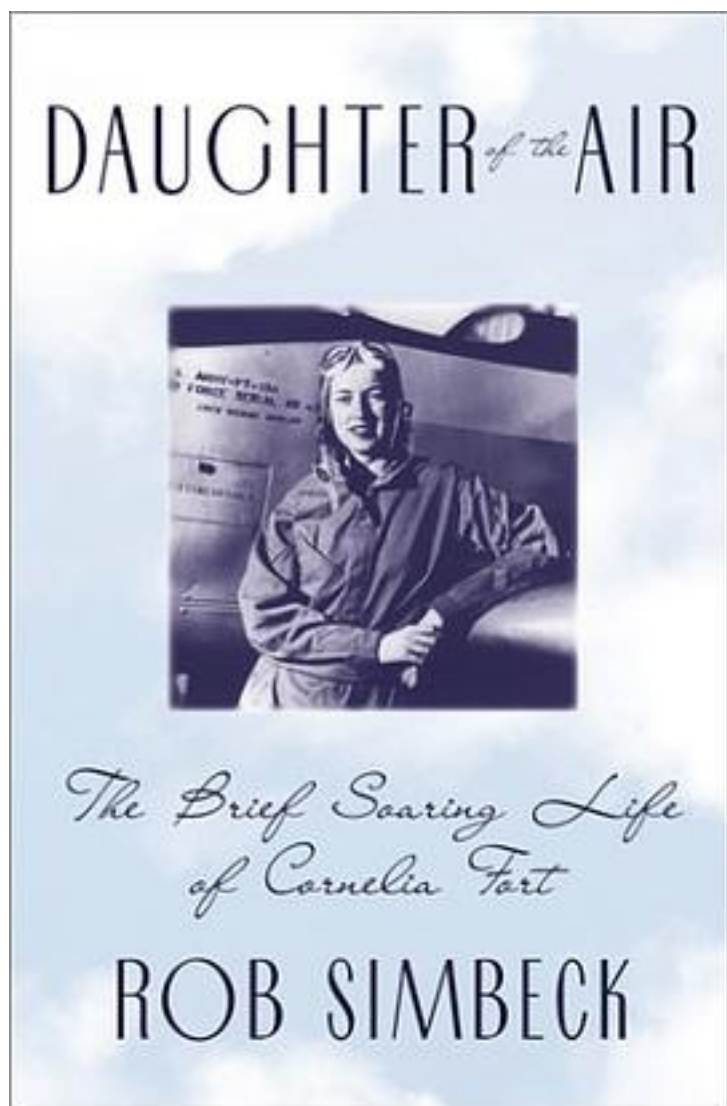


Daughter of the Air



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著者:Simbeck, Rob

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From Publishers Weekly The first woman pilot to die on active duty in U.S. history, Cornelia Fort (1919-1943) was a member of the Women's Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron (WAFS), a civilian unit established during WWII to transport newly manufactured military planes from the factories to U.S. air bases. Raised in a wealthy Nashville family and slated to become a privileged Southern socialite, Fort had first flown in 1940 and "was happiest in the sky." She quickly earned her commercial and instructor's licenses and was in the air over Honolulu training a student pilot on the day Pearl Harbor was attacked. This episode, dramatically recounted here, left her plane riddled with bullets and nearly ended her life. Although Simbeck details Fort's early years, this biography really only comes to life when he chronicles her experiences during the war. Although most of the women pilots entering the WAFS were better trained than their male counterparts, they were not only subjected to more coursework than the men, but were paid less and, despite their documented hard work, never received commissions as the male civilian pilots did. Simbeck effectively captures the seriousness and dedication with which Fort and her colleagues approached flying, and the camaraderie that developed between them. Fort died during a flight over West Texas, when her plane collided with another while flying formation (forbidden by the military) and crashed. Despite rumors that the other pilot was trying to impress or scare Fort, Simbeck, was convinced by interviews with witnesses that it was an accident. (Aug.) Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title. From Library Journal This slim volume documents the U.S. Women's Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron, a group of pilots who delivered aircraft wherever they were needed in North America during World War II. Simbeck tells the story through Cornelia Fort, the Sarah Lawrence-educated Southern belle who was the second woman to enlist and the first to be killed in the line of duty. The text is thoroughly grounded in Fort's own words and in the recollections of her family and friends. Unfortunately, Simbeck's analysis sometimes tends toward the simplistic: for example, in his eagerness to promote a forgotten history, he blames all the women's difficulties on misogyny. An argument that is contradicted by Marianne Verges's seminal history, *On Silver Wings: The Women Airforce Service Pilots of World War II, 1942-1944* (Ballantine, 1991). Simbeck also fails to mention the other squadron members who joined Fort in death. Still, this is an informally written, well-documented portrait of a fascinating, little-known figure. For public and high school aviation and women's studies collections. A Barbara Ann Hutcheson, Greater Victoria P.L., BC Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title. See all Editorial Reviews

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