Bell X 1

BRUCE LAFONTAINE

- PELL X-1 PETER E. DAVIES, 2016-09-22 IN 1947, NO ONE KNEW IF IT WAS POSSIBLE TO BREAK THE 'SOUND BARRIER'. THE BELL X-1 WAS THE TINY, ROCKET-POWERED CRAFT THAT FINALLY BROKE IT. IT WAS THE RESULT OF INNOVATIVE DESIGNERS AND ENGINEERS TURNING THEIR ATTENTION FROM THE PIONEERING JETS OF WORLD WAR II TO A NEW TASK AN AIRCRAFT DESIGNED PURELY TO FLY FASTER THAN SOUND. LEGENDARY PILOTS RALLIED TO THE CAUSE, WITH WORLD WAR II ACE CHUCK YEAGER PILOTING THE X-1 WHEN IT FINALLY ACHIEVED SUPERSONIC FLIGHT IN 1947, THE FIRST MANNED CRAFT TO REACH SUCH SPEEDS. WITH HISTORICAL PHOTOGRAPHS AND METICULOUSLY RESEARCHED DIGITAL ART, PETER DAVIES TRACES THE WHOLE CAREER OF THE PIONEERING BELL X-1, FROM ITS EARLY DEVELOPMENT THROUGH TO THE INFLUENCE IT HAD ON MILITARY AND CIVILIAN JETS IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE 20TH CENTURY.

 BHUCK YEAGER AND THE BELL X-1 DOMINICK A. PISANO,F. ROBERT VAN DER LINDEN,FRANK H. WINTER, 2006-05 PHOTOGRAPHS AND TEXT CHRONICLE WORLD WAR II ACE CHARLES CHUCK YEAGER'S QUEST TO FLY SUPERSONICALLY AND PROFILE THE PEOPLE AND AIRCRAFT THAT MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR HIM TO BREAK THE SOUND BARRIER.
- The Unknown Louis C. Rotundo, 1994 For more than forty years, the story of the record-breaking flights of the world's first supersonic aircraft the Bell X-1 has fueled the American imagination and has been embellished by myths and faulty recollections. Challenging the accepted story of the X-1, Into the Unknown describes the complete history of the X-1 program from the origins of high-speed research in the 1930s to Chuck Yeager's pioneering flight through the sound barrier on October 14, 1947. Rotundo examines the complex factors that shaped the process of breaking new ground in aviation research, as well as the inner decision making of the three major participants: Bell Aircraft, the Air Force, and the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics (NACA). He reveals the divergent views and the competing objectives of the NACA and the Air Force on policy decisions, aircraft design and capability, and program direction. The first airplane constructed solely for high-speed research, the X-1 not only broke the sound barrier, but also was distinct as one of the few aircraft to complete its test program without a significant aerodynamic or structural alteration. Rotundo details each of the fifty test flights of the X-1 and each new test procedure, many of which became standard for research on the later X-series aircraft and provided the foundation for the techniques later used by the space program. The final chapters of into the Unknown analyze the veil of secrecy and correct the factual errors surrounding Yeager's supersonic flight. Rotundo details how the Air Force tried to control the release of the story for national security purposes, and how many of the resulting news accounts contained inaccuracies. The bookincludes previously unpublished material, rare photographs, interviews with the participants, and original NACA, Air Force, and Bell Aircraft archival files.
- THE QUEST FOR MACH ONE CHUCK YEAGER, 1997 ON OCTOBER 14, 1947, FLYING THE BELL X-1 ROCKET PLANE, CHUCK YEAGER BURST THROUGH THE MYTHICAL SOUND BARRIER AT MACH 1.0, TO BECOME THE FIRST MAN TO FLY FASTER THAN THE SPEED OF SOUND. YEAGER'S EPIC FLIGHT WAS THE CULMINATION OF HOURS OF WORK AND FLYING TIME BY A GROUP OF DEDICATED AVIATION PIONEERS, AND IT MARKED THE BEGINNING OF FLIGHT TESTING AS WE KNOW IT. WHO WERE THESE MEN? WHAT WERE THE AERONAUTICAL HURDLES THEY CLEARED TO USHER IN THE SPACE AGE AND MANNED SPACE FLIGHT? IN THE QUEST FOR MACH ONE, MEMBERS OF THE MACH ONE TEAM COME TOGETHER TO CHRONICLE THE ENTIRE X-1 PROGRAMME. THEY ARE CHUCK YEAGER, TEST PILOT; BOB CARDENAS, MOTHER SHIP PILOT; BOB HOOVER, BACKUP AND CHASE PILOT; AND JACK RUSSELL, YEAGER'S X-1 CREW CHIEF. THEIRS IS A SAGA OF CAMARADERIE, TECHNICAL BRILLIANCE AND HEROISM.
- DUPERSONIC FLIGHT RICHARD HALLION, 1997 HALLION DESCRIBES THE BASIC PROBLEMS OF SUPERSONIC FLIGHT, LOOKING AT GEOFFREY DE HAVILLAND'S FATAL ATTEMPT TO BREAK THE SOUND BARRIER IN 1946, CHUCK YEAGER'S SUCCESSFUL FLIGHT IN 1947, AND THE FIRST AIRCRAFT TO REACH TWICE THE SPEED OF SOUND
- DUPERSONIC FLIGHT RICHARD HALLION, 1972
- THE X-PLANES JAY MILLER, 1988 A FASCINATING REVIEW OF THE RECORD-BREAKING EXPERIMENTAL AIRCRAFT OF THE FUTURE CURRENTLY BEING BUILT AND TESTED BY THE U.S. AIR FORCE AND NASA. THE X-PLANES, DRAWING ON RECENTLY DECLASSIFIED INFORMATION, IS THE FIRST COMPREHENSIVE BOOK ON THE EXPERIMENTAL AIRCRAFT. 335 PHOTOS AND 30 SCALE DRAWINGS.
- EMATES AND ERSON, RICHARD PASSMAN, 2014-02-15 THE CONCISE ILLUSTRATED HISTORY OF THE FIRST SPACE PLANE, FEATURING EXCLUSIVE PHOTOGRAPHS. THE EXCITING STORY OF THE X-15—THE ICONIC ROCKET PLANE OF THE COLD WAR SPACE RACE IS RECOUNTED BY JOHN ANDERSON, CURATOR OF AERODYNAMICS AT THE SMITHSONIAN NATIONAL AIR AND SPACE MUSEUM. THIS EXPERIMENTAL SPACE PLANE WAS ON THE CUTTING EDGE OF HYPERSONIC AERODYNAMICS, AND ITS WINGED REENTRY FROM SPACE FORESHADOWED THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SPACE SHUTTLE DECADES LATER. LAUNCHED FROM THE WING OF A MODIFIED B-52 BOMBER—AGAIN FORETELLING A CONCEPT THAT WOULD BE USED DECADES LATER, IN THIS CASE BY SPACESHIPONE AND SPACESHIPONE AND SPACESHIPONE AND SPACESHIPONE AND SPACESHIPONE AND SPACESHIPONE THE SHIP ROCKETED HIGHER AND FASTER THAN ANY MANNED AIRCRAFT OF THE TIME. DESIGNED TO APPROACH SEVEN TIMES THE SPEED OF SOUND, IT WAS THE FIRST HYPERSONIC AIRCRAFT EVER CREATED AND WAS ENGINEERED TO FUNCTION BOTH IN THE EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE AND AT THE EDGE OF SPACE. ILLUSTRATED WITH PERIOD NASA AND USAF PHOTOGRAPHS, AS WELL AS EXCLUSIVE SMITHSONIAN PHOTOGRAPHY OF THE FIRST OF THREE X-15S BUILT, X-15 CAPTURES THE RISKS AND DANGERS OF THE X-15 PROGRAM AS ANDERSON FOLLOWS THE TEST PILOTS (INCLUDING NEIL ARMSTRONG) WHO PUSHED THE VERY LIMITS OF THEIR PILOTING SKILLS TO MASTER GROUNDBREAKING EXPERIMENTAL TECHNOLOGY. EVEN WITH THE FATAL CRASH OF THE THIRD X-15, THE OVERALL SUCCESS OF THE PROGRAM HELPED PAVE THE WAY FOR NASA TO CONTINUE TO THE MOON—AND THIS IS THE DEFINITIVE, EXPERTLY CURATED, AND BEAUTIFULTY ILLUSTRATED ACCOUNT OF ITS DEVELOPMENT. PRAISE FOR X-15" [X-15] LAYS OUT THE CASE FOR WHY THE X-15 WAS AND CONTINUES TO BE SUCH AN IMPORTANT AIRCRAFT. THIS BOOK MAKES THE READER WANT TO VISIT THE NATIONAL AIR AND SPACE MUSEUM AND VIEW THE X-15 UP-CLOSE IN A WHOLE NEW LIGHT, IN WHICH ITS AEROSPACE ACCOMPLISHMENTS RANK ALONGSIDE OTHER DISTINGUISHED AIRCRAFT ON DISPLAY AT THE MUSEUM." —DEFENSEMEDIANE WON WANTS TO START TO LEARN ABOUT THIS MOST REMARKABLE AIRPLANE."—INTERNATIONAL PLASTIC MODELERS SOCIET
- EMASING THE DEMON DAN HAMPTON, 2018-07-24 NATIONAL BESTSELLER At the end of World War II, a band of aces gathered in the Mojave Desert on a Top Secret Quest to break the sound barrier-nicknamed The Demon by pilots. The true story of what happened in those skies has never been told. Speed. In 1947, it represented the difference between victory and annihilation. After Hiroshima, the ability to deliver a nuclear device to its target faster than one's enemy became the singular obsession of American war planners. And so, in the earliest days of the Cold War, a highly classified program was conducted on a desolate air base in California's Mojave Desert. Its aim: to push the envelope of flight to new frontiers. There gathered an extraordinary band of pilots, including Second World War aces Chuck Yeager and George Welch, who risked their lives flying experimental aircraft to reach Mach 1, the so-called sound barrier, which pilots called "the demon."

 Shrouding the program in secrecy, the US military reluctantly revealed that the "barrier" had been broken two months later, after the story was leaked to the press. The full truth has never been fully revealed—until now. Chasing the Demon, from decorated fighter pilot and acclaimed aviation historian Dan Hampton, tells, for the first time, the extraordinary true story of mankind's quest for Mach 1. Here, of course, is twenty-four-year-old Capitain Chuck Yeager, who made history flying the futuristic Bell X-1 faster than the speed of sound on October 14, 1947. Officially Yeager was the first to achieve supersonic flight, but drawing on new interviews with survivors of the program, including Yeager's former commander, as well as declassified files, Hampton presents evidence that a fellow American—George Welch, a daring fighter pilot who shot down a remarkable sixteen enemy aircraft during the Pacific War—met the demon first, though he was not favored to wear the laurels, as he was now a civilian test pilot and was not flying the Bell X-1. Chasing the Demon sets the race be
- 3 N-Planes from the X-1 to the X-60 Michael H. Gorn, Giuseppe De Chiara, 2022-01-01 Foreword by Dr. Roger D. Launius, Former NASA Chief Historian For the past 75 YEARS, THE U.S. GOVERNMENT HAS INVESTED SIGNIFICANT TIME AND MONEY INTO ADVANCED AEROSPACE RESEARCH, AS EVIDENCED BY ITS MANY EXPERIMENTAL X-PLANE AIRCRAFT AND ROCKETS. NASA'S X-PLANES ASKS A SIMPLE QUESTION: WHAT HAVE WE GAINED FROM IT ALL? TO ANSWER THIS QUESTION, THE AUTHORS PROVIDE A COMPREHENSIVE OVERVIEW OF THE X-plane's long history, from the 1946 X-1 to the modern X-60. The chapters describe not just the technological evolution of these models, but also the wider STORY OF POLITICS, FEDERAL BUDGETS, AND INTER-AGENCY RIVALRIES SURROUNDING THEM. THE BOOK IS ORGANIZED INTO TWO SECTIONS, WITH THE FIRST COVERING THE OPERATIONAL X-PLANES THAT SYMBOLIZED THE COLD WAR STRUGGLE BETWEEN THE U.S. AND THE U.S.S.R, AND THE SECOND SECTION SURVEYING POST-COLD WAR AIRCRAFT AND SPACECRAFT. FEATURING DOZENS OF ORIGINAL ILLUSTRATIONS OF X-PLANE CROSS-SECTIONS, IN-FLIGHT PROFILES, CLOSE-UPS, AND MORE, THIS BOOK WILL EDUCATE GENERAL READERS AND SPECIALISTS ALIKE. BEYOND BLUE SKIES CHRIS PETTY, 2020-11 IN 1945 SOME EXPERTS STILL CONSIDERED THE SO-CALLED SOUND BARRIER AN IMPENETRABLE WALL, WHILE WINGED ROCKET PLANES REMAINED LARGELY RELEGATED TO SCIENCE FICTION. BUT SOON A SERIES OF UNIQUE ROCKET-POWERED RESEARCH AIRCRAFT AND THE DEDICATED INDIVIDUALS WHO BUILT, MAINTAINED, AND FLEW THEM BEGAN TO PUSH THE BOUNDARIES OF FLIGHT IN AVIATION'S QUEST TO MOVE EVER HIGHER, EVER FASTER, TOWARD THE UNKNOWN. BEYOND BLUE SKIES EXAMINES THE THIRTY-YEAR PERIOD AFTER WORLD WAR II DURING WHICH AVIATION EXPERIENCED AN UNPRECEDENTED ERA OF PROGRESS THAT LED THE UNITED STATES TO THE BOUNDARIES OF OUTER SPACE. BETWEEN 1946 AND 1975, AN ANCIENT DRY LAKEBED IN CALIFORNIA'S HIGH DESERT PLAYED HOST TO A SERIES OF ROCKET-POWERED RESEARCH AIRCRAFT BUILT TO INVESTIGATE THE OUTER REACHES OF FLIGHT. THE WESTERN MOJAVE'S ROGERS DRY LAKE BECAME HOME TO EDWARDS AIR FORCE BASE, NASA'S FLIGHT RESEARCH CENTER, AND AN ELITE CADRE OF TEST PILOTS. ALTHOUGH ONE OF THEM—CHUCK YEAGER—WOULD RANK AMONG THE MOST FAMOUS NAMES IN HISTORY, MOST WHO FLEW THERE DURING THOSE YEARS PLAYED THEIR PARTS AWAY FROM PUBLIC VIEW. THE RISKS THEY ROUTINELY ACCEPTED WERE EVERY BIT AS REAL AS THOSE FACING NASA'S ASTRONAUTS, BUT NO MAGAZINE STORIES OR FREE CORVETTES AWAITED THEM—JUST LONG DAYS IN A CLOSE-KNIT COMMUNITY IN THE HIGH DESERT. THE ROLE OF NOT ONLY THE TEST PILOTS BUT THE ENGINEERS, AERODYNAMICISTS, AND SUPPORT STAFF IN MAKING SUPERSONIC FLIGHT POSSIBLE HAS BEEN WIDELY OVERLOOKED. BEYOND BLUE SKIES CHARTS THE TRIUMPHS AND TRAGEDIES OF THE ROCKET-PLANE ERA AND THE UNSUNG EFFORTS OF THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO MADE AMAZING ACHIEVEMENTS POSSIBLE.
- MERICAN X-VEHICLES DENNIS R. JENKINS, TONY LANDIS, JAY MILLER, 2003
- ELL X-2 PETER E. DAVIES, 2017-11-30 EVEN BEFORE THE SPECTACULAR SUCCESS OF ITS X-1 ROCKET-POWERED AIRCRAFT IN BREAKING THE 'SOUND BARRIER', THE ADVENTUROUS BELL AIRCRAFT CORPORATION WAS ALREADY PUSHING AHEAD WITH A PARALLEL PROJECT TO BUILD A SECOND AIRCRAFT CAPABLE OF FAR HIGHER SPEEDS. THE X-2 (OR MODEL 52) EXPLORED THE EQUALLY UNCERTAIN TECHNOLOGY OF SWEPT-BACK WINGS. NOW COMMON IN MODERN CONVENTIONAL FIGHTER AIRCRAFT, THE BELL X-2 WAS REVOLUTIONARY IN USING THIS TYPE OF AIRFRAME TO PROBE MACH 3 AND RESEARCH THE EFFECTS OF EXTREME AERODYNAMIC FRICTION HEAT ON AIRFRAMES. ALTHOUGH BOTH X-2S WERE DESTROYED IN CRASHES AFTER ONLY 20 FLIGHTS, KILLING TWO TEST PILOTS, THE KNOWLEDGE GAINED FROM THE PROGRAMME WAS INVALUABLE IN DEVELOPING AIRCRAFT THAT COULD SAFELY FLY AT SUCH SPEEDS. USING STUNNING ARTWORK AND HISTORICAL PHOTOGRAPHS, THIS IS THE STORY OF THE PLANE THAT ULTIMATELY MADE THE LOCKHEED BLACKBIRD AND CONCORDE POSSIBLE.
- ELL X-1a ROCKET PLANE PILOT'S FLIGHT OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS UNITED STATES AIR FORCE, 2007-10-01 AN IMPROVEMENT OVER THE BELL X-1 THE FIRST PLANE TO BREAK THE SOUND BARRIER IN LEVEL FLIGHT THE X-1A WAS DESIGNED TO REACH MACH 2.0. INITIAL TEST FLIGHTS COMMENCED IN JANUARY OF 1953. ON DECEMBER 12TH, TEST PILOT CHARLES

CHUCK YEAGER SET A RECORD WITH THE AIRCRAFT, REACHING A SPEED OF MACH 2.43 AT 75,000 FEET. IN 1954, PILOT MAJ. ARTHUR MURRAY FLEW THE PLANE TO A NEW ALTITUDE RECORD OF 90,440 FEET. ROUGHLY A YEAR LATER, THE X-1A WAS SEVERELY DAMAGED BY AN EXPLOSION WHILE STRAPPED TO ITS B-29 MOTHER SHIP. THE PLANE WAS JETTISONED AND DESTROYED. VARIANTS OF THE DESIGN, INCLUDING THE X-1B, X-1D, AND X-1E CONTINUED TO FLY AS LATE AS 1958. ORIGINALLY PRINTED BY THE U.S. AIR FORCE AND NACA / NASA, THIS HANDBOOK PROVIDES A FASCINATING GLIMPSE INSIDE THE COCKPIT OF ONE OF HISTORY'S GREAT PLANES. CLASSIFIED RESTRICTED, THE MANUAL WAS DECLASSIFIED. THIS AFFORDABLE FACSIMILE HAS BEEN SLIGHTLY REFORMATTED. CARE HAS BEEN TAKEN TO PRESERVE THE INTEGRITY OF THE TEXT.

- PILESTONES OF FLIGHT F. ROBERT VAN DER LINDEN, ALEX M. SPENCER, THOMAS J. PAONE, 2016-05-15 EXPERIENCE THE HISTORY OF FLIGHT WITH THE WORLD-CLASS AVIATION COLLECTION AT THE SMITHSONIAN'S NATIONAL AIR AND SPACE MUSEUM, WHICH ATTRACTS MILLIONS AND MILLIONS OF VISITORS EACH YEAR IN WASHINGTON, D.C.FROM THE MOMENT THE Wright Brothers first took flight in 1903 to the modern-day reliance on stealth aircraft and drones, there have been significant advances made in aviation. Milestones of Flight celebrates each era of advancements by showcasing the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum's world-class aircraft collection. AUTHORED BY DR. ROBERT VAN DER LINDEN, A LEADING EXPERT ON AVIATION AND CHAIRMAN OF THE AERONAUTICS DEPARTMENT AT THE NASM, THIS BOOK IS A STUNNING PROFILE OF THE ADVANCEMENTS IN FLIGHT FROM DECADE TO DECADE, ILLUSTRATED WITH BEAUTIFUL, LARGE-SCALE PHOTOGRAPHY AND ENHANCED WITH LITTLE-KNOWN FACTS, ANECDOTES, AND INSIGHTS FROM MAJOR PLAYERS IN THE AVIATION INDUSTRY. CLIMB INSIDE THE COCKPIT OF THE SPIRIT OF ST. LOUIS THAT CHARLES LINDBERGH PILOTED SOLO ACROSS THE ATLANTIC OCEAN, MAKING HISTORY. CONTRAST THAT WITH A BOEING B-29 SUPERFORTRESS, THE FIRST AIRCRAFT TO DROP AN ATOMIC BOMB. THE FULL-PAGE PHOTOS OF EACH MILESTONE-MAKING AIRCRAFT ARE ACCOMPANIED BY TIMELINES TO SHOWCASE RELATED AIRCRAFT AS WELL AS SIDEBARS WITH INTERESTING AND LITTLE-KNOWN FACTS, STORIES, AND RELATED RESEARCH. MILESTONE CATEGORIES INCLUDE:- ERA OF EARLY FLIGHT- WORLD WAR I FIRST FIGHTERS- LONG-RANGE RECORD-SETTING FLIGHT- POPULAR FLIGHT- FIRST COMMERCIAL AIRLINERS- WORLD WAR II AIRCRAFT- EXPERIMENTAL FLIGHT- COLD WAR MILITARY/KOREAN CONFLICT AIRCRAFT- COMMERCIAL JETS- MODERN MILITARY AIRCRAFT WHAT WILL THE NEXT MILESTONE BE? MILES M.52 CAPTAIN ERIC BROWN CBE DSC AFC QCVSA RN,2012-03-01 IN DECEMBER 1943, A TOP SECRET CONTRACT (E.24/43) WAS AWARDED TO MILES AIRCRAFT. THE CONTRACT WAS TO BUILD THE WORLD'S FIRST SUPERSONIC JET CAPABLE OF 1000MPH. THE ONLY RELIABLE SOURCE OF DATA ON SUPERSONIC OBJECTS CAME FROM THE ARMAMENT RESEARCH DEPT AND THEIR WIND TUNNEL TESTS ON AMMUNITION. FROM THIS, MILES DEVELOPED AN EXCEPTIONALLY THIN-WINGED, BULLET-SHAPED AIRCRAFT. THE RESEARCH WAS INEXPLICABLY PASSED TO THE AMERICANS IN 1944. BY DECEMBER 1945, ONE PROTOTYPE WAS VIRTUALLY COMPLETE. THE SECOND, DESTINED FOR AN ATTEMPT AT THE SOUND BARRIER WAS 80 PER CENT COMPLETE. IN FEBRUARY 1946, CAPT ERIC BROWN WAS CONFIRMED AS THE TEST PILOT AND OCTOBER 1946 WAS SET FOR THE SUPERSONIC TRIALS. HOWEVER, ON 12 FEBRUARY 1946, MILES WERE ORDERED TO STOP PRODUCTION. NO PLAUSIBLE EXPLANATION WAS GIVEN FOR THE CANCELLATION WHEN BRITAIN WAS WITHIN SIX MONTHS OF BREAKING THE SOUND BARRIER. ERIC Brown and others directly involved including Dennis Bancroft, the Chief Aerodynamicist on the M.52, have now come together to try and finally solve the mystery BEHIND THE CANCELLATION.
- MODERN EXPERIMENTAL AIRCRAFT BRUCE LAFONTAINE, 2000-05-01 45 ACCURATELY RENDERED ILLUSTRATIONS OF DYNAMIC FLYING PROTOTYPES: NORTHROP XP-56 BLACK BULLET, THE BELL X-1 ROCKETPLANE, THE DIMINUTIVE MCDONNELL XF-85 GOBLIN PARASITE, MORE. DESCRIPTIVE CAPTIONS.
- EXCES WILD AL BLACKBURN, 1999 ACES WILD GOES MUCH FURTHER THAN THIS DUEL. BLACKBURN TRACES THE HISTORY OF FIGHTER PLANES FROM THE START OF WORLD WAR II AT PEARL HARBOR THROUGH THE TRANSITION TO JETS IN THE 1950s. THE AUTHOR REVEALS THE VIEWS ON SUPERSONIC FLIGHT BEFORE AND AFTER 1947 BY PILOTS, SCIENTISTS, ENGINEERS, BUSINESS INTERESTS, THE GOVERNMENT, AND THE MEDIA.
- ☑ PHUCK YEAGER GOES SUPERSONIC ALAN W. BIERMANN, 2012-12-28 YOUNG READERS WILL SOAR AS THEY DISCOVER THE LIFE OF CHUCK YEAGER, AN AMERICA HERO WHOSE COURAGE CHANGED THE WORLD OF FLIGHT FOREVER. --BACK COVER.
- The 25 Most Influential Aircraft of All Time Walter Boyne, Philip Handleman, 2018-03-01 The 25 Most Influential Aircraft of All Time conveys the fascinating progression of flying technology from flimsy wood-and-fabric biplanes to thunderous supersonic wonders. Aviation's most historically relevant and arguably most influential aircraft planes like the elliptical-winged Spitfire, the blisteringly-fast X-15, and the ubiquitous Learjet are dramatically showcased in individual chapters. Factors like performance, price, operational efficiency, and perceptions in popular culture are examined. People are just as important as hardware in the discussion of the world's greatest aircraft. The larger-than-life characters who designed and built these aeronautical marvels men like the reclusive Howard Hughes and the demanding Clarence "Kelly" Johnson are an indispensable part of the story. So, too, are the featless pilots like Charles Lindbergh and Chuck Yeager who gave life to the shining examples of a new and dynamic industry. The authors have flown or flown in many of the featured aircraft and they knew many of the luminous personalities involved, enabling them to share unique perspectives. The preface is written by William Lloyd Stearman, a former staff member of the National Security Council and the son of famed industry engineer Lloyd Stearman. The introduction is written by Norman R. Augustine, the retired Chairman and CEO of Lockheed Martin Corporation. The foreword is written by Burt Rutan, the renowned aircraft designer and founder of Scaled Composites. Each aircraft is magnificently illustrated in color, mostly with paintings by leading aviation artists.

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BELL X 1 INTRODUCTION

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