John George Lynch 650438 RAF



John was born on 8 July 1919 in Pelton, Durham, the son of Joseph Edward Lynch and Harriet Lynch nee Harle.

John joined the RAF in 1938 and was employed on ground duties until he volunteered for aircrew duties and in April 1944 was awarded his Air Gunner badge. In November 1944 John was posted to 462 (RAAF) Sqn at RAF Driffield, Yorkshire from 1652 HCU RAF Marston Moor, Yorkshire. The squadron moved to RAF Foulsham, Norfolk in December.

On 24/25 February 1945, Bomber Command was tasked with operating a diversionary sweep over Northern France to draw enemy fighters into the air.

A combined force of 74 training aircraft was allocated to the op, and 462 (RAAF) Sqn were detailed to carry out a "Spoofing" flight to Neuss, Rhein-Kreis Neuss district, North Rhine-Westphalia. Of the ten squadron aircraft allocated to the op, four failed to return.

At 17:01 on 24 February 1945 John, operating as the Rear Gunner, and the crew departed RAF Foulsham in Halifax III MZ448(Z5-).

Hit by flak on the return, John's aircraft crashed SSW of Krefeld, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany killing four of the crew. The remaining crew members were taken as POW.
In a post war release from captivity statement the Navigator later reported:

"The aircraft was hit by flak seven and a half minutes after bombs gone at height 15,000 feet. There was an immediate fire amidships. The Captain ordered chutes on jump. The Engineer was out first while the Bomb Aimer, Navigator and WOP were blown out by the explosion of petrol vapour in the fuselage (the bomb bay tanks were hit). I assumed the Rear Gunner, Mid Upper and SDO were still in the aircraft. The aircraft was in a steep dive at time of explosion and on fire. It crashed SSW west of Krefeld. The WOP was seen while descending his chute torn. I was captured immediately. Later met the BA, WOP and Engineer on way to the interrogation centre at Krefeld. Released by American troops."

Also Killed: F/L Frederick Harold Ridgewell (Pilot); FO Thomas Pawsey (AB/SDO); Sgt George Edward Rolls (AG)

Originally buried in Margraten American War Cemetery, Netherlands, in April 1947 John was moved to the Venray War Cemetery, Limburg, Netherlands.

John is commemorated on Wall Panel 201

Photo Source: IBCC