



First African American Aviator

Recently, I came across an article that was written on February 4, 2011, by a relative of an African American Aviator that I had never heard of. According to this relative, Emory C. Malick, an African American, received his pilot's certificate from the Curtis School of Aviation on March 20, 1912, in San Diego, California. This date is fourteen years earlier than James Herman Banning, who was previously thought to be the first African American to receive his pilot's licenses in the United States. Malick was born in Seven Points, Pennsylvania On December 29, 1881. He was the third child of his mother, Susan, who died in 1887. His father remarried and had a total of thirteen children. Malick grew up in a place called Seven Points; however, he spent his adult life in Philadelphia. He remained single until his death. He was a skilled carpenter and worked most of his life with his father, who was also a skilled carpenter. He and his father worked on the interior of railroad sleeping and dining cars.

After earning his pilot's license, he became interested in building an airplane where upon he acquired a Curtis "pusher" bi-plane. It is reported in the article that in August 1914, he was flying this airplane. By August 30, it was stated in this article that he made several flights over Penn's Creek and was the first pilot to soar through the skies of Sydney and Northumberland Counties. According to this article, factories would shut down to witness the novelty of his flights. It is reported that he was the first pilot in the area.

Malick was 37 years old when World War I began; he applied for the military, but was turned down. He established a flying service called, the Flying Dutchman. He transported passengers for the Flying Dutchman Air Service and took aerial surveys. After two crashes and the death of a passenger, he decided to stop flying.

Malick died in late 1958 in Philadelphia and was buried a year later due to the fact that his body lay in the morgue until it was identified. He is perhaps one of the pilots that was missed by aviation history and has just recently surfaced. According to his relative, who wrote the article that all of my information has been based on, there will soon be a book about him that a family member with more details about his life will author.

Other articles that are to follow this one will provide more names and stories of some of the aviators who, in my opinion, were left out of history and thereby are unknown to the pages of Aviation History.

