



Naval Monument at Brest

GPS N48 23.011 W4 29.181



The Naval Monument at Brest rises above a park along the Cours Dajot, overlooking the harbor. It is 800 meters southwest of the Gare de Brest.

American Battle Monuments Commission

This agency of the United States government operates and maintains 26 American cemeteries and 29 memorials, monuments and markers in 16 countries. The Commission works to fulfill the vision of its first chairman, General of the Armies John J. Pershing. Pershing, commander of the American Expeditionary Forces during World War I, promised that "time will not dim the glory of their deeds."

American Battle Monuments Commission

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GPS N48 31.199 W1 18.067

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American Battle Monuments Commission



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www.abmc.gov

Brest Monument



The Naval Monument at Brest displays this inscription in both English and French:

**ERECTED BY THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO
COMMEMORATE THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE NAVAL FORCES OF
THE UNITED STATES AND FRANCE DURING THE WORLD WAR.**

The monument is situated atop an old fortification wall overlooking the harbor. Its shaft of Brittany granite rises 100 feet above the neighboring Cours Dajot promenade.

The original monument was destroyed by the Germans on July 4, 1941 before the U.S. entered World War II. The present monument is a replica of the original, and was completed in 1958.

Brest is the westernmost port of France. Its location and activities there have been vital in commerce and conflicts over the centuries. Brest was especially important to many missions of the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) during 1917 and 1918. It was the principal port of embarkation and debarkation of troops, equipment, and supplies. Of the more than 2,000,000 members of the AEF arriving in France, more than 700,000 flowed through Brest.



Photo: ABMC

This sculpture of an interlaced anchor and dolphin is one of eight on the Naval Monument at Brest.



Photo: The National Archives



Contagious cases were kept in tents at the Naval Base Hospital No. 5, Brest, during the influenza epidemic, December 1918.

Brest served as American Naval Headquarters in France. Its ships and aircraft performed escort duties for convoys to and from France, as well as fighting the German submarine menace. A force of more than 30 destroyers and dozens of smaller subchasers performed the many missions to ensure safety of the sea. The Naval Air Service, flying airplanes and dirigibles, supplemented the surface forces.

During July and August, 1918, more than 3,000,000 tons of shipping was conveyed in and out of French ports by vessels based at Brest.

The AEF's Services of Supply (SOS) Base Section No. 5 set up depots to accommodate arriving and departing troops. For example, its billeting facilities at Brest could accommodate 55,000 persons. The SOS operated a variety of installations in the Brest locale for assembly and delivery of vehicles and equipment to forward units.



Photo: The National Archives

Gun crew practicing on a 4-inch gun of the destroyer USS Little (DD-79). She served in Atlantic convoy operations from May 1917 to after the Armistice.



Photo: The National Archives

Soldiers of the U.S. 4th Infantry Regiment debarking from a ship at Brest, April 18, 1918.