

The Germans had been expecting an Allied **invasion** of Northern France for long time. **However**, they were not sure where the invasion would **take place**. The Germans **concentrated** their **troops** near Calais because it was nearest to the British Isles.

Early on June 6, 1944 Operation Overlord, the code name of the invasion, began. **Commanded** by Dwight D. Eisenhower about 3,000 ships and 176,000 soldiers crossed the English Channel and landed, to the surprise of the Germans, on the beaches of Normandy, much farther to the west than Hitler's generals had expected. **Paratroopers** dropped behind the German **defence lines** and **captured** bridges and railroad tracks.



The Allied Invasion

Although Germany was surprised by the **attack**, they fought back **fiercely**. At one landing site, named Omaha beach, **Allied troops** came under heavy fire and had **difficulty** staying on the **shore**. At the end of the day, Allied **forces** had **managed** to **secure** the coast-line and **create** a harbour where more troops could land. By the end of June, 1944 about a million **Allied troops** had reached France.

After heavy fighting, American and British armies were able to move **inland**. They captured Paris on August 25, 1944. After advancing to eastern France and Belgium the Allied offensive moved on but as winter came was **halted** west of the Rhine River.

WORDS

- **Allied** = the countries that fought against Germany, Italy and Japan during World War II
- **although** = while
- **attack** = an act of using weapons against an enemy in a war
- **capture** = to catch a person and keep them as prisoner
- **command** = to tell soldiers to do something; to be the leader of an army
- **concentrate** = focus on
- **create** = make
- **defence lines** = the front line that a country uses to stop enemy soldiers
- **difficulty** = trouble, problem
- **fierce** = violent, strong, intense
- **forces** = here: army, soldiers
- **halt** = stop
- **however** = but
- **inland** = in a direction away from the coast into the centre of a country
- **invasion** = when an army of a country enters another country and takes control of it
- **manage** = here: were able to do
- **paratrooper** = a soldier trained to jump out of plane using a parachute
- **secure** = make safe
- **shore** = coast
- **take place** = happen
- **troops** = soldiers