WW1

How and when WW1 started.

World war 1, also known as the great war, began in 1914 after the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria. His murder catapulted Europe into a war that lasted until 1918. During the conflict, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire (the Central Powers) fought against Great Britain , France, Russia, Italy, Romania, Japan and the United States (the Allied Powers). Thanks to the new military technologies and the horrors of trench warfare , World War 1 saw unprecedented levels of carnage and destruction. By the time the war was over and the Allied Powers claimed victory, more than 20 million people - soldiers and civilians alike - were dead.

Facts

* An explosion on the battlefield in France was heard in England.
* WW1 journalists risked their lives to report on the war.
* 12 million letters were delivered to the frontline every week.
* Plastic surgery was invented because of WW1.
* The youngest british soldier in WW1 was just 12 years old.
* There were 20 million deaths and over 21 million wounded.
* The United States only spent 7 and a half months in actual combat.
* Blood banks were developed during WW1
* On one Christmas day some of the soldiers apparently stopped fighting and had food and played football together.

Life in the trenches

Trenches were long, narrow ditches dug into the ground where soldiers lived. They were very muddy, uncomfortable and the toilets overflowed. These conditions caused some soldiers to develop medical problems such as trench foot. There were many lines of German trenches on one side and many lines of Allied trenches on the other in the middle was no man’s land, which soldiers crossed to attack the other side.

Trench facts

* It is estimated that there were about 2,490 kilometres of trench lines dug during WW1. Most trenches were between 1-2 metres wide and 3 metres deep.
* Trenches weren’t dug in straight lines. The WW1 trenches were built as a system , in a zig-zag pattern with many different levels along the lines. They had paths dug so that soldiers could move between the levels.

How and when WW1 ended

At the 11th hour on the 11 day of the 11 month of 1918, the great war ended. At 5 a.m that morning, Germany, depleted of manpower and supplies and faced with imminent invasion, signed an armistice agreement with the Allies in a railroad car outside Compiegne, France. The first world war left nine million soldiers dead and 21 million wounded, with Germany, Russia, Austria -Hungary, France and Great Britain, each losing a million or more lives. In addition, at least five million civilians died from disease, starvation, or exposure.

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