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## Fate Is the Hunter: A Pilot's Memoir

*Ernest K. Gann*

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#17276 in Books 1986-07-02 1986-07-02Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.25 x 1.10 x 6.12l, 1.01 #File Name: 0671636030416 pages | File size: 69.Mb

**Ernest K. Gann : Fate Is the Hunter: A Pilot's Memoir** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Fate Is the Hunter: A Pilot's Memoir:

10 of 10 people found the following review helpful. This is why I chose to be an Airline PilotBy GuitarslingerThis is the book that pushed me over the edge, prompting me to make my own journey from being an enthusiastic Private Pilot to becoming a Captain at a major airline, over the course of thirty years. This is Gann's autobiography and follows his amazing flying career, starting with his new-hire class at American Airlines during the 1930's. During

World War II, he flies cargo missions across the Atlantic, and also in Asia across the Himalayas, usually tired, overloaded, in the most dreadful weather, with dead reckoning often the primary means of navigation. It is a riveting true story that makes the reader feel like an invisible observer riding along on the jumpseat during countless flights, dealing with mechanical failures, perfect storms, colorful characters, and inevitable human error. Gann has a disarming honesty, disavowing any heroic mantle or superhuman airmanship. He is a highly skilled master of his craft, but he grimly comes to acknowledge that Fate or chance circumstance will often be the salvation of one man and his plane, or a cruel grim reaper to another, for no apparent reason. Reading this book gives us a greater appreciation of the fine transport category aircraft we enjoy flying today, and the myriad ways safety has been enhanced. I have read it numerous times over the years, with new perspective as I had my own moments of elation or despair. Although written many years ago, the job and the circumstances of professional aviation still have a great deal in common with those long ago days. Many times I have thought of a situation from this book as I faced a similar hazard or situation. You will too. I am sure you will also become a better pilot by reading this book, and gain a greater appreciation of the flying pioneers who came before us. Who knows, it may inspire you to make the leap, as it did for me many years ago.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Amazing stories, amazing writing  
By Dennis Fried  
These stories of the early days of commercial airline flying are amazing. And the fact that Gann survived through his flying career is even more amazing. He recounts at least half-a-dozen flying misadventures where his survival was essentially a coin-toss. And the book is replete with names of his friends and colleagues who lost the toss. Gann is an amazing writer. To me, there are three kinds of writers. The first are so bad that you notice the writing because it gets in the way. The second are good and the writing becomes transparent as you read. And the third are so good that you notice the writing again, because its elegance and style and freshness slap you in the face - when you read Gann, be prepared to get slapped silly.

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. The classic tale of aviation's golden years.  
By Glenn Smollinger  
This is Ernest K. Gann's semi-autobiographical, seminal work covering his career in commercial aviation from the 1930's through WWII and the post-war years. Gann flew twin and four-engined aircraft for American Airlines and the Air Transport Command in WWII. The narrative covers a series of incidents and accidents, and a plethora of pilots, co-pilots, navigators, radio operators, flight engineers and other airline employees who took part in Gann's career. There is a central question that the book tries to answer, and it is right in the title. Throughout Gann's flying time, he was part of, or witness to aviation close calls and disasters. Weather, equipment, and pilot error may be the answers the accident investigators attributed, but why did one airplane go down in a ball of flame, and Gann's airplane fly with the same circumstances, but land safely. How many times can fate be the answer, to living to tell the tale, while mourning the loss of another captain, crew, and passengers. Gann's writing style is very personal in the book, and the people he describes become personal to the reader, through Gann's writing skill. Ross, Beatie, Keim, and scores of other characters will seem like they were part of your crew, if you give Ernest Gann the chance to tell you about them.

Ernest K. Gann's classic memoir is an up-close and thrilling account of the treacherous early days of commercial aviation. In his inimitable style, Gann brings you right into the cockpit, recounting both the triumphs and terrors of pilots who flew when flying was anything but routine.

"Mr. Gann is a writer saturated in his subject; he has the skill to make every instant sharp and important and we catch the fever to know that documentary writing does not often invite." (V.S. Pritchett *New Statesman*) "This book is an episodic log of some of the more memorable of [the author's] nearly ten thousand hours aloft in peace and (as a member of the Air Transport Command) in war. It is also an attempt to define by example his belief in the phenomenon of luck -- that 'the pattern of anyone's fate is only partly contrived by the individual.'" (The *New Yorker*) "Few writers have ever drawn their readers so intimately into the shielded sanctum of the cockpit, and it is here that Mr. Gann is truly the artist." (New York Times Book Review) "Fate Is the Hunter is partly autobiographical, partly a chronicle of some of the most memorable and courageous pilots the reader will ever encounter in print; and always this book is about the workings of fate. . . . The book is studded with characters equally as memorable as the dramas they act out." (Cornelius Ryan, author of *A Bridge Too Far* and *The Longest Day*) "This fascinating, well-told autobiography is a complete refutation of the comfortable cliché that 'man is master of his fate.' As far as pilots are concerned, fate (or death) is a hunter who is constantly in pursuit of them. . . . There is nothing depressing about Fate Is the Hunter. There is tension and suspense in it but there is great humor too. Happily, Gann never gets too technical for the layman to understand." (Saturday Review) "This purely wonderful autobiographical volume is the best thing on flying and the meaning of flying that we have had since Antoine de Saint-Exupéry took us aloft on his winged prose in the late 1930s and early 1940s. . . . It is a splendid and many-faceted personal memoir that is not only one man's story but the story, in essence, of all men who fly." (Chicago Sunday Tribune) From the Publisher 10 1.5-hour cassettes About the Author Ernest K. Gann is the author of numerous books, among them *The High and the Mighty*, *Twilight for the Gods*, *The Aviator*, and *The Magistrate*. He lives in Anacortes, Washington, and continues to write and publish prolifically.