

MISSOURI STATE SOCIETY DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Proudly Honors

WILBUR E. MCGEE

UNITED STATES ARMY AIR CORPS

SECOND LIEUTENANT (O1)

JANUARY 7, 1942 – MARCH 4, 1944

MISSING/KILLED IN ACTION

as

PURPLE HEART PATRIOT

SEPTEMBER 2025

Dianna (McGee) Antonacci, Honoring Her Uncle's Service and Sacrifice

Sponsored by: John Sappington Chapter, NSDAR



Wilbur E. McGee was born on Aug 16, 1921, and grew up around Warrenton, MO. He lost his parents while in high school and enlisted shortly after graduation in the United States Army Air Corps. After receiving training in New Mexico and Arizona, He was commissioned a second lieutenant in Santa Ana, California, on June 2, 1943. His military occupation or specialty was Pilot, and his service number assignment was attached to the 363rd Fighter Group, 382nd Fighter Squadron. He was sent overseas to England in November of 1943.

On March 4, 1944, while supporting Mission 217, Second Lieutenant. Wilbur E. McGee was lost while flying his P-51B "Mustang" as a fighter escort for an aborted raid on Berlin. According to USAAF records, Wilbur, a member of the 382d Fighter Squadron of the 363d Fighter Group, was one of sixteen P-51s lost in poor weather over the North Sea while returning from the sortie. He was considered MIA and ultimately

declared dead.

Conflicting reports, however, claim that the group was surprised by an experienced Luftwaffe unit of Me-109s over Hamburg as they were heading out to sea while escorting bomber planes in raids over Germany. According to Luftwaffe ace Heinz Knoke (1921-1993), who was leading a flight of Me-109s from Stab II/JagdGeschwader 11, his pilots surprised some 60 Mustangs, including those of the 363rd Fighter Group, over Hamburg. The USAAF lost twelve P-51s in that single engagement, with Knoke claiming one for himself. If this is true, it must be assumed that the four remaining losses were due to a combination of battle damage and bad weather.

Wilbur E. McGee is memorialized at Tablets of the Missing at Cambridge American Cemetery, Cambridge, England. This is an American Battle Monuments Commission location. His family also placed a memorial stone in Warrenton, Missouri. He was awarded: ir Medal, Purple Heart, United States Army Aviator Badge, World War II Victory Medal, American Campaign Medal, Army Good Conduct medal, European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign.