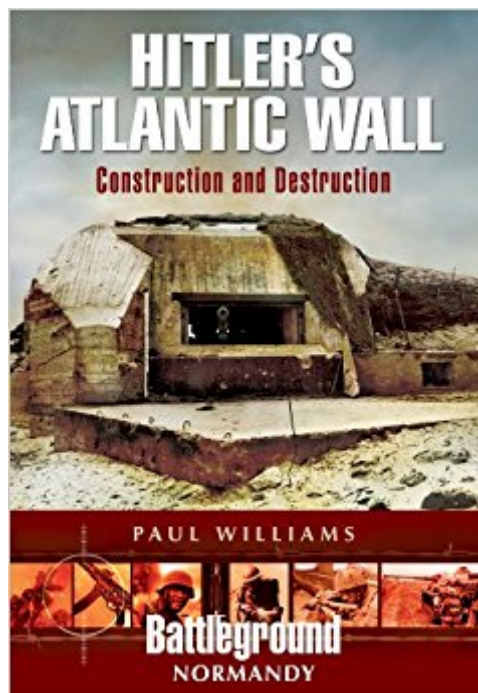




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Hitler's Atlantic Wall: Normandy: Construction And Destruction (Battleground Europe)



Synopsis

This highly informative book begins with an examination of the background to Germany's primary military objectives in relation to the western end of their self-styled 'Fortress Europe', including the early foundation of shore defenses in northern France. In 1941, there was a switch in emphasis of the Atlantic Wall's role from attack to defense. Beach defenses became more elaborate and the Nazi-controlled Todt Organization began a massive building program constructing new bunkers and reinforcing existing sites, using forced labor. Hitler appointed Rommel to formulate Germany's anti-invasion plans in early 1944. At the same time the Allies were making extensive studies of the fortifications and preparing for the challenge of overcoming this most formidable of obstacles. Using, in many cases, previously unpublished accounts of the soldiers on the ground this book follows Britain's 79th Armored Division, Sir Percy Hobart's 'Funnies', as they utilized their unique weaponry in support of Allied efforts to ensure the success of the invasion. The author draws on British, American, Canadian and German sources. Hitler's Atlantic Wall in Normandy also includes information on war cemeteries along with travel information and accommodation suggestions and a guide to the relevant museums.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Paul Williams is married with twin sons and works as a freelance author and journalist in South Yorkshire. After having articles on many different subjects published in magazines and on the

internet, Malta: Island Under Siege became Paul's first book for Pen and Sword in 2009. He lives near Doncaster.

One of two books on the Atlantic Wall by this author and in this same series (the other concerns the Pas de Calais region farther north), this small paperback encourages the reader to take it along while exploring what is left of the 1941-44 concrete structures along this portion of the French Coast. How (and why) the string of fortifications was built by the German occupation forces using thousands of often slave laborers makes for a fascinating story. So does the June 1944 tale of how the forts impacted the Allies' D-Day landings--and how the forts were overcome. There are many books on the Atlantic Wall, though most are in French or German as might be expected. This one being in English is a plus, as is its small size as already noted. The author relates the rise and sudden fall of the Wall in Normandy well, with good use of photos, diagrams, and maps. Other books do a more in-depth job of defining the many standard types of bunker and armament employed.

Part of Pen & Sword's BATTLEGROUND series, Paul Williams' HITLER'S ATLANTIC WALL details the various beach defenses built by the Germans along Normandy's beaches and their ultimate fate. Part travelogue, part history, it's a wonderful, well-illustrated addition to the literature on D-Day. After describing the origins of the 'Atlantic Wall,' Williams describes how various bunkers and fortifications were constructed, German officers and civilians who played important roles in that effort, the special tanks and other equipment developed by the Allies to breach the Wall, the battles that took place once the Allies landed, surviving fortifications in the area, etc. The book is illustrated with an appealing mix of vintage and contemporary photographs, maps and diagrams. In short, HITLER'S ATLANTIC WAR is a winning and informative guide to the Normandy fighting. Recommended.

Good detail.

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