

## Report of Whitney Simon, survivor from the crash of B-17 "Patches"

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On 17 august 1943 - also called "Black thursday"- we received an assignement to bomb a factory in Schweinfurt. Underway to the target we did not encounter any German hunters, but the anti-aircraft defense was worse than before.

From as soon as our bombs hit the targets, our pilot, Douglas Mutschler (KIA), turned the plane direct heading to base. But it was too late, we were hit by the anti-aircraft guns.

One engine was defective immediately, we all knew what that meant. In the meantime the German hunters from the JG-26-7 division, under command of Adolf Gluntz, arrived. Our flying fortress had no chance anymore.

The FW-190 planes shot another 2 engines out, the hunters kept in our vicinity, until they were sure that we would crash. We all made us ready to jump out the plane.

Then "Patches" started spinning, and the next thing I remember is that I'm making a free fall heading down.

I thought I was dead, and this was my one way ticket to hell. Fortunately I managed to open my parachute and was able to land safely. The Germans did not have too much trouble to capture me, together with Buckley, Baker, Luce and Bagwell.

We were taken immediately to a Belgian prison. Quinlivan and Grundman were too much injured and taken to the hospital in the vicinity.

Eventually we were taken to Stalag 17B, where we spent 18 months in prison. After that we had to march a horrible 280 miles, to get liberated by Patton's 3rd division.

Whitney Simon.

You can find more images [here](#).