

SPITFIRE AND HURRICANE TRIBUTE

Royal Air Force Battle of Britain Memorial Flight



Foreword



by Air Chief Marshal Sir Alasdair Steedman GCB, CBE, DFC, FRAeS, CBIM

Air Chief Marshal Sir Alasdair Steedman was an 18-year old schoolboy when the Battle of Britain was fought. However, at the age of 20 he was a fighter pilot, initially flying Mustangs in Scotland, and then Hurricanes and Spitfires in the North African and Italian campaigns from 1942 to 1944. He well remembers the versatile Hurricane — he flew both the Mk IIb and the IIc 'Hurri-bombers' — and its thoroughbred companion the Spitfire. It was whilst flying a Spitfire Mk VIII on operations in Italy in June 1944 that he was shot down behind enemy lines. He evaded capture and the following year he was again flying Spitfires, this time on tactical and photographic reconnaissance operations in Europe. In all he was flown at least nine different Marks of Spitfire. His remarkable career, which has taken him all over the world, culminated in his appointment as the United Kingdom's Military Representative in NATO in 1977. Following retirement from active service he became Controller of the Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund in July 1981.

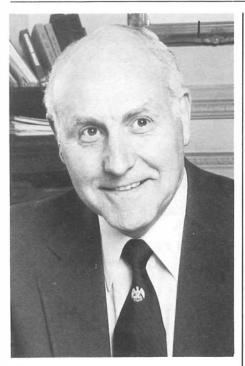
There are several reasons why the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight has a special place in my affections. It was watching the Battle of Britain over London in 1940 that inspired me to want to fly and to join the Air Force later that year. I then had the immense privilege and pleasure of operating both Hurricane and Spitfire aircraft many Marks of Spitfire — in operations during the war. Now the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight is the source of many donations to the Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund, of which I have the privilege to be the Controller, and 50% of the proceeds from this book will come to the Fund.

It is marvellous that those wonderful aircraft which played such a major part in gaining victory in the Second World War should still be flying under the dedicated care of the personnel of the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight.

I warmly commend this excellent book to all interested in aviation and a key part of our history.

Je assain Gedman

Foreword	2
The Battle of Britain	3
A Living Memorial The Story of the Memorial Flight	6
The Hurricane Story	12
The Spitfire Story	16
Immortal Power The Story of the Merlin	22
Maintaining the Heritage The Engineer's Story	26
Displaying the Heritage The Pilot's Story	31
The Story of the Aircraft	35
Commemoration	
Squadron Codes Carried on Memorial Flight Aircraft	45



Above:

Air Chief Marshal Sir Alasdair Steedman GCB, CBE, DFC, Controller of the Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund. Acknowledgements

The Battle of Britain Memorial Flight gratefully acknowledges the help and co-operation of the following, without whom this book would not have been possible: Campbell Gunston, Flight Historian; The Spitfire Society; British Aerospace Kingston, Preston, Salmesbury, Weybridge; Rolls-Royce; Air Historical Branch; Public Records Office; Donna.

Cover:

Hurricane PZ865 with Spitfire P7350.

Richard Winslade

Rear cover:

Seven Spitfires were assembled for the IAT 1983. AB910 is seen here.

Allan Burney

First published 1986

ISBN 0 7110 1668 2

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photo-copying, recording or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission from the Publisher in writing.

© Battle of Britain Memorial Flight 1986

Published by Ian Allan Ltd, Shepperton, Surrey; and printed by Ian Allan Printing Ltd at their works at Coombelands in Runnymede, England

