



# Hurricane Squadron

*Robert Jackson*

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**Hurricane Squadron** Robert Jackson

France, May 1940.

Seated in the cockpit of his Hurricane, Sergeant George Yeoman — young, eager, and innocent in the ways of war — is on his way to join his first operational squadron.

Meanwhile, the German Panzers advance unchecked through the Ardennes, and as the allied bombers plead to strike at them, the Luftwaffe is already set to launch a decisive blow.

Disaster beckons and Yeoman and No. 505 Squadron soon find themselves courting death in a series of increasingly desperate sorties as the allied army begins its retreat towards Dunkirk.

There are only a handful of them against the might of Hitler's war machine, and with each sortie the ranks of the Squadron grow ever more depleted.

The odds stacked against them are hopeless...

A vivid tale of a fighter squadron at war, 'Hurricane Squadron' is told with painstaking accuracy, charting a young man's rise to maturity in the face of combat and sudden death.

Robert Jackson (b. 1941) is a prolific author of military and aviation history, having become a full time writer in 1969. As an active serviceman in the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve he flew a wide range of aircraft, ranging from jets to gliders. 'Hurricane Squadron' is the first book in the Sergeant George Yeoman series.

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## Hurricane Squadron Details

Date : Published October 6th 2015 by Endeavour Press (first published 1978)

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Author : Robert Jackson

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Genre : Historical, Historical Fiction, Fiction, War, Military Fiction

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## From Reader Review Hurricane Squadron for online ebook

### Tony Hisgett says

I came across this book by chance and nearly discounted it, but I had fond memories of reading *Fly for your Life* by Larry Forrester about fifty years ago, so I thought I would give it a try.

The book starts with a series of disasters for George Yeoman; a failed radio when arriving at his base, being blown up as he landed, being 'jumped' by a Me109 on his first mission followed by a failed engine. This set the tone for the first third of the book.

The story then follows George's missions during the early days of the war until he crashes and has to make his way back to his squadron. His journey chronicles the absolute chaos and appalling decisions as the Germans invade Belgium and France.

It was an interesting read, although it felt a bit disjointed at times and I could have done without lieutenant Richter especially as it appears the author wants him to appear in later books.

If possible I would have given 2.5 stars, but I will give it the benefit of the doubt in the hope that the series develops with the next book.

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### Mike Whitehouse says

#### WW2 RAF drama at its best

The first in the series starts with the Battle for France and the Low Countries and ends in Dunkirk, and in between the blooding of George Yeoman a young sergeant pilot in his first posting to an operational squadron. I loved it.

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### Cws says

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### Keith says

I had never heard of Robert Jackson until discovering this book but now know he's a very (nay, incredibly) prolific writer of aviation and military history, over 100 titles at rough count. Most are histories but he's also written about 25 aviation novels. *Hurricane Squadron* (1978) is the first in the "George Yeoman" series. Yeoman is a new recruit to the RAF who ends up in France just as the German invasion begins. Jackson effectively illustrates the dangerous life of a fighter pilot. The book's main virtue is a solid grounding in both the historical detail of the period and the aeronautical abilities of the various aircraft. The series comprises eight books published between 1978 and 1982. It's very similar to Derek Robinson's great 1984 novel *Piece*

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*of Cake.*

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## **Studebhawk says**

From Rookie to Professional

In Hurricane Squadron we have the beginning of what gives promise of a very well done series. We follow, from the very first page, the arrival of our hero, George Yeoman, to the active theatre of the defense of France in early 1940.

This excellent story follows the growth of George Yeoman from raw rookie to experienced Hurricane pilot. Of particular interest to me was the ability of the author to set the stage for the defense of France in early 1940. His description of the Hurricane aircraft, its capabilities and weaknesses demonstrates a level of research that just adds to the appeal of this first book in the series. At times, I had the feeling that I was in the cockpit with our hero. I also believe that the author has some pilot experience as well, it shows in the story. Although this first installment is rather short, the author leaves you with the desire for more. I look forward to many more adventures with George Yeoman.

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## **KOMET says**

"Hurricane Squadron" gives the reader a tangible view and penetrating insight into the life of George Yeoman, a 20-year old Sergeant Pilot in the Royal Air Force, as well as the frontline fighter squadron (No. 505) to which he has been assigned.

The time is May 1940. Yeoman is arriving at the airbase of 505 Squadron in Châlons, France in a brand spanking new Hawker Hurricane fighter. He has had a leisurely flight from Britain, putting his navigational skills to the test. From the time he was a boy, his one abiding dream was to become a pilot. This was at a time when aircraft were not so common as is the case today. Aviation was largely a preserve for the privileged and well-to-do. Yeoman before the war had worked as a clerk in his native Yorkshire and used whatever money he could save to pay for flying lessons on the side. It was not easy, because he didn't earn a lot of money. But if anything, Yeoman was determined. Within a year, he had earned his private pilot's license. From there, he managed to earn a slot in the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve (RAFVR) at the time of the Munich Crisis of September 1938, where he received more intensive training, including flying some of the latest military aircraft in the RAF. So, with the outbreak of war, Yeoman's training took on more of an urgency. He earned his wings in January 1940 and spent the next 4 months in reserve in Britain.

The Hurricane Yeoman was flying to 505 Squadron in France was to replace one that had been lost in action. The so-called 'Phoney War' was still going on between the Allies (Britain and France) and Germany, with both sides occasionally meeting in infrequent and sporadic air battles on the frontline or just over the German border. But for Yeoman, this situation would soon change, for he had hardly touched down at Châlons and taxied in the Hurricane than 505 Squadron found itself under attack by the Luftwaffe. The German Blitzkrieg in the West had begun. The day was Friday, May 10, 1940.

Yeoman barely survives his first day at war. The book goes on to convey to the reader the full fury of the German offensive as experienced by Yeoman, his squadron mates, some members of the squadron administrative and ground crews, and the various civilians in the surrounding areas who figured prominently in the life of 505 Squadron. There are depictions of intensive air battles across France and Belgium,

Yeoman's painfully quick evolution from rookie pilot to seasoned ace over the next month of the battle, and the frenzied efforts made by refugees trying to escape the seemingly unstoppable German advance only to be strafed by German fighters and dive bombers - which, in their own vicious manner, sowed further confusion and chaos for Allied soldiers and civilians alike. The author also provides the reader with a glimpse into the other side through a young Luftwaffe fighter pilot, Joachim Richter, who, like Yeoman, is keen to prove his mettle as a combat pilot in one of the finest fighter planes in the world, the Messerschmitt Bf 109E "Emil".

At 130 pages, "Hurricane Squadron" succeeds brilliantly in imparting to the reader a real sense of the personal cost the Battle of France exacted upon that country and those who vainly tried to save it from an unstoppable German juggernaut.

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