

LETTERS FROM A WAR BIRD

The World War I Correspondence of Elliott White Springs

Edited by David K. Vaughan

Ranked among the top five American flying aces of World War I, Elliott White Springs (1896–1959) was credited with shooting down twelve enemy aircraft during his tour in France. In the postwar years, he was a prolific writer whose nine books include *War Birds: Diary of an Unknown Aviator*, a classic air combat narrative. After his father's death in 1931, Springs inherited Springs Mills and quickly became one of South Carolina's most innovative and successful textile mill owners. Edited by David K. Vaughan, this engaging collection of Springs's wartime correspondence follows the derring-do of an accomplished World War I fighter pilot before he became one of the best-known tycoons in modern South Carolina history.

Following enlistment at Princeton University, Springs was sent to England, where he trained with the Royal Flying Corps and joined the prestigious British 85 Squadron, commanded by Canadian ace William "Billy" Bishop. Springs had earned four kills before being wounded in a crash landing in June 1918. On return to duty he transferred to the 148th Aero Squadron of the U.S. Army, where he remained for the next four months. By the end of the war, Springs had amassed eight more kills and was awarded the British Distinguished Flying Cross and the American Distinguished Service Cross.

Because of his unique career as a pilot in both British and American flying squadrons, Springs was able to offer especially colorful descriptions of his flight training and aerial combat experiences from both perspectives. Grouped into sections according to his training and combat assignments, Springs's letters from his combat years are rife with the wit, bravado, and fatalism of a young aviator deeply enthralled with the wartime culture of England and France. In contextualizing this correspondence, Vaughan explores Springs's complex relationships maps the connections between Springs's firsthand experiences and his subsequent literary endeavors.

This collection highlights the thrills, tactics, and technical aspects of early air warfare from the candid perspectives of a brave young flyer with deadly aim, unflinching nerves, and a prosperous future waiting for him back in his native South Carolina.

Published in cooperation with the South Caroliniana Library

January 2012, 392 pages, 29 illus.

Method of payment:

_____ Check or money order (payable to USC Press in United States dollars)

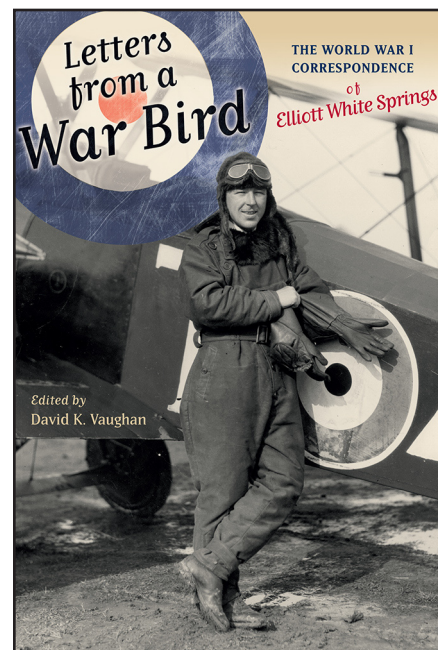
Credit Card: ____ American Express ____ Discover ____ Mastercard ____ Visa

Account number: _____ Exp. date: _____

Signature: _____

Name (please print): _____ Phone: _____

Shipping address: _____



David K. Vaughan is a pilot and educator who served in the U.S. Air Force from 1962 to 1982. He is a professor emeritus at the Air Force Institute of Technology and the author of *Anne Morrow Lindbergh, An American Pilot in the Skies of France: The Diaries and Letters of Lt. Percival T. Gates, 1917–1918*, and *Runway Visions: An American C-130 Pilot's Memoir of Combat Airlift Operations in Southeast Asia, 1967–1968*.

Send me _____ copy/copies

(cl, 978-1-61117-040-5, \$39.95 each) _____

SC residents add 7% sales tax _____

Shipping and handling* _____

TOTAL _____

*add \$6.00 for first book,
\$2.00 for each additional book

CODE AUFR