

303rd BG (H) Combat Mission No. 85

1 December 1943

Target: City area of Solingen, Germany (PFF Bombing)

Crews Dispatched: 20 plus one spare

Crews Lost: 2Lt. G.W. Luke, Jr., 1 KIA, 7 POW, 2 EVD;
1 crewman with very bad frostbite

Length of Mission: 6 hours, 25 minutes

Bombing Load: 8x500 lb G.P. & 20 M47A1 65 lb Incendiaries

Bombing Altitude: 26,700 ft

Ammo Fired: 1,445 rounds

Twenty aircraft plus one spare were dispatched. Each B-17 was loaded with eight 500-lb. bombs plus 20 M47A1 65-lb. incendiary bombs. Four aircraft aborted the mission:

#42-5854 *Alley Oop* 360BS (**Bergeron**) - The Fortress had low oil pressure.

#42-5788 *A.O.G. Not in Stock* 360BS (**McClellan**) - The pilot's mike button was out and oxygen leaked 30 miles from base.

#42-39785 *Thru Hel'en Hiwater* 358BS (**Clark**) - The B-17G developed low oil pressure and the navigator's oxygen leaked out.

#42-5264 *Yankee Doodle Dandy* (spare aircraft) 358BS (**Troppman**) - The airplane developed low oil pressure and had an oxygen leak.

The intense cold gave combat crews more trouble than enemy flak and fighters when temperatures at the 26,700 feet bombing altitude dropped below -40E. P-47s, P-38s and Spitfires supplied flawless fighter protection all the way in to the target and out to the enemy coast. Not one enemy fighter slipped through the fighter cover and attacked the formation. P-47s destroyed twenty German fighters with four probables and seven damaged. Spotty anti-aircraft fire reached its greatest intensity over the Ruhr Valley on the way home. It caused little damage to the 303rd BG(H) B-17s. Bombs were dropped through solid cloud cover on the PFF aircraft.

A new B-17G on its fourth mission was missing. This was the first 303rd BG(H) loss of a B-17G. #42-39781 (*No Name*) 360BS, piloted by 2Lt. George W. **Luke**, Jr., was last seen northwest of Aachen, Germany. It dropped out of the Group formation in a gradual turn to the right as if flying itself back into Germany. It crashed at Radingham, 10 km west of Lille, France.

2Lt. Gordon A. **Ballagh** recalled that flak hit his B-17 next to one of the inboard engines. They left the Group formation and were losing altitude when they were again hit by flak. This burst severed their control cables and the pilot ordered the crew to bail out near Lille, France. He landed in soft ground while being observed by a French lady and her children. She shouted "Good Luck" in broken English. He was captured and made a POW. 2Lt. **Ballagh** also recalled that the aircraft's name was *Career Girl*, although there is no record of this name being used on a 303rd BG(H) B-17.

The pilot, 2Lt. **Luke**, became the first 8th Air Force POW to enter Stalag Luft I. The co-pilot, 2Lt. Frank **Mitchell**, evaded capture and served with the underground until France's liberation. Sgt. Ira J. **Walter** evaded capture for a week, was captured and made a POW at Stalag 17B. Sgt. Robert H. **Washburn** was killed by the Germans during an escape attempt. He was initially buried in the Lille, France cemetery under the name "Washburn RAF" and later interred at the Ardennes American Cemetery near Liege, Belgium.

Another new B-17G Fortress with no name, #42-31243 427BS, piloted by Lt. Alan **Eckhart**, ditched in the English Channel at Pegwell Bay when the aircraft ran out of gas. The crew was picked up by Air-Sea Rescue and taken to Manston.

Maj. **Snyder** summed up the mission by stating, "I've been on a lot tougher ones, although there was a lot of flak in a few places, especially over the Ruhr. We had very good fighter protection and I didn't see even one enemy plane." 2Lt. Linton **Munroe**, navigator on the B-17G *Aloha* 360BS, said he wasn't bothered at all. "Everywhere I looked there seemed to be hundreds of fighters—all P47s, P-38s or Spitfires. I didn't see even one German plane today." "It was cold as hell today. We had good fighter cover and not too much flak, but the cold made the trip pretty rough," said S/Sgt. William H. **Simpkins**, engineer of *Connecticut Yankee*, 358BS. "I don't know where the Luftwaffe was today," said Sgt. Harry **Ross**, tail gunner of *Baltimore Bounce*, 359BS. "But I'm glad they didn't show up. I was plenty busy trying to keep warm."

Two of the returning aircraft landed at Manston and one at Ridgewell. S/Sgt. W.L. **Tharp**, of Lt. **Osborn's** crew in #42-37757 360BS, had severe frostbite on his legs and was hospitalized.



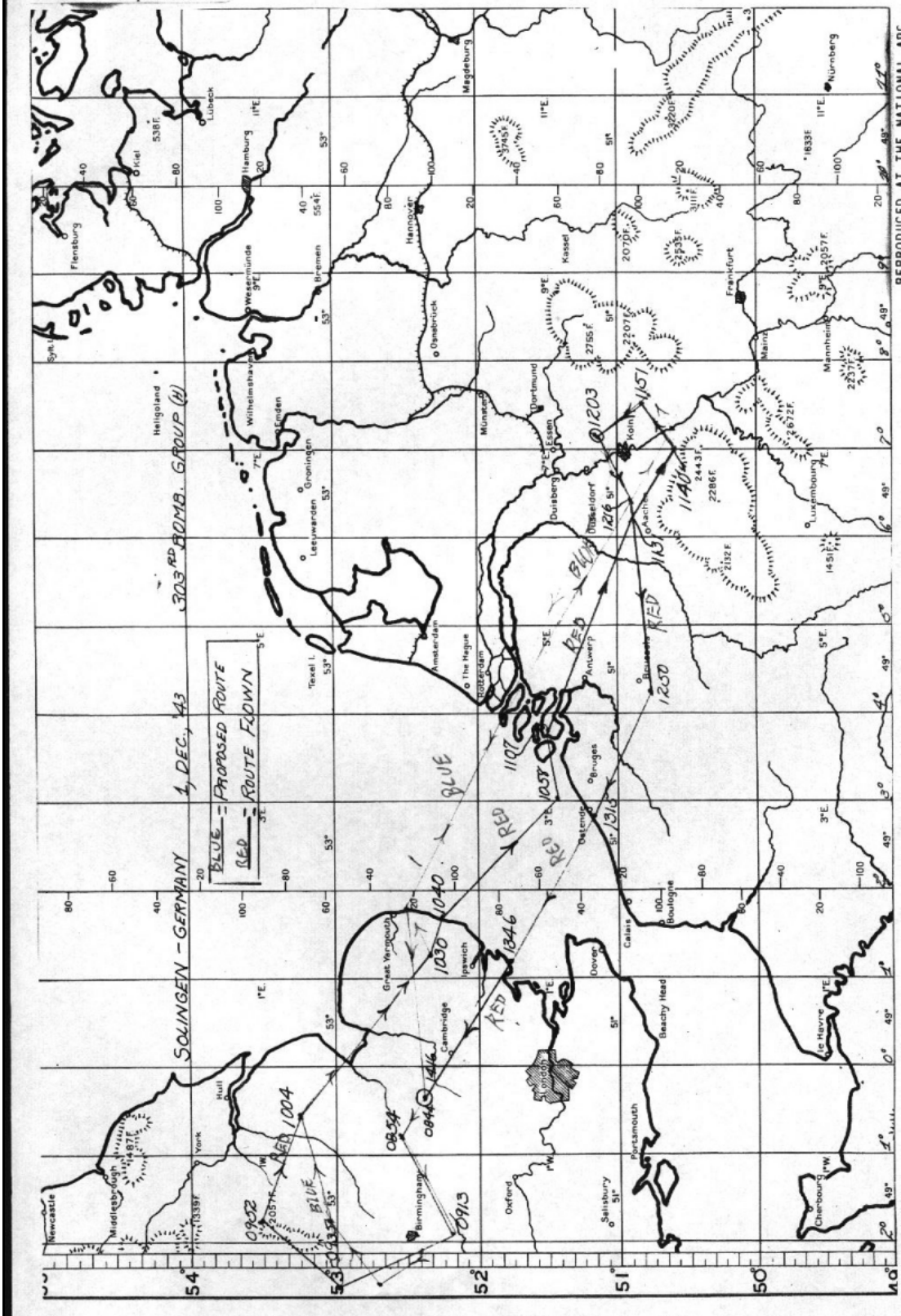
Vicious Virgin #42-5341 (427BS) GN-Q
303rd BG Lead - Pilot 1Lt R.J. Hullar / CoPilot Maj E.E. Snyder

1Lt R.J. Hullar (P), Maj E.E. Snyder (CP),
1Lt P.W. Scroggins (N), Capt B.K. Butt (B), Lt W. Klint (TG-O)
T/Sgt G.E. Hoyt (R), T/Sgt D.W. Rice (E), S/Sgt N.A. Sampson (BT),
T/Sgt C. Fullem (WG), S/Sgt M.D. Miller (WG)
(crewmen are not in order)

12-1-43
SOLINGEN -
GERMANY

T-732

DECLASSIFIED PER EXECUTIVE ORDER 12356, SECTION 3.3, 745005
BY USW NARA, DATE 5/18/88



Route Map

Aircraft Formation at Assembly Point

	<u>Snyder-Hullar</u> 341			
	<u>Sheets</u> 786		<u>Emerson</u> 893	
		<u>Woddrop</u> 875		
	<u>Humphreys</u> 060		<u>Eckhart</u> 243	
	<u>Bergeron</u> 854			<u>Reeder</u> 605
<u>Clark</u> 785		<u>Osborn</u> 757		<u>Shoup</u> 894
	<u>Heller</u> 973			<u>Quinn</u> 561
<u>Lawlor</u> 055		<u>Luke</u> 781		<u>Hungerford</u> 629
	<u>McClellan</u> 788			<u>Goolsby</u> 177
				<u>Troppman</u> 264

Four (4) aircraft aborted this mission:

Lt. Bergeron in 854	Lt. Clark in 785
Lt. McClellan in 788	Lt. Troppman in 264

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
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358th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

B-17F #42-29629 Connecticut Yankee

P Hungerford, Merle R., Capt
CP Henderson, John F., 2Lt
NAV Wiggins, Warren S., 2Lt
BOM Monkres, Woodrow W., 2Lt
ENG Simpkins, William H., S/Sgt
LWG Burkart, Ralph F., S/Sgt
RO Vosler, Forrest L., S/Sgt
BT Ruppel, Edward, Sgt
RWG Moody, Stanley N., Sgt
TG Buske, George W., Sgt

B-17G #42-37893 Bam Bam

P Emerson, Aubrey L., 2Lt
CP DaShiell, William C., 2Lt
NAV Sutherland, Thomas A., 2Lt
BOM DeLaura, Don J., 2Lt
ENG Stevenson, Robert L., S/Sgt
BT Robinson, Authur H., Sgt
RO Radebaugh, Bernard J., S/Sgt
RWG Owen, Robert J., Sgt
TG Morrison, George J., Sgt
LWG McKinney, Clifford M., Sgt

B-17F #42-5264 Yankee Doodle Dandy

P Troppman, Walter W., 2Lt
CP Elder, Damon C., 2Lt
NAV Minkowitz, Samuel, 2Lt
BOM Armstrong, Charles C., 2Lt
ENG Wilson, David L., S/Sgt
LWG Stender, Francis H., S/Sgt
RO Gilmore, Daniel F., S/Sgt
BT Mirenda, Frank J., Sgt
TG Swank, Verden D., Sgt
RWG Garcia, Mario D., Sgt
(Abortive)

B-17G #42-39785 Thru Hel'en Hiwater

P Clark, Martin L., 2Lt
CP Watson, Jack W., 2Lt
NAV Leverton, John G., 2Lt
BOM Colvin, Vance R., 2Lt
ENG Rowland, Samuel L., S/Sgt
LWG Stewart, Eugene R., Sgt
RO Romaniec, Harry, S/Sgt
RWG Fussner, William H., Sgt
TG Kosinski, Roman P., Sgt
BT Booth, Fred H., Sgt
(Abortive)

359th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

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

P Quinn, Thomas J., 2Lt
CP Hybert, Arthur J., 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 McCauley, Patrick N., S/Sgt
LWG Reynolds, James B., S/Sgt
TG Pelkey, Elwood R., S/Sgt
PHO Mahaffey, William D., Sgt

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

P Reeder, D.M., 1Lt
CP Cole, Richard H., Maj
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-17G #42-31177 *Lonesome Polecat*

P Goolsby, Billy M., 2Lt
CP Savage, John N., 2Lt
NAV Towberman, P.E., 2Lt
BOM Bowen, Richard R., 2Lt
ENG Rothrock, Harry J., Sgt
TT Newman, John F., S/Sgt
RO Greenhalgh, Chester W., S/Sgt
BT Montgomery, R.E., S/Sgt
TG Strobel, William A., Sgt
RWG Manchester, Robert E., S/Sgt

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

P Daub, Leroy E., 2Lt
CP Donalson, Douglas C., 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 Hunter, Richard G., Sgt

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

P Shoup, Noel E., 2Lt
CP Callahan, Edward F., 2Lt
NAV Clark, Byron F., 2Lt
BOM Kelly, James H., Jr., 2Lt
ENG Bragg, Ben W., S/Sgt
RWG Gribble, Robert F., Sgt
RO Harrison, Donald B., Sgt
LWG Mayhugh, W.D., Sgt
BT Hostetter, William L., Jr., Sgt
TG Ross, Harry C., Sgt

B-17F #42-3448 *(No Name)*

P Eich, Henry J., Jr. 2Lt
CP Woodside, William E., 2Lt
NAV Carroll, James E., 2Lt
BOM Stein, William G., 2Lt
ENG Lenson, H., Sgt
BT Celoni, J.P., Sgt
RO Harvey, D.S., S/Sgt
RWG Erdmann, D.C., Sgt
LWG Maggia, Edmond A., S/Sgt
TG Gilstrap, R.M., Sgt

360th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

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	Ayres, Arthur B., S/Sgt
TG	Laurinitis, Anthony, S/Sgt

B-17F #42-5854 Alley Oop

P	Bergeron, Willard H., Lt
CP	DeWall, Hershel R., Lt
NAV	Noland, James B., Lt
BOM	DeFeis, Robert N., Lt
ENG	Carnathan, Hugh S., T/Sgt
RWG	Frost, Carlyle A., S/Sgt
RO	Cline, Leroy, T/Sgt
BT	Hemmings, Norman A., S/Sgt
LWG	Wilson, George W., S/Sgt
TG	Appleton, Vernon R., S/Sgt
	(Abortive)

B-17G #42-37757 (No Name)

P	Osborn, William C., Lt
CP	Jernigan, Jack, Jr., Lt
NAV	Ross, Lawrence D., Lt
BOM	Campbell, Nelson, Lt
ENG	Wolff, William E., S/Sgt
LWG	Wolfe, Earl D., Sgt
RO	Daniel, George L., S/Sgt
RWG	Tharp, Willard L., S/Sgt
BT	Fitzgerald, Lyle W., Sgt
TG	Evans, Lawrence B., Sgt

B-17G #42-39781 (No Name) CR-L

P	Luke, George W., Jr., Lt	POW
CP	Mitchell, Frank, Lt	EVD
NAV	Ballagh, Gordon A., Lt	POW
BOM	Dahnke, Leonard L., Lt	POW
ENG	Boren, Millard A., S/Sgt	POW
RWG	Yeakel, Elwood D., Sgt	POW
RO	Day, Ben T., S/Sgt	POW
LWG	Wright, Sherman G., Sgt	POW
BT	Washburn, Robert H., Sgt	POW/KIA
TG	Walter, Ira J., Sgt	EVD/POW

B-17G #42-31055 Aloha

P	Lawlor, John C., Jr., Lt
CP	Hicks, David F., Lt
NAV	Munroe, Linton S., Jr., Lt
BOM	Stamper, William B., M/Sgt
ENG	Tower, Jack W., S/Sgt
RWG	Baker, Nelson, Sgt
RO	Esposito, Frank B., S/Sgt
LWG	Krenek, Joe W., Sgt
BT	Kuntashian, Warren V., Sgt
TG	Butler, Raymond K., Sgt

427th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

B-17G #42-31060 *Poque Ma Hone*

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-17G #42-37875 *Empress of D Street*

P	Woddrop, Edward M., Lt
CP	Culbertson, A.T., LtCol
NAV	Brown, Elmer L., Lt
BOM	Matthews, E.P., Lt
ENG	Watts, William A., S/Sgt
BT	Plante, Royal F., S/Sgt
RO	Mulholland, John J., T/Sgt
TG	Baggs, Charles C., S/Sgt
RWG	Valis, William, S/Sgt
LWG	Hadley, Owen W., Sgt

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

P	Hullar, Robert J., Lt
CP	Snyder, Edgar E., Jr., Maj
NAV	Scroggins, Paul W., Lt
BOM	Butt, Byron K., Capt
ENG	Rice, Dale W., S/Sgt
TG	Klint, Wilbur, Lt
RO	Hoyt, George F., S/Sgt
BT	Sampson, Norman A., S/Sgt
LWG	Miller, Merlin D., S/Sgt
RWG	Fullem, Charles, S/Sgt

B-17G #42-31243 (No Name) DCH

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

B-17G #42-39786 *G.I. Sheets*

P	Sheets, Robert W., Lt
CP	Jackman, Lon E., Jr., Lt
NAV	Linnehan, Arthur, Lt
BOM	Wallen, George A., Lt
ENG	Souder, Lee F., Jr., S/Sgt
BT	King, Earl J., Sgt
RO	DuBray, Ernest D., S/Sgt
TG	Sullens, Tom C., Sgt
LWG	Donnelly, James F., Sgt
RWG	Smith, Leonard C., Sgt

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

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
TG	Dugan, Charles E., S/Sgt
LWG	Heaton, Barnell S., Sgt
RO	O'Connor, William S., Sgt

(Abortive)