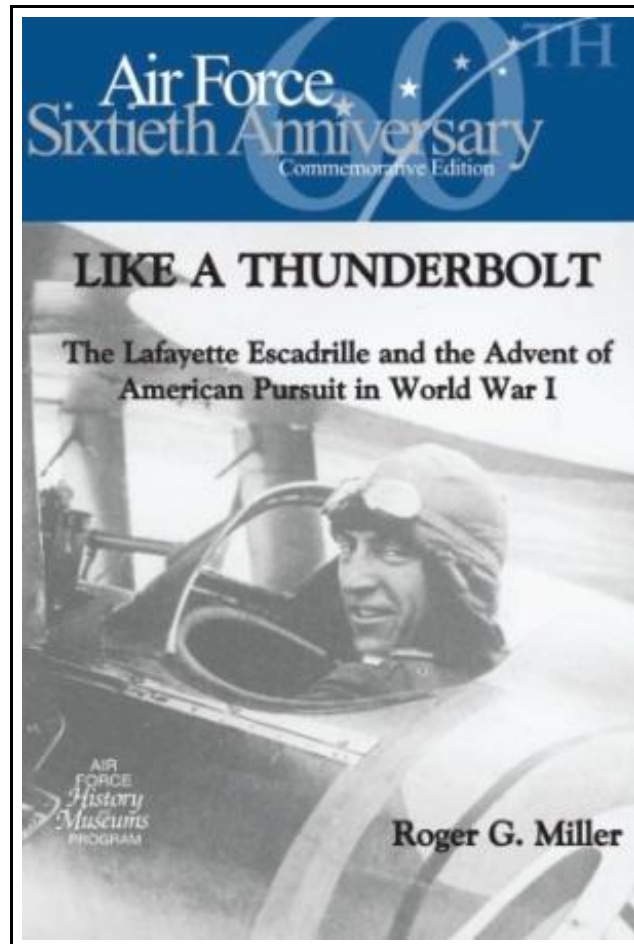


Like a Thunderbolt: The Lafayette Escadrille and the Advent of American Pursuit in World War I



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(Laron Cartwright)

LIKE A THUNDERBOLT: THE LAFAYETTE ESCADRILLE AND THE ADVENT OF AMERICAN PURSUIT IN WORLD WAR I

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CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform. Paperback. Book Condition: New. This item is printed on demand. Paperback. 74 pages. Dimensions: 8.9in. x 5.9in. x 0.4in. On the morning of May 18, 1916, a German LVG appeared in the sky over Thann in the Vosges region, near the ancient French city of Nancy. The LVG was a well-armed, two-seat observation airplane and the Vosges a quiet sector of the Western Front, in stark contrast to the merciless slaughter taking place to the north at Verdun. Normally the two airmen could expect to do their reconnaissance with little interruption, but on this day they had left luck behind. A speck appeared in the sky to the west and rapidly grew into an enemy pursuit aircraft, an avion de chasse, an agile, single-seat Nieuport. The Germans, busy at their trade, failed to see the enemy draw near. A veteran hunter or more cautious pilot might have seized the opportunity to surprise the LVG and launch an attack out of the sun or from behind a cloud, but this one approached directly, without guile. Suddenly aware of the danger, the observer seized his machine gun and began firing while the pilot turned the airplane toward the safety of the German lines. The chasse pilot closed to point blank range and, just as a collision appeared imminent, fired a quick burst, then swerved away. The encounter was over that quickly. Both the observer and pilot collapsed; the LVG rolled and plunged to earth; the Nieuport banked away leaving a plume of smoke to mark the scene of combat. French troops witnessed the brief fight and by the time the Nieuport reached its field at Luxeuil-les-Bains had confirmed the kill. It was an auspicious event. Everything about the victorious aircraft said France except the pilots name. Kiffen Yates Rockwell...



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