

44302 Flying Officer Victor Dominic BENEFIELD.

Parents : Mr. and Mrs. P. Benefield of WANGANUI.

Born in Wanganui on the 8th May 1914, Victor Benefield received his secondary education at Wanganui Technical College where he passed the Public Service Entrance Examination. He subsequently furthered his studies by taking a commercial course with a correspondence college. His sports were rowing, tennis and rugby in which latter game he was a member of his school first fifteen. His civilian occupation was that of cashier and shipping clerk with J.H. Cook & Co., Ltd. Wanganui. In February 1942 he applied for war service in the Royal New Zealand Air Force.

Flying Officer Benefield was enlisted for aircrew training on the 18th January 1941 at the Ground Training School, Levin, and was posted on the 1st March to No. 2 Elementary Flying Training School, New Plymouth, to commence his flying training. After completing this training he was posted on the 12th April, to No. 3 Service Flying Training School, Ohakea. While here, on the 28th May he was awarded his flying badge and on the 5th July was commissioned as a pilot officer. Later when, in England on the 5th July 1942 he was promoted to flying officer. Meanwhile, on the 22nd July 1941 he had embarked for the United Kingdom.

Having arrived in England on the 2nd September 1941, flying officer Benefield reported to No. 3 Personnel Reception Centre, Bournemouth, and was posted on the 16th September to No. 11 Operational Training Unit, Bassingbourn, Hertfordshire, to crew-up and complete his training on Wellington bomber aircraft. While with this unit he commenced operational flying his targets including Dusseldorf, Bremen, and Essen.

From this last mentioned operation against the target of Essen, undertaken in a Wellington bomber on the 16th September 1942, the aircraft failed to return to its base and all its crew including Flying Officer Benefield was classified as missing. After due time

had elapsed Flying Officer Benefield's death was officially presumed to have occurred on the 16th September 1942 as the result of air operations.

The crew of the aircraft contained one other New Zealander, Sergeant R.J. Outen of Lisborne.

5/2/3996 A.S.2.

595 hours as pilot.

Mr. V. Benefield.

29 Kelvin St.,

Aramoho,

WANGANUI.

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