

Picard Henri (RAF n° 87693)

Special Dispatch in RAF "Honours & Awards", Knight's Cross in the Order of Leopold with Palm, Belgian Croix de Guerre 1940 with 2 Palms and Bronze Lion, ...



(Vieilles Tiges Collection)

Born on 17 April 1916 at Etterbeek (Brussels) . He joined l'Ecole Royal Militaire (Military School) in November 1936 attached to the 82° Infantry-Cavalery Promotion. Designated to the Chasseurs Ardennais, he was attracted by aviation and asked for transfer to the Aéronautique Militaire. He joined the 1st Aviation School of Evere in December 1938 for an observer course. Posted to the 1° Regiment, he wanted to become a pilot and joined the 83° promotion at the Flying School of Wevelghem. At the outbreak of War, Picard was perfecting his skills at the Advanced Flying School of Goetsenhoven. The School being transferred to France after the invasion of Belgium by the Germans and to Oujda in Morocco when France capitulated. He and 59 fellow countrymen decided to join Great Britain , where they arrived on 17 July 1940. He enlisted to the RAFVR, 13 August 1940. Sent for training to: EFTS (23 December 1940), SFTS (26 March 1941) and 58 OTU (10 July 1941). He ended his training on 30 August 1941 and was sent for flying duties to 131 Sqn at Ternhill (27 August 1941). On 14 November 1941, P/O Picard was designated for 350 Sqn. 2 Months later, during an escort mission to Hazebrouck, Picard destroyed 2 Fw-190 in the near of Cap Griz Nez. During Operation Jubilee he destroyed another Fw-190 in collaboration with P/O Plas. This young Belgian pilot was shot down over the English Channel on 27 August 1942. He bailed out and spent six days and nights out at sea until being washed ashore in France. Being unconscious, he was taken prisoner of war and was sent first to a hospital and later to a Prisoner of War camp. On 29 March 1944 he was killed, being one of the 50 victims murdered by the Germans as revenge for the Great Escape at Stalag Luft 3. A memorial plaque for Henri Picard was inaugurated at Beauvechain Airbase on 1 December 1951 during the 10th anniversary celebrations of the Squadron.

(source: Allan Hillman and André Bar)

His claims are :

29/06/1942	1 FW-190	Circus 195: Hazebrouck
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19/08/1942	1/2 FW-190	Dieppe (Operation Jubilé)

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