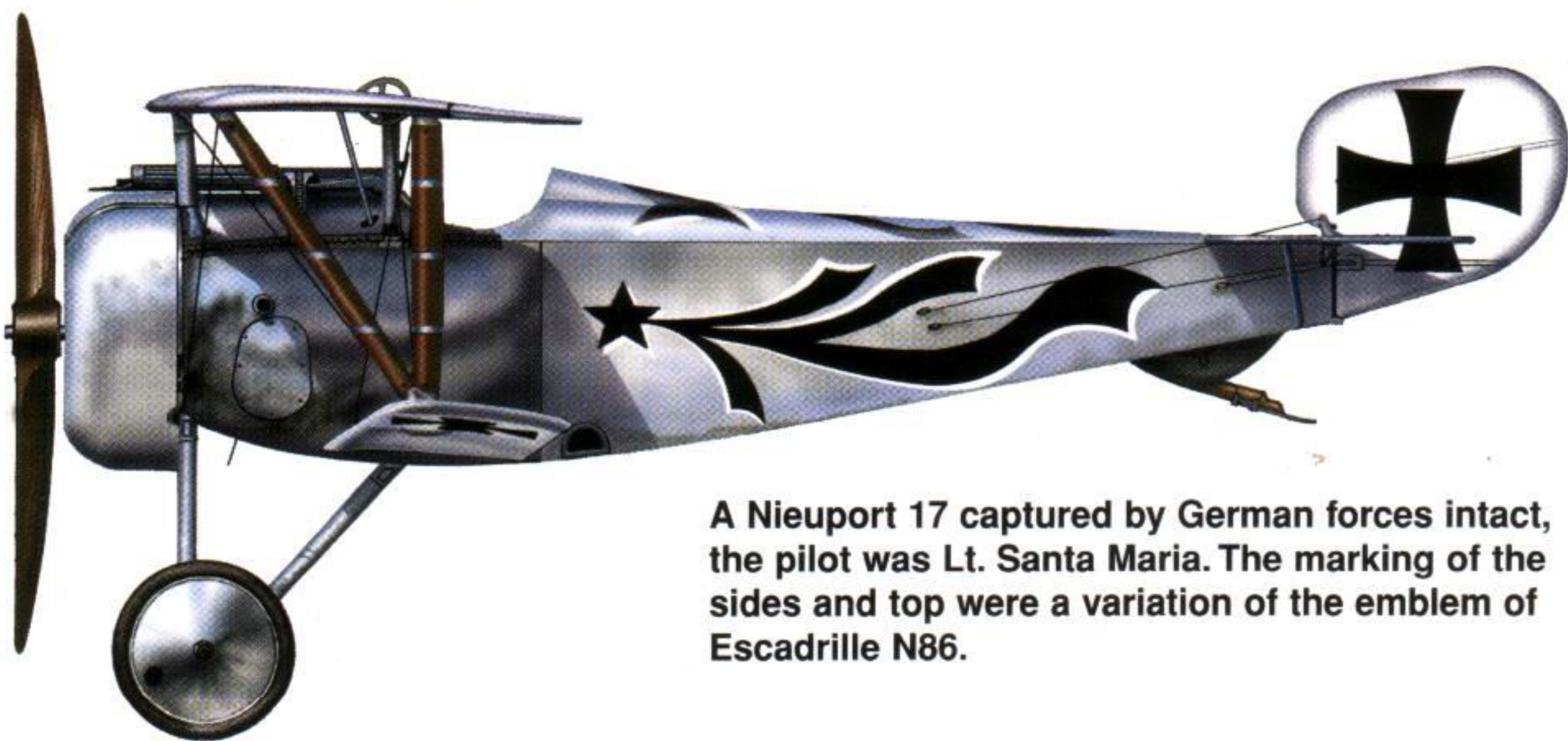
N1135 was a Nie 11 serving with Escadrille N. 26. This aircraft was lost on July 3, 1916.



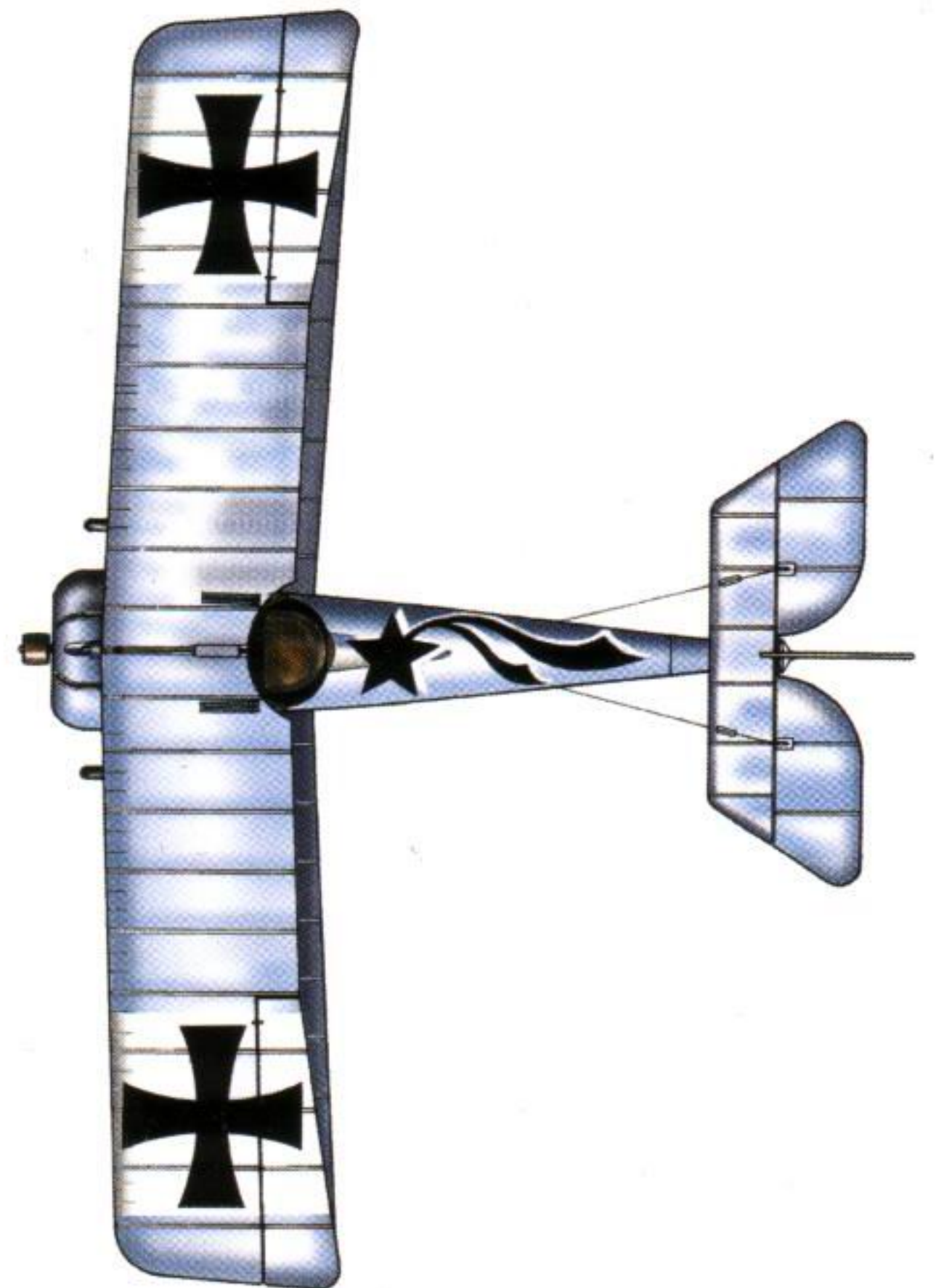
A Nieuport 11 Ni.1763 serving with 75^a Squadriglia of the Italian Air Force, 1916.



A French Nieuport 17 N 1932 of Escadrille N. 76, 1916.

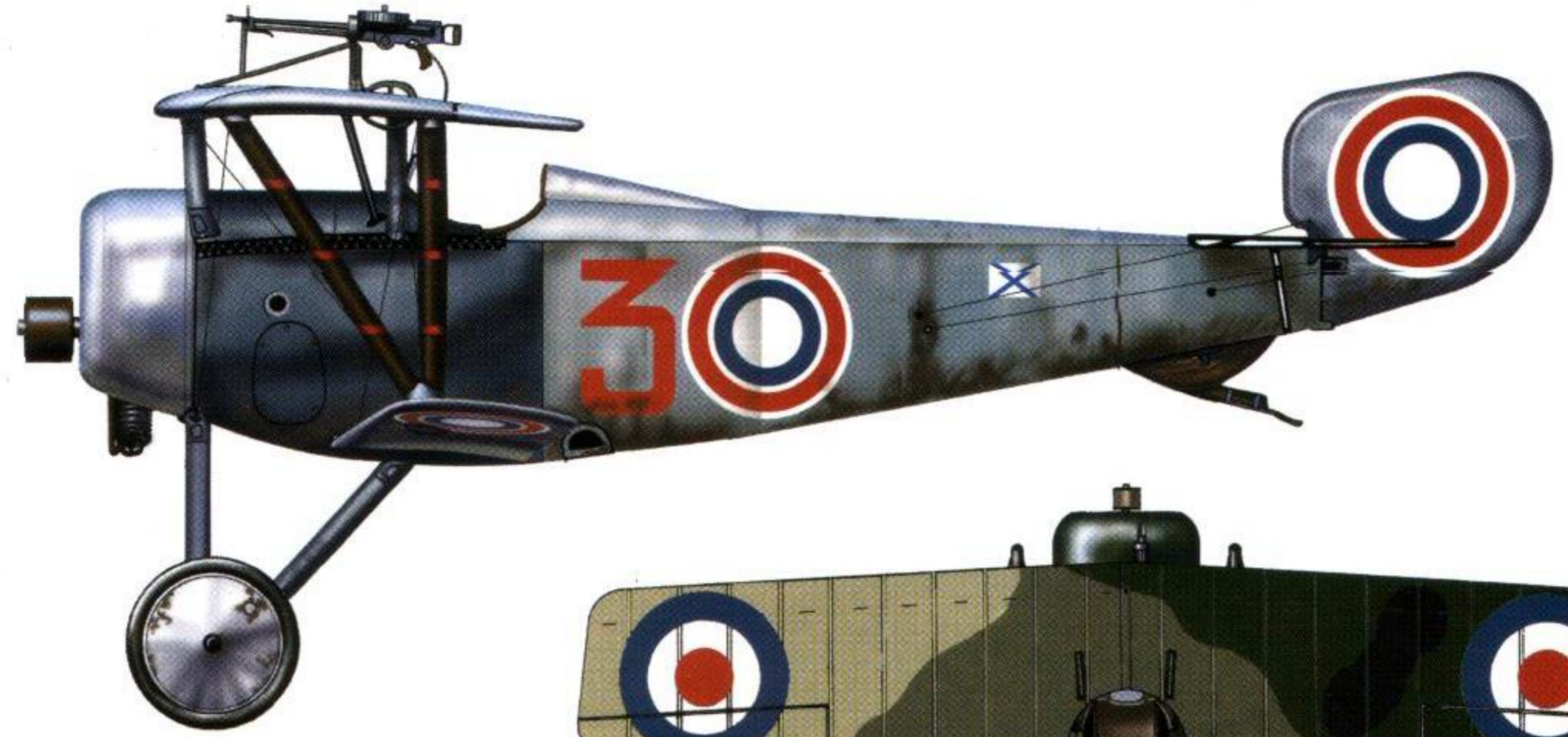


A Nieuport 17 captured by German forces intact, the pilot was Lt. Santa Maria. The marking of the sides and top were a variation of the emblem of Escadrille N86.

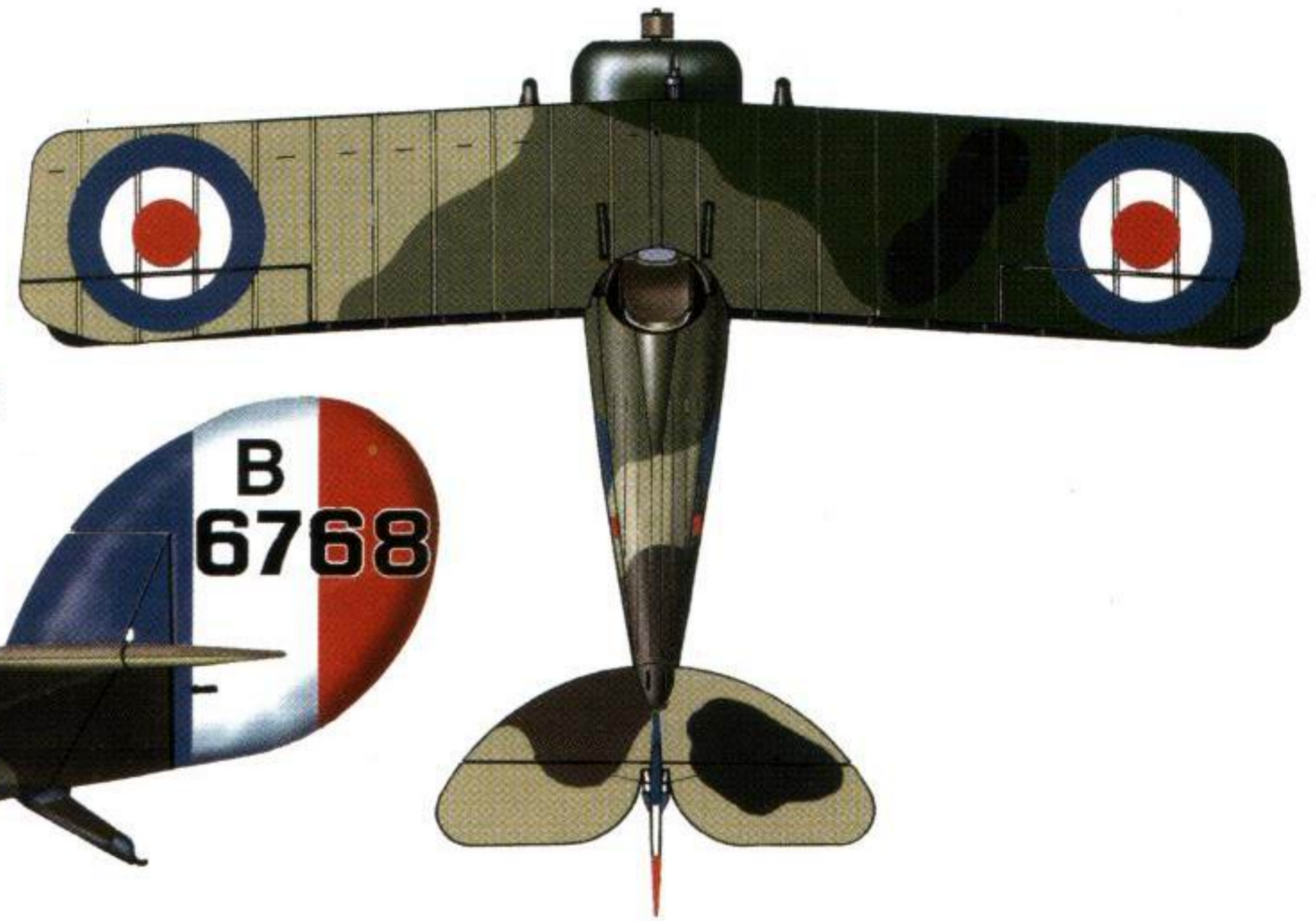




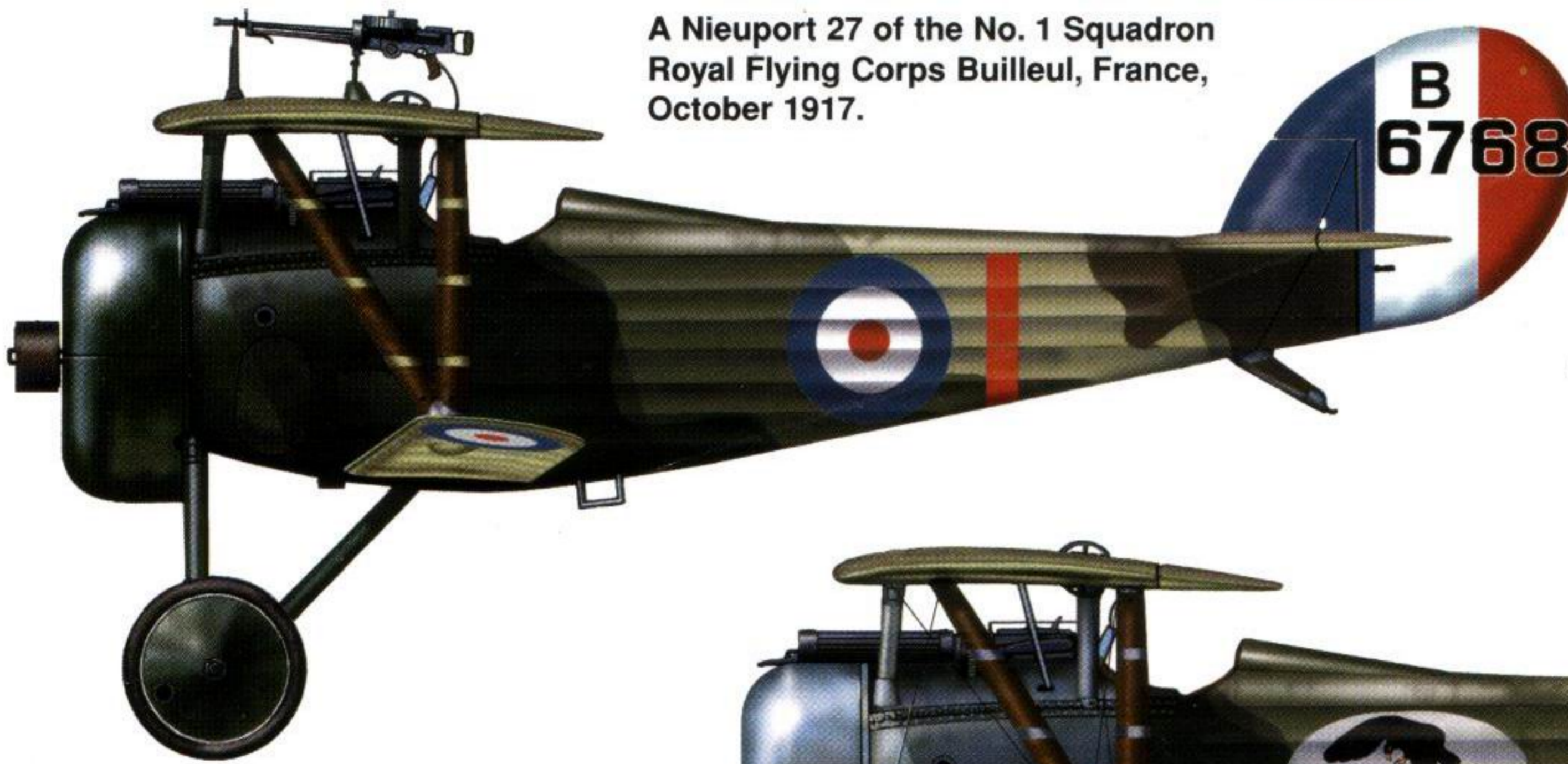
This Nieuport 17 bis, flown by Flt. Lt. F.P. Reeves, was shot down on June 6, 1917. He served with No. 6 (Naval) Squadron.



A Duks built Nieuport 21 of the Russian Naval Air Station on Ösel Island, flown by Ensign Vsevolod Leonidovich Yakovlev, August, 1917. The small flag on the fuselage is the Russian naval ensign.



A Nieuport 27 of the No. 1 Squadron Royal Flying Corps Bailleul, France, October 1917.

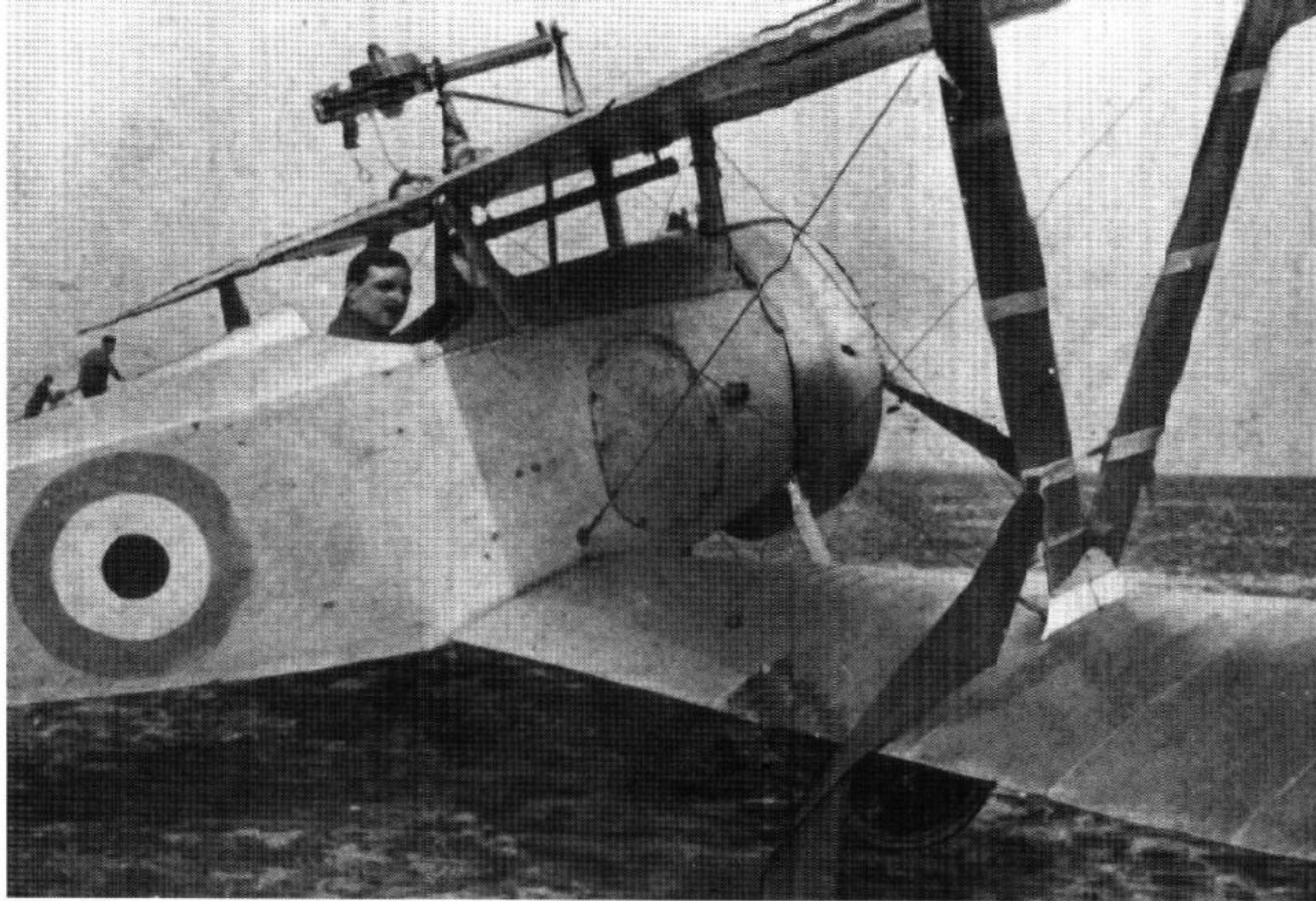


A Nieuport 24 flown by Second Lieutenant William Hérison, an 11 victory Ace with Escadrille N. 75.



A Nieuport 28 of the AEF 95th Pursuit Squadron, 1918.



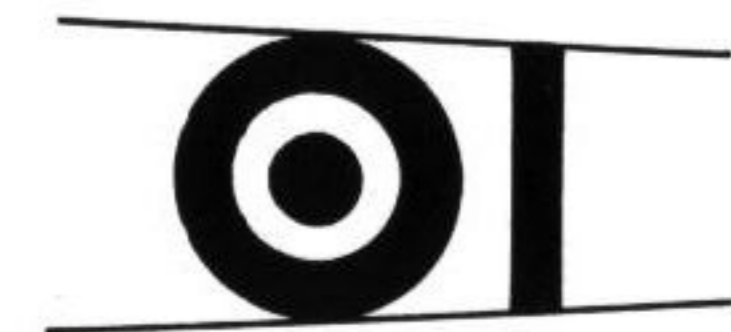


An Nie.17 believed to be of No.1 Squadron RFC, the first RFC unit to be fully equipped with the type, January 1917. With its Lewis gun on a mounting resembling those found on French examples, this aircraft carries a prominent Aldis sight.

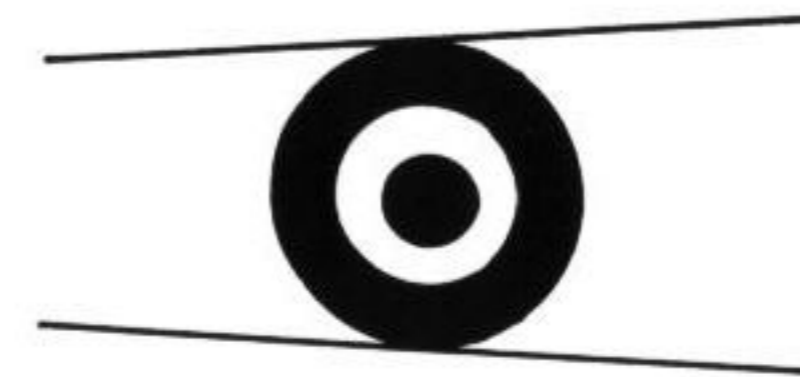
British Nieuport Markings



24 inch red bar marking on No 29 Squadron Nieuport 17 — March 1917 to April 1918.



No 1 Squadron Nieuport 17, March 1916 to April 1918 and Nieuport 27, 1917 to March 1918. Red and white roundels on a silver ground; later camouflaged in French manner. Bar is black, but some sources suggest red.



Roundel of No 60 Squadron on Nieuport 13s and 17s from August 1916 to July 1917.



No 40 Squadron Nieuport 17s from March to October 1917 — White bars framed in black and letter in red. Later marking, December 1917 to March 1918 had bar ahead and behind roundel.

Carrying the wide red band of No.29 Squadron RFC, A6684 has a thin white rim on its fuselage national markings. The outside wheel discs appear to be red with a central silver disc. This machine was captured by the Germans during the Battle of Arras in April-May 1917 and has an unusual type of wing mounted pitot head.





A Russian Nie.17 with a personal insignia of a devil astride a goose that has been painted over a nearly obscured roundel. The roundel is likely a Czarist roundel and would strongly suggest that this is a machine captured by Soviet revolutionary forces, since use of captured aircraft in action was common.



An Nie.17 under repair at the American Aviation School on Field No.2, Isseudon in France during May 1918. The diagonal girder to the right supports a Bessoneau canvas hangar.

This Nie.17 numbered N2038 belonging to Escadrille N15 was named DEDETTE III and carried an elaborate helmet and plume in front of the numeral 7.



The triangular fanion on the fuselage of N1932 is the light blue and gold emblem of Escadrille N76. The colors were also used for the zig-zag on the rear fuselage. A personal marking which is possibly medium blue aft, extends over the decking.

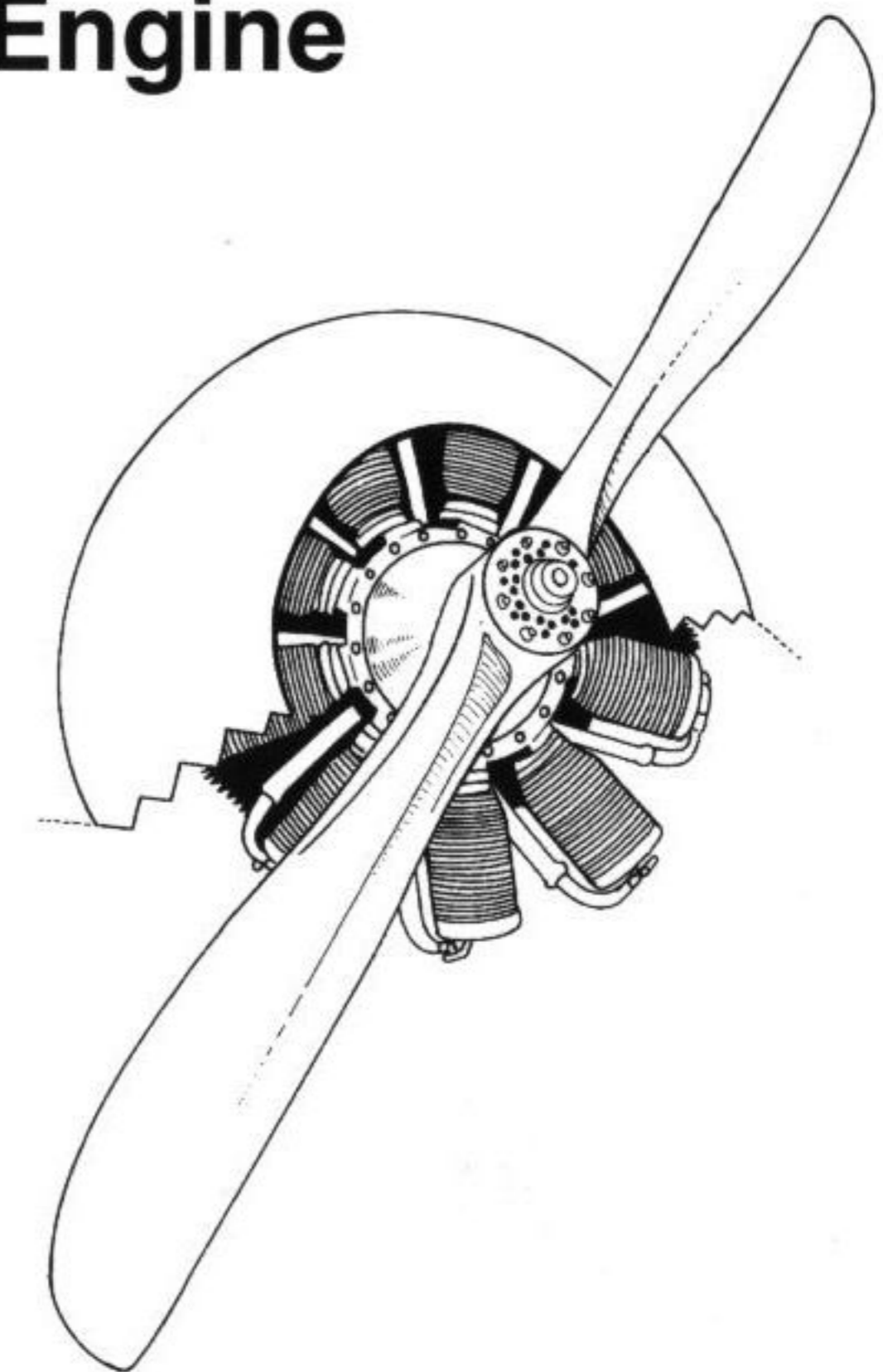
A well-known picture of Canadian ace Billy Bishop with his B1566. The censor has obliterated the number on the rudder and a clumsy attempt has been made to paint out the shed in the background, destroying the true shape of the rudder.



An Nie.17 of the air arm of Czar Nicholas II's forces. Its national colors are even carried on the tail unit.



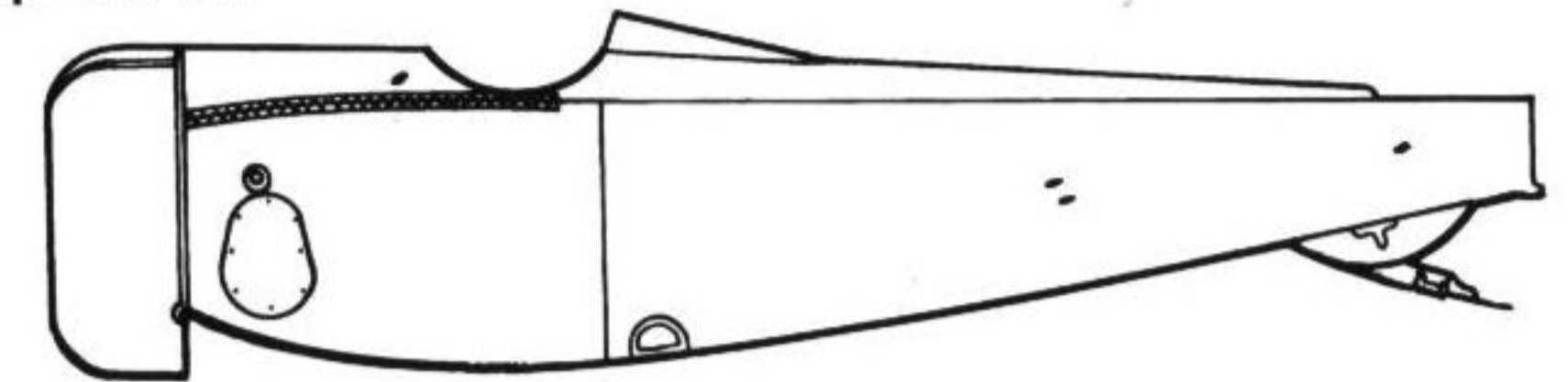
110 hp LeRhône Engine



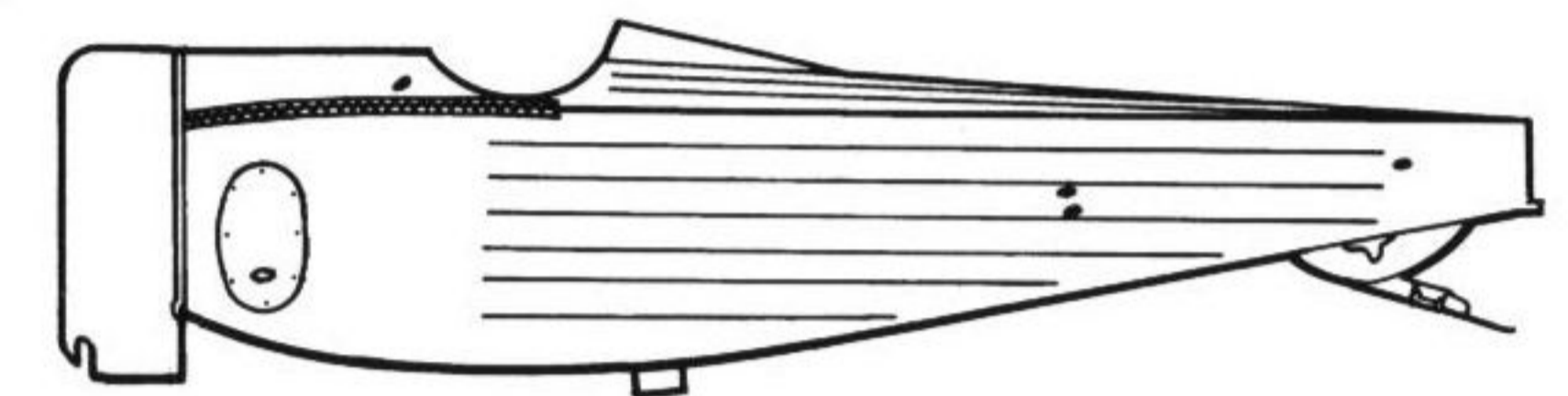


The prefix of the aircraft number N2474 has been omitted from its application to the fuselage side under the leading edge of the tailplane of this French machine. TYPE 17 is in small characters below the aircraft number. In the center of the white rudder stripe is "12k" which is part of the weight table in kilograms; above are the words POIDS UTILE (USEFUL LOAD).

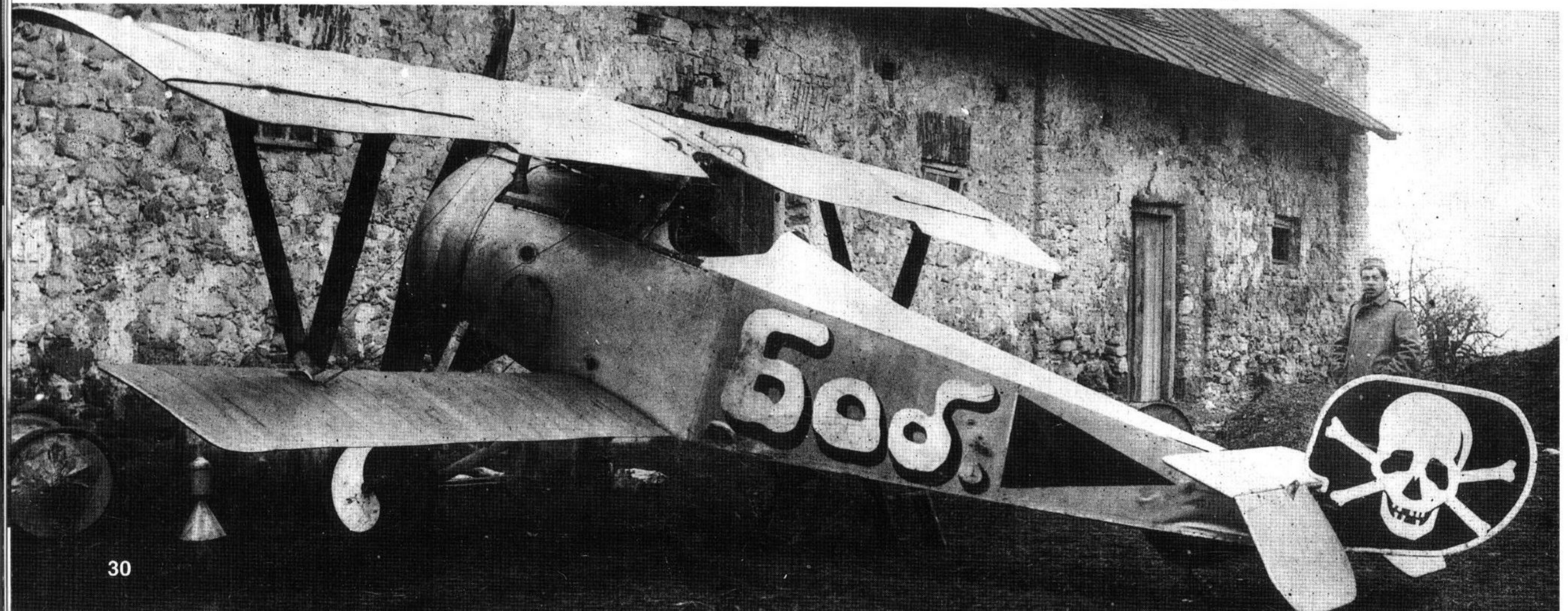
Nieuport 17

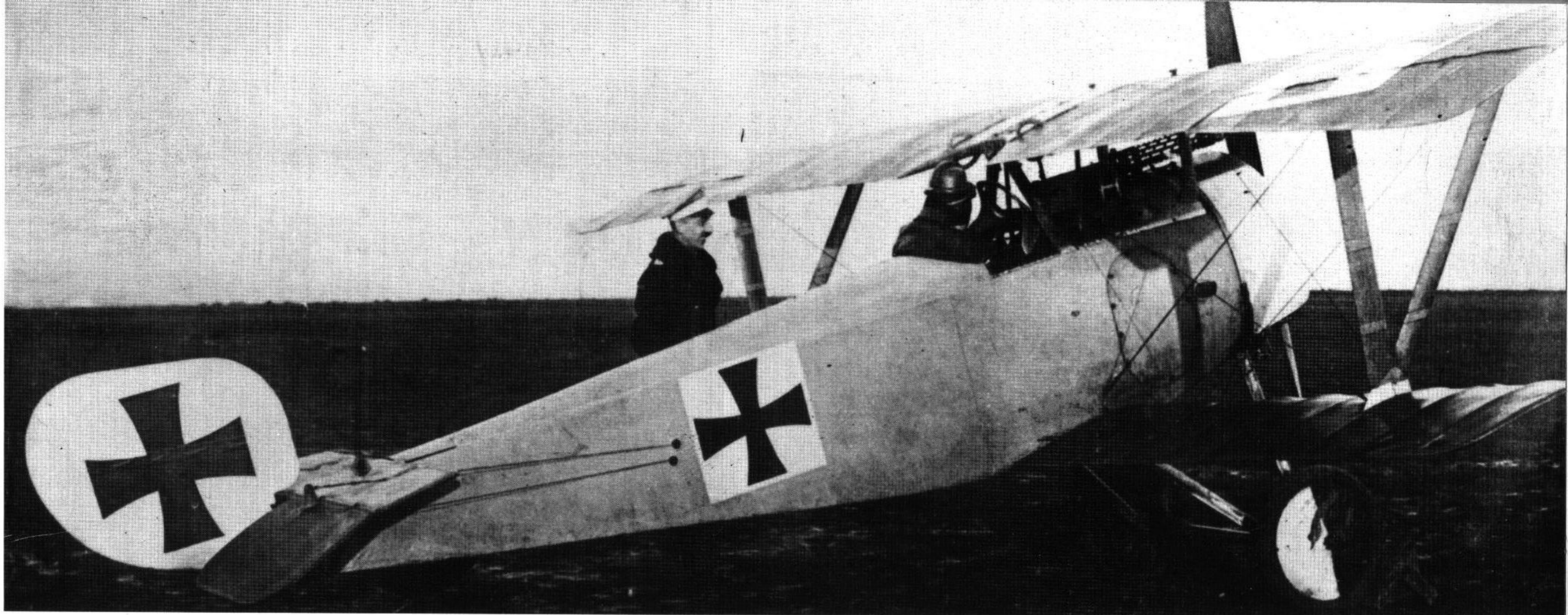


Nieuport 17Bis

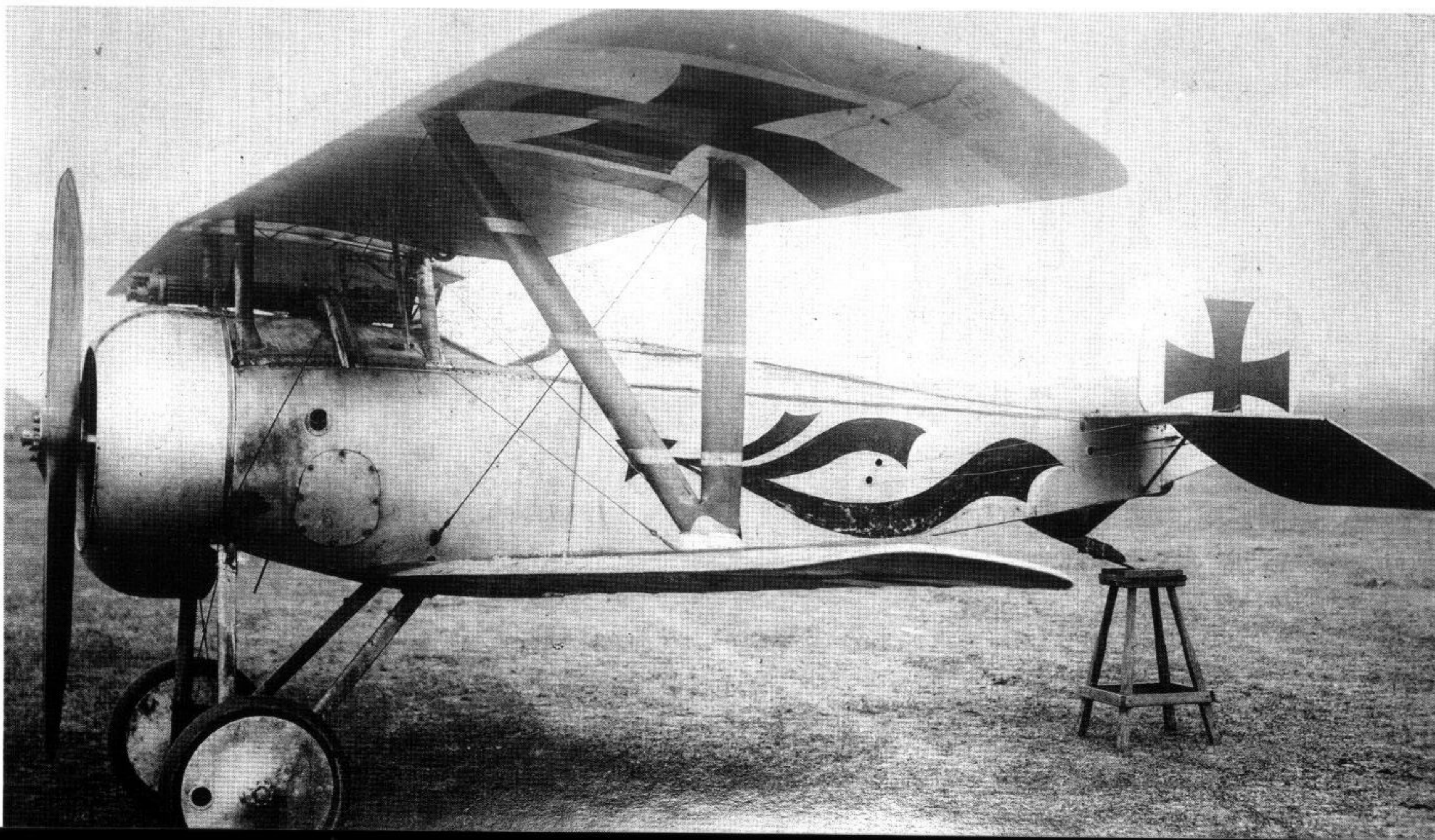


An Nie.17 of No.19 (Death or Glory) Squadron of the Imperial Russian Air service in 1917. Rudder markings are black and white, while the fuselage pennant has three black stripes and two in fawn — the colors of the Order of St. George.





(Above) A captured French Nie.17, with its national markings over painted with crosses, is about to be test flown by a German pilot. The wheel covers, presumably the originals, are equally divided into either red or black and white.



(Below) Another captured Nie.17, this time a former British aircraft. The earlier pilot's personal insignia on the side of the aircraft has survived. This aircraft has had transparent panels installed in the center section of the upper wing.



Operated by Czarist Russia while wearing French colors, this machine was captured by the Germans. Its identity may have been N3389.



Built in France to a Russian order, N1810 awaits transport east. National colors on the rudder from front to rear are white, blue and red.

An Italian machine marked Ni 3817; the location of the number and their shaded presentation were features of Macchi built Nieuports. Roundel proportions differ from those of France or Britain.



Nieuport 17bis

This machine was the result of the manufacturer's policy of continuous development and improvement which was begun during the second half of 1916. The 110-hp Le Rhone 9J rotary engine was replaced by a 130-hp Clerget 9B. Side fairings were installed, running the length of the fuselage sides. Improved armament was planned to be a cowl installed synchronized Vickers gun with a Lewis gun mounted above the upper wing.

The Nieuport 17bis was tested by none other than Charles Nungesser, with his subsequent report stating that he was "very enthusiastic" about both its performance and armament. And although he afterwards went on to fly an operational example (N1895), he is supposed to have declared a preference for the SPAD, despite its reputedly "heavy" controls. The result was that the Nie.17bis was not ordered in quantity for the French air service.



The prominent serial number (N5878) under the wings of this Nie.17bis indicate that the date of the photograph is probably after 1918 and probably of an RAF training unit, possibly at Old Sarum, Wiltshire, England.



Bearing the number N5875 on the rudder, this Nie.17bis was photographed at Chingford, England in January of 1918. The aircraft had been sent to Chingford at the end of the previous August as part of the station defenses.



A view of a Nieuport scout with Nungesser in the cockpit.

This silver doped Nie.17bis (N3159) flew with Britain's No.6 (Naval) Squadron.



Nieuport Triplanes.

Investigations into the advantages of triplane single seaters by the Nieuport design office were all based on existing fuselages, the majority of the wing layouts having a sharp negative stagger to the top wing and equally severe angles to the pair below, all intended to improve the pilot's view.

An example, given the British serial number A5886 was sent to Orfordness testing station in the county of Suffolk for RFC evaluation. This was remembered by pilot Vernon Brown as being "extraordinarily unstable" especially longitudinally, "and heavy to land".

On 9 February 1917, another Nieuport Triplane intended for British evaluation was delivered to the RNAS at St. Omer, France. It was flown to Hounslow, England by Captain G N Gathergood. The journey took three hours despite this being a "more powerful" version, allegedly powered by a 120-hp Le Rhone rotary motor. No Nieuport triplanes entered quantity production.

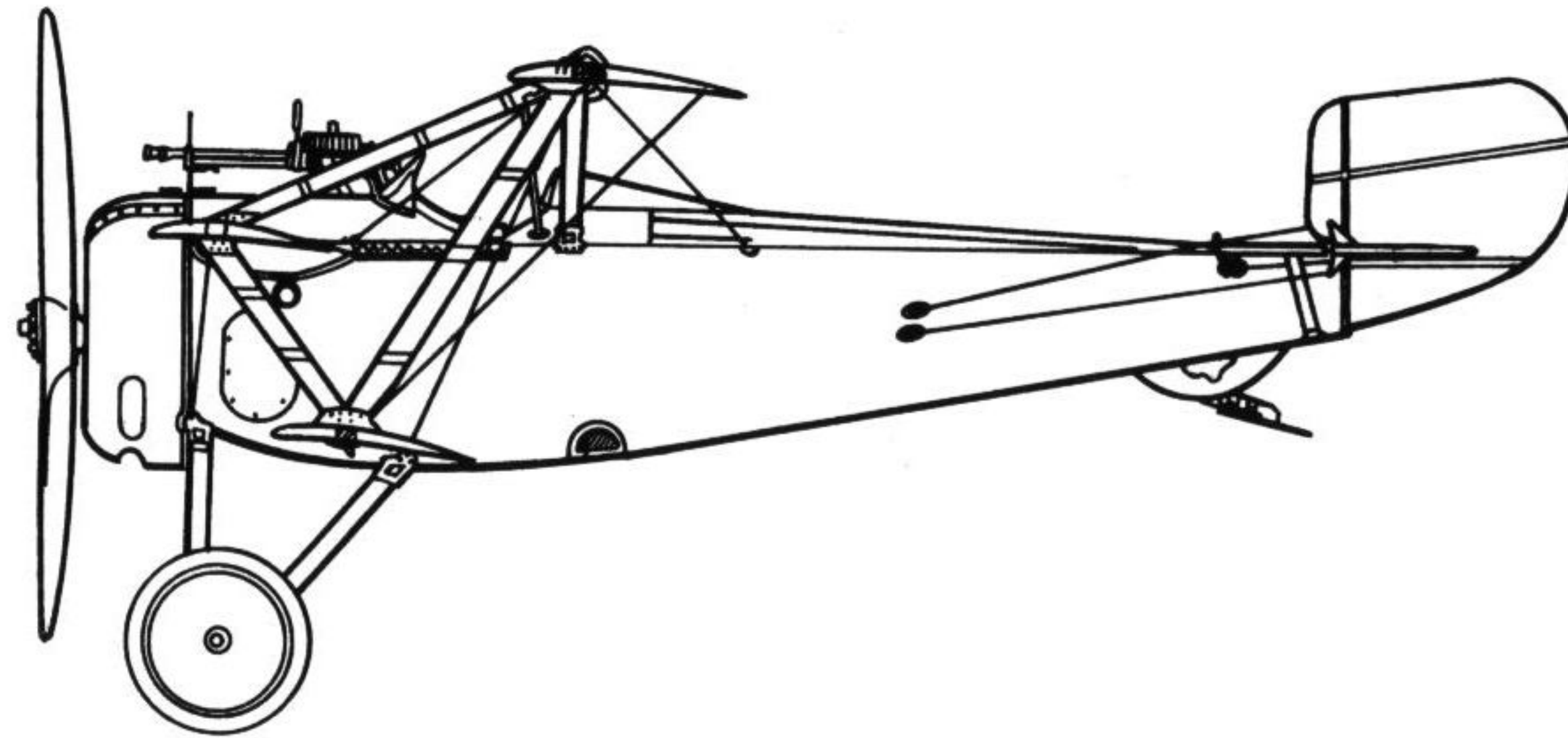
Carrying the French serial number N1388 on the tail, this triplane variant was based on an Nie.17 fuselage, and is armed with a single centrally mounted Vickers machine gun. The original photograph is dated 26 January 1917.



This triplane, based on an Nie.24bis fuselage, is powered by a 130-hp Clerget rotary motor. It carries the number N1946 on the rudder, and has the British serial number N521 on the fuselage. The number on the fuselage was probably assigned when the aircraft was allocated to No.11 (RNAS) Squadron. The number N522 was reserved for a similar machine, but the order was cancelled.

Numbered A'6686, this triplane made use of an Nie.17 airframe and was acquired by Britain for evaluation by the RNAS. It was powered by a 110-hp Le Rhone rotary engine.



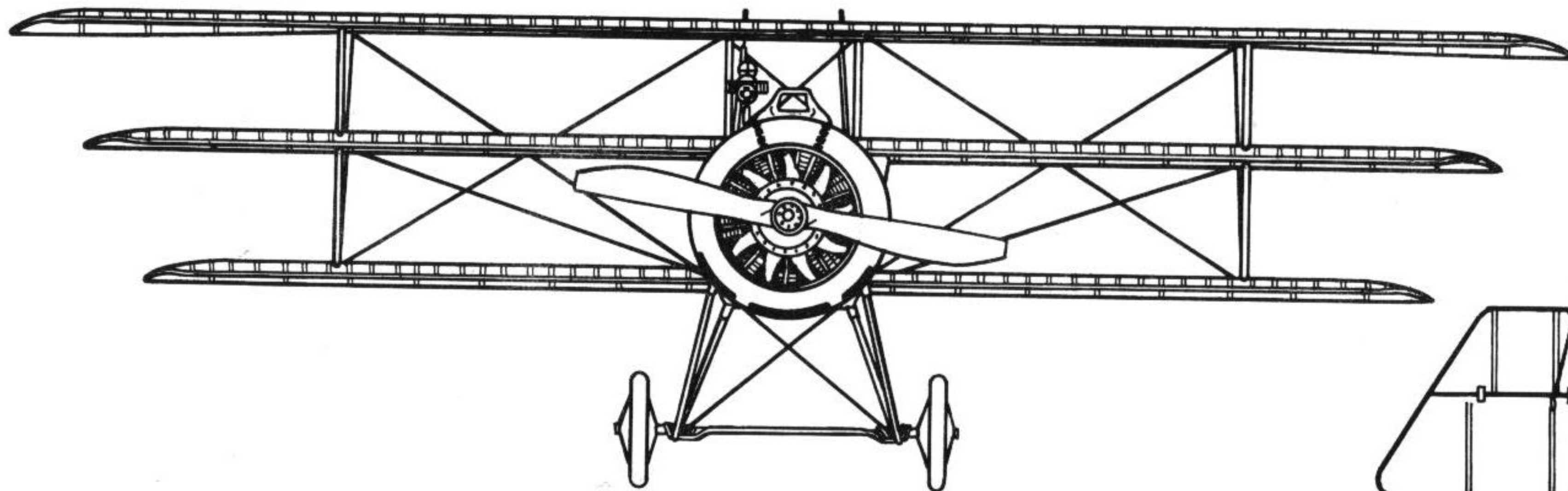
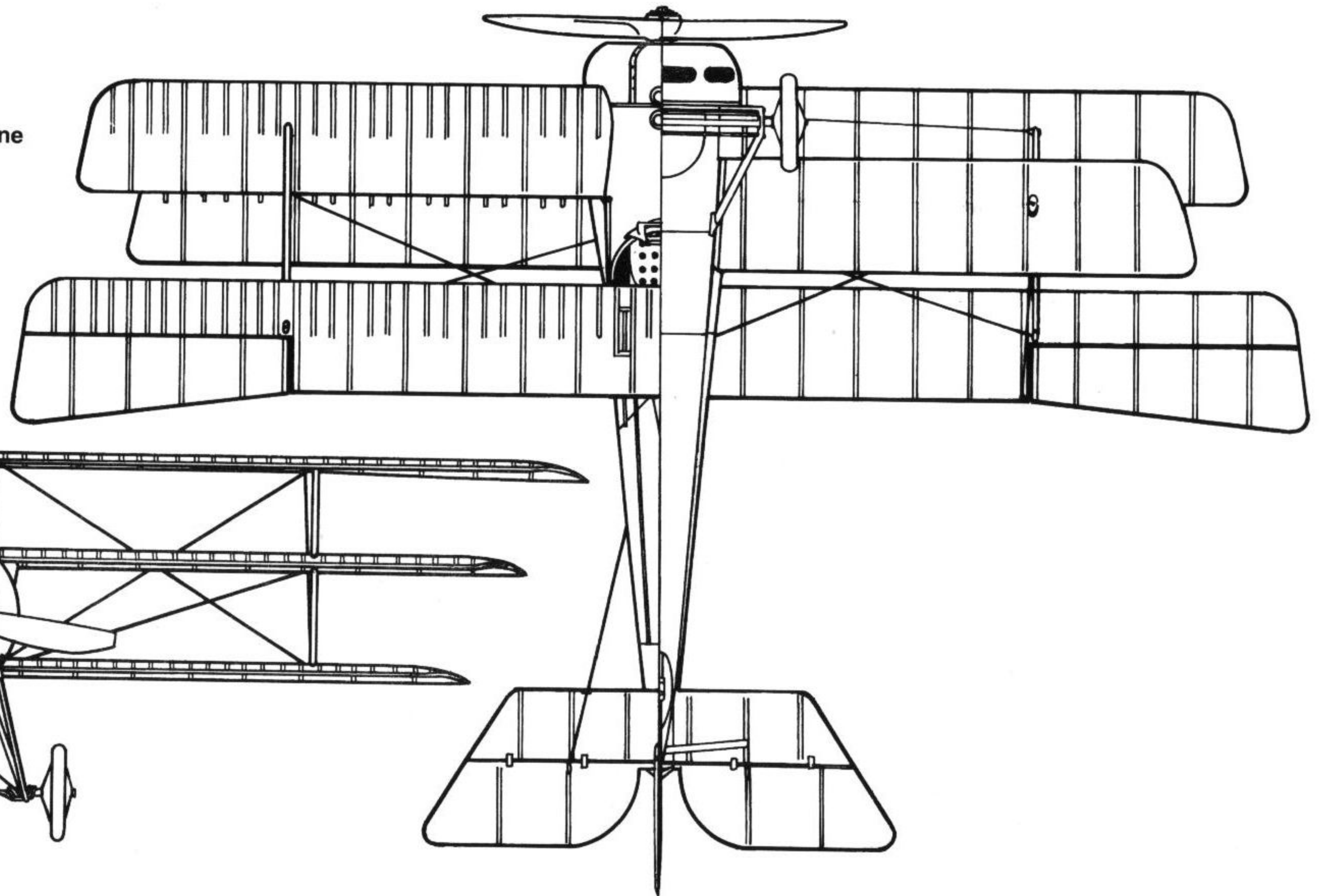


Nieuport Triplane (Nie. 17 Fuselage)

Specifications

Wingspan 26 ft 3.5 inches (7.97m)
 Length 19 ft 2.5 inches (5.88m)
 Height 7 ft 5 inches (2.27m)

Maximum Weight No Data Available
 Powerplant One 110 hp Le Rhone 9J Rotary Engine
 Armament One .303 Synchronised Vickers replacing original Hotchkiss gun
 Speed No Data Available
 Service Ceiling No Data Available
 Endurance No Data Available
 Crew One



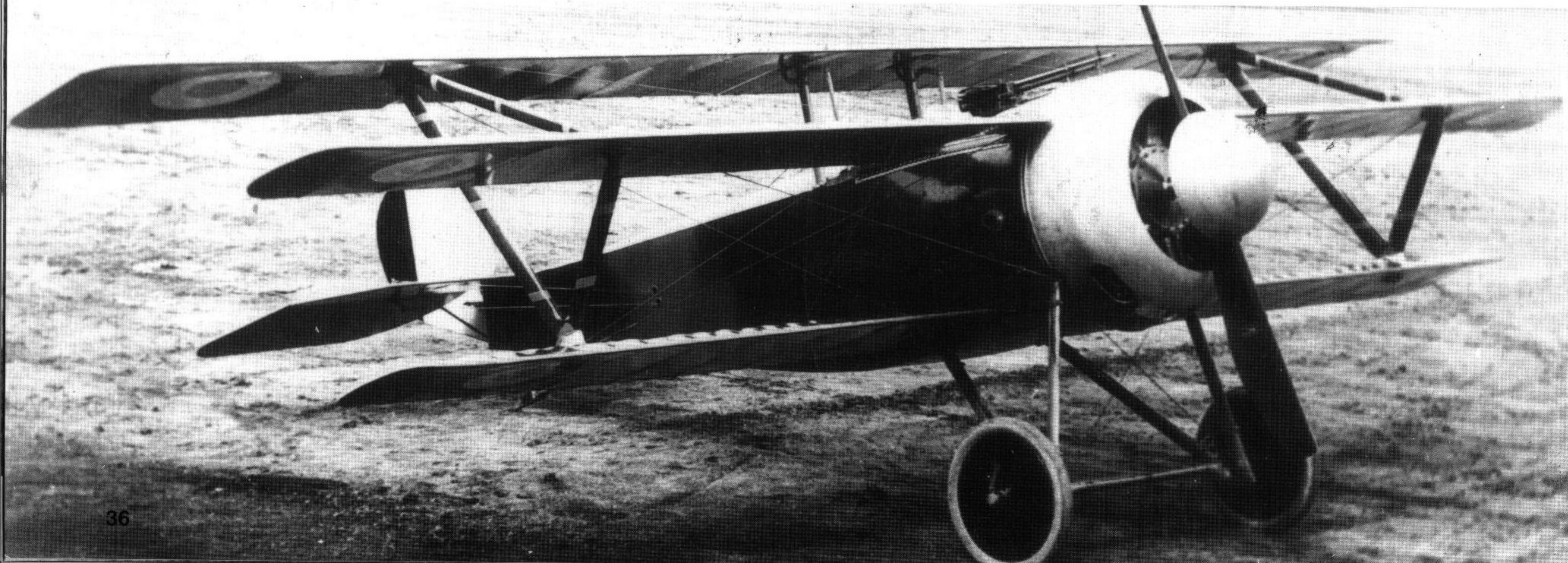


This rear view of N1388 shows that on the starboard side the rudder number lacks any prefix. It was also repeated in miniscule figures on the rear fuselage.



This triplane wearing French national markings and the number 1448 on the rudder appears to have been based on an Nie.11 fuselage and differs from others in having a positive stagger to the wings.

The general appearance of this fourth triplane variant and the offset machine gun above the cowling suggest that an Nie.23 fuselage was used. It is unique among these machines in having a *cone de penetration* on the airscrew.



Nieuport 21c1.

Only small features distinguished this Nieuport single seater from the earlier Nie.17 from which it was developed, these details being parallel flying wires and the often installation of headrests.

More importantly it was powered by an 80-hp Le Rhone engine and was lightened in weight for its intended purpose as a long-range bomber escort. However, a change in French bomber policy meant that it was seldom used in this role.

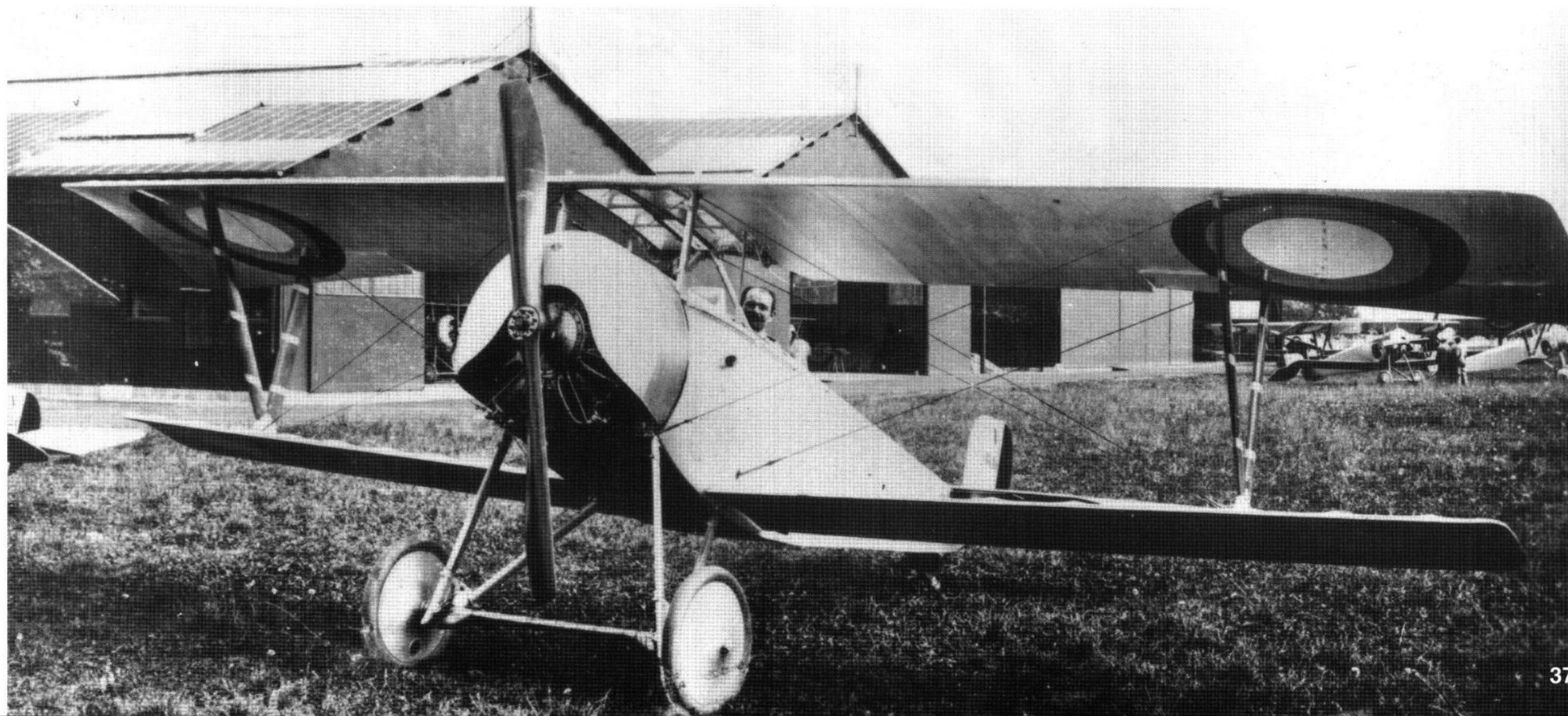
From a historical viewpoint the Nie.21 is chiefly of interest as being among the types produced by Imperial Russia's Dux factory for use in the air arm of Czar Nicholas II and also as the type flown by Raoul Lufbery flying with the Escadrille Americaine in 1916. Lufbery's machine at the time being marked with French national markings and the number N1645 on the central band of the rudder tricolor. His personal marking on the sides being the letter L

Britain's Royal Naval Air Service acquired five Nie.21s which it confusingly termed "Nieuport Type 17Bs" (numbered 3956, 3957, 3958, 8151 and 8750). Until recently these have erroneously been identified as Nie.11s. The United States purchased 198 of the 80-hp Le Rhone powered Nie.21s for use as trainers.

(Beldow) Not all Nieuports operated by the Imperial Russian Air Service were Licence built by Dux, this Nie.21 is part of an order placed with the builders in France. Four others stand in the background with Russian national markings.



(Above) A newly completed Nie.21 ready for allocation to an escadrille. It has an over wing mounting for the armament and transparent panels in the center of the upper wing.



Nieuport 23c1

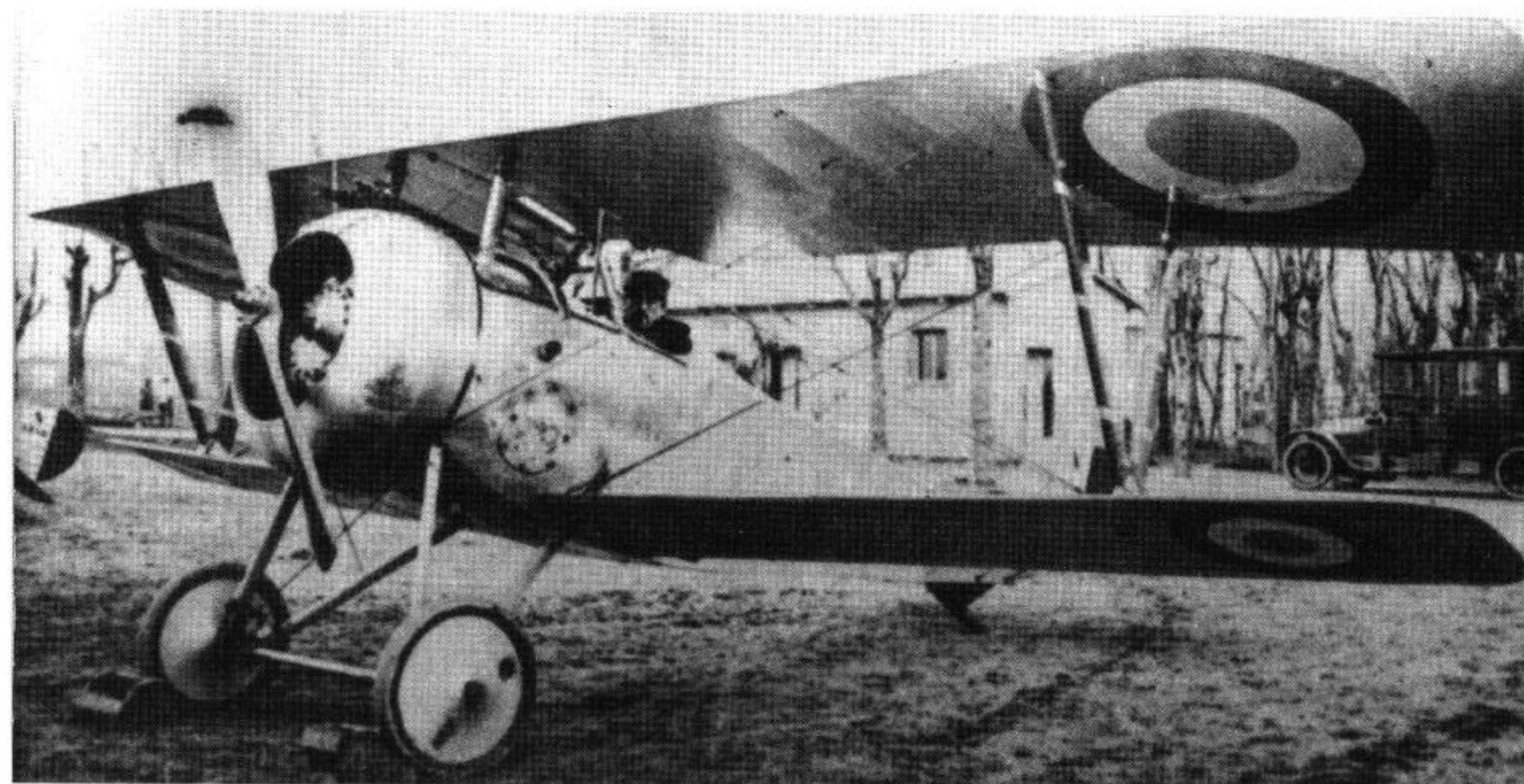
The Nie.23c1 was basically an Nie.17 with a 120-hp Le Rhone 9Jb replacing the 110-hp Le Rhone of the earlier machine. The Nie.23 saw service with the air arms of both France and Britain.

It is difficult to distinguish the Nie.23; early examples of the new scout that were supplied to the RFC even retained the less powerful motor of the earlier Nie.17. Variations in cowling detail are of little assistance, since some Nie.17s passed through a series of changes in shape and fittings of this component to overcome a number of differing problems.

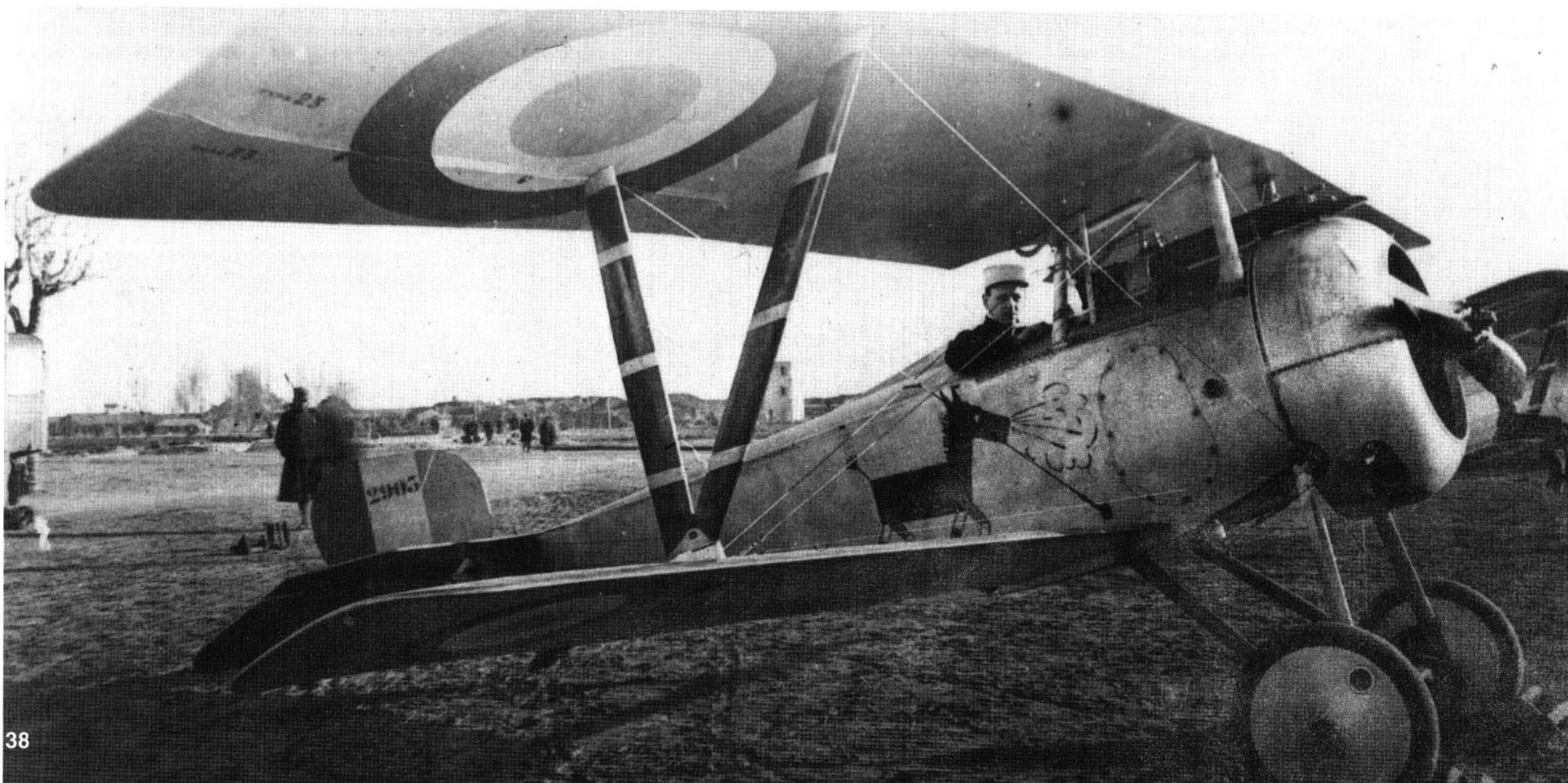
Nie.23s serving with the French air arm are a little easier to identify from the fact that the fuselage mounted Vickers gun of these was slightly offset to the port side of the center line in order to accommodate a different synchronization system than that used by Britain.

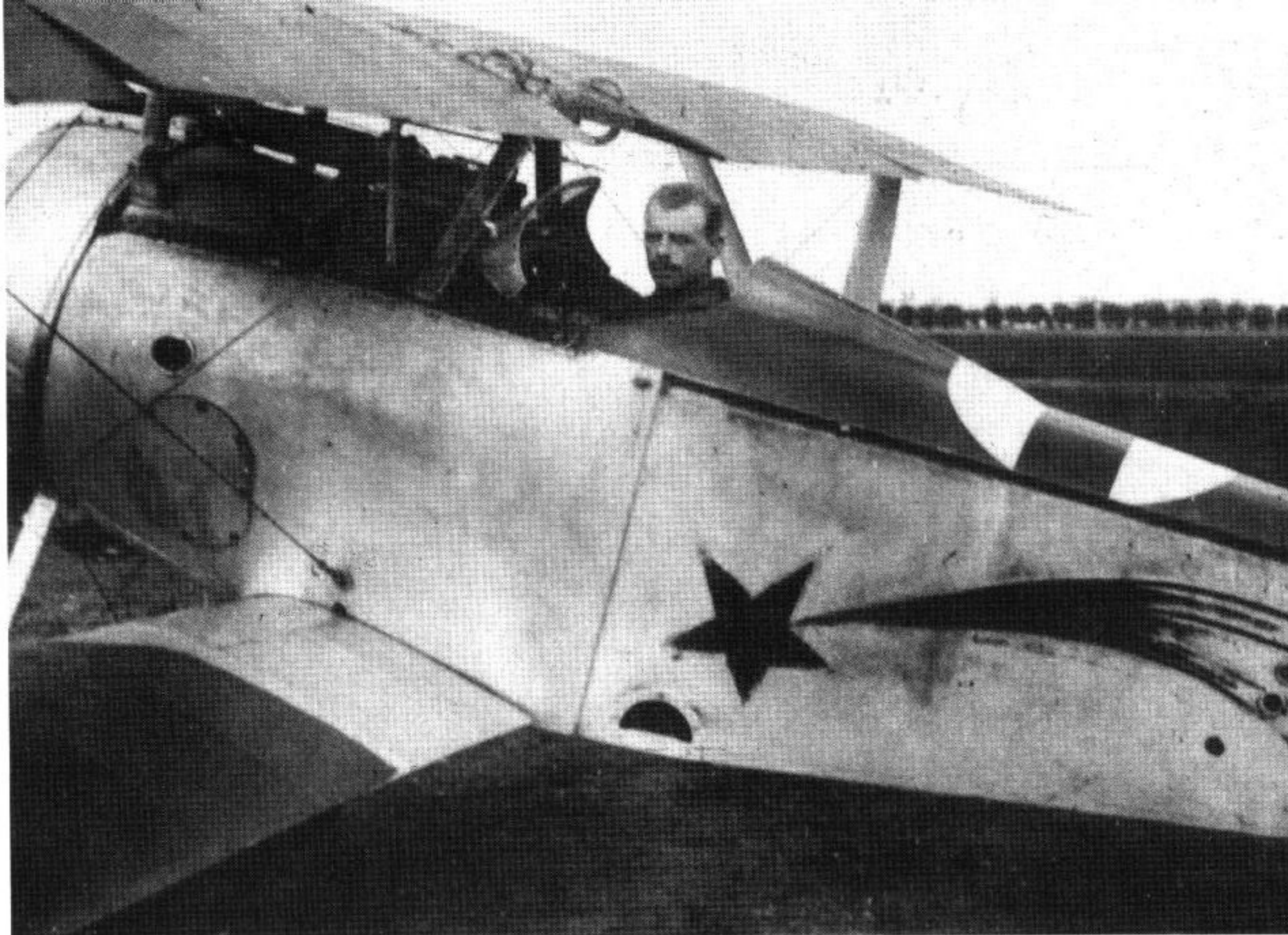
The Nie.23c1 was the mount of the third highest scoring Belgian ace, Adj. Thieffry of *5eme Escadrille* in 1917. Fifty were procured by the United States for use as advanced trainers.

Nie.23 number 2905, which was operated by Escadrille N561 has prominent stenciling under the upper wing and aileron



A French-flown Nie.23 with roundels of different proportions from those generally seen on its British and Belgian contemporaries.





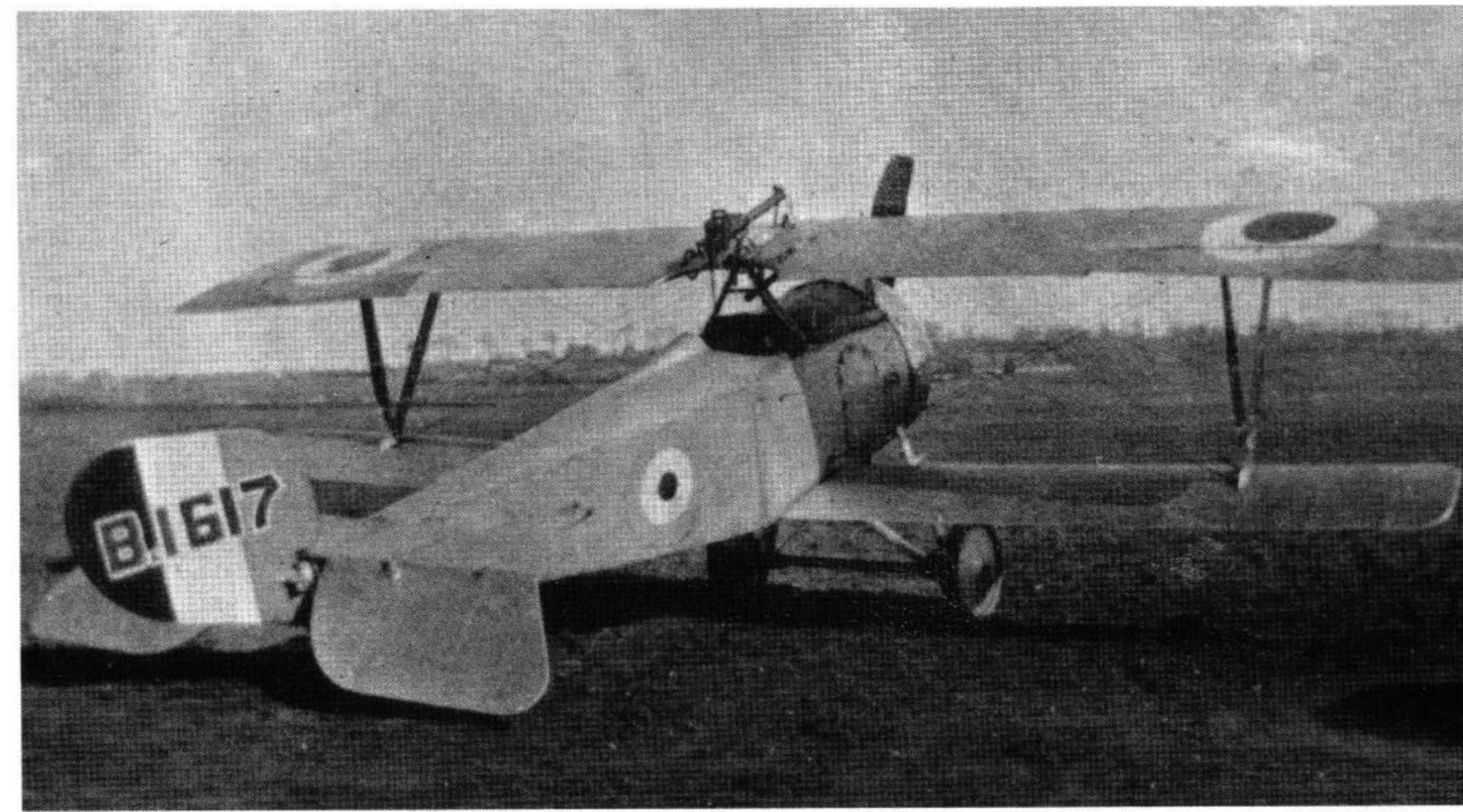
Edmond Thieffry, the Belgian ace in the cockpit of his 5eme Escadrille ("Escadrille Comete") machine. The upper surface doped scheme is probably dark green and is interesting in that on the lower wings the dark green does not extend to the fuselage.

This French built machine is seen in service with the recently formed post-revolution Soviet air arm. It carries an early non-standard type of Red Star marking on the rudder while the former Imperial Russian national markings on the wings have been all but obliterated. A pair of skis have been fitted for winter operations.



Another view of a Thieffry machine showing that the red and white marking on the fuselage decking is repeated on the wheel covers. The comet insignia was red.

A British Nie.23 number B.1617 (the period after the letter prefix is unusual) which was flown by No. 29 Squadron, RFC between 14 May and 27 July 1917. Later it passed to No.40 Squadron, with which it flew between 22 September and 14 October of the same year.



Nieuport 24c1 and 24bis

This, another variant of the Nie.17, was extensively used as a trainer almost exclusively by France where it was known as the Nie.El. The United States purchased 121 for flying training. They were also used by the Soviets and Italy, these being license built, but intended for active, rather than instructional service.

The type differed from the Nie.17 in a number of ways, among them being a stringered and faired fuselage, a plywood covered empennage with a curved outline and fin, sealed ailerons, a more powerful rotary motor and wingtips which were frequently rectangular.

Oddly enough the Nie.24 was preceded into service by the Nie.24bis, a type which was something of an interim design having the earlier tail surfaces, but a faired fuselage and a 120-hp Le Rhone motor.

The only known operational examples of the Nie.24bis in Western Europe were 50 machines constructed in England under license by the Nieuport and General Aircraft Company, most of these being issued to No. 6 Squadron RNAS, with the balance equipping No. 11 Naval Squadron. Small numbers from the French production batch may have gone to Belgium and Italy, with the United States taking 140 Nie.24bis for use as trainers.

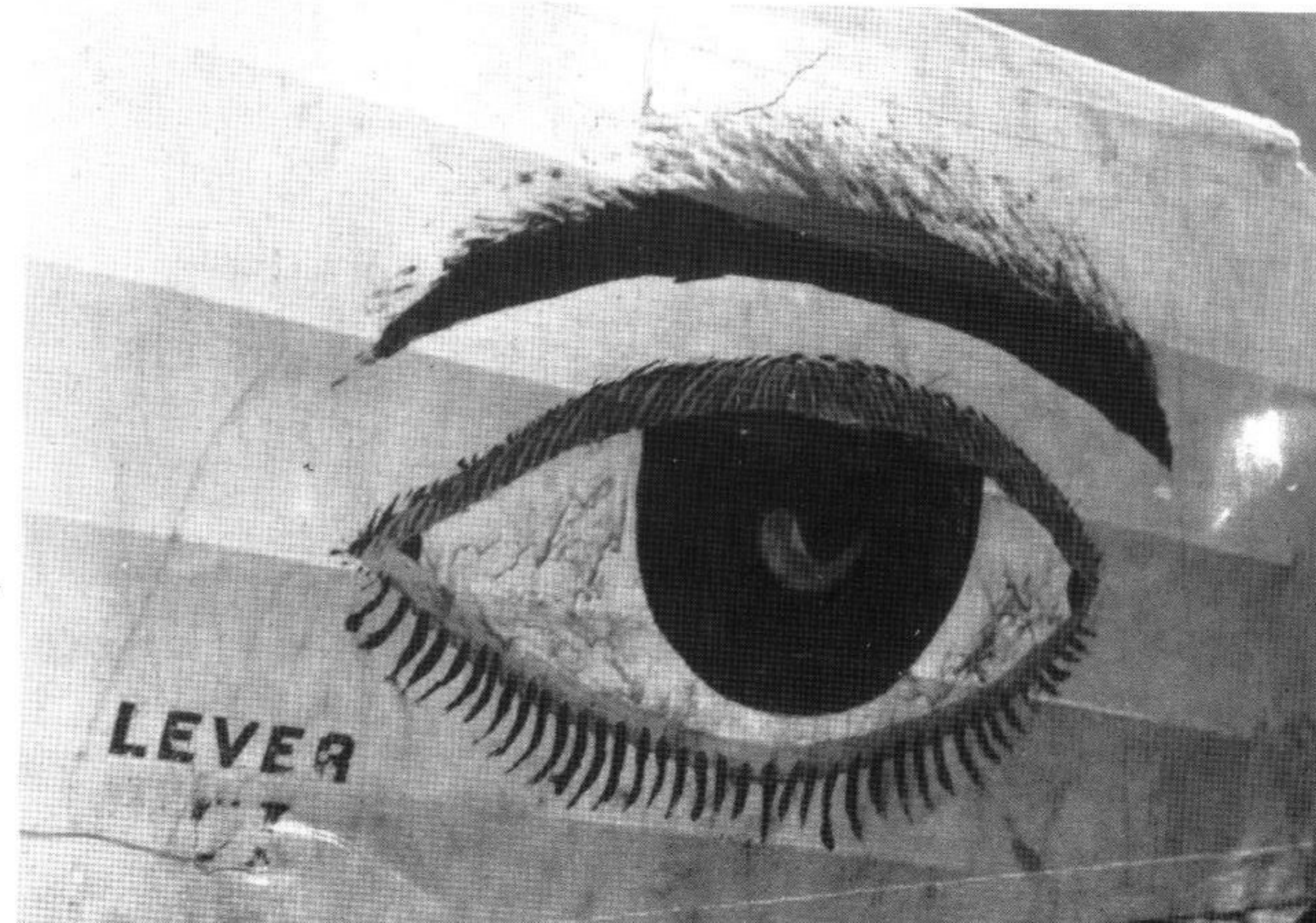
Although a small number of both variants went to the RFC, they had earned a bad reputation. This came from French delivery pilots claiming that the Type lacked lateral control, a defect later corrected in those of the RFC which ordered removal of the canvas aileron sealing strips.

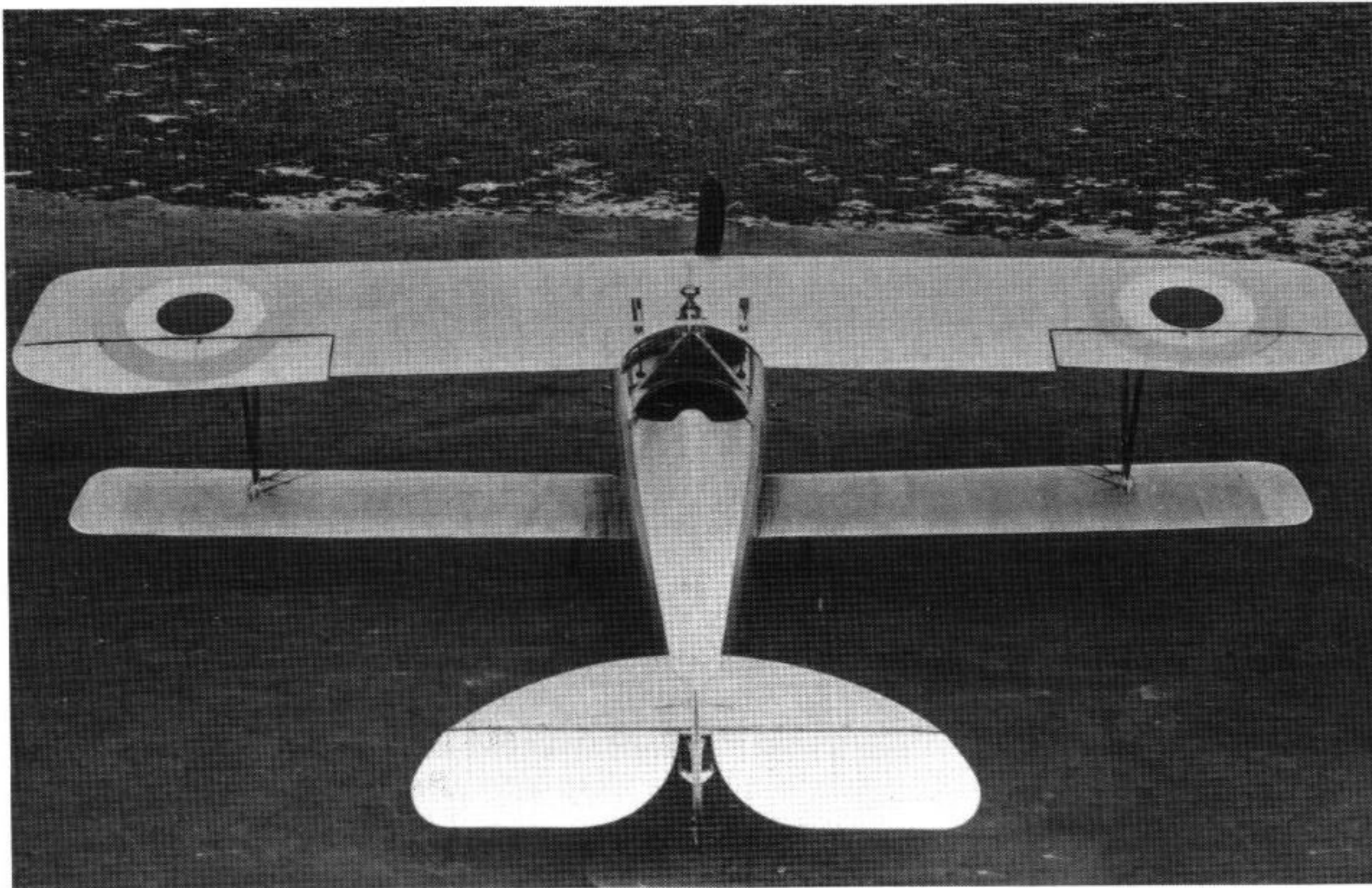


A number of different Nieuports on No.1 Squadron's snow-covered airfield at Bailleul on 27 December 1917. The line up of aircraft are mainly Nie.24s and 24bis variants with an Nie.27 in the foreground. The lower, port wing is PC10 doped. Serial numbers have been obliterated by wartime censors and individual letters are repeated on the decking. The squadron marking of a vertical red band is on the fuselage against both aluminum and PC10 finishes.

A personal marking on the rear of a French Nie.24. Aft of this appeared the type designation above the number 5449. Forward, on the lower fuselage is the lifting point marked LEVER ICI although the ICI has worn off.

Believed to have been photographed at Tokorsawa, an Nie.24 in use by No.11 Koki of the Japanese Army Air Force in 1917. The aircraft in the background appears to be a two seat Nie.10.





An RFC Nie.24 number B3601 at No.2 AD on 29 July 1917 was one of a batch of 15 taken over from the French who had numbered it N4662.

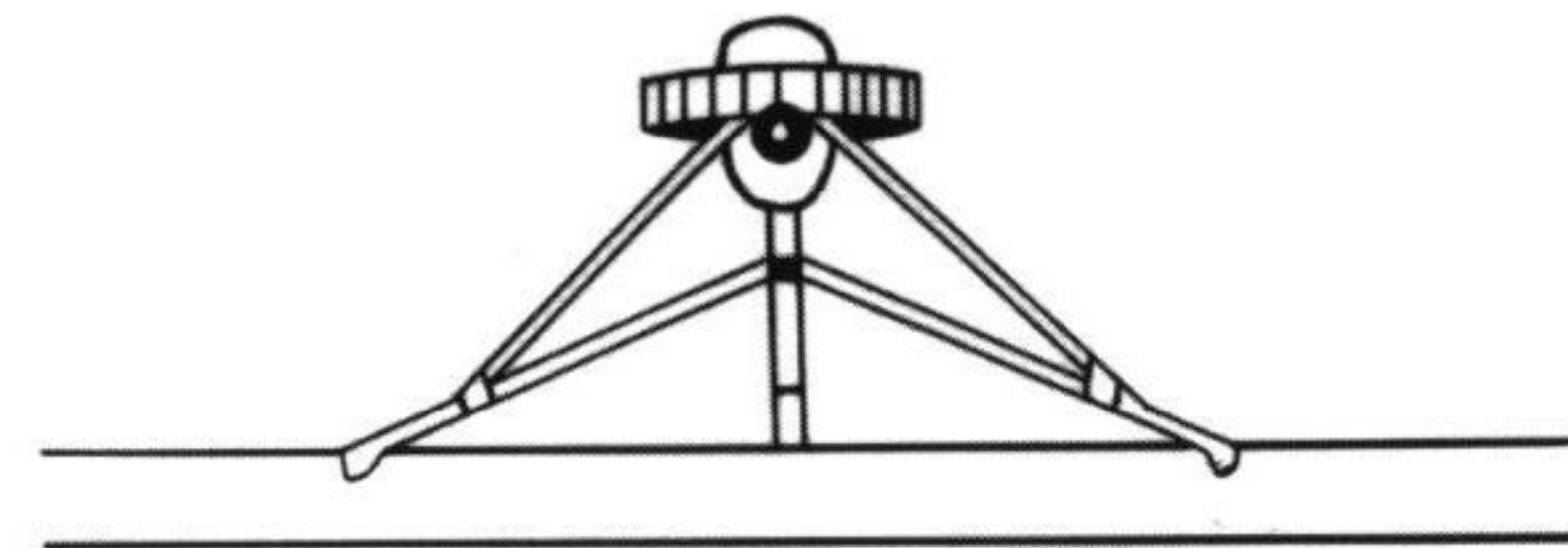
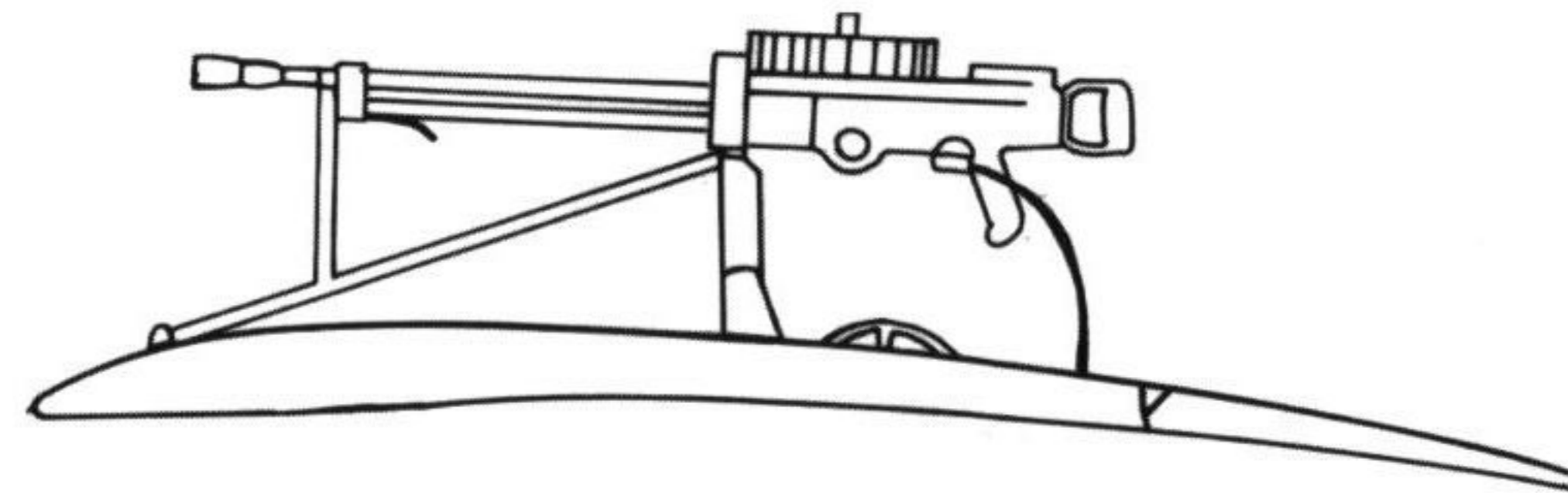


B3601 was allocated to No.40 Squadron on 15 August 1917, but was transferred to No.29 Squadron on 30 March 1918. It was lost in action on 7 April 1918, the pilot Lt. Wingate Grey being taken prisoner.

An Nie.24bis belonging to No.113 Squadron RFC at Sarona near Jaffa Palestine. The colors on the wheel discs are believed to be those of British roundels.



Foster Mounting



Nieuport 25 and 27c1

Both the Nieuport 25c1 and Nieuport 27c1 retained the faired fuselage of the earlier designs, the more robust cowlings seen in photographs of the first being explained by the fact that it was originally intended to have a Clerget rotary motor, but only a few were built. These could also be identified by their broader undercarriage legs and a split axle in the Sopwith manner. They originally had faired tail skids, but these were soon discarded.

The Nie.27c1 which closely resembled the Nie.24 had from the first a conventional sprung tail skid and a split axle. The aircraft were delivered with canvas aileron sealing strips, but these were quickly discarded by both France and Britain.

The American Expeditionary Force in France took 120 Type 27s for use as single-seat trainers, from which the canvas aileron sealing strips were also removed.

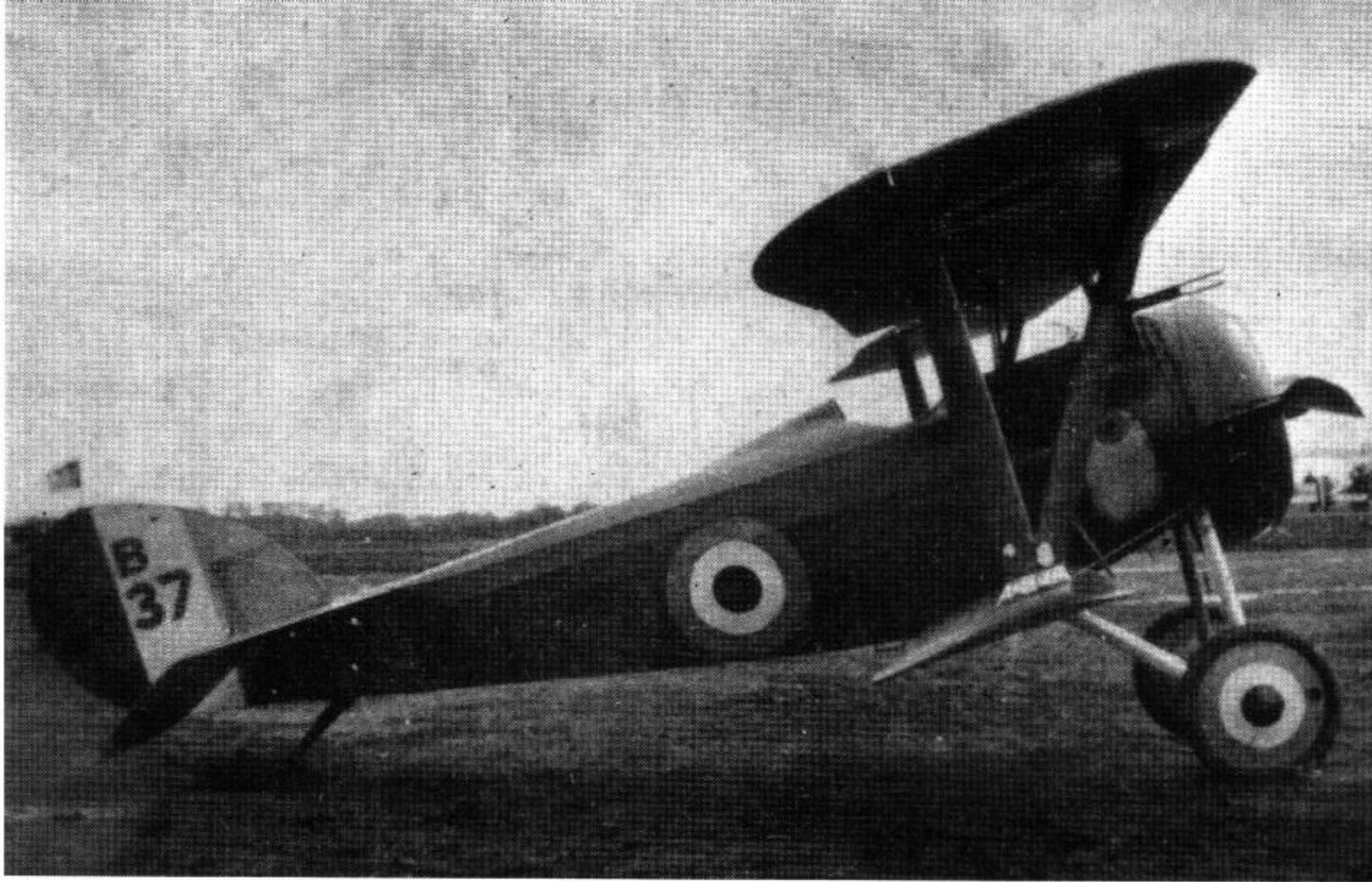
Together, the Nieuport 25c1 and Nieuport 27c1 represented the summit of Nieuport V-strut development, the Nie.27c1 being the last of this design formula to see active service.

This new Nie.27 has colors on its canvas wheel discs in a sequence which may indicate the United States national insignia carried in France.



Nungesser's Nie.25 wearing its true identity, N5324 at Dunkerque in 1917, it was soon to take the number of his former Nie.17bis (N1895). It already carries other markings similar to those of the earlier machine. Type designation and the numbers are repeated in miniscule characters under the leading edge of the tailplane on the rear fuselage.





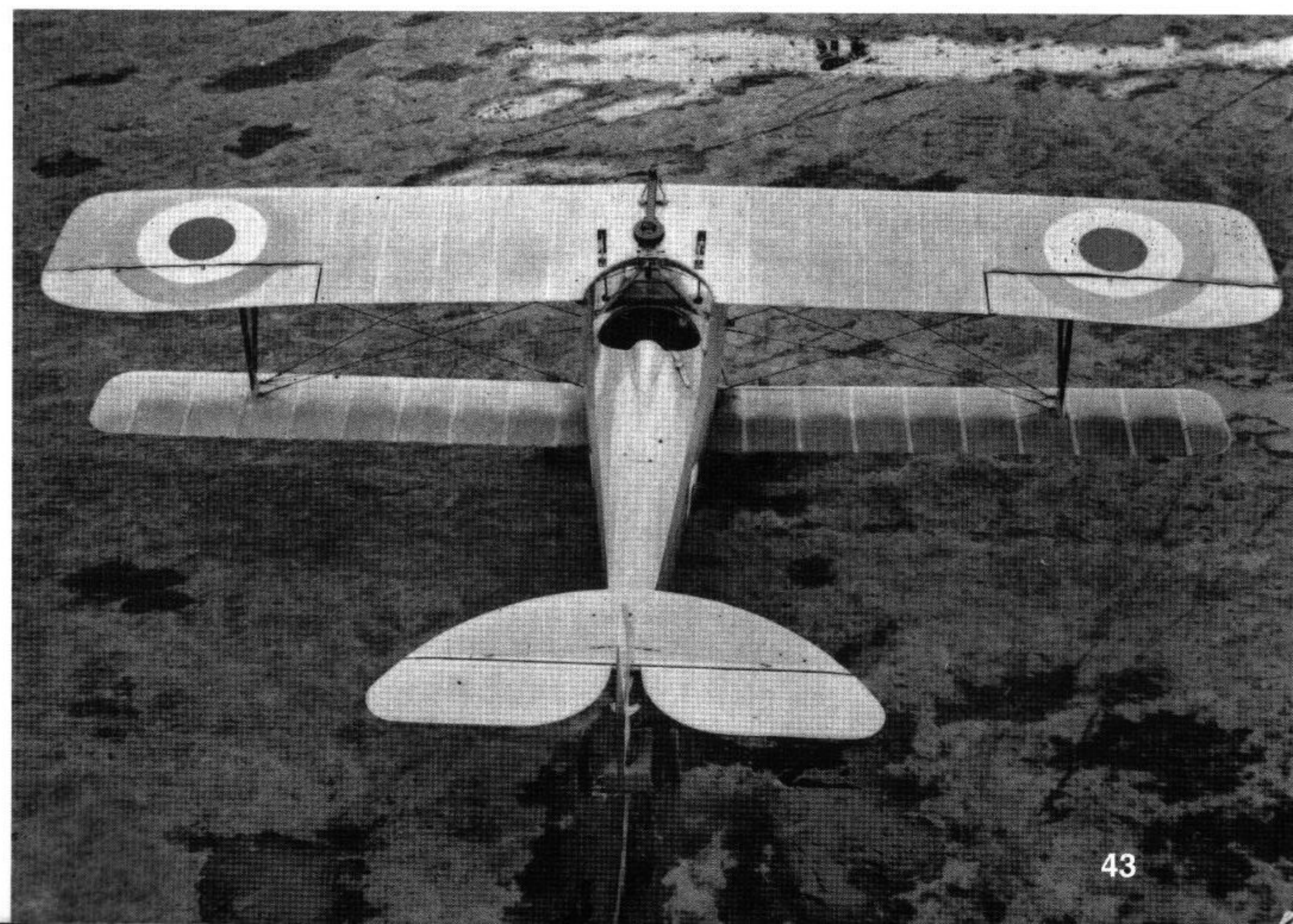
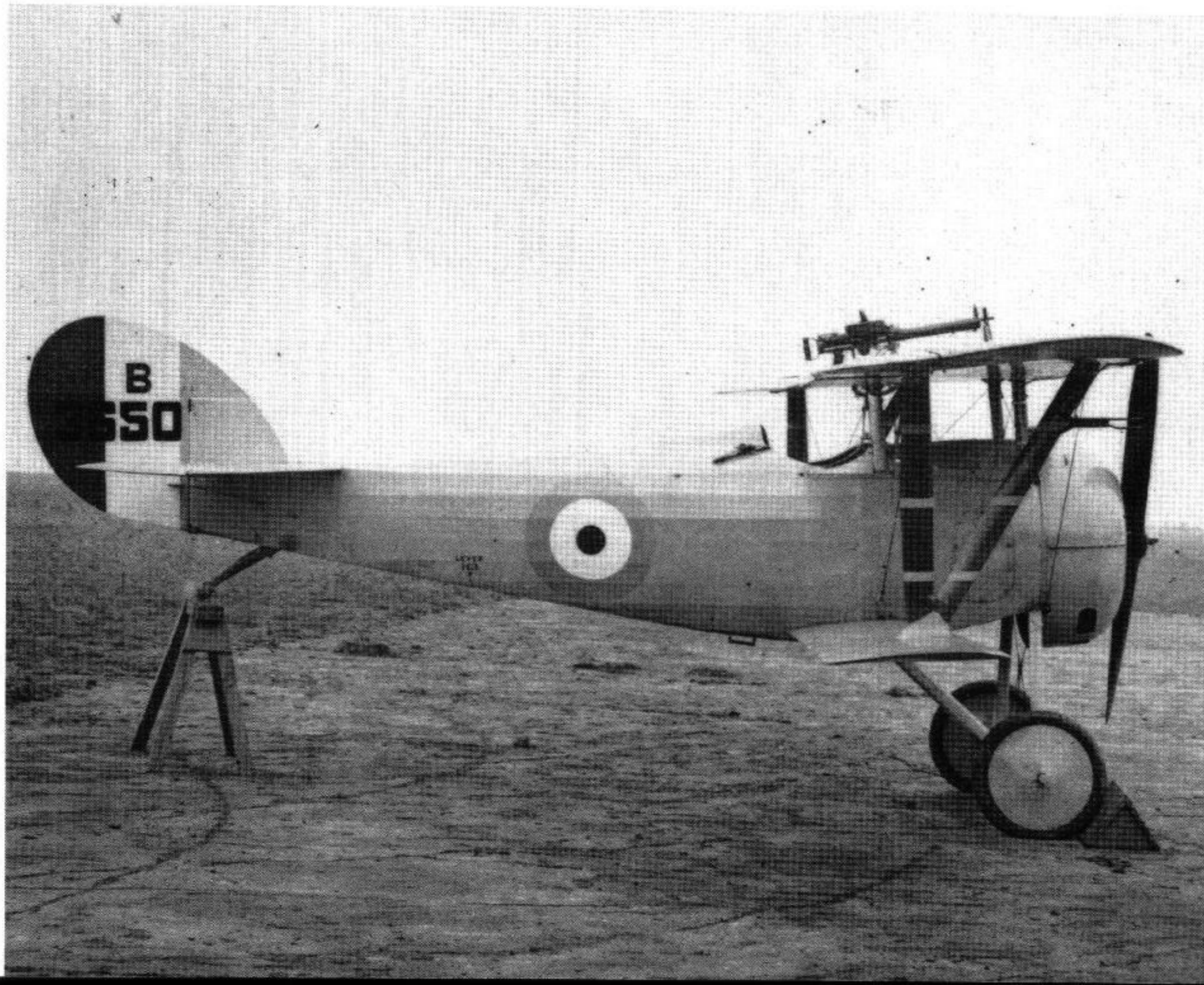
A British Nie.27 which is one of a small number of Nieuports that had a short diagonal strut from the bottom of the forward wing strut to the leading edge of the lower mainplane for extra rigidity. It is believed that this machine is at London Colney before going to No.29 Squadron on 27 September 1917.

This Nie.27 (B3650) joined No.1 Squadron RFC in September 1917, during the following March it went to No.29 Squadron. It was returned to England during the following month when the squadron re-equipped. Aft of the fuselage roundel, the words "LEVER ICI" may be made out on the lower longeron.



An unnumbered prototype with wings of an increased chord on the airframe of an Nie.27. This attempt to direct design trends in a fresh direction contributed much to the evolution of the Nie.28.

Another view of B3650 on the same occasion. Location is believed to be the Reception Park at Narquise, France.





Despite its French national markings, this Nie.27 was used as a single-seat trainer at a United States' training school in France. It carries the French number N6100 on the rudder, and an individual identity "255" on the side. The bands are believed to be red on an aluminum doped fuselage. Two similar machines stand in the background.

Nieuport 28c1

Surprisingly, the next Nieuport scout to appear was a conventional-looking, equal span biplane, yet it was evolved from a sesquiplane, the idea springing from the experimental mating of a lower wing with two spars to an Nie.24 airframe, and powering it with a 160 hp Gnome engine. The new lower wing increased the flying surface area by three square meters.

Although the Nieuport 28c1 was used in small numbers by France, it is more commonly related in the minds of many with the United States, whose aircraft industry at the time was largely limited to building trainers so that foreign sources had to be relied upon for operational aircraft. The result of this was that 297 of the Nie.28 were purchased. These were all armed with twin synchronized guns, one mounted the nose where the narrow gap under the upper wing left no room for a second gun, so that the second gun had to be mounted on a shelf on the port side.

In fact these aircraft left much to be desired, having a tendency to shed the fabric from their wings during a high speed dive. The forward fuselage was covered in a "composition board which was little less than cardboard," in addition the aircraft gained a reputation for catching fire in the air if raw fuel spilled into the cowling.

The first American units to receive the Nie.28 were the 94th and 95th Aero Squadrons, the

former becoming operational on 14 April 1918 with Lieutenants Alan Winslow and Douglas Campbell claiming the first victories on that day.

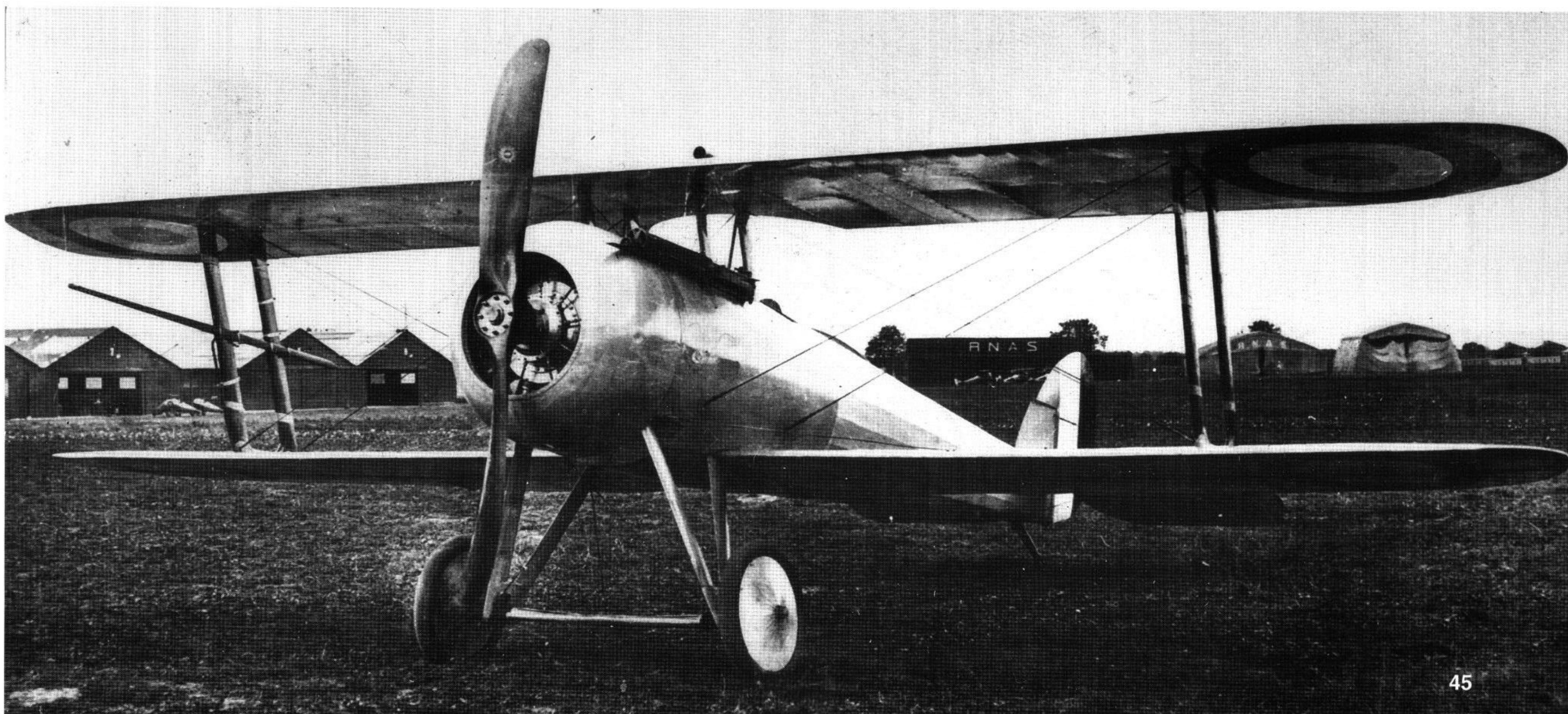
On 4 May, the 95th Aero Squadron joined the 94th at Toul, together the two becoming the First Pursuit Group which was completed by a further pair of Nie.28 equipped squadrons, the 27th and 147th at the end of the month.

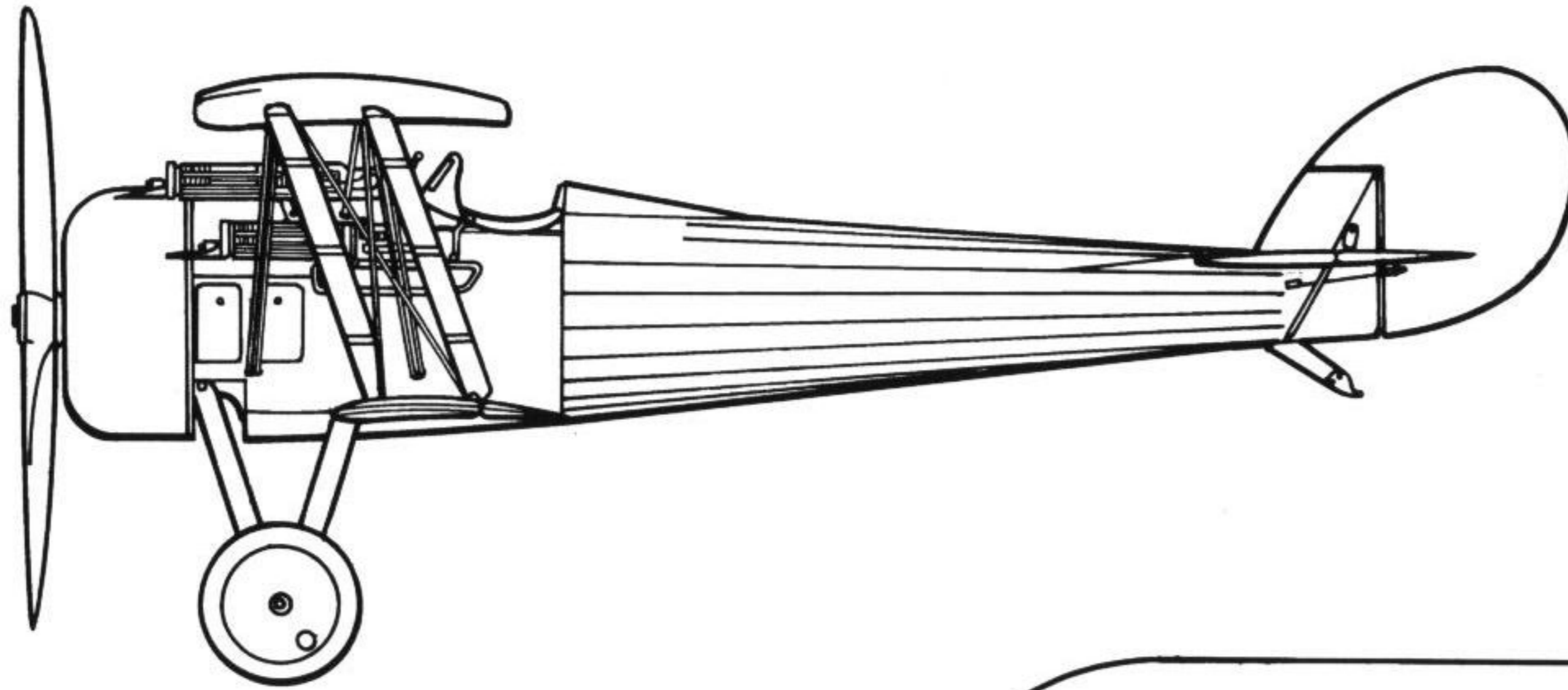
On 20 April the First Pursuit Group moved to the Champagne district to confront the foremost units of the German Air Service including the entire Geshwader I, consisting of highly-experienced pilots under the command of Hermann Goring. The result of this situation was the loss of 36 American pilots in six weeks.

Despite its shortcomings, the structure of the Nie.28 was nevertheless interesting, all the control wires were internal and the tail unit was beautifully covered in a tulip wood ply consisting of 25mm strips laid at 90 degrees to each other.

The Nie.28 was the last Nieuport fighter to see action over the Western Front and was given undue prominence in post 1918 movies, which often featured genuine examples of the Nie.28. In fact this Nieuport never enjoyed much popularity with the pilots who flew it, and when it was replaced by the stronger SPAD, experienced flyers expressed a preference for the SPAD.

For comparison with a prototype having wings rigged with dihedral, this one was rigged with no dihedral in 1917. A venturi tube is mounted above the port center section of the upper wing and a trial pitot head is fastened to the starboard wing struts.

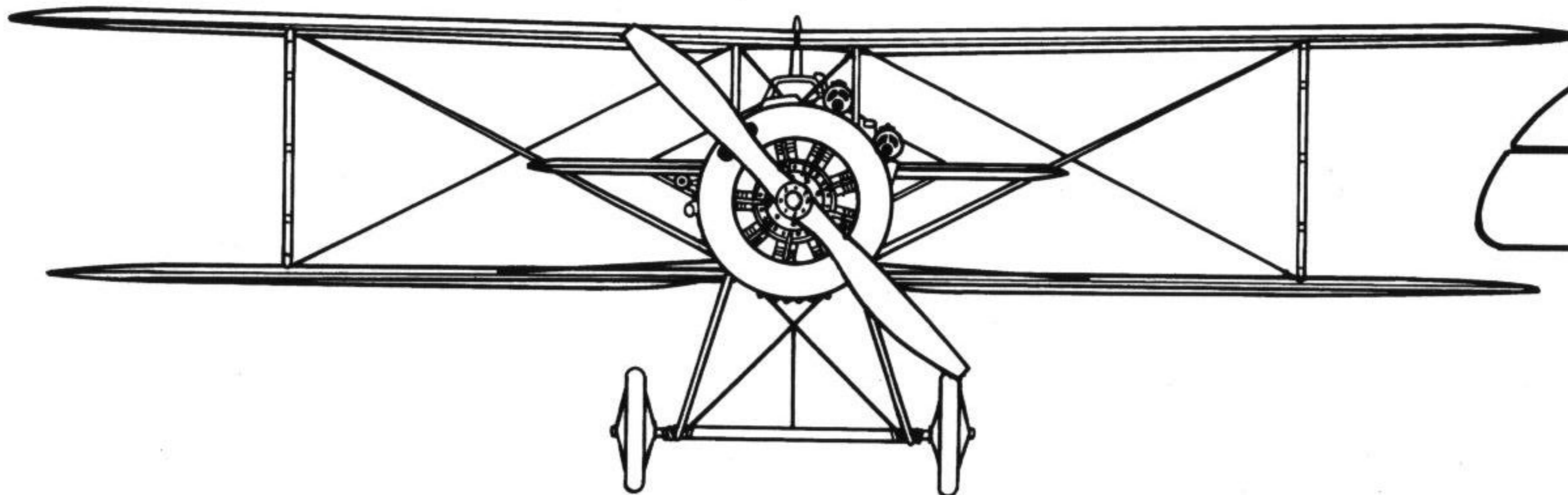
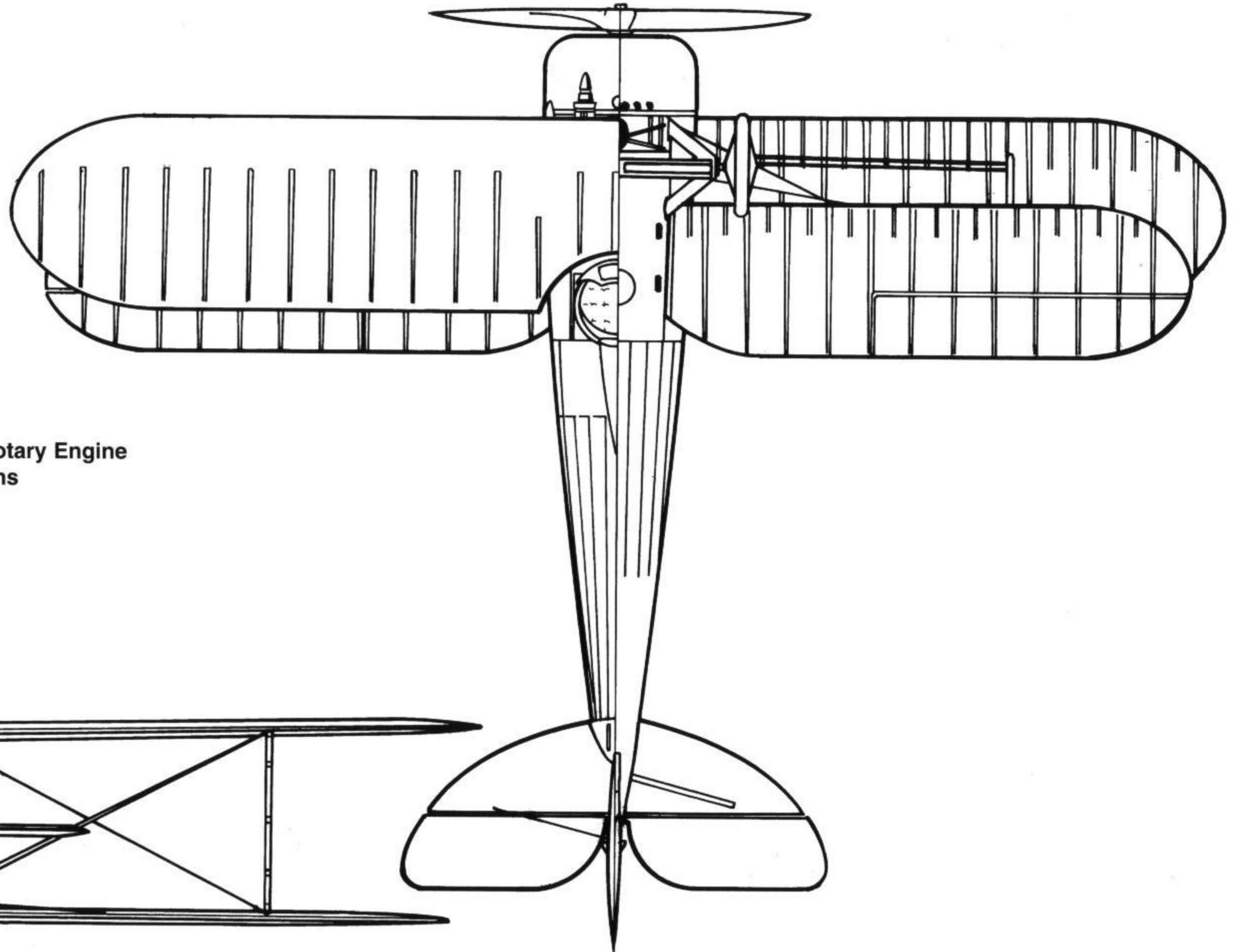




Nieuport 28c.1

Specifications

Wingspan	26 ft 9 inches (8.15m)
Length	21 ft (6.4m)
Height	8 ft 2.5 inches (2.5m)
Empty Weight	1,172 lbs (531.6 kg)
Maximum Weight	1,625 lbs (737 kg)
Powerplant	One 160hp Gnome Monosoupape 9N Rotary Engine
Armament	Two .303 Fixed Synchronised Vickers Guns
Speed	122 mph (400 kph)
Service Ceiling	17,000 feet (5,178m)
Endurance	1.5 hours
Crew	One





A further view of the prototype which lacked dihedral showing its deep-chord cowling and the way in which the second gun was mounted on a shelf on the port side of the fuselage.



N4434 was one of two Nie28 comparative prototypes rigged with dihedral on the upper wings only.

Marked with what looks like a 4 on the fuselage side, this production Nie.28 is said to be in French service. It also has an indistinct cat like creature forward of the fuselage number. The inner wheel cover is missing, as is the side mounted machine gun.





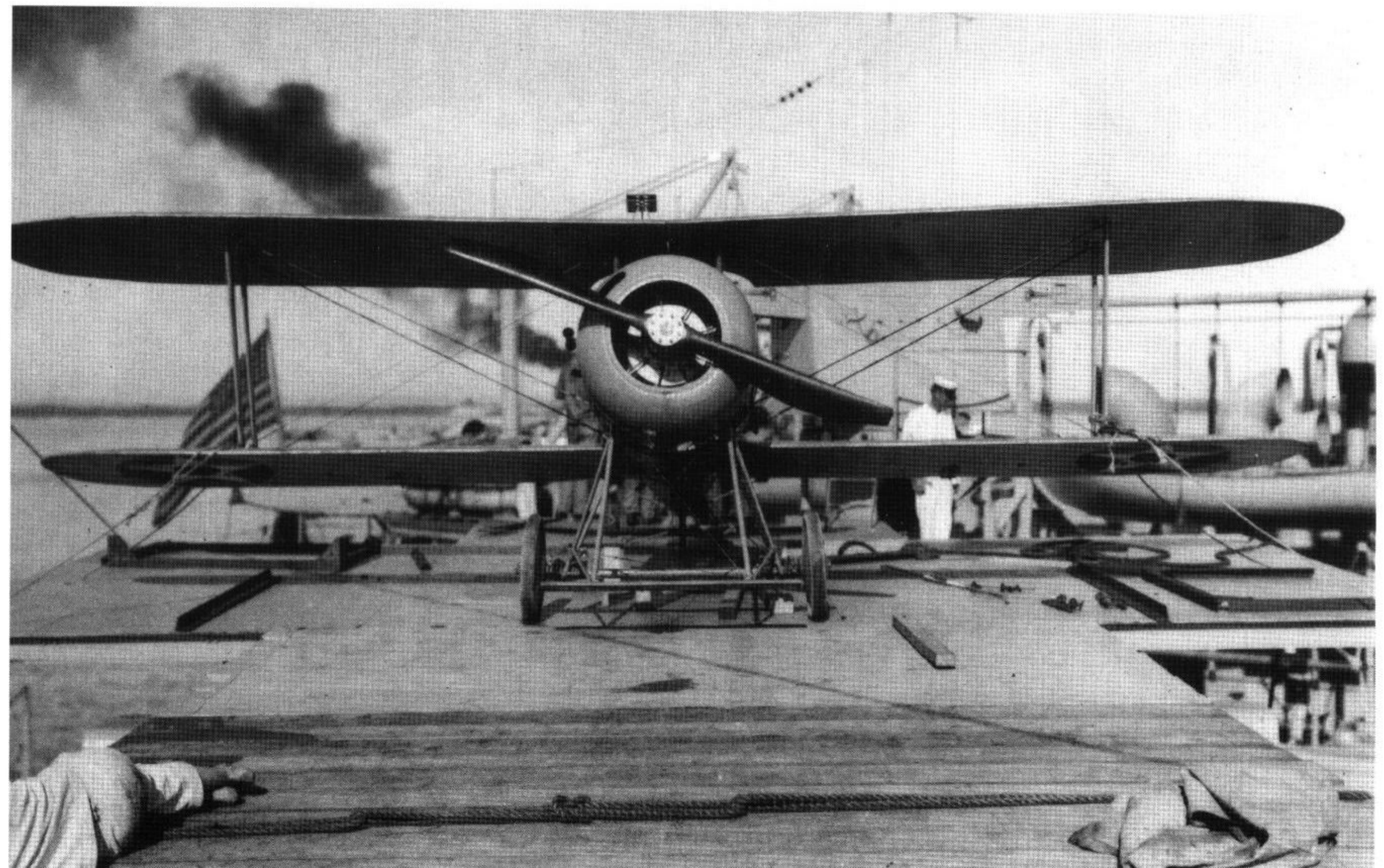
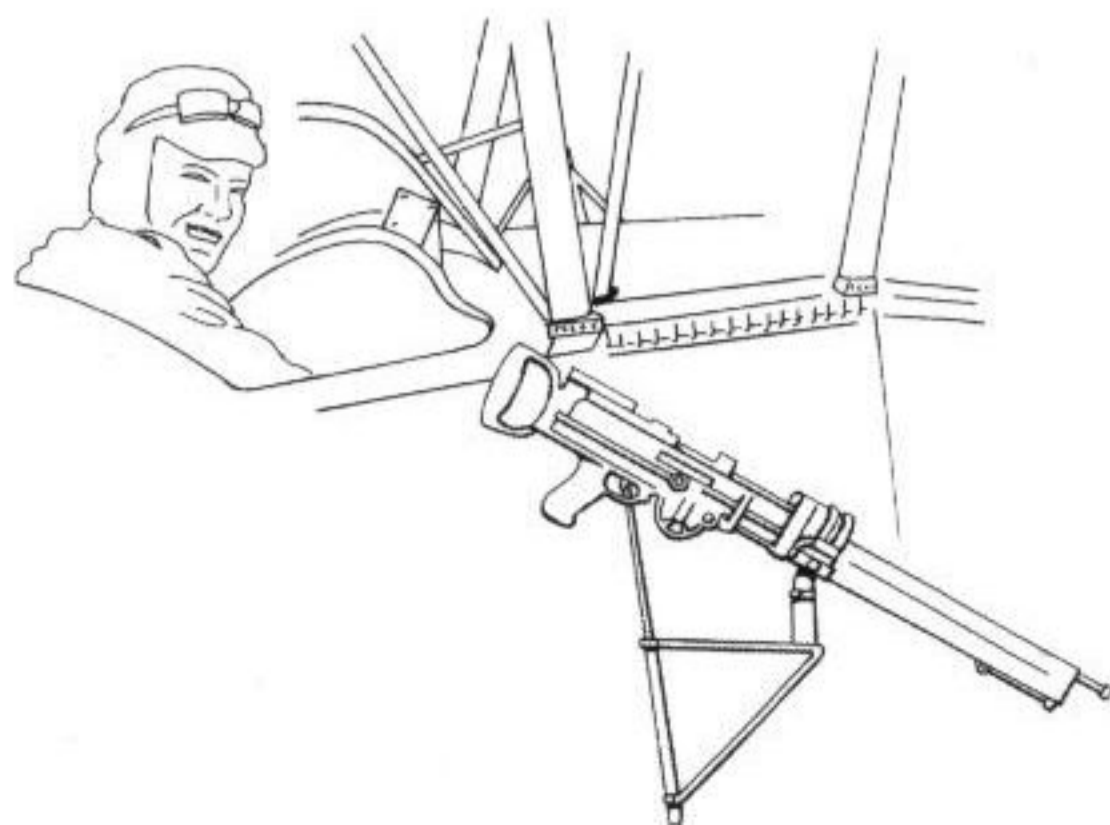
Nie.28s of the American 95th Aero Squadron, carry a wide variety of brightly painted engine cowls. The machine in the foreground carries a 7 aft of the bucking mule unit insignia.

(Below) An unarmed Nie.28 (A5796) on a platform over No.3 aft 14 inch gun turret of the USS Oklahoma (BB-37) in Cuba's Guantanamo Bay during the Spring of 1921. The undercarriage carries a hydrovane and British, deflated "Grain" floatation gear. USS Arizona and Pennsylvania are known to have been similarly equipped for aircraft trials. One machine from the former vessel is known to have been numbered 2 on the side just aft of the cockpit and on the wings inboard of its upper starboard and lower port star national marking, all of which had been added over earlier U.S. wartime roundels. The general dope finish was aluminum. Similarly marked was 5800, its number being carried at the top of the central white rudder stripe. Individual identification 21 appeared in the usual six positions in white, thinly outlined in black. Naval Nieuports did not carry their rudder markings forward of the hinge line, as did those of the Army.

Despite widespread use of the Nie.28 by the United States air services, none were flown in France by the United States Navy, and it was not until August 1919 that the Navy obtained twelve from Army stocks.

Carrying the serial numbers A5794 to A5805, the Nie.28s were assigned to the Fleet, to be flown off platforms constructed over the forward turret guns of eight warships. An aircraft having to take off from one of these warship platforms was to be regarded as expendable; if a land base was not within range, pilots were expected to land on water and with the aid of floatation bags await rescue. These floatation bags extended the time that an aircraft might remain afloat. Hydrovanes were fitted to the undercarriage struts to prevent nosing over in the sea.

Downward Gun Installation





On becoming redundant for military use in the United States, Nie.28s were sold and used for a number of civilian purposes, such as this racer seen as early as 1920. Its national markings were painted out under the lower wings and a white number 8 was added aft of the cockpit.



BE2 in action

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BRISTOL FIGHTER in action

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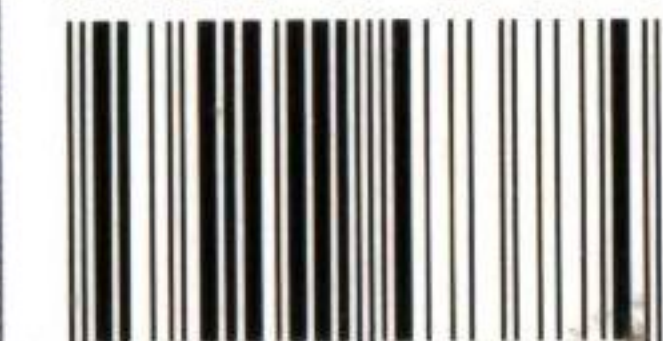


Nieuport 11c.1 of the Escadrille Lafayette over the Western Front during the spring of 1916. The Indian Head Insignia for the Escadrille Lafayette varied greatly early on, later insignia had more red in the head band.



A Russian Nieuport 17 with No. 19 Squadron, Imperial Russian Air Service, 1917. The personal marking on the side translates as Bob, a Russian nick name for Boris.

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