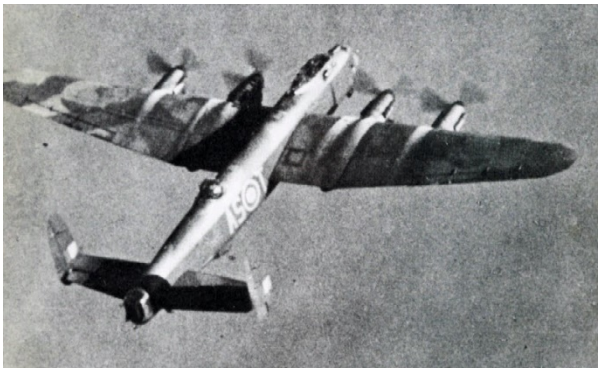
PO George Barlow RAFVR 198280



George Barlow and his crew joined 166 Squadron in mid-April, 1945, too late to fly operationally with the squadron in the closing days of the Second World War.

They did fly two Manna drops to deliver food by parachute to Dutch civilians early in May and flew two more Exodus operations to Italy to fly military personnel back to England. During the Manna operations, the crew added their own gifts to Dutch children, handkerchief-parachutes each carrying bars of chocolates.

As the squadron began to wind down, he and his crew flew a routine cross-country exercise from RAF Kirmington and it was there that George and the other six members of his crew died when their Lancaster crashed into the Bristol Channel, five miles off the coast of north Somerset at 13.00 on 3 July, 1945.

George's body was quickly recovered by the Weston-Super-Mare lifeboat but the search was then called off believing there was no one else on board. Four other bodies were later washed ashore while two members of the crew were never found. They were the last crew lost by 166.

George was the 32-year-old son of Bennett and Sarah Barlow and his wife, Ann, lived in Clontarf, County Dublin, Ireland. He was later buried in Manchester Southern Cemetery.

The others who died were the flight engineer Flt Sgt Ainsley Kirschner, navigator Sgt Charles Butler, bomb-aimer FO James Doyle, wireless operator Flt Sgt Ronald Sullivan, mid-upper gunner Sgt William Edge and rear gunner Sgt William Gibson.

George's name can be found on panel 006.

Sources: 166 Squadron Association/On Wings of War by Jim Wright.