



American Battle Monuments Commission – World War One Sites

Routes of Interest –Aisne-Marne American Cemetery & battles around Belleau Wood.

Note: The Aisne – Marne American Cemetery is located on a battlefield. Behind the cemetery to the south is Belleau Wood, the site of many days of bitter fighting between the German Army and Soldiers, and Marines of the 2nd Division of the United States Army. The fighting in the wood was accompanied by other engagements fought to secure, or outflank the wood. Further afield there were numerous French and American artillery batteries, and medical units.

1. Leaving the American Cemetery turn right and then immediately left by the church.
 - The church was heavily damaged in the war, and rebuilt post war with the aid of the veterans of the U.S. 26th “Yankee” Division who fought here. Their crest is on the right gate post at the churchyard entrance. There is a French inscription over the door, and numerous dedicatory and memorial features inside.
2. Go toward Centre Ville.
3. Keep your eye open on the right for a red hydrant by a stone trough.
 - The trough and old pump are the Belleau Pennsylvania Fountain, the former town water supply, a memorial to Pennsylvanians who fell in battle here
4. Continue toward Centre Ville. The Mairie (town hall) is on the right. It may have flags over the door.
 - There are historical displays in a small museum next to the town hall, called the Belleau Remembrance Museum.
5. Turn left after the Town Hall.
6. Drive up the hill and turn right on Rue du Parc.
7. Go straight into the village of Torcy-en-Valois.
8. In Torcy turn left on Rue de Chateau D28.
9. Look for a turn out on the right for a view to the south.
 - The German defenses attacked by the Marine Brigade ran from Bouresches to your left beyond Belleau Wood, through Belleau and Torcy behind you, and west to your right toward Bussiares.
10. Between here and Belleau south of the road is a WW1 German Cemetery.
11. Turn right at the crossroad toward Bussiares on D9.
12. At the fork down in the woods, bear left toward Bussiares on D9.
 - There is an early medieval church in Bussiares built in the 11 – 12th Centuries.
13. Turn left in Bussiares toward Champillon/Les Mares on Rue du Lieutenant Peyroche.
 - Lt. Peyroche, French 174th Infantry, killed in an attack at Givry, awarded the Croix de Guerre, with Palm, two silver, and two Bronze stars, A Knight of the Legion of Honor.
14. Continue up the hill and go straight to a fork in the road with a cross at left.
 - At the top of the rise past the houses the woods off to the right are the Bois de Veully, the far left of the Marine line. German attacks on June 4 came down this road to attack Les Mares Farm and to occupy Hill 142 ahead to the left.

15. Bear left at the fork toward Champillon on C5.
 - The ridge line on your left includes Hill 142. The Marines attacked along this ridge toward Torcy on June 6 to secure the left flank of the attack on Belleau Wood.
16. Go through Champillon.
 - Les Mares Farm is less than half a mile to the west (your right) over the ridge.
17. At the “T” crossroad turns left toward Lucy-le-Bocage.
18. The street curves to the left.
19. On your left will be the church. Turn left at the stop sign.
20. At the top of the rise out of town pull off to the right carefully on a dirt lane.
 - The forest to your east is the south end of Belleau Wood. On June 4th the Germans attacked Lucy-le-Bocage across these fields and were repulsed by the rifle fire of Marines in Lucy.
 - On the 6th, Marines attacked Belleau Wood from Lucy-le-Bocage, some crossed these fields to the southern wood, and others down this road toward the northern wood. Repulsed from the northern wood they took positions west of the road in the Bois de Bruyeres.
21. Carefully turn back toward Lucy-le-Bocage.
22. Go through the town square and take the third left towards Bouresches.
 - Marines advanced across these fields toward Bouresches. The left hand companies wheeled left to assault into Belleau Wood from the south.
23. There is some parking on the right in the middle of Bouresches.
 - Bouresches was occupied by Germans on the 4th, but on the 6th Americans attacked the West side while another unit crept up a ravine south of town and entered from there upsetting German defenses. Others entered from the north having stolen up the southern edge of Belleau Wood.
24. Continue east and bear left at the fork on Rue du Lt. JG Osborne (D1390).
 - Lieutenant, J.G. Weedon Osborn, Medal of Honor, Distinguished Service Cross with 2 Silver Stars, was a naval dental surgeon assigned to the 6th Marines attacking Bouresches, killed trying to rescue an officer under fire.
25. Bear left at the fork on D1390.
 - A German Machinegun nest just south of here stopped the American advance through Bouresches with the help of heavy artillery fire.
 - There is a cast boulder here with star showing the limit of advance of the U.S. 2nd Division.
26. Follow this road along the east side of Belleau Wood to the town of Belleau at the D9.
27. Turn left on D9
28. The entrance to the American Cemetery will be on your left just past the Belleau church on the right.