

In Memory Of

Flying Officer

JAMES NORMAN ROBERTS

Service Number: 124419

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve who died on 15 January 1943 Age 21

Son of Samuel Arthur and Margaret Sara Roberts, of Saxmundham, Suffolk.

Remembered with Honour

COLWALL (ST. JAMES THE GREAT) CHURCHYARD

S.W. corner.



COMMONWEALTH
WAR GRAVES



COMMEMORATED IN PERPETUITY BY THE COMMONWEALTH
WAR GRAVES COMMISSION

Name: ROBERTS, James Norman

Date of Birth: 31st January 1921

Date of Death: 15th January 1943

Age at Death: 21

Service Number: 124419

Rank: Flying Officer, RAF Volunteer Reserve

Unit: 42 Operational Training Unit (OTU)



Military Service

The 42 OTU was part of number 70 group based at Ashbourne, Derbyshire, which trained Blenheim pilots until May 1943. On 15th January 1943 James was flying a Blenheim IV (V5752) which was carrying out low level bombing practice when the weather significantly deteriorated. As a result, the aircraft stalled in low cloud and crashed 1 mile south of Ashbourne.

Commemorated/Memorial

Colwall (St James the Great) Churchyard.

Colwall Connection

James was the son of Samuel Arthur Roberts (of Calcutta) and Margaret Sara Roberts of Saxmundham, Suffolk. The National Archives data show that he was cremated at Golders Green Crematorium on 20th January 1943. James ashes were placed in an urn and were expected to be kept at Golders Green until his father returned from India, when they were expected to be interred at St. Michael's Church, Rendham, Suffolk. James is remembered on a memorial plaque in St. Michael's Church Rendham.

However on 2nd September 1946 James two grandparents were interred in Colwall (St James the Great) churchyard and James was also commemorated on the gravestone. It is unknown whether his ashes were placed in a grave at Colwall, or Rendham. No connection has been found between James and Colwall. The National Archives do, however, show that James had an aunt (Mrs E.M. Cheshire) living in Hagley, Worcestershire who was notified of James death.

James is commemorated as follows on the horizontal gravestone of his grandparents "In ever loving memory of James Norman, son of Samuel Roberts of West Bromwich and of Polly his dear wife, daughter of James Helme of Lancaster and in proud and loving memory of their grandson Pilot Officer James Roberts, who gave his life in 1943, son of Rita, nee Davison of Montymore and Arthur Roberts of Calcutta".

