

Sgt John Henry George 626245 RAF

John was born in 1919 in Ombersley, Worcestershire, the second son of Arthur James George and Annie George nee Breakwell. Educated at the Royal Grammar School, Worcestershire, John joined the RAF in November 1938 and trained as a Wireless Operator.

On 18 August 1940, 101 Sqn were tasked with night attacks against enemy airfields. John's target was Antwerp, Belgium.

At 22:05 John, operating as the Wireless Operator, and the crew departed RAF West Raynham, Norfolk in Blenheim IV N3574 (SR).

As the aircraft reached the Dutch coast, the port engine failed, and the crew abandoned the original target and made for their secondary target of Haamsted aerodrome, SW Holland. The airfield was located and successfully attacked from 5,000 feet.

Whilst on the return journey, just before reaching the English coast near Lowestoft, Norfolk, the aircraft started to lose height and, in spite of the efforts of the crew, it became necessary to make a forced landing. On spotting a trawler which would enable a prompt rescue, at 00:20 on 19 August the pilot ditched in a rough sea close to the trawler.

The impact of the ditching rendered John unconscious. Despite their injuries, both the Pilot and Observer struggled desperately to free him but to no avail, and he went down with the aircraft within 5 minutes of ditching. The two survivors were picked up by the trawler after 30 minutes in the water

On 29 August the Pilot and Observer were awarded gallantry medals for *"courage and devotion to duty"* their desperate efforts in trying to save John.

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

John is commemorated on Wall Panel 169