



75TH ANNIVERSARY OF D-DAY

1944-2019



OFFICIAL BROCHURE

Front cover:

© IWM (H 38244)

Troops storm ashore from LCAs (Landing Craft Assault) during Exercise 'Fabius', a major invasion rehearsal on the British coast, 5 May 1944.



BUCKINGHAM PALACE



A MESSAGE FROM HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN

I am very pleased that commemorative events to mark the 75th Anniversary of the D-Day Landings are taking place in Portsmouth and in Normandy.

On 6th June 1944, the largest amphibious assault in history was launched, leading to the end of the Second World War and the liberation of Europe. The complex mission required unprecedented cooperation between the armed forces of different nations, who gathered in Britain in huge numbers before making the journey across the Channel. Sailors, soldiers and airmen from 14 nations displayed immense bravery, ingenuity and determination, and the successful operation was only made possible because of allied efforts elsewhere in Europe, and beyond.

At this time of reflection for veterans of the conflict and their families, I am sure that these commemorations will provide an opportunity to honour those who made extraordinary sacrifices to secure freedom in Europe. They must never be forgotten.

ELIZABETH R.



10 DOWNING STREET



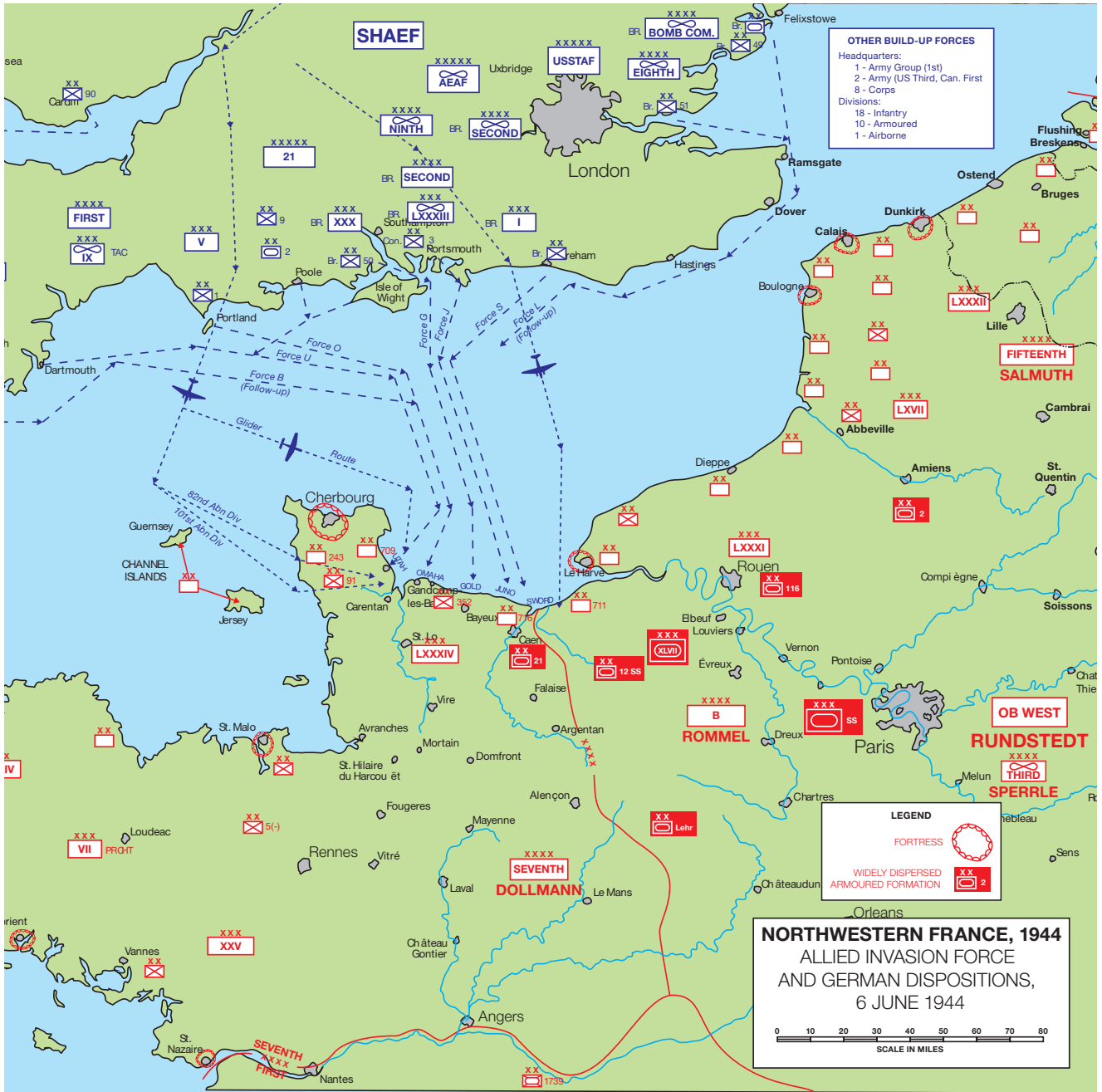
FOREWORD BY THE PRIME MINISTER

The D-Day landings remain an unparalleled moment in our history. They commanded a degree of organisation and international co-operation that has rarely been seen before or since – and as a triumph of planning and logistics they ultimately helped bring an end to the Second World War.

This year's commemoration, as we mark 75 years since D-Day, will be particularly special. I will join fellow leaders from around the world to pay tribute at events in Portsmouth and Normandy. At the heart of those events will be hundreds of veterans: those who fought together from allied nations to secure the freedom we cherish today.

It is thanks to their courage and that of our other allies that today Europe is free and at peace. It is thanks to their ingenuity and resolve that today we have the freedom to live our lives the way we wish.

We will never forget all that they gave – or the sacrifices of the fallen. The solidarity and determination so clearly in evidence on D-Day continues to be a lesson to us all to stand together and uphold the values that we share.



ALLIED FORCES IN BRITAIN

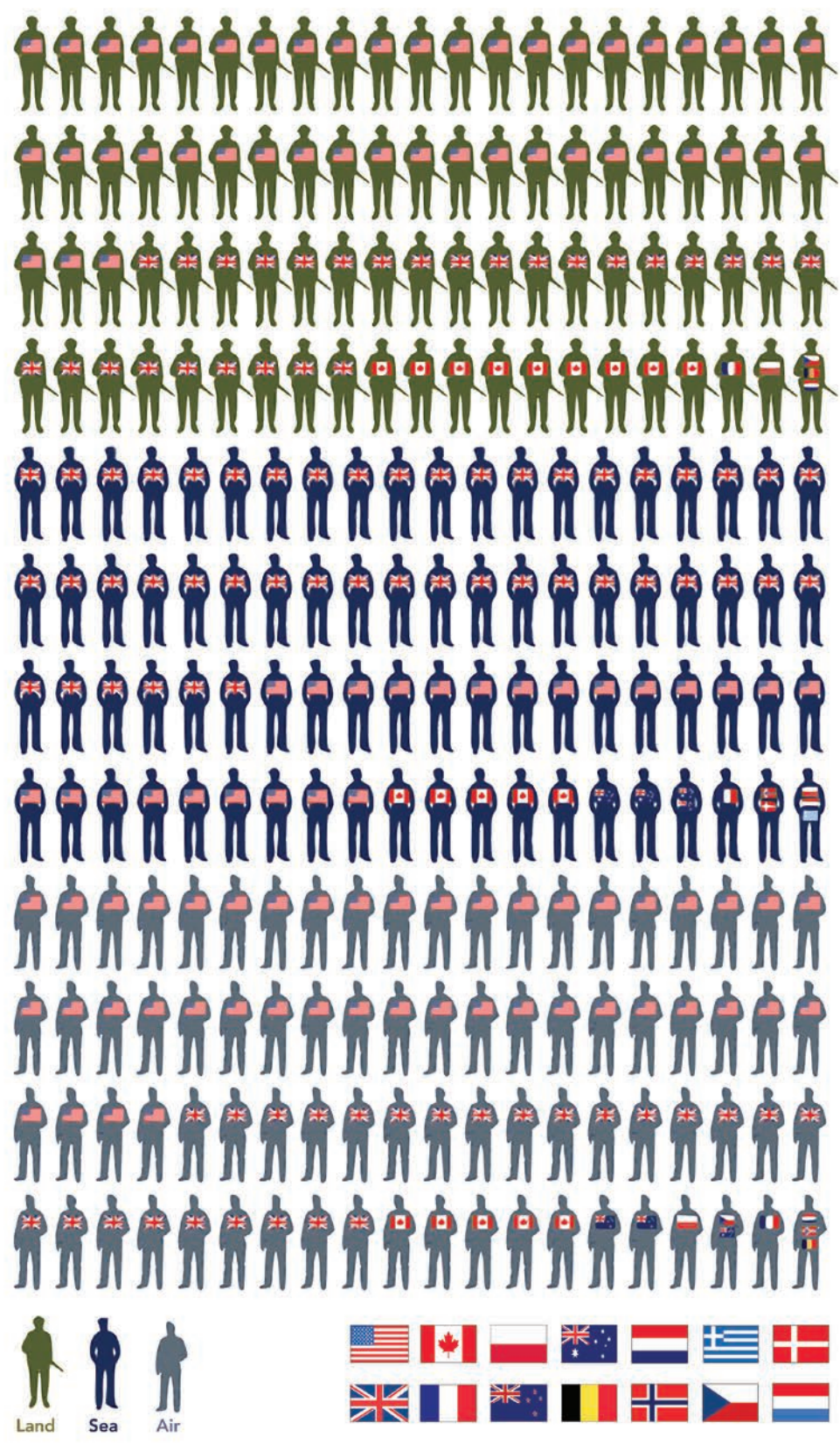


Image provided courtesy of The D-Day Story museum

© The D-Day Story
Infographic by Studio MB

D-DAY AND THE BATTLE OF NORMANDY

On D-Day, 6 June 1944, Allied Forces launched a combined naval, air and land assault on Nazi-occupied France. Codenamed Operation 'Overlord', the Allied landings on the Normandy beaches marked the start of a long and costly campaign to liberate north-west Europe from Nazi occupation. Early on 6 June, Allied airborne forces parachuted into drop zones across northern France. Ground troops then landed across five assault beaches - Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno and Sword. By the end of the day, the Allies had established a foothold along the coast and could begin their advance into France.

The defeat of the Nazis was acknowledged as the western Allies' principal war aim as early as December 1941. Opening a second front would relieve pressure on the Soviet Union in the east, and the liberation of France would weaken the enemy's overall position in western Europe. The invasion, if successful, would drain enemy resources and block access to key military sites. Securing a bridgehead in Normandy would allow the Allies to establish a viable presence in northern Europe for the first time since 1940. Lieutenant General Frederick

Morgan and his team of British, American and Canadian officers submitted plans for the invasion in July 1943. Although limited planning for an invasion of Europe began soon after the evacuation of Dunkirk in 1940, detailed preparations for Operation Overlord did not begin until after the Tehran Conference in late 1943. A command team, led by American General Dwight D. Eisenhower was formed in December 1943 to plan the naval, air and land operations. Deception campaigns were developed to draw Nazi attention – and strength – away

from Normandy. To build up resources for the invasion, British factories increased production and in the first half of 1944 approximately 9 million tonnes of supplies and equipment crossed the Atlantic from North America to Britain. A substantial Canadian force had been building up in Britain since December 1939 and over 1.4 million American Servicemen arrived during 1943 and 1944 to take part in the landings.

1. © IWM (Art.IWM ART LD 5816) Barnet Freedman's painting of a panoramic view of a Normandy beach scattered with soldiers and equipment. In the background is the artificial harbour known as Mulberry B.
2. © IWM (EA 2946): US troops take cover during a training exercise in the UK with live ammunition, 1944.
3. © IWM (TR 1662): British paratroopers sitting in the fuselage of an aircraft while awaiting their order to jump.





D-Day required unprecedented cooperation between international Armed Forces.

The Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF) was an international coalition and although the Allies were united, the military leadership responsible for Overlord had to overcome political, cultural and personal tensions. By 1944, over 2 million troops from several countries were in Britain preparing for the invasion. The invasion was conducted in two main phases: an airborne assault and amphibious landings. Shortly after midnight on 6 June, over 18,000 Allied paratroopers were dropped into the invasion area to provide tactical support for infantry divisions on the beaches. Allied air forces flew over 14,000 sorties in support of the landings and, having secured air supremacy prior to the invasion, many of these flights were unchallenged by the Luftwaffe. Nearly

7,000 naval vessels, including battleships, destroyers, minesweepers, escorts and assault craft took part in Operation 'Neptune', the naval component of Overlord. Naval forces were responsible for escorting and landing over 132,000 ground troops on the beaches. They also carried out bombardments on enemy coastal defences before and during the landings, and provided artillery support for the invading troops.

Germany tried to defend the northern coast of France with a series of fortifications known as the 'Atlantic Wall'. However, Nazi defences were often incomplete and insufficiently manned. Members of the French Resistance and the British Special Operations Executive (SOE) provided intelligence and helped weaken defences through sabotage. The Allied deception campaigns succeeded in convincing the enemy as late as July 1944

that the main invasion force would still land elsewhere. The threat of this larger, second invasion kept enemy reinforcements tied down away from Normandy. Defence also suffered from the complex and often confused command structure of the German Army, as well as the constant interference of Adolf Hitler in military matters. However, the Allies faced a number of setbacks both on 6 June and in the months that followed. On D-Day, the Americans came close to defeat on Omaha partially because the preliminary air and naval bombardment failed to knock out strong defence points, but also because they faced highly effective German troops who had gained hard earned experience on the Eastern Front.

Throughout the Battle of Normandy, the technical superiority of their tanks and anti-tank weapons, as well as the tactical skill of their

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- 4. © IWM (B 5254): Royal Engineers serving with a 50th Division Beach Group share cocoa with a French boy in the village of Ver-sur-Mer, Gold area, 6 June 1944.
- 5. © IWM (TR 2043): The Prime Minister, the Rt Hon Winston Churchill, MP, with men of the 50th Division who took part in the D-Day landings. Behind the Prime Minister is General Sir Bernard Montgomery.

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commanders, gave German forces an advantage over the Allies. However, the Germans were never able to fully exploit their successes or the weaknesses of the Allies in a decisive way. D-Day was made possible because of Allied efforts across all fronts, both before and after June 1944. In planning D-Day, Allied commanders drew important lessons from previous failures at Dieppe in France and Anzio in Italy. The Allied strategic bombing campaign, which began in 1942, weakened German industry and forced Germany to commit manpower and resources away from Normandy to home defence. Securing air superiority allowed the Allies to carry out aerial reconnaissance, giving them vital intelligence on enemy coastal defences. D-Day also depended on Allied control of the Atlantic, which was finally achieved in 1943 through victory in the Battle of the Atlantic. The campaign in Italy

directed German troops away from the Western and Eastern Fronts. The Soviet Belorussian offensive, Operation Bagration, was launched just after Overlord and also kept German forces tied down in the east. Ten weeks after D-Day, the Allies launched a second invasion on the southern coast of France and began a simultaneous advance towards Germany.

The importance of D-Day often overshadows the overall significance of the entire Normandy campaign. Establishing a bridgehead was critical, but it was just the first step. In the three months after D-Day, the Allies launched a series of additional offensives to try and advance further inland. These operations varied in success and the Allies faced strong and determined German resistance. The bocage - a peculiarity of the Normandy landscape characterised by

sunken lanes bordered by high, thick hedgerows - was difficult to penetrate and placed the advantage with the German defenders. Yet the bloody and protracted Battle of Normandy was a decisive victory for the Allies and paved the way for the liberation of much of north-west Europe. Success came at a cost and thousands of Allied soldiers were killed, wounded or missing in action on D-Day. Today, 75 years on, surviving veterans, families, and those supporting them are gathering in Portsmouth and Normandy, to remember, and to reflect on these losses.

6. © IWM (BU 1181): Film still showing commandos of No. 4 Commando, 1st Special Service Brigade, aboard a LCI(S) landing craft on their approach to Queen Red beach, Sword area, 6 June 1944.
7. © IWM (MH 2013): Sherman DD tanks of 'B' Squadron, 13th/18th Royal Hussars support infantry of 2nd East Yorkshires and commandos of No. 4 Commando, 1st Special Service Brigade, as they advance into Quistreham, Sword area, 6 June 1944.

COMMEMORATIONS IN PORTSMOUTH AND NORMANDY

PORTSMOUTH

On 6 June 1944, Portsmouth was one of the key strategic locations for D-Day. From the city and from the surrounding south coast, thousands of troops left for the beaches of Normandy, in an operation planned from Southwick House, just to the north of Portsmouth. This year the city is the focus for the country once more, as it commemorates the epic operation to liberate France.

On the morning of 5 June the National Commemorative event will be held on Southsea common for veterans, attended by invited guests including senior Royal, political and military representatives. The event will tell the story of the build-up to D-Day through a programme of live music, performance and testimonials. Towards the end of the event a Royal Navy frigate will fire a naval gun salute followed by a spectacular flypast of up to 25 historic and UK military aircraft including the Red Arrows and the iconic spitfire.



MV Boudicca at sea, image courtesy of Fred Olsen

At approximately 1600 in the afternoon, Portsmouth will be treated to a breath-taking display of speed and agility by the Red Arrows.

In the evening, The Royal British Legion's ship, supported by Her Majesty's Government through LIBOR funding, the MV Boudicca, will depart Portsmouth carrying up to 300 veterans to Normandy. As the vessel departs, HMS St Albans, a Type-23 Royal Navy frigate, will escort her along with four smaller Royal Navy vessels, emerging into the Solent to be met by a flotilla of Royal Navy vessels, who

will then sail past her in salute with sailors lining the decks. The general public are encouraged to line key vantage points to wave off the veterans as they retrace the journey they made in 1944.

Portsmouth City Council will also host a series of D-Day events from the 5 to the 9 of June on Southsea Common, including a service of Remembrance, a screening of the commemorative events in Normandy, musical performances and the Portsmouth Revival Festival.

NORMANDY

On the 5 June, Troops from 16 Air Assault Brigade – the British Army's rapid reaction force and the successor to the proud traditions of Airborne Forces – will commemorate the involvement of 6 Airborne Division on D-Day, when 7,900 troops landed by parachute and glider ahead of the seaborne invasion fleet.

Members of the Army's 16 Air Assault Brigade will drop over Normandy from RAF Hercules aircraft and the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight's C-47 Dakota. They will jump along with French Army paratroopers to recreate the famous airborne landings. Shortly after, the organisation 'Daks over Normandy' will drop veterans and reenactors from 30+ Dakotas.

In the evening, personnel from 1 Battalion The Rifles and the Army Air Corps will hold a vigil at Pegasus Bridge to mark the moment Horsa gliders landed to capture Pegasus Bridge.

In the early hours of the 6 June, the Army will mark the exact moment the first British soldier landed on Gold beach



Army memorial service in Bayeux Cemetery

at Arromanches with a piper from the 19th Regiment Royal Artillery playing atop a piece of the Mulberry harbour.

This will be followed by an inauguration ceremony at the site of the British Normandy Memorial, Ver-sur-Mer, in the presence of senior leaders, military musicians and personnel. The Central sculpture will be inaugurated ahead of work commencing to build the memorial. The British Normandy Memorial will record the names of those under British Command that lost their lives in Normandy between the D-Day landings and 31 August 1944. Also honoured

will be the tens of thousands of French citizens who lost their lives during the period.

A Service will then be held at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission Cemetery Bayeux. Personnel from the Royal Navy, British Army and the Royal Air Force will also be present including a tri-Service Guard of Honour and Military bands.

In the afternoon, British veterans escorted by Army personnel will move to Arromanches for informal events, including a flypast by the Red Arrows and the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight.

ROYAL NAVY AT THE COMMEMORATIONS



Commodore Mike Utley

“Portsmouth and the surrounding areas were pivotal to the D-Day landings on 6 June – with the key decision taken at Southwick House and then personnel joining ships based here in the Naval Base. We know that those who sailed from Portsmouth landed on Sword and Juno beaches, joining 132,815 men landed by ships and craft who took part in the most significant victory of the Western Allies in the Second World War.

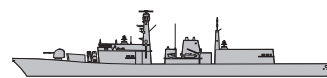
In an ode to this awe-inspiring feat of courage, and to pay our own respects, the Royal Navy has assigned warships specifically for escorting duties during the week of commemorations. In particular we will be escorting two ferries containing veterans which will sail to France on 3 June and 5 June from Portsmouth.”

Commodore Mike Utley, Her Majesty's Naval Base Portsmouth

The Royal British Legion's ship will sail her 300 veterans from Portsmouth carrying them to Normandy. As the vessel departs HMS St Albans, a Type-23 Royal Navy frigate, will escort her along with four smaller Royal Navy vessels. Royal Navy ships docked alongside will pay their respects, before the ship emerges into the Solent to be met by a flotilla of Royal Navy vessels from frigates and minehunters to small patrol craft and support vessels, who will then sail past her in salute with sailors lining the decks. People are encouraged to line key vantage points to wave off the veterans as they retrace the journey they made in 1944.

Details of the personnel and types of ships involved in the commemoration in Portsmouth are as follows:

ESCORT



HMS St Albans

HMS St Albans is the UK's on-duty warship, and is sailed by a crew of 185.

She is a versatile Type 23 Frigate – and the most recent addition to our frigate fleet.

With five radar systems, six sonar systems and eight weapon systems, St Albans is one of the most versatile warships in the world.



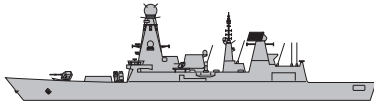
4 x P2000

The Archer class (or P2000) is a class of patrol and training vessel, commonly referred to as a Fast Training Boat. Most are assigned to University Royal Naval Units for training purposes.



HMS St Albans on an escort through the English channel

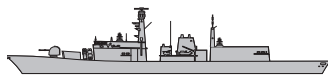
SAIL PAST



Type 45 Destroyer

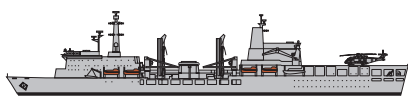
Britain's Type 45 Destroyers are among the most advanced warships ever built. They're suited to a huge range of tasks, from hunting down pirates to defending the Fleet from air attack or providing humanitarian aid.

Equipped with the Sea Viper missile, which can knock moving targets out of the sky from up to 70 miles away, Type 45 Destroyers are the backbone of the Royal Navy.



Type 23 Frigate

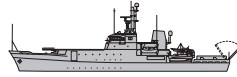
The Type 23, or Duke-class, frigates are the core of the front-line Fleet. They can be typically be found east of Suez, safeguarding Britain's vital maritime trade routes or Britain's interests in the South Atlantic.



Fort-class combined fleet stores ship and tanker

The Fort Class is a class of replenishment oiler of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary, a role that combines the missions of a tanker and stores supply ship.

They are tasked with providing ammunition, fuel, food and other supplies to Royal Navy vessels around the world.



Echo-class multi-role survey vessel

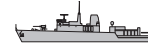
The Echo-class is a class of multi-purpose hydrographic survey ships that are primarily tasked with conducting survey work in support of submarine and amphibious operations, however, the class also has a secondary role in mine countermeasures.



Batch 1 Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV)

The offshore patrol vessel is intended to carry out a range of economic exclusion zone management tasks such as maritime security, border

control, routine patrols, and anti-smuggling. It also facilitates counter-terrorism and piracy, fishery protection, and effective disaster relief. It can also be used for the protection of natural resources.



Hunt-class Mine countermeasures vessel

The Hunt class is a class of thirteen mine countermeasure vessels of the Royal Navy. They combine the separate roles of the traditional minesweeper and that of the active minehunter, but later modifications saw the removal of mine-sweeping equipment. They have a secondary role as offshore patrol vessels.



3 x P2000

Three further P2000s permanently based in HMNB Portsmouth will be present.



Officers line the deck for 'cheer ship' as HMS Bulwark enters Portsmouth Harbour

ARMY SUPPORT TO D-DAY 75

“Force Troops Command is immensely proud to be supporting the D-Day 75 commemorations. From our headquarters in Wiltshire, the Command brings together a number of specialists with the skills required to help prepare and deliver military operations at home and abroad. In Normandy, the men and women under my command will support events at key locations and help ensure the smooth running of the commemorations.

Throughout my 30-odd years in the Army, D-Day has always been an exemplar of sacrifice, bravery and resilience, and I know that every serviceman or woman you see will be honoured to be there and eager to meet the veterans and hear their stories. It is for them that we will be in Normandy. There are few finer examples of inspiration than our Second World War generation. For decades to come, our Armed Forces will look back on D-Day and continue to be inspired by the ingenuity, grit and good humour that so many demonstrated in their actions 75 years ago.”

Major-General Tom Copinger-Symes CBE, General Officer Commanding Force Troops Command



Every serving Regular and Reserve member of Force Troops Command (FTC) recognises the bravery, commitment and sacrifice of all Allied personnel who took part in the decisive actions of D-Day and the Normandy Campaign. FTC is working in partnership with all the agencies involved in the D-Day 75 commemorations and providing military support to ensure the successful delivery of the events in France. FTC is the largest formation in the British Army, comprising 81 units made up of over 17,000 regular personnel, 12,000 reservists and nearly 1,000 civil servants.

5 June

On 5 June, the Army's presence will be seen across Normandy but with particular focus in Ranville, Sannerville, Caen, on Sword Beach and at Pegasus Bridge.

3rd (UK) Division, the division that led the assault onto Sword Beach on D-Day, are holding a number of parades over the following two days starting at 1100 at the statue of Field Marshal Montgomery in Colleville-Montgomery, just a short march from Sword Beach.

At 1400 an Army Air Corps lead Glider Pilot Regiment Drumhead Service will be held at the Pegasus Bridge landing site with readings and wreath laying from both the Army Air Corps and The Rifles who both have lineage to those that fought and successfully captured the bridge.

At 1500, 130 members of the Army's 16 Air Assault Brigade will drop from RAF Hercules aircraft and the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight's C-47 Dakota. They will jump along with 60 French Army paratroopers to recreate the famous airborne

landings; dropping onto the Drop Zones used on 5 June 1944 by 6th Airborne Division to protect the eastern flank of the landing beaches.

At the same time, at the British Garden of Remembrance at Caen Museum with the Mayor of Caen in attendance, 3rd (UK) Division will host veterans for a service and Act of Remembrance.

In the evening, at Pegasus bridge, a retreat will be sounded by the Band and Bugles of The Rifles followed by the official commemoration for Operation Deadstick – which was crucial to the success of D-Day. The Glider Pilot regiment and The Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry have since become the Army Air Corps and The Rifles, respectively, and at 2300, A march will make its way from

Benouville to Pegasus Bridge made up of approximately 30 soldiers and officers from the Army Air Corps and 100 troops drawn from across the five regular Rifles Battalions, with their band in support. The march will cross the bridge itself before a 75th commemoration plaque is unveiled and Officers and Soldiers of the Army Air Corps and The Rifles will join Madame Arlette Gondree for a Champagne toast – a tradition held since D-Day.

6 June

On 6 June, at 0726, a lone piper will play on a Mulberry Harbour in Arromanches signalling the exact time the first soldier landed on Gold Beach 75 years ago.

At the inauguration of the National Memorial site at Ver-sur-Mer, 17 (Port and Maritime) Regiment Royal Logistics Corps will be supported by the Pipes and Drums of 19 Regiment Royal Artillery. 32 Engineer Regiment will lead a tri-service team at the Bayeux Cathedral service which will have musical support from the Band of the RAF Regiment. Servicemen and women following will then support the veterans on a parade to Bayeux Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) Cemetery, where control of the events will be handed over to 12 Regiment Royal Artillery, 10 Signals Regiment and 5 Battalion Royal Electrical Mechanical Engineers at the 'Veteran's Village'.



Members of the Army's 16 Air Assault Brigade jumping from the Royal Air Force Battle of Britain Memorial Flight Dakota over Ranville, Normandy, on 5 June 2014.

The Royal Yeomanry and its band are providing a Guard of Honour and Royal Salute at the Bayeux CWGC Cemetery Service, with the Band of The RIFLES in support. Five of the Royal Yeomanry's antecedent Yeomanry regiments landed on D-Day itself, and four more the following day. All nine live on in the Royal Yeomanry, which now forms part of 1st (UK) Division.

3rd (UK) Division continue their commemorations with a service to the 'Fallen Civilian' in Caen. At 1055, following a wreath laying by the Mayor of Caen, there will be a parade to march to the 3rd British Infantry Division memorial outside the Castle. At 1930 they will hold a service in Hermanville-Sur-Mer before the parade, led by a piper, marches on to the CWGC Cemetery for their final service of the day.

In Arromanches, the Band of the RAF Regiment and the Pipes and Drums of 19 Regiment Royal Artillery will provide support during the celebration events

for the veterans during the afternoon, culminating in a firework display.

The main International event for the Parachute Regiment will be on 9 June where 80 soldiers from 16 Air Assault Brigade will be dropping with US partners from the 82nd Airborne Division onto St Mere Eglise Drop Zone. In total, this drop will see 800 paratroopers from 8 different nations jump from 15 aircraft.

In support of the commemorations in France, units from across the Field Army will deliver enabling support and specialist skills. Medical services will come from 256 Field Hospital, communications infrastructure will be provided by 2 Signal Regiment, and 3 Royal Military Police will support the Gendarmerie. In addition, 29 Regiment Royal Logistics Corps, 32 Engineer Regiment and 7 Parachute Regiment Royal Horse Artillery will provide enabling support.

ROYAL AIR FORCE AT THE COMMEMORATIONS



The Royal Air Force played a significant part in the preparation and execution of D-Day in many different roles. Bombers attacked communications links, gun batteries and jammed enemy radars. Fighters defended the skies over the invasion force, denied the freedom of the air to enemy aircraft, attacked enemy forces on the ground, and gathered vital intelligence. Transport aircraft and gliders deployed 35,000 airborne troops, and delivered huge quantities of equipment to support the battle, while maritime aircraft conducted anti-shipping and anti-submarine operations.



Without the contribution of over 5,000 RAF aircraft, the Allies could not have mounted Operation Overlord, the battle for Normandy, which began with D-Day.

Then, as now, the Royal Air Force relied not only on the skill and bravery of its aircrew, but also the dedicated, hardworking groundcrew and many other personnel who supported them. We pay tribute to them all.

Air Vice-Marshal Harvey Smyth OBE DFC MA, Air Officer Commanding No 1 Group, Royal Air Force

PORTSMOUTH

On 5 June, at 1245 (approx) a Royal Navy frigate will fire a naval gun salute followed by a spectacular flypast of up to 25 historic and UK military aircraft, including the Red Arrows and the iconic spitfire. Later on in the afternoon, at approximately 1600 the Red Arrows will return for a breath-taking display of speed and agility above Southsea Common.

Finally, at 1940 (approx) the RAF's Battle of Britain Memorial Flight will fly over Portsmouth to mark the departure of the Normandy veterans on their way to France.

1. Battle of Britain Memorial Flight

The BBMF is the RAF's heritage unit, composed of 12 aircraft. Based at RAF Coningsby in Lincolnshire, its pilots are also frontline RAF pilots, and these 70-year-old aircraft are lovingly maintained by RAF engineers.



a. Spitfire

First flying in 1936 at Southampton Airport, and developed from the Supermarine S6b racer which flew over the Solent, the Spitfire entered RAF service in August 1938 and was

eventually produced in 22 variants over 12 years. Famous for its role as a fighter during the Battle of Britain, on D-Day, RAF Spitfires flew air patrols to protect the landings and ground attack missions in support of the ground troops. Importantly, Spitfires were involved in reconnaissance and taking photos of enemy positions, and units in the lead up to the invasion.



b. Hurricane

The Hawker Hurricane was introduced into RAF service in 1936 as a frontline fighter and saw fame during the Battle of

Britain alongside the Spitfire. Although withdrawn from service as a fighter in Europe, the toughness of the Hurricane meant that it continued to be operated as a fighter-bomber from improvised airfields in many theatres of war, and as an advanced trainer. The Hurricane was still active in Europe on D-Day, carrying vital secret communications to and from the battlefield.



2. The Red Arrows

The RAF's aerobatic team, the Red Arrows, have been representing the RAF and the UK around the World for over 50 years. The team of nine flies the Hawk T.1 aircraft, and operates as both a full team of nine and a pair of aircraft during their display. Their distinctive red jets are flown by experienced RAF pilots in several different displays depending on weather conditions and other factors. The aircraft are maintained by RAF ground engineers wearing blue overalls, which gives them the name "The Blues".



3. Sentinel R1

A reconnaissance aircraft operated by 5 Squadron at RAF Waddington, the Sentinel provides real time battlefield reconnaissance to ground forces using a suite of sensors which work in all weathers and over a wide area. The aircraft represents the wider RAF intelligence gathering and surveillance force who play an important role in both wartime and peacetime in the modern day, and during the Normandy campaign provided a similar intelligence gathering role.



4. Hercules

The Hercules has been in RAF service in various forms since 1967, and continues to provide the RAF with a tactical troop transport capability. Although now working alongside the Atlas, the Hercules is still at the forefront of RAF operations, capable of carrying a variety of loads into unprepared or makeshift airfields, just as the Dakota did during the Second World War.



5. Voyager

The Voyager is the UK's air-to-air refuelling aircraft and long-range troop transport. Developed from the Airbus A330, the Voyager can carry almost 300 troops, and refuel aircraft from either its wing or fuselage refuelling points simultaneously. Voyagers support the UK's commitments around the world from RAF Brize Norton.



6. Hawk T.1

The Hawk T.1 is operated by both the Red Arrows and by the RAF's dissimilar air combat training squadron, 100 squadron, based at RAF Leeming. Replaced by the Hawk T.2 as an advanced jet trainer, the jet continues its RAF service flying as an adversary against RAF aircraft and training ground forces to operate with close air support, a technique that was used to great effect during the Normandy campaign.



7. Typhoon FGR.4

The RAF's main frontline combat aircraft, capable of carrying out combat air, ground attack and intelligence gathering missions and currently deployed on operations in the Middle East. Closer to home, the Typhoons based at RAF Coningsby and RAF Lossiemouth provide 'Quick Reaction Alert' to protect the UK's airspace all day, every day.



Three aircraft from the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight (BBMF) in the skies above Lincolnshire.

ROYAL NAVY AIRCRAFT



Wildcat

Wildcat is the latest generation of multi-role helicopter specifically procured to operate from the frigates and destroyers of the Royal Navy.



Merlin MK2

Merlin Mk2 entered service in 2014 as an upgrade for the original 1990's Mk1 naval version. Its role is to supply the UK's Maritime Force Protection and airborne anti-submarine warfare capability for the foreseeable future.

JOINT HELICOPTER COMMAND AIRCRAFT



Merlin MK4

The Merlin MK4 is a modification of its predecessors, designed to ensure it can operate from the sea, and take off from ships including the UK's aircraft carrier, HMS Queen Elizabeth.

NORMANDY

On 5 June, at 1500 (local time) members of the British Army's 16 Air Assault Brigade will drop over Sannerville, Normandy from RAF Hercules aircraft and the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight's C-47 Dakota. They will jump along with French Army

paratroopers to recreate the famous airborne landings. Shortly after, the organisation 'Daks over Normandy' will drop veterans and reenactors from over 30 Dakotas.

In the afternoon of the 6th June, British veterans will begin to parade into the square in Arromanches at 1515 (local) for a series of informal events hosted by the local authority. There will be music from the Central Band of the Royal Air Force.

At 1625 (local) The remaining Royal British Legion veterans will arrive to enjoy music and parachute displays and flypasts by the Red Arrows and the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight. Events in Arromanches will conclude with a firework display at 2330 (local).

MESSAGE FROM THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO FRANCE

The commemoration of D-Day each year, is always a very special moment.

It has been a huge honour for me at the ceremonies over the last two years to meet so many veterans of D-Day and the Normandy campaign - and to hear your memories of landing on those beaches, or of the part you played on Royal Navy warships or RAF aircraft supporting the operation. I hope to meet many more of you and your families today.

This year, of course, we mark the 75th anniversary of those momentous events, which began the liberation of France and of the European continent. We remember the countless acts of heroism, sung and unsung; and above all your comrades who never came home.

France remembers those sacrifices with gratitude - French citizens all over this country often mention them to me, and the crucial part Britain played. Each year, it is moving to see people extend a warm welcome to returning veterans, and I am sure you will experience that again this year.

A highlight of the ceremonies this year will be a small ceremony to unveil the sculpture for the British Normandy Memorial to be built at Ver-sur-Mer, on a wonderful location overlooking Gold Beach and within sight of the Mulberry Harbour off Arromanches. It will commemorate the 22,442 who died under British command during the D-Day landings and the Battle of Normandy.

Nothing in my role as British Ambassador has made me more proud than the support I and my team have been able to give to the Normandy Memorial Trust as we have worked together with the French authorities to make this project a reality. I know how much it means to the veterans, who have campaigned for it so hard and for so long.

In the years to come it will provide a fitting Memorial to the sacrifices and the heroism of 75 years ago, and a place to reflect on their enduring meaning for us today, and for the generations who will come after us.

Edward Llewellyn
HM Ambassador



Edward Llewellyn, photo taken by British Embassy in Paris



THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

The Royal British Legion is at the heart of a national network that supports the Armed Forces community through thick and thin – ensuring their unique contribution is never forgotten. We are the country's largest Armed Forces charity, with 237,000 members, 120,000 volunteers and a network of partners and charities who help us give support wherever and whenever it is needed.

The Legion, in partnership with the Ministry of Defence, will be leading the UK's commemorations in France to mark the 75th anniversary of D-Day. The events will be held at Bayeux Cathedral and the Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery, Bayeux. Portsmouth, where much of the landing force sailed from in 1944, will serve as the focal point of the Ministry of Defence led UK commemorations. Those veterans unable to travel to Normandy will have a service of Remembrance at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire.

A ship has been chartered for up to 300 veterans who are able to travel to Normandy, departing from Dover on 2nd June. This voyage will take

in the UK commemorative events in Portsmouth and Poole, before crossing the English Channel and arriving in Normandy on 6th June, exactly 75 years after the D-Day Landings.

Care and support for our Armed Forces community sit at the heart of the Legion's purpose. To prepare for this voyage, up to 300 home visits have been carried out, to assess the fitness of those Normandy veterans who have applied. Those able to participate will be collected from their homes. Once their voyage is complete, we will

bring them home, with a follow-up visit to ensure their ongoing wellbeing. We will also provide professional support to every veteran during their time on the ship and on the road, journeying to and from each event.

The Legion have got to know the veterans well preparing for the trip. Every one of them has powerful recollections of their D-Day experiences. Here are just two.

George Skipper landed on Gold Beach early on 6 June, jumping from his landing craft under relentless enemy fire.



D-Day veteran George Skipper, image provided courtesy of The Press Association

Two of the men alongside him landed in a submerged bomb crater and disappeared underwater, weighed down by their heavy kit. George managed to pull them both out of the water, saving their lives.

George's unit was then pinned down on the beach by machine gun fire from two enemy pill boxes, which left several men from his unit killed or wounded. Eventually a path was cleared through a minefield, allowing George's section to move off the beach.

George helped drive the infantry towards the front line, enabling them to fight the enemy. His courage on that day and in the months that followed was recognised by the French government in 2015, when they awarded him the top military honour – the Legion d'Honneur.

George is delighted and proud to be going on the Legion's voyage to Normandy. "I would not miss this trip for anything. D-Day was a very important time in my life and I



D-Day veteran Ted Cordery, image provided courtesy of The Royal British Legion

want to go back whilst I can, to remember and to pay tribute to the friends and comrades that I lost."

Another veteran, Ted Cordery, was on board HMS Belfast as it supported the landings at Juno beach. The ship provided vital support and cover fire for the troops undertaking the initial landings.

"The sight of all those troops being lowered into the water from the ships was just astounding. It's a memory that sticks with me – all those small boats full of men trying their best to get up onto the beaches and the sight of those that didn't make it."



"The scale of D-Day 75 is unprecedented with Portsmouth at the heart of commemorations on 5 June.

"The city will provide the back drop for the armed forces to mark this historic occasion and, most importantly, to pay tribute to veterans and their comrades and reflect on lessons learned."

David Williams, Chief Executive Portsmouth City Council

PORTSMOUTH'S D-DAY STORY MUSEUM

The D-Day Story: The epic made personal; the personal made epic.

The D-Day Story is the only museum in the UK dedicated to the Allied Invasion in June 1944 and it re opened in 2018 following a £5m transformation undertaken ahead of the 75th anniversary of D-Day.



On 6 June 1944, the greatest military operation in Western European history began with the Allied invasion of Normandy during World War II. Referred to as 'D-Day', the operation began the liberation of German-occupied north-western Europe from Nazi control, and laid the foundations of the Allied victory on the Western Front.

The D-Day Story moves expectations beyond those of a 'military museum' towards an experience rich in the humanity of its stories.

The D-Day Story is an inherently human story as well as a pivotal moment in the Second World War. From the outset the aim has been to capture and tell the human stories behind the historical event as it passes from memory so that the D-Day Story resonates with generations to come.

D-Day Story re-tells the human stories that underpin the history as the event passes from living memory. It is full of personal stories of courage and determination, comradeship and sacrifice, secrecy and deception, innovation and tactics. It is a story in which ordinary people worked together to achieve an extraordinary outcome - exemplifying 'the epic made personal; the personal made epic'.

The D-Day Story transformation has been enabled in part by a Heritage Lottery grant.

THE COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVES COMMISSION



CWGC
Commonwealth War Graves Commission

When the Imperial War Graves Commission was founded, Rudyard Kipling chose the familiar words inscribed on the great Stones of Remembrance which sit in our cemeteries – Their Name Liveth For Evermore. That mission sits at the heart of everything the Commonwealth War Graves Commission does today; caring for the graves and memorials of the 1.7 million men and women who gave their lives for King and Country in the two world wars and keeping alive their memory. Not one of the servicemen who died here in Normandy – or who lie in our cemeteries in 23,000 places over 150 countries and territories around the world – will ever be forgotten.

Now in our 102nd year, the Commission continues to care for these extraordinary places, ensuring that they endure for future generations of visitors and family pilgrims. And it works hard to ensure that the stories of endeavour and bravery are told in other ways. For this 75th anniversary, we are proud to have created an online sound archive of stories of the Liberation – “the Voices of Liberation” - and to be offering podcasts drawing together the work of historians, the experience of veterans and the impressions on all those affected by warfare. We hope you will enjoy hearing about them, at liberation.cwgc.org, and may even wish to contribute yourself.

In Normandy, many veterans arriving at our cemetery in Bayeux will be greeted by a familiar face – our local supervisor, William Moody, who has served the Commission for an astonishing 53 years. I know how much this personal connection over time means to William, and to the families and ex-servicemen who have met him over the years. We hope all visitors to these commemorations will appreciate the work of William’s team as they visit our cemeteries.

The men and women we remember here fought alongside each other, defying the forces of tyranny and intolerance, to free Europe and to secure an enduring peace for future generations. You will see the poignant messages chosen by families on each headstone. One of the most memorable is in the UK – which says, simply

“Mother, I’ve weighed the risks, which I prefer to living in a world dominated by Nazis. Bill”

It is a privilege to mark this anniversary, remember these men, and to be able to pay our respects to all those who served.

Victoria Wallace,
Director General



© ph.minot.creacom.fr. Bayeux Cemetery

COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVES COMMISSION BAYEUX WAR CEMETERY AND MEMORIAL

On 6 June 1944, the Allies landed on the coast of Normandy. British units reached the outskirts of Bayeux by nightfall, and on the following day the city became the first in France to be liberated.

Medical facilities were quickly established nearby to treat men wounded in the fighting, and the British Army constructed a ring road around the city. The road alongside the cemetery is Boulevard Fabian Ware, named after the founder of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

Bayeux War Cemetery is the largest Commonwealth war cemetery of the Second World

War in France. It contains the graves of men originally buried on the battlefields, and those who died in military hospitals in Bayeux. The cemetery was started during the war by the 48th Graves Concentration Unit – a unit of the British Army responsible for recovering, identifying and burying the dead – who were based here.

The cemetery was completed in 1952 and is now the final resting place of more than 4,100 Commonwealth Servicemen, of whom nearly 340 remain unidentified. Also buried here are some 500 servicemen of other nations. The majority, more than 460, are German.

Opposite the cemetery stands the Bayeux Memorial, which bears the names of more than 1,800 men and women of the Commonwealth land forces who fell during Operation Overlord and have no known grave. They died during the landings, the intense fighting in Normandy, and in the advance to the River Seine in August 1944. Both the cemetery and the memorial were designed by Philip Hepworth. The Latin inscription on the memorial recalls the Norman invasion of Britain in 1066 and reads: "We, once conquered by William, have now set free the Conqueror's native land."



© ph.minot creacom.fr. Bayeux Cemetery



WELCOME TO YOU OUR ALLIES

for whom we have been waiting during the dreary days of occupation.

For over four years, we have suffered cruelly, physically as well as mentally, yet we have held out, sustained by the hope of your arrival.

Here you are, on the soil of France, where many of you, your brothers and your fathers before you, and even more of our own people, fell between 1914 and now,

FIGHTING THE SAME FIGHT FOR THE SAME IDEAL: THE IDEAL OF LIBERTY

Above all, we ask you to believe that the treacherous ways of the enemy and their so-called "correct" behaviour, corrupted only a handful of traitors who will be punished as they deserve.

THE FRENCH PEOPLE NEVER SURRENDERED

Echoing the call of General de Gaulle on the 18th of June 1940, each Frenchman, according to the means at his disposal, resisted the German oppression, through sabotage, strikes, civil disobedience, or by fighting with underground organisations.

Tens of thousands have been tortured to death in prison or shot, many of them as hostages, and hundreds of thousands deported to Germany.

IN THEIR FIGHT TO MAKE THIS A DAY OF VICTORY

We cannot receive you as we should like. We have been through years of German oppression and occupation.

We ask you to show understanding towards your brothers in arms, who welcome you to-day.

Believe us, our welcome is straight from our hearts.

We Frenchmen shall do everything in our power to help the Allied troops, whether British, American or French.

LONG LIVE THE ALLIES, LONG LIVE FREEDOM





Ministry
of Defence

This booklet was produced with kind assistance from:



CWGC
Commonwealth War Graves Commission



THE D-DAY STORY
PORTSMOUTH



Portsmouth
CITY COUNCIL