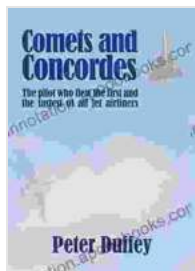


# The Pilot Who Flew the First and the Fastest of All Jet Airlines



**Comets and Concordes: The pilot who flew the first and the fastest of all jet airlines** by Claudia Botterweg

★★★★☆ 4 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 7844 KB

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Print length : 320 pages

Lending : Enabled



Aviation history is replete with stories of daring pilots who pushed the boundaries of flight. One such pilot was Bill Knight, who flew the first and the fastest of all jet airlines.

## Early Life and Career

William H. Knight was born in 1918 in Illinois, USA. He developed a passion for aviation at a young age and obtained his pilot's license at the age of 19.

During World War II, Knight flew P-47 Thunderbolts with the US Army Air Forces. After the war, he joined the Douglas Aircraft Company as a test pilot.

## The First Jet Airliner

In the early 1950s, Douglas Aircraft was developing the DC-8, the world's first jet airliner. Knight was chosen to fly the maiden flight of the DC-8 on May 30, 1958.



The DC-8's maiden flight was a success, and the aircraft entered service with Pan American World Airways in 1959. It revolutionized commercial aviation, reducing flight times and increasing passenger capacity.

### **The Fastest Jet Airliner**

In the late 1960s, Douglas Aircraft developed the DC-10, a wide-body jet airliner. Knight was again chosen to fly the maiden flight of the DC-10 on August 29, 1970.



Bill Knight flying the DC-10 on its maiden flight

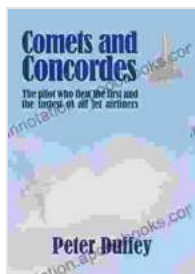
During the test flight, Knight pushed the DC-10 to a speed of Mach 0.99, just shy of the speed of sound. This made the DC-10 the fastest jet airliner in the world at the time.

## **Legacy**

Bill Knight's pioneering flights left a lasting legacy on the aviation industry. The DC-8 and DC-10 became iconic aircraft that shaped the course of commercial aviation.

Knight retired from Douglas Aircraft in 1982. He passed away in 2008 at the age of 90.

Bill Knight was a true aviation pioneer who played a pivotal role in the development of jet airliners. His daring flights and unwavering determination pushed the boundaries of flight and helped to transform the way we travel.



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