

First Lieutenant Darril F. Roufs

Pilot, 848th Bomb Squadron, 490th Bomb Group
U.S. Army Air Forces, World War II

Killed in Action: April 5, 1945



Darril F. Roufs was born on April 17, 1917, in Winsted, MN. His parents were Edward and Catherine (Schlagel) Roufs and his wife was Idene M. (O'Hagen) Roufs. Darril enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Forces on January 30, 1943, at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri. He was killed in action on April 5, 1945, by flak from German naval vessels in the harbor of Middelharnis, Netherlands. The bomber caught fire and crashed in a field north of Sommelsdijk, Netherlands. He was 27 years old.

Darril was the pilot of a B17G bomber "Little Miss Mary Kay" named for his three-year-old daughter. Their mission on April 5, 1945, was to bomb an airfield near Unterschlaubach, Germany. They were shot down on the return flight, and the entire crew of nine was killed. Their bodies were recovered by the Red Cross and buried at the cemetery in Sommelsdijk. After the temporary burial, Darril and several crew members were moved to the Ardenne American Cemetery, Belgium. Darril was awarded the Air Medal with four Oak Leaf Clusters and the Purple Heart.

The following is from the book "THE BOYS IN THE B17" by James Lee Hutchinson.

"Col. Frank P. Bostrom, Commander of the 490th Bomb Group (H) was the mission leader of the 146th mission. Thirty-six B17s with red tails and red bands around the wings took off from Eye airbase (England) the morning of April 5, 1945. Lt. Darril Roufs' crew was flying in lead squadron. The target was a hornet's nest: a Luftwaffe airfield at Unterschlaubach. The 490th flew through severe weather across the North Sea, Holland, and into southern Germany. The weather cleared over the target and the bombing results were excellent. Three aircraft piloted by Lt. Henry J. Martinson, Lt. Charles E. Bates, and Lt. Darril Roufs were lost.

"The Roufs' bomber was flying very low before it crashed in Holland while returning from the mission. There were no survivors."