

(Prince) de Merode Werner (RAF n° 116473)

Grand Officer in the Order of the Crown, Grand Officer in the Order of Léopold II, Commander in the Order of Leopold, Belgian Croix de Guerre 1940, French Croix de Guerre 1940, Commander of the French Légion d'Honneur, Croix des Evadés, Knight Commander in the Victorian Order, 1939/1943 Star, ...



(André Bar Collection)

Born on 25 March 1914 at St-Gilles. After his degree in Philosophy and letters he joined the 1 Rgt Guides of the Belgian Army. At the wish of his father, Werner passed examination for Active Officer and got a 15 month instruction at the Military School of Brasschaat. He is posted to 2 Rgt Chasseurs à Cheval. He asked for a transfer to the Aéronautique Militaire. He is instructed at the Flying School of Wevelghem and his instructor was Manu Geerts. His first Solo was on 27 February 1939 and once graduated he was posted to 3/II/2Aé. At the outbreak of War, de Merode flew on Fiat CR42 and got his sole victory of the War on 10 May 1940, claiming a Do17P shot down near Waremme. He followed his unit in France and was at Chastres when Leopold III capitulated. He returned to Belgium but regretted not having followed the few who escaped to Great Britain. He evaded on 5 June 1941 and reached the UK on 8 November 1941. He enlisted the RAFVR (15/01/1942) and after a short refresh training at the OTU of Aston (09/03/1942) he was posted to 501 Sqn (12/03/1942) and 350 Sqn where he arrived on 4 September 1942. F/O on 01/10/1942. During Circus 242, de Merode flying on Spitfire Mk V MN-N was shot down by a Fw-190 of JG26. He bailed out and evaded. He arrived back in the UK on 28 March 1943. Sent to Receiving Center 1 the same day. Further operational postings saw him joining 91 Sqn (12/05/1943) and 501 Sqn (07/07/1943), His further RAF career saw him as F/Lt, joining the administration of the Belgian Section of the RAF (01/02/1944) and the Air Ministry Unit (26/02/1944). Post War saw him getting a Diplomatic career as ambassador in several countries. He died at Brussels on 22 December 1995.

(Info Kindly provided by Marc Artiges and André Bar)

His claims are :

10/05/1940      1 Do-17P      Near Waremme 14.40 (Aé Mil)