

until his graduation from High School.

On graduating from High School, Bill joined the United States Army in 1936. During World War II, he served with distinction earning the Bronze Star and many other decorations in combat action in France, Europe and in the Pacific Theatre. At the end of hostilities, Bill returned home for a brief spell and then returned to the service - joining the newly formed United States Air Force, where he continued to serve his nation - helping to build a fledgling service to maturity and providing the patient leadership needed to bring up the next generations of airmen. Bill continued to serve his nation through the Korean War and the beginning of the Vietnam War, finally retiring at the rank of Master Sergeant with 30 years of dedicated and loyal service to his nation in 1966. Bill seldom spoke of his service or of the brave and selfless acts he carried out in support of his brothers of the cloth. He was a private, honorable, self-reliant and humble man who wrote the story of his life in deeds not words.

In 1941, while still on active duty, Bill began his long association with the Masonic Rite petitioning to join Naval Lodge 24 here in Pensacola. He completed his degrees and became a Master Mason in 1949 and later earned the 32nd Degree from the Scottish Rite Consistory at Gulfport, Mississippi in 1953. Bill continued to serve his community and the Masons for another 33 years retiring as the Treasurer Emeritus of the Hadji Temple here in Pensacola in 1986 and Honorary Life Member. In 2008 Bill received an award for 60 years of service.

Bill and his wife Sibyl were actively engaged with the First Baptist Church and with Baptist Hospital for decades having donated generously of their time, effort and finances in support of both organizations. He had a rich religious life and was a devout Christian man who lived a clean and honorable life.

During his long and productive life, Bill quietly stood as an inspiration and as an example of the best of what a man should be. He was honorable and stood by his word, generous to those in need, always willing to help his fellow man and loyal to his family and friends. A private and self-reliant man, he seldom asked for help, preferring to take care of his own tasks on his own. At the age of 91 he was still mowing his own lawn, planting his own garden and driving his own car to the store, the pharmacy, restaurants and the bank. He was meticulous and took great pride in doing whatever he did with precision, thoroughness and with careful forethought. A charming, old style gentleman, he was loved by everyone he did business with and was well known, deeply respected and well liked by friends and associates alike. He married his wife Sibyl in 1941, enjoying 68 years of love and mutual growth with her. His every action and deed throughout his life began and ended with his devotion to her, his love for her and with his care for her safety and wellbeing. Like few other men, he saw to it that she would be well cared for and provided enough though he could not finish the last of the journey with her on this earth.

Men like Bill are rare; they don't come often to this world and when they leave us, they take some of the light with them - but only so they can shine it ahead of us and show us the way. Though he left behind no children of his own, there are many other children who loved him, admired him and counted him their father in spirit if not in the flesh. He will be sorely missed, but the good he brought to this Earth in his deeds and the charity of his heart are lasting; they will