

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

Capt. 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)

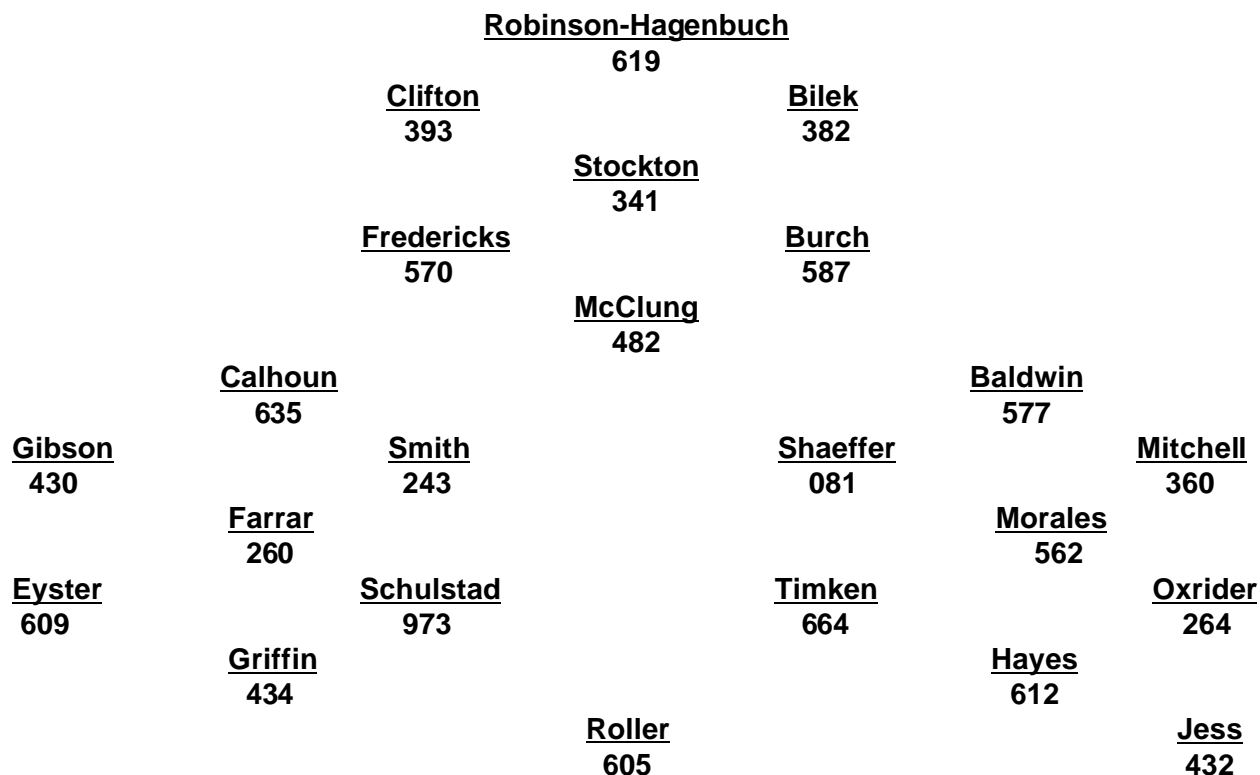
303rd BG(H) crews made some exciting mission comments. Bombardier, 2Lt. Lloyd A. **Shirley**, remarked, "I saw what looked like a large shell coming up at us from above. Suddenly it exploded and a tremendous red burst appeared directly in front of us. I never did see the plane that dropped it, but there 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

<u>CREW POSITIONS</u> 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 <u>RESULTS OF MISSION</u> 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 cuntry 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., 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*

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*

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*

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*

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.*

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*

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*)

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*

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*

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*

P Bilek, A.F., Lt
CP Shayler, Walter K., Capt
NAV Kelly, 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*

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*

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*

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*

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*

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*

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