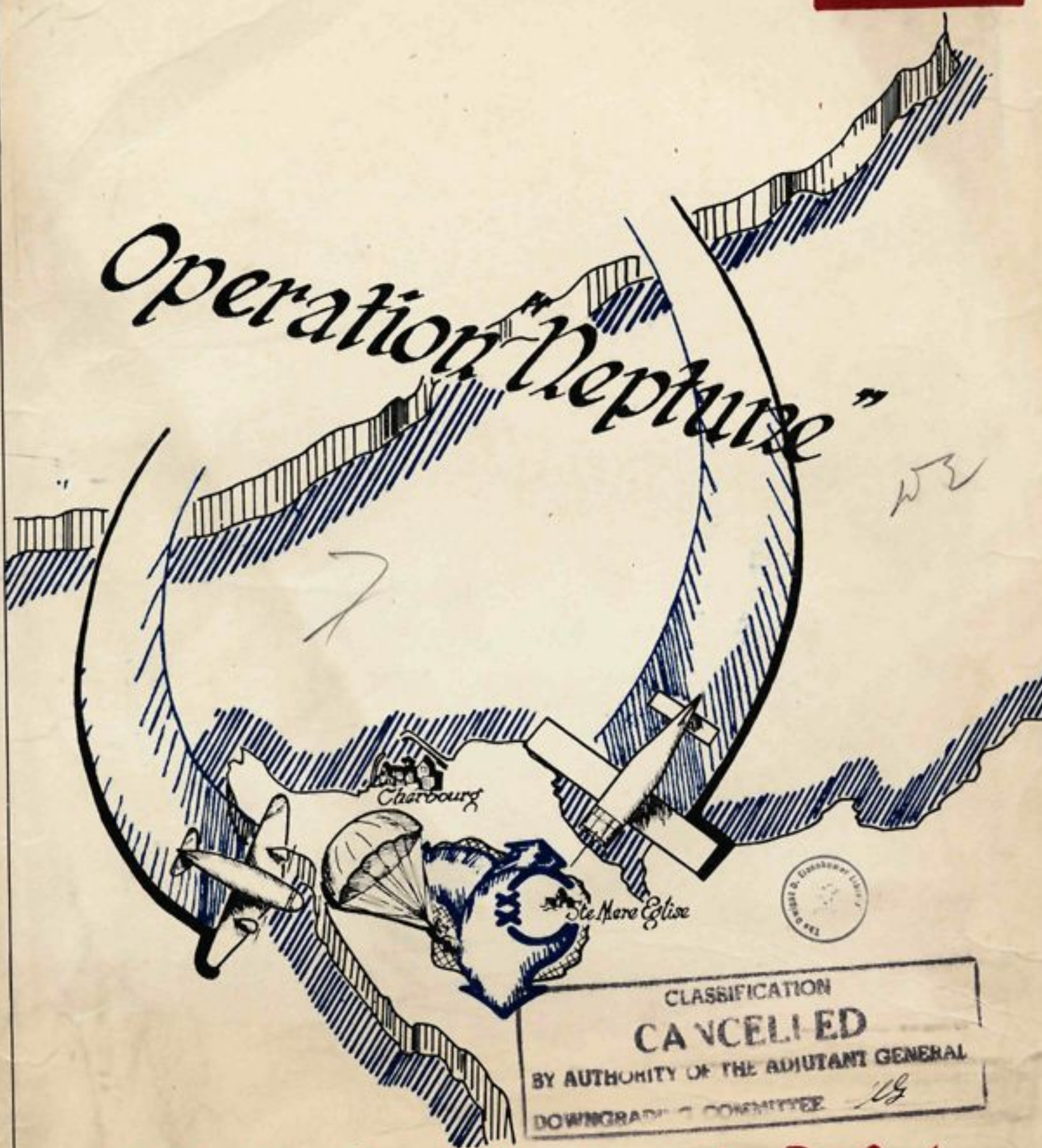


The Eighty Second AIRBORNE DIVISION

AIRBORNE



Operation "Deptune"



CLASSIFICATION
CANCELLED
BY AUTHORITY OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
DOWNGRADING COMMITTEE

NORMANDY

6 JUNE - 8 JULY 1944

R E S T R I C T E D

82D AIRBORNE DIVISION
ACTION IN NORMANDY, FRANCE
JUNE - JULY 1944
SECTION II -- NARRATIVE

R E S T R I C T E D



R E S T R I C T E D

SECTION II - NARRATIVE

By 26 May 1944 all plans and preparations were completed for the Division to carry out the mission assigned it by First United States Army. Field and administrative orders had been published and distributed. In a series of map maneuvers on a special 1/5,000 map regimental and battalion commanders had outlined their plans in order that all commanders might be briefed thoroughly on the prospective Division operations. Divisional seaborne echelons already had departed for the marshalling yards and were assembled in camps scattered along the Welsh and southern English coasts. The Division mission was to be as follows:

"Land by parachute and glider before and after dawn of D-Day west of ST. SAUVEUR LE VICOMTE: seize, clear and secure the general area ST. JACQUES DE NIKOU (156985) - BESNEVILLE (157928) (both inclusive) - ST. SAUVEUR LE VICOMTE (exclusive) - BLANDEMOUR (167982) (Inclusive), and reorganize; seize and destroy the crossings of the PRAIRIES MARCAGEUSES north of LA SANGSURIERE (189898), at ST. SAUVEUR DE PIERRE FORT (143890); destroy the crossings of the OLLONNIE River in the vicinity of ST. LO D'OURVILLE (090894) and block crossroads vicinity LE CHEMIN (102902); prevent enemy forces moving north between ST. LO D'OURVILLE and junction of DOUVE River with PRAIRIE MARCAGEUSES (228921); and protect the south flank of VII Corps north of the same line."

The mission, however, was changed by the First Army Commander on 26 May due to confirmed intelligence reports the enemy had strengthened his forces on the COTENIN, (CHERBOURG) Peninsula with the addition of the 91st Infantry Division in the general area of ST. SAUVEUR LE VICOMTE. The revised mission of the 82d Airborne Division was to be:

"Land by parachute and glider before and after dawn of D-Day astride the MERDERET River, seize, clear and secure the general area: CR (261938) - CR (263958) - CR (265975) - RJ (274982) - RJ (283992) - Bridge (309987) - NEUVILLE AU PLAIN (340985) - BARDIEUVILLE (360987) within its zone; capture ST. MERE E'LISE (340965); seize and secure the crossings of the MERDERET River at (315957) and (321950), and a bridgehead covering them, with H&R along the general line: CR (261938) - CR (263958) - CR (265975) - RJ (274982) - RJ (283992); seize and destroy the crossings of the DOUVE River at BEUZEVILLE LA BASCHLE (309911) and ETISEVILLE (also known as PONT L'ABBE) (265927); protect the northwest flank of VII Corps within the Division zone; and be prepared to advance west on Corps order to the line of the DOUVE north of its junction with the PRAIRIES MARCAGEUSES."

New orders and other administrative details made necessary by the new mission were worked out quickly and disseminated within four days. The change did not effect the basic plan for movement in three echelons which had been worked out as follows:

Force "A" - commanded by Brigadier General JAMES M. GAVIN, assistant Division Commander, to be committed by parachute before dawn of D-Day and to include

Planes

Det Hq & Hq Co, 82d Abn Div

4

- 2 -

R E S T R I C T E D



R E S T R I C T E D

Pathfinders	9
Det Hq 82d Div Arty	2
Det 82d Abn Sig Co	3
Det 456 Prcht FA Bn (atchd 505 Prcht Inf)	
Air Support Party (atchd Hq 82d Abn Div)	
505 Prcht Inf	117
507 Prcht Inf	117
508 Prcht Inf	117
Co B, 307 Abn Engr Bn	9
Naval Shore Fire Control Party (atchd 505 Prcht Inf)	

TOTAL	378

Force "B" - Commanded by Major General MATTHEW H. RIDGWAY, Division Commander, to be committed by glider before and after dawn of D-Day and to include.

	<u>Glidern</u>
Hq & Hq Co 82 Abn Div (-)	22
Hq & Hq Btry, 82d Abn Div Arty (-)	11
82d Abn Sig Co (-)	13
325 Gli Inf	172
319 Gli FA Bn	40
320 Gli FA Bn	54
Btrys A, B & C, 80 Abn AA Bn (AT)	57
Co A, 307 Abn Engr Bn	10
307 Abn Med Co (-)	20
82d Abn Rem Plat (-)	13
Air Support Party	4
Command vehicles - Prcht Regts	<u>12</u>
TOTAL	428

Force "Q" - Commanded by Brigadier General GEORGE P. HOWELL, Commanding General of 2d Airborne Infantry Brigade, to be committed by sea, to land between D plus 2 and D plus 7 and to include.

456 FA Bn (-)	87 Armd FA Bn, atchd
80 Abn AA Bn (-)	899 TD Bn, atchd
307 Abn Engr Bn (-)	Tr B, 4 Cav Sqdn, atchd
782 Abn Ord Maint Co	Co G, 746 Tr Bn (M), atchd
407 Abn QM Co	3809 QM Trk Co, atchd
82 Abn MP Plat	3810 QM Trk Co, atchd
Corps Med Dets	1st Plat, 603 QM (GR) Co, atchd

Seaborne elements of units in Forces

"A" and "B"

Under the plan Force "A" in its entirety was to approach the CHERBOURG (COTENTIN) Peninsula from the west and to drop between 0100 and 0315 hours on the night of D-1/D-Day on three drop zones. The 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment and its attachments were to land east of the MERDERET River about 1,000 yards northwest of STE. MERE EGLISE (3397). The 507th Parachute Infantry Regiment was to land west of the MERDERET River about 1,000 yards north of AMFREVILLE (3098). The 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment and Force "A" Headquarters were to land west of the MERDERET River about 1,000 yards north of FIGANVILLE (2995).

Fifty-two gliders of Force "B" were to approach the CHERBOURG Peninsula from the west prior to H-Hour and land on the 505th drop zone. The remainder of Force