



JSCSC LIBRARY BIBLIOGRAPHY

Command and Leadership Series

**Air Chief Marshal Hugh Dowding,
1st Baron Dowding**

October 2008, © JSCSC in partnership with

serco

Air Chief Marshal Hugh Caswall Tremenheere Dowding 1st Baron Dowding (1882-1970)

Introduction

Lord Dowding's claim to fame was his judicious handling of the Royal Air Force's tightly stretched air defence forces during the Battle of France and the subsequent Battle of Britain during 1940. Much of Fighter Command's success is due to Dowding's preparation for war in the late 1930s and his support of the revolutionary radar technology to enable the effective use of scarce fighter resources.

Hugh Dowding was born in 1882 and was one of the earliest members of the Royal Flying Corps. He rose to command an RFC Wing during the Battle of the Somme but he fell foul of Trenchard, who had a very different temperament from Dowding, and spent the last two years of the War running a training brigade in the UK. Although well respected by many of his contemporaries, Dowding was never a popular man and was known for his reserve rather than strong leadership. However, he progressed through the inter-war RAF and was Air Member for Research and Development by 1935. He was instrumental in the procurement of radar and of modern fighters such as the Hurricane and Spitfire and became C-in-C of RAF Fighter Command in 1936.

Following grievous losses during the Battle of France Dowding wrote an historic memo to the War Cabinet warning of the dire consequences should the drain of men and equipment be allowed to continue in France. That he was successful in marshalling his resources to win the Battle of Britain and halt the threat of German invasion is now a matter of history. He also had to fight many difficult battles in Whitehall where he failed to maintain the support of many of his Air Ministry colleagues, especially with regard to the difficult relationship between two of his Group commanders, Park and Leigh-Mallory. Many historians consider Dowding's leaving of Fighter Command in somewhat ignominious circumstances after the Battle as distinctly unfair, although probably inevitable. Following an unsuccessful tour of the United States where Dowding came into conflict with official British policy, he retired completely, was created a baron in 1943, and spent much of the rest of his life in the study of religions and spiritualism until his death on 15 February 1970.

This bibliography has been designed to provide a guide as to where to find information on Dowding. Please note that the list of references below is a selection of the more relevant titles and information on the subject. The list is not intended to be exhaustive or definitive but is an introductory guide to some of the resources available.

Monographs

Andrews, Allen. **The air marshals**. London: Macdonald, 1970, 299 p.

Brown, Sqn Ldr Peter. **Honour restored: Dowding, the Battle of Britain and the fight for freedom**. Staplehurst: Spellmount, 2005, 250 p.

Collier, Basil. **Leader of the Few: The authorised biography of Air Chief Marshal the Lord Dowding of Bentley Priory GCB, GCVO, CMG**. London: Jarrolds, 1957, 264 p.

Dixon, J. E. G. **The Battle of Britain: victory and defeat**. Bognor Regis: Woodfield Publishing, 2003, 285 p.

Dowding, ACM Lord. **Many mansions**. London: Rider, 1939, 112 p.]

Fisher, David E. **A summer bright and terrible: Winston Churchill, Lord Dowding, radar, and the impossible triumph of the Battle of Britain.** Washington, DC: Shoemaker & Hoard, 2005, 287 p.

Flint, Peter. **Dowding and Headquarters Fighter Command.** Shrewsbury: AirLife, 1996, 222 p.

Gray, Gp Capt Peter. *Dowding as commander, leader and manager.* In Gray, Peter W., & Cox, Sebastian (eds.). **Air power leadership: theory and practice.** London: Stationery Office, 2002, 302 p.

Lyall, Gavin. *Dowding.* In Carver, FM Sir Michael (ed.). **The war lords: military commanders of the Twentieth Century.** pp. 176-187 London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1976, 624 p.

Probert, Air Cdre Henry, & Cox, Sebastian (eds.). **The Battle rethought: a symposium on the Battle of Britain.** Shrewsbury: AirLife, 1991, 103 p.

Probert, Air Cdre Henry. **High commanders of the Royal Air Force.** London: HMSO, 1991, 149 p.

Ray, John. **The Battle of Britain: Dowding and the first victory, 1940.** London: Cassell Military, 2000, 222 p.

Strachan, Hew (ed.). **Military lives: intimate biographies of the famous by the famous.** Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002, 524 p.

Wright, Robert. **Dowding and the Battle of Britain.** London: Macdonald, 1969, 286 p.

Periodical Articles

Braun, Sqn Ldr Simon. *The command and leadership competence of Air Chief Marshal Sir Hugh Dowding.* **Royal Air Force Air Power Review**, Vol. 8, No. 4, Winter 2005, pp. 34-51

Haslam, Gp Capt E. B. *How Lord Dowding came to leave Fighter Command.* **Journal of Strategic Studies**, Vol. 4, No. 2, June 1981, pp. 175-186

Wray, Col A. D. *A comparative reappraisal of the removal of Smith-Dorrien and Dowding from their respective commands in the early stages of the two World Wars.* **Seaford House Papers**, 1994, pp. 97-109

Any Queries

Contact library.jscsc@defenceacademy.mod.uk
Tel: 01793 788237
Fax: 01793 788281

Compiler: Chris Hobson
December 2008