

## **Sgt. John Peter Williams 1387840 RAFVR**

John was born 6 August 1923, the only son of John Charles and Mary Frances Williams, of Haywards Heath, Sussex.

He was a Pilot serving with 1663 Heavy Conversion Unit based at RAF Rufforth, North Yorkshire, and had earlier in the month been involved in an incident at the airfield when the tailplane struck a fence as it landed.

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.



John is buried at Heanton Punchardon (St. Augustine) Churchyard, North Devon. Row Q. Grave 10. The epitaph reads "Whom we all loved so much". He was 20 years old.

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

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

He is commemorated on Panel 265

Picture courtesy of Patrick Otter