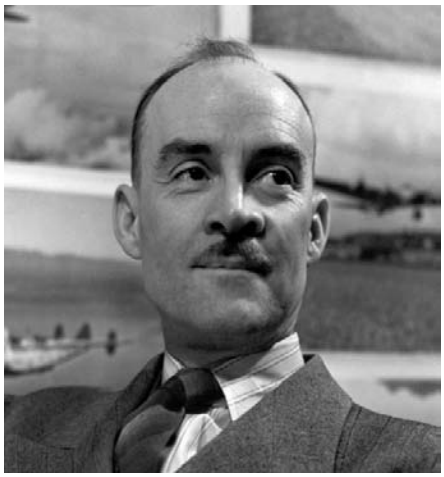
MEDALIST FOR 1943(Posthumous)

*For major contributions to aeronautics leading to important advances in airplane design, flight research, and airline operation; particularly for the presentation of new methods for operational control and for the development of scientific and systematic methods in the flight testing of aircraft for basic design and performance data.*



# EDMUND TURNEY ALLEN

The Daniel Guggenheim Medal for 1943 was posthumously awarded to an outstanding representative of that small company of bold and devoted men who risk their lives—and sometimes, as in his case, forfeited it—in order that the age of flight might continue its unceasing and spectacular advance.

Edmund Turney Allen was born in Chicago on January 4, 1896. His father died in 1913, and a good part of his early education was self-obtained. He was graduated from high school in Chicago in 1913, and two years later matriculated at the University of Illinois.

Soon after the United States entered World War I, he enlisted and joined the officers' training camp at Fort Sheridan. Holding the rank of Lieutenant in the Signal Corps, Aviation Section, he served as a pilot instructor in 1916. In 1918 he conducted flight tests at Martlesham Heath in England. The next year found him flight-testing at McCook Field.

After the Armistice he spent a year at the University of Illinois and two years at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. During the summers he acted as chief test pilot for the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics at Langley Field. From 1920 to 1922 he was engaged at MIT in designing, building and flying gliders, two of which he flew in competition in France and Germany.

In 1924 he again served as test pilot at McCook Field, and from 1925 to 1929 flew the mail for United Air Lines. In 1930 he joined the Boeing Airplane Company as test pilot and the next year was test pilot for the Northrop Corporation. Then, in turn, he became consulting engineer and test pilot for Chance Vought Aircraft, Pan American Grace Airways (where he set a world's altitude record for standard commercial passenger planes of 29,800 feet), Eastern Air Lines, Curtiss-Wright Corporation, Douglas Aircraft Company, North American Aviation, Lockheed Aircraft Corporation, Stearman Airplane Company, Sikorsky Aircraft, Pratt & Whitney Aircraft,

Spartan Aircraft Company, and Consolidated Aircraft Corporation. In 1939 he rejoined the Boeing Airplane Company, where he became Director of Flight and Aerodynamics.

Recognized as the leading American test pilot of his day, Allen was first recipient of the Octave Chanute Award, given annually by the Institute of the Aeronautical Sciences. On December 17, 1942, he delivered the Wright Brothers Lecture in New York, presenting a paper on “Flight Testing for Performance and Stability.”

Less than a year later, on September 18, 1943, he was killed in the crash of a new Army bomber he was testing. The Guggenheim Medal and its accompanying scroll were presented to Mrs. Allen in Seattle on behalf of the Board of Award by Philip G. Johnson, then president of the Boeing Airplane Company. The plane which had been under test became the B-29, noted combat weapon of World War II. The presentation ceremony marked the opening of a laboratory constructed by the Boeing Company and named in Allen’s memory.