

MY VIRTUAL MUSEUM ON THE FIRST WORLD WAR

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Myths about WWI



There are many myths when talking about the first world war. Here I'm going to tell you some and explain why they aren't true.

1. *WWI was the deadliest war.* Many people think of world war one as the deadliest war but it doesn't have as many casualties compared to other wars.
2. *Soldiers lived in the trenches for years.* Soldiers didn't completely live in the trenches. They had a rota. They spent most of their time playing sport, holding concerts and sight seeing.
3. *It was better to be posh than poor.* This isn't true as many middle and upper class men and boys were shipped off to war. It didn't actually matter about your class.
4. *The no-mans land football match.* There was a truce on Christmas day in 1914 but unfortunately there isn't any evidence of a football match. Germans and British did exchange gifts and sing carols though.

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Soldiers well-being



In WWI the soldiers were actually quite well looked after as the government realised that the soldiers would fight the best if they were healthy and well fed. The German government thought the same and so both sides were looked after quite well.

The British soldiers had 4500 calories a day in their food, whereas the Germans only had 3500 calories in their food but they had lots of alcohol so they probably didn't mind. The average British soldier put on 10kg of weight during the war. African and Indian soldiers were given food to keep to their religious diets.

There were many dressing stations which helped to get injured soldiers better quickly. This meant that if you were injured you had a 93% change of surviving, which is very high.

Trench foot was a big problem for the soldiers. After a long day fighting their feet would ache and they were tired so they didn't want to take their boots off because it was hard to do. So they came up with a system where everyone was responsible for another's feet. This meant if your partner got trench foot it was your fault. The system made sure that they made each other take their boots off and put on a new pair of socks.

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African and Indian soldiers



Although this was a war mainly about Britain against Germany, many Asian and African countries were involved. This is because Britain had an Empire and called up on the people they owned to fight for them. The main fighting took place in Russia, France, Belgium, Germany, Poland, Italy, and Turkey.

1 1/2 million Indian people were sent to fight. India sent these people because they thought if they did this Britain would invest more money in India improving their country.

African soldiers were also in the British army and played a big role. An African soldier Alhaji Grushni shot the first shot of WWI and the African civilians food was taken to support the troops.

Manta Singh was an Indian soldier who was best friends with a British soldier. When the British soldier was injured Manta risked his life to save him. This shows that different cultures and races became friends through WWI and those bonds that were made should not be forgotten.

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Freddie Stowers and Walter Tull

Freddie Stowers was a African American man who was drafted to be in the French army when America had set war on Germany. He joined the army because the French were recruiting black people into the army which is something that had not been done before. Freddie was allowed to do all the same things as white people and he felt very respected.

Walter before the war was a spurs player but he joined the army in world war one. In 1917 he was promoted to the rank of second lieutenant which is an officer. This made Walter Tull the first non-white Officer in the British army. Before world war one it would have been banned to have a black officer. This reveals that Britain was willing to relax the rules in order to win.

Sadly both men were killed in battle. Freddie received a Medal of Honour in 1991 and a campaign has been set up to award Walter the Military Cross.



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My family connections

My great great grandad Frank Crumplin was in the royal navy during world war one. He sailed on a ship called the HMS Moresby which is his daughter's middle name. HMS Moresby sank the German submarine U110. He was a petty officer and was awarded a medal. The distinguished service medal for bravery and resourcefulness on active service at sea. Getting this award meant that he could add D.S.M after his name.

My great great grandad Arthur Coningsby was in the British army in world war one. He was a private. He was reported missing but it was then confirmed that he was a prisoner of war. He was in the 2/1st Battalion London regiment who were involved in the 1917 German retreat to the Hindenburg line.

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My great great grandad Harry Hubbard was in the royal army medical corps in world war one. He was a sergeant and was also awarded an award. This one was a level three gallantry award for bravery and devotion to duty under fire. This means he could add M.M after his name. This award was announced in the paper the London gazette.

My great great grandad George Preston Fluck was a sergeant in the army in world war one. He was in the 11th Battalion London regiment. He joined the army on the 31 /05 /1915. He was shot in the right buttock on 29 /09 /1918. Before the war he was a travelling sales rep and before that he made banjos and after the war he was a bus conductor. This is his regiment below.



Conscription



At first the army in world war one was only made up of two types of people. There were the professional soldiers who were already fighting in small wars around the world and volunteers who had joined the army to help the war effort.

By 1916 many of the soldiers who had originally volunteered were injured or dead so they needed more. This is why the government introduced a conscription. This was a law that every man aged between 18-40 had to join the army, navy or air force.

However there were some people who didn't agree with the war due to their moral or religious beliefs. These people were called conscientious objectors but they still helped. Many of them became ambulance drivers, stretcher bearers or hospital workers.

If you didn't do anything to help, you would be put in prison. Out of those imprisoned for refusing to help, we know that at least 73 died in the prison or shortly after their release.

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WWI women



Women didn't fight in the war but found other ways to help. The Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC) was set up for women to do jobs in the Army that freed up men to fight.

Flora Sanders was a member of the St John's ambulance so at the start of the war she went to Serbia and joined the Serbian Red Cross. However Flora was also an exception to this rule because she did eventually become a soldier and fought alongside the men.

Lizzie French joined the WAAC and was still serving in France after the war ended in the clean up. She cooked and drove military vehicles. Records show that she was paid well.

Mairi Chisholm drove a motorbike, which was very unusual for women at this time. She started off riding in an ambulance and helping to care for the wounded. She soon realised that most of the wounded men were actually dying of shock. So she set up her own first aid post just behind the front line. She was also brave enough to walk into no-man's land and rescue the wounded there.

Dorothy Field was one of the first people to volunteer. She went out to France as a nurse and helped attend to the wounded in the Battle of the Somme. Her diaries showed how tough it was.

Nellie Spindler was a nurse but she wasn't old enough to help in World War One so she lied about her age, she then went on to work in hospitals in Britain and overseas. She was killed in 1917 when the hospital that she was working in was bombed and is buried in a military cemetery in Belgium.

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American troops

In 1915 a German submarine sunk a passenger ship killing 178 Americans. America said that if the Germans attacked again then they would join the war.

In 1917 another German submarine sank some American cargo ships so America declared war on Germany.

The arrival of American troops can be seen as a turning point because they gave new hope and optimism to the soldiers. This gave Britain an advantage because Germany hadn't got any new soldiers. They only had their existing soldiers who were tired and demotivated.

30,000 American troops arrived each month to join the War. At the start of 1918 there were a million American troops but very few were actually fighting as they still needed to be trained. By the summer of 1918 the Americas were fighting on the western front.

Americans played a big role in the final attacks that ended world war one as they took part in one even breaking through the heavily defenced German front line.

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Ludendorff and the hundred days offensives



In 1917 Russia withdrew from world war one. This meant that Germany could put it's full force onto the western front. On the 21st March 1918 the British lines were under attack. The attack was so intense that the commanders issued an order to retreat. This marked the start of the Ludendorff offensive. It very nearly worked but it's actual failure had devastating consequences for Germany.

The Hundred Day offensive was the counter attack that the British made on the western front. These attacks reversed the land gained by Germany through the Ludendorff offensive and contributed to ending world war one.

I think the turning point in world war one was Germany's failure at the Ludendorff offensive because this led to Germany losing all of their elite soldiers and therefore left them unable to successfully fight off the British attack in the Hundred Day offensive.

On 11am on the 11th November 1918 Germany signed an armistice deal and World War One ended.

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THANK YOU FOR VIEWING MY VIRTUAL MUSEUM

I HOPE YOU LEARNED SOMETHING NEW
ABOUT WORLD WAR ONE AND THAT
YOU ENJOYED YOUR VISIT.

