

Information on the crew of Lancaster bomber PO-L, serial number ND729, shot down on the night of 24/25th. June 1944 attacking a V1 flying bomb site at Prouville.

Roland Reginald Cowan DFC	- pilot	- RAAF
Harry Kitchener Feltham	- flight engineer	- RAF(VR)
Andrew Leslie West	- navigator	- RAAF
Paul Francis O'Connell	- bombaimer	- RAAF
Herbert Kenith Brown	- wireless operator	- RAAF
Jack Sheffield	- mid upper gunner	- RAF(VR)
Arthur Albert Summers	- rear gunner	- RAAF

This crew was posted to 467 Squadron Royal Australian Air Force at Waddington, near Lincoln, on 18th. February 1944. It was standard procedure for pilots in RAF Bomber Command to begin their operational duties by flying as a second pilot with experienced crews. Roland ("Roly") Cowan flew in this capacity on a raid to Stuttgart on 20/21st. February 1944 and to Schweinfurt on 24/25th. February 1944. Raids flown by Roland Cowan and his own crew were:

Augsburg	25/26-2-44	Lille	10/11-5-44
Stuttgart	1/2-3-44	Bourg Leopold	11/12-5-44
Stuttgart	15/16-3-44	Tours	19/20-5-44
Frankfurt	18/19-3-44	Duisberg	21/22-5-44
Frankfurt	22/23-3-44	Brunswick	22/23-5-44
Berlin	24/25-3-44	Eindhoven	24/25-5-44
Essen	26/27-3-44	Nantes	27/28-5-44
Nuremberg	30/31-3-44	Saumur	31/1-6-44
Toulouse	5/6-4-44	Ferme d'Urville	3/4-6-44
Tours	10/11-4-44	St. Pierre du Mont	5/6-6-44
Aachen	11/12-4-44	Argentan	6/7-6-44
Juvisy	18/19-4-44	Rennes	8/9-6-44
La Chapelle	20/21-4-44	Orleans	10/11-6-44
Brunswick	22/23-4-44	Gelsenkirchen	21/22-6-44
Munich	24/25-4-44	Limoges	23/24-6-44
Schweinfurt	26/27-4-44	Prouville	24/25-6-44
St. Medard en Jalles	28/29-4-44		(Killed in action)

The two RAAF squadrons, 463 and 467, based at Waddington provided 34 Lancaster aircraft for the attack on Prouville. Five of these aircraft were shot down on the raid with the loss of the lives of 35 of the aircrew. This was the heaviest loss suffered by 463 and 467 Squadrons in one night during the whole of the Second World War. Roly Cowan and his crew were on what would have been their 33rd. and final operation of their "tour", following which they would have been rested for at least six months before having to undertake any further operational flying. They were dreadfully unlucky.

Roland Cowan has no known grave; Harry Feltham, Andrew West, Herbert Brown, Jack Sheffield and Albert Summers are buried at Mareuil-Caubert; Paul O'Connell is buried at Poix de Picardie.
