



# **Survival Against All Odds: Sunday, 8 June 1942: Shot Down Over France**

*John Misseldine, Oliver Clutton-Brock*

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Born in 1922 in north London and fascinated by a flight in 1938 in one of Sir Alan Cobham's Flying Circus aircraft, John Misseldine enlisted in the RAF as soon as he turned 18. After training in California in 1941 (in the very first batch of air cadets to be sent there and where he met many Hollywood film stars), in March 1942 he was posted to fly fighters with 611 Squadron, whose CO was Battle of Britain veteran DH Watkins DFC, and wing commander flying Peter Townsend, later a royal suitor.

On June 8th, John was shot down over northern France and for over two months was on the run from the Gestapo, being aided and abetted by the French resistance and British Intelligence, with more than a few alarms along the way. Journeying south through occupied France, he eventually escaped from Gibraltar in August, arriving in Scotland and thence to 65 (East India) Squadron. Commissioned as a pilot officer, he was posted to Algeria to ferry new Spitfires and Hurricanes to front-line squadrons supporting the Eighth Army. This role too was not without its hazards but he made it through to become CO of an airfield and to meet and marry a French girl, Mauricette. Sixty-four years later, they are still together and this is John's heart-warming and page-turning story of 'survival against the odds', written by John Misseldine and the acclaimed author Oliver Clutton-Brock. Grub Street has published two of Oliver Clutton-Brock's previous works, *Footprints on the Sands of Time*, and *RAF Evaders*.

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