

Butler, Reginald Lewis
Corporal
Royal Canadian Air Force
6401 Servicing Echelon
R/78661



Sic itur ad astra - 'Such is the pathway to the stars'

Reginald Lewis 'Joe' Butler was born in Ingersoll, Ontario on Tuesday May 6, 1919. This town is situated on the Thames River in the south-west of Ontario, Canada. The nearest towns are Woodstock in the east and London in the west. He was Irvin Butler's and Edna May Harris' son. The family also consisted of son Gordon Cecil Butler and daughter Inez Lorraine Butler. The family were Protestants by religion. Father Irvin worked in a garage, thus earning a living for his family. They lived at 127 Ann Street in Ingersoll, Ontario.



In 1924 Reginald Lewis 'Joe' went to Victory Memorial School in Ingersoll and was educated there until 1932. He continued his education at Ingersoll Collegiate, a public high school in Ingersoll, Ontario, where he chose a commercial field of study.

<https://history.ocl.net/>

As the sole high school in Ingersoll, it also served the village of Thamesford and the rural areas surrounding both communities. It was situated in Thames Valley District School Board (TVDSB), which was situated in the northern part of town on Alma Street.

Three years later, at the age of 15, he left school in order to start working in his father's garage. In his spare time Reginald Lewis 'Joe' helped his



father and learned a lot from him. He worked with his father for 8 years in total, and on June 27, 1940 he started working as a Fitter at Fleet Aircraft Ltd in Fort Erie, Ontario. This factory produced the Fleet Finch, a biplane trainer for the Royal Canadian Air Force, and later on they produced the Fleet Canuck.

Reginald Lewis 'Joe' had dark brown hair and brown eyes, weighed 134 lbs and was 5 ft 9" tall. He had a small scar on the left side of his nose and a wart on his right finger. Otherwise, he was a healthy young man. He practised ice-hockey and rugby. On February 1, 1940 he signed up for service with the Royal Canadian Air Force in London. However, he was not accepted.

On October 30, 1940 he again signed up with the Royal Canadian Air Force in London, Ontario. He indicated that he had a preference for carrying out ground duties and wanted to become an aircraft engine mechanic. He was medically cleared and placed with No 2 Manning Depot in Brandon, Manitoba. This is where his military career started, where he learned how to bathe, shave, polish his boots, brush his buttons, maintain his uniform and otherwise behave in the required manner. Every day they had two hours of physical education as well as instruction in marching, how to use their rifles, saluting and other routines. He was given the rank of Aircraftsman 2nd class.



Signature of Recruit



On December 19, 1940 he went to Technical Training School in Saint Thomas, Ontario to be trained as an aircraft engine mechanic. The only facility of its kind in Ontario during World War II, No. 1 Technical Training School, St. Thomas, was founded in 1939 by the Royal Canadian Air Force in order to train skilled ground crew for active war service.

The school was equipped to handle more than 2,000 students at a time and offered a six-month course for aircraft electricians and

aircraft engine, hull and instrument mechanics next to specialised courses for textile and sheet metal workers.

ROYAL CANADIAN AIR FORCE

 Right Index Fingerprint	Name	BUTLER, Reginald Louis		No. 1061		
	Rank	A/C1				
	Age	22	Height	5' 11"	Weight	145
	Hair	Brown	Eyes	Hazel	Hair on face	Light
	Marks, scars, etc.	Scar on left side of nose. Right index finger amputated above first joint.				
		<i>R. J. Butler</i>			(Signature of holder)	
	<i>A. M. Kennedy</i>			(Signature of issuer)		
	Photo. 11 S.F.T.S. Yorkton, Sask.		Date 2-2-41			
	Card serial number		60778			

On May 10, 1941 Reginald Lewis 'Joe' was promoted to Aircraftsman after successfully concluding his training. On May 15, 1941 he went to No 11 Service Flying Training School in Yorkton, Saskatchewan for further training. He stayed there for more than a year, and on October 1, 1941 he was promoted to Leading Aircraftsman. On November 17, 1942 he went to No 1 Y Depot in Halifax in order to prepare for his voyage overseas to England. On December 10 he made the crossing to England, where he set foot ashore on December 19, 1942. Via No 9 Reselection Centre he was assigned to Royal Air Force Station Kenley on January 17, 1943, after having been promoted to Corporal on January 1, 1943.

On July 12, 1943 Reginald Lewis 'Joe' Butler was assigned to No 401 Squadron Royal Canadian Air Force, 126 Wing, 83 Group at Royal Air Force Base Redhill, Royal Air Force Staplehurst in August and Royal Air Force base Biggin Hill in October. Flight operations preceding D-Day were carried out from RAF Tangmere, West Sussex. After the D-Day invasion in Normandy, the Squadron operated from Beny-sur-Mer, France. The Squadron increasingly operated in the role of fighter bomber, in ground attack and armed reconnaissance operations, culminating in supporting operations over Nijmegen and ground combats in Arnhem in September 1944.

Mors celerrima hostibus

(Latin for 'Very swift death for the enemy')



In October 1944, the Squadron operated from Air Base 'B-80' in Volkel and subsequently from 'B-88', near Heesch, in the Netherlands. On Monday November 20, 1944 Flying Officer Charles A. Tidy of No. 3 Squadron Royal Air Force departed from B-80 Volkel. However, the engine of its Tempest V EJ658 failed after take-off, whereupon the pilot tried to make an emergency landing at the same Air Base. When approaching the Air Base, it was thrown off course by a heavy gust of wind, and at 11.27 hours it was smashed against the Supermarine Spitfire LFIX MJ604 of 401 Squadron Royal Canadian Air Force that was on the point of taxiing onto the runway.

Reginald Lewis 'Joe' Butler, aircraft engine mechanic of 6401 Service Echelon was on this aircraft and was fatally struck.



The pilot of the Spitfire, Pilot Officer Daniel M. Horsburgh of the Royal Canadian Air Force, escaped without injury, but was unable to fly for a month after this accident. Tidy too survived the accident without serious injury. Both aircraft got irreparably damaged.

At 10.30 hours on November 22, the Commander, officers and men of 401 Squadron attended Corporal Reginald Lewis 'Joe' Butler's funeral that took place at the Roman-Catholic cemetery H. Kruisvinding in the village of Odiliapeel. Reginald died at the age of 26.

On October 25, 1945 he was reburied at Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery, grave reference **XVII. A. 5.**

On his headstone the following words are inscribed :

TO LIVE IN THE HEARTS
OF THOSE YOU LEAVE BEHIND
IS NOT TO DIE



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

GRAVES CONCENTRATION REPORT FORM 3488/00088/0559

The following ^{has} ~~have~~ been concentrated here: Report No. 151

(Name of Cemetery) St. Janskerk Oude Doornik, Holland
 (Full Map Reference) SE. 5. 748567. 34/26034. 1/250,000 REGISTRATION - CANADIAN

(1) Serial No.	(2) Regt. or Corps	(3) Army No.	(4) Name & Initials	(5) Rank	(6) Date of Death	(7) R.A. D.F. or Dist.	(8) Plot	(9) Row	(10) Grave	(11) Date of Reburial	Previous location of grave	Report Number
1	SOAP	1175651	Bethler, S. Ia. ✓	Cpl. Emt.	20/04/45	X/A	27	A	5	250645	3. Oude Doornik cem nr Volkerhoek 34/26034. 34/2	11/11/45
2	"	1188247	Smith, S. Ia. ✓	Pvt	1/04/45	"	27	A	7	"	"	"
3	"	1190859	Winters, T. V. ✓	Pvt	1/04/45	"	27	A	8	"	"	2300
4	"	120995	Summerville, J. B. ✓	Pvt	2/04/45	"	27	A	14	"	3. Oude Doornik cem nr Volkerhoek 34/26034. 34/2	2300
5	"	1211004	Wallerstein, J. C. ✓	P/O	23/04/45	"	27	C	4	"	"	"
6	"	1229587	Hamilton, R. J. ✓	P/O	7/04/45	"	27	D	5	"	"	"
7	"	1273004	Wood, S. Ia. ✓	Pvt	7/04/45	"	27	A	10	"	"	"
8	"	1273405	Wilson, T. C. ✓	Pvt	7/04/45	"	27	A	11	"	"	"
9	"	128901	Wright, T. A. ✓	P/O	13/04/45	"	27	A	12	"	"	"
10	"	150989	Woods, J. T. ✓	Pvt	16/04/45	"	27	A	13	"	"	"
11	"	16793	Wolger, T. C. ✓	X/A	11/04/45	"	27	C	1	"	"	2300
12												

Date 20. Nov. 45

D.V.C. Middelburg 2003

(Signed) *[Signature]*
 Rank & Appointment 5008 S. J. O'Brien
 PGP 2276. 22. 34. 4/45

* When a grave has not already been registered, a Registration Report on A.F.W. 3332 will be prepared, and attached to this FORM.



FACES TO GRAVES

Stichting Faces to Canadian
War Graves Groesbeek

Life story: Gijis Krist - Research Team Faces To Graves.

Sources:

Commonwealth War Graves

Library and Archives Canada

Anton Verbakel, Documentatiegroep Volkel.

* If you have a photograph of this soldier or any additional information, please contact info@facestograves.nl.