



# The World's Greatest Air Depot: The US 8th Air Force at Warton 1942-1945

*Harry Holmes*

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Base Air Depot No 2, Station 582 of the US 8th Air Force became known as 'The World's Greatest Air Depot'. It employed more than 10,000 people working round the clock on overhauls, modifications and maintenance. There were over 45,000 aircraft movements during its existence and every type of American aircraft used in the European Theatre of Operations in World War Two visited BAD 2. Warton saw the first Americans arriving in 1942 and from mid-1943 until the war's end, over 10,000 aircraft were processed, including 4,372 P-51 Mustangs and 2,894 B-24 Liberators. This is the story of an amazing achievement that made a vital contribution to the Allied war effort in the dark days of the struggle against Hitler. It is a tale of mind-boggling logistics and the deployment of armies of skilled engineers to handle the incoming products of America's mighty wartime output of aeroplanes and equipment. Follow the project from its initial beginnings and planning, the implementation and construction of the hangars and workshops, and read how sufficient aircraft were made ready to outfight the Luftwaffe during the invasion of Europe and the campaigns that followed. You will find photographs and information on many famous and some rare American aircraft as they are prepared for combat or repaired from wartime damage. This is a fascinating insight into an American legend in England. --- Harry Holmes is an aviation writer of great authority. He also has boundless enthusiasm for the subjects upon which he writes. Warton, in the period concerning this book, was his Mecca, for as a young boy he would watch with awe as aircraft after aircraft touched down, taxied or took off from BAD 2's runways.

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