

THE IMMORTAL FEW

COMMEMORATING THE BATTLE OF
BRITAIN AND THE AIRCRAFT OF THE
BATTLE OF BRITAIN MEMORIAL FLIGHT

Martin Bowman

THE IMMORTAL FEW is a commemoration of the Battle of Britain and the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight. It covers the perilous weeks in 1940 during which 'The Few' thwarted the Nazis in the prelude to their planned invasion of Britain. The book includes photographs and personal reminiscences from that critical period, along with the complete text of Churchill's epic speech on 'The Few' made on 20 August 1940.

The Immortal Few principally celebrates, through the incomparable photography of Martin Bowman, the surviving aircraft from the Battle of Britain and later war years now represented by the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight. As Air Chief Marshal Sir Michael Graydon says in his Foreword to the book: *The Battle of Britain Memorial Flight is not just a collection of iconic aircraft. It is a national statement, and it is a national treasure. A statement because it reminds the world that freedom must be fought for and was those 70 years ago when Great Britain stood alone. And a statement, too, that we do not forget the sacrifice of all those who flew then and throughout World War 2.*

Seven decades have passed. Yet our nation's pride in the heroism of those airmen lives on. Indeed the memorial flame burns brighter still, even as 'The Few' grow fewer. In stories, books and films, through Memorials and annual Remembrance Services, their brave exploits are commemorated. In the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight we have a permanent and stirring reminder of the aircraft that carried us through the Battle of Britain and in the perilous years that followed, on to the ultimate victory.

HALSGROVE CATALOGUE

The full Halsgrove catalogue is available free or visit www.halsgrove.com for regional and category listings of available titles.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

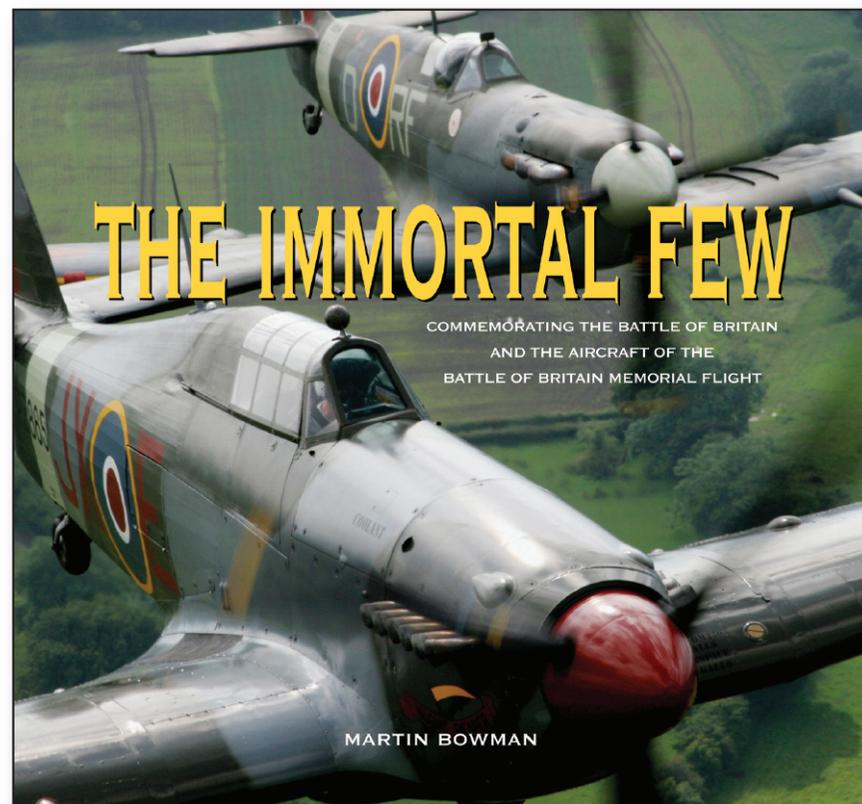
Martin Bowman's interest in WWII and contemporary British and US aviation was fired by the proliferation of US and RAF air bases in his native East Anglia. This is his 100th book. He has authored books and articles on military and commercial aviation as well as photographic books on a variety of subjects since his first book, *Fields of Little America*, was published in 1977. All have been built up from many years of painstaking and fact-finding research, interviews and correspondence with contributors in America, Europe and throughout the world. His quest has taken him to all parts of the world, to over 25 countries, including the USA, Africa, Australia and Russia. He has flown into the world's war zones of Mogadishu, Somalia and Bosnia and he has participated in German and USAF air/land and night air/drop missions aboard C-160 and C-130 Hercules aircraft. He has flown in many other military aircraft including B-17 Flying Fortresses, the Liberator, Lancaster, Dakota and the Canadian Snowbirds as well as landing aboard and being catapulted from, the USS John F Kennedy in the C-2 Greyhound during an embark in the Mediterranean. In 2004 he became one of the few Englishmen to fly in a B-52 Stratofortress. He has produced several photographic books including, for Halsgrove, *Airs and Graces*, which features a collection of his evocative air-to-air shots, *Norfolk: Above And Beyond*, *Echoes of East Anglia*, *Memories of the Air War in East Anglia* and *Ghost Fields of East Anglia*. For many years he has been a frequent contributor of photographic and written articles to aviation journals in Britain, the United States and Australia. In 1999 he was appointed as an official researcher for DERA. Martin lives in Norwich, Norfolk, England.

Trade sales:

Andrew Stirling – Mobile 07971 572468
andrews@halsgrove.com

Halsgrove Publishing
Halsgrove House,
Ryelands Industrial Estate,
Bagley Road, Wellington,
Somerset TA21 9PZ
Tel: 01823 653777
Fax: 01823 216796
www.halsgrove.com
e-mail: sales@halsgrove.com

HALSGROVE TITLE INFORMATION



With a Foreword by Air Chief Marshal Sir Michael Graydon GCB CBE

Format: Hardback, 144 pages, 260x270mm,
includes over 150 superb colour photographs.
Price: £24.99
ISBN: 978 0 85704 069 5
Imprint: Halsgrove
Published: August 2010



**Great Books from
your Local Bookseller**

THE IMMORTAL FEW



The crew of Lancaster 'Phantom of the Ruhr', 1943.



Battle of Britain Memorial Flight Lancaster 'City of Lincoln'.



Spitfire Vb carrying WWII Polish Squadron insignia.



Flight Sergeant Urwin climbs from his aircraft during the Battle of Britain.

Martin Bowman's superb photography fills the book with wonderful images of aircraft in flight, such as those shown on the right.



Example of a double-page spread.

again area bombing, with a large amount of casualties and damage inflicted. We were beginning to get a little confident now, with our navigators keeping us on time and track and hence in the middle of the stream, and not bombarding during the bombing run with precision, and we were obtaining good target photos. Our next trip was another daylight one to the Dutch coast to attack the same batteries as before, also successful.

Mickey took us for her last operation on 6th November to bomb the Merwede Canal at Grootenbroek. The marking from last difficulty in finding the target due to low cloud. We were called down to bomb at low level and I recall entering full flap and when it came to make an low height in now. We were one of the few Lancs that bombed before the Master Bomber abandoned the raid due to low cloud.

On 9th November 1943 we flew Mickey to Northover, 1500 ft high from Northover. Mickey must have been retired from operations then because along with a pilot and a landing gear man to be loaded with Red Cross parcels to airmen the number that could be carried to relieve allied POWs as they were released by the advancing British troops in Europe. Mickey remained there till 30 November.

When we travelled in a Lancaster piloted by T.J. Greenfield on fly her back on Northover, some other crew must have flown her away to 1050 ft after this, as possible we were on time. We were allocated our own Q/R Mission on 14 December. What a difference to the 'When doing one line at one time with no bombs and limited fuel. I spent the shortest an half of fuel and we were flying back in our own. She behaved like a queen for. We had now completed 12 trips and flew the now Mickey although we was ever passed on the next to the end of our year except for a few weeks in Jersey and Edinburg when she was being repaired after getting shot up and having a noisy landing. I returned to Australia in full with the possibility of earning a second tour as part of 'Tiger Force', the new name of No. 5 Group, bombing Japan. The Army Rank presented this.

Flying Officer Frank Morrison RAAF, Lancaster III pilot, No. 100 TFW Mustangs, 61 Squadron, 1943

PHANTOM OF THE RUHR

There have been, according to various times, 31 Lancasters that formed the 100 Squadron or more during their wartime careers. All except Queen's for Super, which flew 137 operations and was the first squadron in RAF Mustangs from 1942 and 1947, when it was put in permanent display at the RAF Museum, Hendon, were successively reduced to empty after the end of the war. It also later wartime operations have been represented by the RAAF Lancaster 'Mick Spang', which flew 140 ops, 'Bill Gray' (long) and 'Midge' (in display at North Air Museum, Winton) and 'Mickie' (in display at North Air Museum, Winton).

In 2007 the RAAF Lancaster emerged from its winter storage operating wearing the dual markings of 100 and 500 Squadrons, Lancaster III 'E' (Phantom of the Ruhr). The post-war show Phantom as would have been at the end of its service life on 100 Squadron, with 100 operations recorded in two years of 73 and 270.

It was the first time 'RF D', the letters of 100 Squadron are painted on the red nose side. As far as we know, Phantom is the first Lancaster 121 ever made.

RF D was built by A.V. Roe Ltd at their Newton Heath works in Manchester as part of a 1943 production order for 620 aircraft built at ML 118 aircraft ordered by Martin 2017, 20 engine respectively. The new Lancaster was delivered to 'E' Flight in 100 Squadron of No. 1 Group Bomber Command at RAF Waddington (Grimsby) on 31 May 1943. The aircraft received the squadron colors of 100 and inherited the individual letter 'A' for Apple but in early July 1943 it became 'E' Regt. RF D completed at least 20 sorties on 100 Squadron, which was to receive its permanent status at Waddington and North East, Winton, until the end of the war. The first Phantom of the Ruhr's 20 ops on 100 Squadron was flown on 31.12.1943 with Sergeant