

In Memory of

Flying Officer MICHAEL HENRY HUGHES

**133874, 161 Squadron, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve
who died age 23 on 1 June 1944**

**Son of Geoffrey Arden and Katherine Mary Hughes
of Avonweir, Christian Malford, Wiltshire**

**Remembered with honour
UDEN WAR CEMETERY,
NETHERLANDS**



The town of Uden lies in the south east of the Netherlands, approx 33kms to the north east of Eindhoven. Uden was occupied by the Germans until its liberation in September 1944. In the earlier years of the war Commonwealth and Allied servicemen were buried in the garden of the parish priest which adjoined the Roman Catholic Cemetery. After the war more than 100 graves from the garden of the parish priest, and also a number of isolated graves from various parts of the commune, were moved Uden War Cemetery. It now contains 701 Commonwealth burials of the Second World War (two of them unidentified).

No.161 Squadron was a special duties squadron. It operated a variety of aircraft through the war, using its Lysanders, Havocs and Hudsons for landing and picking up agents from occupied Europe, and its Whitleys, Halifaxes and Stirlings for supply dropping missions.

Michael was air gunner of a Hudson MkIII aircraft, serial number V.9155, that took off from Tempsford airfield in Bedfordshire at 23.34 hours on the night of the 31st May 1944 on a special operation. He was one of six people aboard this aircraft, two of which were Dutch nationals that were to parachute down behind German lines but through error or lack of information the aircraft flew 500 feet across one of the largest, and very well defended, German airfields on the continent, at Gilze-Rijen, on the most southern part of Holland. The Hudson was hit by German anti-aircraft machine gunners and caught fire in mid-air, all but Michael being killed immediately the aircraft hit the ground at 01.20 hours on the 1st of June 1944, 300 metres south of Gilze. Michael was taken to a hospital in the town of 's-Hertogenbosch by German soldiers but had died before reaching there.