

**F/O John
Christie 53421
RAF**



John Christie was a Scottish Mosquito navigator who died along with his pilot when their aircraft crashed on a hillside in the Rhône valley after experiencing severe weather conditions in the summer of 1944.

His aircraft, DZ636 AZ-N, was one of nine Pathfinders from 627 Squadron that accompanied 178 Lancasters from No. 5 Group to attack the rail yards in Givors to block German reinforcements reaching the battlefield in Normandy.

DZ636 had taken off from Woodhall Spa at 2312 hours on the night of 26/27 July 1944 and is believed to have crashed before reaching the target, hitting a hillside near the village of Letra, between Lyon and Charolles. Both John and his Yorkshire-born pilot, F/O Dennis Flaherty, were later buried in Letra Communal Cemetery.

John was a pre-war member of the RAF and had joined 627 Squadron with his pilot a month earlier from No. 1655 Mosquito Training Unit. He was the 32-year-old son of James and Agnes Christie and came from Brechin, in Angus. A section of the tail of DZ636 was later recovered and can now be seen in the Thorpe Park Visitor Centre at Tattershall Thorpe. It is housed in a building once part of one of the communal sites of RAF Woodhall Spa.

John's name can be found on IBCC panel 019.

Sources: Aviation Safety Network/At First Sight by Alan B Webb/Thorpe Park.