



JOHN EDWARD ROSTRON YOUNG

John Edward Royston Young was Born in 1898 in Streatham South London and lived with his family at 76 Mitcham Lane Streatham. John was one of 7 children his sisters were: Gertrude, Betty and Marjorie and his brothers were: Harrold, Charles and Frank.

John's Mother and Father married in 1895 in Streatham, his father William Simpson Young was a solicitor and his mother was Edith Maud Young (Nee Jones). John's mother died before he joined the RFC.



Went to Stratham Grammar School, he left school and worked for the British Bank of Northern Commerce and he joined the Artists' Rifles in the ranks in June 1916. This regiment was popular with boys from Public Schools. John was commissioned as an officer in the Royal Flying Corps in February 1917.

2nd Lieutenant J. E. R. Young, R.F.C., flew almost alone into the middle of the twenty-two enemy machines. Overwhelmed by the concentrated fire of his adversaries, both Lieutenant Young and his observer perished. In a letter to Lieutenant Young's father the major of his squadron writes: "Your son had only been in my squadron a short time, but quite long enough for me to realise what a very efficient and gallant officer he was and what a tremendous loss he is to me"

John Young was a Second Lieutenant in the Royal Flying Corps when he died on 17th July 1917 near the end of World War 1. On becoming a pilot, John had been posted to 37 Home Defence Squadron and was guarding the northern approaches of the Thames Estuary and living in Leigh-on-Sea.

Following an enemy raid on London, the squadron was ordered to intercept an enemy formation of 22 Gotha bombers approaching the coast of Essex. John took off in his Sopwith Strutter 1 and ½ from Rochford Aerodrome with C.C. Taylor as his gunner.



They were one of 6 aircraft that took off from Rochford and were joined by others from Stow Maries Aerodrome. The aircraft they were flying was a Sopwith Strutter 1916, it had a top Speed 106 mph and was the first to employ an effective machine gun synchroniser – which meant the pilot could look straight at what he was shooting at. The Strutter had 2 7.7mm Vickers machine guns and was 25ft long. JER Young's co-pilot was Cyril Taylor, who was also a Londoner.

Despite being in a technically inferior aeroplane on sighting the enemy and realising how dangerous it would be if the planes got through, Young immediately flew into the middle of the enemy formation to try and stop them escaping.

Lt Young's plane was shot at by the German pilots, but rather than crashing, John put his Sopwith on a collision course with one of the enemy. Their plane was overwhelmed by enemy fire.

JER Young and CC Taylor went down near a lightship off Essex. Cyril Taylor was recovered alive from the wreckage, but John Young's was killed in the crash and his body was not recovered before the wreckage sank. Cyril Taylor later died of his injuries.

JER Young has a Commonwealth War Grave in the North Road Burial Ground in Southend-on-Sea.

