



**D-Day:**  
Primarily  
Omaha Beach

# D:DAY: Primarily Omaha Beach

## INTRODUCTION

One hundred and sixty-thousand troops landed within 24 hours on a 50-mile stretch along France's Normandy coast, on five beaches: Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno and Sword. Of these, it is said that the defeat of Nazi Germany was sealed on Omaha, where Operation OVERLORD planners had decided to land the majority of U.S. troops and supplies. Soldiers had come to believe that Omaha would be "a walk-in." In this program, students will examine primary sources to discover if the Omaha Beach landing the soldiers trained for matched the reality of the landing they made and explore how strategic thinking saved lives when the landing was not what the soldiers expected.

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will gain an understanding of the overall objective of D-Day, the value of primary sources and the crucial role of strategic thinking.
- Students will evaluate primary sources to compare the planning phase for the Omaha Beach D-Day landings with the actual experience of the soldiers.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This unit was produced in December 2013 by the Eisenhower Foundation.

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Thanks to the Eisenhower Presidential Library, Museum and Boyhood Home for support.

Thanks to First Division Museum, War Chronicle, and American D-Day for their database of first-hand accounts by soldiers from the First Infantry Division who landed on Omaha Beach on D-Day, June 6, 1944.

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## TARGET AUDIENCE

Grades 9 - 12

## TIME REQUIREMENT

1 Hour

## NATIONAL CURRICULUM STANDARDS

All lesson plans meet numerous national Common Core State Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects, as well as National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies.

Common Core St Standards		9th - 10th	11th-12th
Standard	<b>RI</b> - Reading Informative Text	1-4,7	1-4,7
	<b>WHST</b> - Writing	1,7	1,7
	<b>SL</b> - Speaking and Listening	1,4	1,4
	<b>RH</b> - History/Social Studies	1-4,6,7,9	1-4, 6-9
Nat'l. Curriculum Standards for Social Studies			
Theme	<b>2:</b> Time, Continuity, and Change	High School	
	<b>4:</b> Individual Development and Identity	High School	

# Lesson Plan

1. Prepare for this lesson by pre-printing the following pages:  
4-5: one copy per student, double-sided  
6-7: one copy per student, double-sided  
8: one copy per group  
10-17: three-four copies of each, one narrative per group, one per student  
18-23: one copy per group
2. Open the lesson by asking students to share about an event they had planned for that didn't go as expected. Share an example of your own. (Example: Test you studied for doesn't look anything like the test in front of you; key player on your debate team is ill and unable to compete in an important tournament, etc.)
3. Hand out copies of **The Purpose of D-Day** (pages 4-5) and read through with students. Utilize maps and content to familiarize students with World War II and the events leading up to Operation OVERLORD.
4. Hand out copies of the **Background Briefing** (pages 6-7) and read through with students. Utilize maps and content to familiarize students with Operation NEPTUNE, Omaha Beach, and Primary Sources. Have students identify the primary source and secondary source information found on both **The Purpose of D-Day** and **Background Briefing**.
  - \* Pages 25-30 provides the entire **Operation NEPTUNE** document
  - \* **Page 4:** Text and Nazi Empire Map - Secondary
  - Page 5:** Maps II and III - Primary; Omaha Beach and Operation OVERLORD information - Secondary
  - Page 6:** Photo and Operation NEPTUNE Document - Primary; Text - Secondary
  - Page 7:** Map XII, 1st Div. Patch, and Photo - Primary; Text - Secondary
5. Break students into eight groups of three or four students and assign each group to one **Primary Source Soldier Narrative** (pages 10-17). Give each student a copy of the narrative and distribute the corresponding artifact(s) to each group.
  - \* Use the **Primary Source Set List** (page 9) to identify which artifacts correspond to each Soldier Narrative. This page also provides the basic information about each artifact (the answer key). Do not share this information with the students until after they have had a chance to do their own research.
6. After the groups have had a chance to read their **Primary Source Soldier Narrative** and observe the corresponding artifact(s), hand out copies of **Primarily Omaha Beach** (page 8) and have groups complete.
  - \* Student can utilize tools such as the Internet and books to research the soldier and/or artifact(s).
7. Have each group share their soldier's story and how the artifact(s) they observed correlate to the story.
8. Direct a class discussion about **Primarily Omaha Beach**. Ensure students comprehend that although extensive planning went into the D-Day invasion, things did not go according to plan, especially on Omaha Beach, and it was leadership on the ground that saved thousands of lives.
9. Watch video footage of what really happened at:  
[www.eisenhowermemorial.org/experience/#/dday/206](http://www.eisenhowermemorial.org/experience/#/dday/206) OR  
[www.abmc.gov/multimedia/videos/ok-lets-go](http://www.abmc.gov/multimedia/videos/ok-lets-go)

# The Purpose of D-Day

## OVERVIEW

World War II lasted from 1939 to 1945 and was between two military alliances, the Allies (United States, Great Britain, and Russia) and the Axis (Germany, Italy, and Japan). On June 6, 1944, General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Supreme Allied Commander, led "Operation OVERLORD," one of the largest military invasions in history. One hundred and sixty-thousand troops landed within 24 hours on five beaches codenamed Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno, and Sword, along France's Normandy coast. June 6th, or simply D-Day, signified the beginning of the end of the bloodiest and most widespread war the world had ever experienced.

## OPERATION OVERLORD

The D-Day invasion of World War II was codenamed Operation OVERLORD. Its purpose was to establish a safe entry point into Europe for the Allied soldiers, and force Nazi Germany to fight on two fronts.

Germany had already conquered most of Western Europe, which allowed Nazi dictator, Adolf Hitler, to invade Russia to his east. This meant, however, that while the Germans were fighting the Russians on the Eastern Front, they were also fortifying over 1,600 miles of coastline, known as the Atlantic Wall, stretching from Norway to southern France.

Allied leaders believed that Hitler's forces could be defeated if the Nazis had to split their

resources and fight on two fronts. They saw their opportunity along this 1,600 mile wall.

The Allies did not have enough soldiers and equipment to fight the whole German army at one time, in one place, but what if they could trick the Germans into thinking they were going to attack multiple locations?

The Allies convinced the Germans that they were assembling an army in Scotland to attack in Norway, another army in central England to attack at Pas de Calais in France, and a third army in southern England that would attack at Normandy, France. Only the third army, aimed straight at Normandy across a wide stretch of the English Channel, was real.




<b>Soldiers</b>	<b>156,115</b>
American	73,000
British & Canadian	83,115
<b>Aircraft</b>	<b>12,843</b>
Bombers	5,112
Fighters	5,409
C-47s	822
Gliers	1,500
<b>Ships</b>	<b>6,939</b>
Warships	1,213
Transport Vessels	4,126
Ancillary Craft	736
Merchant Vessels	864
<b>Naval Staff</b>	<b>195,701</b>
American	52,889
British	112,824
Other Allies	4,988
Merchant Navies	25,000

Figures are Approximate

## OPERATION OVERLORD

by the Numbers



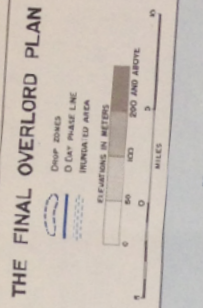
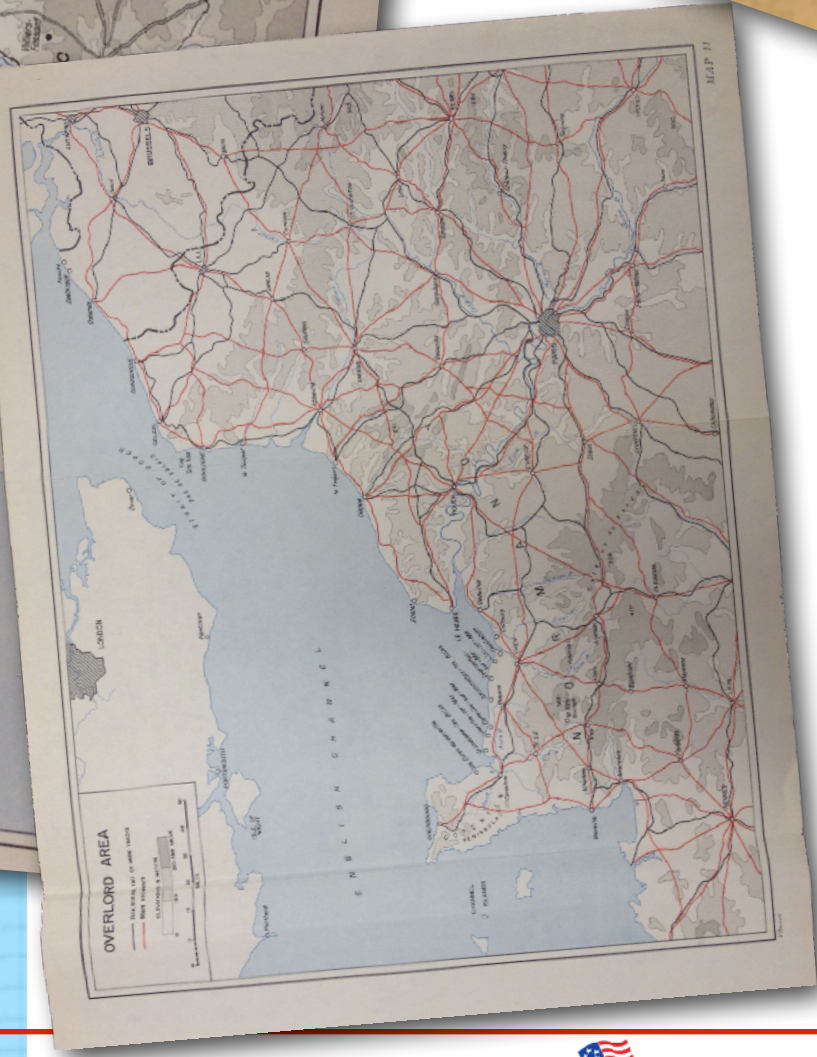
U.S. 1st & 29th  
Infantry Divisions

Soldiers:  
34,250

Casualties:

**OMAHA**  
6:30 a.m.

### THE FINAL OVERLORD PLAN

### DID YOU KNOW?

"D-Day" is a military term used to mean the date on which any military operation will begin. The day before D-Day is known as "D-1," while the day after D-Day is "D+1," and so on. This is done so that if the projected date of an operation changes, the date reference in the plan does not also need to be changed. The term "H-Hour" is used to refer to the time an operation will begin. The WWII invasion at Normandy is simply the most well-known D-Day.

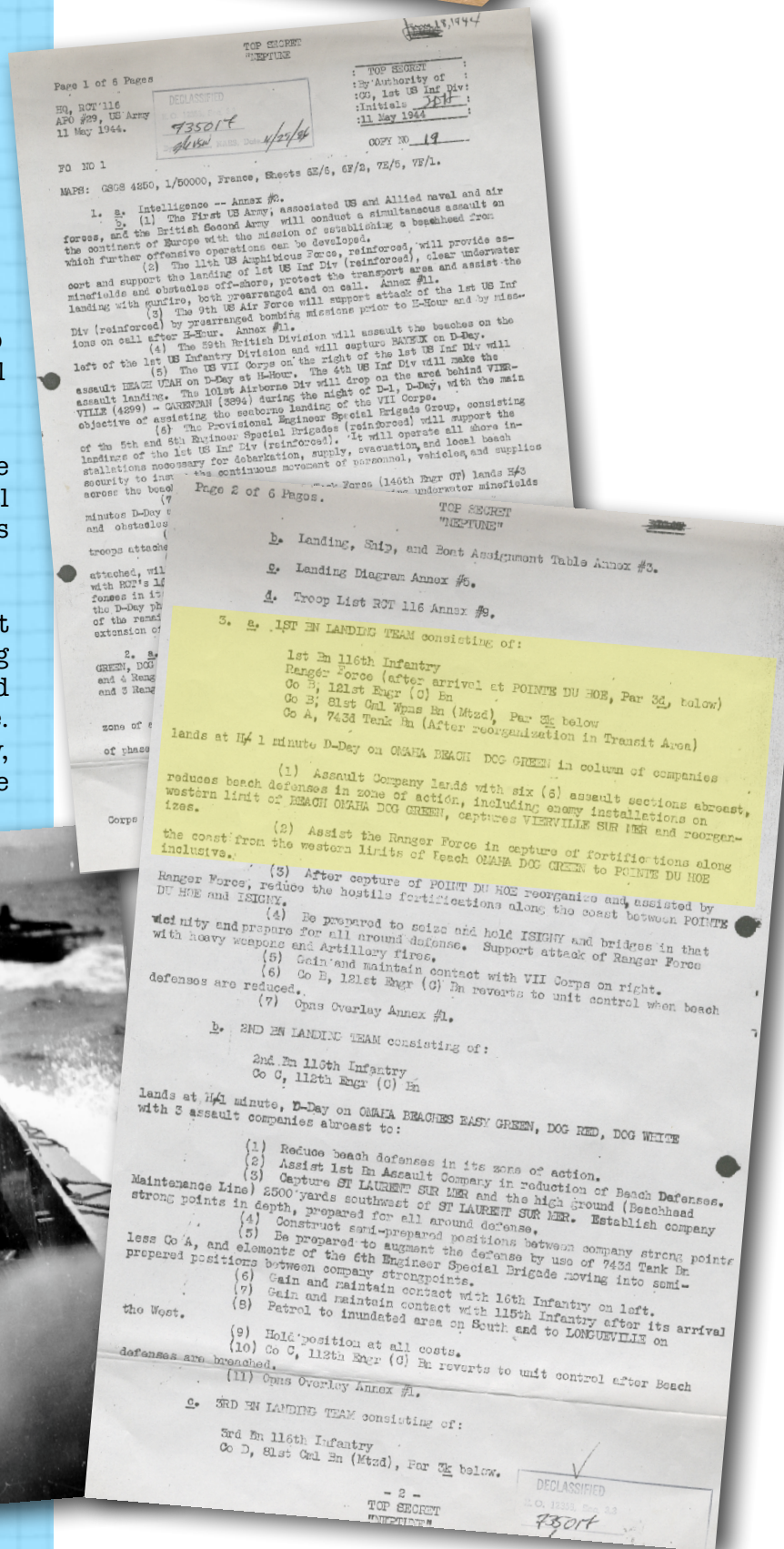
# Background Briefing

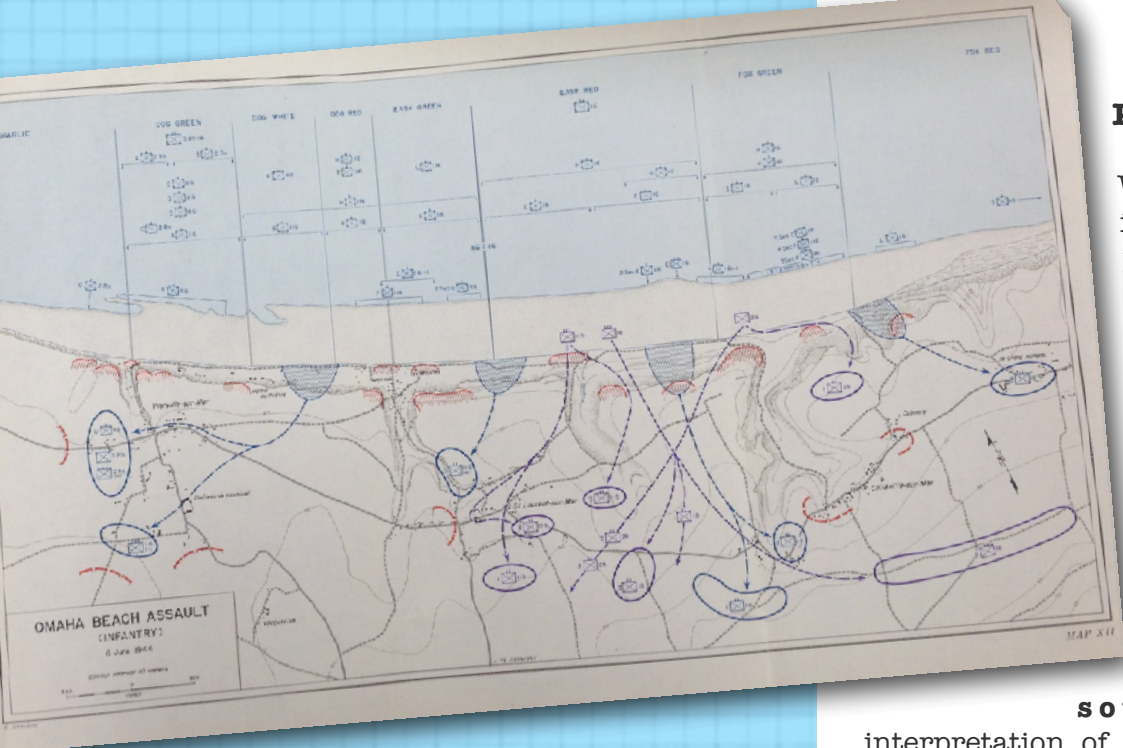
## OPERATION NEPTUNE

Operation OVERLORD was the overall plan for everything that had to happen on D-Day, the "big picture." Operation NEPTUNE spelled out the details: every airplane and who and what it carried and when and where it was to go; every Navy destroyer and its targets and crews; every landing craft, every tank and jeep and bulldozer; every soldier and what he was ordered to carry, who he was to report to and where he was supposed to be by nightfall on D-Day. It was a massive plan.

And yet the man in charge of it all, Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces General Dwight D. Eisenhower, said, "The plan is nothing -- but the planning is everything."

The troops trained according to the plan. But even in the training phase things went wrong and when things went wrong, soldiers and commanders had to adapt together to survive. In the fury of war, General Eisenhower knew, planning is critical but leadership on the ground is crucial.





## OMAHA BEACH

Operation OVERLORD targeted Allied landings on five beaches: Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno, and Sword. American soldiers from the 1st and 29th Infantry Divisions trained together for months for the landing on Omaha Beach. Many of the soldiers strongly believed the Omaha Beach landing was going to be “a walk-in.”

The document excerpt you have is just part of one page for a fairly small group of soldiers. The plan called for over 34,000 soldiers to land on Omaha Beach. What was the plan for this four-mile stretch of sand codenamed Omaha Beach? It was all spelled out in that great big plan - Operation NEPTUNE. It is all very specific: the time; in what order soldiers were to walk onto the beach; and what to do first. Then, when they got time, what they were to do next.



Why did so many soldiers think this was going to be so easy? Using primary sources, you will discover if the Omaha Beach landing the soldiers trained for matched the reality of the landing they made and explore how strategic thinking saved lives when things did not go as expected.

## PRIMARY SOURCES

What is a **primary source**? It is any direct evidence produced during a specific period under study. Primary sources vary widely from objects like artifacts, photographs, diaries, maps, movies, songs, and eyewitness accounts. The key is that they were created during the time period being studied.

Primary sources are different from **secondary sources**, which are an interpretation of the past. History textbooks are typically secondary sources because the authors were not present at the time in history they are writing about, but are interpreting what they have learned about the event.

This is what makes learning with primary sources so engaging -- you get to hold a real piece of history in your hands and come up with your own conclusions of its significance. The answers are not always provided by the primary sources, so you are encouraged to seek the answers through inquiry and research.

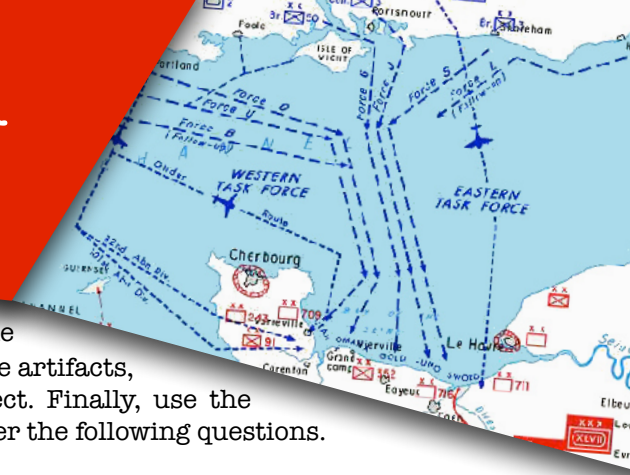


You may have not realized, but you have actually been looking at primary sources already. Take a minute to review the images on pages 4-7 and decide whether the sources of information are primary or secondary.

## LEARNER COMPREHENSION CHECK

What is the key to determine if information or items are primary or secondary?

# Primarily Omaha Beach



**Directions:** First, read your group's Soldier Narrative. Then, look at the artifacts in the bag on your table. If you are unable to identify any of the artifacts, utilize any tool (Internet, books, etc.) available to research the object. Finally, use the information from both the soldier's narrative and the artifacts to answer the following questions.

## **NAMES** \_\_\_\_\_

1. Name three facts the soldier gave in his narrative.

- 
- 
- 

2. Name one fact about the soldier that was secondary source information.

- 

3. List and describe the artifacts your group observed.

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

4. How does the soldier's narrative correspond to the artifact(s) listed above?

5. How did Operation NEPTUNE, the plan, differ from what really happened on Omaha Beach?

6. Was the Omaha Beach landing successful? Why or why not?

7. Was D-Day a success?

8. Was the war over?



CAPTAIN  
JOHN R. ARMELLINO

Notes:

- \* Capt. Armellino was commander of L Company, 16th Infantry Regiment, 1st Infantry Division
- \* He was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross
- \* Excerpt from personal account, full version available at [www.americandday.org](http://www.americandday.org)



"On June 6, 1944, I was the Commanding Officer of Company 'L' of the 16th Regiment, First Infantry Division . . . I was given an assault map, reconnaissance photos, and the final objective of my Company . . . capture the Village of Colleville-sur-Mer located several miles from the beach. . . .

We were heavily armed with automatic weapons, Bangalore torpedoes, flamethrowers, wire cutters, hand grenades, smoke grenades, gas masks, and TNT. Our clothing was impregnated against a gas attack. Bangalore torpedoes are long pipes loaded with dynamite and fuses and were to be used against the German pillboxes or concrete bunkers. . . . Finally, we carried two life preserves per man, one for the soldier and one to float heavy equipment into the beach.


Upon our arrival at our destination off the coast of France, we were given orders to disembark from the mother ship onto the landing craft. My men went over the side onto rope ladders hanging from the ship. The soldiers, fully equipped, climbed down these ladders into the landing craft, which were rolling and turning in the rough waters of the English Channel. We started towards Omaha Beach. One of my landing craft was swamped by the violent seas and sank. To this day, I don't know how many of those men were lost. Since we were the first combat wave, there was complete silence on the way to the beach. You could hear a pin drop. We didn't know what to expect when we landed. We soon found out.

Our intelligence had not informed us that there was a German Panzer Division training on the high ground above the landing area, occupying the pillboxes and the defensive positions. In addition, our air support, which was to bomb the landing beach to form craters on the 200 yards of open beach for us to use as cover, had missed the beach completely, leaving the advancing troops without any cover at all.

About a quarter-mile from the beach, all hell broke loose. The landing craft came under an intense attack, including mortar and artillery fire. One of my landing craft took a direct hit from enemy fire as it was unloading onto the beach. Half the men on this craft had already left the boat when it was hit. Some of these men crossed the beach. The remainder were either killed or wounded. As we landed, enemy fire peppered the ramps as they were lowered to allow my men to disembark and cross the 200 yards of open beach. The German pillboxes and machine-gun nests were laying a vicious crossfire on the beach. Many men were cut down as they left the landing craft. Small-arms, mortar, and artillery fire were all concentrated on the landing area, but we suffered our greatest casualties just after touching down because of the crossfire of the German automatic weapons.

Few of the landing craft were able to make a dry landing. Most of them grounded on sand bars 50 to 100 yards off the beach. The water was neck deep. Some men climbed over the sides of the landing craft trying to avoid enemy fire. We lost some of these men because in the excitement they failed to open their garrison belts and the weight of their equipment took them under water. Some of these men drowned while others shed the equipment and swam to shore.

The water was loaded with obstacles to which mines were attached. Those who reached shore started running across the beach through heavy machine-gun crossfire, mortars, and artillery fire. We headed towards a bluff to give us cover. I lost many of those young soldiers who joined my company right before the invasion in England. They had no fear and failed to hit the ground after every few yards running directly for cover. The more seasoned men hit the ground very often as a result avoided being hit by enemy fire. After reaching the cover of the bluff, I began to reorganize my Company. I had approximately 125 men left of the 200 I started with . . ."



CAPTAIN  
JOHN R. ARMELLINO

## Primary Sources to Examine\*

- **Testimony and photo** of Cpt. Armellino was submitted by his son, John N. Armellino, to [AmericanDDay.org](http://AmericanDDay.org) by Laurent Lefebvre.
- **Transport bag:** Its original use was for carrying Bailey Bridge pins. The modular bridge was a series of components that could be put together in places where bridges had been destroyed. General Eisenhower is quoted as saying the Bailey Bridge was “. . . one of the three pieces of equipment that most contributed to our victory [in Europe].” Field Marshal Lord Bernard L. Montgomery said, “Without the Bailey Bridge, we should not have won the war. It was the best thing in that line that we ever had.”
- **Practice rocket:** This 2.36”, M7A1, H.E.A.T. rocket was used in anti-tank launcher.
- **Flotation belt:** It was worn around the waist and inflated by a Co2 cylinder. The disadvantage of this type of preserver, when wearing a pack wighting 60-70 pounds, was that the soldier often overturned in deeper water. paratroopers used the Mae West style which was worn around the neck much like life preservers of today.
- **Wire cutters:** These were issued to all branches of the military. They were used on D-Day to cut through the barbed wire barriers all along the beach. The handle of this cutter was repaired with electrical tape indicating the importance of being able to continue using it.
- **Pocket book Kidnapped by Robert Louis Stevenson:** Books were printed in a small size to fit in the uniform pockets for the soldiers’ entertainment. Bibles were often made with metal covers. Several stories can be found of men’s lives being saved by the pocket books shielding them from bullets.
- **Dog tags and P38 can opener:** All soldiers were issued each of these items. The information on the dog tags differed according to the year. These replicated tags depict the information that was used in 1944. The military ID numbers, blood type, and religion were not available for the soldiers used in this lesson.
- **Order of the Day:** This is a replica of the statement issued by General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Forces, to the soldiers, sailors and airmen of the Allied forces about to embark on the D-Day invasion, June 6, 1944.

\*These artifacts were not the property of this specific soldier, but are authentic to the time period.

PRIVATE  
FIRST CLASS  
WALTER BIEDER

Notes:

- \* Wfc. Bieder was in E Company of the 16th Infantry Regiment, 1st Infantry Division.
- \* He met and shook hands with Eisenhower in England before the invasion.
- \* Oral history excerpt from 2000-2001, full version available at [www.warchronicle.com](http://www.warchronicle.com).



"We were ten miles out in the water when we left the ships. And it was really rough that day. We debarked from the ship by a rope ladder that came down the side. A couple of guys went down first to hold the ladder steady when we were coming down. And when you're coming down, the boat would be coming way up in the water and then all of a sudden it would drop down. We finally got everybody aboard, but it was rough.

When we left the mother ship we went out a ways and the landing craft circled. You have a Navy boat there, a Navy officer to guide you, to give you the go to go in. We were all out there circling around waiting for everybody to get ready, bouncing around there getting soaked, and guys were puking left and right.

Finally, the Navy guy said, 'Okay.' and we started and we all spread out and went in a line until we hit the beach. H-Hour was 6:30. We left the ships about 3:30 in the morning. So it took about three hours to get in there.

When we hit the beach, we were the first wave in. The coxswain we had on our landing craft, he was good. He run the boat up as far as he could and hit a sandbar or something and said, 'That's as far as I can get it.' And Spalding said, 'Lower the ramp.' So we lowered the ramp and jumped out. First thing, whoop, the water come way up. So we had to wade in and then crossed a long beach because the tide was out. . . .

I hit this machine gun nest . . . I had a grenade launcher on my rifle. It was an armor piercing grenade, but not like a hand grenade. See the regular hand grenade we called a pineapple. It was smaller and you had to pull the pin on it. The grenades that I used, when you fired, it automatically set off the mechanism in the grenade to explode on contact.

Our first platoon got up there and I got that one machine gun nest. I fired at it twice and the second time I hit it. Farther up, in a little ravine, was a small anti-tank gun and I aimed at that and I hit that. . . . We started taking German prisoners and took a bunch down to the beach. Then we went right back up and joined the rest of our section . . .

We thought we had elements on our left and our right. But we didn't. We were out there alone. And we got caught in a hedgerow. The hedgerows were square, and thick as hell. They pinned us down in a hedgerow and they caught us flat-footed. We were there firing back at them but we couldn't move because they had us pinned with machine gun fire. And our forces down on the beachhead didn't know we were out there. And the Navy was shelling, and we were catching Navy shells also.

We didn't have no communication. From what I remember, our radio man was knocked or something, I can't remember. Anyhow, we had no communication that we was out there. And for the whole day we was pinned down out there in this hedgerow. They had us really pinned because they had cross fire and you had to lay flat right up against the hedgerow or you got nailed.

. . . We were there until it started getting dark and then Spalding and Streczyk decided we've got to see if we can locate the rest of our company. And we started pulling out. We kept ten-yard intervals between men going back and there wasn't a shot fired at us. I could never figure that out. They had us there all day long. So we don't know what the hell happened to the Germans.

We took off to the rear and finally found the rest of our company; Captain Wozenski and the rest of our outfit. Wozenski actually cried, 'Where are my men? What did they promise us?' They were supposed to have bombed the whole beach area and they didn't do it. There were no craters at all there. D-Day night, out of 200 men, there was 60 of us left. . . ."



PRIVATE  
FIRST CLASS  
WALTER BIEDER

## Primary Sources to Examine\*

- **Testimony and photo:** The narrative was written by War Chronicle and based on recorded conversations done with Pvt. Bieder between June 2000 and July 2001.
- **Dog tags and P38 can opener:** All soldiers were issued each of these. The information on the dog tags differed according to the year. These replicated tags depict the information that was used in 1944. The military ID numbers, blood type, and religion were not available for the soldiers used in this lesson.
- **Artillery Shell Casing:** Large caliber guns (cannons, howitzers, or mortars of a caliber greater than 15 mm) were used in warfare to shoot over great distances.
- **Mess kit:** This is a regular military issue complete with silverware and a P38 can opener (named because it took 38 punches to open a can in the C rations). C Rations were designed to meet a daily food requirement which the soldier could carry and use when he was cut off from regular food supply sources.
- **K Rations bag:** This waterproof bag was used for food items that were compact and easy to carry rations that could be used in assault and combat operations.
- **Pineapple grenade:** A U.S. grenade given the name due to its resemblance to a pineapple.
- **Collapsible bucket:** This was available on the landing crafts, and used for many purposes.
- **Comfort Kit:** A regular military issue complete with toiletry items to promote good hygiene habits.
- **Order of the Day:** This statement was issued by General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Forces, to the soldiers, sailors and airmen of the Allied forces about to embark on the D-Day invasion, June 6, 1944.

\*These artifacts were not the property of this specific soldier, but are authentic to the time period.

SERGEANT  
CLARENCE COLSON

Notes:

- \* Sgt. Colson was in E Company of the 16th Infantry Regiment, 1st Infantry Division.
- \* He was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.
- \* Oral history excerpt from 2000, full version available at [www.warchronicle.com](http://www.warchronicle.com)



"The invasion itself, where we landed, they were supposed to bomb so there'd be a lot of craters, bomb craters, for us to get into to. But they missed it, I guess. And [the rocket craft] didn't get in far enough. Most of them went in the water. . . .

The assault boat hit a sandbar and dumped us. 'Well, let's get out.' We had these belts on and you're in the water clear up to your neck trying to get in. One of my gunners from the mortar section said, 'I can't make it.' And I said, 'Dump the gun!' I said, 'Come on! Get in alive! Come on!' So he dumped it. Guys couldn't make it with the load, you know, that's quite a load to carry.

So we got into shore, get everybody spread out as far as we could. You don't bunch up you want to get them spread out. 'Course they were firing, but there was one pillbox way over and there was nothing coming from that.

There was a minefield in front of us where we landed, but there was an old house with a stone wall. Sims was one of my main gunners. He was a good man. We got behind this wall, two of us got there. A lot of them laying back there was wounded and we pulled some of them up behind the wall . . .

But then there was a path. When I looked and seen that path . . . there was this pillbox way over here wasn't manned. They didn't have nobody manning that pillbox. Enemy fire was all coming from this way. So when I seen that path and all these wires I knew there's minefields there.


I told Sims. We got a BAR from a guy that was wounded . . . And we got a few magazines. I brought the extra magazines and we got some bandoliers of ammunition that we carried. And I said, 'I'll head for the hill.' Quite a steep hill. So I went up the path.

There was no wires across the path, that's what I was looking for, and running as fast as I could run. 'Course I was young then, I could move pretty good. And when I got over there then I motioned him to come. And Sims came up. And he had some more bandoliers. So we got [to the] top of the hill, and that's where all the trenches were. And here this one guy was, running back and forth in that trench and I hollered at him and he threw a potato masher, a German hand grenade. I ducked down, put my hands up, my head down. It didn't go off right quick and I kind of glanced and I see he hadn't unscrewed the back and pulled the string. So I nailed him.

But the one that was holding the company up, the pillbox, down there. I could shoot right down the back end. The pillbox had a door that goes downstairs, then you have your gunner slots, see. So I got the BAR. It had a tripod on it and I got it set right up and started spraying that back door. I told Sims, I says, 'Just as soon as I kick that magazine out, put another one in.' There was 20 rounds, I think, in those magazines. So we shot about three or four of them. Maybe more, maybe less. I know it was more than three. We shot quite a few rounds.

All of sudden a white flag came out and we quit firing and they came out. I motioned for them to come on up and they came up. I don't know how more many was dead in there or anything. That's why we got all the troops up, pretty soon, on that part of the beach.

. . . But out of the whole company we only had, oh, 20 men or so left. The boat next to me on the right, none of them got out of it. We was on the further left. As I say, that was a good thing for us because this pillbox up here wasn't manned. They didn't have nobody in it. Good thing for us. From then on we just scattered out and moved forward. That was all we could do."



SERGEANT  
CLARENCE COLSON

## Primary Sources to Examine\*

- **Testimony and photo:** The narrative was written by War Chronicle and based on recorded conversations done with Sgt. Colson between July 2000 and May 2002.
- **Dog tags and P38 can opener:** All soldiers were issued each of these. The information on the dog tags differed according to the year. These replicated tags depict the information that was used in 1944. The military ID numbers, blood type, and religion were not available for the soldiers used in this lesson.
- **Order of the Day:** This statement was issued by General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Forces, to the soldiers, sailors and airmen of the Allied forces about to embark on the D-Day invasion, June 6, 1944.
- **Ammo pouch:** This was a regular military issue used to carry ammunition.
- **Shell casings:** These are spent ammunition of various calibers.
- **Belt:** This webbed let with grommets was used to attach/carry weapons, pouches, etc.
- **Gun case:** This was attached to a belt or harness.
- **Backpack:** This was a regular military issue to be used to carry the soldiers' supplies in the field.
- **Bandolier belt photo:** Shown here is a pocketed belt for holding rifle ammunition. It was slung sash-style over the shoulder with the ammunition pockets across the midriff and chest thus keeping weight off the soldiers hips so as not to cause difficulty in movement.
- **Potato masher photo:** Shown here is a German hand grenade believed by G.I.'s to be of inferior quality to the U.S. grenades.
- **Ammunition box:** This container was used for ammunition of various calibers.

\*These artifacts were not the property of this specific soldier, but are authentic to the time period.

CAPTAIN  
JOSEPH T. DAWSON

Notes:

- \* Capt. Dawson landed with G Company of the 16th Infantry Regiment, 1st Infantry Division.
- \* He was one of the first soldiers on Omaha Beach.
- \* He was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross by Eisenhower (pictured).
- \* Oral history excerpt from 1991, full version available at [www.firstdivisionmuseum.org](http://www.firstdivisionmuseum.org)



"I landed and I was the first man off of my boat, or off of all of our boats, followed by my communication sergeant and my company clerk. Unfortunately, my boat was hit with a direct hit, so the rest of my headquarters company was wiped out as well as the little flight control officer from the Navy, which was our communication, to give us the support fire that was supposed to give us the cover and the neutralizing of the little village of Colleville, which was the objective that I was given, assigned as my objective for the day. . . .

Now, I felt the obligation to lead my men off [the beach] . . . And as I can recall, I think the beach at Normandy was a very unusual beach in that it came down from a great height of over 250 yards in a sloped manner until it reached the beach water, but the whole defenses of the Germans were right on the crest of that overlooking the beach, except for the pillboxes that were encased within that whole area of the back of the beach.

I found this path . . . it seemed to generally go in the right direction toward the crest of the hill, and so I started up that way. . . . I was up there pretty much alone, so I told Baldrige to go back and bring the men up. I said, 'They've got to get off the beach. Tell them to come up here with me.' Well, they started up there, but I had gone on ahead. And just before you reach the crest of the ridge, it becomes almost vertical for about a 10-foot drop.

And there was a log there and I got behind the log to see if I could see my men coming up, and they were beginning to filter. I could see a single file beginning to develop off of the beach and coming on up when I heard a great deal of noise just above me and, sure enough, there was a machine gun nest up there and they were giving us a lot of trouble. And I was able to get within a few yards of them because they couldn't see me.

. . . I lobbed a couple of grenades in there and silenced them and, sure enough, that opened the beach up. It was a miracle. It doesn't mean anything on my part. It was just one of those wacky things that happen, that I was right on the spot.


[E1 and] E3 were the two exits that we had anticipated would be the exits off the beach. We didn't get them open until the next day. And the only place on which that whole beach was able to get off was through that point that we established. We had a firefight from there [the bluffs] on into the village of Colleville, but we were successful in being able to do it as a unit and my men did a superb job on getting there.

There was a calm over us. There was a calm and a mutual respect began to develop, and it was almost incredible. I felt it in every one of my men. We had casualties. We had lost men there on the beach . . .

. . . then I debouched\* my men into a defensive position around the town, and after there had been a little firefight [that] develop[ed] from the Germans that had shot at me down at the end of the street, they [American soldiers] had the town completely in control. And this was about 3:30 in the afternoon.

But at 4:00 we were devastated with artillery barrage from the Navy. It leveled the town, absolutely leveled it, and in doing so we suffered the worst casualties we had the whole day, not from the enemy but from our own Navy. I was angered by it, angered beyond all measure because I thought it was disgraceful . . . the Navy's response was that the order called for the leveling of Colleville at H+60 or as soon thereafter as visibility would permit . . . their contention was that the pall of battle had obscured their vision until 4:00 that afternoon, which was H+8 or H+10 hours."

\*debouch - when military troops march in a long, narrow line, sometimes single file, due to the width of the area they're moving through.



CAPTAIN  
JOSEPH T. DAWSON

## Primary Sources to Examine\*

- **Testimony and photo:** Obtained from Cpt. Dawson in 1991 by Colonel Robert R. McCormick Research Center.
- **Grenade:** U.S. issue hand grenade
- **Flashlight:** Regular military issue, often issued with red or green colored cellophane to use for signaling.
- **Photo of mines:** Shown here are German made bouncing mines which were anti-personnel mines known as “bouncing betties” that, when triggered, launched into the air and detonated about two feet in the air. Lethal shrapnel was then sprayed in all directions.
- **Walkie Talkie:** Signal Corpsmen were trained to communicate using these. They had a range of three miles.
- **Helmet:** The helmets came with a liner and a netting cover. In addition to protecting the head, they were used for washing, cooking, cleaning, and sometimes as a pillow.
- **Canteen:** This was standard military issue for drinking water.
- **Bag:** Bags came in a variety of sizes and shapes. A “ditty” bag was given out by the Red Cross volunteers for storage of personal items in their backpacks. Some were called “possibles” bags, haversacks, rucksacks, knapsacks, duffle bags, pouches, battle packs, or back packs, depending on their use.
- **Dog tags and P38 can opener:** All soldiers were issued each of these. The information on the dog tags differed according to the year. These replicated tags depict the information that was used in 1944. The military ID numbers, blood type, and religion were not available for the soldiers used in this lesson.
- **Order of the Day:** This statement was issued by General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Forces, to the soldiers, sailors and airmen of the Allied forces about to embark on the D-Day invasion, June 6, 1944.

\*These artifacts were not the property of this specific soldier, but are authentic to the time period.



PRIVATE  
VINCENT DIGAETANO

Notes:

- \* Pvt. DiGaetano was in E Company of the 16th Infantry Regiment, 1st Infantry Division
- \* Oral history excerpt from 2000, full version available at [www.firstdivisionmuseum.org](http://www.firstdivisionmuseum.org)



"He [the gunner on the slope above Easy Red] is in a one-man foxhole and he's shooting like hell. Finally, we get around behind him. He only threw up his hands when we got behind him and put a gun to his head. [laughs] That's when we finally found out he was Polish, started talking Polish.

He says, 'I got captured, I don't want to shoot!' One-man foxhole and shooting like crazy! Streczyk talked to him in Polish and he got so crazy with him he punched him. 'What the hell are you doing?' Pow!

[Vinny's wife, Chris, joined in and asked if Streczyk was the one who sent him back for the flamethrower? Vinny said yes. Chris said, 'And you went back?' Vinny said, 'What the hell do I know? He told me to go back, I go back.']

We got the flamethrower and went to a pillbox. The Germans come out, Aaaaah! They didn't even know we had a frigging flamethrower. They were hiding in the back or something. If you get them, they know about it. Had to be like napalm. In 30 seconds, or a minute, all gone. The tank was empty. Goodbye.

What's his name, [Fred] Reese? He has a fantastic memory, I think. He remembers me, that thing with the gun. That's great. I guess if I gave somebody my gun and then it was shot to pieces, I'd probably remember it too.

[... in an interview with Spalding, Vinny was said to have been 'hit in the butt by shrapnel fire.' Vinny laughed. He also laughed at the idea of yelling, 'I'm drowning, what do you want me to do with this flamethrower?']

It was about four or five o'clock in the afternoon when I got hit. I got hit in the leg, up here [points to thigh]. But that was from the grenade.

If it was our grenade, I would have been blown to bits. But they had these stupid mashed potatoes and they stunk. They were concussion things. Ours were fragmentation. Theirs were more or less concussion. When it blew up, pieces of metal that came from there was enough to do some damage. But it wasn't like ours where the whole thing would blow apart. Fragmentation, you know? Ours were more deadly than theirs. They were garbage. We thought they were garbage. It was a good thing too.

I remember the count that night at 9:00 or 10:00 o'clock. It didn't get dark until about 1:00 o'clock in the morning. It was Double British Summertime, you know? About 10:00 or 11:00 o'clock at night they had a count and from what I remember, 90 of us were left out of 250. They weren't all killed, probably they were wounded a lot of them. And missing too. But everything was all mixed up then. We had guys from the 29th Division with us most of the day, they had that blue and grey patch. They were with us a lot of the day. They wanted to stay with somebody. They didn't want to be deserted.

There was nothing joyous about it [victory on D-Day] because you had the next hedgerow, the next hedgerow, the next hedgerow. And there were a whole load of hedgerows. Like we never really run out of them in Normandy.

... The helmets were everything. You'd cook in them, eat out of them. The helmets were the greatest thing in the world. They were a little heavy until you got used to wearing them. You couldn't really take them off because you couldn't tell when they'd start shelling you or mortars would be coming in. And helmets saved so many lives."



PRIVATE  
VINCENT DIGAETANO

## Primary Sources to Examine\*

- **Testimony and photo:** The narrative was written by War Chronicle and based on recorded conversations done with Pvt. DiGaetano in the spring and summer of 2000.
- **Helmet:** The helmets came with a liner and a netting cover. In addition to protecting the head, they were used for washing, cooking, cleaning, and sometimes as a pillow.
- **Helmet liner:** This was an insert for a helmet that allowed the soldier to adjust the outer helmet to his head.
- **Shovel with cover:** This was one of the few items that the fighting soldier would not discard, but would actually carry right into battle with him. It was probably the most useful utensil that he had in his possession. In every new position he took, either advancing or retreating, it was absolutely necessary that a foxhole be dug.
- **Baseball grenade:** This was a U.S. issue grenade.
- **Hedgerow photo:** The Norman hedgerows dated back to Roman times. They were mounds of earth to keep cattle in and to mark boundaries. Often overgrown with vegetation they made the GI's feel like they were trapped in leafy tunnels. It was said to be like fighting in a maze. Rhino tanks were developed by soldiers in the field, fitted with metal "tusks" in front to break through the hedgerows.
- **Potato masher photo:** Shown here is a German hand grenade believed by G.I.'s to be of inferior quality to the U.S. grenades.
- **Dog tags and P38 can opener:** All soldiers were issued each of these. The information on the dog tags differed according to the year. These replicated tags depict the information that was used in 1944. The military ID numbers, blood type, and religion were not available for the soldiers used in this lesson.
- **Order of the Day:** This statement was issued by General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Forces, to the soldiers, sailors and airmen of the Allied forces about to embark on the D-Day invasion, June 6, 1944.

\*These artifacts were not the property of this specific soldier, but are authentic to the time period.

LIEUTENANT  
JOHN SPALDING

Notes:

- \* Lt. Spalding was in E Company of the 16th Infantry Regiment, 1st Infantry Division.
- \* He was one of the first soldiers on Omaha Beach.
- \* He was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross by Eisenhower (pictured).
- \* Oral history excerpt from 1945, full version available at [www.firstdivisionmuseum.org](http://www.firstdivisionmuseum.org)



"About 0630 we hit the line of departure; someone gave a signal and we swung into line. When we got about 200 yards offshore the boat halted and a member of the Navy crew yelled for us to drop the ramp. S/Sgt. Fred A. Bisco and I kicked the ramp down. Shortly before this, a Navy man had mounted the machine gun on the rear of the LCPV and had started to return fire. We were now receiving not only MG fire, but also mortar and some artillery fire.

We had come in at low tide and the obstacles were noticeable. They stuck out of the water and we could see tell-mines on many of them. No path had been cleared through them so we followed a zigzag course in . . .

Because we were carrying so much equipment and because I was afraid that we were being landed in deep water, I told the men not to jump out until after I had tested the water. I jumped out of the boat slightly to the left of the ramp into water about waist deep. It was about 0645. Then the men began to follow me. We headed ashore and the small arms fire became noticeable. We saw other boats to our left, but nothing to the right. We were the right line of the 1st Division. . . .

. . . By this time I noticed a number of my men on the beach, all standing up and moving across the sand. They were too waterlogged to run, but they went as fast as they could. It looked as if they were walking in the face of a real strong wind. We moved on across the shale to a house, which was straight inland. The first place we stopped was at the first slope . . . Down near the water's edge we ran into wire. S/Sgt. Curtis Colwell blew a hole in the wire with a bangalore. We picked our way through.


I tried to get E Co with my 536 radio. I took the 536 off my shoulder, worked the antenna out as I walked across and tried to get contact, but it didn't work. I looked down and saw the mouthpiece was shot away. . . . When we got up to the rubble by the demolished house we were built up as skirmishers and were returning what fire we could. Streczyk and Pfc. Richard J. Gallagher went forward to investigate the mine field. They decided that we couldn't cross it. . . .

On our left we had by-passed a pillbox, from which MG fire was coming and mowing down F Co people a few hundred yards to our left. There was nothing we could do to help them. We could still see no one to the right and there was no one up to us on the left. We didn't know what had become of the rest of E Co. Back in the water boats were in flames. I saw a tank ashore about 0730-0745. After a couple of looks back we decided we wouldn't look back any more.

About this time Gallagher said to follow him up the defilade\* which was about 400 yards to the right of the pillbox. . . .

. . . Lt. Blue of G Co came up and contacted me. He had come up our trail. His company had landed in the second wave behind us. Just a few minutes later Capt. Dawson of G Co came along. we still saw no one on the right. Capt. Dawson asked me if I knew where E Co was and I told him I didn't know. He said that E Co was 500 yards to my right, but he was thinking in terms of where they were supposed to land; they were actually 500-800 yards to our left. I later found out that they had lost 121 men. . . . We were on top of the hill by 0900. Advanced cautiously. We were the first platoon of the 16th to hit the top. Now I had 21-22 men in my section. . . ."

\*defilade - the protection of a position, vehicle, or troops against enemy observation or gunfire.



LIEUTENANT  
JOHN SPALDING

## Primary Sources to Examine\*

- **Testimony and photo:** Obtained from Cpt. Dawson in 1991 by Colonel Robert R. McCormick Research Center.
- **Dog tags and P38 can opener:** All soldiers were issued each of these. The information on the dog tags differed according to the year. These replicated tags depict the information that was used in 1944. The military ID numbers, blood type, and religion were not available for the soldiers used in this lesson.
- **Order of the Day:** This statement was issued by General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Forces, to the soldiers, sailors and airmen of the Allied forces about to embark on the D-Day invasion, June 6, 1944.
- **Field telephone:** These mobile phones were used by signal corpsmen in the field. The windup generator was used to power the phone's ringer and batteries to send the call. They drew power from their own battery, from a telephone exchange, or from an external power source. Usually the talking range was about five miles after being connected by wire strung by the signal corps wire crew.
- **Repair kit:** This was used to keep the field telephones in working condition.
- **Photo of mines:** Shown here are German made bouncing mines which were anti-personnel mines known as "bouncing betties" that, when triggered, launched into the air and detonated about two feet in the air. Lethal shrapnel was then sprayed in all directions.
- **Boots:** These are regular military issue, with strong ankle support and thick, durable soles.
- **Omaha Beach photo:** Soldiers are seen regrouping later in the day of June 6, 1944.
- **Sewing kit:** These kits were standard military issue, so soldiers could keep their uniforms in good condition by sewing on buttons and patching tears.
- **Bag:** Bags came in a variety of sizes and shapes. A "ditty" bag was given out by the Red Cross volunteers for storage of personal items in their backpacks. Some were called "possibles" bags, haversacks, rucksacks, knapsacks, duffle bags, pouches, battle packs, or back packs, depending on their use.

\*These artifacts were not the property of this specific soldier, but are authentic to the time period.

MAJOR CHARLES E  
TEGMEYER

Notes:

- \* Maj Tegtmeyer was the surgeon for the 16th Infantry Regiment, 1st Infantry Division.
- \* He received the Distinguished Service Cross and was one of the most decorated surgeons in the U.S. Army.
- \* He wrote Comments and Criticism on Operation "NEPTUNE" June 24, 1944, full version available at [www.warchronicle.com](http://www.warchronicle.com)




Excerpt from **Comments and Criticism on Operation "NEPTUNE"**

**The Operation.**

- (1) The weather and the roughness of the sea was such on June 6th that the operation should have been postponed another twenty-four hours. With a calmer sea many of the Amphibious tanks and Dukws lost would have made the beach and helped in the assault of the strong points.
- (2) The aerial, naval and rocket artillery preparations against the strong points were an utter failure, not a single enemy emplacement having been knocked out by them. An exact method of pin pointing targets for aerial bombing and naval artillery in the assault phase of such operations must be developed.
- (3) When the beach head became congested the Navy should have help up on ferrying the troops in until the assault waves had time to clear the beach.
- (4) Considerable congestion on the beach was caused by the large groups of Amphibious and Special Engineers brought in with the assault waves. These groups failed in their mission and merely crowded the beach and got in the way. These groups should not be brought in to shore until a beach head is made.

**The Medical Mission was a failure because:**

- a) Those medical groups responsible for first aid and evacuation of the beach namely, the Navy and the Engineer Shore Brigade did not function.
- b) The Landing Craft made slight effort in the first twenty-four hours to evacuate the wounded along the beach.
- c) Medical Installations such as Auxiliary Surgical groups were brought on shore too early without equipment, litters, blankets, or litter bearers. During the first twelve hours of a beach assault all medical emphasis should be placed on Evacuation, litter and vehicle and on emergency treatment only.
- d) The Collecting Company should not have been put all on one craft. They should have been distributed over at least two craft if not three. The losses suffered by this group were such that they were rendered non-effective when they were needed most.
- e) Reserves of litter bearers, litters and blankets must be gotten to shore in some manner early to promptly replace losses in the initial waves.
- f) The Geneva Convention is a failure. Many of the Aidmen wounded were shot intentionally. The white brassard draws fire. The Craft bringing in the Collecting Company all members of which were wearing brassards received more direct enemy fire than any other craft. Since the landing on the beach several Aidmen have been wounded by sniper fire. The Geneva Convention brassard makes the Company Aidman's job the most hazardous in the Army.



MAJOR CHARLES E  
TEGTMEYER

## Primary Sources to Examine\*

- **Testimony and photo:** Retrieved from the National Archives (College Park, Maryland), Rg. 407, 301-INF (16) 6-O.1, "History Medical Det", Box 5931 via [WarChronicle.com](http://WarChronicle.com).
- Photo taken with other soldiers during an amphibious exercise in England, early 1944
- **Dog tags and P38 can opener:** All soldiers were issued each of these. The information on the dog tags differed according to the year. These replicated tags depict the information that was used in 1944. The military ID numbers, blood type, and religion were not available for the soldiers used in this lesson.
- **Order of the Day:** This statement was issued by General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Forces, to the soldiers, sailors and airmen of the Allied forces about to embark on the D-Day invasion, June 6, 1944.
- **Haversack:** These were worn slung over the shoulder to the side rather than on the back.
- **Brassard:** This is a replica of the armbands worn by medical personnel to be recognized by their enemy as members of the Red Cross, according to the rules of the Geneva Convention.
- **Medic photo:** The medics discovered that one red cross arm band was not visible enough to prevent being fired upon. They started wearing one on each arm and even painted red crosses on their helmets.
- **Army blanket:** This blanket is regular military issue made of wool.
- **Canteen:** This was a regular military issue water canteen.
- **Helmet:** The helmets came with a liner and a netting cover. In addition to protecting the head, they were used for washing, cooking, cleaning, and sometimes as a pillow.
- **Medical bag with photo of contents:** This bag was used by Red Cross and medical personnel. Each soldier carried his own first aid bandage container. The medical personnel carried a much more detailed set of equipment, medicine, and tools.

\*These artifacts were not the property of this specific soldier, but are authentic to the time period.

CAPTAIN  
EDWARD F WOZENSKI

Notes:

- \* Capt. Wozenski was commander of E Company, 16th Infantry Regiment, 1st Infantry Division
- \* He was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross
- \* Oral history excerpt from 1972, full version available at [www.warchronicle.com](http://www.warchronicle.com)



"[As an assault division, however] We were overtrained. This is a thing that I learned. We had number one man in number two boat team going for aperture number three in pillbox number seventeen. So if you missed your whole target area by a thousand yards, you were in another family of pillboxes and the whole thing went completely askew. . . .

Despite all the fantastic gear that was supposed to be laid out for us, [I said to my men] have faith in what you have in your hand. And thank God we did.

. . . [the ships] were drawing some shore gunfire. We saw the rocket ships taking some evasive action and somebody panicked and pulled the switch. And we saw this tremendous display but I'll bet . . . that there wasn't one rocket that came within a half a mile of the beach. Nine thousand rockets, the most beautiful display you ever saw in your life, and I'll swear to God I didn't see so much as a hand grenade crater within a half a mile of the beach that I hit.

Of course, we expected great things of the 9th Air Force too . . . 186 tons of divebombing by the 9th Air Force on Exit E-1 and the same thing for John Finke on Exit E-3. To this day, I don't know what happened. As I say, I didn't see so much as a hand grenade crater there anyplace. . . the 8th Air Force was supposed to carpet the whole area with 2,000 tons of bombs. Where it went, I don't know. It must have gone far inland.


After we debarked into the small LVCPs, I recall any number of characters floating around in the waves with their life vests on . . . it dawned on me what had happened. The amphibious tank battalion that was supposed to hit the beach four minutes prior to H-Hour, apparently all swamped. When I got to the beach I saw two tanks there. I'm assuming the other 52-odd did go in [that the DD tanks sank] and the crews bailed out. These were the people we went through.

. . . To this day I don't know what happened to the very fine 116th Infantry of the 29th Division. . . Three battalions of the 116th Infantry were to hit the beach [along with two battalions of the 16th Infantry] so that there were going to be at least five battalions hitting the beach initially.

I wanted company. I wanted company very badly. I could see John Finke to my left with his seven or eight landing craft. I had mine, but E Company of the 116th Infantry was supposed to be to my right. We crested a wave and the last thing I did before we hit the beach proper was to look. I'm looking for company, I want company, and I could not see them. I imagine I had a good two or three miles visibility. And they were not in sight. Nowhere. And to this day I don't know what happened.

The beach was bloody awful. We landed, per the Navy's request, at low water and that meant approximately 400 yards of struggle over the sand. So there was 400 yards and we were horribly overloaded. Just before the landing . . . our web gear . . . was taken away from us because some theorist figured that it would be far easier and much more practical to carry a hunting-type jacket . . . we were issued these canvas jackets with these fantastic pockets all over the place and we transferred all of our gear into these pockets.

So picture: You hit the beach and you're up and down, you're in water . . . and everything's flying all around so you duck down. You're terrified as anyone would be. And every time I got up I thought that it was pure terror that was making my knees buckle until I finally hit the shale and realized I had about 100 pounds of sand in those pockets that had accumulated on top of maybe 50 or 60 pounds that we were all carrying in. so it wasn't just pure terror that was making our knees buckle. Our pockets were full of sand. . . ."



CAPTAIN  
EDWARD F WOZENSKI

## Primary Sources to Examine\*

- **Testimony and photo:** The narrative is from a television interview recorded in 1972. The recording (made by Thames Television for a TV program on D-Day) is now part of the Imperial War Museum's oral history collection. It was transcribed and published on [WarChronicle.com](http://WarChronicle.com).
- **Cloth bag:** This was a regular military issue for holding a variety of clothing items needed in the field.
- **Field jacket:** The field jacket was a regular military issue. This style was designed with multiple external pockets so the soldier could reach items easier than out of a backpack. The disadvantage to this style was that the pockets filled with the fine beach sand during the landing and added even more weight to the 60-70 pound packs, making it very difficult to stand or move forward onto the beach.
- **Socks:** Each soldier was issued at least two pair. It was extremely important that soldiers keep their feet dry to prevent trench foot which could render the soldier unable to walk. Trench foot is a medical condition caused by prolonged exposure of the feet to damp, unsanitary, and cold conditions.
- **Undershirt and long johns:** These were standard military issue clothes.
- **Lucky Strike cigarettes:** Before the Surgeon General's ruling on the harmful effects of cigarette smoking, soldiers were issued Lucky Strike cigarettes to calm their nerves in battle. Originally, the packages were green, like these. The Lucky Strike company changed to a white package so the green paint/dye could be used by the military for the war effort.
- **Normandy Beach sand:** This vial of sand was brought back from France.
- **Guide to Great Britain:** This was issued to American soldiers to help them assimilate into Great Britain's culture when they were stationed there.
- **Dog tags and P38 can opener:** All soldiers were issued each of these. The information on the dog tags differed according to the year. These replicated tags depict the information that was used in 1944. The military ID numbers, blood type, and religion were not available for the soldiers used in this lesson.
- **Order of the Day:** This statement was issued by General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Forces, to the soldiers, sailors and airmen of the Allied forces about to embark on the D-Day invasion, June 6, 1944.

\*These artifacts were not the property of this specific soldier, but are authentic to the time period.



TOP SECRET  
"NEPTUNE" 18, 1944

Page 1 of 6 Pages

HQ, RCT 116  
APO #29, US Army  
11 May 1944.

DECLASSIFIED  
E.O. 12958, Sec. 1.1  
93501F  
By glv/vsl NARS, Date 4/29/96

FO NO 1

TOP SECRET :  
: By Authority of :  
: CG, 1st US Inf Div :  
: Initials JPH :  
: 11 May 1944 :

COPY NO 19

MAPS: GSGS 4250, 1/50000, France, Sheets 6E/6, 6F/2, 7E/5, 7F/1.

1. a. Intelligence -- Annex #3.  
b. (1) The First US Army, associated US and Allied naval and air forces, and the British Second Army will conduct a simultaneous assault on the continent of Europe with the mission of establishing a beachhead from which further offensive operations can be developed.

(2) The 11th US Amphibious Force, reinforced, will provide escort and support the landing of 1st US Inf Div (reinforced), clear underwater minefields and obstacles off-shore, protect the transport area and assist the landing with gunfire, both prearranged and on call. Annex #11.

(3) The 9th US Air Force will support attack of the 1st US Inf Div (reinforced) by prearranged bombing missions prior to H-Hour and by missions on call after H-Hour. Annex #11.

(4) The 59th British Division will assault the beaches on the left of the 1st US Infantry Division and will capture BAYEUX on D-Day.

(5) The US VII Corps on the right of the 1st US Inf Div will assault BEACH UTAH on D-Day at H-Hour. The 4th US Inf Div will make the assault landing. The 101st Airborne Div will drop on the area behind VIERVILLE (4299) - CARENTEAN (3894) during the night of D-1, D-Day, with the main objective of assisting the seaborne landing of the VII Corps.

(6) The Provisional Engineer Special Brigade Group, consisting of the 5th and 8th Engineer Special Brigades (reinforced) will support the landings of the 1st US Inf Div (reinforced). It will operate all shore installations necessary for debarkation, supply, evacuation, and local beach security to insure the continuous movement of personnel, vehicles, and supplies across the beach.

(7) The Engineer Special Task Force (146th Engr CT) lands H+3 minutes D-Day assists 11th Amphibious Force in clearing underwater minefields and obstacles off-shore to permit passage of landing craft.

(8) The 29th US Inf Div, less RCT 115, with RCT 26 and other troops attached, will land on Beach OMAHA behind the initial assault.

(9) The 1st US Inf Div less RCT 26, with RCT 116 and other troops attached, will make the initial assault on BEACH OMAHA at H-Hour on D-Day with RCT's 16 and 116 abreast, RCT 116 on the right to reduce the beach defenses in its zone of action, secure the Beachhead Maintenance Line, secure the D-Day phase line by two hours prior dark on D-Day and cover the landing of the remainder of the V Corps. It will be prepared to participate in the extension of the beachhead to the South and South West.

2. a. RCT 116 reinforced lands H-5 minutes D-Day on OMAHA BEACHES, EASY GREEN, DOG RED, DOG WHITE, DOG GREEN, AND CHARLEY with 1st and 2nd Battalions and 4 Ranger Companies abreast, in order left to right 2nd, 1st, 1 Ranger Co and 3 Ranger Companies to:

- (1) Assault and reduce beach defenses in zone of action.
- (2) Seize and secure that portion of Beach Maintenance Line in zone of action.
- (3) Move with all possible speed, seize and secure that portion of phase line 1 in zone of action prior to two (2) hours before dark on D-Day.
- (4) Capture POINTE DU HOC.
- (5) Seize and hold ISIGNY.
- (6) Protect bridges vicinity ISIGNY.
- (7) Patrol to D+1 phase line in zone of action.
- (8) Gain and maintain contact with RCT 16 on left and VII Corps on right.
- (9) Be prepared to repel hostile counterattacks.
- (10) Opns Overlay Annex #1.

- b. Landing, Ship, and Boat Assignment Table Annex #3.
- c. Landing Diagram Annex #5.
- d. Troop List ROT 116 Annex #9.

## 3. a. 1ST BN LANDING TEAM consisting of:

1st Bn 116th Infantry  
Ranger Force (after arrival at POINTE DU HOE, Par 3d, below)  
Co B; 121st Engr (C) Bn  
Co B; 81st Cml Wpns Bn (Mtd), Par 3k below  
Co A, 743d Tank Bn (After reorganization in Transit Area)

lands at H+1 minute D-Day on OMAHA BEACH DOG GREEN in column of companies

(1) Assault Company lands with six (6) assault sections abreast, reduces beach defenses in zone of action, including enemy installations on western limit of BEACH OMAHA DOG GREEN, captures VIERVILLE SUR MER and reorganizes.

(2) Assist the Ranger Force in capture of fortifications along the coast from the western limits of Beach OMAHA DOG GREEN to POINTE DU HOE inclusive.

(3) After capture of POINT DU HOE reorganize and, assisted by Ranger Force, reduce the hostile fortifications along the coast between POINTE DU HOE and ISIGNY.

(4) Be prepared to seize and hold ISIGNY and bridges in that vicinity and prepare for all around defense. Support attack of Ranger Force with heavy weapons and Artillery fires.

(5) Gain and maintain contact with VII Corps on right.

(6) Co B, 121st Engr (C) Bn reverts to unit control when beach defenses are reduced.

(7) Opns Overlay Annex #1.

## b. 2ND BN LANDING TEAM consisting of:

2nd Bn 116th Infantry  
Co C, 112th Engr (C) Bn

lands at H+1 minute, D-Day on OMAHA BEACHES EASY GREEN, DOG RED, DOG WHITE with 3 assault companies abreast to:

(1) Reduce beach defenses in its zone of action.

(2) Assist 1st Bn Assault Company in reduction of Beach Defenses.

(3) Capture ST LAURENT SUR MER and the high ground (Beachhead Maintenance Line) 2500 yards southwest of ST LAURENT SUR MER. Establish company strong points in depth, prepared for all around defense.

(4) Construct semi-prepared positions between company strong points

(5) Be prepared to augment the defense by use of 743d Tank Bn less Co A, and elements of the 6th Engineer Special Brigade moving into semi-prepared positions between company strongpoints.

(6) Gain and maintain contact with 16th Infantry on left.

(7) Gain and maintain contact with 115th Infantry after its arrival

(8) Patrol to inundated area on South and to LONGUEVILLE on the West.

(9) Hold position at all costs.

(10) Co C, 112th Engr (C) Bn reverts to unit control after Beach defenses are breached.

(11) Opns Overlay Annex #1.

## c. 3RD BN LANDING TEAM consisting of:

3rd Bn 116th Infantry  
Co D, 81st Cml Bn (Mtd), Par 3k below.

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lands on OMAHA BEACHES, EASY GREEN, DOG RED AND DOG WHITE (Annex #5, Landing Diagram) to:

- (1) Proceed with all possible speed to LONGUEVILLE, capture high ground 2500 yards WEST of LONGUEVILLE and organize for all around defense.
- (2) Reconnoiter to ISIGNY.
- (3) Be prepared to capture ISIGNY.
- (4) Cover the assembly of the RCT 115.
- (5) Patrol to D-1 Phase line in OT Zone of Action.
- (6) Gain and maintain contact with 1st Bn on right.

d. RANGER Group. See Par 3a above.

(1) Force "A", consisting of 3 companies (reinf), at H-Hour D-Day land on Beach CHARLEY, capture POINTE DU HOE, prepare to repel counter-attack, and cover advance of remainder of Ranger Group. Par d (3) below.

(2) Force "B" consisting of 1 Company land at H+3 minutes D-Day on Beach OMAHA DOG GREEN, move rapidly through breach in wire on western edge of DOG GREEN BEACH, destroy defenses at POINTE ET RAZ DE LA PERCEE. Continue advance along coast, assist 1st Bn 116th Inf in destruction of fortifications from POINTE ET RAZ DE LA PERCEE to and including POINTE DU HOE. On arrival at POINTE DU HOE revert to Ranger Group.

(3) Ranger Group less detachments (Force "C") above, land at H+60 minutes D-Day and execute one of following plans:

PLAN 1. If success signal is received prior to H+30 from FORCE "A" per d(1) above, FORCE "C" will move to and land at H+60 minutes D-Day on BEACH CHARLEY. Gain contact with FORCE "A" destroy fortifications at POINTE DU HOE and along coast from POINTE DU HOE to SLUICE GATE (563933). Reorganize, prepare to repel counter-attack. Cover advance of the 1st Bn 116th Inf to POINTE DU HOE. Upon arrival of 1st Bn 116th Infantry at POINTE DU HOE, Ranger Group is attached to 1st Bn 116th Infantry.

PLAN 2. Force "C" land on BEACH OMAHA DOG GREEN commencing at H+60 minutes D-Day move rapidly to POINTE DU HOE. Capture POINTE-DU HOE. Destroy fortifications from POINTE DU HOE to SLUICE GATE (563937 - 563933) reorganize, prepare to repel counter-attack. Cover advance of 1st Bn 116th Inf to POINTE DU HOE.

Upon arrival of 1st Bn 116th Inf at POINTE DU HOE, Ranger Group is attached to 1st Bn 116th Infantry.

(4) Ranger Group will maintain contact with OT and 1st Bn 116th Inf CP by Liaison Officer with SCR 300s, and will submit half hourly reports by most rapid means available.

e. 111th FA Bn with 58th Armd FA Bn attached.

(1) 111th FA Bn will land in DUKWs on OMAHA BEACH EASY GREEN at H+110 minutes D-Day or on call of Bn Commander. Occupy positions near ST LAURENT SUR MER, support attack of RCT 116; be prepared to reinforce fires of 58th Armd FA Bn; cover the defense of RCT 116 against counter attack and be prepared to answer calls for fire from CG, 1st US Inf Div Artillery.

(2) The 58th Armd FA Bn will fire from positions afloat in accordance with Annex #11, Prearranged Air and Naval Gunfire Support Plan and will land at H+90 minutes on OMAHA BEACH DOG WHITE; occupy positions near VIERVILLE SUR MER and be in direct support of the attacks of 1st Bn 116th Inf reinforced and Ranger Group. Be prepared to answer calls for fire from CG, 1st US Inf Div Artillery.

f. 58th Armd FA Bn (Par 3 g(2) above), Annex #5, Landing Diagram.

g. 743d Tank Bn. Annex #5, Landing Diagram and Annex #10, Tank Employment Plan. Dewaterproof in Rallying Position.

h. Cannon Company land in DUKW's on OMAHA BEACH DOG GREEN at H+110 minutes D-Day. Direct support 3rd Bn. Be prepared to promptly go into action to repel hostile Tank Attack.

i. AT Company land on OMAHA BEACHES EASY GREEN AND DOG RED at H+120 minutes D-Day. Annex #12, Antitank Plan.

j. 121st Engr (C) Bn (less Cos: A & B per 3a above) with 112th Engr (C) Bn (less Co C, par 3b above) and Det, Tank Dozers attached.  
Annex #5; Landing Diagram  
Annex #7, Engineer Plan.

k. Companies B & D, 81st Cml Wpns Bn (Mtzd). Annex #5, Landing Diagram (Par 3a and 3c above).

l. Det, Tankdozers, land at H-Hour D-Day on OMAHA BEACH EASY GREEN (Par 3j above).

m. Co B, 104th Med Bn (reinforced) Annex #5, Landing Diagram. Set up station for collection and evacuation of casualties. Relieve 500th Med Coll Co. Annex #1 Opn Overlay.

n. Det 29th MP Plat. Annex #5, Landing Diagram. Establish traffic control in zone of action. Coordinate with PM 1st US Inf Div and 6th ESC. Supervise movement of vehicles to assembly areas. Mark roads.

o. Det 29th Ren Troops. Annex #5, Landing Diagram. Have Radio Crew of 4 men with SCR 300's to:

- (1) Follow each assault Company.
- (2) Land with Ranger Force at H-Hour on Beach CHARLEY.
- (3) Maintain contact with RCT Hqs by half hourly reports
- (4) Land with Det 29th US Inf Div Hq.
- (5) Report progress of attack at least every fifteen minutes to 29th Inf Div.

p. Section GR Plat, 806th QM Co Annex #5, Landing Diagram Annex #3 Landing Ship and Boat Assignment Table. Identify, register, and supervise burial of dead.

q. PWI Team Annex #2 Intelligence Annex #3 Landing, Ship and Boat Assignment Table and Annex #5 Landing Diagram. Carry out mission assigned by higher headquarters.

r. (1) All units not specifically mentioned land in priorities established in Annex #3 Landing, Ship, and Boat Assignment Table and Annex #5 Landing Diagram.

(2) Watches synchronized with ships time prior to debarkation and daily thereafter with RCT OP.

(3) H-Hour, D-Day will be announced later.

(4) All units landing in the assault will carry sufficient explosives to remove all types of beach and road obstacles.

(5) All assault troops will carry one  $\frac{1}{2}$  pound block of TNT with Safety fuze and primer for use in digging fox hole in occupation of defensive positions.

(6) Upon arrival at objectives all units will immediately prepare to repel counter-attack.

(7) Gas will not be employed except on orders from Supreme Headquarters. No gas offensive ammunition will be taken overseas.

(8) Eng and Special units submit situation reports every half hour.

(9) Annex #11 Rearranged Air, Air Support, and Naval Gunfire Plan.

(10) Annex #13 Chemical Operation Plan.

(11) Prisoners will be held to minimum necessary for identification.

(12) An individual will precede each vehicle landing in water. Vehicle will not be debarked from craft in over  $3\frac{1}{2}$  feet of water. Individual will walk in front of vehicle to high water mark.

(13) Planes will not be fired on except on orders of a commissioned Officer or in case of actual air attack. All passive air defense measures will be used.

(14) Strict camouflage and track discipline will be enforced.

(15) Good Luck, God bless you, and shoot to kill.

4. Annex #4, Administrative Order.

5. a. Annex #6 - Signal Communication Plan.

b. CP's (1) ROT 116 initially on USS Carroll. Alternate on LCI (L) 535 On Shore Opns Overlay - Annex #1.

(2) 1st Bn initially LSI (L) #2 HMS Empire Javelin.

(3) 2nd Bn initially on APA #4 USS Jefferson.

(4) 3rd Bn initially on APA #3 USS Carroll.

(5) Bns report locations ashore.

c. Axis Signal Communication Annex #1 Opns Overlay.

d. Radios silent until H-Hour or until orders received from competent Headquarters.

C A N H A M

OFFICIAL:

*J. H. Howie*

HOWIE,  
S-3.

ANNEXES

Annex #1 - Operations Overlay

Annex #2 - Intelligence

Annex #3 - Landing, Ship, & Boat Assignment Table

Annex #4 - Administrative Order

Appendix #1 - Personnel

Appendix #2 - Burial & Grave Registration

Appendix #3 - Traffic Circulation Map

Annex #5 - Landing Diagram

Annex #6 - Signal Communications Plan

Annex #7 - Engineer Plan

Appendix #1 - Engineer Supply Plan

Appendix #2 - Engineer Operation Overlay

Annex #8 - Field Artillery Plan

Annex #9 - Troop List

Annex #10 - Tank Employment Plan

Annex #11 - Proarranged Air, Air Support, and Naval Gunfire Plan

Annex #12 - Antitank Plan

Annex #13 - Chemical Operation Plan

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CO Naval Assault Group	5	20-24
CO 16th Inf	1	25
CO Det 6th ESB	1	26
CO 115th Inf	1	27
CO Special Engr Task Force	1	28
CO 149th Engr (C) Bn	1	29
CO 1st Bn 116th Inf	1	30

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CO Cannon Co 116th Inf	1	36
CO Medical Det 116th Inf	1	37
CO 111th FA Bn	1	38
CO 121st Engr (C) Bn	1	39
CO 112th Engr (C) Bn	1	40
CO 58th Armd FA Bn	1	41
CO 743d Tank Bn (ID)	1	42
CO Ranger Group	1	43
CO 2nd Ranger Bn	1	44
CO 5th Ranger Bn	1	45
CO 467th AA AW Bn (SP)	1	46
CO 81st Cml Wpns Bn (Mtd)	1	47
CO Co B 104th Mod Bn (Reinf)	1	48
CO 116th Inf Air Support Party	1	49
CO Det 29th CM Co	1	50
CO Det 29th Signal Co	1	51
CO Det 29th MP Plat	1	52
CO Det 29th Inf Div Hq & Hq Co	1	53
Civil Affairs Officer (29th Inf Div)	1	54
Co Det 29th Ren Troops	1	55
CO 2nd & 5th Ranger Bn Air Support Party	1	56
CO Btry 397th AA AW Prov Bn	1	57
CO Det 320th Bar Bln Bn (VIA)	1	58
CO 116th Inf	1	59
Executive Officer 116th Inf	1	60
S-1 116th Inf	1	61
S-2 116th Inf	1	62
S-4 116th Inf	1	63
Communications Officer 116th Inf	1	64
Ammunition Officer 116th Inf	1	65
Surgeon 116th Inf	1	66
Personnel Officer 116th Inf	1	67
In Officers, S-3 Section, 116th Inf	3	68-70
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**Order of the Day:** D-day statement issued by General Eisenhower to encourage the soldiers, sailor, and airmen of the Allied Expeditionary Force on June 6, 1944.

Collection DDE-EPRE: Eisenhower, Dwight D: Papers, Pre-Presidential, 1916-1952; Dwight D. Eisenhower Library.

SUPREME HEADQUARTERS  
ALLIED EXPEDITIONARY FORCE



Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen of the Allied Expeditionary Force!

You are about to embark upon the Great Crusade, toward which we have striven these many months. The eyes of the world are upon you. The hopes and prayers of liberty-loving people everywhere march with you. In company with our brave Allies and brothers-in-arms on other Fronts, you will bring about the destruction of the German war machine, the elimination of Nazi tyranny over the oppressed peoples of Europe, and security for ourselves in a free world.

Your task will not be an easy one. Your enemy is well trained, well equipped and battle-hardened. He will fight savagely.

But this is the year 1944 ! Much has happened since the Nazi triumphs of 1940-41. The United Nations have inflicted upon the Germans great defeats, in open battle, man-to-man. Our air offensive has seriously reduced their strength in the air and their capacity to wage war on the ground. Our Home Fronts have given us an overwhelming superiority in weapons and munitions of war, and placed at our disposal great reserves of trained fighting men. The tide has turned ! The free men of the world are marching together to Victory !

I have full confidence in your courage, devotion to duty and skill in battle. We will accept nothing less than full Victory !

Good Luck ! And let us all beseech the blessing of Almighty God upon this great and noble undertaking.



*Dwight D. Eisenhower*