Triumph and Tragedy in the Normandy Invasion

Jacob Janousek

Junior Division

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The Normandy invasion on June 6th, 1944 was the deciding point in WWII. This battle was a triumph for the allies, but was a catastrophic tragedy for the Nazis.

After the United States got involved, they needed a place closer to the front lines to attack Germany. The United States plan to get closer to the front lines was D-Day. “D-Day “ or “H-hour” is a code that represent the day or the hour of the invasion. In order to attack they needed a plan. Britain's Prime Minister, Winston Churchill and The United States President, Roosevelt first talked about D-Day in a meeting sometime in May of 1943. This meeting was held in Washington DC was called The Trident Conference. When they talked about the operation, Winston proposed a shortened name for Operation Overlord, that name is known as D-Day. The United States and and Britain's military Chief of staff first talked about the operation in August of 1943. Operation Overlord was planned to invade Normandy which took months to plan. The allies plan was to have saboteurs try to destroy things on the beaches a few hours before D-Day started (like mines, obstacles, etc.). These saboteurs did a decent job of cleaning up the beaches of traps, but there were still tons of obstacles to get through. They had the resistance feeding information to the allies and false information to the Nazis for months before D-Day happened. Theses Spies were extremely successful. They were able to move enemy forces towards a different location other than those beaches. The British had a dead soldier float to shore with a briefcase to try to fool the Nazis into thinking the attack was somewhere else. This also fooled the Nazis and had them plan for an invasion somewhere else. The paratroopers were to disturb the Nazis and attack critical areas behind the enemy's front line. This really messed up the Nazis. They did not know right away were the allies where. The British had Soldiers crash land in gliders to attack the German bridges. They succeeded at taking the bridge.
This allowed the allies to move and capture the next town swiftly after they took the beach. They Nazis tried extremely hard not to be fighting on two fronts. They did not want to fight the Russians along with the Americans at the same time. This lead to the making of the “Atlantic Wall”. The “Atlantic Wall” was planned to be built as a coastal defence fortifications. This was in the works from 1942 to 1944. They stopped working on the wall when the allies invaded Normandy. This wall was built by forced labourers from concentration camps from all over europe. The Nazi troops that were defending those lines were battle hardened veterans but, they did not have the ammunition that they needed to defend the beaches.

The beaches that the allies attacked was spit up into five different section. The allies did this to make the invasion easier for them to attack. The beaches they attacked are Sword, Utah, Omaha, Gold, and Juno beach. Another important fact is who attacked which beach. The United States attacked Utah, and Omaha beach. Britain attacked Gold, and Sword beach, and Canada attacked Juno beach. The troops had a rough time trying to advance on the beaches. On the beaches, the soldiers had some inspiration. The soldiers had inspiration from a colonel named Charles Canham said “There murdering us here, let's move inland and get murdered” in order to get troops to advance inland on the beaches. Eisenhower gave a speech on june 6th 1944. He said “Your task will not be an easy one. Your enemy is well trained, well equipped and battle-hardened. He will fight savagely. But this is the year 1944! The tide has turned! The free men of the world are marching together to victory! I have full confidence in your courage, devotion to duty and skill in battle. We will accept nothing less than full victory! Good luck! And let us all beseech the blessing of Almighty God upon this great and noble undertaking.”. This speech gave the soldiers a high morale.
Another part of Operation Overlord involved the Air Force. The Americans had paratroopers attacked Ste. Mere Eglise and were told to secure the town. The generals thought that would help prevent a German counter attack on the beaches. The British had there paratroopers attack a bridge in Caen. That would also help secure the beach and would help prevent a counter attack. This bridge helped the allies move from the beach. The British paratroopers did not jump out of their planes, they crashed landed in gliders. The Americans had P-38J Lockheads “Lightnings” along with P-51 “Mustangs” in the battle as well. They were there ordered attack the bunkers. The Lockheads and P-51s flew over the Beaches for reconnaissance missions before the invasion. They were instructed to keep enemy aircraft off the troops during the invasion to give them a chance to take the beaches. Even though the American pilots were ordered to deal with the fighters, they ended up dealing with the towers because only two fogies or enemys showed up. The British had Typhoon torpedo bombers attack as well during the invasion. The planes were ordered to primarily deal with the towers. All the planes had been painted in black and white stripes known as the “invasion stripes” so other allies would know not to shoot at a friendly's by accident. Theses stripes were top secret at the time because in fear that the enemy would paint their own planes in stripes to cause chaos in the skies. According to Smithsonian Museum the allies had the rule “If it ain’t got stripes, shoot it down”. There were over 12,000 allied planes in D-Day supporting the troops. Out of those 12,000, 127 planes were shot down. During the first day of battle 2,395 American and British airplanes flew over the beaches to help the troops advance forwards on the beach.

The Navy had a major part of this invasion. When the allied Navies got the okay to depart from the harbor, they crossed the English Channel. The allied armada had over 3,000 landing
crafts, 2,500 ships, and 500 navy vessels. The battle of Normandy was one the largest battles in World War II.

There was a plethora of complications in operation Overlord. The Rangers who were cliffhanging were trying to take the artillery guns on a cliff on Omaha beach had problems with the Germans cutting their lines and falling 80 feet or more. The Germans had every part of the beach zeroed in with artillery so they knew where to fire their guns, that is why the Rangers were sent in to dispose of it. If they did not remove those guns, the allies would have had to worry about those guns delaying the invasion longer than already intended with their deadly rain fire. Those guns were firing upon the allied troops before they even stepped foot on the beaches. They started attacking the Higgins Boats when they were a few miles off shore. The British paratroopers had a complication of trying to avoid a Nazi trap that would prevent gliders from landing. This trap is called Rommel's Asparagus trap. This trap was a wooden pole with trip mines attached to the log so when a glider hit the pole, the mines would go off. The troops on the beaches had a simple complication with just trying to get out of the Higgins Boats. The Nazi opened fired on the Higgins Boats as soon as the doors were open. There problems did not just end there. When on the beach, they had to worry about where they stepped so they did not land on a mine. The allies also had problems with the weather. They were going to attack a few days prior to June 6th but the weather was too much of a hassle for the Higgins boats. There was a threat of capsizing in the waves if the seas were rough. They also needed the tide to be rising when they attacked or they may have too much land to cover or the obstacles would rip the bottoms off the higgins boats. Each soldier had the problem of surviving D-Day. The odds of surviving on Omaha beach was one in four of surviving. That is a very low chance.
The allies had the Germans intercept a fake radio broadcasts telling them about a fake army. There was a platoon that put up fake tanks that fooled the Germans to think they were going to attack somewhere else. The British used new versions of tanks (the tanks are called a bobbin tank, a flying dustbin, and a crab tank) on the beaches to try to advance the troops.

This triumphant victory for the allies gained them beaches from the Nazis. This triumph allowed the allies to attack other cities around Normandy France and set them free from the Nazis. If the allies were unable to take Normandy France, winning World War II would have been significantly harder. This triumph for the allies landed 156,000 allied troops on there beaches. Taking the beaches was crucial in winning World War II. The allies were expecting more casualties on the assault to take Normandy. There were 4,414 allied soldiers confirmed dead on D-Day with an estimate of 10,000 dead (soldiers went missing). The generals were very pleased that the attack did as well as it did.

The Normandy invasion was a terrific tragedy for the Nazis. In 1943 Hitler said “If they attack in the west, that attack will decide the war,”. He was correct, when the allies attacked from the west, the Nazis were kicked out of Normandy France and the United States was in a better position to attack the Nazis on there land. They tried to avoid fighting on two fronts. They were afraid that once the Americans got a foothold, they would kick them out of europe and force them back to Germany. The Nazis were now unable to attack and advance there armies. There were forced to defend their home land and fall back to Germany. This tragedy for the Nazis, forced them to retreat from the west along from the east. After this battle the Nazis were on the run from all over europe. The Germans had dead soldiers and have lost control of Normandy. If they could have repelled the incoming forces they may have won the battle. But
once the allies got on the beaches, they were not going to be pushed back to the sea. Once the allies broke through there lines, they had a low morale, even Field Marshal Rommel disbelieved they could win after the invasion in Normandy. This was a very unpleasant and tragic day for the Nazis in Normandy France.

This was a very significant short term event in history. After this battle the Americans pushed so far into Germany they could not go any further. They pushed there lines to the point that they could not get supplies in. The Germans took advantage of this and gave one last final attack to push the Americans out. This event is known as The Battle of the Bulge. This also gave the United States soldiers a high morale, they broke through the Nazis “Atlantic Wall” that was supposed to repeal the allies from invading Europe and taking back what the Nazis have taken. This also gave us a place to stockpile weapons, ammunition and other essential equipment the allies might need to win World War II. They could also bring in reinforcements and take out the wounded soldiers. The allies could keep on advancing and had to worry less while the Nazis had a low morale and had to keep on pushing back while they fall back further into Nazi Germany.

This event was also significant long term as well. This allowed the allies to take back Paris and other cities the Nazis have taken over a period of a months. This battle allowed the United States to advance and be a major part of the Nazis defeat. When the allies were marching there way through Nazi occupied territory, they took cities back from the Nazis till The allies took Berlin. This significant event allowed the allies to win World War II. If the allies would not have taken Normandy France, the allies would have had a very rough time winning World War II. If we have lost this battle, winning World War II would have been significantly harder
and, unlikely for the allies. If the Nazis won, things would have been different all over the world.

Bibliography


d-day-quotes. Accessed 2016. This is a website full of quotes. This source was useful, I used one quote from this page. I used this source by adding a quote to my paper.

Created: 01/14/19 09:59AM | Updated: 02/07/19 12:01PM


newscomwc.newspapers.com/image/70092915/

?terms=D-Day%2BNormand%2Binvasion&pqsid=c9Ttr6uWpGnGq6H9lajEKA%3A3A35000%3A10520060

21. Accessed 6 June 1944. This source is a newspaper that is about the D-Day invasion. This source is useful because it gave me background info about the invasion. I used this newspaper to allow me to write parts of the background section.

Created: 01/03/19 11:11AM | Updated: 02/07/19 10:19AM
"Invasion of Europe by the Allies." *Invasion of Europe by the Allies* [Indiana], 6 June 1944, sec. 1, pp. 1-6. This source is a newspaper that mentions the weather and the delay of planes for the allies. This source was useful, I was able to find out why the Higgins Boats had problems because of the weather. I used this source to talk about the problems the Higgins Boats problems and why they delayed the plans.

Created: 01/08/19 11:10AM | Updated: 02/07/19 10:51AM

20th century- How many troops died on D-Day. history.stackexchange.com/questions/25/how-many-troops-died-on-d-day. Accessed 2019. This source is about the death toll in Operation Overlord. This source was useful for telling me about the Germans death toll. I used this to tell me about the death toll of the German soldiers.

Created: 01/14/19 10:18AM | Updated: 02/07/19 10:26AM
Brook, Henry. *True Stories of D-Day*. Usborne, 2006. This source is a book that the author wrote about true stories that happened on D-Day. This source was useful, I was able to figure out what nation was apart of which event (paratroopers, rangers, etc.). I used this source to figure out what section of the beach (Juno, Sword, Omaha, etc) the allies attacked.

Created: 12/19/18 01:57PM | Updated: 02/07/19 10:10AM

*Cost of Battle: D-Day Revisited*. d-dayrevisited.co.uk/d-day-history/
d-day-landings/cost-of-battle/. Accessed 2012. This source talks about all the lost soldiers and equipment. This was useful because I was able to find out how many planes and other things went missing in D-Day. I used this source to talk about how many allied planes were shot down.

Created: 02/08/19 11:34AM | Updated: 02/11/19 10:08AM


This source explains the amount of ships and aircraft. This was useful, I was able to explain the allied fleet. I used this source to explain the number of allied ships and planes.

Created: 02/10/19 11:25AM | Updated: 02/11/19 08:12AM
D-Day Facts: CNN. www.cnn.com/2013/06/03/world/europe/d-day-fast-facts/index.html. Accessed 2013. This source gave me the dates of major events that were associated with D-Day. This was useful because I gained information about the Roosevelt and Churchill meeting. I used this source to mention the Trident Meeting and the date of that event.

Created : 02/09/19 04:09PM | Updated : 02/11/19 10:01AM

D-Days Legacy. www.earthmagazine.org/article/d-days-legacy-remnants-invasion-linger-beach-sands. Accessed 2011. This source talks about about a lot of soldiers that were on the beaches. This source was useful, I was able to know who was where and how Generals were involved. I used this source by explaining what D-Day and H-Hour stood for.

Created : 02/10/19 11:58AM | Updated : 02/11/19 08:09AM

Drez, Ronald J. Remember D-Day, the Plan, the Invasion, Survivor Stories. 2004.

This source is a book that talked about the allies plan for the invasion. This source was useful, I was able to know what the original plan for the allies was for Operation Overlord was. I used this source to know how the invasion happened and to know the allies plane.

Created : 02/01/19 10:00AM | Updated : 02/07/19 10:17AM
History. 2019, www.history.com/topics/world-war-ii/d-day. This source is about Operation Overlord that was put online by History Chanel. This source was useful, this source gave me info about the whole invasion and operation. I only used the allied death toll of the battle and small sections about the landing craft.

Created : 02/01/19 01:44PM | Updated : 02/07/19 10:24AM

National D-Day Memorial. www.dday.org/preparation-and-planning/. This source talks primarily about the soldiers during D-Day but mentions the plan as well. This source is useful because it gave me info about how the allies attacked and the plan the allies had. I used this source when I was talking about the plan and how the allies attacked.

Created : 02/05/19 11:01AM | Updated : 02/08/19 10:56AM

Normandy Landings. 2019, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Normandy_landings. Accessed 19 Jan. 2019. This source is a Website about the Normandy landings. This source was useful, it gave me info about how the allies attacked the beach. I used it when I was talking about the Higgins Boats in my paper.

Created : 02/01/19 01:57PM | Updated : 02/08/19 10:48AM

Research Starters: D-Day. www.nationalww2museum.org/students-teachers/
student-resources/research-starters/research-starters-d-day. This source explains the amount of the allied air force. This source was useful because it explained how many planes were used. I used it to explain how many planes were involved.

Rommel's Asparagus. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rommel%27s_asparagus. Accessed 31 Jan. 2019. This source is about the trap Rommel designed to prevent Gliders. This source was only useful when I was talking about the British gliders. I used this source to talk about the Germans defences against the allied gliders.

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useful because I was able to find out how many aircraft and other stuff was used. I used this source in my paper by explaining the odds of surviving WWII.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE D-DAY BEACHES. www.iwm.org.uk/history/what-you-need-to-know-about-the-d-day-beaches. Accessed 2019. This source talks about Rommel's defence on the beaches. This source was useful, I would have a harder time figuring out all the defences Rommel put on the beaches. I used this to find out what defences were used to defend the beach.

Created : 01/14/19 10:09AM | Updated : 02/07/19 12:08PM

Why D-Day was so Important. 8 Dec. 2017, www.iwm.org.uk/history/why-d-day-was-so-important-to-allied-victory. Accessed 8 Dec. 2017. This source talks about the significance of D-Day. This source was useful, I was able to learn more about the significance of the D-Day invasion. I used this source in the "significance in history" section of my paper.

Created : 12/12/18 01:44PM | Updated : 02/07/19 12:13PM

world-war-ii-the-allied-invasion-of-europe/100160/. Accessed 2019. This source shows pics of what happened on D-Day with a caption. This source was useful because I could explain in detail what happened. I used this source to explain victory stripes on the allied planes. Created: 02/10/19 11:52AM | Updated: 02/11/19 08:16AM