

Allied Landings on June 6, 1944

KEY: † Military Cemetery 🪂 Parachute Drop

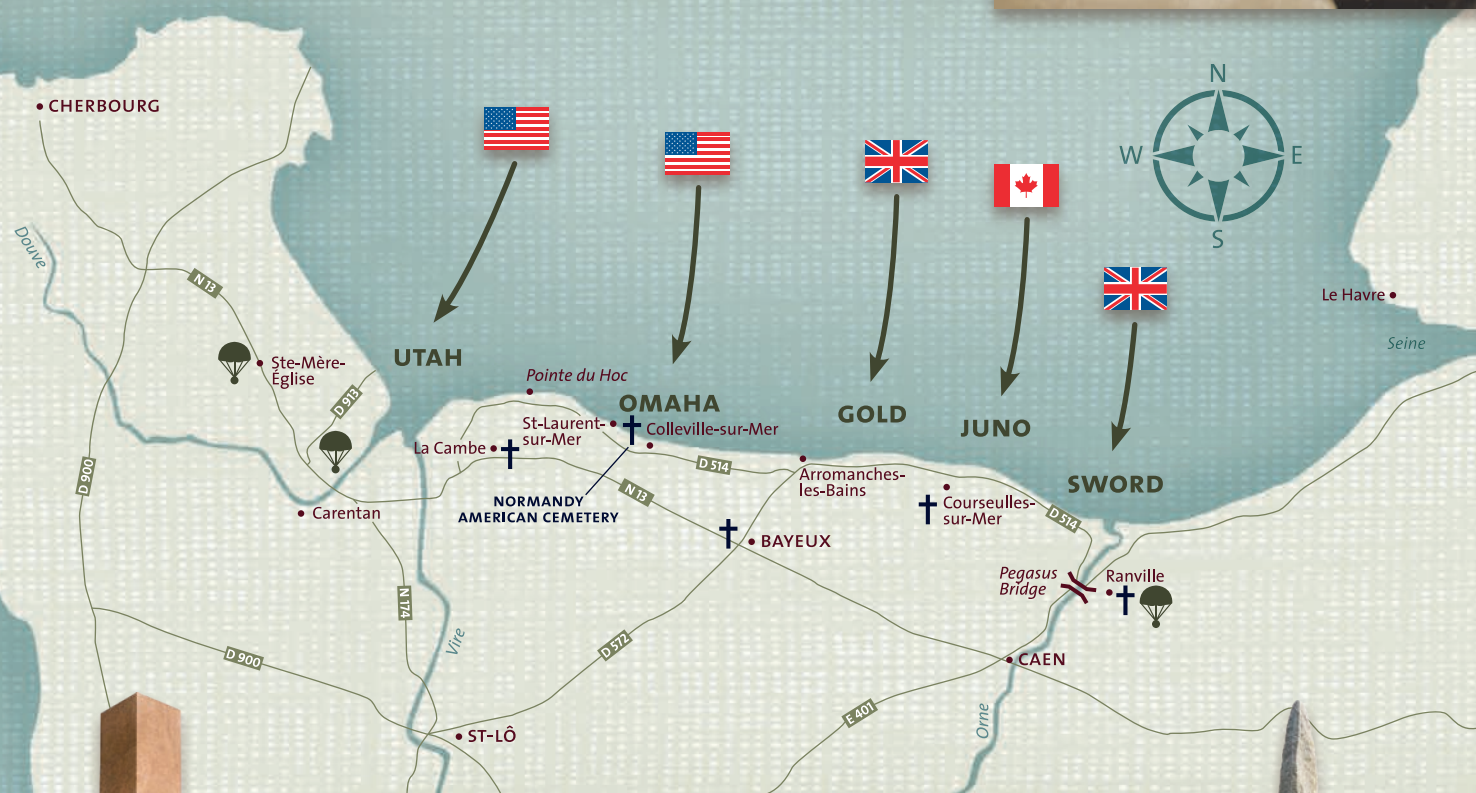


Photo: U.S. Coast Guard



Normandy American Cemetery and Memorial

American Battle Monuments Commission



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The Normandy American Cemetery is one of 14 permanent American World War II military cemeteries on foreign soil. The government of France granted use of this land, in perpetuity, as a permanent burial ground without charge or taxation.

American Battle Monuments Commission

This agency of the United States government operates and maintains 26 American cemeteries and 29 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
2300 Clarendon Boulevard
Suite 500
Arlington, VA 22201
USA

Normandy American Cemetery
14710 Colleville-sur-Mer, France
tel +33.(0)2.31.51.62.00
gps N49 21.394 W0 51.192

Cover photo: Robert Uth



Utah Beach Monument

A red granite obelisk in a small park overlooks historic Utah Beach. It honors the achievements of U.S. VII Corps forces that fought to liberate the Cotentin Peninsula.

Pointe du Hoc Monument

A granite pylon tops a bunker on a 100-foot cliff eight miles west of the cemetery. It honors soldiers of the 2nd Ranger Battalion who scaled the cliff to disable German guns threatening Utah and Omaha Beaches.



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

THE NORMANDY CAMPAIGN

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.

Symbolic Statues

Two statues of Italian Baveno 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.



Layout

From the visitor center at the east, the Garden of the Missing leads to a memorial overlooking a reflecting pool, then to the grave plots, chapel, and statues at the west end.

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.



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.



Photo: Roland Halbe

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.



Photo: U.S. Coast Guard

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: