

" Terry " Spencer Terence (RAF n°47269)

Distinguished Flying Cross, Belgian Croix de Guerre 1940 with Palm, ...



(Dan Johnson Collection)

Terence Spencer was born on 8 March 1918 during a Zeppelin raid in Bedford England. He took an engineering degree at Birmingham University. Originally in the Corps of Royal Engineers, he was commissioned from Acting Lance Corporal to Second Lieutenant wef 20 December 1939. An Army Council Instruction (ACI) was issued in February 1941, which, basically, stated that following the losses during the RAF's Battles, the Royal Air Force was going to expand the flying branches as quickly as possible. Approximately 18,000 Army Officers applied from this ACI. "Terry" Spencer volunteered for aircrew and received his commission on 11 October 1941. After serving as Flight Commander in 165 (Ceylon) Squadron in spring 1944, he was posted to 41 Squadron, initially in ADGB, but from December 1944 in 125 Wing at B.64 Schaffen/Diest. He was promoted S/Ldr and went to 350 (Belgian) Squadron on 4 January 1945. On 26 February 1945 his aircraft caught fire in the Rheine-Lingen area and he had to bail out. He was made POW. He and another pilot escaped when the main gate of the camp was open. They reached Allied lines on bicycles. He rejoined his Squadron, but on 19 April, his plane was hit by rocket fire when he was strafing a trawler in the Wismar Bay. His plane disintegrated and by a miracle, he could open his parachute at a height of 50 feet. Captured again, he was liberated by advancing Allied troops on 4 May and returned to the UK. He was authorised to wear the Belgian Croix de Guerre 1940 with Palm wef 24 January 1947. After the war Terence flew a single-engined airplane 8000 miles to South Africa without radio and only emergency supplies. He ran a successful aerial photographic business outside Johannesburg with his actress wife, Lesley Brook. Terence started shooting for LIFE Magazine in 1952 covering the troubles of the African continent including Sharpville and the Congo revolution. He went on to cover stories that took him to far, distant, lonely and dangerous places, including the Vietnam war, various crises in the Middle East, Indonesia, and Cuba after The Bay of Pigs. In 1963 he returned to England to photograph "Swinging London". At the request of his 13 year old daughter, Cara, Terence chronicled the Beatles phenomena as it was taking off, and produced a definitive book on the band, "It Was 30 Years Ago Today." He went on to shoot celebrity stories for PEOPLE Magazine which included portraits of stage and screen personalities, as well as politicians, writers and pop groups. Rockarchive has but a small selection from his vast archive. Terence is still traveling and shooting and he and his wife have written a book about their lives called "Living Dangerously". He passed away at Odiham, Hampshire, on 8 February 2009, aged 90.

He was awarded the DFC on 22 June 1945, citation as follows:

Acting Squadron Leader Terence SPENCER (47269), R.A.F. (Lieut., Corps of Royal

Engineers).

"This officer's keenness for air operations has won great praise. He has completed a very large number of sorties and has invariably attacked his targets with great courage and determination thereby achieving much success. On one occasion in February 1945, Squadron Leader Spencer was forced to come down in enemy territory. He was captured, but subsequently rejoined his unit. He has been responsible for the destruction of one enemy aircraft and a good number of mechanical vehicles."

(source : Christopher Shores, Clive Williams and Jill Furmanovsky)

His claims are :

03/09/1944	1 FW-190	Tienen (41 Sqn)
19/04/1945	1 Ju-88 Destroyed on the ground	Lauenburg
23/06/1944	1 V-1	Hastings (41 Sqn)
25/06/1944	1 V-1	Hastings (41 Sqn)
09/08/1944	1 V-1	Hastings (41 Sqn)
19/08/1944	1 V-1	Appledore (41 Sqn)
23/28/1944	1 V-1	Folkestone (41 Sqn)
23/08/1944	1 V-1	Harrietsham (41 Sqn)
27/08/1944	1 V-1	Rye (41 Sqn)

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