

# 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

**N**o 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**

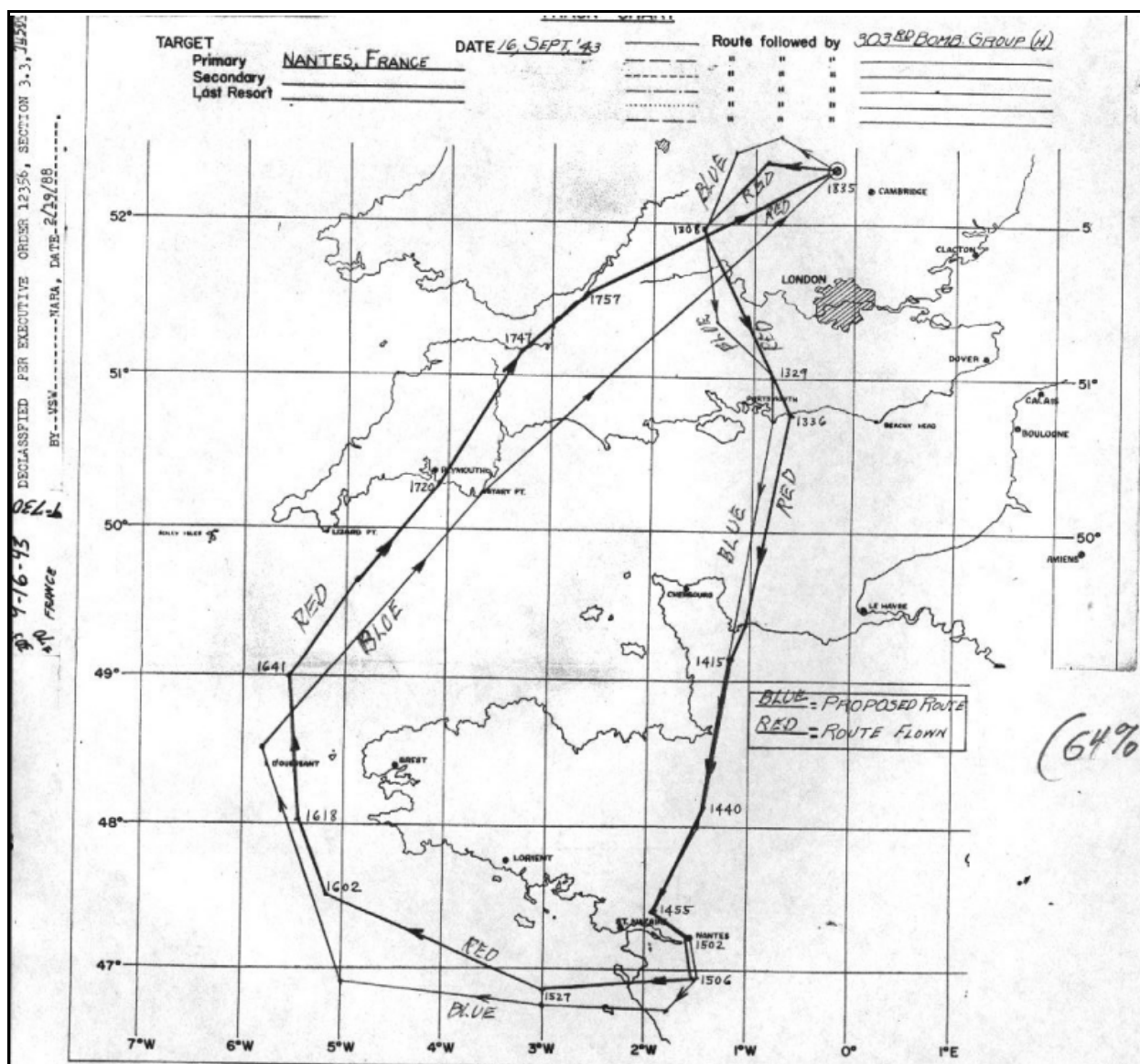
Maj K.R. Mitchell (P), B/Gen R.F. Travis (CP),  
1Lt R.E. McElwain (N), Lt P.W. Scroggins (N), Lt R.J. Saiz (B), Lt G.E. Wright (TG-O)

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)

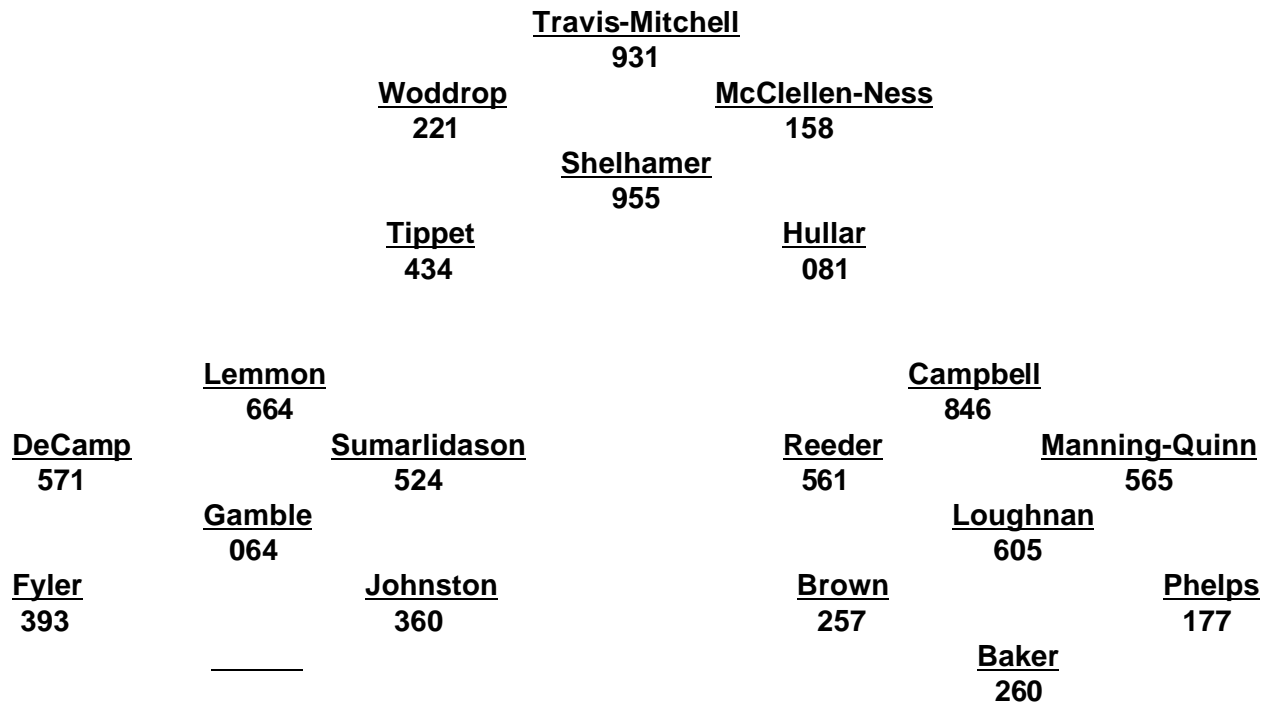
## Crew Reports of Enemy Aircraft Destroyed or Damaged

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



Route Map

# Aircraft Formation at Assembly Point



## KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

<b>CREW POSITIONS</b> 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  <b>RESULTS OF MISSION</b> 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***

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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***

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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***

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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.***

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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***

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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***

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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***

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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***

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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)***

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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***

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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***

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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***

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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***

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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***

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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***

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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***

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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***

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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***

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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***

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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