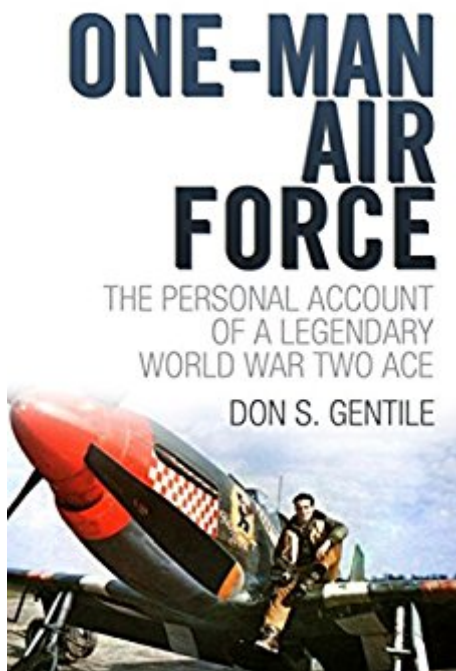




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One Man Air Force



Synopsis

After shooting down thirty German airplanes, the equivalent of nearly two whole Luftwaffe squadrons, Gentile is rightly respected as one of America's greatest ever air aces. Gentile's personal account of life fighting through the skies of World War Two provides fascinating insight into the mind of this young pilot. The feelings of engaging an enemy in a dogfight, of having a Messerschmidt close on your tail, and of soaring into the air in Spitfires, Thunderbolts and Mustangs are all encompassed within this memoir. The admiration that Gentile commanded was demonstrated when General Dwight D. Eisenhower presented the pilot with the Distinguished Flying Cross and stated, "You are a One-Man Air Force." Gentile, in the course of this short book, takes the reader from his earliest memories of wanting to learn to fly through to his entry into the Second World War, through the course of three hundred and fifty combat hours in one hundred and eighty-two sorties, up to the moment when he was removed from front line combat in 1944. "This is not only the story of a one-man air force against the Huns; nor is it only a story of the fluctuations, failures and successes of our air war against the Luftwaffe. It is also the story of a new type of American - one who has been growing up all around this older generation of ours, sometimes, it seems, while we were hardly looking and who will be ready to take over and make use of the air power that is predicted now to lie just beyond the war." Ira S. Wolfert

After surviving all the Germans could muster, he was killed in 1951 in a simple crash of a jet trainer while testing near Andrews AFB, Maryland. He was posthumously promoted to major and was inducted into the National Aviation Hall of Fame in Dayton. This work was published shortly after he finished front line duty in 1944.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I read the book in 10 minutes, basically a short story. It was a good short book. Needed more history

Here, in his own words is the story of American fighter pilot and ace Don Gentile. Growing up in rural northwestern Ohio, he was already a pilot when he volunteered to join the RCAF/RAF to fight before the U.S. entered the war. His combat exploits became legendary with no less a personage than Winton Churchill comparing him to a famous Greek warrior. Written with noted war correspondent Ira Wolfert, it holds up well today with a minimum of bravado (and propaganda) you often see in period accounts. It's great to see this back in print as the first editions are extremely rare. I found one at a used bookstore in Dayton, Ohio, not far from Gentile's hometown, and in doing some checking, found the Dayton-based National Museum of the U.S. Air Force didn't have a copy. Best of all, mine was autographed, something the bookseller did not know when he sold it to me.

Written in 1944 style of writing which is a tough read today. The book is also way too short.

Extremely short (more akin to a magazine article than a book) and dated. RRM

Very short book, have read much better, guess it was worth my .99

An excellent book with a thoughtful outlook on war.

Major Gentile is one of favorite pilots and I was pleased to find that he was a humble man. So many of the hot pilots of that era were rather obnoxious blowhards. Refreshing to find one that was not. Major Gentile is mentioned often in the book "One Thousand Destroyed" as he was one of the top scorers in the 4th fighter group. This book is a nice addition to my library.

This is a must read for any world war II buff. One of the best. Don Gentile was one of my boyhood heroes too....

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