

FO Richard Winter Taylor DFC & Bar J/15535 RCAF

Richard, known as "Dick", was born on 18 October 1920 in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, the son of Francis Winter Taylor and Emily Taylor nee Dixon. Raised in Winnipeg until 1934, Richard was educated at Prince Edward School, Kildonan, Winnipeg until the family re-located to Vancouver. Richard worked as a clerk in the Hudson Bay Company before enlisting in Vancouver in December 1939, he was called up in July 1940.

Following training in Saskatchewan, Edmonton and Manitoba, Richard was awarded his Observer Badge in March 1941 and he was posted overseas the following month. Following further training, Richard was posted to 51 Sqn at RAF Dishforth, Yorkshire in September 1941. Richard was awarded the DFC for his service on 51 Sqn, particularly for his participation in Op Chariot, the raid on St Nazaire on 28 March 1942. Gazetted in March 1943 his Citation read:

"This officer has completed a large number of sorties invariably displaying outstanding skill and devotion to duty. The successes achieved reflect the greatest credit on his efforts which are worthy of high praise."



Commissioned in May 1942, following brief periods at 296 Sqn and 26 OTU, in October 1942 Richard was posted to 161 Sqn at RAF Tempsford, Bedfordshire. Although awarded posthumously in March 1945, the Bar to his DFC was recommended as follows (What he did on this night is unknown):

"This officer is strongly recommended for the immediate award of the Distinguished Flying Cross for his part in a Special Operation on the night of February the 24th-25th, 1943."

On 14 March 1943, Richard and the crew were tasked with "Operation Iridium", the sixth attempt to insert the 4 man Czechoslovakian SOE Iridium team to Bohemia. The team was tasked to organize the resistance, carry out intelligence surveillance activities, and transmit information back to London. The group radio was codenamed "Anna". At 20:00 Richard, operating as the Nav/Air Bomber, the crew and 4 man Czech team departed RAF Tempsford, Bedfordshire, in Halifax V DG245 (MA-W).

Whilst in the region of Sušice, now in the Plzeň Region of the Czech Republic, the visibility deteriorated and the group could not be dropped as planned. The decision was made to return to base. Whilst flying to the south of Munich, the aircraft was hit by German anti-aircraft fire and crashed in the Perlacher Forest, killing all on board.

Also Killed: Flt Lt Alfred Ellis Prior DFM (Pilot); PO George McWilliam (WOp/AG); PO Alfred John Kingham (Pilot); Sgt John Henry Kempton (Air Gunner); Sgt Felix James Mowles (FE); Sgt Francis Douglas Bell (AG); Lt Miroslav Špot (Agent); Lt Miroslav Kříčenský (Agent); Platoon Leader Bohumír Kobylka (Agent); Sgt Vladislav Soukup (Agent)

Originally buried in Munich West Cemetery, in November 1947 Richard was moved to Durnbach War Cemetery, Bayern Germany

Richard is commemorated on Wall Panel 251

Photo Source: The Vancouver Sun