



**William
Fry**

Army Air Corps

William Fry

Mar 18, 1923 - Oct 14, 2021

BIRTHPLACE: Stafford, KS

SOLDIER DETAILS

HIGHEST RANK: Lgt.

DIVISION: Army Air Corps, 8th Air Force

THEATER OF OPERATION: European

SERVED: 1942 -

**MILITARY HONORS: Good Conduct Medal EAME
Theatre Ribbon with 3 bronze stars Air Medal
Legion of Honor Medal from the French Republic**

HONORED BY: The Eisenhower Foundation

BIOGRAPHY

William Luke "Bill" Fry was born March 18, 1923 in Stafford, KS. He attended and graduated from St. Theresa's Catholic Church School. He loved subjects of science and math and always dreamed of becoming a pilot. Fry enlisted in the Army Air Corps in December of 1942 and on February 2, 1943 became an Aviation Cadet. He was assigned to fly a P-61 Black Widow first, then the B-17 Flying Fortress. In March of 1944 he was assigned to Station 120 Deopham Greene, England as a B-17 pilot. He flew 24 missions. On February 3, 1945 his 24th bombing mission, his squadron took off to bomb Berlin. Fry's aircraft took on heavy flak over Berlin and although no hit directly, three of his four engines were disabled and the radio operator was critically injured. Fry polled his crew on the choices they had: 1. attempt to return to England, 2. attempt landing in Russia, 3. cross the Baltic to Sweden. The vote was to go to Sweden. They were met with heavy cloud cover and anti-aircraft. The crew dumped everything overboard not needed to make the aircraft lighter. Fry ordered the bomb bay doors open to show they had no armament. At an altitude of 150 feet over Sweden, they found a small airfield, too short to land a B-17. At the end of the air strip was a group of civilians with machine guns, however this was their best chance to land. Lt. Fry managed to land the plane saving his crew. As they landed an engine burst into flames which scattered the civilians temporarily. The crew left the plane and were taken prisoner by the civilians. They were interred in Sweden as POW's for weeks. Fry was honorably discharged from the 8th Air Force in 1945 and returned to Hutchinson KS. Fry was a lifelong pilot and taught many to fly. Courtesy of browningandlahey.com obituaries