



REVIEWS

Spying From The Sky

BY ROBERT L. RICHARDSON. CASEMATE, 2020.
301 PP., \$34.95.

William J. Gregory was a Tennessee sharecropper's son who climbed out of poverty to become an Air Force colonel, entering the service's pantheon of heroes by learning to fly a Piper Cub and eventually transitioning to a CIA U-2. Gregory's flights in the U-2 as the commander of Detachment G (the unit's cover story was weather reconnaissance) had him flying over Cuba to photograph the MiGs, SAMs and SS-4 ballistic missiles that had provoked the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962.



Gregory's professional exploits are described in vivid detail based on more than 100 phone calls and emails the book's author, Robert Richardson, had with Gregory over the course of five years. Gregory's narration in italics throughout most of the book gets the reader directly into the action. *This is the most important mission you will ever have flown*, he recalls his CIA contact telling him before the flights over Cuba.

Over the next 16 months, Detachment G would make 28 passes over Cuba, which had been seeded with surface-to-air missiles, one of which killed Major Rudolf Anderson in a U-2 on October 27 (read more about the U-2 on p. 70).

Spying From The Sky is a solid and informative addition to several books on the subject, most notably *Shady Lady: 1,500 Hours Flying the U-2 Spy Plane* by Rick Bishop and *Silent Warriors, Incredible Courage: The Declassified Stories of Cold War Reconnaissance Flights and the Men Who Flew Them* by Wolfgang Samuel and R. Cargill Hall.

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