

Sqn Ldr Richard Ashton Shuttleworth 33549

Richard, known as Dick, was born on 18 May 1920 in Sheffield, Yorkshire, the youngest son of Major Ashton Ashton Shuttleworth and Dorothy Ann Shuttleworth nee Leslie. In August 1941, just under 2 weeks before he was killed, he married Honor Muriel Ramsay in Belfast, Northern Ireland.

Eager to fly, Richard obtained his Aero Licence in September 1938 at the Norfolk & Norwich Flying Club, shortly before he joined the RAF as a Flight Cadet at RAFC Cranwell on J39 Course. Richard obtained his wings together with his commission in March 1940.

In April 1940, Richard was posted to Nantes, France with 98 Sqn, serving until the evacuation after the Fall of France two months later. The squadron was re-assembled at Gatwick and were posted to Kaldadarnes, Iceland in July 1940 for Coastal Command duties. Richard completed further Coastal Command flying on 88 Sqn at RAF Sydenham, Belfast.

Richard was posted to 21 Sqn in July 1941 as a Flight Commander. Although Richard had extensive flying experience on convoy and anti-submarine ops, he had limited time on low-level Blenheim bombing work.

On 28 August 1941, six 21 Sqn Blenheims, escorted by two squadrons of long range Spitfires, were detailed to carry out a low level attack on shipping at Rotterdam. Richard was, for the first time, to lead the attack.

At 17:41 Richard and his crew departed RAF Watton, Norfolk in Blenheim IV Z7447 (YH-A). Richard's aircraft was hit by Rotterdam based Flak and crashed in the sea off the Dutch Coast.

Richard survived the crash and was picked up by a rescue boat and taken to the Wilhelmina Hospital, Amsterdam, where he died shortly after being admitted. His two crew were killed in the crash.

Two large cargo ships were hit, and damage was caused to the docks, but the operation was costly for 21 Sqn, as 4 of the 6 aircraft failed to return.

Also Killed: FS Dennis John Mackan (Observer); FS George Brittain (WOp/AG)

Richard is buried in Amsterdam New Eastern Cemetery, Noord-Holland, Netherlands

Richard is commemorated on Wall Panel 241

Photo Source: Aircrewremembered

