

13. Meanwhile the main landings on Red and White Beaches* took place punctually and according to plan, with the exception that the leading wave of three L.C.Ts. approached from too far to the westward and were about 10 to 15 minutes late in touching down.

14. The air support, and the smoke-making aircraft on the East cliff, were accurately synchronised, and the destroyer's fire, both on the houses along the front while the boats were going in, and subsequently on the East and West Cliffs, appeared to be as effective as could be expected. No losses of landing craft took place during the initial landing, but it did not appear to officer in charge that the troops were able to capture the strong points along the front after landing. However, the L.C.T's. on going in encountered very heavy opposition, and I consider that theirs was a notable achievement in landing 28 out of 30 tanks dry-shod. The heavy damage and casualties in the L.C.T's. were undoubtedly due in a large measure to the relatively long periods they remained on the beach, waiting for the miscellaneous troops that they were carrying in addition to the tanks, to disembark.

15. The work of L.C.F.(L) 2 (Lieut. E. L. Graham, R.N.V.R.) in supporting the main landing, calls for special mention. This vessel closed in to provide point blank range, and gave most effective support. She was soon disabled, and her captain killed, but her guns were fought until one by one they were put out of action, and the ship herself was finally sunk.

16. Lieut.-Commander J. H. Dathan, R.N. (Senior Officer of Group 7) carrying reserve troops in L.C.Ps., reported on board H.M.S. CALPE within 5 minutes of the time laid down in the plan. At the request of Major-General Roberts, I instructed him to land his force on Red Beach, and the landing was successfully effected by 0700. This landing, which was shielded by smoke until the last moment, encountered very heavy fire just off the beaches, but all boats effected a landing, although in most cases the troops sustained heavy casualties immediately afterwards. Two out of the 26 boats were destroyed.

17. Up to this point the Naval part of the plan had proceeded very much as was intended, with the exception of the frustration of the Yellow Beach landing. Furthermore, there had been remarkably little opposition from shore batteries, and apparently none from enemy aircraft. Nevertheless it was clear that the military operations were not proceeding according to plan, and that the opposition ashore was considerably greater than had been expected. In view of the failure of the Blue Beach landing and hence of the plan to capture the East Cliff I felt doubtful whether H.M.S. LOCUST'S proposed entry into the harbour would be either practicable or profitable. Commander R. E. D. Ryder, V.C., R.N., who was signalled to come on board H.M.S. CALPE at about 0645, shared this view, and informed me that H.M.S. LOCUST had already suffered damage and casualties whilst closing the East Cliff earlier on. Major-General Roberts was consulted and agreed that

no attempt should be made to enter the harbour. It was decided instead to transfer the Royal Marine Commando to armoured landing craft and to land them as reinforcements. The General asked that they should be sent to White Beach, and this operation was entrusted to Commander Ryder, all L.C.F.(L)s. being ordered to close H.M.S. LOCUST and give support. Actually, owing to communication difficulties, only 2 L.C.F.(L)s. responded, but all the Chasseurs* backed them up and gave good support. The landing was effected in face of very heavy opposition at about 0840. Judging from the reports of the landing craft who took part it is doubtful whether the Royal Marines were able to achieve anything.

18. About this time Commander Wyburd came aboard H.M.S. CALPE and informed me of what had occurred to the best of his knowledge to Group 5. He was instructed to embark in M.G.B.317 and to proceed to the vicinity of Yellow Beaches to round up what L.C.Ps. he could find.

19. Lieutenant-Commander H. W. Goulding, D.S.O., R.N.R., also came on board about this time and informed me of the landing at Blue Beach, an account of which is given earlier. He was instructed to proceed to Blue Beach with 4 L.C.As. to endeavour to withdraw any troops which were there. Lieutenant-Commander C. W. McMullen, R.N., in an M.L. proceeded with him to provide support. I received a report later to the effect that Lieutenant-Commander Goulding was unable to close the Blue Beach owing to heavy opposition and that no one could be seen on the beach.

20. Commander McClintock also reported on board H.M.S. CALPE and I instructed him to proceed to investigate Green Beach and inform the Beachmaster that he should not evacuate the beach as it might be necessary to withdraw all the troops from Green Beach. Commander McClintock was unable to approach close to Green Beach owing to heavy and well directed fire of the enemy.

21. At about 0750 I received information that 10 E-boats were approaching from Boulogne. Accordingly O.R.P. SLAZAK, H.M. Ships BROCKLESBY and BLEASDALE were ordered to proceed to the north eastward, and all available M.G.Bs. were also ordered to patrol to the eastward. (My signals timed 0752 and 0816 refer). Nothing more was heard of the E-boats, and it is remarkable that at no time during the entire operation was there any organised opposition from German naval forces. While detached on this service, O.R.P. SLAZAK was damaged by near misses, and later had to return to England.

22. Throughout the period which followed, enemy fire from the shore steadily increased, and the destroyers were forced constantly to shift their positions in order to avoid damage and keep under cover of smoke. Periodically requests were received from the shore for supporting fire against strong points but in no cases was an F.O.O.† in a position to observe this fire. The requests were met by detailing destroyers in succession, but I felt very doubtful

* Admiralty footnote:—Red Beach—Eastern portion of Dieppe Sea Front, immediately to west of harbour entrance. White Beach—Western portion of Dieppe Sea Front.

* Admiralty footnote:—Chasseurs—Free French Navy small A.A. escort craft, six of which were employed in this operation.

† Admiralty footnote:—F.O.O. = Forward Observer Officer.