

# 303rd BG (H) Combat Mission No. 150

4 May 1944

Target: Zwischenahn Germany

Crews Dispatched: 36

Length of Mission: 4 hours, 45 minutes

Bomb Load: 2 x 1000 G.P. bombs plus 4 x M17 Incendiary Clusters

Bombing Altitude: No Bombs Dropped

Ammo Fired: 210 rounds

**B**oth 303rd BG(H) formations had the Friedrichstrasse Railroad Station in Berlin as the primary target. Hannover was designated as the secondary and any German industrial area as the last resort target.

Three aircraft returned early:

#42-31423 *Jigger Rooche*, 427BS (Lt. **Jones**) - No. 1 engine failed.

#42-31177 *Lonesome Polecat*, 359BS (Lt. **Daum**) - The Nos. 3 and 4 engines had excessive cylinder head temperatures.

#42-31213 *Pistol Packin' Mama*, 359BS (Lt. **Fackler**) - No. 3 engine cracked duct on intake manifold.



Lord Trenchard and Col Kermit D. Stevens review the troupes.

Group aircraft took off, but returned safely after a 1st BD recall at 0956 hours. Clouds were reported as being scattered and low up to 3/10s, tops 5,000 feet, 7/10 to 9/10 middle clouds at 11,000 feet and 7/10 from 10,000 to 20,000 feet with contrails from 15,000 to 22,000 feet.

No bombs were dropped by either Group formation. The 303BG-A (41 CBW high Group) spotted a few enemy aircraft, but none attacked or were close enough for identification. Flak was observed at Ijmuiden on the coast of the Netherlands. Turn-back was at 52E 35' N - 03E 11' E. The crews in this formation were credited with a sortie. The 303BG-B (94 CBW high Group lead and low Squadrons) turned back when they were 10 to 15 miles short of the coast of the Netherlands, 10 miles south of course. The crews in this formation were not credited with a sortie and are not listed in this report.

Lt. Joseph A. **Moreau** and his crew, flying in #42-31583 *Clover Leaf*, 358BS, were commended for their report of a B-17 ditching in the middle of the North Sea. Through their distress procedure, they established the position of the distressed crew. The crew was later rescued. Other crews were urged to continue to be watchful for aircrews in distress and to render all aid possible toward their rescue.

1Lt. C.M. **Hall**, pilot, and Capt. J.F. **McNamara**, co-pilot, were in #42-31739 *Pugnacious Peter* 358BS-P. After a hard landing and a very short roll the left wing went down as the wheel gave way. The B-17 ground looped off the runway.

### ***SOME THOUGHTS FROM OUR GROUND SUPPORT PERSONNEL***

Working around the clock to get the aircraft ready for the mission were our Ground Support Personnel. At the hard stands were many Crew Chiefs and their Aircraft Engine Mechanics. One of them, T/Sgt. James C. Hicks, tells his thoughts about the early days at Molesworth:

In the last few weeks I have read and studied the whole of the 364 missions and gone over the first 150 missions in some detail again. This exercise brought back many memories. I want to give you a few of my thoughts on this first part of the Molesworth Saga.

When we got to England in October 1942 and the new planes started coming in, we thought that we truly had the Flying Fortress. However, when we went into combat, we soon learned that there were problems with this great plane. These problems caused difficulty for the planes and for the crews as they went into combat. And if it caused them problems, it also caused problems for the maintenance men on the ground. Here is a list of some of those problems:

- Leaking Oil Coolers
- Oil Controls for the Superchargers
- Poor Brake Drums
- Waist Guns that would freeze up at altitude
- Oxygen Masks that froze up, causing some deaths, and difficulty in breathing
- Generators that didn't provide adequate output control
- No Guns in the Nose to provide complete protection
- Waist Guns that did not have an automatic cut-off to prevent shooting up the wing and horizontal stabilizer.

The generators had an output control that was poor, very hard to adjust and the generators were not big enough for the demands place on the.

The waist guns had no automatic cut-off and the wing or the horizontal stabilizer could be shot up. We had to replace one, on "The Duchess" because of this.

We had no guns that would shoot to cover in full the front of the plane. And the Ball Turret guns would not raise up enough, nor would the Top Turret guns go down low enough to cover the entire front against incoming German fighters.

Because of this, we lost many planes because the German pilots found this 'blind spot' and took advantage of the Forts by attacking in this "blind zone." So our first crews that came over in November of 1942 had to put up with these problems and more.

But then times changed and improvements came along. Double drum brakes made taxiing better and safer. Electronic control superchargers made the pilots control of them easy and this made the engines and superchargers last longer. Limiting switches for the waist guns were installed to prevent the gunners from shooting up their own wings and stabilizers.

Along came the Chin Turrets on mounts for guns to cover the "blind spot." Oil to keep the guns from freezing up at altitude. Demand oxygen systems with a new type of mask were provided. They came up with Flak suits for the crews. Bigger generators with real good output controls came with the new aircraft as they arrived and supplies of them were made available to change the ones in the older aircraft.

One thing that never was changed was the tires. They would blow out in 1942 and would still blow out in 1945. All these improvements made it better for the newer flight crews and by the same token made it better for the maintenance people.

These days still linger in my mind.

### ***A CREDITED MISSION — BUT NOT FOR MY GROUP "B" AIRCRAFT***

**Ed Miller's Memories and Recollections**

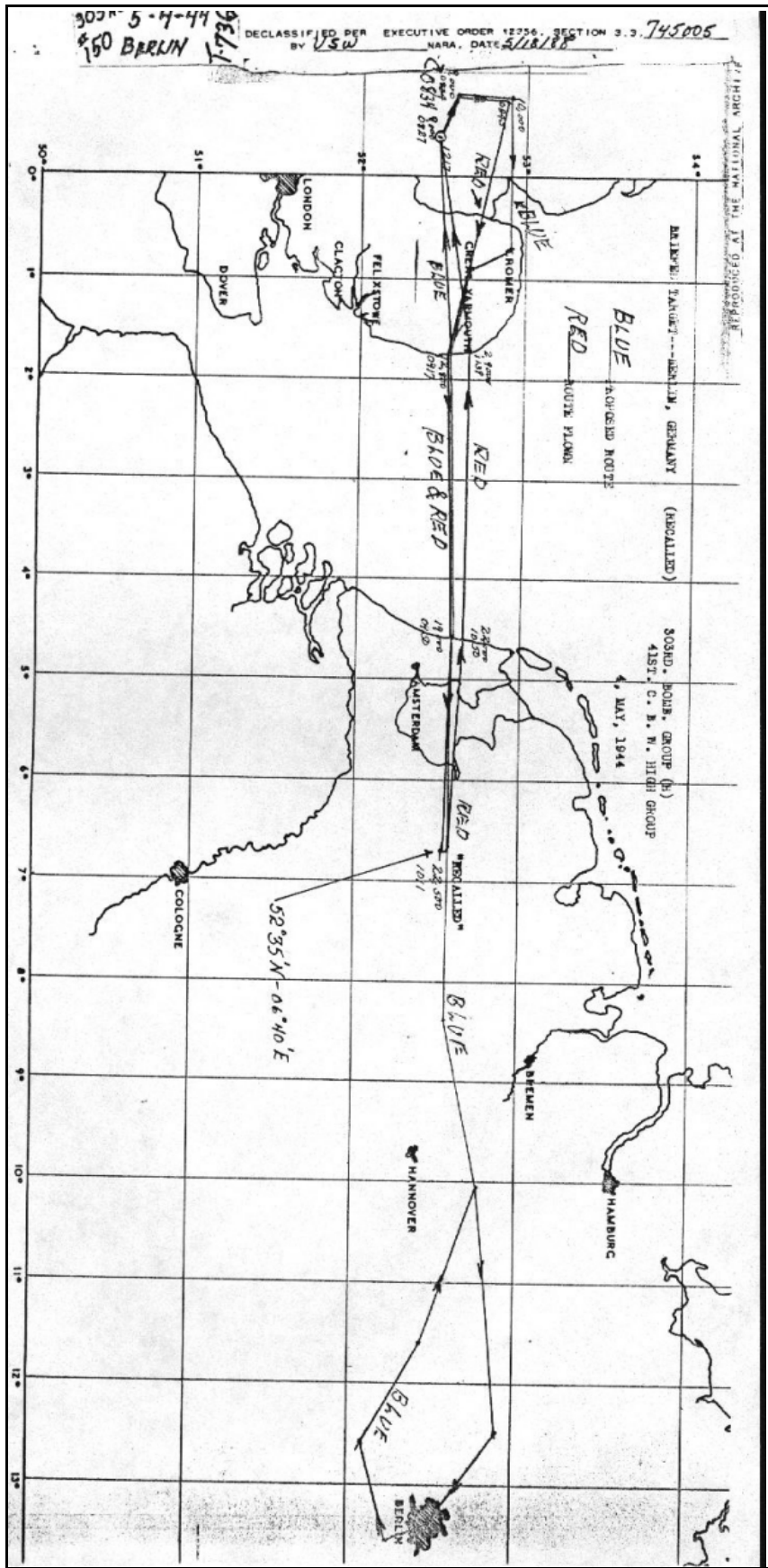
The target, wouldn't you know, would be that "damned railroad station" in Berlin—the Friedrichstrasse Railroad Station. But we didn't get anywhere close to it today. The weather was not any way near what was briefed.

There must have been considerable discussion between the Wing, 1st Air Division and the 8th Air Force on this mission. That is why the numbering of it appears to be out of sequence. Note that it was flown on 4 May 1944, but mission #146 was flown after May 4th. The problem was whether we would receive credit for the mission. As it turned out the 303rd Bomb Group that was flying the High Group in the 41st Combat Wing were credited with the "sortie," but the two squadrons flying in the High Group of the 94th Combat Wing (B Group) did not receive credit for this "sortie."

The High Group of the 94th Combat Wing was lead by Major R.H. Cole. Due to clouds during assembly, and the necessity of having to dodge around cloud formations on the climb up to altitude before leaving England, we were behind schedule. Upon reaching 22,000 feet we could not find the Lead Group of the 41st Combat Wing and were never able to reassemble with them.

Since we never flew over enemy territory, and had no encounter with either enemy aircraft or anti-aircraft guns, we did not deserve to receive credit for this "sortie."

This was another one of those missions that we had to fly at low levels after we reached the coast of England and on the way back to Molesworth, because of a low overcast and bad weather.



Route Map

**Aircraft Formation at Assembly Point**  
**41st CBW-A High Group Formation**  
(crews that received Mission Credit)



Three (3) aircraft aborted this mission (Not shown on Squadron Crew lists):

Lt Daum (359 BS) in 177 (41st CBW-A High Group)

Lt Fackler (360 BS) in 213 (41st CBW-A High Group)

Lt Jones (427 BS) in 413 (94th CBW-B High Group, Low Squadron)

The Formation Diagram for the thirteen 303rd BG(H) B-17s of the 94th CBW-B High Group, Lead and Low Squadrons, is not shown in this report.

**KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS**

<b><u>CREW POSITIONS</u></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><u>RESULTS OF MISSION</u></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
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## 358th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

### **B-17G #42-107002 *Mairzy Doats***

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P	Maxey, Frank, 2Lt
CP	Pfahler, Ervin J., 2Lt
NAV	Shamban, Marcus F., 2Lt
BOM	Spatt, Arnold I., 2Lt
ENG	Gonsalves, John D., S/Sgt
LWG	Johnston, Wendell B., Sgt
RO	Rabun, Clifford G., Sgt
BT	Swain, Norman F., Pvt
TG	Angelo, George L., S/Sgt
RWG	Hodgins, Robert A., Sgt

### **B-17G #42-31739 *Pugnacious Peter***

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P	Hall, Charles M., 2Lt
CP	McNamara, James F., Capt
NAV	Krouskup, Wayne E., 2Lt
BOM	Ney, Russell L., F/O
ENG	Rodgers, John E., S/Sgt
RWG	Mikola, Robert, Sgt
RO	Kustic, Mark S., S/Sgt
TG	Casey, Lawrence, Sgt
BT	Lappo, Teddy, Sgt
LWG	Wagner, William H., Sgt

### **B-17G #42-31583 *Clover Leaf***

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P	Moreau, Joseph A., 1Lt
CP	Hudson, Hendric S., 2Lt
NAV	Binder, Carroll, Jr., 2Lt
BOM	Larson, Albert W., 2Lt
ENG	Rossman, Carl H., Sgt
RWG	Tate, Royce G., Sgt
RO	Lowe, Gareth W., Sgt
LWG	Tomasini, Michael, Sgt
TG	Fox, Howard E., Sgt
BT	Ross, Ben A., Sgt

### **B-17G #42-107028 (No Name)**

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P	Ames, Walter J., Jr., 2Lt
CP	Way, Henry G., 2Lt
NAV	Sigurdson, Elden A., 2Lt
BOM	Bell, Julian P., 2Lt
ENG	Lynam, Stanley A., S/Sgt
TT	Paolino, Vincent C., Sgt
RO	May, James G., S/Sgt
BT	LaFleur, Paul L., Sgt
TG	Parks, Robert E., Sgt
RWG	Manning, Robert L., Sgt

### **B-17G #42-97787 (No Name)**

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P	Ferguson, Wendell Z., 1Lt
CP	Moody, James D., 2Lt
NAV	Brown, James F., 2Lt
BOM	Schmid, Ralph D., 2Lt
ENG	Matthews, David R., Sgt
LWG	Smithson, Clyde E., S/Sgt
RO	Phillips, Robert B., S/Sgt
RWG	Bartean, Edward L., S/Sgt
TG	Brooks, Richard S., Sgt
BT	Rhodes, Kenneth G., Sgt

### **B-17G #44-6006 (No Name)**

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P	Howell, Ernest F., 2Lt
CP	Miller, Campbell, 2Lt
NAV	Williams, Grover C., 2Lt
BOM	Campbell, William D., 2Lt
ENG	West, Jerome H., Sgt
TG	Stafford, Sheldon A., Sgt
RO	Lesser, Edward R., Sgt
BT	Stone, Robert L., Jr., Sgt
RWG	Galloway, John B., S/Sgt
LWG	Rowe, Thomas M., Sgt

### **B-17G #42-97622 *Paper Dollie***

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P	Knight, R.A., 2Lt
CP	Determan, Alvin G., 2Lt
NAV	Palmer, Jackson, Jr., 2Lt
BOM	Ledbetter, Lamar E., 2Lt
ENG	Vodicka, Leonard R., Sgt
RWG	Livingston, Acel A., Sgt
RO	Asman, Hobert H., S/Sgt
BT	Vasquez, Manuel, Sgt
TG	Cope, Wayne E., Sgt
LWG	Carroccia, Albert R., Sgt

## 359th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

### **B-17G #42-31386 *Sky Duster***

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P	Meier, Russell W., 2Lt
CP	Reed, John W., 2Lt
NAV	Beys, George J., 2Lt
BOM	O'Neill, Owen N., 2Lt
ENG	Danford, Emmett J., S/Sgt
RO	Connors, Joseph Q., S/Sgt
RWG	Hinson, Archie H., Sgt
LWG	Colley, Smith K., Sgt
BT	Richard, Vernon, Sgt
TG	Butler, Ashley A., Sgt

### **B-17G #42-31183 *Bad Penny***

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P	Harrison, Weldon O., 1Lt
CP	Moyer, William G., 2Lt
NAV	Bates, Robert L., 2Lt
TOG	Manchester, Robert E., S/Sgt
UT	Ela, Lyman E., Sgt
RO	Hanson, Robert W., Sgt
BT	Salmon, Earl D., Sgt
TG	Miller, Theodore G., Sgt
LWG	Neathery, Ralph E., S/Sgt
RWG	Arendt, John L., Sgt

### **B-17G #42-107206 *Old Black Magic***

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P	Eisenhart, William E., 1Lt
CP	Sirany, George R., 2Lt
NAV	Ehrke, Warren D., 2Lt
BOM	Prussman, Henry G., 2Lt
ENG	Stephenson, Thomas O., S/Sgt
RO	Van Horn, Everett E., S/Sgt
BT	Bale, Gordon E., Sgt
TG	McPherson, Frank V., S/Sgt
LWG	See, Cecil J., Sgt
RWG	Umberger, Robert C., Sgt

### **B-17G #42-97272 *Duchess' Daughter***

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P	Young, Elmer W., 1Lt
CP	Cunningham, Robert L., 2Lt
NAV	Sanders, Coleman, 2Lt
BOM	Trawicki, George J., 1Lt
ENG	Steele, John C., T/Sgt
RO	Dulick, Steve, T/Sgt
BT	Lebeck, Richard H., S/Sgt
RWG	Rohaly, Andy, S/Sgt
LWG	Withrow, John W., S/Sgt
TG	Stapleton, Bill, S/Sgt

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

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P	Tulloss, John W., 2Lt
CP	Batton, James H., 2Lt
NAV	Scheer, Harold, 2Lt
BOM	Hollingsworth, William, 2Lt
ENG	Robinson, Charles R., T/Sgt
RO	Rose, William A., S/Sgt
BT	Davies, John W., Sgt
TG	O'Connor, Julian J., Sgt
RWG	Richard, John, Sgt.
LWG	Kolenda, Frank M., Sgt

## 360th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

### **B-17G #42-31432 *Old Glory***

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P	Johnston, Donald M., 1Lt
CP	Heussler, Robert W., 2Lt
NAV	Schultz, Milo R., 2Lt
BOM	Sudderth, Ralph M., 2Lt
ENG	Barnum, Abraham E., M/Sgt
RO	Treece, Charles E., T/Sgt
BT	Pesetsky, Paul W., S/Sgt
TG	Nestok, Frank, S/Sgt
RWG	Smith, Herbert L., S/Sgt
LWG	Turner, Kenzie H., S/Sgt

### **B-17G #42-31340 *Miss Liberty***

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P	Eisele, Roy, 1Lt
CP	Girard, Louis F., 2Lt
NAV	Schenker, Murray, 2Lt
BOM	Gladstone, Melvin, 2Lt
ENG	Cowley, Louis M., S/Sgt
RWG	Bell, Richard L., S/Sgt
RO	Millard, Ralph, S/Sgt
LWG	Friedman, Szymon A., S/Sgt
BT	Longoria, Efrain, S/Sgt
TG	Vallee, Edward J., S/Sgt

### **B-17G #42-37841 *Banshee***

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P	Spindler, Benjamin L., 2Lt
CP	Doughty, Gordon R., 2Lt
NAV	Caffrey, James J., F/O
BOM	Proud, Rexford I., 2Lt
ENG	Pfeffer, William W., S/Sgt
RO	Uhl, Willard H., S/Sgt
BT	McKinnon, Neil W., Sgt
TG	Petrie, Joe D., Sgt
RWG	Fambry, Lewis F., Sgt
LWG	Babbitt, Bruce E., Sgt

### **B-17G #42-97329 *Flak Hack***

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P	Wilson, Fred F., 1Lt
CP	Brinkley, Pharis C., Capt
NAV	Munroe, Linton S., 1Lt
BOM	Barker, Havelock W., 1Lt
ENG	Worthington, Arthur J., T/Sgt
RO	Snyder, Richard N., T/Sgt
LWG	Lance, Guy A., S/Sgt
BT	Reid, Harold C., S/Sgt
FG	Ferguson, Charles R., S/Sgt
TG	Rein, William E., S/Sgt

### **B-17G #42-107147 *Sweet Melody***

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P	Erickson, Roger W., 2Lt
CP	Tellinghuisen, Oscar A., 2Lt
NAV	Roche, William J., 2Lt
BOM	Moul, John D., 2Lt
ENG	Manser, Charles, S/Sgt
RO	Haynie, John D., S/Sgt
BT	Watson, Judson F., Sgt
TG	Johnson, Charles W., Sgt
RWG	Jacobs, John W., Sgt
LWG	Herr, Allen H., Sgt

### **B-17G #42-107196 *Temptress***

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P	Earhart, Amon E., 1Lt
CP	McMillan, Murdock B., 2Lt
NAV	Pepe, Nicholas A., 1Lt
BOM	Cottrell, John W., 1Lt
ENG	Payne, George S., S/Sgt
RO	Deerfield, Eddie, T/Sgt
BT	Weaver, Thomas E., Sgt
TG	Logan, Frank C., S/Sgt
LWG	Ferguson, Charles R., T/Sgt
RWG	Huddleston, D.O., S/Sgt