

# From Archangel to Senior Crown: Design and Development of the Blackbird (Library of Flight)

Peter W. Merlin

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"The Lockheed Blackbirds hold a unique place in the development of aeronautics. In their day, the A-12, YF-12, M-21, D-21, and SR-71 variants outperformed all other jet airplanes in terms of altitude and speed. Now retired, they remain the only production aircraft capable of sustained Mach 3 cruise and operational altitudes above 80,000 feet. This is the first book to address the technical aspects of these incredible aircraft. The author describes the design evolution of the Blackbird, from the Archangel to the Senior Crown (the Air Forceís SR-71.) He describes in detail the construction and materials challenges faced by Lockheed, as well as the Blackbirdís performance characteristics and capabilities. A NASA historian, the author describes NASAís role in using the aircraft as a flying laboratory to collect data on materials, structures, loads, heating, aerodynamics, and performance for high-speed aircraft. The reader will benefit from the bookís discussion of the technical and programmatic lessons learned.

This volume was produced in cooperation with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration."



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