

**Buller, Edward Matheson**  
**Trooper**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Army 1<sup>st</sup> Hussars**  
**6<sup>th</sup> Armoured Regiment**  
**L103899**



Edward Matheson Buller was born on August 11th, 1924 in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada and after being in the hospital he was taken to his family's house at 516 Avenue I North. His parents were James S. and Rosina D. Buller. They were members of the Church of England.

People called Edward Ed and he was the youngest of three children. He had an older brother named Jim and an older sister named Forence. He had brown hair and blue eyes. He was the only one in the family who had blue eyes. Ed grew up to be a big, strong boy who had grown to about six feet tall by the time he was fifteen years old and he apparently had a temper.



*Jim, Florence and Edward Buller as young children*

Edward liked hunting birds. He had an old rifle with a homemade stock and would shoot it with one hand like a pistol. He was, by all accounts, an excellent shot even with one hand.

Edward's brother Jim remembered a time when the two boys got into some trouble in a neighbour's backyard. The neighbour chased them into a back alley and the boys ended up climbing into two trashcans. They waited a very long time until the neighbour gave up searching for them. Then Jim finally got out of the trash can.

However, Edward, being bigger than Jim, had gotten stuck. Jim tipped over the can and started rolling it down the street until Edward popped out. Edward got so mad that he chased Jim all the way home, but Jim was faster than Edward was and so he made it home safely.

Edward was generally a pleasant, amiable, easy-going boy as he grew up. He was popular and had many friends, except when his temper got the better of him. There were many Ukrainian families in Edward's neighbourhood and as a result several of his friends were Ukrainian. He did not have to do many chores around the house, because being the youngest child he was considered the 'baby' of the family. Edward had a deep voice like Jim, but didn't sing in the choir, as Jim did. He did, however, like to be a part of the Church organization for boys, whose motto was 'Here I am - send me.' While he was not into making model airplanes like Jim, he enjoyed other quiet activities and spent a lot of time working on jigsaw puzzles and collecting stamps. Edward ended up with a very good collection that Jim continued after the War. The family still has Edward's stamp collection in a very safe place.

Perhaps it was because Ed was considered the baby of the family that he was not considered an 'achiever' and was allowed to go to Technical School. He had difficulties in school and, unlike others in the family, did not like to read. In retrospect, reading his letters from Overseas, his sister Florence believed that he may have been dyslexic. His mother and father had different aspirations for Jim and Florence who were both expected to go to university and make a good life for themselves. According to Florence, Edward was 'considered a Campbell' and was more of a hunter and countryman, so not a lot was expected from him academically.

In high school, Edward wanted to join the army really badly, but he also wanted to get a job. His father made a deal with him that if he gave up the idea of joining the army, he would be allowed to get a job and stay in school. So, Edward and his friend got a job piling hides. It was a dirty job and he had to strip off all his clothes before he could come in the house and then take a bath to get rid of all the smell. Yet, he persevered through the summer until school started again.



*High School Football Team*

He attended Pleasant Hill Public School, Westmount and the Technical College, but left school in 1941 to work for the CNR like his father. He was employed as a stower in the CNR Freight Shed in Saskatoon for six months prior to his enlistment. While the CNR had guaranteed his job on return after the War and Edward indicated that he would return, he noted on his recruitment form that he would like to become an electrician at some point.



*Ed at age 19*

*This is Edward +  
his sister Florence  
Taken while he was  
on leave in 1943.  
He was not quite  
19 years old.*



Edward enlisted for active service in World War II on January 5th, 1943 at the 12<sup>th</sup> District Depot in Regina, Saskatchewan. At that time, he was 19 years old, six feet and one inch tall and weighed about 190 pounds. He was single.

First, he traveled to Prince Albert on January 28th. Later, he was sent to Camp Borden in Ontario, where he arrived on March 29th, 1943.

Edward went through basic training. He qualified as a tank gunner-operator in August 1943 and eventually as a tank driver. His record shows that while he was in basic training he took a small 'vacation' from the Army in July. Afterwards, he was confined to his base for three days and forfeited 1 day's pay and allowance for being away without leave. At that time, he received \$1.50 per day as pay and 25 cents per day as a tradesman.



*Ed in Camp Borden*

After Camp Borden, Ed was transferred to Number 1 Transit Camp in Windsor, Nova Scotia on August 28th, 1943. After a few weeks in Nova Scotia, Edward embarked for England on September 13th and landed there on September 19th, 1943. He reported for duty the next day and spent the following months training and qualifying for more advanced gunnery duties.

All did not go smoothly as his record shows. On March 24th, 1944, he was docked one day's pay 'under AA sec 11' Ed's nephew is not sure what that means, but it can't have been good.

Edward was part of the Normandy invasion. He embarked by ship on June 3rd, 1944 in England and landed in France on July 6th. He was a member



of the Sixth Canadian Armoured Regiment, First Hussars and was part of the Canadian forces that pushed their way through The Netherlands towards Germany.



He had some time to rest in Nijmegen and therefore found time to get into a little bit more trouble. He was diagnosed with urethritis, more commonly known as gonorrhoea. According to his testimony to the Medical Officer at the Field Medical Unit, whom he met on February 5th, 1945, an English RA soldier had introduced him to a woman of around 40 years old. He had never met her before, but after discussing a price – she had wanted three guilders and Edward had said he would pay nothing - they adjourned to a private house at #2 Waterfront Street, by the pontoon bridge. This took place at about 8:00 pm on January 8th, 1945. Around January 14th, he had met with her again. He had been to see her a third time, but told the Medical Officer that she had been put out of business by the Provost. The Medical Officer prescribed medication and took him off duty until February 11th, 1945, when he rejoined his unit.

Edward never made it to the end of the war. He was killed on February 26th, 1945, in one of the largest land battles of the War. This battle was described by Douglas Amaron, a Canadian Press War Correspondent, in an article Edward's nephew Ed found in his Grandfather's papers after his passing.

*"Spire Marks Their Path*

*WITH THE 1ST CANADIAN ARMY IN GERMANY, Feb. 27. - The spire on Keppeln's Church pointed through the smoke to an angry sky and the ground seethed with battle.*

*Like a magnet, the spire was drawing Canadian infantry and armor towards it, for Keppeln was a bastion on the road to Uedem, 1 1/2 miles to the south. Since early morning, Canadian soldiers had been pressing forward, halting for a time while shells and mortar bombs fell among them and machine-gun bullets whipped their path, but always with their faces to the spire.*

*I came upon these soldiers at a fortuitous time for a correspondent but at a grave and testing time for the fighting men. Their advance had been halted at an open field, across which the Germans had perfect observation and where they already had inflicted casualties with small arms and supporting fire.*

*Shells crumped occasionally around us, coming from German guns on the ridge up front, and the whine of our shells speeding overhead from the guns behind them was continuous. Machine-guns to the right contributed to the rushing chatter.*

*From the third-story attic of a farmhouse already scarred by war I watched the storm break. The intensified barrage almost hid Keppeln's spire from view, with the dust and smoke it raised. Then the tanks, a squadron of them from an Ontario regiment, rolled past us in a single column along a dirt road leading across a field. "It will be warm here," said an infantry commander, a lieutenant-colonel from Ottawa. "We've had reports that there are German tanks in Keppeln." He was standing on a bench looking through a hole in the roof of a burning barn where some of his men were waiting for our tanks to come up to them. Almost as he spoke the Germans opened fire and the field just ahead erupted with bursting shells. Tanks, some of them carrying infantry, pressed on, moving magnificently through the shellfire. Infantrymen ran forward in the wake of the army. Some fell wounded and through my field glasses I could see stretcher bearers applying bandages and then helping them to their feet. One tank appeared hit on the tracks and halted, but others went on and when they reached a barn their guns opened fire on Keppeln. Another tank further forward burst into flames from a direct hit."*

There was another soldier in the tank with Edward. It was Vince Reid, who told the story of Edward's death. When the tank was hit by enemy fire, both Vince and Edward escaped unharmed. They ran to a low-lying patch of land where they ended up under mortar fire. Edward was badly wounded by a mortar shell and Vince was also wounded. At some point, Vince asked Edward if he was okay and Edward's last words were 'hurt bad' and then he passed away.

COPY

6811 Tofino Terrace  
Vancouver, B.C.  
Jan. 25, 1949.

Canadian Army Records,  
Ottawa, Ont., Canada.

Dear Sirs:

If it is possible I shall be obliged if you will forward me the addresses of or get me in touch with the next of kin of the following two men:

Tpr (Acting Cpl.) William Harrington Davidson, enlisted at Prince Rupert, B.C. & killed in action with the sixth Canadian Armoured Regiment (First Hussars) Feb. 28, 1945, in Germany.

Tpr. Ed. Buller, enlisted at Saskatoon, Sask., & killed in action with the Sixth Canadian Armoured Regiment (First Hussars) Feb. 28, 1945, in Germany.

I was present when both these men were killed, & my intention is to communicate to their next of kin any information pertaining to their deaths which they might request and which I might be able to supply.

Yours truly,

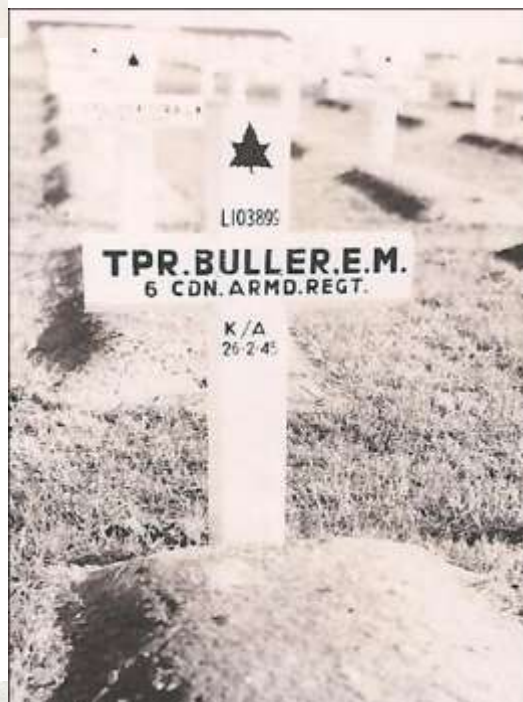
[Sgd.] E.V. Reed,

Ex B.448493  
S.C.A.H.

Later in his life, Vince Reid wrote:

*"L103899 Trooper Edward M. Buller, a Cree Indian, enlisted in Saskatoon and was killed in the Battle of the Rhineland on the 26th of February 1945 while serving in tanks with the First Hussars. This splendid, gentle person was as fine a comrade as I ever had during my time in service. He was standing beside me when he went down with his face to the enemy. I shall always remember him."*

On February 26th, 1945, Edward Matheson Buller was killed and he was initially buried in Bedburg Temporary Graveyard, Germany.



30-13-10  
Buller

Personal Effects of BULLER, E.M., Cpl., L-103899 (See 's)

1 Kit Bag  
1 Pr. Rubber Boots (ankle) - size 5 - my son wore size 12  
3 Pr. Socks dirty  
1 Pr. CAG Flasher  
1 Kit Bag Handle (broken)  
1 Padlock (damaged)

Not Acknowledged.

ESTATES  
BRANSON  
OCT 20 1945  
NATIONAL DEFENSE

Oct. 26, 1945  
E. V. Buller

He was reburied at the Canadian War Cemetery in Groesbeek, grave reference **IX. C. 12.**

The inscription on his gravestone says:

SLEEP ON NOW  
AND TAKE YOUR REST



*Grave with photo May 2021*

**Awards:**

- 1939-1945 Star
- Defence Medal
- France & Germany Star
- War Medal 1939-1945
- Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with Clasp



Edward's mother received a telegram informing her of Edward's passing on March 5th, 1945.

*MRS. ROSINA BULLER*

*516 AVE I NORTH SKTN*

*49195 REGRET DEEPLY L103899 TROOPER EDWARD MATHESON BULLER HAS BEEN OFFICIALLY REPORTED KILLED IN ACTION TWENTY SIXTH FEBRUARY 1945 STOP YOU SHOULD RECEIVE FURTHER DETAILS BY MAIL DIRECT FROM THE UNIT IN THE THEATRE OF WAR STOP TO PREVENT POSSIBLE AID TO OUR ENEMIES DO NOT DIVULGE DATE OF CASUALTY OR NAME OF UNIT.*

*DIRECTOR OF RECORDS*

Shortly after receiving the telegram, Ed's mother received two letters from Edward's superior officers, which explained his passing in more detail. The first letter was dated March 14th, 1945 and reads:

*Dear Mrs. Buller,*

*It is with real regret that I have to write to you of the death of your son (L103899 Tpr Buller, E.M.).*

*It occurred on 26 February when our regiment was engaged in very bitter fighting toward the Rhine. There was considerable artillery concentration against us and also tanks and self-propelled guns, mines were also numerous.*

*He was instantly killed.*

*I was speaking to him one afternoon and - tho' he had grown beyond my recognition - we discovered that we had met before. You may recall my coming to tea at your home, I believe in 1931 to meet some of your folks from Mortlac. We had a great chinwag together, recalling such people as Sergeant & his courting days.*

*My own son died recently in England and at the service we had the 23rd Psalm & the lesson was Revelation 21:1-7. You might care to read them over for yourself.*

*Our Christian gospel teaches us that death is the entrance into a new life, a life in which we are closer to the God who loves and understands us better than our best friend. We can surely trust our own loved ones to His care.*

*We are apt to think of death of a younger person as tragic because of all the hopes and ambitions left unfulfilled; yet the new life offers us yet greater opportunities and a lasting joy.*

*Inevitably we are in sorrow at the going from us of one we love for we miss them in familiar places doing the old familiar things. But we need not grieve for them since they are beyond the reach of human suffering & anguish.*

*The officers and men of the regiment all join in sending you their real sympathy.*

*May God comfort and bless you all,*

*With every sincere wish,*

*George H. Adams (H/Capt)*

*P.S. Sorry I forgot to mention that he was buried at the Military Cemetery at Bedbury.*

The second letter was dated Friday, March 16th, 1945, and reads:

*Dear Mrs. Buller*

*It is extremely difficult to write a letter such as this, but I feel it is my duty to advise you as far as possible of the details surrounding the death of your son due to enemy action on the 26th Feb. 45. I have been commanding the Recce. Hs. for the past three months and Ed. has always been one of my most capable and conscientious drivers. As my own tank was involved in the same action and had been hit by anti-tank fire and "brewed up" a few minutes before your son's tank was hit, I can only give you details as I recall them, and from statements from the sole remaining member of Ed's crew now with us.*

*We had been involved in heavy fighting on German territory throughout most of the day on the 26th Feb. and had inflicted many casualties on the enemy. Late in the afternoon, the tank in which your son was co-driver, was ordered to move forward from our forward infantry positions, and was hit by anti-tank fire and immobilized. At the time the enemy was laying down a heavy mortar barrage and when the crew bailed out, a direct hit from a mortar landed on top of the tank and instantly killed your son and the crew commander. One other member of the crew was wounded. I returned to the scene as soon as it was possible to do so, endeavouring to obtain a clear picture of what had happened. The tank had been completely burned out, but our padre, H/Capt. Greelman, immediately made arrangements for your son's burial. Further information as to the place of burial will be forwarded as soon as possible.*

*Ed. has been with the regiment for a good while now as you know, came with us during the invasion. He has always been one of my most capable and reliable drivers and was extremely popular with both his fellow troopers, and his N.C.O.'s and officers. As a consequence Mrs.*

*Buller, the regiment and I personally feel deeply the loss of your son, and we extend our sympathies to you in your sorrow, hoping at the same time you will derive some measure of consolation from the fact that Ed, like so many of his friends, has given his life for others in the great cause for which we are fighting. If I can be of any further assistance, please don't hesitate to write me at any time.*

*Sincerely, Gordon K. Henry, Capt.*

Other letters arrived following Edward's passing and each one found its way into his mother's keepsakes from the time. One letter, postmarked March 26th, 1945 from London, England, reads:

Buckingham Palace

The Queen and I offer you our heartfelt sympathy in your great sorrow.

We pray that your country's gratitude for a life so nobly given in its service may bring you some measure of consolation.

(signed) George R.I.

A similar letter, also postmarked March 28, 1945 from London, England, reads:

CANADA HOUSE

TRAFALGAR SQUARE

LONDON, S.W.1.

PERSONAL

Dear Mrs. Buller.

*Ever since the news came of the loss of your son, I have wanted to write and tell you how deeply my husband and I feel for you and your sorrow.*

*You will think of him as we do here, as one of those on the Great Roll of Honour who have given their lives for their country, for civilization itself.*

*I had so hoped that I could write to you in my own hand, but, alas, the pressure of work here continues so great, that I know you will understand and forgive a dictated note.*

*Do know with what understanding and sympathy we are both thinking of you, and yours.*

*Yours very sincerely, Alice Vincent Massey*

One of the 75 trees on Memorial Avenue in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada was dedicated to Edward Buller on Decoration Day, 1945.

Not many stories have been passed down about Edward, since he did not live past the Second World War and his mother and father never talked about him to their grandchildren. His brother Jim didn't talk about him very much either.



Lifestory by Marian Straatman, Research Team Faces To Graves, and Ed Buller.

Sources:

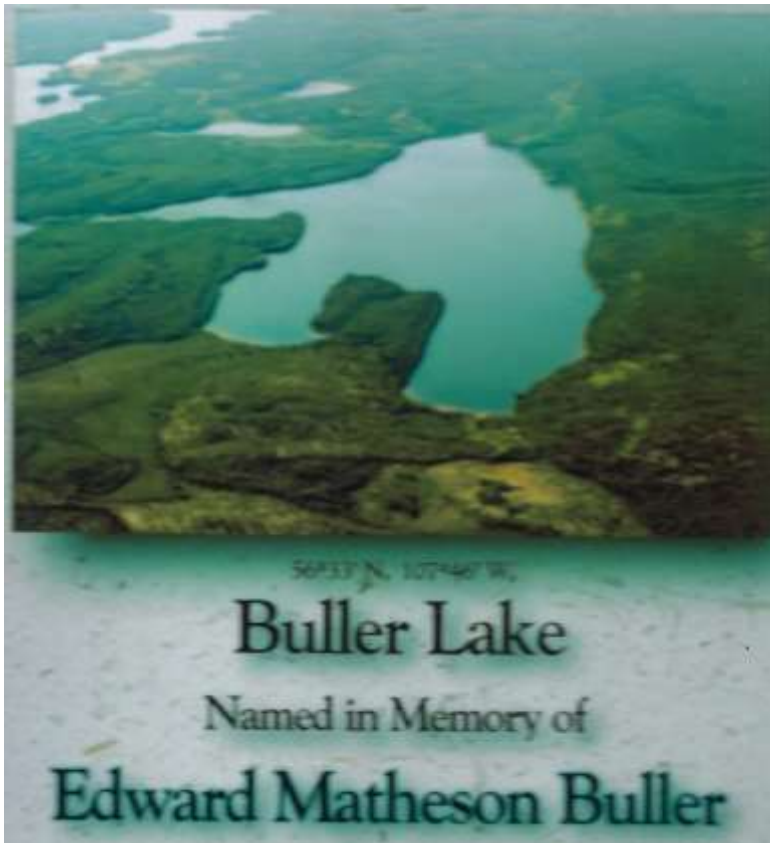
Many thanks to Ed and Marion Buller, nephew and niece of Edward Buller. They also provided us with the photo's.

Commonwealth War Graves Commission

Library and Archives Canada

\* If you have a photo of this soldier or additional information please contact [info@facestograves.nl](mailto:info@facestograves.nl)





A picture of Buller Lake. Lakes were named in honour of those who had been killed in the war, as was customary for the Canadian Government. The photo is part of a memorial picture made for Edward Buller's family by Mr. Doug Chisholm, who owns Woodland Aerial Photography. He took several pictures of lakes named after fallen soldiers and shared them with their families.



*Brother Jim Buller came to visit his brother's grave and also visited Christel and her family in 1975.*

In the 1950's, the Kerkhoff family from Groesbeek adopted Trooper Edward Buller's grave on the Canadian War Cemetery in Groesbeek.

Christel, daughter of that family wrote:

*"In Groesbeek after the war, volunteers were asked to care for the graves of the fallen Canadian soldiers. My mother, Riek Coenen-Schoonenberg, instantly signed up for this task and was assigned the grave of Edward Buller. She always looked after it with lots of love and visited the grave numerous times a year. She understood the importance of remembering those who gave their lives at wartime. Her own brother had been a soldier in the war and had died in Indonesia.*

*In those early days, my mother regularly corresponded with Edward's mother. In 1975, one of Edward's brothers, who had also served in Europe during the war, came to visit the grave. His mother had asked him to go and find 'Rieky' from Groesbeek. In order to find out where she lived, he had to make enquiries at city hall. After that, the city secretary joined him and his wife as they visited my parents. I remember this being an emotional meeting, which I can easily imagine. Edward and his brother had agreed to meet each other in England during their leave, but this never came to be. The family felt incredibly grateful towards 'Rieky'. The mother had even given her son a dreamcatcher and a homemade beaded necklace to give to my mother as a token of gratitude.*

*Later, in the nineties, a good friend of Edward's also came to visit my mother. He had fought in the area of Groesbeek at the same time as Edward. He told us that he had been injured and had therefore returned to Canada. The soldiers who had come home injured had been allowed to go to college for free and so the state had payed for his law studies. He also told us that a whole forest had been planted in Canada, where every tree was dedicated to one fallen soldier. I believe this was near Calgary. That was also where he lived. Again, his gratitude was huge. This just proved how nice it was that the people of Groesbeek cared for the cemetery.*

*This is a very valuable memory that, together with the stories that are now being collected by Faces to Graves, can keep the post-wartime alive."*