



THE

NATIONAL

ARCHIVES

Archives Live: D-Day

What can documents reveal about the experiences of people who participated in D-Day?

Upper KS2 (Year 6) - KS3 (Years 7, 8 and 9)

Second World War 1939-1945

Live broadcast resource pack

Introduction

This resource pack is designed to prepare and support students to take part in the Archives Live: D-Day live event. The resources and activities in this pack have been broken up into three different sections: before, during and after the live event.

Before the event, there are some teacher notes for your use, including historical background information about D-Day. There is also an accompanying PowerPoint presentation which you can use with your class prior to the event, with activities and questions to facilitate pupil discussion. The resources and activities used in the PowerPoint are also included in this resource pack. These pre-event activities should last around 20 minutes, but with the possibility of extending this with further discussion.

During the event, there are resources for you and your students to use and refer to in this resource pack. Please refrain from showing the 'during the event' resources or activities to students until the live event so as not to give anything away!

After the event, there are some follow up activities for use in your classroom included at the end of this resource pack.

Contents

Introduction	2.
Historical background	3.
Teacher's notes	5.
Before the event	5.
Mystery Document	8.
Map of the D-Day beaches	9.
Key terms matching activity	10.
Images of D-Day experiences	11.
During the event	14.
Document activities for during the live event	14.
After the event	18.
Follow up activities for after the live event	18.

Historical background to D-Day for teachers

By 1944 Germany occupied large parts of Europe. The Russians had been doing most of the fighting against Germany in the East and wanted the USA and the United Kingdom to launch an invasion in the West, to ease the pressure on them. Opening a second front would mean that Germany would have to divide their army, making for fewer troops in each place. The USA and the United Kingdom agreed this was necessary and in 1943 they came up with a complicated plan called Operation Overlord.

This involved landing thousands of soldiers on five beaches in Normandy, in northwest France. From there they hoped that their forces could push into France and drive out the German army.

It was the largest seaborne invasion ever assembled. Soldiers from all over the world participated. The countries included, USA, United Kingdom, Canada, Belgium, Norway, Poland, Luxembourg, Greece, Czechoslovakia, New Zealand, Australia and 177 French commandos.

On 6th June 1944, 156,115 Allied troops landed by sea and air on five beachheads in Normandy, France. The five beaches were codenamed Gold, Juno, Omaha, Sword and Utah. It was the start of Allied operations which would ultimately liberate Western Europe, defeat Nazi Germany, and end the Second World War in Europe.

Planning Operation Overlord

Planning had to be meticulous and needed to avoid the same mistakes as previous attempted invasions, such as the disastrous failed assault on Dieppe in 1942.

The careful planning involved reconnaissance of the French coast and included using mini submarines known as X-Craft. Soldiers also secretly swam ashore tasked with taking samples of the sand on the proposed landing beaches. This was to make sure the beaches could handle the weight of the tanks, trucks and other vehicles that would take part in the invasion. Major Logan Scott Bowden was part of this heroic clandestine effort, and we will explore his story more during the live event.

Deception

The Germans knew that the Allies would plan an attack, but they believed it would concentrate on other locations in France, including Calais. Calais was the closest French port to England. The Allies used various tactics to trick the Germans into thinking the landings would happen at various coastal locations. They utilised their vast spy network in Occupied France. Many of these individuals acted as double agents including Elvira Chaudoir aka agent 'Bronx', whose involvement will be explored in the live event. They helped divert the German army's attention by spreading false information about possible invasion points.

Historical background to D-Day for teachers

The Invasion

On 5th June a fleet of 3,000 landing craft, 2,500 other ships, and 500 naval vessels began to leave ports in England headed for France. That night thousands of men were dropped by parachute into the landing zone. Their task was to capture important towns, roads, and bridges in Normandy so that the soldiers from the beaches could make their way inland.

On the morning of 6th June, the fleet of ships arrived at the Normandy coast. The landing craft were boats that could carry soldiers and tanks. These ships could land on the beaches, drop off their soldiers and tanks, and then return to the larger ships to bring back more men.

The five beaches chosen as the sites of the landings were spread along a 30 mile (48km) stretch of coastline. British soldiers landed on Gold and Sword Beach, Canadian soldiers landed on Juno and the American soldiers landed on Omaha and Utah beaches. Ramsay Bader, a tank driver as part of the 147th (Essex Yeomanry) Field Regiment, was one of many soldiers who landed on Gold Beach.

Before the first soldiers landed on the beaches, Allied ships and planes fired at German forts. They hoped to destroy them, but some of the forts were so well built that the Germans were protected and were able to attack the Allies.

On the British beaches the soldiers made good progress, they pushed inland. The Americans faced strong defences on one of their beaches and took longer than they had planned to move off the beach. However, by the end of the day all five beaches were in the hands of the Allies.

Aftermath

The D-Day landings came at a high cost. More than 200,000 Allied soldiers had been killed or wounded by the end of Operation Overlord. The Germans suffered a similar number of casualties. There were insufficient numbers of medical staff to deal with the level of casualties. Those who were present, witnessed terrible scenes and tried desperately to save as many of the injured as they could. Iris Ogilvie (Bower) was of only two women nurses in Normandy in the aftermath of the D-Day landings. Iris arrived at the Juno beachhead on 12th June 1944. You can explore her experience further as part of the suggested post-event activities.

As the battle raged on and the Allies moved inland towards Paris, many French civilians were also killed during bombing raids and battles. Although the war would continue for another year, D-Day was the beginning of the end for Nazi Germany. It is considered one of the most successful operations in military history.

Teacher's notes

These are the suggested activities to prepare and support students to take part in the live event. Please use the accompanying PowerPoint to support students with these activities and complete them before the live event.

Please do not show students the resources in the 'during the event' section prior to the live event so as not to give anything away!

Before the event

Mystery Document (please see page 8)

Get student to discuss:

- What can you see?
- What type of document is it?
- When was it made?

Ideas for feedback and discussion:

- Consider the scene, where the people might be. It looks like they are on a beach, either on the sand or in the sea.
- The weather looks sunny and bright because sunhats are being worn, indicating it might be summertime or somewhere warm.
- Students might comment on the activities the people are doing, such as playing in the sand or sitting and relaxing. Mostly they seem happy.
- There are many people visible in the background, as well as buildings and beach huts.
- Type of document: if children say 'picture'- you can clarify what type of picture, a photograph. This captures a snapshot in time. You could discuss the 'third' person in the image, the photographer.
- Get children to consider when this was taken/made. Their clothing/beachwear might help give a clue and the fact it is in black and white.
- Other question to ask as follow up: what do you think this document has got to do with D-Day?

Information about the photograph

This is a photograph showing families on a beach in Normandy, France, c. 1930s-1940s. Families and friends are together, enjoying the sand and sea.

As early as 1942, the BBC launched an appeal for the general public to submit their holiday photographs. Millions of photos ended up being sent in. It was a way of gathering intelligence on the best landing beaches for D-Day. The beach 'Luc-sur-Mer' would go on to be codenamed 'Sword' Beach on D-Day.

Before the event

Map of the south coast of England and the north coast of France

Hand out the map showing the south coast of England and the north coast of France. Ask students to find the five beaches where the Normandy landings took place. These places are listed as part of the key term matching activity.

As an extension, you could ask students to think about how long the journey might have taken from the coast of England to the coast of France, and the different ways in which the troops may have travelled there (by boat but there were also airborne divisions). Also, they could begin to consider what the journey might have been like.

D-Day: Context:

In the accompanying PowerPoint, there are questions related to the planning of D-Day. Students can work in pairs/groups, or this can be a full class discussion.

1. What did the Allies do in preparation for Operation Overlord?
2. How did the Allies ensure the location of the invasion was kept a secret?
3. What difficulties do you think the Allies faced on D-Day?

The following points are some ideas to support student discussion.

Ideas for feedback and discussion:

- Some ideas for preparation: Finding a suitable location/recruitment and training of soldiers/paratroopers. Planning which weapons to use.
- Checking the level of mines/barricades used on each beach.
- Deception: Using spies/ spreading false information.
- Operation/Invasion: Could mention the different roles during the invasion.
- Operation Invasion: Difficulties faced/tactics.

Key terms matching activity

Give students the key terms matching activity, they can do this individually or in pairs. This activity is designed to help with understanding key areas of Operation Overlord/D-Day.

Answers: 1F, 2E, 3B, 4G, 5H, 6C, 7A, 8D

Before the event

Major Logan Scott-Bowden

Students read this brief information about Major Logan Scott-Bowden:

- Major Logan Scott-Bowden was part of the heroic effort to plan Operation Overlord.
- Before D-Day, Logan secretly swam ashore to the French coast from mini submarines called X-craft to collect samples of sand.
- His job was to make sure the beaches could handle the weight of the tanks, trucks and other vehicles that would take part in the invasion.

Students can discuss the interesting things they found out about Logan's involvement in D-Day with another student and begin to consider questions they might want to ask his son – who will be present for the event – relating to his father's involvement in D-Day.

Images of D-Day experiences

Either show on the PowerPoint slide or hand out these images. Each image reveals something different about the experiences of people involved in D-Day. Get students to discuss what they show about D-Day and the people involved.

What do these pictures tell you about the experiences of people who participated in D-Day?

Preparations for the event

These are discussion questions to prepare students for the live event.

- What question would you like to ask Brigadier R L Scott-Bowden MBE, whose father was Major Logan Scott-Bowden? You might want to decide on one question for the whole class. You will be able to submit questions prior to the live event.
- Do you have a family member who was involved in D-Day? How do you know this story? You can get students to think about how they know this story e.g. through written documents like diaries, or through spoken stories passed down from relatives.
- Why do you think it is important to mark the 80th anniversary of D-Day?

Mystery Document

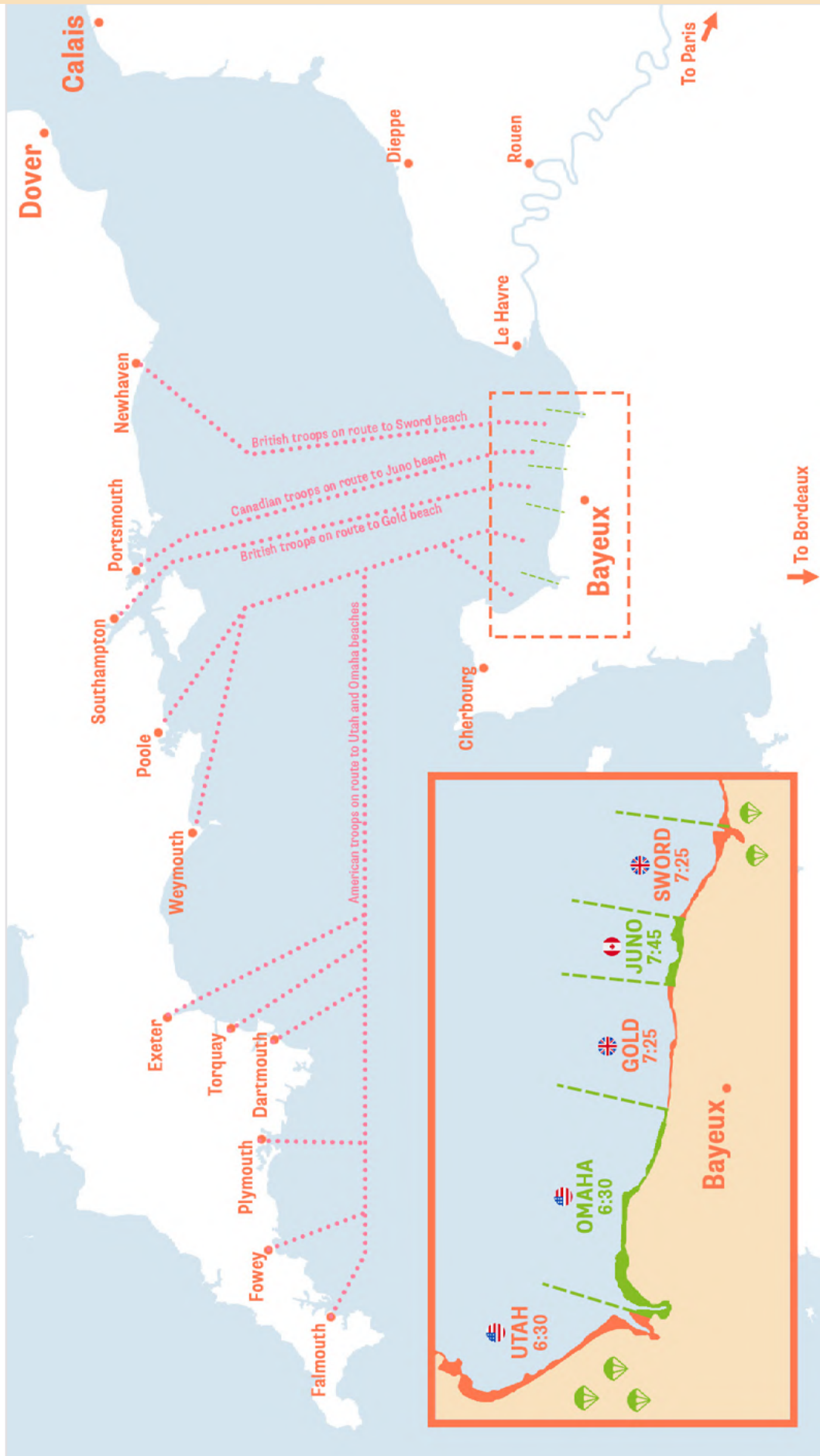
Catalogue Ref: WO 252/583

COAST, BEACHES, AND EXITS



28. Beach 44. Luc-sur-Mer: the beach and sea-wall

Map of the south coast of England and the north coast of France



Key terms matching activity

1) Allies

2) The Battle of Normandy

3) BIGOT

4) Double agent

5) Reconnaissance

6) X-craft

7) Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno, Sword

8) Pilotage

A. Allied code names for the beaches where the ground troops landed along the 50-mile stretch of Normandy coast.

B. British Invasion of German Occupied Territory. The highest level of security clearance, introduced by the Allies before D-Day to help keep their plans secret.

C. Small British submarines. X-craft were used to carry out missions along the Normandy coast before D-Day and to mark the routes to the landing beaches.

E. The planned battle was the first phase of the Allied campaign to defeat the German armed forces in Normandy. The aim of D-Day was to gain a foothold in France from which the Allies could then advance and defeat the Germans.

D. Directing or piloting the movement of a ship or aircraft by visual or electronic means towards specific landmarks.

F. A group of people or countries working together with a common aim. In D-Day, this included the USA, Great Britain, Canada, France, Belgium, The Netherlands, Norway, Denmark, Australia, New Zealand, Czechoslovakia, Greece and Poland.

G. Someone who works for a secret intelligence service for one country to spy on another country's military operations. But, who is now secretly spying on their own country's operations for the target country.

H. A military operation to obtain information relating to the activities and resources of a foreign nation or armed group.

Planning & Invasion



Deception

There's often a listener



SILENCE IS SAFETY

*Never talk to anyone about sailing
dates, cargoes, destinations.*

During the event

Take a look at the mystery document (please see page 14)

1. Which of these words is not in the document?

- A) Tank
- B) Reconnaissance
- C) Bigot
- D) Position

2. What words are missing from the title of the document?

Mystery Document Transcript

BIGOT - MOST SECRET

Reconnaissance of French Coast using "X" Craft.

(Enclosure of No. 4 to A.N.C.X.F. letter No. X/0562/9 dated 10th December, 1943.)

Appendix B.

Hourly ____ of ____ in the vicinity of position. 49° 21' N, 0° 37# W.

Note. All time are G.M.T. Heights in feet.

[A table of numbers arranged into columns with headings of 0H to 18H and rows of dates showing Dec 30 - 31 and Jan 1-5]

Mystery Document

Catalogue Ref: ADM 179/347

FIGOT - MOST SECRET.

RECONNAISSANCE OF FRENCH COAST USING "X" CRAFT.

(Enclosure No. 4 to A.N.C.X.F. letter No. X/0562/2 dated 10th December, 1943.)

APPENDIX B.

HOURLY [REDACTED] OF [REDACTED] IN THE VICINITY OF POSITION
 49° 21' N.
 0° 37' W.

NOTE. All times are G.M.T.
 Heights in feet.

DATE	0 H	1 H	2 H	3 H	4 H	5 H	6 H	7 H	8 H	9 H	10 H	11 H	12 H	13 H	14 H	15 H	16 H	17 H	18 H
Dec. 30	22.6	19.9	15.6	10.9	7.2	4.7	4.0	5.9	10.9	17.2	21.8	23.5	23.0	21.1	17.1	12.2	7.9	4.9	3.4
31	22.8	21.8	19.0	14.6	10.1	6.9	4.9	4.5	7.0	12.5	18.3	21.9	22.8	22.3	20.1	16.1	11.4	7.5	5.0
Jan. 1	21.8	22.1	21.1	18.1	13.8	9.9	7.2	5.4	5.2	8.1	13.6	18.7	21.4	21.9	21.5	19.1	15.3	10.9	7.7
2	19.4	21.0	21.5	20.5	17.4	13.5	10.3	7.6	5.8	5.0	9.2	14.3	18.3	20.3	21.1	20.6	18.5	14.8	11.1
3	15.7	18.7	20.3	20.8	19.8	17.1	13.6	10.7	8.1	6.4	6.8	10.0	14.2	17.5	19.4	20.3	19.9	18.1	14.9
4	11.2	15.3	18.0	19.6	20.3	19.4	17.1	14.2	11.2	8.7	7.0	7.3	10.0	13.6	16.7	18.5	19.7	19.7	18.1
5	7.9	11.1	14.6	17.4	19.1	20.0	19.6	17.5	14.5	11.6	9.1	7.3	7.3	9.5	12.9	15.9	18.1	19.4	19.8

Decoding activity: Elvira Chaudoir aka 'Bronx'

Catalogue Ref: KV2/2098

Read the following sections from this telegram and attempt to 'decode' this message:

'Please send urgently £50 to pay my dentist'

£ 80	means	Atlantique.
70	"	France Nord, Belgique.
60	"	France Nord et Biscaya.
50	"	Biscaya.
40	"	Mediterrané.
30	"	Danmark.
20	"	Norvége.
10	"	Balkans.

"Pour mon dentiste"	means	the information	about the target area	is certain.
"Pour mon docteur"	"	"	"	" almost certain.
"Pour mon medicin"	"	"	"	" probable.
"Tout de suite"	means	landings will be in	one week.	
"Urgent"	"	"	"	" two weeks.
"Vite"	"	"	"	" one month.
"Si possible"	"	date is	uncertain.	

Transcript:

£80 means Atlantique.
 £70 means France Nord, Belgique.
 £60 means France Nord et Biscaya.
 £50 means Biscaya.
 £40 means Mediterrane.
 £30 means Danmark.
 £20 means Norvege.
 £10 means Balkans.

"Pour mon dentiste" means the information about the target area is certain.
 "Pour mon docteur" means the information about the target area is almost certain.
 "Pour mon medicin" means the information about the target area is probable.

"Tout de suite" means landings will be in on week.
 "Urgent" means landings will be in two weeks.
 "Vite" means landings will be in one month.
 "Si possible" means date is uncertain.

After the event

The aftermath: Nursing

Looking at the document, get students to discuss:

- What can you see?
- What type of document is it?
- What can you infer?

Ideas for feedback and discussion:

- It is a photograph, in black and white. It is taken from inside a tent, looking out.
- There are two people carrying a stretcher, with what looks like a person lying on the stretcher.
- There is also a woman standing beside the stretcher, looking at the person being carried.
- It can be inferred that the person on the stretcher is possibly a casualty of D-Day and the woman looking down at the stretcher is a nurse.
- The tent could be where the patient is being treated, because there are no hospital buildings nearby.

Then reveal:

This is a photograph showing a casualty arriving at the no. 50 Mobile Field Hospital in Normandy, France, 1944. Over 20,000 troops landed on Juno beach on D-Day, taking heavy casualties.

In the foreground of the photograph is Iris Ogilvie, an RAF nursing sister, waiting to receive the patient. Iris was one of only two nurses dealing with these casualties for over a week before other nurses began to arrive.

Questions for further discussion:

- How must Iris have felt as one of the only nurses available to treat so many casualties?
- What would some of the challenges be when treating casualties in tents such as this?

(Could highlight key phrases on the document such as 'two very composed young women', 'added a fresh paragraph to nursing history' and 'all the sisters have lived like soldiers')

Transcript

Photo Shows: A casualty arrives at the Mobile Field Hospital. In the foreground is Sister I. Ogilvie of Swansea, an RAF Nursing sister. (Picture issued 1944) C.6.

Archives Live: D-Day - Aftermath - Nursing

Catalogue Ref: AIR29/762 (2)



PHOTO SHOWS: A casualty arrives at the Mobile Field Hospital. In the foreground is Sister I. Ogilvie of Swansea, an RAF Nursing sister.
(Picture issued 1944) C.6.

After the event

The aftermath: Mobile Field Hospitals

Read the document. This could be done individually, or it could be read aloud to the class.

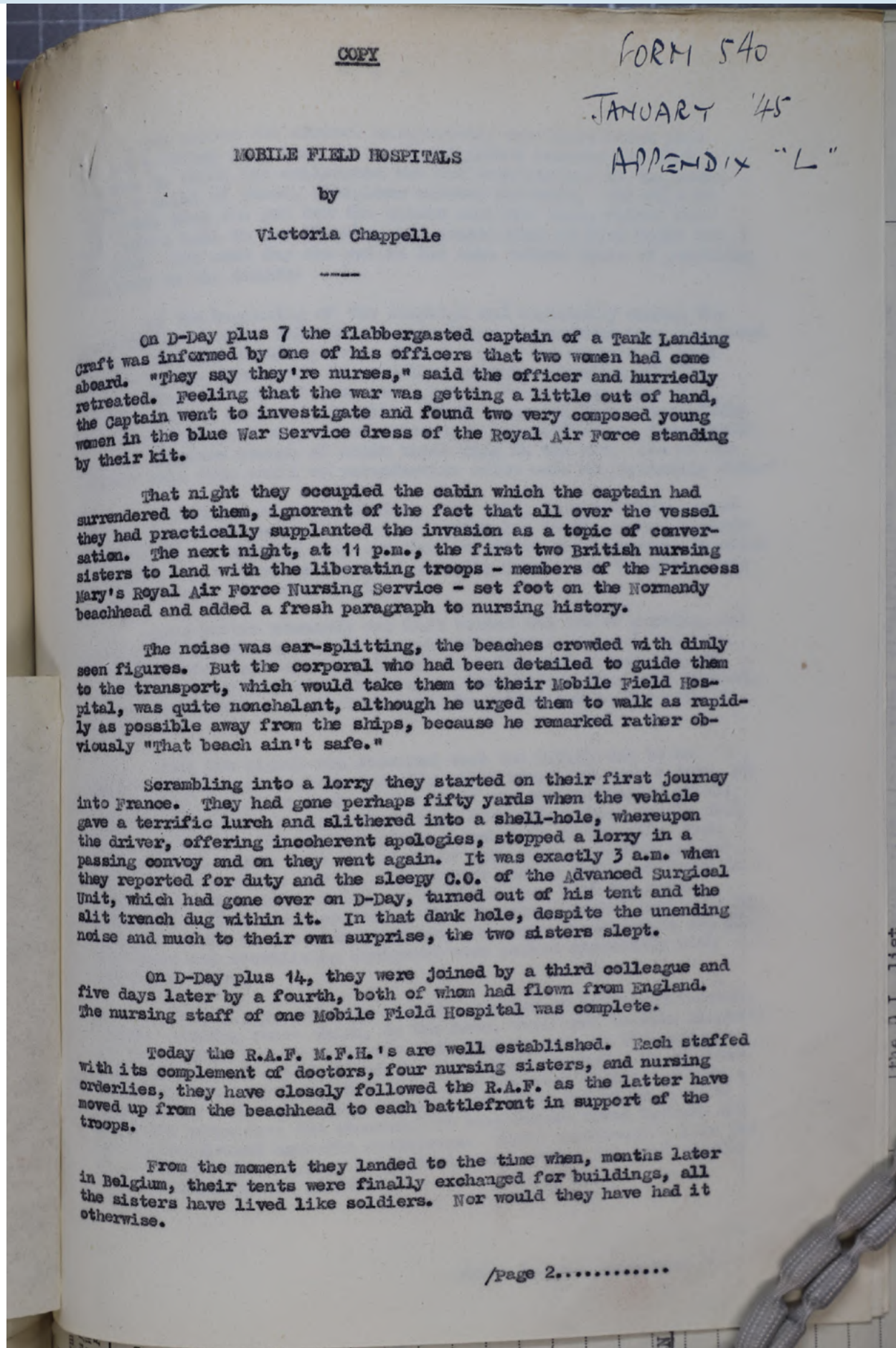
The document is a description of the nurses Iris Ogilvie and Molly Giles – members of the Princess Mary's Royal Air Force Nursing Service – arriving at the no. 50 Mobile Field Hospital on the Normandy beachhead on D-Day plus 7.

Discuss the following questions in relation to the document:

- What words could you use to describe these two young women?
- What is the meaning of the phrase 'added a fresh paragraph to nursing history'?
- What might the nurses have experienced to 'have lived like soldiers'?

Archives Live: D-Day - Aftermath - mobile field hospitals

Catalogue Ref: AIR29/762



After the event

The aftermath: Mobile Field Hospitals Transcript

Copy [Handwritten: Form 540. January '45. Appendix "L"]

Mobile Field Hospitals

By

Victoria Chappelle

On D-Day plus 7 the glabbergasted captain of a Tank Landing Craft was informed by one of his officers that two women had come aboard. "They say they're nurses," said the officer and hurriedly retreated. Feeling that the war was getting a little out of hand, the Captain went to investigate and found two very composed young women in the blue War Service dress of the Royal Air Force standing by their kit.

That night they occupied the cabin which the captain had surrendered to them, ignorant of the fact that all over the vessel they had practically supplanted the invasion as a topic of conversation. The next night, at 11 p.m., the first two British nursing sisters to land with the liberating troops – members of the Princess Mary's Royal Air Force Nursing Service – set foot on the Normandy beachhead and added a fresh paragraph to nursing history.

The noise was ear-splitting, the beaches crowded with dimly seen figures. But the corporal who had been detailed to guide them to the transport, which would take them to their Mobile Field Hospital, was quite nonchalant, although he urged them to walk as rapidly as possible away from the ships, because he remarked rather obviously "That beach ain't safe."

Scrambling into a lorry they started on their first journey into France. They had gone perhaps fifty yards when the vehicle gave a terrific lurch and slithered into a shell-hole, whereupon the driver, offering incoherent apologies, stopped a lorry in a passing convoy and on they went again. It was exactly 3 a.m. when they reported for duty and the sleepy C.O. of the Advanced Surgical Unit, which had gone over on D-Day, turned out of his tent and the slit trench dug within it. In that dank hole, despite the unending noise and much to their own surprise, the two sisters slept.

On D-Day plus 14, they were joined by a third colleague and five days later by a fourth, both of whom had flown from England. The nursing staff of one Mobile Field Hospital was complete.

Today the R.A.F. M.F.H's are well established. Each staffed with its complement of doctors, four nursing sisters, and nursing orderlies, they have closely followed the R.A.F. as the latter have moved up from the beachhead to each battlefield in support of the troops.

From the moment they landed to the time when, months later in Belgium, their tents were finally exchanged for buildings, all the sisters have lived like soldiers. Nor would they have had it otherwise.

/Page 2....