Epinal American Cemetery and Memorial

The 45th Infantry Division liberated the Epinal area on September 21, 1944. A temporary cemetery was established here 15 days later. The French government granted use of this site 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.”

Soldiers view an M4 tank damaged by German gunfire southwest of Epinal, September 12, 1944.

Photo: The National Archives

For more information on this site and other ABMC commemorative sites, please visit www.abmc.gov
From mid-August to early September 1944, the U.S. Seventh Army and French First Army advanced rapidly northeastward from Southern France. On September 11 near Dijon, units of the Seventh Army met the U.S. Third Army pressing forward from Normandy.

**September 15, 1944:** The U.S. 6th Army group was activated, consisting of the U.S. Seventh Army and the French First Army. Strong tactical air support by the U.S. 9th Air Force and the French First Air Corps reinforced the continuing operations of the 6th Army Group.

**September 21:** The 45th Infantry Division crossed the Moselle River at Epinal.

**Mid-December:** Seventh Army forces reached the West Wall near the Saar River.

**January 1, 1945:** German counteroffensives began. Several battles raged until Allied forces stopped the Germans by January 25.

**February 9:** After furious winter fighting, the 6th Army Group cleared German forces from the Colmar Pocket.

**March 26:** The Seventh Army crossed the Rhine and pressed onward, occupying Mannheim on March 29.

**Late April:** The French First Army cleared Stuttgart (April 22), then Ulm (April 24). The Seventh Army took Nuremberg (April 26), then Munich (April 30), driving southeast toward Innsbruck and the Alps.

**May 4:** Advance units of the U.S. 103rd Infantry Division pushed through the Brenner Pass and linked up with patrols of the U.S. Fifth Army at Vipiteno, Italy. Germany capitulated on May 8, marking victory in Europe for the U.S. and its allies.