

Tough Campaigns Produce Final Offensive

KEY: † Military Cemetery 🗿 Monument



Photo: The National Archives
Soldiers view an M4 tank damaged by German gunfire southwest of Epinal, September 12, 1944.

Epinal American Cemetery and Memorial

The 45th Infantry Division liberated the Epinal area on September 21, 1944. A temporary cemetery was established here 15 days later. The French government granted use of this site in perpetuity, as a permanent burial ground without charge or taxation.

American Battle Monuments Commission

This agency of the United States government operates and maintains 25 American cemeteries and 26 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."



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For more information on this site and other ABMC commemorative sites, please visit www.abmc.gov



Epinal American Cemetery and Memorial

American Battle Monuments Commission



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**TOUGH CAMPAIGNS PRODUCE
 FINAL OFFENSIVE**

From mid-August to early September 1944, the U.S. Seventh Army and French First Army advanced rapidly northeastward from Southern France. On September 11 near Dijon, units of the Seventh Army met the U.S. Third Army pressing forward from Normandy.

SEPTEMBER 15, 1944: The U.S. 6th Army group was activated, consisting of the U.S. Seventh Army and the French First Army. Strong tactical air support by the U.S. 9th Air Force and the French First Air Corps reinforced the continuing operations of the 6th Army Group.

SEPTEMBER 21: The 45th Infantry Division crossed the Moselle River at Epinal.

MID-DECEMBER: Seventh Army forces reached the West Wall near the Saar River.

JANUARY 1, 1945: German counteroffensives began. Several battles raged until Allied forces stopped the Germans by January 25.

FEBRUARY 9: After furious winter fighting, the 6th Army Group cleared German forces from the Colmar Pocket.

MARCH 26: The Seventh Army crossed the Rhine and pressed onward, occupying Mannheim on March 29.

LATE APRIL: The French First Army cleared Stuttgart (April 22), then Ulm (April 24). The Seventh Army took Nuremberg (April 20), then Munich (April 30), driving southeast toward Innsbruck and the Alps.

MAY 4: Advance units of the U.S. 103rd Infantry Division pushed through the Brenner Pass and linked up with patrols of the U.S. Fifth Army at Vipiteno, Italy.

Germany capitulated on May 8, marking victory in Europe for the U.S. and its allies.

Walls of Missing

The Court of Honor is enclosed by four separate low walls on which are engraved the names of 424 service members who are Missing in Action in the region.



Memorial Interior – Mosaic Battle Wall Map

The colored glass mosaic wall map depicts American and Allied campaigns from the landings in southern France on 15 August 1944 to war's end.



The Plantings

Oriental cherry trees line the northern perimeter wall adjacent to the flagpole, adding color and density. Small stoned benches provide pleasant spots for meditation.



Chapel Interior

The U.S. flag and flags of the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, and Air Force flank the altar. A sculpture of the Angel of Peace appears above the altar.



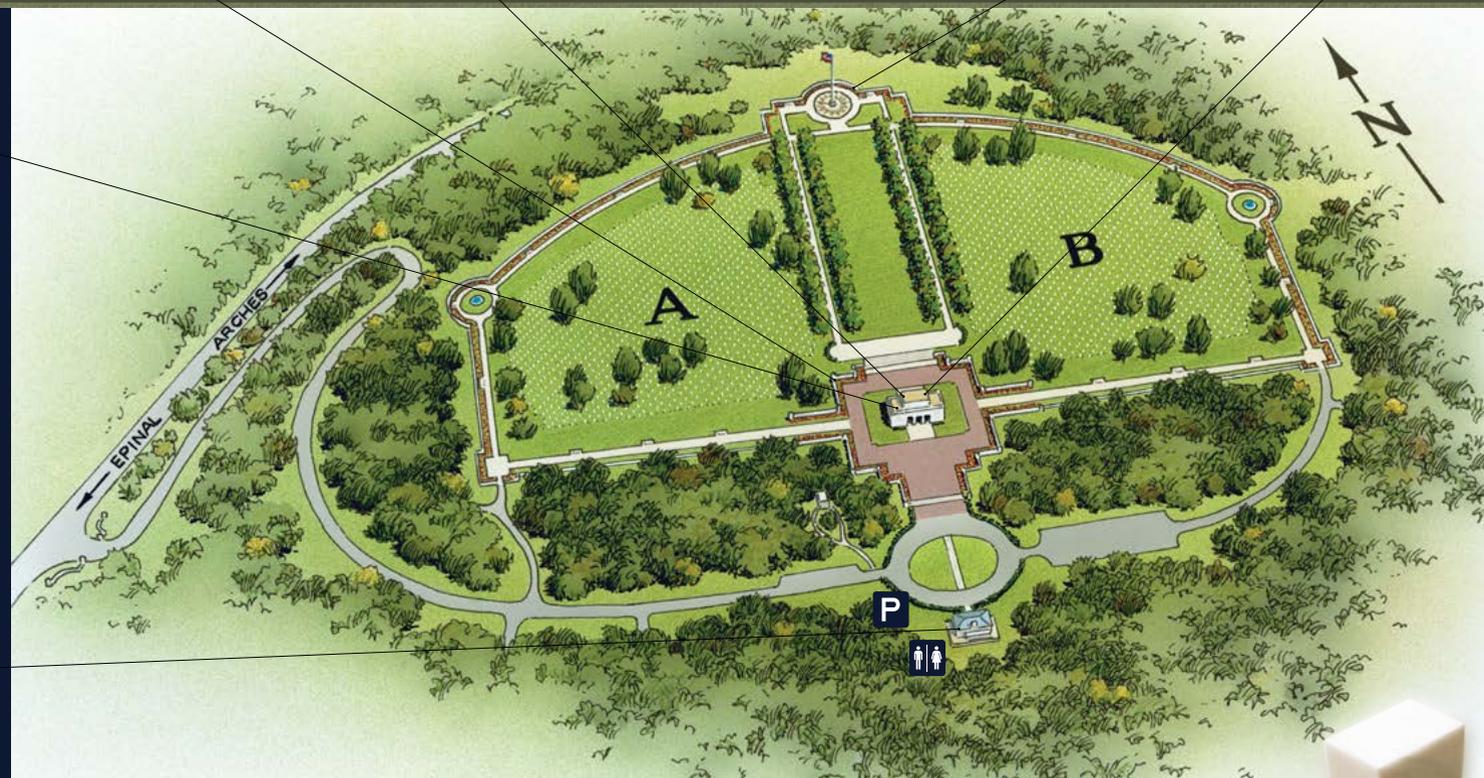
Memorial Structure

The inscription atop the memorial's south façade reads, "CITIZENS OF EVERY CALLING BRED IN THE PRINCIPLES OF THE AMERICAN DEMOCRACY." Inside are a mosaic battle map and a chapel.



Visitor Building

Here you can meet our staff, get your questions answered, and sign the guest register.



Layout

From Highway D-157, a winding road leads to the cemetery entrance. Parking is available adjacent to the visitor building. From the visitor building at the south, entrance to the Court of Honor and Memorial area is reached across the roundabout. The flagpole area lies up the mall paths flanked by Plots A and B.



Graves Area

The 5,255 graves are set in two fan shaped plots separated by a wide north south mall lined with sycamore (*Platanus orientalis*) trees.



Photo: The National Archives
 U.S. Army anti-aircraft gunners protect Epinal and the Moselle River from attacks by German aircraft.

Headstone Location

PLOT:

ROW:

GRAVE:

Useful Information

DIMENSIONS: 49.54 acres
HEADSTONES: 5,255
LATIN CROSSES: 5,139

STARS OF DAVID: 116
MISSING IN ACTION: 424
UNKNOWN: 69

SETS OF BROTHERS: 14
DEDICATED: July 23, 1956

