

**WILKINSON, James W.**

“Wilkie”

B: 9 November 1916 Newark, OH

D: 6 June 1944 Llandoverly, Wales



## Swarthmore Pilot Honored in Death

Captain James W. Wilkinson, ace Thunderbolt pilot, of 411 Dickinson ave., Swarthmore, who was killed during a routine flight over England on June 4, has been posthumously awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, it was announced yesterday from an Eighth Fighter Command station.

The Army's second highest decoration went to the 28-year-old flier for ex-



**CAPT. WILKINSON**

traordinary heroism in action against the enemy on May 19, when without regard for the almost impenetrable odds against him, he led a flight of three fighters in an attack against 30 or more enemy fighters swarming to attack a friendly bomber formation.

### DOWNED ENEMY PLANE

According to the citation accompanying the Distinguished Service Cross, Captain Wilkinson pressed his attack through the enemy flight, despite the fact that one of his wingman was lost, and shot down an enemy plane, breaking up a threat against the bombers.

Captain Wilkinson, only son of R. L. Wilkinson, of Swarthmore, before the accident which cost him his life, had destroyed eight enemy planes in the air and had damaged or destroyed an extensive list on the ground. He had completed 102 combat missions in Europe.

*The Philadelphia Inquirer*  
15 July 1944

**Hometown:** Swarthmore, Pennsylvania

**Rank:** 1st Lieutenant

**MOS:** 1055 - Pilot, single engine fighter

**Unit:** 334th Fighter Squadron

### Aircraft:

P-47C-5-RE 41-6405 QP-S

**4th Service:** 20 January 1943 – 17 May 1943

20 MAR 43 Promoted to 1st Lieutenant

27 APR 43 Involved in mid-air collision on local flight while engaged in an exercise with members of his squadron. His aircraft was struck by that of Lt. Chatterley, shearing off the “tail stabilizer.” Bailed out successfully but severely injured during the landing due to chute having 3 panels blown out.

17 MAY 43 Transferred to 2nd Evacuation Hospital with a broken back.

### Victories:

None with 4th

8.5 total (7 air/ 1.5 ground)

### Post 4th Fighter Group:

Transferred to 82nd Fighter Squadron, 78th Fighter Group in Duxford; promoted to Captain.

4 JUN 44 Piloting P-47D-22-RE MX-G (42-26256), he crashed into a mountain northeast of Llandoverly, Wales while strafing during a training mission.

KIFA.

Buried at Cambridge American Cemetery  
Cambridge, England  
Plot F Row 2 Grave 113

### Decorations:

Distinguished Service Cross, Silver Star, Distinguished Flying Cross (4 OLC), Air Medal (30LC), Purple Heart, European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal.