

Robert A Marsh

7 July 1918 - 29 September 1942

Robert Ainley Marsh was born 7 July 1918 in Pontiac, Michigan to Frank Hardin Marsh and Pearl H. Messer Marsh. The 1920 Census showed that Robert is the only child and the family living in Royal Oak, Michigan. Frank is working as a Bank Teller. The 1930 Census showed the family moved to Farndale, Michigan and has grown. 11-year-old Robert is joined by Ernest, 10, Arthur, 7 and Helen, 6. The family owns their home, and a radio set. Frank is now a Manager at a Bank. Robert graduated from Pontiac High School, class of 1937. Robert attended University of Michigan in Ann Arbor starting that fall. He was in the School of Engineering. He was also a member of Roger Williams Guide House and proceeded over its choir at least once in 1937. In the 1938 yearbook, Michiganensian, he was listed as a member of Kappa Delta Rho fraternity. In 1939 he was listed as a member of Alpha Kappa Lambda. In 1940 he was listed as a member of the American Institute of Electrical Engineers. His mother Pearl passed away on 29 January 1940. He was registered to finish his senior year, but his enrollment card, dated 8 February 1940, showed he was granted a "100% refund" due to "Mother's death and going to work". The 1940 Census showed widowed Frank with Robert and Ernest now living back in Pontiac, and Frank is working as a Salesman, but his usual occupation is Bank Auditor. He made \$1500 in 1939. Robert has finished 3 years of college at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, and is working as a Research Worker, but did not work in 1939.

Robert's draft card, dated 29 January 1940, showed he was working for the Yellow Coach and Truck Company. He was 5' 10" tall, weighed 150 lbs. with blue eyes and brown hair. Robert was drafted into the Army on 5 March 1941. He was given Service #36104336. He qualified for flight training about 8 months later. Aviation Cadet Marsh was in flight class 42-G and started Primary on 16

SERIAL NUMBER 2476	1. NAME (Type) ROBERT (A.) Marsh	ORDER NUMBER 4263
2. ADDRESS (Type) 159 Lincoln av. (Number and street or R. F. D. address)	PONTIAC OAKLAND Mich (City) (County) (State)	
3. TELEPHONE 28946	4. AGE IN YEARS 22	5. PLACE OF BIRTH Pontiac Mich (City) (County) (State)
6. DATE OF BIRTH July 7 1918 (Month) (Day) (Year)	7. NAME OF PERSON WHO WILL ALWAYS KNOW YOUR ADDRESS Frank H. Marsh (Name) (Address) (City) (County) (State)	8. RELATIONSHIP OF THAT PERSON father (Relationship) (Name)
9. ADDRESS OF THAT PERSON 159 Lincoln av Pontiac Mich (Number and street or R. F. D. address) (City) (County) (State)	10. EMPLOYER'S NAME Yellow Coach & Truck Co. Div. B. M. C.	11. PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT OR BUSINESS Pontiac Mich (City) (County) (State)
I ASSESS THAT I HAVE VERIFIED ABOVE ANSWERS AND THAT THEY ARE TRUE.		
REGISTRATION CARD D. H. S. Form 1		Robert A. Marsh (Signature)

January 1942 at Dorr Field, Arcadia, Florida. This was when new recruits first learned to fly. He flew PT-17s, also known as a Stearman. He soloed on his 14th flight after 11:56 dual time. He finished 20 March with a total of 60:00 hours flight time, 30:58 dual, 29:02 solo. Next was Basic flight at Gunter Field, Alabama from 30 March to 29 May. He flew BT-13s, Valtee Valiant, also known as the Vibrator. He flew a total of 76:30 hours, 30:05 dual and 45:35 solo. Advance flight started 3 July at Dothan, Alabama. Here he flew AT-6s. Robert was married to Catherine Melissa Rowston on 20 June 1942 in Alabama. Catherine grew up in Pontiac, MI, so they may have been high school sweethearts and she traveled to his training base for their wedding. He finished flight school on 5 August 1942. At that time, Robert was Commissioned and awarded his Pilot's wings. He was given an Officer's service number of O-790301. 2nd Lt. Marsh was assigned to the 79th Fighter Group, 86th Fighter Squadron at Hillgrove, RI. He flew a P-40 for the first time on 19 August. He had 10 more P-40 flights for a total of 17:30 hours. When



the 79th Fighter Group deployed overseas, some of its newer pilots did not go. On 22 September orders were given to move some personnel to the 317th Fighter Squadron, 325th Fighter Group, that was being formed at Hillgrove, RI. No September flight records could be readily found.

Lt. Robert A. Marsh was killed 29 September 1942 during a training flight over Rhode Island. His plane was involved in a mid-air collision with a JF-1, a Grumman Duck, a Navy amphibious rescue plane. Per newspaper articles, Lt. Marsh's plane collided with the Navy Duck. He was flying a P-40 F, serial #41-14186. The pilot of the other plane, Clarence Hawkins, was able to bailout. He was based out of Quonset Point Naval Air Station, also in Rhode Island. His plane was Bureau #9445. Two crew members on the Duck were lost. They were Homer D. McLendon, Radio Mechanic 2c, and Harris Elmer, Aviation Machinist Mate 3c. Lt. Marsh was buried at Oak Hill Cemetery in Pontiac, Michigan next to his mother, Pearl.