

D-DAY TIMELINE: THE BEGINNING OF THE END OF WW2

VIDEO TRANSCRIPT – ‘The longest day’

[Presented by Jonathan Dimbleby]

By midnight on the 6th June, the Allies can take stock of what has been an extraordinarily successful day.

Casualties have been high but not nearly as high as had been feared. All five beachheads have been secured and the Free French have joined the battle to liberate their land.

Not every objective has been reached. In the strategic town of Caen, the Germans hold out for another six weeks, and much bitter fighting lies ahead.

The Allies will struggle to break out of Normandy in the face of fierce German resistance. But when the breakout comes, progress will be swift.

In August, French troops lead the Allies into Paris and less than nine months later Germany will be defeated. The war in Europe will be over.

On 8th May 1945, here in Whitehall in the centre of London, Winston Churchill addressed the crowds who gathered here from that balcony.

He said: “This is your victory. It is the victory of the cause of freedom in every land. In all our long history we have never seen a greater day”.

It was started by D-Day.

[Image of Southwick House courtesy Chris Lowrey, with permission from the Royal Military Police Museum, Southwick Park]