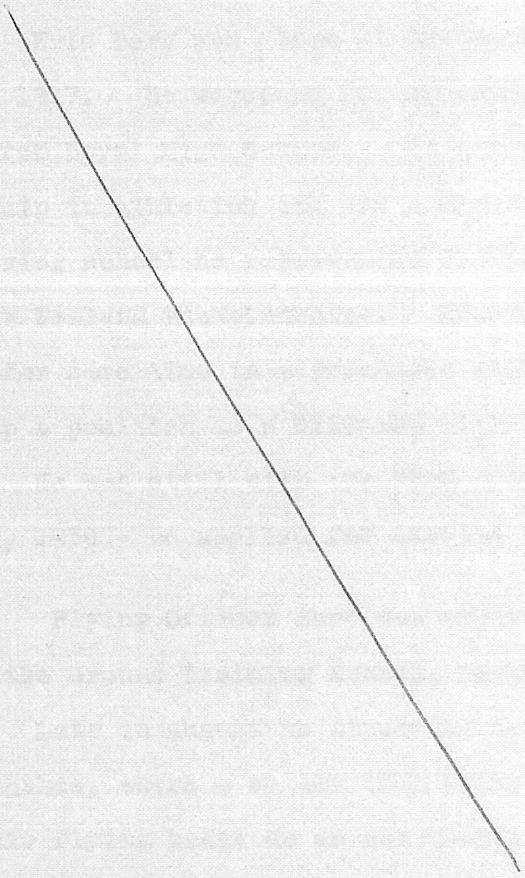
RAF 40981 Flying Officer Heslop Miles Frederick BARNITT (D.F.C.)

Parents: Mr. & Mrs. F.H. Barnitt of New Plymouth.

Heslop BARNITT was born in New Plymouth on January 13th, 1918 and received his secondary education at the New Plymouth Boys' High School, passing his Matriculation examination. He was a member of the First XV and the First XI at primary school in addition being interested in golf, tennis and swimming. He was a Corporal in the New Plymouth Boys' High School Battalion Territorial Unit and a member of the New Plymouth ~~Area~~ Aero Club. Prior to his enlistment on a short term commission in the Royal Air Force on Apr. 5th, 1938, Flying Officer Barnitt was employed as a Clerk in the State Fire Insurance Office, New Plymouth. On acceptance in the R.A.F. he embarked on the "Arawa" for the United Kingdom on May 20th 1938.

On his arrival in England Flying Officer Barnitt was posted to the Central Flying School, Hanworth on June 27th, 1938. On completion of this course he transferred to No. 1 Depot, Uxbridge for a supernumerary disciplinary course in August, thence to No. 2 Flying Training School, Worcester early in September, 1938. On the 15th April, 1939 he moved to No. 206 (General Reconnaissance) Squadron Benbecula being three weeks later attached to the School of General Reconnaissance, Squires Gate on a Navigational Course. He was graded as Pilot Officer on 27th June, 1939 receiving the rank of Flying Officer on September 3rd, 1940. Flying Officer Barnitt was posted back to No. 206 Squadron, Benbecula again for flying duties on August 26th, 1939. Early in 1940 he was transferred to No. 203 Squadron, Aden for convoy duties. He completed over 100 hours of fighter patrols ~~and~~ on convoy and in covering the evacuation of Berbera. He also made two successful reconnaissances over enemy aerodromes in Abyssinia. On one occasion Flying Officer Barnitt pursued a formation of five aircraft back into enemy territory. In October, 1940 he attacked three enemy aircraft which were bombing a convoy in the Gulf of Aden. One enemy aircraft was so badly damaged that it later crashed into the sea. Twice he attacked another aircraft, but was forced to break off the engagement when his port engine was hit. For his exploits in this area he was later

awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross on January 17th, 1941, the citation covering the award being for the exploits as enumerated above.



Flying Officer Barnitt was the pilot of a Blenheim bomber of the 203 Squadron based at Kamaran Island in the Red Sea, detailed for an operational day flight on October 20th, 1940. On returning to land the port engine of the aircraft lost revolutions, the port wing striking the corner of a mosque situated near the landing ground, the pilot losing his life in the resulting accident. He was buried in the Kamaran Island Christian Cemetery, Red Sea.

Mr. F.H. Barnitt (F).
488 Devon Street,
NEW PLYMOUTH.

5/2/498 AS2
533 Hours.

FILE.
15/6/1949 Initials