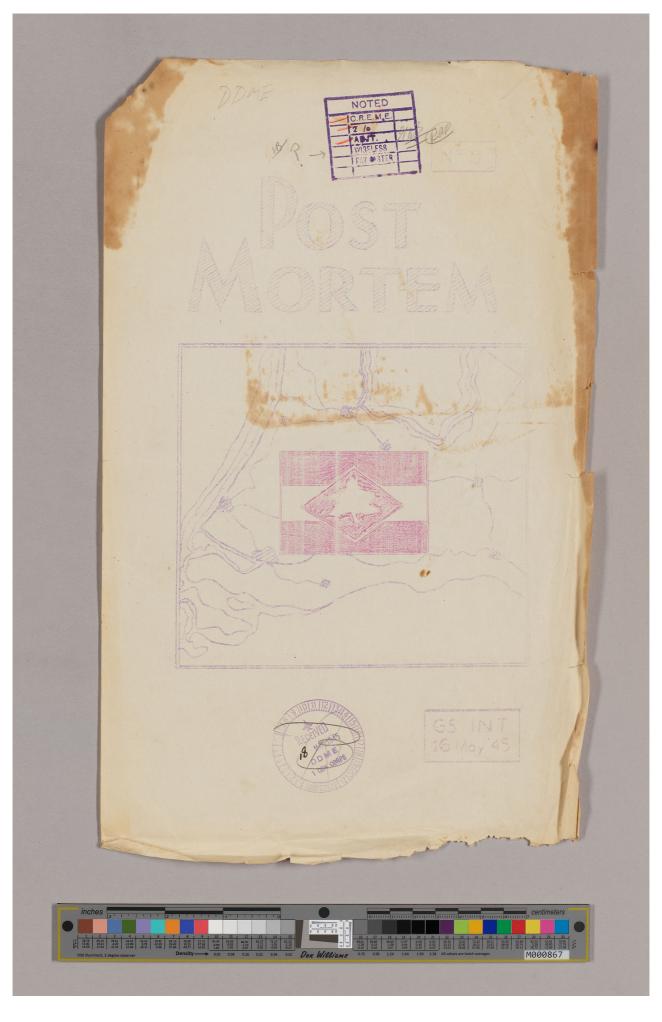
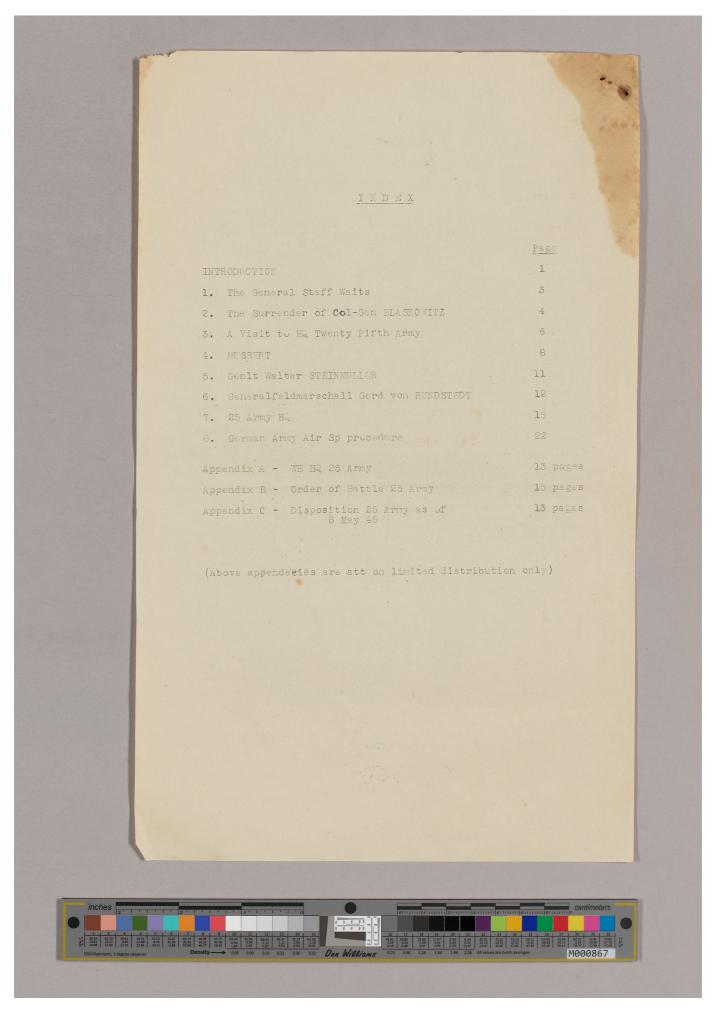
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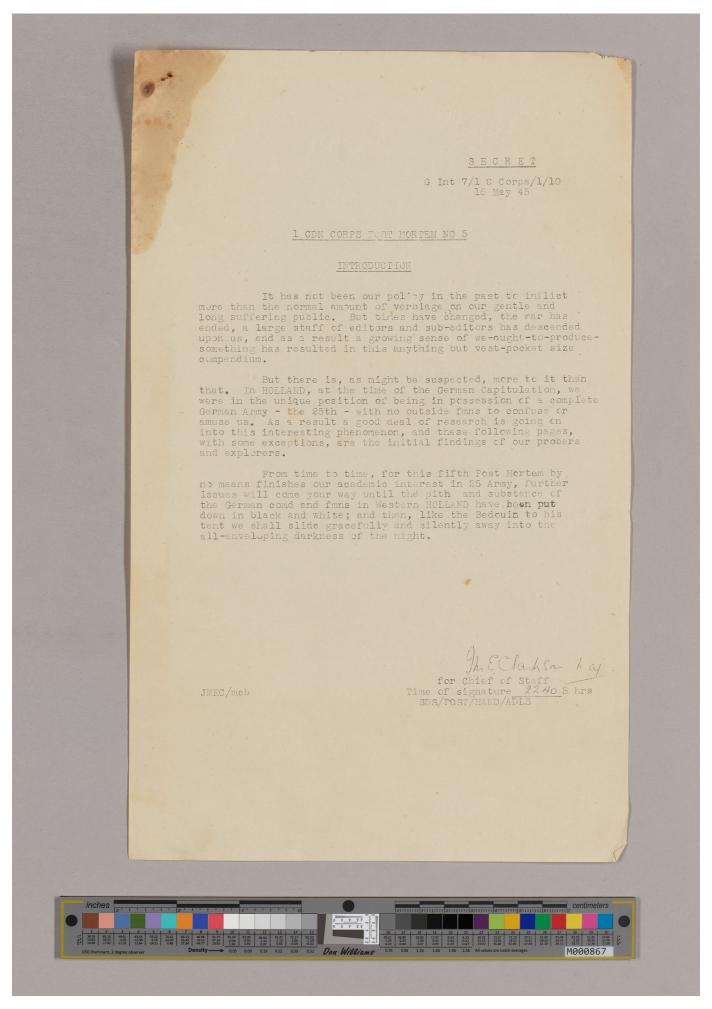


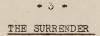
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1. THE GENERAL STAFF WAITS

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"We in our haste can only see the small components of the scene....."

With the failure of the putsch of 20 July 1944 the German General Staff had failed. Most of its members realised not only that this war was lost but that to continue it was to reduce their power to prepare for the next. Until Hitler died all they could do was to hang on, disbelieving in but still hopping for, a miracle. With Hitler dead, they immediately set in motion a programme of salvage. By a coup d'etat DOENITZ seized Himmler and vestigial power. The new regime is not National Socialism writ small: it is the German General Staff conducting another rearguard. Moreover, it is evident that those who now abuse Hitler (and many have old scores or old friends to avenge) blame him not because he was disgusting but because he was unsuccessful. It is the German General Staff who will learn most quickly from Hitler's mistakes.

The aim of the DOENITZ Government is not to drive a wedge between the Russians and the WESTERN Allies. Rather do they assume that one exists already (and the Polish problem is a German godsend) and that they must be WEST of it. Such temporizing as has been evident in the last week may be explained only partly by the refusal of even senior offrs to take responsibility readily (and since the decisions have been enormous, this need not surprise us) but also because they assume that once the jaws close, nothing and nobody will be salvaged from Russian-occupied GERMANY. That area is a write-off, to them one vast SIBERIA. Therefore every day's delay offered the hope that more men might get into the British and American lines; ostensibly to till the soil, to gather the harvest, strategically as stallion salvage. The brilliant organisation by which foreign helots released an enormous warrior class to conquer EUROPE rested on the continued success of the warriors. Now a new and improved tactic must be adopted. To the German General Staff what remains of GERMANY is what has been occupied from the WEST. DOENITZ is the residuary legatee. The first anxiety is to avoid starvation and it may be that the first time some of the German General Staff realised how unpleasant war is was when they found themselves sitting in a little neck of land surrounded by a million German wounded without anaesthetics, bandages or drugs: part of the salvage had gone sour.

They had realised for a long time that backseat driving of the Nazi bandwagon was no good any more, for it had tun out of gas, although it continued to run very fast downhill. With a peculiarly arrogant despair, the ephemeral convenience could be kicked into the ditch, useful now only as a sepagoat. The time had come, to many of them it was overdue, to transfer bag and baggage (and the Staff offrs all have handkerchiefs even if the the German wounded have no bandages) to another vehicle. The aim mow must be to make themselves indispensable to the WESTERN Allies. That is the reason why there is so little suboversive activity. Only silly little men would do anything like that at this stage. OKW itself has ostentatiously stamped on any attempt, trading in infm about Werewelves and clobbering the SS, best of scapegoats. Superficially and temporarily the German General Staff is playing. For a while there is no alternative. They are willing to play because they want employment: They are willing to play because they may retain coherence: they

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are willing to play because they reckon they may be able to play us for suckers.

A mood of complacency may spring up when all WESTERN GERMANY scems peaceful, the harvest is being gathered and undernourishment is making the Germans less effective. The malignant fungus will not make its awkward reappearance just yet; this is not the time. The German General Staff will try to hold on until we thin out. Give them a tent and a telephone and all the plans for a new Hundred Thousand Army would scen be ready. But it would not be mustered until we were thirner on the ground. Meanwhile they are regrouping.

· (Source: 21 Army Group Review No 189 dated 8 May 1945)

2. THE SURRENDER OF COLONEL-GENERAL BLASKOWITZ 5 MAY 1945

Prior to the actual surrender, the preliminaries were discussed with General REICHELT, Chief of Staff to BLASKOWITZ. This time, instead of the small wayside house which had been used for all conferences up till that date, the shell-scarred hotel in the small villiage of WAGENINGEN was chosen as a more suitable location. At the time of the first meeting the villiage was packed with the food convoys nosing their way through the narrow streets towards the German lines. At the same time from the other direction came staff cars and jeeps containing those taking in the deliberations and, for the first time, the gentlemen of the press. At 1100 hours a grubby Volkswagen under escort pushed its way through this mass of orderly confusion in the direction of the hotel. General REICHELT with his escort dismounted and looking neither to right nor left hurried into the conference room. There about 50 correspondents were lined up along one side of the big dining room, and on the other side a table was set apart at which the Corps Comd 1 Cdn Corps, his Chief of Staff, the interpreter were sitting ready for negotiations to begin.

How different from the last time at the food conferences when the Germans were still masters of their destinies even though their future at that time could hardly have been termed favourable. This time the Germans came in knowing full well that they bad been ordered by higher authority to surrender. This time there was no attempt to prevaricate, argue or in any way hinder the conversations.

General FOULKES opened proceedings by reading over the general terms of surrender which had been received from SHAEF. The German replied with what infm he had at that time available, which had been received from DOENITZ. His voice was low and his eyes averted as one after another points revealing the shattering reality of his posn were explained to him. Some of the more important topics discussed included the immediate opening of the EDE-TURECHT rd, the standstill order, responsibilities of the German staffs at all levels, the posn of the Dutch SS, the German order of battle, and the immediate removal of the charges from all the dykes. These were gone through one by one, approval was signified by a nod and just the one word "understood"; otherwise there was no reply from the other side of the table.

It was arranged that General BLASKOWITZ would meet the Corps Commander at 1600 hrs that afternoon in order to receive the the full surrender terms and sign them on the dotted line. After discussions had concluded a brief opportunity was given to enquire into the number of tps in HOLLAND which up till that time had been estimated as up to 150,000. In point of fact General REICHELT stated that all, including Army, Navy and Air Force, were approx 115,000 to 120,000 in number.



+ 5 -Proceedings then came to an end and the General returned to his car. With a loud popping noise the Volkswagen disappeared down the street only to get hopelessly entangled in a food convoy about a hundred yards down. What an opportunity for the Press: Cameras clicked, cinecameras turned and eager questions were asked concerning the function; name and general background of the German party. Thus ended the preliminaries to the larger conference which was to take place that afternoon at 1600 hrs. 1600 hrs. The afternoon affair was even more crowded with press representatives. In addition to the normal fixtures and fittings representatives. In addition to the normal fixtures and fittings of a conference, a battery of floodlights shone down on the assembled company. General BLASKOWITZ, with the Chief of Staff, driving in separate cars made their way to the village gall, and in like manner to the morning proceedings, rapidly entered the building. General BLASKOWITZ a man of 61, standing about 5'8", stooping slightly, grubby and unshaven, looked a very tired and disconsolate man. This General had commanded an army in the field since the Polish campaign, but had never managed to attain the rank of Field Marshal. The reason for this was given by one of his staff, who explained that it was a result of the protest BLASKOWITZ made at the mishandling of the Polish people at the conclusion of the Polish campaign. Present also at this meeting was the General's chief "Q" Staff offr, one who had figured so largely in the food discussions, and who now minced in with the same superior bearing for which he had been noted on previous occasions. The terms of surrender were read over by General FOULNES, and BLASKOWITZ hardly answered a word. Occasionally he would interpose with a demand for more time to carry out the orders given to him, otherwise nothing was said from the German side. They looked like men in a dream, dazed, stupefied and unable to realise that for them their world was utterly finished. Instead of orders from the Fibrer's HQ, the orders were new to come from the Allies, and for the German soldier this took a good deal of swallowing. General REICHELT during these proceedings adopted the same dignified gloom, but later when the meeting broke up showed himself capable of appreciating a joke even at his own expense. He produced the dispositions and strengths of the units in HOLLAND and answered further questions of a general nature. He corroborated duced the dispositions and strengths of the units in HOLLAND and answered further questions of a general nature. He corroborated the evidence that had been gleaned from air photographs concerning the damage done to the various HQ which had been attacked by the fighter bombers. Three times, he states, he had had to leave his lunch and dive for the bunker. This has since been substantiated after a visit to 25 Army HQ which shows that all the houses surrounding the main bunker had been harshly treated by 84 Group. Proceedings came to an end somewhat hurriedly as BLASKOWITZ became slightly impatient at the lengthy discussion that His Chief of Staff was conducting. His Chief of Staff noticed the red light, excused himself, collected up his papers and departed in the tracks of his commander. A great concourse had collected outside thehotel, and once again batteries of photographic paraphernalia went into action. The day was fine and results were good. Many direct hits were scored. No cameras were missing. Thus ended a memorable day. HOLLAND, as a country, was saved. Inundations, though serious in one or two placed, had been warded off, food was going in and the great cities protected from the horrors of direct siege. The good people of HOLLAND had been spared the horrors of war in the richest and most populous part of their country. F F F F F

3. A VISIT TO HE TWENTY FIFTH ARMY

These notes are written from conversations held on 8 May 1945 at HILVERSUM between certain Staff Offrs of First Cdn Army and of HQ Twenty Fifth German Army. They serve to record some of the more interesting infm received, insofar as it was not already known.

(a) The Headquarters

Some difficulty was met in finding the locations of the HQ in HILVERSUM. 49 Divisional FS Section, however, provided a Resistance guide who brought us to the gate of the HQ. The whole area, a wooded suburb of HILVERSUM, had evidently been taken over by the Germans and the houses used as billets and messes. In the Centre, round the bunker, they had been well Jaboed (fighterbombed) and rocketed.

The bunker itself was the impressive sight. Well cam, it stands about 80 ft by 50 ft, with the roof 15 ft above ground. The netrance led down some steps into the eye of a loophole and round the corner into a central passive. The concrete looked about 10 ft thick and it appeared untouched, although houses all round were smassed and sagging. Inside there aere a dozen or more of reas, of which we visited five: those or the Chief of Staff, Genite 116 bit; Operations; intelligence; the labeligence office; and the yeroom. There was also a clerk's office attravindow at which appeared the head of a Stabshelferin (AIS), are office with a window at which appeared the head of a Stabshelferin (AIS), are office and fluorescentilizating and were real-appointed, with masses of flowers and Dutch pairbings, each had a good wireless, ambed and some unobtrusive maps.

(b) The Christmas Party

The Christmas MAAS offensive was definitely on. REICHELT had got the plan from 88 Corps as follows; 346 Div was to cross from SCHOUWEN with main effort on DINTELOORD, and also on ST PHILIPSLAND. 712 Div was to form a bridgehead SOUTH of PERENBOOM. 711 Division was to pass through 712 Div and the three divs ware to advance on BREDA and ANTWERP. 6 Para Div was to form a bridgehead SOUTH of HEDEL and provide left flank protection on the advance. Two bns of paratroopers coming from the PADERBORN area were to be dropped on objectives as yet unrevealed. Also, a specially equipped regiment was to cross from OVERFLAKKEE on to SOUTH BEVELAND, seize the NORTH-SOUTH Canal and pass through the small naval battle units, who, in conjunction with arty on SOUTH BEVELAND, would harry the SCHELDT. The operation was to depend wholly on the success of the ARDENNES offensive.

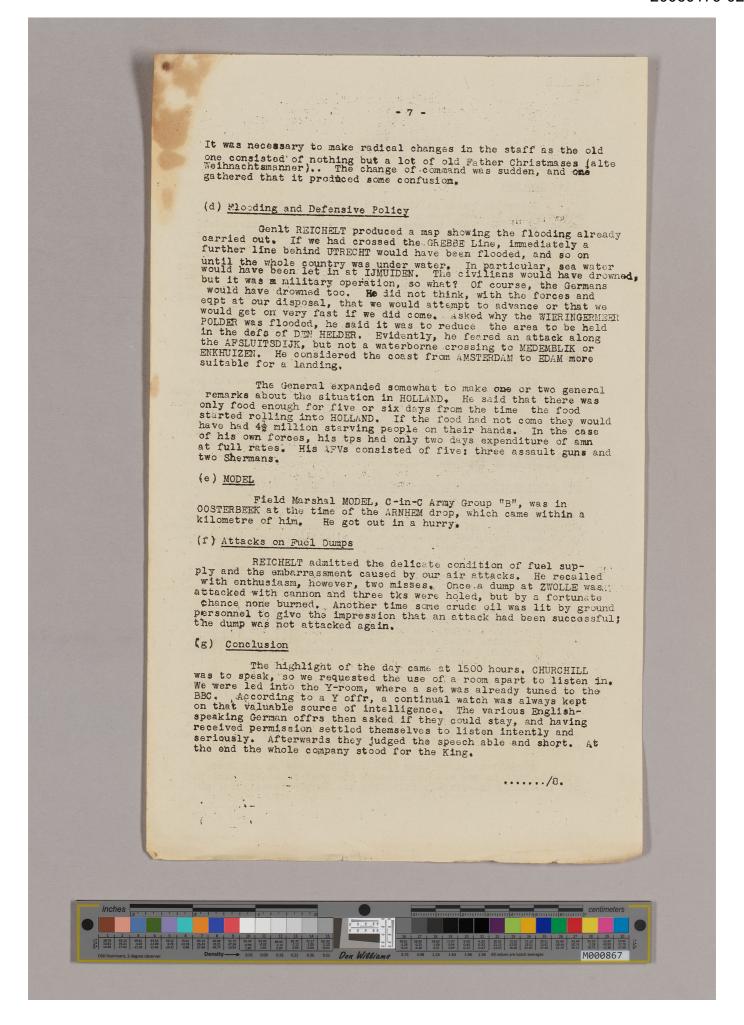
The Chief of Staff was not quite certain about the dates, but it would appear that the operation was envisaged for the 25-27 Dec 1944. On about the 27 Dec it was put off, and as 88 Corps was progressively shorn of its divs, it was abandoned. It is hoped that further details will be obtained, revealing the whole plam.

(c) Formation of HQ Twenty Fifth Army

General CHRISTIANSEN'S HQ, as C-in-C NETHERLANDS, was originally formed to parallel the civil administration of the Reichskommissar. Its chief function was administrative and training, and later it received an increased number of engrs to construct the coastal defs. 88 Corps was responsible for operations under Fifthenth Army. When Fifteenth Army left the area, HQ Twenty Fifth Army was formed from HQ C-in-C NETHRELANDS.

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PERSONALITIES

1. MUSSERT

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(a) The Man

Generally known as the Dutch ""UISLING", MUSSERT, who is now reported to have been captured at The HAGUE, has been described by a very well-informed and reliable PW as dictatorial, grasping, half-educated and pedantic. Aged in the early fifties, this squat and generally unpopular leader of the Dutch Nazis is said to have been more Fascist than Nazi before 1940, and to have dreaded the unification of HOLLAND with GERMANY on account of his fear that the result would entail a loss of justification for his own official existence. He preferred the idea of a Germanic "Bund" of states in which HOLLAND would be an equal member, with himself as "Leider" (Führer), whereas the German and Dutch SS members and supporters of a Greater GERMANY favoured the idea of the NETHERLANDS being made a "Gau" with someone other than MUSSERT as "Gauleiter". The latter made several attempts to form a government of his own in HOLLAND but was no more successful than was QUISLING in NORWAY. was QUISLING in NORWAY.

MUSSERT was married to his own aunt, a woman some 15 yrs older than himself, whose considerable wealth did her husband much harm. He was a non-smoker and in imitation of HITLER nobody was allowed to smoke in his presence or in his headquarters. By the same token, he did NOT drink, but compensated for this by continuously eating sweets and encouraging his supporters to give him presents of every description, including food. The fact that in the momentous days of 1940 he hid in a barn had NOT done his reputation any good. his reputation any good.

(b) Correspondence Between HITLER and MUSSERT

MUSSERT himself called his correspondence with HITLER by the name of "notes". These literary effusions were always very voluminous consisting of between 20 to 30 pages of foolscap paper. It is most probable, therefore, that these were by no means read through to the end by such a man as the unsteady Adolf.

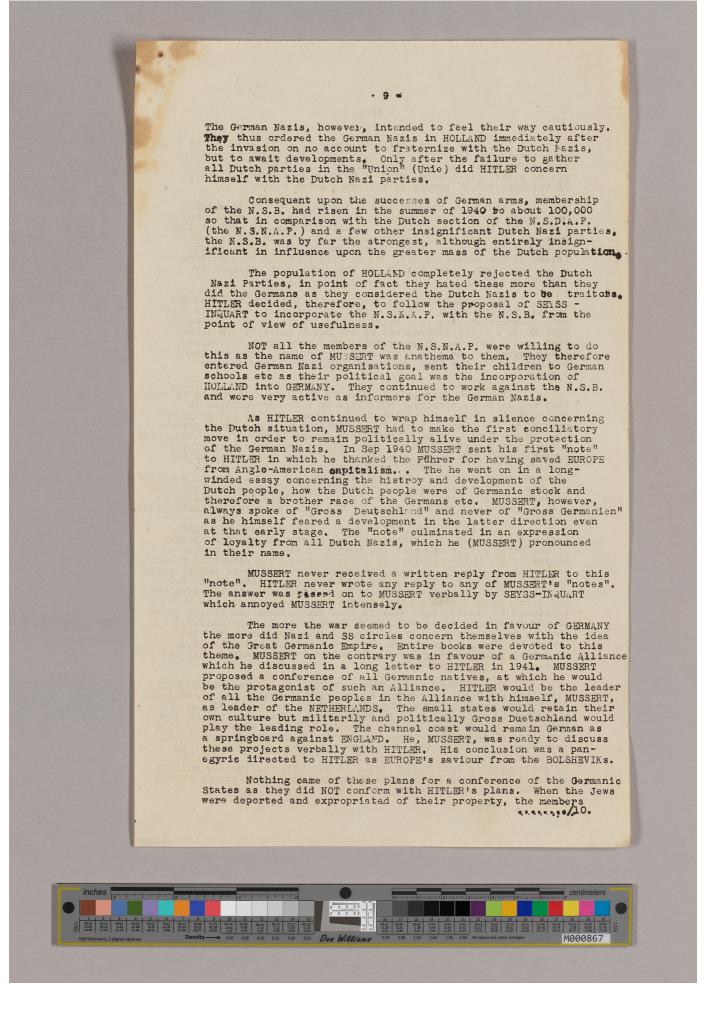
These letters were partly written by MUSSERT himself and partly by his experts in the various branches, which explains the lack of uniformity in style. The came applied to MUSSERT's speeches.

When the "notes" were ready for despatch they were NOT sent direct to MITLER, but were always discussed by MUSSERT in coll-aboration with SCHMIDT, the 'Dberbereichsleiter of the N.S.D.A.P.", so that anything which might be construed as slighting GERMANY and thus HITLER could be erased. the correct Nazi mentality. The correspondence had to show

The correspondence was then handed to Reichskommissar S.:3S-INQUART whose approval was also necessary. Usually, the letters had to be further altered or modified to suit his taste so that in point of fact MUSSERT was "writing through the spectacles of both SCHMIDT and SEYSS-INQUART". MUSSERT's literary style was like his life, a pose, entirely unnatural and purposely pedantic.

MUSSERT's first long note to HITLER was in Sep 1940, stating that he was nettled because the Führer had NOT sent for him (MUSSERT) immediately following the German invasion of HOLLAND.





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of the N.B.S. once again felt themselves to be ill-treated as they were given only the non-prosperous properties. They complained to MUSSERT about this who passed it on to SEYES-IN-UART. They got no satisfaction from SEYSS-IN-UART, much to the satisfaction of the anti-N.S.B. groups of the other Dutch Nazis.

Thereupon MUSSERT sent a letter to HITLER in which he once again attacked Anglo-American capitalism and also German capitalism and its Dutch Ally. He defended himself against the reproach of being an anti-German. He declared in his letter "I am certainly an enemy of the German vulture but the greatest friend of the German eagle". To be told that a German vulture existed did NOT please HITLER and the net result obtained by MUSSERT was nil.

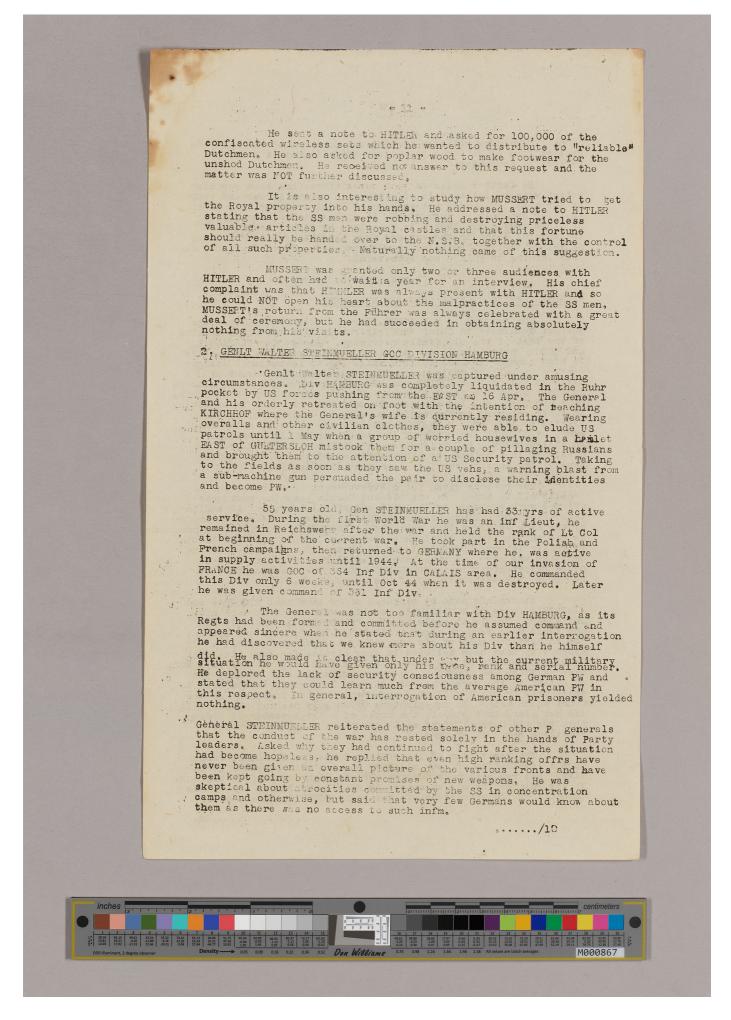
NOT having achieved success with his Germanic Alliance scheme, MUSSERT tried another trick. He got Nazi Jurists to draw up a document stating that there was no longer either a Queen of HOLLAND or a Putch government, as the Dutch constitution stated that should the king or queen leave HOLLAND without nominating a deputy, he or she ceased to be the sovereign. This the Queen had NOT done in May 1940, therefore MUSSERT claimed she was deposed.

The same principle applied to the Dutch Government as they had left the country. MUSSERT sent this appreciation in the form of a "note" to HITLER in the Autumn of 1943 and proposed himself to the Führer as the Prime Minister of a new Dutch Government on the lines of the QUISLING Government in NORWAY. He (MUSSERT) had a sufficiency of competent Nazi-minded officials to fill the vacant seats. The State Council too was to be reinstated in this fashion so that he (MUSSERT) could, as head of the new legal government, conclude a peace with GERMANY. It would then be possible for him to introduce conscription in HOLLAND and thereby place many press-ganged soldiers at HITLER's disposal. This scheme was like-wise rejected by HITLER, as if did NOT conform with the latter's plans.

As a balm to MUSSERT's bruised vanity, SEYSS-INQUART declared in a long speech that the N.S.B. was the standard bearer of the Dutch people and that the leader of the N,S.B. was thereby leader of the Dutch people. In point of fact, the situation remained absolutely the same, otherwise SEYSS-INQUART would have had to leave his nice warm seat. Many conferences took place between the two and a Staatssekretariat was Created, the costs of which - 500,000 Guilders a year - were debited to the Dutch tax payers. As MUSSERT continued to receive only rebuffs from the Germans and became aware of his impotence, he began to talk about retiring. He declared that he had less say in HOLLAND than a Prussian corporal. The German and Dutch SS and SD openly cursed MUSSERT and the N.S.B. or dubbed them "black marketeers" etc which to a great extent was true.

When SS Obergruppenfthrer RAUTER, on orders from HIMMLER, dissolved the Dutch Legion and transferred them into the Germanische SS without asking MUSSERT, MUSSERT was furious. About 70 men of the Dutch Legion refused to be transferred and were thereupon imprisoned. MUSSERT complained in a note to HITLER about this. The men were released after three months' imprisonment but were then transferred to the Service Corps and they thus became 2nd Class privates. This was a nasty rebuff for MUSSERT. NOT being able to gain anything from HITLER owing to HIMMLER's influence, MUSSERT resigned himself to the situation but made one more attempt to win over the Dutch people to his side

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Regarding politics the General does not concur with the present form of National Socialism, but believes it to be preferable to Communism.

He further believes that our Airforce has been our most potent weapon, followed in effectiveness by our Armour and them by our arty. He would not express an opinion of our inf, saying that inf can only be judged when it fights without the support of other arms. STALINGRAD is described by him as having been the turning point in the war and from a military point of view, he thinks that an armistice should have been effected as soon as our landing in FMANCE was successful.

(Source: Ninth US Army).

3. GENERALFELDMARSCHALL GERD VON RUNDSTEDT

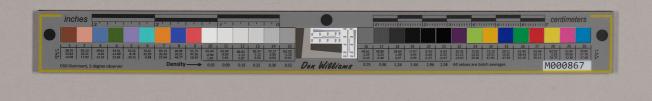
The removal of RUNDSTEDT, for the second time, from the post of Gommander in Chief WEST, is rather like the final sacking of the last of the old family retainers. Except for BLASKOWITZ and BUSCH, not a single one of his contemporaries and successors in high command in 1939 to 1941 still has an operational assignment. A call of their names WELL illustrates the amount of military talent that HITLER and HIMmiER have managed to do without in their quest for final victory. The two other Army Group Comds, BOCK and LEEB, who led the assault on RUSSIA are said to be living on their estates, in the unlikely event of their still having estates to live on. MANNSTEIN and LIST are probably doing the same. REICHEMAU and DOLLMANN are dead. KUEIST is a prisoner in Allied hands, KLUJE is dead, KÜCHLER has vanished from the news. It is a tribute to RUNDSTEDT's staying power and indispensability that he survived as a commander in 1945.

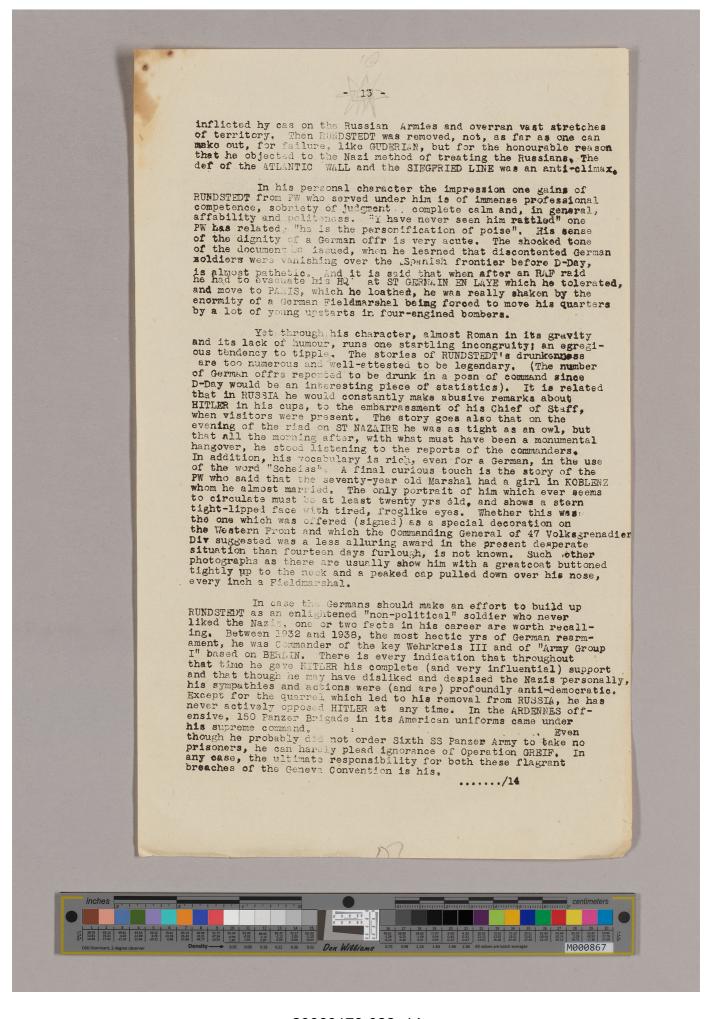
The reasons given for his retirement are various and may easily all be true. He was old and feeble and the real operational work was done by WESTPHAL and MODEL; he wanted to capitulate after the failure of the ARDENNES offensive; he was regarded by the Army as a man with whom the Allies might negotiate. Since he was whisked away, little has been heard of him and that little is contradictory. Officially he is on the Führer-reserve of the OKH. He was also reported both to be in prison and to have a house reservedfir him in BERCHTESGADEN. His recent capture at BAD TOLZ solved the mystery of his whereabouts.

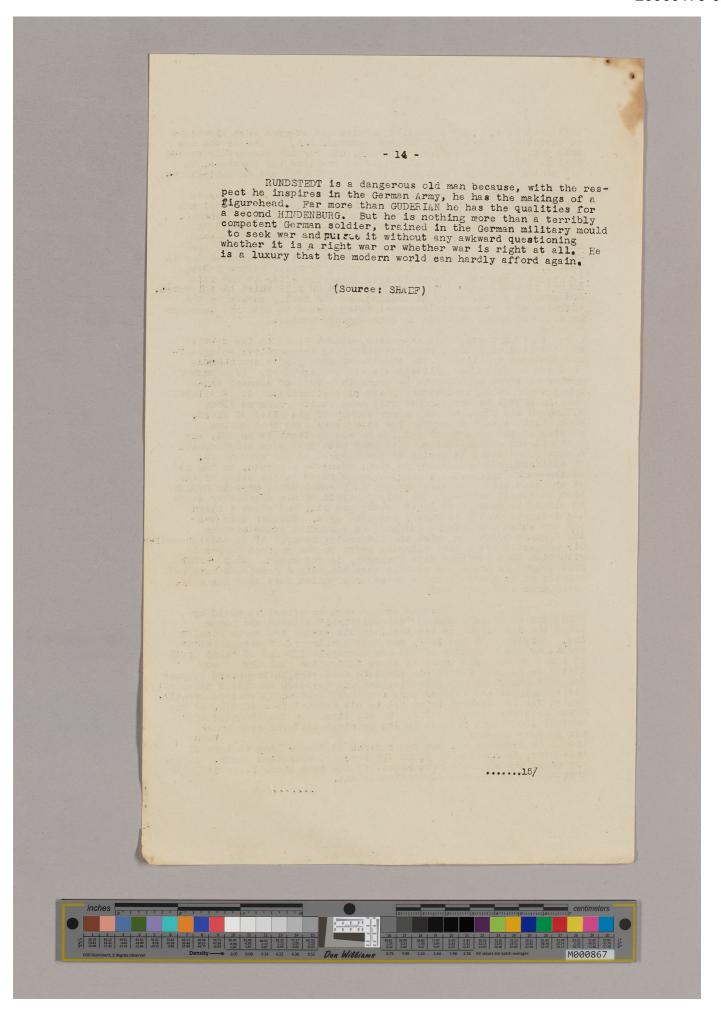
Statements made by captured offrs show that HITLER's and HIMMLER's fears of RUNDSTEDT's prestige with the Army were not unfounded. "He is the only hope". "RUNDSTEDT is the only man who could have brought about a finale". "But", adds one source, "he thought too much of his own safety to make the attempt". It appears to have been believed in Army circles for some time that RUNDSTEDT was almost prepared to tell HITLER where to get off. But, like ZEITZLER and GUDERIAN, he never quite did so. Seventy yrs of belief in the sacredness of military leadership is not easy to shake away from. RUNDSTEDT's appearance as the President of the Court which tried the conspirators of 20 July dashed, although it did not altogether dispel, the hopes of a large number of offrs that the old Marshal might still negotiate a surrender while something remained of GERMANY.

The veneration of the Officer Corps for RUNDSTEDT rests upon a combination of long military success with personal qualities. His reputation as a commander was high even before the war. It was enlarged by his successes in FRANCE and POLAND and by his conduct of the operations of Army Group SOUTH in RUSSIA which

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25 ARMY HEADQUARTERS

INTRODUCTION

This is an attempt to depict, in some detail, a static operational HQ of a German Army, as it was during the concluding days of the wer. It is, in essence, a description of a nervous system, after the inevitable ravages of defeat, failure and decay has sapped the physical power of the body, leaving the controlling force impotent, and all but helpless to translate its functions into coherent action. Here the analogy ends, for though the body of the Wehrmacht had withered to a futile decrepitude, the mind remained active, and even brilliant, until the end.

The subject matter for this report, is drawn from a detailed study of 25 army HQ. Centred in a residential district of HILVERSUM is the comd post, a concrete air raid shelter with $2\frac{1}{2}$ meter thick walls. A limited but comprehensive part of the district had been wired off the provide living and exterior office accommodation for the various branches but all vital offices were concentrated in the BUNKER or shelter. This concentration had been speeded up and intensified after some remarkably accurate bombing by the RAF.

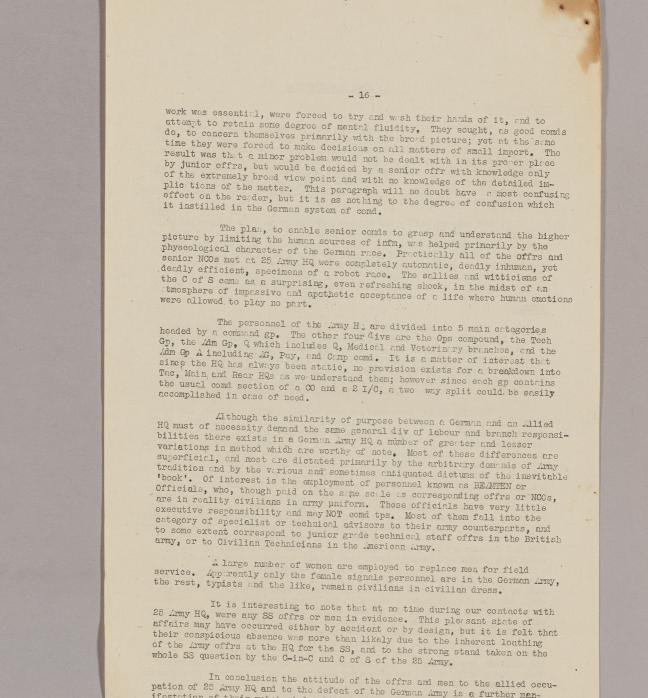
GENERAL

A first impression of 25 Army HQ is most difficult to put into words. The atmosphere of unreality which grips the imagination on entering the most secret places of an Army that one has fought against for years, is not only overwhelming, but it tends to distort any sort of objective general analysis. However one coherent emotion, dragged up most reluctantly, and therefore perhaps relatively honest, was a feeling of strong admiration for the purely military precision and functioning of the machine itself.

25 Army HQ is, in a word, a most compact, well designed, and hard working unit, whose strongest physical characteristic lies in its small size. The limited number of personnel employed to control an entire Army, is a most striking commentary, for better or for worse, on the general efficiency of the org. In fact, in actual size, 25 Army HQ resembles one of our Div HQs much more than an Army HQ. The WE of the org includes no more than four GS offrs below the rank of Col, 62 other offrs, 45 officials and 320 ORs while tpt for the HQ is limited to 59 MT and 43 MCs. It is claimed that all HQ offrs must have served in a Bn and from observation this is the case in 25 Army HQ. Some of the discrepancies between the corresponding Allied and German org may of course be explained by the static nature of German operations under 25 Army. However the fact remains that the individual effort and ability of each member of a German HQ is expected to be of an almost superhuman calibre. This is well illustrated by the case of the senior IO, who with a staff of one IO under him, considered himself lucky that he had sometimes been able to get as much as three hours sleep a night, during the 8 preceding weeks. The General Staff Int Offr had been killed leading a battle gp at HEDEL and the lack of trained I personnel were contontributery reasons in addition to the small WE. It was the rule, rether than the exception, that an ops offr would live for days at a time in his office, eating and sleeping there, when opportunity offered. The effects of this sort of life were of course very great and the subsequent general state of overwork and mental strain demanded, and to a fair degree achieved, a high state of simplification of normal work and routine. This effort at simplification had to be made in spite of the normal and constant demands for detail from both higher and lower fams. Therefore while senior offrs could, and did, make simplicity their key note junior offrs, WOs and NOOs found themselves completely unequal to the struggle and

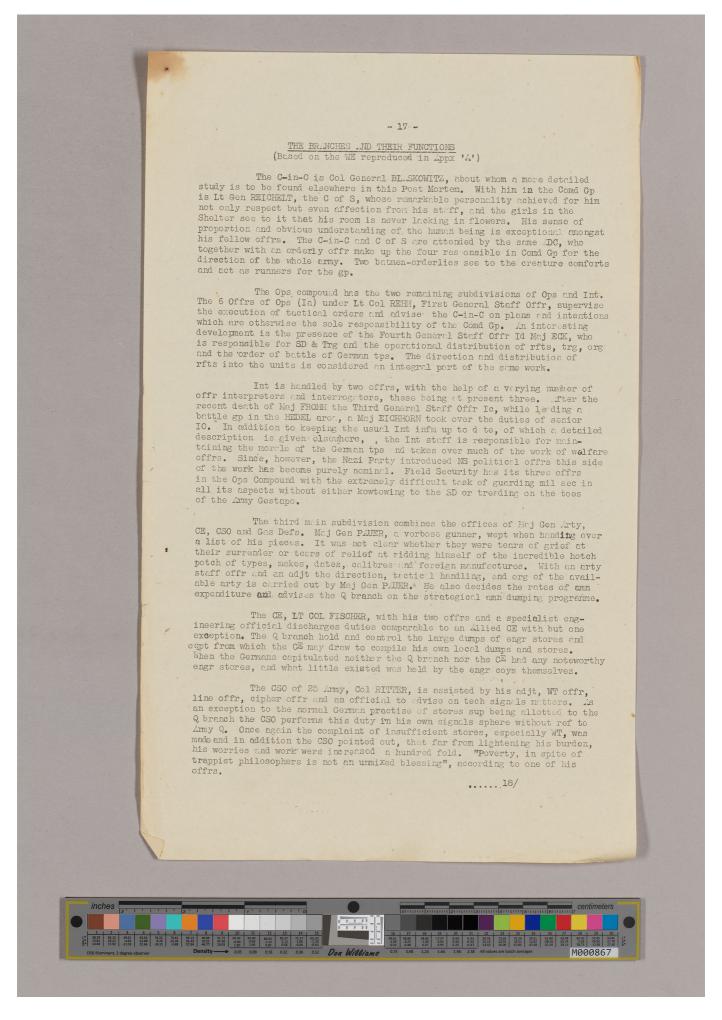
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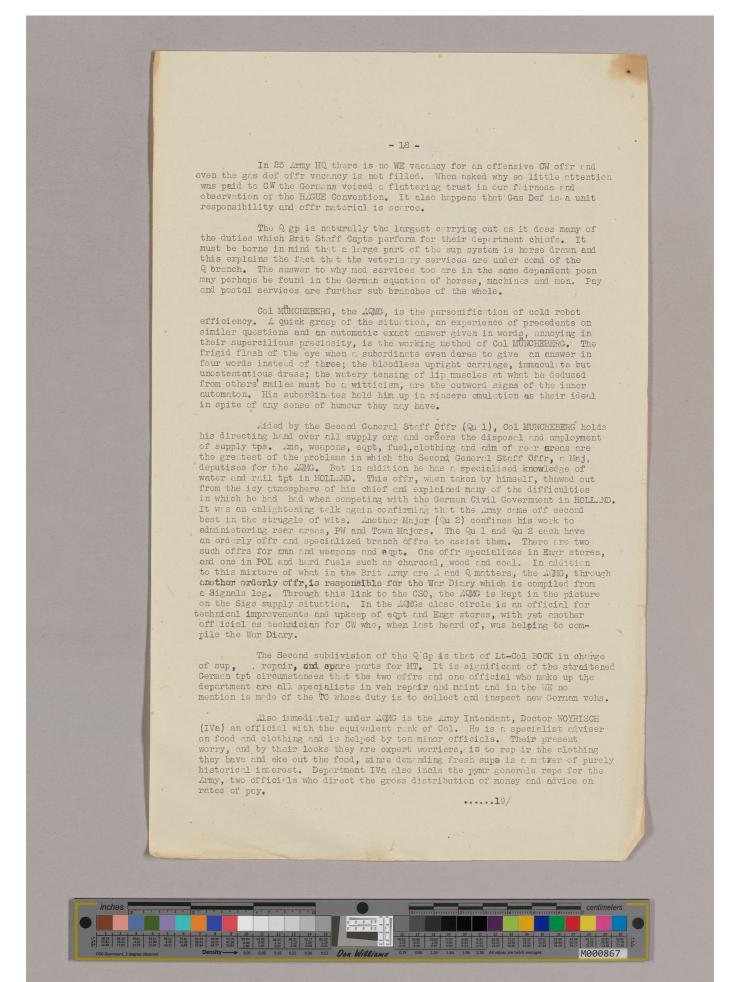


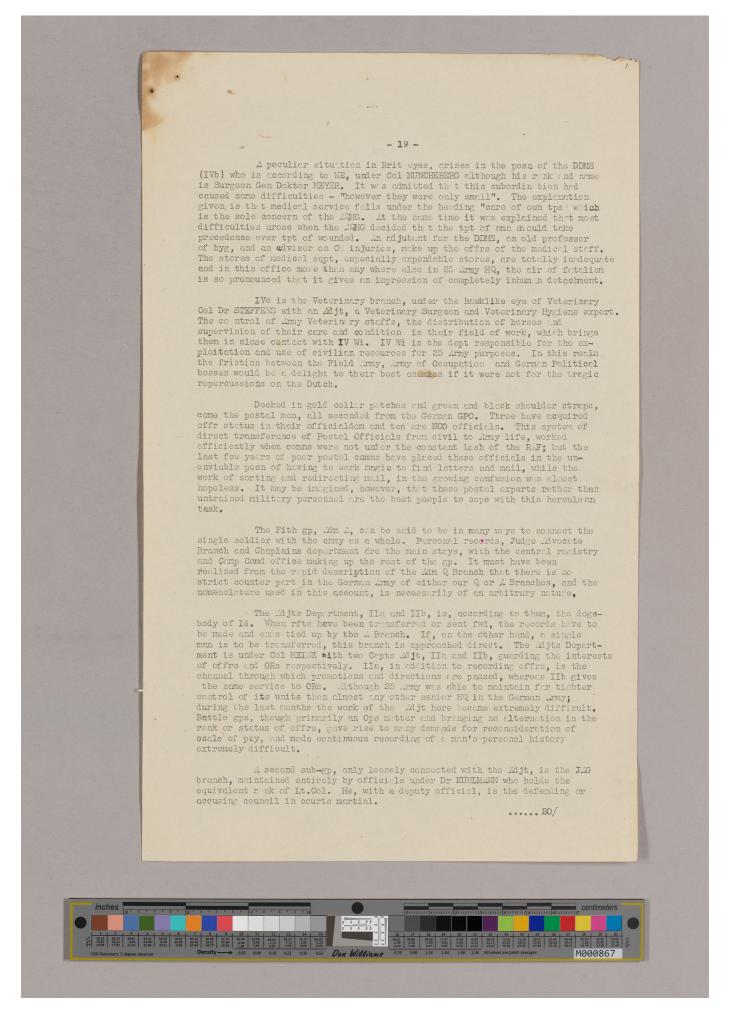


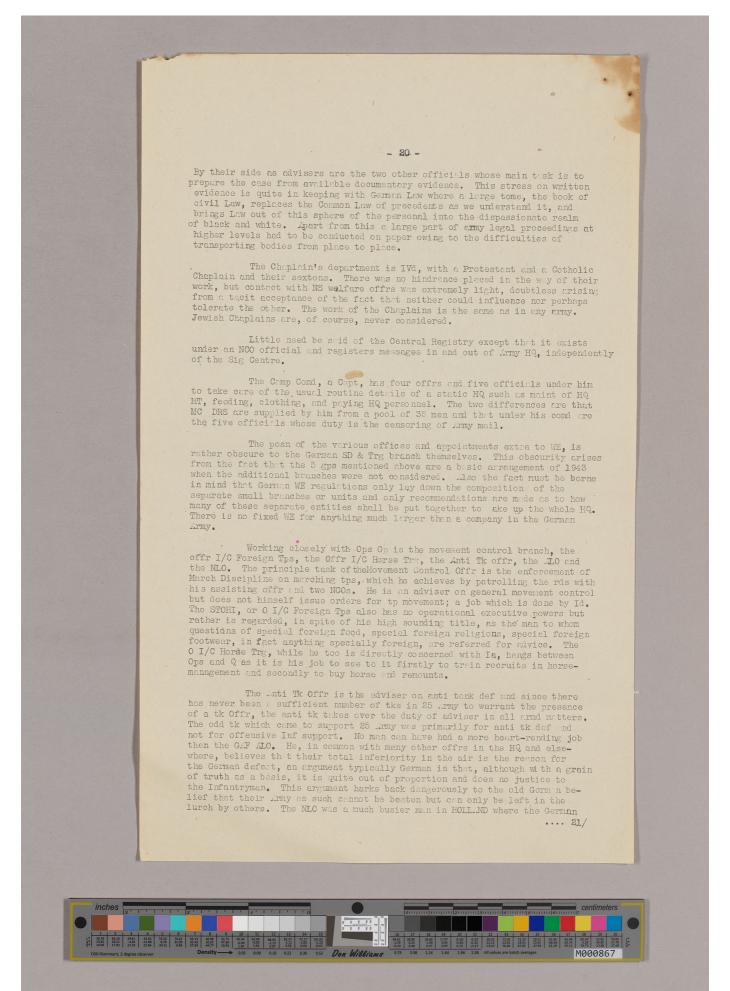
In conclusion the attitude of the offirs am men to the affect of pation of 25 Army HQ and to the defeat of the German Army is a further manifestation of their robot mind. Little or no personal interest or curiosity about the future entered into their relations and although many of the files, had been destroyed the co-operation was efficient and businesslike; it is a machine which pretended never to have been ciled by human blood and which was a presented to zero or pick up again after a temporary storping of prepared to run on for ever or pick up again after a temporary stopping of

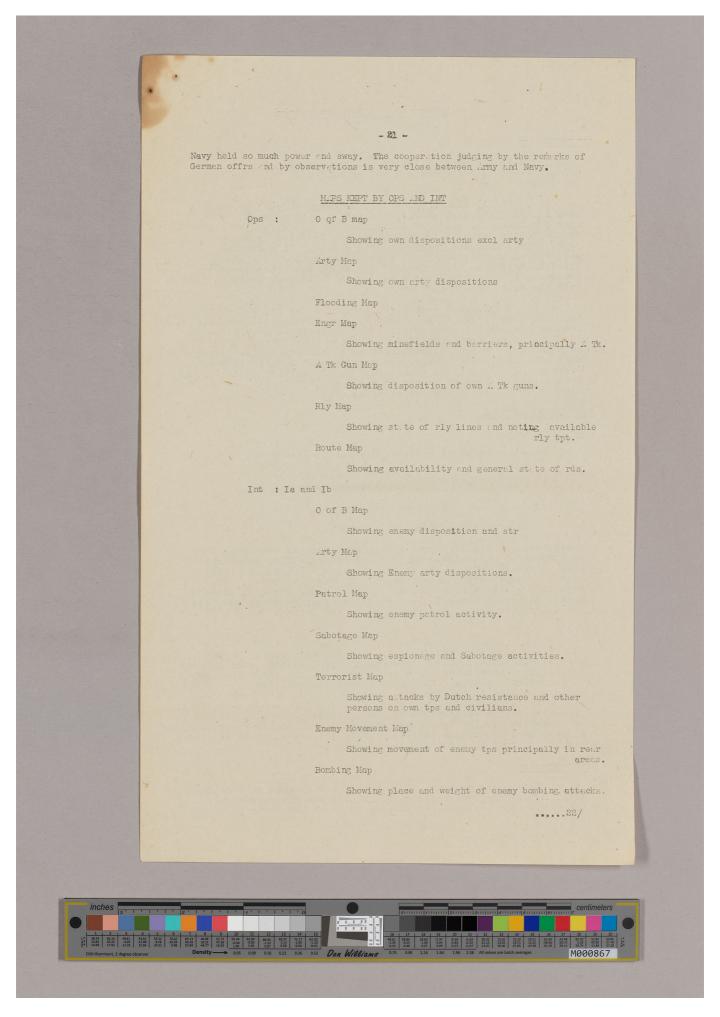












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GERMAN ARMY AIR SP PROCEDURE

INTRODUCTION

The following is a report on a series of interviews between G2 Air 1 Cdn Corps and Maj KROBE, CC of the air Liaison Det at HQ 25 Army.

Maj KROBE, who is a regular Air Force Offr, joined the army in 1929 as a pte, where he stayed in a MG bn until 1936 when the Luftwaffe was officially formed. His first ops were in the Polish Campaign in 1939 where he flew as a long range recce pilot. Service in the Balkans followed this and then he was sent to the Eastern Front where after a tour as a recce pilot he became an airforce LO. Maj KROBE was transferred to the Western Front as recently as Jan 45 to 25 Army where he has held the same job since.

Maj KROBE has a very high opinion of the RAF and stated that the combination of Strategical, semi-Strategical and Tactical bombing has been, in his opinion, the greatest single factor in winning the war for the Allies. Of these three phases of bombing he puts Close Sp and Tactical bombing at the top of the list as most effective, with Strategical bombing next and lastly semi-Strategical bombing. He stated that in his opinion no matter how hy Strategical bombing became it could not, of itself, be decisive without the Close Sp attacks as well.

AIR STAFFS AT FMNS

Army

The air sp staff at Army HQ consists of:-

OC Air Force Liaison Det (Euchrer des luftwaffen verbindunge kommando)

AA Liaison Offr (Flak verbindungs offizier)

Air Force Int Offr (IC luftwaffen)

These were usually air force ex op types who had been engaged in army co-op generally. Major KROBE had been long range recce pilot himself. During the latter stages his job was entirely that of co-ordination of air recce with the Int Branch. The procedure was to discuss possible moves of our tos with Int and direct his recce accordingly in order to confirm their suspicions. The interpretation of any casual recce was left to Int.

Corps

The air force rep at Corps is a GAF sigs offr. He has very little responsibility apparently beyond passing some demands and keeping the Flieger Div which works with the Corps completely in the ground picture. The whole target demand setup seems to be loosely knit, e.g. the demands might be passed either through ops or int channels to Army, where the air staff would pass it laterally to the Flieger Div HQ, or as explained above, they might be passed on receipt by the GAF offr at Corps, to the supporting Flieger Div. In such a case, air staff at Army would be advised purely for infm by a message "sent later".

Divs and Bdes

There were no tentacles such as we kmow them at bdes or divs, although a Rover or contact car was often employed in much the same manner as ours. Tele comms seem to have been used



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exclusively, with wireless "as an alternative". The contact car received its demands by phone or intercepted messages broadcast from rece aircraft. It is interesting to note that apparently no facilities for obtaining air sp other than by tele were provided for inf divs. Panzer divs, presumably designed and intended for breakthrough, were allotted a contact tk. This contact tk could demand sp either from aircraft already airborne or from Corps or Army.

GENERAL PROCEDURE

In discussing past and present procedures it is difficult to draw a clear line between what the original setup was two years ago and the procedure adopted since. In answer to questions, Maj KROBE repeatedly stated that such and such "was originally intended" or that "the ideal is so and so" indicating that various procedures, originally part of the setup and taken as a matter of course, fell into disuse as the Luftwaffes fortunes dwindled. It may be said that the German Army apparently never relied on its air force to the extent to which we do, and so was not prepared at any level to make the elaborate arrangements which we have considered essential (ALOs, Gs3 Air at divs, etc), except in the case of a special offensive. The procedures outlined below may be taken as employed from 1940 to 1941, the last two years having witnessed the abolition of contact cars, the and FCPs or their equivalent, the reduction of staffs at various levels and other changes attendant on what amounted to the loss of all but a recce air force.

One of the main differences in the German setup is the lack of an Army/Air setup at Army level comparable to ours. Whereas the "focus" of all our air sp is, strictly speaking, at the Army/RAF Gp level, it is more at the Corps/Flieger div level in the German Army. This is deduced from the fact that "the decision to attack a target rests with the Flieger Div HQ", which is usually placed in sp of a Corps for a spell of ops. The GAF air staff at Army are not covered off by any Army/Air staff types and should controversy arise over the engaging of a target the matter is discussed between Air Force staff offrs and the Ops or Int people at Army.

It would appear that any demands for air sp are generally passed as quickly as possible by tele to Flieger Div HQ with whom all decisions rests. The main tasks of air staff offrs at fmns (Corps and Army) are to advise the Army, keep the GAF in the picture and "post-office" the sp demands.

GCC - FLIEGER DIV HQ

From several pts of view it appears that Flieger Div \mathbb{H}^0 combines most of the essential functions of both our Gp \mathbb{H}^0 and GCC. It is obviously not sited in close proximity to its army fmn but depends on the work of the GAF Air Liaison Det at Army \mathbb{H}^0 for keeping in the picture.

In the matter of Army/Air LOs there are none of them employed at any pt in the Army/Air setup. Air sp is purely an Air Force controlled matter, and the providing of army offrs to brief pilots was "not considered sufficiently important to be undertaken".

BOMB LINE

The fixing of the bomb line rested with Flieger Div HQ on infm supplied by GAF offr at Corps HQ. This infm was passed direct to Flieger Div HQ from Corps and not through Army. Divs



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passed back only line of fwd tps, and if the GAF wanted to fly a mission of their own they might call the Corps and get a check on the line of fwd tps first.

Re briefing the pilots as to the bomb line, this was done in the course of normal op briefing, by the CO of the mission. He was kept advised of the bomb line by Flieger Div HQ.

No gen safety margin was laid down but the position of the bomb line as decided by Flieger Div depended on their estimate of the accuracy and dependability of the pilots carrying out the particular mission.

RECCE PROCEDURE

Recce aircraft were employed in the following manner:-

The pilot broadcast while airborne to five stations on his net. In as far as any control was exercised at all, the aircraft was Control and the out stations were Army, Corps, PZ div, Flieger Div and Recce Sqn. It appears that VHF was used and this would have been reasonable as nearly all the traffic was broadcast by the aircraft. Occasional requests were sent up by one of the out stations and no traffic at all was necessary between ground stations. When a good target was broadcast it was acted upon by Flieger Div HQ, who actually ordered the aircraft up (cf. GCC), the army stations listening out for infm only. When necessary, the contact the with the Pz Div was an additional out station.

RLY INTERDICTION

Maj KROBE stated that the interdiction of rly lines was of slight nuisance value only, and providing that only the line itself was cratered, could be repaired very quickly by engrunits which were stationed conveniently along the main lines. The destruction of marshalling yds and goods trains, the latter particularly when on the move, was an extremely serious matter. It would appear from this that the effect of attacks on rolling stocks was of much greater nuisance than the actual interdiction of lines themselves.

AIR COUNTER BATTERY

Our air attacks, in a CB role, are described as "very effective". Bombing is less feared than cannon and MG straffing and nothing less than a direct hit is effective at all. The greatest damage done in these air attacks is to eqpts and not to personnel, since the latter can always get under ground at short notice.

ROCKET ATTACKS

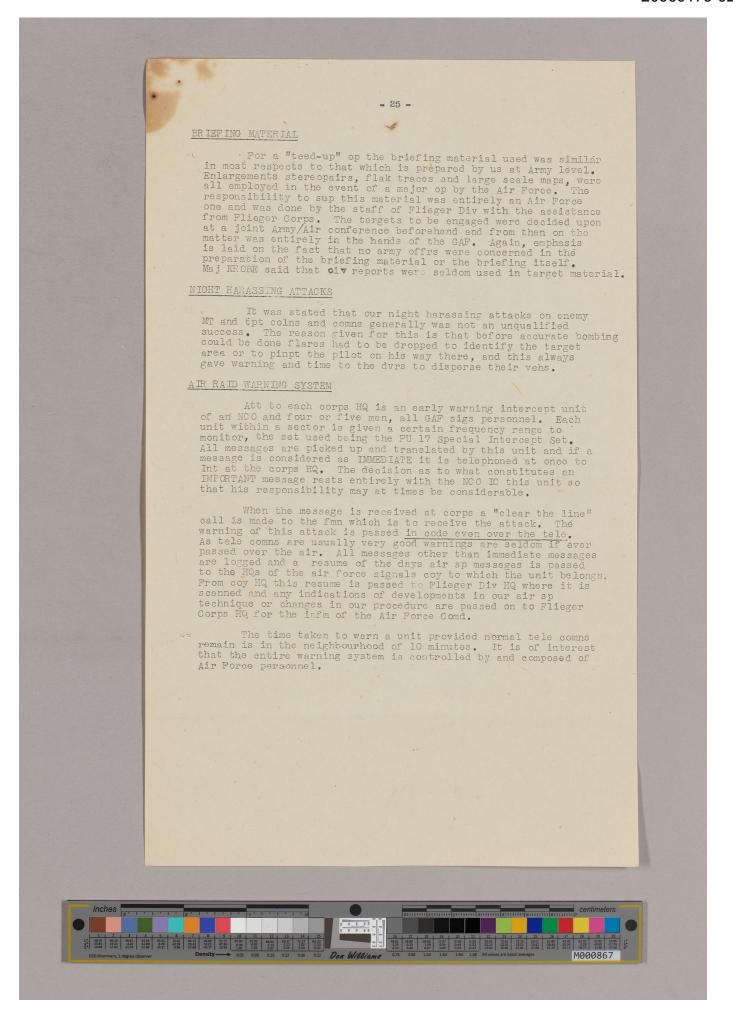
The excellent concs obtained and the great accuracy with which rockets could be used made them a very dreaded weapon. 25 Army HQ is cited as an example.

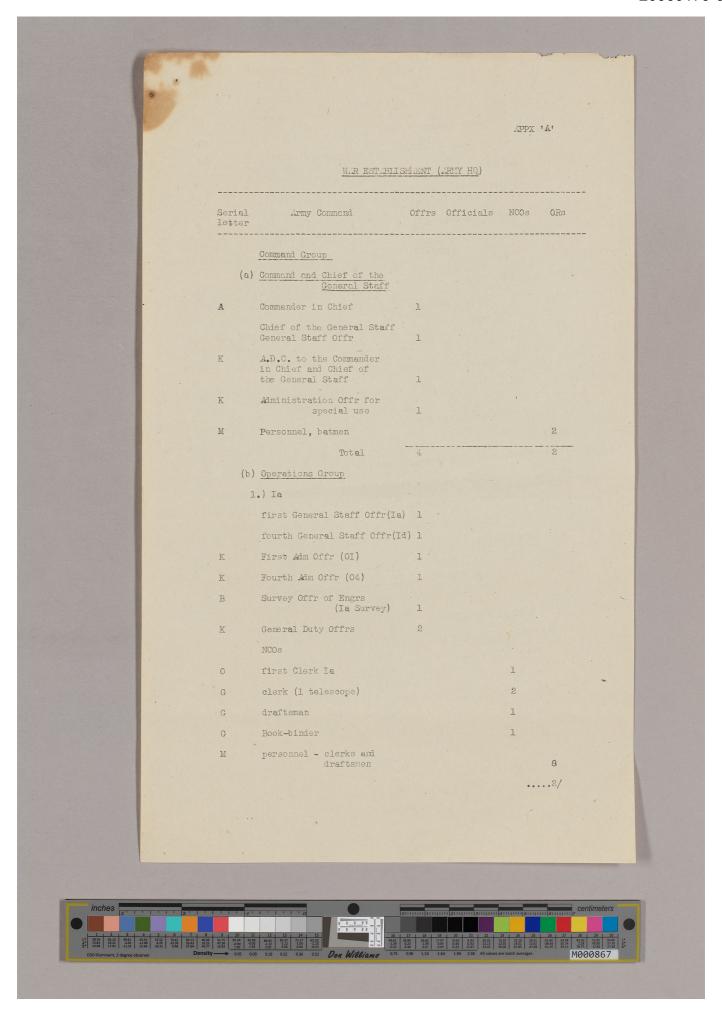
FIRE BOMBS

It was stated that fire bombs, while capable of burning bush and ground, especially during dry weather, was generally of only morale value in attacks which were made on the enemy either in the open or in buildings. The material damage done by fire bombs does not appear in the opinion of Maj KROBE to have been serious, although the morale effect was great.

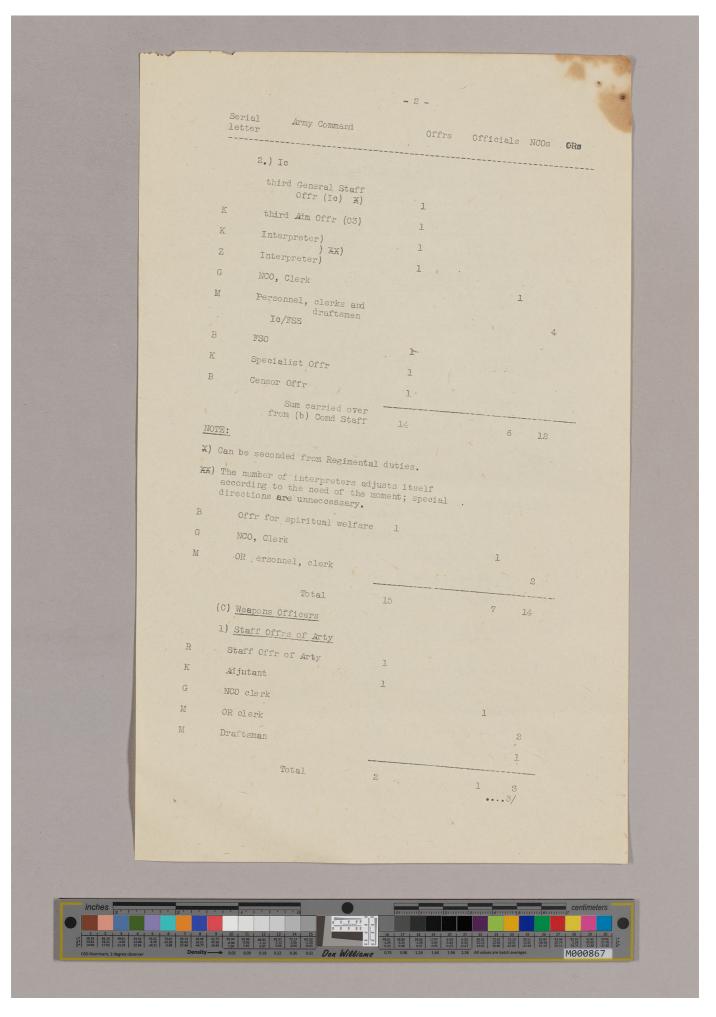
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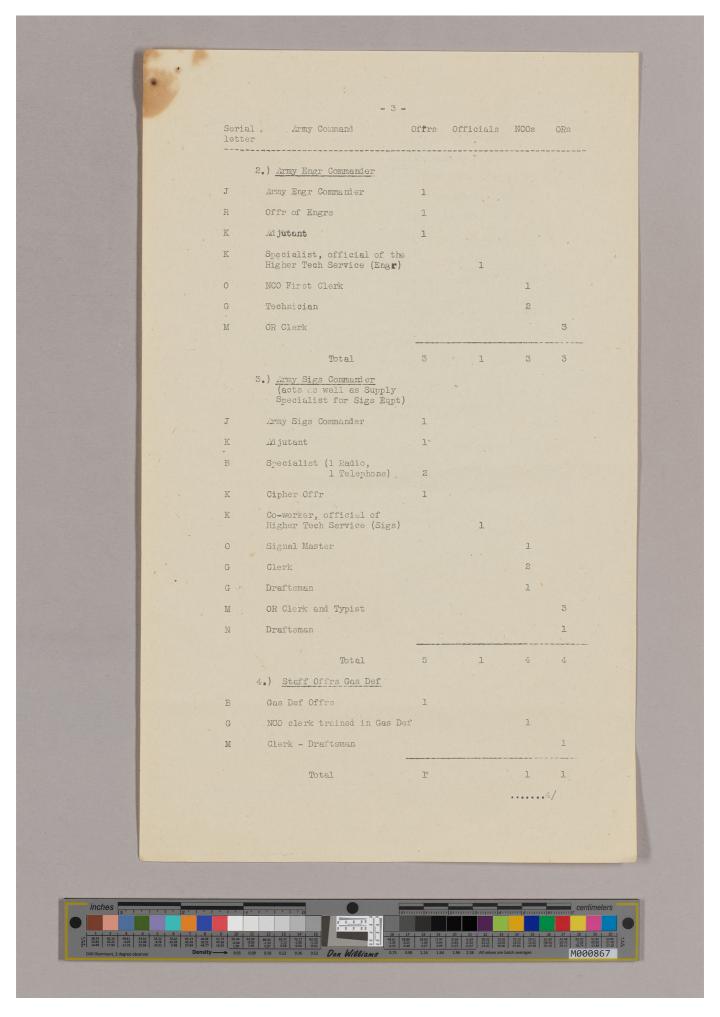


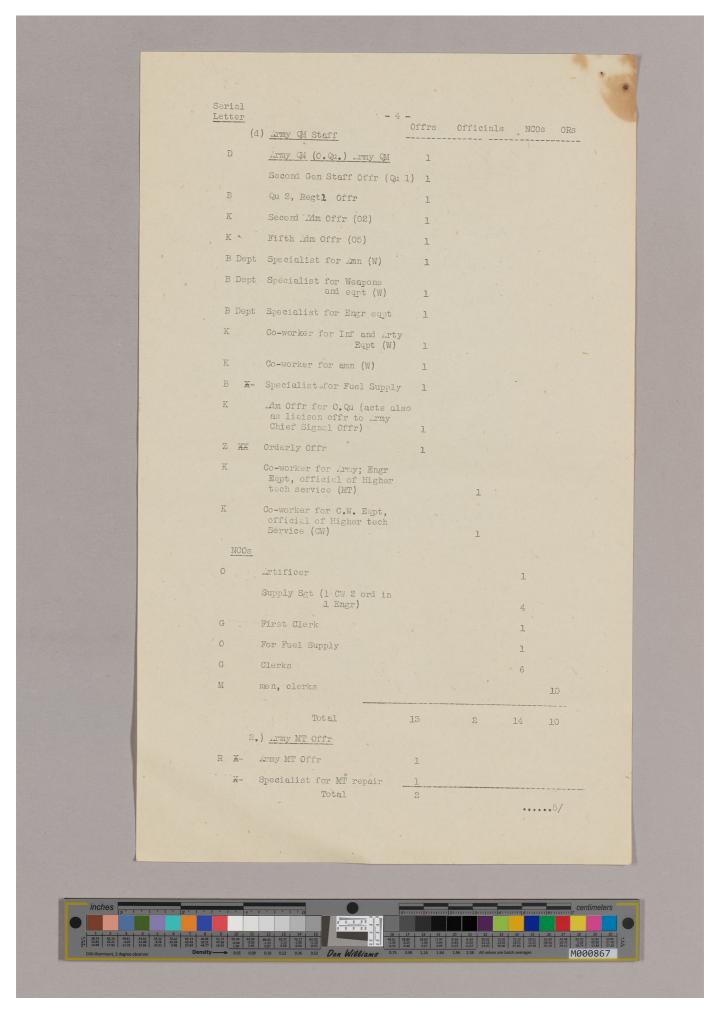


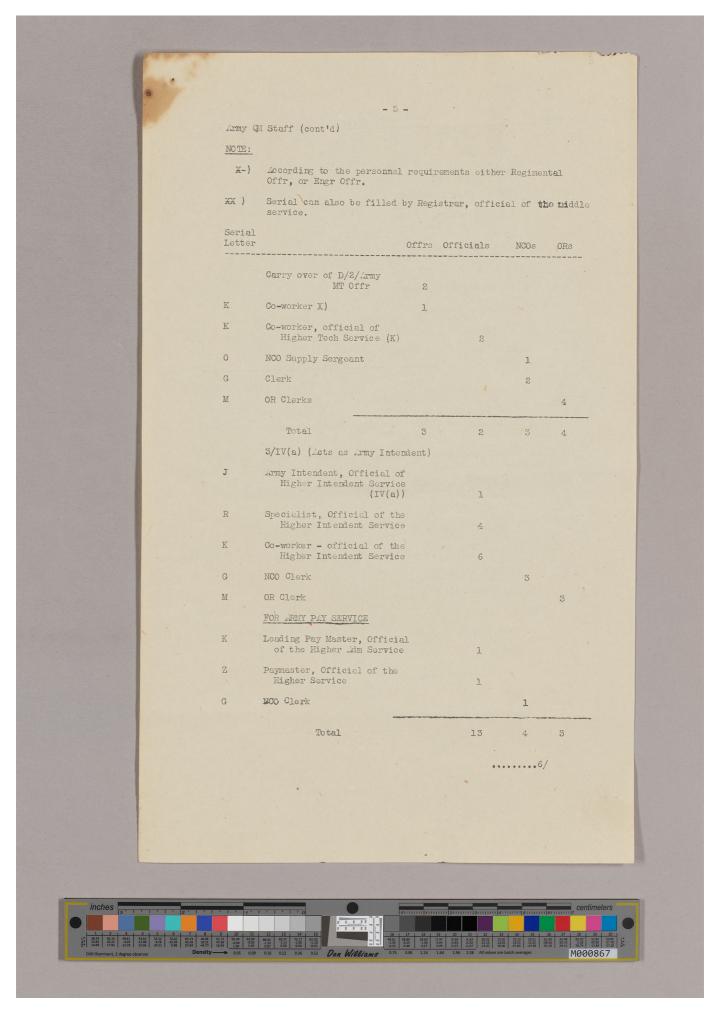
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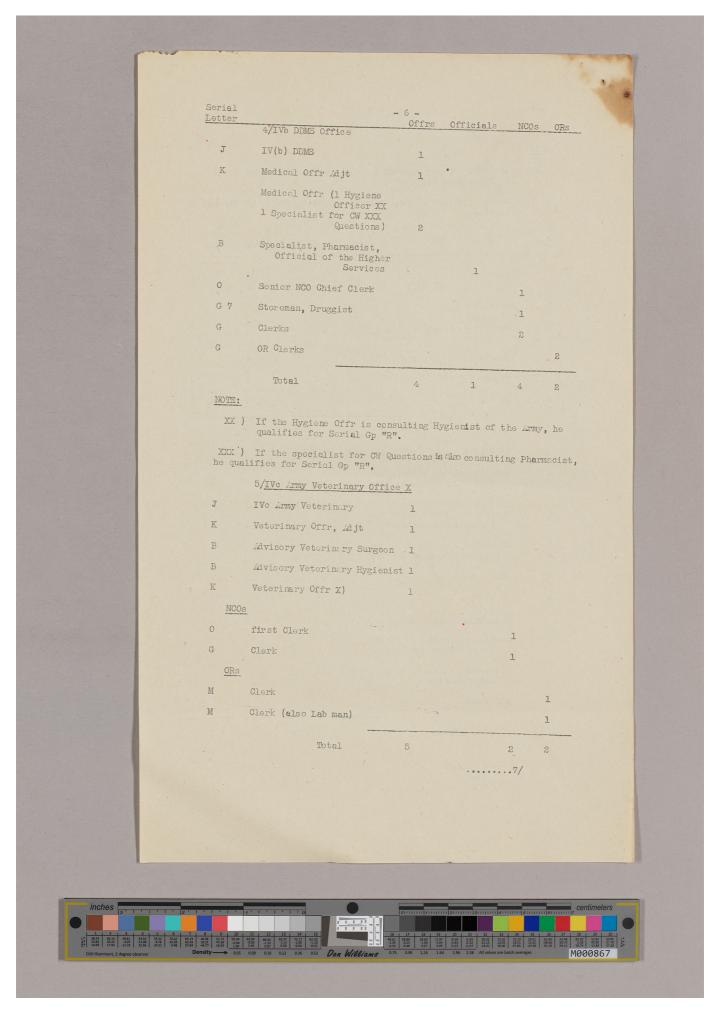
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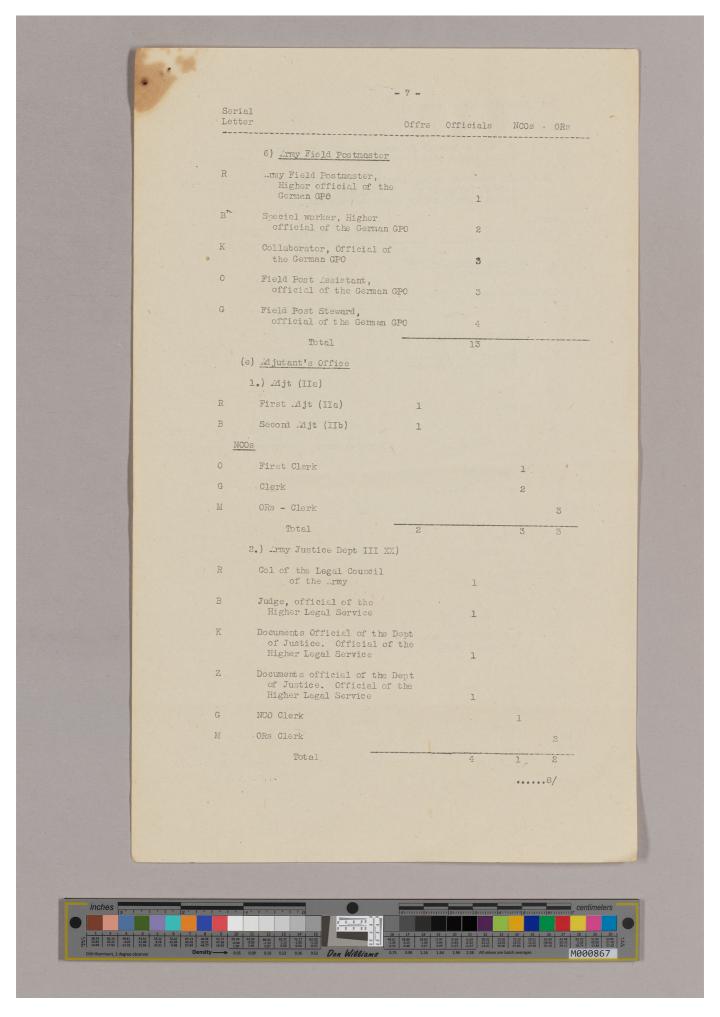


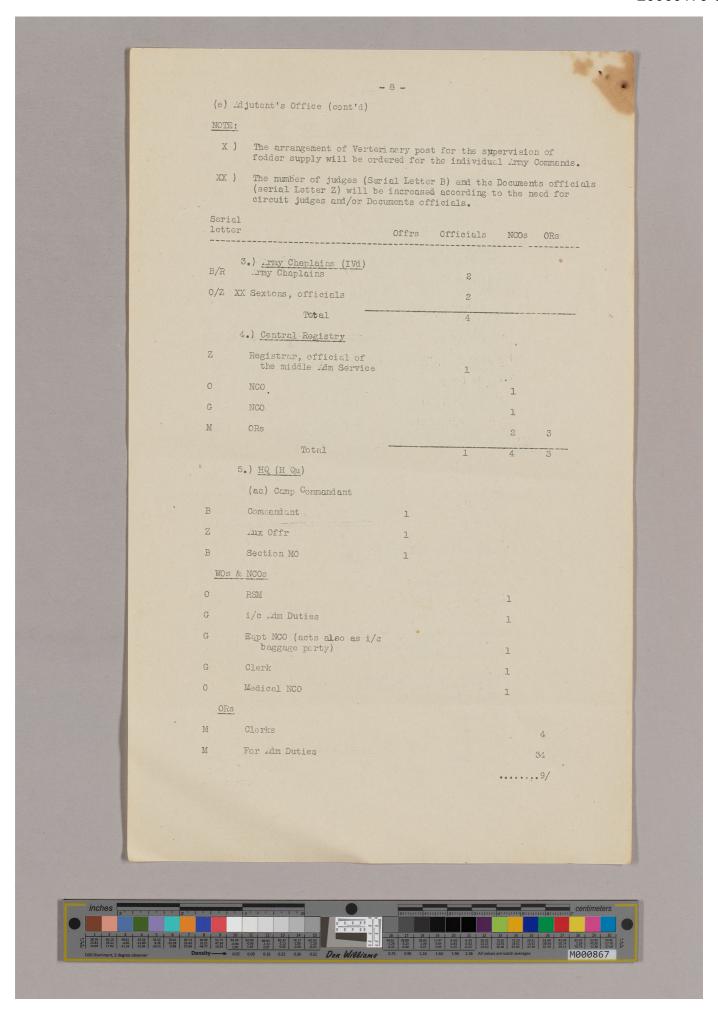




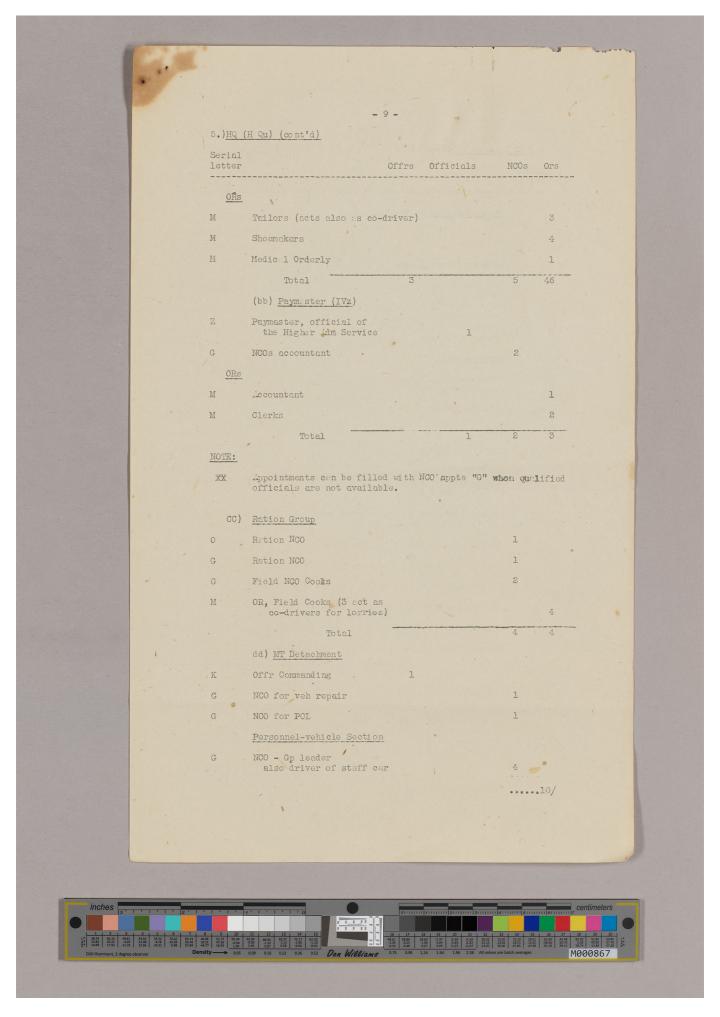
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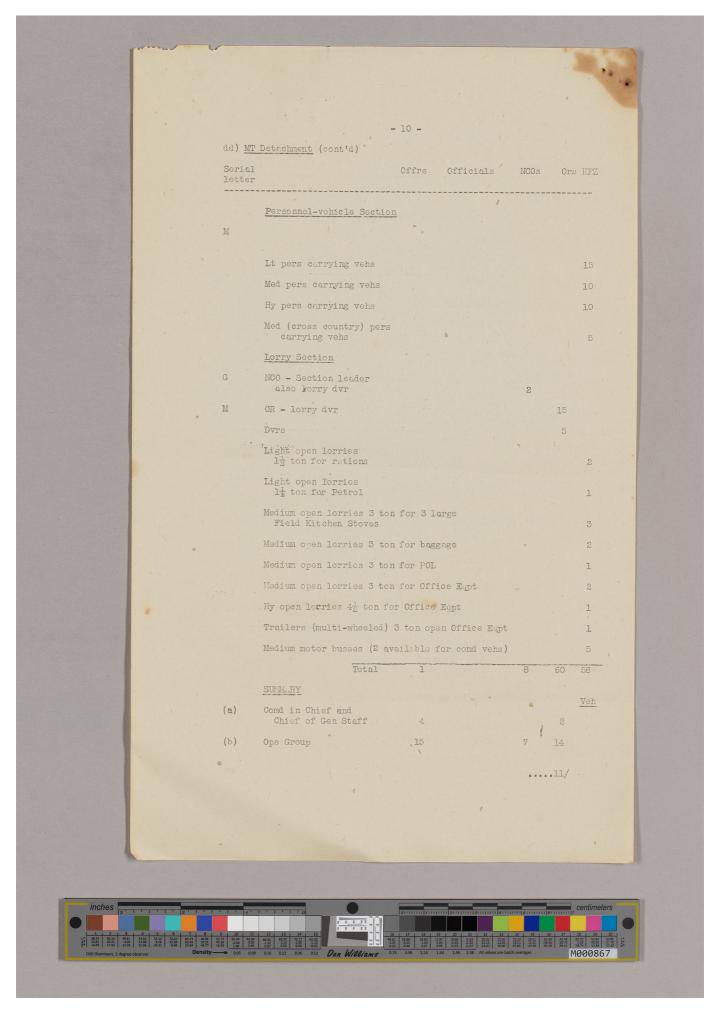




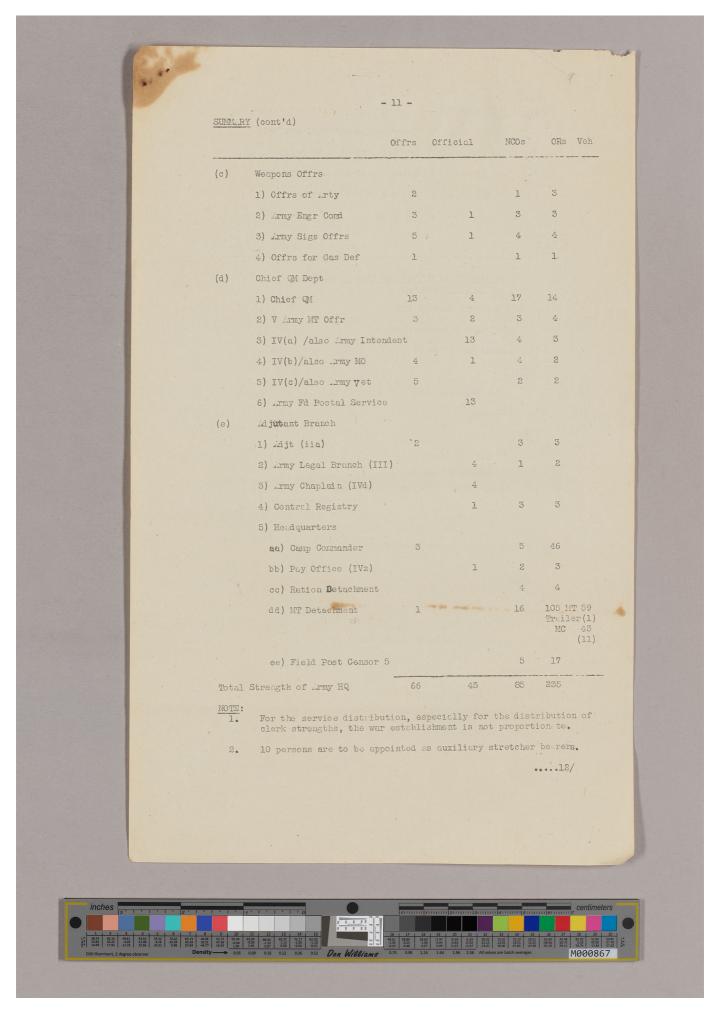
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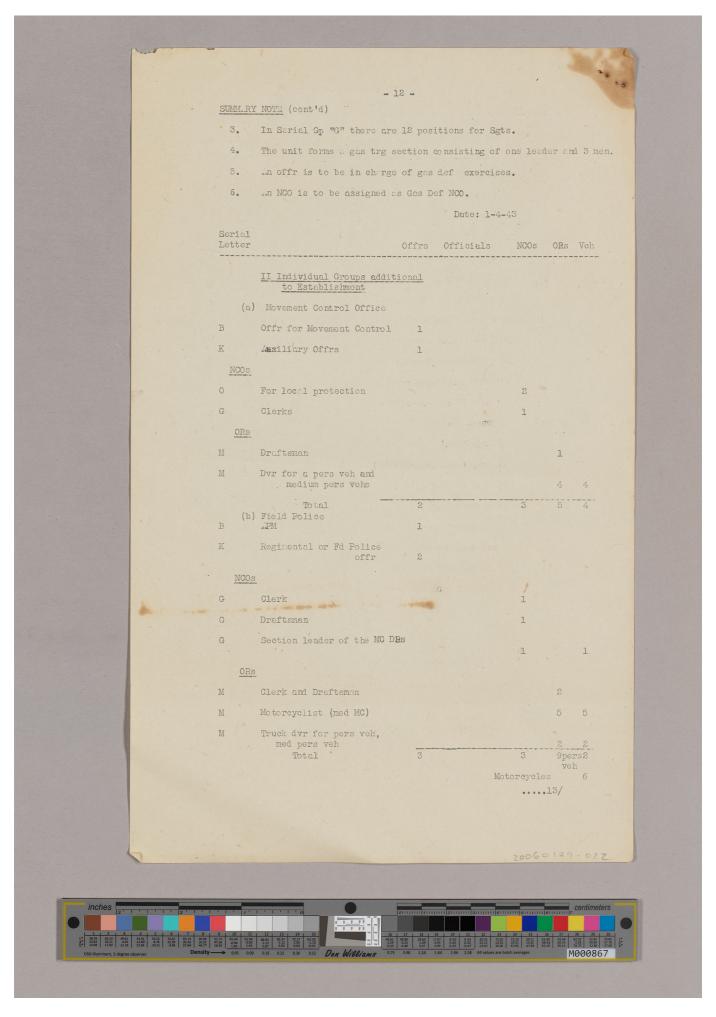
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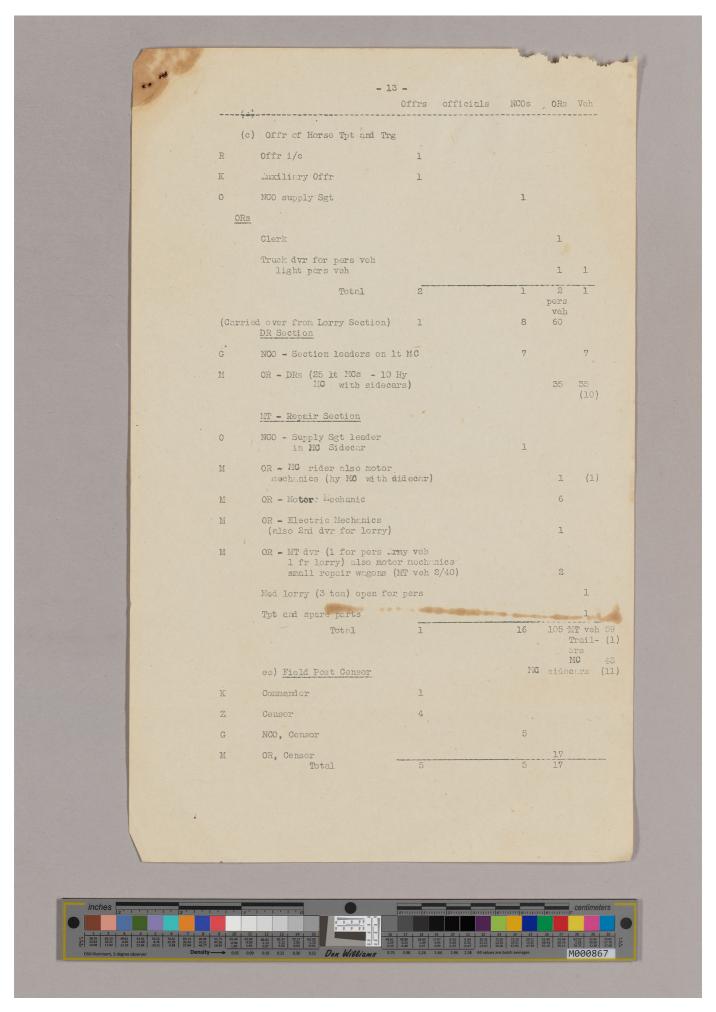


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