



The Dead and Those About to Die: D-Day: The Big Red One at Omaha Beach

John C. McManus

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A white-knuckle account of the 1st Infantry Division's harrowing D-Day assault on the eastern sector of Omaha Beach—acclaimed historian John C. McManus has written a gripping history that will stand as the last word on this titanic battle.

Nicknamed the Big Red One, 1st Division had fought from North Africa to Sicily, earning a reputation as stalwart warriors on the front lines and rabble-rousers in the rear. Yet on D-Day, these jaded combat veterans melded with fresh-faced replacements to accomplish one of the most challenging and deadly missions ever. As the men hit the beach, their equipment destroyed or washed away, soldiers cut down by the dozens, courageous heroes emerged: men such as Sergeant Raymond Strojny, who grabbed a bazooka and engaged in a death duel with a fortified German antitank gun; T/5 Joe Pinder, a former minor-league pitcher who braved enemy fire to save a vital radio; Lieutenant John Spalding, a former sportswriter, and Sergeant Phil Streczyk, a truck driver, who together demolished a German strong point overlooking Easy Red, where hundreds of Americans had landed.

Along the way, McManus explores the Gap Assault Team engineers who dealt with the extensive mines and obstacles, suffering nearly a fifty percent casualty rate; highlights officers such as Brigadier General Willard Wyman and Colonel George Taylor, who led the way to victory; and punctures scores of myths surrounding this long-misunderstood battle.

The Dead and Those About to Die draws on a rich array of new or recently unearthed sources, including interviews with veterans. The result is history at its finest, the unforgettable story of the Big Red One's nineteen hours of hell—and their ultimate triumph—on June 6, 1944.

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