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December 2018

“Time will not dim the glory of their deeds.”
- General of the Armies John J. Pershing
The massive Allied assault on the Normandy coastline on June 6, 1944 aimed to liberate France and drive into Nazi Germany.

Before dawn on June 6, three airborne divisions—the U.S. 82nd and 101st and the British 6th—landed by parachute and glider behind targeted beaches. Allied naval forces, including the U.S. Coast Guard, conveyed assault forces across the English Channel. Beginning at 0630 hours, six U.S., British and Canadian divisions landed on Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno and Sword Beaches in history’s greatest amphibious assault.

The U.S. 4th Infantry Division pushed inland from Utah Beach. To the east, on Omaha Beach, the U.S. 1st and 29th Infantry Divisions battled German resistance over a beach bristling with obstacles. To reach the plateau where Normandy American Cemetery stands, troops fought across an open area of up to 200 yards, and attacked up steep bluffs. By day’s end, the Americans held fragile control of Omaha Beach.

On Gold, Juno and Sword, British and Canadian divisions forged ahead. In less than a week, the Allies linked the beachheads and pressed onward.

Over the next three months, the Allies battled German troops throughout Normandy. British and Canadians freed Caen. Americans liberated Cherbourg and staged a dramatic breakout near St. Lô. Allied troops, joined by French and Polish units, encircled and annihilated German troops at the Falaise Pocket while surviving units fled eastward. The way was now open to advance toward Paris and then to Germany.

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The Garden of the Missing

Engraved tablets honor the missing in action who gave their lives in this region. A bronze rosette beside a name shows that the remains were later recovered, identified and buried.

The Visitor Building

It depicts the significance and meaning of Operation OVERLORD. Here you can meet our staff, get your questions answered, and sign the guest register.

The Graves

A central mall bisects the cemetery’s ten grave plots. Our servicemen and women lie beneath precisely aligned headstones of white Lasa marble Latin crosses and stars of David.

The Plantings

Trees, shrubs and roses highlight the grave plots. Beds of polyantha roses trim the Garden of the Missing, while a variety of trees grace the lawn areas.

USEFUL INFORMATION

Dimensions: 172.5 acres
Headstones: 9,387
Latin crosses: 9,238
Stars of David: 149
Tablets of the Missing: 1,557
Sets of brothers: 45
Medal of Honor recipients: 3
Dedicated: July 18, 1956

Headstone Location

PLOT:  
ROW:  
GRAVE:  

Symbolic Statues

Two statues of Italian Bavano granite representing the United States and France stand at the west end of the central mall.

The Chapel

Its mosaic ceiling depicts America blessing her sons as they depart by sea and air, and a grateful France bestowing a laurel wreath upon the American dead.

Overlook

Gives a panorama of Omaha Beach and the English Channel.

The Memorial

Features a 22-foot statue, “The Spirit of American Youth Rising from the Waves,” facing west toward the headstones.