



Juno Beach: Canada's D-Day Victory — June 6, 1944

By Mark Zuehlke

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On June 6, 1944 the greatest armada in history stood off Normandy and the largest amphibious invasion ever began as 107,000 men aboard 6,000 ships pressed toward the coast. Among this number were 18,000 Canadians, who were to land on a five-mile long stretch of rocky ledges fronted by a wide expanse of sand. Code named Juno Beach. Here, sheltered inside concrete bunkers and deep trenches, hundreds of German soldiers waited to strike the first assault wave with some ninety 88-millimetre guns, fifty mortars, and four hundred machineguns. A four-foot-high sea wall ran across the breadth of the beach and extending from it into the surf itself were ranks of tangled barbed wire, tank and vessel obstacles, and a maze of mines.

Of the five Allied forces landing that day, they were scheduled to be the last to reach the sand. Juno was also the most exposed beach, their day's objectives eleven miles inland were farther away than any others, and the opposition awaiting them was believed greater than that facing any other force. At battle's end one out of every six Canadians in the invasion force was either dead or wounded. Yet their grip on Juno Beach was firm.

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Review

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"No other battle narrative on the subject comes close to the breadth and depth of detail, nor the clarity of presentation...Destined to become the defining popular history of Canada's D-Day battle." (*Quill & Quire* 2005-04-01)

About the Author

Mark Zuehlke is the winner of the 2014 Pierre Berton Award: the Governor General's History Award for Popular Media. In 2006, his Canadian Battle Series book *Holding Juno* won the City of Victoria Butler Book Prize. He has also written six historical works outside of the series, including *For Honour's Sake* (Knopf Canada), which won the 2007 Canadian Author's Association Lela Common Award for Canadian History. He lives in Victoria, BC.

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