

Pilot Officer James William Barber J/90366 RCAF

James Barber was born on 4 April 1924 in Upton on Severn, Worcestershire, the son of John Henry Barber and Eileen "Nellie" Barber nee Taylor. In 1927 the family emigrated to Canada and settled in Nova Scotia.

Educated at Lansdowne and Truro Schools, Nova Scotia, on leaving school in May 1942 James volunteered for service in the RCAF.

He completed his training in Canada in June 1943 with the award of his Air Bomber badge and embarked for the UK the following month.

Following advanced training at No. 30 OTU RAF Hixon, Staffordshire and 11 Base RAF Blyton in Lincolnshire (for conversion to Lancasters) in April 1944 James was posted to No. 101 Squadron at RAF Ludford Magna.



On 24/25 May 1944 Bomber Command was tasked with an operation against two railway yards in Aachen, Germany: Aachen-West and Rothe Erde. The raid was intended to disrupt the railway system linking Germany to France and 442 aircraft, including nineteen 101 Squadron crews, were allocated to the op.

At 2356 hours on 24 May James and his crew departed Ludford Magna in Lancaster I DV389 (SR-X).

Outward bound, at 0218 hours, James' aircraft was intercepted and shot down by Oblt. Josef Kraft of 7./NJG 6 flying a Bf110 from Hagenau Airfield. The Lancaster crashed at Olzheim, 10 km north of Prum, Nordrhein-Westfalen in Germany, killing all on board. James was posthumously granted a commission.

Also killed: F/Sgt. Stanley William Hans RCAF (Navigator); F/Sgt. Samuel Lewis Silver RCAF (Special Duties Operator); F/Sgt. Wilfred Albert Sullock (Pilot); Sgt. William Davis (Wireless Operator/Air Gunner); Sgt. Stewart Haslett (Air Gunner); Sgt. Nicholas Edward Hyt RCAF (AG); Sgt Reginald Thomas Taylor (Flight Engineer)

Originally buried in Olzheim New Cemetery, Rhineland Palatinate, in March 1948 James was moved to the Rheinberg War Cemetery (Coll. grave 9. L. 12-15).

James is commemorated on IBCC Wall Panel 5.

Photo Source: www.veterans.gc.ca