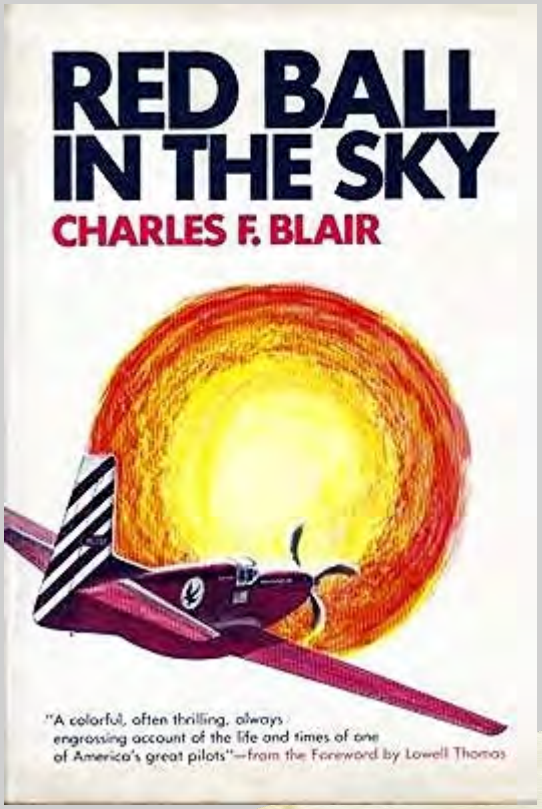

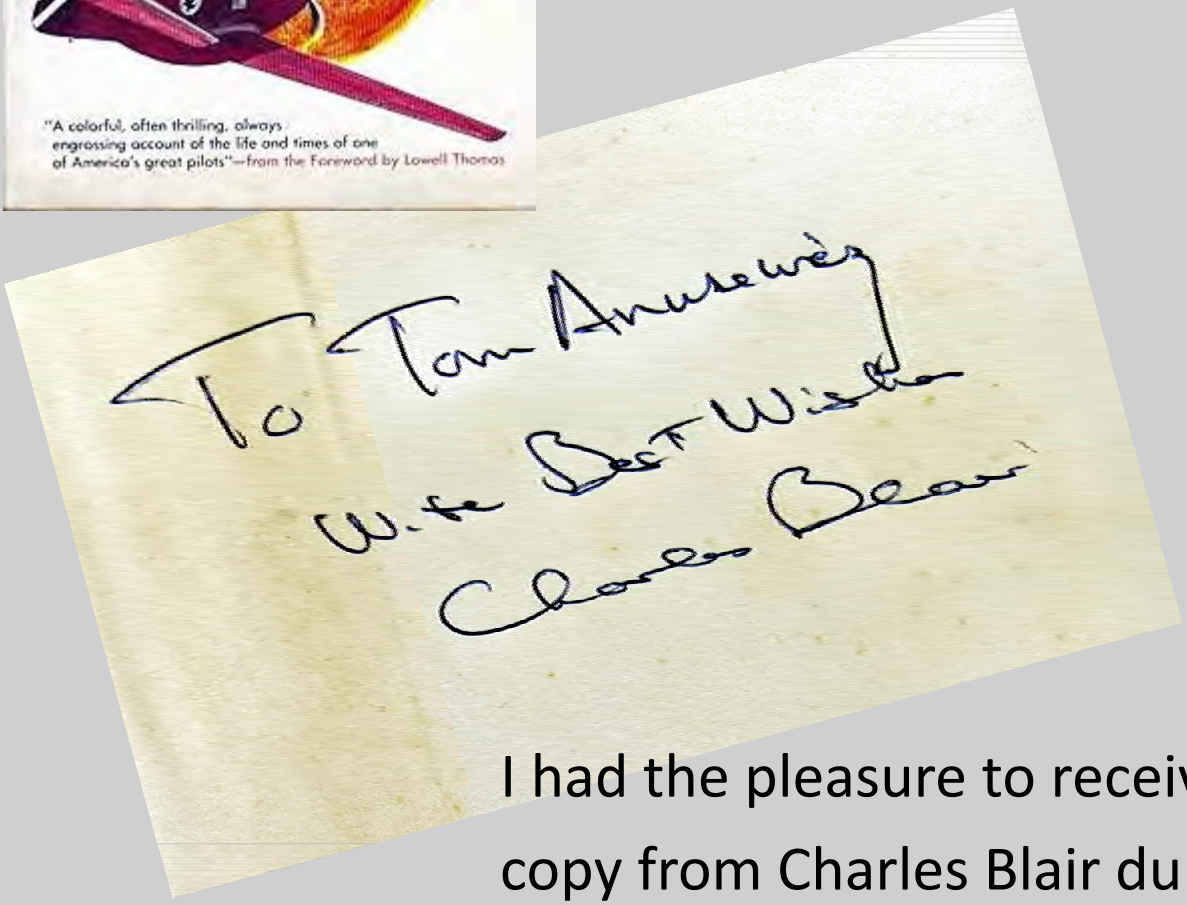

I had the pleasure to receive a copy from Charles Blair during my years at Antilles Air Boats.

Tom Anusewicz

$5.95

RED BALL IN THE SKY

CHARLES F. BLAIR

One sunny day in May of 1951 a bareheaded man in tweeds streaked across the top of the world in one of the great flights of history. The pilot was Charles Blair. The airplane was a single-engine, single-seat P-51 fighter. This was the first long-distance solo flight across any polar region.

Blair's incredible journey across the North Pole—executed with faultless precision—demonstrated that nonmilitary, transpolar flights were feasible. It proved, too, that the Arctic Ocean was no longer a valid barrier against air attack.

In 1952, as a result of his Arctic solo, the Strategic Air Command invited the author to help develop techniques for delivering thermonuclear weapons from long-range fighter aircraft—a new scheme of military tactics. Working as a special consultant he became the only part-time fighter pilot in the regular

(continued on back flap)

JACKET ILLUSTRATION: HARRY SCHAARE

(continued from front flap)

Air Force. Over the weekends he flew airliners to Europe as a Pan American Airways captain.

In 1956 he commanded Operation Sharkbait, a suspenseful, pioneering flight of jet fighters nonstop across the North Atlantic. In 1959, as a brigadier general, he led Operation Julius Caesar, the first flight of jet fighters to cross the Arctic and the North Pole.

Years of immersion in a nuclear-weapons "think tank" have left the author anything but complacent about the spreading technology of thermonuclear explosives. His words of warning about the decade of the seventies do not make carefree reading.

An engrossing and exciting story *Red Ball in the Sky* tells, too, of the author's P-51 speed dash from New York to London on the crest of a winter jet stream; of his pioneering achievements in flying boats; of the famed pilots of the Air Mail with whom Blair flew as a young copilot across the Rockies; and of his involvement in a Pentagon controversy.

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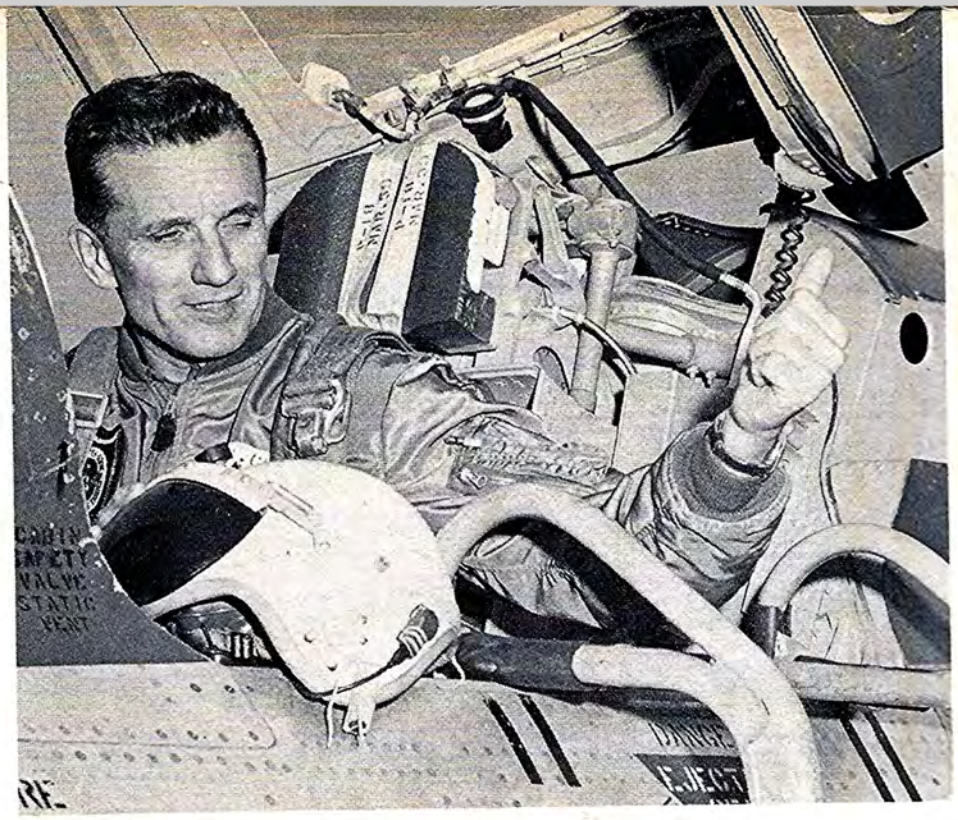

CHARLES BLAIR was born in Buffalo, New York, and studied aeronautical engineering at the University of Michigan and mechanical engineering at the University of Vermont, from which he graduated in 1931. After flight training with the Navy at Pensacola, Florida, and completing a tour of duty as naval aviator, he began a remarkable and significant career with the airlines and with the Air Force, accumulating 35,000 hours in the air in just about everything that flies. Among his awards are the Harmon International Trophy, Thurlow Award, and the Distinguished Flying Cross. He is married to the Irish-born motion-picture star Maureen O'Hara, and lives in St. Croix, Virgin Islands.