

FS James Patrick McKay R/58824 RCAF

James was born on 25 February 1915 in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, the son of James McKay and Brigid Frances McKay nee Garvey.

Educated at Provencher School, St Boniface and St John Baptiste School, Manitoba, James pursued an academic career. Studying at the University of St Louis, Missouri, Dayton University, Ohio, USA, St Mary's University San Antonio, Texas and the University of Manitoba, James specialised in Science and Mathematics and was awarded a BA and BSc

On graduation, James was employed as a science and mathematics teacher in Central High, San Antonio, Texas, USA, Provencher Collegiate, St Boniface and, in January 1940, when he volunteered for service with the RCAF he was employed by the Dauphin Collegiate Institute, Manitoba.

Called up in May 1940, James completed his aircrew training in Canada in October 1940 with the award of his Observer badge and embarked for the UK in December.

Following advanced training at 20 OTU RAF Lossiemouth, Scotland, in May 1941 James was posted to 214 Sqn at RAF Stradishall, Suffolk.

On 2/3 September 1941, Bomber Command was tasked with an attack on Frankfurt, Hesse, Germany, a key industrial and transportation centre and home to numerous industrial installations. A combined force of 126 aircraft, including twelve 214 Sqn crews, was allocated to the op. The squadron's main target was the Frankfurt Marshalling yards.

At 20:25 on 2 September James, operating as the Navigator, and the crew departed RAF Stradishall in Wellington Ic R1717 (BU-R).

Approaching the French coast, James's aircraft was shot down by enemy fire and crashed into the sea off Dunkirk, Hauts-de-France, killing all on board.

Also Killed: F/L Reginald Hubert May (Pilot); Sgt Lionel Black (WOp/AG); Sgt Jesse Clemence Brakeman RCAF (AG); Sgt Clifford Hambleton (Pilot); Sgt Leslie Whitehouse Price (WOp/AG)

James is buried in Dunkirk Town Cemetery, Nord, France

James is commemorated on Wall Panel 209

Photo Source: veterans.gc.ca

