

Flight Sergeant Frederick Donald Thomson

Nationality: New Zealand
Rank: Fight Sergeant (Navigator/Bomb aimer)
Regiment: RNZAF
Unit: 608 (RAF) Squadron
Age: 23
Date of Death: 23rd May 1943
Cemetery: El Alia Cemetery

Fred, the eldest son of English immigrant parents Sidney Motram (Seaforth Highlanders Regiment WW1) and Mary Alice Thomson joined the RNZAF as soon as he was able in 1942. His basic training was completed in New Zealand before being posted to Canada for advanced aircrew training arriving in the UK in 1943. This was a typical wartime routine for many New Zealand aircrews as part of the Commonwealth Forces contribution to the war effort.

Typically the majority of the trainees wanted to be pilots but Fred showed superior ability in maths and they preferred that he complete his training as a navigator. Not one to argue he also trained as the bomb aimer and converted to Lockheed Hudson aircraft.



Flight Sergeant F D Thomson

He was good communicator he sent his youngest sister Iris a number of letters describing his visits to places and events like New York City and the operas he attended while on an R & R in America. He sent her a makeup powder compact case with his Squadron Crest affixed to the lid as her birthday present while stationed in Canada.

In 1943 the squadron was posted to Tunisia where while on a troop transporting assignment the entire plane load of crew and passengers were killed when their heavily laden Lockheed Hudson MK VI Serial Number FK715 crashed on the runway during takeoff. Flight Sergeant F B Thomson was 24.

After the war Iris married a Returned Serviceman Pilot who also did his advanced training in Canada and went to New York on one of his R & R's in America, Warrant Officer E M West.



The powder compact case