

81639 Squadron Leader Patric Glynn Thornton – Brown

Joined 263 Squadron in early 1941 flying Westland Whirlwinds. Seriously injured in a crash at Portreath on 14<sup>th</sup> March 1941, after which he was hospitalised for a long period. After discharge he converted to Hawker Typhoons and joined 56 Squadron. Promoted to Squadron – Leader to command 609 at Lympne on 21<sup>st</sup> August 1943. On 21<sup>st</sup> December 1943 he was flying Hawker Typhoon R8845 from RAF Manston, leading six Typhoons of 609 Squadron on Ramrod 382, escorting USAF Martin Marauder light bombers. In the Somme estuary area Flt/Lt Smith was fired upon by 2 RAF Spitfires, followed by attacking fire by USAF Thunderbolts, who also fired on Sergeant McLoughlin. The 609 pilots fired off the recognition signals of the day and Squadron Leader Thornton – Brown ordered his pilots to withdraw. It was now 11 am, and they were over Abbeville. A Typhoon was seen going down in flames, and was identified as that of Flying Officer Miller. Thornton – Brown then ordered his No. 2, Sergeant Adam, to return to base. The USAF fighters continued to attack the Typhoons and Sqn Ldr Thornton – Brown baled out near Doullens. Eye – witness reports state that he was shot at and killed by German ground troops. His DFC was promulgated 2 days after his death, along with a recommendation for promotion to Wing Leader. Squadron Leader Pat Thornton – Brown is buried in the village of Caumont, south of Hesdin, France. Also on Ramrod 382 was 501 Squadron. Three of their Spitfires were also shot down by the American Thunderbolts.

THORNTON-BROWN, Patrick Glynn, S/L, DFC (81639) - Croix de Guerre with Palm, Belgian - awarded as per London Gazette dated 18 June 1946.