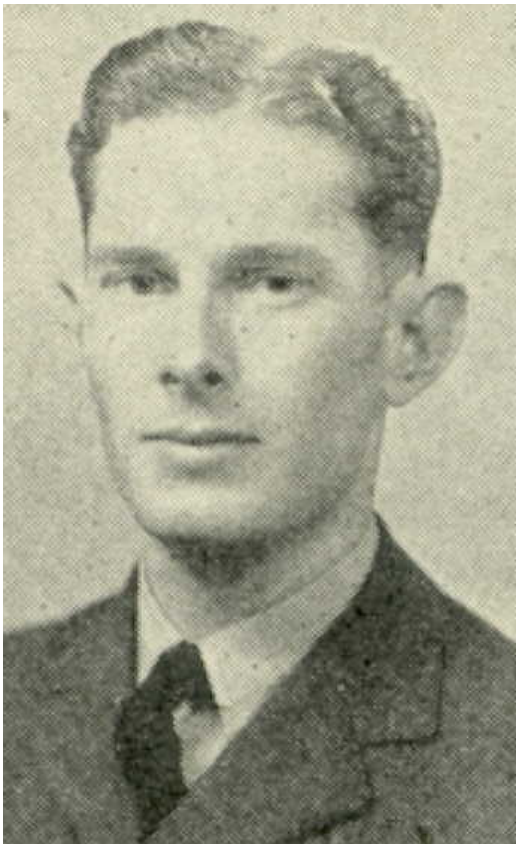
Flt Lt Stamford Seaton Williams 412297 MiD RNZAF



Stamford, known as “Bill” was born on 4 February 1920 in Wanganui, New Zealand, the son of James Gordon Williams and Ethel Winifred Williams nee Furniss.

Educated at Hastings High School, Stamford was employed on the family farm in Orini, Waikato when, in April 1940, he applied for aircrew service in the RNZAF.

Called up in April 1941, following basic training in New Zealand, in July 1941 Stamford was sent to Canada to train under the Empire Air Training Scheme where in December he was awarded his Wings and immediately embarked for the UK.

Following advanced training at 17 Advanced Flying Unit, RAF Watton, Norfolk and 56 OTU, RAF Sutton Bridge, Lincolnshire, in May 1942 Stamford was posted to 485 (NZ) Sqn at RAF Kenley, Surrey. In August 1942 Stamford was granted a commission and in October he was posted to 185 Sqn at RAF Luqa, Malta. In May 1943 Stamford returned to the UK and was employed on instructor duties with 56 OTU at RAF Tealing, Dundee, Scotland and then on 55 OTU RAF Annan, Dumfriesshire, Scotland.

In January 1944 Stamford was posted to 486 (NZ) Sqn at RAF Tangmere, Sussex. The squadron moved around the south of England, East Anglia and Scotland before they were tasked with anti-diver (V-1) patrols from RAF Newchurch, Kent. “Op Diver” was the British code name for the V-1 flying bomb campaign launched by the German Luftwaffe in 1944 against London and other parts of Britain. Diver was the code name for the V-1, against which the defence consisted of anti-aircraft guns, barrage balloons and fighter aircraft.

In September 1944 the squadron moved to B60 Grimbergen, Belgium and then to B80 at Volkel, Netherlands where Stamford was appointed as Flt Cdr.

At 14:40 on 22 December, Stamford departed as the lead of four aircraft from B80 Volkel in Tempest V EJ715 (SA-B) on an armed reconnaissance op in the Munster area, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany.

Approaching Munster, the weather deteriorated and the formation commenced the return to base.

At 15:20 the formation encountered intense anti-aircraft fire over Vreden, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany, and Stamford’s aircraft was hit. The aircraft crashed near 'Hazewinkel' farm at Oldenzaal, Overijssel, Netherlands. This was Stamford’s 241st op.

Stamford is buried in Losser RC Churchyard, Overijssel, Netherlands

Stamford is commemorated on Wall Panel – Not Yet Erected

Photo Source: aucklandmuseum.com