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Official Photo — U. S. Air Force

Major Frederick L. Martin, original Commander of the first Round-the-World-Flight, far right, is congratulating Lt. Lowell H. Smith who was placed in command after Maj. Martin's plane crashed in Alaska. They are shown in front of the Chicago, Lt. Smith's plane, with other expedition members looking on after concluding their flight in Seattle on September 28, 1924.



THE AIR FORCE HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

# TRAGEDY AND TRIUMPH

## The Story of Edmond C. C. Genet

By **CAPTAIN PHILIP M. FLAMMER**

*Assistant Professor of History*

"I'd far rather die as an aviator over the enemy's lines than find a nameless, shallow grave in the infantry . . ."

Edmond Genet to his Mother.

Though he considered himself a failure, Edmond Charles Clinton Genet could hardly have avoided a hero's reward. In contrast to the "hero" who quite unexpectedly performs ably and miraculously, Genet, throughout his brief life was a thorough-going idealist, a devoted and deadly serious young man who always saw his duty with unmistakable clarity and then, whatever the personal inconvenience and danger, followed his convictions with almost incredible determination. Given his remarkable personality, the quality of his heritage and the circumstances of the Great War, it seems almost certain to one looking back, that his life, however brief, would be a heroic one.

### The Despair of Failure

Edmond Genet, born November 9, 1896, at Ossining, New York, was part of a very close-knit family with an unusual heritage. The third son of Aubert and Martha Fosc Genet — he often referred to himself as "the Third" — he was also the great-great-grandson of Edmond "Citizen" Genet, the First Minister of the French Revolutionary Government to the United States in 1793.<sup>1</sup> (The "Citizen," it will be recalled, elected to remain in the United States rather than return to France and the guillotine.)

Young Edmond Genet's early life was both normal and happy. From the age of nine, however, he had one great passion and that was the sea. Though he toyed with aviation, as had the "Citizen" before him, and had invented an aeroplane at the age of ten, he longed to be an officer in the United States Navy and hence concentrated his thoughts and studies upon gaining an appointment to the Naval Academy at Annapolis.<sup>2</sup> Nor did Edmond lose his firm hold on his dream after his father died in 1912, even though the death was a great tragedy for the Genet family. The two older boys, in financial distress, were forced to leave Princeton University and Edmond himself voluntarily worked after school to ease the burdens at home.<sup>3</sup>

Two years later, another great tragedy befell "the Third." The appointment to Annapolis, upon which he had mentally built his future, went to another. For Edmond this was a staggering setback. It shattered his greatest dream, leaving him in its stead the despair of failure. Partly in dismay and partly clinging to some hope of a sailor's life, he enlisted in the Navy as an ordinary seaman. In keeping with a pattern of behavior already evident, he informed his family only after he had taken the step.<sup>4</sup>

The magnitude of the failure to get into Annapolis, coupled with subsequent failure to pass some competitive

examinations for petty officer rank, is clearly reflected in one of Genet's letters to his mother, written shortly after his enlistment in the Navy.<sup>5</sup>

*I feel mighty down-and-out. I don't feel as if I had any brains worth anything at all. Here all the money, time and worry spent since last Spring has gone for nothing — failure . . . I hardly care what becomes of me. What's the use when I can't seem to gain anything but failure? I don't feel that I have any more fight left in me. Now I'm going out into the World and hit it hard, and let it hit me just as hard and harder in return.*

But no matter how down-and-out he felt, Edmond always recognized his duty. In this same letter, he called upon his mother to "cheer up," since "even if I have failed twice and am a black sheep, perhaps some day in the distant future I will turn out to be a white one, and something worthwhile."<sup>6</sup>

Edmond was a good sailor and except for his regret over Annapolis, a happy one. Throughout his brief life he spoke fondly of his comrades at sea, and took pride in his participation in the naval action at Vera Cruz in August 1914.

In time young Genet perhaps could have had his happy life at sea. He may even have won another chance at Annapolis, but then the Great War broke out in August 1914 and another factor came into play, carrying with it new obligations and responsibilities. Almost automatically his thoughts turned to Europe where his family tradition had left him strong ties with France. Like so many Americans, he viewed the issues as clearly black and white with absolutely no doubt in his mind that France stood for humanity and civilization against a barbaric and aggressive Germany. His duty now was to "fight for the right," but first he had to gain his release from the Navy. Of course, this was denied him. Again torn by an inner turmoil, which somehow escaped the attention of his family, he returned home for the Christmas holidays of 1914 and the customary family gathering.<sup>7</sup>

After the holidays, Genet left home to return to his ship at Charleston, Massachusetts. He suddenly reappeared in Ossining a few days later, however, with the incredible announcement that he had gone to Washington, D. C., secured his passport, and would soon sail for France to join the Foreign Legion. How his family wept, begging him again and again to reconsider the probable consequences of his desertion. But it was no use. Edmond knew he had

made the proper decision, he could not yield. "I have done nothing wrong," he assured them, "nothing to be ashamed of, though I had to tell one lie — about my age."<sup>8</sup>

After a tearful parting with his family, Edmond went to New York where he was to sail, but for some reason his ship was delayed, and for nearly a month he wandered about the city. He made no conscious effort to conceal himself from authorities, apparently feeling that others would see the necessity of his action as clearly as he himself. Finally, on January 20, 1915, he sailed for France aboard the *SS Rochambeau*, as firmly resolved as ever to do his duty for mankind and meet his obligation to France.<sup>9</sup>

Aboard the *Rochambeau*, Genet met Norman Prince of Prides Crossing, Massachusetts. Prince, too, was a man with a mission. An amateur aviator and scion of a very wealthy family, he was full of enthusiasm for the idea of an all-American squadron of aviation volunteers flying for France. He talked with Genet at some length about it but though "the Third" was interested, it was, after all, just an idea, waiting upon many uncertain future developments. But Genet could not wait. By February 3, he was a *soldat deuxième classe* in the *3<sup>me</sup> Régiment de Marche* of the famed Foreign Legion, a crack unit in the toughest of all European armies, and the only place where a foreigner could legally serve with the French.

By the end of March 1915, Genet was in the Champagne Sector, sharing the hardships and horrors of attritional warfare in the trenches. He was an excellent soldier. Having given up so much to fight with the Legion, he was not one to complain about the mud and the lice and the omniscience of death. Also, his devotion to duty found ample expression and this, together with an almost incredible disregard for his own safety, earned him the praise and respect of his comrades-in-arms. They genuinely liked and appreciated this lad who, more than once, found him-

The youthful Genet as a foot soldier.



self in the very thick of battle and who, on several occasions, came out of the slaughter one of the very few survivors of his particular unit. In one notable instance, he came unscathed through a holocaust so severe that the Legionnaires themselves were inclined to regard his survival as near miraculous.<sup>10</sup>

But while no one in the Legion questioned little Genet's courage and devotion, there was something that set him apart and caused him considerable anguish — his own boyish face. He was now eighteen years of age but alas, he looked no more than fifteen. He had short blond hair, blue eyes that seemed amazed at the world, and a rosy, childlike complexion that needed no razor to keep it clean. Yet to the French infantryman of 1915, the growing of a beard — and certainly no less than a mustache — was regarded as virtually the only sure sign of manhood, a view that found some sanction in French army regulations. (The very name "Poilu," carried by French infantrymen, meant "the bearded one.") Thus, however much Genet's comrades admired his courage, many were amused by the delightful paradox of a beardless *Poilu*, a boy who, at first glance, seemed to be "playing soldier."<sup>11</sup>

Not everyone was amused, of course, least of all Genet himself. He really cared what others thought and, as a consequence, suffered agonies because of his beardless face. For him, this unkind trick of nature was another tragedy.

### The Appeal of the Air

No doubt it was this bit of unhappiness in the Foreign Legion, coupled with the almost complete loss of individuality in the trenches, that led young Genet to recall his earlier meeting with Norman Prince aboard the *Rochambeau*, and to take note of the fact that several Americans, including some from within the Legion itself, had found their way into aviation. "I have often been wondering how Norman Prince . . . is getting along," he wrote his family. "If you ever read anything concerning him in the papers please send me the article or let me know about it anyway."<sup>12</sup> Genet apparently did not know at this point that Prince and several other Americans were getting along quite well indeed. William Thaw, Kiffin Rockwell, Prince, Bert Hall, James Bach, and one or two others had found their way into the *Service Aéronautique* where some, and Thaw in particular, were covering themselves with glory.<sup>13</sup> Moreover a group of individuals, including an American doctor by the name of Edmund Gros, and a French Under Secretary of State named Jarousse de Sillac, were slowly making headway in getting French authorization for an all-American squadron of volunteers. How it would have heartened Genet to know that among those considered for membership in this elite unit, if and when it became a reality, was "the Third" himself. Apparently he had greatly impressed Norman Prince when the two met aboard the *Rochambeau* several months before.

Primarily through the efforts of Dr. Gros and M. de Sillac, Genet was "detached" from the Foreign Legion for duty with the *Service Aéronautique* in November 1915. He welcomed the change. For him, "This is sport with all the fascination, excitement, and sporting chances any live fellow could ever wish for."<sup>14</sup> But while he enjoyed flying immensely, there is no evidence that Genet had illusions of grandeur about it. To him, as to so many others, it offered an opportunity to make a positive contribution to the cause he had elected to serve, a contribution that stood in bold contrast to infantry duty in the trenches where almost all mark of individuality was lost in the great round

of those who participated in battles, and the names of those who fell.

*This is the most dangerous branch of the service (he wrote his mother) but it is best as far as future is concerned . . . The rewards are great and we're treated with respect and plenty of consideration. Besides, the best class of men are to be found here, and that means a good deal.*<sup>15</sup>

Moreover, Genet was simply not the type to dwell on the glamorous aspects of flying and pass over lightly its dangers, particularly under combat conditions. It is true that he hardly mentioned two bad accidents he had in training — about normal for the course — but he knew full well that in combat idealists like himself would not last long. Thus, when he learned of the death of Kiffin Rockwell, another thorough idealist and the second member of the famed Lafayette Escadrille to fall in combat, he wrote his mother as follows:

*Thus it is and will be right along with all the best ones — those who really do the biggest amount of the fighting. We can't help but predict which ones will be killed. This game is only that of get or be gotten, and those who go right into the fray to get are almost sure to be killed sooner or later. I'm not going to be any shirker, dear little mother, even if it is sure to mean what it has meant to Chapman and Rockwell.*<sup>16</sup>

#### With the Lafayette

Genet joined the Lafayette Escadrille at Cachy, in the Somme Sector, in January 1917. The squadron was only then adopting the name Lafayette Escadrille, German protests having led the French to abandon the popular designation of *Escadrille Americaine*. There is an outside possibility that Genet himself may have suggested the name "Lafayette Escadrille."<sup>17</sup> His arrival, quite typical of him, was one that caused quite a stir in the squadron.

On this particular day, the weather was unusually miserable and on both sides of the lines, the airplanes sat idle in the cold and the fog. Suddenly, the sound of a rotary motor was heard over the field at Cachy, prompting William Thaw of Pittsburgh, a prominent member of the squadron to remark to a friend:

"Who the hell do you suppose that dumb cluck is? Flying in weather like this. He better come down while he's still got his health."

"The thought has probably occurred to him," Lt. Alfred de Laage, a French officer and the second-in-command of the squadron, replied. "I don't see who it can be. There are no patrols out, and it's a certainty the Boches aren't flying in this muck."<sup>18</sup>

A few moments later the plane landed safely and its pilot came into the squadron mess hall. His arrival has been described by Edwin C. Parsons, himself a first-rate hero who also flew with the Lafayette.<sup>19</sup>

*. . . on the wings of a great gust of snow-laden wind, a short, muffled, fur-clad figure drifted into the room. Only the tip of a reddish, frost-bitten nose and a pair of wide appealing blue eyes showed through the woolen wrappings. Hastily the stranger unwrapped layer after layer of woolen and silk, then jerked off his jacket. De Laage gasped in surprise.*

*The chunky little figure was topped by a thatch of short-cropped blond hair above the round, innocent, pink-checked face of an infant. He didn't look a day over fourteen. His peach-bloom complexion showed no traces of ever having met a razor socially. He had a*



Genet ready for take-off.

*snubby nose and there was a constant expression of pleased surprise at the wonders of the world in the wide-set blue eyes. He saluted snappily and in a high-pitched, almost girlish voice announced that he had ferried up a new Nieuport from Plessis-Belleville for the Escadrille.*

Genet had not yet been formally assigned to the squadron when he flew this ferry mission, but since he was scheduled to join the unit in the very near future anyway, de Laage suggested that he remain. This proved to be a tragic mistake, for back at the replacement depot Genet was first listed as AWOL, and then posted as a deserter. De Laage soon got the matter straightened out — Genet's official army record does not even mention the event — but in the meantime it nearly tore Genet apart. "What to us was merely a tremendous joke," Parsons wrote later, "was something on the verge of tragedy for him."<sup>20</sup> No one suspected at this point why Genet was so upset, but it was soon apparent that "the Smiler," as he was now called, was carrying some sort of oppressive burden. The Lafayette pilots naturally did not pry. Most of them had cut across the grain to fly for France anyway, and they took little Genet for what he was with no questions asked. In a way this did not help much. As the bonds of friendship and mutual respect grew stronger, Genet twisted in agony. "What would they think if they knew?" he asked his mother, later adding:<sup>21</sup>

*If anything should happen to me over here, Mother, it would be so much easier to meet if I knew it was O.K. with my own loved country. I'm afraid it is an impossible privilege though. The only thing that ever impressed me about the burial service is the question: 'Oh Death, where is thy sting?' I know now that it*

would hold its sting for me if I met it with that blot upon my record.

The desire to remove this "blot" became almost an obsession with Genet, yet how to do it? Several times he had the opportunity to come back to the United States and clear his record in this matter, but this did not fit in with his obligations to the "cause of humanity, the most noble of all causes," as Kiffin Rockwell had put it.<sup>22</sup> Could he clear his name by unrelenting effort for that cause?

It seems logical to assume that it was this haunting bit of shame, coupled with his basic idealism and devotion to duty, that drove Genet on. At any rate, he was, from the beginning, one of those rare souls who never spared himself in the slightest. Wrote Parsons:<sup>23</sup>

*From the moment of his arrival at the Escadrille, no pilot in the air did more or better work than little Genet. Despite the foul weather and the consequent*

tary attaché in Parish, and his wife, two of the very few people to whom Genet, with obvious signs of relief, confided his desertion.<sup>24</sup>

Genet's fixation on his duty was also evident in his political attitudes, which find abundant expression in his letters. Having given up so much to fight for France, he, like so many of his comrades in the Lafayette Escadrille, was at a loss to understand America's isolation and neutrality. "I surrender — unconditionally, and in profound disgust," he wrote after learning of Wilson's reelection in 1916 on the slogan "He Kept Us Out of War."<sup>25</sup> Then, in February 1917, having learned of Germany's intention to resume unrestricted submarine warfare, but not yet aware of Wilson's reply, he had written:<sup>26</sup>

*If the U. S. accepts this latest extraordinary dictation from Germany, which is in today's papers . . . I can't see that any genuine self-respecting American*



Genet and fellow Escadrille members making plans to cross "Fritz's" lines.

*scarcity of Boches, he seems to have a nose for smelling them out. He was having tough combats when others were bemoaning the fact that they couldn't even see a Hun.*

This incredible drive never left Genet. Though he enjoyed the nickname of "Smiler," he was never jovial as were friends like Henry S. Jones and Andrew Courtney Campbell, whose sayings were sometimes so clever and delightful that they were inscribed on the barracks walls. Genet too decorated the walls, not with witticisms, but with paintings depicting great aerial duels. Moreover, he refused to indulge in the "favorite sport" of sneaking off for leave in Paris or overstaying "permission" as was customary with most pilots. To him duty was the only thing that mattered and his time "en repos" was spent strictly according to regulations and usually in company with his choice friends, Major (later General) Frank Parker, the American mili-

*should feel justified in holding his head up any more. It's abominable, and goes beyond all bounds of patience . . . It's simply dictation and nothing more, and no self-respecting nation can stand it. Will ours? Damn the Boches! I hope and pray that I may live long enough to make them realize there's one American who refused to be neutral in the face of the confounded audacities.*

Naturally Genet's feelings found vent in his flying. He was, said his commanding officer, one of those individuals who had to be restrained rather than encouraged.<sup>27</sup> He apparently never hesitated to fly, at any time or in any kind of weather. There is no indication that he ever brought down a German airplane, but it was not for lack of effort.

#### **The Death of James R. McConnell**

In late January 1917, the Lafayette Escadrille was

from Cachy to St. Juste in the Aisne Sector. This was in preparation for a large-scale offensive planned for the spring, and for several weeks the squadron advised to keep its presence secret from the Germans. When the Germans began their famous retreat to the Hindenburg Line, aerial activity became intense. The American airmen went out again and again to harass the Germans and to bring back information about troop movements. Needless to say, the squadron won considerable praise for its part in this operation, but not without a price. And this price, when it was paid in blood, proved another tragedy for Edmond Genet.

On March 19, 1917, Genet, Edwin C. Parsons, and another thorough-going idealist named James R. McConnell, were to take part on a morning patrol. McConnell, however, was not well. He had recently spent several months in a military hospital, suffering the combined effects of chronic rheumatism and a badly wrenched back — the latter the result of a landing accident. But learning of the coming push in the Aisne Sector, he literally deserted from the hospital to go back to the front. He naturally insisted that he was all right, but he needed help to dress and had to be lifted bodily into the airplane.<sup>28</sup>

The patrol began badly. Parsons' plane suffered a fouled oil line and crash-landed shortly after take-off. Genet and McConnell, however, continued alone.

Near Jussy, the two airmen ran into a group of three German airplanes. A wild combat followed in which each of the Americans, losing contact with one another, did the best he could against whatever opponent happened to be at hand. Genet, fighting against a two-seater, soon found himself in considerable difficulty. The German gunner, a real marksman, shot away one of Genet's upper wing supports and shattered a guiding rod from the left aileron control, a piece of which struck Genet in the face, leaving a deep gash in the left cheek. Dazed, his vision partially obscured by blood, and flying a damaged airplane, Genet nonetheless refused to retreat. He continued to fight as best he could — at one point he thought he had the German airplane on fire — but at length the German pilot broke away.<sup>29</sup>

Genet waited in the vicinity for another fifteen minutes, hoping to join up with McConnell, but the latter was nowhere to be seen. At last, Genet reluctantly returned home, thinking his comrade had probably done likewise.

McConnell, however, had not returned to the field and four anxious days followed before a cavalry patrol found his wrecked airplane, and near it the airman's lifeless body. The corpse, stripped clean by the retreating Germans, was buried where it fell, for that was the way McConnell had wanted it.<sup>30</sup>

Genet was deeply moved by McConnell's death. He was one to fret over losses anyway, and a vacant chair at the mess table was always a personal disaster to him.<sup>31</sup> (He never enjoyed the stoic outlook of combat fliers who traditionally sing funny songs about death, toast with vigor those who fall, and show uncommon haste in dividing up the goods of those who do not return.) In this particular case, however, there is the possibility that Genet felt some personal guilt. It was not out of character for him to reason that had he done something different, his friend would not have died.

The aerial combat that cost McConnell his life won Genet a citation — his first. An order of the Army referred to him as one who had shown the "finest qualities of ardor and devotion to duty," and praised his work during the German evacuation to the Hindenburg Line. Nor

did the citation fail to mention that Genet had "been wounded in combat" but had "refused to interrupt his service at the front."<sup>32</sup>

### Genet Follows

Lt. de Laage once owned a scrawny, partially paralyzed pup named Archie, but later de Laage was killed in a tragic accident shortly after Genet joined the squadron. McConnell then adopted the dog although most of the airmen, somewhat superstitious because of their constant dealing with chance, spurned the mutt as carrying some sort of a curse. Now McConnell, too, was gone and the pup became more of a pariah than ever. At this point, little Genet took care of Archie. "It was a fatal mistake," one pilot wrote, "for Archie promptly put the curse on him."<sup>33</sup>

On the morning of April 16, Genet and Raoul Lufbery, the famed "ace" of the Lafayette Escadrille, went out on a regular patrol. This particular sortie was uneventful, and after an hour and fifteen minutes in the air, the two airmen returned to Ham — to which the squadron had recently moved — to refuel and rest up before an afternoon mission. Genet went right to bed, saying he was not feeling well. Willis B. Haviland, a young man from St. Paul, Minnesota, wanted to take Genet's place on the afternoon mission, but the latter would not hear of it. Insisting that he was now all right, he took to the air, again with Lufbery as his partner, and flew towards his "rendezvous with death."<sup>34</sup>

As the two airmen passed over the lines between St. Quentin and La Frère, German anti-aircraft shells suddenly burst near Genet's plane. Lufbery noticed the bursts but was not particularly concerned over this common occurrence. ("Archie fire," as it was called, never got out of the nuisance category anyway.) Nor was Lufbery disturbed when he noticed Genet's plane suddenly turn back towards the French lines. "I followed him for three or four minutes to make sure he was taking the right direction," he later reported. "After that I went back to the lines to finish my patrol duty."<sup>35</sup>

Genet, however, made it only part way home. Later that afternoon, some soldiers found his body about five kilometers inside the French lines and, oddly enough, only a few hundred meters from where McConnell had fallen four weeks before. The authorities could only speculate on what had happened. It was certain that the engine had been going full speed when the plane hit the ground, for the plane was completely demolished and little Genet was crushed almost beyond recognition. Best guess was that he had either fainted or been knocked unconscious by an anti-aircraft shell. Though they could never be certain, the authorities ruled for the latter.<sup>36</sup>

Genet's death was another tragic loss for the Lafayette Escadrille, a squadron that had had its fair share of such misfortunes. Inclined to reject "shirkers," the Lafayette pilots had every reason to appreciate the "Smiler." "He was very brave," wrote Lufbery, and "everyone was very fond of him."<sup>37</sup> "For myself," Walter Lovell wrote to a friend, "I have lost a very dear friend and a courageous comrade of combat; the squadron has lost one of the most conscientious pilots that it has ever had or ever will have."<sup>38</sup>

But Genet's death had overtones far beyond his immediate circle of friends. For one thing, it was his lot to be the first American aviator to fall after his beloved country entered the war. Moreover, a multitude of little tragedies and circumstances now began to fall into place. Sometime before his death, Genet had told his fellow Americans: "If I die, wrap me in the French flag, but place the two

together upon my grave, to show that I died for the countries."<sup>39</sup> It was no mere coincidence that those who prepared him for burial found an American flag wrapped carefully around his body.

They buried Edmond Charles Clinton Genet in the military cemetery at Ham during a blinding snowstorm. *Capitaine* Thenault, the commander of the Lafayette Escadrille, delivered the funeral oration in which he referred to Genet as the "Benjamin" of the squadron but a "valiant soldier" nonetheless. "The only solicitude of his chiefs," he added, "was to teach him moderation of flying." Then, as the *Capitaine* said "Amen," the sun pierced the clouds for an instant and illuminated the bier. "It was like a benediction from heaven," wrote one eyewitness.<sup>40</sup>

Genet's death earned him another citation, this one praising him as "a courageous and devoted pilot," not failing to mention, of course, that "he found a glorious death" on the field of honor. It also quoted a short but common phrase that was a favorite with Genet, "*Vive la France, toujours,*" a phrase that was duly inscribed on a beautiful monument erected by a grateful French government in



Monument erected by a grateful France in memory of American volunteers of whom Genet was the first aviator to die.

memory of the American volunteers who fought for France in the Great War.<sup>41</sup>

Naturally many people, both in and out of the military, were stirred by the tragic story of Edmond Genet when it became known. The French Ambassador to the United States, Jules Jusserand, sent his condolences to the Genet family as did many others. President Woodrow Wilson wrote Mrs. Genet: "I congratulate you from the bottom of my heart on the record he made for himself, which must have mixed your grief with genuine pride."<sup>42</sup> Yet of all the letters that followed Edmond's death, none was more welcome to the Genet family than one from the Secretary of the Navy, Josephus Daniels. In part, it read as follows:<sup>43</sup>

*There has but recently been brought to my attention a story full of interest to me, a story glorified by the unselfish patriotism and final sacrifice of an American lad . . . Edmond Charles Clinton Genet, having honorably terminated an enlistment with an ally, since he died on the field of battle . . . the offense (of desertion) is nullified by his conduct in the common cause under the flag of our ally. I myself am honored*

*in having the privilege of deciding the record of Edmond Charles Clinton Genet, ordinary seaman, United States Navy, shall be considered in every respect an honorable one.*

Thus, the one stain that colored Genet's escutcheon throughout his life was wiped clean by his death. Yet in a way, he had suffered needlessly. In the Great War, where idealism and self-sacrifice were more common than most people now realize, his kind was truly appreciated. It is a shame that he did not share his terrible secret with his comrades in the Lafayette Escadrille. How it would have heartened him to know that they would only have cherished him all the more. One of them summed up the sentiments of all when he wrote: "It was desertion with a noble purpose, from a safe and easy berth at home to a post of danger in the trenches of the Western Front."<sup>44</sup> This, they could have assured him, was triumph, not tragedy, something all well-meaning men of that day could appreciate, as indeed they did.

#### REFERENCES

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- <sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, xii.
- <sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, xiii.
- <sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, 3-4.
- <sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, xviii.
- <sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, 35.
- <sup>10</sup>Paul A. Rockwell, *American Fighters in the Foreign Legion* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1930), 116-120.
- <sup>11</sup>Edwin C. Parsons, *The Great Adventure* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, Doran and Co., Inc., 1937), 208
- <sup>12</sup>Genet, *War Letters*, 80.
- <sup>13</sup>James Norman Hall and Charles B. Nordhoff, *The Lafayette Flying Corps*, Vol. I (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1920)
- <sup>14</sup>Genet, *War Letters*, 181.
- <sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, 177, 179.
- <sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, 209.
- <sup>17</sup>Personal interview with Admiral (Ret.) Edwin C. Parsons, Osprey, Florida, 29 Oct 1959. It is Admiral Parsons' personal recollection that Genet first suggested the name.
- <sup>18</sup>Parsons, *The Great Adventure*, 204.
- <sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*, 205.
- <sup>20</sup>*Ibid.*, 206.
- <sup>21</sup>Genet, *War Letters*, 187-188.
- <sup>22</sup>Quoted in Rockwell, ix.
- <sup>23</sup>Parsons, *The Great Adventure*, 209.
- <sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*, Genet, *War Letters*, 190-191.
- <sup>25</sup>Genet, *War Letters*, 234.
- <sup>26</sup>*Ibid.*, 278.
- <sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*, 329.
- <sup>28</sup>Rockwell, 251; personal interview with Colonel Paul A. Rockwell, Asheville, North Carolina, 1 Jan 1960.
- <sup>29</sup>Rockwell, *American Fighters*, 252.
- <sup>30</sup>Nieuport 125, *Journal de Marche*, 19 Mars 1917. This document is the official log or diary of the famed Lafayette Escadrille. See also Rockwell, *American Fighters*, 253.
- <sup>31</sup>Personal interviews with Admiral Edwin C. Parsons and Henry S. Jones, Osprey, Florida, 29 Oct 1960.
- <sup>32</sup>Hall and Nordhoff, I, 241.
- <sup>33</sup>Parsons, *The Great Adventure*, 258.
- <sup>34</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>35</sup>Quoted in Genet, *War Letters*, 321.
- <sup>36</sup>Edmond Charles Genet, *Etat Signaletique et des Services, Classe 1915, Numero L.M.: II. 308*. A copy of this document, which is a portion of Genet's official war record, was graciously provided the author by the French Ministry of War.
- <sup>37</sup>Quoted in Genet, *War Letters*, 322.
- <sup>38</sup>Quoted in *Ibid.*, 323.
- <sup>39</sup>Genet, *War Letters*, 324-330.
- <sup>40</sup>Parsons, *The Great Adventure*, 259.
- <sup>41</sup>Rockwell, *American Fighters*, 354; Hall and Nordhoff, I, 241.
- <sup>42</sup>Quoted in Genet, *War Letters*, 325.
- <sup>43</sup>Quoted in Rockwell, *American Fighters*, 353.
- <sup>44</sup>Parsons, *The Great Adventure*, 208.