

2nd LT Roland Chapman BOULTER was the navigator on Crew #616 (Kenneth R. KESSENGER, pilot) in the 786th Bomb Squadron of the 466th Bomb Group. This crew was on its 3rd mission on 8 April 1944, when disaster struck. On that day they were shot down over Germany with a loss of 4 crew members who were KIA, and 5 taken as POWs. 8 April 1944 was the 466th BG's largest single day loss of planes and soldiers of the war. On that day the 466th BG lost six aircraft with 21 soldiers KIA and another 38 taken as POWs.

The KESSENGER crew was flying the B-24 heavy bomber "The MADAME," as their regular aircraft, their assigned B-24 named "LUCKY STRIKE," was being repaired and not ready to fly on that day.

The original KESSENGER crew consisted of 10 crew members: KESSENGER, K.; TYNER, W.; BOULTER, R.; PELTZ, J.; WALLER, C.; HOMNER, E.; OREAR, D.; LOMBARDO, L.; STRAW, L.; and ENGLISH, A. Before this crew arrived in England both PELTZ and WALLER were removed from the crew and Russell R. MEDICO and Leonard W. KRONE were added. On that fateful day KRONE was away from the base on a 3-day pass, so the crew flew with only 9 crew members.

Roland was born in 1921 in Norfolk Co., MA, the son of Curtis Lord and Mary (McDONALD) BOULTER. Roland's mother passed away at 26 years of age in June 1922, when he was only 8 months old. He was raised by his father and third wife Anna. Roland's father had several children by his first wife, so Roland had several ½ siblings, much older than him.

LT BOULTER graduated from Walpole High School (MA) in 1939, and the photo of him is from that class yearbook. The yearbook listed "Chappy's" participation in Glee Club, Baseball, Basketball, and Tennis. His aspiration was to become an Architectural Engineer.

Roland enlisted directly into the Army Air Corps on 21 July 1942 in Philadelphia, PA, listing his residence as Norfolk Co., MA. The crew went overseas in February 1944 and began flying on 23 March 1944 with their first target being Achmer, Germany.

Roland was interred in the Ardennes American Cemetery and Memorial in Neuville-en-Condroz, Liege, Belgium (Plot C; Row 2; Grave 57). His step-mother applied for his military marker. The marker reads: "2LT 786 BOMB SQ 466 BOMB GP (H)."

Thank you, LT BOULTER for your service.

