



## American Battle Monuments Commission – World War One Sites

### Routes of Interest - Oise Aisne American Cemetery to the south, the “Rainbow” and “Keystone” Divisions,

1. From the Oise Aisne American Cemetery Go West on the D2.
2. At the intersection bare left toward Memorial de la 42e division US on the D2.
3. At the stop sign turn left toward Villers-sur-Fère / Sergy on D6.
4. You will cross a bridge over the small Ourcq River.
  - Note: As you begin to curve left at the top of the rise the forward lines of the 42<sup>nd</sup> “Rainbow” Division were in the fields on your right for 600 yards facing northeast on July 28 1918. Their advance from here to the site of the American Cemetery took four days of heavy fighting. The 42<sup>nd</sup> Division
5. Continue on the D6 past a walled cemetery and a monument to ten French soldiers parachuted into this area in May 1944 shot here in World War Two by the Germans.
  - Note: The Valley of the Ourcq River looks very similar today compared to 1918. American forces descended the slopes on your right to cross the Ourcq and assault the towns, woods and ridges across the valley. They took almost 6500 casualties in the assault operations.
6. Bear left at the fork toward Courmont on the D6.
7. Bear right at the fork toward Trélou-sur-Marne on D6.
  - Note: If it is safe stop in a pull off and look to your left. This was the front line looking northeast on July 28 1918. From the town below, Courmont, the 28<sup>th</sup> “Keystone” Division of the Pennsylvania National Guard assaulted the wooded heights of the Bois de Grimpets across the Ourcq River 1,400 casualties in four days of fighting.
8. Continue south on D6.
9. Bear right at the fork toward Le Charmel on D14.
10. You will pass under a highway, then over a railway
11. At the intersection with a fountain in Le Charmel bear half left on the Route de Jaulgonne, the D14.
12. At the fork on the edge of town turn right toward Fère-en-Tardenois on D3.
  - Note: American Patrols probed north up this road through Charmel by July 22 but were forced back by German forces desperate to keep their routes of retreat open.
13. Pull over on the left where there are some ruins and a monument with parking at Croix Rouge Farm, the “Memorial de la 42e division US”.
  - Note: This front line of the 42<sup>nd</sup> “Rainbow” Division on the morning of July 26<sup>th</sup>. There is a monument to the 167<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment of the Alabama National Guard. From here the Division began their advance toward the Ourcq River.
14. Go North on D3.
15. At the Crossroad continue north toward Fère-en-Tardenois on d3.
16. At the intersection bear left toward Fère-en-Tardenois on d3.
17. At the intersection bear right toward Fère-en-Tardenois on d3.
18. At the stop sign intersection turn right toward Fère-en-Tardenois on d967.

19. At the next intersection go straight.
20. At the next intersection turn hard right toward American Cemetery on D2.
21. At the fork bear left toward American Cemetery on D2.
22. At the fork bear right toward American Cemetery on D2.
  - Note: This is the right end of German positions looking across the Ourcq River toward the “Rainbow” Divisions positions. German Artillery observers and long range machine gunners had the same view. The Third road on the right led to Mercy Farm. Near here was where American poet Joyce Kilmer lost his life on a reconnaissance patrol.
23. The American Cemetery is just ahead.