

AUGUST 23rd 1971:

The United States owns outright, the cemeteries and Memorial at Belleau Woods and Omaha Beach. It has two beautiful homes beside a wide drive; one occupied by the American Superintendent and the other for a permanent employee. It is the only American Cemetery with graves in semicircle. Every cross is of Marble!

We proceeded into the town of Lucy. As we drove thru the woods one could see the very old trees still showing damage inflicted 53 years ago, June 12th 1918! The new growth that has come in during those years has made the woods just as thick thru which to maneuver as it was in 1918!

LOCATED THE WELL!.....

This well --and we found it--provided the only source of water for us in the action at Belleau Woods. When given a special invitation to go on water detail, we gathered up as many empty canteens as we could carry, and traveled back thru the pitch dark woods, with that well under constant gun fire at night because of this water supply! Just one night "out on the town" and you knew you were on a suicide mission you did not enjoy.....

We located the well, took pictures. Three members of a family were seated on a low bench in front of a large barn door. As you know, house and barn join hands in communion with one another on French Farms; there alsowas that large purveyor of pollution and perfume at the rear door, center court yard, the Manure Pile!

I asked Done to stop. They could not understand my sign language. French. Don came to the rescue, telling them that I had taken part in the recapture of the Germans, in the town, October 10th 1918!

Response instantaneous! "We, wee messieurs, Wee, Wee!" "We owned this farm and worked it at that time! I felt perfectly at home, being of the same vintage. The two brothers could have passed as twins, and no doubt the Madame with the bible tucked under her arm was the wife of one of them.

One of the men stood up and pointed to holes in the door, which were from machine gun fire. I asked him about a cemetery close to town. "Wee, Monsieur! He pointed in the direction of the cemetery. What did the cemetery have to do with October 10th 1918? Ask members of the 95th Company!" Fritz had loaded it with machine guns and had stopped that company cold, with their heavy fire that morning, until the 74th company outflanked that cemetery. The 95th had been stopped dead in their tracks!

We battled from the town of Snippe Railroad Station ten long days and nights to take this town and high ridge of Blanc Mount! This relieved pressure on railroad and Rhelms, which the Germans had held four years!

A NEAR CASUALTY.....

Moving up one night in October 1918, we came under shell fire. Three shells came over, no doubt from the same battery. Two landed in our rear, no casualties! The third a direct hit in the belly of the 95 company barber! It did not explode! Had it done so, this Buck Private of the rear rank would not be writing this episode!