

Normandy Stories

The Allied invasion of Hitler's "Fortress Europe" began in the early morning hours of June 6, 1944, when American and British paratroops dropped behind the intended invasion beaches to disrupt German communications. At dawn, the sea invasion began as an Allied Armada disgorged thousands of troops at five beaches along France's Normandy coast. By the end of the day, the Allies had achieved a tenuous toe hold that would be laboriously expanded over the next weeks and would lead ultimately to the Nazi defeat in the West.

June 17th 1944 – Fighting In Normandy Bacup Soldier Wounded

Mrs Elizabeth Taylor of 96 New Line Bacup, has received official notification that her husband Lance Sergt Gordon William Taylor, 24 Royal Engineers, has been wounded in France in the upper arm. He is now in hospital in this country and was visited by his wife on Wednesday. The only son of Mr and Mrs F.A. Taylor of 9 Acre Mill Road, Stacksteads. Lance Sgt Taylor was in the Territorial Army before the war and served abroad for three years. Previously he worked for Harold Kenyon, Joiner of King Street.

June 17th 1944 – Wounded In Normandy

Official notification has been received by his sister Mrs Beatrice Craven, 31 Blackwood Road, that her brother Private Fred Craven 33 is in hospital in the Midlands with wounds to his hands, and stomach received in the fighting in Normandy. The second son of the late Mr Richard Craven, formerly of Todmorden Road, Bacup. He has served in the army for about three years and in civil life worked at Messrs J.J. McLerie, New Hey Mill. His wife died about six months ago.

June 24th 1944 - Brought to England By Hospital Plane Bacup Soldier Wounded in Normandy

Mrs Florence K Walkden, of 4 Broadclough Villas, Bacup, received official notification last Sunday morning that her husband L/Bmbdr Clifford Walkden, 24 R.H.A. was in hospital dangerously ill, as a result of having been wounded in both legs on June 14th while serving with the Allied Forces in Normandy. The injuries which include a fractured thigh were caused by a shell burst. He was brought to England by hospital plane and his wife who is second daughter to Mr and Mrs H.C. Ingham, and father in law visited him on Sunday, the former remaining in town where he is in hospital. On Wednesday he was stated to be progressing favourably.

He is the only son of Mrs and the late Mr Alfred Walken, of 5 Walnut Street Bacup, and in civilian life, he was chief clerk on the staff of the Bacup Corporation Health Department. He is sideman's secretary and Sunday school registrar at Mount Pleasant Methodist Church. Joining the army over four years ago he served with the eighth army in the North Africa Campaign in Italy.

August 12th 1944 – Bacup Soldier Badly Wounded

Pte Robert Lister, Pioneer Corps, 18 Underbank Bacup, only son of Mrs E.A. Hiams, Old Doals Farm Sharneyford, has been badly wounded in Normandy, he has been brought back to this country, and is in a Northern hospital. Called up with the Territorials at the outbreak of the war, he was in the evacuation from Dunkirk and landed in Normandy on D-Day. In civil life he was employed by Messrs Gaskell & Co Ltd felt manufacturers. He has a wife and two children and is connected with Christ Church. His father died in the last war.

September 9th 1944 - Landed In Normandy By Parachute Stacksteads Soldiers D-Day Experience

A Stacksteads soldier attached to an airborne division, at present at home on ten days leave, landed by parachute in Normandy as part of the D-Day landings. He is Signaller Sidney J Crabtree, 20 years old only son of Mrs A Crabtree and the late Mr J Crabtree, 31 Booth Road Stacksteads. Describing his experiences, as one he is never likely to forget. He said he himself landed about five miles inland on the East side of the River Orme. His division consisting of airborne and glider troop's were detailed to capture the gun emplacements, bridges, and to hold all the high ground East of the Orme.

He subsequently took part in the advance to the Seine. Sig Crabtree mentioned that he had been present at an investiture by Field Marshall Montgomery. He speaks with the highest praise about the [art the F.F.I are playing In the liberation of N. W. Europe. Before joining the army two years ago Sgn Crabtree Was employed by Messrs Seville, grocers of Waterfoot. He is connected with Waterbarn Baptist Church.