

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

VIDEO TRANSCRIPT – ...and what a plan!

[Presented by broadcaster Jonathan Dimbleby]

[Voice of BBC correspondent Richard Dimbleby]

Hello BBC. This is Richard Dimbleby. The British, Canadian and American troops who landed on the coast of France north of the lovely town of Caen in broad daylight this morning are already several miles inland, on a front sufficiently broad to be more than a bridgehead.

They're pushing steadily on, backed by the tremendous firepower of heavy British and United States warships, and covered by an ever-changing but ever-present umbrella of fighters.

That was the picture at noon today, but at any rate it is proper to report that the first phase of the attack on Western Europe has gone, not only according to plan, but corking well.

[Jonathan Dimbleby]

That was the voice of my father Richard Dimbleby. He was one of the team of BBC correspondents embedded with the Allied invasion forces on D-Day.

As he was witnessing those scenes, the Prime Minister Winston Churchill was on his way to the House of Commons to tell MPs what was happening just under three hundred miles away.

But he didn't tell them straight away. He began with a long update on the Allied troops who had been battling their way towards Rome, which had fallen the day before.

Only then did he turn to the big news of the day.

"I have also to announce to the House that during the night and the early hours of this morning the first of the series of landings enforced upon the European continent has taken place.

"An immense armada of upwards of 4,000 ships together with several thousand smaller craft crossed the Channel.

"Massed airborne landings have been successfully effected behind enemy lines and landings on the beaches are proceeding at various points at the present time.

"I cannot of course commit myself to any particular details. Reports are coming in in rapid succession. So far the commanders who are engaged report that everything is proceeding according to plan."

Then he added: "And what a plan!"