

P/O Gordon Collis DFM 87034 RAFVR

Gordon was born on 16 June 1919 in Netherfield, Nottinghamshire, the youngest son of Albert Edward Collis and Florence Ethel Collis (née Dann).

Educated at Henry Mellis County Secondary School, Nottingham, Gordon was employed as a Local Government Clerk with Nottingham County Council when he volunteered for service with the RAF in 1939.

He joined 101 Squadron at RAF West Raynham, Norfolk, as a sergeant observer in June 1940, as the squadron was preparing to transfer from a training to an operational squadron. In November 1940 Gordon was granted a commission.

In November 1940 Gordon and his crew were decorated, with Gordon awarded the DFM. His citation read:

"This crew has shown great skill and determination in locating their targets and pressing home their attacks in spite of encountering heavy A.A. fire on nearly every occasion".

On the night of 18/19 March 1941 Bomber Command was tasked with an attack on Kiel, Wilhelmshaven and Rotterdam. The target for Gordon's Blenheim was Wilhelmshaven, a key base for the German Navy. They were part of a combined force of 44 Blenheims, with 101 Squadron contributing nine crews.

At 1935 hours on 18 March Gordon and the crew departed RAF West Raynham in Blenheim IV R3846 (SR).

The aircraft failed to return and it was later reported to have been shot down by a German naval vessel and crashed into the sea near Texel, Frisian Islands, killing all on board. Only the pilot was recovered for burial.

Also killed were the pilot P/O Charles Raymond Brown DFC and wireless operator/air gunner Sgt. Godric Loughlin DFM.

Gordon has no known grave and is commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial, Surrey.

Gordon is commemorated on Wall Panel 147.

Photo Source: Nottingham Evening Post

