

Flt Lt Thomas Fraser McCrorie 68770 RAFV

Thomas was born on 24 January 1917 in Ayr, Scotland, the son of John Andrew McCrorie and Margaret McCrorie nee Fraser. In 1941 he married Joan Holder in Alcester, Warwickshire. They had one son.

Educated at Morrison's Academy, Perth, Scotland, on leaving school Thomas travelled to Portugal where the family had re-located in 1921 due to his father's work.

In 1940 Thomas returned to the UK from Portugal and enlisted in the RAF. Following pilot training at RAF Hatfield, Hertfordshire and RAF Grantham, Lincolnshire, in June 1941 Thomas was awarded his wings and granted a commission.

Following advanced training at 21 OTU RAF Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire, in September 1941 Thomas was posted to 101 Sqn at RAF Oakington, Cambridgeshire. In December 1941

Thomas was posted to 40 Sqn when the squadron was sent to Malta. After completing 38 ops and with the squadron preparing to move to India, Thomas returned to the UK to take up a role as a staff pilot on 12 OTU, still at RAF Moreton-in-Marsh.

In May 1943 Thomas was posted back to ops, converting to the Stirling at 1657 HCU RAF Stradishall, Suffolk before his posting to 75(NZ) Sqn at RAF Newmarket, Cambridgeshire.

On 22/23 June 1943 Bomber Command was tasked with an op against Mulheim, a major centre of manufacturing in the Ruhr industrial region. A combined force of 557 aircraft were allocated to the task, including fifteen 75(NZ) Sqn crews. Four crews failed to return.

At 23:48 on the 22 June 1943 Thomas and his crew departed RAF Newmarket, Cambridgeshire, in Stirling III EH889 (AA-Z).

At 02:26 on 23 June, Thomas's aircraft was intercepted by FW Heinz Vinke flying a Bf110 of II./NJG 1. The aircraft crashed into the IJsselmeer, 5 miles E of Oosterland, Zeeland, killing all on board.

Post war analysis confirmed this was a very successful attack, with 64% of the town reported as destroyed.

Also killed: PO William Stuckey MiD (Nav); WO2 Richard Douglas Tod RCAF(WOp/AG); WO2 Robert Ernest Tod DFM RCAF (WOp/AG); FS James Leonard Richards (AB); Sgt Eric Grainger (FE); Sgt Raymond Anthony Kennedy (AG)

Thomas was washed ashore on 5 July near Molkwerum, and is buried in Hemelumer Oldeferd (Molkwerum) Protestant Churchyard, Noord-Holland, Netherlands

Thomas is commemorated on Wall Panel 207

Photo Source: findagrave

