

303rd BG (H) Combat Mission No. 353

6 April 1945

Target: Main Marshalling Yard at Leipzig, Germany

Crews Dispatched: 39

Crews Lost: 2Lt. Alderman, 8 KIA; 2Lt. Lacker, 9 KIA

Length of Mission: 9 hours, 19 minutes

Bomb Load: 32 x 100 lb G.P. & 2 x 500 lb M17 Incendiary bombs

Bombing Altitudes: 26,000, 24,800 & 26,600 feet

Marshalling yards in the Leipzig area were the targets for the 8th Air Force bombers. The 303rd BG(H) targets were the Moehau yard in Leipzig, the first priority target (visual), the main yard in Leipzig, the second priority (H2X), and the Gerf yard, the third (visual) and fourth (H2X) priority targets.

Thirty-nine B-17s were dispatched. Thirty-seven dropped 1,217 100-lb. G.P. and 72 500-lb. M17 incendiary bombs and ten leaflet units on the second priority target. The target area weather conditions made visual bombing impossible—there were 10/10 low clouds with tops at 13,000 to 15,000 feet, 3/10 to 4/10 high clouds at 25,000 feet, and dense, persistent contrails. Bombing results were unobserved.

An ME-262 German fighter attacked another formation, but was chased by P-51s close to the rear of the 303rd BG(H) formation. One Group gunner fired on the ME-262 and filed a claim that was assessed as a probable. Flak was meager to moderate and inaccurate. Returning aircraft had no battle damage or casualties.



2Lt Melvin Alderman

Two aircraft were missing as a result of a mid-air collision shortly before reaching the target at Leipzig — #43-38958 *Green Hill Belle*, 427BS, and #44-8647 (*No Name*), 360BS. The dense contrails appeared to contribute directly to the collision. No parachutes were observed leaving either B-17 and both aircraft crashed at Teplitz, Germany.

Green Hill Belle, piloted by 2Lt. Melvin **Alderman**, exploded in the air after the collision and broke up into small parts—some were on fire. The crewmen were assigned to the 2Lt Roman M. **Ley** Crew on 27 March 1945. They were flying their initial mission with pilot 2Lt Melvin **Alderman**, an experienced pilot who had flown 34 previous missions, most of them as copilot with the Grafton N. **Smith** Crew. Also killed in the crash were 2Lt. Roman M. **Ley**, F/O George S. **Thomas**, 2Lt. Howard G. **Weinberg**, Cpl. Roaul R. **Prieto**, Sgt. Don M. **Beebe**, Cpl. William M. **Toler** and Cpl. Jesse M. **Moore**. F/O **Thomas**, 2Lt. **Weinberg** and Sgt. **Prieto** are buried in Ardennes American Cemetery near Liege, Belgium.



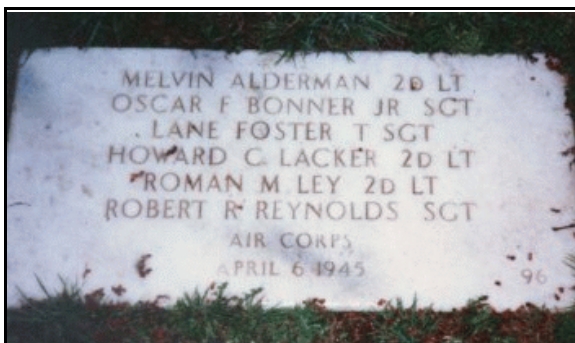
Ardennes American Cemetery Memorial



HOWARD C. LACKER CREW - 360th BS
(crew assigned 360BS: 30 Jan 1945)

(Back L-R) S/Sgt Clarence Mooneyham, Jr. (TOG), Sgt Robert R. Reynolds (BT), Sgt Louis V. Garbarino (TG),
 T/Sgt Lane Foster (R), S/Sgt Francis E. Bratcher (E) - (Front L-R) 2Lt Howard C. Lacker (P),
 2Lt Ralph L. Johnson (CP), 2Lt Billy L. Runnels (B), 2Lt James B. O'Neil (N)
 (The mascot "Baby Doll" was given to Jim O'Neil by his wife as a good luck piece.)

The tail assembly broke and the No. 3 engine caved in with the propeller off on #44-8647, piloted by 2Lt. Howard C. **Lacker**. Other crews spotted the aircraft going down in a flat spin. It appeared that the engines had been out because the propellers turned slowly. Also killed in the crash were 2Lt. Alexander **Kacus**, 2Lt. James B. **O'Neil**, S/Sgt. Clarence **Mooneyham**, S/Sgt. Francis E. **Bratcher**, S/Sgt. Lane **Foster**, Sgt. Robert R. **Reynolds**, Sgt. Louis V. **Garbarino**, Jr. and Sgt. Oscar F. **Bonner**. 2Lt. **O'Neil**, S/Sgt. **Mooneyham**, S/Sgt. **Bratcher** and Sgt. **Garbarino** are buried in Ardennes American Cemetery near Liege, Belgium.



Six members of the two crews are buried in a common grave at the *Zachary Taylor National Cemetery* in Louisville, Kentucky. Interred there are: 2Lt Melvin **Alderman**, Sgt Oscar F. **Bonner**, Jr., T/Sgt Lane **Foster**, 2Lt Howard C. **Lacker**, 2Lt Roman M. **Ley** and Sgt Robert R. **Reynolds**.

Aircraft Formation at Assembly Point - Group A

		<u>Hatch-Nye</u> 552 - PFF		
	<u>Smith</u> 563		<u>Rapp</u> 545 - PFF	
<u>Bristol</u> 860				<u>Austin</u> 532
		<u>Edmunds</u> 516		<u>Perkins</u> 258
	<u>Fowler</u> 517		<u>Bentzlin</u> 523	
<u>Lester</u> 842				<u>Scott</u> 870
		<u>Lacker</u> 647		<u>Maker</u> 544



Molesworth Chapel at Easter 1945

The Beloved Chaplains, who sustained the faith, were Reverend Merritt O. "Chappie" Slawson (Protestant) and Father Edmund Skoner (Catholic).

Aircraft Formation at Assembly Point - Group B

Knutzen-Haynes
564 - PFF

<u>Tilsen</u> 645		<u>Heller-Lowry</u> 883	
<u>Nicolaisen</u> 191			<u>Call</u> 734
	<u>Richeson</u> 127		<u>Peterson</u> 944
	<u>Towne</u> 608	<u>O'Donnell</u> 891	
<u>Henning</u> 875			<u>Beasley</u> 682
	<u>Bohle</u> 006		<u>Bashor</u> 289

Aircraft Formation at Assembly Point - Group C

Ashwell-McKeon
710 - PFF

	<u>Chuba</u> 977	<u>Grob</u> 824	
<u>Alderman</u> 958			<u>Kahler</u> 692
	<u>Miller</u> 621		<u>Greene</u> 311
	<u>Nester</u> 778	<u>Barr</u> 885	
<u>Cunningham</u> 462			<u>Denison</u> 937
	<u>Lonski</u> 763		<u>Thomas</u> 287

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

<p>CREW POSITIONS</p> <p>CMP - Command Pilot P - Pilot CP - Co-Pilot NAV - Navigator ANV - Ass't. Navigator MNV - Mickey Navigator ENG - Engineer BOM - Bombardier RO - Radio Operator</p>	<p>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</p>	<p>PAS - Passenger PHO - Photographer Y - Y-Operators (YRO,YO) RCM - Radio Cntr Measures SJ - Spot Jammer</p> <p>RESULTS OF MISSION</p> <p>KIA - Killed in action WIA - Wounded in action MIA - Missing in action</p>	<p>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</p>
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358th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

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

P Greene, Robert E., 1Lt
 CP Parson, Jerome G., 2Lt
 NAV Milligan, William J., 2Lt
 TOG Williams, Ira J., S/Sgt
 ENG Rollinger, Joseph C., Sgt
 RO Thompson, Joe C., Sgt
 BT Covert, John L., Sgt
 TG Jobe, Milton L., Sgt

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

P Bohle, Loren W., 2Lt
 CP Geile, Thomas A., 2Lt
 NAV Gerhardstein, Eugene M., F/O
 TOG Sproule, Wayne O., Sgt
 ENG Bigelow, Robert F., Sgt
 RO Genter, Norman, Sgt
 BT Aldous, George C., Sgt
 TG Smith, Jack C., Sgt

B-17G #43-38191 *Shasta*

P Nicolaisen, Arthur R., 2Lt
 CP Silver, Jack, 2Lt
 NAV Wilson, Benjamin H., F/O
 TOG Novakovich, George B., Sgt
 ENG Bentley, Robert L., Sgt
 RO Wierzbicki, Ted F., Sgt
 BT Straub, Robert C., Sgt
 TG Gray, Robert J., Sgt
 VI Brody, John J., Sgt (384th BG)

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

P Perkins, Morton C., 2Lt
 CP Kamstra, Walter W., 2Lt
 NAV Wyman, Asa N., F/O
 TOG Allen, Arlan R., Sgt
 ENG Carlson, Charles P., S/Sgt
 RO Little, Gerald G., Sgt
 BT McDonald, John T., Sgt
 TG Beckwith, Walter D., Sgt

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

P Cunningham, Neil E., 2Lt
 CP Smith, Lawrence S., 2Lt
 NAV Das, Mitchell C., 2Lt
 TOG Quig, Francis X., Sgt
 ENG Sprinkles, Leburn D., Sgt
 RO Ennis, Charles S., S/Sgt
 BT Carter, William J., Sgt
 TG Crigger, Richard S., Sgt

B-17G #43-38778 (*No Name*)

P Nester, Harry E., 2Lt
 CP Craig, Fred, 2Lt
 NAV Rainey, John L., 2Lt
 TOG Jones, James P., Sgt
 ENG Kappardaki, Kermit P., Sgt
 RO Strouse, Jacob J., Sgt
 BT Nichols, William A., Sgt
 TG Edleman, Robert W., Sgt
 SJ Scott, William R., S/Sgt

359th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

B-17G #43-38875 *Redwing*

P	Henning, Clyde H., 2Lt
CP	Bauer, Donald R., F/O
NAV	Barger, Donald T., 2Lt
TOG	Jones, John V., Sgt
ENG	Grant, Gilbert D., Sgt
RO	Ferche, Joseph P., Sgt
BT	Harper, Richard F., Sgt
TG	Barnett, Raymond L., Sgt

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

P	Peterson, Robert C., 2Lt
CP	Kirkpatrick, Roy A., 2Lt
NAV	Mollman, Charles A., 2Lt
TOG	Wilson, Robert P., Sgt
ENG	Reed, Denver E., Sgt
RO	Strigle, Paul C., Sgt
BT	Hunsucker, John E., S/Sgt
TG	Borsody, William L., Sgt

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

P	Bashor, Oliver L., 2Lt
CP	Baker, Ira B., 2Lt
NAV	Johnson, Herbert G., 2Lt
TOG	Hansen, Robert S., Sgt
ENG	Reed, Paul E., Sgt
RO	Shook, Victor N., Sgt
BT	Greene, Norman S., Sgt
TG	Theisen, Robert J., Sgt

B-17G #43-38682 (No Name)

P	Beasley, William M., 1Lt
CP	Rich, Richard H., 2Lt
NAV	Welsh, Harry A., 2Lt
TOG	Harrigfeld, Thomas E., Sgt
ENG	Gornto, Jacob R., Sgt
RO	Terrill, Jack W., Sgt
TG	Gracida, Henry J., Jr., Sgt
BT	Thomas, David W., Sgt

B-17G #44-8734 *Hell's Cargo*

P	Call, Fred E., 1Lt
CP	Wilson, Carl V., 2Lt
NAV	Udy, Donald M., F/O
TOG	Cassino, Julian R., S/Sgt
ENG	Myers, Ernest L., S/Sgt
RO	Sussman, Martin, S/Sgt
TG	Boling, Shuble A., S/Sgt
BT	Hager, Mark I., Sgt

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

P	Richeson, Marvin G., Jr., 2Lt
CP	Powlus, Vernon F., F/O
NAV	Bielski, Casimir, Jr., 2Lt
TOG	Benge, Charlie W., S/Sgt
ENG	Gray, Alexander W., S/Sgt
RO	Cohen, Seymour T., T/Sgt
TG	Hoxie, Charles R., Sgt
WG	Davidson, Dyle K., Sgt

B-17G #43-38891 *Blues in the Night*

P	O'Donnell, Thomas M., 1Lt
CP	Goulding, Traynum D., 2Lt
NAV	Crawford, Raymond C., 2Lt
TOG	Jeandrevin, Robert R., Sgt
ENG	Belcher, Rubin W., T/Sgt
RO	Portney, Sol, S/Sgt
BT	Simpson, James A., S/Sgt
TG	Palsa, Rudolph, Sgt

B-17G #43-38645 (No Name)

P	Tilsen, Cyril, 1Lt
CP	McDowell, James B., 2Lt
NAV	Fish, Louis, 2Lt
BOM	Adams, Harry W., 1Lt
ENG	Driggers, Sherod R., Jr., S/Sgt
RO	Mawdsley, Arnold, Sgt
TG	Proctor, Isaac H., Sgt
BT	Hendon, William G., Sgt

359th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists - Cont'd.

B-17G #43-38608 *Lucille*

P Towne, Harvey E., 2Lt
CP Ligaard, Warren K., 2Lt
NAV West, Alonzo, III. 2Lt
TOG Taylor, Wallace K., S/Sgt
ENG Dritz, Arthur, S/Sgt
RO Fiore, Thomas, S/Sgt
BT Syler, Allen B., Sgt
TG McGurdy, Lewis M., Sgt
RCM Palm, Kenneth A., S/Sgt

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

P Knutzen, Owen A., 1Lt
CP Haynes, Eugene, 1Lt
NAV Moon, Richard Y., 1Lt
MN Harrouff, Kelly F., 2Lt
BOM Mitchell, Robert C., 1Lt
ENG Klym, Michael, T/Sgt
RO Jobe, Andrew K., T/Sgt
TG Kennedy, Jack B., S/Sgt
WG Fogle, Jerome W., T/Sgt

B-17G #43-38883 *Lady Beth*

P Heller, Emerson E., 2Lt
CP Lowry, William J., 2Lt
NAV Wood, Stuart K., 2Lt
BOM Wort, Irving, 2Lt
ENG Manina, Joseph J., Sgt
RO Thomas, William B., Sgt
BT Warcholak, Emanuel, Sgt
TG Moots, Merritt L., Sgt

360th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

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

P	Edmunds, Robert E., 1Lt
CP	Sumpter, James A., 2Lt
NAV	Lofquist, Gordon B., 2Lt
TOG	King, Raymond H., S/Sgt
ENG	Hammel, Norman D., Sgt
RO	Polo, Matthew N., S/Sgt
BT	Kaber, Harvey N., S/Sgt
TG	Marchionda, Guido P., S/Sgt

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

P	Austin, Charles A., 1Lt
CP	Johnson, Arthur E., 2Lt
NAV	Kokoska, Florian T., 2Lt
TOG	Stuckey, Edward C., S/Sgt
ENG	Ingles, Howard L., Sgt
RO	Kummer, Burnell R., Sgt
BT	Danielsen, Stanley K., Sgt
TG	Krouse, Thomas R., Sgt

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

P	Maker, Eugene L., 2Lt
CP	Kaltenbacher, Robert F., 2Lt
NAV	Strassburger, Harvey D., F/O
TOG	Johnson, Wilfred B., Sgt
ENG	Smith, Paul R., Sgt
RO	Wisniewski, Andrew J., Sgt
BT	Mattucks, Robert E., Sgt
TG	Martis, Joseph A., Sgt

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

P	Bentzlin, Bertil V., 2Lt
CP	Briley, Dewey E., 2Lt
NAV	Andrzejczyk, Walter A., F/O
TOG	Friery, James R., Sgt
ENG	Rodgers, Walter D., Sgt
RO	Sole, John A., Sgt
BT	Henderson, Clarence J., Sgt
TG	Joneson, Leonard B., Sgt

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

P	Scott, John, 2Lt
CP	Weinandt, Bernard M., 2Lt
NAV	Bergvall, Otis A., 2Lt
TOG	Morris, Robert W., Sgt
ENG	Hart, Leroy M., Sgt
RO	Gentry, John M., Sgt
BT	Beckman, Charles W., Sgt
TG	Woolpert, John C., Sgt

B-17G #43-38563 *Jackie*

P	Smith, Samuel W., 2Lt
CP	Shanafelt, Arthur S.C., 2Lt
NAV	Knudsen, Russell A., F/O
TOG	Geyer, Walter A., S/Sgt
ENG	Zenick, Thomas E., Sgt
RO	Bridgman, Robert A., S/Sgt
BT	Kucab, Michael J., Sgt
TG	Jensen, Jens C., Sgt

360th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists - Cont'd.

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

P	Lester, Jack L., 2Lt
CP	Gaspar, Robert V., F/O
NAV	Sutherland, James M., 2Lt
BOM	Potts, Joseph, Jr., 2Lt
ENG	Livingston, Edward B., Sgt
RO	Rachel, Frank R., Sgt
BT	Keenan, Alexander J., Sgt
TG	Donner, Eugene D., Sgt
VI	Taylor, Walter H., S/Sgt (427th)

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

P	Bristol, Clarence D., 2Lt
CP	Welshon, Frank E., 2Lt
NAV	Robinson, Truman, 2Lt
BOM	Inman, James O., 2Lt
ENG	Jackson, James L., Sgt
RO	Kirtner, Billy A., T/Sgt
BT	Paris, Russell C., Sgt
TG	Mangum, Henry L., Jr., Sgt
WG	Wentland, Howard H., Sgt

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

P	Lacker, Howard C., 2Lt	KIA
CP	Kacus, Alexander, 2Lt	KIA
NAV	O'Neil, James B., 2Lt	KIA
TOG	Mooneyham, Clarence, Jr., Sgt	KIA
ENG	Bratcher, Francis E., Sgt	KIA
RO	Foster, Lane, Sgt	KIA
BT	Reynolds, Robert R., Sgt	KIA
TG	Garbarino, Louis V., Jr., Sgt	KIA
VI	Bonner, Oscar F., Sgt	KIA

B-17G #44-8552 (No Name) - PFF

P	Hatch, Logan B., Capt
CP	Nye, Robert M., Maj
NAV	McCarty, Mike D., 1Lt
MN	Gibson, Cater M., 1Lt
BOM	Downey, Francis G., 1Lt
ENG	Fuczka, Peter, T/Sgt
RO	Broughton, Averell M., T/Sgt
WG	Patterson, Charles A., S/Sgt
TG	Johnson, Ralph L., 2Lt

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

P	Rapp, John W., 2Lt
CP	Judd, Dudley F., 2Lt
NAV	Rinish, Jams M., F/O
MN	Fleming, David D., 2Lt
BOM	West, Albert G., F/O
ENG	Dreblow, George P., S/Sgt
RO	Turner, John R., Sgt
TG	Rasmussen, Gerald G., Sgt
WG	Evans, William A., Sgt

B-17G #44-6517 Old Cock

P	Fowler, Robert R., 1Lt
CP	Boyles, Kenneth L., 2Lt
NAV	Sarkis, George A., F/O
TOG	Bice, Lowell E., S/Sgt
ENG	Bryson, Emil M., T/Sgt
RO	Ahland, Walter F., S/Sgt
BT	Henager, Rudolph M., Sgt
TG	Jones, William P., Sgt
YRO	Brooks, James E., Sgt

427th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

B-17G #44-6937 *El Sereano*

P	Denison, William A., 2Lt
CP	Roche, John E., F/O
NAV	Zabelicky, John E., 2Lt
TOG	McComb, Harold A., Sgt
TT	Eckert, Clair E., S/Sgt
BT	Conyer, Roy, Jr., Sgt
RO	Kiggens, William P., Sgt
TG	O'Hearn, Walter D., Sgt

B-17G #44-8692 (No Name)

P	Kahler, Thomas F., 2Lt
CP	Cotton, Lewis, F/O
NAV	Slauson, Leon H., 2Lt
TOG	Fogarty, Richard T., Sgt
TT	Lowery, Lloyd, S/Sgt
RO	Latz, Leslie L., S/Sgt
TG	Allen, Herrold H., Sgt
BT	Broughton, William A., S/Sgt

B-17G #44-83287 *Southern Comfort*

P	Thomas, Blaine E., 2Lt
CP	Bartholomew, Max R., 2Lt
NAV	Bonanno, Joseph, F/O
TOG	Eschinger, Edward G., Sgt
TT	Haynes, Harry W., Jr., Sgt
BT	Contreras, Luis L., Sgt
RO	Smith, Walter E., Sgt
TG	Carlson, Melvin C., Sgt

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

P	Lonski, Charles J., 1Lt
CP	Halonen, Eugene L., 2Lt
NAV	Szymanski, Milton J., 2Lt
TOG	Campen, Donald O., Jr., Sgt
TT	Beadle, Richard H., Sgt
BT	Czarny, Alex G., Sgt
RO	Newby, Sidney W., Sgt
TG	Bourget, Joseph B., Sgt

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

P	Chuba, Francis B., 2Lt
CP	Kipfer, James F., 2Lt
NAV	Wolf, Robert J., 2Lt
TOG	Malmo, Richard C., Sgt
TT	Ayers, Francis H., Sgt
BT	Paananen, Uhlo J., Sgt
RO	Harkey, Charles I., S/Sgt
TG	Huckabay, Harvey H., Sgt

B-17G #44-6824 (No Name)

P	Grob, Emil E., Jr., 2Lt
CP	Vanderhei, Vivian S., 2Lt
NAV	Fox, Richard W., 2Lt
BOM	Steinberg, Clifford, 2Lt
TT	Loy, Vernon C., S/Sgt
RO	Mullen, John P., S/Sgt
TG	Nutting, Rufus R., Sgt
BT	Apel, Charles W., Sgt

427th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists - Cont'd.

B-17G #42-39885 Sweet Rose O'Grady		B-17G #43-38958 Green Hill Belle CR-L	
P	Barr, Thomas J., 2Lt	P	Alderman, Melvin, 2Lt KIA
CP	Pauling, Verlin C., 2Lt	CP	Ley, Roman M., 2Lt KIA
NAV	Walker, Raymon G., 2Lt	NAV	Thomas, George S., F/O KIA
BOM	Wentworth, Richard H., F/O	BOM	Weinberg, Howard G., 2Lt KIA
TT	Daspit, Thomas M., Cpl	TT	Prieto, Roaul R., Cpl KIA
BT	Laza, Benney F., Cpl	BT	Beebe, Don M., Sgt KIA
RO	Zierk, George W., Cpl	RO	Toler, William M., Cpl KIA
TG	Byers, McClellan A., Cpl	TG	Moore, Jesse M., Cpl KIA
B-17G #43-38621 50 Ragged		B-17G #44-8710 Idle Wheel - PFF	
P	Miller, Forrest E., 2Lt	P	Ashwell, Silas B., 1Lt
CP	Woodworth, Kenneth R., F/O	CP	McKeon, Preston W., 1Lt
NAV	Higgins, Harold W., 2Lt	NAV	Wolansky, John, 2Lt
BOM	Lee, Roger E., 2Lt	MN	Perry, Franklin W., 2Lt
TT	Conroy, Thomas R., S/Sgt	BOM	Marshall, Alexander F., 1Lt
BT	Burns, Jerry E., Sgt	TT	Erdmann, Robert A., T/Sgt
RO	Retzlaff, Robert R., Sgt	RO	Islava, Joseph O., T/Sgt
TG	Bulbach, Walter, Sgt	TG	Turkovich, Charles J., S/Sgt
		WG	Kohlmayer, Garth G., Sgt