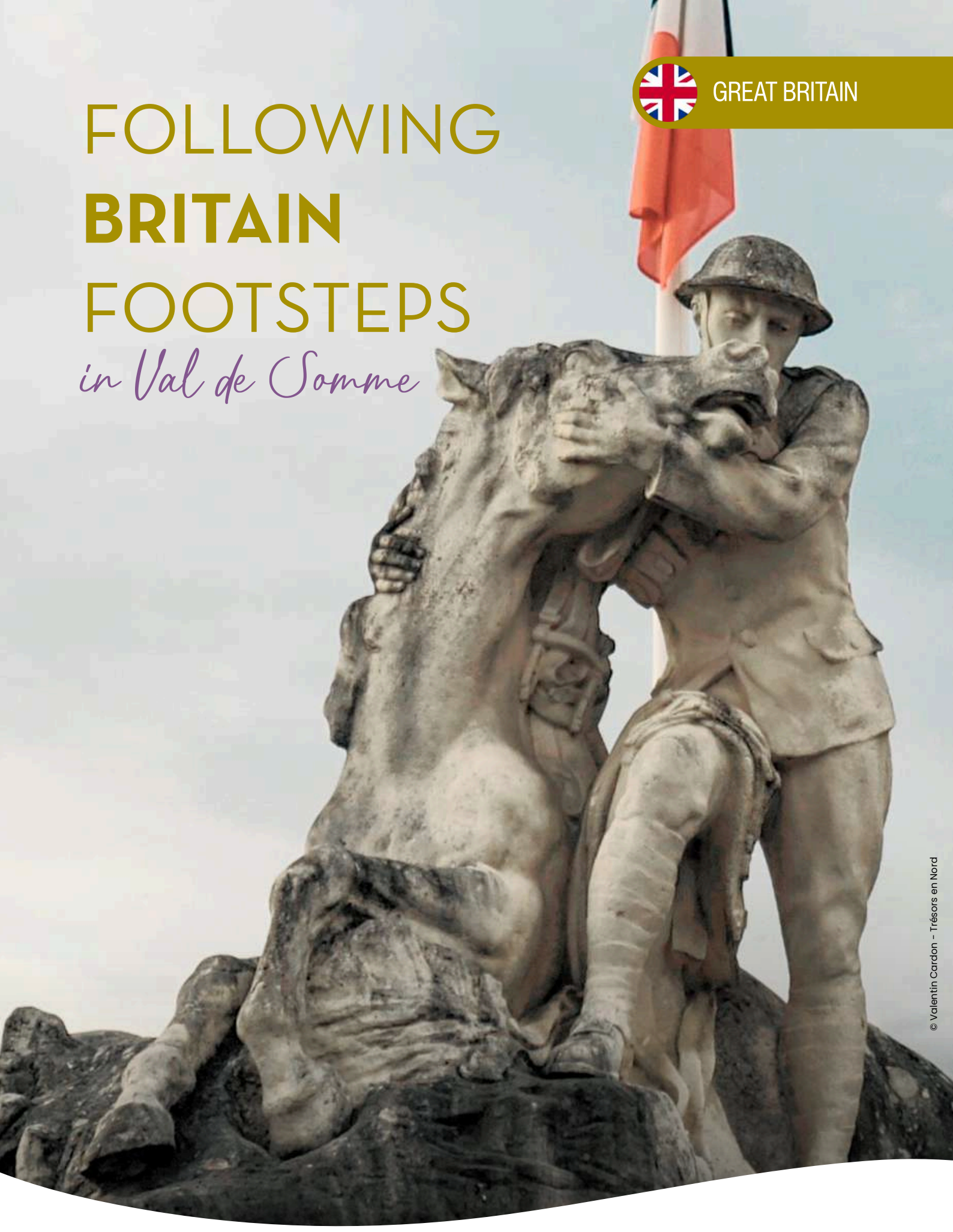
GREAT BRITAIN

FOLLOWING **BRITAIN** FOOTSTEPS

in Val de Somme



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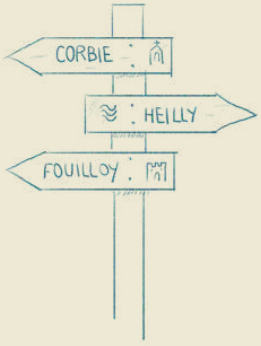
VAL DE SOMME
terres d'**histoires** à partager

WELCOME TO
the Val de Somme

Welcome to the Val de Somme, a place to explore and unwind, just outside Amiens. Here, three valleys intertwine to create landscapes that are both wild and restorative. Meandering rivers, enchanting marshes and hidden trails invite visitors to slow down and discover something new around every corner. But the Val de Somme is also a land shaped by history. Walking through the streets of Corbie is a journey through centuries of history, while Villers-Bretonneux offers a vivid insight into the region's industrial past and the importance of reconstruction following the two World Wars.Throughout the Val de Somme, architectural landmarks, archaeological remains and places of remembrance bear witness to the richness and diversity of the area's heritage. From ancient history to the First World War, the landscape itself tells the story of a territory shaped by the people and events that have left their mark on it.



WHERE ARE WE ?
1 Chemin de Halage - 80800 Corbie - France
officedetourisme@valdesomme.com
www.valdesomme-tourisme.com
03 22 96 95 76

WHO ARE WE ?

THE VAL DE SOMME TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE : YOUR LOCAL TOURISM PARTNER

Located in Corbie, along the Somme Valley cycle route and beside the canal, the new Val de Somme Tourism Centre welcomes visitors in a modern, welcoming and environmentally conscious setting.

Our team shares local expertise and personalised advice on the destination, from heritage sites and walking and cycling routes to outdoor activities and local experiences. The Tourism Centre also offers a range of services for travellers, including 24/7 toilets and showers, bicycle parking and charging points, as well as a shop featuring local products, maps, guides and souvenirs. Throughout the year, we also organise guided tours, nature activities, workshops and special events, including the popular Les Fantômes du Vendredi immersive experience in Corbie.

OPENING TIMES

LOW SEASON

From 1st november to 30th april

Tuesday to saturday

From 10am to 12:30am and from 1:30pm to 5pm

MID SEASON

From 1st may to 30th june and from 1st september to 31st october

Tuesday to Saturday

From 10am to 12:30am and from 1:30pm to 6pm

HIGH SEASON

From 1st july to 31st august

Wednesday to Saturday from 10am to 18pm

Sunday from 10 am to 12:30am and from 1:30pm to 6pm

Opening hours subject to change

THE MUST-SEES

You may already know

©Department of Veterans' Affairs - Morgan Kessler

THE AUSTRALIAN *National memorial*

Unveiled in 1939, this memorial commemorates the 11,000 Australian soldiers who went missing during the First World War and have no known grave. Walk through the Commonwealth cemetery, admire the imposing monument, then climb to the top of the tower for a breathtaking panoramic view of the former battlefields and, in the distance, the city of Amiens.

THE SIR JOHN MONASH *Centre*

This immersive multimedia center tells the story of Australian troops on the Western Front through interactive installations.
New | Discover the Battle of Villers-Bretonneux from a new perspective through their brand-new virtual reality experience.

photos © Department of Veterans' Affairs - Morgan Kessler

WHERE ?
Route de Villers-Bretonneux - 80800 FOUILLOY
+333 60 62 01 40 - www.sjmc.gov.au

THE FRANCO AUSTRALIAN

museum

Located on the first floor of Victoria School (built in 1927), the Franco-Australian Museum tells the story of the Australian Expeditionary Force, especially on the Western Front in 1918. It features exhibitions of photos, uniforms, weapons, letters, and personal belongings.

WHERE ?
9 rue Victoria, 80800 Villers-Bretonneux
+333 22 96 80 79 - www.museeaustralien.com

© Valentin Cardon - Trésors en Nord

THE AUSTRALIAN CORPS

memorial park

Located on the heights of Le Hamel, this memorial commemorates the Allied victory of 4 July 1918, led by General John Monash.
Around twenty panels detail this innovative battle, won in just 93 minutes through a combind strategy. The memorial features the Australian Armed Forces badge and an excerpt from George Clemenceau's speech after the victory.

WHERE ?
4 Chemin de Sailly-Laurette, 80800 Le Hamel
+333 22 96 95 76 - www.valdesomme-tourisme.com

HIDDEN GEMS

you shouldn't miss

© Max Coquards - Bestjobers

CORBIE
behind the lines

Corbie has been shaped by history for more than 1300 years. From the foundation of its famous abbey in 657 to the Industrial Revolution, the town has witnessed sieges, wars and major turning points from the Spanish siege of 1636 to the Franco-Prussian War of 1870. But Corbie's wartime story did not end there. During the First World War, the town became an important base behind the lines, welcoming thousands of soldiers and serving as a centre for military hospitals during the Battle of the Somme. Although heavily damaged by German shelling in the spring of 1918, traces of this military past can still be found throughout the town. **Explore the places where soldiers lived**, rested and recovered, and discover a different side of the Battle of the Somme away from the front line.

THE TRACES OF WAR

Many places, such as the house shown in the photograph, are still standing today. Many of the buildings that once housed military hospitals can still be identified, while a wealth of photographs allows visitors to immerse themselves in Corbie's wartime history and imagine what life was like in the town during the First World War.

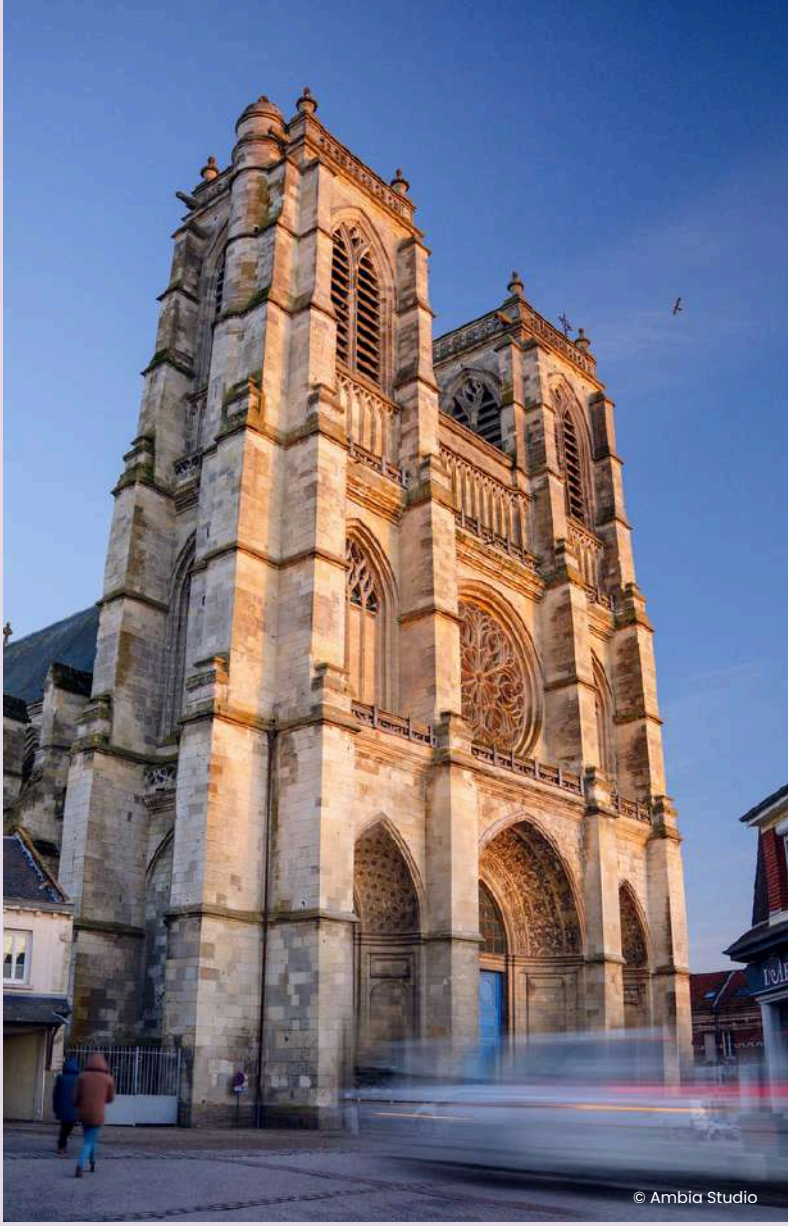
©Albert Samama-Chikli /SPA/SPCA/ECPAD/Défense – SPA 74 L 3490

→
Australian, French, British and American officers outside British Town Major's office at Corbie, 25 May 1918.
IWM Q 78346

A DIFFERENT SIDE OF THE BATTLE OF THE SOMME

Discover Corbie, a fascinating stop between Albert and Amiens, where soldiers rested, recovered and lived during the war. With a large car park and a wide choice of restaurants, it is an easy stop to add to your itinerary.

© Max Coquards - Bestjobers



© Ambia Studio

A LITTLE EXTRA

DISCOVER THE ROYAL ABBEY OF CORBIE
As a local institution, the Tourism Office can arrange **guided tours** of churches throughout the Val de Somme. Discover the beautiful church of Corbie, its remarkable relics, and the story of how it survived the two World Wars. We can also **provide historical information and itinerary suggestions** to help you organise your visit.

TO BOOK A GUIDED TOUR
The abbey church of Corbie / Guided tour of Corbie / Climb to the Top of the Abbey Tower and many more possibilites... Contact us !
+333 22 96 95 76 - officedetourisme@valdesomme.com

HEILLY STATION
cemetery

We know that the **36th Casualty Clearing Station** was set up in Heilly on 1st March 1916. At that time, it consisted of tents pitched near the station, to the south of the railway line. The captain who kept the unit's diary notes that the camp measured 165 metres by 70 metres, or 11,500 square metres, the same size as the Licorne football pitch in Amiens.

The location was ideal in the run-up to the Battle of the Somme, as Heilly station lay on the Albert–Corbie railway line, which was heavily used to evacuate the wounded to hospitals. The cemetery, meanwhile, opened in May 1916. The first burial was that of John Westcott Solomon of the 25th Field Ambulance (Royal Army Medical Corps), who died on 26 May 1916. The 'Heilly Station Cemetery' is the largest military cemetery in the Val de Somme. Nearly 3,000 men are buried here.

La Couturelle, 80800 MERICOURT-L'ABBE

During the Battle of the Somme, **Heilly Station recorded the highest number of medical evacuation trains**, with 167 departures. In July alone, more than 16,500 wounded soldiers were admitted to the 36th Casualty Clearing Station. The 3rd of July was the deadliest day, with 56 men buried at Heilly Station Cemetery.

←
A wounded Australian soldier being lifted down from an ambulance by three other soldiers at No. 38 Casualty Clearing Station. AWM E00003

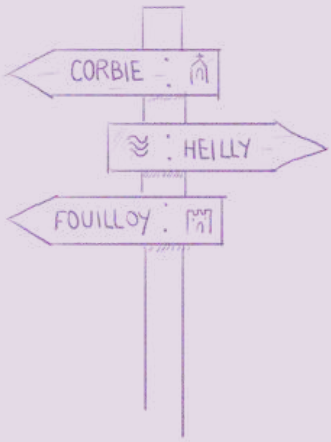
FOLLOW THE EVACUATION ROUTE

On your way **from Albert to Amiens**, follow the evacuation route taken by thousands of wounded soldiers during the Battle of the Somme, from the front line to medical stations such as Heilly and onward to Amiens.

Please note that access to the cemetery can be challenging for coaches at certain times of the year.

© CWGC

© CWGC



A unique site

The cemetery reflects the difficult conditions in which the burials took place. Some graves contain several casualties, with headstones bearing up to three names. The 117 regimental badges that could not be included on the headstones are instead carved into the cloister wall on the north side of the cemetery.

58TH DIVISION
Memorial

Located in the village of Chipilly, this unusual memorial commemorates the men of the 58th Division who fought to liberate the village in August 1918. It is particularly distinctive for also **honouring the animals** that suffered and served during the conflict.

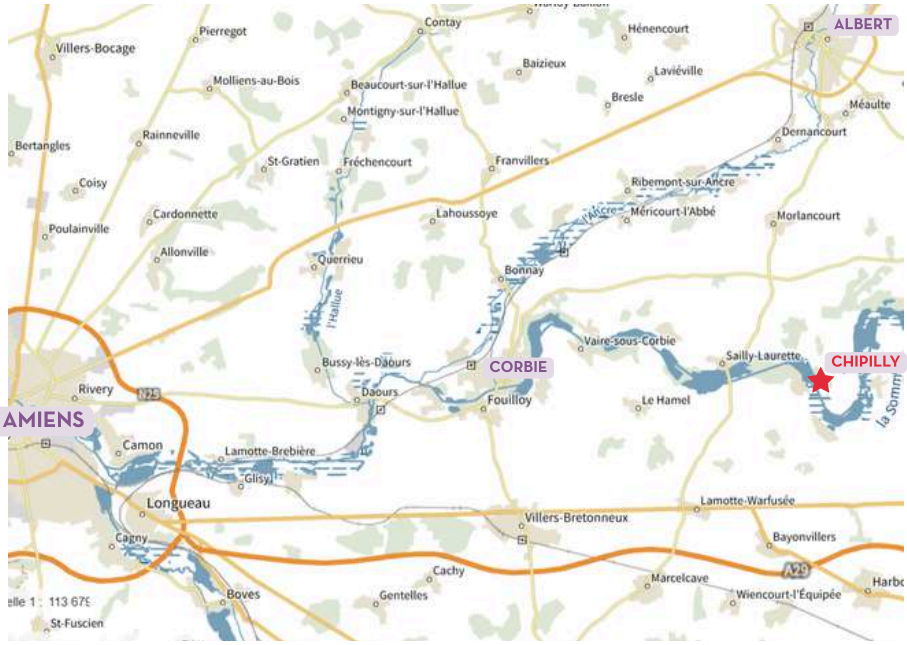
The heights north of Chipilly were of major strategic importance to the Allied forces during the offensive of 8 August 1918. From these German-held positions, troops could fire upon Australian forces advancing south of the Somme River.

German lines held during the first day of the attack, and the village remained under german control. It was eventually liberated on 9 August by British and American troops. The monument located in front of the church commemorates the soldiers of the 58th Division (British Army) who helped liberate the village.

WHERE ?
2 Rue d'Etinehem, 80340 CHIPILLY

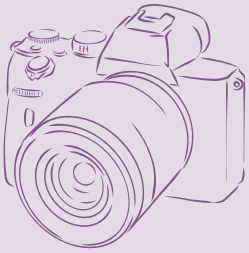
The ruins of Chipilly the day after it was taken by the 58th Division aided by a regiment of the 33rd Division of the American Army, 10 August 1918, IWM, Q6939

A TALE OF TWO WAR MEMORIALS
The sculpture depicts a British artilleryman comforting his wounded horse, a tribute requested by Major General Frank William Ramsay. Created by Henri-Désiré Gauquié, the moving realism of the scene makes it one of the department's most poignant war memorials. On the other side of the road, the French Monument aux Morts offers a striking contrast, with its simplicity and sobriety.



AN EASY STOP BETWEEN ALBERT AND VILLERS-BRETONNEUX

Located along the route between Albert and Villers-Bretonneux, Chipilly is **an easy stop to add to an existing coach itinerary**. Convenient parking right next to the memorial makes it particularly easy for groups to stop, visit the site and continue their journey.



A little extra

Just a mile from the memorial, the **Belvédère du Camp César** offers beautiful views over the eastern Somme Valley towards Bray, where Allied troops continued their advance in August 1918.

WANT TO SEE MORE ?

Remembrance in Perspective

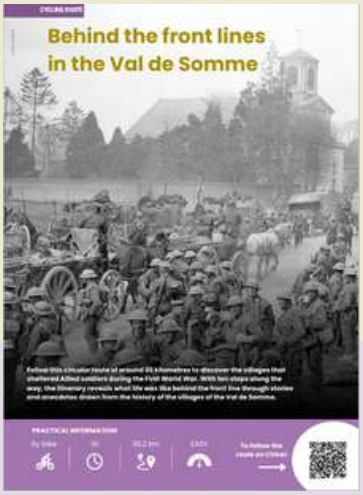
Travel through the Val de Somme and discover the **«Remembrance in Perspective»** tour. This tour is made up of four memorial works, depicting four historical figures who have distinguished themselves in the Val de Somme during the First World War. These works of art are made according to a new and unusual manufacturing method called '**anamorphosis**'. This original process plays with perspective such as an optical illusion. Explore the territory in search of these anamorphoses! As you travel, you will discover the different memory sites of the Val de Somme!

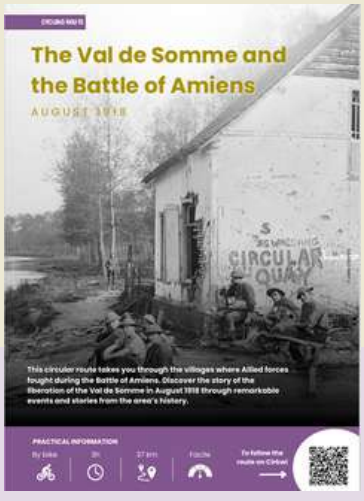
CARTE DU CIRCUIT
TOUR MAP

Discover more :
https://fr.valdesomme-tourisme.com/medias/files/depliant-memoire-en-perspectives-1.pdf

Cycling Routes

Discover the First World War history of the Val de Somme by bike. Two circular routes take you through the villages where Allied soldiers were stationed, fought and passed through during the conflict. From life behind the front line to the fighting and liberation of August 1918, **follow in the footsteps** of the men who lived through these decisive moments. Along the way, stories, anecdotes and remarkable events reveal the experiences of Allied troops across the Val de Somme.





Discover the two routes :

Behind the front lines in the Val de Somme
The Val de Somme and the Battle of Amiens

WE *remember* THEM

Remembering those who fought and lived through the First World War is an important part of our work. Through commemorations, guided tours, educational projects and remembrance events, we help keep their stories alive.

©Department of Veterans' Affairs

© Pascal Leclerc

APRIL, THE MONTH
of remembrance

A strong bond was forged between the inhabitants of the Val de Somme and the soldiers who fought here. A lasting spirit of solidarity and friendship grew from these shared experiences.

After the war, the reconstruction of the devastated villages further strengthened these ties and left a lasting mark on the local landscape. Every year, on **Anzac Day**, Australians, New Zealanders and French people come together to remember this shared history. Every April, Val de Somme Tourism organises the "**Mois de la Mémoire**" (*the month of remembrance*), a series of guided tours exploring the area's sites of remembrance. Through these visits, we help local communities better understand the stories behind these places and keep their memory alive.

HONORARY CITIZEN
of the Val de Somme

In April 2025, **Private William Allan Irwin** became the first person to be named an **Honorary Citizen of the Val de Somme**, in recognition of his courage, dedication and sacrifice.
Born on Gomeroi Country in New South Wales, Irwin served with the 33rd Australian Battalion on the Western Front. He was the only Aboriginal soldier mentioned in Charles Bean's official history of the war.

A day of tribute was held in his honour on 18 April 2025, organized by the Val de Somme Tourist Office, in the presence of his great-nephew, Peter Milliken. His journey was also documented in the film *Bringing His Spirit Home*.

ANZAC STAND
welcoming visitors

Every year, the Val de Somme Tourism team runs a stand at the Australian National Memorial providing visitors with information about the history of the ANZACs in the Val de Somme.
It is an opportunity to welcome our Australian visitors, introduce them to the remembrance sites around Villers-Bretonneux, and share the French perspective on the conflict.

We also help local residents register for the **Dawn Service** and provide practical information about attending the ceremony.

COMMEMORATING
The battle of Le Hamel

On 4 July 1918, Australian and Allied forces under General John Monash captured Le Hamel in just 93 minutes. The battle became a landmark in the First World War, thanks to the remarkable coordination of the Allied forces. Every year, the anniversary is commemorated at the Le Hamel Australian Memorial at sunset, bringing together music, remembrance and storytelling in the heart of the former battlefield.

Bands, pipers and drummers perform a concert combining brass band music and bagpipes, interwoven with a narration that follows the battle minute by minute, bringing the events of 4 July 1918 to life.
An atmospheric way to discover the story of Le Hamel and the Australian soldiers who fought there.

WHEN ?
The commemoration is held each year on the weekend closest to the anniversary.

© Ambia Studio

© Max Coquards - Bestjobers

DISCOVER
the old town of Corbie

Our team can arrange a guided tour of Corbie. Discover how the town was used during the First World War, particularly as a centre for military hospitals during the Battle of the Somme, and how the soldiers stationed here endured the intense shelling of 1918, which ultimately reshaped the town.

A REMARKABLE
variety of churches

As a local institution, the Tourism Office can arrange visits to churches throughout the Val de Somme.
Discover the beautiful church of Corbie, its remarkable relics, and the story of how it survived the two World Wars.
Or explore the beautiful interior of Villers-Bretonneux Church and the cross erected beside it in memory of the Australian troops who fought to liberate the town.
The Val de Somme brings together 33 towns and villages, and 33 churches, each with its distinctive character and history. We invite you to discover them with us!

photos © Ambia Studio

EXPLORE
the rebuilt town of Villers-Bretonneux

Step into the **history of Villers-Bretonneux** and discover how the First World War shaped the town we see today. From its former textile industry to the **fierce battle of 1918**, explore the places and stories that reveal the impact of the conflict and the remarkable reconstruction that followed.
Discover the **strong ties forged between Villers-Bretonneux and Australia**, and how this shared history continues to shape the town. Along the way, admire the imposing Saint-Jean-Baptiste church, rebuilt in 1929 in a striking Neo-Romanesque-Byzantine style.

The visit offers a perfect complement to the **Franco-Australian Museum**, bringing the town's history and its Australian connection to life beyond the museum walls.

YOUR LOCAL PARTNER
for tailor-made programmes

As your local partner in the Val de Somme, we can assist you with **itinerary planning, provide reliable historical information, and connect you with local accommodation providers, restaurants and tourism partners** to help you build your programme.

© Ambia Studio

VAL DE SOMME
terres d'**histoires** à partager

Maison du tourisme du Val de Somme

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