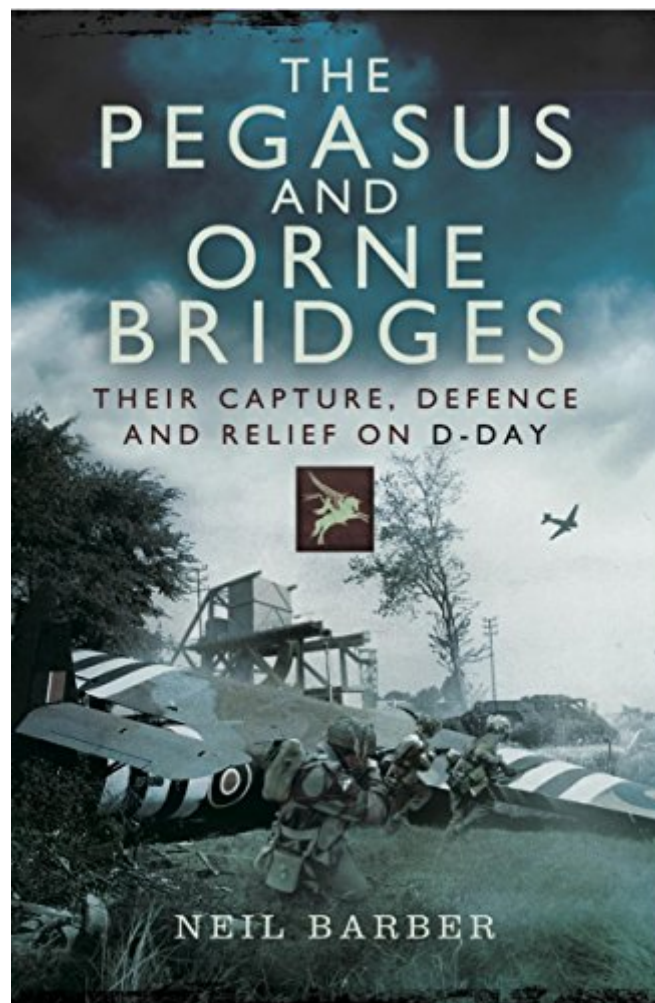




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# **The Pegasus And Orne Bridges: Their Capture, Defences And Relief On D-Day**



## Synopsis

The glider-borne operation to capture Pegasus Bridge has an established place in the annals of warfare. Conducted by Major John Howard and his company of Oxford and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry it was a superbly daring, brilliantly executed 'coup de main' assault. Equally brave was the seizure of the Orne bridges by airborne forces and the defence against ferocious German counter attacks over a prolonged period. The author who has a deep specialised knowledge of the area and period uses extensive personal accounts to tell this thrilling and inspiring story. He covers events and operations from Ranville in the East to Benouville in the West and this embraces the fierce fighting by 7th, 12th and 13th Parachute Battalions and reinforcements such as the Commandos, seaborne engineers and the Warwicks. This splendid book will be enjoyed by those at home and those who are lucky enough to visit these historic sites.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Having visited Pegasus Bridge in 2009, I absolutely had to get this book. It is mostly a collection of 1st person narratives, so there is little in the way of the author's work, but it is fascinating

nonetheless. I found myself telling my wife 6th Airborne anecdotes daily as I read their incredible stories, which nearly all take place on D-Day. Many of their recollections have a distinctly British sense of humor, making it an easy read, but the level of sacrifice these men made is never lost. It's naturally more intriguing to focus on the coup de main operation against the bridges, but the reinforcements in the eastern drop zones suffered tremendously to keep those bridges from the Germans. This book helped keep that in perspective. It was also interesting as a contrast to American paratroopers in the "E" Company memoirs, who had more negative experiences with the French. The British seemed more welcomed by the French and received the joyous kisses and handshakes the Americans didn't see until Holland. If you liked Stephen Ambrose's Pegasus Bridge book and you're looking for more, this is the book for you. It also features rare photographs of many of the men, helping put faces to their names, which should not be forgotten.

Well written with good notes that add clarity without impacting readability. Good coverage of a busy 24 hours. Addresses some of the key controversies but doesn't pick sides without clear, multiply sourced, evidence.

Probably the best book on this historical jewel. Good detail on both pre-war and pre-battle Benouville, good coverage of the strategic and tactical aspects, and excellent first-person accounts of key moments in the battle.

This book not only adds detail to the capture of Pegasus Bridge, but also deals with the often neglected operation at the Orne Bridge, plus the never mentioned defensive actions in Benouville and Ranville. It will almost certainly become the definitive account, and as someone who has visited Pegasus Bridge on a number of occasions, I can assure anyone visiting the area that it will drastically enhance their experience. It is beautifully presented, with a multitude of photographs of the men involved, a marvellous touch for posterity. Highly recommended. I would also like to comment on the statement made in the Brandon review that "there is little in the way of the author's work". It makes me wonder if he has actually read the book from cover to cover ! This is not one of the 'Forgotten Voices' series of books where the narratives are indeed thrown together in a mish-mash order. The Pegasus and Orne Bridges has obviously been painstakingly researched, putting the events in chronological order and then enhancing them by adding the detail, ie the accounts of the men who were actually there, a vast number of which I have never read before. Perhaps it is because the author does not insert his own opinion or make judgements with the

benefit of hindsight. His method has been to take himself 'out of the equation' almost entirely, and this only enhances the narrative. Such discussions are related in the Appendices.

I looked forward to this book to learn about how the British airborne REALLY fared on D-Day because most of the accounts I've read over the years have not been as detailed as this. This was a solid account of the British airborne and glider operations and the difficulties they encountered executing the assault. Of interest was the training of the glider pilots leading up to June 6th. My impression of their objective of the Orne bridges clearly necessitated a little more precision piloting than the American gliders (I'm not minimizing their skill or risk) simply because the geography was a small, confined plot. It was a pleasure to finally read the oral accounts of many of the participants which helped give the story a little more scope. I have only one critique - I didn't get a sense of urgency from the invaders as they held and waited for the seaborne landing while the situation became precarious. Maybe the narrative lacked some flowery prose or I missed the nuance of the stiff upper lip in the face of impending doom. I would have liked to learn some more regarding the background of some of the paras and glider riders - their personal histories and how a series of events led them to the Parachute regiments. A well written account from a British perspective and a refreshing change from Ambrose et al.

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