

303rd BG (H) Combat Mission No. 96

5 January 1944

Target: City Center, Kiel, Germany

Crews Dispatched: 23 (only 21 took off)

Crews Lost: 1 crew, Lt. B.G. Burkitt, 10 crewmen KIA

Length of Mission: 7 hours, 35 minutes

Bomb Load: 9 x 500 lb G.P. bombs, 1 B-17 w/ M17 Incendiaries

Bombing Altitude: 24,000 ft

Ammo Fired: 6,715 rounds

Eighteen aircraft in main 303rd BG(H) formation of got off the ground with a bad start. B-17 #42-31441 (*No Name*) 360BS-G, piloted by 2Lt. Benajah G. **Burkitt**, collided with #42-29747 "Rikki-Tikki Tavi II" 379BG, piloted by 2Lt. Dale C. Killon during the climb after take-off to the assembly area. Take-off was made in semi-darkness and visibility was very poor. Aldis lamps and flares were used in the effort to identify aircraft. Ten men in the 379BG aircraft died, as did all ten men in the 303rd BG(H) B-17 aircraft, which crashed near Catworth. The brand new B-17G was on its first mission. Crew members who died in #42-31441 were: Lt. **Burkitt**, 2Lt. Harold J. **Kuhn**, 2Lt. Herbert A. **Foote, Jr.**, 2Lt. Fred J. **Reith**, S/Sgt. P.H. **Gatewood**, S/Sgt. A.D. **Cantrell**, Sgt. Arthur O. **Berntzen**, Sgt. W.E. **Stoffregen**, Sgt. Lee C. **Brown** and Sgt. Cleve C. **Rush**. Lt. **Reith**, Sgt. **Brown**, Lt. **Kuhn** and Sgt. **Rush** are all buried at Cambridge American Cemetery, England. Sgt. **Berntzen** is buried at Brittany American Cemetery, Manche, France, next to his brother, **Yngvar Berntzen**, who was Killed In Action 29 May 1943.



BENAJAH G. BURKITT CREW - 360th BS - All KIA
(crew assigned 360BS: 16 Nov 1943 - photo: 26 Nov 1943)

Four aircraft in the main formation aborted the mission: #41-24561, *The Duchess* 359BS-T (**Shoup**); #41-24605, *Knockout Dropper* 359BS-R (**Bordelon**) - Take-off was delayed for spark plug replacement and the formation could not be found; #42-5081, *Luscious Lady* 427 BS-V (**McGarry**) - had a fire in the No. 4 engine. After extinguishing, they could not find the formation; #42-29795, *Flying Bitch* 427BS-O (**Harrison**) - The No. 2 engine supercharger and engine failed.

All five of the 358BS aircraft, dispatched to fly as the high Squadron of the 379/303 composite Bomb Group, aborted. Four could not find the 379BG formation and one took off late and could not find the formation. The remaining twelve B-17s of the main 303rd BG(H) formation reached the target and found 3/10 cloud cover and a highly effective smoke screen. The Wing commander gave the signal for visual bombing. Eight aircraft bombed the primary target with good results. Three dropped bombs in the vicinity of Meldorf with unknown results. They were out of formation. One aircraft carrying leaflets (**Nickels**) failed to drop them.

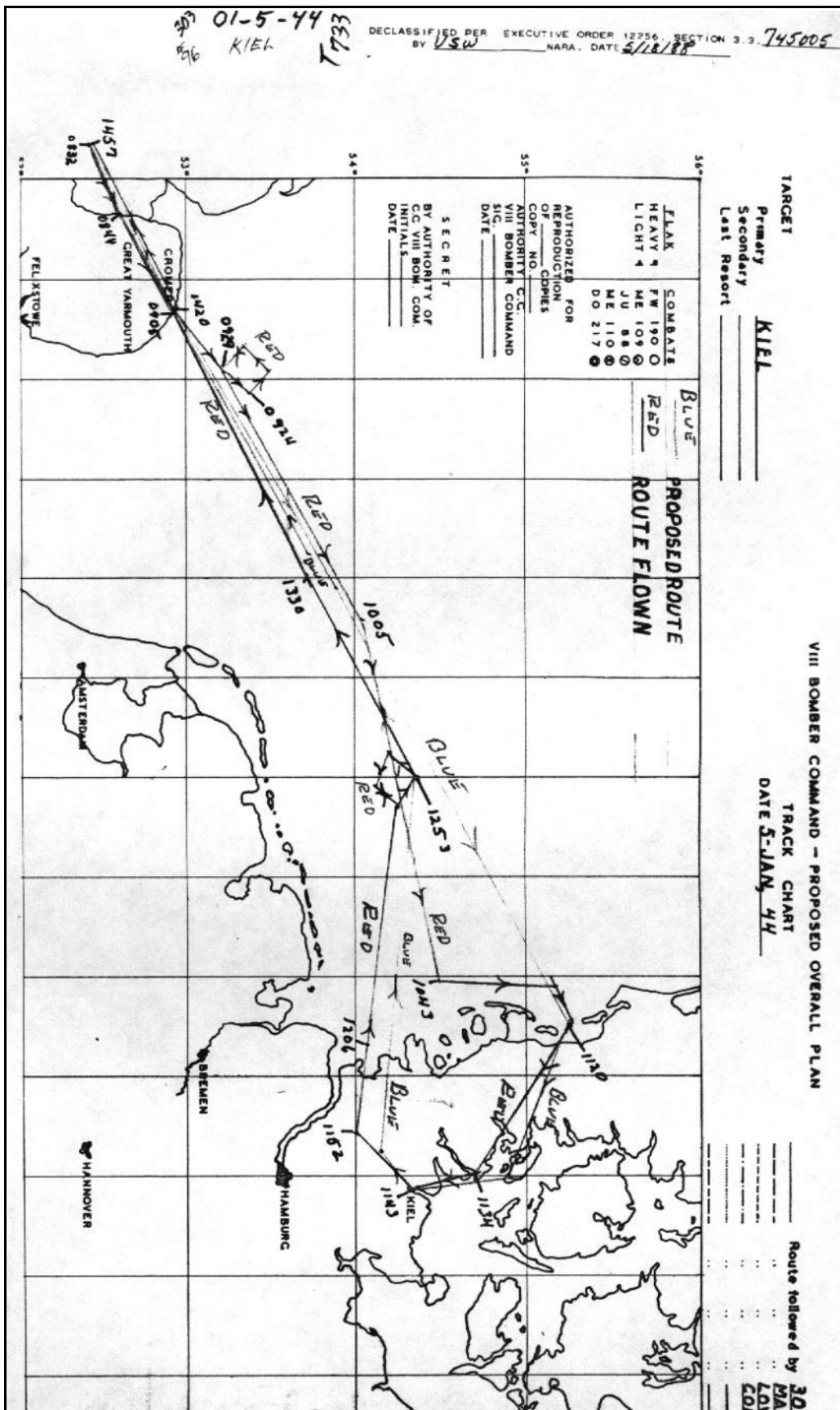
Moderate and accurate flak was reported over the target. Meager and inaccurate flak was seen along the route. From eight to fifty enemy aircraft were seen by the Group, but no attacks were pressed home. Good P-38 and P-51 fighter escort was provided. All aircraft, except for the **Burkitt** crew, returned safely. Six had minor flak damage.

Capt. John P. **Manning**, pilot of the lead ship *The '8' Ball MK II* summed up the mission, "We hit flak all over the area, but fortunately didn't see many fighters. I really expected to see a lot of them because it was a beautiful, clear day and we were the last ones over the target. However, I only saw about a dozen and they didn't bother us much. Some of the other boys saw a lot more. I couldn't see whether our own bombs hit the target or not, but I saw the results of the ship that went in ahead of us and it looked good." Lt. Robert **Halpin**, a pilot riding as tail gunner, said that some of the bombers did good work. "There was plenty of black smoke comin' up through the smoke screen," he said, "I don't know whether it was ours or not, but it came from the American Air Force, anyway."

S/Sgt. Edward K. **Carter**, top turret gunner on #42-29894 *Baltimore Bounce*, was enthusiastic about the P-51 performance in covering the formation. "Two JU-88s dove down on us and then two P-51s dove on them," he said. "In a few seconds, all that was left in the air were the two P-51s and just scattered bits of the two JU-88s." Navigator 2Lt. Gerald M. **Palmer** added that the bombing looked good and "even when we were fifty miles away after leaving the target, I could see two distinct columns of heavy grey and black smoke coming up through the clouds." Sgt. Charles G. **Covington**, tail gunner on *Nero* 359BS-K, claimed one enemy fighter. He got in a long burst on an ME-110 and "he just blew up all over the sky." Sgt. **Covington** remarked.

Crew Reports of Enemy Aircraft Destroyed or Damaged

		<u>Claim</u>	<u>Confirmed</u>
S/Sgt. Harry Goland (471)	ME-110	Destroyed	Damaged
S/Sgt. John P. Celoni (483)	FW-190	Probable	Destroyed
Sgt. C.G. Covington (807)	ME-210	Probable	Damaged
Sgt. Ray A. Cheek (029)	ME-210	Probable	No Claim



Route Map

Aircraft Formation at Assembly Point

<u>Cole-Manning</u> 635			
	<u>Daub</u> 894		<u>Dahleen</u> 807
		<u>Eich</u> 483	
	<u>Shoup</u> 561		_____
	<u>Hullar</u> 060		<u>Heller</u> 931
<u>Harrison</u> 795		<u>Wood</u> 200	<u>Holdcroft</u> 340
	<u>Barnes</u> 131		<u>Wilson</u> 471
<u>McClellan</u> 587		<u>McGarry</u> 081	<u>Crook</u> 029
	_____		<u>Bordelon</u> 605
			<u>Coppom</u> 896
			<u>Burkitt</u> 441

Composite Formation with 379th Group

_____		<u>Campbell</u> 865	
_____		<u>Kyse</u> 893	<u>Lake</u> 794
_____		<u>Clark</u> 562	
_____		<u>Hungerford</u> 360	_____

Four (4) aircraft aborted this mission:

Lt. Shoup in 561, Lt. Bordelon in 605, Lt. McGarry in 081, Lt. Harrison in 795

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

<u>CREW POSITIONS</u>			
CMP - Command Pilot	TOG - Toggler	VI - Voice Interpreter	DOW - Died of wounds
P - Pilot	BT - Ball Turret Operator	OBS - Observer	EVD - Evaded the enemy
CP - Co-Pilot	TT - Top Turret Operator	PAS - Passenger	INT - Interned in neu cntry
NAV - Navigator	TG - Tail Gunner	PHO - Photographer	REP - Repatriated
ANV - Ass't. Navigator	NG - Nose Gunner		RES - Rescued
MNV - Mickey Navigator	RG - Radio Gunner	<u>RESULTS OF MISSION</u>	ESC - Escaped
ENG - Engineer	WG - Waist Gunner	KIA - Killed in action	BO - Bailed out
BOM - Bombardier	LWG - Left Waist Gunner	WIA - Wounded in action	DCH - Ditched
RO - Radio Operator	RWG - Right Waist Gunner	MIA - Missing in action	CR-L - Crashed on land
	GUN - Gunner	POW - Prisoner of war	CR-S - Crashed at sea

358th Bombardment Squadron

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

P	Hungerford, Merle R., Capt
CP	Arundale, Karl B., 2Lt
NAV	Vogel, Joe B., 2Lt
BOM	Barlow, James F., 2Lt
ENG	Finch, Charles C., S/Sgt
RWG	Elovich, James T., Sgt
RO	Davis, Richard A., S/Sgt
BT	Miller, Richard C., Sgt
LWG	Petix, Angelo P., Sgt
TG	Fertitta, Joseph F., Sgt

(Abortive)

B-17G #42-30865 (*No Name*)

P	Campbell, Paul W., 1Lt
CP	Voorhees, Burton K., LtCol
NAV	Nothstein, John P., 2Lt
BOM	Millner, William J., 2Lt
ENG	Backiel, Stanley J., T/Sgt
RWG	Wisniewski, Alexander, S/Sgt
RO	DiMartino, Dante, Sgt
BT	Brooks, John W., Sgt
LWG	Hoy, James F., S/Sgt
TG	Cassidy, Edward J., S/Sgt

(Abortive)

B-17G #42-39794 (*No Name*)

P	Lake, Lester A., Jr., 1Lt
CP	Cook, John H., 2Lt
NAV	Wiggins, Warren S., 2Lt
BOM	Morrison, James P., 2Lt
ENG	Haggerty, Jerome J., S/Sgt
LWG	Delaney, Jessie L., Sgt
RO	Rumpf, Charles W., S/Sgt
RWG	Balzano, Christopher, Sgt
TG	Hunt, John L., Sgt
BT	Chadick, Neal T., Sgt

(Abortive)

B-17G #42-37893 *Bam Bam*

P	Kyse, Walter R., 2Lt
CP	Taylor, James B., 2Lt
NAV	Steely, Hobart H., 2Lt
BOM	Mack, Austin J., 2Lt
ENG	Jones, Douglas L., S/Sgt
BT	Kennard, Royal G., Sgt
RO	Dulin, Woodroe G., S/Sgt
RWG	Schweinebraten, Leslie H., Sgt
TG	Cox, James B., S/Sgt
LWG	Hitt, William T., S/Sgt

(Abortive)

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

P	Clark, Martin L., 1Lt
CP	Bass, Julius E., 2Lt
NAV	Abernathy, Milton B., 2Lt
BOM	Zientar, Matthew S., 2Lt
ENG	Quevedo, Alfonso, S/Sgt
RWG	Grsetic, John P., Sgt
RO	Hensley, James C., S/Sgt
LWG	Canale, Michael J., Sgt
TG	McLawhorn, Jerry C., S/Sgt
BT	Brown, Harold J., Sgt
PHO	Dockendorf, Cyril J., Sgt

(Abortive)

359th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

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

P	Shoup, Noel E., 2Lt
CP	Litherland, James, 2Lt
NAV	Clark, Byron F., 2Lt
BOM	Ulbricht, Walter E., 2Lt
ENG	Bragg, Ben W., S/Sgt
RWG	Gribble, Robert F., Sgt
RO	Rose, William A., Sgt
LWG	Asvestos, Nick, S/Sgt
BT	Hostetter, William L., Jr., Sgt
TG	Ross, Harry C., Sgt

(Abortive)

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

P	Cole, Richard H., Maj
CP	Manning, John P., Capt
NAV	Antman, Jack, 1Lt
BOM	McCormick, James E., 1Lt
ENG	Keesling, George R., T/Sgt
LWG	Jennings, Harley F., S/Sgt
RO	Fitzsimmons, Kenneth P., T/Sgt
RWG	Santella, Albert C., S/Sgt
BT	Mace, LeRoy L., S/Sgt
TG/O	Halpin, Robert H., 2Lt
PHO	Green, William H., Jr., T/Sgt

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

P	Daub, Leroy E., 2Lt
CP	McLean, Ralph C., 2Lt
NAV	Palmer, Gerald M., 2Lt
BOM	Marlatt, Ray G., 2Lt
ENG	Haman, Ray T., Sgt
RO	Kelly, Victor S., S/Sgt
TT	McConaghy, Leo R., S/Sgt
LWG	Carter, Edward K., Sgt
BT	Gilmore, Charles E., Sgt
TG	Considine, Louis W., S/Sgt

(Abortive)

B-17G #42-31483 *Bonnie B*

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
TG	Maggia, Edmond A., S/Sgt
LWG	Gilstrap, R.M., Sgt

B-17G #42-39807 *Nero*

P	Dahleen, Howard D., 2Lt
CP	Austin, John T., 2Lt
NAV	Klingensmith, Russell S., 2Lt
BOM	Gauthier, Raymond W., 2Lt
ENG	Malcolm, Orrick H., S/Sgt
RO	Swanson, Clifford E., S/Sgt
RWG	Smith, Harding W., Sgt
LWG	Titworth, William E., Sgt
BT	McCauley, Patrick N., S/Sgt
TG	Covington, Charles G., Sgt

360th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

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

P	Heller, William C., Lt
CP	Chapman, John M., 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-17G #42-31340 *Miss Liberty*

P	Holdcroft, Lloyd L., Lt
CP	Bradley, Clyde W., Jr., Lt
NAV	Pace, Charles M., Lt
BOM	O'Donnell, John J., Lt
ENG	DeMarco, John A., S/Sgt
RWG	Hustus, Walter L., Sgt
RO	Francis, Walter G., S/Sgt
LWG	Slusser, Walter C., Sgt
BT	Kern, Lloyd F., Sgt
TG	Krumholz, Robert A., Sgt

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

P	Bordelon, Berton A., Lt
CP	Coons, Charles L., Lt
NAV	Cromwell, Frederick P., Lt
BOM	Cottrell, John W., Lt
ENG	Barker, Forrest, S/Sgt
RWG	Adams, Donald K., Sgt
RO	Fontana, Joseph L., S/Sgt
LWG	Stamper, William B., M/Sgt
BT	Harrington, Joseph F., Sgt
TG	Couch, Ted, Sgt

(Abortive)

B-17F #42-3029 *Wallaroo*

P	Crook, Charles D., Lt
CP	Evans, Ernest N., Lt
NAV	Davis, Roscoe, Lt
BOM	DeLuca, Joseph, F/O
ENG	Breitenbach, Louis H., S/Sgt
RWG	Chavez, Salvador, Sgt
RO	Hannan, Robert J., S/Sgt
LWG	Williams, Norris R., Sgt
BT	Cheek, Roy A., Sgt
TG	Hensley, James H., Sgt

B-17G #42-37896 (No Name)

P	Coppom, John F., Lt
CP	Hallden, Robert H., Lt
NAV	Limon, Gerald N., Lt
BOM	Hubenschmidt, John W., F/O
ENG	Binben, H.M., S/Sgt
LWG	Moore, C.E., Sgt
RO	Hutchins, Dalton R., S/Sgt
RWG	Hays, Hubert G., Sgt
BT	Robinson, Robert B., Sgt
TG	Chatoian, Carl H., Sgt

B-17G #42-31471 *Doolittle's Destroyer*

P	Wilson, Fred F., Lt
CP	Bowen, James W., Lt
NAV	Przybyszewski, Henry S., Lt
BOM	Fahlbusch, Joseph F., Lt
ENG	Goland, Harry, S/Sgt
RWG	Roads, Dwight W., Jr., Sgt
RO	Mirkin, Herman H., S/Sgt
LWG	Pierson, Lawrence C., S/Sgt
BT	Webbink, Elvin F., Sgt
TG	Hubley, Warren G., Sgt

B-17G #42-31441 (No Name) CR-L

P	Burkitt, Benajah G., Lt	KIA
CP	Kuhn, Harold J., Lt	KIA
NAV	Foote, Herbert A., Jr., Lt	KIA
BOM	Reith, Fred J., Lt	KIA
ENG	Gatewood, P.H., S/Sgt	KIA
TG	Rush, Cleve C., Sgt	KIA
RO	Cantrell, A.D., S/Sgt	KIA
BT	Berntzen, Arthur O., Sgt	KIA
RWG	Brown, Lee C., Sgt	KIA
LWG	Stoffregen, W.E., Sgt	KIA

(Abortive)

427th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

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

P	Harrison, Emmittes S., Jr., Lt
CP	Bastean, Stephen B., Lt
NAV	Kurnik, Walter F., Lt
BOM	Biedanski, Edmund J., Lt
ENG	Rombach, Joseph H., S/Sgt
BT	Dye, James W., S/Sgt
RO	Volmer, Lawrence O., S/Sgt
TG	Burkett, Albert S., Sgt
LWG	Campbell, Walter C., Sgt
RWG	Hawk, Kenneth L., Sgt
(Abortive)	

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

P	Barnes, Deane L., Lt
CP	Raistrick, Albert G., Lt
NAV	Randall, Everett Z., Lt
BOM	Roode, William A.T., Lt
ENG	Sparks, Willie T., S/Sgt
BT	Chancellor, John R., Sgt
RO	Doyle, Edward J., S/Sgt
TG	Underwood, Clifford B., Sgt
LWG	Winters, Craig W., Sgt
RWG	Price, John B., Sgt
PHO	Mulberry, Harold F., Sgt

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

P	Hullar, Robert J., Lt
CP	Sullivan, Francix S., Lt
NAV	Brown, Elmer L., Lt
BOM	Cornish, Merlin L., Lt
ENG	Rice, Dale W., S/Sgt
RO	Hoyt, George F., S/Sgt
BT	Sampson, Norman A., S/Sgt
TG	Miller, Merlin D., S/Sgt
RWG	Fullem, Charles, S/Sgt
LWG	Marson, Charles H., S/Sgt

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

P	McClellan, George S., Jr., Lt
CP	Knutson, Wilmer A., Lt
NAV	Kaliher, John C., Lt
BOM	Bawol, Walter S., Lt
ENG	Tempesta, David, T/Sgt
RWG	Chiles, Alfred B., Jr., S/Sgt
RO	Callihan, George A., T/Sgt
BT	Tambe, Angelo J., S/Sgt
TG	Dugan, Charles E., S/Sgt
LWG	Heaton, Barnell S., S/Sgt
(Abortive Sortie)	

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

P	McGarry, John J., Jr., Lt
CP	Cotham, Willie C., Lt
NAV	Halligan, Robert W., Lt
BOM	Foe, Kenneth D., Lt
ENG	Grace, Henry J., S/Sgt
BT	Friedman, Ira, Sgt
RO	Wilson, Elmer A., S/Sgt
TG	Kowalonek, Walter A., Sgt
LWG	Brown, Edgar S., Sgt
RWG	Hilborn, Ervin, Sgt
(Abortive)	

B-17G #42-31200 *Old Crow*

P	Wood, Vere A., Lt
CP	Greenwood, Ernest G., Lt
NAV	Pinnette, William S., Lt
BOM	Brown, Thomas G., Lt
ENG	Tevis, John E., Sgt
BT	Grant, Thomas V., S/Sgt
RO	Brooks, Winnie R., S/Sg
TG	Helton, Edward, Sgt
RWG	Heathershaw, Charles L., Sgt
LWG	Noah, Norbert O., Sgt