

303rd BG (H) Combat Mission No. 56

30 July 1943

Target: Fiesler Aircraft Works, Uschlag, Germany

Crews Dispatched: 23

Crews Lost: 10 crewmen ditched, S/Sgt. Humphries killed

Length of Mission: 5 hours, 45 minutes

Bomb Load: 10 x 500 lb H.E. M43/ 2 a/c dropped 250 lb incendiary

Bombing Altitude: 25,720 ft

Ammo Fired: 78,885 rounds

Enemy Aircraft Claims: 10 Destroyed, 4 Probable, 1 Damaged

The Focke-Wolf airplane assembly and engine works at Kassel was the sixth and final "Blitz Week" target. The lead pilot, Lt. **Timken** was on his 22nd mission. The round trip distance was over 1,000 miles.

Twenty-three B-17s took off. Four planes aborted the mission inside the Belgium coast: #42-5257 *Miss Bea Haven* 358BS (**Brown**) and #42-29635 *Augerhead* 358BS (**Thompson**); Aborted due to erratic supercharger regulators. #42-3131 *Flak Wolf* 427BS (**Rolfson**); The Nos. 1 and 4 engines ran rough at altitude. #42-5788 *A. O. G. Not in Stock* (**Johnston**); The ball turret door came open and blew off.

The Fortresses flew through fair weather to make an excellent bombing run at 25,000 feet. They dropped 42 1/2 tons of 500-lb. M-43 and 250-lb. British incendiary bombs of destruction well on the target. They were accompanied by German single-engine fighters, mostly ME-109s, for over an hour. About 130-200 fighters were seen in 17 encounters. The fighters hit the 303rd BG(H) as they crossed the coast into Germany, stayed with them over the target and followed them back out over the North Sea. Some of them bombed the formation, but most made direct attacks in bunches. They didn't attempt to press their attacks as they had in the past. Four fighters were claimed as destroyed, with two probables and eight damaged. Intense, but inaccurate barrage-type flak was observed.

Lt. **Timken** summed up the mission: "The weather was only fair. We hit some flak, but it didn't bother us too much. However, there were plenty of fighters and they stayed with us for over an hour. They escorted us right back to the coast. We had a good bomb run with only slight evasive action. I think that our bombing was fairly good, but I'm not sure." Lt. Col. **Stevens**, mimicking what the British might say, commented, "Mighty good show. Plenty of fighters, but we did all right." The tail gunner on *Sky Wolf*, 2Lt. William B. **Harper** added, "It was a damn good target. At times there were up to 400 fighters out there. Most of them hit us on the way back. I got my first enemy fighter, an ME-109. He went down in flames at about 5,000 feet and the pilot bailed out. Some flak hit our ship and it sounded like skeletons on a tin roof." S/Sgt. George R. **Redhead**, riding on his 21st mission said, "It was a little rough. There were no attacks on our ship, but there were enough planes out there to scare hell out of us."

As one of the 303rd BG(H) B-17s approached the field, it was observed that only two engines were operating, both on the same side. The plane was losing altitude fast, but the pilot managed to give it enough power, keep it level, bring it in and made one of the most beautiful landings ever seen at Molesworth. The ship was *The '8' Ball MK II*, piloted by Lt. James **Nix**. He commented, "Never saw so many fighters. Boy! They were really coming at us. They had a field day today. There must have been plenty shot down. I saw three of them myself. We were really sweating out our engines. It feels good to be down safely." As *The '8' Ball MK II* hit the runway after being literally greased in, it taxied by and a head stuck out the waist gun window and hollered, "Pretty good, ain't he? That's our pilot."

There were several mission casualties. T/Sgt. F.G. **Krajacic**, top turret gunner on #42-29754 *Shangrila Lil*, had a shrapnel wound on the middle finger of his left hand; S/Sgt. W.G. **Hover**, tail gunner on #42-29955 *Mr. Five by Five*, suffered a broken leg; T/Sgt. L.E. **Ratliff**, radio operator and Sgt. A.J. **Tambe**, ball turret gunner, had sprained ankles; and waist gunner S/Sgt. A.J. **Burns** had a back injury sustained when they bailed out of their damaged aircraft over England. The pilot, Lt. G.W. **Shope** landed *Mr. Five by Five* at Leiston and returned to Base in another aircraft.

S/Sgt. O.L. **Humphries**, ball turret gunner in #42-5360 *War Bride*, was shot through the right lung and side and was killed. He is buried in the Cambridge American Cemetery, England.



360BS B-17F *Upstairs Maid* #42-29738 (PU-I)
Ground Crew Chief John M. Hagar

Aircraft #42-29738 360BS-I *Upstairs Maid*, piloted by Lt. R.W. **Cogswell**, was attacked by two fighters on his aircraft's tail, two or three on the nose and four or five on his beam. He struggled to bring the B-17 back to England. Radio Operator T/Sgt. Eddie **Deerfield** began transmitting a stream of SOS signals as the B-17 approached the Dutch coast. The pilot had feathered his No. 4 engine and dropped behind the formation after leaving the Dutch coast with only two engines operating. About 22 miles from Felixstowe, he ditched the aircraft after the other engine ran out of gas. The B-17 sank in about two-and-one-half minutes. The entire crew was picked up by an Air-Sea rescue launch after only 35 minutes. Lt. E.L. **Cobb**, the navigator, suffered injuries to his head, left leg, right hand and a left tooth when he was knocked out during the ditching.

Crew Reports of Enemy Aircraft Destroyed or Damaged

S/Sgt. Arthur J. Burns (955)	FW-190	Probable
S/Sgt. Raymond Peck (158)	ME-109	Probable
S/Sgt. George Z. Howard (640)	FW-190	Destroyed
S/Sgt. Joseph Kerr (4635)	FW-190	Probable
T/Sgt. Howard E. Hernan (846)	FW-190	Destroyed
Lt. LeRoy V. Gordon (4635)	FW-190	Destroyed
S/Sgt. Paul Lemann (4635)	FW-190	Destroyed
S/Sgt. George D. Quick (846)	FW-190	Destroyed
S/Sgt. Billy F. Knorpp (416)	ME-109	Destroyed
S/Sgt. David Miller (754)	ME-109	Probable
Lt. W. Hargrove (754)	ME-109	Destroyed
S/Sgt. James H. Comer (754)	FW-190	Destroyed
S/Sgt. James H. Comer (754)	ME-109	Probable
Lt. William B. Harper (562)	ME-109	Destroyed
T/Sgt. Frank G. Krajacic (754)	??	Destroyed
T/Sgt. Thomas F. Kelly (434)	ME-109	Destroyed
S/Sgt. Eugene F. Williams (393)	FW-190	Possible

TWO ENGINES OUT AND NO CONTROLS ON THE THIRD ENGINE

**Unusual Experiences of 1/Lt George W. Shope, Jr.
(B-17F #42-29955 *Mr. Five by Five*)**

On the 30th of July, 1943 we went on a mission to Kassel, Germany. We were subjected to heavy anti aircraft fire and to repeated attacks by enemy fighters. Prior to reaching our target, one engine was knocked out. We successfully bombed our objective and another engine was knocked out, as well as being subjected to further heavy damage from flak and fighters.

I managed to get the plane back to England, despite the fact that we lost the controls on a third engine. I had seven of the crew bail out over England and I landed on a unfinished airfield that had two ditches across the runway, which had not yet been completed.

I was able to stop before the second ditch. No further damage was done to the plane. They had to replace the four engines and the plane was returned to Molesworth upon completion.

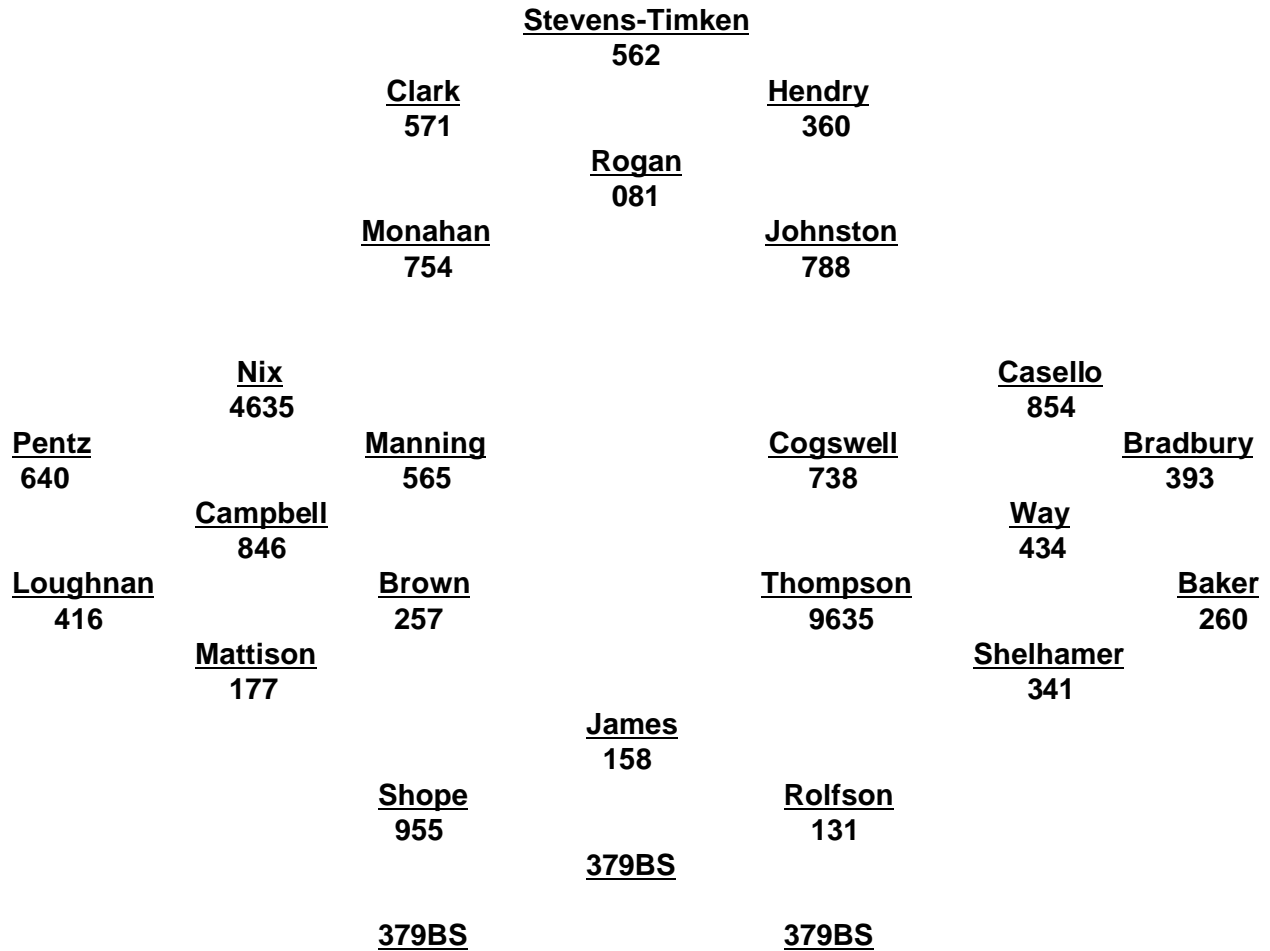


Sky Wolf #41-24562 (358BS) VK-A
103rd PBCW Lead (358BS) - Pilot 1Lt J.C. Timken / CoPilot LtCol K.D. Stevens

(Back L-R) 1Lt W.V. Chamberlain (N), 2Lt W.B. Harper (TG-O), 1Lt J.C. Timken (P),
LtCol K.D. Stevens (CP), 2Lt J.R. McConnen (N), 1Lt R.K. Solverson (B)

(Front L-R) S/Sgt C.N. Giassullo (WG), S/Sgt G.R. Redhead (WG),
S/Sgt J.E. Toy (BT), Sgt J. Baxter (R), T/Sgt L.M. Knuth (E)

Aircraft Formation at Assembly Point



Four (4) aircraft aborted this mission:

Lt. Brown in 257 Lt. Thompson in 9635
Lt. Rolfson in 131 Lt. Johnston in 788

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

<p>CREW POSITIONS</p> <p>CMP - Command Pilot P - Pilot CP - Co-Pilot NAV - Navigator ANV - Ass't. Navigator MNV - Mickey Navigator ENG - Engineer BOM - Bombardier RO - Radio Operator</p>	<p>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</p>	<p>VI - Voice Interpreter OBS - Observer PAS - Passenger PHO - Photographer</p> <p>RESULTS OF MISSION</p> <p>KIA - Killed in action WIA - Wounded in action MIA - Missing in action POW - Prisoner of war</p>	<p>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</p>
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358th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

B-17F #42-29571 *Charley Horse*

P Clark, Elmo E., F/O
 CP DeCamp, Donald F., 2Lt
 NAV Haddock, Ralph M., 2Lt
 BOM Galbraith, Robert E., 2Lt
 ENG Hembree, William T., T/Sgt
 RO Brooke, Curtis O., T/Sgt
 RWG Doback, Charles R., S/Sgt
 BT Mathews, Frank M., S/Sgt
 TG Jenkins, William H., S/Sgt
 LWG Tracy, Richard J., S/Sgt

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

P Hendry, John W., Jr., 1Lt
 CP Wise, Calder L., 2Lt
 NAV McNamara, Bernard T., 2Lt
 BOM Webster, Richard E., 2Lt
 ENG Biddle, Loran C., T/Sgt
 LWG Doherty, John J., S/Sgt
 RO Brown, James J., T/Sgt
 BT Humphries, Olwin L., S/Sgt KIA
 TG Abney, Howard L., S/Sgt
 RWG Arasin, John C., S/Sgt

B-17F #42-29754 *Shangrila Lil*

P Monahan, William J., 1Lt
 CP Clark, Martin L., 2Lt
 NAV Maher, William P., 2Lt
 BOM Hargrove, Walter, 2Lt
 ENG Krajacic, Frank G., T/Sgt WIA
 RWG Gasser, Walter, S/Sgt
 RO Mulholland, John J., T/Sgt
 BT Buinicky, Alfred R., S/Sgt
 TG Miller, David, S/Sgt
 LWG Comer, James H., S/Sgt

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

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

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

P Rogan, Dave L., 1Lt
 CP Gamble, Donald, 1Lt
 NAV McSween, William D., 2Lt
 BOM Coburn, Ralph F., 2Lt
 ENG Wagner, Clyde E., T/Sgt
 LWG Vaughn, Norville, S/Sgt
 RO Bland, Hugh N., T/Sgt
 BT Scharch, Richard G., S/Sgt
 TG Gilbert, Bill A., S/Sgt
 RWG Schmeltzer, Charles S., Sgt

B-17F #42-5788 *A.O.G. Not in Stock*

CP Johnston, John R., 1Lt
 CP Lake, Lester A., Jr., 2Lt
 NAV Karraker, William H., 2Lt
 BOM Sweet, William D., 2Lt
 ENG Lopez, Rudolph S., T/Sgt
 RWG Mills, James E., S/Sgt
 RO Matthews, James O., T/Sgt
 BT Griffin, Edward W., S/Sgt
 TG Moody, John P., S/Sgt
 LWG Cobb, Edward N., Sgt

B-17F #42-29635 *Augerhead*

P Thompson, Frank H., 1Lt
 CP Emerson, Aubrey L., 2Lt
 NAV Curo, Dwight M., 2Lt
 BOM Spencer, Charles W., 2Lt
 ENG Welch, James R., T/Sgt
 TT Fulanovich, Charles J., S/Sgt
 RO McGuire, Robert J., T/Sgt
 RWG Wilson, Donald R., S/Sgt
 BT Nakaniski, Ralph, S/Sgt
 TG Aubrey, Eldred L., S/Sgt
 (Abortive)

359th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

B-17F #41-24416 *Black Diamond Express*

P Loughnan, Victor J., 2Lt
CP Gredvig, Winfield H., 2Lt
NAV Maxwell, James L., 2Lt
BOM Robinson, John M., 2Lt
ENG High, Eugene W., T/Sgt
LWG Knorpp, Billy F., S/Sgt
RO Daley, Russell M., T/Sgt
BT McGee, Kenneth L., S/Sgt
RWG Barr, Gordon E., S/Sgt
TG McConaghy, Leo R., S/Sgt

B-17F #42-29640 *Old Ironsides*

P Pentz, Arthur H., 1Lt
CP Mulligan, Thomas E., 2Lt
NAV Yonkman, Robert J., Capt
BOM Philpitt, Russell O., 2Lt
ENG Dougherty, John A., T/Sgt
BT Edwards, Hurd L., Sgt
RO Murray, Robert L., T/Sgt
RWG Horvath, Robert A., S/Sgt
TG Knudsen, Elmer T., Sgt
LWG Howard, George Z., S/Sgt

B-17F #42-29846 (*No Name*)

P Campbell, Claude W., 1Lt
CP Miller, Arthur W., 2Lt
NAV Ririe, George M., 2Lt
BOM Boutelle, Winston E., 2Lt
ENG Hernan, Howard E., T/Sgt
RO Kraft, Harold A., T/Sgt
RWG Bachert, Kurt W., S/Sgt
BT McCauley, Patrick N., Sgt
TG Quick, George D., S/Sgt
LWG Wilson, Benton, S/Sgt
PHO Kagey, Martin I., Jr., S/Sgt

B-17F #42-5257 *Miss Bea Haven*

P Brown, Malcolm E., 2Lt
CP Szelwian, Felix T., 2Lt
NAV Alloway, Hillard C., 2Lt
BOM Schreidell, Matthew, 2Lt
ENG Kress, Beryl W., T/Sgt
RO Cirello, Ralph T., T/Sgt
LWG Boucher, Henry C., S/Sgt
BT Wernet, Charles E., Sgt
TG Boggs, Calvin E., S/Sgt
RWG Wright, Malcolm, S/Sgt
(Abortive)

B-17F #42-5177 *Fast Worker MK II*

P Mattison, Robert L., 1Lt
CP Case, Spencer F., 2Lt
NAV Rich, David A., 1Lt
BOM Shafer, John H., 1Lt
ENG Green, Frederick J., T/Sgt
RO Nordyke, Lloyd E., T/Sgt
TG McEachern, David C., S/Sgt
BT Schneider, James E., S/Sgt
LWG Boling, Shuble A., Sgt
TT Vogel, George W., S/Sgt

B-17F #41-24635 *The '8' Ball MK II*

P Nix, James S., 1Lt
CP Phelps, Robert L., Jr., 1Lt
NAV Street, Benamin B., 1Lt
BOM Gordon, LeRoy V., 1Lt
ENG Doran, Arnold S., T/Sgt
TT Jordan, Lloyd L., S/Sgt
RO McGee, Paul P., S/Sgt
TG Lemann, Paul C., S/Sgt
BT Piatek, Casimir P., S/Sgt
LWG Kerr, Joseph, S/Sgt

B-17F #41-24565 *Idaho Potato Peeler*

P Manning, John P., 2Lt
CP Blossom, George H., 2Lt
NAV Antman, Jack, 2Lt
BOM Pullman, Edward J., 2Lt
ENG Keesling, George R., T/Sgt
RWG Kolling, Arthur J., S/Sgt
RO Fitzsimmons, Kenneth P., T/Sgt
LWG Santella, Albert G., S/Sgt
BT Traylor, Lloyd S., Jr., S/Sgt
TG Jennings, Harley F., S/Sgt

360th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

B-17F #42-5854 Alley Oop

P Casello, John J., Lt
CP Huguenin, Wesley V., Lt
NAV Wright, Howard R., Lt
BOM Fawcett, Jack B., Lt
ENG Carnathan, Hugh S., T/Sgt
RWG Gray, Johnnie E., S/Sgt
RO Calco, Anthony, T/Sgt
LWG Frost, Carlyle A., S/Sgt
TT Ponder, Truly S., S/Sgt
TG Stout, Otis T., S/Sgt

B-17F #42-5434 Lady Luck

P Way, Arthur C., Lt
CP Ward, Robert C., Lt
NAV Molnar, George, Lt
BOM Gibson, Steve M., Lt
ENG Addison, Bill J., T/Sgt
LWG Stachowiak, Martin G., S/Sgt
RO Jillson, John S., S/Sgt
RWG Fisher, George C., S/Sgt
TG Kelly, Thomas F., T/Sgt
BT Ford, Ray D., S/Sgt
OBS Schwartz, David, Lt

B-17F #42-29738 Upstairs Maid

P Cogswell, Robert W., Lt
CP Tippet, Paul S., Lt
NAV Cobb, Edward L., Lt
BOM Kennedy, John D., Lt
ENG Bengston, Gilbert E., T/Sgt
RWG Etheredge, Alvin, S/Sgt
RO Deerfield, Eddie, S/Sgt
BT Davis, Paul J., S/Sgt
LWG Peterson, Elmer L., Sgt
TG Timm, Harold R., S/Sgt

B-17F #42-5260 Yardbird II

P Baker, William T., Lt
CP Gahimer, Loyd D., Lt
NAV McLane, Joseph T., Lt
NG Sawicki, Joseph R., S/Sgt
ENG Fielder, Neal F., T/Sgt
RWG Bowman, Vergil E., S/Sgt
RO Bonn, Charles J., T/Sgt
BT Dioquardo, Fred J., Sgt
LWG Borrer, Norwood D., S/Sgt
TG Bacon, Charlie M., S/Sgt

B-17F #42-5393 Thumper Again

P Bradbury, Joseph E., Lt
CP Crockett, George W., Jr., Lt
NAV Millner, Israel, Lt
BOM Cramsie, William J., Lt
ENG Tepper, Morris, T/Sgt
RWG Homer, Eddie D., Sgt
RO Jaynes, Allen D., T/Sgt
BT Clarke, Benjamin, Jr., S/Sgt
LWG Williams, Eugene F., S/Sgt
TG Burke, James C., S/Sgt

427th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

B-17F #42-3158 *Max*

P	James, Jacob C., Lt
CP	Ness, Howard C., Lt
NAV	Scroggins, Paul W., Lt
BOM	Witt, Walter E., Lt
ENG	Johnson, Otto D., S/Sgt
BT	Peck, Raymond R., Sgt
RO	Hamilton, A.J., S/Sgt
RWG	Misiak, Frank L., S/Sgt
LWG	Kesky, Leonard A., S/Sgt
TG	Tripp, Jesse E., Sgt

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

P	Shelhamer, David P., Jr., Lt
CP	Tucker, Frederick W., Lt
NAV	Noblin, John D., Lt
BOM	Lewis, William L., Lt
ENG	Willett, John K., S/Sgt
BT	Garrett, Frank O., Sgt
RO	Harvie, Warren L., T/Sgt
TG	Arnold, Robert W., S/Sgt
LWG	Barlow, Elmer O., T/Sgt
RWG	Volz, Robert J., S/Sgt

B-17F #42-29955 *Mr. Five by Five*

P	Shope, George W., Jr., Lt	
CP	Ashwell, Silas B., Lt	
NAV	Doyle, Robert V., Lt	
BOM	Reeder, John J., Lt	
ENG	Walsh, Charles E., T/Sgt	
BT	Tambe, Angelo J., S/Sgt	
RO	Ratliff, Leonard E., T/Sgt	
TG	Hoover, G.W., S/Sgt	WIA
RWG	Smith, Frank D., S/Sgt	
LWG	Burns, Arthur J., S/Sgt	WIA

B-17F #42-3131 *Flak Wolf*

P	Rolfson, Jack G., Lt
CP	Woddrop, Edward M., Lt
NAV	Herman, Charles L., Lt
BOM	Smith, Abbott M., Jr., Lt
ENG	Good, James K., T/Sgt
BT	May, Cecil M., S/Sgt
RO	Jessee, Jesse J., T/Sgt
TG	Serpa, Joseph E., S/Sgt
RWG	Smith, Delvyn, S/Sgt
LWG	Fleming, William W., S/Sgt

(Abortive Sortie)