John James (Jack) Cox Sergeant-observer Wellington R1397

Elder son of William and Olive Marion Cox of Knowle, Bristol

Born Bristol 12th May 1917 lost 25th July 1941

Jack attended Colston's School in Bristol and on leaving, joined Bristol Corporation as a clerk. He played rugby for Bristol Harlequins XV and was the captain of Knowle Cricket Club before he enlisted in April 1940.

Wellington R1397 with 103 Squadron at Elsham Wolds

Pilot - P/O Mervyn Sydney Lund

Co-pilot - Sgt Arthur Edward Owen

Air Observer - Sgt John James Cox

Gunner – Sgt Frank Gordon Walker

Wireless Operator/Gunner - Sgt Alfred John le Poidevin

Wireless Operator/Gunner – Sgt Roy Penry Williams

From the Squadron Operations Book:

Took off at 23.40 on 24/07/41 'to attack and cause maximum damage to the docks at Emdem'. Weather conditions favourable with slight fog over the North Sea, clearing near the Dutch coast. There was no cloud over the target and visibility was excellent. Opposition fairly intense over the target. Light and heavy flack up to 12,000 feet and 16000 feet respectively occurring at irregular intervals together with red, green, blue, white and yellow tracer. No search lights were operating. One machine (P/O Lund) was missing from these sorties.

R1397 was shot down on the return flight by the German Ace Helmut Lent flying from Leeuwarden airfield. The Wellington came down in flames in a field near a farm in Klaeiterp in Friesland. The unidentified bodies (thought to be 4 of them) were recovered by the Germans and buried in a single grave, dated 31st July 1941. After the war the CWGC placed a standard gravestone on the grave recording the incorrect date from German records.

Brinkman Productions – Documentary June 2017 (in dutch):
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ey6onRPJl7I