

# Potter, Charles Edmund

**Age:** 43

**Nationality:** Canadian

**Rank:** Sergeant

**Unit:** No. 51 MT

**Occupation:** Motor Mechanic

**Service No:** R/68604

**Birth:** 5 February 1901  
London, UK

**Home Town:** Brandon, Manitoba,  
Canada

**Death:** 16 October 1944  
  
Natural Causes

**Burial:** Riverside Cemetery, Hartney,  
Manitoba, Canada



## **Biography**

In 1918 Charles Potter applied to join the Royal Naval Air Service when he was 17, but before he could be enlisted the armistice was declared. When he applied successfully to what was now the Royal Canadian Air Force, in 1940, he was a balding 39 year old. He applied for ground duties and was enlisted as a motor mechanic. Throughout his service Charles was reported as of very good conduct and superior in his trade proficiency.

Charles was born in London, England, of parents also born in London. His father is described as a maker of croquet or polo handles. The family emigrated to Canada and settled in Manitoba where his father farmed. In 1930, Charles married Elsie Turner Hardaker with whom he owned and ran a small grocery store in Carroll, Manitoba. They had no children and in 1939 the marriage broke up and Elsie applied for a legal separation. Under the separation ruling the business had to be sold and their assets divided. From June 1939 Charles lived common law with Elizabeth Mary Catherine Poets. After losing his business and before joining the RCAF, Charles worked as a milkman.

When Charles enlisted in the RCAF he made no mention of his separation or of his subsequent relationship. He named his separated wife, Elsie, as his next of kin and applied for an allowance for her support. By 1942, Charles and his common law wife, Elizabeth, had two children, and Charles applied for a further allowance for Elizabeth and the children.

On a later record of service, Charles and Elizabeth have four children; Charles Francis, born 1939, William James born 1941, Barry Douglas born 1942, and Francis Sydney born 1944. When Charles' son, Barry Douglas, died, his obituary listed his three brothers shown here and three sisters, who were presumably half sisters born to Elizabeth after Charles' death.

On 23 June 1944, Charles, who was then with No. 51 MT, was found medically unfit for any form of RCAF service and was discharged. On the 16<sup>th</sup> of the following October, he died of coronary occlusion and thrombosis. His death was judged as resulting from his military service.

Charles Edmund Potter was born 5 February 1901 to Charles James Potter and Grace Darling. He had two living sisters, Elizabeth Victoria, born 1898, and Rose Ada born 1905. When his parents emigrated to Canada in 1920, they had two other daughters who must have died before Charles enlisted in the RCAF.