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HEADQUARTERS 2d AIR DIVISION
APO 558

373.2

8 April 1945

SUBJECT: Tactical Analysis of Mission 25 March 1945 - F. O. 641.

TO : Commanding Generals, All Combat Bomb Wings, This Division, APO 558.

This information is submitted for your consideration and any action you deem necessary. The deductions and remarks made below are the results of the study of mission reports and information obtained from Combat Wings and Groups.

<u>BATTLE ORDER</u>	<u>PRIMARY</u>	<u>SECONDARY</u>	<u>SORTIES</u>	<u>EFFECTIVE SORTIES</u>
20th CBW	Buchen (Vis.)	Rotenburg (Vis.)	58	56
14th CBW	Hitzacker "	Fassberg "	63	56
96th CBW	" "	" "	87	82
2nd CBW	Ehnen "	Celle "	64	58
		2nd	272	252

1. Takeoffs, Assembly and DAL

a. Takeoffs

(1) All takeoffs were normal except that the 389th Group's takeoff time was delayed because of conflict between it and the 458th Group. The 389th Group was using Plate I and the 458th Group, Plate 2. The actual delay was five minutes.

b. Assembly and DAL

(1) Assembly altitude was changed from 12,000 to 10,000 feet because medium cloud began to move in from the west at takeoff time. Fifteen minutes prior to scheduled time for leaving Control Point 1, weather scouts advised that units should approach the DAL from the north and west at 7,000 feet rather than from the south at 12,000 feet. Combat Wings were advised and let down accordingly.

<u>Combat Wing</u>	<u>First Actual Takeoff</u>	<u>Assembly Altitudes</u>	<u>Briefed Time For CP 1</u>	<u>Assembly Time</u>
20th	0530	7,000	0730	2:00
14th	0535	7,000	0732	1:57
96th	0550	8,000	0734	1:44
2nd	0555	9,000	0737	1:42

2. Navigation - Penetration

a. Before reaching the Continent, the Division experienced difficulties which were to affect the entire mission. Poor visibility confused Wing assemblies. A force of the RAF passed through Mundesley Beacon at the assembly altitude during the period of assembly. Before reaching the Continent, units were forced to make 360° turns but were able to climb through breaks in the clouds to reach the briefed minimum altitudes of penetration.

b. At penetration all units were late. Time behind schedule varied for the different units. The result was that the Division was more of a column of Groups than one of Wings. Coming into an area of better visibility, the units adjusted themselves as much as possible while enroute to the IP's. Wing integrity was better after the Zuider Zee area with the exception of the 467th Group which flew with the 14th Wing and one Squadron of the 448th Group which flew with the 96th Wing until the IP was reached.

- 1 -

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Tactical Analysis of Mission 25 March 1945

c. Routes to the IP's were generally good. The 14th Combat Wing and the 96th Wing approached their IP from the south and continued the run due north to the target, making the IP good. The only other deviation was the 2nd Wing which, because it was late, flew from landfall to Control Point 3 - thus cutting out the turn south of Dummer Lake.

d. Routes from the IP's to the targets were direct. The Squadron of the 448th Group, attached to the 96th Wing, proceeded to its assigned target by the briefed route. This Squadron attacked the target five minutes after the rest of its Group.

3. Bombing Analysis

a. All targets assigned to 2AD were attacked visually with good to excellent results.

b. The 2nd Combat Wing attacked the primary target, Ekmien, with good results. Some difficulty was experienced from bomb smoke by some of the Squadrons. The HR Squadron of the 453rd Group had a C-1 malfunction which resulted in a short run and caused bombs to hit over and right.

c. The 14th Combat Wing bombed the primary target, Hitzacker, with good results. The only difficulty experienced was bomb smoke in the target area.

d. The 20th Combat Wing bombed its primary target, Buchen, with good results. Bomb smoke again caused some difficulty in the last Squadrons over the target. The lead bombardier of the 93rd Group, in spite of a bombsight malfunction, placed 95% of his bomb load within 2,000 feet of the MPI - knowing the bombsight pays off well.

e. The 96th Combat Wing completed a day of good bombing. Again bomb smoke hampered the last Squadrons over the target. Seven A/C of the 2nd Squadron of the 458th Group released early due to an electrical release malfunction. Wing crews should be aware of the distance remaining to the target (by means of pilotage and in the case of an accidental release will know the bomb release point has not been reached. Watch the leader, check the target, check your position to the target and do not be fooled into scattering your bombs over the open fields. Drop your bombs on the leader on the target.

4. Navigation - Withdrawal

a. Rallies were good except for the one Squadron of the 448th Group which was out of the Division column. This Squadron was subsequently attacked by jet fighters.

b. In withdrawing, the Wings were ordered to use the alternate route out. This was well done by the 20th. The two Groups of the 14th Wing separated on the route and the 392nd Group made landfall out about twelve miles right of course. The 96th Combat Wing came out nearly on course - the 2nd Wing was well off course due to an error in plotting in the Wing lead A/C - however, Control Point 5 was made good.

c. In returning to England, the Groups separated in preparation for a let down through the middle clouds. The routes followed by most of the Groups were necessary to accomplish the let down safely. The 491st, 458th, and 466th Groups passed closer to the Frisian Islands than is considered safe from flak - however, they reported none encountered on this route.

5. Fighter Support

a. Headquarters, Eighth Air Force assigned the 56th, 479th A and B, 4th A and B, 355th A and B, and the 339th Fighter Groups, as close escort to the 2AD Bombers. Due to weather, the fighter support was changed and the 352nd and 361st Groups replaced the 4th and 339th Groups.

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Tactical Analysis of Mission 25 March 1945

b. All Groups R/V as planned although Bombers were late.

c. The Bomber stream was scouted by enemy A/C from the Meppel area. Fighters observed these planes but the latter were too high above them to be engaged.

6. Enemy Action Encountered

a. There were two separate attacks on the Bomber stream by Jet A/C. The first attack occurred between 1015 and 1020. Vinegrove 2-1 reported an attack in the target area but the Jets were driven off by unidentified P-51's - the latter is believed to have been the Scouting Force.

(1) The second attack came at 1045 when Jets attacked the 96th Combat Wing from five o'clock high. The LL Squadron, 448th Group, flying with the 96th Wing, bore the brunt of the attack. The Jets shot down at least two B-24's before the attack was broken up by escort.

(2) The Fighters of the 65th Wing claim 3-0-2 Jets in the air.

b. Anti-Aircraft Fire

(1) Enroute, meager AA fire was encountered at Emden, Nienburg, Lauenburg, Wietzen, and Donitz.

(2) Two Groups attacked Buchen - no AA fire was encountered by the lead (93rd) Group - meager, inaccurate AA fire was encountered by the second (448th) Group.

7. Losses

a. One A/C, 448th Group - Known to have been shot down by Jet Fighters in the target (Buchen) area.

b. One A/C, 448th Group - A/C crashed into the Baltic Sea, one mile off the coast of Sweden - seven rescued, one dead, one missing.

c. Three A/C, 448th Group - All A/C believed lost to Jet Fighter attacks in the target (Buchen) area.

8. Scouting Force

a. Planning - Normal target and route weather Scouting Forces were planned. An alternate withdrawal route was planned and Scouts were to advise if this route should be used.

b. Execution

(1) Scouts gave accurate reports throughout the mission. Targets were visual and no trouble was encountered. The Scouts were of great assistance on penetration and withdrawal - they recommended the alternate withdrawal route.

9. Screening Force

a. No Screening Force was planned since only one of the targets (Buchen) was defended and visual conditions were to prevail.

10. Radara. H2X Analysis

- 3 -

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Group	<u>A/C</u> <u>Dispatched</u>	<u>A/C Over</u> <u>Target</u>	<u>OK For</u> <u>Navigation</u>	<u>OK For</u> <u>Bombing</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
389th	3	3	3	3	
445th	3	2	2	2	1 non-effective
453rd	3	3	3	2	1 equipment malfunction
93rd	4	4	4	4	
446th	0	0	0	0	
448th	4	4	4	4	
892nd	3	2	2	2	1 non-effective
44th	2	2	2	2	
491st	3	3	3	3	
458th	4	4	4	4	
466th	4	4	4	4	
467th	4	4	4	4	
	<u>37</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>34</u>	

(1) H2X performance on this mission was excellent. One A/C, 453rd Group, could not bomb with the equipment - which, however, was satisfactory for navigation.

b. GEE operation on this mission was restricted. There was bad jamming on the Ruhr chain. The average maximum fixes were about 0730E.

11. Comments

a. The Scouting Force and also the Combat Wing Air Commanders pulled this mission out of the fire and should be especially commended.

b. After joining the 96th Combat Wing formation, the LL Squadron of the 448th Group should have maintained Wing integrity and bombed with the 96th Wing.

By command of Major General KEPNER:

FRANCIS H. GRISWOLD
Brigadier General USA
Chief of Staff

OFFICIAL:

Robert H. Terrill
ROBERT H. TERRILL
Colonel GSC
Dep C of S for Operations

1 Incl:

Incl 1 - Weather Summary

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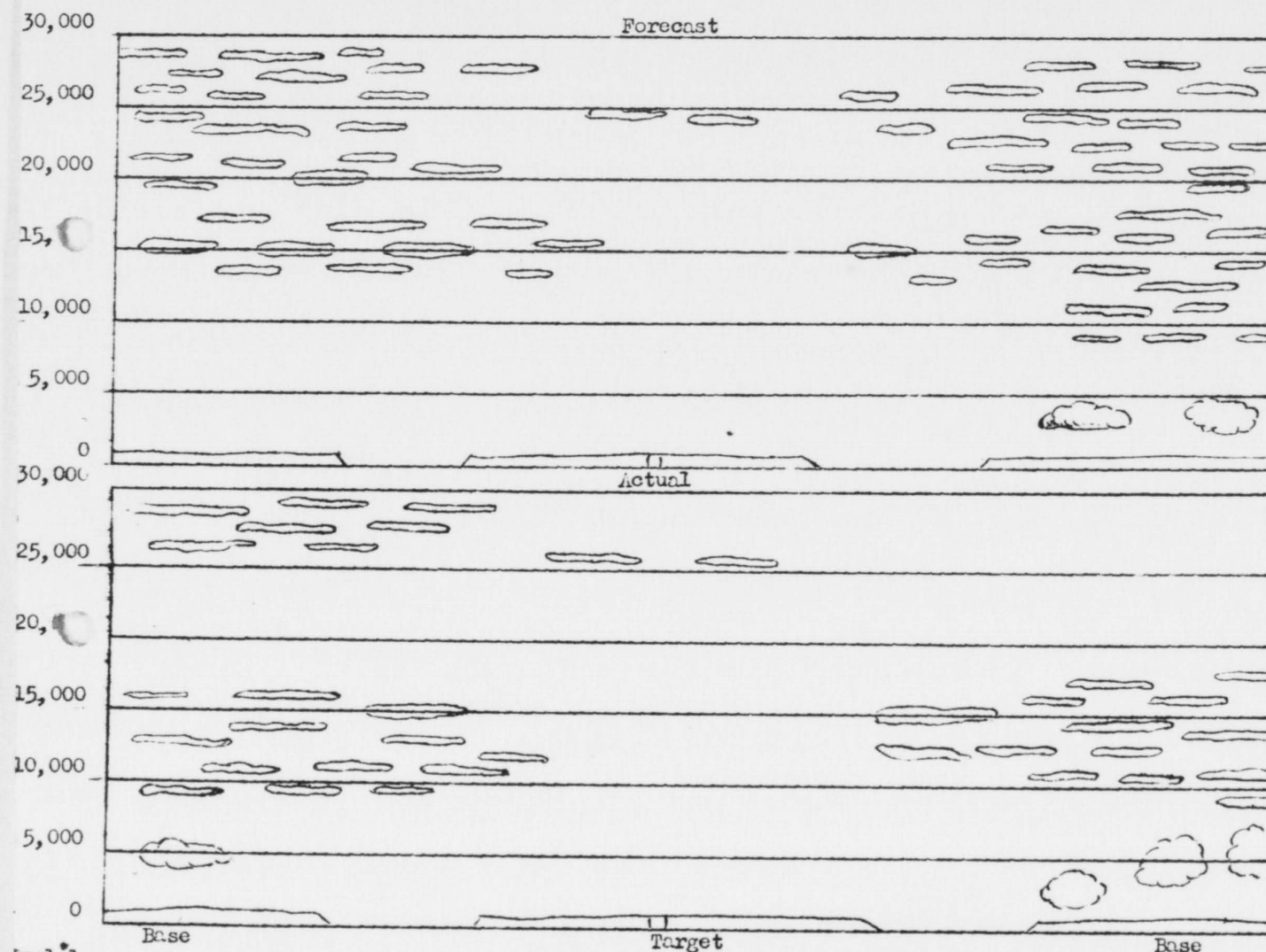
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Tactical Analysis of Mission 23 March 1942

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Weather Summary

a. Forecast - Winds at 20,000 feet - base to 05°E, 170/40 - 05°E to targets, 160/35. Light non-persistent contrails above 23,000 feet east of 06°E. Light rime ice in layered medium cloud east of 0°, and moderate rime ice west of 0°.

b. Actual - Winds generally believed as forecast. Light non-persistent contrails associated with medium cloud layers over England. Light non-persistent contrails from Fighters above 23,000 feet over the Continent. Light to moderate rime ice in layered cloud at 14,000 feet over England.

Incl 1

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Group 458th Bomb Gp (H)

STATISTICAL SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS

(Part 1)

Primary: Hitzacker - Storage Depot
Ordered Targets: Secondary: Roeburg H/ A/F Via
Canalbruck H/Y H2XDate of Operation 25 March 1945Division Field Order No. 641

Squadron	Sorties		Credit Sorties	Effective Sorties	Non Effective Sorties	No. A/C Bombing	Type of Tgt	Name of Target	Number and Type of Bombs on Targets	Aircraft Lost						Time of Take off	Total Time of Mis'n	Comments
	Total	Less Unused Spares								Total	Flak	Flak & E/A	E/A	Acc	U N K			
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	14	15	16	17	18	19	25	27	40
12	9	9	9	9	-	9	PT	Hitzacker - Depot	60 300/ M31 108 250/ M57	-	-	-	-	-	-	0600	172	Lead 96th CG
2	10	10	10	4	6	4	PT	Hitzacker - Depot	62 300/ M31	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1 A/C bombed with 467th BG Same Tgt bombed with different MFI
3	10	10	9	9	1	9	PT	Hitzacker - Depot	166 300/ M31	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
TOTALS	29	29	28	22	7	22	PT	Hitzacker - Depot	288 300/ M31 108 250/ M57	-	-	-	-	-	-	0600	172	

NON-EFFECTIVE SORTIE SUMMARY (Part 3)

Total Non Eff. Sorties	Causes of Non-Effectives					Incidents of Mechanical and Equipment Failures																Comments
	Weather	Personne	Enemy Action	Other Non Mech.	Mech. & Equip.	Total	Engine	Oil System	Fuel System	Super-charger	Propeller Governor	Communication System	Guns & Turrets	Bomb Release	Bomb Bay Doors	Electrical System	Instruments	Oxygen System	Bomb-sights	A/C in general		
46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66		67
7		5		4	2	2	1							1								Bomb release malfunction on Lead A/C of 2nd Sqdn caused this A/C to drop only two out of six bombs on target. Six other A/C in 2nd Sqdn dropped 12 miles from target following the lead A/C.
Footnote 1	1	1 - 3rd Sqdn - Deputy Lead																				
Footnote 2	2																					
Footnote 3	3																					

1 - 3rd Sqdn - Deputy Lead

42-51270

42-95316

42-51110

41-29567

42-52457

42-100425

44-10618

25 March 1945

FORMATION PLAN458TH LEAD GROUP - 96TH COMBAT WINGLEAD SQUADRON - LINCOLN RED #1**BONO-HOGG**

J3 : 669J

2 AD Cont.

WINKER-HENGLER Scope-K-20WALLIS

Z5 : 298E

8 AF

J3 : 930I

8 AF

PATAK

Scope

NUTTER

Z5 : 108B

RCM

Z5 : 179P

RCM

Z5 : 199A

2 AD

8 AF Cont.

**THOMAS

Z5 : 120M

**HOLTE

Z5 : 126L

K-21

ROSEN

Z5 : 456D

K-21

K-21

2ND SQUADRON - LINCOLN RED #2DASH

J3 : 628K

8 AF-RCM

SHARP

J3 : 740Q

O'REAGAN

7V : 270A

RCM-2 AD

JACKSON-W.L.

7V : 110M

8 AF

K-21

8 AF

CHIVEN

7V : 487A

8 AF

K-21

2 AD

FERRIELL

7V : 766J

8 AF

DEWARD

7V : 567G

SCHUCH

7V : 457Q

HINER

7V : 316H

LAIRD

7V : 4250

K-21

3RD SQUADRONLANQUIST-GARDNER

J3 : 837L

RCM

DYE

J3 : 499U

2 AD

BIDELSBURG

J4 : 287J

2 AD

8 AF

WILLIAMS-D.G.

J4 : 539B

J4 : 277P

RCM-8 AF

WARRELL

J4 : 163M

8 AF

2 AD

HADDEN

K-21

CARTER

J4 : 768Y

HOOD

J4 : 555A

HOEY

J4 : 912D

8 AF

McCOY

J4 : 602E

SPARES:

557H-J3-26 PFF 300# GP's

618T-J3-22 Vis 300# GP's

352K-7V-32 8AF 300# GP's

285H-J4-42 8AF 150# GP's

516V-25-25 8AF 300# GP's

018J-25-44 300# GP's

141U-J4-40 8AF 150# GP's

**ASTERISKS INDICATES SHIPS ARE
CARRYING 250# GP's

WEATHER SHIP: 183U-25-53

PILOT: Lt SANDERS - 754th Sq

ORDER OF TAKE OFF

WEST			EAST			WEST			EAST	
DISP	SHIP	NO.	SHIP	DISP		DISP	SHIP	NO.	SHIP	DISP
		1	183U	53		29	766J	16		
18	669J	2				32	487A	17		
24	936I	3				28	567G	18		
11	628K	4				31	316H	19		
17	740Q	5				34	457A	20		
15	837L	6				31	110M	21		
13	499U	7				30	4250	22		
23	298E	8						23	287J	49
21	108B	9						24	277P	40
		10	179P	51				25	163M	49
		11	126L	47				26	768Y	86
		12	120M	46				27	912D	42
21	456D	13						28	555.	45
		14	199A	51				29	539B	47
33	270A	15						30	602E	36

458th Pilots and Aircraft as listed on Formation Plans

Date	Target	Pilot	458th Msn	Pilot Msn	Cmd Pilot	Ld	Serial	Last 3	RCL	Sqdn	A/C Msn	A/C Name	Comments
25-Mar-45	HITZACKER	BENO	214	20	HOGG	L1	42-51669	669	J	J3	24	UNKNOWN 026	
25-Mar-45	HITZACKER	CARTER	214	1			42-50768	768	Y	J4	44	ARISE MY LOVE AND COME WITH ME	
25-Mar-45	HITZACKER	CRAVEN	214	30			44-10487	487	R	7V	50	Girl on surfboard (no name)	
25-Mar-45	HITZACKER	DAHM	214	30		L2	42-95628	628	K	J3	21	UNKNOWN 038	
25-Mar-45	HITZACKER	DENARD	214	4			41-29567	567	G	7V	20	MY BUNNIE / BAMBI	DROPPED 12mi OFF TARGET
25-Mar-45	HITZACKER	DYE	214	6			44-10618	618	T	J3	11	UNKNOWN 038	ABORT - #4 ENG SMOKING - REPL 499
25-Mar-45	HITZACKER	EIDELSBURG	214	27			44-40287	287	J	J4	55	BACHELOR'S BEDLAM	
25-Mar-45	HITZACKER	FERRIELL	214	23			44-50766	766	J	7V	3	YOU'VE HAD IT	WITH 467BG
25-Mar-45	HITZACKER	HADDEN	214	30			44-40277	277	P	J4	55	MISS USED	
25-Mar-45	HITZACKER	HINER	214	15			42-95316	316	H	7V	97	PRINCESS PAT	DROPPED 12mi OFF TARGET
25-Mar-45	HITZACKER	HOEY	214	33			42-50912	912	D	J4	29	THE TRAVLIN' BAG	
25-Mar-45	HITZACKER	HOLTZ	214	5			44-40126	126	L	Z5	74	SPITTEN KITTEN / SKY TRAMP	
25-Mar-45	HITZACKER	HOOD	214	35			42-50555	555	A	J4	33	BABY SHOES	
25-Mar-45	HITZACKER	JACKSON, WL	214	18			42-51110	110	M	7V	97	TOP O' THE MARK	DROPPED 12mi OFF TARGET
25-Mar-45	HITZACKER	LAIRD	214	16			42-100425	425	O	7V	73	THE BIRD	DROPPED 12mi OFF TARGET
25-Mar-45	HITZACKER	LANQUIST	214	12	GARDNER	L3	44-48837	837	L	J3	20	UNKNOWN 041	
25-Mar-45	HITZACKER	McCOY	214	15			44-10602	602	E	J4	39	TEN GUN DOTTIE	
25-Mar-45	HITZACKER	MINSKER	214	6	HENSLER	D1	42-51936	936	I	J3	25	UNKNOWN 027	
25-Mar-45	HITZACKER	NUTTER	214	10			42-95108	108	B	Z5	73	ENVY OF 'EM ALL II	
25-Mar-45	HITZACKER	O'REGAN	214	19			42-51270	270	A	7V	31	MY BUNNIE II	DROPPED 12mi OFF TARGET
25-Mar-45	HITZACKER	PATAK	214	20			42-51199	199	A	Z5	42	UNKNOWN 023	
25-Mar-45	HITZACKER	RHOADES	214	25			42-51179	179	P	Z5	83	DUSTY'S DOUBLE TROUBLE	
25-Mar-45	HITZACKER	ROSEN	214	16			42-50456	456	D	Z5	53	DOROTHY KAY SPECIAL	
25-Mar-45	HITZACKER	SANDERS	214	WTHR			42-95183	183	U	Z5	--	BRINEY MARLIN	WEATHER SHIP - 754
25-Mar-45	HITZACKER	SCHUCH	214	4			42-52457	457	Q	7V	108	FINAL APPROACH	DROPPED 12mi OFF TARGET
25-Mar-45	HITZACKER	SHARP	214	7			42-50740	740	Q	J3	30	OUR BURMA	
25-Mar-45	HITZACKER	THOMAS	214	8			42-95120	120	M	Z5	86	HOOKEM COW / BETTY	
25-Mar-45	HITZACKER	WALLIS	214	10			44-40298	298	E	Z5	48	THE SHACK	
25-Mar-45	HITZACKER	WARRELL	214	33			42-110163	163	M	J4	77	TIME'S A WASTIN	
25-Mar-45	HITZACKER	WILLIAMS, DG	214	25			44-50539	539	B	J4	7	UNKNOWN 045	