FO Terrance Valleau McKee J/37716 RCAF



Terrance was born on 28 March 1920 in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, the only son of Major Norman Frederick McKee and Josephine Adrien McKee nee Valleau.

Terrance had just completed his education when, in September 1938, he enlisted in the RCAF and was employed on ground support duties.

In May 1941 Terrance applied to re-muster as aircrew. Accepted for training in January 1943 Terrance commenced pilot training; however, when his training was terminated in May 1943, he re-mustered as Air Bomber.

In October 1943 Terrance completed his training in Canada with the award of his AB badge, was granted commission and immediately embarked for the UK.

Following advanced training at 1(O) Advanced Flying Unit, RAF Wigtown, Dumfries and Galloway, Scotland, 84 OTU RAF Desborough, Northamptonshire and 31 Base RAF Shepherds Grove, Suffolk, in September 1944 Terrance was posted to 214 Sqn at RAF Oulton, Norfolk.

On 16/17 January 1945, Bomber Command was tasked with attacks on Magdeburg, Zeitz, Brux and Wanne-Eickel, with minor ops to Mannheim and Hamburg. A total of 1,238 ops were completed, including 55 Radio Counter Measure ops. Eight 214 Sqn crews were allocated to support the ops, and Terrance's crew was tasked with a "Jostle Patrol", the airborne jamming of German radio communications which prevented the Luftwaffe's ability to co-ordinate night fighter defences against the bombing stream, on the Brux op.

At 18:00 on 16 January Terrance, operating as the Bomb Aimer, and the crew departed RAF Oulton in Fortress III KJ103 (BU-M).

Weather was poor on the return, with reduced visibility in fog. On making an approach to the in-use runway the wheels were not fully down and could not be wound down in time for the landing. The Captain elected to make a RH circuit in order for the crew to address the problem, and on attempting to align with the runway hit the top of a 40ft tree in the approach area, 500 yds short of the runway. Ten feet of the port wing was lost and, at 02:40 on 17 January, the aircraft crashed, killing Terrance, seriously injuring 4, slightly injuring 3 with the rest of the crew unharmed. This was Terrance's 27th op.

Terrance is buried in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey

Terrance is commemorated on Wall Panel 209

Photo Source: findagrave