

303rd BG (H) Combat Mission No. 315

15 February 1945

Target: Military Objectives at Dresden, Germany

Crews Dispatched: 39

Length of Mission: 8 hours, 22 minutes

Bomb Load: 18 x 250 lb H.E. M57 bombs

Bombing Altitudes: 24,700, 24,100, & 25,600 ft

Ammo Fired: 1,050 rounds

Major William C. **Heller** and Major Louis M. **Schulstad** piloted the Scouter aircraft. Major Robert M. **Nye** flew with the 358BS formation on another orientation combat flight. One aircraft returned early, #44-8647 (*No Name*), 360BS (Lt. **App**), when the #4 supercharger failed.

Thirty-nine aircraft were dispatched to attack the synthetic oil plant at Muehlen, Germany (visual). The secondary target was military objectives in Dresden (visual or PFF), with the last resort target a factory in Plauen. Suggested targets of opportunity were military objectives in Chemnitz and Jena, Germany.

The 358BS lead B-17G, #44-8590 (*No Name*), 358BS (Lt. **Goering**), had a take-off accident. After beginning the take-off roll, the aircraft swerved to the left of the runway, about one-quarter of the way down the field. Lt. **Goering** asked for flaps and applied full military power. The B-17 became airborne at 95 mph, wheels were raised, and flaps were bled up at 110 mph. The aircraft then began to mush and struck the ground about 300 yards west of the east/west runway. Visibility was 70 yards, the sky was obscured, and an instrument take-off was being made. The bombardier, 1Lt. Bill F. **Conder**, suffered a broken arm and three other crew members suffered minor injuries. At 0745 hours, ten minutes after the crash, the aircraft exploded and was completely destroyed. All crew and other personnel were clear of the aircraft when it exploded.

Sgt. Joseph A. **Blinebury** was awarded the Soldiers' Medal for the rescue of 2Lt. James C. **Buckner**. He later wrote about the crash:



Sgt Joseph Blinebury

I was awarded the Soldier's Medal while at Molesworth. The occasion for the award took place on the morning of February 15, 1945, around 8:00 A.M. We crashed on takeoff on a mission to Dresden, Germany. I was the Waist Gunner on the Lead Crew B-17 headed by 1Lt Werner G. Goering. The aircraft broke into three sections. I was in the waist section which broke off from the forward fuselage portion just behind the Radio Compartment. I must have been unconscious for a brief time, and when I came to I felt that I was lying in a muddy field. Getting to my feet I noticed a bright glare in the fog and I slogged through the muddy terrain in the direction of the light. When I approached, the area around it broke into a clear circle of vision showing the wings on fire and the .50 caliber shells popping off from the top turret guns.

The Engineer T/Sgt R.C. Eckert, Jr. and Radio Operator T/Sgt P.B. Johnson, Jr. were trying to get to the radio compartment area of the fuselage, which was tilted up in the air about 7 feet or so off the ground. To get to the Mickey Navigator, 2Lt J.C. Buckner, whose knee was wedged into the camera well area, the Engineer and myself boosted the Radio Operator up so he was able to get the Mickey Navigator and lower him to us below. We did not know it at the time but learned later that Lt Buckner suffered a crushed knee cap.

The three of us carried Lt Buckner away from the burning fuselage. After struggling for a time through the field, we came to rest against a hay stack. Shortly thereafter we heard the bomb load explode and felt the ground beneath us shudder. The time was now about 8:30 A.M. or so. I stayed with Lt Buckner — I don't know what became of the rest of the Crew members. The Lt and myself fell to sleep. When I awoke the sun was shining bright. I was very hot clothed in all of my flying gear. The time was now around 11:00 A.M. I called to a Sgt driving along a road some yards from where we were lying. He, I suppose, rode off to the Air Base. Several minutes later base personnel came to take us back to Molesworth.

I was taken to our Field Medical area and given a needle. I was told later that I was out for 24 hours. All this occurred on my 27th mission (not completed). I returned later to active duty with our Lead Crew, still headed by Lt Goering. I flew four more missions and finished my tour with my 30th mission to Ulm, Germany on Sunday March 4, 1945. We were flying 35 missions then and I was credited with 35 as I flew five lead missions.

The deputy lead crew in #43-38999 *Emma*, 358BS, took over high Squadron lead after Lt. **Goering's** crash. Thirty-seven 303rd BG(H) aircraft bombed the secondary target, dropping 631 250-lb. H.E. M57 bombs and ten units of leaflets, from 24,700, 24,100 and 25,600 feet. Bombing was PFF through a solid undercast, and results were unobserved. Dresden was considered a "dead city" following this raid. Although the tremendous loss of life and property is still considered an unnecessary tragedy by many, at the time it was believed to be a military necessity.

Friendly fighter support by 141 P-51s was reported as good, but not as good as other recent missions. No enemy aircraft were seen. Meager and inaccurate flak (accurate for high Squadron) was encountered in the Limburg-Wiesbaden area and over the battle lines on the route back. High Squadron aircraft had one major and six minor instances of battle damage.



LAWRENCE E. POOLE CREW - 358th BS

(crew assigned 358BS: 25 Nov 1944 - photo: 09 Dec 1944)

(Back L-R) 1Lt Lawrence E. Poole (P), 2Lt Harley E. Cannon (CP), F/O Harold S. Smith (N), Sgt Beryl E. Kindred (TG) - (Front L-R) Sgt Harry D. Kinsland (WG), Sgt Donald P. Smith (WG), S/Sgt Rayford E. Pullen (E), S/Sgt Marvin L. Hoke (R), Sgt Charles K. Morrill (BT)

The Group found the weather upon return to Molesworth similar to take-off conditions—near-zero visibility. Landings were made under very difficult conditions. Lt. Lawrence E. **Poole** had engine problems on return in #43-38065, *Princess Pat 2*, 358BS. Two engines had been feathered and gas was near zero, causing Lt. **Poole** to order eight crewmen to bail out. Lt. **Poole** and T/Sgt. Rayford E. **Pullen**, engineer, attempted a normal landing at Lakenheath, Suffolk, an RAF airfield. After reaching the RAF airfield, they found that it was under construction. They collapsed the landing gear to avoid hitting some workmen, saving, according to RAF reports, an almost certain loss of life among the civilian workers. The landing was made without injury and all bailouts were successful. The new Caterpillar Club members of the **Poole** crew were: 2Lt. Harley E. **Cannon**, 2Lt. Charles A. **Mott**, F/O Harold S. **Smith**, T/Sgt. Marvin L. **Hoke**, Sgt. Norman R. **Sexton**, Sgt. Beryl E. **Kindred**, Sgt. Harry D. **Kinsland** and Sgt. Harold A. **Zimmerman**.

Aircraft Formation at Assembly Point - Group A

		<u>Sirany-Schopplein</u> 564 - PFF		
		<u>Beasley</u> 206		<u>Knudson</u> 875
			<u>Rybaltowski</u> 609	
		<u>Fravel</u> 621		<u>Richeson</u> 944
	<u>Rogers</u> 127			<u>App</u> 647
<u>Tarvid</u> 608		<u>Stocks</u> 050	<u>Statton</u> 842	<u>Edmunds</u> 451
				<u>Tilsen</u> 316



*B-17G #42-38050 Thunderbird 359BS (BN-U) Fire Accident - 15 Feb 1945
The incident was probably following the mission, which was Thunderbird's 102nd Mission.*

Aircraft Formation at Assembly Point - Group B

<u>Goering-Walter</u>				
8590 - PFF				
	<u>Milman</u>		<u>Nye</u>	
	999		7590	
		<u>Poole</u>		
		065		
	<u>Perkins</u>		<u>McKimmie</u>	
	191		462	
	<u>Gmernicki</u>		<u>Stiver</u>	
	427		563	
<u>McLeod</u>	<u>Leach</u>		<u>Austin</u>	<u>Bentley</u>
160	523		517	870
			<u>Garrett</u>	
			096	



JOSEPH V. LEACH CREW - 358th BS

(crew assigned 358BS: 30 Jan 1945 - photo: 01 Feb 1945)

(Back L-R) 2Lt Joseph V. Leach (P), 2Lt Earl E. Triebes (N), 2Lt John L. Olson (CP)
 (Front L-R) Sgt Robert R. Wilburn (R), Sgt Thomas M. Roberts (WG), Sgt John W. Psota (TOG),
 Sgt James H. Bridgeman (E), Sgt Junior W. Anderson (WG), Sgt Oda F. Sulley, Jr. (TG)

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 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 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 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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Aircraft Formation at Assembly Point - Group C

	<u>Sheets-Ashwell</u> 038 - PFF		
<u>Bluethenthal</u> 763	<u>Petersen</u> 977	<u>Wertz</u> 545 - PFF	
<u>Richter</u> 011		<u>McKeon</u> 081	
<u>Schlecht</u> 921		<u>Holtorf</u> 532	
<u>Demian</u> 311	<u>Ayers</u> 958	<u>Armfield</u> 544	<u>Brown</u> 860
		<u>Smith</u> 248	



B-17G #44-8038 (No Name) PFF 427BS (GN-Z)
41st CBW-A Lead (427BS) - Pilot Maj R.W. Sheets / CoPilot 1Lt S.B. Ashwell

358th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

B-17G #43-39160 *G for George*

P	McLeod, William S., 2Lt
CP	Kamstra, Walter W., 2Lt
NAV	Das, Mitchell C., 2Lt
TOG	Weaver, Robert J., T/Sgt
ENG	DeWillers, Edgar, Sgt
WG	Rafferty, William A., Sgt
RO	Guenin, Wayne E., T/Sgt
BT	Nichols, William A., Jr., Sgt
TG	James, Frank M., Sgt

B-17G #43-39096 *Sky Demon*

P	Garrett, Charles E., 2Lt
CP	Olson, John L., 2Lt
NAV	Feezel, Ralph S., 2Lt
TOG	Prudhoe, Charles E., S/Sgt
ENG	Hohstadt, Hollis H., Sgt
TG	Dickinson, Morris L., 2Lt
RO	Henson, Jessey B., Sgt
BT	Walczak, John, Sgt
WG	Van Cleave, Joseph A., Sgt

B-17G #43-38999 *Emma*

P	Milman, Jerome, 2Lt
CP	Geile, Thomas A., 2Lt
NAV	Wilhelm, Frederick H., 2Lt
BOM	McCall, John W., 1Lt
ENG	Eygabroad, Robert J., Sgt
WG	Beck, Harold P., S/Sgt
RO	Noble, Neal W., S/Sgt
BT	Fox, Raymond H., Jr., Sgt
TG	Johnson, Jack W., Sgt

B-17G #43-37590 *Neva-The Silver Lady*

P	Nye, Robert M., Maj
CP	Cunningham, Neil E., 2Lt
NAV	Guerrieri, Joe C., F/O
TOG	Quig, Francix X., Sgt
ENG	Sprinkles, Leburn D., Sgt
WG	Boone, Kenneth E., Sgt
RO	Ennis, Charles S., Sgt
BT	Carter, William J., Sgt
TG	Crigger, Richard S., Sgt

B-17G #43-38462 *Teddy's Rough Riders*

P	McKimmie, William L., 2Lt
CP	Sims, Allen R., 2Lt
NAV	Leonhirth, Junius, F/O
TOG	Smith, Donald P., S/Sgt
ENG	Farmer, Evert L., Sgt
WG	Frazier, Victor L., S/Sgt
RO	Kilroy, Robert E., Sgt
BT	Kampa, Vernon L., Sgt
TG	Mogusar, John F., Sgt

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

P	Leach, Joseph V., 2Lt
CP	Castillo, Joseph L.A., F/O
NAV	Triebes, Earl E., 2Lt
TOG	Psota, John W., Sgt
ENG	Bridgeman, James H., Sgt
WG	Roberts, Thomas M., Sgt
RO	Wilburn, Robert R., Sgt
BT	Anderson, Junior W., Sgt
TG	Sulley, Oda F., Jr., Sgt

358th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists - Cont'd.

B-17G #44-8590 (No Name) - PFF CR-L

P	Goering, Werner G., 1Lt	
CP	Walter, Donald R., 2Lt	
NAV	Hansen, Heber D., 1Lt	
MN	Buckner, James C., 2Lt	
BOM	Conder, Bill F., 1Lt	WIA
ENG	Eckert, Raymond C., T/Sgt	
RO	Johnson, Paul B., T/Sgt	
WG	Blinebury, Joseph A., S/Sgt	
TG	Gordon, Joseph, 2Lt	
(Abortive)		

B-17G #43-38065 Princess Pat 2

P	Poole, Lawrence E., 1Lt	
CP	Cannon, Harley E., 2Lt	
NAV	Smith, Harold S., F/O	
BOM	Mott, Charles A., 2Lt	
ENG	Pullen, Rayford E., Sgt	
WG	Kinsland, Harry D., Sgt	
RO	Hoke, Marvin L., Sgt	
BT	Sexton, Norman R., Sgt	
TG	Kindred, Beryl E., Sgt	
PAS	Zimmerman, Harold A., Sgt (Hqtrs)	

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., S/Sgt	
ENG	McGreevy, James, T/Sgt	
WG	McClymont, John W., S/Sgt	
RO	Calenberg, Raymond N., Sgt	
BT	Greenberg, Bernard, Sgt	
TG	Hudler, Billie E., Sgt	
PAS	Scott, William R., Sgt	

B-17G #43-38191 Shasta

P	Perkins, Morton C., 2Lt	
CP	Elkins, Richard A., 2Lt	
NAV	Wallace, Robert J., 2Lt	
TOG	Allen, Arlan R., Sgt	
ENG	Carlson, Charles F., S/Sgt	
WG	Partsch, Warren L., Sgt	
RO	Little, Gerald G., Sgt	
BT	McDonald, John T., Sgt	
TG	Beckwith, Walter D., Sgt	

359th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

B-17G #42-97944 *Daddy's Delight*

P	Richeson, Marvin G., Jr., 2Lt
CP	Heller, Emerson E., 2Lt
NAV	Herrmann, Robert H., 2Lt
TOG	Benge, Charlie W., Sgt
ENG	Gray, Alexander W., S/Sgt
RO	Mahoney, Denis J., Sgt
BT	Schilling, Lawrence E., Sgt
TG	Hoxie, Charles R., Sgt
WG	Davidson, Dyle K., Sgt

B-17G #43-39127 (No Name)

P	Rogers, Clem W., 2Lt
CP	Powlus, Vernon F., F/O
NAV	Albertson, Edward, F/O
TOG	Wilson, Johnnie B., S/Sgt
ENG	Reese, Bobbie B., Sgt
RO	Wysocki, John F., Sgt
BT	Simpson, James A., S/Sgt
TG	Palsa, Rudolph, Sgt
WG	Westfall, Byron D., Sgt

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

P	Beasley, William M., 2Lt
CP	Rich, Richard H., 2Lt
NAV	Welsh, Harry A., 2Lt
BOM	Mabary, George D.L., F/O
ENG	Gornto, Jacob R., Sgt
RO	Terrill, Jack W., Sgt
BT	Thomas, David W., Sgt
TG	Gracida, Henry J., Jr., Sgt
WG	Harrigfeld, Thomas E., Sgt

B-17G #42-38050 *Thunderbird*

P	Stocks, Jack E., 2Lt
CP	Marsh, John F., 2Lt
NAV	Jones, Clayton C., 2Lt
TOG	McKinley, A.B., S/Sgt
ENG	Copp, Edmond D., Sgt
RO	Fiore, John, Sgt
BT	Hamilton, John W., Sgt
TG	Johnson, Robert O., Sgt
WG	Holden, Robert R., Sgt

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

P	Tilsen, Cyril, 2Lt
CP	McDowell, James B., 2Lt
NAV	Bielski, Casimir, Jr., 2Lt
TOG	Goudy, William F., S/Sgt
ENG	Driggers, Sherod R., Jr., S/Sgt
RO	Mawdsley, Arnold, Sgt
BT	Hendon, William G., Sgt
TG	Proctor, Isaac H., Sgt
WG	Cassino, Julian R, Sgt

B-17G #43-38875 *Redwing*

P	Knudson, Darwin D., 1Lt
CP	Heitman, David E., 2Lt
NAV	Simon, Albert, 2Lt
BOM	Mitchell, Robert C., 1Lt
ENG	Lainson, Colin C., S/Sgt
RO	Jones, Walter N., Jr., Sgt
BT	Meichtry, Leo R., Sgt
TG	McDonald, Billy L., Sgt
WG	Erdody, Joseph, S/Sgt

359th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists - Cont'd.

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

P	Rybaltowski, Vincent, 2Lt
CP	Olson, John A., 2Lt
NAV	McLeod, Harry A., 2Lt
BOM	Moss, Henry G., 2Lt
ENG	Perlowitz, Murray A., S/Sgt
RO	Capps, Douglas M., S/Sgt
BT	Hollingsworth, Donald M., S/Sgt
TG	Reseigh, John R., S/Sgt
WG	Vitiritto, Joseph A., S/Sgt
WG	Palsa, Kenneth A., Sgt

B-17G #43-38621 50 Ragged

P	Fravel, Harold L., 2Lt
CP	Bitler, Hower E., 2Lt
NAV	Garvey, Richard J., 2Lt
TOG	Fogle, Jerome W., Jr., S/Sgt
ENG	Klym, Michael, S/Sgt
RO	Jobe, Andrew K., Jr., S/Sgt
BT	Kennedy, Jack B., Sgt
TG	Hartmann, Alexander, T/Sgt
WG	Schoonover, Howard D., S/Sgt

B-17G #43-38608 Lucille

P	Tarvid, Arthur J., 2Lt
CP	Grandwilliams, Louis C., F/O
NAV	Hudson, Glenn V., 2Lt
TOG	Otto, Kenneth, Jr., S/Sgt
ENG	Jenkins, Maurice L., Sgt
RO	Root, Carmen W., Sgt
BT	Muchmore, Gale F., Sgt
TG	Dimick, Richard D., Sgt
WG	Carlson, Dale H., Sgt
WG	Carl, Lewis E., Sgt

B-17G #44-8564 (No Name) - PFF

P	Sirany, George R., Capt
CP	Schopplein, Orin H., 2Lt
NAV	Carriere, Lawrence C., 2Lt
MN	Gennaro, Louis T., 2Lt
BOM	Schulze, William A., 1Lt
ENG	Ela, Lyman E., S/Sgt
RO	Carman, Nolan W., S/Sgt
TG	Sharp, Bryant M., 2Lt
WG	Hrych, Robert C., S/Sgt

360th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

B-17G #43-38842 (No Name)

P	Statton, Roy F., 2Lt
CP	Schroll, David A., 2Lt
NAV	Donahue, Thomas R., 2Lt
TOG	Woods, Heiber J., Sgt
ENG	Rhodes, William H., Sgt
RO	Knowles, Charles D., Sgt
BT	Hulterstrum, Joseph P., S/Sgt
TG	Bialobrzeski, Joseph C., S/Sgt
WG	Maxson, Gordon H., Sgt

B-17G #42-102544 Sack Time

P	Armfield, John M., 2Lt
CP	Marten, Dudley V., 2Lt
NAV	Stewart, James L., 2Lt
TOG	Odegaard, Duane J., S/Sgt
ENG	Lemon, James M., Jr., Sgt
RO	Haynes, Donald L., Sgt
BT	McNeel, Morgan L., S/Sgt
TG	Davis, Jesse W., Sgt
WG	Goggin, Edward F., Sgt

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

P	Holtorf, Ernest H., 2Lt
CP	Fowler, Robert R., 2Lt
NAV	Sarkis, George A., F/O
TOG	Bice, Lowell E., Sgt
ENG	Bryson, Emil M., S/Sgt
RO	Ahland, Walter F., Sgt
BT	Henager, Rudolph M., Sgt
TG	King, Marvin O., Sgt
WG	Jones, William P., Sgt

B-17G #43-38451 (No Name)

P	Edmunds, Robert E., 2Lt
CP	Bristol, Clarence D., 2Lt
NAV	Lofquist, Gordon B., 2Lt
TOG	Buchanan, Paul A., S/Sgt
ENG	Hammel, Norman D., Sgt
RO	Polo, Matthew N., Sgt
BT	Farnham, Gordon W., Sgt
TG	Rumberger, Frank C., Sgt
WG	King, Raymond H., Sgt

B-17G #43-38870 (No Name)

P	Bentley, Andrew K., 2Lt
CP	Lucien, Ralph A., 2Lt
NAV	Dwyer, Marion J., 2Lt
BOM	West, Albert G., F/O
ENG	Fleming, James A., Sgt
RO	Kirtner, Billy L., S/Sgt
BT	Beckman, Charles W., Sgt
TG	Moore, Bill A., Sgt
WG	Mulqueen, John J., Sgt

B-17G #43-38563 Jackie

P	Stiver, Merrill M., 2Lt
CP	Kacus, Alexander, F/O
NAV	Beasley, Leon O., 2Lt
BOM	Hight, Basil D., 2Lt
ENG	Auer, Kenneth R., Sgt
RO	Godley, Walter M., Sgt
BT	Pilgrim, Robert W., Sgt
TG	Free, Ennis B., Jr., S/Sgt
WG	Marchionda, Guido P., S/Sgt

360th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists - Cont'd.

B-17G #44-8647 (No Name)

P App, Robert G., 1Lt
CP Hardy, James H., F/O
NAV Dennis, Walter F., 2Lt
BOM Dee, Martin R., 2Lt
ENG Leach, Norman E., T/Sgt
RO Matlock, Austin M., T/Sgt
BT Brady, Gene F., S/Sgt
TG Nabors, Herschell F., Sgt
WG Polaski, Duane L., S/Sgt
(Abortive)

B-17G #42-97860 (No Name)

P Brown, William W., 1Lt
CP Lacker, Howard C., 2Lt
NAV O'Neil, James B., 2Lt
BOM Runnels, Billy L., 2Lt
ENG Bratcher, Francis E., Sgt
RO Foster, Lane, Sgt
BT Reynolds, Robert R., Sgt
TG Garbarino, Louis V., Jr., Sgt
WG Mooneyham, Clarence, Jr., Sgt

B-17G #44-6517 Old Cock

P Austin, Charles A., 1Lt
CP Johnson, Arthur E., 2Lt
NAV Kokoska, Florian T., 2Lt
BOM Morgan, Clinton J., 2Lt
ENG Ingles, Howard L., Sgt
RO Kummer, Burnell R., Sgt
BT Danielsen, Stanley K., Sgt
TG Krouse, Thomas R., Sgt
WG Stuckey, Edward C., Sgt
VI Fegette, Iva L., T/Sgt

427th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

B-17G #43-38958 *Green Hill Belle*

P	Ayers, Roger D, 2Lt
CP	Danna, Joseph, 2Lt
NAV	Wagner, Charles D., 2Lt
TOG	Clarkson, Robert T., Sgt
TT	Rys, Valentine J., Sgt
BT	Bailey, George E., Sgt
RO	Morris, Allen L., Sgt
TG	Turkovich, Charles J., Sgt
WG	Sears, William A., Sgt

B-17G #44-6977 *Better Do'er*

P	Petersen, William H., 1Lt
CP	Candido, Anthony N., 2Lt
NAV	Bason, William A., 2Lt
BOM	Rubins, William R., F/O
TT	Zarella, Anthony A., S/Sgt
BT	Czerwonka, Joseph A., T/Sgt
RO	Whitely, Cull W., Jr., S/Sgt
TG	Coleman, Loyd, S/Sgt
WG	Tanner, Loyd H., S/Sgt

B-17G #43-39011 (No Name)

P	Richter, George K., 2Lt
CP	McMullen, Robert A., 2Lt
NAV	Thompson, John M., 2Lt
TOG	Leas, Harry D., S/Sgt
TT	Garrett, Joe W., T/Sgt
BT	Smith, Donald S., Sgt
RO	Kemmerer, Alfred G., S/Sgt
TG	Chisholm, Robert E., Sgt
WG	Vernon, James D., Sgt

B-17G #44-6921 (No Name)

P	Schlecht, Walter J., 1Lt
CP	Ferrari, Walter J., 2Lt
NAV	Tanner, Merlin A., 2Lt
TOG	Hardin, Joe A., S/Sgt
TT	Hedison, Ara H., S/Sgt
BT	Hocknell, Raymond A., Sgt
RO	Hradiskey, Joseph R., S/Sgt
TG	Herod, William J., S/Sgt
WG	Warburton, Arlis F., S/Sgt

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

P	Smith, Grafton N., 1Lt
CP	Alderman, Melvin, 2Lt
NAV	Cohen, Leo, F/O
TOG	Brown, Thomas P., Pvt
TT	Warner, Vester W., T/Sgt
BT	Miller, Raymond M., Sgt
RO	Parker, George F., S/Sgt
TG	Witcher, Marvin E., Sgt
WG	Dussliere, Albert L., Sgt

B-17G #43-39081 (No Name)

P	McKeon, Preston W., 2Lt
CP	Kahler, Thoms F., 2Lt
NAV	Smith, Charles W., 2Lt
TOG	Fogarty, Richard T., Jr., Sgt
TT	Lowery, Lloyd, Sgt
BT	Broughton, William A., S/Sgt
RO	Latz, Leslie L., Sgt
TG	Wolski, Walter S., Sgt
WG	Frew, Billis D., Sgt

427th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists - Cont'd.

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

P	Bluethenthal, Arthur, 2Lt
CP	Walder, Wilfred M., Jr., 2Lt
NAV	Wolansky, John, 2Lt
BOM	Short, Arthur E., F/O
TT	Engelhardt, Roy H., Sgt
BT	Doles, David, Jr., Sgt
RO	Gibbons, Francis M., Sgt
TG	Mitchell, Donald C., Sgt
WG	Teter, Winston C., Sgt
SJ	Hendrix, Frank H., Sgt

B-17G #44-8545 (No Name) - PFF

P	Wertz, Robert M., 1Lt
CP	Durst, Melvin A., 2Lt
NAV	Russo, William D., 2Lt
MN	Weinstein, Irving, 2Lt
BOM	Leavell, Adelbert D., Jr., 2Lt
TT	Warne, Ralph W., Sgt
BT	Jensen, Kenneth E., Sgt
RO	Giering, Edward J., S/Sgt
TG	Bennett, Kenneth A., Sgt
WG	Campbell, Walter C., Sgt

B-17G #42-97311 Shoo Shoo Baby

P	Demian, Julius C., F/O
CP	Weatherby, Earl R., F/O
NAV	Tractman, Bernard L., F/O
TOG	Ross, Joseph M., Jr., Sgt
TT	Leach, Harry L., Sgt
BT	Wilson, Alfred D., Sgt
RO	Lombardi, Donato J., Sgt
TG	Buford, Thomas A., Sgt
WG	Ray, Paul, Sgt
Y	Brody, John J., Sgt

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

P	Sheets, Robert W., Maj
CP	Ashwell, Silas B., 1Lt
NAV	Neubert, Marshall A., Capt
NAV	Tollack, Howard V., Capt
MN	Lifshus, Lawrence, 1Lt
BOM	Orvis, George T., Jr., Capt
TT	Robertson, Joseph J., T/Sgt
RO	Smith, Phillip E., T/Sgt
TG	Wilson, Jack G., 2Lt
WG	Price, John B., T/Sgt

THERE ARE NO EIGHT HOUR DAYS IN COMBAT

by Harley E. Cannon

February 15 was a bright and clear day. The bomber formations reached the English coast outbound in perfect order and started the long climb to their assigned altitude entering enemy territory. By the time we crossed France into Germany we knew that we were favored with an unusually friendly tailwind approaching 100 miles per hour, giving us the amazing ground speed of about 350 mph while on the bomb run and over the critical flak zones.

"Bombs Away" occurred without mishap and the group swung off the target and headed for home. As the formation headed west toward the friendly sky over France, we soon found out that the wind that was our ally going into the target had become a beast at our throats. We were barely averaging 150 mph ground speed and we were consuming gas at a devastating rate, practically forcing us to use fuel we would need to reach Molesworth.

We were flying a brand new B-17G, #43-38065, and since it was the first time we had it on an operational mission we had not become familiar with its gas consumption record. We leaned our fuel mixture as far as we dared and stayed with the Squadron across the channel although some planes pulled out and landed on the continent for refueling. The original group of 13 ships had now become a formation of five as we approached Molesworth at 2200 feet, and over a solid undercast. We tried to get a radio report on visibility but we discovered that we had no communications--our radio was out.

Lt. Poole, the pilot and I, the copilot were alarmed as we watched all the gas gauges register empty. But we made the decision that we could make it and approached the landing pattern zone in formation and prepared to let down through the overcast.

We figured we had it made, when I felt a tap on the shoulder from our flight engineer Sgt. Rayford Pullen. He pointed to our right in-board prop which was windmilling. Pullen was ordered to transfer gas that might be in our Tokyo tanks, so as to restart the engine—but no luck. I then feathered the prop to reduce drag. At this moment, Pullen pointed to the left in-board engine. It too, was windmilling in the slipstream. This was immediately feathered to save our airspeed. Poole and I decided not to try an instrument let-down in formation with only half power and no visibility in the event having to make a go-around before we could set it down.

We turned and headed east towards the Channel area on two engines hoping to find a visual hole in the overcast that we could let down in. After about ten minutes we knew we would not be so lucky and made the decision to bail out, rather than attempt a blind crash landing with all the crew aboard.

I punched the bail-out alarm and the crew lost no time in getting out of the ship. Poole set the autopilot and we started for the hatch. I went out first. After the initial shock of the chute opening, I was startled by the sudden quiet. I was in a world of grey and seemed to be suspended in time. As I came through the cloud cover I saw the other chutes below and was surprised to see what seemed to be two chutes on one man. We were so low it only took a moment before we hit the ground.

The two chute man turned out to be our tail gunner, Sgt. Beryl Kindred whose chute shroud line had fouled over the canopy which visually made it look like two chutes. Radio operator Marvin Hoke had a close call as another plane in the soup nearly cut into him, but the pilot pulled away in time to miss his chute. We all finally assembled on a nearby road. All were OK except Lt. Harold Smith who had been busy plotting a route to an emergency field that we could get into when he heard the bail-out alarm. He hastily grabbed his chute and jumped with only his chest straps buckled. He took seven stitches in his chin where the buckle had caught him and saved him from going through the harness. Our Bombardier, Lt. Charles Mott fell into a farm pond where two English farm hands spotted him, but instead of helping him they turned and left him to struggle out of his harness and get ashore by himself. Charlie's opinion of England at that moment was that it should be cut off from Europe and left to sink.

We had assumed that everybody had gotten out of the aircraft, so after waiting for Lt. Poole and Sgt. Pullen to show up and not knowing where we were, we started down the country lane to find help. We soon came to a small grocery store at a crossroad and learned from an elderly lady, who turned out to be the postmistress, that we were in the small community of Pidley. She had a phone and I made a call to our base and checked in. We were told to sit tight and they would see that we were picked up.

I think at this point, the most gracious gesture of English hospitality was offered to us since we arrived in the UK. Our elderly hostess who was very much concerned over our well being, came out to the bench where we were sitting, cold, dejected and tired and offered us hot tea and biscuits. I am certain nothing could have been more welcome. I only wish I could thank her once again!

Poole and Pullen had still not joined us by the time an RAF lorry came and picked us up. We were taken to "Warboys" an Australian pathfinder group's base. They had us checked over for injuries, fed us and in general made us feel welcome as their guests for the night. Our money was no good at their bar.

The following morning Lt. Poole and Sgt. Pullen were brought in and we finally learned the final sequence of events. After setting the auto pilot and starting for the exit, Poole found that Pullen had been too busy trying to transfer fuel that he had not noticed everybody bailing out, so they had to get his chute and buckle it on. It was then that they spotted a clearing through the overcast and a possible area to land. Pullen got into the right seat, Poole cut out the auto pilot and they headed down. Wheels up, they bellied onto the grass at an English fighter base at Lakenheath. The plane slid to a stop at the brink of a quarry, safe and sound.

That day we were trucked into Molesworth and requested to report to the C.O., expecting to really get chewed out for wasting a beautiful new bomber worth half a million. Instead, we were warmly welcomed back, but since I had listed my 45 cal. pistol as being lost with the armament on the ship, I was told to file a statement of charges and I had to repay the government 35 dollars for its loss. I was told that side arms were to be worn on your person, not left with your luggage. It was truly our longest day!