

Bouskill, Russell Reginald
Flight Lieutenant
401 Squadron
Royal Canadian Air Force
Distinguished Flying Cross
J/10254



Mors Celerrima Hostibus

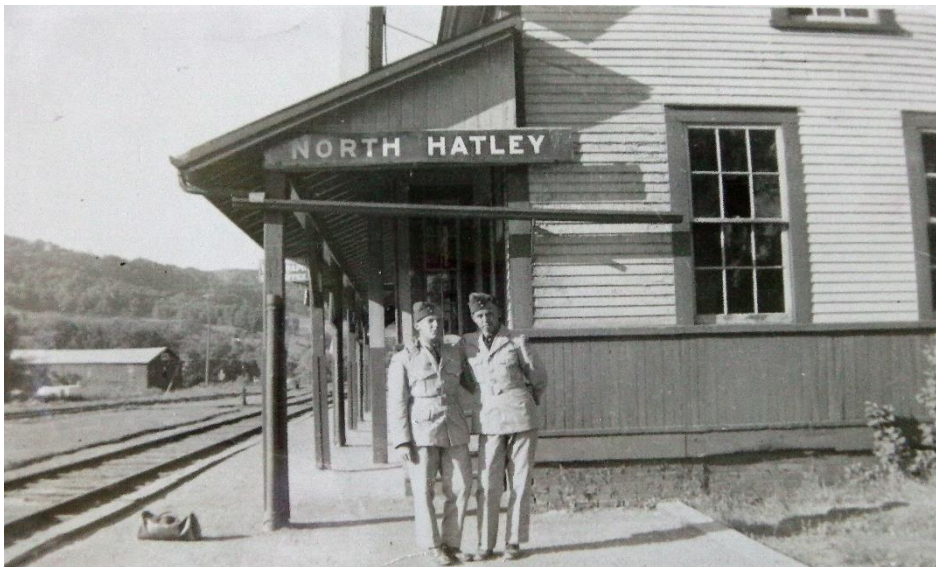


Russell "Russ" Reginald Bouskill was born on Saturday September 18, 1915 in Trout Creek, Northern Ontario, Canada. Son of Reginald Percival Bouskill, born in Toronto, and Alice Gowans Hornby-Bouskill, of Clavering, Ontario. They got married on November 23, 1912 in Toronto. The family also consisted of brother Gordon William Bouskill and sister Marjorie Elisabeth Bouskill. As a religion they belonged to the Anglican Church. Father Reginald Percival worked as a wood trader and as a lumber layer. The family lived at 21 Fern Avenue in Toronto. Russell received his primary education from 1922 to 1928 at the Parkdale Public School, then from 1928 to 1933 he attended secondary education at the Parkdale Collegiate Institute in Toronto. Opened in 1888, this school was one of the oldest schools in Toronto, Ontario. He left school at the age of 18 and was unemployed from 1933 to 1936.

In 1936 he found work as the youngest employee at Brouse Mitchell & Co, but the company closed its doors in 1938. He then continued his social career at J.H. Crang & Co, 304 Bay Street, also as junior clerk.

In 1939, Russell went to work at the British American Service Station gas station at 1705 Bloor Street West in Toronto.

Russell had brown eyes and brown hair, was 6 ft. tall and weighed 132 lb. At the age of 19, he was confined to bed for three months because of rheumatic fever. He had a scar on his left arm from a vaccination. Russell enjoyed reading and playing ice hockey, basketball, rugby, and golf at the Humber Valley Golf Course, and baseball at the McCormick Playground in Toronto. He also had knowledge of motorcycles, which was a hobby of his as well as reading was.



*Russel (right}
together with a
friend at North
Hatley, Quebec,
Canada.*

*Photo : Tracy
Hartwell*

On January 9, 1940, Russell Reginald signed a certificate as a reservist with the Royal Canadian Air Force and on May 22, 1941, Russell enlisted in the Canadian Army in Toronto.

He was posted to the No 3 Initial Training School in Victoriaville, Quebec, graduating there on September 13, 1941. He then attended the No. 17 Elementary Flying Training School in Stanley, Nova Scotia. This training base had been opened on March 17, 1941 and was located 10 miles east of Windsor, Nova Scotia. The Royal Canadian Air Force used Fleet Finch planes and Havilland Tiger Moth aircraft for flight training. The Tiger Moth had entered service with the Royal Canadian Air Force in 1931 and was the standard basic trainer for the next two decades. Every six weeks, the No. 17 Elementary Flying Training School was busy training four classes of thirty students. Russell Reginald was a hard worker and always tried his best.



Russell 'Russ' passed there on November 17, 1941 and continued his training at the No. 8 Service Flying Training School, where he received his wings on February 27, 1942.

Russell became an instructor with the No. 1 Service Flying Training School at Camp Borden from May 18, 1942 to June 6, 1943. This was followed by placement at the No. 1 Operational Training Unit in Bagotville, Quebec. In September 1943 he went overseas to England and was assigned to the No. 57 Operational Training Unit from October 12, 1943 to January 10, 1944.



That same day, January 10, Russell "Russ" was posted to No. 401 Squadron at Biggin Hill, where he became a pilot on a Supermarine Spitfire. This aircraft was built from 1938 by Supermarine Division, Vickers Armstrong Ltd. The squadron's nickname was City of Westmount or Ram. On June 1, 1944, Russell made a test flight at Royal Air Force base Tangmore, near Chichester in

West Sussex. Upon landing it appeared that the radiator housing was missing and that a wing had been hit, resulting in a crack. The aircraft was still brand-new and had only flown for thirty-four hours and then it went wrong during a dive.

Russell was not to blame, it was a technical defect and the plane was repaired by the Fleet Requirements Unit.

During D-Day, Russell and No 401 Squadron were involved in the fighting and eight enemy aircraft were destroyed on June 7.

On June 18, the squadron moved to Beny-sur-Mer in France. The squadron's one hundredth victory was achieved on July 20. The squadron increasingly operated in the role of fighter-bomber, during ground attacks and armed reconnaissance operations, also during operations in support of Operation Market Garden around Arnhem in September 1944 and actions over Nijmegen and the surrounding area. During his operational flights, Russell "Russ" managed to damage three German aircraft and shot down five German aircraft: three Focke Wulf FW 190, nicknamed Würger (game bird, assassin) and two Messerschmitt BF 109 aircraft.

*Russell
"Russ"
Reginald
Bouskill*



*Photo :
Tracy
Hartwell*

On Monday morning, October 2, 1944, several Spitfires from the 401 Squadron, 126 Wing, took off from Le Culot airfield in Belgium, with the task of protecting the Waal Bridge in Nijmegen and the Maas Bridge near Grave. One of them was Flight Lieutenant Russell 'Russ' Bouskill in his Spitfire type LF Mk. IX with registration number MJ300. This British aircraft was equipped with the power source of a Rolls-Royce Merlin 61 engine, the most modern version. German fighters were also active in the vicinity of the Maasland and the Corridor.



*W/O. 'Shorty' Marshall, F/O. Russ Bouskill, F/O. Jerry Bell, W/O. Tommy Dowbiggin, Fl/Lt. Bill Tew
Second from the left Russ Bouskill - photo: <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/>*

In the airspace over Nijmegen, the pilots of the Canadian 401 Squadron noticed a formation of four FW-190 fighters of the Luftwaffe and they decided to attack these enemy aircraft. But it was an ambush and the Canadians were in turn attacked by four other FW-190 fighters from Jagdgeschwader 26. During this dogfight, two Spitfires were shot down. The pilot, W/O M. Thomas, managed to safely exit his burning Spitfire MJ726 with his parachute. He ended up on allied terrain, his plane crashed just outside the Volkel airbase.

The Spitfire LF Mk. IX of Reginald Russell "Russ" Bouskill was chased by four Focke Wulf-190 fighters of the Jagdgeschwader 26 of the Luftwaffe and opened fire on him. Unable to jump out of the plane in time due to his injuries, Russel Bouskill made an attempt to perform an emergency landing, but the plane crashed straight down at Keent, north of the airport near the runway.

Russell Reginald 'Russ' Bouskill died at age 29. The remains of the pilot that were found were temporarily buried in the Roman Catholic cemetery in Reek. On October 16, 1945 he was reburied at the Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery, grave reference **XV. E. 5.**

His headstone reads:

'HIS MEMORY IS AS DEAR TODAY
AS IN THE HOUR
HE PASSED AWAY'



Photo : <http://lestweforget1945.org/>

The salvage of the aircraft and of the remains of the pilot was partly carried out in October 1944 by the airport personnel of Keent. This happened during the height of the battle in the border region of the provinces of Brabant and Gelderland. On June 30, 2009 a new search was made for the place where the plane had crashed and an excavator started working. Each time the top layer was scraped off piece by piece and everything was thoroughly examined. The final salvage of the engine of this aircraft took place on August 18, 2009. The remains of the Spitfire had been driven deep into the clay soil of the flood plains near Keent. Due to the plans to excavate the River Maas in the river bend, the remains had to be salvaged. In addition to many aircraft remains, aircraft tires, steel back protection behind the pilot's seat, on-board ammunition, instruments, the propeller hub and a whole tank of small wreckage were recovered. Many parts still looked okay. The on-board guns were taken to Woensdrecht. A piece of aluminum plate with legible initials was also found. Moreover parts of the flap handle and cockpit seal were recovered. And also a little cockpit clock on which the time of the crash could be read, a quarter past twelve.



After sixty-five years, the undiscovered remains of Russell Reginald 'Russ' Bouskill were found. The Canadian embassy was informed. On June 21, 2011 the recovered remains were interred in his grave with reference **XV.E.5.** at the Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery. This was done during a short, private ceremony with representatives of the Canadian Embassy, representatives of the Royal Canadian Airforce, as well as a representation of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

In 2009 the remains of the crashed Spitfire type LF Mk. IX MJ300 and the Rolls-Royce aircraft engine first went to the Salvage Service of the Royal Netherlands Air Force in Woensdrecht to be examined. In March 2009 the Royal Netherlands Air Force took the wreckage and the Rolls-Royce aircraft engine to a construction company in Oss. There the Rolls-Royce Merlin 61 engine was placed on a wheeled undercarriage with financial support from the municipality of Oss.

The modified 12-cylinder Rolls-Royce engine was donated to the Visitor Center in Keent on Thursday June 30, 2011. This was done with the cooperation of the municipality of Oss. The found wreckage and the Rolls-Royce engine were displayed there.

In a display case, for example, is a clock from the cockpit, the hands of which stopped at the time of the crash, 12.15 pm.



The Rolls-Royce engine of Russell "Russ" Reginald Bouskill's Spitfire on display at the visitor center in Keent.

Russell Reginald 'Russ' Bouskill's mother received the Distinguished Flying Cross on February 28, 1946. The cross is awarded to officers and non-commissioned officers for an act or acts of bravery performed while flying in active operations against the enemy.

Distinguished Flying Cross.

**Flight Lieutenant Russell Reginald BOUSKILL
(Can/J.10254), R.C.A.F., 401 (R.C.A.F.) Sqn.**

This officer has set a fine example of skill and courage. He has displayed the greatest keenness for air operations and his successes include the destruction of 5 enemy aircraft. Throughout a long period of fighter activity, his devotion to duty has been of a high order.





FACES TO GRAVES

Stichting Faces to Canadian
War Graves Groesbeek

Life story: Gijs Krist, Research Team Faces To Graves.

Sources:

Commonwealth War Graves

Library and Archives Canada

W.F.J. Boeijen

Monique van den Hark

Tracy Hartwell

* Do you have a photo of this soldier or additional information please contact info@facestograves.nl



*Russell Reginald 'Russ' Bouskill's
pins and ring*

Monument in Keent in honour of Russell Reginald 'Russ' Bouskill.

