

## 303rd BG (H) Combat Mission No. 283

6 December 1944

Target: Leuna Synthetic Oil Plant at Merseburg, Germany

Crews Dispatched: 39

Length of Mission: 8 hours, 15 minutes

Bomb Load: 20 X 250 lb G.P. bombs

Bombing Altitudes: 21,600, 21,700, & 23,000 ft

Ammo Fired: 1,710 rounds

**R**esuming their offensive against German oil production, the 1st BD and 3rd BD B-17s attacked Germany's No. 1 synthetic oil plant, the Leuna Refinery at Merseburg (visual or PFF). The last resort targets were the marshalling yard in Nordhausen and the good yard in Hamlin, both in Germany.

Three aircraft returned early: #43-38238 (*No Name*), 358BS (Lt. **Snyder**) – engine problem; #43-37597 *Earthquake McGoon*, 427BS (Lt. **Gano**) – prop ran away; #44-6517 (*No Name*), 360BS (Lt. **Mayer**-358BS) – co-pilot ill

Thirty-five B-17s dropped 673 250-lb. G.P. bombs and 10 units of leaflets on Merseburg. One aircraft dropped 20 250-lb. bombs on a target of opportunity. In the target area there were 10/10 middle clouds with tops at 16,000 feet, with moderate to dense, persistent contrails between 23,000 and 27,000 feet.



2Lt Glenn R. Canning

There was no enemy aircraft opposition. Friendly fighters consisted of 256 P-51s that gave good support. Anti-aircraft fire—anticipated at Merseburg—was intense and accurate, especially for the lead Squadron. One aircraft sustained major battle damage and ten, minor damage. Two men were wounded – a 427BS crewman sustained a leg wound and Lt. **Canning**, 358BS co-pilot on the **Freeman** crew, suffered a flak hit on his right hand and lost several fingers. All aircraft returned safely to Molesworth.

## Aircraft Formation at Assembly Point - Group A

		<u>Cole-Haynes</u> 557 - PFF		
	<u>Knudson</u> 309		<u>Mickle</u> 137 - PFF	
		<u>Frazier</u> 609		
	<u>Knutzen</u> 767		<u>Harding</u> 050	
	<u>Proffitt</u> 608		<u>Carney</u> 764	
<u>Embrey</u> 289		<u>Holmes</u> 619	<u>Gates</u> 502	<u>Bixby</u> 258
			<u>Geiger</u> 544	



**Mercy's Madhouse #42-97557 (358BS) PFF VK-X**  
**41st CBW-A Lead (359BS) - Pilot LtCol R.H. Cole / CoPilot 1Lt C.D. Haynes**  
 (Back L-R) 1Lt L.J. Lifshus (N), 1Lt H.A. Susskind (N), LtCol R.H. Cole (P),  
 1Lt C.D. Haynes (CP), F/O L.C. Carriere (N), 2Lt O.H. Schopplein (TG-O)  
 (Front L-R) 1Lt R.L. Smith (B), T/Sgt Joseph Vieira (R),  
 T/Sgt Lyman E. Ela, Jr. (E), S/Sgt William J. Zielinski (WG)

## Aircraft Formation at Assembly Point - Group B

<u>Miller-Fielder</u> 44-8238 - PFF				
	<u>Freeman</u> 298		<u>Twomey</u> 191	
		<u>Holm</u> 554		
	<u>McCutcheon</u> 516		<u>Gmernicki</u> 427	
	<u>Heckendorf</u> 316		<u>Goering</u> 065	
<u>Snider</u> 38238		<u>Mayer</u> 517	<u>Gobrecht</u> 590	<u>Goodberlet</u> 949
	_____		<u>McKinley</u> 523	

## Aircraft Formation at Assembly Point - Group C

<u>Newton-Smith</u> 038 - PFF				
	<u>Gano</u> 597		<u>O'Leary</u> 166	
		<u>Roberts</u> 763		
	<u>McGinnis</u> 875		<u>Hewitt</u> 885	
	<u>Rose</u> 311		<u>Callahan</u> 689	
<u>Petersen</u> 569		<u>Schlecht</u> 411	<u>Reid</u> 248	<u>Aagesen</u> 734
	_____		<u>Beasley</u> 532	

### KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

<b>CREW POSITIONS</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 WG - Waist Gunner LWG - Left Waist Gunner RWG - Right Waist Gunner GUN - Gunner VI - Voice Interpreter OBS - Observer	PAS - Passenger PHO - Photographer Y - Y-Operators (YRO,YO) RCM - Radio Cntr Measures SJ - Spot Jammer  <b>RESULTS OF MISSION</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 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 #43-37590 *Neva-The Silver Lady***

P Gobrecht, Harry D., 2Lt  
 CP Eby, Joe M., 2Lt  
 NAV McDonald, Walter H., 2Lt  
 TOG Miller, Robert J., Sgt  
 ENG Benefield, Lenville H., Sgt  
 WG Mays, Thomas G., Sgt  
 RO Quick, Edgar H., Sgt  
 BT McGrory, William P., S/Sgt  
 TG Buske, Phillip R., Sgt

### **B-17G #44-8427 *Henn's Revenge***

P Gmernicki, Richard H., 1Lt  
 CP Judd, Chester G., 2Lt  
 NAV Jones, William M., 2Lt  
 TOG Denning, Glenn J., Sgt  
 ENG Griffith, Elwood A., Sgt  
 WG McClymont, John W., S/Sgt  
 RO Calenberg, Raymond N., Sgt  
 BT Greenberg, Bernard, Sgt  
 TG Henn, Thomas A., Sgt

### **B-17G #44-6516 *My Darling***

P McCutcheon, George E., 1Lt  
 CP Hower, Frederick C., 2Lt  
 NAV Starr, Ben, 2Lt  
 BOM Day, Keith E., Sgt  
 ENG Burcham, Johnnie O., T/Sgt  
 WG Foulk, Donald H., S/Sgt  
 RO Alexander, John C., S/Sgt  
 BT Aberdeen, James E., S/Sgt  
 TG Kinsman, George R., S/Sgt

### **B-17G #44-6523 (No Name)**

P McKinley, Ralph C., 1Lt  
 CP Harwick, James A., 2Lt  
 NAV Long, Donald C., Jr., 2Lt  
 TOG Rowe, Thomas M., S/Sgt  
 ENG Jones, Burlen, T/Sgt  
 WG Devaney, Thomas J., S/Sgt  
 RO Moll, Richard S., T/Sgt  
 BT Clark, Woodrow E., Sgt  
 TG Soule, Evan R., Sgt

### **B-17G #44-6316 (No Name)**

P Heckendorf, Marvin H., 2Lt  
 CP Erickson, Robert L., 2Lt  
 NAV Birkenseer, Donald L., 2Lt  
 BOM Guerrieri, Joseph C., F/O  
 ENG Gallman, Hubert W., T/Sgt  
 WG Barris, Robert L., Sgt  
 RO Windle, Bill, T/Sgt  
 TG Koerner, David M., Sgt  
 BT Lary, Raymond W., Sgt

### **B-17G #42-97298 *The Floose***

P Freeman, Clyde E., 1Lt  
 CP Canning, Glenn R., 2Lt WIA  
 NAV Goldstein, Sheldon, 2Lt  
 TOG Cox, Lyle H., Sgt  
 ENG Fleck, Peter J., S/Sgt  
 TG Caporusso, Frank J., Sgt  
 RO VanLier, Donald E., S/Sgt  
 WG Cooper, Ray R., Sgt  
 BT Chesney, Alan D., Sgt

### **B-17G #43-38554 *Bouncing Betty III***

P Holm, Maurice M., 1Lt  
 CP Fletcher, Harold D., F/O  
 NAV Howard, Paul A., 2Lt  
 BOM Kedzierski, Edward P., Sgt  
 ENG Compton, M.C., T/Sgt  
 WG Frazier, Victor L., Sgt  
 RO Dale, John A., T/Sgt  
 BT Ebert, Preston P., S/Sgt  
 TG Moran, George J., S/Sgt

### **B-17G #43-38065 *Princess Pat 2***

P Goering, Werner G., 1Lt  
 CP Cannon, Harley E., 2Lt  
 NAV Hartel, Gale E., 2Lt  
 BOM Davis, Edward A., 1Lt  
 ENG Gustafson, Orall R., S/Sgt  
 RO Brodzinski, Chester, S/Sgt  
 BT Foster, William D., S/Sgt  
 WG Houseman, Clarence W., Sgt  
 TG Mahan, Weldon T., Sgt

## 358th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists - Cont'd.

### **B-17G #43-38238 (No Name)**

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P Snider, Harley D., 2Lt  
 CP Kunkel, Joe T., 2Lt  
 NAV McCorkle, Robert W., F/O  
 BOM Feezel, Ralph S., 2Lt  
 ENG Work, John R., S/Sgt  
 BT Kudder, Edward P., Sgt  
 RO LaPerch, William J., T/Sgt  
 WG Wade, Murray W., S/Sgt  
 TG Gibson, James, Sgt  
 (Abortive)

### **B-17G #42-97949 (No Name)**

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P Goodberlet, Clarence J., 2Lt  
 CP Magid, Malcolm J., 2Lt  
 NAV Mylonas, Peter E., F/O  
 BOM Mott, Charles A., 2Lt  
 ENG Cotter, William J., Sgt  
 WG Karash, Matthew J., Sgt  
 RO Baloga, Stephen M., Sgt  
 BT Walling, James M., Sgt  
 TG Schultz, Frederick W., Sgt  
 (Abortive)

### **B-17G #44-8238 (No Name) - PFF**

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P Miller, Campbell, 1Lt  
 CP Fielder, George H., 1Lt  
 NAV Hansen, Heber D., 2Lt  
 MN Beyeler, Earl R., 1Lt  
 BOM Sachau, William D., 1Lt  
 ENG Cavagnaro, James E., T/Sgt  
 WG Barteau, Edward L., S/Sgt  
 RO Buie, Neil C., T/Sgt  
 TG Ross, James V., 2Lt

### **B-17G #43-38191 Shasta**

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P Twomey, John M., 1Lt  
 CP Dorsett, John D., 2Lt  
 NAV Markt, Rex H., 2Lt  
 BOM Green, George A., 1Lt  
 ENG Shaw, Vergil A., Sgt  
 RO Bzik, Paul J., S/Sgt  
 TG Hammond, Walter E., Sgt  
 WG Martin, Jack E., S/Sgt  
 BT Johnson, Marvin T., Sgt

### **B-17G #44-6517 Old Cock**

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P Mayer, Walter J., 1Lt  
 CP Gradle, Raymond B., 2Lt  
 NAV Celich, Nicholas J., 2Lt  
 TOG Brown, James L., Sgt  
 ENG McGreevy, James, Sgt  
 WG Withers, Frederick J., S/Sgt  
 RO Tuescher, Ernest, S/Sgt  
 TG Weaver, Robert J., S/Sgt  
 BT Gendron, Ernest J., S/Sgt  
 (Abortive)

## 359th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

### **B-17G #43-38258 *Forget Me Not Oilly***

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P	Bixby, Kenneth E., 2Lt
CP	Burns, James S., 2Lt
NAV	Jones, Clayton C., F/O
BOM	Moss, Henry G., 2Lt
ENG	Robichaux, John B., S/Sgt
RO	Krumwiede, Leland J., Sgt
BT	Reese, Dale G., Sgt
TG	Peters, John W., Sgt
WG	Lombardi, Mondo, Sgt

### **B-17G #43-38608 *Lucille***

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P	Proffitt, John S., 2Lt
CP	Ogborn, Maurice E., 2Lt
NAV	Finke, John C., 2Lt
BOM	Dodson, Jasper C., 1Lt
ENG	Young, James W., Sgt
RO	Norris, Cornie, Jr., Sgt
BT	Bechtold, Robert E., Sgt
TG	O'Neal, Howard F., Sgt
WG	Rose, G.L., Sgt

### **B-17G #43-38619 (No Name)**

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P	Holmes, Alfred M., 2Lt
CP	Haynes, Eugene, 2Lt
NAV	Albertson, Edward, F/O
BOM	Donovan, Thomas A., 2Lt
ENG	Sprague, Wendell P., Jr., Sgt
RO	Prehatny, Joseph R., S/Sgt
BT	Vowels, Donovan E., Sgt
TG	Bartkowski, Edward L., Sgt
WG	Hejna, Dennis R., S/Sgt

### **B-17G #43-38609 (No Name)**

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P	Frazier, Eugene C., 1Lt
CP	Force, James G., 2Lt
NAV	Goettman, Andrew T., 2Lt
BOM	Barlow, Richard B., 2Lt
ENG	Borges, Gilbert C., T/Sgt
RO	Trainor, Donald W., S/Sgt
BT	Charron, Raymond H., Sgt
TG	McCullough, Luther, Jr., S/Sgt
WG	Anderson, Eston R., Sgt

### **B-17G #43-38289 *Sweet LaRhonda***

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P	Embrey, Henry C., 1Lt
CP	Sharp, Bryant M., 2Lt
NAV	Malone, Roy P., F/O
TOG	Connor, Joseph C., Sgt
ENG	Miller, Harry C., T/Sgt
RO	Zellar, Donald W., S/Sgt
BT	Freese, Paul D., S/Sgt
TG	Gavin, William E., Sgt
WG	Peters, Arthur R., S/Sgt

### **B-17G #43-38764 (No Name)**

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P	Carney, Walter J., 1Lt
CP	Heitman, David E., 2Lt
NAV	Taylor, Albert R., 2Lt
BOM	Cooney, Thomas E., 2Lt
ENG	Turner, Harold L., T/Sgt
RO	Ringen, Walter E., T/Sgt
BT	Schilling, Lawrence E., Sgt
TG	Howe, Clarence H., S/Sgt
WG	Encinas, William S/Sgt

### **B-17G #43-38767 (No Name)**

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P	Knutzen, Owen A., 2Lt
CP	Bitler, Hower E., Jr., 2Lt
NAV	Christenson LeRoy P., 2Lt
TOG	Fogle, Jerome W., Jr., Sgt
ENG	Klym, Michael, Sgt
RO	Jobe, Andrew K., Jr., Sgt
BT	Kennedy, Jack B., Sgt
TG	Hartmann, Alexander, T/Sgt
WG	Tarnava, Christopher, Jr., Sgt

### **B-17G #44-6502 (No Name)**

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P	Gates, Cecil J., 2Lt
CP	Zapora, Theodore T., 2Lt
NAV	Elliott, Harold F., 2Lt
TOG	McKinley, A.B., Sgt
ENG	Wysocki, Walter, Sgt
RO	Maurer, Charles E., Sgt
BT	Garcia, Leonard A., Sgt
TG	Schrader, Chrissie D., Sgt
WG	Wallis, Elton E., Sgt

## 359th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists - Cont'd.

### **B-17G #44-8137 (No Name) - PFF**

P	Mickle, James D., 1Lt
CP	Clarke, Loren M., F/O
NAV	O'Dell, Benjamin L., 2Lt
MN	Buckner, James C., 2Lt
BOM	Stone, Leonard, 1Lt
ENG	Humphrey, William B., S/Sgt
RO	Eagon, Dennis G., S/Sgt
TG	Van Zile, Raymond J., Sgt
WG	Wentz, Robert D., Sgt

### **B-17G #42-97557 Mercy's Madhouse - PFF**

P	Cole, Richard H., LtCol
CP	Haynes, Charles D., 1Lt
NAV	Susskind, Harold A., 1Lt
NAV	Lifshus, Lawrence, 1Lt
NAV	Carriere, Lawrence C., F/O
BOM	Smith, Ralph L., 1Lt
ENG	Ela, Lyman E., T/Sgt
RO	Vieira, Joseph, T/Sgt
TG	Schopplein, Orin H., 2Lt
WG	Zielinski, William J., S/Sgt

### **B-17G #44-6309 Duchess' Granddaughter**

P	Knudson, Darwin D., 2Lt
CP	McClurg, Galt B., 2Lt
NAV	Davis, Daryl W., 2Lt
TOG	Wilson, Johnnie R., Sgt
ENG	Hurdle, Robert E., Sgt
RO	Jones, Walter N., Jr., Sgt
BT	Meichtry, Leo R., Sgt
TG	McDonald, Billy L., Sgt
WG	Erdody, Joseph, S/Sgt

### **B-17G #42-38050 Thunderbird**

P	Harding, Lawrence T., 2Lt
CP	Campbell, Laurie H., 2Lt
NAV	Garvey, Richard J., 2Lt
TOG	Otto, Kenneth, Jr., Sgt
ENG	O'Brien, William J., Sgt
RO	Cornelius, Russell B., Sgt
BT	Lammers, Roger G., Sgt
TG	Johnson, Robert O., Sgt
WG	Holden, Robert R., Sgt

## 360th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

### **B-17G #43-38532 (No Name)**

P	Beasley, Roland C., 2Lt
CP	Schuchard, Virgil R., 2Lt
NAV	Harding, Warren G., 1Lt
TOG	Durfee, James R., S/Sgt
ENG	Clippinger, Robert E., S/Sgt
RO	Wimer, Maurice E., T/Sgt
BT	Oberly, Eldridge C., S/Sgt
TG	Englis, Hiram E., S/Sgt
WG	Branin, James J., S/Sgt

### **B-17G #42-102544 Sack Time**

P	Geiger, James E., 2Lt
CP	Telford, Donald R., 2Lt
NAV	Emery, Roy F., 2Lt
BOM	Dubin, Martin M., S/Sgt
ENG	Stockman, Leonard G., S/Sgt
RO	Licht, Wilfred L., S/Sgt
BT	Wentz, Roland L., Sgt
TG	Germanine, Joseph R., Sgt
WG	Doctor, Gordon C., Sgt

## 427th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

### **B-17G #43-38763 (No Name)**

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P	Roberts, Ingersall J., 1Lt
CP	Bluethenthal, Arthur, 2Lt
NAV	Natoli, Stonewall J., 2Lt
BOM	Nazarian, John K., 2Lt
WG	Carlson, Harold A., Sgt
TT	Riveland, Alf, Sgt
RO	Renzi, Frank, Sgt
TG	Barber, Albert P., Sgt
BT	Campbell, Gerald R., Sgt

### **B-17G #42-102411 Miss Lace**

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P	Schlecht, Walter J., 2Lt
CP	Ferrari, William J., 2Lt
NAV	Tanner, Merlin A., 2Lt
BOM	Hansen, Harley L., 2Lt
TT	Hedison, Ara H., Sgt
BT	Hocknell, Raymond A., Sgt
RO	Hradiskey, Joseph R., Sgt
TG	Herod, William J., Sgt
WG	Warburton, Arlis F., Sgt

### **B-17G #43-38734 Cheshire Cat**

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P	Aagesen, Donald C., 2Lt
CP	McKeon, Preston W., 2Lt
NAV	Minnis, Karl, 2Lt
TOG	Gray, Paul A., Sgt
TT	Ellis, Paul R., Sgt
BT	Calderon, Reuben J., Sgt
RO	Bledsoe, Clinton A., Sgt
TG	Lindeman, Henry E., Sgt
WG	Vuksinich, Louis F., Sgt

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

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P	Hewitt, Donald I., 2Lt
CP	Wilson, Jack G., 2Lt
NAV	McMahon, William F., 2Lt
BOM	Leas, Harry D., Sgt
TT	Sabo, Stephen R., Sgt
BT	Kohlmayer, Garth G., Sgt
RO	Schmidt, Elmer J., Sgt
TG	Agrifoglio, Benjamin M., Sgt
WG	Mussi, James L., Sgt

### **B-17G #43-38248 Jigger Rooche II**

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P	Reid, Clair P., 2Lt
CP	Bean, John R., 2Lt
NAV	Rogge, Richard W., 2Lt
TOG	Ralph, William L., S/Sgt
TT	Arnott, David H., Sgt
BT	Casciola, Benedict L., Sgt
RO	Foell, Charles R., Sgt
TG	Lowe, Joseph W., Sgt
WG	Clare, Donald T., Sgt

### **B-17G #42-39875 Buzz Blonde**

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P	McGinnis, Martin S., Capt
CP	Doscher, Frederick C., 2Lt
NAV	Neubert, Marshall A., Capt
BOM	Ganson, Howard H., S/Sgt
TT	Lyons, Robert J., S/Sgt
BT	Beal, Donald L., Sgt
RO	Muir, Keith R., T/Sgt
TG	Stevenson, Lowell F., Sgt
WG	Hamilton, Lois R., S/Sgt

### **B-17G #43-38689 (No Name)**

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P	Callahan, Charles A., Capt
CP	Eisenhart, Oliver T., 2Lt
NAV	Morrison, Martin, 2Lt
BOM	Burket, Wallace A., 1Lt
TT	Erdmann, Robert A., Sgt
BT	Johnson, Gene W., Sgt
RO	Kamen, Roland K., Sgt
TG	Dorner, Alvin W., Sgt
WG	Robins, James B., Sgt

### **B-17G #42-102569 Miss Lace**

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P	Petersen, William H., 2Lt
CP	Candido, Anthony N., 2Lt
NAV	Bason, William A., 2Lt
TOG	Garrett, Joe W., T/Sgt
TT	Zarella, Anthony A., Sgt
BT	Grove, John W., S/Sgt
RO	Whitely, Cull W., Jr., Sgt
TG	Coleman, Loyd, Sgt
WG	Tanner, Loyd H., Sgt



## 427th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists - Cont'd.

### **B-17G #42-97311 *Shoo Shoo Baby***

P	Rose, Jack W., 2Lt
CP	Cornyn, T. John, 2Lt
NAV	Russo, William D., 2Lt
BOM	Price, John B., T/Sgt
TT	Dyson, Flake S., Sgt
BT	Brinkley, Lynn M., Sgt
RO	Scaglione, Joseph, T/Sgt
WG	Delcher, Merlin S., S/Sgt
TG	Cottle, Clyde J., Jr., Sgt
Y	Hurlbutt, Carl R., Sgt

### **B-17G #44-8038 (*No Name*) - PFF**

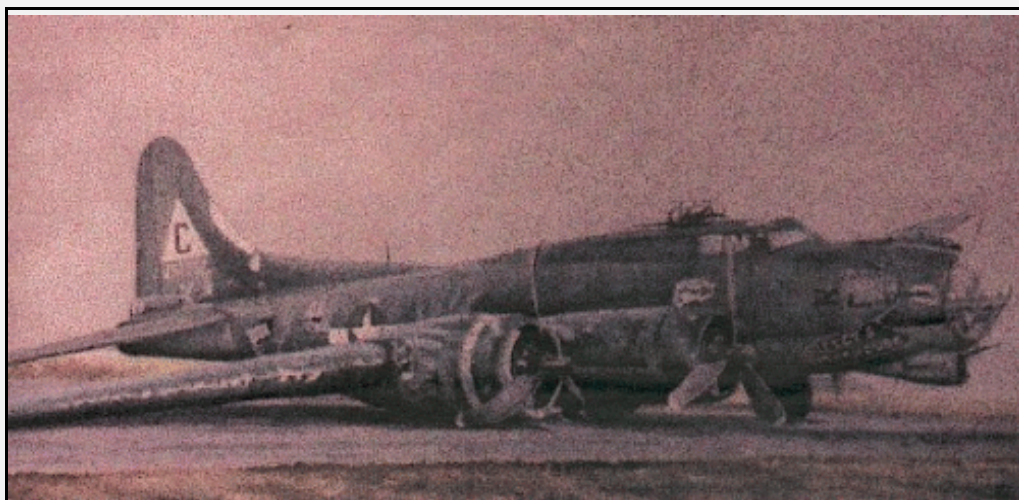
P	Newton, George C., 1Lt
CP	Smith, Donald R., 2Lt
NAV	Katz, Edwin Harold, 1Lt
NAV	Weinstein, Irving, 2Lt
BOM	Prusha, Elmer E., 1Lt
GHN	Quinlan, Thomas E., 2Lt
TT	Schneider, Joseph R., S/Sgt
RO	Corn, Byron D., S/Sgt
TG	Karr, Leslie E., S/Sgt
WG	Simon, Lawrence E., S/Sgt

### **B-17G #44-6166 *The Red***

P	O'Leary, James W., 2Lt
CP	Reed, Louis E., 2Lt
NAV	Jenkins, John I., 2Lt
BOM	Lyda, Robert E., 2Lt
TT	Kernodle, John T., S/Sgt
BT	Mittell, Phillip P., T/Sgt
TG	Czerwonka, Joseph A., S/Sgt
RO	Carver, Harold R., Sgt
WG	DeCicco, Frank C., Jr., Sgt
Y	Conrad, Joseph, S/Sgt

### **B-17G #43-37597 *Earthquake McGoon***

P	Gano, Frederick, 1Lt
CP	Flanders, Wesley J., 2Lt
NAV	Maniscalco, John B., F/O
BOM	Blessing, Gerald D., 2Lt
TT	Anthony, George E., S/Sgt
BT	Coyle, Arthur J., S/Sgt
RO	Elling, Myron A., Sgt
TG	Nelson, Edward F., Sgt
WG	Sears, William A., Sgt
	(Abortive)



***Mercy's Madhouse by Steven Leahy (2000)***

Reproduction of a 7 Dec 1944 crash photo of Mercy's Madhouse B-17G #42-97557 (358BS) VK-X

**7 December 1944** — 1Lt Werner G. **Goering** was returning from a routine PFF training flight in #42-97557 Mercy's Madhouse, 358BS (VK-X). The right landing gear collapsed after completing the landing roll down the runway. It was caused by a broken landing gear reduction screw. There was extensive damage to the No. 4 propeller and engine, and to the outboard wing.