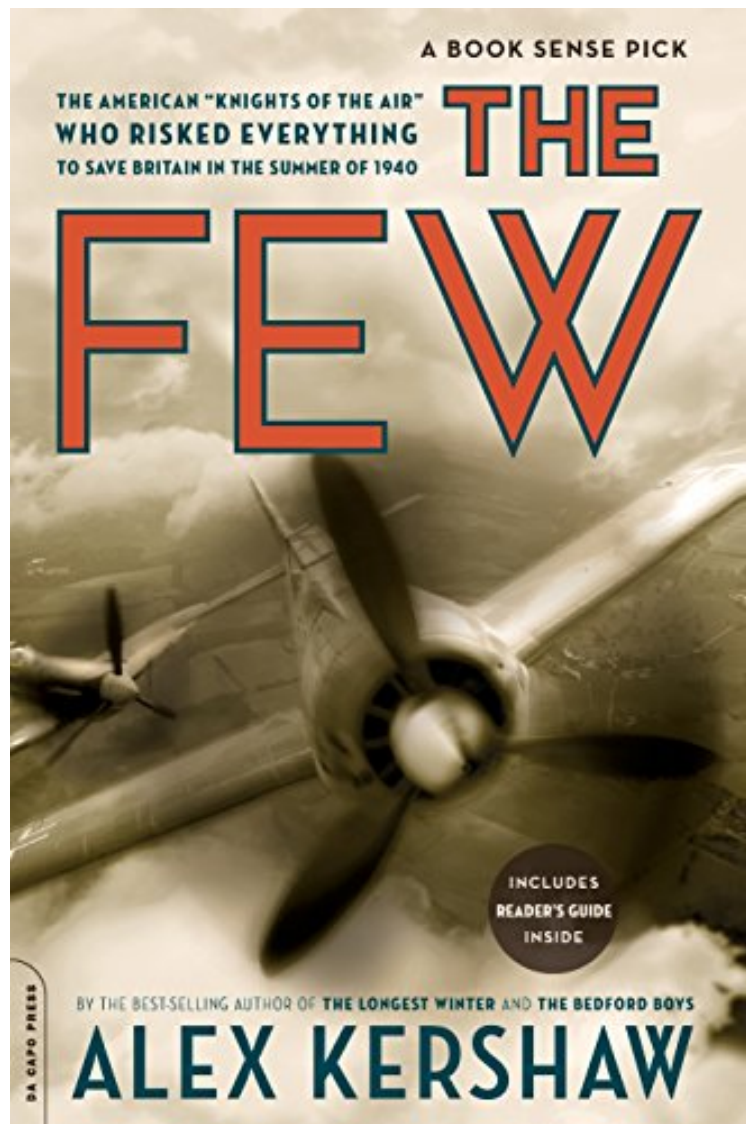


[Library ebook] The Few: The American "Knights of the Air" Who Risked Everything to Save Britain in the Summer of 1940

## The Few: The American "Knights of the Air" Who Risked Everything to Save Britain in the Summer of 1940

Alex Kershaw

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Alex Kershaw : The Few: The American "Knights of the Air" Who Risked Everything to Save Britain in the Summer of 1940 before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Few: The American "Knights of the Air" Who Risked Everything to Save Britain in the Summer of 1940:

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CarlsonThe Battle of Britain was a close thing. A heroic few American volunteers, along with some brave Poles, were enough to turn the tide. I wish there were more on how the US State department tried to stop them1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A great book!By Dittybopper1954A great education about how the US and others were key players in the Battle of Britain and the aid that they gave.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Great Book!By Ayis CaperonisIn this book Alex Kershaw does a masterful job of bringing the stories of the few Americans in the Battle of England to life. A fifth of pilots in the battle of England were foreigners, but only eight American did so against their government's neutrality laws! Among the heroes who fought for a greater good was Olympic gold medalist Billy Fiske! All these stories of WWII are amazing and I recommend this book without hesitation!

The Few tells the dramatic and unforgettable story of eight young Americans who joined Britain's Royal Air Force, defying their country's neutrality laws and risking their U.S. citizenship to fight side-by-side with England's finest pilots in the summer of 1940-over a year before America entered the war. Flying the lethal and elegant Spitfire, they became "knights of the air" and with minimal training but plenty of guts, they dueled the skilled and fearsome pilots of Germany's Luftwaffe. By October 1940, they had helped England win the greatest air battle in the history of aviation. Winston Churchill once said of all those who fought in the Battle of Britain, "Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few." These daring Americans were the few among the "few." Now, with the narrative drive and human drama that made *The Bedford Boys* and *The Longest Winter* national bestsellers, Alex Kershaw tells their story for the first time.

From Publishers WeeklyWith his customary narrative drive, Kershaw (*The Bedford Boys: One American Town's Ultimate D-Day Sacrifice*) spotlights the handful of American pilots who joined the Royal Air Force and its fighter squadrons during the Battle of Britain. They have been overshadowed by or confused with the better-known Eagle Squadrons, which formed in the autumn of 1940 with the tacit consent of the U.S. government. Kershaw's "few" were a vanguard, enlisting individually to operate the British Spitfire planes as early as May 1940, when England stood alone and her odds of survival seemed long. Crusaders and adventurers, the pilots ignored U.S. neutrality acts to fight from a mixture of principled opposition to Nazism, vaguely defined Anglophilia and sheer love of air combat at a time when it still seemed glamorous. Scattered by ones and twos among different squadrons, each had his own story, which Kershaw admirably contextualizes within the climate of the Battle of Britain. Using personal vignettes to convey the extraordinary routines of life in the cockpits, in the squadrons and in England, Kershaw evokes the heroism of these pilots, only one of whom survived the war whose tide they helped turn. (Nov.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.From BooklistIn the summer of 1940, World War II was in its second year and Adolf Hitler was planning to invade England. The U.S. had not yet entered the war, but a few Americans joined Britain's Royal Air Force. Flying Spitfire planes, they became known as the "knights of the air." In doing so, they would break several neutrality laws and become what Kershaw terms "outlaws in their own country." Kershaw, author of *The Bedford Boys* (2003) and *The Longest Winter* (2004), tells the story of these pilots; 244 U.S. citizens eventually flew with the RAF Eagle Squadrons. Only 1 survived the war. But according to the RAF's official roster in 1940, just 7 Americans belonged to "the few." These were the Americans who fought during the greatest air battle in history, labeled the Battle of Britain. Like his other books, Kershaw has written a rousing tale of little-known heroes. With 32 pages of black-and-white photographs, *The Few* marks Kershaw as a master storyteller. George CohenCopyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved "A powerful reminder of the human cost of war." "The true story that inspired *Saving Private Ryan*." "A moving story of uncommon valor." -- James Bradley "A heroic, inspiring story that deserves to be told." "Few books describe the costs of war so soberly and so vividly." "The poignant story of twenty-one young men... who died in the D-Day invasion."