

WO John Mitchell Crawford 1392529
RAFVR

John Crawford was an experienced navigator who died when his Lancaster vanished on a training operation in November 1944.

He was one of 16 men from 97 Squadron who were killed on the night radar exercise over France in two Lancasters that had been among six sent out on training sorties from Coningsby on the night of 10/11 November 1944.



Their task was to use the new American-designed LORAN (long range reconnaissance) radar on board their Pathfinder Lancasters. One crashed in France, but no trace was ever found of the second, PB450 OF-D, or the eight experienced men on board. Each crew was carrying an additional radar operator and both were described by the squadron records as 'very capable'.

John was the 22-year-old son of John and Beatrice Crawford and came from Abbey Wood in north London.

The others who died on board PB450 were the pilot Flt. Lt. John Runnacles, flight engineer F/O Wilfred Cowen, bomb aimer F/O Hugh Annett MiD, wireless operator WO Harold Moore MiD, radar specialist (substantive trade of navigator) Flt. Sgt. John Farrell, mid-upper gunner WO John Madge and rear gunner Sgt. Leonard Oldfield. All are remembered on the Runnymede Memorial.

His name can be found on panel 024.

Sources: Bomber Command Losses 1944 by Bill Chorley/97 Squadron ORBs.