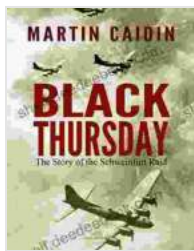


# Black Thursday: The Devastating Schweinfurt Raid During World War II

On October 14, 1943, the US Army Air Forces launched a daring daylight bombing raid on the German city of Schweinfurt. The raid, known as Black Thursday, was one of the most costly in terms of American aircrew lives lost during World War II.



## Black Thursday: The Story of the Schweinfurt Raid

by Martin Caidin

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 370 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 136 pages



The target of the raid was the Schweinfurt ball bearing factories, which were essential to the German war effort. The factories produced ball bearings that were used in a wide variety of military equipment, including tanks, aircraft, and submarines.

The raid was carried out by 291 B-17 Flying Fortresses and was escorted by 103 P-47 Thunderbolts. The bombers flew in a tight formation at an altitude of 25,000 feet. The raid was met with heavy German defenses, including flak and fighters.

The raid was a disaster for the US Army Air Forces. Of the 291 B-17s that took part in the raid, 60 were shot down. 650 aircrew members were killed or captured. The raid also resulted in the loss of 13 P-47 Thunderbolts.

The Schweinfurt raid was a turning point in the US Army Air Forces' strategic bombing campaign against Germany. The raid showed that the US could not carry out daylight bombing raids against heavily defended targets without suffering heavy losses.

The raid also had a significant impact on the German war effort. The destruction of the Schweinfurt ball bearing factories caused a significant disruption in the production of German military equipment.

### **The Planning of the Schweinfurt Raid**

The planning for the Schweinfurt raid began in the summer of 1943. The US Army Air Forces had been carrying out daylight bombing raids against Germany since 1942, but these raids had been largely ineffective. The US bombers were often shot down by German fighters and flak.

The US Army Air Forces decided to launch a daylight raid against Schweinfurt in order to demonstrate the effectiveness of its new precision bombing techniques. The US bombers were equipped with Norden bombsights, which allowed them to drop bombs with great accuracy.

The US Army Air Forces also decided to escort the bombers with a large force of fighters. The fighters would protect the bombers from German fighters and flak.

### **The Execution of the Schweinfurt Raid**

The Schweinfurt raid was launched on October 14, 1943. The bombers took off from bases in England and flew to Schweinfurt in a tight formation. The bombers were escorted by a large force of fighters.

The bombers reached Schweinfurt at around noon. The bombers dropped their bombs on the ball bearing factories and other targets. The raid was met with heavy German defenses, including flak and fighters.

The US bombers suffered heavy losses during the raid. 60 B-17s were shot down and 650 aircrew members were killed or captured. The raid also resulted in the loss of 13 P-47 Thunderbolts.

### **The Aftermath of the Schweinfurt Raid**

The Schweinfurt raid was a turning point in the US Army Air Forces' strategic bombing campaign against Germany. The raid showed that the US could not carry out daylight bombing raids against heavily defended targets without suffering heavy losses.

The raid also had a significant impact on the German war effort. The destruction of the Schweinfurt ball bearing factories caused a significant disruption in the production of German military equipment.

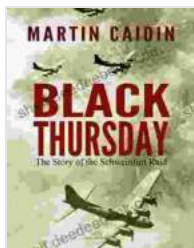
The Schweinfurt raid is often referred to as "Black Thursday" because of the heavy losses suffered by the US Army Air Forces. The raid remains one of the most costly in terms of American aircrew lives lost during World War II.

### **Legacy of the Schweinfurt Raid**

The Schweinfurt raid is a reminder of the dangers of daylight bombing raids. The raid also showed the importance of precision bombing techniques. The US Army Air Forces continued to develop these techniques in the years following the raid.

The Schweinfurt raid is also a reminder of the sacrifices made by American aircrew members during World War II. The raid is a testament to the courage and determination of these men.

The Schweinfurt raid was a turning point in the US Army Air Forces' strategic bombing campaign against Germany. The raid showed that the US could not carry out daylight bombing raids against heavily defended targets without suffering heavy losses. The raid also had a significant impact on the German war effort. The Schweinfurt raid is a reminder of the dangers of daylight bombing raids and the sacrifices made by American aircrew members during World War II.



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