

## PRESS RELEASE

### Pen & Sword Books Ltd

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## Empty Sky

RAF Voices from the Fall of France and Battle of Britain

Author: Colin Higgs, Bruce Vigar

### Highlights

**Based on the graphic, filmed interviews of some of 'The Few', veterans of the Battle of Britain**

**Includes supporting interviews with the late Wing Commander Tom Neil and the late Group Captain Dennis David**

**Highly illustrated throughout**

**Graphic and vivid first-hand testimony**

One moment the sky would be full of aircraft wheeling and positioning for the best shot at the enemy; a sky full of danger and menace. The next instant there would just be a clear blue empty sky with the sun shining down on a calm and beautiful landscape. Such was the phenomenon experienced by pilots who fought in the key battles of France and Britain in the Summer of 1940.

These air battles were certainly the most important ever fought in defence of the country and have deserved the millions of words that have been written about them. However, as the number of surviving veterans dwindles to single figures, interviews with some of 'The Few' who actually fought the battle are of increasing importance and rarity.

This book tells the story of sixteen men and women who were there. Through a series of filmed interviews their stories were preserved, allowing them to tell the part they played in the nation's defence in their own words. It is the transcriptions of these interviews that form the basis of this unique collection of accounts.

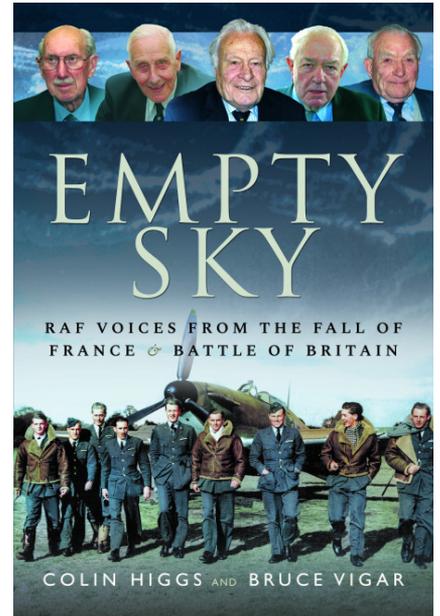
The sixteen stories are riveting and insightful, yet full of modesty and humour. The veterans talk about not being very good or just being followers of the aces – but underneath it all is a great pride that day after day they flew sortie after sortie against an enemy who had never been beaten until that moment. They talk of aerial battles perhaps three or four times each day; of the aircraft that carried them into battle without faltering; of the social life in their precious moments of quiet and peace; but most of all they talk about comradeship, friends and colleagues. Some friendships lasted barely a few days while others continued for decades.

Three of the interviewees epitomise the men from fifteen other countries who joined the RAF to fight. Others represent the thousands of ground crew, WAAFs, ATA, drivers, plotters, radar operators, airfield defenders, controllers, aircraft builders, cooks and associated personnel without whom the Royal Air Force would have been unable to maintain the fight against Germany.

### About the Author

BRUCE VIGAR is a media professional with a career spanning over four decades. He has also had the privilege of interviewing a large number of veterans of conflicts in which they did far more in considerably less time. It is the latter that launched Bruce into writing when not producing and directing documentaries through his production company, LeadingEdgeTV Limited. Bruce lives in Kent with his wife, two adult children and three dogs.

COLIN HIGGS has more than twenty-five years' experience in the broadcast and home entertainment industries and for much of that time has co-produced, written and researched aviation documentaries together with Bruce Vigar. Colin's business, A Flying



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AIR WORLD

Author photographs can be made available upon request.

History, was created to make accessible the unique Peter Keating and John Stroud aviation photograph collections and Colin and Bruce's extensive archive of first-hand interviews with veterans.