



Robert Jacob Plarr
Major U.S. Army
16 January 1941 – 30 Nov 1961

Robert was born on 21 August 1916 in Allentown, Pennsylvania. His family later moved to Cetronia, Pennsylvania. He attended grade School in Lehigh County at Cetronia Elementary School and at South Whitehall High School, from which he graduated in 1934. He then attended Business College in Allentown for a semester and worked at Dorney Park in Cetronia until 1939, when he went to work as Office Manager for Borden Dairies in Allentown. He was inducted into the Army as a Private on 16 January 1941 at Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, and was ordered to Fort Sam Houston, Texas, where he underwent 12 weeks training in the Signal Corps, and was then assigned to the 3rd Radio Intelligence Company. He was promoted to Corporal there, and then left for Camp Crowder in Missouri, where he was assigned to Headquarters, 7th Signal Training Regiment. He rose to the rank of First Sergeant at Camp Crowder on 24 November 1942, and on 1 May 1944 was transferred to Fort Monmouth, New Jersey, where he attended Officer Candidate School and was commissioned Second Lieutenant in the Signal Corps on 25 November 1944. He then left for the Signal Depot in Los Angeles, California, where he served as Supply Officer until he was released from active duty at Fort MacArthur, California, on 23 November 1945. Robert remained in California to attend college for a while before returning to active duty on 13 August 1946. Over the next 15 years, Robert served at various locations, including overseas as a Signal Officer in Okinawa, Turkey, and Germany, and in the States at the Army War College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania; the University of Kentucky, where he taught for the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) and earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Business in May 1957; and Fort Monmouth in New Jersey where he taught at the Army Signal School. Robert and his first wife **Hilda**, whom he married while he was stationed in Germany, and their daughter **Margaret** (born 1951) were living in Lexington at the time Robert was teaching ROTC and when he and Hilda were divorced. Robert retired from the Army as a Major after 20 years of active duty on 30 November 1961. For his service, Robert was awarded the Army Commendation Medal, American Defense Medal, World War II Victory Medal, Army of Occupation Medal (Germany and Japan), and the National Defense Service Medal. After Robert retired, he remained in Long Branch, New Jersey, until circa 1963 before returning to Cetronia to live with his mother. Subsequently, he taught Business courses at Upper Perkiomen High School in Montgomery County until 1966. He married **Katherine Bastian Guldin** (born 7 August 1925) on 2 April 1966 in Saint Paul's Union Church, Lutheran Congregation, in Trexlertown, Pennsylvania. He and Katherine bought a house in Shepherd Hills in Lower Macungie Township, and he became a teacher for the East Penn School District in Emmaus, Pennsylvania, until 1973. Robert then went to work for the Allentown Housing Authority as a Purchasing Agent until he retired in 1978. Robert died at home in Wescosville in 1999. In 2006, Katherine moved from Shepherd Hills to Luther Crest Senior Living Community in Allentown. Robert is buried in St. Paul's Union Church Cemetery. His parents were **Robert Louis Plarr** (14 June 1895 – 6 February 1966), who served in the Navy from 1911 to 1914 aboard *USS Wyoming (Battleship#32)*, and **Wiltracy Thompson** (23 June 1895 – 25 April 1984). Robert's grandfather, **Jacob Plarr**, emigrated from Zinswiller, Alsace-Lorraine, in 1871, and eventually became the owner of Dorney Park in Cetronia. Robert's father was President of Dorney Park from 1936 to 1966.