



## Montsec Monument

GPS N48 53.402 E5 42.803



*The Montsec Monument, atop the Butte Montsec, is reached via Highways D 12 and D 119 to Montsec, then a road up the hill.*

## 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."

### American Battle Monuments Commission

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### St. Mihiel American Cemetery and Memorial

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American Battle Monuments Commission



For more information on this site and other ABMC commemorative sites, please visit:

[www.abmc.gov](http://www.abmc.gov)

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The Montsec Monument commemorates reduction of the St. Mihiel Salient by the U.S. First Army, September 12-16, 1918, and operations of the U.S. Second Army, November 9-11. It also honors combat services of other U.S. divisions in this region and in Alsace and Lorraine.

The monument consists of a large circular colonnade. Names of nearby villages liberated by American troops are carved upon the outside frieze.

The Butte of Montsec (alt. 1,230 feet) was a strategic position from early history. The Gaulois and Romans exploited its location. Messages were sent from it to distant heights, as smoke in daytime and fires at night. A fortified castle, Chastel Montclin, was built here in the 8th Century. Subterranean passages were discovered in the 19th Century.

From 1914 onward, the Germans constructed tunnels, underground shelters, and trenches in the hill.

Allied counteroffensives in mid-1918 eliminated most German salients on the Western Front. But the St. Mihiel Salient remained. Its elimination was critical.

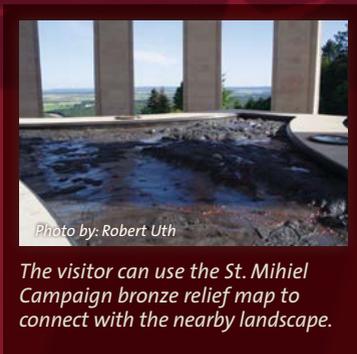


Photo by: Robert Uth

*The visitor can use the St. Mihiel Campaign bronze relief map to connect with the nearby landscape.*



Photo: The National Archives



*Soldiers of Company B, 165th Infantry Regiment, 42d Division, are ready and waiting for German patrols to approach near Hazavant, France. September 14, 1918.*

**AUGUST 10, 1918:** The U.S. First Army was activated, commanded by General John J. Pershing. It included fourteen American and four French divisions. Its mission: reduce the St. Mihiel Salient.

**SEPTEMBER 12:** Aerial and artillery bombardment of German positions began at 1:00 a. m., and the main ground attack at 5:00 a. m. The advance was rapid on all axes. The 2d Division liberated Thiaucourt by midday. The 89th Division advanced across ground that became the St. Mihiel American Cemetery. The 42d Division reached the Bois de Thiaucourt.

**SEPTEMBER 13:** The 26th Division entered Vigneulles. Its patrols met 1st Division soldiers, closing the salient. Combat continued for three more days.

**SEPTEMBER 16:** The St. Mihiel Salient was erased. More than 550,000 Americans and 110,000 French fought in the offensive. Many units battled next in the Meuse-Argonne Offensive, starting September 26.

**OCTOBER 16:** The U.S. Second Army held the sector until November 9. Then its U.S. and French divisions attacked northeastward into the Wöevre Plain, bolstering Allied offensives ending with the Armistice on November 11.



Photo: The National Archives

*Engineer soldiers who went "over the top" at Montsec repair shell holes made by U.S. artillery on German positions. Montsec, September 15, 1918.*



Photo: The National Archives

*Phoning to the guns. Battery B, 21st Artillery, near Thiaucourt, France. September 24, 1918.*