
Landing Zone 'W' Photographs & Footage Operation Mallard



Major WHJ Sale

Charles Aitkenhead ©

During Operation Mallard more than 250 gliders on the second D-Day lift were towed from airfields in England to be released over landing zones (LZs) in Normandy at 21:00 hours on June 6th, 1944. The gliders were delivered to LZs 'N' and 'W' near Ranville and Benouville respectively. Since I covered the Mallard photos taken by Sgt. Jim Christie of 5 A.F. P. U. and others on LZ 'N' in [another PDF](#) this study will focus on various LZ 'W' photos and related material only. No official military photographer landed on LZ 'W' on D-Day so we will have to rely on photos taken afterwards to get a glimpse of the situation there. Below is data taken from Hugo Mitchell's D-Day spreadsheet that lists airlanding units, chalk numbers, airfields and tug squadrons for Operation Mallard.

OPERATION MALLARD

LZ 'N'

1st Battalion Royal Ulster Rifles - CN 1-35 - RAF Broadwell - Tugs 512 (1-18) & 575 (19-35) Sqns RAF
Administrative Troops - CN 36-37 - RAF Broadwell - Tugs 575 Sqn RAF
1st Battalion Royal Ulster Rifles - CN 38-72 - RAF Down Ampney - Tugs 48 (38-59) & 271 (60-72) Sqns RAF
Administrative Troops - CN 73-74 - RAF Down Ampney - Tugs 271 Sqn RAF
6th Airborne Armoured Reconnaissance Regiment - CN 75-93 - RAF Brize Norton - Tugs 297 (75-90) & 296 (91-93) Sqns RAF
6th Airlanding Brigade HQ - CN 94-108 - RAF Brize Norton - Tugs 297 (94-96) & 296 (97-108) Sqns RAF
Administrative Troops - CN 109-112 - RAF Brize Norton - Tugs 296 Sqn RAF
9th Parachute Battalion - CN 112a-112b - RAF Brize Norton - Tugs 296 Sqn RAF
6th Airborne Armoured Reconnaissance Regiment - CN 221-250 - RAF Tarrant Rushton - Tugs 644 (222-234?) & 298 (221, 235-250) Sqns RAF

LZ 'W'

2nd Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Battalion - CN 113-145 - RAF Harwell - Tugs 295 (113-133) & 570 (134-145) Sqns RAF
195 Airlanding Field Ambulance - CN 146-151 - RAF Harwell - Tugs 570 Sqn RAF
6th Airborne Divisional HQ - CN 151a - RAF Harwell - Tug 570 Sqn RAF
2nd Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Battalion - CN 152-183 - RAF Keevil - Tugs 299 (152-168x) & 196 (169-183) Sqns RAF
Administrative Troops - CN 184-185* - RAF Keevil - Tugs 196 Sqn RAF
'A' Coy, 12th Battalion, The Devonshire Regiment - CN 186-193 - RAF Fairford - Tugs 620 (186-193) Sqn RAF
211th Airlanding Light Battery - CN 194-220a - RAF Fairford - Tugs 620 (194-196, 201, 205-208) & 190 (197, 200, 202-204, 209-220a) Sqns RAF

From the [Pegasus Archiive](#) a section of the chart showing units destined for LZ 'W'.

54	4	2 OXF BUCKS	"	113-145	33	HARWELL	W	"
55	4	195 Fd Amb	"	146-151	6	HARWELL	W	"
56	5	2 OXF BUCKS	"	152-183	32	KEEVIL	W	"
57	5	Adm Tpt	"	184-185	2	KEEVIL	W	"
58	6	A Coy 12 DEVON	"	186-193	8	FAIRFORD	W	"
59	6	211 Bty	"	194-220	27	FAIRFORD	W	"

"After delivering the First Lift, the aircraft of 38 and 46 Groups began to land at their bases in England at around dawn. Their crews grabbed a little rest whilst their aircraft were repaired and refuelled in time for the Second Lift; Operation Mallard. Each of the fifteen squadrons of these two Groups provided between fifteen and twenty-two aircraft for this glider lift, which carried most of the 6th Airlanding Brigade as well as the balance of the Division's heavy equipment and supporting units. In all, two hundred and fifty aircraft were involved, each towing a Horsa or a Hamilcar glider. With these came a massive escort of seventeen fighter squadrons, whose presence ensured that enemy fighters could not even see never mind fire upon the formation."

...

The spectacle of the Second Lift arriving was a great tonic to the men of the 6th Airborne Division already on the ground. Major-General Gale later wrote, "It is impossible to say with what relief we watched this reinforcement arrive."

On the next few page are photos by Captain Malindine (5 AFPU) taken on the evening of June 6th, 1944 at RAF Harwell of Op Mallard gliders carrying men of the 2nd Ox and Bucks and the 195th Field Ambulance. IWM photos in order below - H 39176, H 39178, H 39177 and H 39183. Clips by his cine partner, Len Harris, of RAF Harwell scenes are [viewable on Youtube](#).





"Short Stirlings towing Horsa gliders carrying part of 6th Airlanding Brigade, 6th Airborne Division, towards the Normandy coast on the evening of 6 June 1944."



[War Diary No. 1 Wing, GPR](#) - Appendix "L"
Report on Operation "MALLARD"

'D' Squadron provided 34 crews (including 17 attached from 'E' Squadron, 2 Wing). On Operation MALLARD, Capt. I.A. Morrison was in command. The combination took off from KEEVIL at 1900 hrs and 32 gliders of the 34 landed on L.Z. 'W'. 1 glider would not take off and another Horsa landed at Ford due to engine failure of the tug. Lt. Martin was killed due to a crash on landing and his second pilot Lt. A.A. Clark was badly injured. S/Sgt. Coddington and Sgt. Goodchild were also killed on landing.

Report on Operation MALLARD
by [Captain J.A. Morrison](#)

It was about 2100 hrs on 6 Jun 44 that we crossed the French coast and headed towards our Landing Zone. There was flak coming up from Ouistreham but this did not worry us

particularly as it seemed to be aimed at the gliders to our port, and as we approached the church at COLLEVILLE SUR ORNE, I said goodbye to my tug crew and pulled off.

There was a feeling of great elation as we neared the field into which we were to land for we had practically 'made it'. We had been briefed to land from West to East, but as the 'Harwell' gliders were landing from South to North I decided to lead by stream in, in the same direction. At this point we could not see any landing strips, and as the gliders seemed to be piling up in all directions it looked as if we were in for an exciting landing.

Luckily, S/Sgt. Beech, my second pilot saw an area in which the poles had not been placed. It was a ploughed field about 70 yards long by 40 yards wide, and we managed to get down without any trouble.

From that moment we were frantically busy, and hadn't time to worry about the sniper and L.M.G. fire which seemed to be coming from the area to the South of our L.Z. It was there that S/Sgt. Richardson and S/Sgt. Fraser captured two prisoners.

When coming into land S/Sgt. Richardson noticed three Huns shooting at him from a camouflaged pit about 100 yards in front. He quickly warned his load that they would have to deal with trouble after landing, and then he dived his glider at the enemy position, landing practically on top of it. He and his load jumped out and captured two of the three snipers. The third had run off into the hedge from whence he commenced to pepper them. S/Sgt. Richardson then took two men and stalked the Hun, and was just about to attack him when a British tank which had spotted the trouble, machine-gunned the hedgerow killing the sniper.

The immediate task of our force was to unload our glider and get to the R.V. as soon as possible. This we did, and arrived in the Squadron area in time to assist the men into the Flight Areas. I had already chosen these from the photographs and I was able to give out my orders and start my men digging within an hour of landing.

The Squadron Area was positioned along a high hedge containing a ditch, which provided us concealment from air and ground, although our field of fire was considerably reduced by corn standing about 3 ft high. Accordingly we improvised by digging a slit trench deep enough to provide ample cover against blast or shelling but with a step from which we could fire over the corn.

The men were in high spirits and went to work magnificently and by 2330 hrs I was able to inform the O.C. Ian Force that we were prepared for anything.

The night was quite uneventful apart from slight bombing directed at the Fleet, although we were quite grateful for the narrow trench as there was a lot of 'stuff' coming down.

Immediately after 'Stand-down' the following morning I sent out two fighting patrols to recover weapons lost in the glider crashes, and to bury the deceased pilots.

The bodies of Lt. Martin, S/Sgt. Coddington and Sgt. Goodchild were found and buried by a

First Aid Party at ST. AUBYN D'ARQUENAY CHURCH. It was noticeable that they had been stripped of watches, fighting knives and rations.

These patrols returned after two hours bringing with them various weapons, British and German, but no prisoners.

At 1030 hrs we received orders to make our way to the road via COLLEVILLE SUR ORNE. This we did fairly easily although we met sniper opposition en route.

Sgt. Watt was the Bren Gunner of the leading section and became attached to "C" Squadron who were ahead of us. They had already handed over their L.M.Gs. to the seaborne infantry, and in view of the sniper activity O.C. "C" Squadron placed Sgt. Watt and S/Sgt. Jones out on the right flank to protect the passage of the column. Whilst here he accounted for five German Snipers and assisted the Squadron through.

When he saw that the troops were safe he withdrew to the road only to find that sappers had mined the verges. A half hour later he was extricated. By this time Sgt. Watt had lost the main column ("D" Squadron having been diverted along a different route). He accordingly made his way to the beach where he was placed on board a T.L.C. - H.M.S. Glengareth. Here he assisted the A.A. Gunners to maintain his weapon during an air-raid, and whilst firing the gun himself had a direct hit on an attacking J.U.88.

In the meantime "D" Squadron had reached the beaches and were successfully brought back to England.

Casualties -

Killed - 1 Officer, 2 N.C.Os.

Injured - 1 Officer.

(Signed) J. A. Morrison, Capt.

Incident Report

O.C. 10 Fl. 'G' Squadron.

Date: 6 Jun 44

2115 - Arrived over L.Z. No cleared lane, T's or identification letters visible. Decided to land on North area of L.Z.

2116 - Landed safely. 2nd Pilot took up defensive position beneath glider whilst unloading was being carried out. Noticed over gliders landing some from WEST to EAST others from SOUTH to NORTH. Many gliders were being damaged by the poles, but pilots were managing to keep fuselage intact. There was no ground opposition in this part of the L.Z. but according to reports there was a certain amount of sniping in the SOUTH of the L.Z. One

2nd Pilot Sgt. Sephton was killed on landing probably by a stray bullet or splinter from our own mortar fire which was being 'put down' by the Warwicks in order to clear Germans from a nearby house. This incident occurred in the SOUTH of the L.Z. One glider was unable to stop after touching down and ran into a minefield. Mines did not explode - no casualties.

2136 - Glider unloaded. Myself and 2nd Pilot made for R.V. No opposition en route.

2145 - Arrived R.V. located Fl. locality. About six crews were already there. One crew had commenced digging. Others lying under trees at the 'ready'. I allocated sec. positions - ordered no digging until arrival of more crews. Crews were arriving at Fl. R.V. fairly rapidly and immediately reported to sec. position.

2200 - Flight complete except for about three crews which came in approximately ½ hr late. Sec. commenced digging slits. Pilots who had landed in the SOUTH area of L.Z. reported they had been sniped at. Sephton was reported killed when his 1st pilot arrived. No opposition in area of R.V. Firing could be heard in area of bridges.

2215 - Party of three N.C.Os. sent out to recce. gliders and locate any wounded. None were found. Party returned about 2255 hrs.

2300 - Lt. Corrie and two N.C.Os. departed for beach head to contact Beachmaster to arrange for departure of glider pilots by sea forthwith. Slits not complete but deep enough to afford cover. Certain amount of ground and air activity during the night the former in the area of bridges and the latter over the beach.

The following partial account was taken from the [Lightbobs site](#) and tells of the flight of a 'C' Coy HQ glider belonging to the 2nd Battalion, The Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry (2OBLI) during Operation Mallard. They left from RAF Harwell.

" ... It was with few regrets that, after tea on the 6th June, we left our camp and moved to the airfield (RAF Harwell). An impressive array of Horsa gliders lined up on the edge of the runway awaited us. A brief command and we split up into our glider parties and waited for the order to emplane. The impression I got was that the men were quiet, but confident and keen to get on with the job. Such laughter as there was seemed slightly forced and directed mainly at remarks, some rude, some humorous, chalked on the fuselages of the gliders. At about 1830 hrs. with final wishes of bon voyage over, we were in our gliders. In the glider we all wore Mae Wests and had a rapid rehearsal of our ditching drill in case we pranged (This is believed to be current slang in the R.A.F. for crashed or forced to land) in the English Channel. Then with safety belts adjusted we waited for the jerk as the tug took the strain on the tow rope. Soon it came and those in the front seats could see themselves hurtling down the smooth runway behind of the tug. Then we were airborne and once again we heard the familiar whistle as the air rushed by and we glided higher and higher into the evening sky. The first hour of flying was spent in moving to a rendezvous over the south coast of England and then in taking up position in the air armada which was quickly forming for France.

Once inside a Horsa glider, except for a person standing in the hatchway leading into the pilot's cockpit, the view outside is restricted. Small portholes allow a limited vision to either side, but little can be seen except sky and an occasional glimpse of the nearer tugs and gliders. This soon becomes boring and it was interesting to note the reactions of one's fellow-passengers. Most were soon asleep. This was the usual reaction on long practice flights and even the excitement of our present flight could not break the old hands of the remarkable aptitude of the British soldier for sleep. Others were reading newspapers and an occasional song was hummed. The only two persons looking in any way perturbed were two men of the Corps of Military Police who were flying with us. They were really parachutists, it was their first flight in a glider, and they obviously missed their parachutes. Glider troops carry no parachutes.

The air fleet eventually passed over the coast in the Portsmouth area and headed across the sea. For a short time we were out of sight of land and could only see silvery dots which were ships on the sea below. The sea appeared calm. Our fighter escort was by now weaving and turning above and around us. One could not help wondering whether all the planes sweeping to and fro were friendly. A glider is very helpless if attacked in the air and, although we had been told to fire Brens through the glider's portholes in the event of air attack, we were not too confident of our prowess as air gunners. Events proved that all aircraft sighted were friendly.

Very soon the French coast came into sight. We had dropped altitude to about 3,000 feet and it was soon possible to see ahead of us the mass of shipping off the beaches. There seemed to be thousands of ships of every shape and size. Beyond the ships the yellow line of the beaches stretched out to our right and left, with the green and yellow fields of Normandy forming the background.

Haze and smoke prevented, at this stage, the identification of any landmarks, but once over the coastline it was possible to pick out the line of the River Orne and out ahead the town of Caen.

Our navigator had not failed us: we had arrived.

The thoughts of all those in a position to get a view of the ground below must have been the same. Where was our landing zone? Would the pilots find it? Would it be free of enemy? Would it be clear of the anti-glider landing poles?

Suddenly one of the glider pilots pointed below, and there was the landing zone. A moment later he made another motion with his hand as puffs of black smoke began to appear in the sky, followed by the cracking thuds so well known to war-time airmen. It was flak (German for anti-aircraft fire) the enemy was somewhere below us. Then came the moment for cast-off. I noticed the sweat breaking out on the necks of the glider pilots and with a muttered "Here we go we were clear of our tug and had begun our slow spiral descent to earth. The time was about 2130 hrs. Glancing back into the body of the glider, C Company headquarters staff were sitting stiffly in the seats. It must have been an ordeal for them, being unable to see what was happening. No one had been hit by flak and a quick "We're O.K." brought relief

to the faces of those I could see.

Looking again over the glider pilot's shoulder I could see the first gliders about to land. They seemed to be coming in from all angles and as we approached to land the language of the pilots became unprintable. The landing plan was obviously not working with the precision expected. In order to avoid a mid air collision our senior glider pilot made a split-second decision to land just off the actual landing zone. Leaning forward to place my arms in a protective position around my head, I felt the glider touch down and saw that we were making straight towards a large hedge. An almighty crash and splintering of wood followed, then silence and the glider had stopped.

Our landing drill worked and all-round defence around the glider was at once adopted. Our glider no longer had any wheels, wings or tail, otherwise it seemed undamaged, although we had ploughed a lane through a large hedge.

No one was the worse for the experience except for a few bruises. The jeeps and other equipment were being unloaded and the signaller was struggling to re-net the somewhat shaken wireless sets.

This landing was typical of many landings: some were better, some much worse. In fact, all the gliders of the Regiment, except four, landed in or near the landing zone, and in spite of the many crash landings and collisions that took place our casualties were small.

The position on the landing zone was rather obscure. Firing was going on in the area of Benouville, chosen as the Regimental rendezvous, and there was also a certain amount of firing on the landing zone itself. One glider ended up in an enemy slit trench, the occupants of which quickly surrendered, being quite unnerved by the sudden descent of a large number of gliders on their position.

The adjutant, doctor and serjeant-major were rather astonished to find a real live German about ten yards from them when they leapt from their glider. After a certain amount of fumbling for weapons they succeeded in taking their first prisoner.

After a certain amount of delay, during which time enemy were cleared out of Benouville by a battalion of the 3rd Infantry Division and ourselves, the Regiment assembled as arranged just west of the River Orne and at 2215 hrs began to move to the prearranged concentration area east of the River Orne. Four of our gliders were still missing. These contained a platoon of Letter B Company, a detachment of the mortar platoon and the intelligence officer's party. It was learned later that they had landed in England and Lieutenant R. M. Osborne joined us the next day, having travelled by sea. Of the officers injured on the landing zone the assistant adjutant, Lieutenant L. Nicholson, had to be evacuated, but the commanding officer, Lieutenant-Colonel M. W. Roberts, was able to carry on for a time, although injured when his glider came into collision with another glider whilst still some ten feet from the ground.

The situation in the divisional bridgehead area when the 52nd landed was as follows: 7th Parachute Battalion was in position holding an area west of the River Orne bridges. The

remainder of the 5th Parachute Brigade (12th and 13th Battalions) were holding the bridgehead to the south-east of the bridges in the Bas de Ranville—Ranville—Ranville le Mariquet area. The 3rd Parachute Brigade, having destroyed the German coastal battery south of Merville and the bridges over the River Dives, was operating on an approximate line Hauger—Le Mesnil—Bois de Bavent.

The 1st Special Service Brigade was fighting its way towards Sallenelles. All battalions had had very heavy fighting during the day against heavy German pressure on the bridgehead. By 2300 hrs on the 6th June the 52nd was concentrated east of the River Orne. The move to the area was uneventful except that the night was dark and our move coincided with a supply drop in the area by the R.A.F.

Large hampers full of stores were falling to the ground close to our route and occasionally the parachutes failed to open and the threat from a "free drop" hamper seemed worse than the odd enemy shell. When passing over the Orne bridges we learnt first hand of the brilliant success of our coup-de-main party.

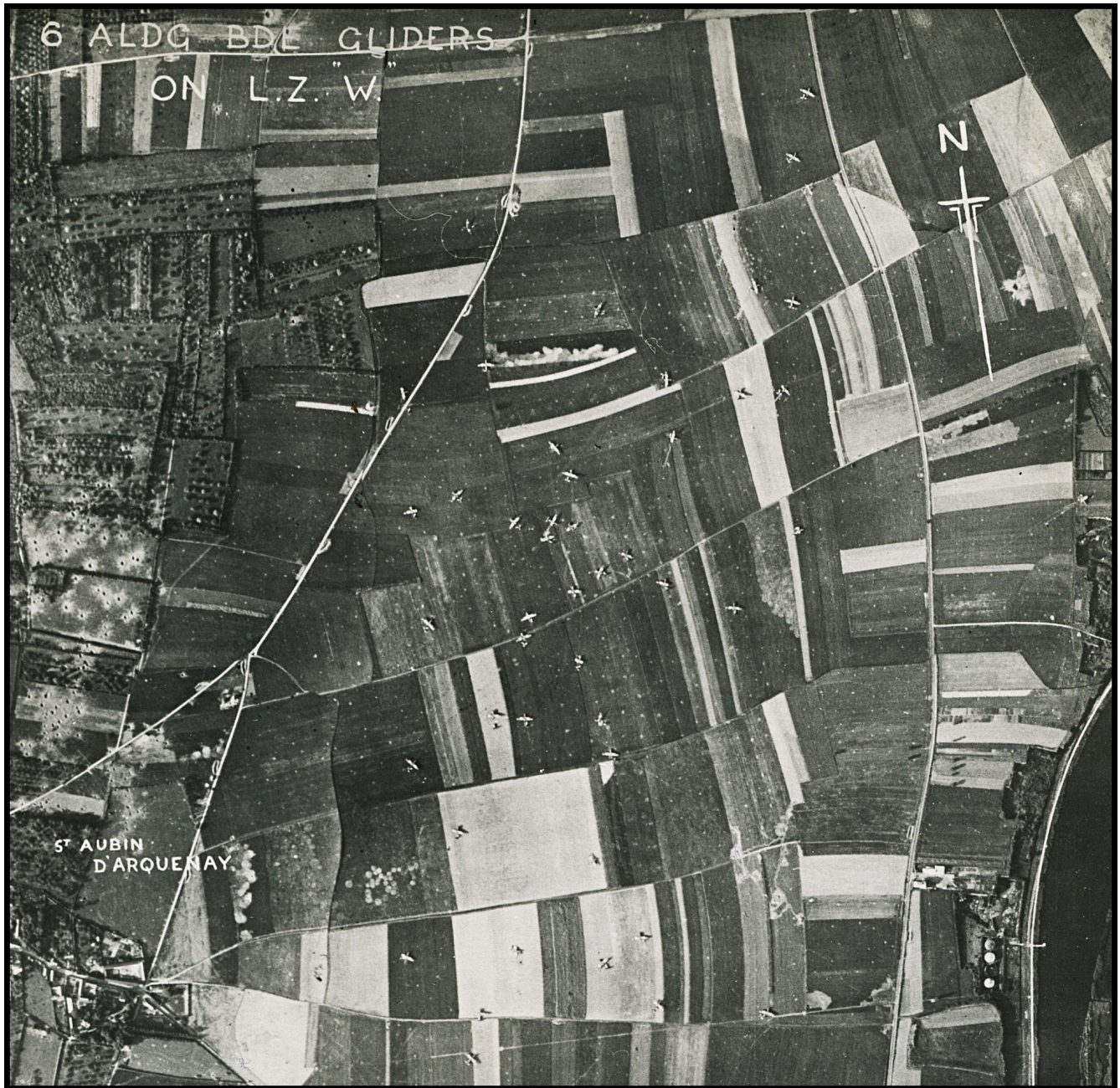
Major John Howard met the commanding officer on the bridges as we passed over. It was, however, sad to hear of the first 52nd casualties, particularly the death of Lieutenant Den Brotheridge, who was killed at the head of his platoon in its gallant assault on the western end of the bridge.

From the concentration area the Regiment was ordered forward at 0130 hrs to the area of the chateau at Ranville with orders to go forward to Herouvillette at first light. At Ranville companies took up all-round defence positions in the chateau grounds. The 13th Parachute Battalion was holding this area and had had a tough time since landing the previous evening. Lieutenant-Colonel P. J. Luard, their commanding officer, was, however, in good heart and told us that they had been in contact with the enemy till darkness had fallen. He thought that Herouvillette was held by the enemy.

During the early hours of the morning of the 7th June C Company sent a fighting patrol into Herouvillette but found it deserted. At Ranville the coup-de-main force returned to the Regiment. Captain B. C. E. Priday and his glider party also turned up. 1

1. The Oxfordshire & Buckinghamshire Light Infantry Chronicle, Vol 4: June 1944 - December 1945 ..."

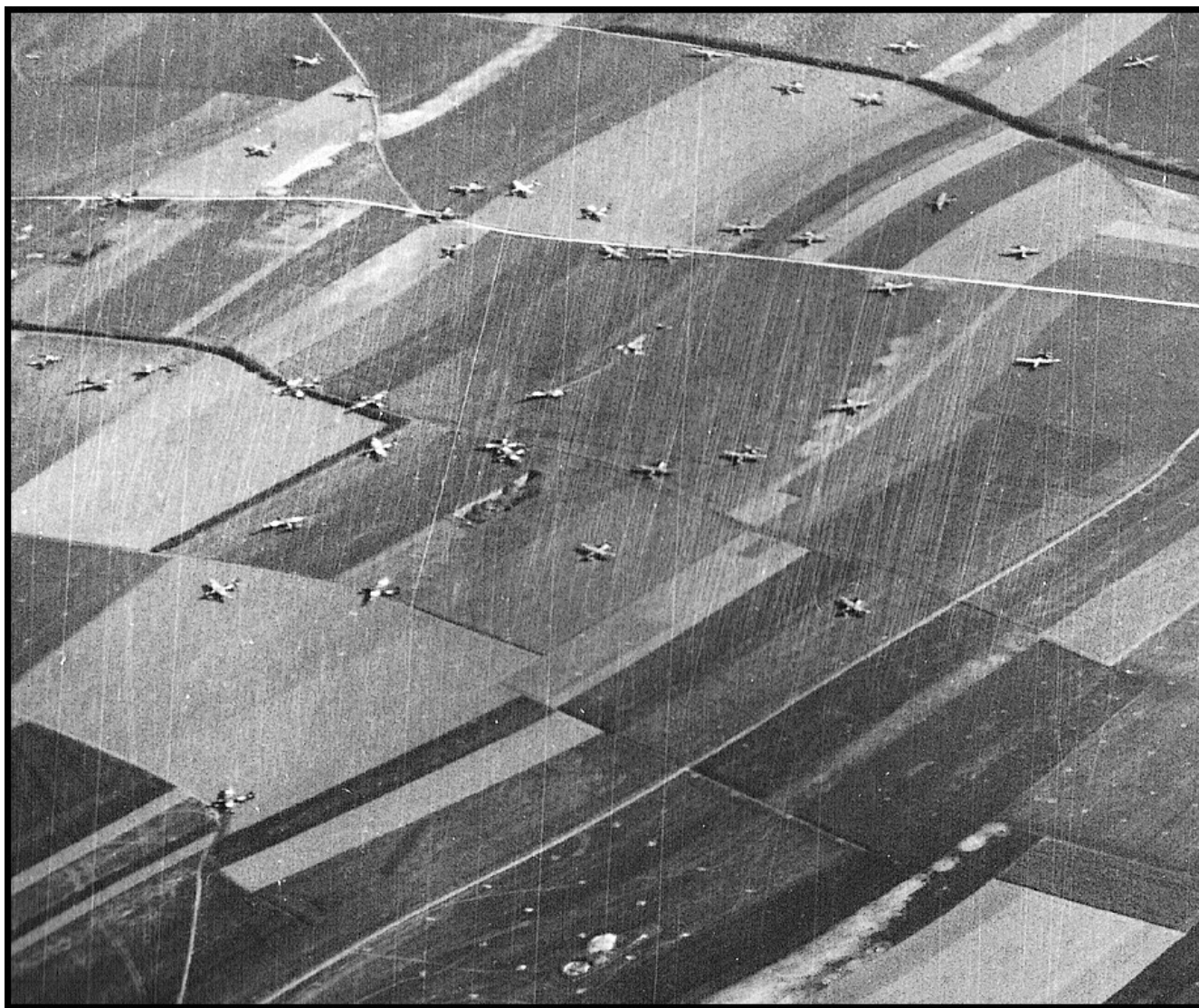
LZ 'W' covered a large open area to the west of the Caen Canal from below Ouistreham to Benouville in the south as can be seen in the two halves of the official aerial below. There are clusters but overall the gliders are spread out across the LZ.



Below the southern half of the aerial near Benouville. Pegasus Bridge can be seen to bottom right.



An oblique view of a southern section of landing zone.



Medic John Tranter who probably belonged to the 195 Airlanding Field Ambulance describes his glider's harrowing landing and later seeing a devastated tank at the road junction near Pegasus Bridge which may have been the one taken out by Waggon Thornton's Piat bomb.

Airborne Medic – John Tranter

On the evening of 6 June I was part of the 6th Airborne Division landing at Normandy. I travelled in a Horsa glider with twenty men, a jeep and a trailer full of medical supplies. Our orders were to set up an advanced dressing station and begin treating men immediately. When we landed, we'd already lost one private and a sergeant through anti-aircraft fire coming up through the floor. The glider hit the ground like a brick and we ended up lying side-on to a couple of trees and had lost a large part of both wings and a huge chunk of the tail. It was one of those times when you were glad you had your feet up and arms linked as we felt like we were trapped in a whirlpool before we stopped. Having done so many practice landings on flat fields, it was a big shock to say the least. We carried out the two bodies and covered them up and then got the jeep and trailer out and headed to Pegasus Bridge. It was here I saw a captured French tank the Germans were using that had been blown up near the road junction. God, it was in one hell of a mess and was still smouldering. We drove to the village of Ranville and set up a forward medical station. For a long time we were under constant fire from German mortar bombs and artillery as well as indirect machine-gun fire. There were a number of heavy attacks by the Germans as they wanted the village back and casualties on both sides were really heavy.

Two days after we got there, the Germans put in yet another big attack supported by several tanks and self-propelled guns. A tank came within 100 yards of us but on seeing the Red Cross flags on the building it turned away and was hit by a six-pounder anti-tank gun as it moved to attack another part of the village. During this time a young French woman was brought into the aid station and gave birth to a little boy. For

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Earliest photos from LZ 'W' found so far were taken by Sgt. Jim Mapham (AFPU) on June 10th. The one below of an Airborne man with a horse was taken in the southern end of LZ near the water tower.



B 5428

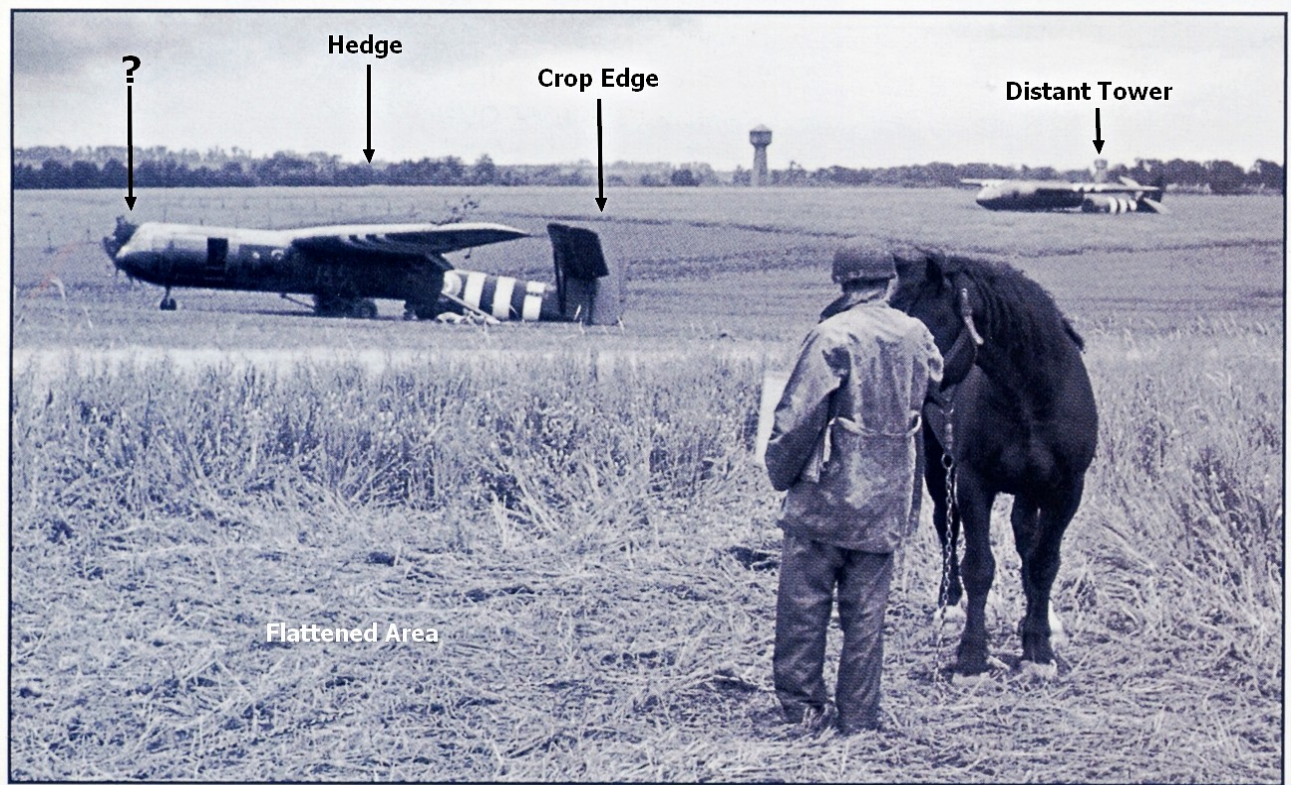
SCENES FROM NORMANDY, VARIOUS.

B. 5428.

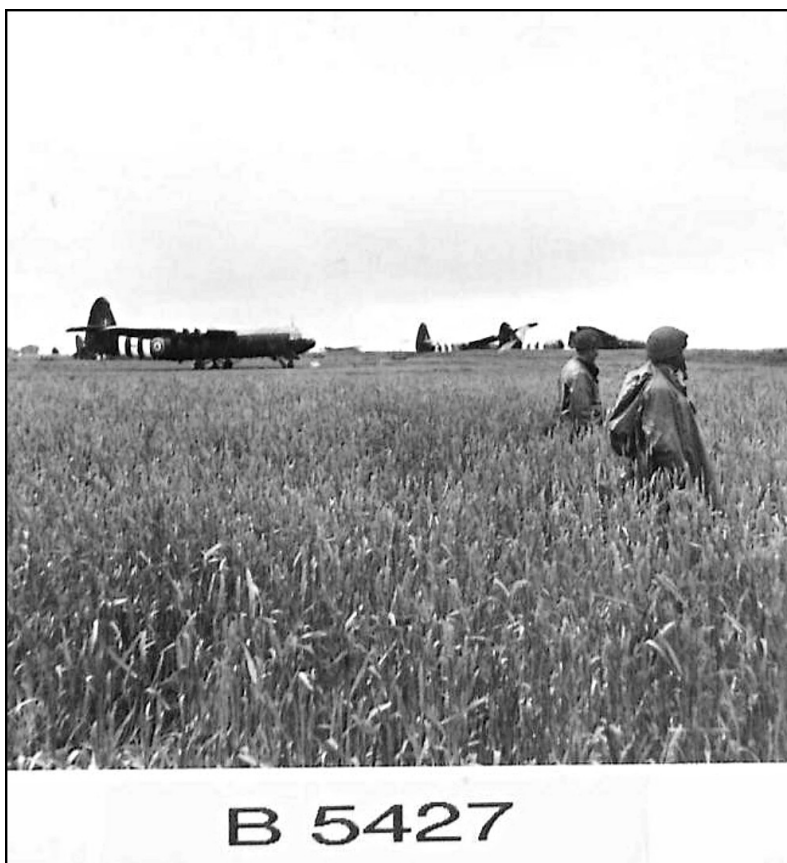
For story see B. 5425.

Gliders used by the Airborne glider troops to hold the bridge at Benouville seen in the fields near the bridge.

Taken by Sgt. Mapham. 10.6.44.



Two more June 10th photos by Mapham, location on LZ unknown. IWM B 5427 and B 5426.



Major Sale

Major Sale, the unofficial photographer of the 3rd/4th County of London Yeomanry, took photos at the Bridge and on LZ 'W' with no dates specified at the NAM site where digital images of his photos were found. They were probably taken sometime in July of 1944 before the amalgamation of the 3rd and 4th CLY. Except for first photo below which possibly shows the Saint-Aubin-d'Arquenay church tower in background LZ locations are, far the most part, unknown.





"Douglas Endacott taking photographs by the emergency escape hatch of a glider", 1944."



"Interior of a Horsa glider, 1944"



"Cockpit of an Airspeed Horsa glider, 1944"



"Tank commanders from 3rd County of London Yeomanry (Sharpshooters) in front of a Horsa glider, 1944."



Sgt. Ken Hodges, AFPU

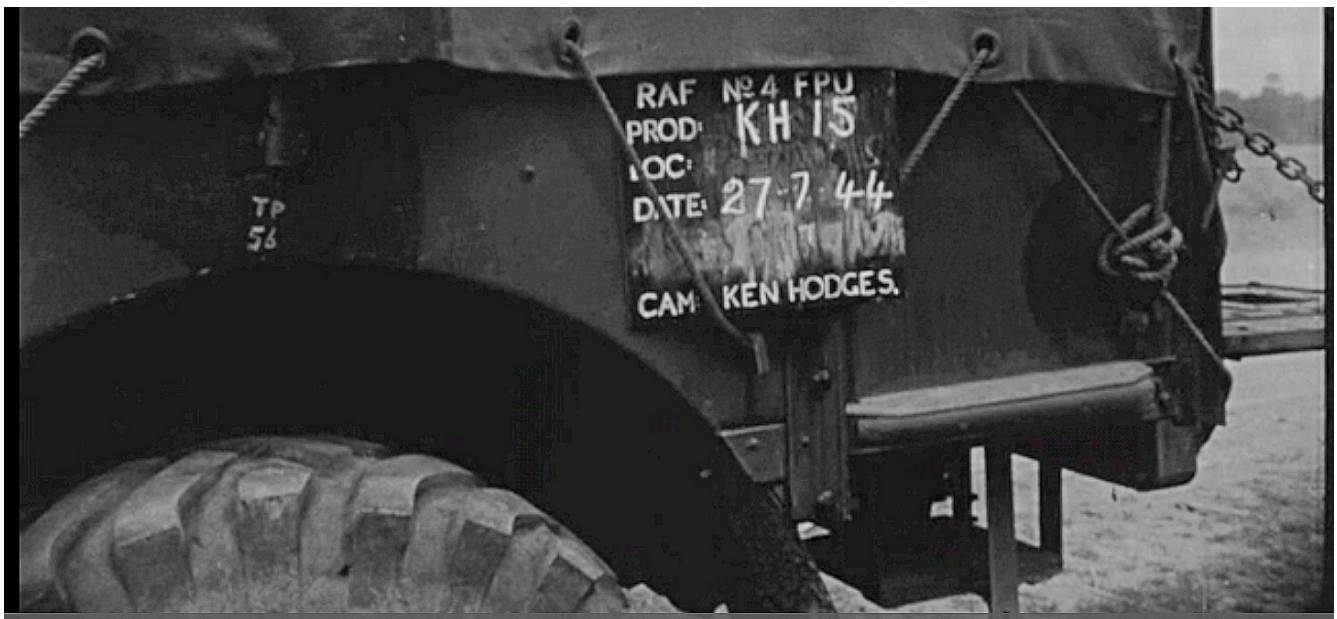
There is an interesting series of clips in a RAF production online at the IWM site (ACB 86) by Ken Hodges that show a number of Bridge and LZ scenes taken late July, 1944. Unfortunately it is a bit dark. Viewable here:

[PEGASUS BRIDGE \[Allocated Title\]](#)

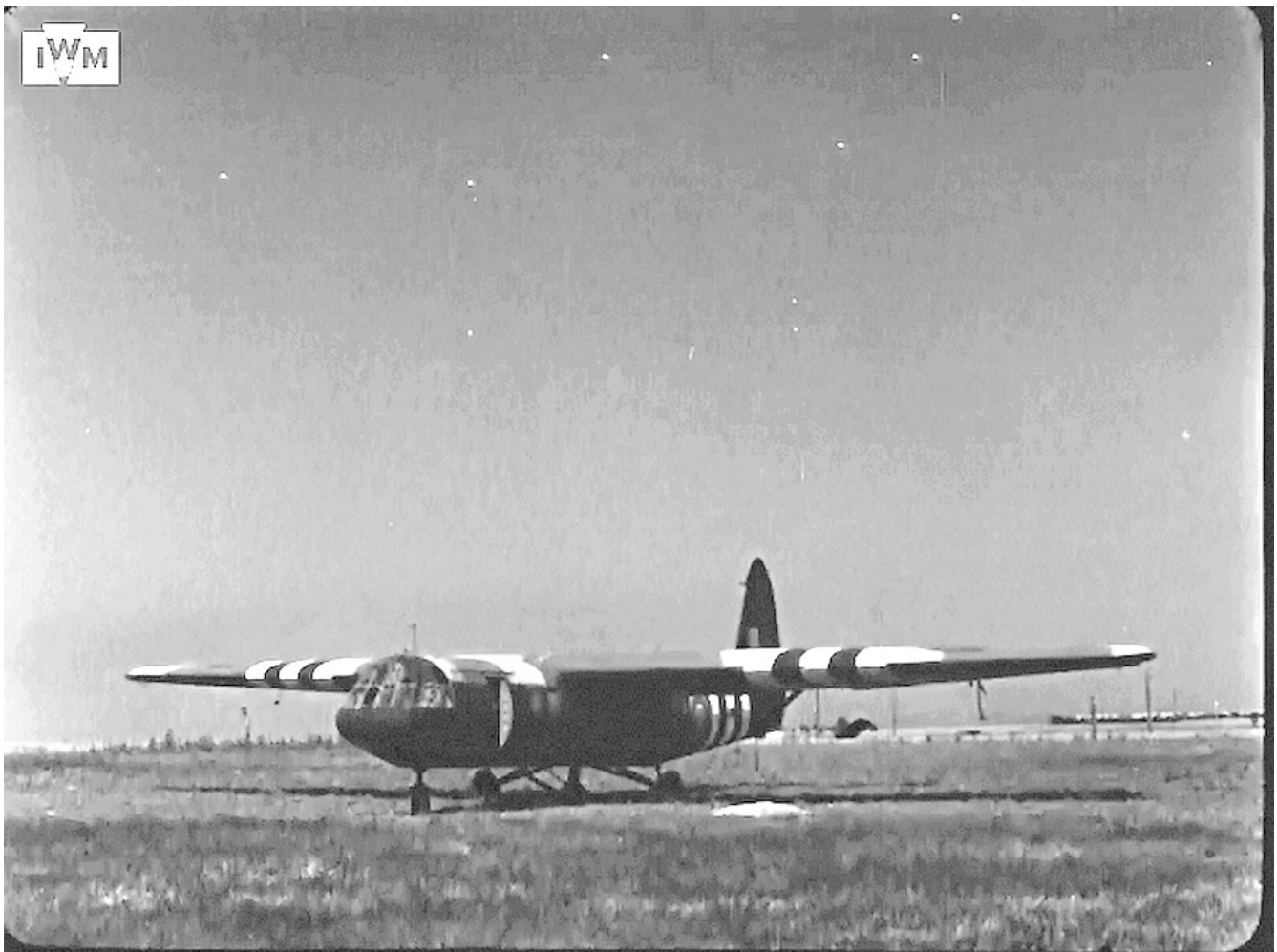
A WW2Talk thread on the film:

[Cameraman with ambition ...](#)

Except for one short pan all of Hodges' clips were static using a tripod mounted film camera. He shot scenes at both the Bridge and on LZ 'W'. Below a few stills from the landing zone clips were added. An attempt was made to lightened them up, but they still lack in quality.



Interestingly he shot the same Horsa from same angle as seen in Major Sale's photo above with Officers' group. Location on LZ still unknown.



Several more stills from Hodges' clips.







A separate report on Hodges' Pegasus film can be viewed or [downloaded from here](#):



Below a photo (B7654) by Sgt. Jim Christie (5 AFPU) of Army vehicles waiting on LZ 'W' to cross the York pontoon bridges over the Caen Canal and River Orne.



THE BREAK THROUGH IN FRANCE. B 7654.

For story see caption sheet.

One of the huge columns of tanks, Bren carriers, trucks, and every description of vehicle that poured across the Orne River.

Taken by Sgt. Christie

18.7.44.

Earlier on June 22nd Sgt. Christie photographed a supply drop to the Airborne troops. On the far side of the river valley to the east the Breville Ridge can be seen. [Film footage](#) of the resupply drop was also shot.

B 5880





SUPPLIES BY PARACHUTE.

B. 5882.

Members of a special R.A.S.C. company collecting the supplies after they had been dropped on a glider landing ground.

Taken by Sgt. Christie. 22.6.44.

A few stills from a [Critical Past video](#) of [official footage](#) that captured same event.

Airborne RASC men are briefed in preparation for the upcoming supply drop over LZ 'W'.



Aircraft drop the supplies.



Men on the LZ watch as the containers float down.



The containers are picked up and brought in.



The cine cameraman captures a returning RASC jeep.



Another short series of RAF related clips by a Sgt. Hicks, recently rediscovered at the IWM film site, were taken on LZ 'W' as early as June 14th.

Selected metadata:

Title: [HORSA GLIDERS \[Allocated Title\]](#)

Film Number: ACB 17

Description:

Various shots of Horsa glider(s) - including out of focus film of instrument panel - with D-Day markings, also of sections of dismantled gliders.

Production Date: 1944-06-14

Production Details:

Royal Air Force (Production company)

Hicks (Sergeant) (Production individual)

Personalities, Units and Organisations:

Royal Air Force (regiment/service)

Technical Details:

Format: 35mm

Number of items/reels/tapes: 1

Footage: 82 ft; Running time: 1 min

Notes:

Technical: print is part of a can comprising ACB 17-19 (total length 719 ft).

Not too sure what these men (RAF?) were doing on the LZ but could have been living there in makeshift shelters and gliders? Still frames of a few pans were stitched together.





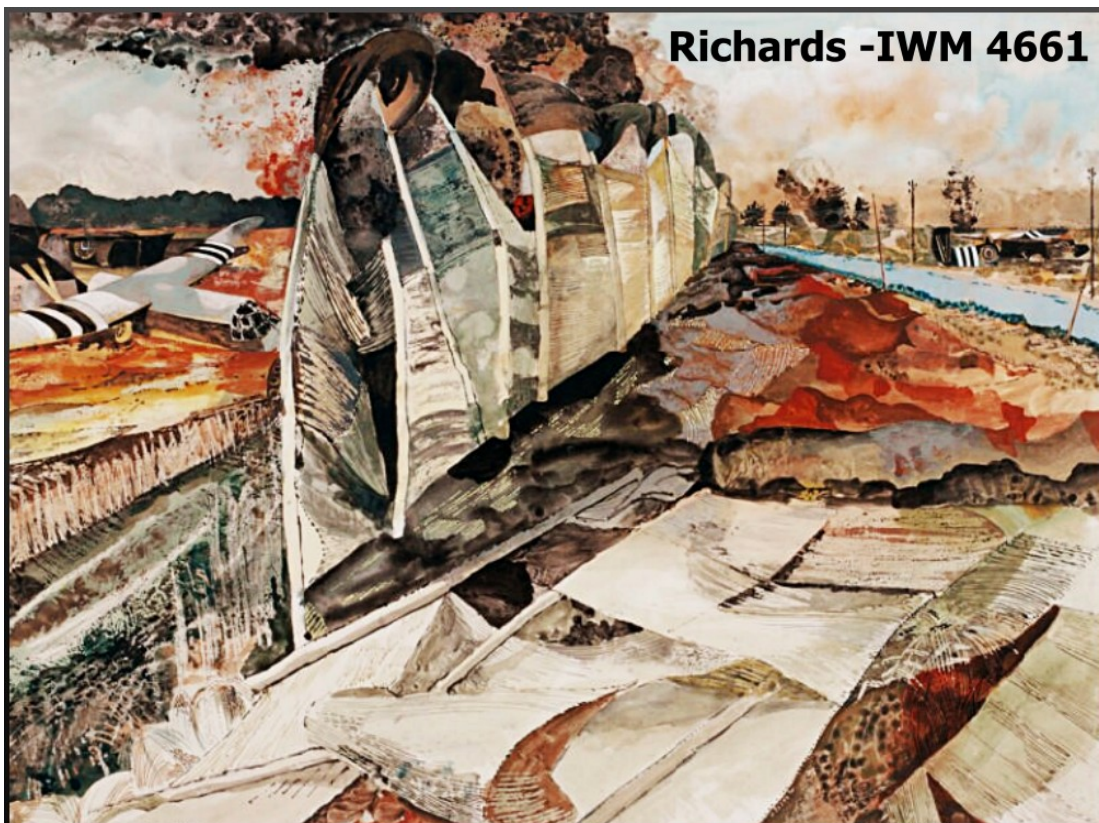
An American soldier walks through the scene.



An intact glider. The Breville Ridge can be clearly seen across the Orne Valley to the east.



The RAF film may have caught the same road screen as painted by [artist Albert Richards](#).



[An interesting article on a LZ 'W' archaeological excavation](#) as translated below:

THE REMAINS OF 7 Horsa GLIDERS UNEARTHED IN NORMANDY

Posted in ARCHEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS - by MuseeGrandBunker

The D-Day landings have not yet revealed all their stories.

Le Grand Bunker, musée du Mur de l'Atlantique and its team have uncovered the remains of 7 Horsa gliders, which landed on June 6, 1944 in the commune of Saint Aubin d'Arquenay. Fabrice Corbin, curator of the museum in Ouistreham, was a keen observer of events relating to the D-Day landings, and had in his possession aerial photos showing an impressive number of gliders, which had landed not in Ranville or Bénouville, but in Saint Aubin d'Arquenay.

Lieutenant Geoffrey Sneezeum, a British veteran of the 12th Battalion, The Devonshire Regiment, confirmed all these facts, having been there himself. 104 gliders took off at 6.40pm on June 6, 1944. They landed between Rommel's asparagus around 8.52pm and at 9.20pm, on Landing Zone 'W'.

A few years later, "in the years 46-47", the owners of the fields, anxious to be able to use their land, buried the remains of these gliders. Roger Mallet, aged 12 at the time, remembers that an airstrip was built on the plain so that all these gliders, which had been repaired, could be flown back to England. Another testifies: "As a child, I used to play on the abandoned gliders on the plain. I was even reckless, playing with plastic or with strips of machine-gun cartridges."

Fabrice Corbin, with the agreement of the owners and the help of his team, undertook excavations in search of these gliders. In holes 20 meters long by 4 meters wide and 2.50 meters deep, they dug out a variety of objects: glider wing supports, complete landing gear, shock absorbers, shell containers, ammunition boxes etc ...

