



# **If Chaos Reigns: The Near-Disaster and Ultimate Triumph of the Allied Airborne Forces on D-Day, June 6, 1944**

*Flint Whitlock*

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“Gentlemen, do not be daunted if chaos reigns; it undoubtedly will.” So said Brigadier S. James Hill, commanding officer of the British 3rd Parachute Brigade, in an address to his troops shortly before the launching of Operation Overlord—the D-Day invasion of Normandy. No more prophetic words were ever spoken, for chaos indeed reigned on that day, and many more that followed.

Much has been written about the Allied invasion of France, but award-winning military historian Flint Whitlock has put together a unique package—the first history of the assault that concentrates exclusively on the activities of the American, British, and Canadian airborne forces that descended upon Normandy in the dark, pre-dawn hours of 6 June 1944. Landing into the midst of the unknown, the airborne troops found themselves fighting for their lives on every side in the very jaws of the German defenses, while striving to seize their own key objectives in advance of their seaborne comrades to come.

Whitlock details the formation, recruitment, training, and deployment of the Allies’ parachute and glider troops. First-person accounts by the veterans who were there—from paratroopers to glidermen to the pilots who flew them into the battle, as well as the commanders (Eisenhower, Taylor, Ridgway, Gavin, and more)—make for compelling, “you-are-there” reading. *If Chaos Reigns* is a fitting tribute to the men who rode the wind into battle and managed to pull victory out of confusion, chaos, and almost certain defeat.

Author/military historian Flint Whitlock graduated from the Army's Airborne School at Ft. Benning, GA, in 1965 and spent five years on active duty, including a combat tour in Vietnam. He is the author of nine books, six of which are about World War II, and is currently the editor of *WWII Quarterly*. He has appeared in documentaries on The History Channel and on the Fox Channel's "War Stories with Oliver North," and now lives in Denver, CO.

## REVIEWS

“...excellent and well balanced view of the airborne operations on D-Day as well as tackling the background that led up to the events on that most famous of days...does a great job of organizing the stories of how that chaos sorted itself out so well and makes for a very readable set of accounts to give the wide story of the airborne operations that played such a vital part in the success of the D-Day Landings.”

Military Modeling, 07/2011

“...for anyone with any interest in the airborne operations phase of D-Day...A well written and well researched book...A great book, well worth a read...”

Arrse.co(UK) 8/1/2011

“...an examination of the Normandy landings that concentrates exclusively on the activities of the American, British, and Canadian airborne forces that descended upon Normandy in the dark, pre-dawn hours of 6 June 1944. Drawing on numerous first-hand accounts, Whitlock details not only the formation, training and deployment of the Allies’ parachute and glider troops, but the events on the ground at the many targets.”

Britain at War, August 2011

"Vietnam veteran and former U.S. Army paratrooper Flint Whitlock has written a gem of a book that highlights the 'fog of war' as seen by American, British and Canadian airborne units when they parachuted behind enemy lines to be the vanguard of the D-Day invasion....What makes Whitlock's book such a good read is his no-holds-barred style of writing that accurately depicts the combat that these "devils in baggy pants" endured. The fighting described is intense and savage....Another wonderful aspect of the book is the lesser-known battles that were fought, especially by the Canadians, who have received scant recognition for their tremendous contributions to the campaign....Whitlock's book is a worthy tribute to the airborne and glider units that spearheaded the D-Day invasion...."

WWII History Magazine

"It is the personal accounts, the human factor, which drives how wars are won and World War II was no exception. "If Chaos Reigns" highlights this fact in the training and combat accounts on every page... straightforward and captivating. Needless to say, this book is a page turner, filled with cutting edge history and the personal accounts of this crucial and pivotal battle of World War II. The author adds to the importance of Operation Overlord and also emphasizes the human factor, something often overlooked in many military histories. Whitlock's work is a great addition to the history of D-Day and the important role played by the Allied Airborne Forces."

MILITARY

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#### **Michael Hilton:**

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