

## **Sgt. Gordon Arthur Taylor 413283 RNZAF**

New Zealander Gordon Taylor was the wireless operator in a Lancaster flown by 9 Squadron commanding officer which crashed nearing the German city of Mainz in the early hours of 11 April 1943. It was the final bombing operation of the squadron at the pre-war RAF station at Waddington and the last of eight aircraft lost by the unit in a week.

The aircraft, ED501 WS-R (pictured below), was one of 502 bombers involved in the attack on Frankfurt that night, taking off shortly before midnight on 10 April. Most of the bombs missed the target and 21 Bomber Command aircraft failed to return. There were no survivors in his crew, most of whom were nearing the end of their operation.

Gordon was the 22-year-old son of William and Ethel Taylor of Hastings, Hawke's Bay, New Zealand and had trained in Canada after enlisting. His body was never recovered and he is remembered on the Runnymede Memorial.

The others who died were W/C Ken Smith DSO, second pilot Sgt. Allan Stone, flight engineer Sgt. William Thomson, navigator F/O Arnold Turner, bomb-aimer F/O Bernard Smith, mid-upper gunner Sgt. Louis Fiddes and rear gunner P/O Roy Pleasance.

His name can be found on panel 105.

Sources: *Bombers First and Last* and *Luck of the Lancaster* by Gordon Thorburn/Auckland Museum.

