

CYCLING ROUTE

The Val de Somme and the Battle of Amiens

AUGUST 1918

This circular route takes you through the villages where Allied forces fought during the Battle of Amiens. Discover the story of the liberation of the Val de Somme in August 1918 through remarkable events and stories from the area's history.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

By bike



3h



37 km

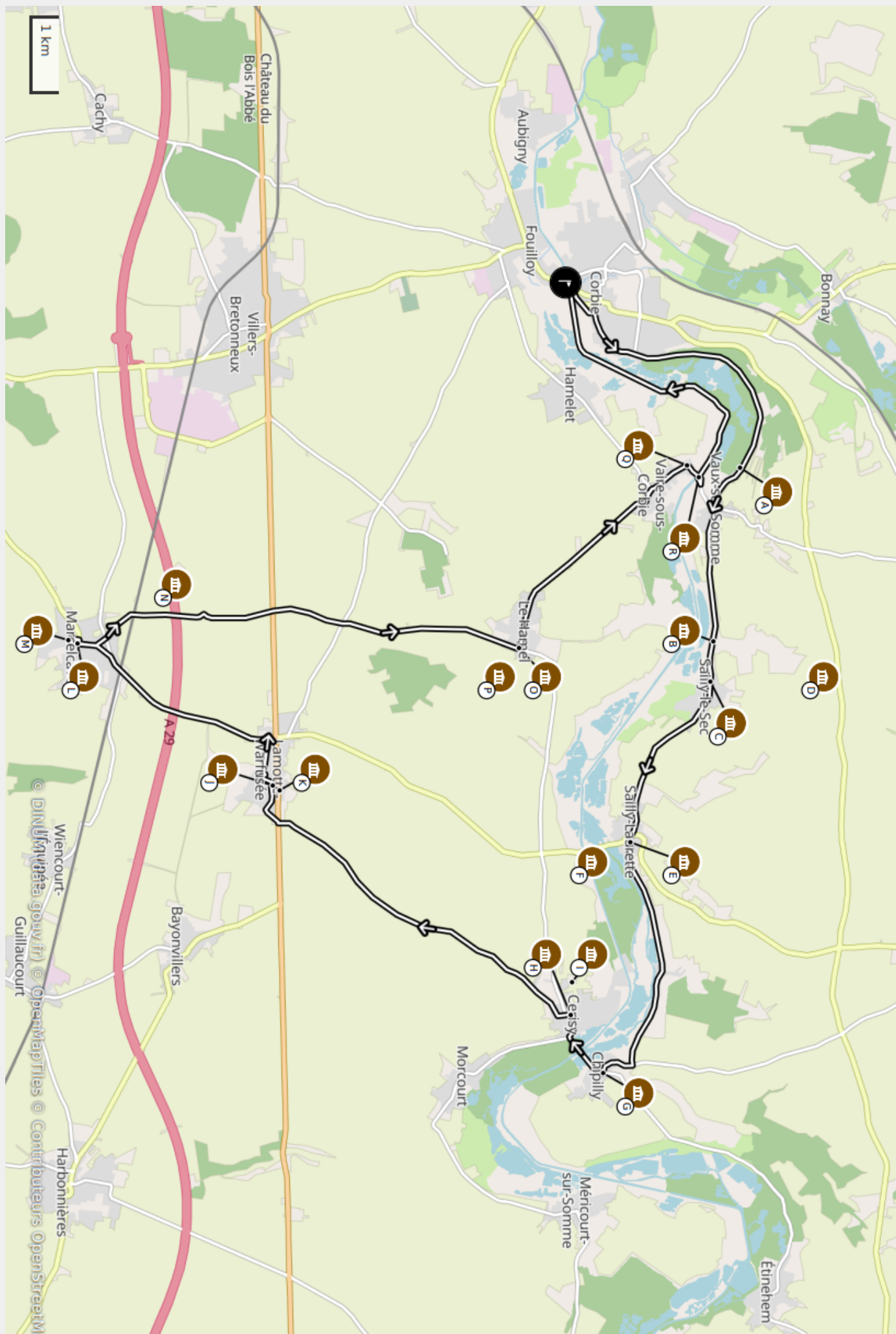


Facile



To follow the route on Cirkwi





Route information and points of interest

Step 1

Starting from the Tourist Office, cross the bridge and cycle up Rue du Rempart des Poissonniers as far as the 'jeu de battoir'. Turn right towards Vaux-sur-Somme. Continue straight on, following the ponds, until you reach the Baron Rouge anamorphosis.



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The Red Baron's Final Flight

On 21 April 1918, the famous 'Red Baron', Manfred von Richthofen, took off from Cappy on a mission over the Somme. After pursuing a Canadian aeroplane, he was ambushed and came under enemy fire. Despite his skill, his red triplane was hit by Australian fire from the vicinity of Corbie. Mortally wounded, he managed to make an emergency landing in a field opposite the brickworks at Vaux-sur-Somme. That day marked the end of the greatest flying ace of the First World War, credited with 80 aerial victories.

📍 639 rue de Corbie, 80800 Vaux-sur-Somme.
Lat : 49.9247003 Lng : 2.5421387

Step 2

Carry on towards Vaux-sur-Somme, and continue along the D233 towards Sailly-le-Sec. Stop in front of the church.

Sailly-le-Sec: The Australian Stand

Sailly symbolises the Australians' first heroic battles to defend Amiens and the Somme Valley. These victories marked the beginning of the Australian Army's emergence as an independent force, contributing to its global recognition. This path towards military independence would culminate in the famous Battle of Villers-Bretonneux on 24 and 25 April 1918, which would, in fact, become the central venue for the annual Anzac Day ceremonies.

The village of Sailly-Le-Sec remained the scene of repeated clashes in 1918. Several battles took place between March and August 1918. The final German offensive against the village was repelled by the Allies on 6 August, just two days before the major counter-offensive.



📍 1 rue du Maréchal Leclerc, 80800 Sailly-le-Sec.
Lat : 49.9213191 Lng : 2.580092

Step 3

Continue along the D233 to Sailly-Laurette. Once you reach the church, follow the signs for Chipilly. Do stop off at the wayside shrine on Rue de Chipilly.



Sailly-Laurette: Along the Prisoners of War Route

On 8 August 1918, Sailly-Laurette was the first village to be captured by the British Army's 3rd Army Corps. This paved the way for the Allied push eastwards. In the days following the offensive, columns of prisoners being sent to the rear regularly passed through the village.

This route for prisoners passed through the village of Sailly-Laurette, then through Sailly-le-Sec, before crossing the Somme and heading towards Villers-Bretonneux and then Amiens.

In the photograph, you can see a column of German prisoners being escorted by British soldiers. They are heading towards the ruins of the village church, before continuing on their way to the rear.

📍 5 rue de Chipilly, 80800 Sailly-Laurette.
Lat : 49.9121726 Lng : 2.6085881

Step 4

Continue along Rue de Chipilly for 2.5 km. Then, at the give-way sign, turn right towards Chipilly. Follow Rue du Château down to the church and the war memorial.

The 58th (London) Division Memorial

The heights to the north of Chipilly were of vital importance to the Allies during the offensive of 8 August 1918. Indeed, from this position held by the Germans, they were able to engage the Australian troops advancing to the south on the other side of the Somme.

The German lines held firm and the village remained in German hands throughout that first day. It was finally liberated on 9 August by British and American troops. The monument in front of the church pays tribute to the men of the 58th Division who liberated the village. The depiction of a dying horse was requested by the statue's patron, to ensure that the sacrifice of animals during the Great War was remembered alongside that of the soldiers.

📍 21 Rue du château, 80800, Chipilly.
Lat : 49.9090634 Lng : 2.649537



Step 5

Next, head towards Cerisy along Rue du Pont. Once you reach Cerisy, turn right towards Saint-Georges Church, the oldest church in the Val de Somme. Do feel free to stop off there to find out more about the village.



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Cerisy: The Village of Three War Cemeteries

The village of Cerisy was affected by the war from August 1914 onwards, but remained outside the line of fire. From then on, it served as a rear-area village, gradually developing into a major logistics hub. Hospitals were set up, soldiers were sent there to be billeted, and a railway station was established to facilitate the transport of supplies, in addition to the transport by boat made possible by the river.

The village played a special role during the Battle of the Somme in 1916, particularly in the evacuation of the wounded. A hospital was set up. The three military cemeteries in the town bear witness to the human cost of that battle.



20 D71, 80340 Cerisy.

Lat : 49.9053633 Lng : 2.6392293

Step 6

Cycle up Rue de la République, pass the war memorial on your left and take the first right. Carry on straight ahead until you reach Lamotte-Warfusée, then take the street to the right of the cemetery and continue on to the church.

Lamotte-Warfusée: The First Village Liberated by Australian Forces

On 8 August 1918, the villages of Warfusée-Abancourt and Lamotte-en-Santerre (now Lamotte-Warfusée) were the first two villages to be liberated by the Australian Army Corps. The 'Green Line', the offensive's primary objective, lay to the east of both villages.

Sheltered by thick fog, the Australians, accompanied by tanks, managed to liberate the villages by 7.00 am.

The Church of Saint-Pierre in Lamotte-Warfusée, designed by Godefroy Teisseire after the war, is a fine example of Art Deco architecture. It is, however, distinguished by its openwork spire, which was a result of a lack of funds during its construction.



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2 rue de Montreuil, 80720 Lamotte-Warfusée.

Lat : 49.8712887 Lng : 2.5985241

Step 7

Carry on to the left along Rue Delambre, then take the first right. Next, turn left onto Rue Adrien Détré and continue straight ahead. At the stop sign, turn left towards Marcelcave. Then follow the D42 to the church in Marcelcave.



Marcelcave: Liberated by Canadian Forces

The village of Marcelcave was the first village to be liberated by the Canadian Expeditionary Force on 8 August 1918. Protected by tanks, the men of the 19th Canadian Infantry Battalion managed to liberate the village, encountering little resistance.

During the course of the day, Sergeant Robert Hollidge distinguished himself through his actions. His unit was pinned down by machine-gun fire coming from the north of the village. He managed to seize the machine gun and turn it against the Germans. He then succeeded in outflanking the enemy troops, crossing the village alone and taking numerous prisoners. He was awarded the DCM for his actions.

📍 8 rue de la Mairie, 80720 Marcelcave.
Lat : 49.8489435 Lng : 2.5733221

Step 8

Walk around the square to see the church, then head up Rue Saint-Marcel before turning left onto Rue du Onze Novembre. At the stop sign, carry on straight ahead and follow the signs for Le Hamel. Once you're in the village, stop at the war memorial.

Le Hamel: A 93-Minute Victory

The village of Le Hamel was liberated on 4 July 1918 by the Australian Army Corps, with the aim of recapturing the high ground occupied by German artillery and thereby averting the threat to Amiens.

This battle was the first to be planned by Lieutenant-General John Monash and proved a resounding success. The main objectives were captured in just 93 minutes thanks to the coordinated efforts of the infantry, tanks, artillery and air force. This new tactic was to be employed again during the fighting in August 1918.

As we can see in the photograph, on 4 July, the Australians continued to comb the village in search of the wounded or any German soldiers still hiding there.

To find out more about this battle, do visit the Australian memorial at the top of the hill before continuing on your way.

📍 399 rue du Général John Monash, 80800 Le Hamel.
Lat : 49.8994445 Lng : 2.5741267



Step 9

Next, head down the Grande Rue towards Vaire-sous-Corbie. Do stop off to see the anamorphosis on the outskirts of Le Hamel before continuing along the D71. Once you've passed the church in Vaire-sous-Corbie, carry on along the Grande Rue and stop at the wayside shrine.

Vaire-sous-Corbie: On the Front Line Against the Germans

When the Germans advanced towards Villers-Bretonneux on 25 April 1918, the village of Vaire-sous-Corbie found itself on the front line. Although the Australians managed to drive the Germans back towards Le Hamel, the village remained close to the enemy front line. The troops stationed in the village during April played an important role in keeping the command informed of enemy movements. Indeed, patrols and observers were deployed from Vaire-sous-Corbie to monitor troop movements.

In this photograph, we can see an Australian soldier dressed in civilian clothes, whilst the village had been abandoned by its inhabitants. He may have been a man from the 8th Australian Infantry Brigade, which was occupying the sector at the time.



1 rue du Château, 80340 Vaire-sous-Corbie.

Lat : 49.9186561 Lng : 2.5417256



Step 10

Follow Rue de l'Abreuvoir on your right, cross the bridge, then turn right to join the towpath.



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"Circular Quay"

Until 1928, the towns of Vaire-sous-Corbie and Vaux-sur-Somme were not connected by a bridge. To cross the canal, people therefore had to take a ferry. Whilst stationed in the area, the Australians even named the place 'Circular Quay', in reference to the famous ferry terminal in Sydney. You could board the ferry with your car and horse.



1 Impasse du canal, 80800 Vaux-sur-Somme.

Lat : 49.9199997 Lng : 2.5438178

Step 11

To get back to your starting point, follow the Vallée de Somme cycle route (V30) along the towpath to the Tourist Information Centre.



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

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