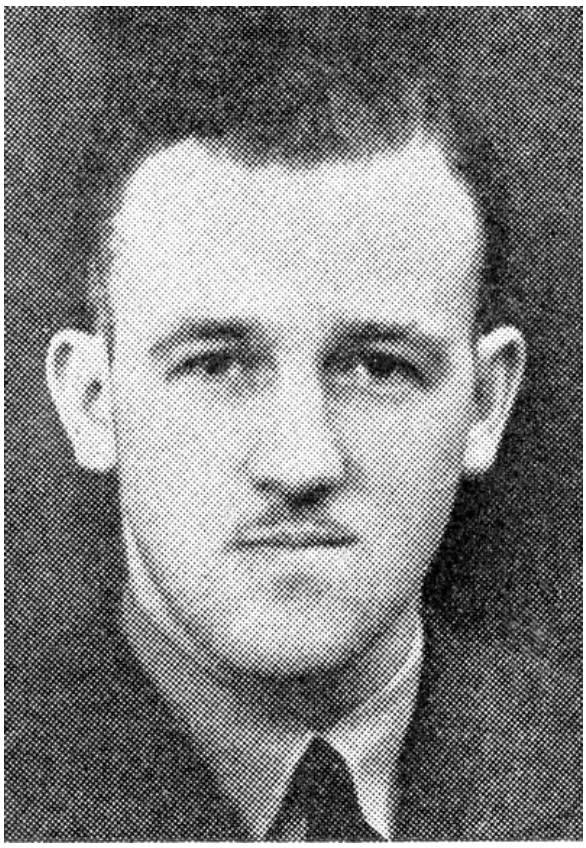
FS Raymond Thomas 40586 RNZAF



Raymond was born on 14 September 1920 in Kaitaia, North Island, New Zealand, the son of Frank Thomas and Eva Edna Thomas nee White.

Educated at Takapuna Grammar School and Seddon Memorial Technical College, Raymond was employed by Ross and Glendining Ltd, Auckland when, in October 1939, he volunteered for service with the RNZAF.

Called up in February 1940, Raymond was employed on ground duties until November 1941 when he re-mustered as aircrew. In May 1942 Raymond completed his training in New Zealand with the award of his Wings, and in August he embarked for the UK.

Following advanced training at 29 OTU RAF North Luffenham, Rutland and 1657 HCU RAF Stradishall, Suffolk, on 2 July 1943 Raymond was posted to 75(NZ) Sqn at RAF Mepal, Cambridgeshire.

On 5/6 July 1943, Bomber Command was tasked with Gardening ops off the French Coast and the Frisian Islands. A combined force of 34 aircraft, including four 75(NZ) Sqn aircraft were allocated to the op. The squadron's target area was the Frisian Islands.

At 23:45 on 5 July 1943 Raymond and his crew departed RAF Mepal in Stirling III EF436 (AA-A).

At 02:31 on 6 July Raymond's aircraft was intercepted by Oblt Hermann Greiner of the 11./NJG 1 flying a Bf 110 flying from Leeuwarden airfield. The aircraft crashed into the sea, 12 miles NW of Terscherlling, killing all on board. This was Raymond's 2nd op.

Also Killed: Sgt Cyril James Moore RAAF (AG); Sgt Andrew Lackenby (FE); Sgt Leslie Owen Lewington (AG); Sgt John Bernard McLoughlin (WOp/AG); Sgt William Edward Stobbs (Nav); Sgt Douglas Arthur Allen Tayler (AB)

Raymond has no known grave and is commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial, Surrey

Raymond is commemorated on Wall Panel 252

Raymond's brother, Bombardier Fenton Thomas, 1 Survey Troop, NZ Artillery, was killed in action on 4 July 1942 serving in El-Alamein

Photo Source: 75nzsquadron.wordpress.com