

FO John Livingstone Martin J/16339 RCAF

John was born on 28 May 1912 in Phippen, Saskatchewan, Canada, the eldest son of Robert Livingstone Martin and Zena May Martin nee Loadman. In 1943 he married Daphne Rose Edwards in Waterbeach, Cambridgeshire.

Educated at Battleford Collegiate Institute and Saskatoon Normal School, John was employed as a schoolteacher in Phippen, Saskatchewan when, in June 1940, he volunteered for aircrew service in the RCAF.

Called up in October 1940, John commenced pilot training; however, when his training was terminated in May 1941 he re-mustered as Observer. Completing his training in October 1941 with the award of his Observer badge, John embarked for the UK the following month.

Following advanced training at 1 (O) Advanced Flying Unit RAF Wigtown, Dumfries, Scotland, 23 OTU RAF Pershore, Worcestershire and 1651 HCU, RAF Waterbeach, Cambridgeshire, in July 1942 John was posted to 15 Sqn at RAF Bourn, Cambridgeshire. In October 1942 John was commissioned and awarded his Navigator badge.

In November 1943 John was sent for Lancaster conversion training at 1678 HCU, RAF Waterbeach, Cambridgeshire, and at the end of the month was posted to 514 Sqn, also at RAF Waterbeach.

On 14/15 January 1944, Bomber Command was tasked with an operation to Brunswick, the first major raid on this town of the war. A combined force of 498 aircraft was allocated to the op, including 23 514 Sqn crews.

At 17:06 on 14 January John, operating as the Navigator, and the crew departed RAF Waterbeach in Lancaster II LL685 (JI-G2).

The German controller tracked the bomber stream from just off the English coastline and many German fighters entered the stream over Bremen, continuing to claim aircraft until the stream left the Dutch coast on the return leg. On approach to the target, at 19:05 John's aircraft was intercepted by Hptm Walter Barte of the Stab III./NJG3, flying a Bf110 from Stade Airfield. John's aircraft crashed 3 miles South of Celle, and ½ mile West of Bennebstel, Lower Saxony, Germany, killing all on board.

Also Killed: S/L Ernest Frank Sly DFC AM (Pilot); FO Philip Pullyn Boulter (FE); FO William Leonard Harvey DFM RNZAF (WOp/AG); FO Edwin Horton Thomas DFM RCAF (AB); FO Frank George Rosher DFM (AG); FO James Allan Sneddon DFM (AG)

Originally buried in Westercelle Cemetery, Lower Saxony, Germany, in October 1946 John was moved to Hanover War Cemetery, Niedersachsen, Germany.

John is commemorated on Wall Panel 205

Photo Source: IBCC

