

The Life and Death of an Ace: The Extraordinary Story of Eddie Rickenbacker



Red Baron: The Life and Death of an Ace by Stephen Williams

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 1614 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled



Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 240 pages



Eddie Rickenbacker was one of America's most decorated war heroes. He was awarded the Medal of Honor, the nation's highest military honor, for his actions during World War I. Rickenbacker was also a successful businessman and aviation pioneer. He founded Eastern Air Lines, one of the world's largest airlines. However, Rickenbacker's life ended in tragedy when he died in a plane crash in 1973.

Early Life and Career

Eddie Rickenbacker was born in Columbus, Ohio, in 1890. He began his career as a race car driver. In 1917, Rickenbacker joined the Army Air Service and was assigned to the 94th Aero Squadron. He quickly became one of the most successful fighter pilots in the war. Rickenbacker shot down 26 enemy aircraft, more than any other American pilot.

The Medal of Honor

On September 25, 1918, Rickenbacker was awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions during a dogfight over France. Rickenbacker's plane was shot down, but he managed to land it behind enemy lines. He then led his men on a daring escape back to friendly territory. Rickenbacker's Medal of Honor citation reads:



“ For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty in action against the enemy near Billy, France, September 25, 1918. Leading a patrol of seven Spad pursuit planes, Captain Rickenbacker attacked a formation of 15 enemy planes. In the spirited engagement which ensued, Captain Rickenbacker shot down two enemy aircraft and forced a third to retire with its pilot mortally wounded. Captain Rickenbacker's plane was riddled with bullets and his observer seriously wounded, but despite these handicaps he continued to lead his patrol and succeeded in breaking up the enemy formation. The skill, courage, and determination displayed by Captain Rickenbacker on this occasion reflect the highest credit on himself and the United States Army Air Service. ”

Post-War Career

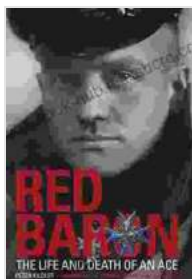
After the war, Rickenbacker returned to the United States and continued his career in aviation. He founded Eastern Air Lines in 1926. Eastern Air Lines became one of the world's largest airlines and was a major force in the development of commercial aviation. Rickenbacker also wrote several books about his experiences during the war. In 1930, he was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for his autobiography, *Fighting the Flying Circus*.

Death and Legacy

Rickenbacker died in a plane crash in 1973. He was 82 years old. Rickenbacker's death was a great loss to the aviation community. He was a pioneer in the field of aviation and one of the most decorated war heroes in

American history. Rickenbacker's legacy continues to live on through the many awards and scholarships that bear his name. The Eddie Rickenbacker Award is given annually to the top fighter pilot in the United States Air Force. The Eddie Rickenbacker Scholarship Fund provides financial assistance to students who are studying aviation or aerospace engineering.

Eddie Rickenbacker was a true American hero. He was a courageous fighter pilot, a successful businessman, and an aviation pioneer. Rickenbacker's legacy continues to inspire generations of Americans.



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