

303rd BG (H) Combat Mission No. 70

16 September 1943

Target: Supply Ship in Loire River at Nantes, France

Crews Dispatched: 19

Length of Mission: 6 hours, 55 minutes

Bomb Load: 12 x 500 lb M-43 G.P. bombs

Bombing Altitude: 20,000 ft

Ammo Fired: 37,875 rounds

Enemy Aircraft Claims: 6 Destroyed, 1 Probables, 1 Damaged

No aircraft aborted the mission led by General Robert F. **Travis**. Weather over the target was good with six to nine miles visibility and 6/10 cloud cover. The Group dropped 223 500-lb. M-43 bombs from 25,000 feet. Bombing results were good and a smoke screen over the target was ineffective.

Crews reported that flak was moderate, and even though very accurate in the target area, not enough to spoil a good bombing run. Several aerial bombs were observed by two crews. They reported two clusters of four bombs each exploding near their aircraft 20 miles south of Rennes. They could not see the bombs falling nor the enemy aircraft dropping them but were sure they were aerial bombs because of the size and character of the explosions. Another crew saw two bombs drop and explode near them from an aircraft 5,000 feet above. The bombs appeared to be approximately 500-lb. bomb size.

Several crews reported that eight to ten FW-190s lined abreast and fired rockets. There were large time-fused bursts from the nose. Smoke and fire followed the projectile until it burst. Only 25 to 30 enemy fighters were encountered, but gunners say they were very persistent in their attacks for more than one-half hour. Most of the German fighter attacks were directed at the B-17's noses and tails, but the concentrated fire from the Group gunners resulted in the fighters backing off from their attacks.

P-47 fighters accompanied the Forts most of the way in to the target and aircrews were loud in their praise of the fighter support. "The P-47s are really all right. As long as they stayed with us, no fighters came through," reported S/Sgt. Henry **Swan** who watched several dog fights from his tailgun position in the Fortress *The Duchess*. 303rd BG(H) gunners claimed six enemy aircraft destroyed with one probable and one damaged.

According to Maj. **Mitchell**, the mission was well worthwhile. "I think it was a very successful mission," he said. "The fighters are still there and came right in but didn't hurt us any." 1Lt. John R. **Johnston**, pilot of *Old Faithful* was on his 14th mission. He reported, "The bombing looked good to me. We saw a lot of smoke in the target area and one enormous black cloud came up from an explosion."

Photographs revealed that the Combat Wing scored direct hits on an Agile-class destroyer, a floating dock containing a tanker, a coastal type naval auxiliary, a spearbreaker, a small tug, two naval auxiliaries and two small vessels. Bombs also burst

near other vessels causing damage. Concentrations of bombs fell among warehouses, marshalling yards, oil storage tanks and small buildings with many direct hits and fires.

During interrogation, it was suggested that gunners be restricted in the future from firing into the water when the formation is flying at low altitude. Tracers were seen to rocket off the water and come very close to aircraft in the formation. Bombardier 2Lt. William T. **Sweet**, flying in *old Faithful* 358BS, lost the sights on his gun. He reported, "We want tracers! With no tracers my gun was of little value." Several other Group gunners complained about the lack of tracers in their ammunition belts.

Six Group B-17s landed at Exeter to refuel before returning to Molesworth. There were no casualties. Six aircraft sustained minor battle damage. It was a very successful mission.



Satan's Workshop #42-29931 (360BS) PU-L

303rd BG Lead - Pilot Maj K.R. Mitchell / CoPilot B/Gen R.F. Travis

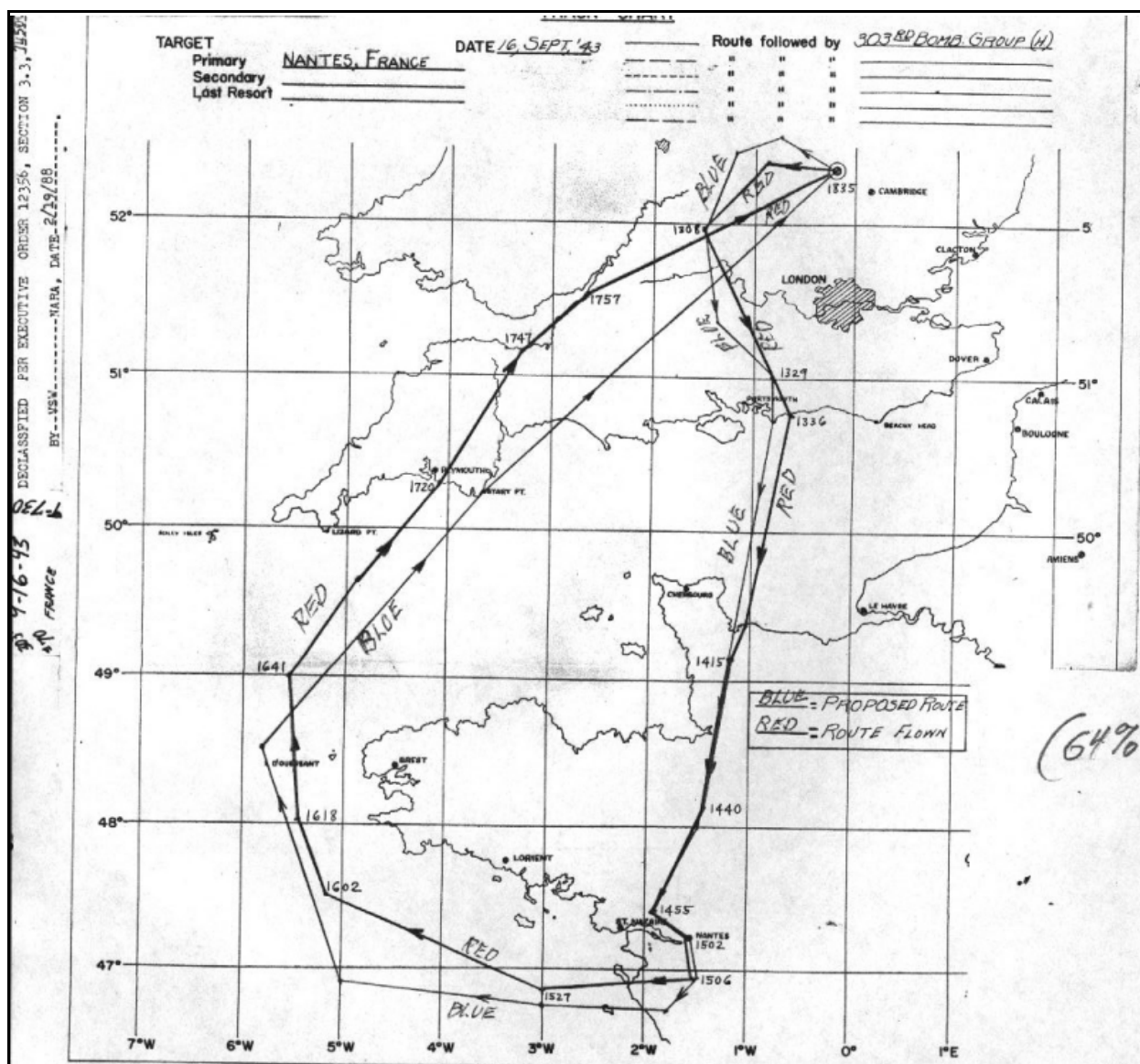
Maj K.R. Mitchell (P), B/Gen R.F Travis (CP),
1Lt R.E. McElwain (N), Lt P.W. Scroggins (N), Lt R.J. Saiz (B), Lt G.E. Wright (TG-O)

Sgt A.J. Hamilton (R), T/Sgt J.E. Scheuerer (E), S/Sgt A.L. Longo (BT),
S/Sgt R.R. Humphreys (WG), S/Sgt F.L. Misiak (WG)

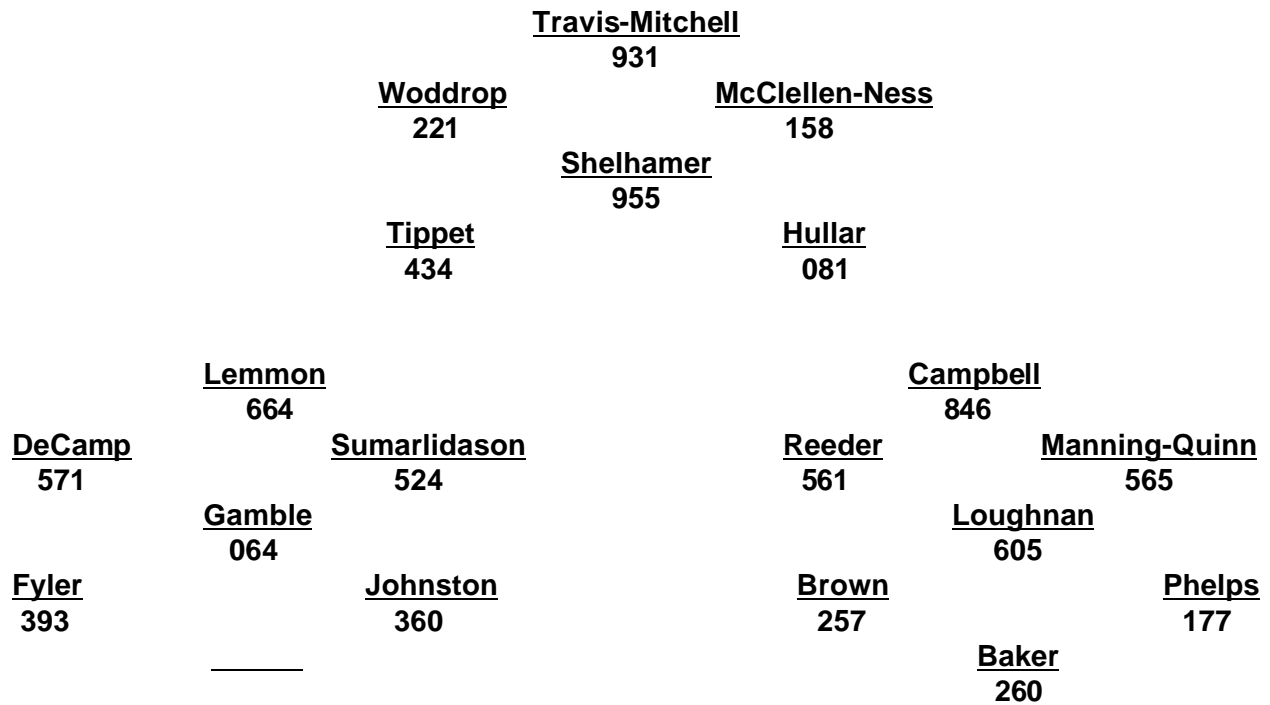
(crewmen are not in order)

Crew Reports of Enemy Aircraft Destroyed or Damaged

S/Sgt. A.B. Ayres (260)	FW-190	Destroyed
T/Sgt. Andrew Berzansky (664)	FW-190	Destroyed
T/Sgt. Andrew Berzansky (664)	FW-190	Damaged
S/Sgt. Albert Beavers (664)	FW-190	Destroyed
S/Sgt. Gustof J. Simon (524)	FW-190	Probable
S/Sgt. Billy F. Knorpp (605)	ME-110	Damaged
Sgt. J.L. Perryman (177)	ME-110	Destroyed
Sgt. W.A. Watts (221)	FW-190	Destroyed



Aircraft Formation at Assembly Point



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

358th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

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

P DeCamp, Donald F., 2Lt
CP Campbell, Paul W., 2Lt
NAV Haddock, Ralph M., 2Lt
BOM Galbraith, Robert E., 2Lt
ENG Hembree, William T., T/Sgt
RO King, Robert E., Sgt
LWG Hitt, William T., Sgt
BT Witherwax, Leon J., Sgt
TG Tracy, Richard J., S/Sgt
RWG McLawhorn, Jerry C., Sgt

B-17F #42-29524 *Meat Hound*

P Sumarlidason, Arni L., 1Lt
CP Sanders, Roy C., 2Lt
NAV Wood, Gordon W., 2Lt
BOM Peed, Philip A., 2Lt
ENG Rozek, Joseph A., T/Sgt
RWG Carll, Martin V., Sgt
RO Trest, James G., T/Sgt
BT Simon, Gustof J., S/Sgt
TG Cockrum, Alfred E., S/Sgt
LWG Smith, Riker K., S/Sgt

B-17F #42-3064 *Star Dust*

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

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

P Lemmon, John V., 1Lt
CP Harper, William B., 2Lt
NAV Gust, Darell D., 1Lt
BOM Stone, Elbert E., 1Lt
ENG Berzansky, Andrew, T/Sgt
RWG Beavers, Albert T., S/Sgt
RO Zeller, Caryl C., T/Sgt
BT Bagwell, Clayton R., S/Sgt
TG Brown, Virgil E., S/Sgt
LWG Briggs, Wayne E., S/Sgt

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

P 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 Miller, Richard C., Sgt
TG Moody, John P., S/Sgt
LWG Cobb, Edward N., S/Sgt

359th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

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	Konecko, John, Sgt
TG	Boggs, Calvin E., S/Sgt
RWG	Wright, Malcolm, S/Sgt

B-17F #41-24561 *The Duchess*

P	Reeder, D.M., 1Lt
CP	McLean, Ralph C., 2Lt
NAV	Salk, Harvey M., 2Lt
BOM	Vermillion, Earl E., 2Lt
ENG	Herod, Henry W., T/Sgt
RWG	Hayes, John J., S/Sgt
RO	Mowery, Ellis D., T/Sgt
LWG	Hull, Kenneth W., S/Sgt
BT	Wright, Samuel S., S/Sgt
TG	Swan, Henry, S/Sgt

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

P	Loughnan, Victor J., 1Lt
CP	Kalhoefer, Herbert E., Capt
NAV	Maxwell, James L., 2Lt
BOM	Robinson, John M., 2Lt
ENG	High, Eugene W., T/Sgt
TG	Knorpp, Billy F., S/Sgt
RO	Daley, Russell M., T/Sgt
BT	McGee, Kenneth L., S/Sgt
LWG	Barr, Gordon E., S/Sgt
RWG	Robillard, Paul C., Sgt
PHO	Luman, Morton, S/Sgt

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

P	Campbell, Claude W., 1Lt
CP	Miller, Arthur W., 2Lt
NAV	Ririe, George M., 1Lt
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

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

P	Manning, John P., 1Lt
CP	Quinn, Thomas J., F/O
NAV	Howlett, Oscar D., 2Lt
BOM	Van Zandt, Roland, 2Lt
ENG	Holper, Ralph M., T/Sgt
LWG	Reynolds, James B., S/Sgt
RO	Vieira, Joseph, T/Sgt
RWG	Kalafut, Joseph J., S/Sgt
BT	Bergman, Harvey F., S/Sgt
TG	Pelkey, Elwood R., S/Sgt

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

P	Phelps, Robert L., Jr., 1Lt
CP	Bolsover, Harold S., F/O
NAV	Rich, David A., 1Lt
BOM	Gordon, LeRoy V., 1Lt
ENG	Powell, Marvin F., S/Sgt
TT	Robb, Charles W., Sgt
RO	McGee, Paul P., S/Sgt
BT	Joubert, Francis M., Sgt
TG	Perryman, Jack L., Sgt
LWG	Robichaud, Joseph E., Sgt

360th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

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

P Baker, William T., 1Lt
CP Gahimer, Loyd D., 2Lt
NAV McLane, Joseph T., Lt
BOM Kulesa, Frank E., Lt
ENG Fielder, Neal F., T/Sgt
RWG Bowman, Vergil E., S/Sgt
RO Morrison, Eugene D., T/Sgt
BT Ayres, Arthur B., S/Sgt
TG Borrer, Norwood D., S/Sgt
LWG Watson, James A., T/Sgt

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

P Tippet, Paul S., Lt
CP Nemitz, Lewellyn H., Lt
NAV Mims, Edwin E., Lt
BOM Clark, Fred T., Lt
ENG Smith, Oaks H., Lt
RWG Greason, William R., S/Sgt
RO Richardson, Thomas L., T/Sgt
LWG Gibney, Hugh F., Jr., S/Sgt
BT Rasch, Abraham J., S/Sgt
TG Randall, Jack H., S/Sgt

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

P Fyler, Carl J., 1Lt
CP DeWall, Hershel R., Lt
NAV Davis, Darius R., Lt
BOM Gibson, Steve M., Lt
ENG Addison, Bill J., T/Sgt
RWG Fisher, George C., S/Sgt
RO Jillson, John S., S/Sgt
BT Ford, Ray D., S/Sgt
TG Stickler, John J., S/Sgt
LWG Stachowiak, Martin G., Sgt

427th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

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

P Shelhamer, David P., Jr., Lt
CP Tucker, Frederick W., Lt
NAV Kotz, Warren C., Lt
BOM Lewis, William L., Lt
ENG Willett, John K., S/Sgt
RO Harvie, Warren L., T/Sgt
BT Garrett, Frank O., Sgt
LWG Knight, Frederick B., S/Sgt
RWG Keaton, Joe J., S/Sgt
TG Volz, Robert J., S/Sgt

B-17F #42-29931 *Satan's Workshop*

P Mitchell, Kirk R., Maj
CP Travis, Robert F., B/Gen
NAV Scroggins, Paul W., Lt
NAV McElwain, Richard E., 1Lt
BOM Saiz, Reinaldo J., Lt
ENG Scheuerer, Joseph E., T/Sgt
RWG Humphreys, Robert R., S/Sgt
RO Hamilton, A.J., Sgt
BT Longo, Angelo L., S/Sgt
LWG Misiak, Frank L., S/Sgt
TG Wright, George E., 2Lt

B-17F #42-5221 *Son*

P Woddrop, Edward M., Lt
CP Henderson, Grover C., Lt
NAV Iverson, Ingvald M., Lt
BOM Bierman, Leonard B., Lt
ENG Watts, William A., Sgt
BT Baggs, Charlie C., S/Sgt
RO Mulholland, John J., T/Sgt
LWG Cooney, Robert M., Sgt
TG Allen, Glen R., S/Sgt
RWG Priestly, Van B., S/Sgt

B-17F #3158 *Max*

P McClellan, George S., Jr., Lt
CP Ness, Howard C., Lt
NAV Kaliher, John C., Lt
BOM Cornish, Merlin L., Lt
ENG Tempesta, David, T/Sgt
RWG Chiles, Alfred B., Jr., S/Sgt
RO Callihan, George A., T/Sgt
BT Yarian, Robert G., S/Sgt
LWG McGrew, Robert H., S/Sgt
TG Dugan, Charles E., S/Sgt

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

P Hullar, Robert J., Lt
CP Klint, Wilbur, Lt
NAV Brown, Elmer L., Lt
BOM McCormick, James E., Lt
ENG Rice, Dale W., S/Sgt
RWG Valis, William, Sgt
RO Hoyt, George F., S/Sgt
BT Sampson, Norman A., S/Sgt
TG Miller, Merlin D., S/Sgt
LWG Fullem, Charles, S/Sgt