



105th Anniversary of WWI-1918

Doughboys & Devil Dogs in France

20—29 May 2023

American Battlefields & Commemoration Ceremony Belleau Wood



MILITARY™
HISTORICAL TOURS, INC



13198 Centerpointe Way, Ste 202 Woodbridge, VA 22193-5285
703-590-1295 * mhtours@miltours.com * www.miltours.com



It has been called THE GREAT WAR and THE WAR TO END ALL WARS. We know it as WORLD WAR I. It began in 1914 and ended with an armistice at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month in 1918. The cost... included 52,947 dead and 202,628 wounded Americans. After war was declared on 6 April 1917 the U.S. began preparations to enter the morass of European trench warfare. In June 1917, transport ships carrying 14,000 U.S. troops in the American Expeditionary Force approached the shores of France, these soldiers would join the Allied fight against the Central Powers. They disembarked at the port of Saint Nazaire. However, the "Doughboys," as the British referred to the green American troops, were said to be untrained and ill-equipped, untested for the rigors of fighting along the Western Front.

Nevertheless, the war-weary Allied armies enthusiastically welcomed the fresh American troops. In 1918, the Yanks won a small but important victory at Cantigny, stopped the German attack toward Paris at Belleau Wood and along the Marne, played the major role in turning the tide of the war at Soissons, eliminated the German salient at St Mihiel that had existed for four years, smashed the Hindenburg Line at Blanc Mont and again in the Meuse-Argonne, driving the Germans back across the Meuse River to the north and east by the time the Armistice was signed. The inexperienced and hastily trained Americans took severe casualties but were ultimately victorious in every major battle they fought.

Military Historical Tours, Inc. is pleased to offer our legacy tour of the battlefields of this world-changing war and we are happy to have two of the finest leading you "Over There!"

Our MHT Tour Leaders: *Steve Girard (left) is a valued member of the MHT team. He is a Retired United States Army (Infantry) SSG and Field Historical Officer for both U.S. Army & U.S. Marine Corps. A combat veteran of Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm (1990-1991), Operation Joint Endeavor, Joint Guard, Joint Forge, Operation Enduring Freedom & Operation Iraqi Freedom he specializes as a WWI American Expeditionary Forces Historian/Archivist and a Special Historical Consultant (WWI) to Marine Corps History Division, Quantico. James White (right) is the son of Col Bill White, USMC(Ret) (center) who originated this legacy tour for MHT and a WWI expert in his own right having lead this tour multiple times and has extensive knowledge of the French battlefields.*

Daily Itinerary

Sat 20 May (Day 1) Departure. Individual departures from USA to France.

Sun 21 May (Day 2) Arrive CDG Paris. Proceed to your hotel in Paris, instructions on transportation will be provided by your tour leader. Evening wine reception and tour overview briefing. **RON-Paris**

Mon 22 May (Day 3) Soissons Battlefield, Reims. Visit the Lafayette Escadrille Memorial Cemetery, commemorating the birth of American combat aviation (Picture Top Left.) The Escadrille was made up of Americans who volunteered for France prior to America's entry into the war. Visit historic Notre Dame Cathedral, Reims, the traditional place of coronation of the Kings of France, largely destroyed during the war. Tour the 2nd Division battlefield at Soissons, "turning point of the war." Lunch on own in town square in Pierrefonds



with photo op of its magnificent castle on the hill. In the evening we will depart for the historic city of Reims. **RON-Reims. Meals: (B)**

A note on Reims: Reims is an ancient city founded circa 80 BC. After the fall of the Roman Empire it was the site where most of the French kings were crowned at the famed Notre-Dame de Reims. Reims is located in the heart of the Champagne region of France. You will have a chance to take in the town in the evenings and perhaps have a taste of the champagne or see the lovely cathedral lit up at night.

Tue 23 May (Day 4) Blanc Mont & Meuse-Argonne Battlefields. Drive along the French-German front line in the Champagne region from 1914 to 1918 from Reims to Blanc Mont and tour the Marine (2nd Infantry Division) battlefield where the seizing of Blanc Mont ridge was called by French General Henri Petain, "The greatest achievement of 1918." Then, on to the Meuse-Argonne, the site of the largest American battle until WWII, stopping at sites of interest in this huge



Tour Price: \$ 3,845*

BODO - Based on Double Occupancy

Single Room Supplement: \$ 985*

Tour Price Includes:

- * First-Class Hotel Accommodations
- * Air-conditioned deluxe motorcoach
- * Meals as indicated in itinerary
- * Historical Trip information packet, containing maps & other information
- * Admission fees to all sites, museums and special attractions listed
- * Services of experienced Tour Directors & English-speaking local guides



Airfare Not Included: Optional MHT Round-trip economy airfare from your hometown airport to CDG Paris available upon request (price subject to confirmation at time of booking.) Business class is also available.

* - Price based on € current rate of exchange



battlefield's western portion. **RON-Verdun. Meals: (B/L)**

Wed 24 May (Day 5) Verdun and St. Mihiel. We will journey to the famous, or infamous, Verdun battlefield. This 1916 attack by the Germans to "bleed the French Army white." We begin our exploration of the Battle of Verdun with the excellent Verdun Museum in Fleury. We will also visit Fort Douaumont and Douaumont Ossuary. In addition, we will see the vast areas of shell craters (some areas are still off-limits due to thousands of unexploded munitions)

with lunch on your own. In the afternoon, tour the St. Mihiel battlefield, where for the first time an American army entered into battle. We end the day at the beautiful St Mihiel American Military Cemetery. Group Dinner. **RON-Verdun. Meals: (B/D)**

Thur 25 May (Day 6) Meuse-Argonne. Tour the central/eastern portion of the Meuse-Argonne battlefield, stopping at the huge American monument atop Montfaucon, then paying our respects at the Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery at Romagne, the largest American cemetery in Europe. We'll continue to the jump-off line of the 2nd Division, where the Hindenburg line was smashed and follow the attack of the Marine Brigade as they drove north to the Corps Objective at Barricourt Heights. Then, on to the Meuse River near Mouzon



where we'll view the spot where on 10 November, the last night of the war, two battalions of the Fifth Marine Regiment crossed the river on a footbridge under heavy fire. Group Dinner. **RON-Reims. Meals: (B/D)**

Fri 26 May (Day 7) Belleau Wood Battlefield. Today, we'll visit the iconic Marine battlefield at Belleau Wood, a site at or near the top of most Marines' "bucket lists." Here, you'll see fighting positions, trenches, medical aid stations, machine-gun nests in and around the woods and view Les Mares Farm, Hill 142, Lucy-le-Bocage, Bouresches, "The Wheatfield," and much more. You'll also have the opportunity to drink from the legendary "Bull Dog Fountain." Lunch will be on your own in Chateau-Thierry. We'll then return to Paris with the evening at leisure. **RON-Paris. Meals: (B)**

Sat 27 May (Day 8) Paris in the Springtime. Today, you experience Paris, quite arguably the most beautiful city in the world. Your tour leaders will be available to offer suggestions



of things to do and places to visit, as well as how to use the excellent Paris public transportation system. Your choices are endless and a Paris guidebook of your choice, obtained before the tour

would be most helpful. You can ride one of the hop-on/hop-off tour buses for an excellent driving tour. Want more military history? Visit Napoleon's Tomb at Les Invalides, where Marshal Ferdinand Foch, the Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces is also entombed and which also houses the National Army Museum, a fabulous collection of French militaria. Had enough military history for the moment? Visit the incomparable art treasures of the Louvre, Orsay Museum, Rodin Museum, Pompidou Center, take in the architectural wonders of the Eiffel Tower, the Arc de Triomphe, Notre Dame Cathedral, the Opera, the Basilica de Sacre Coeur in Montmartre, the Marais, or take an optional tour to Versailles. Or, you can just sit on a bench on the Champs Elysees or at a table at the Cafe de la Paix on the Place de la Opera and watch the world go by. **Overnight: Paris. Hotel: Concorde Montparnasse. Meals: (B)**



Sun 28 May (Day 9) Memorial Day Ceremony at Aisne-Marne American Cemetery. We depart this morning to return to Belleau Wood, where we'll participate in the annual Memorial Day observance at the cemetery. Traditionally, either the Commandant or Assistant Commandant of the United States Marine Corps is the guest of honor, usually accompanied by a Marine musical unit which performs along with a similar band unit from the French Marines. The moving ceremony reminds us of the great losses suffered in the futile



"War to End All Wars," and of the great sacrifices made by these young men and their families. This ceremony gives our tour appropriate "closure" to all we have experienced in our exploration of **THE GREAT WAR's 105th Anniversary.** After the ceremony we are on our way to Paris to enjoy a final night in the City of Light with our evening at leisure. **Overnight: Paris. Hotel: Concorde Montparnasse. Meals: (B)**

Mon 29 May (Day 10) Departure for Home. Check out for the flight home or extend your stay in Paris for some French Open Tennis, Versailles or additional sites. **Meals: (B)**



MAJGEN JOHN A. LEJEUNE
WENT TO FRANCE IN JUNE
1918, YOU SHOULD DO
THE SAME IN 2023!



MILITARY
HISTORICAL TOURS, INC.

★★★★★

13198 Centerpointe Way, Ste 202
Woodbridge, VA 22193-5285