

FS Ronald Mark Wood R/176382 RCAF

Ronald, known as Ron, was born on 7 February 1921 in Bengough, Saskatchewan, Canada, the son of Clarence Franklin Wood and Ada Florence Wood nee Litchfield.

Educated at Harptree, Saskatchewan, Ronald was employed as a Hotel Porter in Bengough when, in July 1942, he enlisted in the RCAF. Ronald completed his aircrew training in Canada in January 1944 with the award of his WOp/AG badge and in March 1944 he was sent to 111 (Coastal) OTU Nassau, Bahamas, for Liberator conversion.

In June 1944 Ronald embarked for the UK and in August 1944 he was posted to 223 Sqn when it reformed at RAF Oulton, Norfolk.

On 20/21 February 1945 Bomber Command made four major attacks on the Ruhr and North of the Ruhr, the targets being Dortmund, Gravenhorst, Reisholz and Mannheim. Eleven 223 Sqn Liberators were tasked with "Jostle" and "Window" sorties, Ronald's crew was tasked with a "Window" op (dropping chaff), on a northern patrol area.

At 22:36 on 20 February Ronald, operating as the Mid Upper Gunner, and the crew departed RAF Oulton in Liberator VI TS520 (6G-J).

At 01:25 on 21 February, approximately 30 miles SE of Dortmund, Ronald's aircraft was intercepted by Oblt Kurt Matzak of Stab I./NJG1 flying a Ju88. The aircraft was raked from nose to tail and began an out-of-control dive with flames and smoke in the tunnel leading to the Navigator's department. The captain gave the order to abandon the aircraft, and six crew members were able to bale out.

The aircraft crashed at Dornheim, Schmallenberg, 5 miles north of Bad Fredeburg, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany, killing five of the eleven-man crew who remained in the aircraft. Of the six crew that baled out, five were taken as POW.

Also killed: FO John Willard Thompson RCAF (Pilot); FS Desmond Bryant (WOp/AG); FS John Henry Kendall (Pilot); Sgt Edwin Eric Whittaker (AG); Sgt Ronald Wynn (FE)

Originally buried in the Catholic Cemetery Kirchbach, Germany, Ronald was first moved to the American War Cemetery, Margraten, Netherlands, and then in March 1947 to Venray War Cemetery, Limburg, Netherlands.

Ronald is commemorated on Wall Panel 268

Photo Source: IBCC

