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398TH BOMB. GROUP MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION • 8TH AIR FORCE • 1ST AIR DIVISION • NUTHAMPSTEAD, ENGLAND

REMEMBERING THOSE TIMES

I, MAX RAHE, FARMER AND RANCHER FROM CRESCENT, OKLAHOMA, HAD ALWAYS HOPED THAT SOME DAY I COULD FLY --- LITTLE DID I KNOW WHAT IT WOULD COST ME TO PURSUE THAT AMBITION.

THE SUMMER OF 1941 I HAD MARRIED PHYLLIS CARD, AN INSTRUCTOR IN THE LOCAL HIGH SCHOOL. THEN CAME PEARL HARBOR TO CHANGE OUR LIVES IN WAYS THAT OUR WILDEST IMAGININGS COULD NOT EVEN DREAM AT THAT TIME.

THE OLD URGE TO FLY SURFACED, SO AFTER HOURS OF WRITTEN EXAMS AND PHYSICALS I WAS ACCEPTED AS A LOWLY CADET IN THE ARMY AIR CORPS. SOME MONTHS LATER CAME MY CALL TO CLASSIFICATION AND PRE-FLIGHT TRAINING IN SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS, WHERE PHYLLIS WAS ABLE TO JOIN ME. AFTER THAT, IT WAS TO FORT WORTH, TEXAS, AND PRIMARY TRAINING IN THE PT-19 PLANE. IT WAS HERE I MADE MY FIRST SOLO FLIGHT. PHYL WORKED IN PERSONNEL AT CONSOLIDATED-VULTEE PLANT WHERE THE FIRST B-29 WAS BEING RUSHED TO COMPLETION. FROM THERE WE MOVED TO BASIC TRAINING, FLYING THE B-14 IN INDEPENDENCE, KANSAS. LASTLY, WE WERE SENT TO ELLINGTON AIR BASE IN HOUSTON WHERE WE FLEW AT-10 PLANES IN ADVANCED TRAINING. IT WAS ONE PROUD DAY IN EARLY JANUARY, 1944, WHEN PHYL PINNED A PAIR OF SILVER PILOT WINGS ON MY BRAND NEW TAILOR MADE 2ND LT. UNIFORM.

I WAS ORDERED TO RAPID CITY, S. D., THE HOME OF THE 398TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP. THESE FLIERS WERE NOW MY FAMILY AS WE TRAINED IN B-17S FOR OVERSEAS DUTY AND COMBAT. HEAVY BLIZZARDS WERE COMING AT US SO FREQUENTLY THAT WINTER THAT WE WERE OFTEN ORDERED TO PYOTE, TEXAS, IN ORDER TO GET IN OUR HOURS OF FLIGHT TRAINING.

I WAS ASSIGNED TO MILTON (FRED) DUNLAP'S CREW AS CO-PILOT. IMAGINE HIS APPREHENSION AT HAVING SUCH A "GREEN" PILOT SIT NEXT TO HIM IN THE COCKPIT. ONE DID NOT STAY "GREEN" LONG, HOWEVER, UNDER SUCH RIGOROUS TRAINING AND WHEN SUCH MIGHTY FORCES WERE CATAPULTING US TOWARD COMBAT. IN APRIL, 1944, AFTER ONLY EIGHT WEEKS (FOR ME, THAT IS) OF B-17 TRAINING, THE 398TH WITH ITS 72 CREWS WERE ORDERED TO NUTHAMPSTEAD, ENGLAND, AND TO TRIALS AHEAD IT WAS WELL NOONE COULD IMAGINE.

ENROUTE TO ENGLAND WE FLEW TO GRAND ISLAND, NEBRASKA, WHERE WE BECAME "SOCKED" IN FOR ONE WEEK. PHYL WAS THE ONLY WIFE OF THE WHOLE 398TH WHO WAS ABLE TO MAKE IT TO NEBRASKA. TO BE ON THE FLIGHT LINE WHEN ONE MORNING VERY EARLY, OUR 72 PLANES CAME ROARING DOWN THE RUNWAY TO TAKE OFF IN THE EARLY MORNING FOG. WITH STOPS AT

GOOSE BAY, GANDER AND ICELAND, WE FINALLY MADE THE BIG HOP TO ENGLAND TO BECOME AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE "MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR FORCE". THE 1ST COMBAT WING, 1ST AIR DIVISION OF THE "EIGHTH", WAS MADE UP OF THE 398TH, 91ST, AND 381ST BOMBARDMENT GROUPS.

AT THIS TIME, PHYL RETURNED TO HER PARENT'S HOME IN ALVA, OKLAHOMA. SHE WORKED FOR THE ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS AS THEY BUILT A PRISONER OF WAR CAMP OUTSIDE OF ALVA, THEN SHE TRANSFERRED TO THE ARMY AS THEY FILLED AND RAN THE CAMP FOR GERMAN PRISONERS OF WAR. THERE SHE STAYED UNTIL MY RETURN.

OUR CREW WAS EITHER LEADER OR DEPUTY LEAD CREW FOR THE 602ND SQUADRON (PART OF THE 398TH) ON ALL OF OUR MISSIONS,----- ON OCCASION WE EVEN LEAD THE "MIGHTY EIGHTH" DEEP INTO GERMANY. THOUGH OUR PLANE SUFFERED EXTENSIVE DAMAGE, OUR CREW HAD NO PURPLE HEARTS, (THANKFULLY), BUT WE WERE AWARDED AIR MEDALS WITH CLUSTERS FOR SUCCESSFUL MISSIONS. I WAS AWARDED THE DFC, (DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS). MY LAST COMBAT MISSION AS 1ST PILOT WAS FLOWN SEPT. 26, 1944 --- MY 28TH BIRTHDAY.

SHORTLY THEREAFTER, I WAS TRANSFERRED TO CHIPPINGONGAR, ENGLAND, INTO THE 87TH TRANSPORT GROUP. IN WEARY, OLD, B-17S WE FLEW GASOLINE TO PATTON'S TANKS AS THEY RACED THROUGH FRANCE. (FLYING GASOLINE INTO COMBAT ZONES WAS QUITE AN EXHILARATING EXPERIENCE, TO SAY THE LEAST). AFTER THAT, FROM OXFORD, ENGLAND, I FLEW SUPPLIES INTO FRANCE IN C-47S. WE CARRIED EVERYTHING YOU CAN IMAGINE -- FROM PRUNES TO FOUR BUCKLE OVERSHOES. ON ONE OCCASION, I FLEW A CHAPLAIN WITH HIS SARGEANT, TENT, CHAIRS, SUPPLIES, EVEN A FOLD UP ORGAN INTO FRANCE. I HAD THE PRIVILEGE LATER OF BEING ABLE TO ATTEND ONE OF HIS CHRISTMAS SERVICES.

IT WAS ONE BLEAK CHRISTMAS THAT YEAR ----- 1944.

NEXT I WAS SENT TO LE BOURGET AIRPORT IN PARIS. FROM THERE I FLEW C-64 CANADIAN NORSEMAN PLANES WITH MEDICAL SUPPLIES INTO THE "BATTLE OF THE BULGE". ON MY RETURN TO PARIS, I BROUGHT WOUNDED FROM LIEGE, BELGIUM, WHERE THE "BATTLE" WAS RAGING.

I WAS, FINALLY, REASSIGNED TO THE STATES IN JANUARY, 1945, WHERE I MET PHYL IN FORT SMITH, ARKANSAS. FOLLOWING TWO WEEKS IN FLORIDA, WE WERE SENT TO SHERMAN, TEXAS, AND TRANSITION TRAINING IN THE AT-6 PLANE. FROM THERE TO MONROE, LA., WHERE I FLEW NAVIGATION CADETS DURING THEIR TRAINING.

I WAS SEPARATED FROM THE AIR FORCE (AT THAT TIME IT WAS THE AIR CORPS) IN AUG. 1945. WE RETURNED TO CRESCENT, WHERE I TOOK UP MY LIFE FARMING AND RANCHING. AT THAT TIME, I GAVE NO THOUGHT TO THE HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE OF THE MANY MISSIONS IN WHICH I HAD PARTICIPATED WITH THE "MIGHTY EIGHTH". NOW, HOWEVER, FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF 45 YEARS, I CAN FINALLY THINK AND TALK OF THOSE TIMES. I HAVE WRITTEN THIS BARE SKELETON OF FACTS FOR MY DAUGHTER, HER HUSBAND, AND OUR TWO GRANDCHILDREN TO HOPEFULLY READ AND WONDER AT IN YEARS TO COME. MILLIONS DIED SO THEY COULD ENJOY FREEDOM. I WAS FORTUNATE --- I RETURNED TO ENJOY IT ALSO!!

Max H. Lake

"IMMEDIATELY, UPON ARRIVING IN LONDON ON A TYPICAL APRIL, ENGLISH DAY (APRIL 25, 1989 -- RAIN, SNOW, SLEET), WE DROVE TO NUTHAMPSTEAD. IT WAS WITH JOY, SADNESS AND REVERENCE WE STOOD FOR SOME TIME BEFORE THE 398TH MEMORIAL, EACH OF US WRAPPED IN SILENCE. OUR TRIP HAD BEEN PLANNED TO COMMEMORATE OUR ARRIVAL AT NUTHAMPSTEAD FROM RAPID CITY EXACTLY 45 YEARS AGO. THE MEMORIAL IS TRULY DISTINCTIVE AND ONE OF WHICH ALL CAN BE PROUD. OUR THANKS TO ALL WHO MADE IT POSSIBLE."

MAX & PHYLLIS RAHE, R 1, 325 S. PINE,
CRESCENT, OK. 73028

FRED & MARY DUNLAP, 230 MIDDLETON SHORES,
ANDERSON, S.C. 29621

(THE ABOVE LETTER TAKEN FROM THE 398TH BOMB GROUP FLAK NEWS, JULY 1989.)



"THEIR WINGS OF SILVER TOUCHED THE PASSING CLOUDS,
MADE SOFT WHITE TRAILS ACROSS THE AZURE BLUE. BUT
NOT FOR THEM THIS LIFE WE SHARE ON EARTH; THEY
SACRIFICED THAT GIFT FOR ME AND YOU."

C O M B A T M I S S I O N S

8TH AIR FORCE

398TH BOMB GP.,
602 SQ.

BOEING 4 ENGINE -- B-17

<u>DATE</u>	<u>DESTINATION</u>	<u>TOTAL HOURS</u>
11 MAY, 1944	BETTEMBOURG, FRANCE	6:30
13 MAY, "	POLITZ, GERMANY	10:00
19 May, "	BERLIN, GERMANY	10:15
22 MAY, "	KIEL, GERMANY	8:00
25 MAY, "	NANCY, FRANCE	7:00
27 MAY, "	LUDWIGSHAFEN, GERMANY	7:00
31 MAY, "	MULHOUSE, FRANCE	6:15
6 JUNE, "	COURSEULLES, FRANCE	5:45
12 JUNE, "	LILLE, FRANCE	5:00
15 JUNE, "	BORDEAUX, FRANCE	8:00
AS OF 20 JUNE, 1944, ADDITIONAL NUMBER OF SORTIES CREDITED IS <u>TWO</u> , AS DETERMINED BY TWX, 1ST BOMB DIVISION, U-997-E, DATED 20 JUNE, 1944..		
23 JUNE, "	FEIFS, FRANCE	4:30
25 JUNE, "	TOULOUSE, FRANCE	10:00
27 JUNE, "	BIENNAIS, FRANCE	5:45
6 JULY, "	CAUCHIE - D'ECQUES, FRANCE	4:00
7 JULY, "	LEIPZIG, GERMANY	8:20
19 JULY, "	LECHFELD, GERMANY	8:20
24 JULY, "	MONTREUIL AREA, FRANCE	5:30

C O M B A T M I S S I O N S

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25 JULY, 1944	MONTREUIL AREA, FRANCE	5:30
29 JULY, "	LEUNA, GERMANY	9:20
1 AUG. "	MELUN/VILLAROCHE, FRANCE	7:30
6 AUG. "	BRANDENBURG, GERMANY	9:30
15 AUG. "	OSTHEIM, GERMANY	7:30
23 AUG. "	NEUBRANDENBURG, GERMANY	9:30
8 SEPT. "	LUDWIGSHAFEN, GERMANY	9:00
13 SEPT. "	LUTZKENDORF, GERMANY	8:30
17 SEPT. "	EINDHOVEN AREA, HOLLAND	5:30
25 SEPT. "	FRANKFURT, GERMANY	7:15
26 SEPT. "	OSNABRUCK, GERMANY	6:50

COMBAT MISSIONS FLOWN BY PILOT MAX N. RAHE, 1ST LT., O-705423.
MISSIONS FLOWN FROM NUTHAMPSTEAD, ENGLAND, STATION # 131.

VERIFIED BY: THOMAS G. HEARN,
CAPTAIN, AIR CORPS,
ASS'T ADJUTANT.

THESE COMBAT MISSIONS CONSISTED OF FIVE SQUADRON LEADS, TWELVE GROUP
LEADS, AND TEN WING LEADS.

SEPARATION

ARMY
QUALIFICATION

RECORD

LAST NAME - FIRST NAME - MIDDLE INITIAL RAHE, MAX N.	ARMY SERIAL NUMBER 0 705 423	GRADE 1stLt	DATE OF ENTRY INTO ACTIVE SERVICE 7 Jan 44	SEX M	DATE OF BIRTH 26 Sept 16
PERMANENT ADDRESS FOR MAILING PURPOSES (Street and Number - City - County - State) R. F. D. Crescent, Logan County, Oklahoma					

CIVILIAN EDUCATION

HIGHEST GRADE COMPLETED 1 year college	LAST YEAR OF ATTENDANCE 1936	HIGHEST DEGREE RECEIVED None	MAJOR COURSE OF STUDY Academic	NAME AND ADDRESS OF LAST SCHOOL ATTENDED Oklahoma A & M Stillwater, Oklahoma	
OTHER TRAINING OR SCHOOLING					
COURSE None	NO. HRS.	COURSE	NO. HRS.	COURSE	NO. HRS.

SERVICE EDUCATION

SERVICE SCHOOL	COURSE	WKS.	RATING	ARMY SPECIALIZED TRAINING PROGRAM		
San Antonio, Tex.	Preflight, Pilot	17	Comp	INSTITUTION WHERE ENROLLED	CURRICULUM AND TERM (COURSE OF TRAINING PURSUED)	NO. OF WEEKS
Ft. Worth, Tex.	Primary, Pilot	9	Comp	None		
Independence, Kan.	Basic, Pilot	9	Comp			
Ellington Fld, Tex.	Advanced, Pilot	9	Comp			

CIVILIAN OCCUPATIONS

MAIN OCCUPATION (TITLE) Farmer, Livestock		SECONDARY OCCUPATION (TITLE) None	
JOB SUMMARY Operated 1200 acre farm. Fattened 150 cattle per year. Raised wheat, oats, and barley.		JOB SUMMARY	
NO. OF YEARS 6	LAST DATE OF EMPLOY- MENT July 1942	NAME AND ADDRESS OF EMPLOYER Self Employed Crescent, Okla.	

MILITARY SPECIALTIES

YEARS	MONTHS	GRADE	PRINCIPAL DUTY	ARMY CODE NO.	YEARS	MONTHS	GRADE	PRINCIPAL DUTY	ARMY CODE NO.
1	6	1stLt	Pilot, B-17	1091					
1	7	1stLt	Pilot, Two Engine	1051					
1	7	1stLt	Pilot, Single Engine	1054					

SUMMARY OF MILITARY OCCUPATION AND ASSIGNMENTS:
PILOT, B-17: Was co-pilot and later pilot of B-17 aircraft and commanded crew on 30 combat missions (225 combat hours) against enemy targets in France, Belgium, Holland, and Germany. Flew five squadron leads, twelve group leads, ten wing leads. Total pilot time: approximately 828 hours.

SUMMARY OF MILITARY OCCUPATION AND ASSIGNMENTS:
PILOT, TWO ENGINE AND PILOT, SINGLE ENGINE: Piloted C-47 aircraft transporting gas and medical supplies to France. Flew C-64 aircraft transporting medical supplies to front and bringing wounded back. After return to U.S., underwent refresher training and flew routine training missions.

* THIS INFORMATION BASED ON SOLDIER'S STATEMENT. (Indicate by * any items not supported by military records)

DATE OF SEPARATION 7 July 45	SIGNATURE OF SOLDIER <i>Max N. Rahe</i>	SIGNATURE OF SEPARATION CLASSIFICATION OFFICER <i>W. S. Halliday</i> W. S. Halliday, 1st Lt. AGD
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