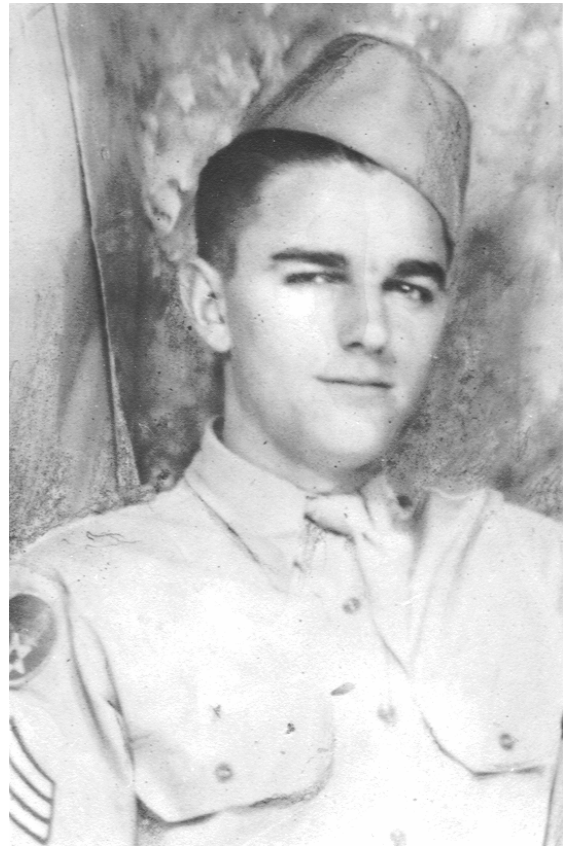


George E. Wilson – Killed in Action Serial # 39122850 (Prepared by brother Ed, Dec. 2001)

George Edward Wilson was born on January 9, 1924 in Ferndale, California, the fourth of seven children of Josephine Christen (1892-1970) and James C. Wilson (1883-1962). Ferndale, a small dairy farming community and the birthplace of the Wilson family, is approximately 250 miles north of San Francisco on the Pacific Coast. It is the most Westerly city in the first 48 US States. His older brother Jim, 81 years old, and many of his other relatives and friends still live in the Ferndale area. George and Alice Wilson, RN, served in WW-II. Blanche, RN, Wilfred and Ed Wilson served during the Korean War.



George was, perhaps, the most adventurous of the Wilson children. He made many friends in his short life. There were not enough hours in a day to accomplish all of the activities that he loved to do. His mother often warned George - ***you are burning the candle at both ends.*** He loved to drive cars, very fast, on the county roads at a very young age. He was an avid hunter and was an excellent shot. It was not surprising that he become the ball turret gunner on a B17.

In his last few letters to his mother, George indicated that he was enjoying England and he said ***not to worry and that he could take care of himself.*** However, in a letter, dated July 19, 1944, to his older sister Margaret, who is now 83, he indicated that he did not care what she did with his car and implied that he may not be returning. At a memorial service for George Wilson in 1992, Robert Lee from the Ferndale Area, who was in another plane at the same base in England, indicated that all crewmembers realized that their days were numbered. Lee returned home after 28 missions, including two on D-Day (June 6, 1944).

On August 3, 1944 George's family was notified that he was ***killed in action on July 21 over Germany.*** Within the next few months, the families of several crewmembers started to communicate. Most of the crew was missing in action – only George was killed. Finally, in December 1944 Lloyd Peacock, the only survivor, wrote the family a very kind letter indicating the details of the plane crash. In this letter he stated that George had completed seven missions.

At first, the Wilson family thought that the news that George was ***KIA*** was the ultimate disaster. Later, after correspondence with the ***MIA*** families, they realized that they were fortunate to ***know*** what had happened to George.

Staff Sergeant George E. Wilson was awarded the Purple Heart and the Air Medal posthumously (these medals are presently in the custody of his brother Ed). His remains are interred in the Cambridge American Cemetery, England, Plot C, Row 4, Grave 52.

In 1992 in Ferndale, his relatives and friends held a memorial service for George and placed an engraved stone, in his remembrance, on the plot of his Grandfather, Edward Christen. Brothers Jim and Ed Wilson are shown at that service in the photo to the right.

George died over 57 years ago; however, we have not forgotten him.



Margaret Mary (Wilson) King

September 16, 1918 - December 3, 2008

March 1945

Mrs. Margaret King, shown on the left, accepted the air medal awarded posthumously, to her younger brother Staff Sergeant George E. Wilson, Air Corps, who made the supreme sacrifice in defense of his country on July 21, 1944.



While in the service George wrote almost daily. The following information may be of interest to all crewmember families:

March 8 – We arrived here at Alexandria this afternoon and will be here at least three months. Sure was glad to get away from all that snow and cold of Salt Lake.

March 9 – I met with the rest of the members of the crew and they seem to be a bunch of swell guys.

March 20 – We had a new plane today and it was sure nice. We also had a Major along and he said we were doing OK. Our pilot can really fly the plane.

March 25 – Last night we were up for 5 hours and dropped 12 bombs. We really have a good bombardier. He put all bombs in the middle of the lighted target.

April 8 – We have been flying every day and going to school also.

April 21 – I talked to my pilot last night and he is trying to get me promoted to Sergeant.

May 1 - I made Sergeant and my new pay will be \$117 a month.

May 2 - We had a picture taken of the crew and you should receive it in a few days.

May 6 - We went on a long trip to Big Springs, Texas today and got back at 8 pm. We have to get up at 4:30 AM in the morning and fly again.

May 13 – Yes, I expect to go overseas when we are finished here, which is the 20th of the month.

May 15 – All of us in our crew had a picnic last night and had a great time (I had three beers). The pilot and the bombardier had their wives, and the navigator had his girlfriend. The picnic ground was about 10 miles from here. We went in the pilot and bombardier's cars.

May 16 – We leave at noon on the 20th. It should take us about 3 days by train to go to Nebraska.

From Kearney Army Air Field, Nebraska George wrote:

May 25 – We will leave here any day now, as soon as we get a plane. Today, I took out an allotment for \$50 a month made out to you. Put it in the bank and if you ever need some, use it yourself. When I get overseas I will be making \$150 a month. (His mother and invalid father continued to receive the \$50 allotment for the rest of their lives.)

May 27 – We got our new plane all loaded and ready to go when we get the word.

May 29 – We were supposed to leave here a few days ago but we are getting our plane overhauled.

From Newfoundland George wrote:

June 5 and 6 – Two letters from Newfoundland in one envelope – George said that he did not know how long they were going to be there and where they were going. On the outside of the envelope the letters were censored and approved by the signature of Lt. H. Beasley, the Bombardier.

George wrote from England:

June 11 – Well here I am in England.

June 17 - We have good food over here and the sleeping quarters are OK. I went to Church last night with Lenti, the tail gunner on our crew, and we always go to church together every chance we get.

June 22 - Everything is rationed. I am really happy when chow time comes. Each week I get three candy bars, two razor blades, a package of cookies and seven packs of cigarettes. I have a great appetite and am getting fat.

June 30 – Guess who I met today? You remember the Lee family that live up Williams Creek (near Ferndale). I met the oldest boy, Robert Lee, in chow line today. He has been here for a while and we had a “big talk” together.

July 5 – Received four letters from you today – all old ones – but was glade to receive them. I plan to buy a bicycle – I sure need one over here.

July 8 - I am glad to hear that you pray for me – I sure can use them.

July 14 – We sure have a swell time over here and really like it fine so far.

July 16 – I received eight letters from you yesterday. You asked if Stack was a Catholic. Yes he is and we sure have a lot of fun with him. (Ed Wilson assumed he was referring to Lenti, however, it could have been one of the other crewmembers. George always gave his friends nicknames.)

July 19 to his Mother – Just a few lines to let you know I am fine. I just got back from a 48-hour pass.

July 19 to his older sister Margaret - I just got back from a 48-hour pass. I met a cute little English girl and had a swell time. Do whatever you want with my car – I don't give a damn.