



THE FIRST WORLD WAR

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

You might already know a lot about World War 1 but are you really sure everything you know is true or is it just a myth?

My museum will include some not so well known facts and events that aren't very well remembered. Although the war was mainly fought in Europe it did reach all corners of the world and practically everyone was involved.

The start of it all



This is alhaji grunshi, The first british officer to fire a gun. It was not actually shot in Europe which most people would have thought but in West Africa where the Germans had been trying to take over. The shot was aimed at capturing and neutralising a radio station from Germans. Without the 2.5 million brits that followed in the steps of Grunshi the outcome would have been very different.

Why was it a Global war?

When people picture WW1 they usually picture a white british male in the trenches of somewhere across the western front. And although this isn't wrong there are still many other aspects that seem to have been forgotten. In fact $\frac{1}{3}$ of the British army was Indian! Africans were also a big part in the army and were recruited to fight for countries like France and Germany because they were seen as less precious and apparently 'didn't feel as much pain'. Chinese civilians also played a big part in not the fighting but the engineering and technical stuff behind the scenes.



WW1 was set out to be just a war in Europe but many factors got in the way of that and that's why it became a worldwide disaster. Because England was fighting as the British Empire it meant that all the countries under the control of Britain were involved like India, Australia and Africa. This meant that the war was very diverse war and there were 1.5 million Indians, 2 million Africans, 400,000 African Americans and 100,000 Chinese that took part. Russia was also on the allies side until they pulled out later on and so were South Africa because they thought Britain would help them if they helped Britain. However this also meant that Germany had multiple countries as well. For instance The Ottoman Empire, Austria-Hungary, Italy and Bulgaria.



Conscientious Objectors



Before WW1 The British Army was very small and nowhere near ready to go into a big war. So what the British Army had to do was ask the public to volunteer to go into battle. At first people were very enthusiastic but as time went on less and less people wanted to join. And so the government made it compulsory for any single male from the ages of 18-24 to join. Some people refused to join and they were called conscientious objectors and claimed they didn't want to join for religious reasons. Some people didn't believe this and they had to go through a tribunal to make sure they weren't just being cowards. They would have been frowned upon and felt ashamed and were forced to contribute in other ways.

Contribution and Experience

WW1 was a battle famous for its variation of new weapons that were way deadlier than any seen in history before then. Tanks were introduced as well as the use of efficient and powerful machine guns and rifles. Soldiers built and lived in trenches so they could not be seen and shot in the open. The western front was over 400 miles long! Although they were safe, they were uncomfortable places for the soldiers to stay in and they had to be super hygienic to make sure they didn't get rats and diseases. In battle any casualties would be taken but before getting to the field hospital patients would have to be picked up, taken to a regimental 8 post and then to a dressing station and then to the field hospital. Another massive problem was the psychological damage on the soldiers who would become really ill with symptoms.

People say that women didn't play a role in World War 1 but this is actually very far from the truth. As well as taking on traditional nursing roles they also did auxiliary roles. For example Flora Sandes says she 'naturally drifted from nurse to soldier' in the Serbian battle. In 1917 The Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC) was established which meant that women could take up jobs behind the lines. They also helped out at home taking on 'Male jobs' however they did get payed a lot less.



Turning Points



Even though Britain lost the Battle of Somme i still think they gained a lot from that and it helped improve their tactics and learning from their mistakes. It would have also made them realise that the Germans were better than they thought. Another major turning point for the allies was when the americans joined forces with the British and helped them win. When they joined they were excited and optimistic which gave hope to the British who were exhausted and hopeless. They also helped in battle because they increased the army size massively which gave them a big advantage over the Germans. Without the Americans i think the British would have been defeated or would have given up so they were a massive turning point.

End of your museum

Thank you for visiting my virtual museum! I hope you found out some interesting facts and experiences of the people at that time that you didn't know before!

