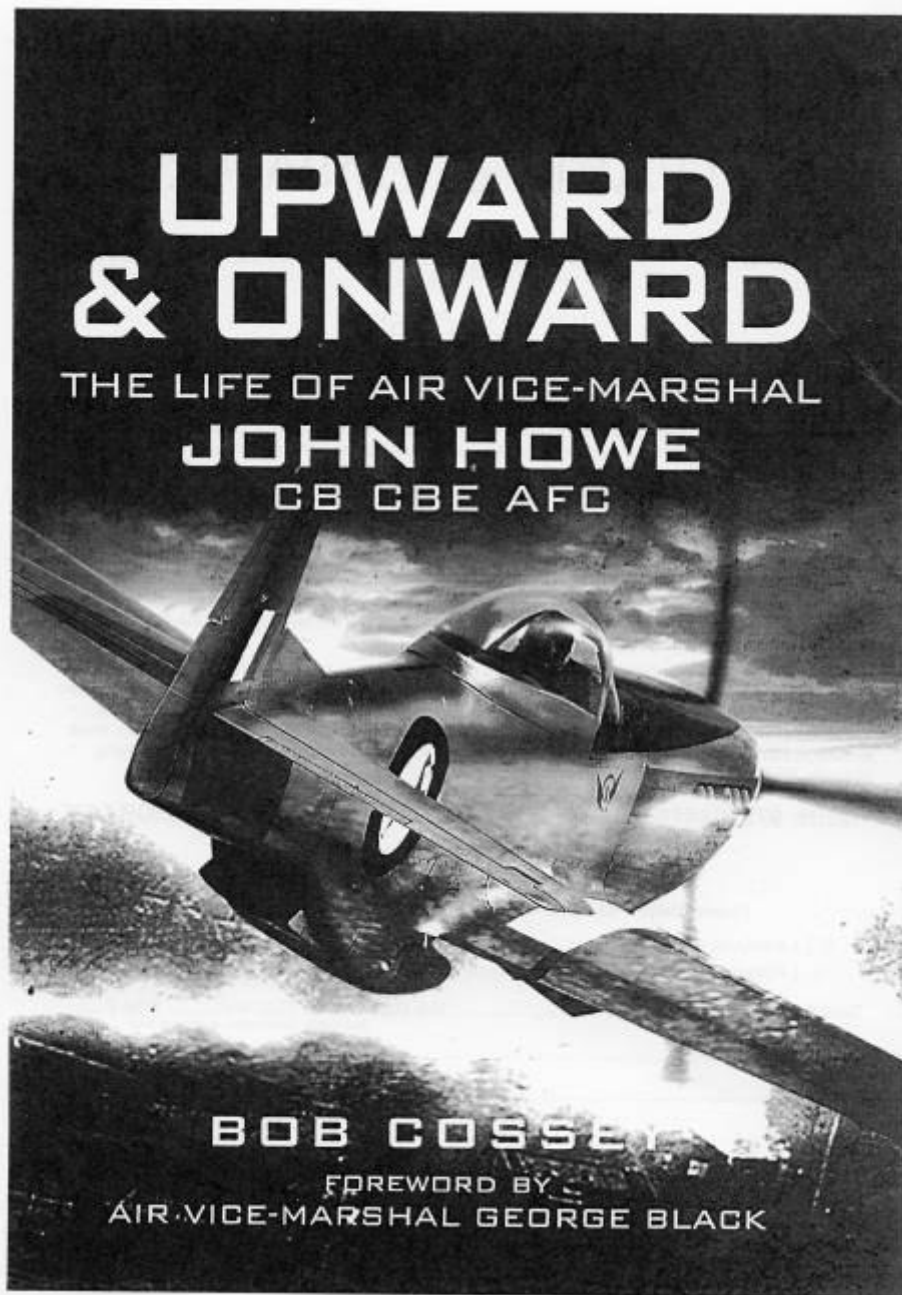


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John Howe started his flying career in the post-war South African Air Force, learning to fly on Tiger Moths, Harvards and Spitfires. He was posted to No 2 Squadron SAAF which was sent to Korea to fly as South Africa's contribution to the war in support of the United Nations' forces. There he flew the Mustang F-51 D fighter-bomber in front-line action during his first tour. A second tour saw him with the US Infantry as a Forward Air Controller operating on the ground with the troops to call in air support.

As the apartheid political situation in South Africa became more extreme he resigned from the SAAF and traveled to England where he was welcomed by the RAF to fly their first jet fighters - and later to instruct on Vampires. He then converted to the Hunter and joined 222 Squadron at Leuchars. During the Suez crisis he operated as a Forward Ground Controller and landed on the beaches with 40 Commando. Later, he was appointed CO of 74 Squadron - The Tigers - to introduce the supersonic Lightning into service with the RAF and with them, demonstrated the remarkable capabilities of the new fighter to the Air Forces of the world at both the Farnborough and Paris Air Shows.

His career later took him to Fighter Command HQ, RAF Staff College and the Joint Warfare Establishment. After a posting to the USA on an exchange tour flying most of the Century Series Fighters and the F-4 Phantom, he returned to the UK to head up 228 OCU to introduce the Phantom FGR2 into operational service. Towards the end of his thirty-eight year service career he commanded the RAF base at Gutersloh, close to the Iron Curtain, flying Lightnings again and was then AOC of the Southern Maritime Region flying Nimrods. His final postings was as Commandant of the RAF Regiment.

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