

Like all U.S. Military Cemeteries in Europe, this was beautifully well kept. The headstones are lined in long rows, divided into four plots by avenues with tree bordered walks. At the center is a large sundial surmounted by an American Eagle.

Dad remembered the railroad station in Thiaucourt was taken by his regiment during a massive air battle between French, German and American planes.



The station at Thiaucourt was taken from the Germans by Dad's Second Marine Division. They lost 1,555 Marines while taking 3,300 German Prisoners

He recalled that when a plane was shot down it would "fall like a rock." But when the pilot jumped out it appeared that he was falling in a "lazy summersault" at a relatively slower speed until a background of trees would provide a reference to show how fast they were really falling. These fellows did not carry parachutes.



A French Military Cemetery we visited on our way from Thiaucourt to Verdun. It, too, was very well kept in honor of the French Soldiers who lost their lives at St. Mihiel.

Alain Brainos, of Culligan France, had told us, in Stockholm, to be on the lookout for the "Syndicate de Initiative" somewhere along our way to Verdun. He said they would be able to supply us with maps and other information about the activities of WW1

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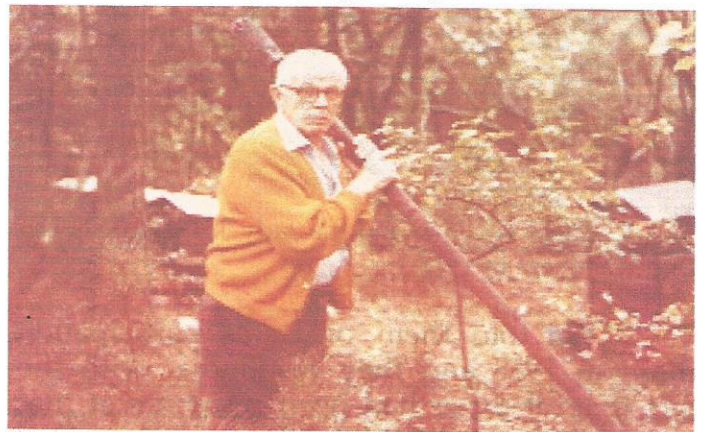
We stopped at a wide spot in the road to ask where to find the "S de I." Much to our embarrassment, the gentleman told us we were right in front of it. We went in and did get a map and some other information about the area. I was able to replenish my supply of film while dad visited with the lady in charge.

Our next objective was to visit the location of the Argonne Front, another of the major engagements of Dad's 95th Company. Our route was in a northwesterly direction through Verdun. Another 17 kilometers brought us to the village of Varennes-en-Argonne where a little country road brought us to Fleville. How Dad could remember these little country roads is beyond me.

Dad recalled a deep ravine which provided valuable cover from a murderous German Artillery barrage as the 95th was advancing on the village St. George. It was in the field beyond that ravine that Captain Overton, Commander of the 95th Company was killed. I guess a traumatic event such as that is something one never forgets.

We continued westward through the village of Grandpre where our WW1 map showed the location of "Grosse Piece Allemand" (a German Big Bertha cannon). After passing through the small village of Mont-St. Martin we noticed a clump of trees off the small one lane dirt road we were traveling. Dad told me to turn off onto a little lane through a farm field toward those trees.

We got out of the car and were exploring the wooded area with no success in locating the cannon. However, Dad suddenly said, "Here it is!" He had found the ramrod.



Dad holding the ramrod he found at the apparent site of the German "Big Bertha Cannon. The ramrod was used to tamp the powder charge in the hugh cannon.