

Richard Hutchinson Forbes

Richard Forbes was born in August 1915 in Newcastle upon Tyne. After his father died, when Richard was only 9 years old, his mother worked as a typist for a business in Scotswood. After he left the Royal Grammar School in Newcastle, where he had joined the School Officer Training Corps, Richard began work as an office boy and later as a clerk.

In 1937, Richard Forbes joined the Territorial Army and was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the 9th Battalion DLI. When the Second World War began, he was given command of the battalion's Carrier Platoon, which he took to France in January 1940. In May 1940, Lieutenant Forbes was involved in heavy fighting at Provins on the Ypres Canal and for his leadership was awarded the Military Cross. He was also badly wounded and was evacuated to a Casualty Clearing Station. When this CCS was overrun by the advancing Germans, Richard Forbes was made a prisoner of war.

Richard Forbes spent the next two years in German hospitals and prison camps, until he was selected, because of his wounds, for repatriation. Transferred by the Germans to Sweden, Lieutenant Forbes finally returned home by sea in 1943 and spent the next six months in hospital and recuperating at home. Unfit for any further active service, Richard Forbes became an instructor at an Officer Cadet Training Unit, until he was demobilised in January 1946.

After the war Richard Forbes worked for ICI until he retired in 1971. He died in July 2004.

Richard Forbes was interviewed for the Imperial War Museum in 1996 at his home in Bingley, West Yorkshire.