

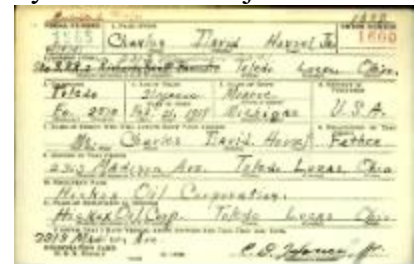
Charles David Housel, Jr.
21 February 1919 – 19 May 1943

Charles David Housel, Jr. was born on 21 February 1919 in Monroe, Michigan to Charles D. Sr. and Bertha J. Reisig Housel. He was the 3rd child of Charles and Bertha, joining Eveline, born 1910, and Myron, born 1916. The 1920 Census showed the family living in Monroe, Michigan



where they own a house. Charles Sr. is working as a Truck Driver on his own accounts. The 1930 Census showed the family moved to Adams Township, Ohio (looks like Adams is now part of Toledo) where Charles Sr. was a Superintendent in the Oil Industry. They paid \$40 a month rent and had a radio set. Charles graduated in 1937 from DeVilbiss High School. He took General Courses and was Homeroom President his junior year. The 1940 Census showed the family still in Adams, Ohio and Charles Sr. still in Oil Industry. He made \$4,000 in 1939. Big sister Eveline is not listed with family, guessing she got married and moved out. Charles Jr. has finished 4 years of High School and is working as an Errand Boy, making \$1,000 in 1939.

Charles' draft card, dated 16 October 1940, showed he was working at Hickok Oil in Toledo, Ohio as a truck driver. He was 5' 9" tall, weighed 155 with brown eyes and hair. He joined the Army Air Corp on 12 March 1941 as a Private. His Army Service #15018132. He joined at Fort Hayes, Columbus, Ohio. He soon qualified for flight training, becoming part of Class 42-I. Information about his Primary and Basic flight training was not readily available. He did his Advance at Moore Field, Texas from 6 August to 9 October 1942. He flew AT-6s for a total of 88 hours, 16 hours dual and 72 solo. He flew a total of 222:25 during his training time. Upon completion, he



was awarded his Pilot's Wings and Commissioned. Now being an Officer, Lt. Housel was given a new Officer's Service #0-665796. After some leave time, he was assigned to the 351st Fighter Squadron, 353rd Fighter Group at Norfolk, Virginia for Transition training into a combat airplane. He flew a P-40 for the first time on 28 October. Through the end of 1942, he flies 40 more times in a P-40 for 77 hours. During this training, Charles married Jane Marie Maier on 27 November 1942 in Princess Anne County, Virginia. She grew up in Toledo, so they may have been high school sweethearts. Looks like Jane remarried in 1947. In early January 1943 Lt. Housel was assigned to the 319th Fighter Squadron, 325th Fighter Group. This unit just arrived in Norfolk to learn how to fly an Army P-40 off a Navy aircraft carrier. After about 10 days at sea, all 72 P-40s flew off the Ranger to French Morocco. Soon after arriving, the 325th was ordered to turn over many of its planes to the 33rd Fighter Group, then engaged in heavy combat. With only about half of the planes it should have, during January and February he only flew 14 times for about 20 hours. As more planes became available, flight training picked up with 22 flights in March for 43+ hours. On 15 March, he was involved in a takeoff accident. His plane, P-40 F, 41-14313, had substantial damage to it. No medical report was readily available, looks like Lt. Housel was unhurt, except for maybe his pride. In April the 319th moved up into combat, flying its first

mission on the 17th. Lt. Housel flew 18 times for 33 hours, but records did not indicate which flights were combat missions. In May he flew 10 times for 32:40 hours.

1st Lt. Charles D. Housel was lost 19 May 1943 during an escort mission over Decimomannu Air Drone, Sardinia. Several enemy fighters attacked the bombers, and Lt. Housel's P-40 was shot down protecting the bombers. One account mentioned he was able to bail out of his stricken P-40. Being so early in the war, Missing Air Crew Reports were not being written yet. He was not found and was Memorialized on the Wall of the Missing at North Africa American Cemetery. The family also has a Cenotaph marker at King Cemetery in Monroe, Michigan.