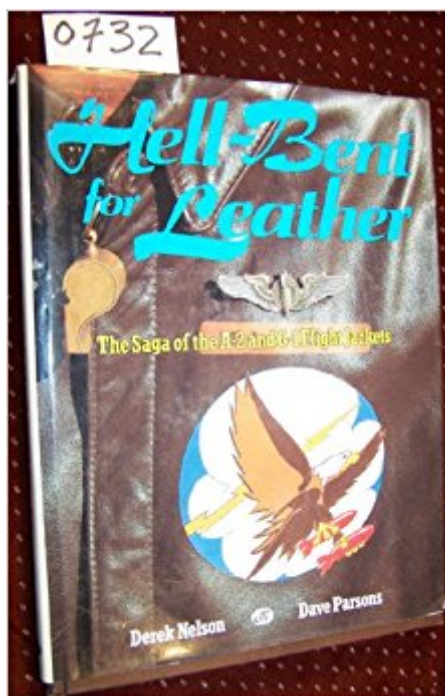


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Hell-Bent For Leather: The Saga Of The A-2 And G-1 Flight Jackets



Synopsis

Book by Nelson, Derek, Parsons, Dave

Book Information

Hardcover: 160 pages

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Customer Reviews

Book by Nelson, Derek, Parsons, Dave

Great historical look at the development of the leather flight jacket. As a licensed private pilot since 1987, I enjoy reading everything I can of the development of things related to flight. This led to a love of leather flight jackets and a pretty decent collection also. It was really interesting to learn the story behind my A2's, my G1, my goatskin CWU-45 and much more. Great historical book on a great topic!...keep 'em flyin'.

This is a great book if you are an aficionado of leather flight jackets! My only complaint, and I use that word lightly, is that the book tends to focus more on the G-1 rather than the A-2. Of course this is probably due to the author being a naval aviator, so I can't fault him there! If you can afford it or find it at a lower price, I highly recommend this book if you want great pictures, interesting stories and a thorough history of the A-2 and G-1's, and even to a lesser extent, the B-10's and other non-leather jackets.

Excellent book, detailing the invention and ongoing design and modification to the A2/G1 jacket we see today. The only thing I wished that they should have included.. Would be on the last couple of

pages, give all the manufacturers names and the Type of zipper used, the weave in the sleeve and waist line, and where their factories are located eg: state These things may sound a little silly, but if you are interested in the A2 these are the questions asked, what zipper has it got??, is there leather sewn in under the label to hang it?? But having said that, the book is not just interesting but excellent!!

As a history of the A-2 and G-1 jackets, this book falls well short. The authors present a weak history of these sought-after jackets that is frequently interrupted by rather dull accounts by former members of the military reminiscing about their personal jackets. Not enough attention is paid to the 20+ wartime manufacturers and the different contracts for the A-2' jacket. In addition, the authors make several technical mistakes in identifying certain models of jackets, such as the A-1 that the author frequently calls a "pre A2" or not mentioning the first version of the G-1 called the M442 or misidentifying a D-1. The authors are also well out of date with the current companies manufacturing high end reproductions. If one is interested in these jackets and their history, they would be better served by starting with the Eastman catalog and Internet sites of History Preservation Association, Lost Worlds, and Aero Leather Clothing.

This is one SILLY book- especially if you want to find anything reliable about vintage flight jackets! The "experts" quoted in this book are all the owners of 1980's flight jacket companies trying to cash in on the Top Gun craze. You've got your Stuey Clurman and your Jeff Clyman and some guy named Wegge and of course the indomitable Burt Avedon all spinning tales about A-2s and G-1s! Gems like this explaining original jackets' russet color: "...results from oxidation of the dyes." or this from Burt: "Chrome snaps on an A-2 are bogus." I think the best quote in this book has to be "Authentic is a much misused word" (James Goodson)! Boy he isn't kidding! Reading this book is like overhearing a bunch of rowdy drunks in a bar blowholing about quantum mechanics- "Hey- I knew a guy who stepped into a wormhole!" Not one actual reference- crappy photos-interesting only in kind of a sadly comic way.

Flight jackets are very special articles of clothing to many (including the preceding reviewers) hence their continued popularity since their inception which the authors tackle on all fronts. Unlike the first reviewer, I LIKE to hear the stories of individuals and their jackets. It adds context and taps the passion that many feel for the jackets which has led to their special status in the military and civilian marketplace. Conversely, I find the listing of contract numbers and the like boring (there is already a

book out on Combat Flying Clothing that covers all USAAF WWII flight gear by Sweeting...I suspect the preceding reviewers have it. THAT's a reference book). I have many books on aircraft specs and history, but many more on tales of aviators and units that are not reference books per se, but tell their stories. Any good aviation library ought to have both. So what is this book? At any rate, it has scores upon scores of newly discovered images of A-2 and G-1 jackets which sets it above the very few other books that deal exclusively with the A-2 and G-1 Flight Jackets. The authors deserve a great deal of credit for unearthing so many "new" images from a wide variety of sources (check the photo credits, they are widespread and no doubt a result of diligent research. Too many times, I see the same "retread" photos used over and over). Is it a definitive reference book?...I don't think it was intended to be one, but it is a gorgeous book with many, many color photographs even from WWII era. I found it to be more than a Flight Jacket Book, it really comes across as an aviation history through the many images that grace the pages. Being a naval aviator myself, I earned a G-1 and found the book to be a rich addition to my collection. I have given it as a gift and recommended it to many others. I'm glad to see it available again as many friends have seen my copy and wanted one for themselves. It would have been nice if the publisher had allowed the authors to update it after 10 years, but I suspect Motorbooks wanted to reprint it as is to avoid the costs associated with doing so. I'm sure the authors would be willing, but they don't make decisions on reprinting, publishers do. Perhaps there will be another opportunity down the road if Motorbooks reads the reviews.

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