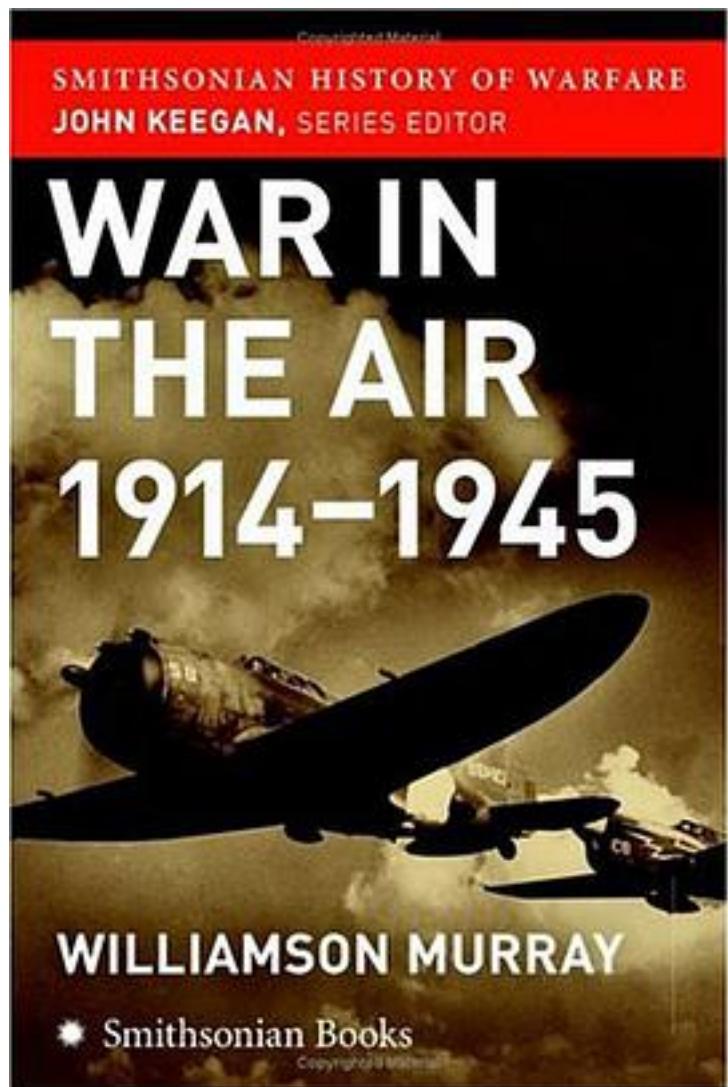


# War in the Air 1914-45



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The first aircraft flew in 1903 and within ten years had been developed into military weapons. From World War I to World War II, pilots became exalted national heroes, gallant knights astride their iron steeds high above the skies of Europe. Far from the heroic fantasy, however, most pilots and aircrews struggled against grim odds, fighting out their frequently short lives with bravado and recklessness. This vivid account explores the conditions in which these pilots fought and the rise of air warfare to preeminence, culminating in the Enola Gay's fateful drop of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima. The early flying machines of World War I and the pilots who braved hostile skies. The rise of airplane technology in the 1930s -- radar, blind-bombing devices, radio control, and the increased speed of new monoplane designs. The contribution of Allied air power to the defeat of Nazi Germany, Raids on Japan, the drop of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, and the beginning of a new era of warfare.

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