

Ronald Rodgers



Rank: - Sergeant (Pilot)

Number: - 657967

Regiment: - Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, 77 Squadron Code letters KN

Died: - 18th August 1943 aged 23

Cemetery: - Haverlee War Cemetery, Leuven, Belgium. Plot 4, Row D, Grave 10

Batley News, 4 Sep 1943 (photo); 20 Nov 1943 (photo)

Ronald was born on 19 May 1920 in Hanging Heaton the son of James Arthur and Mary E Rodgers formerly Hill, nee Fradgley who had married on 15 Apr 1919 at Wesleyan Chapel, Batley. The family lived at Croftlands, Hanging Heaton. Beryl was born in 1922 followed by Alfred 1924, Derrick 1927 and Colin 1929.

Ronald attended Mill Lane School and Batley Grammar School, later working as a radio repair specialist for Messrs. Kitson, Kingsway, Ossett, before he joined the RAF in 1940.

Ronald was with Handley Page Halifax II / JD371 / KN-O when they took off from Elvington with the operation of bombing Nuremberg using 674 aircraft, which resulted with 33 losses (4.9%). H2S marking was used and, given the difficulties experiences with Oboe equipment in recent raids, the crews were ordered to drop a 1000lb bomb on Heilbronn using the equipment to check its functionality. Nuremberg was clear and PFF marking was accurate but significant creep-back set in and PFF were unable to correct it because, once again, they had difficulties with their H2S sets. Many of the bombs fell in open countryside S.S.W. of the city and 65 people were killed on the ground.

While returning the aircraft was shot down by night fighter pilot Oberleutnant Martin Drewes of the 11. /NJG 1, flying a Bf 110 G-4 from Leeuwarden airfield.

Ronald was awarded the Air Crew Europe Star; 1939-45 Star; 1939-1945 War Medal

He is remembered with Honour at Hanging Heaton War memorial (St Paul's); Batley Grammar School; Royal Air Forces Association Club, Batley and Batley War Memorial.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group