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Tally-Ho! Yankee in a Spitfire

Arthur Donahue DFC

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In 1940, an ordinary American from a Midwest farm came to a country at war, joined its fighting forces, mingled with its fighting men, and fought and fell and fought again.

Donahue felt it his duty as a believer in a civilised way of life to throw his lot in with Britain, and felt it a privilege to be able to serve alongside her forces.

A civilian pilot, upon hearing that the R.A.F. was hiring Americans for non-combatant jobs Donahue made his way to Canada, where he was promptly hired.

Shipped to Britain, Donahue was commissioned as a Pilot Officer and began the transition to a war-time fighter pilot as the skies above Britain transformed into a battlefield.

Filled with technical insights and descriptions of what his senses experienced, Donahue transports the reader into his heavy fur-lined flying boots.

As an American abroad Donahue’s memoir also acts as window to a bygone age, shining a light onto life in England during the Blitz from a visitor’s point of view.

Tally-Ho! Yankee in a Spitfire is Donahue’s vivid account of the first part of his service with the R.A.F., chronicling the years 1940-1.

Arthur Gerald Donahue (1913-42) was an American fighter pilot who volunteered to fly for the R.A.F in 1940, fighting in the Battle of Britain. In March 1942 he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, before becoming the first American to command an all-English Squadron later in the year. Reaching the rank of Flight Lieutenant, he was killed in action in September 1942, aged twenty-nine.

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