

P/O James Martin
143898 RAFVR



James Martin was a young Scottish bomber pilot who was killed when his Lancaster crashed in Lincolnshire as it returned from a bombing raid on the night of 13 February 1943.

He was the pilot of Lancaster W4836 PH-P, of No. 12 Squadron, which had taken part in what was the biggest raid of the war on the French port of Lorient. Bomber Command sent 466 aircraft to Lorient and its extensive U-boat facilities, and just seven were lost.

W4836 had taken off from RAF Wickenby at 1741 hours and had almost made it back home. The bomber was in the airfield's circuit when it crashed at Newhall Farm, less than three miles from the runway, killing all of the young crew members, including an 18-year-old mid-upper gunner.

James came from Glasgow and was the 21-year-old son of Thomas and Ellen Martin. He was later buried in Glasgow's St Kentigern's Roman Catholic Cemetery.

The others who died with him were the flight engineer Sgt. Leonard Jones, navigator Sgt. John Reay, bomb-aimer Sgt. Robert Coombs, wireless operator Sgt. James Callanan, mid-upper gunner Sgt. Dennis Gibbs and rear gunner Sgt. Edward Hemmings.

James' name can be found on IBCC panel 068.

Sources: IBCC/Bomber Command Losses 1943 by Bill Chorley/Bomber Command War Diaries by Martin Middlebrook and Chris Everitt.