



**Orris E. Herr**

**57-43**

**First Lieutenant, U.S. Army**

**Service # O1179441**

**202nd Field Artillery Battalion**

**Entered the Service from: Iowa**

**Died: 4-Dec-1944**

**Buried at: Plot C Row 30 Grave 36**

**Lorraine American Cemetery**

**St. Avold, France**

**Awards: Purple Heart**



**Orris Elton Herr was born in Creston, Iowa on 6 September 1921, the son of Harry L. Herr and Elizabeth M. Smith. He was inducted into the Army on 3 September 1942 and completed basic training at the Field Artillery Replacement Center at Camp Roberts, San Miguel, California.**

**Three months earlier on 6 June 1942, the Secretary of War ordered the establishment of organic air observation for Field Artillery. Army Ground Forces would have their own pilots and aircraft which would be separate from Army Air Force liaison personnel. The aerial adjustment of artillery fire was both the purpose for the establishment of organic Army Aviation and its single most important function during WWII. After it came to be accepted by artillery commanders, organic aviation was a complete success in this mission.**

**Initially, all tactical flight training students already had civilian pilot licenses. As the supply of licensed pilots ran out, the Army Air Force, which had responsibility for providing rated pilots to the Army Ground Forces, contracted with civilian companies to conduct primary flight instruction. Also, the Army wanted only enlisted men for liaison pilot training. That changed in April 1943 when enlisted soldiers began attending Officer Candidate School before flight school.**

**Elton graduated from the Field Artillery Officer Candidate School at Fort Sill, Oklahoma and was commissioned as a 2nd lieutenant on 25 March 1943.**

**He then reported to Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri for four months of training. In September 1943, Elton was assigned to the Second Army Air Force Liaison Training Detachment at Pittsburg, Kansas for flight school. The primary training phase consisted of 9 weeks of liaison pilot training at Pittsburg, Kansas, or Denton, Texas (Training was discontinued at Denton, TX, in November 1943 and conducted only at Pittsburg, KS, until the end of 1944). Atkinson Municipal Airport was located about 3.5 miles northwest of Pittsburg. McFarland Flying Service, a civilian flying school under contract to the AAF, provided the flight training and conducted the ground school for the students. The instructors were all civilians. Glider pilots were also trained at the facility.**

**Elton graduated from Class Forty-Four of the Second Army Air Force Liaison Training Detachment at Pittsburg, Kansas on 22 November 1943 and was awarded the wings of a liaison pilot. The ceremony was held at the Besse Hotel located at Fourth and Locust Streets in Pittsburg.**

**1st Lt. Herr joined the 202nd in France on 26 October 1944 and was assigned to HQ Battery as a liaison pilot. He replaced 2nd Lt. Walter R. White who was wounded by enemy machine gun fire.**

**He was killed on 4 December 1944, along with 1st Lieutenant John W. White, when the L-4 Grasshopper observation and liaison aircraft they were flying was hit by friendly artillery fire. A howitzer of "B" Battery was conducting registration fire in the area of Hinsbourg, France when the plane was hit and fell in flames near Puberg, Bas-Rhin, Alsace. The bodies of Liaison Pilot Orris E. Herr and Observer John W. White were recovered and taken to the Graves Registration Officer at Puberg.**

The crew of the Battalion's other liaison plane had suffered the same fate only two weeks earlier. Elton, age 23, was survived by his wife and a son who would be born three months later.

Lt. Herr was buried at 1515 hours on 6 December 1944 in the U.S. Military Cemetery at Hochfelden, France. On 3 February 1949, he was permanently interred in the Lorraine American Cemetery near St. Avold, France in Plot C Row 30 Grave 36.

**LT. ORRIS ELTON HERR HAS NEW ASSIGNMENT**

Lt. Orris Elton Herr, son of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Herr now of Algona but formerly of Creston, has recently been given a new assignment after spending the last four months at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo.

He is taking 10 weeks of basic flying training at the liaison flying school, Pittsburg, Kan., upon completion of which he will be sent to the air training field artillery school at Fort Sill, Okla.

Herr was inducted in September, 1942, and took his basic training at Camp Roberts, Calif. Three months later he entered field artillery officer candidate school at Fort Sill from which he was graduated and commissioned on March 25 of this year.

His wife is still in Rolla, Mo., but expects to join him at Pittsburg, Kan., in the near future.

The lieutenant's present address is: Orris E. Herr, O-1179441, 2nd A.A.F. Liaison Tr. Dept., Pittsburg, Kan.

**ELTON HERR IS LIAISON PILOT**

Lt. Orris Elton Herr has been awarded the wings of a liaison pilot at Pittsburg, Kan., according to a bulletin from the army air force liaison training detachment.

The new liaison pilot is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Herr, formerly of Creston but now of Algona. He was inducted in September, 1942, took his basic at Camp Roberts, Calif., and was commissioned in March of this year upon graduation from the field artillery officer candidate school at Fort Sill, Okla.

He is now returning to Fort Sill for advanced training in piloting the "grasshopper" observation planes.

