Flt Lt Vanegmond Robert Bell J/11345 RCAF



Vanegmond, known as "Van", was born on 17 February 1919 in Seaforth, Ontario, Canada, the only son of Earl William Bell and Ruth Clare Bell nee Vanegmond. In December 1942 he married Helen Jane Robson Hamilton in Toronto. They had one daughter.

Educated at Seaforth Public School and Seaforth Collegiate, Vanegmond was employed as a machinist by the Bell Engine Company, Seaforth when, in September 1940, he enlisted in the RCAF.

Employed on ground duties as a security guard, in April 1941 Vanegmond requested to re-muster to aircrew duties. In September 1941 Vanegmond re-mustered to aircrew and commenced pilot training in Canada. In April 1942 Vanegmond was awarded his Wings, granted a commission and posted to 124 (Ferry) Sqn where he served until August 1944.

In November 1944 Vanegmond completed Mosquito training at 7 OTU RCAF Debert Nova Scotia and immediately embarked for the UK. Following additional training at 13 OTU RAF Bicester, Oxfordshire and 2 GSU RAF Fersfield, Norfolk, on 1 March 1945 Vanegmond was posted to 107 Sqn at Cambrai/Epinoy, Pas de Calais, France (Base 75).

On 5/6 March 1945 eight 107 Sqn crews were tasked with carrying out offensive patrols of railway infrastructure. The squadron was allocated four tasks, each consisting of two aircraft. Vanegmond's area was Wetzlar-Siegen-Koln, Germany, specifically the marshalling yard at Haiger, Hesse, Germany.

At 23:17 on 5 March Vanegmond and his Navigator departed Base 75 in Mosquito VI RS533 (OM-P).

Recalled due to deteriorating weather, at 01:40 on 6 March whilst on the return leg, the aircraft was flown into the ground, in cloud, 0.5 miles south of Marquette, Nord, between Cambrai and Valenciennes, killing both on board.

Also killed: FS Charles Grant Davidson RCAF (Nav)

Originally buried in Cambrai Cemetery, Nord, France, in September 1945 Vanegmond was moved to the Adegem Canadian War Cemetery, Oost-Vlaanderen, Belgium

Vanegmond is commemorated on Wall Panel - Not Yet Erected

Photo Source: www.veterans.gc.ca