

Sgt. John Gregson Hitchen 937501 RAFVR

John was born on 25 January 1919 in Halifax, Yorkshire, the youngest son of Irvine and Lily Hitchen (née Gregson).

Educated at Holy Trinity School, Heath Grammar and Halifax Technical College, John was employed as a Machine Tool Draughtsman with Messrs Churchill-Redmans before joining the RAF shortly before the outbreak of war and training as an Observer.

On 30 October 1940 six 101 Squadron crews were detailed for a bombing mission in the Duisberg-Ruhrort area, Germany.

At 1715 hours John, operating as the Observer, and the crew departed RAF West Raynham, Norfolk, in Blenheim IV T2246 (SR). The targets were obscured by cloud and the aircraft were forced to seek targets of opportunity in the region. The returning aircraft encountered poor visibility over eastern England and John's aircraft was well off course when, at 2300 hours, it crashed in Dunster Wood, near Coleby 6 miles North of Scunthorpe, Lincolnshire, killing all on board.

Also killed were the pilot P/O Jack Milton Cave and wireless operator/air gunner Sgt. Clifford John Gooderick.

John is buried in All Saints Churchyard, Halifax, Yorkshire.

He is commemorated on Wall Panel 182.

Photo Source: Halifax Evening Courier

