

# 303rd BG(H) Combat Mission No. 28

4 April 1943

Target: Billancourt Dist. Renault Motor Works, Paris, France

Crews Dispatched: 23

Crews Lost: Lt. Ercil F. Eyster - 7 KIA, 3 POW

Length of Mission: 5 hours, 15 minutes

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

Bombing Altitude: 23,500 ft

Ammo Fired: 33,195 rounds

Enemy Aircraft Claims: 6 Destroyed, 2 Probables, 4 Damaged

**C**apt. W.R. **Calhoun**, Jr., CO 359BS, flew in the Low Squadron lead B-17, #41-24635, 359BS-O, *The '8' Ball MK II*. Deputy Group Commander, Lt. Col. George L. **Robinson**, led the 303rd BG(H)'s 23 aircraft on a maximum effort mission. The secondary target was the Citroen Motor Works, Paris, and the last resort was the Scotteville Marshalling yards at Rouen. All aircraft were loaded with six 1,000-lb. bombs. The four 8th Air Force Groups dispatched 97 bombers. The plant, previously destroyed by the RAF, had been rebuilt and was producing over 1,500 trucks, tanks and armored cars per month.



LtCol George L. Robinson

Three aircraft aborted the mission:

#42-5432, *The Hunting Club*, 358BS (Lt. **Jess**)

#41-24612, *The Devil Himself*, 427BS (Lt. **Hayes**), dropped out due to supercharger and engine problems.

#41-24605, *Knockout Dropper*, 359BS (Lt. **Roller**). The pilot, Lt. Roller, became ill with gas pains and cramps at altitude.

The remaining 20 B-17s bombed the primary target. There were no clouds and visibility was unlimited. Flak, at the 23,500 bombing altitude, was moderate, black, and inaccurate from the target area and the vicinity of Rouen.

Crews observed 40 to 50 enemy fighters with 14 encounters. *Holy Mackerel*, 359BS, was shot down by enemy fighters and crashed near Rouen, France. 1Lt. Ercil F. **Eyster**, 2Lt. Fred H. **Hayward**, 2Lt. John D. **Shanks**, T/Sgt. Harold J. **Dunham**, Sgt. Eugene A. **Nicosia** and S/Sgt. Floyd E. **Bauer** were killed. S/Sgt. Marcus K. **Davis**, Sgt. Edmund R. **Thornton**, Sgt. George T. **Morton** and S/Sgt. Robert C. **Altizer** were captured and became prisoners of war. Lt. **Eyster**, Lt. **Shanks** and T/Sgt. **Dunham** are buried in Normandy American Cemetery near Coleville-sur-Mer, France.

Battle damage to other aircraft was slight. A great deal of credit reportedly was due to excellent Spitfire fighter support. The remaining 19 B-17s returned to Molesworth between 1606 and 1632.



Original 359th BS 1Lt Ercil F. Eyster Crew  
(Eyster, back left; 2Lt W.D. Cargill (B), back 4th from left)

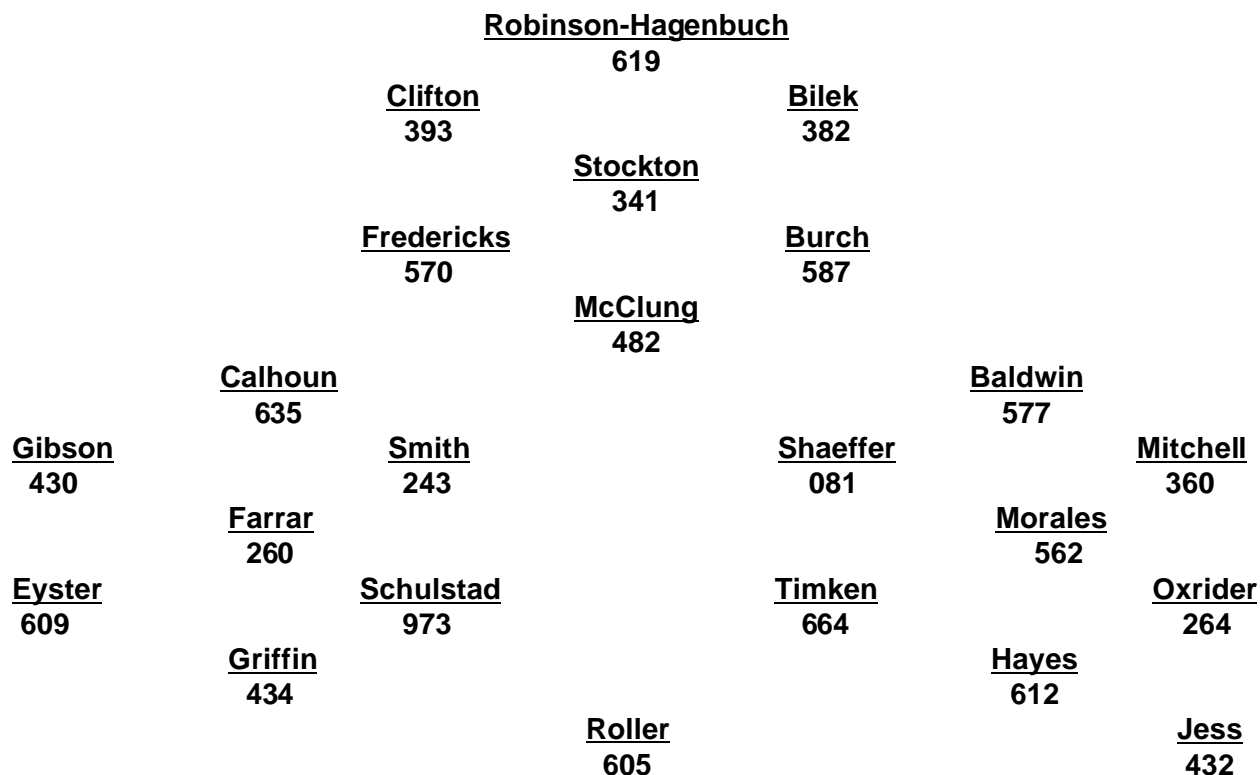
303rd BG(H) crews made some exciting mission comments. Bombardier, 2Lt. Lloyd A. **Shirley**, remarked, "I saw what looked like a large shell coming up at us from above. Suddenly it exploded and a tremendous red burst appeared directly in front of us. I never did see the plane that dropped it, but there wasn't any doubt about it being a bomb from a German fighter." 2Lt. Earl A. **Steele** said, "We passed over an airdrome just outside of Paris after we left the target. I counted 38 fighters starting to take off. In about 10 minutes they were on top of us like a swarm of bees." Maj. Frank

**Doherty**, Group Adjutant, was making his first combat mission and said, "It was a swell trip and the boys certainly hit the target in good style. That ought to discourage the Germans from rebuilding the place, because our boys will go over and lay it low again about the time they get it rebuilt." Fortress pilot 1Lt. Earl A. **Shaeffer** was quick to state, "The bombing was the best ever. My crew claimed that our bombs landed right on the aiming point. That's what we went for, so the trip was a success." 2Lt. Arthur M. **Stone**, his co-pilot, said, "We had fighters, some flak, but we were in a good spot to avoid any attacks. We also had a good view of Paris. It looks like a beautiful city, but I'm not anxious to make a visit there while the Germans are in control."

The crew of *Snap! Crackle! Pop!*, all veterans, offered their comments. The ball turret gunner, S/Sgt. Howard **Nardine**, said, "It was a fair trip. I got an FW-190 away. It certainly wasn't as rough as expected." S/Sgt. Henry **Schneiderman**, left waist gunner, said, "I didn't get many close shots because most of the fighters I saw were smoking by the time they got where I could see them." T/Sgt. Michael **Hlastala**, upper turret gunner, noted, "I didn't get much shooting either, but they sure made me sweat." S/Sgt. Harvie **Collins**, right waist gunner, said, "It was pretty hot today. 20mm shells bursting around us looked like a cotton field." S/Sgt. Tom **McGiffin**, top turret gunner, said, "It was hot in spots, but just another good raid." T/Sgt. Richard **Smith**, radio operator/gunner, got off a good one by saying, "I saw the target after we left and I think that they should change the name of that song to 'The Last Time I Saw Paris There Were Fires Burning There.'"

The 305th BG(H), which led the mission, hit the target with most of its bombs, lost three aircraft, bore the brunt of the fighter attack, and shot down 25 enemy aircraft with an additional six probables and five damaged. One crew shot down ten FW-190s. For their action the 305th received the first **Distinguished Unit Citation** awarded to an 8th Air Force Bomb Group.

# Aircraft Formation Over the Target



Three (3) aircraft aborted this mission:

Lt. Jess in 432

Lt. Hayes in 612

Lt. Roller in 605

## KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

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

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

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P Morales, Carl H., Capt  
CP Swaffer, Calvin A., 2Lt  
NAV Miller, Hubert E., 1Lt  
BOM Zasadil, Frank E., 2Lt  
ENG Hinds, Francis G., T/Sgt  
BT Mathews, Frank M., 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

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

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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 #41-24577 *Hell's Angels***

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P Baldwin, Irl E., Capt  
CP Joy, Ripley W., 2Lt  
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 Warren, Russell M., T/Sgt  
BT Brody, Harry J., S/Sgt  
LWG Weiskopf, Dennis, S/Sgt  
TG Godwin, Harold E., S/Sgt

### **B-17F #42-5432 *The Hunting Club***

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P Jess, Ray W., 2Lt  
CP O'Connor, Robert S., 2Lt  
NAV Davidson, Robert P., 2Lt  
BOM Box, Charles M., 2Lt  
ENG Koenig, Bernard H., T/Sgt  
RWG Hardacre, Charles F., S/Sgt  
RO Godzinski, Joseph J., T/Sgt  
BT Johnson, Byron W., S/Sgt  
LWG Smith, Harold E., T/Sgt  
TG White, Frank M., Sgt  
(Abortive Sortie)

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

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P Mitchell, Kirk R., Capt  
CP Rogan, Dave L., 1Lt  
NAV Clement, Richard W., 1Lt  
BOM Montgomery, James H., Jr., 2Lt  
ENG Fanning, David D., T/Sgt  
RWG Testoni, William A., 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

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

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P Timken, Jack C., 1Lt  
CP Wright, George E., 2Lt  
NAV Chamberlain, William V., 2Lt  
BOM Solverson, Robert K., 2Lt  
ENG Knuth, Leland N., S/Sgt  
RWG Paiva, Joseph B., S/Sgt  
RO Baxter, Jack, T/Sgt  
BT Toy, James E., S/Sgt  
TG Giassullo, Criscienzo N., S/Sgt  
LWG Redhead, George R., Sgt

## 359th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

### **B-17F #42-5243 *FDR's Potato Peeler Kids***

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 #41-24635 *The 8 Ball MK II***

P Calhoun, William R., Jr., Capt  
 CP Nix, James S., 2Lt  
 NAV Strickland, Joseph M., 1Lt  
 BOM Yonkman, Robert J., 1Lt  
 ENG Zaorski, Roman R., T/Sgt  
 LWG Fortunak, Richard C., S/Sgt  
 RO Richardson, Donald R., T/Sgt  
 BT Garriott, John A., S/Sgt  
 TG Owen, Calvin H., S/Sgt  
 RWG Brown, Houston B., Jr., S/Sgt

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

|     |                           |     |
|-----|---------------------------|-----|
| P   | Eyster, Ercil F., 1Lt     | KIA |
| CP  | Hayward, Fred H., 2Lt     | KIA |
| NAV | Shanks, John D., 2Lt      | KIA |
| ENG | Dunham, Harold J., T/Sgt  | KIA |
| RO  | Thornton, Edmund R., Sgt  | POW |
| LWG | Morton, George T., Sgt    | POW |
| BT  | Nicosia, Eugene A., Sgt   | KIA |
| NG  | Davis, Marcus K., S/Sgt   | POW |
| RWG | Altizer, Robert C., T/Sgt | POW |
| TG  | Bauer, Floyd E., S/Sgt    | KIA |

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

P McClung, Guy H., 1Lt  
 CP O'Connor, Squire T., 1Lt  
 NAV Stettler, Donald G., 2Lt  
 BOM Rothman, Theodore I., 2Lt  
 ENG Coykendall, Ralph A., T/Sgt  
 RWG Traban, James J., S/Sgt  
 RO McCoy, Gordon K., Sgt  
 TG Piatek, Casimir P., S/Sgt  
 LWG McKagan, Azzon C., S/Sgt  
 BT Tupper, Theron S., S/Sgt  
 PHO Luman, Morton, 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 Chandler, U.M., Sgt  
 TG Treon, John E., Sgt  
 PHO Kagey, Martin I., Jr., Sgt

### **B-17F #41-24605 *Knockout Dropper***

P Roller, Jack, Capt  
 CP Cline, William J., 2Lt  
 NAV McElwain, Richard E., 2Lt  
 BOM Shoup, John R., Jr., 2Lt  
 ENG Marcelonis, Joseph G., T/Sgt  
 BT Ketron, Frank M., S/Sgt  
 RO Williams, Lemuel R., T/Sgt  
 BT Beringer, John L., Jr., S/Sgt  
 TG Burnham, Arthur L., S/Sgt  
 LWG Gonsalves, John D., S/Sgt  
 (Abortive Sortie)

## 360th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

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

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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 #42-29570 (*No Name*)**

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P Fredericks, Jacob W., Capt  
CP Way, Arthur C., Lt  
NAV Hoyt, Otis A., Lt  
BOM Fonorow, Milton S., Lt  
ENG Hlastala, Michael S., T/Sgt  
LWG Schneiderman, Henry G., S/Sgt  
RO Smith, Richard J., T/Sgt  
BT Nardine, Howard H., S/Sgt  
TG McGiffin, Tom, S/Sgt  
RWG Collins, Harvie L., S/Sgt  
OBS Blythe, Leon W., Capt

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

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P Farrar, John W., Capt  
CP Trojan, Joseph E., Lt  
NAV Auman, Rictor H., 2Lt  
BOM White, R.E., Lt  
ENG Prescott, Paul H., S/Sgt  
RWG Kelly, Thomas F., T/Sgt  
RO Lindewall, Erick K., T/Sgt  
BT Dioquardo, Fred J., Pvt  
TG Swanson, Theodore G., S/Sgt  
LWG O'Connell, Lincoln T., S/Sgt

### **B-17F #42-5393 *Thumper Again***

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P Clifton, David S., Lt  
CP Shayler, Walter K., Capt  
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

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

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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

### **B-17F #42-2973 *Iza Vailable***

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P Schulstad, Louis M., Lt  
CP Stallings, George V., Jr., Lt  
NAV Roberts, Sumner L., Lt  
BOM Kulesa, Frank E., Lt  
ENG Watson, James A., T/Sgt  
LWG Yattaw, Robert H., S/Sgt  
RO Jones, Dick W., S/Sgt  
BT Stevens, A.S., T/Sgt  
TG Pierson, Lawrence C., S/Sgt  
RWG Bradbury, Joseph E., Lt

## 427th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

### **B-17F #42-5341 *Vicious Virgin***

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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-17 #41-24587 *Bad Check***

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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 McGill, Edward E., Sgt

### **B-17F #41-24612 *The Devil Himself***

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P Hayes, Ralph S., Jr., Lt  
CP Rolfson, Jack G., Lt  
NAV Illgen, Frederick, J., Lt  
BOM Smith, S.L., Lt  
ENG Strohsack, R.R., S/Sgt  
TG Bednarchuk, Antonio, S/Sgt  
RO Jessee, Jesse J., S/Sgt  
LWG Smith, Delvyn, S/Sgt  
RWG Hairr, Elwood F., S/Sgt  
BT Longo, Angelo L., Sgt  
(Abortive Sortie)

### **B-17F #41-24619 *S For Sugar***

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P Robinson, George L., Lt. Col  
CP Hagenbuch, Glenn E., Capt  
NAV Anderson, Samuel H., Lt  
BOM Dieffenbach, Albert W., Capt  
ENG Gray, J.R., T/Sgt  
RO Brandfas, Dale F., T/Sgt  
LWG Baart, James C., T/Sgt  
BT Sink, Robert K., S/Sgt  
TG Serpa, Joseph E., S/Sgt  
RWG Harmon, Edward Z., S/Sgt  
PAS Doherty, Frank J., Maj

### **B-17F #42-5081 *Luscious Lady***

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P Shaeffer, Earl A., Lt  
CP Stone, Arthur M., Lt  
NAV Stugard, F., Jr., Lt  
BOM Fec, A.D., Lt  
ENG Murray, G.F., T/Sgt  
BT Harris, M.L., Sgt  
RO Penley, D.B., T/Sgt  
TG Clapshaw, Keith L., Sgt  
LWG Groves, R.W., S/Sgt  
RWG Lentz, R.C., S/Sgt