

Flt. Sgt. Richard James Takle
638924 RAF



Richard Takle was an experienced 83 Squadron wireless operator who was one of two Welsh brothers to be killed while flying with Bomber Command.

He was flying in a hand-picked Pathfinder operation which was to breach the Mittelland section of the Dortmund-Ems canal on the night of 21/22 February 1945. Richard was in a crew assembled by the commanding officer of RAF Coningsby, Group Captain Anthony Evans-Evans DFC, made up of personnel from at least three 5 Group squadrons.

After taking off from Coningsby at 1707 hours, his Lancaster, NE165 OL-Y of 83 Squadron, was shot down by a night fighter in an attack close to the Dutch border, crashing in Gertruda Farm in the village of De Rips, near Helmond. Only the rear gunner in the eight-man crew survived and all seven men who died are buried in Mierlo War Cemetery.

Richard came from the mining town of Pontycymer, near Bridgend in Glamorgan and was the 27-year-old son of Ernest and Mary Takle. His brother, Ernest, was a rear gunner in a 207 Squadron Lancaster killed during a raid on Berlin on 16 December 1943.

The others who died on NE165 were G/C Evans-Evans, flight engineer F/O Sid Marsh, navigator S/L William Wishart DFC & Bar GM, second navigator F/O Desmond Ball DFM, bomb-aimer F/L William Fitch DFC GM and mid-upper gunner F/O Clifford Coombes. The survivor was rear gunner P/O E Hansen RAAF.

His name can be found on panel 104.

Sources: RAF Commands/Bomber Command Losses 1945 by Bill Chorley/Facebook.