

1ST INF DIVISION

Omaha Beach

June 6, 1944

An unusually complete collection of interviews on assault landing by one combat team. Full narrative at regiment, battalion and company level. A great deal of precise tactical data on amphibious operations and small unit combat.

<u>Interviews (Sources unknown)</u>	<u>Pages</u>
1st Bn 16th Inf	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
1st Bn 16th Inf Forward CP	1
AT Plat 1st Bn 16th Inf	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
A Co 16th Inf	1
B Co 16th Inf	1
C Co 16th Inf	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
D Co 16th Inf	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
2nd Bn 16th Inf	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
E Co 16th Inf	8
F Co 16th Inf	8
G Co 16th Inf	5
H Co 16th Inf	1
L Co 16th Inf	2
AT Co 16th Inf	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
After Action Report CT 16	1
Cannon Company, 16th Inf	2
A Co 1st Medical Bn	6
IPW team report	6

**CLASSIFICATION CHANGED TO:**

**CANCELLED**

**BY AUTHORITY OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL**

*W. O. McPartland*  
**DOWNGRADING COMMITTEE** 15 April 46

16th Inf Regt - 1st Inf Div

1. A narrative letter written by a member of the 1PW team which landed on D-Day with the 16th Inf. It gives an informative account of PW handling during the assault stage. 5 1/4 pages

AL-110  
⑤ 14

REPORT AFTER ACTION:

The advance C.P Group, consisting of 102 officers and men in LCM #26 moved toward the beach in a rough sea. The weather was rainy, foggy and cold. A considerable volume of fire, artillery, machine gun and rifle was directed at the craft as it neared the beach. The tide was just beginning to rise and the ramp was stopped 150 yards from shore at 0720 hours. Lt. Hill led the I & R into the waist deep icy cold water followed by the personnel of the communications group carrying radios and wire, the Regimental Headquarters advance Group, and the advance Command post. Landing at extreme low water the men had but a short distance to cover before they came to the first obstacles. They were in some depth of water when they met their first enemy fire. They immediately hit the sand but the rushing tide made cover impossible, many of the wounded that were unable to walk were swamped heroic efforts were made by other personnel to escort them to the safety of the beach. Considerable confusion resulted, the Officer in charge Lt. Col Mathews was among the first to be hit, and died immediately. Thirty five men in all were wounded and killed from the time the ramp went down till they reached the beach. The beach was crowded, no exits had been made in the wire, the beach was under continual cross fire from small arms and artillery. Communication equipment had been lost and any radio that showed an antenna above the shale shelf drew immediate and personal attention from enemy guns. Into this confusion the rear C.P. group landed at about 0815. When these boats were within fifty yards of the shore they came under fire, the men went off in orderly fashion, but the confusion on the beach soon infected them. The commanding Officer proceeded immediately to the vicinity of where the advance CP should have been which was some hundred yards to the left of where they landed. It soon became evident that no such command post existed and that most elements were pinned on the beach. A word might be said at this point that may in all fairness be included to explain some of the grouping on the beach. A good number of the men in the small craft were deathly sea sick and needed some rest before they could continue. Col. Taylor sought out the various commanders and tried to get order out of what looked like chaos. "The only people on this beach are the dead and these that are going to die-now lets get to hell out of here". They did. By that time he had most of the companies moving and followed shortly with Headquarters Company. The primary end was to clear the beach so that a good bit of equipment was left behind. In the meantime at a point close to where the rear CP came ashore a hole was made in the wire and it was thru this single hole that the whole combat team left the beach. Cover was taken behind steep hill that bordered the beach some three hundred yards inland. The CP was organized and rescue squads were sent back to the beach to salvage what wire radios and other equipment was left there. At this point a count was taken on the personnel present, and those that were hit on the beach. The air support command was there almost intact but without equipment. Not one radio was in working order, a shortage of wire was reported but within an hour everything was almost in working order. Major Godfray was reported to be killed on the beach while trying to assemble his command. It soon became evident that while the new location was better than the beach it left much to be desired. Mortar shells fell in the draw with a disconcerting frequency, and picked off men every now and again. The Regimental medics were doing a land sale business. The Command continued to function in creditable manner. During the night the enemy air power showed itself and the CP found itself on the receiving end of the naval anti air fire. The following afternoon the CP moved to the vicinity of Colleville to the comparative safety of the war zone and soldiers slept a peaceful sleep.

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HEADQUARTERS COMPANY CT-16  
APO #1 U. S. ARMY

16 June 1944

SUBJECT : Report on operation "Neptune".

To : Commanding Officer, CT-16.

GL-110  
⑤ 15

Prior to commencement of operation "Neptune", Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 16th Infantry, started its movement from Parnham, Beaminster, Dorset, England, on May 15, 1944, when two vehicles and drivers, with one  $\frac{1}{4}$  ton trailer left for Bristol Channel. The main body of men and officers departed from Parnham at 1000 hours, May 17th and moved to Marshalling Camp D-10. Col. Taylor and several members of his staff remained behind at Parnham, and moved to D-10 on May 25th. Also left behind was a small group from Headquarters Company of about 25 men and one officer to clean out Parnham. This group, less 10 kitchen personnel, departed for D-10 area on May 25th. The kitchen truck with one ton trailer and personnel reported to the Personnel Adjutant, where it was to be under his command until it joined the company again in France on D plus six.

The main body which had moved to area D-10 on May 17th, was under command of Lt. Col. Mathews, Executive Officer of the Regiment. Area D-10 was occupied and administration set up with a minimum of confusion.

The rear detail left at Parnham gave the area we had occupied since November, 1943, a thorough clean-up, and the place was left in clean and orderly condition. During this period that the rear group was still at Parnham, there were frequent and sizeable conferences and meetings by Col. Taylor, his staff and other officers - all relating to the impending "Neptune" operation.

Two days after the rear group moved into D-10 area, the camp was sealed, and shortly thereafter, briefing commenced. If any officer or enlisted man had any doubt that "Neptune" was really the invasion, and many held this belief, the briefing eliminated this thought.

Men and officers were briefed in a room especially set up for the purpose. An exact model of the beach we were to assault, and the surrounding terrain, was there for all to see and study. Aerial photographs, close-up photos of the beach, maps, were all here. Briefing officers read pertinent sections of the "Neptune" field order to their respective men. The men were particularly interested in the model, and carefully looked at that particular section of the beach where they would be landed.

At Area D-10, new type assault gas masks were issued and tested in a tear gas chamber. The reaction to the new type of mask was favorable, and the men seemed to prefer this mask over any other type they had ever been issued.

On May 29th, Headquarters and Headquarters Company moved out of Area D-10, and was moved into other camps by Boat Groups. The great majority of Headquarters and Headquarters Company was in two groups. One group, under Lt. Col. Mathews, constituted the Advance C.P. Group, and moved to Camp D-8. The other group, under Col. Taylor, moved to D-4. Those men not included in either of these groups went to other marshalling areas. These for the most part were drivers, who were to load on other boats with their vehicles.

Life at Areas D-4 and D-8 was largely a matter of final check ups, meetings of officers, clean up of equipment, and other last minute details. Though hot water facilities were none too plentiful, there were frequent movies and the chow was good.

On the 1st of June the rear CP group packed their equipment, loaded their rolls, and moved from D-4 area at 1030 hours, in trucks for Weymouth. It took about four hours' standing in line at Weymouth until the last of the rear CP group was loaded onto APA #1, otherwise known as "The Chase."

The advance CP group departed from D-8 at 1700 hours on the 1st of June, proceeded to Weymouth by truck, and proceeded to load onto APA #2, better known as the USS "Henrico."

LCVPs were used to transport the men from the dock at Weymouth out into the harbor where the ships were anchored. The seas was not what would accurately be called rough, but neither was it calm, and this, combined with the characteristics of an LCVP, brought the men to their ships wet, but full of spirit. (????)

They were happy to board the ship. They had been there before. They knew the chow would be good. The big question, of course, was -- when would D-day be? Every man was anxious to get the job started, for the sooner it started the sooner would come the long-awaited victory.

Life aboard ship was pleasant, especially as compared to that in the marshalling areas. The food was excellent and ample. The conversation was, of course, all invasion. When would D-day be? How rough would be the ~~xxx~~ show? Would the Germans be expecting the troops? Those and a million other questions were soon to be answered.

Officers and NCOs found themselves busy on board ship. Meetings, final plans and details were attended to. In addition, the troops were given a final briefing and final questions were answered. Those on board the "Chase" had the opportunity of viewing the model of the beach for the last time and get their final orientation.

The evening meal on June 4th was steak and ice cream. The men figured they would set sail that evening. However, they didn't, and (they maintain) whether or not plans had been changed or D-day moved up, they said they never knew. At any rate, the evening meal on June 5th was again ice cream with pork chops this time. The "Chase" weighed anchor at about 1800 hours and set sail for France, and the "Henrico" set sail at about the same time.

The convoy grew larger as they proceeded. Ships -- and more of them -- on all sides, of all types -- LCI(L)s, transports, destroyers, cruisers, PT boats, and others.

There was little sleep the night of June 5th. The most anyone could get was a two-~~hour~~ or three hour snatch. Few actually wanted to sleep, for there were rifles to be cleaned and checked, and equipment to be readied. The men were anxious and ready to get going with the big show. Morale was excellent, and all Headquarters men were confident.

Exactly when the convoy dropped anchor few of the men knew for sure, but what each and every man did know after he finished his breakfast at 0415 hours was that we were there -- ten miles off the coast of France.

The Advance CP group, on board the "Henrico", went down the nets on the sides of ~~xxx~~ the ship and loaded into LCM #26 at 0500 hours, and set sail for the beach. The rear CP group left the "Chase" at 0600, scrambled down the nets, and loaded into two different craft -- an LCM and an LCVP. The latter carried Col. Taylor, his Staff and certain other liaison personnel.

The Advance Group, consisting of 102 men in LCM #26, moved toward the beach in a rough sea. The weather was rainy and foggy. Many men were seasick and the small vomit bags which had been issued to each man, proved their usefulness. As the boats neared the beach, a considerable volume of fire, both shellfire and MG fire, was directed against the ~~xxx~~ boat. The tide was low, or just on its way in, and the ramp on the LCM was dropped at 0720

hours several yards from shore. There was thus considerable distance to traverse, under heavy fire, to reach cover on the beach itself. In addition there was a sand bar some 25 yards wide which had to be crossed to reach the beach proper.

As the ramp dropped, Lt. Hill was first off into the water, waist high, followed by men from his I. & R. Platoon. The communication group followed, carrying all its equipment, followed by Company Headquarters group, field artillery, and other attached men. There was very heavy fire. Officers and NCOs were active in trying to disperse the men, and in trying to get all equipment off boat, and onto shore. Approximately 35 officers and men were killed or wounded from the time the ramp went down until the beach was reached. When the beach was reached there was indescribable confusion. The beach was crowded. There was no exit off the beach which was open. One pill box was still firing. There were dead and wounded all over, on the beach in the water. Equipment was floating in the water, and strewn on the beach. Examples of bravery, courage, heroism and initiative during this period are too numerous to mention.

The rear C.P. Group, in one L.C.V.P. and one L.C.M., left the "Chase" at approximately 0615 hours, and proceeded towards the beach. At about 0815 hours the ramp was lowered. The boat was about 50 yards from shore. The boats had been under some artillery and machine gun fire on the way in, but as the ramp was lowered there was no fire immediately. The men went off orderly, into the water waist deep. All equipment was gotten off. As the last few men were getting off, the I.C.M. was brought under fire, but no one was hit. There was no sand-bar to cross, such as the Advance Group experienced, and the distance to the beach was much shorter, due to the fact the tide had risen considerably.

The rear Group got to the beach to find the same confusion and chaos which existed when the advance Group hit. The group moved to the left in an effort to join up with the Advance Group. Contact was made, but it was difficult to marshall the men together into any organized group, as they were too spread out. The primary task at this point was to take what cover was possible, save what equipment could be saved, rescue what men from the water that could be rescued, and last but not least, to try to get off the beach.

Midst all the confusion, one beach exit was opened, and the men started to move off the beach up onto the hillside, where there was defilade. Most Headquarters and Headquarters Company men joined up at this point. The Hillside was crowded with troops, but everyone had a hole, and there were several opportunities to use it.

The outfit remained here during the day, and all that night. The beach was under constant fire, and the position was actually that of a group of spectators watching a big show. During the night, enemy bombers were over, and considerable flak was sent up. One Headquarters Company man was wounded by flak, in spite of the fact he was in his trench.

The next day, D plus one, Headquarters and Hq. Co. moved forward to a new C.P. location. It was here but a short time, and moved forward again to a new location, where it spent the night. This was in the vicinity of Colleville Sur-Mer. Again, the next day, June 8th, we moved again, and spend the night at the new location. At this point the action slowed and our Regiment went into a reserve position.

STEPHEN V. RALPH  
Capt., Infantry  
Commanding.

1st BATTALION, 16th Infantry

G-L-1105

On hour D day 0630 hours 6 June 1944 the 16th Infantry CT of the 1st Inf. Div assaulted beaches ER and EG of the Omaha Beach located east of the base of the Cherbourg Peninsula on the coast of France. The 116th Inf. CT was on the right of the 16th CT and the British 50th Div. was on the left.

The 1st Bn., initially in reserve, landed at 0730 hours with A and C Cos. abreast, A on the right. Company B landed 10 minutes later. Bn. forward CP landed at 0740 followed in 10 minutes by D Co. and the remainder of the Bn. The landing was made in the face of very heavy fire from MGs, mortars, and artillery. The beach was heavily mined with anti-mechanized and anti-boat obstacles.

The Bn. landing found the 2nd Bn. still on the Beach, so the various Cos. rapidly pushed inland through the 2nd Bn. and seized the cliffs overlooking the beach from the south. A Co. was on the right, C Co. on the left, and B Co. followed C Co. up the cliffs. By 0930 the Bn. was at the top of the cliffs.

From the top of the cliffs the Bn. attacked straight inland (south). Approx. 500 yds. inland Co. A ran into an enemy strong point of approx. Co. strength. They took up the attack from the \_\_\_\_\_ and worked two sections around to attack the strong point from the west. Here the fight continued for the remainder of the day.

In the meantime Co. C continued the attack to the south and advanced rapidly clearing up isolated enemy snipers and MG positions. Co. B was moved to the right of C Co. and continued the attack to the South.

1300 hours found Co. C at the X-roads 1/2 mile west of Colleville s Mer (approx. 1-1/2 miles inland). B Co. was on the right rear of C Co., and A Co. was in the right rear of B Co. In the afternoon C Co. cleared the woods and orchard to the east of the X-roads of snipers, riflemen, and MGs. This area received intermittent mortar and artillery fire for the rest of the day and early evening hours.

At about 1600 hours the 116th Inf. attacked the strong point that was holding up ~~xxx~~ A Co. The attack was made from the north and east, and A Co. was then able to disengage itself.

The attack by the Bn. was continued to the SW after the 2nd Bn. was contacted on the left. C Co. moved forward on the left, B Co. on the right, and the high ground SW of the X-roads was seized and organized for defense. B Co. was in position to the right rear of C Co., and A Co. moved into position to the left of C Co. Remnants of E and F Cos., total strength that of approx. 1 platoon, was in position to the left rear of A Co. D Co. in support had only three HMGs and 3 mortars.

Contact was maintained with the enemy continually from the time the Bn. hit the beach. Prisoners captured during the first day's fighting totaled approx. 60. Casualties for the first day were 4 Os and 127 EMs. C.O., Co. A, Capt. Pence, was wounded on the beach and evacuated. Ex. O., Lt. Kolb, took command.

During the night B Co. was engaged almost continually in a fire fight on the right flank. Patrols ~~xxxxxx~~ maintained contact during the night with the 2nd Bn., 16th Inf. and 2nd Bn. 18th Inf., on the left. Patrols were unable to gain contact with the 116th Inf. on the right. Bn. CP for the night was located about 200 yards west of the cross roads in the rear of C Co.

At approx. 0900 hours 7 June the Bn. received 1 platoon from the AT Co. as attachments. These guns were placed in position protecting ~~xxxxxx~~ the flanks and rear. The Bn. AT platoon came up at the same time but only with two guns. These were placed in position in C Co's area to protect the front of the position. At approx. 1000 hours, Can. Co., originally attached to the Bn., joined the Bn. but with only one gun. This gun was not in condition to fire. All of the missing weapons mentioned above were lost in the landing. Personnel from Cannon Co. went into position to protect the Bn. area.

(2)

1st Bn, 16th Inf.

On the morning of D+1 the Bn. continued the attack to the South. Axis of advance was the road to the SW. The Bn. started the attack at approx. 1030 hours with C Co. on the right of the road and A Co. on the left. B Co. in support followed C Co. Resistance met was in the form of isolated MGs protected by riflemen with snipers scattered throughout the woods. The Bn. objective was the wooded high ground about 1 mile north of Surrain. This obj. was reached at approx. 1200 hours. NSFCP provided support.

The obj. was organized for all-round ~~survive~~ defense with ~~key~~ A Co. on the left, C in the center, B on the right, and Cn. Co. on the right rear. The 18th Inf. and 26th Inf. passed through the position during the afternoon and evening.

Contact with the enemy was lost when the 18th Inf. continued the attack on the Bn. front. Prisoners captured during the second day's fighting totaled approx. 40. Casualties for the second day were      Os and 13 EMs. The Bn. remained in position until 1800 hours 8 June.

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From an account at 16th Inf.-- 4 July 1944.

 pdfelement



HEADQUARTERS CO. 1ST BATTALION 16TH INFANTRY  
A. P. O. #1, U. S. ARMY

23 June 1944

INVASION OF FRANCE  
(FORWARD C.P.)

G L-110  
⑤ 12

On 6 June 1944 at 0800 the forward C.P. group of the 1st Battalion 16th Infantry landed on the left side of Easy Red-Omaha Beach. The Machine gun and rifle fire was terrific and men were being hit from the front and flanks as they left the L.X.V.P.'s. Men who were carrying the heavier loads of equipment such as wire and radios seemed to be the ones that were hit more often because they could not move as fast as the rest.

Upon reaching the beach it was found that there were many men from the first assault unit still laying there. Some were going back into the water to get wounded men, ammunition and equipment.

There were not sufficient exits cleared through the wire entanglements and mine fields to remove the men quickly from the beach at the time we arrived. They made their own exits by blowing wire and going through mine fields.

After this section was reorganized as much as possible, it moved through the exit by the house and proceeded to a point about 200 yards inland. A check was made of the equipment and men and it was found that only three miles of wire remained. A wire team was sent to lay wire to C Company and one to A Company. One team laid a line back to the regimental C.P. It was not very long before our unit had fair telephone communication.

The radio section attempted to establish a net with regiment but it was found that the S.C.R. 284 radio had been damaged, and the unit had to depend upon the telephone communication from battalion to regiment for the rest of the day. The man carrying the message center S.O.I. and the radio operator carrying a S.C.R. 300 radio was shot before reaching the beach. That left one SCR 300 radio in the Battalion C.P. which was used to contact the companies who had not lost their radios and radio operators.

After leaving the first assembly point the forward C.P. group proceeded to the first road running parallel with the beach. The assault companies had crossed this road but there was still much sniping in this area. After staying there for a short period of time the Bn C.O. then moved out behind Company C which was moving south. After reaching a point about three hundred yards south of Colleville, the first forward C.P. was established and remained there until the following day, 7 June 1944. The C.P. group then moved about one half mile south of Colleville and Regiment moved into the old C.P. location. There was some enemy artillery fire falling near the C.P. during the night, and there was also quite a bit of sniping going on in that vicinity. We remained in that location until the following night.

HEADQUARTERS CO. 1ST BATTALION 16TH INFANTRY  
A. P. O. #1, U. S. ARMY

INVASION OF FRANCE

GL-110 13

On the morning of 6 June 1944, Headquarters Company as members of the reserve battalion, landed on the Easy Red Section of Omaha Beach. The company was split mainly into three groups; the forward C.P; the rear C.P. and the Anti-Tank Platoon. With the exception of the Anti-Tank platoon and drivers of our organic transportation which crossed the English Channel in LSTs, the company sailed to within 15 miles from French soil on the U.S. S. Chase.

Just about the time the assault battalions hit the fortified beach, our company began loading into the landing craft. As our waves of boats neared the beach, the enemy let loose with MG, artillery, and mortar fire. From the time that the ramps were lowered until we reached the high ground about  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile inland the company suffered 15 casualties. The entire beach was under enemy observation and the heavily mined approaches made progress on the high ground costly and slow.

The C.P. was established in the high ground area which our assault units used as an assembly area at 0930 hours. After remaining at this point for two hours, the group moved forward. Spasmodic sniping forced us to move cautiously. The Battalion C.P. was established at 1345 hours about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles inland in the vicinity of Colleville Sur Mer. Headquarters Company dug in and provided the security for the remainder of the day and throughout the night.

On the morning of D/1 the company moved forward about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile where the Anti-Tank Platoon joined the organization. As the drivers were preparing to move to their new motor pool site, about 30 German snipers discovered and captured by Headquarters Company men two hedge rows from where the company was located during the previous night.

Two more moves were made during the day. At the end of D/1 the company was located about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles inland.

HEADQUARTERS CO. 1ST BATTALION 16TH INFANTRY  
A. P. O. #1, U. S. ARMY

23 June 1944

INVASION OF FRANCE  
(Anti-Tank Platoon)

GL-110  
(5) 11

At 0300 hours 6 June 1944 we disembarked from the LST with our three DUKWs. At that time we were  $12\frac{1}{2}$  miles from the beach and as yet the transports had reached their area. We circled another LST until 0400 hours at which time an assault guide boat started taking us to shore. After about 2 miles the guide boat motor quit, but was again started. The naval personnel told us to go ahead as he was unable to make it. We continued toward shore on our own not knowing the lanes or anything else. At approximately 0700 hours my 1st Squad's DUKW sank and all men were later rescued by the navy. We got about 100 yards off shore at approximately 0830 when we received heavy artillery and machine gun fire. One man was seriously wounded in my DUKW. We went back to sea where a naval control vessel told us not to land until ordered. We waited around until 1415 hours then went in again. This time we made it. The exits were not finished as yet so we had to sit under artillery fire on the beach until 2000 where two more men were wounded. At 2030 hours we finally got two half tracks and took our guns to the main transit area, as the original one was not taken. During the rest of the evening we stayed in that area continually being harassed by sniper and machine gun fire. At 0600 hours, D/1 Sgt. Cameron found us and took us to the CP of the 1st Battalion at which point I displaced my guns in the Battalion area. We stayed in this position until the Battalion again moved about 1500 hours we again went into position here.

A COMPANY, 16th Infantry

GL-110 52

At approx. 0530 hours on ~~x~~ 6 June 1944 the company disembarked from the USS Samuel Chase for the invasion of France. Company A was the assault Company of the reserve bn. and landed on ER beach at H/70 (0740 hours). After landing on the beach and finding the assault waves still on the beach Capt. Pence ordered the Co. to pass through the assault waves and beach obstacles and seize the first high ground. In moving his Co. off the beach, Capt. Pence was wounded and the Co. carried on under Lt. Dillon all the time being under heavy enemy concentrations of artillery, mortar, MG, and sniper fire. While moving through an AT ditch (which was mined) and through a mine field, Lt. McElyea and Lt. Webne were wounded together with approx. 45 EMs from mines and small arms fire. The Co. pushed on to the high ground and toward a sector of the 2nd Bn's objective. After reaching the high ground the company was up against numerous enemy MG nests which had to be cleared out before advancing. T/Sgt. Benn, taking over the 4th Section after Lt. McElyea became a casualty, was ordered to clear out a woods from which we were receiving enemy fire. T/Sgt. Benn and at least three others became casualties when Lt. Webne and his Section were sent in to assist the fourth section, where he and his section became pinned down. Lt. Long and Lt. Hinchcliffe flanked the enemy positions. In clearing out ~~the~~ one of these MG positions, Lt. Long and part of his section were caught in enemy MG cross fire, where he and his men became wounded, captured, or killed. Lt. Hinchcliffe and his section came on line with Lt. Long and proceeded to assist in knocking out the enemy positions, but he also was pinned down under at least three more enemy MGs. After some time, friendly fire opened up on the flanks, thus distracting the enemy and allowing Lt. Hinchcliffe and his section to withdraw, losing about three EMs. The enemy apparently withdrew so the Co. continued advancing, still meeting some resistance but succeeding in pushing through and reaching the objective, where the Co. again ran into fairly ~~heavy~~ stiff enemy resistance, composed of several Mgs, machine pistols, and snipers. The Co. took up the fight placing rocket, mortar, AT grenade, and small arms fire on the emplacements and succeeding in silencing the enemy MGs in the area, leaving only occasional sniper fire for the remainder of the night. Here the Co. halted and the men and officers rested the rest of the night. Lt. Kolb joined and assumed command of the company just prior to reaching the objective with Lt. Jones and excess men of the Co. During the night it became necessary to outpost the Co. front. Lt. Hinchcliffe and his section were ordered to undertake this mission and, after leaving the Co., were lost, and he dug in for the night about 1/4 mile to the Co. front. He had small fire fights throughout the night and succeeded in knocking out at least one enemy MG nest with mortar fire. At daylight contact was made with him and the Co. advanced approx 1/2 mile where it was ordered to patrol all surrounding fields, hedges, woods, roads, and trails within one mile to the front and the small gap between the company and the 18th Inf. This mission was carried on throughout the day and night.

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From an account by Lt. Chambers, Co. Historian, at 16th Inf.--4 July/44.

B COMPANY, 16th Infantry

GL-110 (5) 3

Boats were lowered from the APA at 0555 hours 6 June. The landing craft put the Co. ashore on ER beach at 0755 amidst heavy artillery and small arms fire. Practically all the preceding waves were ~~pinnd~~ still pinned down on the beach.

Co. Hq.'s LCVF received two direct hits, probably 47 mm, and it began ~~taking~~ sinking just as its personnel landed. The Co. moved up to the wire and section leaders did an excellent job of hasty reorganization.

Five breaches in the wire having been made by Co. A were used to clear the beach. The first and third assault sections made very good use of their smoke grenades at the wire barrier and in the field beyond, as both were being swept by enemy fire.

The Co. could not contact Bn. with the SCR 300 radio set as it had been lost when the operator was wounded.

The minefield in front of the wire and one FPL (?) on the far side of the minefield took their toll of casualties as the company moved off the beach.

The fifth and third sections tried to advance over the first high ground and were pinned down by enemy MG, sniper fire in the second mine field, causing more casualties. These two sections withdrew and moved left and reached the top of the ridge 400 yards to the left of Exit E-1.

Bn CP was located and the Co. was ordered to take up positions to the right of Co. C.

The Co. then moved about 1-1/2 miles inland and reached a point just to the right of Colleville where it was held up by an enemy strong point and was forced to spend the night in the spot.

Enemy activity was encountered throughout the night and small enemy groups tried to penetrate the positions. The enemy strong point was neutralized about 1030 D/1 and the 18th Infantry moved up on the right flank. The Co. then moved forward about 600 yards and took up positions on the high ground overlooking Surrain to the south. Here they spent the second night and part of the third day.

Second section patrols located a German Bicycle Bn. bivouac area deserted except for one sniper who was eliminated.

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From an account by Lt. Beach, Co. Historian, Hq. 16th Inf. --4 July/44

COMPANY C 16TH INFANTRY  
A. P. O. #1 U.S. ARMY

GL-110  
54

20 June 1944

INVASION OF FRANCE

Co. C 16th Infantry landed on Easy Red Section of Omaha Beach on the coast of France at H / 70, D-Day. The landing was made midway between the points where the 2nd and 3rd Battalions 16th Infantry had landed. Before hitting the beach the assault craft came under enemy artillery fire, the 2nd boat group receiving a direct hit causing several casualties. On leaving the boats the company encountered heavy enemy machine gun fire as well as encountering water about 7 feet in depth. A number of casualties resulted from the firing and drowning. Small arms fire pinned the company down on the beach until a path was cleared through the mine field directly inland from the beach. The company then moved through the mine field and up the cliff to a reorganization area. Several prisoners were taken in this vicinity.

After reorganizing the company moved inland approximately 1000 yards under continual sniper fire. The advance was halted at the Manor House 500 yards west of Coleville Sur Mer for another reorganization. While here an enemy artillery and mortar barrage caused additional casualties. The company again pushed ahead but were pinned down by heavy sniper and M.G. fire a short distance from the house. Large numbers of enemy were observed to the south and the company was forced to dig in for the night in this area. At dawn an enemy machine gun squad was captured by a C Company outpost. Naval artillery was directed on a farmhouse where approximately 200 of the enemy had spend the night. The artillery caused the enemy to withdraw and C Company advanced 1900 yards south to a point just northeast of and over looking the town of Surrain. Enemy snipers were encountered but were driven back and the company dug in for the night of D/1. Patrols were sent out continuously throughout the night but very little enemy activity was encountered.

1st Lt. Winter  
Historian

G-L-11056

Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry

The majority of Hq. Co, 2nd Bn. 16th Infantry, landed with the third wave of the Bn. assault team in LCVPs and an LCM. Transportation followed later in the day on LSTs.

The Bn. Hq. section with msg cntr and the radio section landed 200 yards to the left of its objective, approx. 50 yards from shore. Heavy MG fire was raking the beach and water. Part of the rifle companies were still along the shingle on the beach. The men, well deployed, waded through the water, crossed the sand bar and proceeded to cover provided by the high water mark. The A & P Platoon beach Easy Red at 0655 hours in an LCM, 500 yards from the beach the craft came under heavy artillery fire and mortar fire in addition to raking MG fire. The ramp was put down at the three-foot water mark level and the first group of men headed for shore. The fire became more intense as the boat unloaded and the last men to leave the craft, carrying heavy equipment, were mowed down by the enemy fire.

The wire section was divided into two teams, one with the free boat carrying the BN. C.O. and staff, and the other with Co. H. This craft, too, received heavy MG fire, the H Co. craft sinking as it approached to make landing. The heavy sea and intense shelling of the beach made it impossible to save equipment. Several men carrying wire on the free boat were wounded in the water. The men managed to bring the switchboard, phones, and several rolls of wire ashore. The radios that were carried ashore were put out of commission by small arms and MG fire.

The sections organized quickly on the beach. The A and P platoon started through the passage to the initial CP, finding unexperienced beach engineers in a minefield. The demolition squad, having lost their equipment through casualties, broomrowed the equipment of the engineers and proceeded to mark the minefield and direct troops through the passage. The Hqtrs. and wire sections followed to the initial CP at 682896.

The radio, wire, and A & P sections returned to the beach to try to recover equipment lost in the landing. Enough equipment was recovered to enable the company to function in support of the other companies of the BN.

The transportation was to land at 0730 but because of the heavy seas and intense fire of the Navy, ~~was forced~~ them to pull back from the beach. forced

The ship had ~~been~~ received several direct artillery hits. They landed the transportation about 1235 on a beach full of troops and equipment. After struggling to get the vehicles through the water they proceeded to the vehicle transient area. Two half tracks were lost in water too deep for travel.

The Bn. AT platoon approached the beach at 0800 hours. The heavy sea proved too rough for the DUKWS and they had to be towed in. Troops were still on the beach and enemy fire was heavy, keeping the platoon from landing until 1200 hours. With only one truck available, the platoon leader went in search of prime movers returning with transportation from the AT Co. By 1700 hours Exit E-1 had been cleared sufficiently to enable them to proceed to the transient area, where they awaited orders from the Bn. C.O.

Despite the overcrowded beach, the confusion caused by the beach Bns., the intense fire, and the missing of objectives by the landing craft, the reorganization of the sections and platoons of the Co. by the platoon leaders and section sergeants was excellent. Equipment lost in the operation was due to casualties and every effort was made by the other men to retrieve equipment carried by the men wounded. Many trips were made under heavy shellfire to secure equipment rushed ashore.

The Co. moved forward to establish a second CP at 1145 hours in the vicinity of 684892. Where constant communications were maintained with the

(2)

Hqtrs. Co., 2nd Bn, 16th Inf.

Cos. of the Bn. and surrounding units, prisoners were received and taken to the rear by the Intelligence section, and the necessary administrative work was handled by the Hqtrs. section. The Company stayed at this location for the remainder of the day.

-0-

From an account at the 16th Inf. Hqtrs. 4 July 1944.

 pdfelement



COMPANY D 16TH INFANTRY  
A.P.O. #1, US ARMY

GL-110  
55

INVASION OF FRANCE

"D" Company landed on Omaha Beach Easy Red at 0920 hours 6 June 1944 and moved in against a low bank while an exit was being cleared.

The Mortar platoon and the 2nd platoon went into position along the beach and opened fire on enemy positions approximately 75 yards away.

The company ceased firing and moved to the left along the beach to an exit cleared by the 3rd Battalion by 1045 had moved in along the cliff just off the beach. The 2nd Battalion was contacted approximately  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile inland from which point the company moved  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile to the east and rejoined the 1st Battalion. Here the 1st Platoon was attached to B Company, the 2nd Platoon to C Company and the Mortar Platoon went into position as a battery in the support of the Battalion advance.

The 1st Platoon was relieved of attachment to B Company and was attached to A Company at about 2300 hours.

For the remainder of D Day there was no change.  
Casualties - 11MIA and 19 WIA.

The mortar Platoon had 4 serviceable guns and the MG platoons each had 3 guns in action.

The Company did no firing after that done of the beach.

The Company moved out at about 1200 hours with the platoons disposed as at end of D Day.

Casualties at end of day - 11 MIA and 10 WIA.

8 Jeeps were brought into company at about 1730.

Nofiring done during day.

Lt. Barker  
Historian.

F COMPANY, 16th Infantry

4 July 1944

GL-110  
58

Company F landed on Beach vicinity of Colleville s Mer at 0640 hours. Smoke laid down by the Navy and artillery had already lifted, which therefore enabled the enemy to observe the landing of the Company.

Enemy machine guns, rifles and mortars were fired at the assault teams as they ran out of the LCVs. The water was about 4-1/2 ft deep. The assault teams had to wade across 30 yards of water under fire and cross the beach of approximately 150 yards under the same fire. The cost in casualties was 6 officers and about 50 % of the company.

The 2nd, 4th and 5th sections landed approx. 400 yards too far over to the left. These three sections played a major part in silencing beach defenses in the third bn. sector. S/Sgt. Strojny aided in the success of the 3rd Bn. by picking up a rocket launcher of a wounded soldier and firing it unassisted at the pillboxes and open emplacements. A direct hit into the embrasure of one pillbox hindering the advance, caused the pillbox to go up in flames. S.Sgt. Piyo, mortar squad leader, 4th Section, knocked out several emplacements and after all his ammunition had been expended, with a few other NCOs, led the men in an assault on enemy positions.

Approximately 15 prisoners were captured and turned over to the 3rd Bn. These men stayed with the 3rd Bn. until they were able to rejoin the Company the following day.

The 1st section landed at their proper place on the beach. This section also displayed courage and initiative. ~~When~~ When the section leader was ~~xxx~~ fatally wounded, the assistant section leader took over. He ordered the wireman to blow the barbed wire, which he did after crawling 30 yards exposed to small arms and mortar fire. Shortly after the section sgt. was wounded and the next senior NCO assumed command and led the section to commanding ground overlooking the beach. This section attached itself to Co. G, moved inland, and helped in destroying enemy snipers and isolated MG nests between the beach and Colleville s Mer.

Co. Hqtrs. and the 3rd section landed directly in front of strongpoint assigned to Co. F. 3rd Section lost all its special equipment, due mostly to casualties inflicted by the enemy. Therefore, only small arms fire was used against enemy emplacements with little effect. No support was received from the tanks as none landed at this particular sector of the beach. However, three tanks did come over from the left flank at 1000 hours and fired at open enemy emplacements and pillboxes. Also a destroyer came fairly close to shore and fired at the same strongpoint. Co. Hqtrs. and the 3rd Sctn. were pinned at the high water line, which offered some cover until approx. 1200 hours. At 0945 hours the Co. Cmdr sent a runner along the beach to the right to contact Bn and give them the sign. The runner returned abt. 1130 hours with orders for Capt. Finke to move all 2nd Bn. men to the right, where a breakthrough had been made about 500 yards down the beach. When the Co. finally assembled at Bn., only the Co. C.O., 1st Sgt., and 10 pvts. were present. These pvts. were used as local security for the Bn. C.P. The 1st Sgt. by placing three men to the left flank of the CP was fired upon and pinned down temporarily by an enemy MG. One of the men managed to return to the CP immediately after he was fired upon and informed the Co. C.O. that he believed the 1st Sgt. to be hit by the MG fire. Upon receiving this information, Capt. Finke, with one pvt. tried to capture or kill the enemy MGer by working his way up around the flank. He succeeded in getting to within 75 yards of the gun but both he and the pvt. were wounded by mortar fire and were evacuated to the aid station. This left the Co. on the night of D-day with no officers, a 1st Sgt., and abt. 10 pvts. Eight more EM joined the Co. before midnight.

The men separated from the Co. rejoined it in Colleville s Mer during the afternoon of D+1. The overflow consisting of two Os and 31 EM, also arrived

A roll call was held. The Company reorganized and was once more able to function and operate tactically.

Despite the fact that all Os and 3 Plat sgts. were lost, the men gallantly carried on. Also the fact that they were landed on wrong sectors of the beach and were not under Co. hqtrs. control, showed the discipline, which had been instilled in the men and it was a fine example of leadership done by junior NCOs. (Skip the last -- )

From an account at 16th Inf. Hqtrs.

right  
~~left~~ side of valley at E tab 1000. Stayed there rest of  
D-day + night, On road to central POW enclosure. Left  
this ~~CP~~ <sup>morning</sup> ~~afternoon~~ of D+1 at 1200.

- 0 -  
(Capt. Wm. Friedman, Adj. 16<sup>th</sup> Inf)  
- 0 -

GL-11059  
17 June 1944

History of Company "G", 16th Infantry, from 6 June 1944- 7 June 1944.

The following resume of events concerning Company "G", 16th Infantry, relate the participation of of this organization during the initial phases of Operation "Neptune".

At 0115 hrs., 6 June 1944 the Company was alerted aboard the USS Henrico and began preparations for disembarking into assault craft. Breakfast was given all Army personnel at this time, consisting of bologna and luncheon meat sandwiches and coffee. All equipment was then secured, and at 0345 hrs the Company was called by boat teams to their respective debarkation stations and began loading into the LCVPs. A very heavy sea was running, which created considerable difficulty in loading the personnel from the "Henrico" into the assault craft. Loading was effected by means of loading all heavy equipment and ten men into the assault craft before lowering away these boats. The remainder of the boat team personnel was then loaded over the side of the "Henrico" by scramble nets. This was extremely difficult, due to the weight of the equipment carried by each man in his assault jacket and the slippery footing created by the wooden rungs of the scramble nets.

All assault craft teams were loaded by 0415 hrs., and the boat wave was formed approximately 500 yards off the starboard bow of the "Henrico". The boat wave rendezvowed in this position until 0445 hrs., and then proceeded in line toward the beach. All craft were heavily loaded, and the very rough sea encountered caused the personnel and equipment to become thoroughly drenched before leaving the rendezvous area, and all boats shipped more water than could be pumped out, causing them to be constantly in danger of foundering.

The boat wave reached the line of departure 2000 yards from the beach at 0635 hrs and deployed with all boats abreast, and proceeded toward the beach at the best possible speed. Intense enemy fire was seen falling on the beach and as the Company came within 1000 yards of the beach this fire began to land in and around the craft, and increased in intensity as we moved closer. Great difficulty was experienced by the coxwains of the assault craft in maintaining the boat formation, and one of the craft capsized about 200 yards from the beach, necessitating the boat team to swim ashore without a great deal of their assault weapons. The remainder of the boats, however, succeeded in almost reaching shore before lowering the debarking ramp, and most of the Company was able to walk ashore. Very heavy artillery, mortar, and machine, gun, and small arms fire was falling, and the Company received a number of casualties as they proceeded across the beach. Approximately 200 yards inland from the waterline a small shingle mound about ten feet in height enabled the Company to secure a slight amount of defilade from the intense machine gun and small arms fire that raked the beach, both from the flanks and to the immediate front. A large number of personnel was already ashore in this position, (having landed at H Hour), and seemingly were unable to advance onto the steep, high bluff overlooking the beach, and from which the enemy was firing. Most of the units were disorganized and ~~refused to move into this fire~~, due to losses of Officers and NCO's on the beach.

As soon as this organization reached the above mentioned position (time- h plus 30) a hasty reorganization of the assault teams of the Company was made and the 60mm mortars and light machine guns were placed in firing positions, and all effort was made by a few Officers and NCO's to build up a volume of fire on the enemy to enable movement forward. A few of the elements of the 1st wave had succeeded in advan-

cing approximately 100 yards in front of this position, but were pinned down and seemingly unable to move in any direction because of the terrific fire descending on them.

At approximately 0710 hrs., Company "G" was ordered to move forward toward the front and managed to infiltrate thru a narrow gap between the mine fields between the shingle mound and the cliff overlooking the beach. The section of Company "E", 16th Infantry, under command of 2nd Lt. Spalding and remnants of two sections from Company "E", 116th Infantry, were those troops pinned down at the base of the cliff. They were told by the company Commander of Company "G", that their organizations were supposed to be 500 yards to the right of this position, and to move inland, and to the right if possible. They, then, began to move forward and slightly to the right. As the Company "G", sections reached this point they were directed to seize the high ground to the immediate front and to deploy from right to left as they cleared the crest of the hill and move forward as quickly as possible; also to maintain contact with the two sections of Company "E", 116th Infantry, on the right.

Two machine gun nests were destroyed and one prisoner was taken by 5th section, Company "G", and secured the immediate crest of the bluff, thus enabling the remainder of the Company to reach this high ground and deploy in their movement forward. The company moved out from this position in the following order from right to left: Sections 5, 3, 4, 1, ~~2~~ and 2, with the light machine gun section attached to the 2nd section. Movement forward ~~was~~ accomplished under artillery fire and a number of snipers firing machine pistols at us. One enemy machine gun was destroyed on the left flank of the Company by the 2nd Section, and light machine gun section and three enemy soldiers were killed. This engagement took place about 200 yards from the deployment position. Two more enemy were destroyed by the 1st Section as they progressed inland.

At approximately 0900 hrs the Company had moved inland to a line generally from 677881 to 685885.

Effort was then made to consolidate the Company laterally, but this was seriously hampered by enemy small arms and automatic weapons fire that came from both front and rear of the Company. Also heavy mortar fire began falling on the right flank Section, (Section 5). The 5th and 3rd Sections were then ordered to clear the enemy from the woods surrounding the road junction at 683883. The enemy was engaged in this area for several hours and a number of casualties were incurred on both sides. Meanwhile the 1st, 2nd, and 4th Sections were also engaged on the left flank, and most of the fire was coming from the small valley at 663900. One machine gun nest was destroyed in this vicinity by the 2nd Section.

At approximately 1200 hrs the enemy had been cleared from this area and aside from sporadic mortar and artillery fire falling in the general vicinity of our positions, all enemy personnel had withdrawn or had been destroyed. The 5th and 3rd Sections had moved and were at this time forming a line at 682879-685879 with a few men from Company "E", 116th Infantry Co C, 16th Infantry moved up into position on the right flank and abreast of this Company, but did not remain but a very short time before withdrawing back to the road junction at 682880. This withdrawal was made without notifying this organization of their intentions until they had already left.

At approximately 1300 hrs the 1st Section was sent into the town of Collville-Sur-Mer, with the mission of clearing the town of any enemy, and to seize and hold it.

The 5th and 2nd Sections were ordered to protect the right front of the Company, and were in position at 683878-686880. One Section of 30 Cal. HMG of Company "H", 16th Infantry were placed in position on the right flank of this line when the 4th Section was moved to extend to our right flank to a point 682878. Only 13 men composed the 4th Section at this time, as the remainder had become casualties. One 70 cal. HMG from Company "H", was also put in position at 686883 to cover the advance of the 1st Section into the town. The remaining elements of the 2nd Section were put in position on the left flank at 684883, but became engaged in a fire fight in this vicinity, with enemy located generally around 684885, therefore could not render any covering fire or support to the 1st Section as it advanced into the town.

The 1st Section reached the outskirts of the town at 1315 hrs., and occupied the church and house due south of the church at 687882, where they became engaged with the enemy at point blank range. Although three men were killed almost immediately and two seriously wounded, these buildings were occupied by our men and held. A heavy counter attack developed on all sides of the entire Company at this time, but was beaten off successfully with nine enemy killed in the town; four on the north of town by the 2nd Section and five by the 5th and 3rd Sections on the south, a total of 18. These were definitely known to be destroyed. The total number of prisoners taken up to this time was eight. This engagement necessitated a consolidation of the Company in an oval position as the enemy completely encircled us, and no front could be fixed. In order to contain the ground that ~~had~~ had been gained, no further effort was made to advance and the Company dug in at this time and awaited the 18th Infantry to pass through and relieve the pressure on us. At this time the Company strength was 107 men and 6 officers, plus about 25 men from other organizations. The 2nd Battalion, 18th Infantry passed thru, moving S.E. from the road junction at 683879, which relieved the pressure from this sector. Meanwhile the 4th Section and one section HMG from Company "H", had moved further south and became isolated from the Company to a point generally at 680877, where they remained for the remainder of the D-Day and the morning of 7 June. Efforts were made to contact this section, but enemy infiltration between our lines prevented this from being accomplished.

~~At~~ At about 1530 hrs and continuing to 1700 hrs. friendly naval gun fire shelled our position in the town with very heavy fire, causing seven casualties. Efforts were made to stop this fire by firing yellow smoke flares. Contact was finally accomplished through Battalion, who caused this fire to lift. On the morning of D plus 1 the Company Executive Officer and 27 EM rejoined the Company and brought the effective combat strength up considerably.

On the morning of D plus 1 the Company moved thru the town and occupied it, taking 12 more enemy prisoners and killing 5 when we became engaged at 1000 hrs at 688879; we suffered 2 men wounded.

The total casualties for the Company from H-Hour D-Day to 1200 hrs, Dplus 1, was 60 EM and 3 officers.

12 June 1944

GL-110  
510

Members of this organization loaded into their assault craft at approx. 0430 hours and started ~~an~~ rendezvous movement until the entire group had gathered. The ~~air~~ armada was complete and very satisfying. The sea was very rough and quite a few men were seasick, some of the craft turned over, but fortunately none from this Company. The rocket lighters (LCT-R) and heavy ships were constantly bombarding the shore.

H Co. was scheduled to hit the shore at Easy Red beach at 0710 hours, but had to contact the Navy control boat and lost some time in doing that. After finding the exact direction from the control boat the Co. started towards shore at full throttle. The Co. reached shore at approx. 0727 hours. They were immediately hit by MG fire and heavy casualties ensued. They hit the beach too far left of where they were to land. The tanks were on the beach to the right of where they landed, but were not giving too much support. There were obstacles on the beach and around these were anti-personnel mines and Teller mines on top of them. The tide was rising at this time and many of the wounded, who probably could have been saved, were drowned. Quite a bit of equipment was lost. All of the radios were either lost or destroyed.

The situation on the beach was critical, and at times looked very black. One of the Co's MGs set up on the left and started firing at the pillbox and open emplacements that were on the left flank. Enemy mortar fire was dropping on the beach, but the enemy either was scared or was hit because it wasn't very effective and, after a time, ceased. ~~xxxx~~ There was MG fire coming from the extreme left. This sector was supposed to be taken up by the 3rd Bn. Every time a move was made this gun would open up and kept the Co. pinned down. There also was a lot of mines going off. These evidently were timed (????????). About three hours later a hole was blown in the barbed wire by a Bangalore torpedo and they then started moving down to the beach, a distance of about 200 yards; and started infiltrating through the gap. An enemy MG on the left kept up a continual fire which made progress very slow. There were a lot of mines along the Co's path, most of which were marked, and the engineers were trying to take them out. After getting off the beach, they climbed up a hill and crossed a minefield and then turned to the left and continued on until they hit a road and then turned right. The mortar platoon was set up in position near some ruined bldgs. and the Co. CP was set up near these positions.

This position was approx. 800 yards from the beach and approx. 400 yards from the town of Colleville. The MG platoons ~~xxxx~~ were in direct support of the rifle Cos. The 2nd Platoon could not be contacted for a period of time and it was believed that they were captured, but later, contact was ~~xxxx~~ established with them.

The manner in which the battle was fought was out of the ordinary. The enemy seemed to be everywhere. MG fire, artillery, and sniping were very heavy. The mortars played a very important part in eliminating these MG nests and also snipers. At times the Co. had a MG to the left, front, and right, and it had begun to look like they would be backing into the sea, but sheer guts, excellent leadership dominated and they pulled through successfully. They remained in a defensive position during the rest of the night.

The total casualties numbered 26, eight of these were believed dead, but were carried as MIA. The rest were wounded, most of them seriously.

-0-

From a statement by Sgt. R. D. Hopes, H Co, 16th Inf.



62nd FA Armored Bn

Only the advance groups of the 62nd Bn landed. Guns didn't land - rough seas, intense enemy fire. <sup>not ashore at 2000 hours.</sup> A lot of 18 guns were lost. Otr. 16 guns still in use in infantry supp. of 3rd Bn. "The only city in the Reg. area." - Lt. Walker, S-3, 3rd Bn, 16th - 4th July/44.

-0-

7th FA Bn

nothing at moment.

-0-

18th + 26th passed through 1st Bn during afternoon + evening of D + D+1.

-0-

741st Tank Bn

H-1 in 16 DD tanks, Co. C; 16 DDs, Co. B - 6,000 -

26 of the 32 were sunk - foundered because of rough seas - enemy fire. 6 reached beach - 2nd knocked out.

LCT<sup>57</sup> - carrying 4 DDs

1st DD off LCT<sup>57</sup> 6000 yds offshore. Went abt 10 yds., submerged. 2 standing on tanks - 1 man when tank submerged. - 2 Prossin on 2nd Tank + 3rd Tank - back against tanks in rear, punching canvas. Left tried to tell Coxswain to bring the tanks to shore. This done. Dashed 3 of 6 tanks which got ashore. Lt. O'Laughnessy in command of these tanks. 3 rescued in abt. 20 mins. Otr. abt. 35 mins. Cold. - T/4 Wap Roiser landed at H-hour. Fire all around.

DD tanks could not fire coming in. Started fire on shore. Came in right of road, turned left, fired as they went, and went to left of known minefields. I actually got over there. The fluid got water in its motor, had to stay in place abt 7 hours. Road leading to Colleville. = 688 896 } tanks landed. One knocked out on

684 897

end of road. Other knocked out in front of house at top of bluff (just before) 16th CP first at 684 897 (roughly) - shot time on D-day. 2nd CP on bluff 2nd Bn. Dug mine at AT ditch. No water in ditch at E-1. 2nd CP on bluff

2L-114 (16)

The D Day Experiences of Company L, 16th Infantry

The company landed between 0650 and 0700. The order from left to right in the assault sections was four, five, three, headquarters detachment, two, and one.

The fourth section foundered due to heavy seas. The boat sunk about two miles from shore. The men remained in the water from two to three hours. Four of them drowned, four others are still missing.

The first section boat was hit by an artillery shell about two hundred yards out, but lost no men. This shell was probably a 47mm. However, as with the second battalion, the boats did not suffer any real losses while in motion, although under steady fire. The losses began when the ramps were lowered.

When L Company landed there were tanks in motion and other infantry on the beach well off to the right. The tanks were moving up and down the beach but they were not firing.

Headquarters and third section landed dry. The second landed in water up to their hips, and the first section landed in water neck deep. Fifth section landed in knee deep water.

In the first section two antitank artillery shells landed on the boat just as the men were debarking. One shell hit under the ramp and knocked off two men who fell into the water. Several others were wounded.

The third section had some near artillery misses. The same was true of the second section which had two shells to the right of their boat. Five men were wounded by this fire, two in the stomach, the others in the extremities. These men were all dragged to safety.

The second section had just landed when a shell hit the boat and exploded it. It seems to have been the experience of L Company that it was able to retrieve its wounded in time, as the men do not recall seeing any of them taken out by the tide. However, they did see Navy personnel lost in this manner.

There was no shingle where L Company landed, but only flat beach stretching out ahead of them to the foot of the cliff. The company landed so that its right flank was just at the right edge of the cliff.

The men advanced to the foot of the cliff immediately and without having to be urged. There was much machine gun fire from above and from both flanks. On the left flank there was a 47mm gun shooting down the beach.

It was only a matter of a few minutes--as long as it takes to walk three hundred yards--until the company had moved from the waters edge to the foot of the cliff. The first and more lightly loaded men ran. The weight carriers did it at a walk.

Of the 31 in the first section, 18 arrived at the cliff and six of these were wounded. Second section got 25 to the cliff, five wounded. The third section got all of its 31 men to the cliff and only one man was wounded. This section had kept extremely well spread out and its movement regulated off the boat. This section had taken up an interval but the others had deployed on leaving. The fifth got twenty men to the cliff, about ten wounded en route. One man was killed at the foot of the cliff from mortar fire. Headquarters detachment lost five men before reaching the cliff. This included the company commander, Capt John R. Armellino, who was hit by mortar fire.

The aid men were treating right at the edge of the water. They worked back and forth from the water dragging those back to the cliff who could not move under their own power. First Army troops, both

engineers and medics, went to the rescue of the wounded. Some were shot while so doing. The Germans fired at all that moved and made no exceptions of the aid men.

L Company was supposed to land with its right flank next to the left shoulder of F Company, but in fact it came in about five hundred yards to the left of its objective and at the point that I Company was supposed to land. It thus was displaced five hundred yards from its assigned missions. The first section under Lt Kenneth E. Klenk struck out immediately to the right to feel out the strong point confronting the beach and between the two draws. However, upon finding that the approach to this strong point exposed his men unduely, he moved his men back and straight up the hill toward the strongpoint between the beach and Cabourg. The ground of this incline was furrowed with numerous small circular ditches so that it was almost terrace like. The men were able to walk right up the draw without receiving any fire. In part this was due to the nature of the ground but also to the defenders being shelled by a destroyer. Two men were hit in the group. That left ten. In retracing its steps, however, the first section had closed in behind the second, third, and fifth sections which were already fighting their way up the slope with the second in the lead. The second section swung in toward the strong point and got behind it. The third and fifth moved oblique right and continued up the draw. By this time the naval fire was holding up the movement and preventing second and first sections from closing in on the strong point.

The sections attacking the strong point had come up the hill under bullet and rifle grenade fire. The men had moved along in squad column and were taking advantage of the shrubbery within the draw so that the enemy fire did them little hurt. They could see the Germans moving around in position on the top of the hill and the BAR men not only in the sections closing on the strong point, but in the two sections which had gone on rightward, were spraying the ground steadily. The BAR fire was extremely effective and they saw some of the enemy fall.

At the same time, two medium tanks on the beach were putting 75mm fire on the enemy emplacements, this fire being directed by Lt Jimmie W. Monteith of L Company.

The machine guns of L company were set up on the ridge to the west of the strong point. They also supported the advance.

The second section phoned Lt Robert R. Cutler that it was ready to close on the position if the naval fire could be lifted. Just then Cutler saw purple smoke rising from the strong point and told the second section that part of the force was already closing in. The second should therefore push on inland. The signal had been put out by the first section which had worked in to the strongpoint on a shorter line than the second section. The naval fire was falling in between the two groups. The second section then continued inland. The third section had kept moving right along and was already standing on the initial high ground. The fifth had come in on thirds right. The second went on up and formed to the left of the southward facing line.

First section moved in to the outlying trenches of the strong point and began moping up with grenades and satchel charges. About four or five of the enemy were knocked out during the close fighting before the remainder surrendered. The Americans lost only one. He is supposed to have been killed by a mine. In the second section four men were wounded, but they treated on the ground and remained to fight. One other was hit in the stomach. The third section was still unhurt. The

fifth lost no men advancing up the hill.

At 0900 Lt Cutler called to battalion and told them that the enemy had been subdued in the strong point. At 0930 battalion was again called and told that the company was on the initial high ground.

Almost immediately Sgt. Burton Davis took a patrol of three men to cut the road to le Grand Hameau. He then added one man to the patrol and moved up to the first building of le Grand Hameau, looking for the flank of K Company. His mission also included reconnaissance of a route by which L Company could advance. But while he was talking with a French civilian, a German came toward the patrol. They shot him.

At the same time machine pistols started firing over on the left and the patrol fell back toward the company. The troops claim that the Germans were drunk. Sgt Davis could hear them laughing and giving commands in English in the hedgerows.

L Company had already beaten off its first small counter attack. The Germans moved their automatic fire along the hedge rows from the direction of the beach. This attack was driven off by fire before many of the enemy were seen. But it seemed to be about a platoon omen. They moved from both the left and right rear. Monteith was killed during this attack. Half a dozen others were hit. By this time L Company had been joined by a heavy machine gun section from M Company and a section from K Company.

Another patrol from the fifth section was sent on a reconnaissance toward Cabourg on the right flank. It sent back word by one man that it had followed a defiled position from which to observe the town. A few minutes later, however, one of the men was wounded. While the two others were attending him, they were captured by a German patrol. They spent the night in Cabourg and came out next night with 52 prisoners. The leading figure in this was Pfc. Lawrence Miellander.

That afternoon L company moved into le Grand Hameau.

ANTI TANK CO., 16th Infantry

14 June 1944

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On 6 June the leading elements of the Co. landed with the 2nd and 3rd Bns. of the Regiment at 0745 on FG and ER beaches in the vicinity of Colleville s Mer, France. Both beaches were under heavy enemy small arms fire and artillery fire. Company Hqtrs. landed on EG beach shortly thereafter and was met with the same type of fire. This group moved along the beach in an easterly direction for about 600 yards, then moved south and set up the initial CP about 500 yards inland in the vicinity of the Regimental CP. While moving laterally along the beach two gun squads which had already landed, joined the Co. Hqtrs. group. In the landing the Co. suffered the loss of two 1/4-ton trucks and 3/4-ton truck but were able to salvage the guns by the excellent work of the gun crews. Some casualties were experienced at the time. At about 0845 the element landing with the 2nd Bn, led by Lt. Kunze, made contact with the Company proper. The Co. CP dug in for all around defense in order to further its operations. At approx. 1100 hours the rest of the Co, guns started to land in the vicinity of Exit No. 1, ER beach. The company suffered the loss of one 1/4-ton truck and two 57-mm guns at this time. The guns were salvaged at a later time by the gun crews. At about 1300 hours Lt. Allen joined the company with the residue group and assisted in the all around defense of the CP. Up until this time the word had come from Lt. Campbell and his reconnaissance element with the 3rd Bn. of the Regiment. At about 1600 hours enemy resistance slackened and the company moved inland about 1 mile and reorganization took place. At about 2000 hours S/Sgt Baker and 23 EM of the Mine Platoon landed and joined the company. Snipers were active throughout the night and bombs were dropped on the beach and the regimental CP area. During all this action the company lost 2 EMs believed killed, one Officer and 13 EMs MIA, 4 EMs wounded and evacuated, and 2 Officers and 6 EMs wounded and not evacuated. During the period from H-hour to 2400 hours ~~many~~ Officers and men of this Company performed many heroic acts such as salvaging equipment and men from the sea and pushing forward in their task as anti-tank men in securing the beachhead for the regiment.

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From an account by Cap. Lincoln D. Fish, AT Co., C.O., at the 16th Inf Hqtrs --- 4 July 1944

14 June 1944

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Hqtrs --- 4 July 1944  
 Form an account by Capt. Lincoln D. Fish, AT Co., C.O., at the 10th Inf

COPY.

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IPW Team #24,  
MIS ETOUSA  
APO #1  
27 June 44.

Memorandum: To Adjutant, FID, MIS, ETOUSA.

Dear Major Stremlau,

Greetings from France. I thought you might be interested in the experiences of my team since I last saw you. We are all hale and hearty and got through "D" day OK and hope that the other teams fared the same.

Shortly after my visit to Broadway on 9 May 44 we received orders to start 1st phase waterproofing, which was completed on 12 May. On 17 May we moved to the marshalling areas, where we were allowed short passes until the camps were sealed for the briefing, which started on 27 May. Pvt Valtin joined me on 25 May in Camp and I was able to get him some necessary last minute equipment. When I talked to you on the phone about him my vehicles were already waterproofed and could therefore not come and get him myself, but could not tell you so over the phone but hope you understood anyway. We were loaded in to our crafts starting the last few days in May. For this operation I had to lend Lt. Shapiro and M/Sgt Bartal to Division Hq. to form a provisional interrogation team for the Division Cage, together with Lt. Renberg and M/Sgt Lewkowitz from the 18th Infantry team. The rest of my team and myself remained with the 16th Infantry Combat Team. As I had also to furnish 1 jeep to the team at the division cage, I needed only one driver to take charge of the other vehicle which was loaded on an LCT and was scheduled to land at H plus 220 minutes. This left me with 2 men, S/Sgt Kirchheimer and Pvt Valtin, to go on board the APA 1 (USS Chase), where we had some good American chow for a few days, including nice white bread, etc. The night before "D" day an extra good dinner had been prepared.

We sailed on the evening before "D" day from Portland Harbor and went east for a while along the coast and started turning south when we were approximately opposite the Isle of Wight. It sure was an impressive sight for any one to look at that invasion fleet. I never realized that there could be that many ships. Besides the numerous APAs, we had what looked like hundreds and hundreds of LCTs and LCIs with us and plenty of naval protection, from countless small craft up to a number of big battle ships. "H" hour was set for 0630 and my team was scheduled to land with Regimental Headquarters at H plus 90 minutes. Breakfast was at 0400 and we were scheduled to go down the nets at H minus 40. Everything went according to schedule till we neared the beach where the enemy resistance proved stronger than had been anticipated. This was mainly due to the fact that units of the German 352nd Infantry Division had moved into our area just a few weeks before we landed and had established a number of strongpoints unknown to us.

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We were supposed to land at and leave the beach via the beach exit at Cole-ville-sur-Mer, but such terrific fire greeted each craft trying to land there, that we were forced to move further west along the beach for a landing which was accomplished 500 yards down the beach, by turning in through a maze of beach obstacles which the demolition engineers had been unable to remove, as the murderous fire from shore had pinned them down on the beach. We got off our landing craft in chest deep water about 150 yards from shore. The concussion of a nearby exploding shell made me lose my balance just as I went down the ramp and I took a complete ducking but got up right away and we all made for shore as fast as we possibly could to take advantage of the cover afforded by the gravel embankment on the beach.

The 16th Infantry was the assault regiment of the 1st Division, with the 18th and 26th in reserve. The assault battalions of the 16th had of course landed at "H" hour, and the reserve battalion came in at about the same time as we did, but by the time we landed, elements of the assault battalions were still pinned down at the beach, but started working their way inshore. The beach was packed with thousands of troops waiting for exist to be cleared and as "H" hour had been at midtide, the tide was now coming in with a strong surf and narrowed the beach down to a strip only a few feet wide. Just one enemy plane strafing that narrow strip of beach could have killed hundreds of us. But no German planes were seen by us throughout the day, only after dark a few showed up to do some not too effective bombing along the beach and near our CP.

A narrow path through some minefields was at least cleared for us and we filed up the rising ground for a few hundred yards up to where a fairly steep bluff offered pretty good cover against low angle fire, and established the Regimental CP and aid station.

In order to keep contact in the terrific confusion at the beach I kept within view of our CO, Col. Taylor, at all times and told my men and also the French interpreter with the 16th, Sgt. Peignat, to keep my in sight all the time, and in this manner we managed to stay together.

Just when I started filing up the path towards the proposed CP, I saw the first batch of prisoners coming down the hill, a sorry looking lot, carrying their own wounded. I stopped them and declared that spot off the path on the hillside the PW enclosure and went to work. The first thing I did was to ask one of the prisoners for his paybook, and I could not believe my eyes when I saw that he was from the 3rd Co, 914th Infantry, 352nd Infantry Division. This regiment and division was supposed to be about 50 miles south from us, and the only thing our O.B. had told us that we would run into at the beach would be the 726th Infantry of the 716th Infantry Division. I checked with several other prisoners, but they were all from the same unit and then sent our discovery up to the S-2 on the hill. I found out that this 352nd Division had their units

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