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Malta: Spitfire Pilot: Ten Weeks of Terror April - June 1942



Par Denis Barnham
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Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurMalta in the summer of 1942, a Malta wide open to air attack from the Germans and Italians and defended by a handful of Spitfires and a few anti-aircraft guns. Denis Barnham, a young and inexperienced flight lieutenant, spent ten hectic weeks on this indomitable island; he left a well-ordered English aerodrome for the chaos and disillusionment of Luqa. His task was to engage the overwhelming number of enemy bombers, usually protected by fighter escorts, and shoot down as many as possible. The Spitfires were bomb-scarred and battered; often they could only get two or three in the air together and the

airfields were riddled with bomb craters, but they managed to keep going and they made their mark on enemy operations. The author has written a powerful account of his experiences in Malta starting with his trip out in an American aircraft carrier through the ceaseless battle and turmoil during the desperate defense of the island, until his departure by air back to England, having seen the reinforcements safely landed and the tide of battle turning. His descriptions and illustrations of the air action are thrilling, but terrifying. It is at times a very grim story but told with humor and compassion to bring, arguably, one of the best firsthand accounts of aerial combat ever written. *Revue de presse* His words reflect honestly and vividly, the sheer terror of flying from Malta at that time. --*Britain at War* The book is based on the diary he kept through this horrendous period, and throughout it shines with an artist's eye for scene and detail. He is a gifted observer and a good writer. The only volume that I can compare it with in that sense is Geoffrey Wellum's *First Light*, which is of course one of the best known tales of a WW2 fighter pilot... Well written, providing insight into a part of WW2 that has not been as well covered as the European theatre, and with the added bonus of some of Barnham's accomplished sketches to enhance the prose, this book has much to commend it. --Paul Smiddy

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