

František Vrbka Agent

Pamětní Medaile Československé Armády v
Zahraničí 'Francie' and 'Velká Británie' bars
(Commemorative medal of the
Czechoslovak army abroad with French and
British Bars)

Československý válečný kříž 1939
(Czechoslovak War Cross 1939)

František was born on 15 July 1924 in Bystřice nad
Pernštejnem, Moravia, the only son of František Vrbka
and Libuše Vrbka nee Myslíková. Educated in Bystřice
nad Pernštejnem and Nové Město, he continued his
education after moving to Prostějov but, following the
German occupation, František decided to leave the
country to join the military.

František made his first attempt to cross the border to
Slovakia in December 1939, but was detained and sent
back, he finally succeeded in January 1940. He crossed the Slovak-Hungarian border a total of five times,
but he was detained by the Hungarians, briefly imprisoned and then returned to Slovakia 4 times. On his
fifth and successful attempt on 8 May 1940 he reached France via Hungary, Yugoslavia, Greece and Turkey
and was assigned to the artillery.

After the capitulation of France, in July 1940 František arrived in England where he continued to serve in
the artillery until August 1942 when he volunteered for Special Ops. By February 1943 František had
completed the basic Special Ops and parachute training. Following advanced courses in cipher and
espionage František was assigned to the Bronse team.

The Bronse team was tasked to organize the resistance in Bohemia, carry out intelligence surveillance
activities, and transmit information back to London. The group radio was codenamed "Blanka". On 14
March 1943, the Bronse team prepared to parachute into Bohemia.

František and the team departed RAF Tempsford, Bedfordshire, in Halifax II BB281 (NF-O) destined for a
drop zone near Brno, SE of Prague. Deteriorating weather conditions in the drop area prevented the
planned operation continuing and 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. Only one crew
member and František survived the crash, but they died later of their injuries.

Seriously injured František was taken to the SS infirmary in Prague-Podolí where he died on 23 March 1943.
František was buried in a mass grave in The Ďáblický cemetery, known as "The Devil's Graveyard"

Also Killed: Sqn Ldr Christopher Francis Gibson DFC (Pilot); WO2 Maurice Tallier Peter Myers RCAF
(WOp/AG); WO1 Douglas Clark Lisson RCAF (Pilot); FS John Stanley Rigden (Nav); FS Arthur Stokes DFM
(WOp/AG); Sgt Malcolm John Hudson (FE) died 11 April; Sgt Harold John Sharood (AG); Sgt Leo Peter Ward
(AG); Lt Bohumir Martinek (Agent); Antonin Kubec (Agent)

František is commemorated on Wall Panel 272 (NYE)

Photo Source: hanacka.drbna.cz

