SCENARIO: 21 INTO 6 WON'T GO, 6 JUNE 1944 (10:00 VARIANT)

UMPIRES NOTES

Background for Umpires

This scenario is 1 of a set of scenarios presenting some 'what if?' situations on D-Day 6 June 1944 in the area around the bridge over the Orne canal that came to be known as Pegasus Bridge.

Historically, the British 6 Airborne Division's role was to protect the left flank of the invasion beaches. Specially-trained elite British glider troops captured the Orne canal bridge and the Orne river bridge via a coup de main (Operation Deadstick). The major part of the Division landed by parachute and glider to the east and north of Caen, as well as at the crossings over the River Dives further to the east. The main opposition to 6 Airborne was from elements of the German 716 Infantry Division, a relatively weak 'static' division, and the 21 Panzer Division, neither of which was concentrated. Both were hampered by a combination of parachute landings over a wide area, German command confusion, Allied air supremacy, Allied naval gunfire and determined fighting by 6 Airborne. The Germans were sufficiently disrupted – partly through enemy action and partly through their own failings – that they didn't carry out a large scale counter-attack until late in the afternoon. Although part of the counter-attacking forces reached the coast at Lion-sur-Mer at about 19:00, the main armoured components of 21 Panzer Division attacking to the west of the Orne were beaten off by the British 3 Division, and the German troops at the coast withdrew when further British airborne troops landed in the late evening. 6 Airborne was reinforced by commandos and by elements of 3 Division, and the Germans were never to see the sea again.

What if the German 21 Panzer Division had launched a major attack on the British 6 Airborne Division during the morning of 6 June? This was after all the expectation not only of the British high command but also of many of the senior officers of 21 Panzer Division at the time. The set of scenarios "21 into 6 Won't Go" enables you and your players to test some alternative history.

This first scenario suggests that a kampfgruppe of 21 Panzer Division, a bit larger than the one positioned east of the Orne in the morning of 7 June, was able to attack at 10:00 on 6 June. The sequence of events as a result of the airborne landings shows that the Division was formally alerted at about 02:00 and that most elements around Falaise, including its tanks, were ready to move by 04:00. An examination of the pre-invasion deployment of 21 Panzer Division and its routes of march suggest that a 10:00 start time for an attack towards the Ranville area is very reasonable – if anything, rather late. This scenario is restricted to the area to the east of the Orne, so that the size of the forces on each side and the area of the battle can be handled by relatively small teams of players.

Troops and command cards

The Command Cards list the troops you'll need for both sides. The lists are roughly historical. However, you can vary them as you see fit, though we advise you to stick to the approximate strengths listed. Substitutions are, of course, perfectly in order, if you don't have the exact troops or vehicles. For 21 Panzer Division there may be particular difficulties, because it used many French conversions. If you substitute German equipment (for example StuG III for the Hotchkiss assault guns), you should bear in mind that the German equivalents were usually stronger, so you may wish to decrease their numbers slightly. Off-board artillery can be historical, because they won't need to be in view.

Command, control and communications

This scenario is about command, control and communications. Therefore, it is important that the umpire(s) enforce the standard restrictions on communications and changes of orders, particularly for changes to angles of attack, deployment of reserves and use of FOOs and FOBs.

Materials required: General

- Mission Command: Normandy - Reference Manual
- Play aids
- Terrain
- D20s
- Artillery templates
- Chits and markers

Materials required: Germans

- German troops
- German Command Cards
- German briefing sheet, including sketch map
- Copies of historical map, if desired (extract from BIGOT Ouistreham map at http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/onlineex/maps/europe/zoomify139251.html)

- German Reference Cards for
  - » Infantry
  - » Infantry heavy support
  - » Engineers
  - » Motorcycle and sidecar
  - » U304 (f) half-track
  - » Somua with PaK40
  - » Panzer IVH
  - » Sdkfz 250
  - » Sdkfz 251
  - » 15cm sFH auf Lorraine
  - » 10.5cm lFH auf Hotchkiss
  - » PaK40 auf Hotchkiss

Materials required: British

- British troops
- British Command Cards for 5 Parachute Brigade and optionally 3 Commando.
- British briefing sheet, including sketch map
- Copies of historical map, if desired (extract from BIGOT Ouistreham map at http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/onlineex/maps/europe/zoomify139251.html)
- British Reference Cards for
  - » Infantry
  - » Infantry heavy support
  - » Bicycles
  - » Engineers
  - » 6-pounder anti-tank guns
  - » 17-pounder anti-tank guns
  - » Jeep
  - » Carriers
  - » 5.5” medium guns (for 6” naval guns)
  - » OQF 25-pounder gun/howitzer (for 4” naval guns)
  - » M7 Priest

Players’ organisation: British

Ideally you’ll need 3 or 4 players, 1 of whom is the C-in-C, the other 2 taking a battalion each. At a pinch, it’s possible to run with 2 experienced players. If you have 3 players, the C-in-C should take charge of the supporting troops (anti-tank guns if independent, artillery, naval guns, 2 Ox & Bucks and the Commandos). If you have 4 players, 1 player should directly assist the C-in-C by taking command of the fire support assets. It is important that the C-in-C focuses on potential enemy attack directions, so that he or she can adjust reserves and fires as appropriate.

With more players, allocate additional individuals to the battalions.

Players’ organisation: Germans

A team of about 5 players is referable. If enabling the Germans to plan in advance, you should allow them to use joint activation and to allocate specific components of the kampfgruppe to specific players. If you have insufficient time for this level of planning, we suggest the following player allocations:

- Recce Company
- Joint - 1/1/125 (w Pioneers attached) + 3/1/22
- Joint - 3/1/125 + 1/200; plus 4/1/125
- Joint - 2/1/125 + 4/1/22 (reserve)
- Artillery with German C-in-C

The German C-in-C should have the overall briefing and the Command Cards, as well as the main historical map. Germans should have the sketch map of where known enemies are located (Le Bas de Ranville, Ranville, probe towards Herouvillette).

During the game

Optional reinforcements for British

At the start of each hour of play (not including 10:00), roll a d20. On a roll of 16 or more (or as decided by the umpires), introduce the ‘lost’ C Company, 13 Para. Make a second roll for direction of its introduction (any edge of the table), or use a spinner to decide. Note that this company will be separated and may not be visible to either side. Keep it under umpire’s control until engaged by the Germans or visible to the British.

Optional reinforcements for Germans

At the start of each hour of play (not including 10:00), roll a d20. On a roll of 16 or more (or as decided by the umpires), introduce a concealed LMG section of the 716 Division. Place them in the nearest unsearched location to the centre of Ranville along the East side of the river bank but not within 25cm of the bridge. Open fire at any British element in range; if none, move towards the nearest British element, then open fire in the next round. Keep it under umpire’s control until the Germans carry out an Attach Separated Element action to add it to a group.

British 3 Commando

The British 3 Commando will arrive at 13:00 – this is the historical arrival time, though you may choose to modify this, if desired, as the planned arrival time was noon. 3 Infantry Division arrives after the end of the scenario.

D Company, 2 Ox & Bucks

If the British deploy any D / 2 Ox & Bucks elements from reserve, then after each 30 minutes (3 turns) has elapsed, roll a d20, taking 1 off the roll for each element (regardless of size) that has been deployed across to the east of the Orne. Any modified roll of 5 or less means that Division will recall the D / 2 Ox & Bucks and remove all naval gun support, in order to support 7 Para west of the Orne.

Victory conditions

The game end is up to the umpires and players. For a shorter game with fewer British troops, end before the arrival of 3 Commando. We recommend continuing until the arrival of 3 Commando at around 13:00, extended to around 13:30 if the situation is still in the balance. The following victory conditions are suggestions only – your players may want to discuss the end point of the game, in relation to ground taken and lost, and casualties, especially in comparison to what happened historically.

British victory

The British win decisively if they hold Le Bas de Ranville, the Chateau, Ranville, the LZ and Herouvillette at game end. It's a clear British win, if they hold all the above except Herouvillette. It's a marginal British win, if they hold the LZ and the bridge, but have lost any or all of the other locations.

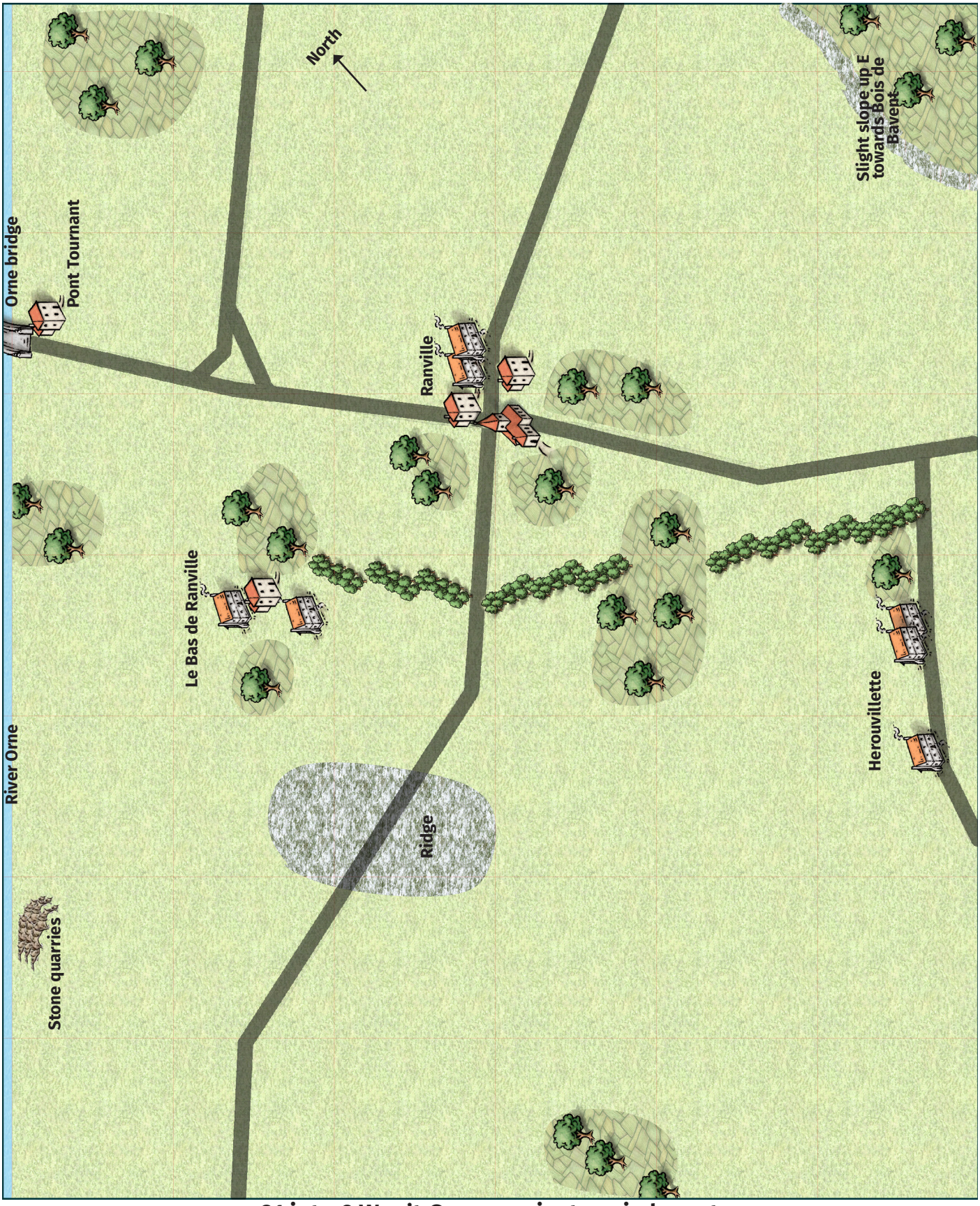
German victory

The Germans win decisively if they take the Orne bridge. They have a clear win if they take Ranville, Herouvillette and the open area to the NE of Ranville. It's a marginal German win, if they've taken the open area to the NE of Ranville, Herouvillette and Le Bas de Ranville.

Discussion

After action discussions may focus on the nature of the victory conditions, particularly in relation to losses and what might happen next.

Woods are all open woods. Hedges are normal (not bocage) hedges. Built-up areas are normal height, medium structures, except the chateau in the centre of Le Bas de Ranville is tall and strong. Stone quarries are rocky areas. The bridge is a medium structure. The river is impassable except at the bridge.



21 into 6 Won't Go scenario: terrain layout

SCENARIO: 21 INTO 6 WON'T GO, 6 JUNE 1944

BRIEFING FOR BRITISH

10:00, 6 June 1944

6 Airborne Division is part of I Corps forming the left of an assault by 2 (British) Army on D-Day, Operation Overlord. D-Day will be the most momentous day in the history of warfare, and all the hopes of the Allies rest on its success. For the sake of brevity, this briefing covers only projected operations in the Sword Beach area, concentrating on the area inland of Queen Red sector (eastmost).

General Synopsis

I Corps' 3 British Infantry Division and 27 Armoured Brigade has landed on Sword Beach from Ouistreham to Lion-sur-Mer, with 1 Special Service Brigade to their left (forming the eastmost amphibious landing force). 6 Airborne Division is landing glider troops and dropping paratroops to protect the eastern flank formed by the Caen Canal and the River Orne, which are overlooked by a wooded ridge to the east. The Division (of which your troops form the advanced part) will dominate the area between the Caen Canal and the River Orne, seize the bridges over them intact to facilitate relief and enable Allied exploitation. To your east other elements of the Division will destroy bridges over the Dives to hinder German movement from the east.

This briefing covers the projected operations in the immediate vicinity of the Caen Canal and the River Orne, focusing on the eastern side. The western side will be held by 7 Para battalion not under your command.

Information

1 Enemy

(a) Static defence in area of operations. Garrison 716 Infantry Division (part of 7 Army LXXXIV Corps) holding 45km coast from Asnelles-sur-Mer to the River Dives. Poor quality, mainly Ost units, including Russian conscripts. Led by German NCOs and officers. [**update 10:00 6 June:** This division largely destroyed by naval & air attack. Small, scattered & weak elements only remain.]

(b) Mobile reserve in & south of area of operations. 21 Panzer Division (200-250 tanks and assault guns). Cantoned in & near Caen. Counter-attack from this division expected 6 June & later.

- Pz Reg (2 Battns) with 70 Pz IV, 70 Pz V
- Attached Hv Battn with 50 Pz VI
- Pz Recce Battn with 100 mixed armoured cars.
- 2x PzGr Reg (2 Battns each) with 1 Battn halftracks, inc Heavy Weapons (75mm AT, 75mm inf howitzers, 8cm / 12cm mortars
- Assault Gun Battn with 36 StuG III
- Pz Art Reg with 18 105mm, 12 150mm, 1 batt 122mm how.
- Pzjager Battn with 24 88mm PaK 43
- Support troops inc park & Flak Battn

(c) State of Alertness

Large scale preparations for invasion, favourable moon and tides, will mean high state of alertness in the German defences.

[**update 10:00 6 June:** 21 Pz Div active in & South & East of Caen. Attack from general direction of Caen (south) expected 6 June.]

2 Own Troops

(a) 6 Airborne Division (advanced part) including Division HQ; later 1 Special Service Brigade (part)

(b) D Coy (reinforced), 2 Battalion Ox & Bucks Lt Inf. [**update:** successful capture of Caen Canal bridge & Orne bridge. Now in reserve at bridges.]

(c) 5 Parachute Brigade with 7, 12, 13 Parachute Battn, each with HQ + 3 Coy. [**update:** you have command of 12 & 13 Battn. 7 Battn to west of bridges, not under your command.]

(d) 4 Airlanding AT battery (6 pdrs, plus troop of 17 pdrs) [**11 guns** – 7x6pdrs, 4x17pdrs]

(e) 3 Commando (1SSB) with 6 troops; under 6 Airborne Division on arrival in area of operations. Expected 12:00.

(f) 9 Para Battn operating to north (Merville battery) [not under your command], expected to link up at Le Plein and SW by late pm.

(g) See command cards for details of own troops under command. Note: none of companies at full strength.

3 Ground

See maps and game tables. Map shows the surrounding area to give context. Caen is off-map to the south-west.

Scenario will take place from bridges to east 3km, and south 3km.

INTENTION

4 Seize & hold intact Caen canal bridge & Orne bridge until relief by 3 Div. [**update:** seized by D / 2 Ox & Bucks]

5 Seize & hold Drop Zone N (top right of playing area) for rest of 6 Airborne Division. To be used as Landing Zone for gliders [**update:** seized earlier in the day, currently occupied by your engineers.]

6 Dominate area bridges, Pont Tournant, Bas de Ranville, Ranville, Herouvillette.

METHOD

7 General Outline

(a) Caen Canal bridge and Orne bridge to be seized by D Coy, 2 Ox & Bucks by coup de main. [**update:** success]

(b) Eliminate remaining German 716 Division in area of ops [**update:** success, some snipers may remain].

(c) Hold off counter-attack by 21 Pz Division until you are relieved.

8 Possible enemy counter-attack

(a) You must expect counter-attack any time after 06:00. [**Update:** game starts at 10:00]

(b) Attack may take form of battle group with battn in lorries OR armoured cars plus up to 40 tanks with supporting troops.

(c) Most likely line of approach for this force is from the south on the east side of the Orne.

9 Defensive position

It is vital that the bridges be held, and to do this you will secure the area le Bas de Ranville, Ranville, Pont Tournant. It is also vital that DZ/LZ N be held, as rest of 6 Airborne Division glider forces will land here this evening. The immediate defence of the bridges and DZ / LZ N must be held at all costs.

Deployment area: anywhere north of the diamond line on the map. Note that 12 and 13 Para areas are demarcated by a dashed line. Engineers must be in the area of the landing zone (LZ N).

Specify 3 registered Defensive Fire (DF) zones for naval gunfire, plus 1 DF per company for its battalion's 3" mortars. These DF zones can be anywhere on playing area.

591 Engineering Squadron: mission is to clear LZ N of glider obstacles. It is estimated that the engineers will take 3 uninterrupted hours to clear the LZ, which must be completed by 17:00.

4 Airlanding AT battery: Each anti-tank gun model may be attached to a specific company if desired, or the group may be kept as an independent command.

Each battalion's HQ company may be kept concentrated or assets may be attached to specific companies. The bicycles element is held at battalion for communications.

Naval FOB can be attached to any single HQ at brigade, battalion or company level.

D Coy, 2 Ox & Bucks is in reserve, positioned between the bridges. If you use any or all of this company, there is a risk that 7 Para may lose the west side of the canal bridge. The risk increases the more elements you take.

During the early morning more elements of your Division have reached you. It is quite possible that further elements will link up during the next few hours.

10 Patrolling

You will harass & delay deployment of counter-attacking forces by offensive patrols covering all road approaches from the south. Patrols will be mobile and offensive.

11 Relief

1 SSB is not expected from Sword Beach until 12:00. When it arrives it will come under your command. 3 Division is expected by 17:00.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

You win decisively if you hold Le Bas de Ranville, the Chateau, Ranville, the LZ and Herouvillette at game end. It's a clear British win, if you hold all the above except Herouvillette. It's a marginal British win, if you hold the LZ and the bridge, but have lost any or all of the other locations.

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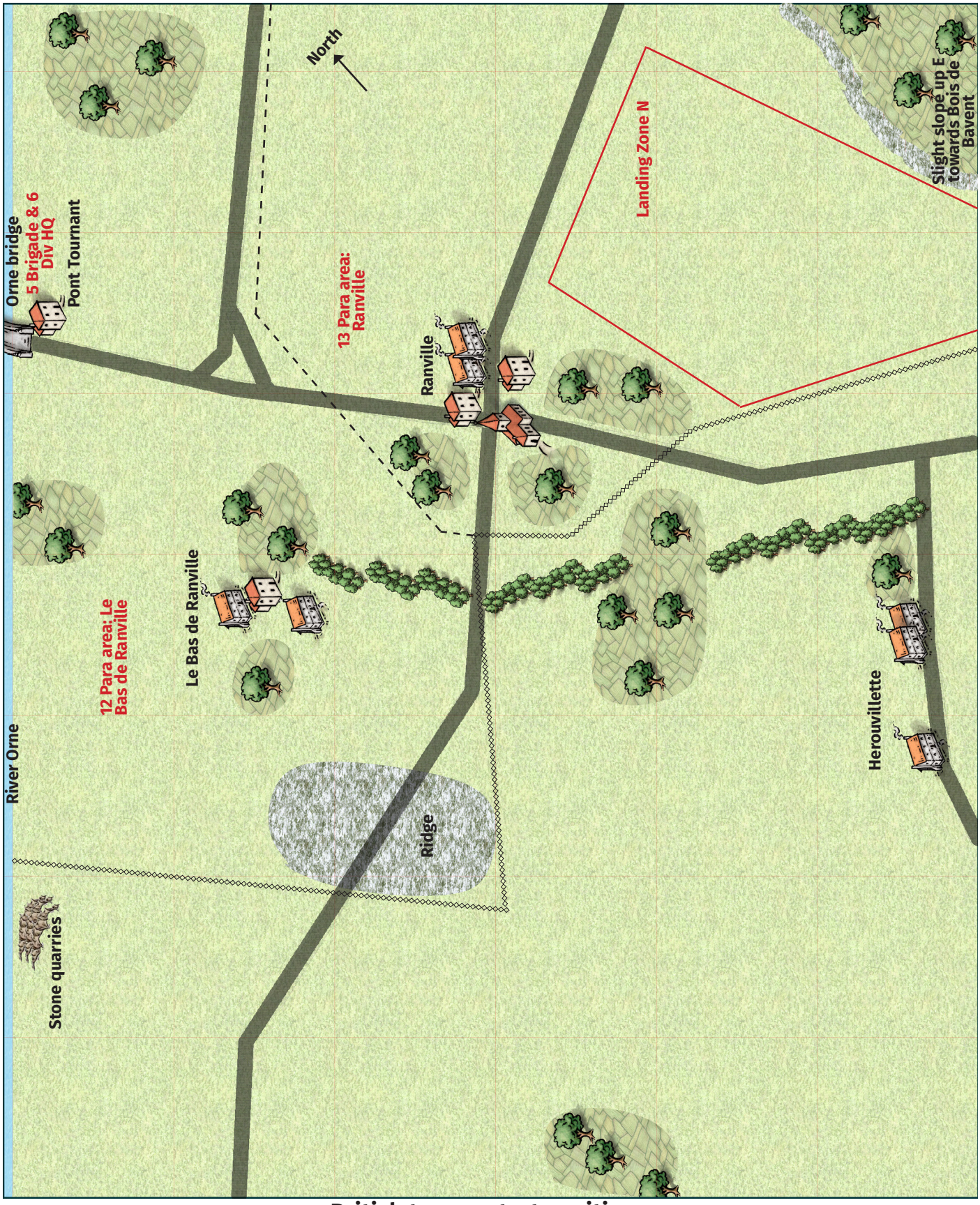

British troops start positions

SCENARIO: 21 INTO 6 WON'T GO, 6 JUNE 1944 (1000 VARIANT)

BRIEFING FOR GERMANS

10:00, 6 June 1944

The evening for the Germans has been unpleasant. Although our weather experts had suggested that the invasion was possible during 5 and 6 June, the weather hasn't been particularly good, so we hadn't really anticipated it. Some of our troops had even been on exercises overnight. The waiting was expected to continue, and everyone has been enjoying the Normandy butter, cheese, 'crème freche' and cider.

Standing orders were that in the event of possible landings by Allied commando or airborne troops, your forces were to attack immediately and independently. You heard the roar of aircraft at about midnight – in fact rather lower than usual...

Current Situation

From soon after midnight, local commanders received reports that paratroopers were dropping and gliders were landing in the area of operations. All units were alerted and local resistance 'in situ' was ordered.

Very soon the first prisoners were taken. Interrogation revealed that the British 6 Airborne Division was supposed to jump during the night in order to take the bridges over the Orne at Ranville intact and form a bridgehead east of the Orne for the landing by sea planned for the morning of 6 June. The invasion is happening today!

Fortunately, Rommel had managed to persuade Hitler that a face-to-face conference initially planned for early June should wait, so your high command has been able to get some grip on the situation. Unfortunately, communication with Army Group B during the night has been disrupted, and orders for a night attack had not been given. So, 21 Panzer Division had set up a defensive front during the night and early hours of the morning, while the coastal division (716) has been subjected to extreme assault.

General Feuchtinger (CO 21 Panzer Division) had been in Paris for a few days, but has returned immediately on receipt of news of the attack. He has received orders from Rommel to organise an attack by the entire Division against the easternmost beaches and the airborne forces to the north. It is now 10:00.

German Forces

See German Command Cards.

21 Panzer Division has been organised into three groups: the major part of the Division under the direct command of Feuchtinger with most of the tanks, artillery and assault guns, and 2 smaller kampfgruppen, 1 under the command of Major von Luck (your group), commander of 125 Panzergrenadier Regiment, and the other under the command of Oberstleutnant Rauch, commander of 192 Panzergrenadier Regiment. Your group is deployed on the east side of the Orne, Rauch's on the west side – communication between the two banks of the river is currently via the bridges in Caen [off-map to the S & W]. The remains of 716 Infantry Division may be discovered anywhere in the area, but we can't rely on their help.

Your force consists of:

- 1 (gepanzert) battalion of 125 Panzergrenadier Regiment
- 3 Company, 21 Panzer Aufklärungs (recce) Battalion
- 3 Company and 4 Company of 22 Panzer Regiment with Panzer IVH tanks
- plus supporting anti-tank, artillery and assault guns.

AREA OF OPERATIONS

See maps. Kampfgruppe von Luck is deployed off-map to the South of the sketch map and elements can enter on Turn 1.

ORDERS

Division context: 21 Panzer Division will attack on a broad front using the bulk of its armour to reach the invasion beaches at Hermanville and positions 1 to 2 kms to the west. It will then swing west along the coast to disrupt and destroy enemy forces on the beaches. [this action is out of your area; you will be performing actions to support these overall orders.]

Kampfgruppe von Luck's orders: In support of the Division's main attack, Kampfgruppe von Luck will attack enemy forces on the east side of the River Orne in order to re-capture the bridge over the river. Kampfgruppe von Luck will then support Kampfgruppe Rauch in the re-capture of the bridge over the Orne canal.

The objective of von Luck's Kampfgruppe is to secure the eastern flank of the Division from counter-attack, so that the Division can sustain its attack on the invasion beaches. Capture of the bridge over the Orne intact is important, as this will facilitate future counter-attacks and support from reserve German Panzer divisions currently north of the Seine.

Enemy Forces

Elements of 6 Airborne Division have been engaged, including paratroopers and glider-borne infantry, and over a very wide area. Enemy drop zones have not yet all been identified, and it is probable that paratroopers will be encountered anywhere in the area of operations. Current enemy concentrations suggest that there is a drop zone in the open ground NE of Ranville. Enemy elements are lightly-armed and without artillery or armoured support. As they are elite assault troops, tough resistance is to be expected.

The enemy is using extensive air and naval bombardment to disrupt our deployments and to destroy unconcealed units. Coastal batteries and the area around Caen have come under particularly heavy fire so far.

PLANNING

In planning a mission, the German command team might well pose the following types of question, bearing in mind all you know about your forces, the enemy and the terrain:

1. What is our best course of action?
2. In relation to this course of action, what is the single clear objective for the German forces in this sector?
3. Where is the decisive point?
4. How do we project maximum combat power onto the decisive point?

SUGGESTED ROLES

Commander-In-Chief – overall commander of forces on one side; ultimate command decision-maker, but advised by the rest of the team. The C-in-C should not interfere with lower level command decisions, except through the proper communications and command channels.

Fire support – responsible for artillery and any other centralised fire assets (this role an be reserved to the C-in-C if you have a small team).

Tactical commanders – responsible for use of troops on the ground ('pushing the figures around'), the tactical commanders will perform the bulk of the nitty-gritty activities with the individual elements.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

You win decisively if you take the Orne bridge. You have a clear win if you take Ranville, Herouvillette and the open area to the NE of Ranville. It's a marginal German win, if you take the open area to the NE of Ranville, Herouvillette and Le Bas de Ranville.

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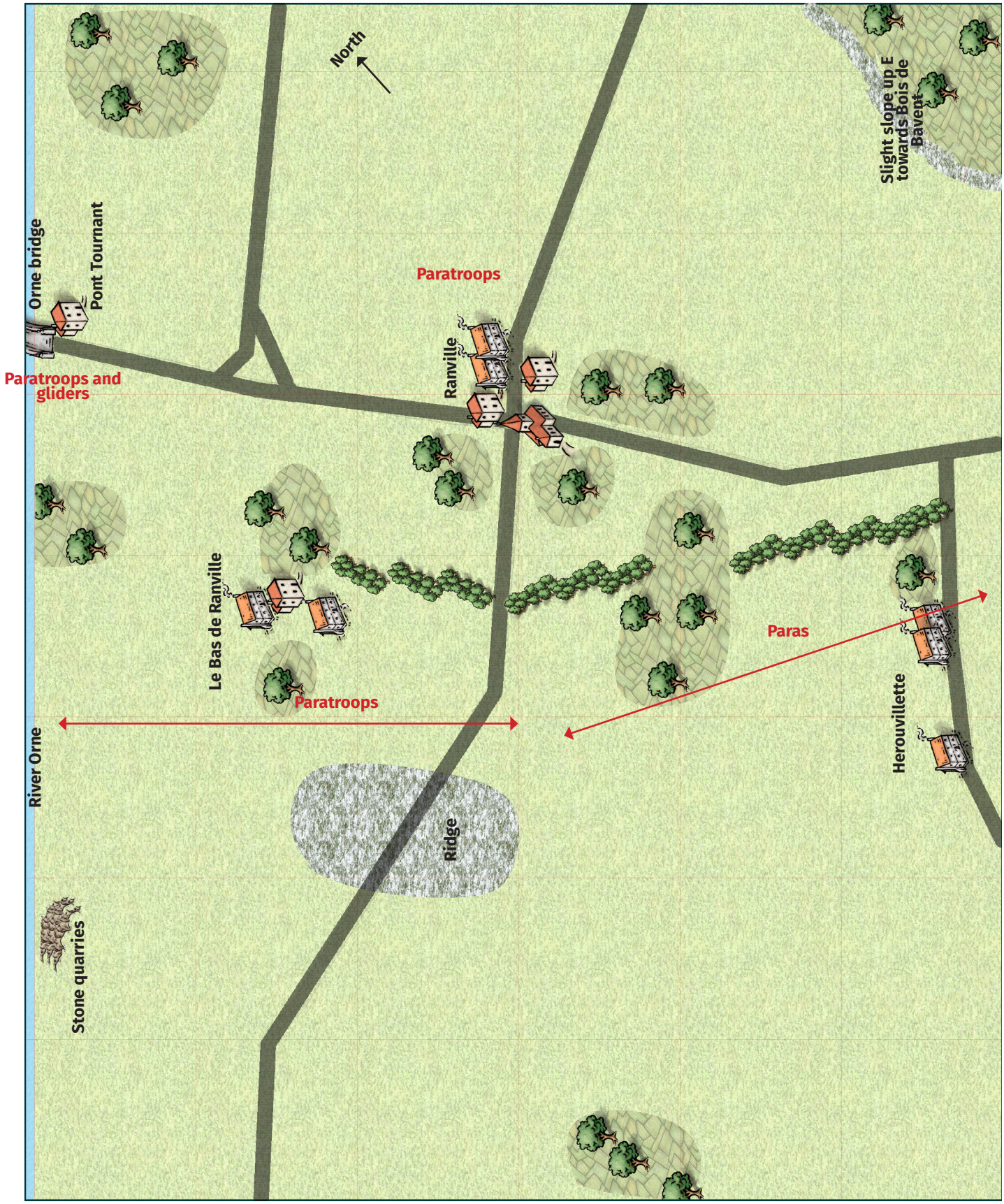

21 into 6 Won't Go scenario: terrain layout and German recce