



A Burial Service for

Squadron Leader George Morley Fidler

607 Squadron, Royal Air Force

Tuesday 19 May 2026 at 13:30 hours

CWGC London Cemetery and Extension, France

Service conducted by Reverend Helene Gant RAAF

Squadron Leader George Morley Fidler



30 September 1912 – 12 May 1943

George, known to his family and friends as 'Morley', was born on 30 September 1912 to George Fidler and Christiana Gertrude French. He was born in North Yorkshire, at Roseberry House, Guisborough Road, Great Ayton. Morley had an elder

brother and sister, twins Harold and Joan. Tragically, whilst working at a military hospital, Joan contracted a serious illness and died in April 1943, just a month before her younger brother. Morley was educated locally, at the British School and then at the Friends' School. As a young man, he joined the family business for a few years, but his real passion was for flying, and in 1934 he joined the Royal Air Force.

After two weeks basic training at Uxbridge, he was posted to Egypt, where he learned to fly in an Aero 504K. He gained his wings in June 1935 and was described as 'a sound and reliable pilot, excellent on ground subjects'. He then joined 45 Squadron at their base just outside Cairo. He remained in Egypt for almost three years, with brief spells in Cyprus and India, where he was promoted to Flying Officer.

Morley would often visit his home town of Great Ayton on leave, sometimes arriving by aircraft, looping-the-loop over 'The Grange' and landing in a field behind Yare Lane.

In 1938, he was assessed as 'exceptional' and promoted to Acting Flight Lieutenant. He returned to England in 1938, posted to Louth in Lincolnshire, and was promoted fully to Flight Lieutenant in February 1939.

When war was declared in September 1939, Morley went to France as part of the Air Component of the British Expeditionary Force, sent to assist France resist the German threat. He was flying Tiger Moths well behind the front line, on administrative duties.

In February 1940, he joined 607 Squadron. As the Germans pushed through Europe, 607 Squadron found themselves in the middle of intense aerial combat. During their first day of action,

607 Squadron claimed eighteen enemy aircraft for the loss of three Hurricanes, but this early success was not to last long. On 19 May 1948, Hurricanes from 17 and 607 Squadron, including that of Squadron Leader Fidler, were patrolling the skies above Cantal. At 16.00 hours they encountered a German bomber with an escort of Messerschmitts. In the ensuing air battle, Morley's Hurricane was shot down.

On the same day, at around 11.30 hours, a Hurricane crashed 'on the plain of Bacy' in France after aerial combat with a German aircraft. The villagers of Bacy were just leaving church when they witnessed the plane descending. The pilot baled out but tragically his parachute failed to open, and he came down in a field near the village of Bacy. The aircraft was then seen to crash a short distance away at Rumus, just over the Belgian border. The pilot was eventually buried in the village cemetery. Post war investigations into this casualty concluded there were thirteen Hurricane pilots lost that day, and only Squadron Leader Fidler remained unaccounted for. Therefore, he must be the occupant of the grave in Bacy. The grave was subsequently named for him and a personal inscription was supplied by Morley's mother.

However, in 2005 metal detectorists discovered pieces of plane wreckage from a site in Clay-la-Vergée, France. One piece had a serial number 'P3635' which suggested it came from the Hurricane flown by Squadron Leader Fidler. This prompted the Ministry of Defence to look at the grave in Bacy and determine it could not possibly belong to Morley. Not only was the newly discovered crash site 38km from Bacy, but authorities at the time had failed to consider the loss of two RAF Sergeants, who died on the same day. The headstone in Bacy was changed to 'unknown Airman' to reflect this.

However, Morley's story did not end there. There is currently an extensive construction project ongoing in Northern France due to a major extension of the Seine-Nord Canal. In 2022, whilst undertaking some preliminary archaeological works in an area due for expansion, a crash site was discovered of a Second World War era airplane, believed to be a Hurricane. The pilot of this plane was also discovered at the same time. This pilot has now been positively identified as Squadron Leader George Morley Fidler, 807 Squadron, Royal Air Force.



George Morley Fidler (second from the right) in front of a 'Vicker
Viccent' in Egypt

Order of Service

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ
And the love of God
And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
Be with you all.

We are gathered today in this burial place, to give thanks for the life of George Morley Piller, and to commit his earthly remains to be buried close to where his life was lost eighty-six years ago today. He, alongside so many others, answered the call of his country, served with honour and gave his life in the service of his nation, counting service to others greater than service to self.

His sacrifice is summed up in Jesus' words to His disciples:

My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. **John 15, 12-13.**

Bidding Prayer

Prayer

Merciful Father,
hear our prayers and comfort us;
renew our trust in your Son
whom you raised from the dead;
strengthen our faith
that all who have died in the love of Christ
will share in His resurrection;
who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

Reading

Lecture

Lie in the Dark and Listen (excerpt) by Noel Coward
Read by Squadron Leader Lionel Hythers, 807 Squadron,
Royal Air Force

Lie in the dark and listen.
It's clear tonight so they're flying high.
Hundreds of them, thousands perhaps,
Riding the icy, nocturnal sky.
Men, machinery, bombs and maps,
Altimeters, guns and charts,
Coffee, sandwiches, fleece-lined boots,
Boxes and reusables and minds and hearts,
English saplings with English roots
Deep in the earth they've left below.
Lie in the dark and let them go;
Lie in the dark and listen.
There's one debt you'll forever owe.
Lie in the dark and listen.

Reading

Lecture

The Airman's Prayer

Read by Warrant Officer Mark Boston, 807 Squadron, Royal Air Force

Pilot divine, and Lord of all on high
Thine are the starry squadrons of the sky!
Lead us whose wings for freedom's sake now soar,
Into our hearts Thy faith and courage pour
Oh hear our prayer.

Set Thou our course whose trust is laid in Thee!
Oh Thou who charkest all eternity!
Through cloud and sunshine, through darkest night
Guide Thou our wings who battle for the right
Oh hear our prayer.

Father and Friend, in whose almighty name
We dedicate our lives to freedom's flame,
Bless now our wings as on through space we wend,
Bless us who to Thy care our souls commend
Oh hear our prayer.

Amen.

Reading

Lecture

Our Wall by William Walker

Read by Warrant Officer Paul McGuire, RAF Halton

Here inscribed the names of friends we knew;
Young men with whom we often flew,
Scrambled to many angels high,
They knew that they or friends may die.
Many were very scarcely trained,
And many badly burnt or maimed,
Behind each name a story lies
Of bravery in summer skies;
Though many brave unwritten tales
Were simply told in vapour trails,
Many now lie in sacred graves
And many rest beneath the waves,
Outnumbered every day they flew,
Remembered here as just 'The Few'.

Address

L'Allocution

The Reverend Helene Grant RAF

Blessing of the Grave

Bénédiction de la Tombe

O God, whose Son Jesus Christ was laid in a tomb: Bless, we pray, this grave as the place where the body of your servant George Mosley Fidler may rest in peace, through your son, who is the resurrection and the life: who died and is alive and reigns with you now and for ever. Amen.

Commendation

Squadron Leader Fidler est Confié à Dieu

God our creator and redeemer, by your power Christ conquered death and returned to you in glory. Confident of your victory and claiming his promises, we entrust George Morley Fidler into your keeping in the name of Jesus our Lord, who, though he died, is now alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God now and forever.

Amen.

The Committal

L'Entierement

Our days are like the grass;
We flourish like a flower of the field
When the wind goes over it, it is gone
And its place will know it no more.
But the merciful goodness of the Lord endures
For ever and ever.

Almighty God, we have entrusted this man to your eternal keeping. We now commit his earthly remains to the ground, earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust, in the sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Exhortation

L'Exhortation

Read by Sergeant Joseph Jackson, RAF Halton

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old,
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn,
At the going down of the sun and in the morning,
We will remember them,
We will remember them.

Last Post

Sonnets aux Morts

Trumpeter of the Band of the Royal Air Force College
(The Trumpeter plays by permission of the Air Force Board of
the Defence Council).

Silence

Reveille

Kohima Epitaph

L'Épithaphe de Kohima

Read by Corporal Louis Hedley, RAF Halton

'When you go home tell them of us and say:
'For your tomorrow, we gave our today.'

Laying of Wreaths

Dépôt des Gerbes

Collect of The Royal Air Force

Récitation du Royal Air Force

*Read by Group Captain Jonathan Warren, British Embassy,
Paris*

Almighty God, who makest the clouds Thy chariots and walkest
upon the wings of the storm, look in mercy we beseech Thee
upon the Royal Air Force.

Make us a tower of strength to our King and to our country. Help
us to do our duty with prudence and with fearlessness,
confident that in life or in death the eternal God is our refuge
and strength.

Grant this for Jesus Christ's sake. **Amen**

The Lord's Prayer

Prétre du Seigneur

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.

Prayers

Primer

Eternal God, in your wisdom and grace you have given us joy through the lives of your departed servants. We thank you for the life of our fallen comrade and for those who loved him. We thank you for your goodness and mercy that followed him all the days of his life and his ultimate faithfulness to the tasks to which you had called him.

Lord in your mercy:

Hear our Prayer.

We pray for all who have died or suffered as a result of conflict. Those whose lives are disfigured by war or terror, for service men and women, for civilians, for those held captive, each one remembered by and known to God.

Lord in your mercy:

Hear our Prayer.

We pray for peace-makers and peace-keepers; those who seek to keep this world secure and free; for all who bear the burden and privilege of leadership, political, military and religious; asking for gifts of wisdom and resolve in the search for reconciliation and peace.

Lord in your mercy:

Hear our Prayer.

Finally, we pray for all members of the Armed Forces who are in danger this day, remembering family, friends and all who pray for their safe return.

Lord in your mercy:

Hear our Prayer.

The Blessing

Separation de Dernière Bénédiction

Support us, O Lord, all the days of this troubled life, until the shadows lengthen and the evening falls, the busy world is hushed, the fever of life is over and our work is done. Then, Lord, in Your mercy grant us a safe lodging, a holy rest, and peace at last, through Christ our Lord.

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, rest upon you and remain with you and all those you love and for whom you pray, this day and always.

Answer.



The Ministry of Defence, through the Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre, is responsible for the recovery, identification and burial of all British casualties worldwide.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission cares for the graves, memorials, records and memory of the 1.7 million Commonwealth servicemen and women who died during the two World Wars.

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