FO Delbert Wesley Woodward J/21599 R



Delbert, known as "Woody", was born on 25 August 1911 in Cannington, Ontario, Canada, the son of William Delbert Woodward and Elizabeth Woodward nee Miller. In August 1942 he married Dorothy Jane Learey Collins in Beaverton, Ontario.

Delbert was employed as teacher and mechanic when, in September 1939, he enlisted in the RCAF as an Aero Engine Mechanic.

In January 1942 Delbert re-mustered as Observer and completed his flying training in Canada in August 1942 with the award of his Observer badge and was granted a commission. Following additional Bomb Aimer training, Delbert embarked for the UK in November.

Following advanced training at 13 OTU RAF Bicester, Oxfordshire where he converted to multi crew ops, in May 1943 Delbert was posted to 18 Sqn at Grombalia Airfield near Tunis. Following the allied advance, by October 1943 the squadron was operating from Brindisi, Apulia, Southern Italy.

On 29 October 1943 Delbert was a passenger in a Dodge 15 cwt truck that departed the Officers' Mess at Brindisi at 09:15, travelling towards Grottaglia. In heavy rain, at 10:30 and 2 miles from Grottaglia, the truck skidded on a greasy patch, struck a low stone wall on the left side of the road and went through a gap in the wall. The truck travelled 20 feet through an orchard before it rolled on its offside, pinning Delbert under the vehicle.

Delbert was extracted with the help of some troops from a passing Italian Army truck, and a passing Medical Officer administered morphine. At 10:45 he was taken to the 70th US Army General Hospital in the Italian truck.

Suffering from a fractured pelvis, ruptured bladder and concussion, on 9 November 1943 Delbert succumbed to his injuries.

Originally buried in Taranto Military Cemetery, Puglia, Italy, in October 1944 Delbert was moved to the Bari War Cemetery, Italy

Delbert is commemorated on Wall Panel NYE

Photo Source: veterans.gc.ca