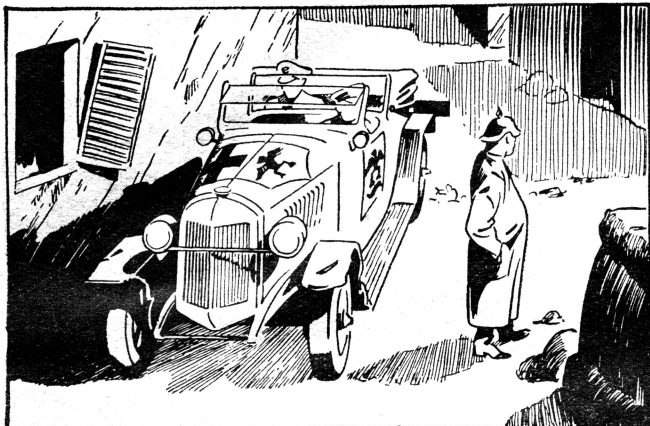


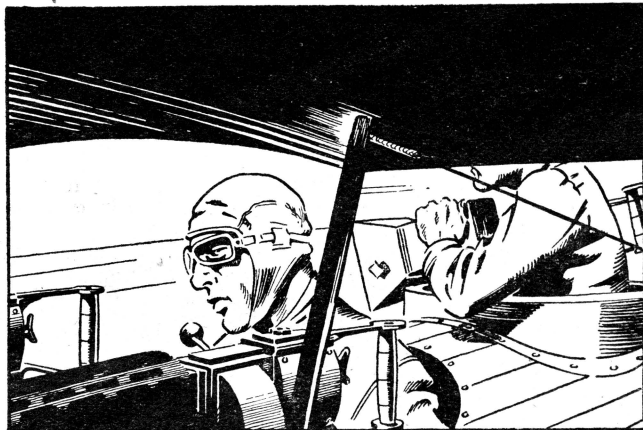
They Had What It Takes

XXIX—ERNST UDET—ACE OF THE BLACK CROSS

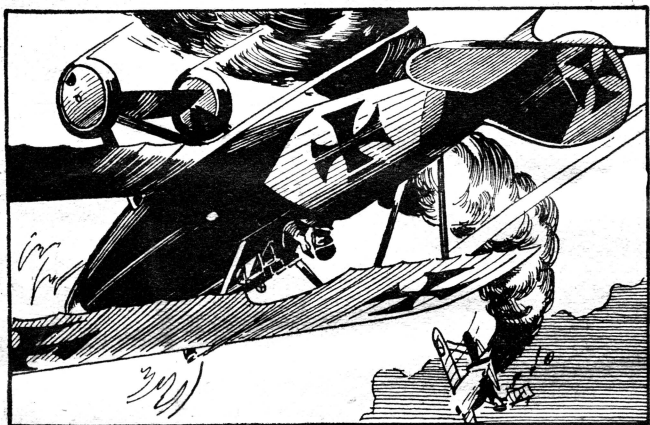
By ALDEN McWILLIAMS



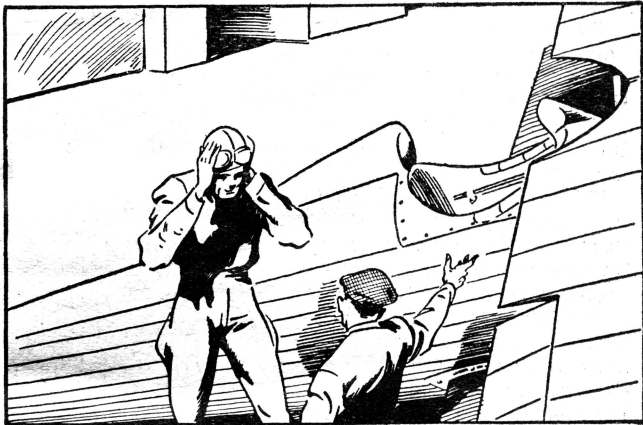
1—Born in Frankfurt, Germany, in '96, little Ernst Udet had no thoughts of ever becoming a great war ace. In 1913 he passed examinations that were given by the Government to serve one year as a volunteer. Was accepted for war duty in 1914 to drive a staff car of the 26th Infantry Division of the Kaiser's Imperial Army "someplace at the front."



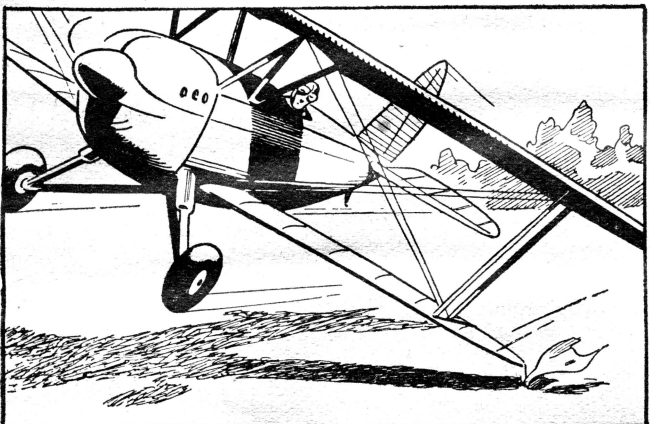
2—At his own expense, Udet completed private flying lessons in June, 1915. He was then commissioned as a reserve pilot. Finally, young Ernst got into the "scrap" as a pilot for the Artillery Flying Corps. His duties while with the artillery division were to take photos of the enemy lines and to direct shell fire from his two place observation job.



3—He was promoted to Lieutenantcy in 1917, and was transferred to a pursuit squadron. Early in 1918, Udet was made assistant leader of Squadron 11, von Richthofen's outfit. In June of the same year, he was made leader of Squadron 4 and was promoted to 1st Lieutenant. His official record of 62 planes shot down is second only to von Richthofen's score.



4—Discharged from the Army at the end of the war, Udet became active in automobile construction. His interests, however, soon turned to sport-plane building. And from 1922 to '25 he was technical head of the Udet Flugzeugbau. After that, he merged with the Bavarian Airplane works and was an official in the joint company.



5—In 1926 Ernst Udet turned to aerobatics—his pet stunt being to pick a handkerchief off the ground with a small hook fastened to the wing-tip of his ship. Between demonstrations at various air meets, he spent his time in flight expeditions to Africa, Greenland and other countries, to further the spirit of aviation with thrilling demonstrations.



6—In '35 he was appointed Colonel of the German Air Force. In 1936 Udet became Inspector of Pursuit flyers, as well as Chief Technical Advisor of the Reich's Air Ministry. In '37 Ernst was promoted to Major General, and received the Order of *Pour Le Merit*, 1st class Iron Cross, Honor Cross, Wuerttemberg Service Cross—*whew!*—and others!