## FO Rowland Bernard Wright J/11649 RCAF

Rowland was born on 29 July 1920 in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, the youngest son of Rowland Samuel Wright and Emily Anne Wright nee Davies.

Educated at Lonsdale School and North Vancouver High School, Rowland was employed as a labourer by Vancouver Ship Repairers when, in January 1941, he volunteered for service in the RCAF.

Called up in May 1941, Rowland commenced pilot training; however, when his training was terminated in September 1941 he re-mustered as Observer. In April 1942 Rowland was awarded his Observer badge and, following advanced navigational training at RCAF Rivers, Manitoba, in May 1942 he was granted a commission and posted to Ferry Command to await availability for navigating a transatlantic flight. Following an abortive trip to Gander, in October 1942 Rowland embarked on the sea journey.

Following advanced training at 13 OTU RAF Finmere, Buckinghamshire where he converted to multi engine/multi crew ops, in May 1943 Rowland was posted to 226 Sqn at RAF Swanton Morley, Norfolk flying the Mitchell. In early February 1944 the squadron moved to RAF Hartford Bridge, Hampshire.

On 25 February 1944 six 226 Sqn crews, together with 12 Mitchells from 320 RDNAS with fighter support, were tasked with an attack on enemy construction works at Moyenneville, near Abbeville, France.

At 11:29 on 25 February Rowland, operating as the Navigator, and the crew departed RAF Hartford Bridge in Mitchell II FL691 (MQ-J).

The attacking aircraft encountered heavy and accurate flak in the target area, Rowland's aircraft was badly damaged and began to lag behind the rest of the formation. Whilst over the sea, the crew were forced to abandon the aircraft 25 miles SW of Ventnor, Isle of Wight, and four parachutes were observed leaving the Mitchell; however, nothing further was seen or heard from the crew.

Also Killed: 1st Lt John E Hendry AM Purple Heart USAAF (Pilot); WO Kenneth McLeod Smith (AG); FS John Slack (WOp)

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

Rowland is commemorated on Wall Panel – Not Yet Erected