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Harold E. Morehouse Flying Pioneers Biographies Collection - Masson, Didier

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Scott Martin biplane.

Masson remained there over the winter of 1912-1913, then in the early spring of 1913 Martin sold a 75 hp. Curtiss-engined Martin biplane to the Mexican rebel forces under General Obregon and Masson was hired to pilot the plane, with Thomas J. Dean as his mechanic. Their operations were established at Morenos Camp, Sonora, Mexico, and an old Pullman car was provided for their living quarters. It was divided into a sleeping section, a dining area and kitchen with an ice refrigerator. Masson began flying there in May, first dropping propaganda leaflets over the enemy areas, then he and Dean began to drop bombs, which were made of 3 inch iron pipe, 18 inches long, packed with dynamite. Numerous bombing flights were made but with questionable results. There were delays at times waiting for repair parts from Los Angeles. On August 4th the two men resigned and returned to the United States. Immediately after this Masson sailed for France to join the war effort of World War I. He was first a flying instructor at Issoudun, then later was transferred to the famed Lafayette Escadrille as a fighter pilot. After the War Masson returned to the United States and engaged in various enterprises until 1928 when he became Field Manager from Pan American Airways at Belize, British Honduras. In 1935 he was appointed French Consul at Belize where he remained until he resigned his post in 1940. At that time he moved to Chetumel, Mexico, to become manager of the Hotel Iris, where he passed away on June 2, 1950, following a short illness, at age 64. He was survived by his wife and a son.

Flying Pioneer Didier Masson, although foreign-born, became very much a part of the early aviation era in the United States. Well-known and an expert pilot, he contributed much to our early aviation progress and history.

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