

Sgt. James Kiltie 986311 RAFVR

James Kiltie was the Scottish wireless operator of one of two 166 Squadron Lancasters shot down by a Luftwaffe night fighter ace within a few minutes of each other over Holland.

Both aircraft were the victims of Hpt Martin Drewes on the night of 21/22 May 1944, as they headed back to England following an attack on Duisburg.

James was part of a crew that had left RAF Kirmington at 2235 hours on board Lancaster III ND956 AS-I, part of a force of 535 Lancasters attacking the Ruhr city, for the first time in almost a year.

At 0138 hours, as ND956 was approaching the Amsterdam area, it was suddenly illuminated by fighter flares and within seconds the port wing was on fire and cannon shells were exploding in the fuselage. Trevor's final instructions to his crew were: 'Out you go boys!' The flight engineer and navigator both managed to bail out before the Lancaster crashed close to the village of Goudriaan with the loss of the remaining five members of the crew.

James was 23 and was the son of Janetta Kiltie of Maybole in Ayrshire.

Those who died with him were the pilot Flt. Sgt. Trevor Franklin, bomb-aimer Flt. Sgt. Stanley Spencer RCAF, mid-upper gunner Flt. Sgt. Allan Anderson RCAF and rear gunner Sgt. John Moffatt. The survivors were flight engineer Sgt. John Tomney and navigator Sgt. Bruce Bird.

His name can be found on panel 59.

Photographic source: 166 Squadron Association

