



**William 'Bill'
Guilfoyle**

Army Air Corps

William 'Bill' Guilfoyle

Feb 10, 1922 - Aug 6, 2008

BIRTHPLACE: Herington, Kansas

SOLDIER DETAILS

DIVISION: Army Air Corps, 306th Bomb Group

THEATER OF OPERATION: European

SERVED: Jan 1, 1942 - Jun 1, 1945

BIOGRAPHY

Bill entered the Air Force in 1942 and went to Basic Training in St. Louis, MO; preflight Training in Santa Ana, CA; Gunnery School in Las Vegas, NV; and Navigator Training in Texas. After training, Bill was assigned to the 8th Air Force, 306th Bomb Group at Thurleigh Air Force Base, northwest of London, England. His rank was 1st Lieutenant and he flew as navigator on a B-17. The B-17 had a crew of 10 men. The officer members of the crew were pilot, co-pilot, navigator, and bombardier. Enlisted crew members were radio operator, engineer, and 4 gunners (2 waist, 1 ball turret, and 1 tail). Bill flew 1 mission over Belgium, 1 mission over France and 33 missions over Germany. Enemy defense included the German 88 Flak Gun and German fighter aircraft including the Messerschmitt 109 and the Fochewulf 190. U.S. fighter aircraft that flew cover over Bill's bomber included the P-47, P-38 and P-51. While flying a bombing mission, on July 28, 1944, Bill's plane was hit and he was wounded in the head. They had been flying a bombing mission over Mersberg, Germany (the biggest synthetic oil refinery in Europe). He spent 13 days in the hospital and 30 days recovering. He then returned to duty and flew his last of 35 combat missions in 1945. Bill was then discharged from the Air Force in June 1945 and entered Kansas University in Lawrence, Kansas. He completed his Degree in Law in 1949; returned to Abilene and joined a law firm. He practiced law in Abilene for more than 50 years. He was a past president of the Abilene Elks Lodge, past president of the Brown Memorial Foundation, secretary of the Eisenhower Foundation, and a member of the Abilene Lions Club, St. Andrew's Catholic Church and the Knights of Columbus. He married Mabel Baker on October 8, 1947 and they had 5 children, Bill, Jim, Betsy, Laura and Ann.