

# Pallen, Richard Haviland

**Age:** 28

**Nationality:** Canadian

**Rank:** Flying/Officer

**Unit:** No. 135 Squadron

**Occupation:** Pilot

**Service No:** J/7083

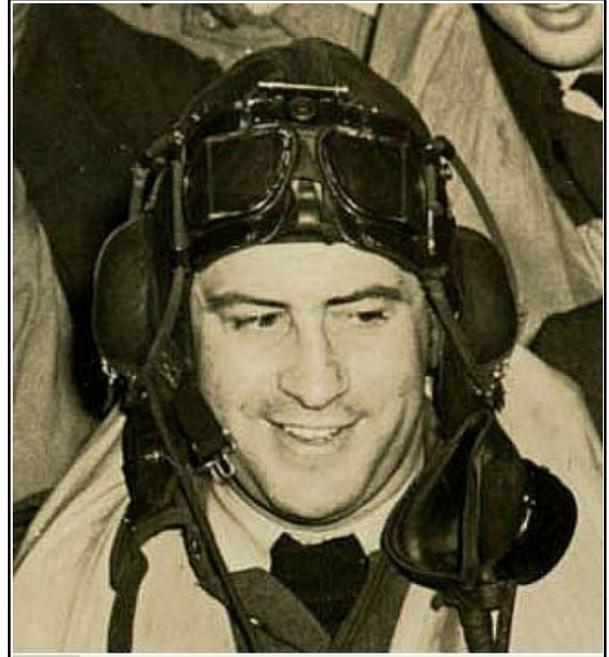
**Birth:** 10 January 1915  
Hamilton, Ontario, Canada

**Home Town:** Vancouver, B.C., Canada

**Death:** 30 May 1943

Crash of Hawker Hurricane 5419  
N. of Sidney Island, BC, Canada

**Burial:** Burnaby (Forest Lawn) Memorial Park  
B.C., Canada



## **Biography**

Richard Haviland Pallen enlisted in the RCAF in December 1940. He had left school when he was 18, with a BC grade 12 education, and had briefly trained as a shipwright, dropping out after eight months. At the time of his enlistment he described himself as a shipper. He wanted flying duties, preferably to be a pilot.

Richard had a slight deformity of the middle fingers on both hands, the result of earlier fractures, but no limitation of function had occurred and he was passed as medically fit for a pilot. Twenty five years old, he was mature, confident and resourceful and after Initial Training, in April 1941, he was sent to No. 18 Elementary Flying Training School in Patricia Bay.

Richard proved to be an above average student, whose conduct and attitude to duties was commendable. He had the qualities to be judged suitable for a commission and in June 1941, with 56 hours experience on de Havilland Tiger Moths, was posted to Service Flying Training School in Dauphin, Manitoba. Here he gained 85 hours experience on North American Harvard Mk III's and earned his pilot's wings on August 1941, becoming a pilot/officer shortly thereafter.

For a period between September 1941 and August 1942, Richard was in England for further training. He was injured in a flying accident in January 1942 and sent back to Canada.

Richard was posted to No. 135 squadron in Mossbank, Saskatchewan, around July 1942 and was serving in this squadron in Patricia Bay in September 1942, when he was promoted to (temporary) Flying/Officer.

The Patricia Bay station diary entry for 30 May 1943 reads:

“An unfortunate accident occurred off the north tip of Sidney Island today. Three Hurricanes from No. 135 squadron were doing low formation flying when two machines collided. One machine fell into the sea killing the pilot, F/O Pallen. The sad feature of the accident was that F/O Pallen (a very popular officer) expected to get married next week and proceed overseas.

Richard Haviland was born on 15 January 1915 to Ernest Haviland Pallen and Mayme Rose Lezie, an American of French extraction. He had a sister, four years younger, Ruth Louise, who described herself on the 1940 voters' list as an author.

From Left to Right - Sgt. Gallinger, F/S Battleson, LAC Lytle, F/S Beazer, Major Herriott  
Cpl. Hepplewhite, F/L Harley, Sgt. McConnell, Unknown, LAC Wragg, LAC Dahl, F/O Pallen,  
F/L Thompson, LAC McQuarrie, LAC McDonald, LAC Richer, F/S Walcroft, LAC Restieux,  
S/L CANNELL & "QUEENIE", F/S Clarke, LAC Miller, Cpl. Fisher, Cpl. Thornington, F/Sgt.  
Passore, LAC Brodie, F/S Aucoin, F/O Wiley, F/S Stewart and F/Sgt. Gardner.



*“Queenie” is the mascot of #135 (Bulldog) Squadron*



## **Details of Crash**

Before the crash that killed him, P/O Pallen had flown a total of 422 hours on Service aircraft, including 184 on Hawker Hurricanes. His Flight Commander considered him a competent pilot, with considerable experience leading formations, and capable of carrying out any duties in a Hurricane.

At 2:05 pm on 30 May 1943, P/O Pallen, in Hurricane 5419, formation leader, P/O Wheeler in 5423, No. 2, and F/S Jackson in Hurricane 5418, No. 3, took off to practise formation low flying on a flight authorized by P/O Pallen. After taking off, they flew low in Vic formation south along the west shore of Sidney island in the positions described above. After passing the island, they turned to port 180° and returned northerly along the east shore at an altitude of about 25 feet. No. 3 (Jackson) was about two spans from the leader and his wing was opposite the leader's tail. They approached a small island and the leader climbed slightly. Just as they reached this island, No. 3 (Jackson) looked ahead to see if he had clearance to go over the island and eased back on the stick to make sure. At this moment the leader came over into the path of No. 3. Pallen's tail was cut off by No. 3's propeller, and Hurricane 5419 fell into the sea. At the time of the accident, the altitude of the aircraft was about 50 feet. No. 3's propeller was damaged but it and No. 2 returned to base. Pallen's aircraft was salvaged on June 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> and his body was recovered. He had suffered massive trauma to the head.

The inquiry into the accident recommended that no blame be attached to F/S Jackson.

Richard Pallen was buried in Burnaby in Forest Lawn Memorial Park.

Hawker Hurricane



