

# notre dame de lorette french cemetery

recommended poem to  
read here: "j'ai été  
soldat à dix-huit  
ans" by eugene dabit

## overview

This is the largest French war cemetery in the whole world. The hill of Notre Dame de Lorette rises 165 metres (500 feet) above sea-level. Four mass graves contain the unidentified remains of thousands more. Those buried here – approximately 35,000 soldiers – represent just 2.5 percent of the estimated 1,398,000 French war dead of World War I.

The site is permanently manned by French veterans who will answer any questions you have. Make sure you say hello to them when you arrive and thank them when you leave!



The Battle of Lorette, an unsuccessful French attempt to regain control of Vimy Ridge from the Germans, lasted 12 months from October 1914 to October 1915. Over 100,000 people were killed and as many were wounded on both sides. On the cemetery are more than 20,000 individual tombs. There are 8 ossuaries (the main one being at the bottom of the Lantern Tower) where the bones of 22970 unknown soldiers have been gathered.

**You will be split into three teams on this site. One team will visit the ossuary first, the second will visit the basilica first, and the third will visit the ring of remembrance.**

## the ossuary

In this monument [pictured] you will see a marked tomb on the floor. The simple inscription states that here lie the remains of thousands of soldiers - in fact about 8,000 unknown soldiers.

The crypt contains the coffins of Unknown Soldiers from the Second World War, the Concentration Camps (A deportee), Northern Africa, and Indo-China.



**Q. Is this mass grave more or less affecting than the spectacle of individual graves in the main cemetery? Why?**

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### the basilica

This chapel looks austere from the outside, but inside it is spectacular.



**Q. What feature inside the basilica do you find the most impressive? Why?**

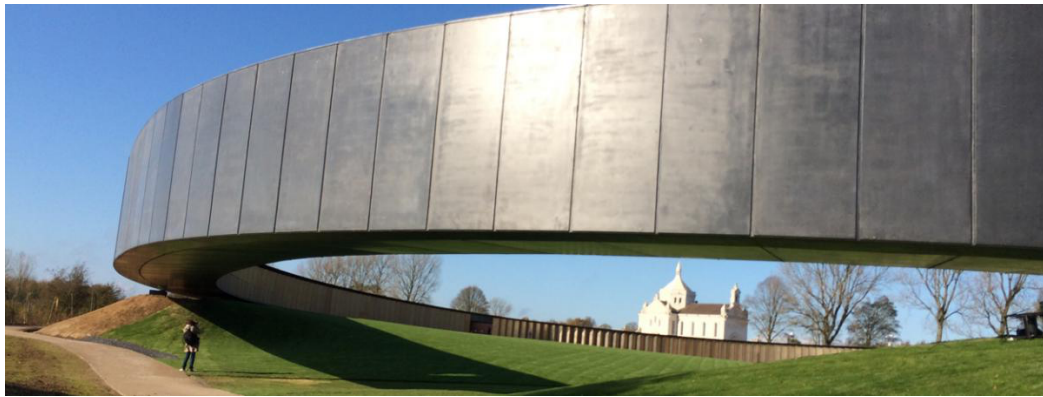
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### the ring of remembrance



The ring of remembrance is a large ellipse, symbolising unity, set on the edge of a plateau; one-third of it overhangs to indicate the fragility of peace. This memorial is unique because it goes beyond the winners-loosers approach, in which each nationality honoured its own dead. It commemorates 580,000 soldiers of all nationalities who died in this part of France. The list of names is engraved in alphabetical order, with no distinction of nationality, rank or religion.

**Q. Walk around the memorial. Perhaps see if there are any soldiers who share your name commemorated here. Mr. Tarr's great grandfather is remembered here, for example:**



TARILL PAUL ANDRE HENRI • TARKIN VICENTE • TARINGA • TARIOI  
TARIS PIERRE • TARISIEN GASTON LUCIEN • TARISSAN GEORGES GI  
TARLETON JOHN • TARLETON JOHN BERNARD • TARLETON MICHAEL  
TARLING H J • TARLING RICHARD • TARLING SYDNEY HERBERT • T  
TARLTON RICHARD THOMAS • TARN A • TARN EDWARD GLADSTONE • T  
TARNOW HERMANN • TARNOWSKI FLORIAN • TARNOWSKI JOHAN  
TARPLEY HORACE ANDREW • TARR BENJAMIN • TARR BERNARD • T  
TARR WILLIAM • TARRADE MARTIAL • TARRAGON GEORGES GASTI  
TARRANT A H • TARRANT ALBERT HENRY CHARLES • TARRANT AL  
TARRANT FREDERICK H • TARRANT FREDERICK NORMAN • TARRA  
TARRANT JACOB HENRY • TARRANT JAMES • TARRANT JOHN • T  
TARRANT SAMUEL • TARRANT SIDNEY ARCHIBALD • TARRANT T  
TATT GEORGE ALFRED • TARRE LOUIS ALEXANDRE • TARRIN H  
TIE MARCELLIN • TARRIER ANDRE • TARRIER FRANCIS RALPH

**Q. Do you think commemorating the soldiers of all nationalities in one monument is a good or a bad idea? Why?**

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