

1939

August 23 - Germany and the Soviet Union sign the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact

September 1 - Germany invades Poland, starting WWII

September 3 - Britain and France declare war on Germany

September-May 1945 - Battle of the Atlantic¹



1940



May - Auschwitz established

May 10 - Germany invades France, Belgium, and Holland

May 26 - Allied troops evacuate from Dunkirk, France

June 10 - Italy declares war on France and Great Britain

June 22 - France surrenders to Germany

July 10 - Battle of Britain begins

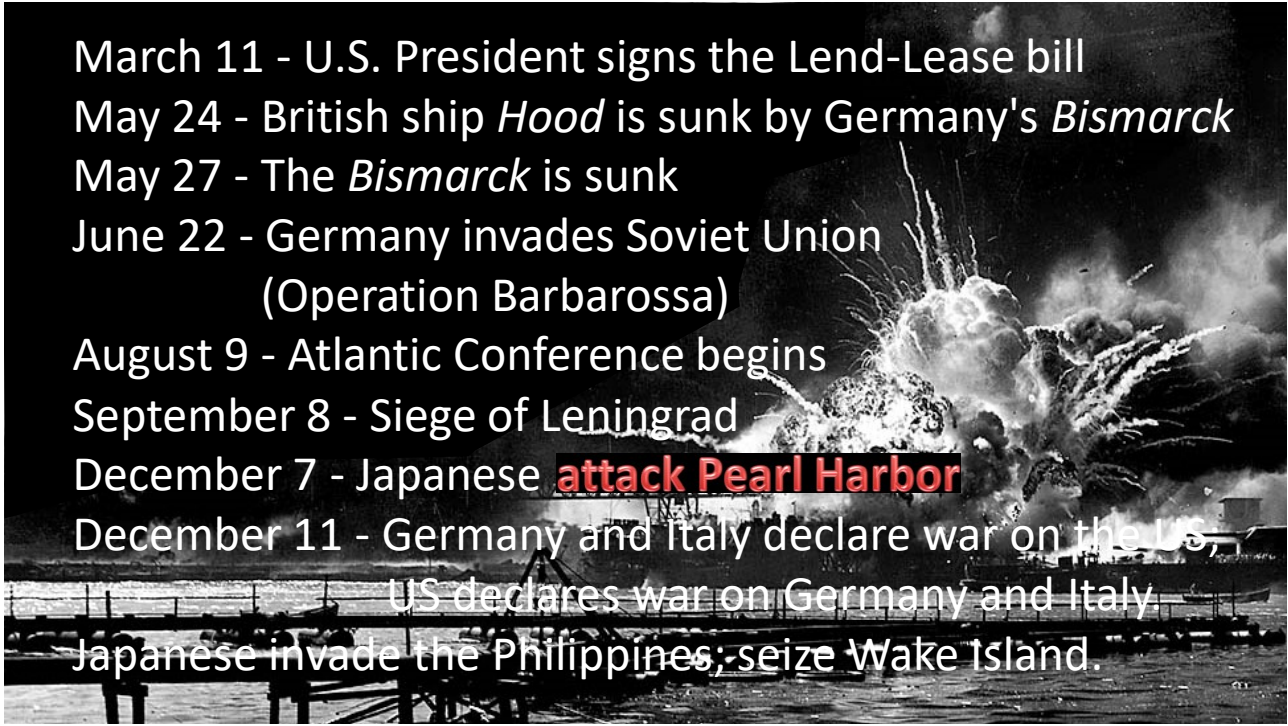
Italy invade Libya to capture Egypt. Tel Aviv bombed.

Japanese occupy French Indochina.

Molotov seeks Hitler OK to liquidate Finland. Hitler refuses.

British launch offensive against Italian forces in Egypt.

1941



March 11 - U.S. President signs the Lend-Lease bill
May 24 - British ship *Hood* is sunk by Germany's *Bismarck*
May 27 - The *Bismarck* is sunk
June 22 - Germany invades Soviet Union
(Operation Barbarossa)
August 9 - Atlantic Conference begins
September 8 - Siege of Leningrad
December 7 - Japanese **attack Pearl Harbor**
December 11 - Germany and Italy declare war on the US,
US declares war on Germany and Italy
Japanese invade the Philippines; seize Wake Island.

1942



January 20 - The Wannsee Conference

February 19 - USA interns Japanese Americans

Japanese invade New Guinea

April 18 – Doolittle's B25's bomb Nagoya, Tokyo, Yokohama

June 3 - The Battle of Midway¹

July 1 - First Battle of El Alamein begins

August 2 - Guadalcanal Campaign begins (ends Feb. 1943)

August 21 - Battle of Stalingrad begins

October 23 - Second Battle of El Alamein²; Rommel retreats

November 8 - Allies invade North Africa (Operation Torch)

¹ Strategic initiative in Pacific shifts to US.

² First successful Allied offensive of WWII.

1943



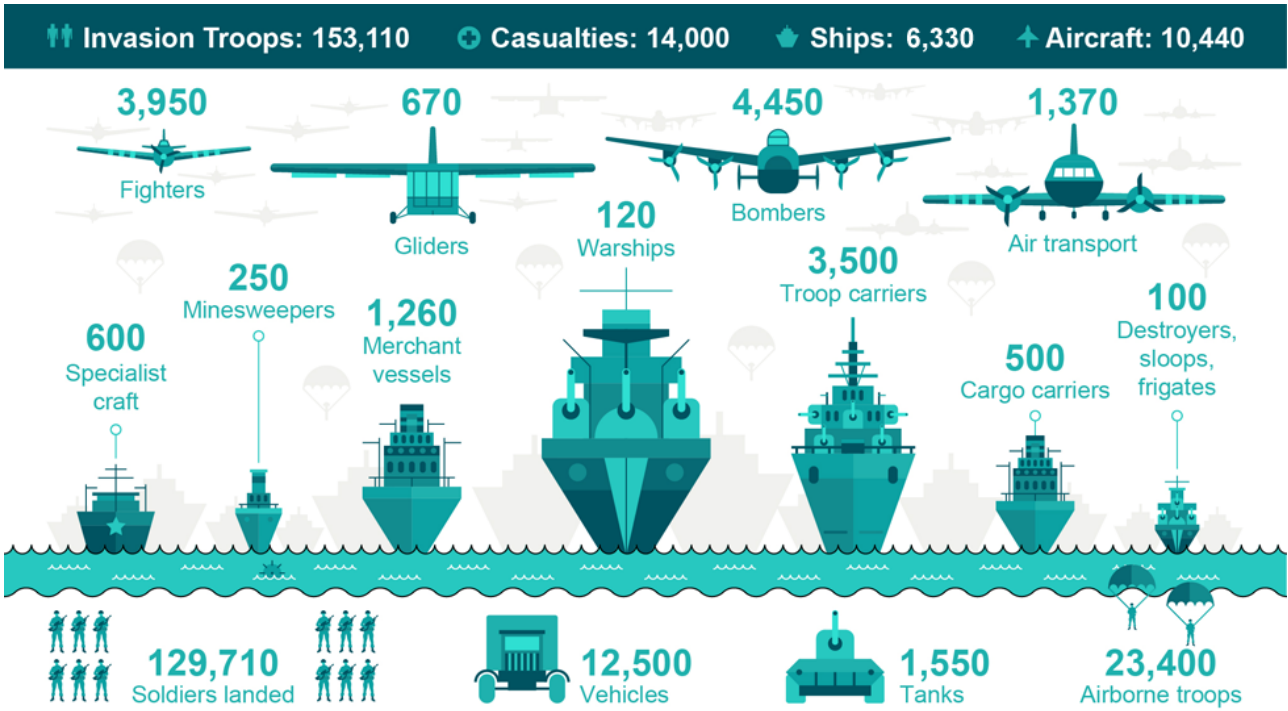
January 14 - Casablanca Conference begins
February 2 - The Germans surrender at Stalingrad³
April 19 - The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising begins
July 5 - Battle of Kursk begins
July 25 - Mussolini resigns
September 3 - Italy surrenders
September 9 – Allied landings at Salerno
Heavy German resistance
November 28 - Tehran Conference begins

³ The largest and bloodiest battle in history becomes the turning point on Eastern Front.

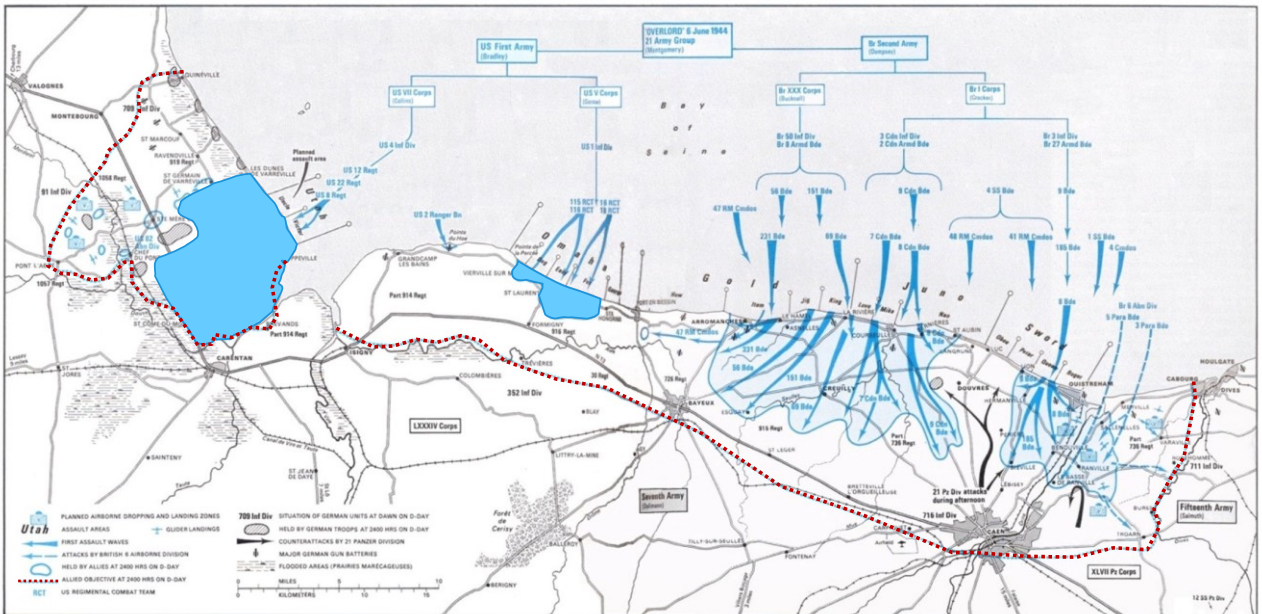
1944



June 6, 1944
D-Day



Allied Beach Head, 2400 hours, 6 June 1944



Factors Constraining Success

- Beachheads were established in all five landing areas, even though most unit objectives were not met: i.e.,
 - The city of Caen was not captured.
 - Airborne troops and 4thID (Utah) linked up three days late.
 - Shore defences were not taken out by either arty or bombing.
 - Allied planning for the beach landings was very detailed, but planning for follow up wasn't, and things often went wrong.
 - Montgomery's plans (seize Caen, build airfields) failed and he habitually over-promised and failed to deliver. American commanders were bitter over Monty's actions.
 - Bradley's focus on moving on a broad front caused casualties.
- D-Day planners lacked practical, hands-on combat experience.
- Allied troops were not as fanatical or as self-sacrificing as Nazis, and not as well indoctrinated. Americans suffered 30,000 PTSD cases in Normandy, and Germans very few.
- The British regimental system resulted in a failure to integrate infantry and armour as required on European battlefields.
- German defence of the **bocage** [dense hedgerows] inflicted considerable casualties on the British and the Americans.
- Savagery in Normandy was intense:
 - 15,000 French civilians were killed by Allied bombing and 20,000 died in the fighting.
 - Killing of prisoners on both sides was not uncommon.

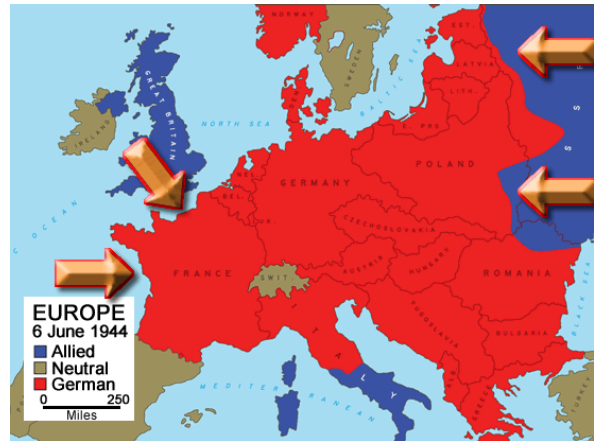
Factors Promoting Success

- By the evening of the first day, along with more than 160,000 men, 20,000 vehicles had been landed.
- Allies had better weather prediction than the Germans because of weather stations in the western and northern Atlantic, and because Allies heavily bombed the German weather stations.
- The Kriegsmarine didn't send out night patrols on 5 June because they thought the weather was too bad.
- Based on bad weather reports, Rommel was on a brief leave.
- If Eisenhower had delayed D-Day again, the next available date saw the worst storm the channel had seen in over 40 years.
- The Germans held back the bulk of their 15th army in Pas de Calais due to the success of Operation Fortitude (e.g. Patton).
- By end August, 2,000,000 men landed; victory was inevitable.
- Allied air, arty supremacy, and logistics (not POL after mid Aug).
- Eisenhower put Patton and 3rd Army in charge of breakouts, which was a masterstroke for his leadership, energy and drive.
- Monty heavily criticised Eisenhower (e.g., "Nice guy, no soldier"), but Ike showed good judgement on all major issues. His principle leadership asset was tact.
- Despite any problems, the Allies achieved their key strategic objective of being on the Seine by D plus 90. Paris fell on 25 August (D plus 79).
- The newly developed drug penicillin went with troops on D-Day and saved thousands of lives.



US President Roosevelt felt that Germany could not handle two fronts effectively. Since 1942 the US had pressed the British for an attack on Nazi-held France. When the Battle of Stalingrad started in late 1942, as Stalin needed a second front to relieve his own army and save Russia.

Great Britain dragged its feet, remembering its losses in WWI, Norway, Dunkirk, Dieppe, etc. They preferred to attack Italy, close to their existing forces in the Middle East.



From May 1943 when the German U-boat threat was largely neutralised, Britain finally agreed to an operation to cross the English Channel. An American general would lead the invasion, with Britain providing key staff, planning, and air, land and sea command.

General Devers was SHAEF Supreme Commander until December 1943, when replaced by General Eisenhower effective January 1944. Neither had combat experience before promotion to flag rank.

But neither had Eisenhower's right hand man and handpicked choice as Group Commander of US forces on D-Day, General Omar Bradley.

Eisenhower's Chief of Staff at SHAEF, General W.B. Smith, had but two days in WWI before being wounded.

However, all four West Point graduates were instead seen as excellent planners and administrators, as was the man who chose them, General G.C. Marshall.

British officers filled the other top spots at SHAEF. Air Chief Marshal Tedder (Deputy), ACM Leigh-Mallory (CinC Air), Adm. Ramsey (CinC Sea) and Field Marshal Montgomery (CinC Land).



Gen. George C. Marshall



Gen. J.L. Devers



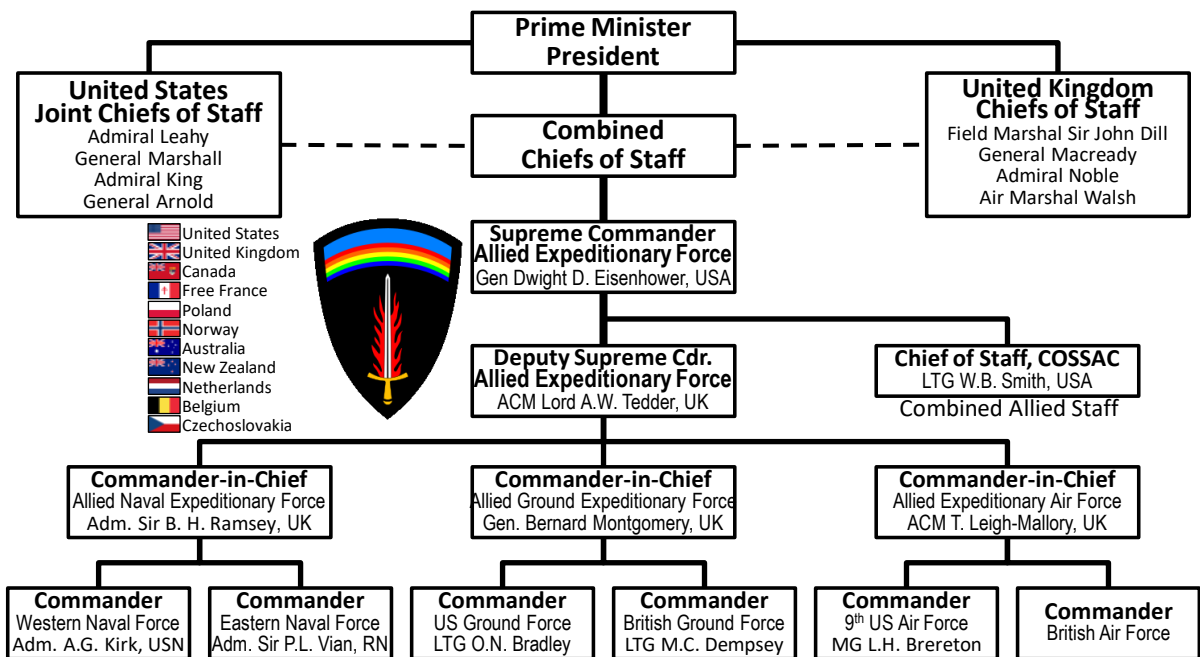
Gen. D.D. Eisenhower



LTG ON Bradley



LTG WB Smith



“The broad outline of the attack was relatively simple: find suitable beaches, gather a landing force, isolate the battlefield by attacking bridges, tunnels, and rail networks so that German defenders could not be easily reinforced, and land the troops. Once a beachhead was established, the plan was to pour in the supplies needed to sustain an offensive and then break out into the French countryside.”¹

However an amphibious attack is not that simple. Success depended on maintaining Allied air and naval superiority and ensuring that German reinforcements did not arrive quickly.

Unbeknownst to the planners, Field Marshal Erwin Rommel was desperately trying to strengthen beach defences. Fortunately for the Allies, Rommel’s plans to stop the enemy on the beaches fell on deaf ears in Hitler’s High Command, and promised building materials, landmines and troops were never sent.



¹ <http://encarta.msn.com>

The Allied planners feared that the Germans would figure out where Operation Overlord would take place. Thousands of lives were at stake. Therefore a plan of misleading the Germans as to where and when the invasion would take place was put forth.

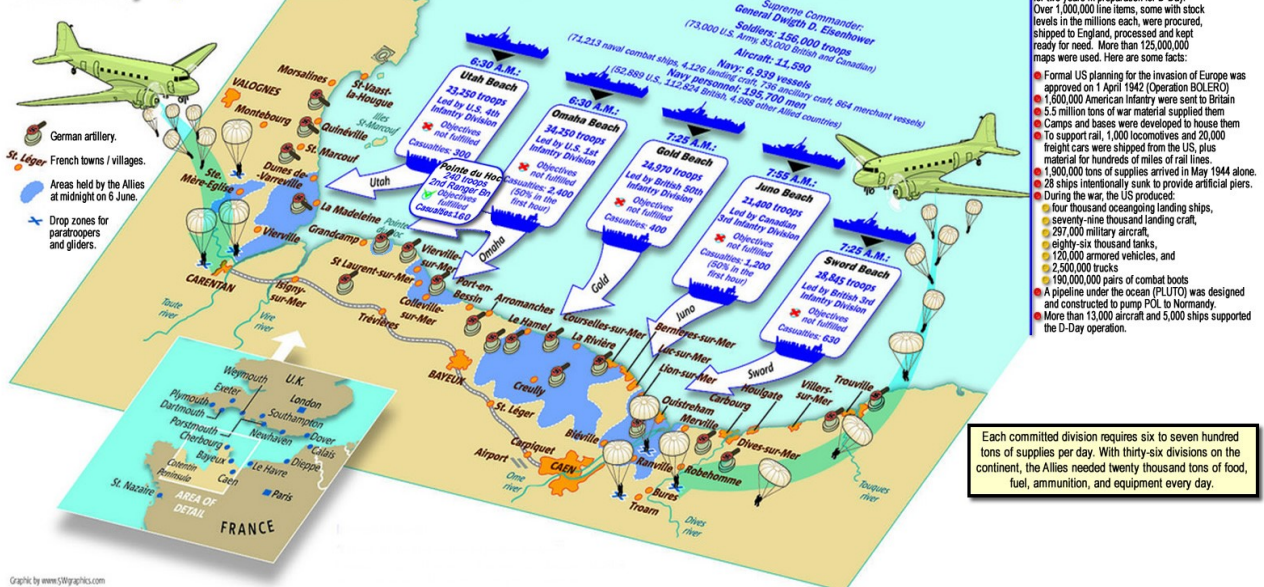
- The Allies placed dummy landing crafts in Thames estuary and along the eastern coast.
- Hundreds of dummy tanks were deliberately placed where German air reconnaissance would photograph them.
- Deserted tent encampments were set up in East Anglia.
- An army of fake (British) spies reported to Germany.
- A fake radio network simulated the traffic of Patton’s 1st Army Group (FISAG) preparing to invade at Calais. The Germans did not believe that the US would omit its best general from the invasion: thus, D-Day was a diversion.
- The pattern of air bombardment was arranged to indicate Pas de Calais in France was where the invasion would happen.



The overall efforts were so successful that the Germans kept their main force (e.g., 15th Panzer Gruppe) in Pas de Calais for days after the Operation Overlord landings.

D-Day 6 June 1944 Normandy

- PHASE 1: Airborne drop**
Midnight - 2 A.M.
Over 22,000 paratroopers and glider infantry were inserted behind enemy lines causing great confusion. Few landed where they expected.
- PHASE 2: Art of deceit**
1 A.M. - 4 A.M.
Operation Fortitude activated many deceptions that convinced the enemy of main landings to be in Pas de Calais.
- PHASE 3: Aerial attack**
3 A.M.
1,300 Allied bombers dropped 11,000 tonnes of bombs before the landings. Most fell too far inland to aid landings.
- PHASE 4: Naval attack**
5 A.M.
Bombardment from 600 naval guns firing 2,000 tonnes of shells preceded the landings, but results were uneven.
- PHASE 5: The Invasion**
- PHASE 6: Logistics**
Amateurs study tactics. Professionals study logistics.
(Military Expression)
Supplies were gathered and stored for two years in preparation for D-Day. Over 1,000,000 line items, some with stock levels in the millions each, were procured, shipped to England, processed and kept ready for need. More than 125,000,000 maps were used. Here are some facts:
 - Formal US planning for the invasion of Europe was approved on 1 April 1942 (Operation BOLERO)
 - 1,600,000 American Infantry were sent to Britain
 - 5.5 million tons of war material supplied them
 - Camps and bases were developed to house them
 - To support rail, 1,000 locomotives and 20,000 freight cars were shipped from the US, plus material for hundreds of miles of rail lines.
 - 1,900,000 tons of supplies arrived in May 1944 alone.
 - 28 ships intentionally sunk to provide artificial piers.
 - During the war, the US produced:
 - four thousand oceangoing landing ships,
 - seventy-nine thousand landing craft,
 - 297,000 military aircraft,
 - eighty-six thousand tanks,
 - 120,000 armored vehicles, and
 - 2,500,000 trucks
 - 190,000,000 pairs of combat boots
 - A pipeline under the ocean (PLUTO) was designed and constructed to pump POL to Normandy
 - More than 13,000 aircraft and 5,000 ships supported the D-Day operation.



Working Issues

“ENGLAND AND AMERICA ARE TWO COUNTRIES SEPARATED BY THE SAME LANGUAGE.”
(Variously attributed to George Bernard Shaw, Winston Churchill, Oscar Wilde, etc.)

1. British commanders made reports direct to London. Eisenhower criticized this practice as "the traditional and persistent intrusion of the British Chiefs of Staff into details of our operation-- frequently delving into matters which the Americans leave to their Field Commanders."
2. He attributed this to "the inevitable trend of the British mind towards 'committee' rather than 'single command.'"
3. During the war, conferences of the Combined Chiefs of Staff were held with the President and the Prime Minister at Casablanca (SYMBOL), Jan 1943; Washington (TRIDENT), May 1943; Quebec (QUADRANT), Aug 1943; Cairo (SEXTANT)-Tehran (EUREKA), Nov-Dec 1943; Quebec (OCTAGON), Sep 1944; Yalta (ARGONAUT), Feb 1945; and Potsdam (TERMINAL), Jul 1945.
4. General Marshall was concerned that Eisenhower might be unduly influenced by British views.
5. The USA pushed for a single Allied Commander over ground, air and sea in each theatre. British reluctantly agreed but insisted on separation in the Pacific and sought for British to be the Supreme Commanders. Eisenhower found major US/UK disagreements on role of Supreme Commander (UK saw as coordinating) and degree of control over troops of other nationalities.

Example. British directed senior officers under Eisenhower, "If any order given by him appears to you to imperil any British troops in the Allied Force even though they may not be under your direct command, it is agreed between the British and United States governments that you will be at liberty to appeal to the War Office before the order is executed." NOTE: The USA had NOT agreed.

6. The British, accustomed to committee-style command in which no service had overall control, favoured a plan giving broad powers to the land, sea, and air commanders under the Supreme Commander. Under this system, the Allied commander in chief became a chairman of a board.
7. The US pushed for unity of command. "[British approach is] destructive in efficiency in that none [of British suggestions] provide for an absolute unity of command by the Supreme Commander over all elements land, air and naval "
 - a. RAF suggested the Supreme Commander focus on inter-Allied issues which would be largely political.
 - b. Also RAF suggested that air, land and sea each would have their own staff for military matters.
 - c. British pressed for British commanders of all sea, air and land components.
 - d. British saw nowhere Supreme Commander could both direct the battle and be in touch with Allied govts.
 - e. On a number of occasions, British tried to organise forces without referral to Eisenhower.
 - f. The British put General Sir Bernard Charles Tolver Paget, GCB, DSO, MC in charge of all planning in conjunction with the air, sea, and ground force CinC's (all British). When it became apparent that recent combat experience would be required for the role, Eisenhower wanted Gen Sir Harold Alexander with whom he had worked well, but he was declared unavailable and Montgomery appointed w/o notice to Ike.
9. Eisenhower assumed command of Allied forces mid-January 1944, but it wasn't official for a month because the U.S. and British Chiefs couldn't agree on his role, powers or objectives.
10. The obstacles lay in policy differences between the British and U.S. leaders known since 1942:
 - a. That main effort was to be against Germany was agreed;
 - b. How it was to be achieved revealed deep differences in national approaches and interests.
 - c. The US wanted to assault Normandy; the British favoured a flanking attack through Italy, which had the added virtue of aiding long-term British interests.
 - d. The US wanted to end the European war quickly; British wanted to avoid cost and casualties.
 - e. The British tried to "teach" the Yanks about "proper forms of strategy."
 - f. Because the Supreme Commander would be American, the British wanted to limit his role.
 - g. The British draft was so specific and detailed on every little thing that the U.S. Chiefs of Staff insisted that the appendices be considered "informational guidance" for the commander.

British draft of Eisenhower's task: "You will enter the Continent of Europe and undertake operations to secure lodgements from which further offensive action can be aimed at the heart of Germany."

American rewrite: "You shall enter the Continent . . . and undertake operations striking at the heart of Germany and the destruction of her forces."

11. The British believed logisticians were meant to know the facts of supply, but could not be relied upon to use these facts to formulate strategy. They saw strategy and logistics as separate.
12. Training was an essential component of preparation for D-Day. Most British training centres were used, notably the Combined Operations (Commando) Training Centre at Inverary, Scotland. British amphibious doctrine and training shifted from large-scale raids to actual invasion.
13. The US established at least eight major training centres, including the Assault Training Centre at Woolacombe Beach, Devonshire, and the Slapton Sands region of the south coast used for amphibious rehearsals.
14. Operation Overlord was divided into numerous separate operations, including but not limited to:
 - Operation Bodyguard – deceptions:
 - Operation Fortitude: (North) Norway; (South) Pas de Calais
 - Operation Taxable (D-Day -1); airdrop of foil strips like ships at Calais
 - Operation Jedburgh – support of French Marquis
 - Operation Neptune- D-Day amphibious invasion and foothold
 - Operation Dragoon – Invade Southern France (15 August 1944)
 - Operation Pointblank – bombing campaign
 - Operation Cobra – break the front at Saint Lo

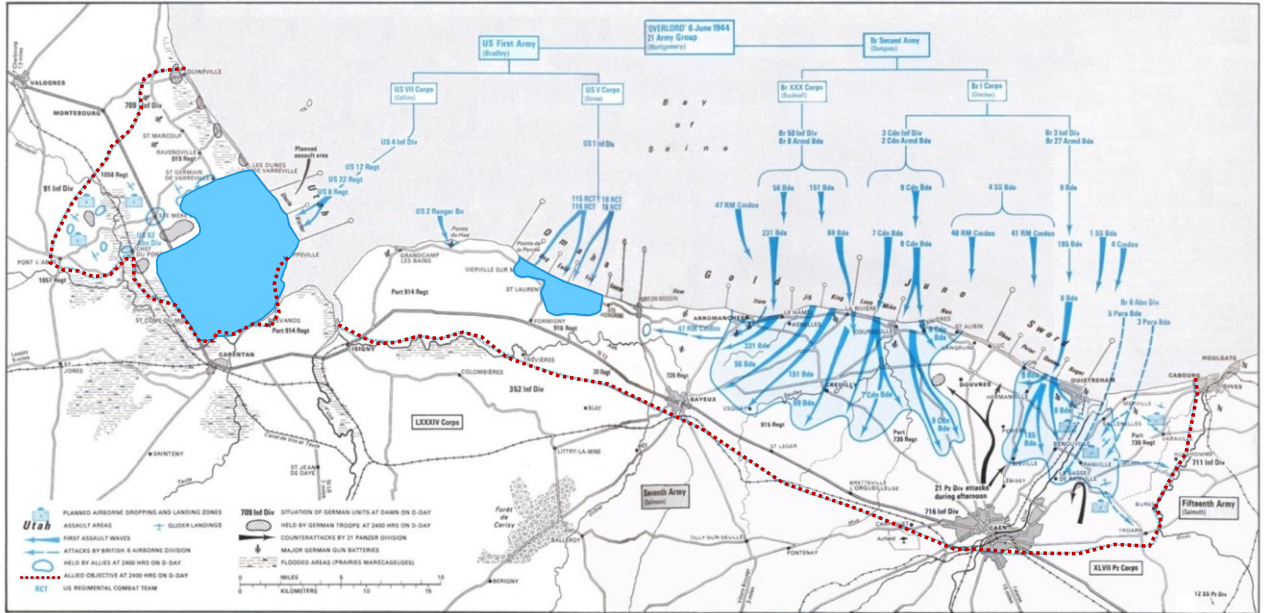
Operation Overlord – Battle of Normandy

- Operation Bodyguard – deceptions
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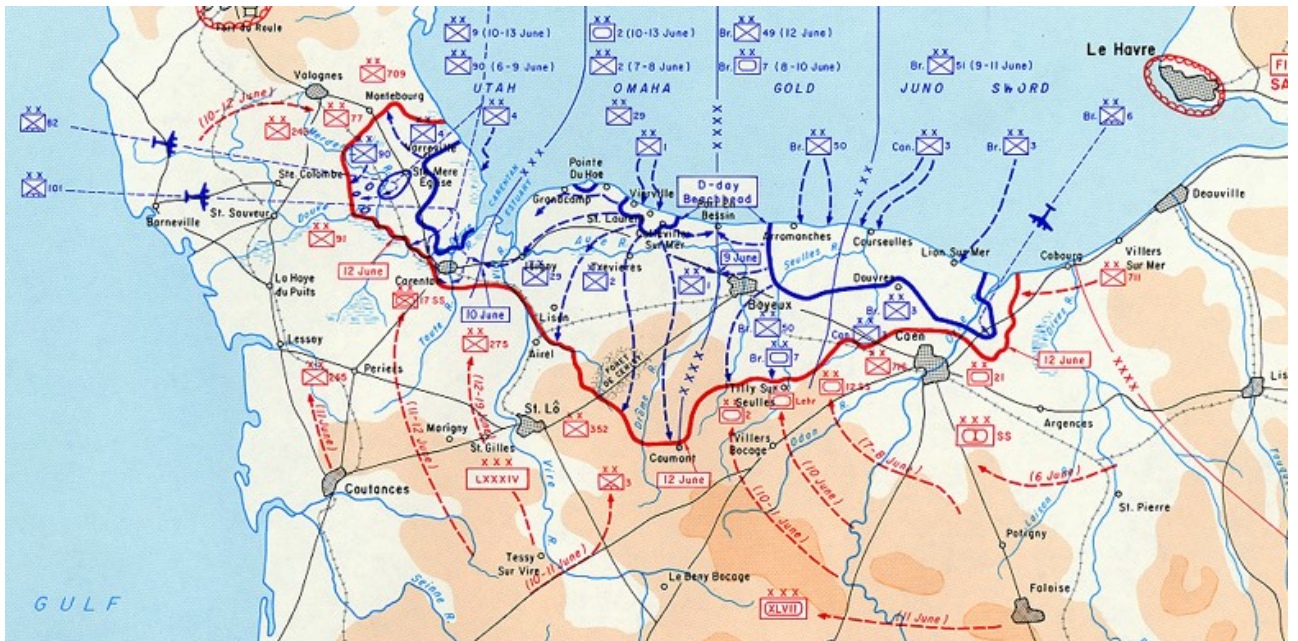


Relieve 2nd Rangers at Pointe du Hoc 6 June. Completed 8 June.
 Capture Bayeux 6 June. Completed 9 June.
 Five beaches connected 6 June. Completed 12 June.
 Capture Carentan 6 June. Completed 12 June.
 Capture St. Lô 9 June. Completed 16 July.
 Capture Carpiquet Airport 6 June. Completed 5 July.
 Cut off Cherbourg by 20 June. Completed 17 June.
 Capture Cherbourg 21 June. Completed 26 June. Port open 26 July.
 Capture Caen 6 June. Completed 21 July.
 Launch Operation Cobra (breakout from St. Lo). 25–31 July.
 German Operation Lüttich, Hitler orders, Mortain. 7-13 August.
 Launch Operation Dragoon (Southern France). 15 August.
 Liberate Paris September 5. Completed 25 August.

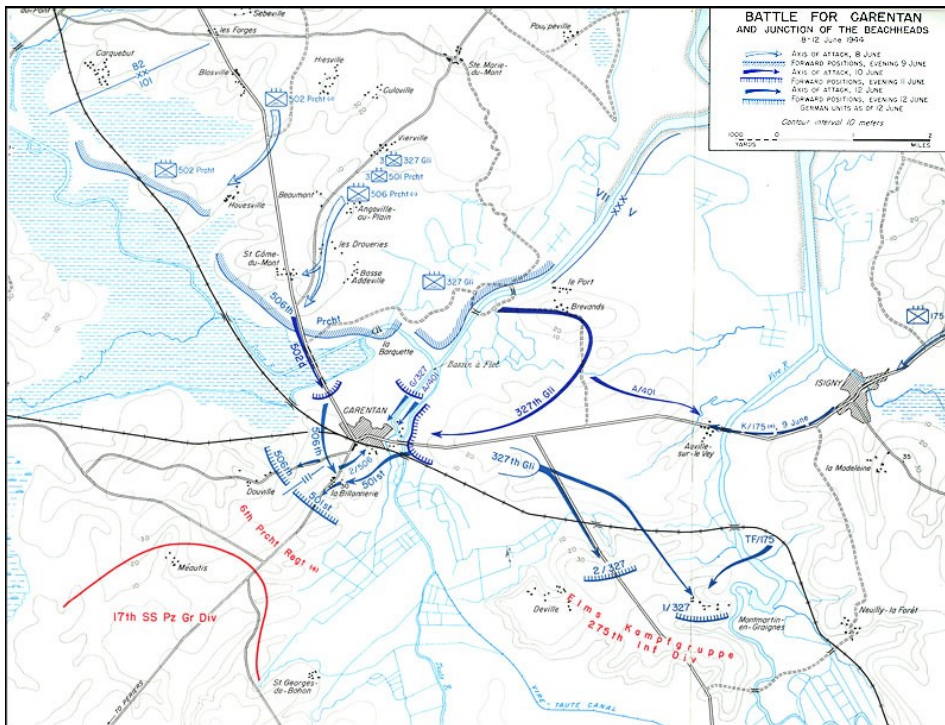
Allied Beach Head, 2400 hours, 6 June 1944



Allied Positions, 6-12 June 1944

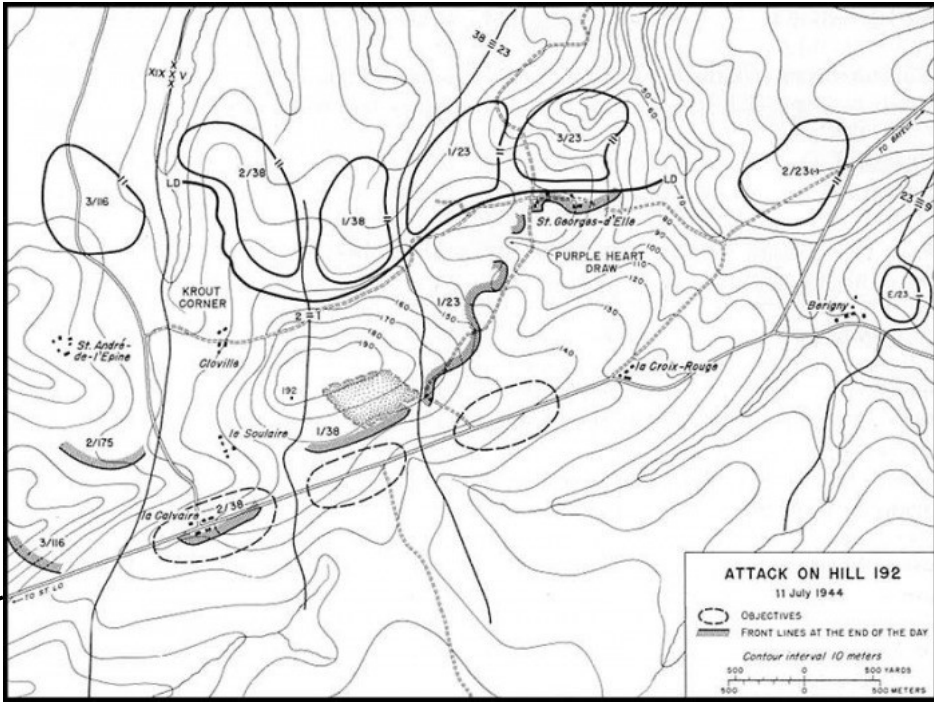


Battle of the Hedgerows,



11 July

To
St. Lo



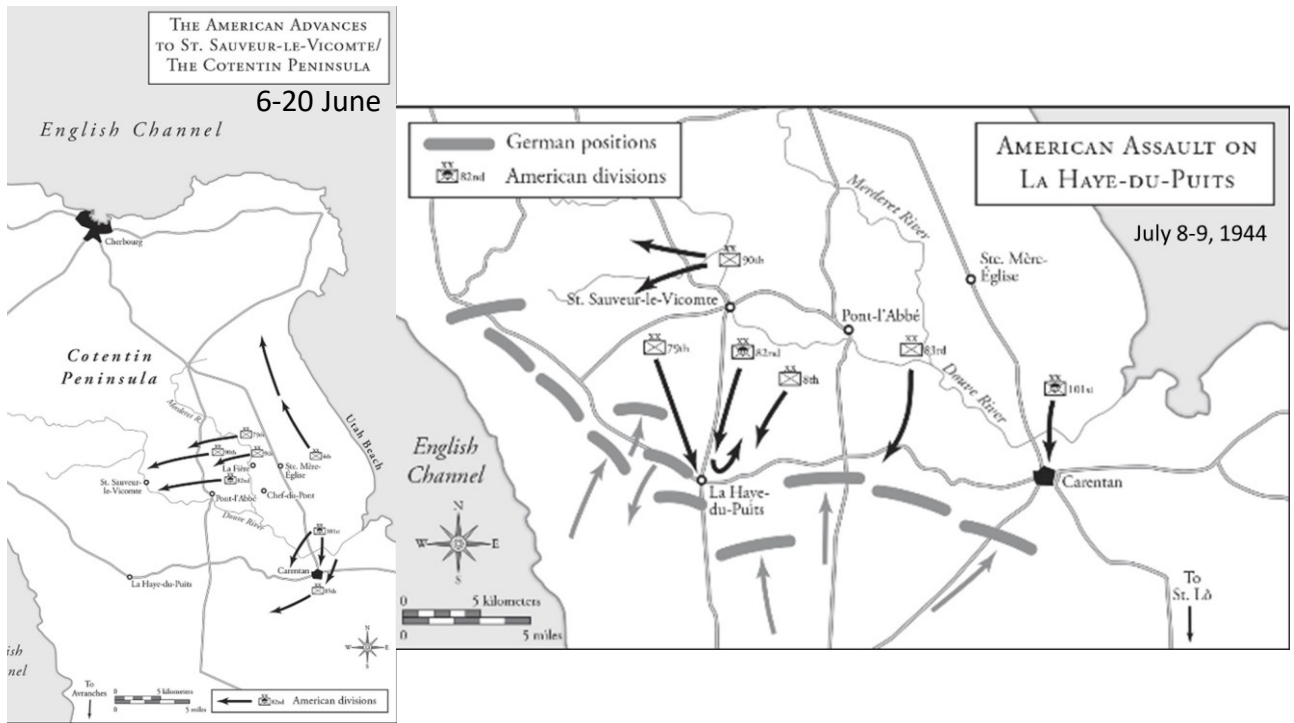


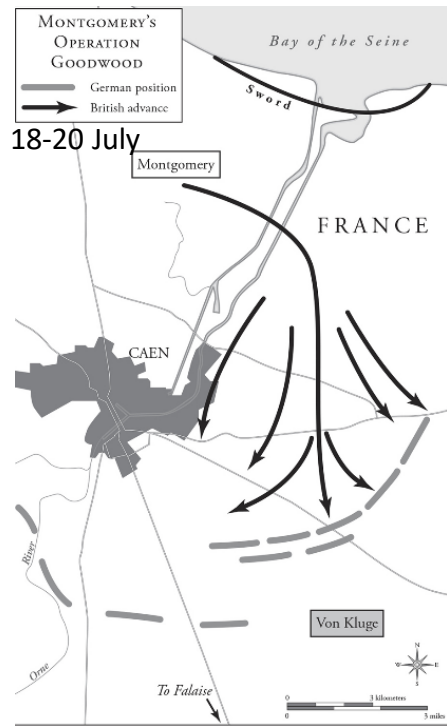
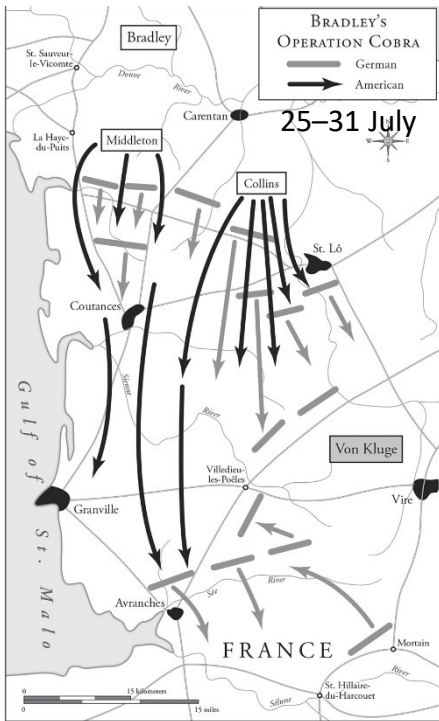
The
Cullen
Hedgerow
Cutter



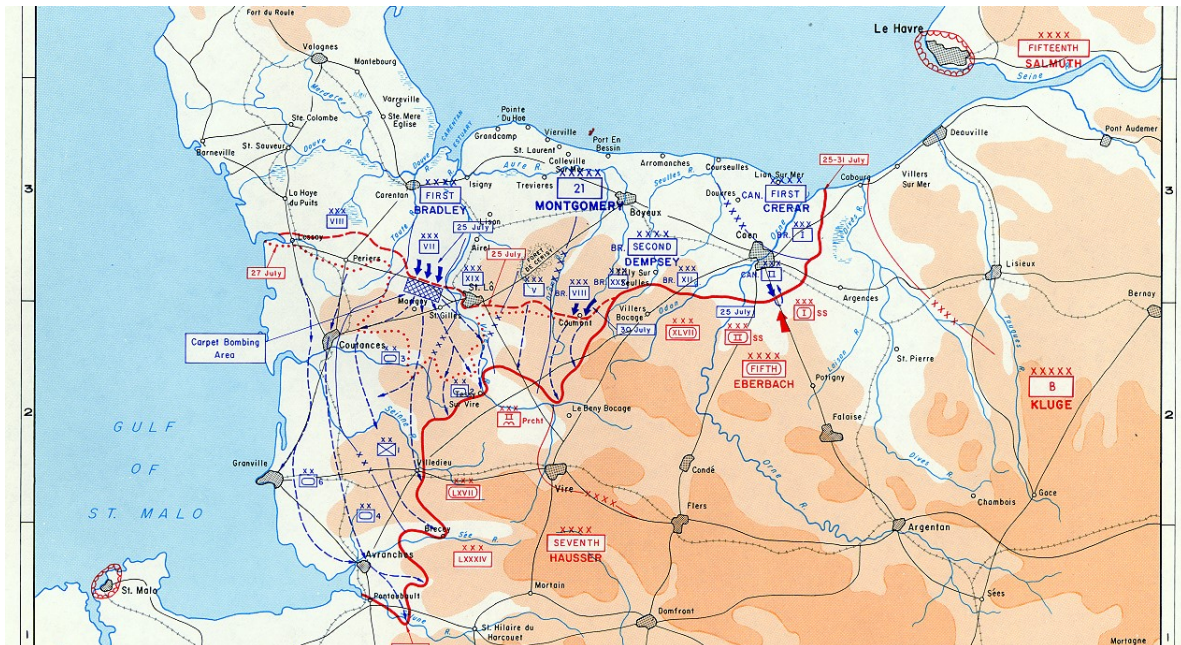
“Liberated” St. Lo



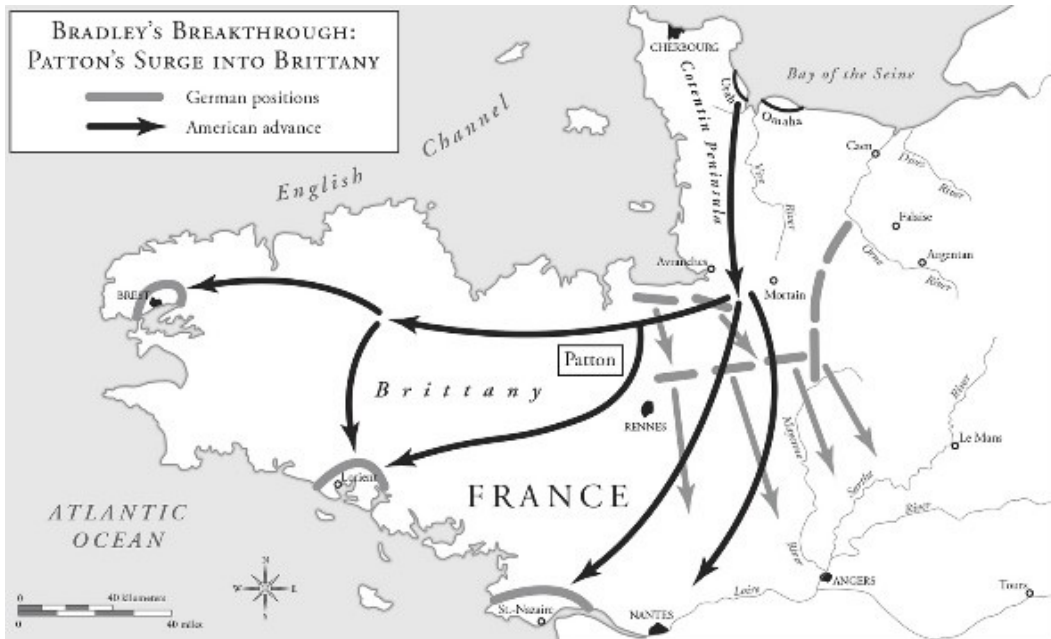
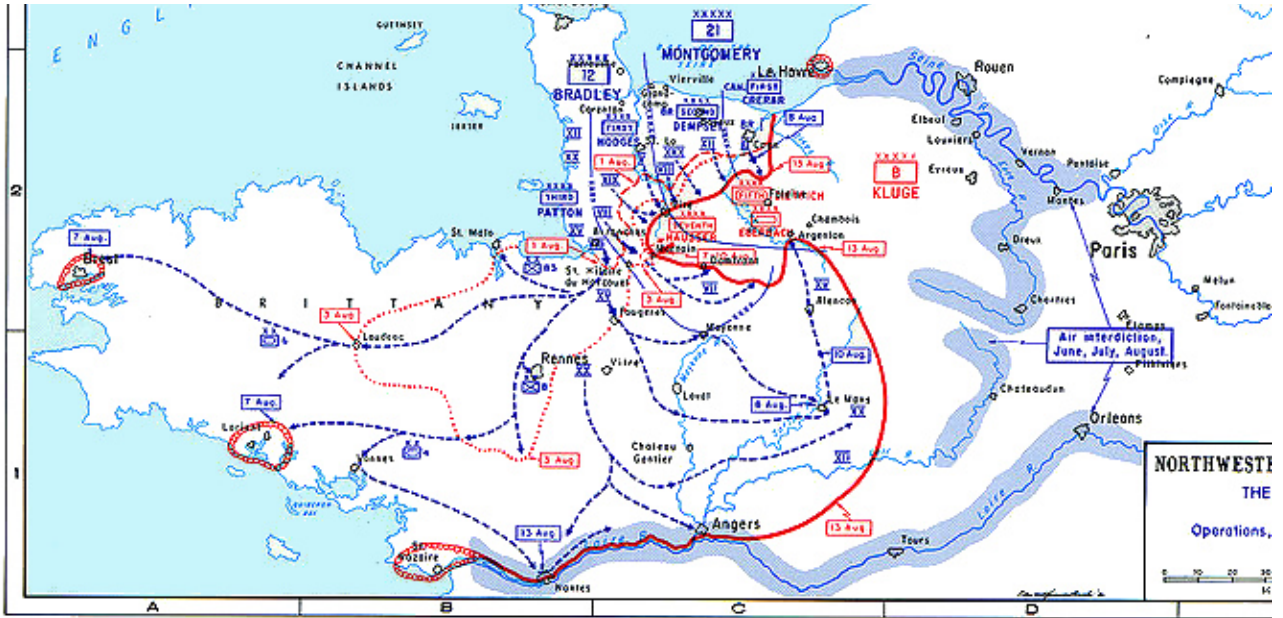


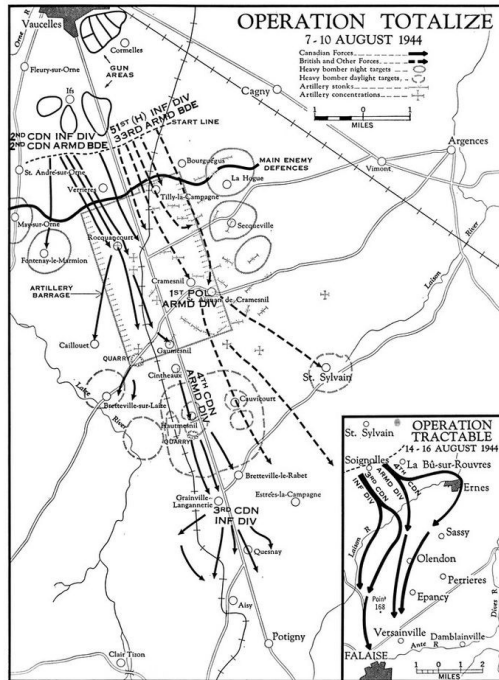
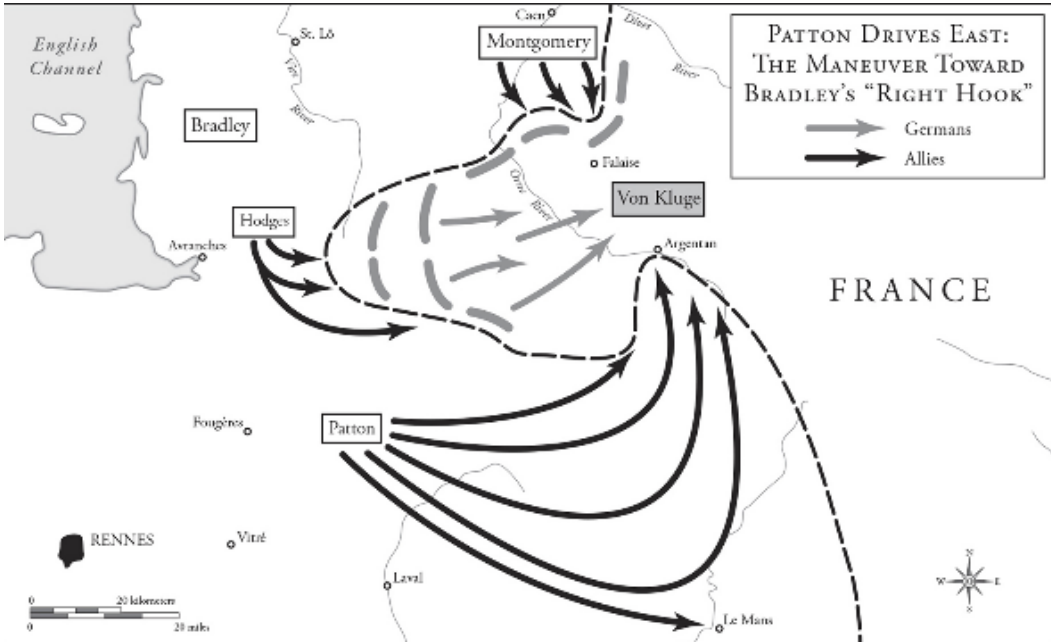


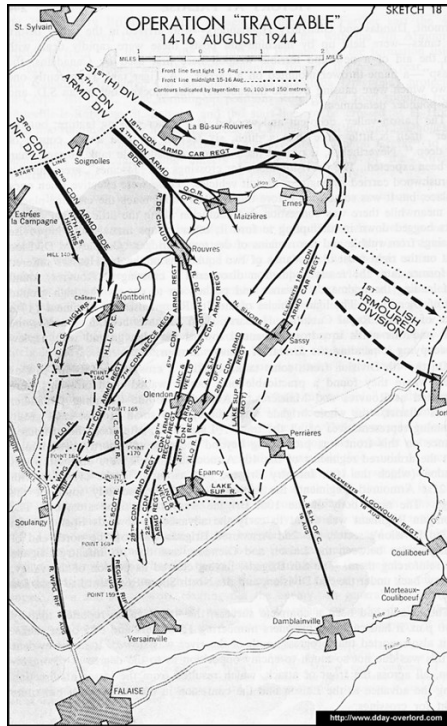
The St. Lo Breakout, 15-31 July 1944



Allied Breakout, 1-13 August 1944

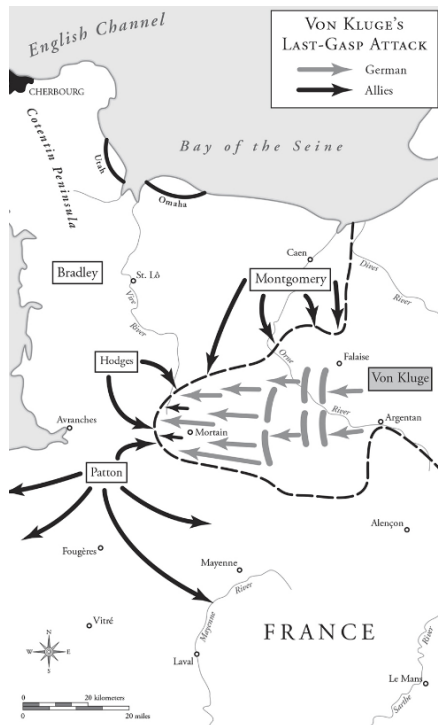




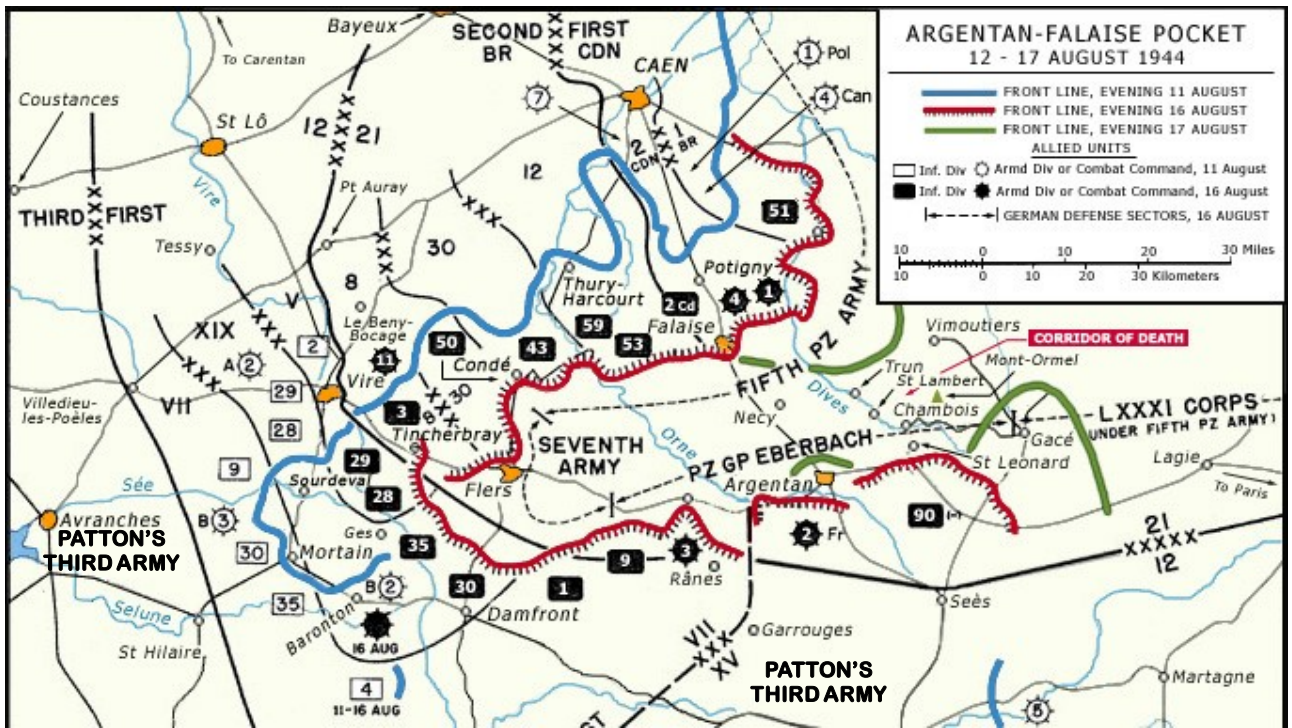


Operation Lüttich ordered by Hitler against advice of military

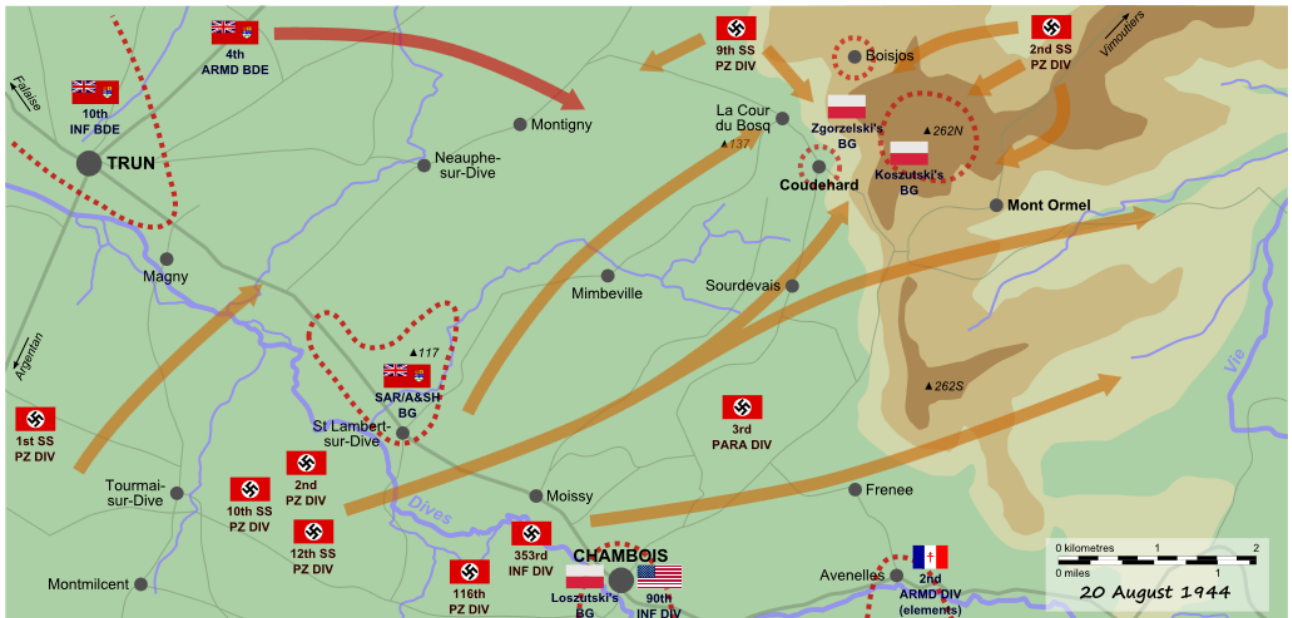
7-13 August

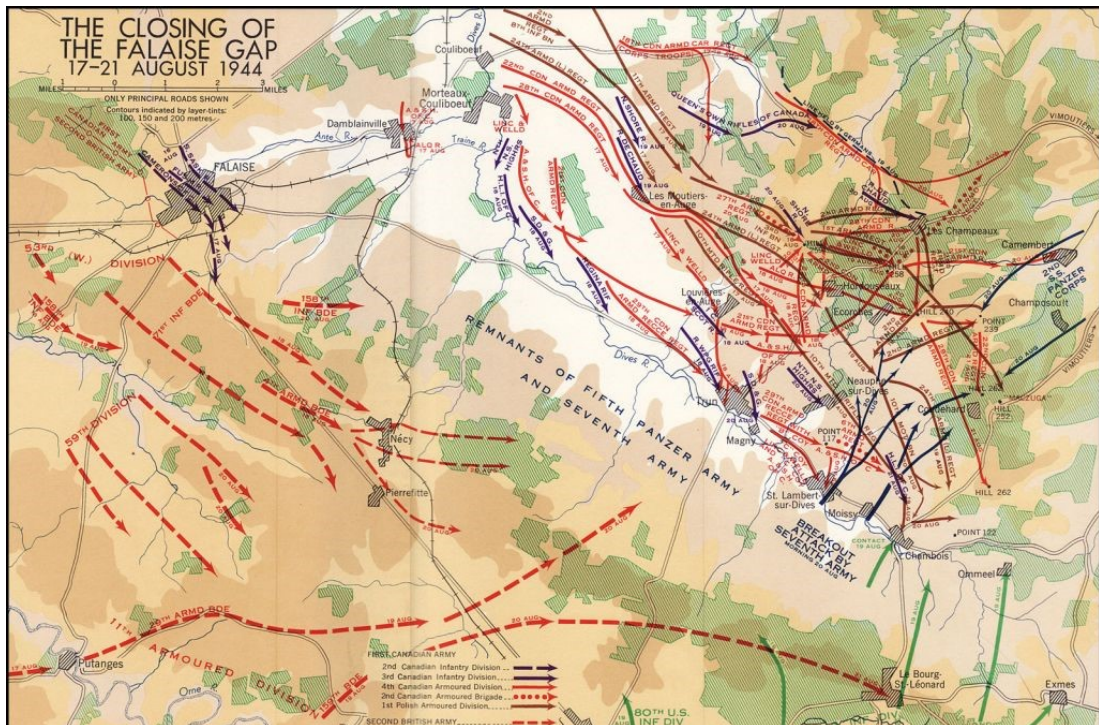


Sacrificed four Panzer divisions.

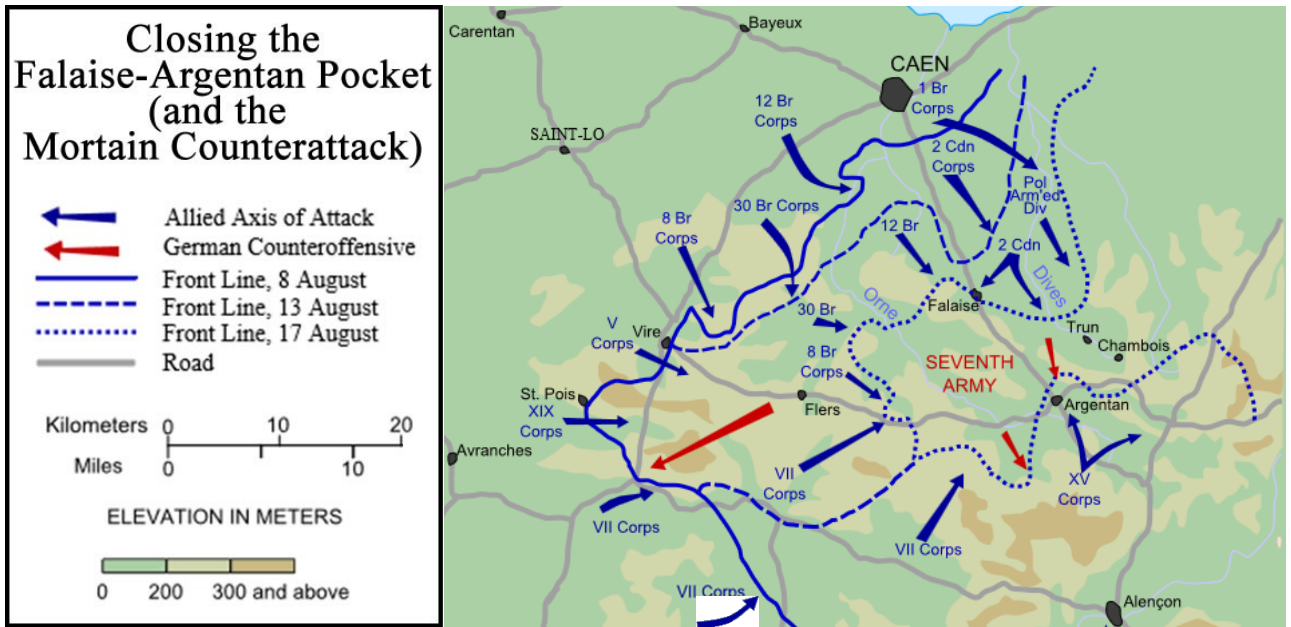


Counter-attacks against Canadian-Polish positions





Battle of Falaise Pocket, 12-21 August 1944



Battle of Falaise Pocket, Casualties

	KIA	WIA	MIA CIA	Total
Can 3 rd Infantry Can 4 th Armour	~80	~180	-	260
1 st Polish Div	325	1,002	114	1,441
US 80 th Div	36	124	-	160
US 90 th Div	134	466	-	600
TOTAL	575	1,772	114	2,461

	Trap'd	KIA	CIA	Escape
German	~100k	12-15k	50,000	~40,000
Tanks		300	>200	~20
Artillery		4,000	1,000	Few
Vehicles		20,000	5,000	Few
TOTAL (HR)	~100k	12-15k	50,000	~40,000

German Army Group B, 5th Army and 7th Army (including 14-20 divisions) rendered combat ineffective.



"Korytarz Śmierci" (the "Corridor of Death")



