

# Flashback

## The Image Catchers



When America entered World War I, military aerial photography virtually was unknown, but it emerged as a major weapon. The Army Air Service in 1917 created a Photographic Section, and pilots flew regular photo sorties. A camera was mounted in the fuselage and was operated by a photographer called an air ob-

server. Here an AO reaches for a mission camera before takeoff. Aerial cameras yielded vital intel on German troop movements, fortifications, and logistics. During the Argonne Offensive late in the war, the Photographic Section produced 56,000 prints in four days.