

R E S T R I C T E D

of men and individuals who had been scattered in the landings rejoined their units throughout the day, and by nightfall approximately 30 per cent of the Division's forces were under control.

At 2100 hours 100 gliders landed with artillery, engineers, and special troops. Seaborne elements set sail at 0645 from BRISTOL except for a task force consisting of Company C, 746th Tank Battalion; the 1st Platoon, Troop B, 4th Cavalry Squadron; and elements of Company F, 3d Battalion (originally 2d Battalion, 401st Glider Infantry), 325th Glider Infantry. This task force landed on Utah Red Beach at 1400 hours and proceeded inland with the mission of contacting the Division near STE. MERE EGLISE.

At the close of the day, the Division was in the midst of severe fighting. It had captured STE. MERE EGLISE and held a general line along the MERDERET River from LA FIERE (319963) south to include the eastern end of the causeway over the MERDERET River at 321930.

Headquarters & Headquarters Company, 82d Airborne Division

Parachute elements, part of Force "A", dropped at 0214 hours near the west bank of the MERDERET River, and glider elements, leading echelon of Force "B", landed at 0204 hours. The Force "A" Command Post was set up initially at 305965, west of the MERDERET River, but at 0730 the group waded across the River to the east bank and assembled at LA FIERE (319963). A new Force "A" Command Post was established at a railroad crossing at 326944.

The Division Commander, who jumped with the 505th Parachute Infantry, established his Command Post in a hedgerow west of STE. MERE EGLISE at 332965. Elements of Headquarters and of the Defense Platoon moved south to secure the bridge west of CHEF DU FONT (321930) where it encountered severe enemy fire. This group returned to the Command Post at 1700, but part of the Defense Platoon moved to a new Force "A" Command Post at a railroad pass at 323960.

The Division Headquarters initial glider ariel, which landed in the dark at approximately 0415 hours, was scattered, and the G-2 and G-3 did not reach the command post until late afternoon. The Chief of Staff was injured in a glider crash and later evacuated. The G-1 did not reach the command post for two days.

505th Parachute Infantry Regiment

The first element, the 2d Battalion, dropped at 0151 hours and the entire regiment landed by 0202 hours. Most of the troops landed on or near the drop zone, but a few were widely dispersed over the countryside. Assembly was rapid, and the battalions moved off toward their objectives. The 3d Battalion entered STE. MERE EGLISE at 0400 hours, and the town was securely held and outposted within an hour. The American Flag was raised over STE. MERE EGLISE, the first French town to be liberated by the Allies. After assembling the 2d Battalion started to move out to take NEUVILLE AU PLAIN, but orders were received from the regiment to stand by. At 0600 hours the 2d Battalion moved into position north of STE. MERE EGLISE and assisted the 3d Battalion in holding the town. The 1st Battalion moved toward its objective, the bridge over the MERDERET River (314956) at LA FIERE at 0630 hours and by 0830 held the eastern end of this bridge against heavy enemy fire from the western approaches.

507th Parachute Infantry Regiment

The first element, the 1st Battalion, jumped at 0232 hours, and by 0312 hours the entire regiment was on the ground generally east of the MERDERET River and was fairly dispersed. Small groups assembled to form small task forces until such time as the regiment could assemble completely. One such force on the west bank of the MERDERET River attacked AMPREVILLE but was forced back by overwhelming superiority in enemy strength to FLAUX (303955). A patrol was sent to the western