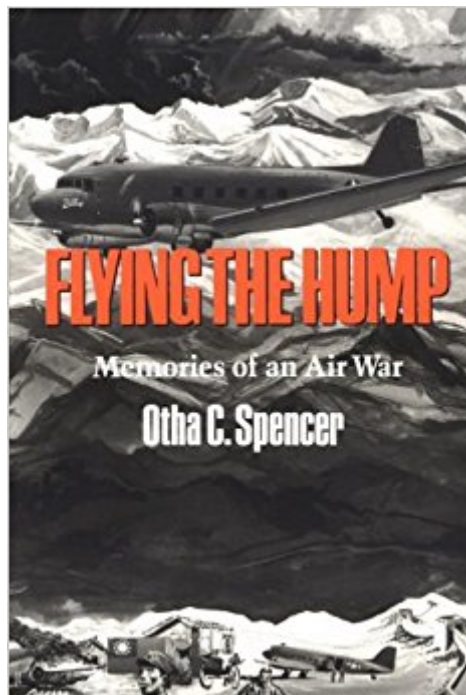




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Flying The Hump: Memories Of An Air War (Williams-Ford Texas A&M University Military History Series)



Synopsis

Noted historian Theodore White called it "the most dangerous, terrifying, barbarous aerial transport run in the world . . . the skyway to Hell." This is the story of the air war over the Himalaya Mountains, in World War II, when Japan and China were locked in a death struggle. China was completely cut off from the world, and the transport planes of the Allies flew day and night missions for three and one half years over the Himalayas to keep China supplied with the needs of war. This was called the Hump. Gen. Claire Chennault's Flying Tigers crossed the Hump to outgun the Japanese Zeros in some of the most spectacular air battles of World War II. More than one thousand airmen and six hundred transport planes were lost, flying air routes that were so dangerous they were called the "aluminum trail." The B-29 Superfortress flew four-day missions across the Hump to bomb the Japanese mainland. The Hump was the epic of World War II in the air. This is a scholarly and historically accurate description of the development of air power in China, explaining the need for the Himalayan airlift and recording the important dates and events of the war over the Hump against Japan. Otha C. Spencer was a Hump pilot and recounts his own experiences and those of the men who flew the planes through the world's worst weather over the world's highest mountains. Dozens of photographs, most taken by Hump airmen, show the glory and tragedy of this great air war. This book will be an important addition to the libraries of the general reader as well as the military historian.

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Customer Reviews

When the occupying Japanese cut off China from outside contact during WW II, the Americans quickly established "the Hump," an airlift of troops and supplies over the Himalayas designed to keep Chiang Kai-shek's army in the fight. Spencer, journalism professor emeritus at East Texas State University, who flew the Hump, reveals that enemy aircraft destroyed fewer planes than did such natural hazards as storms and violent winds. He chronicles the successful efforts of Air Force General William H. Tunner to reduce losses by standardizing maintenance inspections and imposing strict regulations about the use of oxygen masks. (Oxygen deprivation was the "silent killer" of many pilots, who considered it a sign of weakness to wear masks below a certain altitude.) Spencer's comprehensive history, a terrific collection of flying stories, profiles pilots, navigators, maintenance men and weather forecasters against the background of Allied strategy in the China-Burma-India theater. Copyright 1992 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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I purchased this book because of the reviews for a 90 year old friend who flew the Hump. He called me to say he had been "flying the Hump" the last two nights as he read it since it put him back to

that time it was so accurate. I've never heard him so excited about something but he couldn't put the book down! I'm very pleased he liked it so much so can't wait for him to finish so I can read it!

I was surprised to find that Spencer is a good writer. Good writing is hard to find in this genre. He also gives a larger geopolitical picture of the era. His journalism experience shows. I read this as part of some research I am doing on an uncle that served in the China-Burma-India theater. It was very informative.

I gave it 5 stars because it was very good at showing the hardships and danger to those flying the hump, a forgotten and little dwelled on chapter of the war. The author gave enough history of the CBI theater that you got to understand the big picture.

Very interesting, they were truly brave men.

Good info, Great stories, just not enough of them.

Vern Interesting

excellent book on the C.B.I. theater

So many comments seem to jump out at me as I recalled my brother relating a few of his experiences. I realize that the author has passed on or I would have tried to reach him to see if he might have bumped into my relative in his tour. My brother was there throughout the war and of the group of eight that he trained with, I believe he was the only one to return. It is a theater of war that never got much acknowledgement. He ferried everything from mules to Merrills' Marauders. God bless them all.

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