

Flt. Sgt. Rowland Henry Crystal 1322496 RAFVR

Rowland Crystal was a rear gunner killed in a raid on Karlsruhe in April 1944.

He was part of the 626 Squadron crew of Lancaster DV244 UM-L2 that left Wickenby at 2123 hours on the night of 24 April, as part of a force of 637 bombers taking part in what turned out to be a scattered and inconclusive raid. Nineteen aircraft were lost, including three Lancasters from 626 Squadron.

DV244 was reported to have been shot down by a night fighter and crashed at Plittersdorf, south of the target area. There were no survivors and all seven crew members are now buried in the Durnbach War Cemetery.

Rowland had first served with 166 Squadron at Kirmington, joining them in January 1943, before eventually transferring to 626.

The others who died were the pilot P/O Victor Bernyk RCAF, flight engineer Sgt. Jack Wilson, navigator P/O George Bainbridge RCAF, bomb-aimer F/O Paul Korbyl RCAF, wireless operator Sgt. James Hodge and mid-upper gunner Flt. Sgt. George Davies.

His name can be found on panel 025.

Source: 626 Squadron Association.

