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15.9.97

Dear Stephen,

Many thanks for your letter of Sept 11 forwarding your late father-in-law's record of Service. I was indeed surprised and interested to see that you have been sent a copy of his original record. In my time we would not have dreamed of sending the complete record. We always vetted the record and removed any information that was felt could be embarrassing to the recipient or his/her next of kin. I suppose with the Disclosure of Information Act the holders of any personal information or an individual are required by law to supply same upon request.

The original record was on card the size of the photocopy that you have been sent. It was entitled "Permanent Record of Service. RAF Form 543". The dark strip across the top the printout is celloTape used to repair damage to the card. Continued handling was in fact causing considerable damage to the cards. They were placed on film and viewed via a VDU which had a print out capability, which you have received.

The top portion of page 1 contains information which is self explanatory, i.e. date & place of birth, civil occupation, next of kin etc. He was categorised as Medical grade 1 on 18.3.1942 and recruited for training as pilot or observer by N° 30 Aircrew Selection Panel (Board) 28.3.1942 and this fact confirmed on RAF Form 2171 (His Decrement would have been held in his personal file). Under "Good conduct BADGES" he received his 1st badge worth 3 pence (old money) a day. Corporals and above did not wear the badge which was a single diamond, inverted, worn on the cuff of jacket sleeve on left arm. A total of 3 could be earned and worn. It required 3 years service without any offences committed to warrant awarding of the badge. Under "Miscellaneous" the entry W.S. 3 years 21.11.1945 is a record of the War Service Decrement earned at that date. 6p (old money) per day was stopped as income tax towards the cost of the war. After the war this money was repaid to an individual as a lump ~~sum~~ sum.

Under Promotions, RECLASSIFICATIONS REVERSIONS on page 2, are shown the ranks achieved by your late father-in-law upon enlistment Aircraftman 2nd Class (AC2). Reclassified to Leading Aircraftman (LAC) upon commencing pilot training. Promoted to temporary

Sergeant (T/Sgt) upon successful completion of pilot training. Promotion to higher NCO ranks came automatically to aircrew personnel each year, subject to Commanding Officer's recommendation as worthy of the rank. T/F/Sgt = Temporary Flight Sergeant, T/W/O = Temporary Warrant Officer.

Under "Special Qualifications" is recorded the fact he successfully completed a Flight Engineer's course with a 60.30% pass. Towards the end of the war it was a practice to have some pilots trained as engineers as well as a pilot to cover possible crew member losses during operations. Bombardiers were trained also to navigate.

I have attached as a separate listing my interpretation of the details of late father-in-law's movements. I hope this will give you a fuller understanding of what his service covered amounted to. Do let me know if I can be of any further assistance. Almost forgot - the section "CURRENT EVENTS" - the letter D. of P. E. means Duration of Present Emergency. All regular enlistment ceased in August 1939 when general mobilisation came about and every body came into the service for the duration of the war.

Sincerely
Robert Robson

-1A
DETAILS of SERVICE

3. RC.

N^o 3 Reception Centre. He was sent home after allocation etc and instructed to await calling. To the reserve (RES) N^o 1 Aircrew reception centre.

1 ACR
10 ITW.

N^o 10 Initial Training Wing. (Foot drill, rifle drill, aircraft recognition etc. - all good character building!!)

ACDC

Aircrew Disposal Centre. A unit responsible for sending each aircrew catering to respective training. i.e. air gunners, navigators etc.

11 EFTS (@ = attached)

N^o 11 Elementary Flying Training School. Projective aircrew, especially pilots, are listed as to suitability for pilot training or not.

ACDC

LUDLOW (@)

Returned from EFTS
Cannot say what his attachment was for!

ACDC

DRAFT 8049.

Returned from Ludlow
Placed on draft for overseas posting to CANADA.

9 EFTS

N^o 9 Elementary Flying Training School CANADA

5 EFTS

N^o 5 Service Flying Training School CANADA

31 PD

N^o 31 Personnel Disposal - preparing to return to UK. Posted to Home Establishment.

HE

Emb CANADA.
Dis UK

Board ship for UK
Disembark UK ex
Canada.

7 FRC

N^o 7 Personnel Reception Centre
(awaiting a posting to a
UK unit for additional
training)

WHITLEY BAY (Q)
7 FRC
15 EFTS

Returns to Reception Centre
N^o 15 Elementary Repair
Training School (Probably
Twin engine training)
Returns to Reception Centre
?

7 FRC
ACNEOS
17 FRC
4 S of TT

N^o 17 Personnel Reception Centre
High Engine Training.
(This was at RAF ST ATHAN
in South Wales)

76 BASE.

Three Falcons were group
to get to form a base.
N^o 1660 Conversion Unit
(ACU). Training on 4 engine
aircraft.

1660 CU (A)

76 BASE
ACS DALTON

Aviation School Dalton in
YORKSHIRE - Recruit training
to prepare for bombing
operations & bombing
techniques and practice
1022?

76 BASE
72 BASE
425 Squadron

N^o 425 RAF Squadron
to fly Lancaster bombers

428 (cont)

427 Squadron

97 Sqd.
6 (P) AFU

TC HU.

HQ N° 229 Group.

353 Squadron.

3 RC
UK
3 POC

Dis UK & India

RAF Middleham - St-George
outside Dalton. Co Durham
N° 427 RAF Squadron at
LEEMING, YORKSHIRE to
fly LAUNCELOT bombers

N° 6 (Pilots) Advanced Type
Unit. Properly as an
instructor pending release
from service.

Transport Command
Headquarters Unit - has
been posted overseas to
India.

Unit responsible for
flying units in India.
No information - could
have been LIBERATORS

N° 3 Reception Centre
posted back to the UK
N° 3 Personnel Disposal
Centre for release on
CLASS 'A' on 21.11.46

United Kingdom from
India for discharge

Page 1. It will be seen that your late
father-in-law was completely released
from all service responsibilities on
14.2.1947.

Synopsis of Service

Enlisted as a volunteer to be trained

as a pilot. Following basic recruit training he was selected suitable for pilot training and sent to CANADA. Completed training as pilot and received his wings as a single engine aircraft pilot. As a result of policy upon his return from Canada it was decided he should train as a Heavy Engineer and as a pilot/Heavy Engineer he joined a four engine aircraft Squadron for operations against Germany. After the day went to India to fly passenger Lockheed on transport work.

I regret I am unable to identify the locations of most of the units at which your father-in-law served. I would suggest therefore you may care to contact the RAF Museum (Archives section) who may be able to help, or the Historical Air Branch.

Details of operational flying can be obtained from 2 sources now. The individual's flying log book, or from the RAF Form 510 and 511, which are held by the Public Records Office at Kew.

See page 4 for addresses of those members for help with further details.