

FS Frank Burrill R/97521 RCAF

Frank was born on 24 June 1922 in South Shields, Durham, the youngest son of Dr John Rowleron RAMC and Doris Rowleron nee Brason. Following his father's death in 1925, Frank and his mother emigrated to Winnipeg, Canada. In 1928 Frank's mother married Arthur James Burrill, and Frank adopted his step-father's name.

Educated at Wollerman School, North Oyster School and Ladysmith High, Frank was employed as a rigger in the local logging mill when, in September 1940 he volunteered for service with the RCAF.

Called up in March 1941, Frank completed his pilot training in Canada in November 1941 with the award of his wings. Transferring to the UK in February 1942, after completing his conversion training at 22 OTU, RAF Wellesbourne Mountford, Warwickshire, in August 1942 Frank was posted to 75(NZ) Sqn at RAF Mildenhall, Suffolk after spending one month with 101 Sqn.

On the night of the 10/11 September 1942, 479 aircraft were dispatched for an attack on Dusseldorf. Thirteen 75(NZ) Sqn Wellingtons participated in the raid.

Shortly after 21:00 on 10 September, Frank and his crew departed RAF Mildenhall in Wellington III BJ968 (AA-W) named "Rosaline". Homeward-bound, the aircraft vanished into the North Sea, possibly shot down by a Ju 88 of III./NJG 2 based at Gilze-Rijen, Netherlands, killing all on board.

The op was considered a success, with the city hit in all areas other than the North. The industrial area was heavily damaged, limiting production for a considerable time; however, the raid took its toll on Bomber Command with 33 aircraft lost, 60 crew killed and 13 taken POW. Three 75(NZ) Sqn aircraft failed to return with the loss of 15 men.

Also Killed: PO Randolph Cruickshank Smart RNZAF (Obs); FS Ralph Ernest Gorman RCAF (AG); FS William Wilfred Henry Lavers RCAF (Obs); FS Michael Bertram St. Louis RCAF (WOp/AG)

Frank has no known grave and is commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial, Surrey

Frank is commemorated on Wall Panel 139