

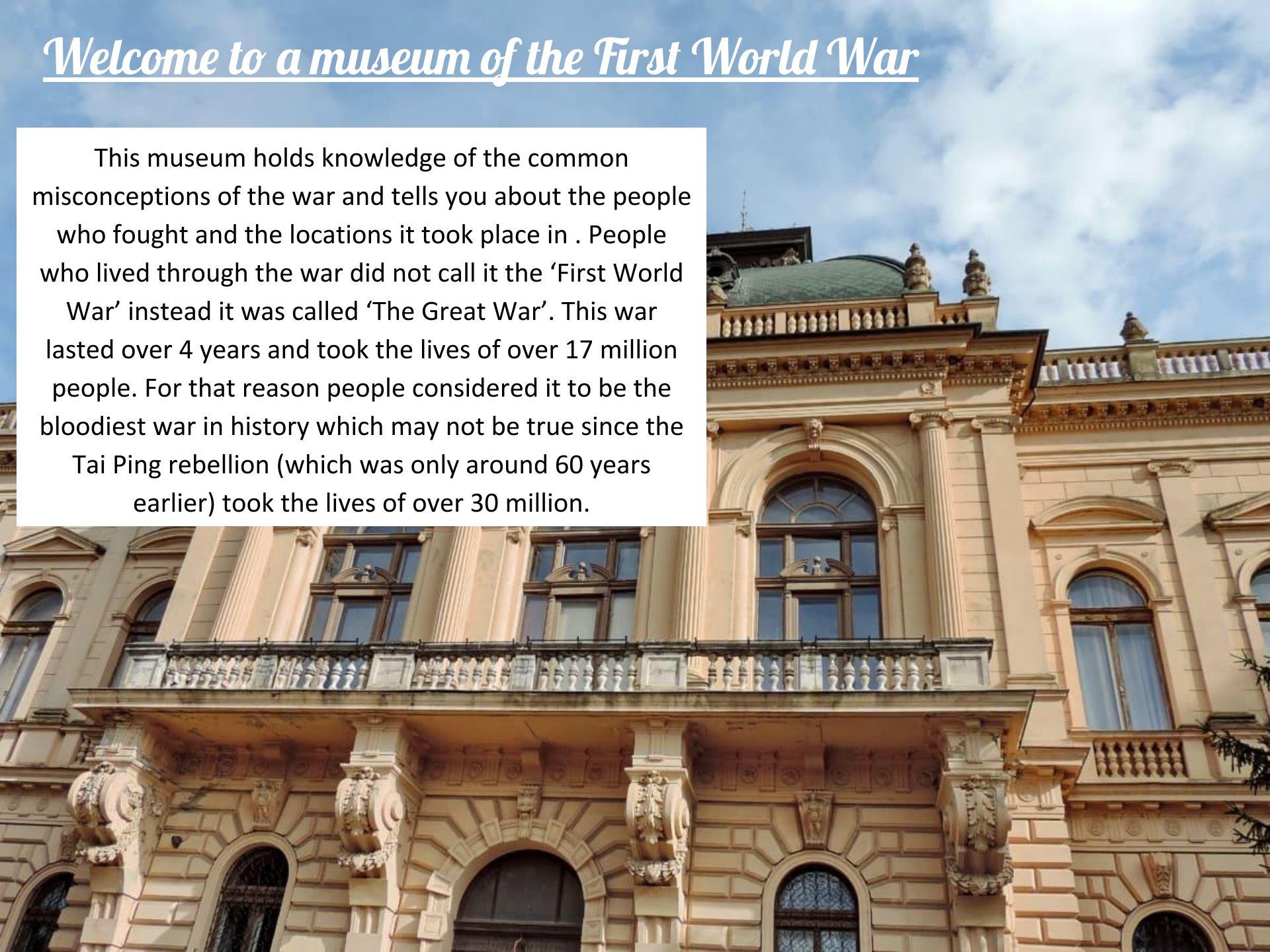


# THE FIRST WORLD WAR

A virtual museum by  
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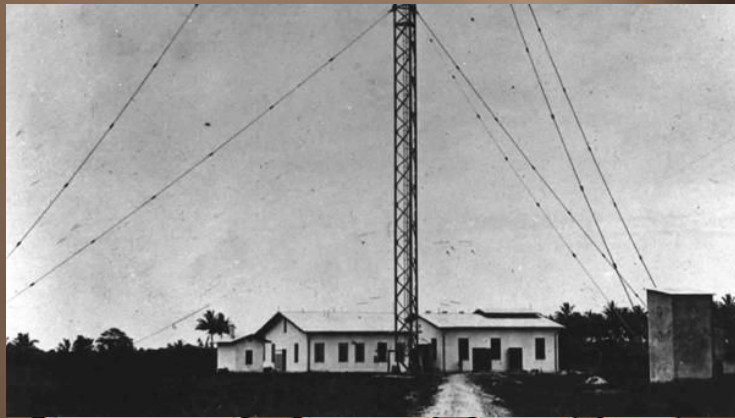
# *Welcome to a museum of the First World War*

This museum holds knowledge of the common misconceptions of the war and tells you about the people who fought and the locations it took place in . People who lived through the war did not call it the 'First World War' instead it was called 'The Great War'. This war lasted over 4 years and took the lives of over 17 million people. For that reason people considered it to be the bloodiest war in history which may not be true since the Tai Ping rebellion (which was only around 60 years earlier) took the lives of over 30 million.





# *Kamiya Wireless Station*



The first battle between Germany and Britain was fought in Togoland which held the Kamina Wireless Station. Kamina had nine masts and thus was one of the most valuable communication devices for the Germans. It was able to link all of their African colonies with Berlin. British people feared that some ships from Australia, New Zealand and South Africa were in danger so it was imperative that Germany's long-range communications were broken. The British relied heavily on the supplies from those ships so Captain FC Bryant demanded that the commander of Togoland surrender.

On 6 August, the British intercepted a message. The message revealed that German troops were withdrawing from Lome to protect Kamiya.

On 7 August they took Lome without difficulty and started invading from the west while the French invaded from the east. The both took control of the south, advancing towards Kamiya Wireless Station.

August 12th was the day that Alhaji Grunshi became the first soldier in British service to fire a shot in the First World War. German forces were trying to slow down British advancements by destroying railway bridges and launching ambushes. Major casualties were inflicted when Lieutenant George Thompson became the first British officer to be killed in action on 22 August.

The Germans retreated due to being outnumbered and burnt Kamiya to the ground so their enemies couldn't get their hands on it. On August 26 Captain Bryant accepted the surrender and Togoland was split between the British and French.



## *Alhaji Grunshi*

This man was the first to fire a shot in WW1. He served in the gold coast regiment of the British army in Africa. During that time he was a Lance Corporal but got promoted to Company Sergeant Major. He also attained the ribbons of the distinguished conduct medal and military medal on his chest.

# National Contributors of The First World War



The war was fought by some of the major powers of Europe like France , Russia , Britain and later Italy. The United States joined in 1917 which is the same year Russia withdrew. They defeated central powers led by Germany , Austria-Hungary , Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire. Most of the burials in WWI are in France (over 500,000) and most of the fighting took place in Europe .

The British had control over many countries not in Europe that were forced into war to fight for us ( India, Canada , Australia , Africa , New Zealand and more).

400,000 Muslim soldiers fought for Britain ( $\frac{1}{3}$  of the British Indian army). The Indians were some of the first troops in the trench warfare where they were thrown right at the front. During the battle at Neuve Chappelle in 1915 more than 4 thousand men were killed in the first 3 days of fighting.

In 1916 , the British recruited lots of Chinese Labourers and some skilled mechanics worked on the British D51 tank , Deborah.

120,000 West Africans were recruited to fight and die for France in the war. Charles Magin was one of the people who believed the French should use Africans not only for their large numbers , but also because he believed they would be great soldiers.

# British People's Contributions

## Army

The British army was quite small in 1914 yet it still played a big role during the earlier months. Many were sent to France and Belgium to fend off German invasion.



## Harry Drinkwater

Harry Drinkwater joined the army as a volunteer in 1914. He was told that he was too short to join the army but on his second attempt he succeeded. He joined the Birmingham 'pals' battalion which had men from the same places, occupation and background. This encouraged more men to want to become soldiers since they could do it with friends.



## Women

There was one woman, Flora Sanders, who was the only British woman to fight in WW1 for the Serbian Army. Although she was the only woman to fight, other women took on many jobs too. They worked behind the lines as nurses and had auxiliary roles.

## Volunteering and conscription

The British needed a larger army quickly so they began a big recruitment that half a million men signed up for in the first month. By 1916 2 million men had been enlisted. Lots of soldiers were being killed off or hurt in 1916 so there was a desperate need for more recruits. Unfortunately, news of the experience of war had spread and men were less enthusiastic about volunteering. Since there were not many new recruits the government introduced a conscription that made it compulsory for all single men 18-40 to join the army, navy or airforce. Later it also extended to married men.



# Trenches



Most of the British soldiers fought in the trenches because it was dangerous to be above ground where you are more vulnerable. Soldiers had rifles , machine guns , artillery and even grenades making it very dangerous to not be in the trenches. Even attacking at night was unsafe since they used flares to light up the battlefield. Bombing the German trenches with planes was also not an option since planes back then didn't have the capabilities to accurately drop bombs.

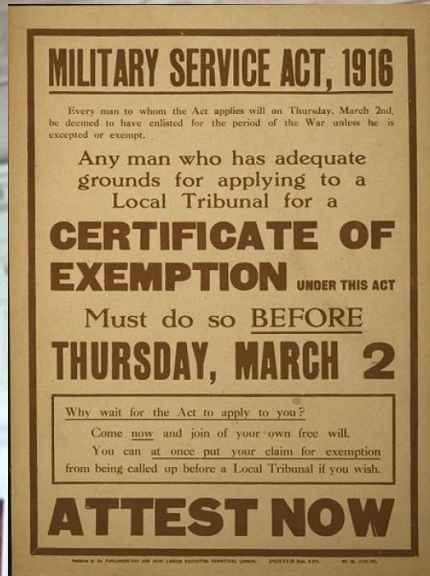


It is a common misconception that soldiers lived in the trenches for years on end . In reality , they only spent about 10 days a month in them on average

The army rotated the soldiers around trenches frequently to give the men morale and a break if they were behind the lines. The men in the trenches ate lots of tinned foods like beef and jam. After joining the army, the average soldier put on about 10kg of weight . The British tried to provide food that respected religious beliefs around the empire ( for example places in India).

Trenches had pretty bad conditions. They were quite narrow to protect troops from overhead fire. The risk of losing men to disease made hygiene a top priority for the government and the soldiers. They instilled pairing systems where they were responsible for the others feet to make sure people were taking care of themselves. They each had wash bags and the army worked hard to keep hygiene in the toilets especially.

# Conscientious Objectors



Some people did not want to fight in the war and objected instead. This was usually due to religious beliefs or morals that made them Pacifists. These men were labelled 'Conscientious Objectors' and the government excluded them from the Conscription. Although excluded from the conscription, they had to go to a Tribunal to explain their beliefs and prove that they weren't just cowards. Tribunals put pressure on them to join and the public handed them white feathers as a symbol of cowardice to shame them into joining. There were around 16,000 conscientious objectors but they helped out in different ways that didn't include violence. Many became ambulance drivers, hospital workers and stretcher bearers. These jobs were still not safe and some of them even went out under fire to help the wounded. This earned them the respect of some of the regular soldiers. Those who didn't follow orders or refused their roles were put in prison and badly mistreated.



## 1914

The war started with commanders on all sides thinking that the war would end quickly and they'd easily win. Unfortunately, it was a lot more complicated than that since the war did not end quickly. At the beginning of the war Germany attempted to invade France but was stopped by the French at the battle of Mame.

## 1915

The French and British tried continuously to break through German lines but their attacks in Autumn and Spring didn't work. The German areas were well protected so it was almost impossible.

The first use of gas in the battlefield came in 1915 near Ypres.

## 1916

France decided that they would launch a joint attack in 1916 to break through German lines and end the war. Before France could, Germany attacked Verdun so the British needed to attack near the river Somme to relieve pressure off of Verdun. On the 1st July battle Somme started and the fight continued until November. The British gained lots of valuable experience and tactics from this battle even if the casualties were high.

***End of museum***

***Some of the many Turning Points of WW1***