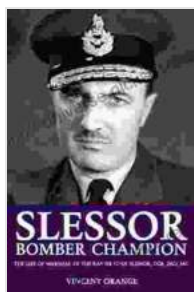


# The Extraordinary Life and Legacy of Marshal of the RAF Sir John Slessor GCB DSO MC

## Early Life and Military Beginnings

Marshal of the RAF Sir John Cotesworth Slessor was born on June 3, 1897, in Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, England. From an early age, he exhibited a keen interest in aviation. After attending Eton College, Slessor joined the Royal Naval Air Service in 1915, at the tender age of 18.



## Slessor: Bomber Champion: The Life of Marshal of the RAF Sir John Slessor, GCB, DSO, MC by Vincent Orange

★★★★☆ 4.1 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 2957 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 450 pages
Lending	: Enabled





## **World War I and Early Aviation Career**

During World War I, Slessor served with distinction in the Royal Naval Air Service, flying bombing and reconnaissance missions. He quickly rose through the ranks, demonstrating exceptional skill and gallantry. In 1918, he was awarded the Distinguished Service Order (DSO) for his courageous actions in combat.

After the war, Slessor continued his service in the newly formed Royal Air Force (RAF). He held various positions, including commanding officer of several squadrons. In 1929, he graduated from the Royal Air Force Staff College, which would later prove instrumental in shaping his strategic thinking.

## **World War II and Strategic Air Warfare**

With the outbreak of World War II, Slessor was appointed Director of Plans at the Air Ministry. In this role, he played a crucial part in developing the RAF's strategic bombing strategy. He argued for the use of heavy bombers to target enemy industrial centers and infrastructure, a strategy that would ultimately prove to be highly effective.



Marshal of the RAF Sir John Slessor during World War II.

Slessor's strategic vision extended beyond bombing. He also emphasized the importance of air superiority, fighter protection, and the development of electronic warfare techniques. His forward-thinking ideas significantly shaped the RAF's conduct of the war and contributed to the Allied victory.

## **Post-War Leadership and Air Strategy**

After the war, Slessor served as Commandant of the RAF Staff College and later as Commander-in-Chief of Bomber Command. In 1950, he was appointed Chief of the Air Staff, the highest-ranking position in the RAF. During his tenure, he oversaw the transition to jet aircraft and the nuclear age.

Slessor was an influential figure in the development of post-war air strategy. He advocated for a balanced air force capable of both nuclear deterrence and conventional operations. He also recognized the importance of international cooperation and played a key role in the formation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

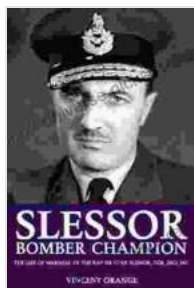
## **Retirement and Legacy**

Slessor retired from the RAF in 1956 and was elevated to the peerage as Baron Slessor. In his later years, he remained an active voice on defense and aviation matters. He authored several books, including "The Central Blue," a seminal work on air power theory.

Marshal of the RAF Sir John Slessor passed away on July 12, 1979, leaving behind a legacy of unparalleled service to the Royal Air Force and the nation. His contributions to air strategy, military leadership, and aviation history continue to be studied and admired by military professionals and aviation enthusiasts alike.

Marshal of the RAF Sir John Slessor was a true visionary and a giant in the field of aviation. His strategic intellect, operational experience, and unwavering determination shaped the RAF into a formidable force and played a pivotal role in shaping the outcome of World War II. His legacy as

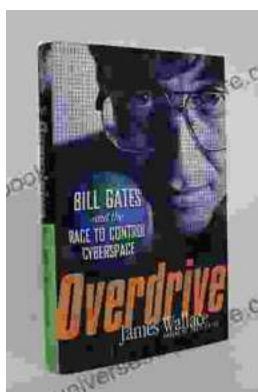
a military leader, air strategist, and pioneer in aviation will continue to inspire generations to come.



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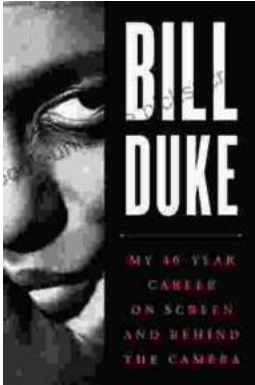
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