



Dowding of Fighter Command: Victor of the Battle of Britain

Vincent Orange

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Making full use of archival sources, studies by other scholars, and information provided by family members, Vincent Orange has completed the first biography of Air Marshal Sir Hugh Dowding to cover his entire life. Soldier, pilot, wireless pioneer, squadron commander, spiritualist, champion skier, 'Stuffy' Dowding is perhaps best known as the creator of the first radar-based air defense system and his no less remarkable management of such throughout the Battle of Britain. Dowding served in 'delightful and dangerous Iraq', helped to pacify unrest in the Holy Land, was involved in the R.101 airship disaster and oversaw the creation of Britain's first eight-gun monoplanes, the Hurricane and Spitfire. Controversially dismissed from Fighter Command and refused the R.A.F.'s highest rank, he nevertheless became the first airman elevated to the peerage since Trenchard. Westminster Abbey was packed for his memorial service in March 1970 with more than 46 air marshals in attendance; and in 1988 H.M. the Queen Mother unveiled a statue in his honor. With his expert eye, respected historian Orange has analyzed and evaluated every episode of Dowding's exceptional career to produce what will be seen as the definitive biography.

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