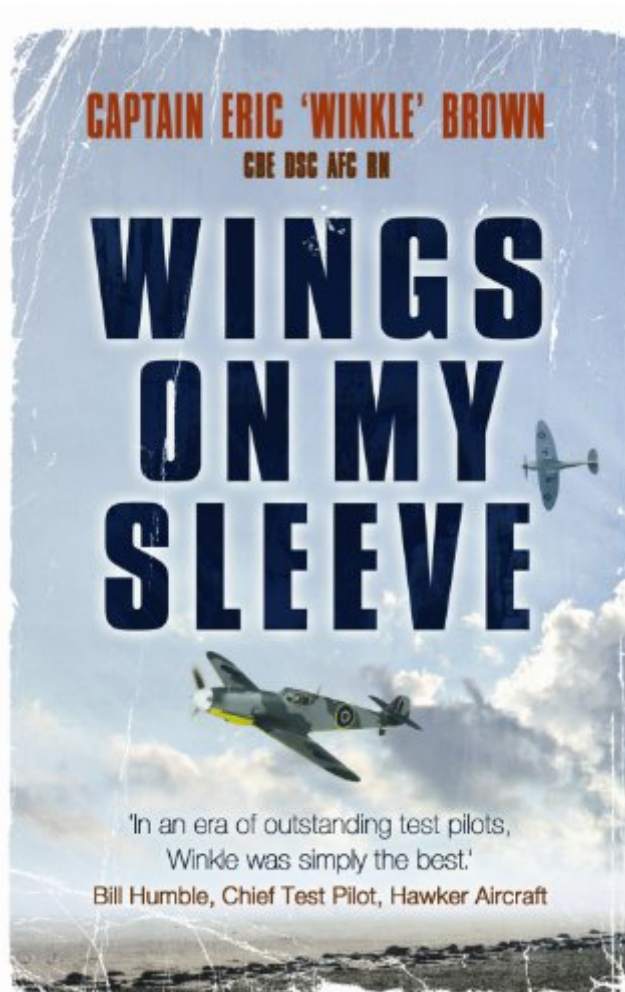


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Wings On My Sleeve: The World's Greatest Test Pilot Tells His Story



Synopsis

The autobiography of one of the greatest pilots in history. In 1939 Eric Brown was on a University of Edinburgh exchange course in Germany, and the first he knew of the war was when the Gestapo came to arrest him. They released him, not realising he was a pilot in the RAF volunteer reserve: and the rest is history. Eric Brown joined the Fleet Air Arm and went on to be the greatest test pilot in history, flying more different aircraft types than anyone else. During his lifetime he made a record-breaking 2,407 aircraft carrier landings and survived eleven plane crashes. One of Britain's few German-speaking airmen, he went to Germany in 1945 to test the Nazi jets, interviewing (among others) Hermann Goering and Hanna Reitsch. He flew the suicidally dangerous Me 163 rocket plane, and tested the first British jets. *WINGS ON MY SLEEVE* is 'Winkle' Brown's incredible story.

Book Information

File Size: 6346 KB

Print Length: 308 pages

Page Numbers Source ISBN: 0753822091

Publisher: Weidenfeld & Nicolson (September 18, 2008)

Publication Date: September 18, 2008

Sold by: Amazon Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B002VCR000

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #300,652 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #82

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Customer Reviews

In this book, Captain Brown is sitting next to you and telling you the incredible story of his life. While his writing style will probably not win him any prize (being the most decorated FAA pilot in history he certainly doesn't need any!), the book is written in an easy to follow conversational style. It is just amazing how flying 8 different aircraft (mostly prototypes) in one day can be part of your daily routine, and that's what Captain Brown did for many years. To say he is a walking encyclopedia of aircraft in the 1939-1970 period would be an understatement, and he has the distinction of being one of the very few who have flown almost all major types in WWII of any air force - that is not only UK, but also US, Germany, Italy, Japan...In just shy of 300 pages you cannot go into every detail when presenting a lifespan of interesting adventures, so this book is a good introduction into the human being behind all the records, and puts many things into perspective. It certainly also serves as a good companion to Captain Brown's many other books (if you can find them), which are usually devoted to more delimited topics and thus enter into much more detail. There are also a few very interesting pictures, correctly captioned and wonderfully accompanying the text. Regarding the binding (see other reviews), the book is rather heavy for its small size, and the binding is a bit narrow, but nothing that will get in the way of an extraordinary reading experience. You would probably need quite some harsh treatment to get a few pages loose, so if you open the book and pages do fall out, then you should return it! I seldom recommend any book as a "must have", but this one is one of these that any aircraft enthusiast simply cannot miss - highly recommended.

If you are in aviation, have been in aviation or have an interest in aviation, this is a fascinating read. It helps to understand some aviation terms to fully enjoy the book and it's told in event by event form rather than story form. Eric Brown has flown more types of aircraft and made more carrier landings than anyone and the man is still alive. After you read his flying adventures you'll wonder how he lived through them. His interviews of captured German staff is eye opening and gives a great insight into their political beliefs and loyalty to their leaders. The pictures of unusual WW II aircraft alone are worth the purchase of the book. It's a little pricey for a paperback but it's a book you'll likely want to keep for reference. I'm a former career pilot and picked up a lot of previously unknown, to me, aviation history. After reading the book I believe that Eric Brown is likely the most talented and luckiest pilot to ever live. And he lived at precisely the right time and place(s) to experience the age of aviation.

This is a wonderful story by someone who isn't well known in the US. Winkle Brown flew more different types of aircraft than anyone in history. And the types he flew were incredible. Almost all of the

WW2 fighters from each of the combatants. Including early jets and the German ME-163 rocket fighter. He was selected to fly the Miles supersonic research aircraft, which probably would have beaten the US X-1 through the sound barrier had it not been cancelled. His evaluations of these aircraft are of particular value, as he could compare each's performance with their contemporaries. What a wealth of information! Unfortunately, I couldn't give this review 5 stars because the book binding is so bad. My first copy came apart within the first few readings and I have been VERY careful with the second. It looks like the binder just didn't use the right type, or amount of glue.

Eric "Winkle" Brown started his professional career in 1940 in the British Fleet Air Arm. His first ever carrier landing, at the age of 21, was as a member of a small group of pilots testing whether it was possible to operate on a modified banana boat with half the landing distance of a purpose-built British aircraft carrier and half as many arrestor wires. His career continued in that vein for the next thirty years. This is the autobiography of an exceptional pilot who had a unique career (where unique is used in its original meaning of the only one of its kind). Nobody has ever flown as many aircraft types, nobody has ever made as many carrier landings and few have ever been in as many situations where survival depended on skill and split-second judgment. Added to that he spoke fluent German and, amongst many other things, interviewed Goering. If the term had been coined when Captain Brown was still flying, he would certainly have been said to have "The Right Stuff". This book is the rare case where the blurb is accurate, perhaps even understates the extraordinary content of the book. It is also very well, and very modestly, written. I could not put it down. If you are interested in WW2, or aircraft, or courage, or exceptional people then read this book.

He was an amazing pilot, a pilots pilot. Anyone who has taken the controls in an aircraft will be delighted with his descriptions of World War II, and his test flying of some 400 different types of aircraft. Get the hard cover version if you can, as the soft cover version is extremely poorly bound, but if on the soft cover is available, its still well worth getting.

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