



# BIOGRAPHY

## A DOCUMENTED ORIGINAL TUSKEGEE AIRMAN

TUSKEGEE AIRMEN INC. PUBLIC RELATIONS, P.O. Box 830060  
TUSKEGEE, AL 36083

## MR. VICTOR W. TERRELONGUE

Major Victor W. Terrelongue  
Original Tuskegee Airmen



Victor Woodrow Terrelongue was born November 14, 1922 in Jamaica, W.I. His birth was registered in January, 1923 and the birth date was recorded incorrectly. He joined his mother, a nurse in New York City, when he was approximately 13 years old. He attended Aviation High School, graduating in only three (3) years, at the age of 16. Upon graduation, he applied and was accepted at City College in New York. During that summer he went to a theatre in Times Square and saw newsreels of airplanes landing on Naval ships. Upon leaving the theatre, he went directly to the Naval Recruiting office to enlist. The Officer returned to the waiting room and announced to the recruits that if their names are not called, they failed the test and should leave. Victor's name was not called. Victor knew he could not have failed that test and was angry. He stated, he knew if he acted out, he would have to face his mother's wrath. When the Officer returned and screamed, "BOY! WHY ARE YOU STILL HERE?" Victor calmly

requested to see his test results. The Officer took him to the rear and explained to Victor he had scored high, but the Navy would never allow him the opportunity to fly (because of the color of his skin). The Officer wrote a letter and sealed it in an envelope, telling Victor to take the letter to the Army Air Corps, Whitehall Street, recruiting office. When Victor arrived at the recruiting office, someone tried to take the letter from him, but Victor stated he was ordered to hand deliver the letter to the Officer indicated on the envelope. Eventually Victor presented the letter to the Officer and the recruiting process began. Upon being weighed, the physician saw Victor's weight was a pound shy of the requirement. He told Victor to start drinking water until he was told to stop. According to Victor, he drank water until he met the weight requirement. That day the recruiting officer realized Victor was born in Jamaica, W. I. Victor explained he was a Naturalized Citizen and could serve. Victor wrote to Washington, D.C. to obtain the necessary waiver.

His Enlistment Record indicates: "*Waiver of ten-year citizenship by order of Sect of Enl. By authority contained in letter, War Dept AGO, 1stInd Dated November 30, 1942*". Victor received a letter and returned to the Army Air Corps Recruiting Office. He was about to be inducted when they realized he was only 16 years old, given the January birthdate. They told him to have his mother sign a document that would allow him to serve, and return it by a given date. Well, his mother, in her strong Jamaican accent stated, "If God had wanted you to fly, you would have been born with wings." Victor fretted but his mother would not relent. On the due date, his sister signed his mother's name and Victor went directly to the recruiting Office, and was inducted. Sometime later, his mother came home from work to learn her only son was on a train bound for Tuskegee, Alabama. (Not sure if his older sister wanted to get rid of the pesky younger brother, or took pity on him and signed her mother's name.)

1943 - 1944:

AAF- GTD- Tuskegee, Ala.- Academic College Course- 5 months- 1943;

AAF- Flying- 3 months- 1944;

April 28, 1943 Kessler Field, Biloxi, Mississippi [Harry Stewart & Victor were sent together]

September, 1943 - NOTED on papers: "Trfs Current Pay and Alws (XX) **Due Solo Flying Pay**"

Victor married Yvonne Plummer, December 18, 1943 and our last name changed to "gue"  
(the day after Spann and Edna Watson were married. Per Edna Watson).

August 1944 - Shaw Fld, SC

October 1944 - Sioux Falls, South Dakota: Victor, along with Gus Palmer and others stationed.

Victor's Military papers state: AERIAL ENGINEER: "Supervised 10 crew members, directing them in actual flight operations. Checked instruments and was responsible for functions of entire ship. Was chief of hydraulics department composed of 15 members who maintained all hydraulic equipment (both planes and ground machinery)"

1945:

SPECIAL ORDERS: Headquarters Amarillo Army Air Field, Amarillo 1945: B-17 Transition Course

AFTS- Amarillo, Texas- B-17 Airplane Mechanic- 13 weeks- 1945;

1945: AAFTS- Amarillo- B-17 Transition Airplane Mechanic- 6 weeks- 1945

1946:

American Service Medal - Good Conduct Medal - World War II Victory Medal

Place of Separation: SEP CTR, FT DIX, NJ

Discontinuance Effective Date: February 28, 1946.

Date of next Premium Pay March 31, 1946.

Total Amount and name of Disbursing Officer: \$111.43, J. Harris Col. FD

After seeing he received pilot pay, his daughters googled Aerial Engineer and later Newsweek stated:

*During WW-II Aerial Engineers were pilots and responsible for all aspects of the aircraft. When jets were introduced it was no longer required that Aerial Engineers fly the aircraft.*

