



JOSEPH WILSON POIRIER **R/55385**

Wireless operator / Air Gunner

Preface.

The documents of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission(CWGC) all use the name Joseph **William** Poirier. This is not correct, it must be Joseph **Wilson** Poirier.

Family affairs.

Joseph Wilson Poirier was born on June 8th or 9th 1915 in Bonaventura, Quebec. He was not married. He was the son of William M. Poirier and Alphonsine Bohin, both born in Bonaventura. The profession of his father is unknown. They lived in New Carlisle, Quebec. According the Ancestry he had 5 brothers and 6 sisters, but their names were not mentioned. Two of his brothers died, one very young after his birth and one by an accident.

From 1922-1930 on the Primary School and from 1930-1937 on the Primary Gaspé Seminary (classique course and philosophy), both in New Carlisle. His final level was equal to Junior Matric/ Senior Matric. His hobby were sports. On moderate level he played baseball, swimming, softball and tennis.

Military affairs.

July 1st 1940 he was enlisted at the Royal Canadian Air Force in Quebec, Quebec. His education and training he got subsequently until July 22nd 1940 in Toronto, Ontario, until September 16th in Montreal, Quebec until January 19th 1941 in Jarvis, Ontario and until April 5th 1941 in Debert, Nova Scotia. Then he went to Great Britain.



He died February 12th 1942, because his aircraft was shot down above the North Sea at Callantsoog, Noord-Holland. His aircraft was part of Operation Fuller, aiming to bomb German battleships. He is temporarily buried on the Huisduinen Cemetery, near Den Helder, Noord-Holland, GSGS 4042, Sh. 3B, 1/250000, M.R.Y. 9787.

May 29th 1947 he is reburied on the British War Cemetery in Bergen op Zoom, plot 29, row B, grave 5.

Remarks.

- No additional text is written on his tombstone.
- He received the following awards: 39-45 Star, Aircrew Europe Star, War Medal, Canadian Volunteer Service Medal and Clasp and the Operational Wings.
- Total wages in 1 year and 7 months active service at the RCAF are unknown.
- Poirier's plane (Vickers Wellington, MK Ic, Z1146, VR-E, RAF 419 Sqdn) lift off from Mildenhall, England on February 12th 1942 at 17.00 hours for a bombing raid on the German battleships Prinz Eugen, Gneisenau and Scharnhorst, which had left Brest Harbour, France. It didn't return from this mission, because it was shot down near Callantsoog, Noord-Holland by Buchholz or Diesselhorst (5./JG1).

Names, service numbers of the crew members:

Pilot R.A. Laing (RCAF)	J/5334
2nd Pilot G.H.S. Ross(RCAF)	J/76634
Observer W.F. Bond (RCAF)	J/6155
Wireless Operator/Air Gunner J.W. Poirier(RCAF)	R/55385
Air Gunner front H. Rowsell(RAF)	798574
Air Gunner rear G.K. Armstrong (RCAF)	C/15020

One of the 6 crew members was from the Royal Air Force and 5 from the Royal Canadian Air Force. No one survived. J.W. Poirier and G.K. Armstrong were temporarily buried in Huisduinen and later on reburied on the British War Cemetery in Bergen op Zoom.

The bodies of the others has never been found, they all are commemorated in the Runnymede Memorial in Egham, England.

Bron: <https://www.verliesregister.studiegroepluchtoorlog.nl/zz.php>