

Campaign in Southern France, August 1944



KEY: † Military Cemetery Parachute Drop



This agency of the United States government operates and maintains 26 American cemeteries and 31 memorials, monuments and markers in 17 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."

The 551st Parachute Infantry Battalion entered Draguignan on August 16, 1944, joined next day by elements of the 36th Infantry Division. A temporary American cemetery was established here on August 17, 1944. The French government has granted free use of the land as a permanent burial ground without charge or taxation.

The cemetery offers free guided tours on request pending staff availability.



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



ENGLISH

AMERICAN BATTLE MONUMENTS COMMISSION

Rhone American Cemetery and Memorial



“Time will not dim the glory of their deeds.”

- General of the Armies John J. Pershing



FROM THE RIVIERA TO THE RHINE

Operation DRAGOON's objectives included capturing the ports of Toulon and Marseille; trapping the German Nineteenth Army; and linking up with allied armies in the north. U.S. Twelfth and Fifteenth Air Forces, plus British and French air units, rendered vital airlift and tactical air support throughout these operations.

AUGUST 15, 1944: U.S. Seventh Army (the VI Corps comprising the 3rd, 36th, and 45th Infantry Divisions, plus French armor) landed on Riviera beaches, supported by more than 800 U.S., British, French, Greek, and Polish ships. The 1st Special Service Force and 1st Airborne Task Force made parachute and glider landings at Port Cros and Le Muy.

AUGUST 16: French Armée B landed on beaches secured by the Seventh Army.

AUGUST 16: 551st Parachute Infantry Battalion liberated Draguignan and captured the German general who was military governor of the Department of the Var.

AUGUST 19-28: Battle of Montelimar. Task Force Butler began blocking German withdrawals up the Rhone Valley north of Montelimar. The 36th Infantry Division joined in attacks and counterattacks in following days. Meanwhile, the 3rd Infantry Division pushed north from Avignon. The escaping German forces suffered severe losses.

AUGUST 26: French II Corps liberated Toulon.

AUGUST 28: French II Corps liberated Marseille.

SEPTEMBER 11: Elements of French II Corps north of Dijon met a patrol from the Third Army advancing from Normandy, fulfilling the campaign objective.

In less than a month, Seventh Army had advanced 400 miles into France. It fought onward in multiple campaigns to victory in Germany, May 1945.

Fountains

Two fountains of red granite from Brittany stand at the east and west ends of the plaza behind the chapel.



Wall of the Missing

The names of 294 of our missing are inscribed on the face of the retaining wall of the terrace of the memorial.



Chapel Mural

The mosaic mural recalls the eternal care of the Almighty, understanding and transcending the personal grief of bereavement, and encouraging new hope for this and future generations.



Bronze Relief Map

The bronze relief map lies between the two flagstaffs. It portrays the military operations in the area and the advance up the valley of the Rhone River.



Headstone

Private First Class Lattie Tipton of the 15th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division, was killed by enemy fire soon after landing ashore on Aug. 15, 1944.



Visitor Building

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

Layout

The cemetery entrance is on the north side of Boulevard John F. Kennedy. The visitor building is immediately on the right. The parking area is adjacent to the visitor building.

Useful Information

DIMENSIONS: 12.2 acres
HEADSTONES: 860
LATIN CROSSES: 836

STARS OF DAVID: 24
TABLETS OF THE MISSING: 294

SETS OF BROTHERS: 2
DEDICATED: July 26, 1956

Headstone Location

PLOT: _____

ROW: _____

GRAVE: _____

Photo: The National Archives

Paratroopers of 551st Parachute Infantry Battalion drop near Le Muy, France, Aug. 15, 1944.