

303rd BG(H) Combat Mission No. 27

31 March 1943

Target: Wilton Shipyards, Rotterdam, The Netherlands

Crews Dispatched: 20

Crews Lost: Lt. James R. Dunn - 7 KIA, 3 injured in bail-out

Lt. Keith O. Bartlett - 8 KIA, 2 uninjured in bail-out

Length of Mission: 4 hours, 45 minutes

Bomb Load: 6 x 1000 lb H.E. M44 bombs

Bombing Altitude: 24,000 ft

Ammo Fired: 13,770 rounds

Seeing a possible break in the weather, the Wing sent in a loading order at 0335 hours, and followed it up with an operational order at 0600 hours, giving the Rotterdam shipyards as the primary target. No secondary or last resort targets were named.

The briefing, held by Maj. **Green**, was scheduled for 0800 with the take-off set at 0935, which meant that a few short cuts were necessary. In the past at least three hours had been allowed between briefing and take-off. This worked to the disadvantage of most crews, as verified in their comments at post mission debriefing.

At 0935, Maj. **Romig**, 359th BS(H) CO, took off followed by nineteen other B-17s. The last plane was in the air at 0946 hours.

Shortly after take-off, at approximately 1026 hours, Capt. **Shayler**, who was flying with Lt. **Bilek** in the 360th's plane #42-5382 *Witches Tit*, returned as an abortive after losing contact with the formation in heavy cloud cover. The crew reported seeing two B-17s collide in mid-air.

The colliding B-17s were later verified as the 360th BS #41-24559, *Ooold Soljer*, and the 358th BS #42-29573, *Two Beauts*. *Ooold Soljer* was Capt. Lewis **Lyle's** regular B-17F that he flew overseas. The two aircraft collided when the right formation passed through 10/10 clouds in the vicinity of Wellingboro. *Ooold Soljer* was completely demolished and was seen to have lost its right wing from the No. 4 engine. *Two Beauts* was later salvaged. In 1996 a memorial was erected at the crash site near Mears Ashby, U.K.

Casualties from 1Lt. Keith O. **Bartlett's** crew in *Ooold Soljer* were: 1Lt. Kent M. **Fitzsimmons**, 1Lt. Richard C. **Browning**, S/Sgt. Claude A. **Hamilton**, T/Sgt. Gene K. **Smith**, S/Sgt. Robert H. **Sangster**, S/Sgt. Edward A. **Bradford**, and S/Sgt. Woodward W. **Smith**. T/Sgt. Clayton S. **Balcombe** and S/Sgt. Tom **McGiffin** were able to bail out. S/Sgt. **McGiffin** was uninjured, but T/Sgt. **Balcombe** was injured and hospitalized. Lt. **Bartlett**, Lt. **Fitzsimmons**, Lt. **Browning**, S/Sgt. **Hamilton**, T/Sgt. **Smith** and S/Sgt. **Bradford** are buried in Cambridge American Cemetery, England.

Casualties from 1Lt. J.R. **Dunn's** crew in *Two Beauts* were: 2Lt. Keith L. **Hafen**, 2Lt. George H. **Boyd**, 2Lt. Robert A. **Lizotte**, T/Sgt. Lamoine D. **Yager**, S/Sgt. Carl E. **Shellman** and S/Sgt. Eugene C. **Clowe**. T/Sgt. Earl **Hogue**, Sgt. William A. **Testoni** and S/Sgt. Stanislaus **Nowak** were able to bail out. Sgt. **Testoni** was uninjured, but T/Sgt. **Hogue** and S/Sgt. **Nowak** were injured and hospitalized. Lt. **Boyd** and T/Sgt. **Yager** are buried in Cambridge American Cemetery, England.



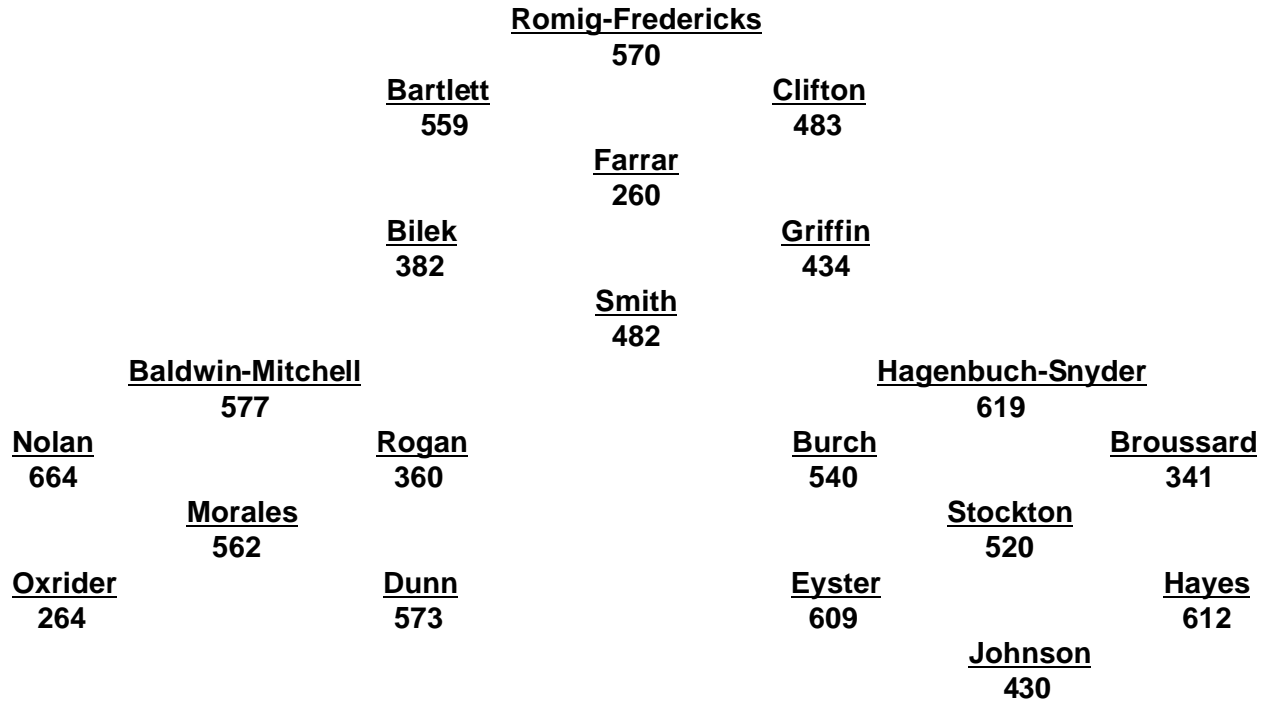
Memorial to the Crews of *Ooold Soljer* and *Two Beauts* in Mears Ashby, England. Dedicated: 31 March 1996

Seventeen remaining aircraft went on to bomb Rotterdam with 51 tons of 1,000-lb. bombs from 24,000 feet. Because of poor visibility over the target area, observation of bombing results was difficult. Some bombs were seen to hit the target through breaks in the clouds. Photos taken later were of little help. The 8th Air Force dispatched 102 aircraft on the mission and only 33 bombed the target, 17 of which were in the 303rd BG(H). S/Sgt. Robert C. **Blake**, the tail gunner of *Sky Wolf*, remarked, "Sitting in the tail gives me a chance to observe the bombing results. I saw quite a few hits on the target. I would say it was pretty fair."

Flak over the target, as well as over three other points, was reported as slight and inaccurate. Due to strong winds and almost zero visibility, the course taken was at times off that prescribed. About 25 enemy aircraft were reported. Most were seen on the last diversion leg and no encounters were experienced. There were no contact casualties. All 17 aircraft returned safely between the hours of 1417 and 1442.

A submarine was sighted about twenty miles off the English coast on the return trip. It submerged when the Group aircraft flew over. 1Lt. Eddie J. **Broussard**, pilot of *Vicious Virgin*, observed an airplane dinghy floating in the channel in sight of the English coast. With no fear of enemy fighters in the vicinity, he peeled off and circled down to investigate. He was a rescue ship and several Spitfires heading in the general direction of the dinghy. 1Lt. William G. **LeFevre**, co-pilot of *Vicious Virgin*, fired several flares to guide the rescuers to the proper spot.

Aircraft Formation at Assembly Point



One (1) aircraft aborted this mission:
 Lt. Bilek in 382

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

CREW POSITIONS CMP - Command Pilot P - Pilot CP - Co-Pilot NAV - Navigator ANV - Ass't. Navigator MNV - Mickey Navigator ENG - Engineer BOM - Bombardier RO - Radio Operator	TOG - Toggler BT - Ball Turret Operator TT - Top Turret Operator TG - Tail Gunner NG - Nose Gunner RG - Radio Gunner WG - Waist Gunner LWG - Left Waist Gunner RWG - Right Waist Gunner GUN - Gunner	VI - Voice Interpreter OBS - Observer PAS - Passenger PHO - Photographer RESULTS OF MISSION KIA - Killed in action WIA - Wounded in action MIA - Missing in action POW - Prisoner of war	DOW - Died of wounds EVD - Evaded the enemy INT - Interned in neu cntry REP - Repatriated RES - Rescued ESC - Escaped BO - Bailed out DCH - Ditched CR-L - Crashed on land CR-S - Crashed at sea
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358th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

B-17F #41-24562 *Sky Wolf*

P Morales, Carl H., 1Lt
 CP Swaffer, Calvin A., 2Lt
 NAV Miller, Hubert E., 1Lt
 BOM Zasadil, Frank E., 2Lt
 ENG Hinds, Francis G., T/Sgt
 BT Toy, James E., S/Sgt
 RO Burns, Francis J., T/Sgt
 LWG Hill, John E., S/Sgt
 TG Blake, Robert C., S/Sgt
 RWG Westfall, Max M., S/Sgt
 PHO Kagey, Martin I., Jr., S/Sgt

B-17F #42-5264 *Yankee Doodle Dandy*

P Oxrider, George J., 1Lt
 CP Hurlburt, Donald W., 2Lt
 NAV Grant, Donald L., 2Lt
 BOM Steele, Earl A., 2Lt
 ENG Ziemer, Frederick B., T/Sgt
 BT Smith, Robert H., S/Sgt
 RO Dasher, Everett A., T/Sgt
 RWG Maxwell, Samuel P., S/Sgt
 TG Sadler, James K., S/Sgt
 LWG Heaps, Theodore C., S/Sgt

B-17F #42-29664 *Jersey Bounce, Jr.*

P Nolan, Robert J., 1Lt
 CP Kruse, Richard L., 2Lt
 NAV Anderson, William J., 2Lt
 BOM Hopper, Richard R., 2Lt
 ENG Hively, Roy J., T/Sgt
 BT Mathews, Frank M., Sgt
 RO Hamill, Milton, T/Sgt
 TG Bitter, Emile V., Jr., S/Sgt
 LWG Isham, Lawrence W., S/Sgt
 RWG Goff, James P., Sgt
 PHO Stringer, James L., Sgt

B-17F #42-29573 *Two Beauts - CR-L*

P	Dunn, James R., 2Lt	KIA
CP	Hafen, Keith L., 2Lt	KIA
NAV	Boyd, George H., 2Lt	KIA
BOM	Lizotte, Robert A., 2Lt	KIA
ENG	Yager, Lamoine D., T/Sgt	KIA
RWG	Nowak, Stanislaus, S/Sgt	BO/WIA
RO	Hogue, Earl, T/Sgt	BO/WIA
BT	Shellman, Carl E., S/Sgt	KIA
TG	Clowe, Eugene C., S/Sgt	KIA
LWG	Testoni, William A., Sgt	BO

B-17F # 41-24577 *Hell's Angels*

P Baldwin, Irl E., Capt
 CP Mitchell, Kirk R., Capt
 NAV Madsen, Parley W., Jr., 1Lt
 BOM Bone, Donald R., 1Lt
 ENG Rodriguez, James E., Jr., T/Sgt
 RWG Meddaugh, Allerton F., S/Sgt
 RO Baxter, Jack, T/Sgt
 BT Brody, Harry J., S/Sgt
 LWG Weiskopf, Dennis, S/Sgt
 TG Zioance, John, S/Sgt
 PAS Blythe, Leon W., Capt

B-17F # 42-5360 *Old Faithful*

P Rogan, Dave L., 1Lt
 CP Timken, Jack C., 1Lt
 NAV Clement, Richard W., 1Lt
 BOM Montgomery, James H., Jr., 2Lt
 ENG Fanning, David D., T/Sgt
 RWG Paiva, Joseph B., S/Sgt
 RO Carpenter, Glenn S., T/Sgt
 BT Bruskotter, James E., S/Sgt
 TG Sterling, Robert W., S/Sgt
 LWG Martin, James C., S/Sgt
 PHO Luman, Morton, Sgt

359th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

B-17F #42-5482 *Cat-O-Nine Tails*

P Smith, Sanford T., 1Lt
CP Farrell, Lawrence C., 2Lt
NAV Summers, Thomas E., 1Lt
BOM Dwyer, Robert P., 1Lt
ENG Hardaway, Sidney T., S/Sgt
LWG Adams, Ralph B., S/Sgt
RO York, Robert F., T/Sgt
BT Tibbles, Russell F., Sgt
TG Howard, Earl R., S/Sgt
RWG Perryman, Jack L., Sgt

B-17F #42-5430 *Pappy/Good Snuf*

P Johnson, Hans C., 1Lt
CP Gibson, Charles E., 1Lt
NAV McNeely, Robert T., 1Lt
BOM Owen, Jedediah G., 1Lt
ENG Dickinson, Paul A., S/Sgt
RWG Broyles, Harold D., S/Sgt
RO Watson, Clyde G., S/Sgt
BT Burry, Robert L., Sgt
LWG McKagan, Azzon C., S/Sgt
TG Treon, John E., Sgt

B-17F #41-24609 *Holy Mackerel*

P Eyster, Ercil F., 1Lt
CP Hayward, Fred H., 2Lt
NAV Shanks, John D., 2Lt
ENG Dunham, Harold J., T/Sgt
RO Thornton, Edmund R., Sgt
LWG Morton, George T., Sgt
BT Nicosia, Eugene A., Sgt
RWG O'Reilly, Francis W., Sgt
NG Altizer, Robert C., T/Sgt
TG Bauer, Floyd E., S/Sgt

360th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

B-17F #42-5434 *Lady Luck*

P	Griffin, Loyd D., Lt
CP	Swanson, Walter C., Lt
NAV	Preston, William M., Lt
BOM	Taylor, Robert L., Lt
ENG	Eason, William M., T/Sgt
RWG	Edwards, Samuel L., S/Sgt
RO	Schwartz, Vernon E., T/Sgt
TG	Wiegand, Lynwood D., S/Sgt
BT	Plummer, Robert, S/Sgt
LWG	Henderson, Paul E., Sgt

B-17F #42-5260 *Yardbird II*

P	Farrar, John W., Capt
CP	Trojan, Joseph E., Lt
NAV	Auman, Rictor H., 2Lt
BOM	Stamper, William B., M/Sgt
ENG	Hassler, Kenneth C., T/Sgt
RWG	Prescott, Paul H., S/Sgt
RO	Lindewall, Erick K., T/Sgt
BT	Sunderlin, Joseph R., S/Sgt
TG	Bartlett, Frank W., S/Sgt
LWG	O'Connell, Lincoln T., S/Sgt

B-17F #42-5382 *The Witches Tit*

P	Bilek, A.F., Lt
CP	Shayler, Walter K., Capt
NAV	Kelley, James F., Lt
BOM	White, Raymond R., Lt
ENG	Sage, L.G., T/Sgt
RWG	Savickas, J.J., Sgt
RO	Fogarty, J.J., S/Sgt
LWG	Slayton, C.E., S/Sgt
TG	Brannan, H.P., Sgt
BT	Glaspell, T.D., Sgt
(Abortive)	

B-17F #42-29570 (No Name)

P	Romig, Eugene A., Maj
CP	Fredericks, Jacob W., Capt
NAV	Hoyt, Otis A., Lt
BOM	Fonorow, Milton S., Lt
NAV	Anderson, Samuel H., Lt
ENG	Murray, Gilbert A., S/Sgt
LWG	Schneiderman, Henry G., S/Sgt
RO	Smith, Richard J., T/Sgt
BT	Nardine, Howard H., S/Sgt
TT	Semonick, Martin A., S/Sgt
RWG	Collins, Harvie L., S/Sgt

B-17F #41-24559 *Ooold Soljer - CR-L*

P	Bartlett, Keith O., 1Lt	KIA
CP	Fitzsimmons, Kent M., 1Lt	KIA
NAV	Browning, Richard C., 1Lt	KIA
BOM	Hamilton, Claude A., S/Sgt	KIA
ENG	Smith, Gene K., T/Sgt	KIA
LWG	Bradford, Edward A., S/Sgt	KIA
RO	Balcombe, Clayton S., T/Sgt	BO/WIA
BT	Sangster, Robert H., S/Sgt	KIA
TG	Smith, Woodrow W., S/Sgt	KIA
RWG	McGiffin, Tom, Sgt	BO

B-17F #42-5483 *Red Ass*

P	Clifton, David S., Lt
CP	Castle, John A., Lt
NAV	Wright, Howard R., Lt
BOM	Currie, Herman C., Lt
ENG	Doss, Carroll P., T/Sgt
RWG	Compo, Anthony, S/Sgt
RO	Morrison, Eugene D., T/Sgt
BT	Mitchell, John B., S/Sgt
TG	Villarreal, Rodolfo A., S/Sgt
LWG	Jameson, Jimmie E., Sgt
OBS	Garvey, John L., Sgt

427th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

B-17F #42-29520 (No Name)

P Stockton, Donald E., Capt
CP Barker, John C., Lt
NAV Grant, Lawrence H., 2Lt
BOM Shirley, Lloyd A., 2Lt
ENG Smith, Roy Q., S/Sgt
RO Amos, Lee H., S/Sgt
LWG Coomes, Clarence S., S/Sgt
RWG Peklinsky, Anthony J., Sgt
TG Koch, Vernon E., S/Sgt
BT Jenkins, Robert R., Sgt

B-17F #42-5341 Vicious Virgin

P Broussard, Edward J., Jr., Lt
CP Le Fevre, William G., Lt
NAV Bradshaw, John W., Lt
BOM Sherwood, Lyle D., Lt
ENG Smock, Edmund L., T/Sgt
RO Karanson, William A., Jr., T/Sgt
BT Choice, Hudson, S/Sgt
LWG Bridges, Alvin A., Sgt
RWG Storer, Charles R., S/Sgt
TG Jurosek, Bernard, Sgt

B-17F #41-24612 The Devil Himself

P Hayes, Ralph S., Jr., Lt
CP Rolfson, Jack G., Lt
NAV Illgen, Frederick, J., Lt
BOM Carlson, Robert C.A., Lt
ENG Gray, J.R., T/Sgt
TG Bednarchuk, Antonio, S/Sgt
RO Jessee, Jesse J., S/Sgt
LWG Smith, Delvyn, S/Sgt
RWG Hairr, Elwood F., S/Sgt
BT Sink, Robert K., S/Sgt

B-17 #42-29540 Shooting Star

P Burch, Armand F., Lt
CP Cardwell, Burt J., Lt
NAV Noblin, John D., Lt
BOM Butt, Byron K., Lt
ENG Barlow, Benjamin, T/Sgt
BT Bourdon, Louis F., S/Sgt
RO Ashworth, George W., S/Sgt
LWG Arnold, Robert W., S/Sgt
TG Brown, Howard T., S/Sgt
RWG Serpa, Joseph E., S/Sgt

B-17F #41-24619 S For Sugar

P Hagenbuch, Glenn E., Capt
CP Snyder, Edgar E., Capt
NAV Soha, Walter M., Lt
BOM Dieffenbach, Albert W., Lt
ENG Zipfel, Charles E., T/Sgt
RO Doughty, Edward J., T/Sgt
TG Strohsack, R.R., S/Sgt
LWG Brandt, Waldo B., S/Sgt
BT Kirkpatrick, Ward M., S/Sgt
RWG Harmon, Edward Z., Sgt