

Sgt. James Taylor 655553 RAFVR

James was the son of William and Agnes Gillespie Taylor, of Kirkcaldy, Fife.

He was a Wireless Operator/Air Gunner serving with 1663 Heavy Conversion Unit based at RAF Rufforth, North Yorkshire.

Handley Page Halifax V, DG412 -B, took off from Rufforth airfield on 27 August 1943, on a daytime Bullseye exercise; it was the final flight before completing their training, and was returning from a mission to bomb Brest, in France. During the flight, the pilot lost control while practicing evasive action, and in the dive that followed, the aircraft came apart under the excessive loads imposed upon its airframe. It was considered almost certain the crew were trapped by the centrifugal force, and their bodies were recovered from the crash site at Langtree, four miles south west of Great Torrington, Devon.



James is buried at Kirkcaldy (Hayfield) Cemetery, Fife. Compt. H. Grave 388. The epitaph reads "Loving memories never die". He was 23 years old.

A granite memorial stone in the village of Langtree commemorates the loss of the crew; the dedication service being held on the 66th anniversary of the crash, with members of the airmen's families attending.

Sgt. James Taylor, Wireless Operator/Air Gunner (killed)
Sgt. Raymond Frederick Stainsby, Navigator (killed))
Sgt. Hugh Patrick Henry RAAF, Air Gunner (killed)
F/O William Henry Graham, Air Bomber (killed)
Sgt. John Peter Williams, Pilot (killed)
F/Sgt. Peter Chadwick Bartle RAAF, Air Gunner (killed)
Sgt. George Rogerson Wheatley, Flight Engineer (killed)

He is commemorated on Panel 251

Picture courtesy of Patrick Otter