

303rd BG (H) Combat Mission No. 81

5 November 1943

Target: Center of City, Gelsenkirchen, Germany

Crews Dispatched: 19

Crews Lost: Lt. A.G. Grant, 1 crewman KIA, 9 crewmen POW

Length of Mission: 5 hours, 10 minutes

Bomb Load: 42 x M47A1 Incendiaries

Bombing Altitude: 26,500 ft

Ammo Fired: 15,485 rounds

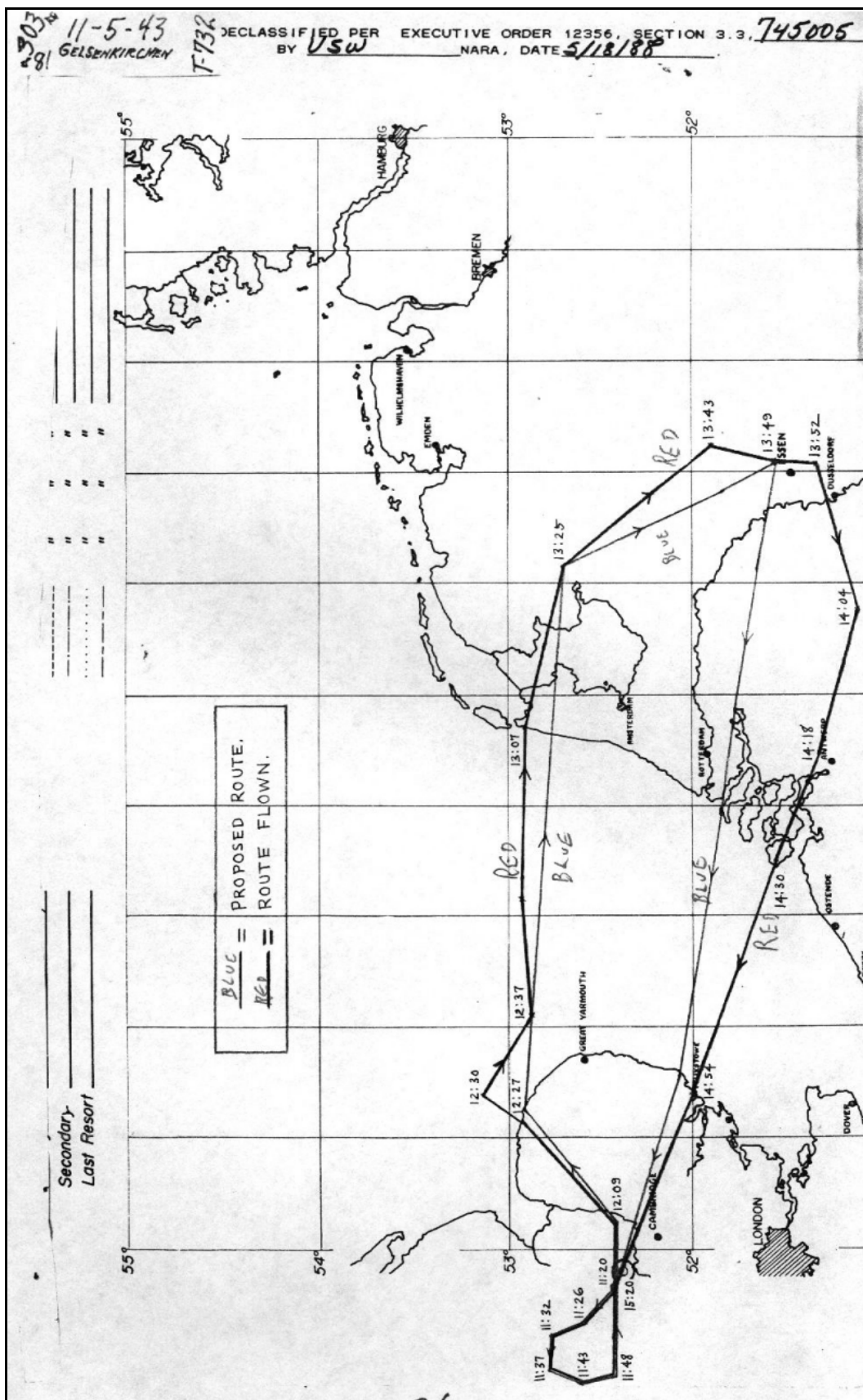
Nineteen aircraft were dispatched and none aborted. The 41 CBW flew in the second position rather than the third due to a timing mistake by the Wing Commander's aircraft. Bombs were released when the Wing Leader's PFF aircraft's bombs were observed. The Wing leader failed to fire a flare and give the code words for "IP" and "Bombs Away" over his VHF radio. A total of 796 65-lb. M47A1 incendiary bombs (25 3/4 tons) were released on the target from 26,500 feet. There were no clouds, but there was considerable industrial smoke and haze, an effective smoke screen. Photos indicated poor bombing results.

From ten to twenty enemy aircraft were seen, but few attacks were made on the Group. P-47 and P-38 fighter support was excellent. On the return journey, the Combat Wing leader took a course that led the formation near Antwerp and subjected the aircraft to severe flak defenses in that vicinity. There were no casualties, but fifteen aircraft received minor damage.

Idaho Potato Peeler, #41-24565 359BS (sometimes called *Rambling Wreck*), piloted by 2Lt. Ambrose G. **Grant**, fell out of formation while on the Group bomb run and followed 400 yards below and behind the formation on the return trip. It was last seen under fighter attack about 40 miles from the enemy coast at an altitude of 12,000 feet. Four parachutes were reported. The B-17 crashed near Rosenthal, Germany. Sgt. Joseph J. **Hauer** was killed in action. 2Lt. **Grant**, 2Lt. Franklin C. **Hall**, 2Lt. James F. **Berger**, 2Lt. Marion D. **Blackburn**, S/Sgt. Anthony T. **Kujawa**, T/Sgt. Edward J. **Sexton**, S/Sgt. Chester **Petrosky**, T/Sgt. Harold A. **Kraft** and S/Sgt. Francis D. **Anderson** were all captured by the enemy and became prisoners of war.

"The fighter support was excellent today," reported Maj. **Mitchell**, "but there was a pretty good crop of flak in that area--about 10,000 acres, I should say. Our airplane was hit four times, cutting one cable and leaving another hanging by a strand." 2Lt. Roland **Van Zandt**, bombardier on the Fortress *Wallaroo*, was carrying a piece of flak in his pocket that came in through the nose and ended up in his lap. "I thought the whole nose had come in," 2Lt. **Van Zandt** said. "I saw more flak today than I want to see again for a long time."

Fifteen of the nineteen Fortresses on this mission sustained battle damage, all minor. Twelve aircraft were hit by flak, two aircraft were hit by fighters and one aircraft was hit by friendly aircraft.



Route Map



Jersey Bounce #42-29664 (358BS) VK-C
41st CBW Low (358BS) - Pilot Maj K.R. Mitchell / CoPilot Capt M.R. Hungerford

Maj K.R. Mitchell (P), Capt M.R. Hungerford (CP), 1Lt R.E. McElwain (N),
 Capt R.J. Saiz (B), 2Lt G.E. Wright (TG-O)

T/Sgt C.E. Wagner (E), Sgt R.W. Hoffman (WG), S/Sgt J.C. Supple (R),
 S/Sgt W.E. Briggs (WG), S/Sgt G.W. Buske (WG), Sgt A.C. Wilson (TG)

(crewmen are not in order)

Aircraft Formation at Assembly Point

		<u>Mitchell</u> 664		
	<u>DeCamp</u> 524		<u>Wise</u> 562	
		<u>Johnston</u> 577		
	<u>Humphreys</u> 795		<u>Eckhart</u> 619	
	<u>Manning</u> 605			<u>Brinkley</u> 854
<u>Grant</u> 565		<u>Daub</u> 894		<u>Baker</u> 498
	<u>Brown</u> 257		<u>Heller</u> 973	
				<u>Fyler</u> 483
<u>Reeder</u> 561		<u>Hanselman</u> 177	<u>McClellan</u> 587	<u>Woddrop</u> 131
				<u>Quinn</u> 029

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 - Togglier 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 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 #41-24562 *Sky Wolf*

P	Wise, Calder L., 2Lt
CP	Fort, William C., Jr., 2Lt
NAV	Halliburton, J.B. Lewis, 2Lt
NG	Fee, George F., Sgt
ENG	Mullins, Grover C., S/Sgt
RWG	Pleasant, James H., S/Sgt
RO	DiMartino, Dante, Sgt
BT	Zeitner, Howard H., Sgt
TG	Sutton, Bernard J., Sgt
LWG	Viszneki, John G., S/Sgt

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

P	DeCamp, Donald F., 1Lt
CP	Emerson, Aubrey L., 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., S/Sgt
BT	Witherwax, Leon J., Sgt
TG	Tracy, Richard J., S/Sgt
RWG	McLawhorn, Jerry C., Sgt

B-17F #41-24577 *Hell's Angels*

P	Johnston, John R., 1Lt
CP	Lake, Lester A., Jr., 2Lt
NAV	Nothstein, John P., 2Lt
NG	Mills, James E., S/Sgt
ENG	Lopez, Rudolph S., T/Sgt
RWG	Arasin, John C., S/Sgt
RO	Matthews, James O., T/Sgt
BT	Griffin, Edward W., S/Sgt
TG	Moody, John P., S/Sgt
LWG	Cobb, Edward N., S/Sgt

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

P	Mitchell, Kirk R., Maj
CP	Hungerford, Merle R., Jr., Capt
NAV	McElwain, Richard E., 1Lt
BOM	Saiz, Reinaldo J., Capt
ENG	Wagner, Clyde E., T/Sgt
RWG	Hoffman, Robert W., Sgt
RO	Supple, James C., S/Sgt
BT	Briggs, Wayne E., S/Sgt
LWG	Buske, George W., S/Sgt
TG	Wright, George E., 1Lt
PHO	Nilson, Arthur C., Sgt

359th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

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

P	Manning, John P., 1Lt
CP	Blossom, George H., 2Lt
NAV	Antman, Jack, 2Lt
BOM	Robinson, John M., 1Lt
ENG	Keesling, George R., T/Sgt
TG	Jennings, Harley F., S/Sgt
RO	Fitzsimmons, Kenneth P., T/Sgt
RWG	Santella, Albert C., S/Sgt
BT	Mace, LeRoy L., S/Sgt
LWG	McKenna, Robert I., Sgt

B-17F #42-3029 *Wallaroo*

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

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

P	Grant, Ambrose G., 2Lt	POW
CP	Hall, Franklin C., 2Lt	POW
NAV	Berger, James F., 2Lt	POW
BOM	Blackburn, Marion D., 2Lt	POW
ENG	Kujawa, Anthony T., S/Sgt	POW
RO	Sexton, Edward J., T/Sgt	POW
LWG	Kraft, Harold A., T/Sgt	POW
BT	Anderson, Francis D., S/Sgt	POW
RWG	Hauer, Joseph J., Sgt	KIA
TG	Petrosky, Chester, S/Sgt	POW

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

P	Hanselman, Charles F., 2Lt
CP	Calwell, Lucien B., 2Lt
NAV	Ramsey, Elijah W., Jr., 2Lt
BOM	Livermore, William D., 2Lt
ENG	Fouss, Howard E., T/Sgt
TT	Laubert, Robert J., S/Sgt
RO	Zitzler, George A., T/Sgt
RWG	Williams, Walter S., S/Sgt
BT	Armstrong, Keith N., S/Sgt
TG	Tybuszewski, Mitchel J., S/Sgt
PHO	Mahaffey, William D., 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
LWG	Hayes, John J., S/Sgt
RO	Mowery, Ellis D., T/Sgt
RWG	Hull, Kenneth W., S/Sgt
BT	Wright, Samuel S., S/Sgt
TG	Swan, Henry, S/Sgt

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

P	Brown, Malcolm E., 2Lt
CP	Szelwian, Felix T., 2Lt
NAV	Alloway, Hillard C., 2Lt
RNG	Quick, George D., T/Sgt
ENG	Wright, Malcolm, S/Sgt
TT	Newman, John F., S/Sgt
RO	Cirello, Ralph T., T/Sgt
LWG	Boling, Shuble A., S/Sgt
BT	Konecko, John, Sgt
TG	Boggs, Calvin E., S/Sgt
PHO	Hunter, Robert G., Sgt

B-17F #42-29894 *Baltimore Bounce*

P	Daub, Leroy E., 2Lt
CP	Assenheimer, Edwin H.P., 2Lt
NAV	Palmer, Gerald M., 2Lt
BOM	Marlatt, Ray G., 2Lt
ENG	Barrett, John J., S/Sgt
RO	Kelly, Victor S., S/Sgt
RWG	Haman, Ray T., Sgt
LWG	Carter, Edward K., Sgt
BT	Gilmore, Charles E., Sgt
TG	Considine, Louis W., S/Sgt
PHO	Mahaffey, William D., Sgt

360th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

B-17F #42-5483 *Red Ass*

P	Fyler, Carl J., 1Lt
CP	Ward, Robert C., Lt
NAV	Molnar, George, Lt
BOM	Gibson, Steve M., Lt
ENG	Addison, Bill J., T/Sgt
RWG	Fisher, George C., S/Sgt
RO	Kistulentz, Paul, T/Sgt
BT	Ford, Ray D., S/Sgt
TG	Sawicki, Joseph R., S/Sgt
RWG	Stachowiak, Martin G., Sgt
PHO	Egge, Nellings P.S., Sgt

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

P	Heller, William C., Lt
CP	Coppom, John F., Lt
NAV	Zwayer, James P., Lt
BOM	DeSousa, John, Jr., Lt
ENG	Huston, William J., T/Sgt
RWG	Payne, George S., S/Sgt
RO	Spoerri, Felix, T/Sgt
LWG	Lanier, Leo, Jr., S/Sgt
BT	Schultz, Melvin E., S/Sgt
TG	Laurinitis, Anthony, S/Sgt

B-17F #42-5854 *Alley Oop*

P	Brinkley, Pharis C., Lt
CP	Parrott, John H., Lt
NAV	Becker, Sylvester J., Lt
BOM	Clark, Fred T., Lt
ENG	Worthington, Arthur J., T/Sgt
LWG	Lance, Guy A., S/Sgt
RO	Snyder, Richard N., T/Sgt
RWG	Ferguson, Charles R., S/Sgt
BT	Reid, Harold C., S/Sgt
TG	Rein, William E., S/Sgt

B-17F #42-29498 *Dark Horse*

P	Baker, William T., 1Lt
CP	Gahimer, Loyd D., 2Lt
NAV	McLane, Joseph T., Lt
BOM	Petrolino, James S., Lt
LWG	Borrer, Norwood D., S/Sgt
ENG	Fielder, Neal F., T/Sgt
RWG	Bowman, Vergil E., S/Sgt
RO	Bonn, Charles J., Sgt
BT	Stevens, A.S., T/Sgt
TG	Bacon, Charlie M., S/Sgt
LWG	Huddleston, D.O., Sgt

427th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

B-17F #42-29795 *Flying Bitch*

P	Humphreys, Fred C., Lt
CP	Clemons, James H., Lt
NAV	Culpin, John J., Jr., Lt
BOM	Orvis, George T., Jr., Lt
ENG	Janisch, Ferdinand J., T/Sgt
LWG	Beach, Russell F., S/Sgt
RO	Woods, Arthur H., T/Sgt
BT	Ross, Madison H., S/Sgt
RWG	Dare, Melvin M., S/Sgt
TG	Sparks, William C., Sgt

B-17 #42-3131 *Flak Wolf*

P	Woddrop, Edward M., Lt
CP	Henderson, Grover C., Lt
NAV	Iverson, Ingvald M., Lt
BOM	Hadley, Owen W., Sgt
ENG	Watts, William A., S/Sgt
BT	Teno, James R., Sgt
RO	Mulholland, John J., T/Sgt
LWG	Baggs, Charles C., S/Sgt
TG	Valis, William, S/Sgt
RWG	Hoff, Henry, Sgt
PHO	Jervis, J.R., Sgt

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

P	Eckhart, Alan, Lt
CP	Jenkins, Elton L., Lt
NAV	Eccleston, Edward F., Lt
BOM	Meagher, Robert W., Lt
TT	Neuner, Francis X., Sgt
BT	Tambe, Angelo J., S/Sgt
RO	Kuehl, Fred T., S/Sgt
TG	Smith, Nyle F., S/Sgt
LWG	Madak, Edward P., S/Sgt
RWG	Musashe, Michael, Sgt

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

P	McClellan, George S., Jr., Lt
CP	Greenwood, Ernest G., 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	Noah, Norbert O., Sgt
RWG	Heaton, Barnell S., Sgt
PHO	Mulberry, Harold F., Sgt

11 NOVEMBER 1943 - MISSION RECALLED

Target: Wesel, Germany

Twenty aircraft took off. The 1st Bombardment Division formations flew to the vicinity of the enemy coast, but abandoned the mission because of heavy clouds that extended up to 32,000 ft. The aircraft took off at 1130 and returned at 15 10 hours.



Glide Bomb Training in the USA

11 NOVEMBER 1943 - PRACTICE GRAPEFRUIT MISSION (GLIDE BOMBS)

The 8th Air Force assigned the 41st Combat Wing to participate in "Operation Grapefruit." This experimental program taught crewmen to drop GB-1 Glide Bombs. Glide Bombs consisted of an M342, 2000-lb bomb outfitted with 12-ft span glider wings and a tail unit 11 ft, 7 in long. The Glide Bombs were carried on underwing shackles, two per aircraft. They had an automatic stabilizing device to assist in directional control. When released, the bombs were supposed to glide a number of miles to the target. The aircraft would not be exposed to enemy anti-aircraft fire. The 444th Sub Depot Technical Supply was assigned the task of receiving, storing and assembling the GB-1 Glide Bombs. Several 303rd BG(H) crews were trained in their use in October 1943 at Brooksville, Florida. The crews were part of the "Iseman Provisional Group" and left for Florida on a high-priority assignment under top-secret orders. Three of these crews were part of the infamous aircraft formation, led by Lt Jack **Watson**, that buzzed Yankee Stadium during the World Series on 5 October 1943. The fact that they were part of the "Grapefruit Project" saved them from strict discipline by the Board of Inquiry.

The practice mission flew over the North Sea bombing range. Groups and Squadrons flew in formation at 150 mph with the lead Squadron at 23,000 ft. Upon signal, the leader dropped his nose to about 60 degrees and dove 2,000 ft at a speed of 190 to 200 mph, a 1,500 ft per minute rate of descent. The aircraft then leveled and released the Glide Bombs after 15 to 30 seconds level flight. The six aircraft Squadrons flew level and abreast during their dive, after which they climbed back to return trip altitudes in normal Group formation.

On the practice bomb run the lead ship's bombs failed to drop and a second bomb run was made. The "bombs away" signal (SCATTERBRAINS) was given on the second run and the aircraft dropped their bombs. Several aircraft were unable to release the Glide Bombs due to the way the lugs of the bombs fit on the shackles of the external bomb racks. Of the B-17s that dropped, one bomb was seen to "spin in" but the others performed as they should.

It was the consensus that additional practice in formation and bombing techniques and equipment modifications were required before utilizing the Glide Bombs on an actual combat mission.

The GB-1 Glide Bombs were packed in large crates, braced by gunstock-quality black walnut wood. After the "Operation Grapefruit" experiment ended, the crates were used for kindling. Several hundred pieces of black walnut were used to build a fancy bar at Site 5, in the joint enlisted/officers recreation room. Sgt Nathan **Smith**, NCOIC Intelligence, salvaged the wood and recruited and supervised the work force for the construction of the bar. The completed bar, 24 ft long and 3 ft wide, saw service until the end of the war. (See missions of 26 April and 28 May 1944.)

13 NOVEMBER 1943 - MISSION RECALLED

Target: Bremen, Germany

The three Combat Wings of the 1st Division were unable to assemble at the appointed time because of adverse weather. The mission was recalled and the twenty aircraft of the 303rd returned to Molesworth.