

Howard. T. SKETT
Pilot Officer - Flying Officer

Howard Skett was a former member of the Midland Aero Club, and joined 609 at Duxford under Sqn Ldr Richey on 17th June 1942 from No.56 Operational Training Unit. On 2nd March 1943, under Squadron Leader Roland Beamont, he was flying Typhoon DN300 PR-W. The last 'Rhubarb' of the day saw Johnny Baldwin and Howard Skett take off from Manston at 15:41 hrs. They found Belgium littered with derelict engines from the last sortie - and that the flak guns had been brought to a high state of readiness! Skett got a Cat.B in a station north of Ypres and some tracer from a single gun. He pranged another just east of Dixmude, and the roof of a signal box which intervened. He then saw white tracer approaching head on from the fields and presently, despite evasive action, felt a thump at the rear of his Typhoon and found his elevator jammed in the climbing position and the engine spluttering at 140 I.A.S. After a mighty heave there was a grating noise and the stick moved forward. Holding it there with alternate hands, Skett got an emergency homing which took him through a large clear patch at 2,000ft over Dunkirk without a shot being fired. He then struggled back to Manston and landed, where the Typhoon was written off. On 11th May 1943, whilst under Squadron Leader Alec Ingle, he was posted to Millfield for a Ground Attack Instructors Course, and was posted overseas on 12th July 1943.