

303rd BG (H) Combat Mission No. 113

25 February 1944

Target: Group A - Messerschmitt A/C Factory, Augsburg, Ger.

Group B - V.K.F. Ball Bearing Works, Stuttgart, Ger.

Crews Dispatched: Group A - 19; Group B - 12

Crew Members Lost or Wounded: 6 crewmen wounded by flak

Length of Mission: 9 hours, 15 minutes

Bomb Load: Group A - 12 x 500 lb bombs,

Group B - 3 or 6 x 1000 lb bombs

Bombing Altitude: Group A - 22,100 ft; Group B - 21,100 ft

Ammo Fired: 3,780 rounds

Big Week continued with 8th Air Force attacks on three Messerschmitt aircraft production centers plus an important ball-bearing factory. The 303rd BG(H) had 31 aircraft airborne with 29 dispatched. Four aircraft returned early:
#42-31471 *Doolittle's Destroyer*, 360BS-E (**Thomas**), runaway prop.
#42-3158 *Max*, 427BS-Y (**Hoeg**), No. 4 engine throwing oil.
#42-31423 *Jigger Rooche*, 427BS-M (**Estes**), No manifold pressure on No. 3.
#42-38050 *Thunderbird*, 359BS-U (**Glass**), wounded photographer.

Fifteen aircraft of the main "A" Group bombed Augsburg with 155 500-lb. G.P. bombs from 22,100 feet. Ten B-17s of the 303/384 composite "B" Group bombed Stuttgart with 36 1,000-lb. G.P. bombs from 21,200 feet. Except for a slight ground haze, the weather over the Continent was excellent. Augsburg bombing results were excellent. Stuttgart results were poor to fair. All bombing was visual-PFF was used only for navigation. There were no contrails.

Both Groups experienced moderate to intense and accurate flak. The main "A" Group sustained one wounded crewman and 15 damaged aircraft and the "B" Group had eight wounded crewmen and nine damaged aircraft—all from flak. Enemy fighter opposition was generally weak with only a few attacks on the Group. Strung-out fighter support over the route resulted in no support over the target area for about one hour. Co-pilot, Lt. John C. **Cook** was hit by flak in his arm. Pilot, Lt. Robert W. **Snyder** was hit in the neck. They were flying in #42-97617 (*No Name*).

Bombing excellence was a tribute to the courage of the bombardiers who stayed crouched over their bombsights through one of the worst flak barrages ever encountered by the 303rd BG(H). Nearly every Group B-17 had several holes to testify to the accuracy of the German gunners.

Credit for the successful operations went to Maj. **Shumake**, who took a Combat Wing to Augsburg, and Maj. **Cole**, who led a Group to attack Stuttgart. Both men made almost identical reports on their missions. Maj. **Shumake** said, "I think we did a darned good job as far as bombing is concerned. We didn't have much trouble until we got over the target, but they really gave it to us there. We didn't get jumped by fighters, but we could

hear other Groups calling for help. It was a long, rough haul, but worth it." Maj. **Cole** said, "Our Group had excellent bombing. All of our bombs went right in there. There was a lot of smoke coming up from the target when we left."

Capt. **Gamble**, who piloted Maj. **Shumake**, said he had seen enough flak to last him for a long time, and "We had flak all the way and it was pretty fierce. "Luckily our fighters kept the Germans away from us and we had a good bomb run in spite of the flak. Our bombardier did a swell job and our bombs seemed to go right into the target. "When our pilot said we were at the French border, I looked back at Augsburg and could still see smoke coming up from our target. It was a big black column and it seemed to be getting bigger," **Davis** said. S/Sgt. Elwood R. **Pelkey**, waist gunner on *The '8' Ball MK II* which went to Stuttgart, reported lots of smoke there, too. "We could see black smoke coming up from Stuttgart thirty minutes after we left the place," he said.



Ole George #42-31574 (358BS) VK-G
41st CBW-A Lead (358BS) - Pilot Capt D. Gamble / CoPilot Maj G.F Shumake
 (Back Row L-R) Maj. G.F Shumake (CP), Capt. J.B. Fawcett (B),
 Capt. D. Gamble (P), 1Lt H.H. Steely (N), Capt. N.N. Jacobsen (N)
 (Front - not in order) T/Sgt C.E. Wagner (E), S/Sgt N. Vaughn (WG),
 T/Sgt H.N. Bland (R), S/Sgt C.S. Schmeltzer (WG),
 S/Sgt F.H. Stender (TG), T/Sgt R.G. Scharch (BT, 2nd from right)

Aircraft Formation at Assembly Point - Group A

		<u>Shumake-Gamble</u> 574		
		<u>Snyder</u> 617		<u>Bensel</u> PFF B-17F #42-3492 812BS/482BG
			<u>Watson</u> 583	
		<u>Gorman</u> 739		<u>Taylor</u> 893
	<u>Henderson</u> 051			<u>Wilson</u> 340
<u>Estes</u> 423		<u>Sullivan</u> 020		<u>Thomas</u> 471
	<u>McGarry</u> 241			<u>Lawlor</u> 841
_____		<u>Wood</u> 200		<u>Glass</u> 050
	_____			<u>Holdcroft</u> 168
				<u>Bordelon</u> 213

#42-39885 *Sweet Rose O'Grady* (**Headlee**), assembled with 357th Group and bombed Stuttgart. Flew #2 position in Low Squadron.

#42-3158 *Max*, (**Hoeg**), assembled with 381st Group, but returned early to Base.

Four (4) aircraft aborted this mission:

Lt. Thomas in 471

Lt. Hoeg in 158

Lt. Estes in 423

Lt. Glass in 050

Composite Group with 384th Group

	<u>Cole</u> 635		
	<u>Dahleen</u> 183	<u>Shoup</u> 605	<u>Savage</u> 306
	<u>Hybert</u> 830		<u>Edwards</u> 561
	<u>Young</u> 393		_____
<u>Bech</u> 823		<u>Eisenhart</u> 973	_____
	<u>Harrison</u> 616		_____
<u>Maxey</u> 629		<u>Melton</u> 795	_____
	_____		_____

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 cuntry 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 #42-37893 *Bam Bam*

P	Taylor, James B., 1Lt
CP	Hall, Charles M., 2Lt
NAV	Levy, Herbert E., 2Lt
BOM	Schmid, Ralph D., 2Lt
ENG	Jones, Douglas J., S/Sgt
BT	Czeczotka, Theodore R., Sgt
RO	Dulin, Woodroe G., S/Sgt
RWG	Schweinebraten, Leslie H., Sgt
TG	Cox, James B., S/Sgt
LWG	Loveland, William H., Sgt

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

P	Gorman, Quentin J., 2Lt
CP	Hofmann, Raymond, 2Lt
NAV	Binder, Carroll, 2Lt
BOM	Israelson, Elmo P., 2Lt
ENG	Blakeney, William R., Jr., S/Sgt
BT	Crenshaw, Ollie G., Sgt
RO	Berman, Seymour, S/Sgt
LWG	Galloway, John B., Sgt
TG	Maxwell, Verle J., Sgt
RWG	Jensen, Bob, Sgt.

B-17F #42-29629 *Connecticut Yankee*

P	Maxey, Frank, 2Lt
CP	Knight, R.A., 2Lt
NAV	Shamban, Marcus F., 2Lt
BOM	Spatt, Arnold I., 2Lt
ENG	Gonsalves, John D., S/Sgt
LWG	Gamon, Edward J., Sgt
RO	Rabun, Clifford G., Sgt
BT	Swain, Norman F., Sgt
TG	Angelo, George L., S/Sgt
RWG	Hodgins, Robert A., Sgt
PHO	Bartreau, Edward L., S/Sgt

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

P	Watson, Jack W., 1Lt
CP	Burns, James R., 2Lt
NAV	Connors, Edward B., 2Lt
BOM	Feinman, Milton, 2Lt
ENG	Hoffman, Robert W., S/Sgt
RWG	Daniels, Herbert A., Sgt
RO	Kistulentz, Paul, Sgt
BT	Gibbs, Paul M., Sgt
TG	McArthur, Robert G., Sgt
RWG	Smythe, Samuel W., Sgt

B-17G #42-97617 *(No Name)*

P	Snyder, Robert W., 2Lt
CP	Cook, John H., 2Lt
NAV	Williams, Jack N., 2Lt
BOM	Morrison, James P., 2Lt
ENG	Haggerty, Jerome J., S/Sgt
LWG	Delaney, Jessie L., Sgt
RO	Rumpf, Charles W., S/Sgt
RWG	Balzano, Christopher, Sgt
TG	Hunt, John L., Sgt
BT	Chadick, Neal T., Sgt

B-17G #42-31574 *Ole George*

P	Gamble, Donald, Capt
CP	Shumake, Glynn F., Maj
NAV	Steely, Hobart H., 1Lt
NAV	Jacobsen, Norman N., Capt
BOM	Fawcett, Jack W., Capt
ENG	Wagner, Clyde E., T/Sgt
LWG	Vaughn, Norville, S/Sgt
RO	Bland, Hugh N., T/Sgt
BT	Scharch, Richard G., S/Sgt
RWG	Schmeltzer, Charles S., S/Sgt
TG	Stender, Francis H., S/Sgt

359th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

B-17G #42-31830 *Marie*

P	Hybert, Arthur J., 1Lt
CP	Harrison, Weldon O., 2Lt
NAV	Towberman, Paul E., 2Lt
BOM	Kelly, James H., Jr., 2Lt
ENG	Broderick, George V., S/Sgt
RO	Ratford, Edward V., S/Sgt
LWG	Gilcrease, Roland L., Sgt
BT	Jaehne, Charles R., S/Sgt
RWG	Kolenda, Frank M., Sgt
TG	Barmak, Paul J., S/Sgt

B-17F #42-5306 (No Name)

P	Savage, John N., 2Lt
CP	Marsh, Richard K., 2Lt
NAV	Walsh, Myles J., 2Lt
BOM	Joyce, John D., 2Lt
ENG	Davis, Eugene B., S/Sgt
RO	Minks, George A., S/Sgt
BT	Munson, James E., S/Sgt
TG	Moessner, Raymond J., S/Sgt
LWG	Rogers, Warren G., Sgt
RWG	Ferrell, William R., Sgt

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

P	Dahleen, Howard D., 1Lt
CP	Rice, Charles M., 2Lt
NAV	Klingensmith, Russell S., 2Lt
BOM	Gauthier, Raymond W., 2Lt
ENG	Newman, John F., S/Sgt
RO	Swanson, Charles E., T/Sgt
RWG	Smith, Harding W., S/Sgt
LWG	Manchester, Robert E., S/Sgt
BT	Hirn, Edward M., S/Sgt
TG	Covington, Charles G., S/Sgt

B-17F #41-24561 *The Duchess*

P	Edwards, Kenneth C., 2Lt
CP	Peterson, Edwin V., 2Lt
NAV	Sanders, Coleman, 2Lt
BOM	Anderson, Everett J., 2Lt
ENG	Johnson, Kenneth V., S/Sgt
RO	Kennedy, Herbert W., S/Sgt
BT	Hein, Walter E., S/Sgt
LWG	Champagne, Adam, Sgt
TG	Kowalk, Francis H., Sgt
RWG	Abernathy, Fay S., Cpl

B-17F #42-29823 (No Name)

P	Bech, G. Neil, Jr., 1Lt
CP	Hall, Franklin M., 2Lt
NAV	Cotter, Edward R., 2Lt
BOM	Corbin, Frederick A., F/O
ENG	Sanelli, Floyd L., T/Sgt
RWG	Boatwright, Edward C., S/Sgt
RO	Dennis, Julian E., T/Sgt
BT	Johnson, Lawrence G., S/Sgt
LWG	Cundiff, Robert W., Sgt
TG	Murphy, Carl B., Sgt

B-17F #42-2973 *Iza Vailable*

P	Eisenhart, William E., 2Lt
CP	Sassone, Joseph C., 2Lt
NAV	Carey, William D., 2Lt
BOM	Van Zandt, Roland, 1Lt
ENG	Mayhugh, John C., Jr., S/Sgt
RO	Mouser, Lloyd C., T/Sgt
BT	McCauley, Patrick N., S/Sgt
TG	Tybuszewski, Mitchell, S/Sgt
RWG	Robichaud, Joseph E., S/Sgt
LWG	Hermann, Kurt J., II, T/Sgt
PHO	Hunter, Robert G., S/Sgt

359th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists - Cont'd.

B-17F #41-24605 Knock-Out Dropper

P Shoup, Noel E., 1Lt
CP Litherland, James, 2Lt
NAV Howlett, Oscar D., 1Lt
BOM Ulbricht, Walter E., 2Lt
ENG Bragg, Ben W., T/Sgt
RWG Gribble, Robert F., S/Sgt
RO Rose, William A., Sgt
LWG Asvestos, Nick, S/Sgt
BT Hostetter, William L., S/Sgt
TG Ross, Harry C., S/Sgt

B-17F #41-24635 The '8' Ball MK II

P Cole, Richard H., Maj
CP Blossom, George H., 2Lt
NAV Palmer, Gerald M., 1Lt
BOM Bowman, Richard R., 1Lt
ENG Kalafut, Joseph J., S/Sgt
RO Vieira, Joseph, T/Sgt
RWG Pelkey, Elwood R., S/Sgt
BT Bergman, Harvey F., S/Sgt
LWG Reynolds, James B., S/Sgt
TG Gorecki, Victor T., Jr., 2Lt

B-17F #42-5393 Thumper Again

P Young, Elmer W., 2Lt
CP Cunningham, Billy A., 2Lt
NAV Schoner, George R., 2Lt
BOM Yelsky, Fred B., 2Lt
ENG Steele, John C., T/Sgt
RO Dulick, Steve, T/Sgt
BT Lebeck, Richard H., S/Sgt
RWG Rohaly, Andrew, Jr., S/Sgt
LWG Withrow, John W., S/Sgt
TG Stapelton, Bill, S/Sgt

360th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

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

P	DeWall, Hershel R., 2Lt
CP	Hicks, David F., 2Lt
NAV	Becker, Sylvester J., 1Lt
BOM	Peterson, Elmer L., S/Sgt
ENG	Green, Jack E., S/Sgt
RWG	Hosso, Harry V., S/Sgt
RO	Bonn, Charles J., Sgt
LWG	Ayres, Arthur B., S/Sgt
BG	Hemmings, Norman A., S/Sgt
TG	Davis, Paul J., S/Sgt

B-17G #42-31471 *Doolittle's Destroyer*

P	Thomas, Earl N., 2Lt
CP	Miller, Edgar C., 2Lt
NAV	Walenta, Clarence V., 2Lt
BOM	Scott, Harold L., 2Lt
ENG	Mason, John W., T/Sgt
TG	Harvey, Roy D., Sgt
RO	Crowder, Gayther B., T/Sgt
RWG	Bacon, Charles N., Sgt
BT	Johnston, Harold A., Sgt
LWG	Books, Carl O., Sgt

(Abortive)

B-17G #42-38168 *Dear Mom*

P	Holdcroft, Lloyd L., 1Lt
CP	Bradley, Clyde W., Jr., 2Lt
NAV	Pace, Charles M., 2Lt
BOM	O'Donnell, John J., 2Lt
ENG	DeMarco, John A., S/Sgt
RWG	Hustus, Walter L., Sgt
RO	Francis, Walter G., S/Sgt
LWG	Slusser, Walter C., Sgt
BT	Kern, Lloyd F., Sgt
TG	Krumholz, Robert A., Sgt

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

P	Bordelon, Berton A., 1Lt
CP	Coons, Charles L., 2Lt
NAV	Cromwell, Frederick P., 2Lt
BOM	Cottrell, John W., 2Lt
ENG	Barker, Forrest, S/Sgt
RWG	Adams, Donald K., S/Sgt
RO	Fontana, Joseph L., S/Sgt
LWG	Patterson, Harry L., S/Sgt
BT	Harrington, Joseph F., S/Sgt
TG	Couch, Ted, Sgt

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

P	Wilson, Fred F., Lt
CP	Bowen, James W., Lt
NAV	Przybyszewski, Henry S., Lt
BOM	Fahlbusch, Joseph F., Lt
ENG	Hubleby, Warren G., Sgt
RWG	Goland, Harry, T/Sgt
RO	Mirkin, Herman H., T/Sgt
LWG	Petree, Wendell R., S/Sgt
BT	Webbink, Elvin F., S/Sgt
TG	Roads, Dwight W., Jr., S/Sgt

B-17G #42-37841 *Banshee*

P	Lawlor, John C., Jr., 1Lt
CP	Chapman, John M., 2Lt
NAV	Munroe, Linton S., Jr., 2Lt
BOM	Barker, Havelock W., 2Lt
ENG	Tower, Jack W., T/Sgt
RWG	Huddleston, D.O., S/Sgt
RO	Esposito, Frank B., T/Sgt
LWG	Krenek, Joe W., S/Sgt
BT	Kuntashian, Warren V., S/Sgt
TG	Butler, Raymond K., S/Sgt
PHO	Lovett, William F., Sgt

B-17G #42-38050 *Thunderbird*

P	Glass, Henry F., 1Lt
CP	McMahan, Eugene A., 2Lt
NAV	Pepe, Nicholas A., 2Lt
BOM	Robrock, Paul A., 2Lt
ENG	Carbillano, Dominick J., Sgt
LWG	Stellato, Francis A., S/Sgt
RO	Miller, Gordon R., T/Sgt
RWG	Patrone, Frank, S/Sgt
BT	Michael, David O., S/Sgt
TG	Roberts, James E., S/Sgt
PHO	Buckley, Paul E., Sgt

(Abortive Sortie)

427th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

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

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

B-17G #42-38051 *My Yorkshire Dream*

P Henderson, Grover C., Lt
 CP Sayers, Darwin D., Lt
 NAV Arvanites, George L., Lt
 BOM Umphress, F.E., Jr., Lt
 ENG Weed, L.A., Jr., S/Sgt
 BT Teno, James R., S/Sgt
 RO Cohen, Leo, T/Sgt
 TG LaFrenier, James E., S/Sgt
 RWG Wright, Edgar A., S/Sgt
 LWG Musashe, Michael, S/Sgt

B-17G #42-31423 *Jigger Rooche*

P Estes, Shirley W., Lt
 CP Byers, Ballard T., Lt
 NAV Minter, Thomas W., Lt
 BOM Shemwell, John T., Lt
 ENG Price, Jack J., S/Sgt
 BT Wiley, Nathan H., Sgt
 RO Wagner, Wayne, S/Sgt
 TG Noah, Norbert O., Sgt
 RWG Silrum, Orvis K., Sgt
 LWG Ross, Samuel C., Sgt
 (Abortive Sortie)

B-17F #42-29795 *Flying Bitch*

P Melton, James H., Lt
 CP Belknap, Robert W., Lt
 NAV Frechter, Harry G., Lt
 BOM Clapp, Keith W., Lt
 ENG Rusinak, John C., S/Sgt
 BT Moore, John J., Jr., Sgt
 RO Stoberl, Donald L., S/Sgt
 TG Anderson, Ralph R., Sgt
 LWG Doyle, Edward J., Sgt
 RWG LaPlant, Willard R., Sgt

B-17G #42-38020 *V-Packet*

P Sullivan, Francis X., Lt
 CP Brangwin, Kenneth R., Lt
 NAV Eccleston, Edward F., Lt
 BOM Bawol, Walter S., Lt
 ENG 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
 LWG Keely, Eugene F., S/Sgt

B-17F #42-3158 *Max*

P Hoeg, Kenneth A., Lt
 CP O'Hare, Phil W., Lt
 NAV Olsen, Kenneth L., Lt
 BOM Cronin, Ernest L., Lt
 ENG Relyea, Ralph R., T/Sgt
 BT McMahan, Bonnar P., S/Sgt
 RO Benevento, Andrew G., S/Sgt
 RWG Hadley, Owen W., S/Sgt
 LWG Vargas, Michael A., S/Sgt
 TG McLaughlin, Jesse W., S/Sgt
 (Abortive Sortie)

427th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists - Cont'd.

B-17G #42-31616 *Spirit of Flak Wolf*

P Harrison, Emmittes S., Jr., Lt
 CP Bastean, Stephen B., Lt
 NAV Kurnik, Walter F., Lt
 BOM Biedanski, Edmund J., Lt
 ENG Rombach, Joseph H., S/Sgt
 BT Dye, James W., S/Sgt
 RO Volmer, Lawrence O., T/Sgt
 TG Vateckas, Coster R., S/Sgt
 LWG Campbell, Kenneth H., S/Sgt
 RWG Hawk, Kenneth L., S/Sgt
 PHO Gervais, Joseph J., Sgt

B-17G #42-31241 *Spirit of Wanette*

P McGarry, John J., Jr., Lt
 CP Cotham, Willie C., Lt
 NAV Halligan, Robert W., Lt
 BOM Foe, Kenneth D., Lt
 ENG Grace, Henry J., S/Sgt
 BT Plante, Royal F., S/Sgt
 RO Wilson, Elmer A., S/Sgt
 TG Serpa, Joseph E., S/Sgt
 LWG Brown, Edgar S., Sgt
 RWG Hilborn, Ervin, Sgt
 PHO Mulberry, Harold F., Sgt

B-17G #42-31200 *Old Crow*

P Wood, Vere A., Lt
 CP Knutson, Wilmer A., Lt
 NAV Pinnette, William S., Lt
 BOM Brown, Thomas G., Lt
 ENG Watts, William A., T/Sgt
 BT Grant, Thomas V., S/Sgt
 RO Brooks, Winnie R., S/Sg
 TG Helton, Edward, Sgt
 RWG Heathershaw, Charles L., Sgt
 LWG Tevis, John E., S/Sgt

This was the last mission of "Big Week," 20-25 February 1944. Like the other missions during "Big Week" this mission was costly in terms of crewmen and aircraft:

First Division Losses:	13 crews and aircraft
Second Division Losses:	6 crews and aircraft
Third Division Losses:	11 crews and aircraft
Total Division Losses:	30 crews and aircraft

303rd BG(H) COMMENDATIONS: "BIG WEEK" COMBAT PERFORMANCE

COMMENDATIONS:

1. The following TWX, 29 Feb 44, is quoted for the information of all personnel, this station: "RESTRICTED - 1 BD F1242G FOLLOWING MESSG RECEIVED FROM 8AF QUOTE: RESTRICTED 8AF F2434B GEN ARNOLD DESIRED FOLLOWING MESSG BROUGHT TO ATTENTION OF ALL MEMBERS OF YOUR COMD. WITH A RELENTLESS DETERMINATION DEMANDING THE RESPECT OF EVERYONE IN THE AAF, YOU ARE DRIVING HOME AN ATTACK WHICH IS DESTROYING GERMANY'S VERY VITALS. THE STRONGEST DEFENSES A DESPERATE ENEMY CAN DEVISE ARE NOT STOPPING YOU. YOU HAVE HAD HEAVY LOSSES BUT YOU ARE INFLECTING HEAVIER ONES ON THE ENEMY. YOUR ATTACKS ON REGENSBURG, LEIPZIG, BERNBURG, GOTHA AND OTHER FIGHTER FACTORIES SO VITAL TO THE ENEMY ARE WIPING OUT GERMAN FIGHTER PRODUCTION AND LAYING THE FOUNDATION FOR DECISIVE AND FINAL OPERATIONS IN THE FUTURE. FOR CONTINUING TO DEAL SUCH DESTRUCTIVE BLOWS AT THE HEART OF GERMANY, I SEND ALL OF YOU MY BEST WISHES. FOR THE SUPERB JOB YOU ARE DOING, I COMMEND ALL RANKS FROM TOP TO BOTTOM. SGD ARNOLD UNQUOTE."

HEADQUARTERS
41 ST COMBAT BOMBARDMENT WING (H)
A.P.O. 634 U.S. ARMY

26 February 1944

SUBJECT: Commendation.

TO: Commanding Officer, 303rd Bomb Group (H), APO 634.

1. It has been stated by competent authority that since 8 February 1944 the damage inflicted on the German air Force has been greater than that of all previous operations combined.

2. It gives me great pleasure to inform you that the tremendous improvement in the performance of your organizations has been such that the superb bombing done during this period was to a very great extent responsible for this grave damage to the enemy. The Bomb Pattern on Aschersleben was excellent, in fact the damage done here alone was sufficient to warrant the effort and justify the losses of the entire force dispatched. The pattern laid on the target at Leipzig by your Group I believe was the only bombing that has ever been as accurate and concentrated that 100% of the bombs fell within one thousand (1000) feet of the aiming point.

3. I desire that you bring this letter to the attention of every man in your organization and express to them my deep appreciation of the outstanding job they have done under very adverse weather conditions. The ground personnel have worked long hard hours in very uncomfortable conditions, but their labors have been more than justified and I'm they will be gratified to know their work has certainly brought the final victory nearer by many months.

ROBERT F. TRAVIS
Brigadier General, A. C. Commanding