John Mitchell





Photo courtesy of Bill Berry

Rank: - Sergeant (Air Gunner)

Number: - 627659

Service: - Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve 61 Squadron (Code letters QR).

Died: - 20 March 1942 aged 20 years.

Memorial: - Commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial Panel 89.

John was born in 1921 the son of Walter and Harriet Mitchell nee Beasley who had married on 13 September 1919 at St Saviour, Brownhill. Harold was born in 1920, followed by John, Lawrence 1923, Frances 1925, Jessie 1926 and Colin 1929.

John attended Birstall Council School and St. Mary's Mission Church, Howden Clough. He worked for Messrs. Joshua Roberts, flock merchants, Batley Carr before he volunteered for the air force in 1938. His brother Lawrence had served in Iceland for three years but was back in England with the KOYLI in 1942. The family lived at 96, Ashfield Road, Leeds Road, Howden Clough.



HOWDEN CLOUGH AIR GUNNER PRESUMED DEAD.

Lost Over Enemy Territory.

Mrs. Mitchell, 96, Ashfield Road, Howden Clough, has received officials news that her second son, Sergt. John Mitchell (21), air gunner, R.A.F., must now be presumed dead. He was posted missing six months ago from operations over enemy territory.

Sergt. J. Mitchell.

Sergt. Mitchell volunteered four years ago while with Messrs. Joshua Roberts, flock merchants, Batley Carr. He attended Birstall Council School and St. Mary's Mission Church, Howden Clough. One of his brothers, Private Laurance Mitchell, K.O.Y.L.I., has served in Iceland three years, but is now back in this country. He was formerly employed at Messrs. J. R. Burrows' Carlinghow Mills.

Batley News, 14 Nov 1942

John took off from Woolfox Lodge at night on the 29 March 1942 with the operation of mine laying. His aircraft, a Manchester L7454 was shot down on the mission over the North Sea. The aircraft and crew of seven were lost without trace. His fellow crew members were: - P/O I M Cassavetti, P/O J F Chevalier, P/O C S Churchill, Sgt R Dawson, Sgt. H Dracass, Sgt D A B Hume.

John was awarded the Air Crew Europe star; 1939-45 Star; 1939-1945 War Medal

He is remembered with Honour at Royal Air Forces Association Club, Batley and Batley War Memorial.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group