

Dambuster-in-Chief: The Life of Air Chief Marshal Sir Ralph Cochrane

by

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Synopsis

“A fascinating biography of one of the most important figures in Bomber Command during the Second World War.” —History of War
Ralph Cochrane was born in 1895 into a distinguished naval family. After joining the Royal Navy, he volunteered in 1915 to serve with the RNAS in airships and was an early winner of the Air Force Cross. In 1918 he transferred to the fledgling RAF and learned to fly, serving in Iraq as a flight commander under “Bomber” Harris. His inter-war career saw him as a squadron commander in Aden before he became the first Chief of Air Staff of the Royal New Zealand Air Force. During the Second World War he served mainly in Bomber Command and commanded 5 Group from early 1943. He formed 617 Squadron and was instrumental in planning the legendary Dambuster Raid, the most spectacular of the War, as well as the sinking of the battleship Tirpitz. An inspirational leader, he trained 5 Group in low level target marking skills. Post war, Cochrane held a string of senior appointments commanding Transport Command, Flying Training Command and finally as Vice Chief of Air Staff, retiring in 1952. He died in 1977. “A brilliantly researched biography of a fascinating fighter . . . adds a new name to rank alongside Great Britain’s most heroic warriors.” —Argunners “The Dambusters is one of my absolute favourite stories from WWII . . . and this bio of Cochrane tells the story of an extraordinary man. Brilliant.” —Books Monthly

What people say about this book

David Scarrett, "A great man. I grew up worshipping so to speak the actions of 617 as my late father served as an Engineering Officer with them. It was nice to read about basically the man behind the Squadron. It's a cracking read"

Steven Ford, "Very readable. This is a very readable account of a man who very few of us would have been aware of. Well written and researched"

E J Norwich, "Excellent. Well written, full of detail, really gave you a feel of the man."

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