

## Do you remember? Edition 2021-05, commemorations at other places. Ceremony on the Dutch West Frisian Island of Ameland.

Richard Carswell, H/19940, died August 19, 1942, 32 years of age.

When we read the date of his death a bell did ring. Wasn't August 19, 1942 the day of Dieppe Raid?

We find a copy of a letter from March 1943. His sister was hereby informed that Richard Carswell, after initially being reported "missing in action in Dieppe," is officially considered "KIA". Killed in Northern France, washed ashore and buried on a Dutch West Frisian Island.

Operation Jubilee, better known as "the Dieppe Raid" was/is considered by many to be the greatest tragedy for Canadian troops in a war, a war that was a tragedy in itself. On August 19, 1942, the northern French port Dieppe became the target of an attack planned by the British. It turned out to be a tactical disaster. Hardly any of the main goals were achieved, but unbelievable losses were suffered on the Allied side in a short period of time. (About 6 hours).

### THE HEADQUARTERS INTENSIONS.

- \* Capture an important port and hold it for a certain period of time.
- \* Prove that this is possible, gather information and gauge the reactions of the Germans.
- \* Involve the Luftwaffe in a larger air battle.

### THE PLAN AND OBJECTIVES.

The Combined Operations Headquarters, led by the British Commander-in-Chief Admiral Mountbatten decided in the spring of 1942 to launch an attack on the occupied French coast for some reasons.

- The Germans had penetrated far into the Soviet Union and the Russians urged the Allies to open a second front in north-west Europe to relieve pressure in the East.
- Admiral Mountbatten thought it desirable for his troops to practice landing against real opposition.
- As proof that the British were not defeated but still 'alive and kicking'.
- The experiences of this could be used for later operations.



Combined Operations badge

The choice fell on Dieppe, although not very conveniently located, the target was not too far from England. It was also believed that no heavy artillery had been set up there for the defense of the harbour. Also, Dieppe was within range of RAF Fighter Command to give air support.

Churchill approved a "hit and run" raid on Dieppe and action could be prepared.

Codenamed "Rutter", Mountbatten's plan, was evaluated early April 1942.

Mostly troops from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Canadian Division of General Roberts would be deployed.

(it was later suggested that the Canadian government had urged "Canadian troops to act").

The South-Eastern Command of Lt-General Montgomery planned an unimaginative frontal assault without heavy preliminary air bombardment. Motivated by the fear of many French victims. As a distraction British parachute units would attack the coastal batteries on the headlands on either side of the Canadians.

The specific objectives were formulated as follows:

- \* Destruction of the enemy defenses;
- \* Destruction of the airport;
- \* Destruction of the radar station;
- \* Destruction of the power plant;
- \* Destruction of the port and railway facilities;
- \* Destruction of fuel stocks;
- \* Engage the Luftwaffe into a war of attrition.

The Chiefs of Staff approved this setup on May 13, 1942.

### **THE RUN-UP.**

General Montgomery insisted on drills and a simulated attack on the Isle of Wight.

This training was conducted on June 22, 1942 and was not a success for the attacking troops. (to say it mildly)

However, it was felt that with some adjustments the plan could go ahead.

Some sources report that a second drill was held ten days later, to Montgomery's satisfaction.



**Training for Dieppe** (*Library and Archives Canada*)

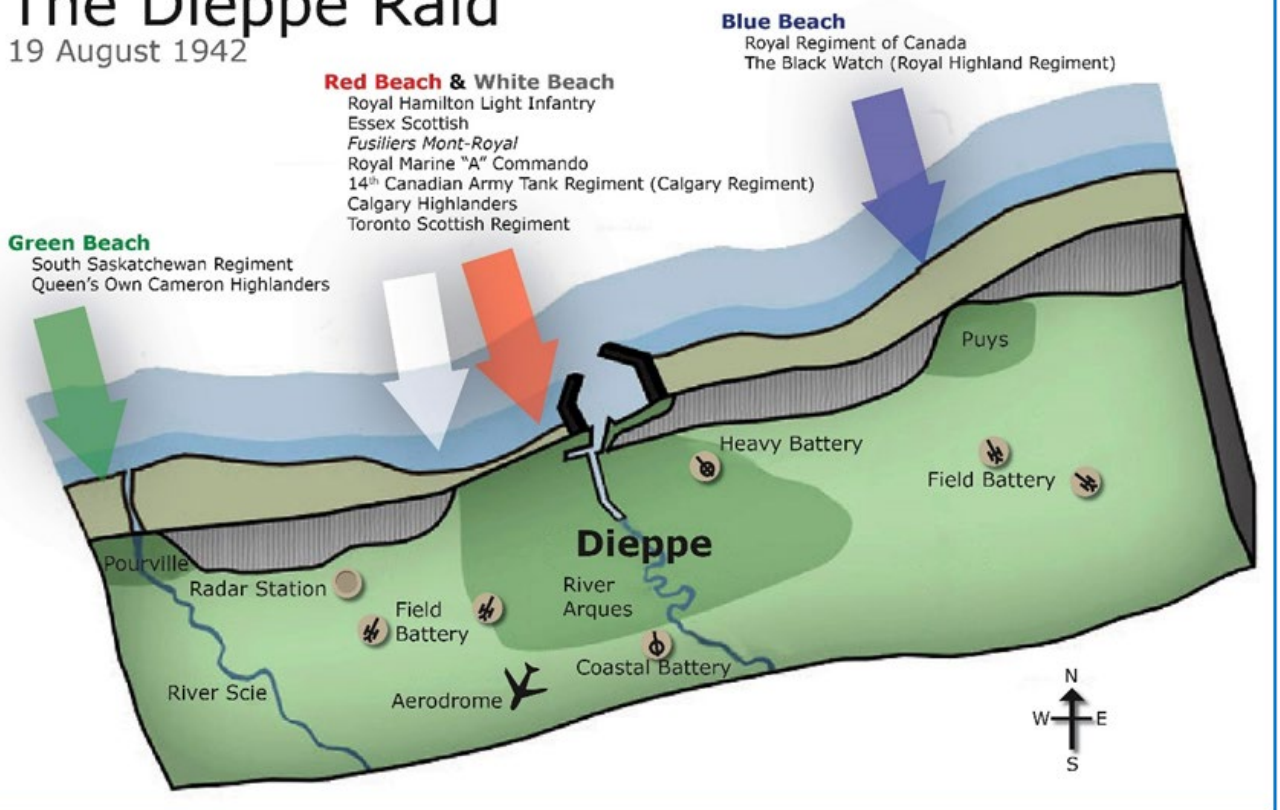
The date was set for July 4 and embarkation started on July 2, 1942. The weather conditions did not cooperate and on July 7 the operation was postponed. Montgomery wanted an complete cancelling, the troops had been briefed and Monty was afraid that the plans might leak out.

A month later, however, Churchill ordered the plan to continue. Stalin's insistence on setting up a second front grew stronger and stronger. Stalin expected that this would ease the pressure on the Eastern Front to some extent.

The codename was changed to “Jubilee” and the plans were resurrected.

# The Dieppe Raid

19 August 1942



## TACTICS and TROOP COMMITMENT.

The troops should land on the coastline at Dieppe and at four other nearby locations; namely Berneval, Pourville, Puys and Varengeville.

After the landing, the troops would advance towards the city while, en passant, the batteries at Berneval and Varengeville had to be knocked out.

It is clear that perfect coordination was a requirement in this set-up.



Hughes-Hallet



Leigh-Mallory



Roberts

[Captain Hughes-Hallet](#) commanded the navy, [General Roberts](#) the ground forces and the air forces were commanded by [Air Vice Marshal Leigh-Mallory](#).

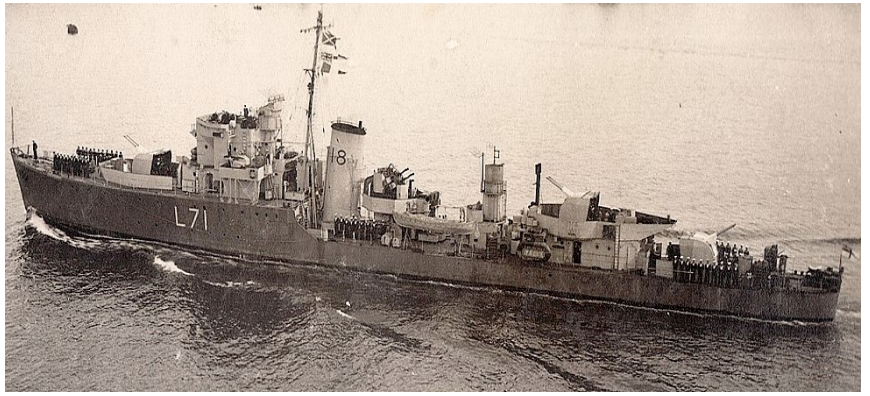


The navy had provided a total of 53 ships.

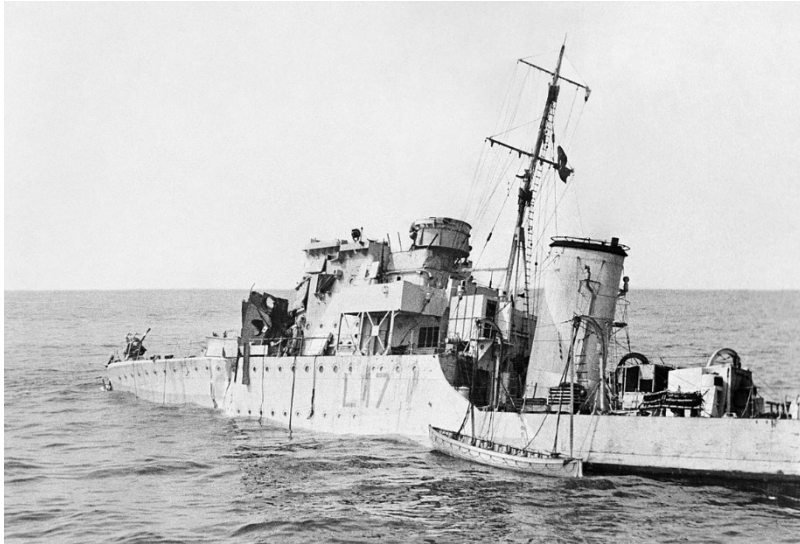
Most important were eight Hunt-class destroyers.

The armament differed a little but all had 4 inch guns.

HMS Calpe was acting as command ship and HMS Berkeley was to support her.



HMS Calpe in Malta

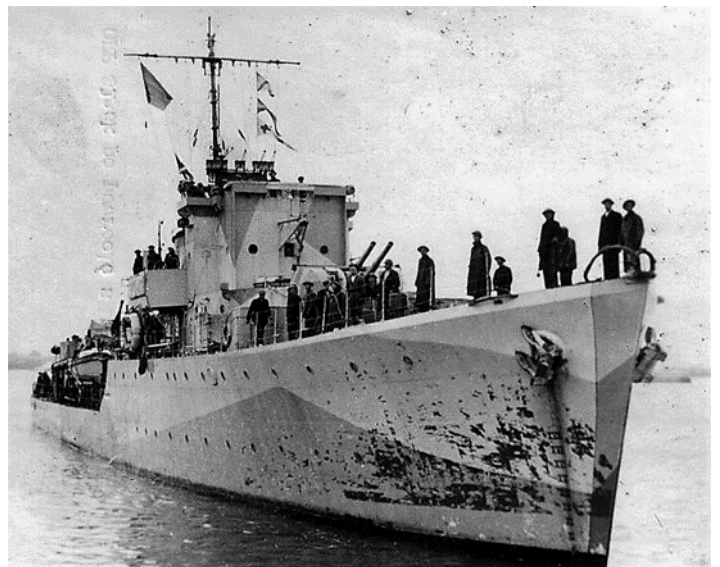


HMS Berkeley after bombing

A Polish destroyer also took part. The ORP *Ślązak*, a Hunt-class ship originally intended for the Royal Navy, but taken over by Poland.

The photo on the right shows the Polish ship returning from the Dieppe Raid.

Also Motor Gun Boats, Steam Gun boats, minesweepers and nine landing ships, each with a number of landing crafts.



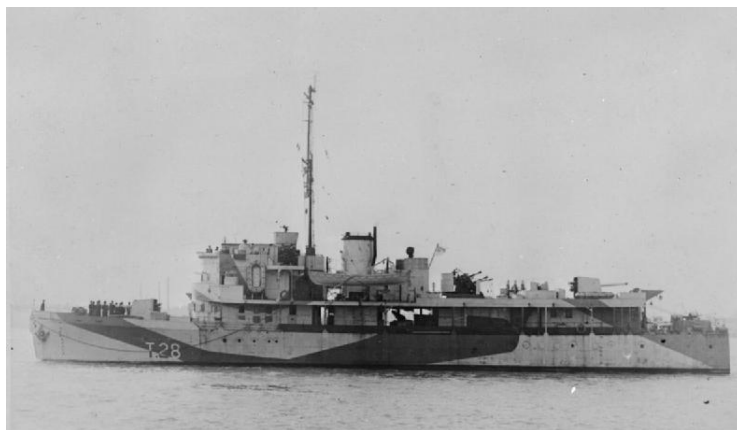
Among the landing ships were two originally Dutch ships which managed to escape to England in May 1940: the Queen Emma and the Princess Beatrix. Adapted by the Royal Navy and mainly used in commando raids. Their high speed made them ideal for hit-and-run actions.



Princess Beatrix

A special gunboat was the [HMS Locust](#). Designed as a flat-bottomed patrol vessel for the Yangtze River. During the raid she had 200 Royal Marine Commandos on board.

The Royal Air Force brought forty-eight Spitfire Squadrons into action. Including Polish, Czech, Norwegian and French Squadrons and one Belgian Squadron.



HMS Locust May 1942



Spitfire pilots from 401 Squadron, RCAF, wait for their aircraft to be refuelled between flights on August 19, 1942, during Operation Jubilee. From left to right: Flight Sergeant Ed Gimbel of Chicago, Illinois, Flight Lieutenant Jim Whitham of Edmonton, Alberta, Flight Sergeant Bob Reesor of Peace River, Alberta, and Pilot Officer "Scotty" Murray of Halifax, Nova Scotia. PHOTO: DND Archives, PL-10627

The Royal Canadian Air Force supplied five Spitfire Squadrons; to know: no. 401, 403, 411, 412 and 416.

Further no. 400 and no. 414 RCAF with the Mustang and "City of Edmonton" Squadron No. 418 that launched the [Douglas Boston](#). (Twin-engine light bomber/assault fighter)

The ground troops had a strength of 6,086 men. All under the command of General John Roberts, commander of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Canadian Infantry Division. As already mentioned: the Canadian partaking was very large.

[General Sherwood-Lett's](#) 4<sup>th</sup> Canadian Infantry Brigade provided:

- The Essex Scottish Regiment
- The Royal Hamilton Light Infantry
- The Royal Regiment of Canada



Sherwood Lett



The 5<sup>th</sup> Canadian Infantry Brigade participated with:

- Three platoons from The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) of Canada
- The Calgary Highlanders mortar platoon

**General William Southam's** 6<sup>th</sup> Canadian Infantry Brigade provided:

- The Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada
- The South Saskatchewan Regiment
- No. 6 Defense Platoon (**Lorne Scots**)
- Les Fusiliers Mont-Royal (to be kept on board as a reserve unit)

Also action for:

14<sup>th</sup> Army Tank Regiment (**The Calgary Tank Regiment**)

A Detachment of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment RCA

A Detachment of the 4<sup>th</sup> Field Regiment RCA

The Toronto Scottish Regiment (machine guns)

Further units deployed:

No. 3 Commando lead by **Lt.-Col. John Durnford Slater.**

No. 4 Commando lead by **Lt.-Kol. Simon Fraser,**  
(Known as: 15<sup>th</sup> Lord Lovat)

### **No. 10 Inter-Allied Commando**

(Predominantly men from No.1 (French Troop)  
French speaking, attached to other units as interpreters)

### **No. 30 Commando (Intelligence)**

A unit of Royal Marine Commandos.

In addition, 50 men of the **1<sup>st</sup> US Ranger Battalion** were assigned to various units as observers.



William W. Southam



Durnford-Slater



Lord Lovat after the  
raid

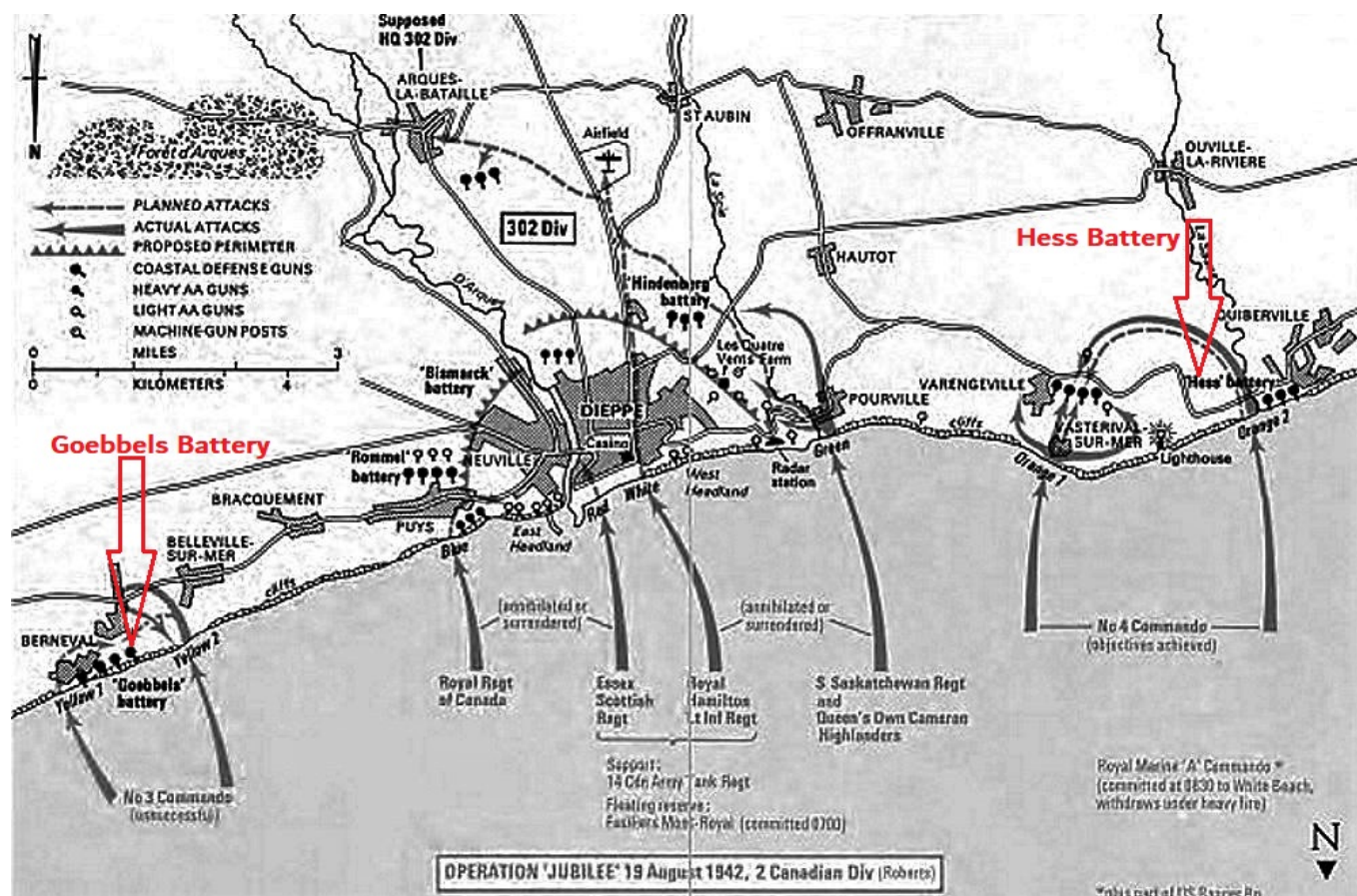
## **WHAT DID THIS FORCE FACE?** ( see sketch on page 7)

The German strength was: two battalions, two engineering companies and artillery units  
They had 24 field guns, 30 anti-aircraft guns and coastal batteries.

Two heavy artillery gun batteries protected the approaches to Dieppe. The so-called „Hess Battery” at Varengeville and the so-called “Goebbels Battery” at Berneval-le-Grand.

Not the slightest lineups. Goebbels Battery housed three 170 mm and four 105 mm guns.  
Situating half a mile inland and protected on the seaside by steep cliffs. Hess Battery housed six 150 mm guns.

The German troops belonged to the **302. Infantry-Division**, more specific the 571. Infantry Regiment, under command of Lieutenant-Colonel Hermann Bartelt.



Adjustments made to the original plan:

- A pre-bombardment was canceled due to fears of too many French casualties.
- Deployment of a battleship for a shelling was rejected, because it would be too vulnerable close to the coast.
- Deployment of paratroopers on the flanks were scrapped from the plan, because the weather conditions were even more important for this than for the attack from the water. Their job was to be taken over by No. 3 and no. 4 Commando. This was to the relief of the Commanding Officer of the 1<sup>st</sup> Parachute Battalion, who later remarked that the plan was "as leaky as a colander, from the start".
- The Royal Marine Commandos, involved from the outset, would land in fast boats when the main force was ashore. They would destroy port installations and take documents from the safe of the port office. Salient detail; the latter was the responsibility for one particular commando, who had been a burglar in civilian life.

The intelligence on the enemy was far below level, to say it mildly.

The gun emplacements in the piers on either side had not been noticed by the air observers, neither the machinegun positions between the cliffs.

Planners had only assessed the beach situation/composition and its suitability for tanks by scanning vacation photos.



Furthermore, also unnoticed: the beach of Dieppe was shielded by a three meter high wall. It had only three ramps and could only be ascended by stairs with about 20 steps. This could even be seen in photos from travel guides

Thus, the enemy strength and terrain suitability were grossly underestimated.

The Germans were already on high alert because they had been warned by French double agents that the British were showing great interest in Dieppe. They signaled an increase in radio traffic and the concentration of landing craft in the ports on the British south coast.

### **FIRST PHASE.**

The action began on 19 August at 04:50 (a delay of 20 minutes) with attacks on the flanking coastal batteries, from west to east.

These include Varengeville (No. 4 Commando), Pourville (the South Saskatchewan Regiment and the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada), Puys (the Royal Regiment of Canada), and Berneval (No. 3 Commando).



Convoy on its way to Dieppe



LC's preparing for assault

The element of surprise that had been expected had already been undone. Escorting ships had exchanged gunfire with a small German convoy before 3:00 AM.

No. 4 Commando however, managed to capture and destroy the battery at Varengeville. It would be the only unit to achieve all of its goals that day.

From No. 3 Commando, only eighteen men succeeded in landing at the right place. They did manage to divert the battery's occupation for some time into firing shots at random. At the end, under great pressure from German reinforcements, they had to withdraw.

At Puys, the Royal Regiment of Canada was virtually destroyed. Only 60 of the 543 men were retrieved from the beach.

Only a handful of the South Saskatchewan Regiment reached their target, many others landed in the wrong place.

The Queen's Own Highlanders of Canada landed late, but managed to push further inland than any other unit. They were also forced to retreat when German reinforcements entered the battlefield.



## **THE MAIN ATTACK.**

After about an hour, by 6:00 am, the main attack came from the Essex Scottish Regiment and the Royal Hamilton Light Infantry.

They were supported by 27 Churchill tanks of the 14th Canadian Tank Regiment.

The tank support was already a fiasco. 58 tanks were transported; only 29 could disembark. Two tanks sunk immediately, only 27 tanks reached the beach.

They didn't get far. The tracks of most tanks dug in due to lack of grip or went to shreds on the pebble beach and came to a stop. For the German anti-tank guns it meant firing on "sitting ducks".

The advance of the few tanks that did get beyond the beach was blocked by concrete roadblocks.



**Wrecked allied tanks**

The infantry was decimated on the beaches by the machine-gun barrage from between the rocks. The support fire coming from the naval ships had hardly any effect on the well-protected German positions. Neither the 4 inch guns of the destroyers, nor the bombs of the Spitfires caused much problems for the Germans.

There was an additional problem for General Roberts: he had no overview of the situation on the beaches from his ship. The smoke screens that had been put up to support the landings, were now to their own detriment.

Fueled by less good information and unaware of the chaos on the beaches, he decided to deploy the reserve troops.

The Fusiliers Mont-Royal, headed for the center of the city, were already halted at the foot of the cliffs. The Royal Marine Commandos were ordered to support them.

For the latter, however, this was a complete change from the orders previously received. This completed the chaos.

The Commanding Officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Joseph Picton (nickname: 'Tigger') Phillipps, had to transfer his men from the fast attack boats into the landing crafts and inform them in a few words of their new task.

Many of the vessels were already hit on their way to the beach.

Several reached the shore, but the crew was killed or captured almost immediately.



**LC's under attack**

Phillipps, seeing that the mission was doomed to failure, stood on the bow of his boat and signaled to turn to the following craft and return.

Just moments later, he himself was fatally wounded.

At around 11 am, under heavy fire, the retreat began.

Three hours later it was completed.

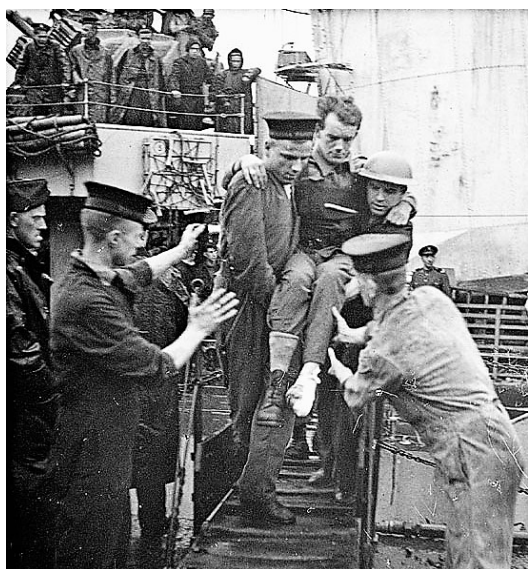


Return of No. 3 Commando, with helmet during this raid



Return of No. 4 Commando

After the return of the survivors, all severely scarred and/or wounded, the balance had to be made and conclusions drawn.



Wounded  
are  
disembarked



Where was the Royal Air Force we wonder? They would to tempt the Germans into a "battle of attrition". Their material commitment was not small, we have seen.

Although the Germans were outnumbered in the air, they gained the upper hand before noon. Their bases were near and the German fighters in 1942 were technically better than the English machines. The RAF and RCAF lost 106 aircraft. The Germans 48.



The Royal Navy suffered 75 dead, one destroyer was lost and thirty-three landing crafts. The British Commandos lost 275 men, killed and wounded. Three American Rangers were also killed; the first American deaths in Europe "KIA". The Canadian losses are detailed below.

**DIEPPE RAID**  
**EMBARKATION STRENGTH—CASUALTIES—DISEMBARKATION STRENGTH**  
**(CANADIAN UNITS)**

Units	Number Embarked		Fatal Casualties								Non-Fatal Casualties								Total Fatal and Non-Fatal Casualties	Number Returning UK on completion of Operation		
			Killed in Action				Died While PW				Total Fatal Casualties				Wounded	Prisoners of War						Total Non-Fatal Casualties
	Off	ORs	Off	ORs	Off	ORs	Off	ORs	Off	ORs	Off	ORs	Off	ORs		Off	ORs	Off				
Headquarters, Miscellaneous Small Units and Detachments	42	48	5	---	---	---	---	---	5	---	7	7	2	5	2	6	11	18	16	18	33	37
Royal Regiment of Canada	26	528	8	199	---	2	2	16	10	217	2	31	8	95	6	155	16	281	26	498	2	63
Royal Hamilton Light Infantry	31	551	7	172	1	6	2	9	10	187	5	103	7	71	9	88	21	262	31	449	6	211
Essex Scottish Regiment	32	521	5	100	---	2	1	13	6	115	1	26	3	119	20	240	24	385	30	500	3	49
Fusiliers Mont-Royal	32	552	7	98	---	4	1	9	8	111	2	48	8	103	11	222	21	373	29	484	5	120
Queen's Own Cameron Highlands of Canada	32	471	5	55	1	7	---	8	6	70	9	94	3	33	6	125	18	252	24	322	18	250
South Saskatchewan Regiment	25	498	3	75	---	3	---	3	3	81	7	159	2	22	7	58	16	239	19	320	13	340
14 Cdn Army Tk Regt (Calgary R)	32	385	2	10	---	---	---	1	2	11	---	4	2	17	13	125	15	146	17	157	15	232
Toronto Scottish Regiment (MG)	5	120	---	1	---	---	---	---	---	1	---	8	---	3	---	1	---	12	---	13	5	115
Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) of Canada	4	107	1	---	---	---	---	3	1	3	---	6	---	2	2	59	2	67	3	70	1	43
Calgary Highlanders	1	21	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	1	21
RCA Units and Detachments	14	256	2	11	---	---	---	---	2	11	1	3	1	7	3	19	5	29	7	40	8	219
RCE Detachments	7	309	1	22	---	1	1	2	2	25	3	33	1	36	---	88	4	157	6	182	4	161
RC Sigs Detachments	6	73	---	8	---	1	---	---	---	9	2	7	---	3	1	14	3	24	3	33	5	47
RCASC Detachments	1	37	---	1	---	---	---	---	---	1	---	6	---	3	1	---	1	9	1	10	---	33
RCAMC Detachments	10	116	---	4	---	---	---	---	4	---	3	---	2	1	9	1	14	1	18	9	101	
RCOC Detachments	1	14	---	1	---	---	---	1	---	2	---	2	---	2	---	---	4	---	6	1	10	
Cdns Provost Corps Detachment	2	39	1	---	---	---	---	1	---	---	7	---	7	---	11	---	25	1	25	1	21	
Cdn Int Corps Detachments	2	13	---	3	---	---	---	---	3	---	---	---	1	---	4	---	5	---	8	2	5	
<b>Total</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>4,658</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>760</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>851</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>547</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>531</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>1,224</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>2,302</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>3,153</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>2,078</b>

NOTE:--The number returning to the UK upon completion of the operation is obtained by subtracting the figures appearing under "Killed in Action", "Died while PW", "Wounded and Unwounded Prisoners of War" from the number that embarked.

- \* Was Operation Jubilee, the raid on Dieppe, particularly tragic? Absolutely!
- \* In retrospect, can we speak of a "mission impossible"? Absolutely!
- \* Was Operation Jubilee a fiasco?

Answering this latter question with 'yes' would be a slap in the face, especially to the Canadian troops. Their courage and fighting spirit was unprecedented, even the Germans wrote that afterwards in their reports.

Were lessons learned from the action in preparation for D-Day?

Yes. The following points were identified as absolutely necessary:

- \* Deploying paratroopers inland to make it more difficult to transport reinforcements.
- \* Flat beaches with sufficient stability for tanks and other heavy equipment.
- \* Lots of heavy naval guns to support the landing.
- \* Pre-bombard enemy positions and troops.
- \* More than sufficient air superiority.
- \* No smoke screens. (a bigger problem for the attackers than for defenders).

It also became clear that the standard tanks were not capable of overcoming obstacles on and along the beaches. Under the supervision of [Major General Percy Hobart](#), who returned to service in 1941, aged 56, a series of tanks for special duties were developed.

These became known as "[Hobart's Funnies](#)" and were used with great success during and after D-Day.

In addition to the 48 German aircrafts already mentioned, the losses on the German side amounted to: 314 killed, 294 wounded and 37 prisoners of war.

Was the pressure on the Eastern Front less, as Stalin wished?

Not at all.

A troop movement to the West did not take place; however, the reinforcement of the coast in Western Europe was stepped up.

Lord Mountbatten, one of the architects of the Dieppe Raid, later claimed that the success of D-Day was won "on the beach at Dieppe". There is indeed some truth in this, although it was also an attempt to justify Dieppe's disastrous action.

The upper command had learned from the Dieppe raid, but the toll, especially for the Canadian troops, was very high.

But they did the job.

And on the 6<sup>th</sup> of June, 1944, they did it again, it finally led to our freedom.

That's why, we, Members of the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 005, 'Liberation of the Netherlands' say, again and again: WE WILL REMEMBER THEM.



One of the "Funnies".  
Crab displayed at the CFB Borden Military Museum, Ontario, Canada.



*Herman Sligman*

Sources: Wikipedia; bbc.co.uk;  
iwm.org.uk; Royal Marine Museum;  
Alberta Press; Jonathon Carroll's notes,  
Warfare History Network, Library and  
Archives Canada.



Canadian War Cemetery Dieppe