

# Dawson, Joseph

**Age:** 22

**Nationality:** American

**Rank:** Sergeant

**Unit:** No. 18 EFTS

**Occupation:** Pilot, Flying Instructor

**Service No:** R58418

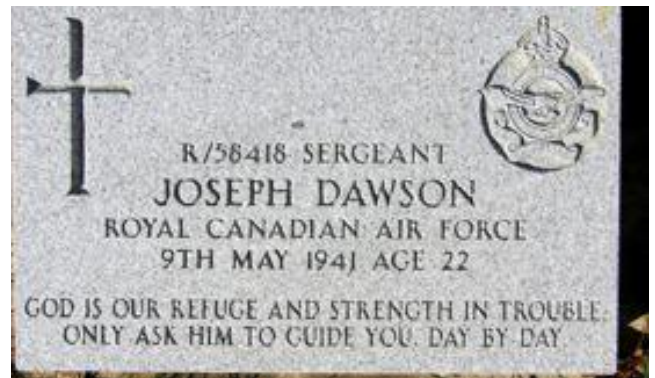
**Birth:** 1919  
Gladesville, NSW, Australia

**Home Town:** Berkley, California, USA

**Death:** 9 May 1941

de Havilland Tiger Moth 4328  
Crash on Michell Farm, Patricia Bay, BC, Canada

**Burial:** Oak Bay Cemetery, Victoria, BC, Canada



## **Biography**

Joseph Dawson was a slender young American with a yearning to fly that cost him his life. Joseph's parents emigrated from Scotland to New South Wales, Australia where Joseph was born. In 1927, the family left Australia and settled in Berkeley, California, USA, where Joseph grew up.

Joseph started learning to fly in 1934, four years prior to graduating from McKinley High School. After school, he worked for a couple of years as an Assembly Operator for a Valve Company. In his bid to become a full time pilot, Joseph travelled to Vancouver and stayed there at some expense to himself, while he waited to be accepted into the RCAF. When he applied to the RCAF in 1940 he already had 214 hours of solo flying.

He was described as quick, organized and accurate with a confident, mature and pleasing personality. He was considered above average and well suited to be a pilot. Joseph was originally posted to Trenton, Ontario, leaving there for Brandon, Manitoba in August 1940 and arriving at Patricia Bay, B.C. on 23 September 1940.

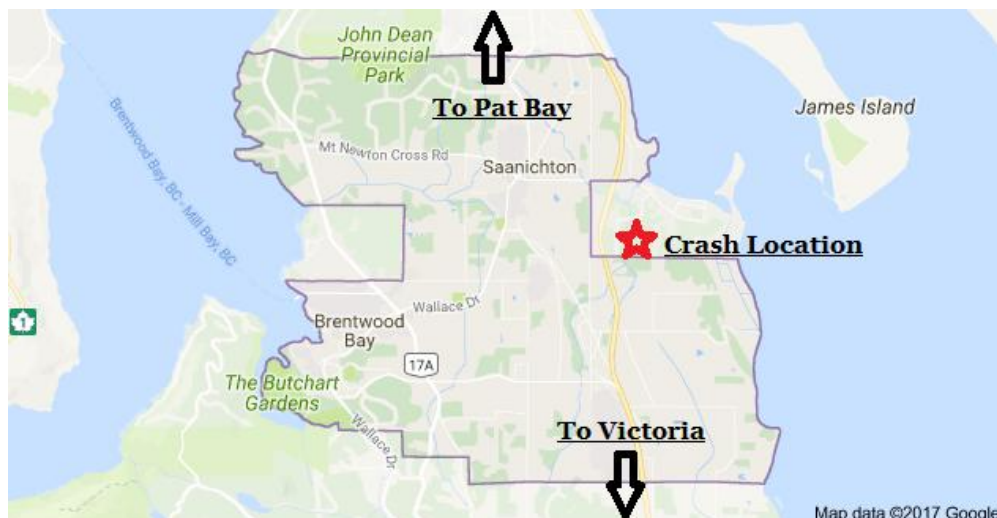
From January 20<sup>th</sup> to February 21<sup>st</sup> 1941, Joseph attended a course in flying instruction in Trenton. He passed categorized as Class II temp. with the comment "*should improve rapidly with practice and supervision.*" Tragically, he had little time to improve and died on 9 May 1941, when de Havilland Tiger Moth 4328 crashed in a farmer's field in Saanich.

Joseph Dawson was born on 19 January 1919 in Gladesville, NSW, Australia, to John Gourley Dawson and Helen Ferguson Purdie. He had one sister, Elizabeth, born two years earlier.

## Details of Crash

On the afternoon of 9 May 1941, Sergeant Dawson was training LAC, S.E. McMann (R77390), another American, in de Havilland Tiger Moth 4328.

The plane was engaged in Aerobatics in the assigned Aerobatics area. After completing several manoeuvres the aircraft started a steep dive at 5000 feet and was pulled out very sharply at 2000 feet, at which time the right main plane collapsed and the aircraft fell completely out of control. At approximately 2:15, the plane crashed at the farm of W. O. Michell at Keatings, South Saanich Township, BC. LAC McMann parachuted to safety but Sergeant Dawson remained with the aircraft and died on impact. The plane had been with No. 18 EFTS for six months. A detachment of the school was temporarily based at RCAF Station Patricia Bay pending the opening of the airport at Boundary Bay.



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## **Flying Instructor Killed In Crash**

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VICTORIA, May 9—(CP) —Instructor J. Dawson of the Royal Canadian Air Force elementary flying training school at Patricia Bay, was killed today when the Tiger Moth plane he was piloting crashed in a field at Keatings, 11 miles from here. Dawson came from Burbank, Calif.

Another American, S. E. McMann, of Denver, Colo., parachuted to safety.

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