



Francis Joseph Geng

Francis Geng was born June 5, 1893 in Hastings, Minnesota to August Ferdinand Geng (1852-1927) and Mary Wasser Geng (1867-1930) originally both from Germany. August is a blacksmith in Hastings and their German grandmother, Walburga Wasser is living with the family. By age 16, Francis is working in his father's blacksmith shop. On June 5, 1917, on his 24th birthday, he registers for the mandatory draft. His parents have moved to Montana, and he is on his own in West St Paul, Minnesota, working as a chauffeur for William Huntington Forbes at 3 Crocus Hill. Forbes was the Treasurer of the NorthWestern Fuel Company in St Paul Park, now Ashland Oil. Not able to wait, he enlisted in the United States Navy as a machinist mate but transferred to the aviation division when he had the opportunity. He trained at Dunwoody Institute in

Minneapolis, Minnesota. He served on an anti-sub patrol out of New York City. On December 28, 1918, he was released from the Navy. He married Martha Illa of Hastings, Minnesota in 1920. In 1923, Francis is listed in the St Paul, Minnesota directory as the Commander of the Joyce Kilmer VFW Post #107. In the years 1924 until his father dies in 1927, Francis operates a Jewelry Manufacturing business in St Paul. By 1930, the family is living in a home on Warwick Avenue in St Paul where Francis is listed as the Air Port Master for the City of St Paul. In 1961, Francis retired as the only managing director of Holman Airport where he held this position for 35 years. He is responsible for expanding the municipal airport to accommodate airline service. In 1930, Northwest Airlines built their maintenance facility there. He also helped secure a base for the Minnesota Air Guard and a home for 3M manufacturing aviation. In the 1930's, during the depression, he oversaw the WPA programs that paved the new runways, installed lighting and built a new terminal.



His wife Martha died in 1969. He remarried, first name Ethel but no other information is available. His son Donald Francis was a Sergeant in the United States Air Force in WWII.

Francis died on February 11, 1981 at Fort Snelling Vets Hospital in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He is buried at St Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Cemetery in Hastings, Minnesota.