

415348 : Pilot Officer Thomas Alexander MALLON.

PARENTS : Mr. & Mrs. A. Mallon of Taranaki.

Thomas Mallon was born on 25th November, 1914, at Christchurch and was educated at the New Plymouth Boys' High School, where he obtained his Senior Free Place. He was interested in football, swimming and tennis. Prior to enlistment he managed his own general store at Moturoa, Taranaki.

P/O Mallon made application for training as an airman pilot in January, 1941, and was accepted, and enlisted at the Initial Training Wing, Levin, on 27th September, 1941. On completion of his course in November, 1941, he was posted to No. 2 Elementary Flying Training School, New Plymouth.

He sailed for Canada on 28th December, 1941 for training under the Empire Air Training Scheme. On arrival he was posted to No. 2 Service Flying Training School, Uplands, Ontario, where he was awarded his flying badge and promoted to Sergeant on 8th May, 1942. The same month he was posted to No. 9 Bombing & Gunnery School, Mont Joli, Quebec, where he was engaged as a staff pilot on Fairey Battle and other types of aircraft. He was promoted to Flight Sergeant on 8th November, 1942.

In May, 1943 P/O Mallon crossed to the United Kingdom where he spent a short time at No. 11 Personnel Reception Centre, Bournemouth, before proceeding to No. 20 Advanced Flying Unit, Weston-on-the-Green, Oxfordshire. Here he flew Airspeed Oxford aircraft. On 31st August, 1943, he was posted to No. 12 Advanced Flying Unit, Grantham, Lincolnshire, where he underwent training in Bristol Blenheim aircraft. On 8th November, 1943 he was promoted to Warrant Officer. In January, 1944 he was posted to No. 51 Operational Training Unit, Cranfield, Buckinghamshire. Here he converted to Bristol Beaufighter aircraft.

While at No. 51 OTU he was sent on detachment to No. 551 Squadron, Twinwood Farm, Bedfordshire, where he remained until the end of April, 1944. On 9th May, 1944 he joined No. 488 (NZ) Squadron at Zeals, Wiltshire and from that base he took part in night-fighter patrols in Mosquito aircraft. In July the squadron moved to Colerne, in the same county. In October, 1944 they moved to Hunsdon, Hertfordshire, and from there he took part in several patrols over Northern France. On 2nd November, 1944 he was commissioned in the rank of Pilot Officer.

The Squadron moved to Northern France in November, 1944, and was based at Glisy, near Amiens. On 24th December, 1944 P/O Mallon engaged and damaged a Junkers JU188 aircraft.

P/O Mallon was pilot of a Mosquito night fighter aircraft which took off from an aerodrome in Holland at 4.28 a.m. on 12th March, 1945. The aircraft failed to climb sufficiently to clear a building a mile and a half beyond the end of the runway, and it crashed some distance further on. Both members of the crew were killed instantly. The navigator, P/O G.H. Brock, was from Palmerston North. The airmen/^{were}buried with full Service Honours in the Breda Cemetery, Prinzenhagen, Zuylen, Holland.

5/2/7790

1175 hrs. as pilot.

Mrs. A. Mallon (M)

Bell Block, TARANAKI.