



The Mighty Eighth in WWII (Aviation History)

Graham Smith

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In May 1942, five months after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, the first airplanes and crews of the newly formed Eighth U.S. Army Air Force arrived in Britain. Over the next two years their numbers swelled to a massive and powerful force of bombers and fighters described by one USAAF General as 'the greatest striking force the world has ever known'.

They occupied no less than 67 airfields in England and added a huge offensive capability to RAF Bomber Command. The Americans were dedicated to high altitude precision bombing in close formation and in daylight. The RAF, who had been bombing Germany at night since 1940, were joined by the Eighth in July 1943 to provide a round-the-clock bombardment.

This book tells the story of the Mighty Eighth during three years of bitter fighting in the smoke-filled skies above Germany and Occupied Europe. It was a harsh, harrowing and costly battle with 26,000 American airmen killed, 1,900 seriously injured and 6,300 aircraft destroyed. Their missions included the bombing of U-boat bases, oil refineries, railway marshalling yards, airfields in France, Holland and Belgium and general industrial targets throughout Germany. On D-Day their task was to destroy Normandy beach defences as the Allied troops stormed ashore.

Graham Smith has written a book of heroism and high drama. It is a fitting tribute to the mighty war machine that made such an enormous contribution to winning the war.



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