

303rd BG (H) Combat Mission No. 152

12 May 1944

Target: Launa Synthetic Oil Plant at Merseburg, Germany

Crews Dispatched: 17

Length of Mission: 8 hours, 10 minutes

Bomb Load: 16 x 300 lb M-31 G.P. bombs

Bombing Altitude: 26,000 ft.

Ammo Fired: 570 rounds

Fifteen B-17s dropped 226 300-lb. G.P. M31 bombs from 26,000 feet. Results were reported as excellent. Two aircraft jettisoned their bombs on the bomb run. There were no clouds in the target area, but the haze was bad.

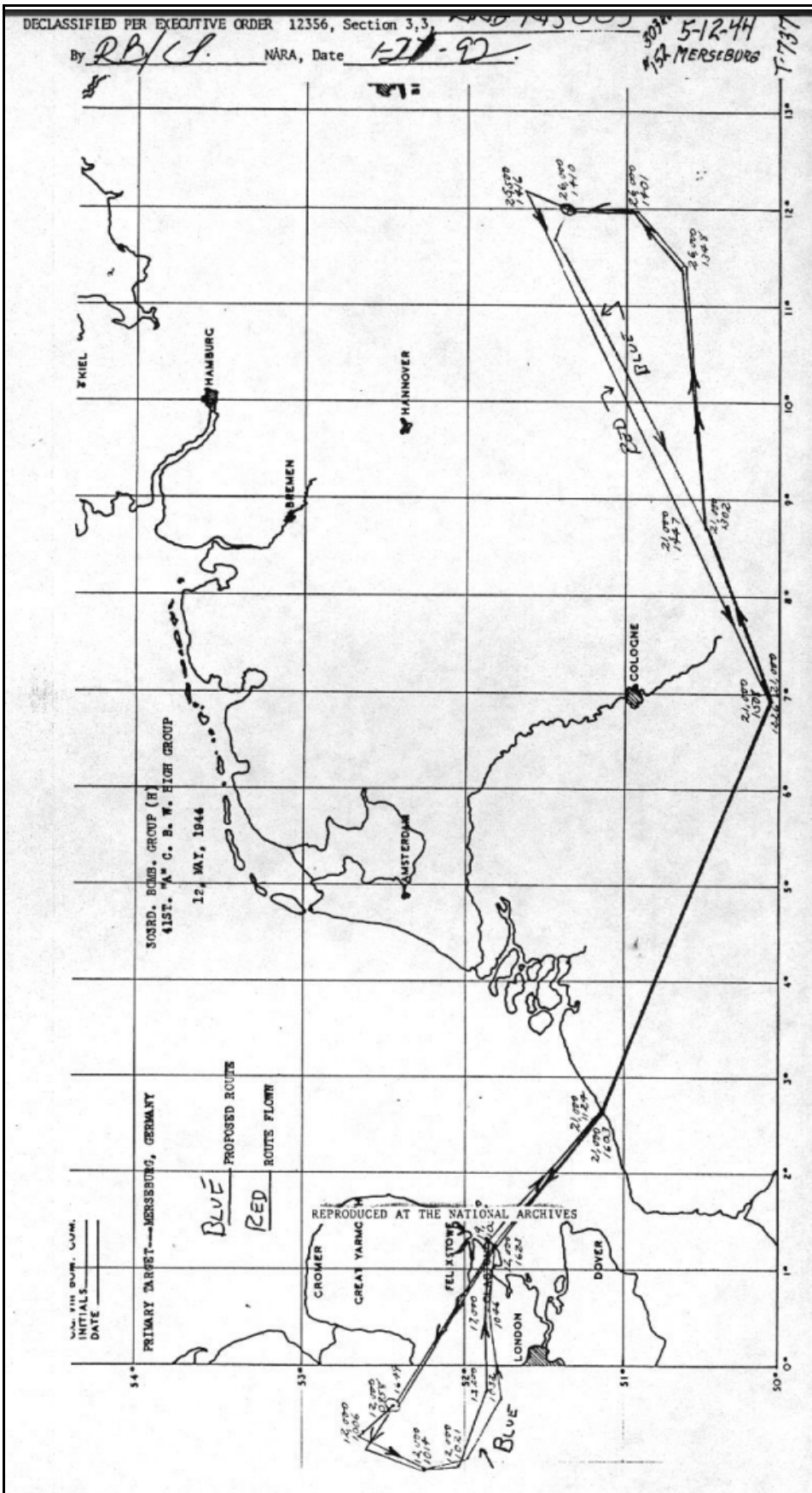
Two aircraft returned early: #42-32483 *Bonnie B*, 359BS (Lt. **Fackler**) - oxygen failure; #42-31213 *Pistol Packin' Mama*, 359BS, (Lt. **Meier**) - engine failure. Lt. **Fackler** returned with his bombs and Lt. **Meier** jettisoned his in the North Sea.

Only six to fifteen enemy aircraft were seen. A lone ME-109 made a pass at the Group, but there were no real attacks. Flak was moderate and accurate at the target, but meager at other points along the route. One crewman was injured by flak. Aircraft damage included eleven aircraft from flak, two of which were major, and one from fighters. Chaff had no apparent effect.

Capt. **Packard**, a Squadron Operations Officer, said he thought the bombing was quite effective. "There was a big explosion as we dropped our bombs and an enormous cloud of black and white smoke came up. We weren't bothered by any fighters, but there were a few sitting out in the distance. Evidently they weren't anxious to attack us because they didn't come in," Lt. **Packard** reported. Lead Bombardier 1Lt. Charles **Armstrong** was certain that the bombs dropped in the right place. "There was a couple of fires before we dropped our bombs," Lt. **Armstrong** said, "but our own bombs must have hit some storage tanks because the red flames and smoke billowed up thousands of feet."

Although there was little excitement from fighters, T/Sgt. Bob **Weepie**, a radio operator, said that at least one attack was made on the formation. "There were a few ME-109s sighted, but they were being pushed around by the P-51s," he said. "But one of the ME-109s pulled out and tore through the formation, firing his guns. He didn't hit anything and he didn't come back to have another go at it. The navigator says he saw the P-51s shoot one of the ME-109s down in flames."

There were no casualties and all aircraft returned safely. This mission was the final 303rd BG(H) mission to use an "F" model B-17. B-17F #42-3398 *Mrs. Satan - Queen of Hell* (360BS), piloted by 1Lt Donald M. **Johnston**, was the last B-17F to fly a 303rd BG(H) combat mission.



Route Map

Aircraft Formation at Assembly Point

		<u>Packard-Watson</u> 453			
	<u>Ames-Way</u> 787			<u>Determan</u> 085	
			<u>Cook</u> 298		
	<u>Johnson</u> 002			<u>Benham</u> 006	
	<u>Sullivan</u> 391			<u>Newell</u> 058	
<u>Headlee</u> 885		<u>Spindler</u> 622		<u>Savage</u> 050	<u>Sirany</u> 405
	<u>Williams</u> 893			<u>Marsh</u> 272	
_____		<u>Johnston</u> 398		<u>Meier</u> 213	<u>Fackler</u> 483
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Princess Pat #42-102453 (358BS) VK-J
303rd BG Lead - Pilot 1Lt J.W. Watson / CoPilot Capt P.L.M. Packard
 1Lt J.W. Watson (P), Capt P.L.M. Packard (CP),
 1Lt L.C. Merthan (N), 2Lt L.F. Mikulich (N), 1Lt C.C. Armstrong (B)
 T/Sgt R.W. Hoffman (E), S/Sgt H.A. Daniel (WG), S/Sgt C. Balzano (R),
 S/Sgt R.G. McArthur (WG), S/Sgt T.R. Czeczotka (BT), T/Sgt F.H. Stender (TG)
 (crewmen are not in order)

358th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

B-17G #42-97085 (No Name)

P Determan, Alvin G., 2Lt
 CP Pfahler, Ervin J., 2Lt
 NAV Palmer, Jackson, Jr., 2Lt
 BOM Ledbetter, Lamar E., 2Lt
 ENG Hendrickson, Milton C., S/Sgt
 RWG Barteau, Edward L., S/Sgt
 RO Asman, Robert H., S/Sgt
 TG Cope, Wayne E., Sgt
 LWG Carroccia, Albert R., Sgt
 BT Vasquez, Manuel, Sgt

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

P Benham, Philip O., 2Lt
 CP Lojewski, Telesphor, 2Lt
 NAV Hamm, Williard A., 2Lt
 BOM McCamy, James A., 2Lt
 ENG Van Drunen, Cornelius, S/Sgt
 RWG Garcia, Robert L., Sgt
 RO Downs, Reginald, S/Sgt
 BT Hill, Reginald L., Sgt
 TG Dellinger, Lenoir E., Sgt
 LWG Bonenberger, Robert E., Sgt

B-17G #42-97298 The Floose

P Cook, John H., 2Lt
 CP Oliver, Sam, 1Lt
 NAV Cantos, Spiros P., 2Lt
 BOM Chapple, Harry, 2Lt
 ENG Haskell, Whitney, S/Sgt
 RWG Imbrogno, Americo S., Sgt
 RO Kissling, John P., S/Sgt
 BT Russell, Francis H., T/Sgt
 TG Humphries, Wayne, Sgt
 LWG Scalco, Robert, Sgt

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

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 #42-107002 Mairzy Doats

P Johnson, Harlan J., 2Lt
 CP Wright, Charles E., 2Lt
 NAV Hamilton, Bruce B., 2Lt
 BOM Oyler, William B., F/O
 ENG Braun, Duane M., S/Sgt
 RWG Stidham, Robert L., Sgt
 RO Berrier, Edwin H., S/Sgt
 TG Buddingh, Frederick, Sgt
 BT George, William R., Sgt
 LWG Ciglar, Joseph, Sgt

B-17G #42-102453 Princess Pat

P Watson, Jack W., 1Lt
 CP Packard, Peter L.M., Capt
 NAV Merthan, Lawrence C., 1Lt
 NAV Mikulich, Louis F., 2Lt
 BOM Armstrong, Charles C., 1Lt
 ENG Hoffman, Robert W., T/Sgt
 RWG McArthur, Robert G., S/Sgt
 RO Balzano, Christopher, T/Sgt
 BT Czeczotka, Theodore R., S/Sgt
 TG Stender, Francis H., T/Sgt
 LWG Daniel, Herbert A., S/Sgt

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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359th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

B-17G #42-97058 *Scorchy II*

P Newell, Noel N., 1Lt
 CP Van Weelden, Douglas C., 2Lt
 NAV Rawlings, Loren F., 2Lt
 BOM Joyce, John D., 1Lt
 ENG Freinwald, Earl C., T/Sgt
 RWG McGee, Richard, S/Sgt
 RO Weepie, Robert F., T/Sgt
 LWG Mendel, Myron R., S/Sgt
 BT Hart, Edgar B., S/Sgt
 TG Atkinson, William E., S/Sgt

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

P Marsh, Richard K., 1Lt
 CP Moyer, William G., 2Lt
 BOM Forve, Frank F., 2Lt
 TOG Trawicki, George J., 1Lt
 ENG Manchester, Robert E., S/Sgt
 RO Minks, George A., S/Sgt
 BT Salmon, Earl E., Sgt
 TG Moessner, Raymond J., S/Sgt
 RWG Rogers, Warren G., Sgt
 LWG Dean, Raymond N., Sgt

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

P Fackler, David E., 2Lt
 CP Paton, Wallace L., 2Lt
 NAV Hogan, Paul G., 2Lt
 BOM Nance, George H., 2Lt
 ENG Schlottman, Jerome D., S/Sgt
 RO Prendergast, Bert T., S/Sgt
 BT McIntyre, Harold W., Sgt
 TG Pohlman, Wilbert F., Sgt
 LWG Brewer, Ray, Sgt
 RWG Tipton, Bill B., Sgt
 (Abortive)

B-17G #42-31405 *Wallaroo MK II*

P Sirany, George R., 2Lt
 CP Batton, James H., 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 #42-38050 *Thunderbird*

P Savage, John N., 1Lt
 CP Gorecki, Victor T., 2Lt
 NAV Counts, George H., F/O
 TOG Kolling, Arthur J., S/Sgt
 ENG Merrow, Robert K., Sgt
 RO Montgomery, Robert E., S/Sgt
 BT Gilcrease, Roland L., S/Sgt
 RWG McKenna, Robert I., S/Sgt
 TG Savela, Wilho A., Sgt
 LWG Quinn, Charles E., Sgt

B-17G #42-31213 *Pistol Packin' Mama*

P Meier, Russell W., 2Lt
 CP Reed, John W., 2Lt
 NAV Bates, Robert L., 2Lt
 BOM Schreidell, Matthew, 1Lt
 ENG Danford, Emmett J., S/Sgt
 RO Connors, Joseph Q., S/Sgt
 LWG Francheschini, James, Sgt
 LWG Colley, Smith K., Sgt
 BT Richard, Vernon, Sgt
 TG Butler, Ashley A., Sgt
 (Abortive Sortie)

360th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

B-17F #42-3398 Mrs. Satan-Queen of Hell

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., Sgt
 TG Nestok, Frank, Sgt
 RWG Smith, Herbert L., Sgt
 LWG Turner, Kenzie H., S/Sgt

B-17G #42-97622 Paper Dollie

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 #42-37893 Bam Bam

P Williams, John T., 1Lt
 CP Coats, Niel, 2Lt
 NAV Fazio, Joseph J., 2Lt
 BOM Grunseth, Roald J., 2Lt
 ENG Schwenke, Howard A., S/Sgt
 RO Barber, Stewart, L., S/Sgt
 BT Whitten, Cleveland W., Sgt
 TG Ott, John E., Sgt
 RWG Northam, James W., S/Sgt
 LWG Mitchell, John B., Sgt

427th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

B-17G #42-39885 Sweet Rose O'Grady

P Headlee, Dale C., 2Lt
 CP Fogerson, Joseph E., F/O
 NAV Schweitzer, Jerome D., 2Lt
 BOM Handley, Donald J., 2Lt
 ENG Klunk, James A., S/Sgt
 BT Almanzor, Berton F., S/Sgt
 RO Moberg, Chester H., S/Sgt
 TG Bell, Alton R., S/Sgt
 LWG Wilson, Robert J., S/Sgt
 RWG Kyle, Clarence, S/Sgt

B-17G #42-97391 (No Name)

P Sullivan, Francis X., 1Lt
 CP Brangwin, Kenneth R., 2Lt
 NAV Gepner, Isadore, 2Lt
 BOM Bawol, Walter S., 2Lt
 TT Frey, James L., S/Sgt
 BT Latta, Thomas B., T/Sgt
 RO Sullivan, James J., T/Sgt
 TG Stone, Vernon W., S/Sgt
 RWG Swanson, Charles A., S/Sgt
 RWG Keely, Eugene F., S/Sgt