

# HOUSTON, Allan Dale

**Age:** 25  
**Nationality:** Canadian  
**Rank:** Sergeant/  
Pilot  
**Unit:** No. 115(F)  
**Occupation:** Pilot  
**Service No:** R/77448

**Birth:** 8 July 1916  
MacDonald Campus  
P.Q., Canada  
**Home Town:** Ste. Anne de Bellevue  
P.Q., Canada



**Death:** 30 January 1942  
Crash of Bristol Bolingbroke 716  
Cowichan Bay, BC, Canada  
**Burial:** Royal Oak Cemetery, Victoria, BC, Canada

# Biography

MacDonald Campus of McGill University houses an Agricultural College and an experimental and demonstration farm. Allan Houston's father, a Scottish immigrant, was farm Manager and Allan was born on the campus, educated there and lived there almost all his life. The Campus is in Ste. Anne de Bellevue on the Western tip of the Island of Montreal in Quebec and Allan grew up fluent in both English and French.

After completing grade 10 at the high school, Allan entered the Agricultural College and earned a diploma. He worked as a tractor operator on the farm for four years and left that for what he thought would be a better position as a feed representative for a mill. This was his occupation when he applied to the RCAF hoping to become a pilot, and possibly to be able to continue working in aviation after the war. Prior to enlisting he had spent a year in MacDonald College C.O.T.C.

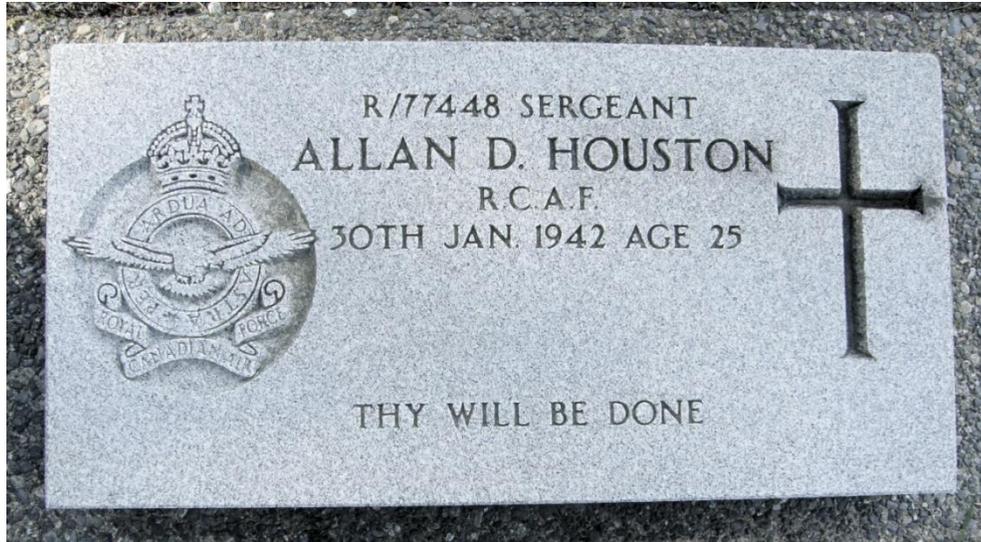
Allan made a good impression when he was interviewed for the Air Force. He was described as very healthy looking, a very fine type, intelligent. He was deemed to have a happy disposition, to show a keenness for flying, and to be suitable for commission and likely to make a good pilot.

From mid-April to the end of May 1941, Allan was in Elementary training. Again, he did well, having made good progress and being thought pleasant, self confident and talkative. At this time, he was anxious to become a fighter pilot.

For the next three months Allan was in Service Flying Training School. During this time, on 14<sup>th</sup> July, he had a minor accident when he failed to carry out a cockpit test and allowed his engines to run out of fuel despite having two full tanks in reserve. The accident was judged to be caused by carelessness. However, he was ultimately passed as average and received his pilot's wings on August 20<sup>th</sup>. He was posted to Patricia Bay No. 115 (F) 11<sup>th</sup> October 1941.

Allan died a little over four months after he qualified as a pilot when his Bristol Bolingbroke crashed into mud flats at Cowichan Bay on Vancouver Island. The other occupant of the plane parachuted to safety.

Allan was born on 8 July 1916, at MacDonald Campus, Quebec, to John Houston and Agnes Hunter; both Scottish immigrants to Canada. He had one brother, Jimmy, and two sisters; Jean and Dorothy.



FEBRUARY 1942



Sergeant Pilot Allan Dale Houston was killed in a 'plane crash north of Victoria, B.C. on January 30.

Allan was born and brought up at Macdonald College and all his life until he joined the R.C.A.F. in November, 1940 was spent on the campus. He attended Macdonald High School and later entered the Diploma Course at the College, from which he graduated in 1936.

He was well known to all members of the College staff and his cheerful personality earned him universal popularity. Our deepest sympathy is extended to his mother, his brother Jimmy and his two sisters, Jean and Dorothy.

## Details of Crash

On 30 January 1942, Sergeant Pilot Allan Dale Houston and Flight Sergeant M. E. Whyte were carrying out airframe and engine checks in Bristol Bolingbroke 716. At about 3:00 pm, while flying at around 3,000 feet, they lost the port engine and shortly afterwards the aircraft began to spiral. Flight Sergeant Whyte successfully bailed out at 1,000 feet after urging the pilot to do likewise. The aircraft crashed into mud flats on the shore of Cowichan Bay. Sergeant Houston's body was found inside the aircraft.

The Accident Investigation Board Concluded that:

*“The aircraft stalled at a low altitude while the pilot was trying to maintain altitude as he headed back to base after switching off the engine due to flames coming out of it. The loss of altitude was increased by the opening of the cowling gills.*

*It is remarked that the pilot did not have his parachute harness done up at the time of engine failure which undoubtedly contributed to this fatality.*

*It further appears that this pilot has been told, but not demonstrated to, that with gills open, the Bolingbroke will not maintain height on one engine. These points are being taken up with the Command concerned.”*



