



Log of the Liberators: An Illustrated History of the B-24

Steve Birdsall

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Though less gloriously remembered than the B-17 Flying Fortress, the B-24 Liberator bomber played perhaps an even greater role in the Allied victory in World War II. Flown by the Army Air Force in every theater of operations, the B-24 became the workhorse heavy bomber of the global conflict despite the ugly duckling reputation given it by its detractors. This is the illustrated history of that rugged aircraft which eventually saw service in the air forces of Australia, Canada, China, Czechoslovakia, England, France, Holland and South Africa besides the USA. Between its first production in 1939 and the close of the war in 1945 over 18,000 of the B-24's and the Navy equivalents, the Privateers, flew on combat missions that earned them a permanent place in the annals of military history. From the blackened skies above Ploesti to the crumbling defenses of the Japanese homeland, from the arid deserts of Africa to the endless water of the Pacific, the Liberators seemed to be everywhere the action was. Described here, the record of their performance in those different campaigns is a fitting tribute to the heroic airmen who flew them, bringing destruction to the enemy's war-making capacity frequently at the cost of their own lives. But the story of the B-24's does not end with planes and crews, and the book also acknowledges the contributions of the literally millions of men and women who were involved in building and maintaining the Liberators throughout their long career. Highlighting the story are over 250 black-and-white combat photographs and four pages of full-color paintings by the noted aviation artist, John Preston, illustrating B-24's in combat markings and camouflage as well as the different units that manned them. In addition, an appendix of Liberator Production Number Lists and Specifications, an Aircraft Index and a General Index, and a list of veterans interviewed by the author make this an unmatched combat log of the most versatile bomber of World War II.

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