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Now You Know:

The Dieppe Raid:

by Robert Nieman

Die TexasRangers Sind Gelandet!

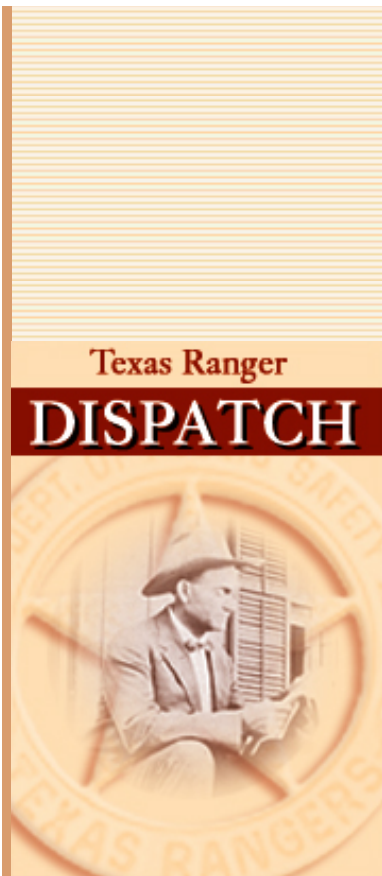
Such is the worldwide fame of the Texas Rangers that the very name "Rangers" is synonymous with the Texas Rangers. Never was this clearer than during the Second World War. A staff writer on the *Houston Tribune* wrote an article in the December 13, 1973 issue about Rangers landing on the shores of Dieppe, France.

On August 19, 1942, three Commando units of the British 2nd Canadian Division landed in occupied France at the seaport and summer resort town of Dieppe. A city located on the English Channel about a hundred miles northwest of Paris, the ravages of the war had seemed to pass it by. The peace would soon be shattered.

The two-fold objective of the Dieppe raid was to test tactics to be used for the future invasion of Europe and to create the illusion that a major invasion was soon to follow. The purpose was to force Hitler to hold troops that were bound for the Russian front in reserve in France.

But somehow, when the report got out about the invasion, the British Commandos became Texas Rangers . . .

The confusion was probably due to leaks about the creation of special American combat units, the legendary U.S. Army Rangers, modeled after the successful British Commandos. American movies about the Texas Rangers played theaters throughout Europe in the 1920s and '30s. Even Hitler was rumored to have watched *Amerikanische westliche Filme* (American westerns). As a result, the only American "Rangers" known to Europeans were heroic men in white hats, who single-handedly cleaned up entire towns with guns blazing.



Word spread like a raging wildfire throughout occupied France and Nazi Germany that the Texas Rangers had landed to liberate France and were preparing to march to the Rhineland. This created so much excitement throughout the Third Reich that Dr. Joseph Goebbels, Hitler's propaganda minister, made a special radio broadcast to deny the reports.

Goebbels assured the nervous German population that it was not Texas Rangers but British Commandos who had landed and that the invaders had been pushed into the sea. Unfortunately, the Reich minister was correct. No Texas Rangers were involved and, from a casualty standpoint, the Dieppe raid was a disaster.

Of the 6,000-strong force involved in the Dieppe Raid, the Allies suffered almost 3,700 casualties. However, for a short time, the Legend of the Texas Rangers offered hope to the residents of occupied France. Less than two years later Allies *would* successfully land on the beaches of Normandy. Among them were Texans who exacted a measure of "frontier justice" on the Wehrmacht and in so doing returned freedom to the land of the French Revolution.

[Top](#)

[Dispatch](#)

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[Museum Store](#)

[Exhibits/Artifacts](#)

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