FO Douglas Thayne Leavitt J/35806 RCAF



Douglas was born on 4 July 1923 in Cardston, Alberta, Canada, the son of Frank Leavitt and Jane Leavitt nee Glenn.

Educated at Glenwood Public School and Cardston High School, Alberta, Douglas had just completed his education when, in June 1942, he volunteered for service with the RCAF.

Called up in July 1942, Douglas completed his aircrew training in Canada in September 1943 with the award of his Air Bomber badge, was granted a commission and, in October 1943, he embarked for the UK.

Following advanced training at 6(O) Advanced Flying Unit RAF Staverton, Gloucestershire and 16 OTU RAF Upper Heyford, Oxfordshire, in May 1944 Douglas was posted to 69 Sqn at RAF Northolt, London when the squadron re-assembled with Wellington aircraft as part of 34 Wing of 2TAF for night reconnaissance duties, beginning operations on the eve of D-Day using flares to locate enemy troop movements.

On 24/25 July 1944 eight 69 Sqn crews were tasked with reconnaissance of road and rail in France. Douglas's crew was allocated an area along the road from Elbeuf to Lisieux, France.

At 23:10 on 24 July 1944 Douglas, operating as the Air Bomber, and the crew departed RAF Northolt, London, in Wellington XIII ME929.

In the early hours of 25 July, Douglas's aircraft crashed at St. Jean d'Elbeuf, Normandy, Seine-Maritime, France, ten miles SW of Rouen, killing all on board. The circumstances of the loss remain unknown.

Also killed: FO Richard Gainford Askew RCAF (Nav); PO Peter Ernest Rushton (Pilot); Sgt Thomas Spencer Higgott (AG)

Originally buried in the St Jean Communal Cemetery, Elbeuf, France, and later re-interred in the St Andre US Military Cemetery by a US Graves Unit, in June 1945 Douglas was moved to the Bayeux War Cemetery, Calvados, France.

Douglas is commemorated on Wall Panel - Not Yet Erected

Photo Source: www.veterans.gc.ca