



D-Day: Ex-BBC man Trevor Hill recalls Eisenhower speech. BBC news June 2014

On 6 June 1944, Supreme Allied Commander Dwight D. Eisenhower broadcast a message to the people of Western Europe informing them the D-Day landings had started. But before most people heard his words, an 18-year-old BBC studio manager at the BBC in London was let in on the secret.

Trevor Hill was tasked with playing out the recording of the now famous speech. Because his duties involved having to listen to recordings prior to their transmission, he knew that D-Day was happening before almost any other member of the public. "I took the acetate disc, plonked it on the turntable, lowered the pickup, and heard this voice... I thought, 'Wow'," he said

The disc had been sent by dispatch rider from Bushy Park, home of the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force, where General Eisenhower was based, to the BBC Overseas Service studio at 200 Oxford Street - Broadcasting House had been bombed earlier in the war. "When I opened the package, to my amazement this acetate disc didn't say 'BBC', it said 'AFRS', which turned out to be 'Armed Forces Radio Service'. "After he heard what was on the recording, he had to keep its contents to himself.

"I wasn't allowed to ring my mother and let her know I wouldn't be home. I wasn't allowed to speak to anybody," he said. "When I wanted to go up one floor to go to the loo, two MI5 officers came into the loo with me. "We waited and waited, and then (BBC announcer) John Snagge turned up. "He then introduced Eisenhower. Three and a half hours since I'd heard him announce D-Day, it was then broadcast.

Operation Neptune - the start of Operation Overlord, the Allied invasion of north west Europe - had been many months in the planning. On D-Day, the first day of the attack, about 156,000 Allied troops landed on the beaches of Normandy in the largest amphibious assault in history. It is considered by many to have been a turning point in World War Two. The plan had been kept secret from the Germans, who thought an attack would happen further up the coast at Calais. General Eisenhower's announcement to the citizens of Western Europe that the invasion had begun was the first the public knew of the invasion.

Mr Hill took the disc of the recording home after he was told initially the BBC's recordings library was not interested in it and could not take it "because it was not a BBC recording". But later he did hand it back. Had he kept hold of it he could have made a small fortune - in the 1990s he was offered £30,000 for the original disc by a group of Americans.

Simon Rooks, head of archive policy at BBC Archives, said the current whereabouts of the original AFRS disc was unknown. "I've seen no evidence that it was ever kept," he said. "The likely explanation is that the BBC made a recording of it on its own systems. "The important thing is a recording of it was kept."



Read the text and answer the following questions.

1- Vocabulary. Find words in the text which match with the following definitions.(1 mark)

- a-Dropped heavily or suddenly.
- b-Places where people or things are.
- c-Became, ended up.
- d-Circular platform that rotates a record while it is being played.
- e- Arrived, showed up

2- Choose the most appropriate option to finish the sentences. (1 mark)

2.1- Mr. Hill's job involved...

- a-recording all the listenings which were transmitted during World War.
- b-informing the public what he knew about the D-Day.
- c-paying attention to the preserved sounds before sending them out.
- d-listening to the recordings after transmissions were sent out.

2.2- Eisenhower speech ...

- a-was broadcast after Trevor Hill had been introduced to Mr. Eisenhower.
- b-had been transmitted some time before Mr. Hill heard it.
- c-was broadcast after three hours and a half of long waiting for Mr. Hill.
- d-was a secret for everyone until it was transmitted.

3- Rewrite the sentences without changing the meaning. (1 mark)

a-It is considered by many to have been a turning point in World War Two.

Many consider

b-"I've seen no evidence that it was ever kept." ,he said.

He admitted



4- Complete the sentences with ideas from the text. Do not reproduce phrases literally. (2 marks)

a-Before Mr. Hill kept the recordings to himself.....

b-On D-Day, the Allied troops

c-The Germans thought.....

d-According to Rooks, the disc was likely

5- Fill in the blanks with one or more adequate words. (1 mark)

So 70 years on, how does Mr Hill feel abouta) part of one of the
.....b) significant moments in the history of broadcasting? "I know what a
wonderful, wonderful moment itc) to hear Eisenhower's announcement," he
.....d)."But one realised very, very soon that it was all going on at a great cost
.....e) mankind and the families of those who perished."

6-Why did Mr. Hill take The disc home?. Answer the question using at least 50 words. DO NOT reproduce sentences or phrases literally from the text. (2 marks)

7-If you found by chance a little piece of history in your hands, really important to mankind, what would you do? Would you keep it for yourself? Would you let it know? Explain it using at least 50 words. (2 marks)