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emplaced in various field fortifications along the coast for a number of weeks already, which accounted partly for the terrific fire we encountered during the initial stages of the landing. I processed about 120 prisoners the first day and around 80 the 2nd day, after that their number fell off considerably during the next few days as our regiment was, on account of its terrible losses, put into Division reserve. Most prisoners I received from now on were mostly deserters or left behinds stirred up out of ditches or other hiding places.

Soon after our first prisoners arrived on "D" day, both our own and also the Shore Party Engineer Brigade MPs arrived and we operated jointly throughout "D" day, as there was no room for 2 inclosures, and it worked fine as the whole thing was necessarily very informal anyway. A big part of the time was spent by prisoners and myself hitting the ground when mortar and artillery shells came whistling down. My team got through "D" day without a scratch (how, I don't know) but I had a prisoner killed and a number of them also some MPs, wounded, even though we did have them in the safest possible spot under the circumstances. I have received a lot of useful information so far. Have had no trouble with any of the prisoners as far as making them talk is concerned.

They all talk freely (Have had to shut some of them up for talking too damned much). The officers I had (highest rank Captain), also talked fairly freely when engaged in conversation, but did not respond so well to direct questioning. All were very polite and cooperative, have had none of the so-called "arrogant" type, but will be able to deal with them if we run across any.

I adopt a fairly stern, matter of fact attitude in most of my interrogations and seem to be getting excellent results. Sometimes, if warranted, I fall into a more easy-going conversational tone of voice, which has also got me good results. Have had very few occasions to shout at any of our prisoners.

The first night on shore was one not so soon forgotten. I have never been so cold and miserable in all my life. We were still more or less wet from the landing, and with no shelter or blankets available I shivered most of the night while trying to get a wink of sleep. The cellophane gas cape was used by most of us to keep the wind off a little bit. Our wounded were suffering especially as none were evacuated on "D" day, except what some of the navy picked up in the water, but I had taken all the overcoats of the prisoners and we used them on most of the wounded.

Next day we changed CPs twice and everyday thereafter for about a week, we changed our CP once a day, moving forward a few miles each time. I always move with the CP, leaving, if necessary, one of my men behind, to finish up any business. For the last 2 weeks we have been in the same place now, and I have a good set-up in an orchard that affords good cover, but there is not much to do. I have my CP tent set up and it comes in very handy on account of the

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frequent rains. Our CO does not favor the use of buildings so I will probably make good use of the tent, if we stay any time at all in one place. My men and myself have all dug slit trenches 4 feet deep, covered them with heavy oak logs, and over them a thick layer of earth, which should give us protection from the shell fire which comes over every night.

My vehicles came through in good shape, both the jeep with me and the one with Division Hq. The boys had done a good job of waterproofing on them, and it was a good thing too, as they had to land in 3 feet of water. My jeep was supposed to land at H plus 220 but after 2 unsuccessful attempts due to the heavy fire being brought on the LCT ferrying it, the jeep did not land until the next day and after going through the Vehicle Transit Area, joined me in the afternoon. My trailer was supposed to come in with the Division residue vehicles on D plus 7, and did so and was turned over to me in good shape.

As I indicated before, things are slow right now, our regiment still being in reserve, and the whole 1st Division advancing not further until the British on our left and the 2nd Division on our right come up on line with us. The Division G-2, Lieut. Col. Evans, has me check on the other teams at the 18th and 26th, and at the Division cage once in a while, to see that everything runs smoothly, I being the senior officer, but everything seems to be alright, except that the qualifications of some of the enlisted personnel leave something to be desired, according to their OICs, but I do not feel that this impairs the efficiency of the teams as a whole too much. The various S-2s concerned seem to be satisfied.

Altogether this operation has proven to me a very interesting experience and has made up somewhat for the months of inactivity behind us. I certainly have been fortunate in my assignment to the 1st Division and especially the 16th Infantry. As a combat unit I think it is tops. The fact that this Division has now made its third landing contributed much to the smooth working and success of this operation, and the quick reorganization after the first confusion at the beach. Ever since I joined the outfit I was aware of everybody knowing his job and going about it in a business like manner. Never have I seen any of the total confusion and shouting that goes on in some outfits, whenever they start on a new phase of their training or operations. For instance, the S/Sgt in charge of the Regimental MPs is a police sergeant in the States, and he has been in charge of the MP platoon ever since the landing at Oran and Sicily. This naturally made the handling of prisoners work just like clockwork.

I would like to make a few remarks in regard to equipment. I have found the following items very helpful, and feel that they should be issued to all teams going into the field, if at all practicable:

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Entrenching tools, w/carrier	-	1 per individual
Watercan, 5 gallon	-	1 per team
Camouflage net, helmet	-	1 per individual
Camouflage net, large	-	1 per CP tent issued
Tube, tin, map storage	-	1 per team
Lantern, Powerlite, Delta	-	1 per team

I have found no use for the following:

Radios	All teams in the division have theirs turned in.
Alarm, gas	Alarm can be given by voice for a small unit like a PW team.
Knife, pocket	Men have enough cutting edges already, i.e. messkit knife, trench knife, and knife in TE-33 kit.
Desk, field, Hq.	Too bulky, company size field desk seems to be sufficient.
Cabinet, file, 2-drawer	Too bulky to justify any usefulness. Papers can be kept in field desk.
Lantern, gas, Coleman	While this lamp gives an excellent light, does not work on anything but white gas, which is unobtainable. Substitute Delta Powerlite.

One each, rather than two each of the following seems to be more than sufficient:

Map measurer
Alidade
Protractor.

The 1-burner gasoline stove has proved invaluable and two per team could easily be used.

I would also like to mention a few administrative matters. First, promotions. I am still working under the assumption that Memo, Hq FID, MIS, dated 7 Jan 44, is still in effect, and have been trying twice to get a promotion for Lt. Shapiro, and also for T/5 Schneider and Pvt Valtin. If the provisions of that memo are not in force anymore, especially as far as promotions are concerned, please let me know. I heard something to the effect that promotion recommendations are now supposed to go through administrative channels rather than intelligence channels. Does FID still act on them at all or are the promotions handled by MIS itself? Whatever it is, I would appreciate it if you could do something for Lt. Shapiro. My recommendations set forth in my letter of 28 February 44 still stand good, except that I would not rate him quite as highly on "tact" at this time. However, if there is anything against his promotion, please let me know, and I will drop the whole matter.

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In regard to Sgt. John E. Fisher, I would like to make reference to par. 5, SO #127, Hq MIS, 15 May 44, which directs his relief from this team and places him on DS with FID, directing him to report to its Co. Sgt. Fischer is not able to comply with this order as he was transferred on 13 May 44, to the Detachment of Patients, 67th General Hospital, APO #511. Therefore I believe that this order should be either amended or revoked.

If in the near or distant future the need for German interrogators should ease up somewhat, I would like to be kept in mind for any other assignment where my language qualifications and my past administrative experience in the Army can be used advantageously, preferably something that requires a little more executive ability and a little more exercise of responsibility than my present assignment.

If you would like a more detailed report on any phase of my activities during the past few weeks, I will be glad to send it to you.

Please give my respects to Col. Hochschild and remember me to any of my friends that may still be left in Broadway.

Sincerely,

/s/

FRED GERCKE
Captain, C. A. C.

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HEADQUARTERS COMBAT TEAM 16
Office of the Supply Officer
A.P.O. #1, US. ARMY

G-2-110

12 June 44

SUBJECT: Report of Events, S-4 Section, 16th Infantry.

(5) 19

To : S-1, 16th Infantry.

On June, 6, 1944 at 0830 hours, five men of the Regimental S-4 Section landed on the coast of France in the vicinity of Colleville-Sur-Mer, under the command of Major Leonard C. Godfray. This group, despite continuous shelling and machine gun fire while still in the assault craft, waded ashore where they were pined down by heavy machine gun fire, located in pill boxes on the beach and surrounding hills.

Major Godfray, while attempting to lead the section across the beach inland, was killed by machine gun fire and Staff Sergeant Schweitzer was wounded in the head by schrapnel. Second Lt. H. D. Blyeat assumed command and brought the section through the mine fields to a place of comparative safety.

The remainder of the section, under the command of Captain John M. Brooks, landed at 1800 hours from a LCT. The surf at this time was quite high and the men were forced to wim ashore. Sporadic enemy artillery fire was falling on the beach and one man was slightly wounded while crossing the beach to the high ground.

The entire section met at the Regimental CP at 2200 hours and at this time, Major Thomas McKoan assumed the duties of S-4. The section dug in and spent the night at the Regimental CP, one (1) mile north of Colleville.

The next day, June 7, 1944, was spent by the section, in locating ammunition dumps and replenishing the supply of ammunition to the battalions. The section was split again between Vehicle Transit Area No. 3 and Vehicle Transit Area No. 4 to assist in locating 16th Infantry vehicles and directing the drivers to their respective units. At 1900 hours, the section moved to Colleville and dug in for the night. Only sporadic sniper fire was heard near the CP during the night.

On June 8, S-4, having received enough transportation, proceeded to draw rations and clothing and equipment. Only a limited stock was available at the quartermaster DP, but a large quantity was obtained. Weapons were processed through S-4 to the Ordnance for repair and replacement. The section marched four miles to a new CP, 1/4 mile north of Bellefontaine and the march was completed and men dug in by 2300 hours. Heavy anti-aircraft fire took place around 2400 hours and one enemy plane was observed to go down in flames. The remainder of the night was quiet.

On June 9, the usual S-4 functions went on during the day and at 1800 hours, the section marched three miles to the new CP, located one mile north of Sur-en-Bessin. One air raid occurred during the night but no bombs fell in the area.

June 10 was spent handling rolls of the regiment which had just arrived from the ships. Over 1500 bedding rolls were processed and delivered to the regiment. Additional items of QM equipment were received and issued during the day. The section moved by transport at 1800 hours to a new CP, located 1/2 mile north of Cottun. The remainder of the night was quiet, except for anti-aircraft fire from the beach.

On June 11, more rolls continued to arrive for the regiment and some ~~vehicles and repaired weapons~~ weapons and repaired vehicles were returned from the Division Ordnance. Two enemy fighter planes flew over the CP at a low altitude at 1130 hours. At 1700 hours, one enemy fighter plane was seen flying low to the north of the CP. At 1900 hours, after reconnaissance by Maj. McKoan and Lt. Blyeat, a new CP was set up at a farm house one mile west of AGY. The move was completed at 2300 hours.

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From an account by Maj. Thomas P. McKoan, Regimental S-4, 16th Inf., at 16th Inf.-- 5 July/44



CANNON COMPANY, 16TH INFANTRY
APO #1, U.S. ARMY

GL-112
(5) 16

1a June 1944.

SUBJECT: Report of Company activities on Operation "Neptune".

To : Co, 16th Infantry.

1. On 28 May 1944 the company was divided up into craft loads and ordered to various marshalling camps in Area D. The company was divided as follows:

a. Company Commander and party of five (5) EM to D-4, for loading aboard APA No.1.

b. Two forward observer teams of one (1) officer and two (2) EM each to D-8, for loading aboard APA No.2.

c. Howitzer sections loaded on DUKws and one (1) each 2½ ton, two (2) each ½ ton 4x4, to D-10 for loading aboard LST 401 (Navy No. LST 376).

d. Half Tracks remained at D-1 for loading aboard LCT 65 and 68 (Navy No. 541 and 538).

e. Company ½ ton 4x4 trucks to D-4 for loading aboard LCT 76 (navy No. LCT 621).

f. Company overstrength of one (1) officer and twenty-one (21) EM to D-4 for loading aboard APA No.1.

2. a. On "D" day the two forward observer teams landed on beach, "Easy Red" at Hx50, (ten minutes late). These teams were attached to the 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry, with the mission of rendering the close support for the battalion advance to its objective. They were then to join the 1st Battalion, 16th Infantry and continue on with the 1st Battalion to its objective. As these two forward observer teams were landing, the officer in charge of one team was wounded and an enlisted man, radio operator, of the other team was wounded. The enlisted man was evacuated, the officer continued to lead his men until again wounded and was forced to be evacuated. No equipment was lost on the beach. These two forward observer teams continued to advance with the 2nd Battalion until joined by the Cannon Company Commander. They then joined his party and accompanied the 1st Battalion advance.

b. On "D" day at Hx100, the Company Commander and party landed on beach, "Easy Red". This party had the mission of coordinating Cannon Company support of the 1st Battalion. After spending some time on the beach working on the tanks, this party moved inland with the 1st Battalion. No equipment was lost. No casualties.

c. On "D" day at Hx60, the two LCTs carrying the company Half Tracks attempted to land on beach, "Fox Green". Both of these LCTs were hit by enemy fire. Machine gun fire killed and wounded a number of men. The LCTs then withdrew from the beach without unloading the half tracks. At about Hx120, one LCT returned to the beach and unloaded the company half tracks. Three of the drivers were wounded at this point. The half tracks could not be moved from the beach due to the fact that the beach was littered with tanks and half tracks

and that the beach exits were not open. At about Hx360, the other LCT returned to the beach and unloaded the remaining company half tracks. Three men were wounded at this time. A total of four (4) half tracks were destroyed on the beach due to enemy shell fire. The remaining half tracks were driven to a vehicle assembly area when the beach exits were opened later in the day.

d At about H - 3 hours, the six howitzer sections loaded on Dukws aboard LST 376 were driven into the ocean approximately twelve miles out from the beach. As the Dukws were driven down the ramps of the LST, they were filled with water because of the steep angle of the unloading ramp. Every effort was made to bail out the Dukws as they were driven toward the rendezvous area. Enroute to the area the motors of two of the Dukws stopped. Other Dukws of the Company took these stalled Dukws into tow and continued on. Later, the heavy load of towing two loaded Dukws caused the towing vehicles to stall also. The two ropes were then cast off and furious efforts made to again start the motors. Success was gained with two of the Dukws and these continued on. The stalled vehicles sunk under the heavy seas. Most of the men from the Dukws were rescued by Navy small boats. Of the four (4) remaining Dukws, one (1) sank enroute for help for the men in the water from the sunken Dukws. Most of these men were also picked up by Navy small boats. One sinking Dukw reached a Rhino Ferry and was unloaded. The two (2) remaining Dukws reached the rendezvous area and proceeded toward the beach. Due to heavy seas these Dukws one by one flooded and sank along the route, despite efforts to lighten the loads and continuous bailing. The men were rescued by Navy small boats. Twenty four (24) men are still missing from these Dukws. The remaining men were assembled on an LST and brought to the beach at 1300 hours, Dxl. The company executive officer had the one remaining howitzer towed to an assembly area, organized a salvage detail, fitted his men with helmets and rifles and proceeded inland with the regiment. The entire group joined the 1st Battalion on Dxl, was formed into a rifle company and attached to the 1st Battalion. The 2½ ton Ammunition truck and the two (2) ½ ton trucks were unloaded on the beach late on Dxl and joined the company at the 1st Battalion CP. Loss of equipment: Six (6) 105mm howitzers, M-3, complete with all equipment, 360 rounds of 105mm howitzer ammunition, three (3) each .50 cal. Mg. complete, three (3) each SCR 300 radio, all fire control equipment.

e The company ½ ton trucks were unloaded on beach "Easy Red" at Hx480 without serious mishap.

f The company overstrength landed on beach, "Easy Red" late on D day. No casualties were suffered by this group. The one (1) officer and twenty-one (21) men joined the company at the 1st Battalion CP.

3. The company was unable to function as a Cannon Company and was formed into a rifle company attached to the 1st Bn. The company losses in personnel were: One (1) officer and nine (9) enlisted men known wounded and evacuated. Twenty-four (24) enlisted men missing, three (3) of these have returned to the company. The company losses in equipment were: Five (5) 105mm howitzers, M-3, 360 rounds 105mm howitzer shell, three (3) each SCR radios, complete, three (3) MG, complete, all fire control instruments of the company. The personnel equipment of eighty (8) men and one (1) officer, rifle, belts, field glasses and watches. The company was able to continue as a rifle company by salvaging necessary items on the beach.

THOMAS F. O'BRIEN
Captain, 16th Infantry,
Commanding.

REPORT

A report of the Initial Landing of U.S.C.G. LCI 85 with 90 Members of the First Medical Battalion, Company A, 6 June 1944. O-L-110
(5) 17

On the morning of June the Sixth, 1944 the assault landing craft of which Company A, 1st Medical Battalion, was aboard approached the beach at the appointed hour. Eighty six men and four officers of Company A were aboard. At 8:30 AM our craft, LCI 85, headed in for the shore with no enemy opposition encountered so far. As the boat slid in over the pilings that stuck up there in front of us one could see soldiers lined up all along the rocky beach ahead of us. Suddenly we came to a stop and at that instant we could hear gunfire and then the report of shell fire. The men in charge at the front of the boat were then determining whether it was too deep to let down the ramps and at this time the first cries of the wounded from up front could be heard and we who were on the port side of the boat knew that we were the target for all the firing we heard around us. The skipper of the craft, Mr. Henley, then decided that a landing couldnt be effected and so he backed the craft off the pilings and pulled out about a hundred yards for another try. At this time the report of fire was heard and smoke could be seen pouring out from out of the doorways just forward of our position. As the craft went underway again for another try at the beach Captain Ralston was seen standing in the doorway leading from the then smoking number three hold directing the men out of the sure death down below to a position along the port side of the boat. This he did while we were still under enemy fire. About fifteen minutes had elapsed between the time we backed off the beach and headed in for another try at the shore. It was also evident at this time that we had suffered a hit below the water line due to a list to the starboard side of the ship. The second attempt in ~~the~~ at the beach was more successful as far as getting the ship in close enough to disembark and one of the boat members we later learned jumped in with a life line and managed to get to shore via this line but the enemy was throwing all his fire at us and soon he shot away the landing ramp and at the same time injuring and killing others who were crowded forward ~~same time injuring and killing others who were crowded forward~~ and trying to get off the ship. Fire now broke out in the two forward holds and the craft began to have a more pronounced list to the starboard. The craft was then backed away from the shore after the Skipper had evidently decided that no more landings could be made and also in view of the seriously damaged ship. All during this shelling the Medical personnel was giving what aid they could to the injured aboard the ship. I later learned that Captain Hahn had gone ~~down~~ into one of the holds that was on fire and had given plasma to one of the injured. Captain Apanasewicz was giving aid to two seriously wounded men who were injured on the starboard side of the ship which was then getting to be a dangerous place to be in. Captain Ralston was then seen giving plasma to men who had been shot and disfigured while standing amidships waiting their turn to get off. ~~It was then about~~ It was then ~~about~~ between 0930 and 1000 and ~~the~~ the ship had made two attempts to land on shore, several men succeeding in getting ashore but ~~others~~ others were cut down where they stood and others, still able to function, were doing all they could for the injured. Fire was still raging ~~in~~ in the holds and the ship continued to list. At this point a ~~small~~ small landing boat came alongside and about 30 men from the rear of the boat went aboard with Lt. Cox. None of the Co. A personnel went aboard this craft. Enlisted personnel who were seen doing meritorious service all during this action were:

Ginnetti, later missing, Sergeant Klein, later wounded, Sergeant Dumphey who did outstanding service, later wounded, and private Hopper who gave Captain Ralston yeomans service in keeping account of all our wounded and keeping the company together. It was now about ten -thirty and I was then near the control tower and learned that the Skipper had decided to go out to the USS Chase and transfer our dead and wounded. When we reached the Chase, sometime after eleven, our decided list to starboard made it difficult and perilous to transfer our wounded and dead but this was accomplished by the hard and fast work of all the army officers and Lt. (JG) Kincaid MC, who had already done meritorious service while we were making the previous landings.

The roughness of the sea, the dense smoke along the beach and some mist at sea all contributed to "E" coming in at the wrong place and becoming dispersed over a wide area. (1/Sgt Lawrence J. Fitzsimmons, T/Sgt Joseph A. Toth and T/Sgt Calvin L. Ellis). The men noted that the Navy crew seemed green and that when fired upon, they would not get to their guns. When at last ordered to get to the guns, they fired wildly and would not expose themselves. In Ellis' boat, the coxswain didn't know where to go and asked Ellis: "What is the objective?" Ellis pointed it out to him and then noted he was moving too far right. He said: "Bear left!" He then told the coxswain he was bearing too far left, but the man kept on the same course.

The Co boats began stringing out, and finally lost one another. All were supposed to guide on the CP boat, but that boat too was bearing far left and the others realized it. (Fitzsimmons). The men kept yelling at the coxswain: "You're going left." He ignored them and kept on the same course. The CP boat landed far left--near 16-3's sector. The only boats the CP men could then see were Nos 2 and 3, which were a little to their right. (Fitzsimmons). Ellis saw one other Co boat come in about 300 yds from him; that was all. Perhaps 800 yds separated the two flanks.

In all of the boats the in-passage was not too costly but when the ramps were dropped, automatic fire caught the open ends dead on. Some of them were caught in crossing bands of fire. The CP boat took its heaviest losses at that moment and only 12 of 36 men got to the beach. The rest got it in the water, as they waded in from a sandbar, or were hit as they returned to drag in the wounded.

Section no 1, however, didn't lose a man in the water: the fire against the section was small in volume and erratic. (T/Sgt Phillip Streczyk).

Toth's 2nd section was dropped in water over its head, the coxswain having started shying off as he drew into the beach. More than half of the men came in swimming; some, it was believed, were carried down by the weight of their equipment. (Toth)

All told, "E" lost 105 men during the day, and only 1 of these was lost during the movement inland. Most of the others were lost in the water: many of the wounded crawled to the edge of the sand, fell exhausted and were there caught by the tide. In trying to pull these men in, the able-bodied were caught by enemy fire and some of these wounded also died from drowning. The Medical Detachment, coming in on the 4th wave, took enough casualties that its own wounded monopolized its attention. (Lt Thad A. Shaw, Ellis). On the beach, the men of "E" noted only other infantrymen. The wire and obstacles had not been touched. A few minutes later, the men of "E" saw the first engineers arrive and set to work.

Stretching ahead of the Co were 300 yds of sand, and then a steep hill. The men among them knew that they had to move, but even they felt their strength and will fading. The fire was hot; their loads were heavy. Their natural inclination was to stay there. (Fitzsimmons)

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and Ellis.) They went on a few feet and then flopped again. The tide came racing in behind them and pushed them on. Fitzsimmons saw two of his men---Pvts Spencer and Walch--take a few strides, flop down and then be blown bodily into the air by mines buried on the beach. Both were killed.

It took one hour to get the survivors across the sand and to the foot of the hill. They went frd one at a time, figuring that they would be less of a target this way. German riflemen were firing at them from the brow of the hill and they were getting automatic fire from both flanks along the beach. Ellis saw four enemy riflemen fire at his men from atop the hill and then move along it in silhouette. He tried to get some fire on them but discovered that every weapon in his section was out of action. The riflemen disappeared suddenly as if the ground had swallowed them and he figured that they had dropped into an emplacement.

Some of the men froze on the beach, wretched with seasickness and fear, refusing to move. Most of survivors toiled painfully to the foot of the hill where the enemy might well have found and destroyed them, since they had no fire power. (Fitzsimmons)

Streczyk's section---which was to contribute one of the most intrepid actions of the entire day--came in exactly where "F" was supposed to land. (See overlay: The place of landing was identified by Streczyk's surviving members and by Streczyk during the interview.) Streczyk got 32 men onto the sands, took 12 casualties mostly from bullet fire in getting across the beach, and continued onward immediately with 20 men. The German SP---covering EXIT 3 on the eastern side---when the debouchement took place was to the party's immediate right, and from this, they were drawing most of the fire. Dead ahead of them was a small ravine and their approach was direct toward it. This put them a little to the left of the first line of emplacements serving as an outwork for the SP. A communications trench led back from the emplacements. The party moved rapidly up the draw, then went right and slightly up hill in such way that they emerged on the rear of the outwork before the enemy had noted the movement. (Streczyk) The 14 Germans inside the work were caught flat-footed. The party attacked them with grenades and bazookas and they made a futile attempt to reply with grenades: several were killed, two were captured and the others got away to the SP.

The party then attacked the SP from the rear, and had its rearward exit covered before a shot was fired. From the cover of an outer trench, they engaged it with grenades. The enemy fire gradually fell off as the occupants went to cover, but there was no sign of a surrender. For 4½ hours, Streczyk's men stayed there, keeping this point neutralized and thereby greatly assisting the movements of "G" and of other units across the beach. Yet they did not feel strong enough to assault it directly and under the conditions in which the men were employed, the Streczyk party was wholly scattered with each man fighting his own battle and doing what he could to harrass the enemy. In this time they took 21 prisoners and left an equal number of German dead behind without, themselves losing one man. They had kept under cover in the outworks, worked in small groups through the trenches and gradually reduced the enemy strength so that the SP was not capable of any strong action. It had become "contained."

Streczyk's men had blown the wire confronting the ravine just after landing. There was thus a convenient avenue for the advance of other troops. Fitzsimmons, who had landed well over to the left, came up shortly after 1100 and learned about the breach. The Co Commander, Capt Edward F. Wozenski, then decided to move laterally along the beach toward Streczyk and he and Fitzsimmons set to work rounding up the men. They could get only about 1½ squads together. Wozenski then tried to get smoke laid on the beach to cover the movement to the right but this was unavailing. The party then moved on along the beach.

1st Section had already quit the ground around the German SP and gone on inland when Wozenski's group came to the route which they had taken up the hill. At the rear of the German SP, they ran into scattered enemy riflemen and some machine gun fire but the enemy resistance here was now disorganized.

They went on. About 1200, Wozenski halted his party about 1000 yds S of Exit 3. He sent Fitzsimmons back to the beach to look for more of the Co. Fitzsimmons met Toth and 7 men coming through the mine field. Other small groups were met and collected farther back. The Wozenski group had caught up with the Streczyk party in the interim and with the fresh men brought in by Fitzsimmons, the Co numbered 60 men. They organized in two platoons and continued to sweep toward Colleville where they went into position on the right of "G". They had encountered some sniper fire on the way and had taken a few casualties but most of their trouble had come on the beach.

Ellis and 20 men were up with Stine and Krukas' section from "G" in the advanced ground, and had in fact been the first men to reach this position. They stayed there 4 hours, getting rifle fire from their rear and being unable to return it lest they fire into the G-E positions. After that, they returned to Bn CP and rejoined the Co.

Lt Shaw was in a party that arrived 2 hours later than the main body. The boat was hit by 3 artillery shells when 400 yds from shore. Three men were killed and 12 wounded; the engine was destroyed. The boat began to drift. There was a tank in the LCT. As the boat drifted, the tanker trained his 75 on the German artillery piece which had put them under fire; he had the good luck to demolish it on the first round. For 2 hours the boat drifted and finally grounded on the rocks, near the beach. Shaw had the ramp lowered. He hit the water with two other men, and one was immediately felled by machine gun fire. Shaw then ordered the men to unload on the other side of the boat and they waded on in---21 from and miscellaneous elements--66 men all told. The fire on Bn 2 beach was still heavy. So they found a section of scaling ladder and went on up the cliff---the 66 men using one 5-foot section of ladder as it was needed. They found German mines all along the ledges, but were able to avoid them.

Streczyk said that after getting to the top of the hill, his party moved west, not east, and that in so doing, they crossed the route by which Dawson and his men had moved inland from the beach. He

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was positive that the party had moved to the right after reducing the SP. The other men agreed that this was the line taken by the small parties which came up on Strezyk's rear. Fitzsimmons said that the groups which came up later and took the same route were not seriously checked by fire on the beach nor in their journey up the hill.

 pdfelement

Co. "E" 16th Infantry

G-L-110
57

The following is a chronological listing of events, actions and circumstances surrounding the landing of Co "E", 16th Infantry in the assault wave on Beach "Omaha". Easy Red-- North of Colleville-Sur-Mer, France on 6 June 1944.

Aboard the U.S.S. Henrico - APA #2- Reveille was sounded at 01:00 hours 6 June 1944. Quarters were policed and equipment collected and adjusted for debarkation.

Details from the company reported to the ship galley for breakfast which consisted of black coffee and one sandwich per man not a very appetizing mess.

At 03:30 hours Co "E" was called to debarkation stations.

At 04:15 hours the Assault wave Co's "E" & "F" were lowered into the sea which was very rough for the small assault craft.

There was considerable milling about, shouting and juggling for positions on the part of the assault craft until they were in proper order for Rendezvousing.

The order to lower away was delayed for some reason and the assault craft were considerably knocked about by banking into the mother ship as she rolled in the heavy sea.

Once in the rendezvous area, as in so many of our prior exercises, there was the usual racing around for well over one hour during which every man was completely soaked and many sickened.

With "H" hour at 06:30 hrs. apprehension increased as we continued to rendezvous after 06:00 hrs.

At approximately 06:00 hours. heavy naval support weapons opened up with their fire display. followed by flashes from the distant low shore where the shells were landing.

A few enemy planes floated over the massed invasion forces dropping their long burning flares.

Anxious eyes scanned the dawn, lightened skies, searching for the hundreds of promised bombers- especially any headed for "Easy Red" our beach. Dam few were seen and there many high flying fighters.

Now we were headed in for shore-pounding in the rough sea.

Out to our front we could see the LCT's "Rocket) moving up to firing position. Guide craft and tank ships were out front as well as small support boats.

About a mile off shore we began to pass a few, and then more and more, men passing about in the water in life belts and small rubber raft- at first we thought that these men were shot down airmen but soon realized that they must be tank men from tanks that had sunk.

We knew our time table was off when, as we were still 10:15 minutes off shore, the rocket ships opened up with their thousands of rockets. It certainly was an impressive and cheering sight. Unfortunately, as was later seen, it was morale effect only what was achieved by our rocket ships for we saw no material effects of their landing- apparently most had fallen into the water.

COMPANY "K" 16th INFANTRY
A. P. O. #1, U. S. Army

June 22, 1944.

SUBJECT: "K" Co., activities on "D" Day.

TO Commanding Officer, 16th Infantry, A. P. O. #1,
U. S. Army

"D" DAY, JUNE 6th, 1944

"K" Co.; debarked from HMS EMPIRE ANVIL, 0325, 6 June
1944,

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Absolutely nothing was seen at the assault landing craft from the 116th Inf. to our right - we didn't know whether they had already landed or were still out of sight behind us.

Nearing the shore, to a point where it was possible to easily recognize landmarks, it became obvious that the company was being landed approximately 1000 yds left of the scheduled landing point.

How anyone who had been briefed could make such an error, I will never know, for the lone house which so prominently marked "Exit #E3" was in flames, and clearly showed its distinctive outline.

Small arms and AT fire opened up on us as we were still 500-600 yds off shore.

When told to fire back, from our LCVP, with the MG's mounted astern. The naval man on one gun fired a burst straight up into the performance if I ever saw one. No one would man the second gun.

MG fire was rattling against the ramp as the boat grounded. For some reason the ramp was not latched during any part of our trip, but the ramp would not go down. Four or five men battered at the ramp until it fell, and the men with it.

The boats were hurriedly emptied - the men jumping into water shoulder high. Under intense MG & AT fire. No sooner was the last man out than the boat received two direct hits from an AT gun, and was believed to have burned and blown up.

Now, all the men in the company could be seen wading ashore into the field of intense fire from the MG's, rifles, AT guns and mortars. Due to the heavy sea, the strong cross current and the loads that the men were carrying, no one could run. It was just a slow methodical march with absolutely no cover up to the enemy's commanding positions. Many fell left and right, and the water reddened with their blood. A few men hit under water mines of some sort, and were blown out of the sea. The others staggered on to the obstacle covered, yet completely exposed beach. Here men, in sheer exhaustion, hit the beach only to rise and move forward thru a tide rilet that threatened to sweep them of their feet. Men were falling on all sides but the survivors still moved forward and eventually worked to a pile of shell at the high water mark. This offered momentary protection against the murderous fire of close-in enemy guns but his mortars were still raising hell.

A firing line was built up along this pile of shell and the enemy guns were brought under small arms fire unfortunately most of our guns were jammed with sand but every arm was brought to bear on the enemy. Men armed with pistols alone were firing back at machine guns in an effort to cover the company's men still struggling ashore. Other men displaying the best in courage and devotion to duty stripped and cleaned their weapons while under heavy fire.

Though enemy machine guns and snipers would mercilessly mow down anyone attempting to go back to the water and drag their wounded comrades to the lee of the shell many men dropped back to do it and a few succeeded despite the point blank enemy fire.

An attempt was made to reorganize the scattered remnants of the company for an attack on the enemy's strong point to our front. Only two men who could be found and most of their weapons were jammed. All radio communication was gone. An attempt was made to get smoke for cover but without avail. Finally in an effort to reorganize in some strength a lateral movement along the exposed beach was started. Men were picked up at scattered intervals and were being led to our originally scheduled landing

Approaching this point it was seen that the first platoon of Company E had broken through just east of Exit E-1. There Lt. Spaulding, with his platoon made the initial brake through from the beach and the entire beach Easy Red was attempting to clear inland by his route despite the fact that it was being swept by machine gun, artillery, mortar, and ~~AA~~ fire. Mines were thickly sown throughout the area but the company heedless of this danger realized the necessity of a break-through and plunged boldly through to attack and silence the machine guns covering the sector.

Working their way to the top of the high ground overlooking the beach the first platoon under covering fire of a platoon from "G" Co. 16th Inf. worked west where pill box by pill box it reduced the strong point guarding the East side of "E-1" extremely stubborn resistance was encountered in this point with its maze of under ground shelters, trenches and dugouts. There was a close exchange of grenades, small arms fire until the platoon had cornered about twenty men and an officer. Again there was a fierce exchange of grenades in the confined trenches until the enemy was overpowered and surrendered.

Having cleaned this strong point the remnants of the Co. without communications of any kind pushed on towards its objective.

Reaching a point approximately 1000 yds south of "E-1" the Co was held up and partially reorganized. A rough check showed that well over 100 men out of the 183 landed were killed wounded or missing.

Patrols were sent into newly discovered strong points. to the front until the first Battalion took over the job of reducing it.

Orders came from battalion Hqs. by runner to move east ~~kk~~ ~~kkkk~~. The Co. moved east then south along the road to the town. Snipers were extremely accurate all throughout but the Co. moved towards its destination. Heavy accurate artillery fire registered on the Co. for a few minutes but no casualties were suffered.

The Battalion commander ordered the Co, then about fifty strong, to sweep the woods and ~~hills~~ fields west of the Coleville road and proceed to the Coleville -St. Laurent road. The Co. swept forward without serious opposition but the small Hqs. group following the deployed Co. was repeatedly pined down by machine gun and sniper fire. It became apparent that the enemy was not firing on large groups but was concentrating on small ones.

The enemy had previously prepared fox-holes, trenches, and deadly fields of fire through this area and was difficult to locate and drive of.

G Co. 2nd Bat. 16th Inf. had in the meantime moved up to Coleville-sur-Mer and occupied the west half of the town in a bitter struggle. E Co. with an attachment of one section of each company's machine guns was given the mission of building up the battalion line by going into cover G Co's right flank which was exposed to numerous enemy machine guns and enemy ~~pkkkkkkk~~ machine pistol men. Two skeleton sections of E Company moved on under Lt Robert A. Huch to take positions on the right of G. Co. The situation at the time was extremely touch and go with enemy in front among and behind the company. Still the Lt. Huch led his men into this rather desperate situation where by setting himself up and holding his ground he eased the dangerous pressure of G. Co's

right and eventually established a Bat'n line.

This was to be held until a reorganization could be effected the next day. We were completely surrounded many times with no supporting troops near by without communication the Co. held its ground throughout the night and by morning had sufficiently reorganized both its personnel and ground to repel enemy thrusts and ensure the success of the beach head in its particular sector.

-This is from an account by Capt. Edward F. Wozenski, Commanding "E" Co. 16th Inf. in the Invasion.

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2L-114 ✓
14

The Story of Company F, 16th Infantry, on D Day.

The entire company was in the assault wave. It was contained in six boats entitled headquarters detachment, and the one thru fifth assault section boats. During the approach the boats were to advance in a column of boats, later to deploy in a regular company front some hundred yards apart. All boats were to touch the shore at the same instant.

No fire was encountered from embarkation in the assault boats until two hundred yards from shore. The fire at this point was entirely small arms fire and did no damage to any section. The headquarters detachment boat contained the Company commander, Captain John G. W. Finke, the company executive officer, Lt Howard Pearre, the first sergeant, Sgt Thaddeus A. Lombarski, and twenty-seven others. Captain Finke stood at the front of the boat to guide the naval personnel to the proper beach. The coxswain was bearing too far to the left and the captain insisted that a change be made to the right. By the time that the change in direction was made, it was too late to hit the proper spot. The boat beached 200 yards to the left of its objective.

In the first assault section boat the army leader was Lt Aaron E. Dennstedt, his assistant, Staff Sgt Andrew Nesevitch. Sgt Nesevitch felt that the Navy did its best to hit the proper beach but by the time it was identified the ground swell was so large that a change of direction was dangerous. It was better to get out wherever you were. Navy men in the boat fired their machine guns all the way in to the beach. This boat beached 200 yards to the right of its objective.

Lt Bernard J. Rush was in charge of the second assault section, his assistant was T/Sgt George B. Hammond. Due to the mist it was very difficult to see the beach. Lt Rush was near the ramp and insisted that the boat bear to the right. Sgt Hammond stood near the coxswain and relayed the information but the coxswain refused to follow these directions until too late. The landing was 800 yards to the left of the proper spot. The ramp stuck momentarily before it opened.

The third section boat was commanded by Lt Gilbert H. Rollins. It landed a good deal right of its target and was near the boat of the headquarters detachment.

The fourth section was commanded by Lt Glendon S. Siefert, his assistant, T/Sgt Farys Williams. This section followed closely behind the third section, but was forced to halt as an LST broke through the formation. Later this section did catch up and headed for its proper landing point. The coxswain believed himself to be on the wrong course but Lt Siefert thought it to be correct. A hundred yards from shore the coxswain turned the boat around, returned 300 yards, then came back to the beach about 1100 yards to the left of the proper position. The landing was thus at least twenty minutes late, although the other sections were all about ten minutes late also. The navy crew fired their machine guns during the final run, but the fire was extremely inaccurate.

The fifth section was commanded by Lt Otto W. Clemens, his assistant, T/Sgt Raymond F. Strojny. As this boat was approaching the shore it seemed to be bearing too far to the right. An artillery shell landed to the right of the boat. The coxswain swung left because of this burst but a shell then lit to the left of the boat. Lt Clemens said, "Take her in. Lets get the hell off this ship." Moving toward the shore the boat received enemy machine gun fire directly on the ramp. When the boat landed the enemy machine gun continued to fire, but the ramp could not be opened. When the ramp did get down the machine gunner was out

26

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of ammunition or changing his barrel. Most of the men got off the boat in good shape before the gun again opened up.

In the headquarters section the ramp was slow in lowering. The men hit the water with only rifle fire around them. Before all reached the waters edge, however mortar shells started landing in the water. Several of the men were killed including Lt Pearre. The enemy machine guns raked the waters edge and all the men hit the dirt in a fully exposed position. Capt Finke yelled to the men to move forward and in little groups they advanced to the high water line. Here they had a small amount of defilade. The light machine guns set up at the waters edge to fire at a pill box. An enemy machine gun soon opened fire on this exposed group killing the machine gun leader, S/Sgt William A. Miller, and two squad leaders, Sgts. Robert Price and Rodney Chase. The two gunners were wounded.

By the time the group reached the high water mark only 17 of the original 30 men were present. Of these seven were wounded and the section leader knew that nine of the absent had definitely been killed.

The first assault boat hit an obstacle about 50 yards from shore. This caused the boat to swing and almost flounder. The boat captain tried to get free but could not. Fire was hitting in front of the boat so everyone yelled to lower the ramp. The ramp lowered quickly and the men jumped into neck deep water. Some were hit right on the ramp, some in the water. On reaching the beach Lt Dennstedt turned and yelled to the men to keep moving. At this moment he was killed by enemy machine gun fire. The high water mark was 75 yards away. Of the 30 men and 1 officer leaving the boat, only 14 men reached this cover. Sgt Nesevitch looked back at the beach to see if anyone still moved. Mortar shells were landing at the waters edge by this time.

The second assault boat beached about twenty or thirty yards from the land. The water was so shallow that the men could move quickly. Between the boat and shore there was small arms fire but no one seemed to go down in the water. On the beach the BAR men fanned to the right and left, firing right from the edge of the water. The men generally started running across the beach. At this point it is about a hundred yards to the high water line. Both BAR gunners were hit almost immediately. The man on the right Pfc. Frank DeBellis, was killed and the gunner to the left, Pfc George Bert, lost his right leg from a shell fragment. Despite this he pulled himself a hundred yards to the cover. He died several hours later as the proper aid could not be given him. Next the mortar squad leader, Sgt Joseph Zukowski, his gunner, Pfc Rueben Schatz, and the two ammunition bearers, Pvts Goza Fazekas and P. L. Wells were killed on the beach. Sgt Zukowski's last act was to pass the mortar sight to Sgt Hammond. Hammond tried to recover the mortar but found it to be ruined so he threw all of this equipment away. The first aid man, Pvt Edward Morozewicz, was killed on the beach while trying to aid a man. About twenty men reached the cover, about half of these were wounded. Those who fell near the water could not be brought forward. Some of these kept moving just ahead of the incoming tide. Many became overcome by the cold water and were carried out by it.

The third section landed near the headquarters section. The water was more than six feet deep. There was small arms fire and mortars causing several casualties in the water. On reaching the beach the men ~~22~~ dropped, many of them being mixed with the headquarters section. On Capt Finke's urging the men moved forward. About twenty reached the cover, half of them wounded.

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The fourth section jumped into breast deep water. Small arms and mortar fire fell all around but the men cleared the water well. Between the waters edge and the cover, three men and Lt Siefert were wounded. All of them reached the cover, but Siefert died soon afterward.

The fifth section entered waist deep water which extended about fifty yards. While in the water they were subjected to machine gun and rifle fire so that many were wounded. By helping one another most of them got out of the water. Practically all the men dropped on the beach on reaching it. Soon they were urged on by Platoon Sgt Coleman F. Steirer and they reached the defilade. The fire was intense but as the group moved forward everyone kept yelling, "Keep moving, keep moving." Lt Clemens waved the men and was killed at the edge of the beach. Only seven men reached the ledge, one of these was wounded. A few others crawled along very slowly just ahead of the tide. The aid man, Pvt Morris T. Levine, made several trips out to the beach to help forward those who could not move. He was seriously wounded before he began this work, but kept at it until he had done all he could. For this action he was awarded the Silver Star.

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By the time that each section had reached the beach and the cover of the high water mark, only two of the officers were capable of command. All units were badly scattered.

The first section made a cut through the wire. This was done by Sgt David N. Radford after the section had been on the beach about fifteen minutes. Radford found the wire to be double apron type and his bangalore torpedo was not long enough to blow a path. He returned from the wire to the beach, ran to a wounded man to secure another bangalore, returned to his exposed position at the wire, fastened the torpedoes, and successfully blew a path through the wire. He was exposed during every motion of this operation and was later awarded the DSC.

Beyond the wire was a grassy field, the grass about two feet high. The BAR man, Pvt Homer Richards, covered the men as they crawled forward. After wire was a field of personnel mines. In leading his unit through the minefield, T/Sgt Edward I. Zukowski, brother of Sgt Joseph Zukowski, was severly wounded by a mine. Sgt Nesevitch took charge of the platoon and headed on a right oblique through the minefield. The mines extended about fifty yards. On reaching the bottom of the hill the unit met the battalion executive officer, Major George Washington, who ordered the unit to go to the top of the hill. Here they were to build up a line of fire. The hill was steep incline for about two hundred feet. The men pulled themselves up by grabbing shrubbery, firing occasionally. Forty-five minutes elapsed between the blowing of the wire and the arrival at the top of the hill. The Germans had elaborate fox holes and trenches, beautifully constructed and well camouflaged. The enemy ran without putting up a fight.

camouflaged

Sgt Nesevitch established a line of fire with fourteen men. At this position there was a good deal of sniper fire. Here Pvt Richards was killed. The men fired at three or four machine gun positions with rifle grenades and forced many of the Germans back.

The thirteen men then moved ##### inland at a right oblique for about a mile. Just outside Colleville-Sur-Mer the group met G Company under Captain Dawson. Captain Dawson put Nesevitch to guarding road blocks.

Nesevitch says the majority of the Germans in the town were drunk. He also said that G Company was hit by our own heavy naval fire.

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The naval control party was approached by Nesevitch but they did not seem to know just where their fire was landing. Nesevitch suggested that they move their fire to the town where it would do some good, but the party merely had the fire cease.

The headquarters detachment and third section landed directly in front of an enemy strong point. There were several emplacements and pill boxes about two hundred yards away. The entire unit was pinned down until just before noon. About six men were wounded by sniper fire at this position. Capt Finke sent a runner about 0800 to the right (?) to try to contact battalion. The runner returned about 1000 with an order for Capt Finke to move all second battalion men to the right to join the battalion. Finke turned the unit over to 1st Sgt Lombarski with directions to move a half an hour later. The move did not take place until well after 1100. After receiving orders, Lombarski notified everyone possible to prepare to move. Not more than twenty men of the two sections were able to do so. About this time Sgt Lombarski saw three tanks move from the left flank along the high water line. They were fully exposed but did not seem to fire at anything.

About 600 yards to the right (?) the party came to a break through position. This was possibly F Company's. There were many people from the First Division moving through and men of the 116th Infantry, 29th Division were milling around on the beach. Artillery fire peppered the break through area. There was no small arms fire here, the mines were taped off, and the men walked upright 150-200 yards to the top of the hill.

At the top of the hill the party met Capt Finke and also saw the Regimental CP. Lombarski then had only ten men and sent a runner back to try and find the stragglers and any other F Company men he could. The Sgt thinks the ten who didn't arrive had been unable to stand the pace. Lt Rollins and Sgt Edward Plona met the ten stragglers and came ahead. Both Plona and Rollins were wounded while moving forward toward the break through position.

Capt Finke moved the ten men near Colleville-Sur-Mer to the battalion rear CP. Lombarski and the ten men provided left flank protection for the CP including a three man outpost. While placing the outpost an enemy machine gun opened fire on Lombarski. Capt Finke took a patrol to flank this gun, but a mortar round landed nearby wounding Finke and two men. Mortar fire forced the battalion CP to move back. By late evening enough men joined the group so that Lombarski had twenty men.

While on the beach Lombarski saw a British destroyer come within four hundred yards of shore and directed close in fire on the beach. The strong point in front of Lombarski's landing position was not wiped out until D+1. For leadership and gallantry in action, Lombarski received a cluster to his Silver Star.

The second section continued to receive mortar and artillery fire while on the beach. About 0900 the enemy fire slackened and Sgt Hammond noticed that men were going up the hill 600 yards to his left. Four men and Hammond moved toward this area, their number increased to about eight by the time the break through area was reached.

At the break through there were a good number of people. The third battalion CP was dug in on the beach. Hammond reported to Capt Edmonds who told him to stand fast. Hammond remained with the third battalion for the remainder of the day. He did not move up the hill until late that afternoon.

In the fourth section, just after Lt. Siefert died, Sgt Williams and his BAR man, Pvt Walter Pielock, engaged an enemy machine gun nest.

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Pielock was wounded. At this time a DD tank arrived and knocked out several machine guns. About the same time the British destroyer arrived and through its fire enabled the third battalion to reach the crest of the hill. Williams section was mixed with the third battalion and soon joined L Company.

By the time the fourth section reached the crest of the hill Sgt Kasmir J. Pisl was in charge of the section. He saw two German 75mm guns, a 47mm gun, two mortar positions, and many machine gun positions. All of these were very elaborate positions. The mortar positions had hand painted panoramic sketches (360 degrees) with the targets indicated on them. Our mortar fire and naval fire caused the Germans to leave. They did not fire at the party going up the hill. S/Sgt Lewis Van Hoogstraten led all of the units up the hill. For this he was decorated with the Silver Star.

The fifth section received a lot of machine gun fire on the beach area. Sgt Strojny found a better position so he called his men to it. There he built a line of fire. Soon he saw two enemy machine gun positions and directed all the fire to these. Both guns ceased to fire. Then Strojny saw a pill box about a hundred yards away which was firing a 75mm gun toward the tanks on the beach. He fired his rifle at the pill box then called for a bazooka. None of his men had one, but a sergeant from the 116th Infantry appeared with one. Strojny told the sergeant to fire at the gun. The sergeant said he couldn't see it. Strojny pointed it out to him but the sergeant said he did not have anyone to load. Strojny loaded the first round which went way wide. A second was loaded but it was too short. At this time a mortar round landed in the five yards between the two men, severely wounding the sergeant. Strojny was not wounded so he took up the bazooka but it was pierced through the tube by shell fragments. The enemy gun continued firing which made Strojny mad. He decided to try the bazooka anyway, so loaded a round and fired. The first two rounds missed, the next two were direct hits. Nevertheless the gun continued to fire. Strojny yelled for more ammunition but there was none. He then went down the beach and returned with six rounds he found. He fired all six from the same position, all rounds hitting the target--the last one causing the ammunition to explode. A number of dead were observed and only one German was seen to escape. Strojny fired at the German with an M1 but was wounded by a sniper. The bullet entered his helmet over his left eye, going through the helmet and leaving a large hole in the rear of it. Despite this, Strojny was only superficially wounded. For this action Strojny was awarded the DSC.

Seeing the pill box in flames, Strojny urged his men forward. He got up but not followed. He did see a good spot to the left so he urged his men to it. His men followed him but the men from the 116th Infantry, who were nearby, did not. Sgt Strojny had his men pick up two BARs the 116th had abandoned. He worked to the left to the point where his unit was to cross, but as there was wire he could not get through. Strojny got a man from the 116th to blow a hole through the wire. The BAR men were placed on the right to fire into a wooded area. Pvt Charles Rocheford had his hand blown off by a mine as he came into position. Strojny ran through the gap and cleared the minefield. He mentioned for the others to follow. Five men from Strojny's section and an officer and a squad from the 116th followed. They received machine gun fire from their right flank. The entire group headed for this fire and seven Germans were killed. One American was killed, one wounded. Both of these were from the 116th. Another machine gun emplacement was

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found and silenced with a demolition charge. Strojny wished to enter the wooded area, but the Lt from the 116th insisted that a bombardment must come first. The party withdrew, but could not contact the navy. Strojny then took his men, returned to the beach, and moved to the left where he found the third battalion. He reported to K Company and moved forward with them for about a mile. This union was about 1300. At 1600 orders were received for all second battalion men to join their own organizations. Strojny's group tried to find the second battalion, but could not. They informally attached themselves to the beach engineers for the night.

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2L-114 (15)
16-6 ON D DAY

The survivors in this company were group-interviewed on 22 Aug 44, at Ferte la Mace.

The Co hit the beach together except the 5th BT. They were shipping much water and couldn't bail fast enough, so the boat was slowed. The Co came in on 6 LCVPs. There were no casualties coming in. "Bullets were dropping around us like rain but the good Lord seemed to be with us." (Capt Joseph T. Dawson. Note: This man is an unusually accurate witness.) AP shells and some HE were hitting in and around the Co and were having a harrassing effect on the men, but the nearest of these did not fall closer than 50-60 yards. (T/Sgt V.J. Miceli.) There was some machine gun fire which fell close to the boats, but on the whole the automatic fire of the enemy seemed to be inaccurate.

No 5 BT, getting to the beach, found its ramp fouled and unworkable. The water inside was then up to the men's knees and this blocked the mechanism. So the men had to clamber over the sides. This made them a broadside target and they lost 15 men debarking--mostly to bullet fire.

The 2nd Section hit a sandbar 700 yds out, but the coxswain told the men to stand steady and he bumped his way on through. He seemed to be absolutely fearless and he kept assuring the men that he was get them in at the right place. (Lieut E.A. Day.) He paid for his courage with his life. He tried to straighten the boat around after he dropped the men and a shell made a direct hit on him.

The water was still quite clear when "E" hit the beach. The Co was supposed to land at H PLUS 30, and did so, at the designated spot, but the few men who had preceded "G" to this part of the beach had been delayed and had been on the sand only 5 minutes. (Dawson). The engineers were engaged in blowing the tetrahedrals, trihedrals and mines, etc., when the company came ashore. (Miceli.) The men of "G" saw some men trying to land behind them (116th Inf and CWS troops) and taking cover behind the obstacles. They were blown up by our own explosives. (Miceli, Dawson.) The engineers had not yet completed the lanes for the tanks; it was about 15 minutes after "G" landed that the first lanes were cleared in this area. (Dawson) However, three tanks had arrived at this strip of beach (where they came into the shore is not known) and had already been destroyed by direct fire from the shore batteries when "G" landed among them. (Dawson's estimate of this arty fire was that it was not heavier than 75 or 77.) These were DD tanks and were supposed to have preceded the first wave by 5 mins. Out of 60 DD tanks which were supposed to have landed (this is Dawson's comment but the record requires a check on this point) only these three had made the shore. Ten had drowned at once in the heavy seas and others had foundered as they came on. All the way in, the men of "G" had passed tankers afloat on rafts and had mistakenly thought they were markers intended to guide the infantry. (Dawson, Miceli.) Such was the height of the surf, that men in the "B" boats were making bets to one another that none of their own craft would reach the shore. (S/Sgt Vincent J. Kachnik).

The scene along the shingle as "G" landed was one of complete confusion. "The assault wave had become pinned down, mentally if not physically." (Dawson) There was no co-ordinated fire from the Americans ashore. "G" could see a line of men along the shingle, frozen to earth and taking no steps against the enemy. They were bunched shoulder to shoulder and were huddling on patches of ground which gave them partial cover from the fire. (Dawson, Miceli.) These were remnants from "E" but principally men from 116-E who had been landed on the wrong beach and had become demoralized in part by that error. (Dawson.) The beaches were supposed to have been saturated with rocket fire from 5 LCRs; one LCR hit the target and got its rockets in the E-3 draw. The other rocket clusters had gone off in the water quite far from the shore: the men of "G" had passed thousands of dead fish killed by this fire. (Dawson)

"G" lost most of its men---63 all told---in getting from the boats to the shingle. They fell mainly from mortar and bullet fire; the enemy arty was falling too far behind to be dangerous. There was no way, however, to minimize these beach-crossing losses. The men had to walk across the sands; they could not sprint because of the weight of ammo, demolitions, etc. (Dawson) It was the feeling of the men that their losses would have been cut in half had their loads been cut likewise. (Miceli.) When the ramps went down, some of the men couldn't move ashore, but stumbled and fell in the water. They had become so cramped because of crowding that their muscles would not respond; they lay in the water for a few minutes, rubbing their legs, then they crawled ashore. (Lieut Marvin M. Stine) It even seemed to some of the leaders that they were glad of the chance to assault, so miserable had they felt on the in-journey. (T/Sgt Peter Gorba) Except for the wounded and perhaps a few stragglers, the men streamed on up to the shingle. The light mgs and the mortars were all with Dawson; he put up the mgs on top the shingle and the mortars at the base of it. Five minutes after hitting the shingle, these weapons were ready to fire. At first the men could see no targets, so they put down a general "zone" fire. At least 10 minutes passed in this way. Then new boat waves came into the beach. At that, the enemy fire shifted from the beach and shingle to the oncoming boats. "They caught all of the unshirted hell that 'G' Co had been catching. When that happened, the men at the mortars and mgs had their first chance to see the targets clearly. They spotted 8 or 10 emplacements---some of them looking like Tobruk pits---and we directed all our fire toward these points. The BARs and rifles added to the volume. We tried to put rocket fire on the emplacements but the rockets were ineffective. So was the mortar fire." (Day) The open emplacements were directly to the front of "G"; the heavier guns were off to the flanks. The Co profited by the fact that there was a small defilade directly ahead and this was what helped most in getting the advance going. (Kachnik)

The wire --2 double aprons and a concertina, about 10 ft broad--- was about 5 yds beyond the shingle. While the offensive fire was being built up, 4 to 5 men from each section blew the wire ahead of them with bangalores, having to use 4 bangalores to cut one lane. They did this under bullet fire. (Dawson) Pfc Henry J. Peszek wiggled through and under the wire with Lieut John D. Burbridge. They got part way through and Burbridge got his pack hung up. He shook him-

self loose. Peszek yelled to him: "Keep going. I'm going back for the bangalores." He exploded two of them: both men were lying within 6' of the torpedoes when they exploded. Peszek got creased on the arm by a bullet while laying the second torpedo but kept working.

This was the best placed and cut lane along the beach. Through it, most of the men of "G" passed, and the Bns which came after them took the same route.

A mine field lay beyond the wire. There were two dead Americans lying in the mine area; they had been blown up. The men of "G" went through the field over the bodies of the two dead men, figuring that this was their safest route. They then continued on through the Roman Ruins and proceeded up the draw. Dawson was out ahead of them. He had crawled through the wire and gone on up the hill with Pfc Frant Baldrige to see if he could clear the way for his men. They got halfway up the draw. Dawson then found himself caught between the fire of his own men and fire from an enemy mg at the head of the draw. Having walked up to that point, they flopped next to a fallen log for cover. Dawson told Baldrige: "Leave your equipment here. Go back and get the rest of the Co."

Baldrige crawled on back and Dawson crawled on another 75 yds. He moved to any cover he could find. The draw was V-shaped, the ruins being right at the bottom of the V. There was a promontory at the top near the left hand angle of the V. He crawled on behind this and around, which move put the enemy emplacement a little behind him and to his right. He was within 10 yds when the Germans saw him, swung the mg around and fired wildly. He heaved a fragmentation grenade; it exploded between them and killed both men.

Dawson then waited at the brow of the hill for the company to come up. As the platoons reached him, he deployed them. Baldrige, the messenger, had met 5th Section under Lieut Kenneth Bleau already coming up the hill. Kachnik, getting frd as far as the ruins, then found that most of the men weren't following Bleau. He went back to the Beach, and learned that in the interval the asst section leader had been hit on the beach and there was no one to "goot the men on." He went to work on them and before long, got the majority moving up the hill. He then followed along. Come to the top of the hill, Kachnik saw "minen" signs to his left. He heard someone yell: "Try the right!" There were more signs in that direction. He then tried looking for a path and began to crawl through the field. Four men followed him---S/Sgt Joseph Gaetano, Pfc Richard Torrey, Pvt Leo A. Sheerer and Pvt Louis Johns. They hit no mines and they crawled on to the hedgerow beyond the field---200 yds or so. Kachnik sent Sheerer back with the word: "It's safe. Tell the men to come ahead." The Co, however, was already coming ahead, guiding on the trail which led frd from the draw. The enemy fire by now had almost ceased. The men of "G" continued on for about 1000 yds. They then saw Germans "milling around" 150 yds or so to their leftward. S/Sgt Joseph Barr moved out along the hedge with an M-1 and took 8 prisoners, routing them from out of a dugout. They were a mixture of Germans and Poles. (The Co had seen mortar fire coming from this position and had thus spotted the enemy group in the first place.) The other elements quit the shingle and came on behind "G", but many of the men stayed in the draw, where the cover was better.

Dawson was getting small arms fire from all around his perimeter. Losses were occurring, but there was no place to withdraw the men. The arrival of the 18th Inf had caused a slackening of this fire for a few minutes; then when the larger group went on, it picked up again. Dawson was hit in the knee but felt that he had to stay on. Eighteen men in the three sections had been either killed or wounded by the American naval fire or enemy bullet fire while the Co clung to the flank of Colleville during the afternoon.

In the meantime, these things had happened: 16-1 had started arriving at 1300 and had gone into position on "G"'s rear; their later elements continued to build up through the mid-afternoon. "G" was not in contact with them---did not even know they were there---but gradually the enemy fire from that part of the perimeter fell away to a whisper. The night was fairly quiet.

At about 0800 on D PLUS 1, Dawson put his first patrol through the town---Burbridge, Kruckas, Gaettano, Peszek and 4 others. They worked down the main road, moved carefully from house to house, shot a few enemy riflemen and captured eight prisoners. As they reached the edge of the town, the 20th Engs and some MPs came along behind them. The patrol was followed by exactly one block by an MP carrying "OFF LIMITS" signs. Gaettano cleaned out one house, went on a short distance, went back and tried to re-enter the same house as he wasn't certain whether he had completed the job. An MP said:"You can't go in there." Gaettano replied:"The hell I can't. Just try to stop me!" and went on in. (Burbridge).

At 1000 Dawson was ordered to displace the Co to the S side of the town. They went 200 yds and drew fire. Dawson got two sections up to an HR and built up a fire position. (18th Inf was 500 yds on beyond him.) In a 15-minute engagement, "G" disposed of 17 Germans who had gone by an underground passage from the barracks in Colleville to prepared positions outside the village. They had got out in the early morning. One 60 mm shell, landing dead center, took all of the fight from this crew. "G" killed 5 and captured 12, having lost two of its men (wounded) in the same skirmish.

It was Dawson's impression that the lanes cut by his Co in the wire were used by 18th, 26th and other elements.

COMPANY A, 1st MEDICAL BN.

G L 110
518

REPORT

On June 6, 1944, at 0830 - two hours after H hour- LCI no. 85 carrying 90 personnel of the Company A, 1st Med. Bn. landed on Fox Green Beach.

Immediately on the touching of shore the enemy opened fire on the LCI with machine gun, 47 mm and heavier artillery. Several direct hits were made going through the front holds, the control room, and the forward deck killing several men and severely wounding several more. Immediately Captain Hahn with an aid man went into hold No. 2 to give medical aid and administer plasma to a critically injured patient. Captain Apanasewicz was on star board side also giving aid and treatment to critically wounded.

The beach at this place was not satisfactory for a landing so the LCI was withdrawn from land a few hundred yards then came in again to make another landing to the right.

On this 2nd landing we succeeded in reaching shore the port side ramp was withdrawn from land a few hundred yards then came in again to make another landing to the right.

On this 2nd landing we succeeded in reaching shore the port side ramp was lowered and the men started getting off. About 20 of the men from A Company succeeded in getting into the water when the enemy again opened fire hitting the ramp throwing it off the side of the boat into the water and at the same time badly wounding some of the men as they came off the ship. During this time other direct hits went into the holds setting two of them on fire, by this time the holds and deck were littered with dead and wounded when the 3rd hold caught on fire there were still several men in it and since the opening to this hold was on the inside they were becoming quite panicky. We succeeded in getting them through the door to the outside deck.

However there was a critically injured patient in the officers' cabin immediately above and in front of the opening of the 3rd hold. Another man and myself went into the cabin in face of terrific heat and blinding smoke and carried the helpless patient to the deck. At this time Lt. Lundgren went up to the control tower to give aid to one of the injured men. The control tower by this time was full of smoke. The ship was listing badly to starboard and was rapidly sinking. It was also getting out of control therefore was swinging around with the tide so that the port side was exposed to the shore. The enemy was still firing and some hits were scored on the port side. The crew finally got the badly listing ship out into the water further from shore, the fire was being extinguished and we started with the dead and wounded to the Chase to be evacuated.

Throughout this time-during the attempted 1st landing and the 2nd landing, the following officers and men: Captain Hahn, Captain Apanasewicz, Lt. Lundgren, Sgt. Dunphy, Sgt. Kline, Corp. Ginnetti, Pvts. Hopper and Wise, with utter disregard for their own safety or position on the ship gave first aid, set up plasma units and helped carry patients from the holds and cabins to the deck thus saving the lives of several critically injured patients.

When the LCI reached the Chase the same men continued to work at top speed to transport the dead and wounded from the sinking ship to a place of safety. This removal being done by placing the patients into net litters which were lifted by derrick to the larger ship.

After all evacuation was completed we again organized the remaining part of the company transferred to an LCM and returned to the beach at about 5 P.M. The landing this time being on Easy Red Beach. This landing was accomplished in the face of a heavy artillery barrage on the very beach in which we were landing and in spite of the fact that again several of the men were injured or killed. Of the men Sgt. Dunphy, Sgt. Kline, Corporal Ginnetti. Of the officers Captain Hahn, Captain Apanasewicz and Captain Relston were hit. Some of them critically so. At this time Lt. Lundgren distinguished himself by giving aid to those injured and helping others to areas of safety from the incoming tide. This all being done while the beach was still under an artillery barrage.

Later in the evening after more of the men had been collected, we reported to the Regt. Surgeon to aid in the evacuation.

Of the men who reached shore from the first landing Sgt. Pasletti distinguished himself by keeping the unit together as well as assisting and directing the first aid care to casualties along the shore. Sgt. Good, Sgt. McDay, Cpl. Bechom, Pvt. Richardson and Pvt. Soucie throughout the day went up and down the shore giving first aid. This was done at all times and on frequent occasions throughout the day received terrific barrages of artillery, machine gun and sniper fire.

It was here that Captain Ralston organized and directed what men he had left with him, though dazed and suffering from the shock of what we had all been through, to get into a small landing craft, LCM, and make another attempt at a landing. Several of the uninjured personnel had already boarded the Chase but it was Captain Ralston who decided that our duty was ashore and not out on the Chase.

It was now after three o'clock and our small overcrowded craft headed for the shore again. As we approached the shore after a very rough and choppy trip in we could observe shell firing and mines still exploding on the beach. Our craft hit the beach and immediately we all headed for shore, but several explosions of some sort occurred as we left the craft and more casualties were suffered by our men and other men who were with us.

It was then that we later learned that Captain Ananasewicz was hit and unaccounted for. When I looked around there were three men severely injured. One was Private Cinnetti whom later died while lying there. Sergeant Klein was injured and after tying him up he managed to crawl to a higher part of the beach. The other injured man with help was brought of shore to position behind a previously damaged boat.

It was behind this damaged boat that I found several injured men whom were in danger of the incoming tide. Upon securing aid from some very helpful corpmen who were up on the beach these men were removed to a more comparative place of safety. Sergeant Dumphy who was among those injured on the last landing though severely wounded himself did help in the direction of care for the other wounded men about him. While we attempted to get the men off the beach.

It was due to Captain Ralston's efforts that Company A was able to reorganize itself and later on that D-Day evening though severely handicapped again function as a Collecting station. Personnel from those that were left were sent to the Sixteenth Surgeon for use as litter bearers late that evening.

pdfelement

Kent T. Lundgren, 2LtMAC
O-1542779
Co A 1st Med Bn

Medical Det. 16th Inf.
APO #1 U.S. Army.

SUBJECT: Activities of Med. Det. 16th Inf. D.-Day.

TO : C.O. 16th Infantry.

GL-110
(5) 20

1: Regimental Section descended nets into LCM #1 at 0600 hrs, June 6, 1944. Heavy equipment was lowered into the boat. The sea was rough with considerable ground swell. and craft rolled pitched and tossed. Many men were sea sick within fifteen minutes of being off the ship. The Bn sections accompanied their respecting battalions on shore.

The LCM approached the beach at the eastern end of "Easy Red" but obstacles were not cleared and machine gun bullets were hitting the beach. The coxswain pulled off and made a landing on the extreme end of "Easy Red" beach. Machine gun bullets were hitting the boat and landing in the water all about the boat as we descended from a ramp into waist deep water. The time was now approximately 0815 hrs.

Our group made its way ashore through the tetra-hedral and log obstacles, a distance of about 75 yards. In spite of the MG fire all of the group reached shore without being hit. With the help of my first sergeants, I assembled the men in a group on the shell shelf above the high water mark. I led the men to the east along the beach following Colonel Taylor's lead. We pulled wounded from the surf, rendered first aid and placed these men in the best shelter available, as we traveled down the beach. The ESB medical personnel not functioning. I passed members of the first, second and third Bn medical sections as we went eastward on the beach. These men seemed all at work pulling wounded from the surf and dressing them. The fire MG rifle and artillery, was heavy along the beach at this time. Functioning was uncertain and movement through the shells complicated by the number of personnel was uncertain and the ESB lying full length on the shelf was slow difficult and laborious. I examined several dead on route down the beach, some had been killed by mines, others by machine gun, others by artillery and mortar fire but a great percentage were dead from bullet wounds through the head.

A halt was made after three hundred yards of the beach had been covered. Radio equipment ~~was set up~~ was set up and a tentative CP set up. My group continued caring for the wounded in this area.

Colonel Taylor issued instructions to Co. and Bn. CO's at this point the men moved to the west along the beach in search of an exit.

Fire seemed heavy along the route going back and we treated several casualties along the way back. I was forced to rest after ~~going~~ going 525 yards and staff sergeant Goldberg led the men toward the exit. I then followed treating patients en route. I worked for about two minutes behind cover of the DD tanks just short of the exit in the vicinity of the ruined house. I met a wounded officer requiring assistance and had him come through the exit with me. and assisted him up the hill following a taped lane through the mine field. I located the CP and reported then rejoined our men 25 yds west of the CP dug in on a steep slope.

The men were all present but Capt. Tierney was missing. Capt. LaVire was present. All of our portable equipment was present and all the men had salvaged additional supplies and two litters which they had found on the beach. It was now approximately 1040 hours.

The men were dispatched in all directions on the slope to assist in bringing wounded men. (These were being hit by shell fragments?) T/3 Bailey and T/3 ~~Friedenberg~~ Friedenberg voluntarily descended the hill back to the beach ~~to~~ despite the heavy artillery fire to render aid and to rescue an injured man on a mine field. We had collected 80 wounded men in the vicinity of the CP by 1900 hours. Five of these men were seriously wounded three of which died during the night from shock and exposure despite the use of blood plasma and blankets given by Lt. Colonel Corley, Bn. Cl of the 3rd Bn. 26 Inf. Major Plitt had messages sent to the ~~Naval~~ Ancon for beach and naval personnel to evacuate the wounded. I called Major Ficchy at Div. Forward CP and asked for litters, blankets, men and boats. He promised to get them.

At about 2100 hours we led and assisted the walking wounded back to the beach so that they could be put aboard LCVPs bringing in the 26th infantry. Litter cases, about fifteen in number, were carried to a naval beach station in the ruined house. There was no naval officer at the station. We stopped evacuating and the enemy began again shelling the beach and hit an abandoned LCM loaded with ammunition which began to burn and exploded.

An auxiliary surgical group attached to the E3B joined about 2200 hours. They however were useless. They had no equipment, no litters and no litter bearers and were only interested in a place of shelter from enemy artillery fire. Capt. Ralston CO collecting company ~~kk~~ A, first Med. Bn brought 12 litter bearers, all he had at 2230 hours. These were sent out to the Bn Med. Center with whom we came in contact by runner. Early D plus 1 he brought up an additional ten litter bearers and two litters which were sent forward to the 3rd Bn.

During the artillery shelling just before dark. T/5 Kisker of the Med. Det. was hit in the neck and seriously wounded by shell fragment.

A man from headquarters co. was wounded by naval AA fire during the night.

The Morning of D plus one we evacuated our ~~wounded~~ wounded walking and litter to a 61st med. bn. which had had set up a station in the vicinity of exit E-3. ~~At~~ At 1200 hours D plus 1 we moved inland.

From an account by Major ~~Clerk~~ Charles E Tegtmeyer, Regimental surgeon, 16th Inf. Headquarters. ~~kkkkk~~

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