

Left Bank (About half an hour or 40 minutes walk from the Champs de Mars along the rue St. Dominique to the rue de Lille)

The first part of this walk is optional: it lies a bit to the west of where the Statistical Section was located but I include it because there's a fun strip of shops and restaurants along this section of the rue St. Dominique.

So, start in the middle of the Champs de Mars, facing east. To your right or southwards, is the Ecole Militaire. This park is where military parades and public gatherings used to take place (and if you walk around the back of the Ecole Militaire, you can still sometimes see cavalry officers exercising their horses – but that would add a good 20 minutes to this walk.) To your left, of course, is the Eiffel Tower. You want to find the rue St. Dominique that runs eastward off the Champs de Mars from the place du General Gouraud. Follow this bustling section of the rue St. Dominique until you end up in the park right at the foot of Les Invalides. (If you're doing some other tourism, you can stop and visit Napoleon's tomb.)

At this point, we get into the heart of the military and government neighbourhood where the conspiracy against Dreyfus was built (Chapter 13, p. 118.) Keep walking along the rue St. Dominique and you'll note the character of the street is much quieter now. Notice, on your left, that forbidding unmarked building that takes up a whole block and is guarded by military policemen? That is the French Ministry of National Defence, and the headquarters to which the officers of the Statistical Section reported. It ends at the rue Solférino. Turn left, so you are heading towards the river, and you cross the Boulevard St. Germain and hit the rue de Lille one block later. Turn left and you will head down into the area where both the Statistical Section and the German Embassy (now only the ambassador's residence but still visible at number 78) were located. Keep going a few more steps and you reach the side of the Assemblée National, France's parliament, where the minister of war Godefroy Cavaignac affirmed Dreyfus's guilt. Turn left down the rue Aristride Briand and you'll encounter the Assemblée National gift shop. Highly recommended for interesting souvenirs.

If you retrace your steps and continue further along the rue de Lille in the opposite direction from the German Embassy, you'll soon find yourself at the main entrance of the Musée d'Orsay. You can stop for a visit: it is filled with the art of Dubon's period, both the famed Impressionists and the traditional salon painters of the era. The palace that once stood there had been burned during the Commune; in Dubon's day the site was being cleared to build a new train station, that only became a museum in the 1980s.

If you are game for a much longer walk, keep going down the rue de Lille until it ends at the rue du Bac. Turn right (away from the river) and stroll along enjoying the shops and restaurants of the rue de Bac as it crosses the Boulevard St. Germain, and the rue de Grenelle. Once you reach the rue de Varenne, turn right. Now you are in the heart of the artistocratic quarter where a man like the Baron de Masson would have had his residence. Keep walking and you will reach the Musée Rodin just before you find yourself back at Les Invalides.