

Trench Warfare

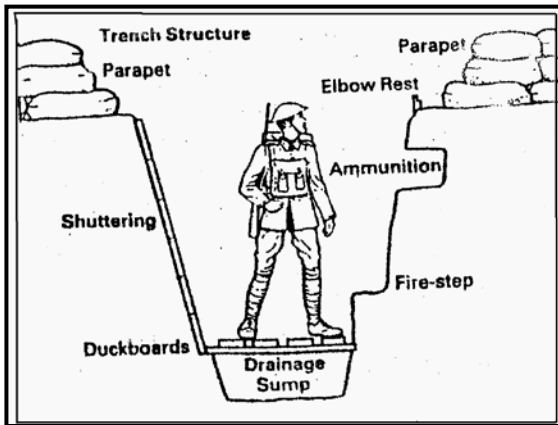
Before the war, many young European men were anxious to go and fight for their country. However, very few soldiers realized the horrors that awaited them; disease, lack of supplies, and cruel deaths by newly invented tools of war. Historian Geoffrey Trease describes how soldiers felt about going off to WWI:

“They did not know what they were in for.... Most believed without question in simple patriotism... And they believed it was going to be a short war (‘over by Christmas’), an adventure, a crusade, a clean affair of fighting man against man... In those first weeks, however, there was no lack of volunteers. The recruiting offices had long lines of men outside, and boys too, for many a 15-year-old lied about his age. Parties of friends went off to enlist together as [happily]...as to a football match.

How did these European men feel about going off to war?

Trench Warfare

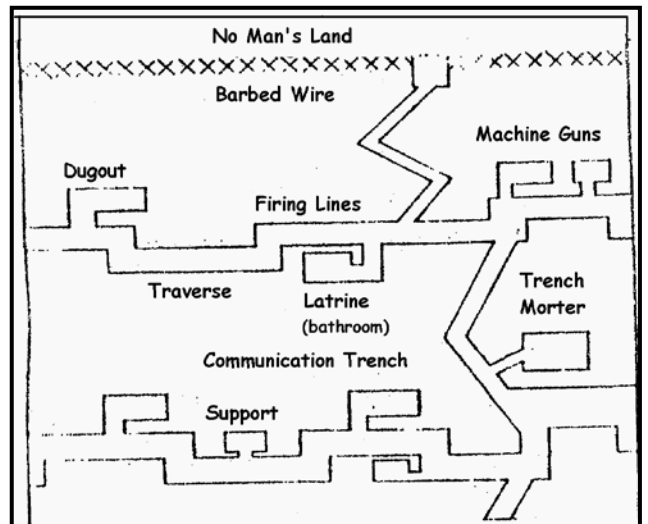
Trenches were a network of tunnels dug into the ground for use as barriers against the opposing army.



1. This diagram shows a sectional view of an “ideal” trench, complete with drainage, duckboards, fire-step, and sandbags. Unfortunately, few were like this in reality and most of them suffered in disrepair.



2. The above plan shows how the trench system evolved (changed) with complex communications, support lines, dugouts and machine gun posts. ⇒



Once the system became this sophisticated with a second and third line of trenches behind the front line, the chances of breakthrough by attacking forces were unlikely. This issue led to enormous casualties (deaths) and the need for newer, more destructive weapons.

Describe one positive and one negative effect of trench warfare.

Excerpts from Soldier's Diaries

Up about noon, had no breakfast. Had a good view of the village of the dead... we found a piano and made music. Furious shelling started about 4:30 PM, and we took to the dugouts. Almost suffocated because of the poisonous fumes! Village a mess of dead horses, wood, and men. Terrible day. No food or water, dead and dying all around.

-S.V. Britton, April 23, 1915

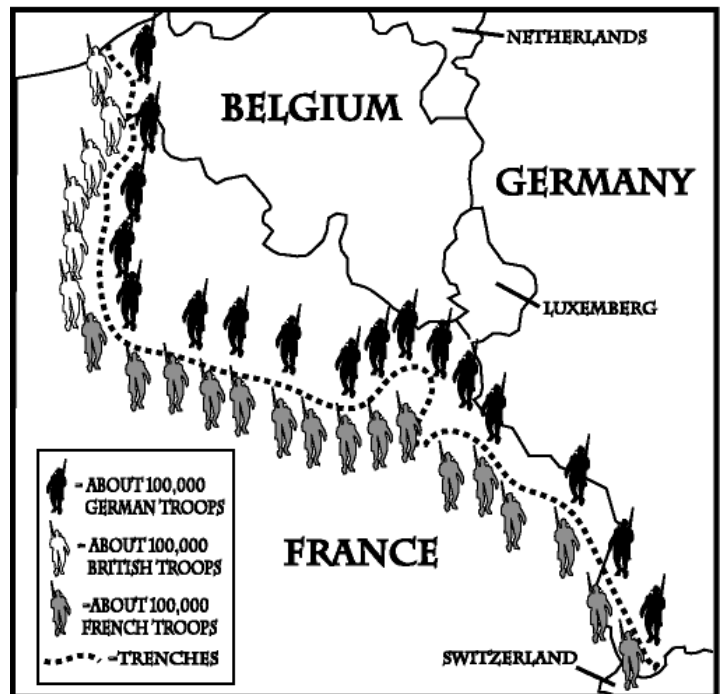
THE WESTERN FRONT

The Western Front

The German army crossed the Belgian border on August 3rd, 1914. Britain and France declared war on Germany on August 4th. The Germans pushed through Belgium and entered France.

The British and French armies marched to stop the German advance. The Battle of Marne 4th - 10th September stopped the Germans from marching on Paris.

To avoid losing the territory already gained in France, the Germans began digging trenches. The British and French, unable to break through the line of trenches; began to dig their own trenches. Throughout the entire war, neither side gained more than a few miles of ground along what became known as the western Front.



Movie Clips: "All Quiet on the Western Front"

Directions: As you watch the film clips, answer the below questions in complete sentences.

1. How did people feel about the war when it first broke out?

2. How did the Germans inspire and motivate the young men?

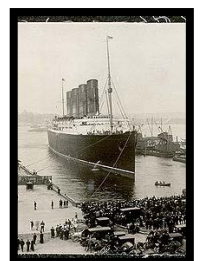
3. Describe what it was like for the soldiers in the trenches.

4. Describe the technology used in World War I. Give specific examples.

5. How did experience of war change the attitude of the soldier?

The United States enters the war

The RMS Lusitania was an ocean liner that was torpedoed by a German U-boat on 7 May 1915. The ship sank in 18 minutes, with a loss of 1,195 of the 1,959 on board, including 123 Americans. The sinking turned public opinion in many countries against Germany, and was instrumental in bringing the United States into World War I. It is considered the second most famous civilian passenger liner disaster, after the sinking of the RMS Titanic. U.S. involvement in the war had a major effect upon the stalemate in Europe. U.S. manpower and supplies was just what the Allied powers needed to shift the tide of the war.



Movie Times

- 1. 2:04**
- 2. 9:40**
- 3. 34:40-49:30**
- 4. same**
- 5. 51:00**