

Captain William R. Winters



1940 UNITED STATES ARMY AIR CORP



1941 UNITED STATES ARMY AIR FORCE



Captain Winters enlisted in the Army in 1940. He served at several bases in the United States, advanced to Corporal and became a cadet in the pilot training program. He first soloed in May of 1942. He was commissioned as an officer, joined a fighter squadron and began aircraft combat training. In 1944 he was deployed to England and his fighter group joined the 9TH Air Force. Captain Winters flew several close air support missions on D-Day on June 6, 1944. Shortly after that he was awarded the Army Air Force Air Medal and went on to earn 2 silver and 4 bronze oak clusters. Captain Winters shot down several enemy aircraft, his first in July of 1944.

During a mission from Toul-Ochey to Sarrebourg, France, Flight Leader Captain Winters was killed in action on November 25, 1944 according to the Missing Air Crew Report which states: "Red and yellow flights were making simultaneous strafing and dive-bombing passes on two roads running north and south about one-half mile apart. Pulling up to the left in our second pass, my wingman said, 'Someone is going in.' Looking down I saw our flight leader, Capt. William R. Winters, O-667017, in a P-47D-26, aircraft serial number 42-28406, about 20 feet above the ground and going in. The aircraft hit with a very violent explosion. There was very intense, light, accurate flak in the area."

Captain William R. Winters

- *Captain Winters enlisted in the United States Army Air Corps on September 27, 1940 at Chanute Field in Rantoul, Illinois, at the age of 23.
- *He completed the Link Trainer Instructors Course on June 27, 1941.
- *He was promoted to Corporal in the 78th Bombardment Squadron on February 1, 1942 at Grenier Field in Manchester, New Hampshire.
- *In May 1942, he was assigned to the Air Corps Training Detachment at Harvey Parks Airport in Sikeston, Missouri.
- *He soloed for the first time on May 14, 1942.
- *In July 1942, he was stationed at Randolph Field in San Antonio, Texas as a member of the Aviation Cadet Detachment.
- *In September 1942, he was stationed at Foster Field in Victoria, Texas as a member of Advanced Flying School Class 42-J.
- * He graduated on November 10, 1942 and was commissioned 2nd Lieutenant.
- *He joined the 81st Fighter Squadron, 50th Fighter Group at Orlando Army Air Field Florida on November 14, 1942.
- *He was deployed to Cross City Army Air Field, Florida for combat training in June 1943. While in Cross City, he was promoted to 1st Lieutenant and was made Assistant Operations Officer.
- *He was returned to Orlando Army Air Field in January 1944.
- *He was deployed to AAF-551 at RAF Lymington, England on March 13, 1944 via train to New York and British passenger ship HMS Sterling Castle, arriving April 5, 1944. Here the 50th Fighter Group joined the 9th Air Force.
- *He flew 3 close air support missions on D-Day, June 6, 1944.
- *He was promoted to Captain on June 16, 1944.
- *He was first awarded the Air Medal on June 17, 1944. His Air Medal ultimately included two silver and four bronze oak leaf clusters.
- *He achieved his first shoot-down of a German FW-190 on July 28, 1944.
- *He advanced to Base A-10 at Carentan Air Field, France on June 25; Base A-17 at Meautis Air Field, France on August 17; Base A-47 at Orly Air Field, France on August 31; Base Y-6 at Lyon-Bron Airport, France on October 18; and Base A-96 at Toul-Ochey Airfield, France on October 29, 1944.



81ST FIGHTER SQUADRON



50TH FIGHTER GROUP

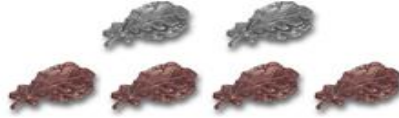


9TH AIR FORCE

Captain William R. Winters



He was first awarded the Air Medal on June 17, 1944. His Air Medal ultimately included two silver and four bronze oak leaf clusters.



Was posthumously awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross:
"For extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight against the enemy in the European Theater of Operations. On 17 August 1944, Captain Winters led his flight against an extremely large enemy force. Leading several dive bombing and strafing attacks against the enemy he inflicted severe damage to the enemy which contributed in large measure to the successful advances achieved by our ground forces on the Continent. The superior airmanship and deep devotion to duty displayed by Captain Winters on this occasion is in keeping with the highest traditions of the Army Air Forces."



Was posthumously awarded the Purple Heart
"This is to certify that the President of The United States of America pursuant to authority vested in him by Congress has awarded the Purple Heart established by General George Washington at Newburgh, New York, August 7, 1782 to Captain William R. Winters, A.S.A. N. 0-667017 for military merit and for wounds received in action resulting in his death November 25, 1944.



Captain Winters is buried in the Lorraine American Cemetery, Saint Avold, France, the resting place of 10,489 American soldiers.