

John Forster

Voyage to Normandy

The view was terrible. When you'd seen all those ships. You'd never seen as many ships, they were like corks on the sea. And close behind us was a monstrous contraption, never seen anything like it. This big contraption nobody could understand what it was. Anyway they, after weeks and months we got to know what this contraption was, it was the PLUTO pipeline on this monstrous big drum, and as it was following us it was laying its pipe out. And it kept going on and then we could see that as dawn broke and we could see the coast of France in the distance. We were getting nearer and nearer so we thought "Oh, we're going to get it any minute now". All of a sudden there was black smoke laid on the sea by all these warships and you could see the flames and that blasting up. And then there was rockets going and we'd never seen one of these rocket ships before, we didn't know what the devil they were. It was just like tracer bullets going out, there was just one mass of flame and dirt. And as we get further and further inland nothing happened, and we were just going in and the planes were coming in over the top and bombing and Spitfires grinding on all over the place. And we kept crawling in, crawling in and it got more distinct and distinct, and we got to about three miles out when the first shell come over. First shell just landed in between our landing craft and another one about 40 yards away. And that was the first shell that we saw come over.