

Engine Room Artificer 4th Class Thomas William James Butterfield V-47041



ERA Thomas W.J. Butterfield. Photo:
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- **Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve**
- **Born: Oshawa ON, 16 November 1907**
- **Enlisted: HMCS *Discovery*, 28 August 1942**
- **Civilian Occupation: Stationary Engineer, Provincial Court House, Vancouver BC**
- **Death: Lost at sea when HMCS *St. Croix* was torpedoed and sank on 20 September 1943**
- **Commemorated: Halifax Memorial, Panel 10; and Memorial Plaque HMCS *Discovery***

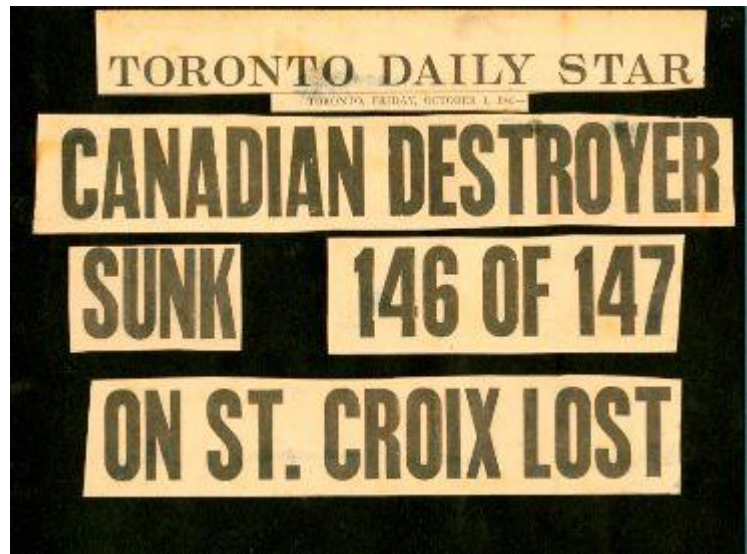
Thomas William James Butterfield was born to Alfred and May Butterfield on 16 November 1907 in Oshawa, ON. He had one younger sister, Gladys. The Butterfield family moved to Vancouver, BC when Thomas was 5 years old. Thomas' father died in 1922. Thomas left school in 1924 at the age of 17. His education included one year of technical school. In 1931, Thomas married Vera Inez Butterfield and later that year his daughter, June Inez Butterfield, was born. Thomas found a position as a stationary engineer at the Provincial Court House in the mid-1930s. A position he held until his enlistment.

On 28 August 1942, at the age of 34, Thomas Butterfield enlisted in the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve as an Acting/Engine Room Artificer 4th Class. His attestation documents described him as 5' 8 ¾" in height, with dark hair, grey eyes, and he had a scar from a previous operation. He listed his faith as Church of England.

Within days of his enlistment, A/ERA 4th Class Butterfield found himself in HMCS *Naden*, in Esquimalt, BC for training. He completed New Entry Training in September 1942, which included gunnery, seamanship, and anti-gas training. Afterwards, Thomas attended several months of technical training. This training included classroom instruction as well as 43 days of training in the engine room of SS *Princess Joan*. On graduation in March 1943, A/ERA 4c Butterfield was drafted to the accommodation ship, HMCS *Givenchy*, where he worked for approximately one month before travelling across the county to HMCS *Stadacona* in Halifax, NS.

After a short wait in Halifax, Thomas was drafted to HMCS *St. Croix* on 4 June 1943. His service in *St. Croix* lasted only 109 days.

In August 1943, *St. Croix* was allocated to a support group (EG 9) for an offensive against U-boats crossing the Bay of Biscay. The group was diverted north to assist several convoys beset by U-boats in the Atlantic. On 20 September 1943 at 2151, while engaged with convoy ON.202, *St. Croix* was torpedoed and sunk by U-305 south of Iceland. Five officers and 76 men were rescued by HMS *Itchen*. *Itchen* was subsequently attacked and sank on 23 September 1943 with only three survivors: one from *St. Croix* and two from *Itchen*. ERA 4th Class Thomas Butterfield served for a total of 397 days prior to his death. He was 35 years old when he died.



ERA 4th Class Butterfield's wife received \$169.50 as a War Service Gratuity and the Canadian Memorial Cross. His mother was also awarded the Memorial Cross. He had no Will and his remaining pay in the amount of \$67.33 was divided between his wife and daughter.



Ronald Weyman's painting depicts the cramped bridge of the destroyer HMCS *St. Croix* - a veteran of the battle of the Atlantic - during an attack on a German submarine (upper right).
Photo: Beaverbrook Collection of War Art.
Canadian War Museum 19710261-5628

For his service, ERA 4c Thomas Butterfield was awarded: the 1939-45 Star, the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal and Clasp, and the War Medal.

ERA Butterfield is remembered on Panel 10 of the Halifax Memorial at Point Pleasant Park, Halifax, NS; the HMCS *Discovery* Memorial Plaque; and the Second World War Book of Remembrance, Page 142 at the Centre Block Houses of Parliament, Ottawa.

Prepared By:

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Sources:

- Commonwealth War Graves Commission Database – Profile page for ERA Butterfield

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