

G.A.R. Legacy



Mrs. "Frances" Hill

1892 - 1982



The King's Medal

for Service in the Cause of Freedom



Mrs. Hill, tending to the British Cadets' Graves

The King's Medal Did You Know?

- **... Frantie Mae "Frances" Hill?**
 - ✓ Frantie "Frances" Mae Hill tended to the graves of British Royal Air Force cadets that died while training in Miami, Oklahoma during World War II. She tended their graves for over 40 years until her death. She and her husband Claude are buried beside the RAF cadets she so lovingly cared for.
- **... Why Mrs. Hill cared for the graves?**
 - ✓ Mrs. Hill always had a special place in her heart for all the cadets that lost their lives and wanted to ensure that they were not forgotten, and to honor them for their families in the UK that couldn't be here to do so themselves.
- **... Mrs. Hill received The King's Medal**
 - ✓ Mrs. Hill was awarded The King's Medal for Service in the Cause of Freedom by King George VI for her care and compassion extended to the fallen RAF cadets and their families.



Mrs Frantie "Frances" Hill's Grave G.A.R. Cemetery

Excerpts from a letter by: Anthony F. Banks, Spartan School of Aeronautics – 15th March 1989

"You are no doubt aware that Mrs. Hill, at her request, is buried alongside the graves of the fifteen Royal Air Force Pilot Cadets who did not return to the United Kingdom from Miami, having died in accidents whilst under training at Spartan School.

Most of us, not of course the relatives and sweethearts of those men, were unaware, until recently, that Mrs. Hill devoted so much love and energy in attending to those graves for approximately 40 years. She also kept in touch with many of the relatives assisting in so many ways.

This association is regularly discovering graduates from Spartan and when they learned of Mrs. Hill's devotion they are, to a man, very deeply moved. I was 'unearthed' only in 1987 as a result of a sentimental return to Miami when I was put in touch with George Meyer and others. I shall never forget being told by George about the graves and later learning about dear Mrs. Hill.

I have been in touch with Buckingham Palace to get details of the award which was made to Mrs. Hill. I also have written to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission in Ottawa, Canada, who have replied with much helpful detail also mentioning the great care which your department has given to the graves.

I am now, on behalf of our Association, requesting your permission to have placed on Mrs. Hill's grave, a small tablet simply recording her devotion and our collective thanks.

We feel that her efforts are so worthy of this recognition and will explain to posterity the close proximity of her grave to the 15 graves."

Yours sincerely,
Tony Banks