

**JB931 EQ-O**

**World War 2 1941-1945**  
**Royal Canadian Air Force**  
**Handley Page Halifax JB931**  
**'EQ-O'**



## JB931 EQ-O



1<sup>st</sup> PO **RCAF** #87059

Squadron Leader Hanlon Donald Richard Leroy **CAMPBELL** (DFC)



2<sup>nd</sup> PO **RAAF** #AUS402461)

Albert Elliott **HORNE** (DFM)



Nav/Bomber/PO RCAF #J12987

Flight Lieutenant Albert William **THOMPSON** (DSM)



WirelessOP/Bomber RAF #130409

Sargent Maurice Henry Joseph **HAMMILL** – from England UK



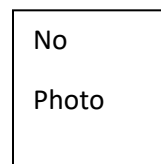
Flight Engineer/ Air Gunner **RCAF** #R70275-

Sargent John McLaren **HARRISON**



Air Gunner/PO **RCAF** #J17695

Sargent Lloyd Albert **STINSON**



Air Gunner/WirelessOP **RAF** #938849

Sargent Arthur Costan **ROSS-**

## JB931 EQ-O

### Flight Lieutenant Albert William (BILL) THOMPSON



**# J12987 - RCAF 405/408 Squadrons**

**Call sign nickname "Tommie"**

**1941-1945**

Albert William THOMPSON (**AWT**) was born in 1921 at Stratford, Ontario to Albert Thomas Thompson and Ethelwyn Smith. Shortly after Bill's birth the family including 2 younger brothers and one younger sister moved to London, Ontario. In London Bill's father, Albert Thomas THOMPSON was a carpenter for the Grand Trunk Railway.

\*Albert Thomas THOMPSON (ATT) was a veteran of World War 1 having served as a Sargent in the Canadian Army's 71<sup>st</sup> Expeditionary Force from 1914 through 1919 in Arras, Somme and Vimy.

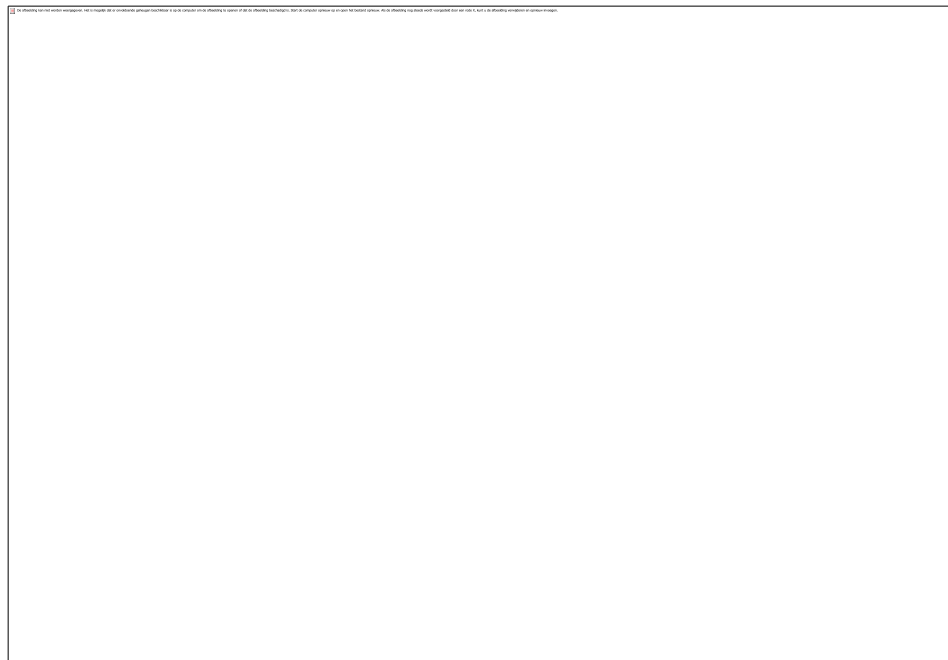
Upon enlistment on July 11<sup>th</sup>, 1941 to the Royal Canadian Air Force at London, Ontario AWT commenced his air training as a Pilot and Observer. Observer could do 3 roles as Navigator, Bomber and 2<sup>nd</sup> seat Pilot. Training centers he attended for these roles within Canada before

## JB931 EQ-O

deployed overseas were in Toronto, Ontario, Edmonton, Alberta, Regina and Mossbank, Saskatchewan, Rivers and Brandon Manitoba, Dorval, Quebec and Halifax, Nova Scotia.

AWT received his commission in August 1942 and within a week proceeded overseas. After operational briefings in England UK, AWT served as one of 7 crewmen in Handley Page Halifax aircraft in 6<sup>th</sup> Group Bomber Command first with 405 Squadron ( LQ-B,LQ-H, LQ-L, LQ-R), then later in 408 Squadron ( EQ-O).

He engaged in night bombing raids from UK Bases in Linton, Topcliffe, Pocklington and Leeming.



## JB931 EQ-O



**AWT** with crewmates had already undertaken several raids over Berlin in addition to targets in the RUHR valley including Stutgard, Dortmund, Duisburg, Essen and Bochum.

**May 13<sup>th</sup>, 1943**

1<sup>st</sup> PO RCAF #87059- Squadron Leader Hanlon Donald Richard Leroy **CAMPBELL** (DFC) -from Regina, Saskatchewan. CANADA

2<sup>nd</sup> PO RAAF #AUS402461) -Albert Elliott **HORNE** (DFM)-from Hurlstone Park, New South Wales, AUSTRALIA

Nav/Bomber/PO RCAF #J12987- Flight Lieutenant Albert William **THOMPSON** (DSM) from London, Ontario CANADA

Flight Engineer/ Air Gunner RCAF #R70275- Sargent John McLaren **HARRISON** from Midland, Ontario. CANADA

WirelessOP/Bomber RAF #130409- Sargent Maurice Henry Joseph **HAMMILL** – from England UK

Air Gunner/PO RCAF #J17695 -Sargent Lloyd Albert **STINSON** -from Melita, Manitoba. CANADA

Air Gunner/WirelessOP RAF #938849 Sargent Arthur Costan **ROSS**- from England,UK

## JB931 EQ-O

On the 13<sup>th</sup> of May, 1943 which was their 13<sup>th</sup> Mission, they were airborne from LEEMING in formation at 13 minutes before midnight now departing along with hundreds of other allied aircraft from other bases. AWT as Navigator in Halifax JB931 "EQ-O" was coordinating their flight towards their assigned target at Bochum, Germany.

\* ( May 14<sup>th</sup> 1943 Air Command Report to air command ref # A-1643 from Leeming)

*"JB931 up 23:47hrs – reported mia 05:04 hrs did not return to Leeming".  
"Radio transmission reported. No cloud, visibility good apart from haze over target was reported by the crew. Approach to target made by red /green T.I markers; clear bends in the Rhine were also seen. Clusters of red and green T.I markers were in bomb sights and release was made at 0213 hrs from altitude of 20,000 feet on heading 208 degrees north. Load release 2 x 1000 mc, 56 x 30lb, 510 x 4lb, 30 x 6lb incds.*

*Result of bombing target not directly observed. Many fires which joined up with each other were seen in the south of T.I markers.*

*One big explosion seen at 0217 hrs and another also seen from the Dutch coast at 0303 hrs. Glow of fires still seen by crew 40-50 miles after almost crossing Dutch coast. Crew also reports, considered very successful raid and further attacks should not be necessary."*

JB931 was suddenly hit by anti-aircraft flak AND under Germany night fighters 5km east of Breskers, province of Zeeland near Flanders and then shot down in flames off the coast of Holland.

\*Research has shown the 2 / NJG 1- German night fighter that shot down JB931 was a German pilot and Luftwaffe Ace named LtN Hauptmann Heinz Strüning

## JB931 EQ-O



Ltn Hauptmann **Heinz Strüning**

\* **Strüning** had 56 confirmed aircraft kills which not only included JB931, a second Halifax as well as a Wellington aircraft that same night on the 13<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> of May, 1943.

**Strüning** himself was shot down on his 280<sup>th</sup> mission and was killed on Dec 24<sup>th</sup>, 1943 by a 10 kill aircraft Ace from the RAF.

<https://www.worldnavalships.com/directory/aircrewprofile.php?AircrewID=381>

<https://prabook.com/web/heinz.struning/2338853>

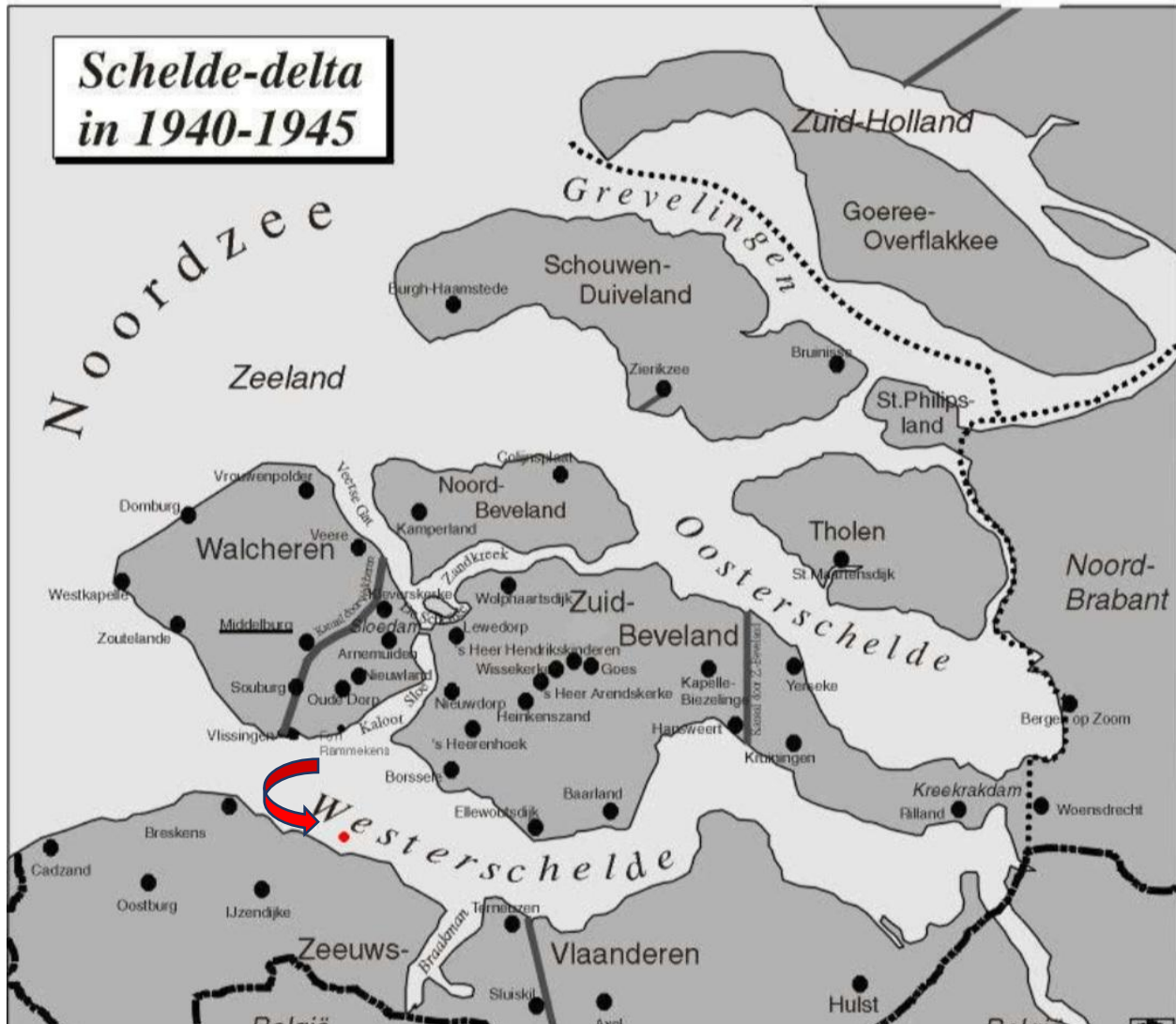
**JB931** -Two of the aircrew **STINSON & MCLAREN** were killed in action and then two others of the crew **CAMPBELL & HORNE** were suspected to have died of hypothermia in the cold waters of the North Atlantic.

\* <https://aviationmuseumwa.org.au/afcraaf-roll/horne-albert-elliott-402461/>

It was **THOMPSON** and two others, **ROSS** and **HAMMILL** who survived their bailout from JB931, parachuting into the cold waters of the North Sea. The three were rescued by separate German Patrol boats before hypothermia set in.

**THOMPSON**, **ROSS** and **HAMMILL** were taken to Vlissingen, Holland as Prisoner's of war.

## JB931 EQ-O



- Note the **RED dot** where JB931 was shot down

**AWT** was treated for his wounds in Vlissingen and later Den Hagg. After intense interrogation by German SS, he was later transported to Stalag Luft 3 at Sagan, Poland.

**AWT** reunited with JB931 crewmate **HAMMILL** there near Belaria and both would remain at Stalag Luft 3 for 2 years.

\*HAMMILL **POW # 1328** Stalag Luft 3

\*THOMPSON **POW # 1336** Stalag Luft 3.



## JB931 EQ-O

\*RAF's Sgt Arthur Coston **ROSS** who survived also was reportedly taken to Stalag 357 Kopernikus as **POW# 240** there.

The other crew who did not survive were interned in Flushing-Vlissingen cemetery in the Commonwealth War graves section.

<https://www.cwgc.org/visit-us/find-cemeteries-memorials/cemetery-details/54231/flushing-vlissingen-northern-cemetery/>



**CAMPBELL D-31**

**HORNE D-32**

**McLAREN E-1**

**STINSON E-2**

\*The writer who is the son of **AWT**, has visited the war graves of the crew of JB931 in September of 2001 when working as the National Police representative from Canada at Europol in Den Hagg and recently again in August of 2022 while on vacation in Europe.

## JB931 EQ-O

STALAG Luft 3 was a large prisoner of war camp near Sagan Poland for RAF/ RCAF and other Allied pilot officers, operated by the German Luftwaffe.

**AWT** was assigned to the north compound where he spent time often with crewmate HAMMILL. **AWT** and many others, as history would record played many roles in escape attempts in addition to the most famous "GREAT ESCAPE". **AWT** also was part of the North Camp orchestra where he learned and played the trombone instrument.



*RCAF Officer Art CREIGHTON and the Stalag Luft 3 -North Compound Band (AWT Back row R)*

AWT was formerly a financial bank officer before the war and his keen penmanship, writing skills and calligraphy hobby made him an excellent forger in creating hundreds of false documents in preparation for escaping prisoners.

<https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205402300>

<https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/classroom/fact-sheets/pow>

In preparation himself for the planned escape, **AWT** turned his WW2 RCAF blue uniform shirt and converted it into a small double strapped pack-sac. The shirt, when folded properly on a shelf in his bunkhouse appeared perfect and normal, however when shaken the long sleeves became shoulder straps and the body of the shirt could hold food, water containers and a small amount of clothing.

**AWT** brought this shirt home after being liberated near Lubeck Germany in June of 1945. The family donated it to the RCAF memorial museum in at CFB Trenton, in Trenton Ontario Canada as they had a large "Great Escape" memorial exhibit there, for the 50 Stalag Luft 3 prisoners of war shot by the German SS after the failed escape attempt.

**See artifact # 2001-418-1** RCAF memorial museum in at CFB Trenton, in Trenton Ontario Canada

The screenshot shows the website for Belleville Intelligencer. The main article is titled "Dedication ensures Canadians don't forget" by Henry Bury. It reports on a ceremony at CFB Trenton where 600 new stones were dedicated to the AD ASTRA program. The article includes a photo of RCMP Insp. Peter Thompson kneeling next to a stone with his brother John. The text describes the significance of the stones, which honor veterans and their families, and mentions that the program has now reached 5,261 stones in total.

Belleville in 1990, at the age of 69.

Peter Thompson wore his RCMP uniform during the ceremony and said afterwards he's proud of his dad for serving with the airforce and fighting for the freedom people now enjoy.

"I'm here to pay tribute to dad and the other members of the Bomber Squadron that he served with," said the detachment inspector from Ottawa.

Thompson also brought some of his father's memorabilia from the war effort and afterwards donated it to the museum "so that others can understand and appreciate what he did for this country."

His brother, John, from Kitchener, said with everything that is going on the world currently, "these ceremonies have become much more significant.

"It's something important for us to celebrate. And it's also important to honour these people and understand their valour and dedication and never forget what they did for freedom," he said.

The AD ASTRA stone program started in 1996 as a vehicle for personal participation in the RCAF Museum. The term "AD ASTRA" is taken from the air force motto "Per Ardua ad Astra" which means "To The Stars."

Ret. Col. Ken Kee, RCAF Museum board chairman, told the audience he never imagined that the program would reach the stars as much as it has, with 5,261 stones in six short years.

"It's extremely important that everyone with a stone in our park is part of our heritage," he said.

Jeff Jeffery, president of the Halifax Aircraft Association, said his stone is among those lining the walkway "and I'm still here. But one day we will all be gone and this will be a true memorial, a perpetual reminder of the great heritage of the air force."

The AD ASTRA success story wasn't lost on Paul Hayes, president of the Air Force Association of Canada.

"Your stones serve as a tangible marker for the posterity of those who served the air force...whether they are gone or are still alive. And there is no more fitting place for something like this than on this historic base," said the retired brigadier-general.

© Copyright 2001 Belleville Intelligencer

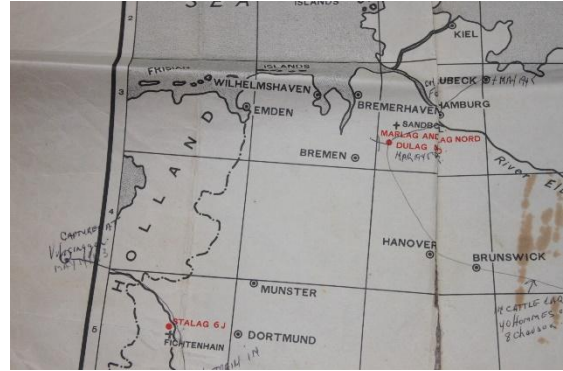
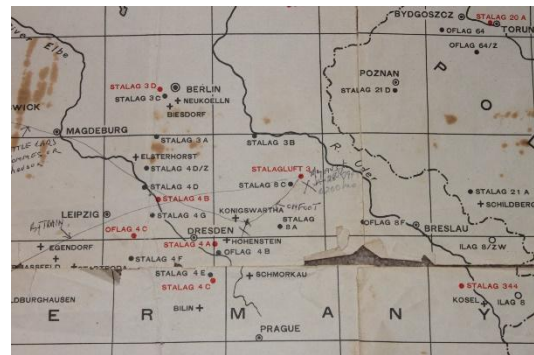
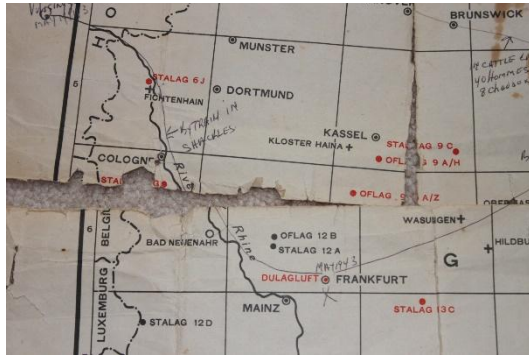
**AWT** remained at Stalag Luft 3 until February of 1945 when Hitler and Himmler ordered all POW camps to commence the prisoners in a "FORCED MARCH" in order to avoid their liberation by the Russian Army who were closing in on many fronts in Poland. Germans would shield themselves and supply depots using the prisoners. On these LONG WALKS, which were forced marches, many prisoners died of harsh winter conditions (hypothermia) with little clothing and boots and near no food. Only what they could grab along the way such as rats, farmers cats cattle chickens sustained few. Dysentery, disease occupied all. Many were shot for not marching or attempting to escape these forced marches.

- The Long March was during the final months of the Second World War in Europe. **About 30,000 Allied PoWs were force-marched westward across Poland and Germany in appalling winter conditions, lasting about four months from January to April 1945.**

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_March\\_\(1945\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_March_(1945))  
<https://ww2escapelines.co.uk/article/long-march>

# JB931 EQ-O

AWT's Handwritten notes on this section map of his two year journey from the North Sea on 14<sup>th</sup> of May, 1943 through to his transport to Stalag Luft 3 and then in February 1945, on the forced marches in western Germany until May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1945.





## JB931 EQ-O

It was early May of 1945 when **AWT's** POW column was liberated by the Russian Army near Lubeck, Germany. By the 9<sup>th</sup> of May 1945, **AWT** was safely back in the UK getting medical treatment.

On June 7<sup>th</sup>, 1945 he arrived back in Canada on a ship to Halifax, Nova Scotia and shortly there after home to his parents in London, Ontario after two years as a POW.

EXCLUSIVE CONNECTION WITH WESTERN UNION CABLE SERVICE


 **CANADIAN NATIONAL** 

W. M. ARMSTRONG, GENERAL MANAGER (1561) TORONTO **TELEGRAPHS**

RXRA687 27 GB 2 EXTRA=RCAF OTTAWA ONT 14 639P  
A T THOMPSON, REPORT DELIVERY=  
863 ADELAIDE ST LONDON ONT=  
234

M9635 PLEASED TO ADVISE YOUR SON ALBERT WILLIAM THOMPSON  
PREVIOUSLY PRISONER OF WAR HAS BEEN LIBERATED AND ARRIVED  
SAFELY IN THE UNITED KINGDOM MAY NINTH=  
RCAF CASUALTIES OFFICER,

FORM 6121  
Cor. RICHMOND & YORK STS. MET. 7900

 **CANADIAN PACIFIC**  
**TELEGRAPHS**  
*World Wide Communications*  
W. D. NEIL, General Manager of Communications

229RNWR. EFM PWM IMP  
GREAT BRITAIN 9  
MRS A T THOMPSON, **PHONED**  
863 ADELAIDEST LONDONONT.  
REPATRIATED TO ENGLAND MY ADDRESS IS LIBERATED POW RCAF OVERSEAS  
AM WELL AND FIT ALL MY LOVE.  
B THOMPSON  
615P17TH.

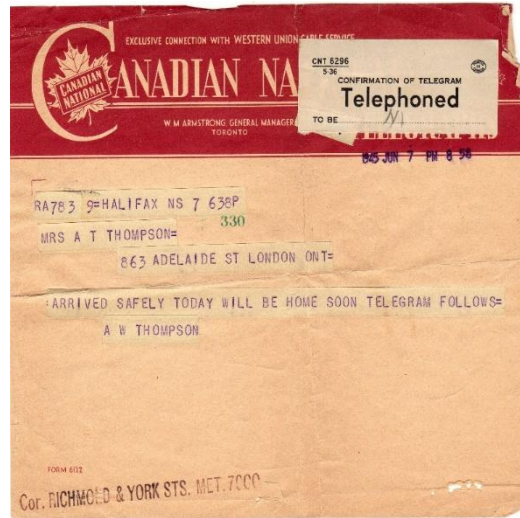
THE FREE PRESS, LONDON, ONT



**HAPPY HOMECOMING:** More than 1,000 R.C.A.F. officers and airmen released from German prison camps, the largest homeward movement of former prisoners, reached Halifax on the troopship Louis Pasteur on Thursday, June 7. The picture shows part of the cheerful throng as they gathered on the sports deck to listen to Air Vice-Marshal A. L. Morfee, C.B.E., commander-in-chief, Eastern Air Command, bid them welcome to Canada. The air

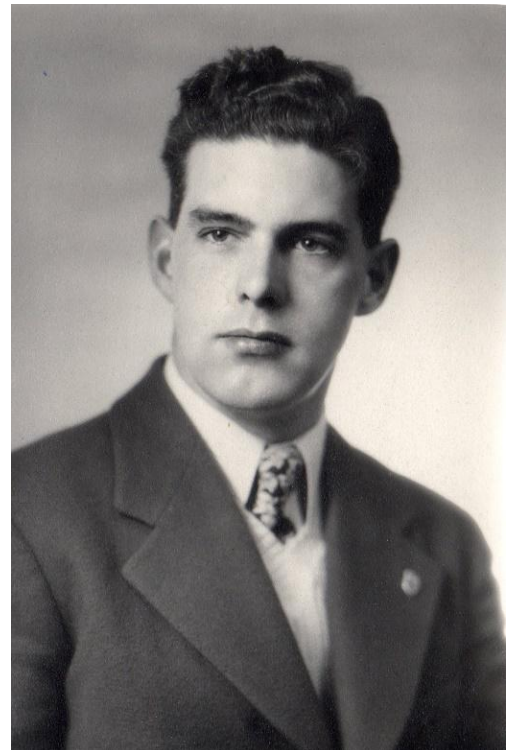
vice-marshal got his biggest cheer when he told the men that everything possible would be done to get them to their homes as quickly as possible. Many of the men—some of them spent as much as three years in prison camps—had stories to tell of their suffering and privation, but anticipation of arrival home blotted ugly memories from their minds temporarily at least. (R.C.A. Photo.)

## JB931 EQ-O



**AWT** returned to his duties as a Bank officer for the Bank of Montreal in London. Showing respect for the brave men of the RCAF and for **AWT's** contributions and sacrifices, the Bank of Montreal had held his job open when he enlisted in 1941 and welcomed him back in 1945.

Through his employment he later met Marjorie Gertrude LAWR of Woodstock, Ontario. On April 19<sup>th</sup>, 1949 they were married.



## JB931 EQ-O

They had three children – John William THOMPSON of Kitchener Ontario, Peter Jeffrey THOMPSON of Oliver, British Columbia and Karen Jane THOMPSON formerly of Toronto, Ontario. (see contact info).



Married for only 33 years and predeceased by his wife Marjorie on the 09<sup>th</sup> of November, 1982 AWT lived in Mississauga, Ontario then Brampton, Ontario and later Belleville, Ontario. AWT Died on June 14<sup>th</sup>, 1990 at Belleville General Hospital of long-term heart illnesses directly diagnosed to cigarette smoking that he started (because of hunger, stress and fear) when he became a POW and endured in Germany.



## JB931 EQ-O

\*RCAF Flight Lieutenant (Ret) J12987 Albert William (Bill) THOMPSON and his wife Marjorie both are resting together at the Glen Oakes cemetery (Ninth line at Dundas Street /highway# 5) in Oakville, Ontario. CANADA

**AWT** family contacts for further information /questions/ comments or documents-photos;

- John THOMPSON – johnthompson7120@gmail.com
- Peter THOMPSON- \*writer - pjsusan@telus.net
- Karen THOMPSON- c/o nephew, Mr Kyle THOMPSON  
kyle.offshore@gmail.com

\*Original : 2001-07-15 ( school research project by **AWT's** grandson Kyle Robert THOMPSON)

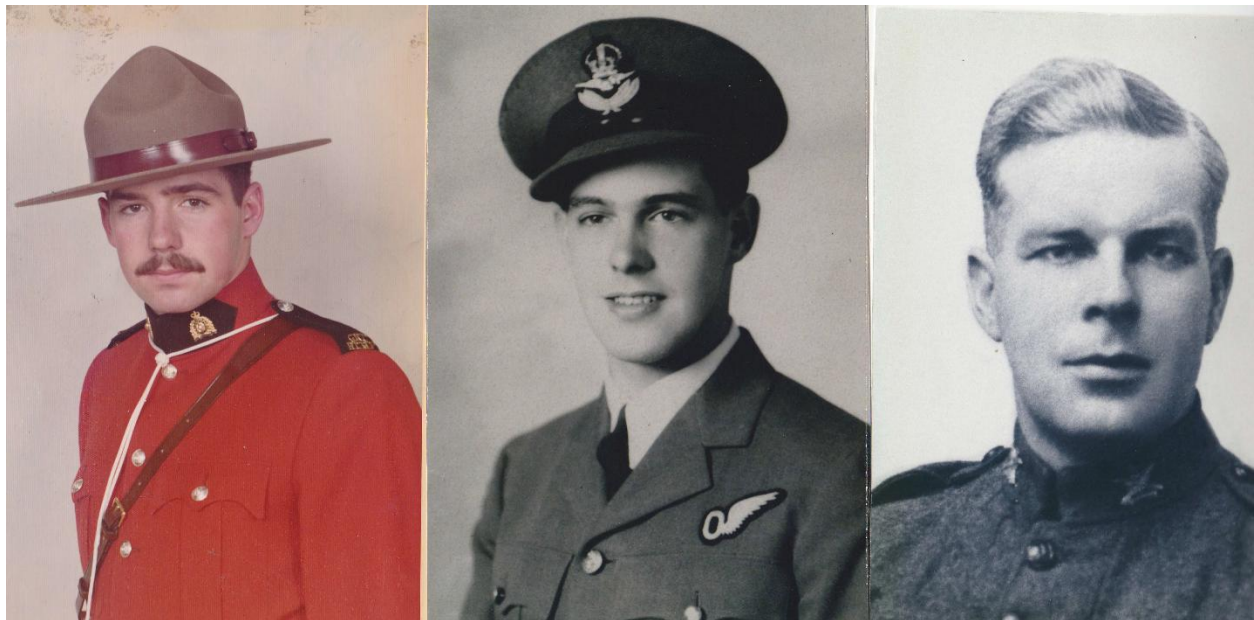
Updated: 10JAN2023

~~10JUL2022~~

~~17MAY2005~~

~~30-DEC-2003~~

### \*Further information on THOMPSON Family of Service to CANADA



Inspector Peter J. THOMPSON

Age 20

Flight Lt Albert William THOMPSON

Age 20

Sergeant Albert Thomas THOMPSON

Age 20

## **JB931 EQ-O**

*Royal Canadian Mounted Police*

*Yukon, British Columbia, Ontario  
USA, Netherlands, Colombia, Korea  
Afghanistan, Jordan, & Iraq*

**1976-2003/2010**

*Royal Canadian Air Force*

*6<sup>th</sup> Bomber Group UK  
405 & 408 Squadrons*

**WW2 – 1941-1943**

*71<sup>st</sup> Battalion*

*Canadian Expeditionary Force  
Arras, Somme, Givenchy-  
en-Gohelle*

**WW1 – 1914 -1918**