

# Gordon, Hugh Lockart

**Age:** 32

**Nationality:** Canadian

**Rank:** Flying Officer

**Unit:** 120 B/R RCAF

**Occupation:** Equipment  
Accounts

**Service No:** C1864



**Birth:** 27 September 1907  
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

**Home Town:** Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

**Death:** 14 Aug 1940  
  
Seymour Narrows, Discovery Passage, BC  
Crash of Northrop Delta 670

**Burial:** Named on Imperial War Graves Monument in Ottawa.  
Commemorated: St. James Cathedral, Toronto, ON

**Others:** S/L Richard Campbell Procter; Cptn. John Henry Bourne;  
F/O Joseph Georges Hector Desbiens; Cpl. Robert George  
Brown.

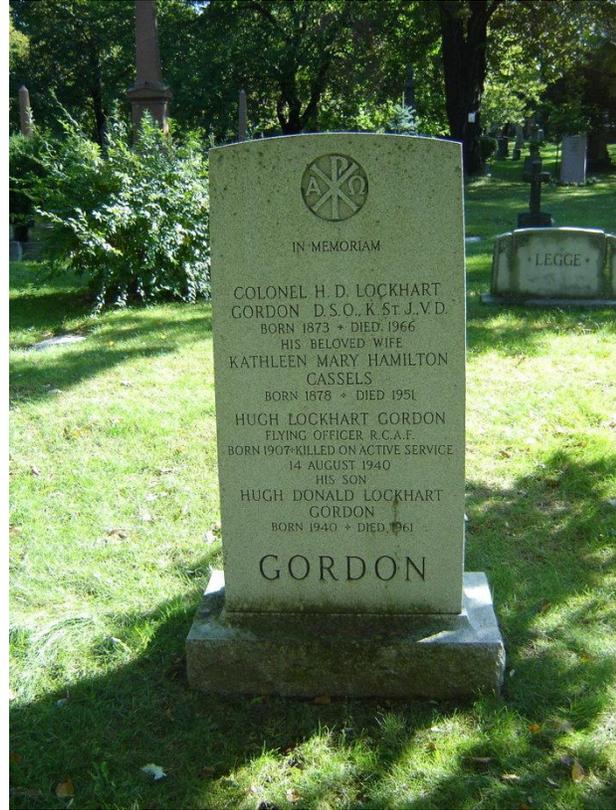
## **Biography**

Hugh Lockart Gordon received his commission in the RCAF on 2 April 1940. He had no flying experience and showed no interest in flying, but he had served as a reserve in the 7<sup>th</sup> Toronto Regiment from 1931 to 1937 where he held the rank of Lieutenant. His type of commission was Special Reserve (non flying) and his rank was Pilot Officer/ Temporary Flying Officer. He was posted to Training School, St. Thomas, Ontario, where from 6 May 1940 to 29 June 1940 he took a course in equipment and accounts. On 30 June 1940 he was posted from St. Thomas to Patricia Bay, BC. Less than six weeks later, and 12 days after the birth of his younger son, Hugh was killed in the crash of Northrop Delta 670. After his death his wife remarried and had one more child. On her death, at the age of 101, her ashes were scattered at the site of the plane crash.

Hugh was born in Toronto, Ontario, on 27 September 1907 to Colonel Harry Duncan Lockart Gordon, a Chartered Account, and Mary Kathleen Cassels Gordon. He had a brother Walter, then two years old. Subsequently there were three younger siblings: sisters, Isabel and Kathleen, and another brother, Duncan.

He married Helen Jessie, whose maiden name was also Gordon, on 27 November 1937. They had two sons, Peter Lockart b. 6 May 1939 and Hugh Donald Lockart b. 2 August 1940, who died in a canoe accident at Sault Rapids, Mackenzie River, N.W.T. on 10 August 1961.

Hugh's education was at Upper Canada College Preparatory School, Trinity College School, Port Hope, Ontario and, from 1925 to 1928, Royal Military College(RMC), Kingston, Ontario where he received a Certificate of Military Qualification. He was a keen sportsman playing rugby on the first team at Trinity College and the junior team at RMC. He also enjoyed tennis, skiing, sailing and horseback riding. He undertook further studies at Queen's University Kingston, Ontario to qualify as a Chartered Accountant and worked at Clarkson, Gordon, Dilworth and Nash. At the time he joined the RCAF he was manager of their Montreal, Quebec Office.



## Details of Crash



On 14 August 1940 Northrop Delta #670 was en route from Alliford Bay and Bella Bella on a routine flight back to Patricia Bay on Vancouver Island. Around 3 o'clock the plane diverted to take a closer look at a vessel in Discovery Passage, East of Vancouver Island. According to the account in the Victoria Daily Times, a witness described the crash:

“the plane made a big circle over the yacht as if inspecting it. Then it made a second circle at a lower altitude. After this, it headed South again, It hadn't gone more than 1,000 feet when it seemed to dive right into the ocean. It struck with a terrific crash and spray flew up 60 feet.”

The plane had crashed in an area of dangerous currents near Seymour Narrows, and the notorious Ripple Rock, which was blasted in 1958.

On the plane were four other men:

Cptn. John Henry Bourne (55)      RCOC seconded to RCAF

Cpl. Robert George Brown (26) RCAF  
F/O Joseph Georges Hector Desbiens (32) RCAF (pilot)  
S/L Richard Campbell Procter (29) RCAF

The first advice of the crash was received from the police.

F/O Mahon, F/L Jacobi and Capt. D'Easum (M.D.) took off in Grumman Goose 924 to search the area, remaining overnight on York Island. F/L Jacobi reported that the site of the wreck had been located in approximately 90 ft of water. Only one pontoon was recovered.

These were Patricia Bay's first casualties of the war. The bodies of the five men were never recovered and remain in the waters of Discovery Passage. They are all recorded on the Imperial War Graves Monument in Ottawa, Ontario.



## Additional Detail

### After seven decades, they'll rest together

With a parachute strapped to his back, Hugh Lockhart Gordon climbs aboard a Royal Canadian Air Force plane. He died in August, 1940, along with four other men when their plane crashed just north of Campbell River.

Image Credit: Photo Courtesy Peter Gordon



Peter Gordon never knew his father. He was just 16 months old when his dad, Hugh Lockhart Gordon, perished in a plane crash along with four other men. The date was August 14, 1940. All five men were members of the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) and were on a routine flight from Alliford Bay in the Queen Charlotte Islands to Patricia Bay in Victoria. They never made it.

“I’m not morose about never knowing my father,” says Peter. “I just never had the chance. Apparently I’m a dead ringer for him, the mannerisms and everything.”

Saturday is a special day for the Gordon family and their friends who will reunite in Campbell River.

They’re coming to scatter the ashes of Gordon’s mother Helen, who died a year ago at age 101. She had been married to Gordon for less than two years when he was tragically killed. “She deeply loved him (and) she had him taken away from her in the prime of his life,” says Peter from his home in Duncan.

When Gordon died, Helen was taking care of Peter, just a toddler, and another son, Hugh Donald, who was just 13 days old. Tragically, his brother would die in a drowning accident when he was just 21.

“My mother had a tough life,” says Peter. Ironically, Helen’s maiden name was Gordon when she met Hugh Gordon. They would marry in Toronto in November 1938.

He had attended Royal Military College in Kingston, Ontario, obtained a degree in accounting and then went to work at a prestigious firm in Montreal. But then came war and Hugh enlisted in the RCAF. Helen went to stay with family in Regina while Hugh was sent west to Victoria.

On the fateful day, their pontoon-equipped plane was heading south, homeward bound, when they passed over a luxury yacht. According to the newspaper account from the Victoria Daily Times, a witness described the crash:

“The plane made a big circle over the yacht as if inspecting it. Then it made second circle at a lower altitude. After this, it headed south again. It hadn’t gone more than 1,000 feet when it seemed to dive right into the ocean. It struck with a terrific crash and spray flew up 60 feet.” Boaters in the area came to the rescue, but the only thing they managed to save was a pontoon. The bodies of the men were never found which isn’t unusual given the strong tides in Seymour Narrows.

Peter and a good friend have some theories about why the plane crashed, but no one will ever know for sure.

Helen would later re-marry and have another son, but her heart was always with Hugh. Before her death, she told Peter it was her wish to have her ashes “joined” with Hugh’s. That takes place tomorrow, after a reception at the museum. “My son Patrick and myself will spread the ashes,” said Peter.

*by Paul Rudan - Campbell River Mirror*