

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.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

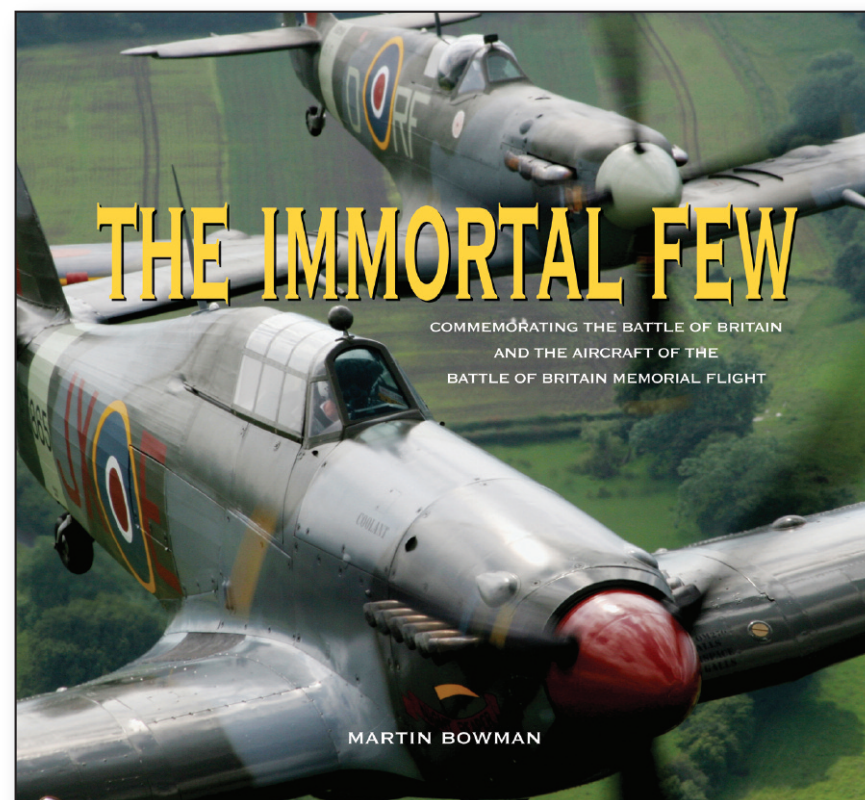
Martin Bowman's interest in WWII and contemporary British and US aviation was fired by the proliferation of US and RAF air bases in his native East Anglia. This is his 100th book. He has authored books and articles on military and commercial aviation as well as photographic books on a variety of subjects 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.

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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.