

'Tommy' Thompson John Marlow (RAF n° 34183)

Distinguished Service Order, Distinguished Flying Cross with Bar, Belgian Croix de Guerre 1940 with Palm, Belgian Military Cross 1st Class, Air Force Cross, Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, ...



(Nigel Thompson Collection)

John was born in Saltford, on 16 August 1914, joined the RAF in 1934, posted to 29 Sqn and then to 56 Sqn (15/01/1936). He became 'A' -flight commander of 151 sqn and then went on commanding 111 sqn in January 1940. After leading his unit in France, he then saw action over Southern England throughout August. A DFC was awarded in September 1940. In June 1941, he formed and commanded 131 Sqn. This unit contained a Belgian Flight and when in November, they formed the basis for 350 Sqn, the Belgians asked for him, and he moved to lead this unit until March 1942. Promoted Wing Commander, he was posted to the Middle East, Here he took over the Takali Wing. Later on he took over command of the Hal Far Wing . He received a Bar to his DFC after the October 'Blitz'. At the end of 1942, he lead all three Malta Wings. In May 1943, he was awarded a DSO. In June he was posted to Air HQ , Malta, as W/Cdr Training. After six weeks of illness, he became Station Commander of Hal Far, from March to February 1944. He then commanded a Wing at Palermo. He moved the to Algiers to command 338 Wing. Promoted G/Cpt he went to Operations HQ, Macat. He ended the war as commander of the Personnel Training Center at Naples. He returned to the UK, becoming Sector Commander at North Weald. He attendee the RAF Staff College in September 1945, he then made career at the RAF, retiring as Air Commodore in 1966. He died on 23rd July 1994.

Citation for the award of the Distinguished Flying Cross.

"Squadron Leader John Marlow THOMPSON (34185).

This officer has commanded a squadron since January, 1940, and has operated over various areas in Northern France. He has taken part in nearly every patrol and, under his leadership, eighty-one enemy aircraft have been destroyed, twelve probably destroyed and at least forty-four damaged. He has, himself, shot down eight and damaged at least six enemy aircraft."

(London Gazette – 6 September 1940)

Citation for the award of the Distinguished Service Order

"Wing Commander John Marlow THOMPSON, D.F.C (34183).

This officer has a fine operational record. He fought in France and later took part in the Battle of Britain. For the past 9 months he has been engaged in flying operations from Malta, playing a prominent part in the defence of the island during a period of intense air attacks. Latterly, Wing Commander Thompson has led formations of fighter-bombers in numerous successful attacks against port installations, factories, airfields and other targets. By his great skill and brilliant leadership, Wing Commander Thompson has contributed in a large measure to the excellent results obtained."

(London Gazette – 1 June 1943)

His claims are :

18/05/1940	1/3 Hs-125	Cambrai (111 Sqn)
18/05/1940	1 Bf-110	Douai (111 Sqn)
18/05/1940	1 Bf-110 Unconfirmed	Douai (111 Sqn)
19/05/1940	1 He-111 Unconfirmed	Cambrai (111 Sqn)
31/05/1940	1 Bf-109E Unconfirmed	Dunkirk (111 Sqn)
11/06/1940	1 Bf-109E	Le Havre (111 Sqn)
11/06/1940	1 Bf-109E Damaged	Le Havre (111 Sqn)
11/06/1940	1 Ju-88 Damaged	Le Havre (111 Sqn)
10/07/1940	1 Do-17 Damaged	Off Folkstone (111 Sqn)
18/07/1940	1/3 Hs-126	Channel (111 Sqn)
11/08/1940	1 Do-17 Damaged	North Foreland (111 Sqn)
13/08/1940	1 Do-17	Eastchurch (111 Sqn)
13/08/1940	1 Do-17 Damaged	Eastchurch (111 Sqn)
15/08/1940	1 Do-17	Thames Estuary (111 Sqn)
15/08/1940	1 Bf-110	Croydon (111 Sqn)
15/08/1940	1 Bf-109E Probable	Croydon (111 Sqn)
16/08/1940	1 Do-17	Dungeness (111 Sqn)
27/08/1942	1/2 Ju-88 Probable	Comiso (Hal Far Wing)
11/10/1942	1 Bf-109	Comino (Hal Far Wing)
12/11/1942	1 Bf-109 Damaged	Takali (Hal Far Wing)
14/11/1942	1 Bf-109 Damaged	St-Paul's Bay (Hal Far Wing)
14/11/1942	1 Ju-88	Zonkor (Hal Far Wing)

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