



2 JULY HD

Homage to Louis Blériot

A few days before the anniversary of Louis Blériot's Channel crossing on 25 July 1909, nearly 230 mementoes assembled by his grandson are being dispersed at Drouot by Morand & Morand. It will take a little longer than the half-hour flight between Calais and Dover to parade these trophies of the father of aviation. Honour to whom honour is due: the eyes of all enthusiasts will be trained on a model of the type XI plane used for his exploit, reconstructed from a damaged plane (€30,000/50,000). As we know, it took the engineer around fifteen flying machines and no fewer than thirty-two crashes during two years of tests to build a monoplane that worked. The Blériot XI succeeded in obliterating its inventor's nickname, "the prince of bad luck", as witness all kinds of objects and posters celebrating the pilot, together with various personal mementoes. Meanwhile, a two-seater Blériot-Whippet cycle car of 1920 (€12,000/15,000), of which there are only two known examples, illustrates the enterprising temperament of this pioneer. *Sophie Reyssat*