

DUNDAS, John Charles, was a Yorkshireman and brother of H. S. L. 'Cocky' Dundas. Before the war he received a First Class Honours in History at Oxford, and was a journalist with the Yorkshire Post. He was also a member of the Auxiliary Air Force, and was called up in 1939, serving with 609 Squadron. On 31st May 1940 he shot down a He111 and a Do17 over Dunkirk, and on 13th July destroyed a Bf110. He claimed another Bf110 on the 19th, and a third on 11th August. Next day he shot down another, and on the 13th got a Ju 87 and damaged a second. On the 14th he probably destroyed a Do17 and shared a He111. He probably destroyed another Bf110 on the 25th. He next claimed on 15th September when he damaged a Do17, and on the 24th destroyed a Bf109 and damaged another Do17. He shot down another Do17 next day, and the following day, the 26th, damaged another and shot down a Bf109. On the 27th he destroyed a Bf110, and probably destroyed another on 7th October. He was then awarded a DFC, and on the 15th shot down another Bf110. He became a flight commander early in November, and on the 27th probably destroyed a Ju88. Next day over the Isle of Wight, he destroyed a Bf109, but was in turn shot down and killed. It was later found that he had shot down the leading Luftwaffe ace of the period, Helmut Wick, who claimed 56 victories. He had been shot down himself by Wick's wingman. At the time of his death his score was at least 13½, and he had probably destroyed 4 more. He was later awarded a Bar to his DFC.

Helmut Wick was born on August 5th 1915 in Mannheim, Germany and after his education he joined the Luftwaffe in 1935 and by 1938 had been promoted with the rank of a Commissioned Leutnant. He learnt much during this period as his advanced training as a fighter pilot was under the instruction of the famous pilot, Werner Mölders, who himself achieved much success in combat over the coming years. Wick's first posting was flying the Arado Ar 68 biplane with II/JG 134 before finally converting to the Messerschmitt Bf 109 in January 1939 when he was posted to I/JG 53. He remained with this unit until September that year when Germany invaded Poland and he was subsequently posted to I/JG 2, a unit tasked with the defence of Berlin.

During the period known as the "Phoney-War" Wick claimed his first victory and also that of the fighter wing, I/JG 2, when he shot down a French Curtiss Hawk on November 22nd 1939. Remaining with the unit he was moved to the western front where the Battle of France was underway, during May 1940.

On May 17th he engaged and shot down three Curtiss Hawk's after he and 3 other Bf109's were attacked by a large formation of the French fighters. By the end of the Battle of France in June 1940, Wick had achieved 14 confirmed kills and 2 unconfirmed. He was awarded the Eiserne Kreuz I (Iron Cross, 1st class) along with promotion to Staffelfkapitan.

Throughout the Battle of Britain Wick rose quickly in rank and in profile as a public figure back home in Germany. This was due to his outstanding qualities in leadership as a fighter pilot and his continual success in combat. During his first combat over England, he claimed 3 Spitfires on the same sortie and on August 27th he received the Ritterkreuz (Knights Cross) for achieving 20 victories. He shot down 2 Hurricanes on August 30th, the first of No: 253 Squadron flown by Pilot Officer Jenkins, over Surrey and the second of No: 43 Squadron flown by Sergeant Noble over Sussex. Both the RAF pilots were killed.

On September 9th he was promoted to Gruppenkommandeur of I Gruppe/JG 2 and on October 6th was awarded the Ritterkreuz mit Eichenlaub (Knights Cross with Oak

Leaves) after claiming his 42nd combat victory of the war. By now Helmut Wick had become the most successful fighter pilot of the Luftwaffe. At the end of the Battle of Britain he had been made a Major and Kommodore of JG 2

As the battles over southern England continued into November 1940, so did his victories and his 55th came on November 28th to make him the highest scoring "fighter-ace" in the world, at that time. It was later that same day, on another sortie, that Wick not only claimed his last victory but also lost his life

During combat over the Solent and the Isle of Wight with Spitfires of No: 609 Squadron, Wick had claimed the Spitfire of Pilot Officer Baillon, who was killed, when two Spitfires subsequently attacked him. One was flown by Flight Lieutenant John Dundas of No: 609 Squadron (already an ace with 16 victories) and the other by the Polish pilot Sergeant Zygmunt Klein of No: 152 Squadron. To this day it is unclear as to which of these pilots fired the fatal shots as both were shot down and killed moments later

With his aircraft stricken with damage, Wick baled out just south of the Isle of Wight and into the English Channel. His body was never recovered