

**Doune Cemetery,
Girvan, Scotland
War Graves**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



SECOND LIEUTENANT

H. R. H. BUTLER

AUSTRALIAN FLYING CORPS

2ND JUNE, 1918

The Only Son

Of W. R. & E. M. Butler

He Loved Life

For 21 Years

Howard Richmond Henry BUTLER

Howard Richmond Henry Butler was born on 21st February, 1897 at Toorak, Victoria to parents Walter Richmond Butler & Emilie Millicent Butler (nee Howard).

Howard Richmond Henry Butler was aged 18 years & 9 months when he joined the Royal Australian Engineers in Melbourne, Victoria on 11th November, 1915 to serve during the absence of the R.A.E. on active service. He stated he had served for 3 years with Senior Cadets & 1 year with 7th Field Company. He was given the rank of Sapper & a service number of 398. Sapper Howard Richmond Henry Butler was discharged from R.A.E. on 31st May, 1916 at his own request. He had served for 203 days.

Howard Richmond Henry Butler was a 19 year old, single, Architect from "Studley", Toorak Road, Toorak, Victoria when he enlisted on 15th June, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 34051 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his father – Walter R. Butler, of "Studley", Toorak Road, Toorak, Victoria. Howard Richmond Henry Butler stated on his Attestation Papers that he had served with Senior Cadets & 7 months with R.A.E. (Royal Australian Engineers) - discharged. As Howard Butler was under the age of 21, his parents needed to sign their consent for their son to enlist in the Australian Imperial Force for active service abroad. Both Walter & Millicent Butler signed their consent.

Gunner Howard Richmond Henry Butler was posted to Field Artillery Brigade, Reinforcements for recruit training at Maribyrnong on 19th June, 1916.

Gunner Howard Richmond Henry Butler embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on HMAT *Ascanius (A11)* on 11th May, 1917 as Sergeant (Voyage only) with the Field Artillery Brigade, March 1917 Reinforcements. He was admitted to Ship's Hospital on 9th July 1917 & disembarked at Devonport*, England on 20th July, 1917. (The Statement of Service form in the Service Record file of Howard Richmond Henry Butler records that he disembarked at Devonport, England, however the Casualty Form – Active Service records that he disembarked at Plymouth, England).

Sergeant (Voyage only) Howard Richmond Henry Butler's rank reverted to Gunner on reaching England.

Gunner Howard Richmond Henry Butler was admitted to Devonport Military Hospital, England on 20th July, 1917 with Parotitis. He was discharged to Depot at Perham Downs on 24th July, 1917.

Reinforcements were only given basic training in Australia. Training was completed in training units in England. Some of these were located in the Salisbury Plain & surrounding areas in the county of Wiltshire.

Gunner Howard Richmond Henry Butler was marched in to No. 1 Command Depot at Perham Downs, Wiltshire from Devonport Hospital on 24th July, 1917.

Gunner Howard Richmond Henry Butler was marched in to R.B.A.A. (Reserve Brigade Australian Artillery) at Larkhill, Wiltshire on 6th August, 1917.

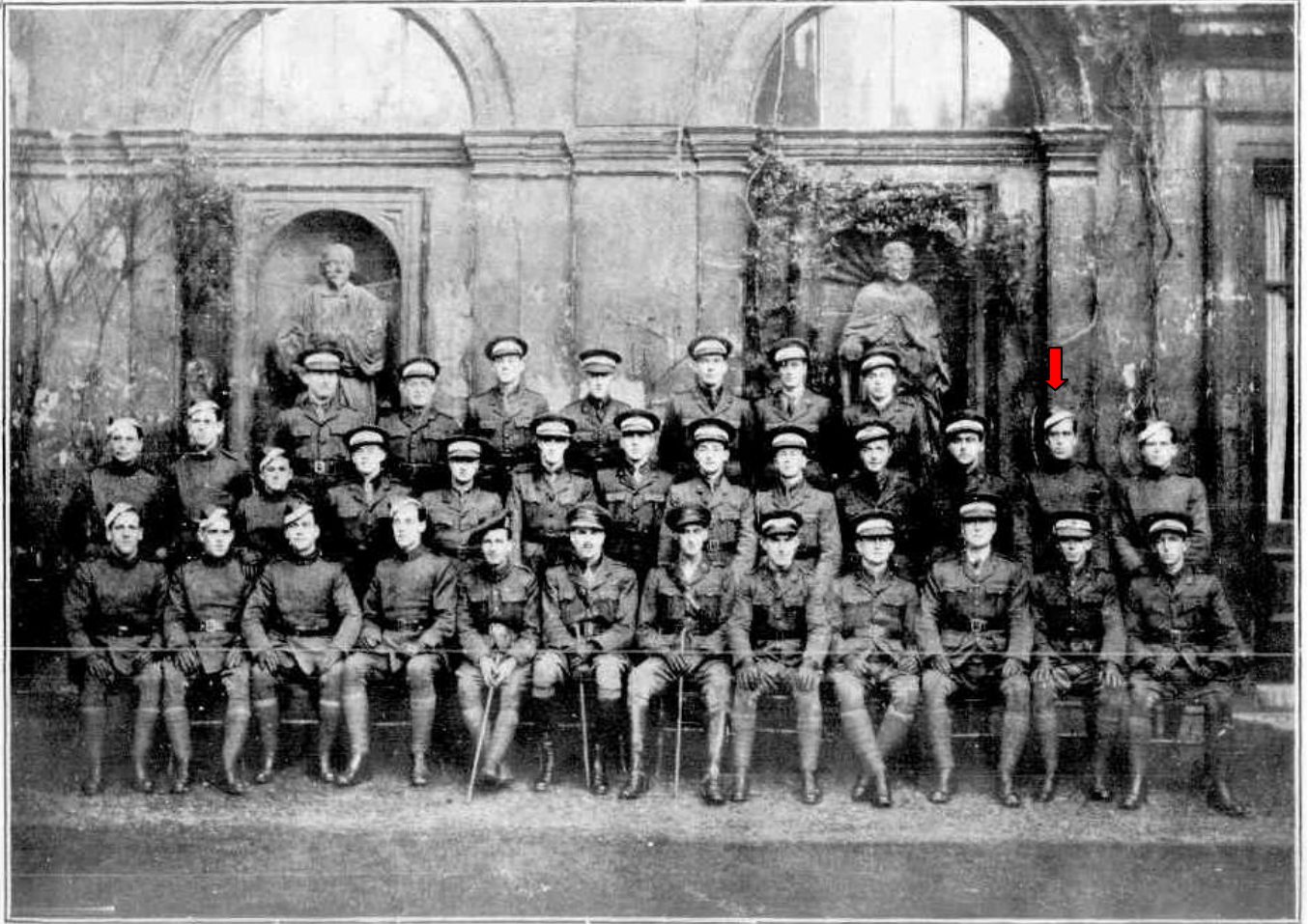
Gunner Howard Richmond Henry Butler was recorded as being Absent without leave on 4th October, 1917. This was later recorded as an error.

Gunner Howard Richmond Henry Butler joined No. 1 S.M.A. (School of Military Aeronautics) at Reading on 4th October & was appointed Cadet.

Gunner Howard Richmond Henry Butler was transferred to Australian Flying Corps Details on 5th October, 1917 & was marched in to A.F.C. Details, Halton Camp, East Wendover on 5th October, 1917. He was taken on strength at Wendover as 2nd Air Mechanic.

Second Air Mechanic Howard Richmond Henry Butler was marched in from Reading on 15th January, 1918. He was marched out to 5th Training Squadron on 22nd January, 1918. Cadet Butler was sent to Shawbury on 28th January, 1918 for Elementary Instruction in Aviation.

Second Air Mechanic Howard Richmond Henry Butler, having graduated as a Flying Officer (Pilot) was appointed Second Lieutenant on 8th April, 1918.



Australian Flying Corps, Queen's College, Oxford

(Second Row – second from right – H. R. H. Butler)

*(Photo from *The Australasian*, Melbourne, Victoria - 20 July, 1918)*



Second Lieutenant Howard Richmond Henry Butler was posted to No. 5 Training Squadron at Shawbury on 8th April, 1918 on Graduation.

Second Lieutenant Howard Richmond Henry Butler passed the Lewis Gun Test No. 6 on 24th April, 1918 & passed the Vickers Gun Test No. E 2 on 29th April, 1918.

Second Lieutenant Howard Richmond Henry Butler was struck off strength of No. 5 Training Squadron A.F.C. on 21st May, 1918 on proceeding to No. 2 School of Aerial Fighting & Gunnery, Turnberry, Scotland.

Second Lieutenant Howard Richmond Henry Butler was flying Sopwith Camel B9262 which took off as part of a formation with four Camels on 2nd June, 1918 at Turnberry, Scotland.

Second Lieutenant Howard Richmond Henry Butler was killed in an aeroplane accident at 10.30 am on 2nd June, 1918 at Turnberry, Ayrshire, Scotland. He died from multiple injuries.

A Court of Enquiry was held at Turnberry, Scotland on 3rd June, 1918 by order of Lt. Col. L. W. B. Rees, V.C., M.C., Commandant No. 1 School of Aerial Fighting and Gunnery for the purpose of investigating the circumstances on 2nd June, 1918 involving the death of 2nd Lieutenant H. R. H. Butler, A.F.C. whilst flying a Sopwith Camel B. 9262.

Evidence:

1st Witness. 85617. 3rd A.M. Waller F.W. states:-

I am the rigger on Sopwith Camel No. B.9262 and prior to its being flown by Lieut Butler on June 2nd 1918 on its last flight, I examined the rigging and found it to be satisfactory.

(Sgd) F.W. Waller.
3rd A.M. No. 85617.

2nd Witness. 63019 2nd A.M. Hirst. R. states:-

I am fitter on Sopwith Camel B.9262 W.D.43775 and prior to its being flown by Lieut Butler on June 2nd 1918 I examined the engine and found it to be satisfactory.

(Sgd) 63019. 2 A.M. Hirst. R.

3rd Witness. Lieut J.H.R. Bryant. R.A.F., G.L. states:-

I flew Sopwith Camel 9262 on May 31st 1918, which was the last flight previous to its being flown by Lieut Butler. I then found the engine and rigging to be quite satisfactory.

(Sgd) J.H.R. Bryant.

4th Witness. Capt. A.D.C. Browne, R.A.F., G.L. states:-

On June 2nd 1918 I sent off a formation of 4 Sopwith Camels one of which was flown by Lieut Butler. Whilst taking off Lieut Butler flew about 40 yards to the left of another machine. He evidently thought he was closer than he really was as he "zoomed" his machine steeply to stalling point, and essayed a left hand turn. I saw his machine begin to spin. It turned twice and then hit the ground from about 200 feet and was wrecked.

(Sgd) A.D.C. Browne. Capt. R.A.F.

5th Witness. Capt. I.H.D. Henderson. M.C., Argyll & Sutherland Hdrs. & R.A.F. states:-

On June 2nd 1918, I observed two Sopwith Camels take off one thirty yards in front of the other and about 50 yards apart. The first machine started to do a slow climbing turn to the left. The second machine also started to turn. Then the first machine pulled his nose up into a steep left hand zoom. He did a flat turn at the top stalled and spun into the ground from about 200 feet.

(Sgd) I. Henderson. Capt. R.A.F.

6th Witness. Capt. J.Gardner, R.A.M C.states:-

A telephone message was received at the hospital at 10.23 a.m. June 2nd 1918 to the effect that a crash had occurred on the aerodrome. I proceeded there at once by motor ambulance, and found the body of the pilot, Lt. Butler had laready been removed from the wreckage of a Sopwith Camel. Life was extinct. Examination revealed the following injuries to which death was due. Several small scalp wounds. Fracture of several ribs with rupture of right lung. Fracture of right thigh also severe fractures of both legs. Death occured within 5 minutes of the crash.

(Sgd) J.Gardner. Capt. R.A.M.C.

Lt. H.R.H. Butler's log book was produced and is attached. He has flown 42 hrs. 40 minst solo and 57 hrs. 45 mins in all. He has flown 15 hours 40 kins on Sopwith Camels.

Finding:

The Court having examined the above evidence finds that:- Lieutenant H, R. H, Butler met his death though turning on the top of a zoom too close to the ground. The accident committee was not required.

Second Lieutenant Howard Richmond Henry Butler was buried on 5th June, 1918 in Doune Cemetery, Girvan, Ayrshire, Scotland – Plot number M. 10. and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Second Lieutenant Howard Richmond Henry Butler - *The deceased Officer was accorded a Military Funeral, Firing Party, Buglers and Pallbearers being in attendance. Major J. W. Gordon, Chief Instructor in Gunnery, represented the Commandant at the funeral and a large number of Officers, both of the Staff and pupils of the school were present. Chaplain the Rev. G. B. Allen, conducted the service, and the "Last Post" was sounded at the graveside. Administrative Headquarters were not represented at the funeral in this instance.*

Obituary Notice from Melbourne Grammar School Magazine – Old Melburnians

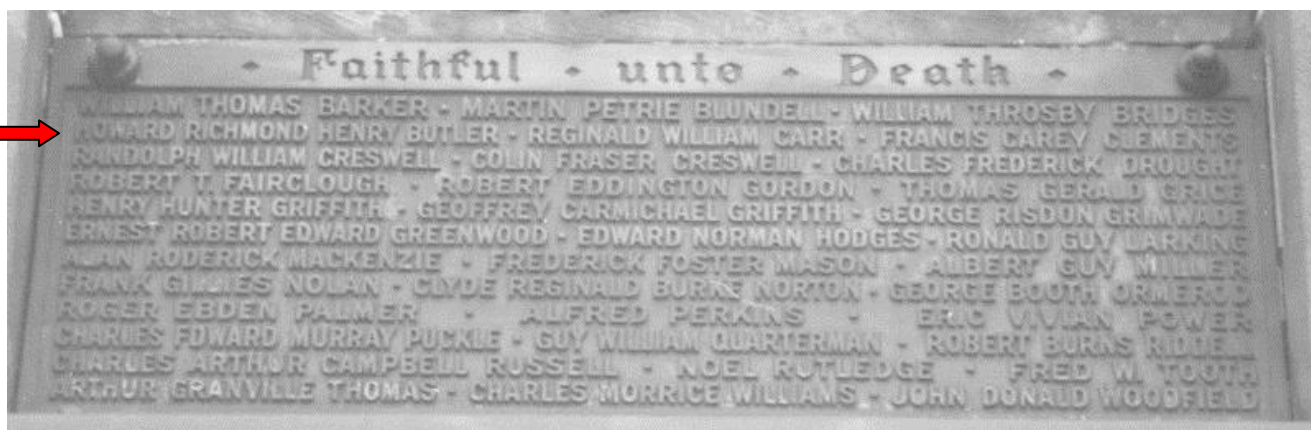
Howard Richmond Henry Butler who was killed in an aeroplane accident on 2nd June 1918 at Turnberry, Scotland, was the only son of Mr Walter R. Butler. He was born in 1898 and entered the Preparatory School in 1909. He came up to the Senior School in 1911 and left in 1913. He was an architectural student, articed to his father, when he enlisted. He left Australia with reinforcements for the Field artillery in April 1917, and obtained his transfer to the Australian Flying Corps. He qualified for wings, and was appointed 2nd Lieutenant on 8th April 1918. The fatal accident occurred at the aerodrome of No. 1 School of Fighting and Gunnery of the Royal Air Force. The machine was seen to "stall," and began to spin downwards, finally crashing from a height of 200 ft. He was buried at Girvan.

Howard Richmond Henry Butler requested in his Will, dated 3rd May, 1917 that the whole of his property & effects be given to his father – Walter Richmond Butler.

Second Lieutenant Howard Richmond Henry Butler was entitled to British War Medal only as he had not entered a Theatre of War. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Second Lieutenant Howard Richmond Henry Butler's father - Mr W. R. Butler, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent June, 1922 & Plaque sent December, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Second Lieutenant Howard Richmond Henry Butler, aged 21, of Australian Flying Corps. He was the son of Walter Richmond Butler and Emelie Millient Butler, of "Studley", Toorak Rd., Toorak, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.

Howard Richmond Henry Butler is remembered on the Toorak War Memorial, located in grounds of St, John's Anglican Church, Toorak & Clendon Roads, Toorak, Victoria.



(Photo from Victorian Heritage Database)

Second Lieutenant H. R. H. Butler is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 187.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

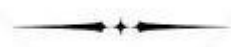
(66 pages of Second Lieutenant H. R. H. Butler's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

Information obtained from the CWGC, Australian War Memorial (Roll of Honour, First World War Embarkation Roll) & National Archives



LIEUTENANT H. R. H. BUTLER.

Howard Richmond Henry Butler



Newspaper Notices

Australians and the War

Flight Lieut. Butler Killed

Information has been received by cable that Flight Lieut. H. R. H. BUTLER, only son of Mr and Mrs Walter R. Butler, of "Studley", Toorak, has been killed in an aeroplane accident. The late Flight Lieut. H. R. H. Butler left Australia with Field Artillery reinforcements in April, 1917, and obtained his transfer to the Australian Flying Corps in England, qualifying for his wings only last month. He gave up his profession in which he was training as an architect to join the colours, and had just passed his 21st birthday.

(*The Age*, Melbourne, Victoria – 5 June, 1918)

DIED ON SERVICE

BUTLER – As the result of an aeroplane accident, Flight-Lieutenant H, R, H, Butler, only son of Mr and Mrs Walter R. Butler, "Studley," Toorak, aged 21 years. (Information received by cable.)

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria – 5 June, 1918)

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE

410th CASUALTY LIST

KILLED BY ACCIDENT

2nd Lieut. H. R. H. BUTLER, Toorak

(*Bendigo Advertiser*, Victoria – 20 June, 1918)

PERSONALS

Second Lieutenant HOWARD RICHMOND HENRY BUTLER, Australian Flying Corps, who was killed in an accident while flying in Ayrshire, on June 2nd, aged 21, was the only son of Mr. W. R. Butler, architect, of Melbourne, Victoria. He was educated at the Melbourne Grammar School, and, after serving some months in Australia with the Royal Australian Engineers at Swan Island, he enlisted in the Australian Artillery. He was in camp some time at Maribyrnong, Victoria, and left Melbourne in May, 1917, with artillery reinforcements. He served in the Australian Artillery until October 4th, 1917, and then joined the Australian Flying Corps, being gazetted second lieutenant on April 8th last. He was completing his training before going out to the front.

(*Flight Global* – 20 June, 1918)

Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstones

The Defence Department, in 1920/21, contacted the next of kin of the deceased World War 1 soldiers to see if they wanted to include a personal inscription on the permanent headstone. Space was reserved for 66 letters only (with the space between any two words to be counted as an additional letter) & the rate per letter was around 3 ½ d (subject to fluctuation).

The expense in connection for the erection of permanent headstones over the graves of fallen soldiers was borne by the Australian Government.

(Information obtained from letters sent to next of kin in 1921)

Second Lieutenant H. R. H. Butler does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

The Only Son Of W. R. & E. M. Butler

He Loved Life For 21 Years

Doone Cemetery, Girvan, Ayrshire, Scotland

Doone Cemetery, Girvan contains twenty one (21) Commonwealth burials of World War 1 and twenty (20) from World War 2, two of which are unidentified. There are also four Foreign National burials.



Doone Cemetery, Girvan, Ayrshire, Scotland *(Photo by Billy McCrorie)*

Photo of Second Lieutenant H. R. H. Butler's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Doune Cemetery, Girvan, Ayrshire, Scotland.



(Photo courtesy of Geoffrey Gillon)



Doone Cemetery, Girvan, Ayrshire, Scotland *(Photo from CWGC)*