

Weldon Youth Tells Of Experience During Invasion

INTRODUCTION

It is only through the Grace of God that I am able to sit in my foxhole and write this.

What I am about to write is only what I saw and what I felt as I lived in France. I was too young to be killed myself...

The majority of the boys feel as I do. It was only a miracle that any of us in the assault were alive today and if the enemy had had two more weeks of preparation...

(John P. Thomas, SM 2 (c) 1 This is German paper and ink below here!

D-Day We were awakened at 0130 June 5. It didn't take long for us to get chow, which was at 0230, because we were filled with a nervous anxiety that can't be explained in words.

We weren't due to disembark into small boats until 0445 so I went up to the weather deck to see if anything was happening ashore. We hadn't had any opposition whatsoever in crossing the channel so naturally we were expecting anything at any moment now.

We were joined by Lt. Fox a few minutes before disembarking and went over the maps and details that we had seen and studied for so many days previous to this.

All boats were loaded and were about to start for our beach when our boat struck another one and started leaking. A few minutes later the boat was rapidly sinking from beneath me, it just didn't seem possible that the damned thing would actually go down and leave us floating around in those rough, choppy waves but there I was...

I didn't realize how cold the water was until they started to take me in, my limbs were absolutely useless from numbness. My stomach and esophagus were having a revolution that would make any history book hide its face in shame but that was all over as soon as I had vomited up all the salt water that had forced its way down my throat. It was a cloudy day and we still had about ten miles to ride. I have never before and hope I never do again have the shakes as bad as I had them all that day.

Finally the shore line became visible and roads, houses and obstacles, that we had studied on wax models back in England, began to make themselves stand out in defiance. The boat was only about seventy five feet from where it lowered the ramp and still nothing had challenged us, then suddenly a rifle bullet whizzed over our heads. The boat was so crowded that everyone didn't have room to duck down low and the next bullet got a soldier.

Sand scraped the bottom as our craft jolted to a halt, the ramp lowered and the wild dash for the beach was on. We had to wade two or three hundred feet to shore and the tide was out so there was a good 150 yards of sand to be covered before reaching apparent safety.

I had no helmet or weapon I decided to hesitate behind an obstruction and catch my breath before making my run for the rocks at the bottom of a cliff.

At the same moment our ramp went down Jerry had cut loose with machine guns, 88 mm. and snipers fire and mortar. Their fire had every foot of the beach down to a zero, it was only through a miracle of God that any of us survived.

Machine gun bullets were making little geysers of sand all around those ahead of me and they were falling and groaning for help. From the corner of my eye I saw Carhuff fall down with bullets through his chest and neck he slumped over with a ghastly face that was full of pain but looked like a smile from the way his lips parted and he gritted his teeth, the waves took that friend of mine with the red cross on his arm and as I began to see more and more dead, wounded and bloody men, it hardly seemed that this was all actually happening. I didn't have time to think about all this at that time because I was so busy trying to get myself to those rocks. I ran from the water in a half crouch for a few feet and hit the dirt. I had to crawl over about thirty feet of rock because it was too slippery to walk or run on. I picked up a garand rifle from a dead man that hadn't been so fortunate as myself and finally I was at the big rocks that gave some protection. I laid down beside a man that had got it in the back of his head by a sniper after he reached the rocks, he was in pain and asked me to give him a shot of morphine out of his first aid pouch. I was shaking so bad from cold and excitement that I was afraid to try to give it to him but no one else was available so I had no choice. I managed to get the needle in and out without breaking it.

We had landed further up the beach than we were supposed to so there weren't many of us and the machine guns and snipers had us pinned in and picking off anyone that showed his head. A Corporal wanted someone to go with him to try to get some Jerries. I told him to wait till I got a helmet but he wasn't in a waiting mood and he took my garand and started out to what was certain death. He had no more than stepped out when he came crawling back with a bullet through his thigh.

There were no other Navy men in the vicinity of me so I decided to slip around a few rocks and find them. I had seen Lt. Fox and some corpsmen come ashore with bullets and shrapnel hitting all around them. I found them only a few yards away, the corpsmen were rushed to death practically, there were so many wounded to be fixed and more to be dragged to safety, which was no fun because Jerry shot at red crosses as though they were meant for a bulls-eye. This was not true in all cases but all too true in some cases.

Things got so hot that even the corpsmen had to lay flat. There was one pillbox on top of the cliff behind us and the Navy gunners were shelling it, they had knocked it out but had no way of knowing it because their "shore fire control party" had been wiped out. If I only hadn't lost my signal light when the boat sank I could have stopped that shelling but they were too far out for semaphores. A Navy shell or an 8. I still don't know which, hit right on the edge of the top of the cliff, it sounded like the whole earth was coming to pieces. dirt and small rocks began hitting me on the back of my head and with each one consciousness took one more step from me. Just when I thought it was all over I started to look up but at the same instant I was hit with such impact that it felt like the rocks beneath me actually sank deeper in to the ground, then all was quiet. I tried to get up but I couldn't move any part of my body or limbs. I realized that I was buried alive and that what little air that was available would last only a few moments. I think that is the nearest I ever came to getting hysterical — and death! I yelled for help a couple of times but then decided that I had better save what little breath I had left. Then the air was gone. I tried to breathe but it was only gasps that

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She Interrogates Bomber Crews



DESPITE a fascinating career in New York City, Pauline Morning, 601—12th Ave., West Vancouver, was determined to get into the fight from the outset. When war broke out, she was working for a movie company in New York, harmonizing sound into film.

Looking Over Our District's Health

BY DR. W. K. McDOWELL, Health Officer

In order to aid in preventing the spread of poliomyelitis it is requested that any children coming into the county from those areas in which poliomyelitis is prevalent be at once reported to the health department, for it may be necessary to place the child in quarantine throughout the incubation period of the disease...

People Have To Learn To Use Their Eyes Like Any Other Tool

People have to learn how to use their eyes just as they must learn how to run an automobile, a die press, or any other instrument, says the Better Vision Institute. Seeing is a complex activity in which nerves and muscles play an important part.

No Rationing Of Used Cars Is Being Planned

Price ceilings on used cars, effective July 10 do not in any way involve rationing of used cars, Theodore S. Johnson, Raleigh district OPA director, declared today. Johnson said that the national office of OPA in Washington had informed the regional office that it has not received a directive from the War Production Board to ration used cars...

CANNING

There will be no holiday for home canning this summer, if we are to eat as well next winter as we did last year.

FARM SAFETY

One fourth of all occupational accidental deaths happen on farms. Be especially careful in handling farm machinery and animals.

FOOD STORAGE

Keep stored foods in a dry place and prepare a place where canned foods will not freeze.

VICTORY GARDEN

Prepare now for the fall Victory Garden. Play safe by producing your own vegetables, because war needs must be met.

HALIFAX MAN KILLED IN AUTO ACCIDENT

Victory Depends On The Home Front

A blunt warning that the war is not yet won came recently from the three top military leaders of the United States following a flying visit to the Normandy battlefield. These chiefs of staff stated moreover, that the speed with which our boys march to Berlin will depend in large measure on the support they get on the Home Front.

The battles now in progress entail heavy losses in material which American industry must replace, they said in a joint statement, "and any slackening in the needed production will only delay ultimate victory."

We cannot fail at this crucial period without nullifying the sacrifices of the hundreds of American boys who died on the Normandy beaches. We can speed the day of victory by cutting all the pulpwood needed to keep military supplies and equipment flowing in unbroken convoys to the battlefields of France.

Summer Term At Presbyterian School

Maxton, N. C., July 8-1944 -- The second term of summer school will begin at Presbyterian Junior College on Monday, July 17. One unit in high school work may be earned in the preparatory department. Six semester hours college credit may be earned in the collegiate department.

George Badger Read, 41, who resided near Halifax, was instantly killed Saturday morning in an automobile accident which occurred on highway 301 between Enfield and Halifax.

Funeral services were conducted from the home of his mother, Mrs. Mary Twissdale Read, Monday afternoon by the Rev. Frank Walters, pastor of the Halifax Methodist Church, assisted by the Rev. Robert E. Cox, rector of Grace Episcopal Church, Weldon.

PROMOTED

Captain H. J. Badenhoop has been promoted to the rank of Major in the United States Army. Major Badenhoop is now stationed at Camp Hood, Texas.

Every Doughboy Needs Pulpwood

Every time a doughboy leaves for overseas it takes 300 feet of lumber to box and crate his initial supplies. It takes fifty feet a month from that on to keep him supplied. That is for just one soldier's personal equipment and does not include all the other armaments of war.

County Gives \$1000 To Polio Stricken Area

A gift of \$1,000 to the current fight against infantile paralysis in the State was voted last Wednesday by the Halifax County Infantile Paralysis Committee.

Meeting in session at Halifax, the Committee received the request made by those in charge of the present drive against the epidemic in the Piedmont section that at least fifty percent of the County's funds be donated to aid in the fight.

"The Roanoke News" Moves Into New Home Next Week

This week's edition of "The Roanoke News" is being placed into the mails early so the printing machinery can be moved into a new building just completed on Maple Street near the Boy Scout Hut.

It was likewise moved and carried to authorize the Executive Committee to spend a sum not in excess of \$500 in any one year for the purpose of purchasing medical equipment for treatment of infantile paralysis cases in the county. Any sum spent in excess of that amount for such purposes would have to be on authority of a majority of the county committee.

The building, built especially for the newspaper plant, is located one block from the present location of the newspaper office. It is of modern concrete block construction, 22 feet wide and 51 feet long, with a 10 foot square building at the rear of the main building will be used as a stereo-type room and will also contain the Linotype metal melting furnace.