



BRAVO BLERIOT!



The Daily Graphic, London Monday July 26, 1909

I love the idea of flying. But when I am inside an airplane I count the minutes left to my destination. The safety of air travel, the technological leaps in aviation, do not change my perception that the only safe place to be is touching the ground.

I have travelled on old Russian planes in Vietnam and North Korea, over the Taklimakan dessert of China and in Russia itself. My friends call me an adventurer. And I always think, how can you be an adventurer nowadays when they tell you the exact time when you'll land at destination, the temperature, the weather forecast and you can see the landing speed in the screen in front of you?

But this was not the case about a century ago. Look at this crazy Frenchman, Monsieur Bleriot, the guy that made the first international flight in history between France and England, in 1909. Bleriot flew without navigation instruments and through fog across the Channel with a machine that had only a little more power than a lawnmower. Why did he do it? Who knows.

Writing about this "epoch-making achievement", the newspaper at the time guessed rightly that in the future hundreds of planes would cross the channel even, perhaps one day, carrying passengers from one country to the other. What a treat!