



Military Despatches

Vol 17 November 2018

World War I Commemorative Issue

World War I

Facts, figures and trivia

Moth O

Founder of the Memorable Order of Tin Hats

An unsung hero

Eugene Bullard, the first black fighter ace

Steel Monsters

The tanks of World War I

Head-to-Head

World War I weapons and equipment



For the military enthusiast

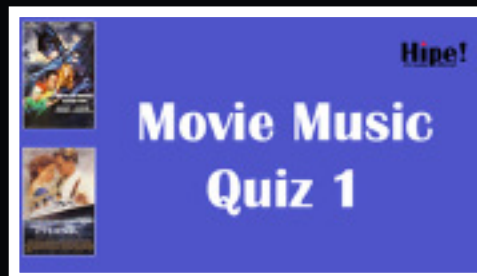


Click on any video below to view



Hipe's Wouter de Goede interviews former 28's gang boss David Williams.

How much do you know about movie theme songs? Take our quiz and find out.



Part of Hipe's "On the couch" series, this is an interview with one of author Herman Charles Bosman's most famous characters, Oom Schalk Lourens.



A taxi driver was shot dead in an ongoing war between rival taxi organisations.

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The old South African Defence Force used a mixture of English, Afrikaans, slang and techno-speak that few outside the military could hope to understand. Some of the terms were humorous, some were clever, while others were downright crude.



Hipe spent time in Hanover Park, an area plagued with gang violence, to view first-hand how Project Ceasefire is dealing with the situation.

CONTENTS

November 2018



Page 6



World War I Facts, figures and trivia

Features

16

We must remember them

Raymond Fletcher looks at the significance of Remembrance Day and imagines what it must have been like to fight in the 'war to end all wars'.

20

An unsung hero

Many will have heard of the Tuskegee Airmen, or General Benjamin O. Davis Junior. Yet not that many will have heard of Eugene Bullard, the man who came before all of them.

22

Silent Night

The day the guns on the Western Front fell silent.

27

Is that a fact

Some facts about World War I. Short, sharp and to the point.

30

The story of Moth O

Early this year the Memorable Order of Tin Hats celebrated its 90th anniversary. This is the story of the man who began the Order.

32

The centenary of the Two-Minute Silence

On Monday 14 May 2018, the Noon Day Gun in Cape Town fired not once, but twice. And there was a very special reason for this.

Head-to-Head

38

Weapons & Equipment WWI

This month we compare the weapons and equipment of the major combatants in the First World War.

Quiz

51

World War I Quiz

This month we're looking at World War I. Here are 38 questions, some easy, others not so easy.





Editor's Sitrep

So, this month it's been 100 years since the signing of the Armistice to end World War I.

I trust that every one of our readers will be attending one of the Remembrance Day Parades or, at the very least, observing two minutes of silence.

Some of you will notice that this month, with the exception of six articles, all of the articles used in this issue have previously appeared in the magazine.

This is because with the exception of 'This month in military history', all of the articles are about World War I.

You will also see that from this month 'Military Despatches' has its own website. We will update the website as often as possible, so bookmark it and keep on checking for updates.

I was recently chatting with someone and they mentioned that putting together a magazine like this must take a lot of work. To be honest, it does.

Yet when you really enjoy doing something, it doesn't feel like work. And I must admit that I really do enjoy putting the magazine together every month.

Often while researching an article you come across a pile of new information, and this often leads to other ideas for articles.

I can't believe that next month is Christmas. Of course most of the big shops already started putting up Christmas decorations half way through October.

I'm far more interested in seeing how much media coverage will be given to Remembrance Day this year. The vast majority of the media, especially in this country, do not consider it to be very newsworthy. Hey, who knows, perhaps this year will be different.

It will also be interesting to see how the other big cities around the world handle the event.

Now that this issue is done, I want to get started on the December issue. If I finish it early enough, maybe I can take a break over Christmas and New Year.

Until next month.

Matt

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Back Issues

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CONTENTS

Page 64



This month in military history

Famous Figures

44

Anthony Beauchamp-Proctor

Andrew (Anthony) Frederick Weatherby Beauchamp-Proctor, VC, DSO, MC and bar, DFC (4 September 1894 - 21 June 1921) was a South African recipient of the Victoria Cross. He was South Africa's leading ace of World War I, credited with 54 aerial victories.

44

Harold Ackroyd

The unassuming, bespectacled World War I medical officer that did everything in his power to save the lives of others.

Forged in battle

52

World War I Tanks

They were slow and unreliable, yet the introduction of the tank in World War I changed the face of warfare forever.

Battlefield

46

Dogfights

For as long as warfare existed, it was fought on land and sea. In 1914, however, the skies over Europe would become a new battlefield.



Front Cover

The ghostly image of a British soldier gazes over a field of poppies. This image was created in Adobe Photoshop using three separate images.

Movie Review

62

World War I Movies

This month we look at eight of the best World War I movies available.



World War I

Facts, figures and trivia

A few facts, figures and trivia about World War I. On 11 November it will mark 99 years since 'The Great War' ended. This article was originally published in the November 2017 issue.

It was called 'The Great War' and 'The War to end all Wars'. Later it became known simply as World War I.

From 28 July 1914 to 11 November 1918 more than 70 million military personnel were mobilised in one of the largest wars in history.

It was a war fought on a global scale and would result in the deaths of over nine million combatants and seven million civilians.

It was one of the deadliest conflicts in history, and paved the way for major political changes, including revolutions in many of the nations involved. It would also contribute to the start of the Second World War only twenty-one years later.

Here are some facts, figures and trivia from World War I.

Largest armed forces of World War I

1. USSR - 12,000,000
2. Germany - 11,000,000
3. British Empire - 8,904,467
4. France - 8,410,000
5. Austria-Hungary - 7,800,000
6. Italy - 5,615,000
7. USA - 4,355,000
8. Turkey - 2,850,000
9. Bulgaria - 1,200,000
10. Japan - 800,000

Smallest armed forces of World War I

1. Montenegro - 50,000
2. Portugal - 100,000
3. Greece - 230,000
4. Belgium - 267,000
5. Serbia - 707,343
6. Romania - 750,000

Greatest military losses of World War I

1. Germany - 1,773,700
2. Russia - 1,700,000
3. France - 1,357,800
4. Austria-Hungary - 1,200,000
5. British Empire - 908,371
6. Italy - 650,000
7. Romania - 335,706
8. Turkey - 325,000
9. USA - 116,516
10. Bulgaria - 87,500

Greatest merchant shipping losses in World War I

1. UK - 2,038 ships sunk
2. Italy - 228 ships sunk
3. France - 213 ships sunk
4. Germany - 188 ships sunk
5. Denmark - 126 ships sunk
6. Sweden - 124 ships sunk
7. Greece - 115 ships sunk
8. USA - 93 ships sunk
9. Netherlands - 74 ships sunk
10. Spain - 70 ships sunk

Top Air Aces of World War I

1. *Rittmeister* Manfred von Richthofen (Germany) 80
2. *Capitaine* Rene Fonck

(France) 75

3. Major William Bishop (Canadian) 72
4. Major Edward 'Mick' Mannock (British) 68
5. Major Raymond Collishaw (Canadian) & Oberleutnant Ernst Udel (Germany) 62
6. Major James McCudden (British) 57
7. Captain Anthony Beauchamp-Proctor (South African), Captain Donald MacLaren (Canadian) & Capitaine George Guynemer (France) 54

World War I Trivia

- Germans were the first to use flamethrowers in WWI. Their flamethrowers could fire jets of flame as far as 40 metres.
- More than 70 million men from 30 countries fought in WWI. Nearly 10 million died. The Allies (The Entente Powers) lost about six million soldiers. The Central Powers lost about four million.
- Nearly two-thirds of military deaths in World War I were in battle. In previous conflicts, most deaths were due to disease.
- In August 1914, German troops shot and killed 150 civilians at Aerschot. The killing was part of war poli-

cy known as *Schrecklichkeit* ("frightfulness"). Its purpose was to terrify civilians in occupied areas so that they would not rebel.

- During World War I British tanks were initially categorized into "males" and "females." Male tanks had cannons, while females had heavy machine guns.
- "Little Willie" was the first prototype tank in World War I. Built in 1915, it carried a crew of three and could travel as fast as 4.8 km/h.
- Artillery barrage and mines created immense noise. In 1917, explosives blowing up beneath the German lines on Messines Ridge at Ypres in Belgium could be heard in London, 220 km away.
- The Pool of Peace is a 12-m deep lake near Messines, Belgium. It fills a crater made in 1917 when the British detonated a mine containing 45 tons of explosives under the German lines.
- The most successful fighter pilot of the entire war was German fighter pilot Manfred Albrecht Freiherr von Richthofen (1892-1918), or the "Red Baron." He shot down 80 planes, more than any other World War I pilot. He died after being shot down near Amiens. France's René Fonck (1894-1953) was the Allies' most successful fighter pilot, shooting down 75 enemy planes.
- During World War I, dogs were used as messengers and carried orders to the front lines in capsules attached to their bodies. Dogs were also used to lay down

telegraph wires.

- Big Bertha was a 48-ton howitzer used by the Germans in World War I. It was named after the wife of its designer Gustav Krupp. It could fire a 930 kg shell a distance of 15 km. However, it took a crew of 200 men six hours or more to assemble. Germany had 13 of these huge guns or "wonder weapons."
- Tanks were initially called "landships." However, in an attempt to disguise them as water storage tanks rather than as weapons, the British decided to code name them "tanks."
- French Second Lieutenant Alfred Joubaire wrote in his diary about World War I just before he died that "Humanity is mad! It must be mad to do what it is doing. What a massacre. What scenes of horror and carnage! I cannot find words to translate my impressions. Hell cannot be so terrible! Men are mad!"
- Some Americans disagreed with the United States' initial refusal to enter World War I and so they joined the French Foreign Legion or the British or Canadian army. A group of U.S. pilots formed the *Lafayette Escadrille*, which was part of the French air force and became one of the top fight-

ing units on the Western Front.

- In early 1917, British cryptographers deciphered a telegram from German Foreign Secretary Arthur Zimmermann to Germany's minister in Mexico. The telegram encouraged Mexico to invade U.S. territory. The British kept it a secret from the U.S. for more than a month. They wanted to show it to the U.S. at the right time to help draw the U.S. into the war on their side.
- Woodrow Wilson's campaign slogan for his second term was "He kept us out of war." About a month after he took office, the United States declared war on Germany on April 6th 1917.
- To increase the size of the U.S. Army during World War I, Congress passed the Selective Service Act, which was also known as the conscription or draft, in May 1917. By the end of the war, 2.7 million men were drafted. Another 1.3 million volunteered.
- During World War I, people of German heritage were suspect in the U.S. Some protests against Germans were violent, including the burning of German books, the killing of German shepherd dogs, and



Little Willie

- even the murder of one German-American.
- Herbert Hoover, who would become president in 1929, was appointed U.S. Food Administrator. His job was to provide food to the U.S. army and its allies. He encouraged people to plant "Victory Gardens," or personal gardens. More than 20 million Americans planted their own gardens, and food consumption in the U.S decreased by 15%.
- The total cost of World War I for the U.S. was more than \$30 billion.
- The war left thousands of soldiers disfigured and disabled. Reconstructive surgery was used to repair facial damage, but masks were also used to cover the most horrific disfigurement. Some soldiers stayed in nursing homes their entire lives.
- World War I is the sixth deadliest conflict in world history.
- British author T.E. Lawrence (1888-1935), also known as Lawrence of Arabia, worked for Allied intelligence in the Middle East. He also led

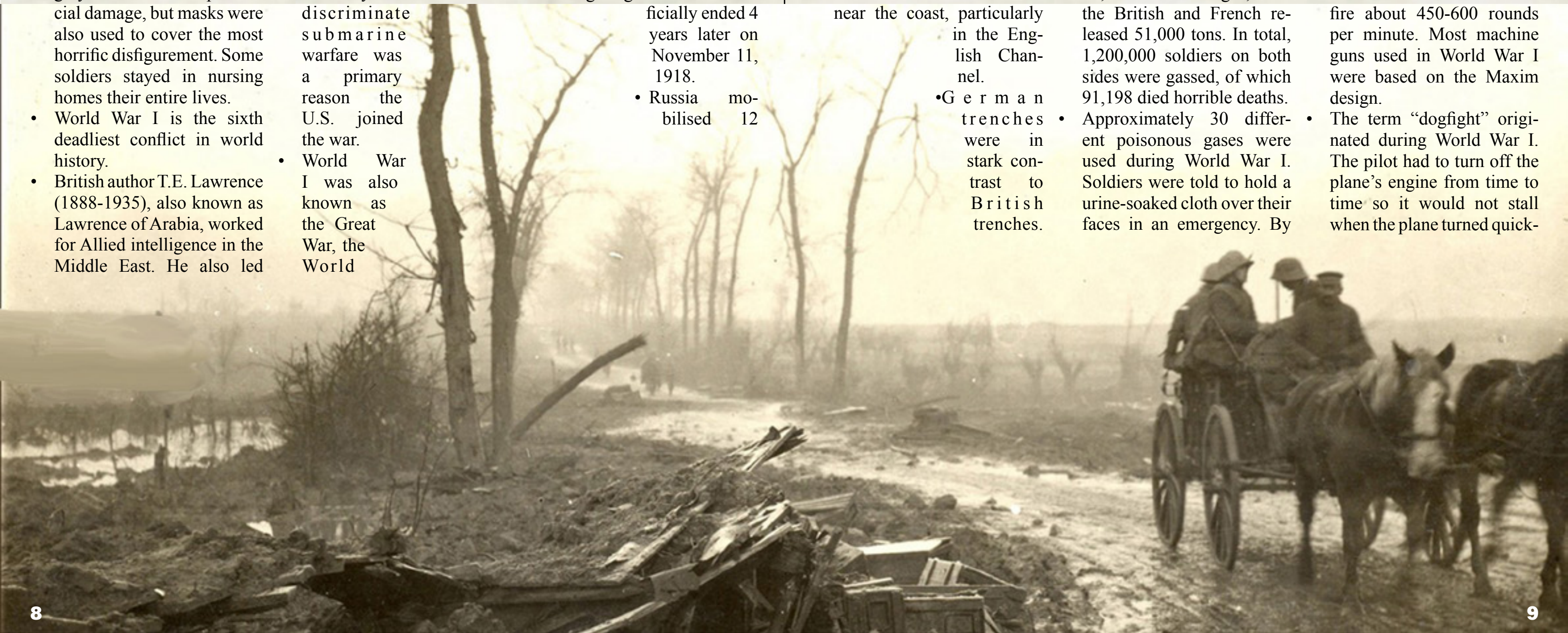
- an Arab revolt against the Turks and wrote about it in his book *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom*.
- Four empires collapsed after World War I: Ottoman, Austro-Hungarian, German, and Russian.
- While the first military submarine (named the Turtle) was first used by the Continental Army during the American Revolution, submarines only made a large military impact during World War I when Germany launched its fleet of U-boats. Its submarines mostly stayed on the surface and submerged only to attack ships with torpedoes. Germany's indiscriminate submarine warfare was a primary reason the U.S. joined the war.
- World War I was also known as the Great War, the World

- War, the War of the Nations, and the War to End All Wars.
- World War I was fought from 1914-1918 on every ocean and on almost every continent. Most of the fighting, however, took place in Europe.
- World War I began on June 28, 1914, when a Serbian terrorist shot and killed Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, and his wife. Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia on July 28, 1914. Russia and France sided with Serbia, and Germany supported Austria-Hungary. Other countries around the world were soon pulled into the fighting. World War I officially ended 4 years later on November 11, 1918.
- Russia mobilised 12

- million troops during World War I, making it the largest army in the war. More than three-quarters were killed, wounded, or went missing in action.
- The terrorist group responsible for the assassination of Franz Ferdinand was called Black Hand, Sarajevo.
- The United States joined World War I during the final year and half of fighting.
- For the span of World War I, from 1914-1918, 274 German U-boats sank 6,596 ships. The five most successful U-boats were U-35 (sank 224 ships), U-39 (154 ships), U-38 (137 ships), U-34 (121 ships), and U-33 (84 ships). Most of these were sunk near the coast, particularly in the English Channel.
- German trenches were in stark contrast to British trenches.

- German trenches were built to last and included bunk beds, furniture, cupboards, water tanks with taps, electric lights, and doorbells.
- France, not Germany, was the first country to use gas against enemy troops in World War I. In August 1914, they fired the first tear gas grenades (xylyl bromide) against the Germans. In January 1915, Germany first used tear gas against Russian armies, but the gas turned to liquid in the cold air. In April 1915, the Germans were the first to use poisonous chlorine gas.
- During World War I, the Germans released about 68,000 tons of gas, and the British and French released 51,000 tons. In total, 1,200,000 soldiers on both sides were gassed, of which 91,198 died horrible deaths.
- Approximately 30 different poisonous gases were used during World War I. Soldiers were told to hold a urine-soaked cloth over their faces in an emergency. By

- 1918, gas masks with filter respirators usually provided effective protection. At the end of the war, many countries signed treaties outlawing chemical weapons.
- During the war, the U.S. shipped about 7.5 million tons of supplies to France to support the Allied effort. That included 70,000 horses or mules as well as nearly 50,000 trucks, 27,000 freight cars, and 1,800 locomotives.
- World War I introduced the widespread use of the machine gun, a weapon Hiram Maxim patented in the U.S. in 1884. The Maxim weighed just over 45 kg and was water cooled. It could fire about 450-600 rounds per minute. Most machine guns used in World War I were based on the Maxim design.
- The term "dogfight" originated during World War I. The pilot had to turn off the plane's engine from time to time so it would not stall when the plane turned quick-



- ly in the air. When a pilot restarted his engine mid-air, it sounded like dogs barking.
- The French had what German soldiers called the Devil Gun. At 75 mm, this cannon was accurate up to almost 6,5 kilometres. The French military commanders claimed that its Devil Gun won the war.
 - During U.S. involvement in World War I, more than 75,000 people gave about 7.5 million four-minute pro-war speeches in movie theatres and elsewhere to about 314.5 million people.
 - “Hello Girls,” as American soldiers called them, were American women who served as telephone operators for Pershing’s forces in Europe. The women were fluent in French and English and were specially trained by the American Telephone and Telegraph Company. In 1979, the U.S. Army finally gave war medals and veteran benefits to the few Hello Girls who were still alive.
 - During World War I, American hamburgers (named after the German city of Hamburg) were renamed Salisbury steak. Frankfurters, which were named after Frankfurt, Germany, were called “liberty sausages,” and dachshunds became “liberty dogs.” Schools stopped teaching German, and German-language books were burned.
 - Millions of soldiers suffered “shell shock,” or post-traumatic stress disorder, due to the horrors of trench warfare. Shell-shocked



HOME SWEET HOME: Life in the trenches was often muddy and miserable.

men often had uncontrollable diarrhoea, couldn’t sleep, stopped speaking, whimpered for hours, and twitched uncontrollably. While some soldiers recovered, others suffered for the rest of their lives.

- Even though the U.S. government didn’t grant Native Americans citizenship until 1924, nearly 13,000 of them served in World War I.
- There were over 35 million civilian and soldier casualties in World War I. Over 15 million died and 20 million were wounded.
- More than 200,000 African Americans served in World War I, but only about 11 percent of them were in combat forces. The rest were put in labour units, loading cargo, building roads, and digging ditches. They served in segregated divisions (the 92nd and 93rd) and trained separately.
- The Germans were skilled at intercepting and solving Allied codes. Germans also captured one out of four pa-

per messengers. However, when a U.S. commander used Choctaw tribe members from the Oklahoma National Guard unit, they used an extremely complex language that the Germans could not translate. The eight Choctaw men and others who joined them became known as the Choctaw Code Talkers.

- More than 500,000 pigeons carried messages between headquarters and the front lines. Groups of pigeons trained to return to the front lines were dropped into occupied areas by parachutes and kept there until soldiers had messages to send back.
- On Christmas Eve in 1914, soldiers on both sides of the Western Front sung carols to each other. On Christmas Day troops along two-thirds of the Front declared a truce. In some places the truce lasted a week. A year later, sentries on both sides were ordered to shoot anyone who attempted a repeat performance. The British High

Command ordered artillery bombardments to start on Christmas Eve and carry on for three days.

- Edith Cavell (1865- October 12 1915) was a British nurse who saved soldiers from all sides. When she helped 200 Allied soldiers escape from German-occupied Belgium, the Germans arrested her and she was executed by a German firing squad. Her death helped turn global opinion against Germany.
- Margaretha Zelle (1876-1917), also known as Mata Hari, was a Dutch exotic dancer accused of being a double agent. Though she always denied being a spy, the French executed her in 1917.
- The most decorated American of World War I was Alvin Cullum York (1887-1964). York led an attack on a German gun nest, taking 32 machine guns, killing 28 German soldiers, and capturing 132 more. He re-

turned home with a Medal of Honor, a promotion to Sergeant, the French *Croix de Guerre*, and a gift of 400 acres of good farmland.

- U.S. troops fought their first battle of World War I on November 2, 1917, in the trenches at Barthelemon, France.
- The greatest single loss of life in the history of the British army occurred during the Battle of Somme, when the British suffered 60,000 casualties in one day. More British men were killed in that one World War I battle than the U.S. lost from all of its armed forces and the National Guard combined.
- World War I transformed the United States into the largest military power in the world.
- Although Germany may have forced the hand of the European powers in the summer of 1914, it did not cause war. Germany was not responsible for creating the



IN FLANDERS FIELD: No Man’s Land, the area between the trenches was littered with shellholes, barbed wire, and bodies. This was what remained of a forest in Flanders Field.

atmosphere in which war was a probability. World War I broke out against a background of rivalry between the world’s great powers, including Britain, Germany, France, Russia, Austria-Hungary, Italy, the Ottoman Empire, and Japan. The previous 40 years were characterized by increasing nationalism, imperialism, militarism, and various alliances.

- World War I helped strengthen the power of central government in the United States and Europe, which meant that 19th-century liberalism that emphasized individual responsibility was gone forever. In fact, one of the chief legacies of the war is the lasting power of the state over its citizens.
- World War I increased people’s suspicions of minority groups. All outsiders were considered a potential threat, especially the Jews, who were seen as sleek profiteers of the armaments industry.
- The Harlem Hell Fighters were one of the few African American units that saw the front lines. For their extraordinary acts of heroism, the soldiers received the French *Croix de Guerre*, a medal awarded to soldiers from Allied countries for bravery in combat. However, in the U.S their deeds were largely ignored.
- During World War I, the Turks slaughtered approximately 1.5 million Armenians. This act of genocide would later attract the attention of Hitler and was partly

responsible for sowing the seeds of the Holocaust.

- After World War I, Britain's leadership in the world economy was gone forever. It had huge debts, high unemployment, and slow growth. France suffered as well. Most of the loans it had made to czarist Russia were never repaid, inflation was rampant, and large parts of the country were ruined.
- World War I brought a new era of warfare. The most significant development was air power, which brought civilians in the line of fire. By 1918, it was clear that the days of cavalry as a realistic fighting force were over with the introduction of poisonous gas. Tanks heralded a new era of offensive war. Finally, the Nazi blitzkrieg tactic of World War II grew out of the final Allied offensive of 1918 in which tanks, aircraft, artillery, and men were carefully coordinated.
- Because mustard gas was unpredictable, it was never the war-winning weapon

GOING OVER THE TOP: Attacks on opposition trenches would normally lead to heavy casualties. Most men were cut down before they had gone more than a few steps.

- its users hoped it would be in World War I. Neither side used it in World War II.
- World War I helped bring about the emancipation of women. Women took over many traditionally male jobs and showed that they could perform them just as well as men. In 1918, most women over the age of 30 were given the vote in the British parliamentary elections. Two years later, the 19th amendment granted American women the vote.
- World War I helped bring about the emancipation of African Americans. For example, Henry Ford recruited black people from the South to work in his factories. The migration of African Americans from the South to the North during World War I was one of the most significant population shifts in the 20th century.
- Post-World War I literature includes John McCrae's *In Flanders Fields*, T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms*,

Erich Maria Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front*, and Wilfred Owen's tragic poem, *Anthem for Doomed Youth*.

- World War I helped hasten medical advances. Physicians learned better wound management and the setting of bones. Harold Gillies, an English doctor, pioneered skin graft surgery. The huge scale of those who needed medical care in World War I helped teach physicians and nurses the advantages of specialization and professional management.
- World War I was the catalyst that transformed Russia into the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR). It was the creation of the world's first communist state and ushered in a new phase in world history. Historians note that this was the most



DOGFIGHT: British SE5 fighter planes swoop down to attack a German formation.

startling and important consequence of World War I.

- After World War I, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland emerged as independent nations.
- The collapse of the Ottoman Empire after World War I helped the Allies extend their influence into the Middle East. Syria, Jordan, Iraq, and Palestine were declared "mandates" under the League of Nations. France essentially took control of Syria and Britain took control over the remaining three mandates.
- The trench network of World War I stretched approximately 25,000 miles (40,200 km) from the English Channel to Switzerland. The area was known as the Western Front. British poet Siegfried Sassoon wrote, "When all is done and said, the war was mainly a matter of holes and ditches."
- Journalists faced execution. A handful of journalists risked their lives to report on the realities of war. As the

Government sought to control the flow of information from the frontline at the start of the war, journalists were banned. Reporting on the conflict was, in the opinion of the War Office, helping the enemy. If caught, they faced the death penalty.

- Two million letters were delivered to the front every week. Astonishingly, it only took two days for a letter from Britain to reach the front in France. The journey began at a purpose-built sorting depot in Regent's Park before being shipped to the trenches. By the end of the war, two billion letters and 114 million parcels had been delivered.
- War work turned some women's skin yellow. When a generation of men went to fight the war, more than a million women took their place in the workforce. They worked long hours, often in poor conditions and with dangerous chemicals. The so-called 'canaries' were women who worked with

TNT, which gave them toxic jaundice and turned their skin yellow.

- Wilfred Owen was unknown at the end of the war. Wilfred Owen is one of the best known poets of the World War I, but when he died on the frontline, just a week before the end of the war, he was relatively unknown. At the time, his view of the war as one of pity and horror was in the minority. It wasn't until the 1960s that a literary elite decided this was the most authentic view of the conflict because it chimed with their own anti-war feelings. This resulted in the publication of two key war poetry anthologies which heavily featured Owen.



ACES: Manfred von Richthofen and Rene Fonck were the top German and Allied fighter pilots of World War I with 80 and 75 kills respectively.

- Blood banks were developed during World War I. The British Army began the routine use of blood transfusion in treating wounded soldiers. Blood was transferred directly from one person to another. A US Army doctor, Captain Oswald Robertson, established the first blood bank on the Western Front in 1917, using sodium citrate to prevent the blood from coagulating and becoming unusable. Blood was kept on ice for up to 28 days and then transported to casualty clearing stations for use in life-saving surgery where it was needed most.
- Nine out of 10 soldiers survived the trenches. Being in the firing line was rare for a British soldier. They constantly moved around the trench system - meaning more often than not they were kept from the dangers of enemy fire. The more typ-

- ical experience for the British Tommy would have been a life of boredom and regular routine.
- Generals were banned from going over the top. The stereotype is that the ordinary soldiers of World War I were lions led by donkeys - the donkeys being incompetent generals who sat out the war in comfort while thousands died unnecessary deaths. In fact, so many of the generals wanted to be closer to the fighting they had to be banned from going over the top because they kept getting killed. The experience required to be a general was too significant to lose.
- The Treaty of Versailles stated that Germany had started World War I. It gave Alsace and Lorraine back to France. Poland picked up

CASUALTIES OF WAR: British troops that have been blinded by gas are led to a first aid station.

German territory in the east, and other territories were given to Belgium and Lithuania. The treaty also transferred the Hultschin area of Upper Silesia to Czechoslovakia. The eastern part of Upper Silesia was assigned to Poland. Lower Silesia, meanwhile, was left entirely to Germany. The key Baltic port of Danze, the industrial region of the Saar Basin, and the strategically important Rhineland were also taken from Germany. Its armed forces were strictly limited and its colonies were made League of Nations mandates. A 1921 Reparations Committee decided that Germany should pay \$33 billion in compensation to the Allies for the damage it caused. The Treaty left Germany humiliated and impoverished, which left the world vulnerable to another world war.

World War I

28 Jul 1914 – 11 Nov 1918

*When you go home
Tell them of us and say,
For your tomorrow
We gave our today.*



We **must** remember them

At 11.00 am on November 11 most countries in the world will observe two minutes of silence. **Raymond Fletcher** looks at the significance of Remembrance Day and imagines what it must have been like to fight in the 'war to end all wars'. Originally published in the October 2017 issue.

If there was one subject that I really didn't enjoy it would have to be history. I've always been far more interested in what's happening now, not what happened centuries before I was born.

Then last year a strange thing happened. We got a new history teacher at my school and his whole approach to history was just so different. He puts things into context and makes history come alive.

Since he arrived history has gone from being one of my worst subjects to my favourite, along with English.

One of the things none of us

could ever work out was the badge that our history teacher always wore on the lapel of his jacket. It was a small soldier's helmet. During one lesson we asked him about it.

He told us that he was a Moth. We all had a good laugh and had no idea of what he was talking about. Then he explained.

The word MOTH stands for Memorable Order of Tin Hats. It's an organisation that was started after World War I to honour the memory of all the soldiers that died during that war.

Charles Alfred Evenden was a soldier, cartoonist and author.

But he will be best remembered as the man that started the Moths. It was after he had seen a drawing in a newspaper (pictured on page 17) that he made a decision that those that fell in battle should never be forgotten.

We asked our teacher how he could be a Moth because surely he couldn't have fought in World War I. He laughed and told us that after World War II, those that had fought could also join the Moths.

Since then membership has been extended to anyone who fought in other wars such as Korea, the Gulf War, and even



THE TIN HAT: The symbol of the Memorable Order of Tin Hats (MOTH).

our own Border War.

He then asked us how much we knew about World War I and most of us, myself included, knew very little about it.

I've watched a lot of movies about World War II and Vietnam, but I can't recall ever having seen anything about World War I. All I knew is that it was a long time ago.

I was right. It was a long time ago and it began on July 28, 1914 and ended just over four years later on November 11, 1918. By the time it ended an estimated 20 million people had lost their lives.

The war was a true global conflict that took part in Europe, Africa, the Middle East, the Pacific Islands, China and off the coast of South and North America. The war was fought on land, sea and in the air.

It was mainly fought between the Allied Powers, which consisted of France, the British Empire (including Australia, India, Canada and South Africa), Russia and Italy. The Americans joined the Allied Powers in 1917 when they declared war on Germany.

On the other side was the Central Powers that consisted of Germany, Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire.

There were a number of things that I learnt about World War I that left me amazed, shocked and sad.

One of the things that did amaze me was the fact that the majority of the British Empire soldiers were volunteers. They were not forced to go and fight, they did so willingly.

Often an entire class from a university would go to a recruitment office and sign up. Very few of them ever returned to complete their studies.

Officially you had to be at least 18 years of age to sign up as a soldier and go off to fight in the war. Yet as losses mounted and replacements were desperately needed the recruitment teams began to turn a blind eye to the age requirement.

I'm 16 years old and I know that there were many boys my age that fought in World War I. Many were even younger than that. It is a documented fact that the youngest person to fight as a British soldier in World War I was only 12 years old.

The war on land quickly developed into a stalemate that became known as trench warfare.

These trenches stretched from the coast to the Swiss border, right across Europe. Sometimes the trenches were less than 100 metres apart. The area between the trenches was called 'no-man's land'.

By all accounts life in the trenches was horrific at the best of times. Rain would turn them into mud pits. The floor of the

trench was covered with planks called 'duck boards'. Sometimes the mud would be so deep and thick that if someone stepped off the duck board they would disappear into the mud never to be seen again.

The treatment of soldiers was often barbaric. If, for example, you were on guard duty at night and fell asleep, an officer had the right to shoot you. If he found you sleeping he could take out his pistol and shoot you dead without even bothering to wake you up.

Attacks on the enemy would always result in massive casualties. The object would be to capture a section of the enemy's trench. The normal procedure would be to bomb the opposition trench with artillery for up to three days. Then the artillery would stop and the infantry would launch an attack.

This was known as 'going over the top'. The infantry would climb out of their trenches and advance at a steady walk towards the enemy. The only problem with this was that the enemy were normally waiting for them.





FOR KING AND COUNTRY: At the start of the war men of all ages flocked to the recruiting office to sign up. Many would go into "Pals Battalions" and fight alongside their friends.

The enemy would have sat in their bunkers dug into the side of the trench during the artillery fire and few of them would have been killed or injured.

As soon as the artillery stopped they knew the infantry would be on their way.

They would set up machine guns covering no-man's land and wait for the attack. The advancing infantry would usually be mown down before they had advanced more than a few steps.

Even if an attack did manage to succeed and a section of the enemy trench was captured, both sides had a second, third and forth line of trenches. They would launch a counter attack and normally recapture the lost territory very quickly.

Yet even though these tactics proved fruitless time after time, the generals and war planners on both sides persisted with them. No matter how many died.

Take the Somme offensive for example. It lasted from July 1 to November 18, 1916. The Allies took 60,000 casualties on the

first day of the battle. This was the most casualties the British had ever taken in a single day.

By the end of it they would suffer a staggering 623,907 casualties.

The war also saw many new innovations and weapons being used. The French were the first to use chemical weapons in 1914.

They used tear gas against the Germans, but it was largely ineffective. A few months later the Germans retaliated by using chlorine gas.

In 1917 the Germans introduced the far more deadly mustard gas.

The tank was developed and first used during World War I. It was originally called the 'land battleship' and were sent to France in crates that were stamped 'tank' on the outside. This was so that people would think they were water tanks. The name stuck and everyone called them tanks.

The tank was first used during the Battle of Flers-Courcelette on 15 September 15, 1916. It had limited success. They could

only move very slowly, would often break down, and were used in very limited numbers.

Another first was the use of aircraft. The Wright brothers had only taken the first powered flight 11 years earlier on December 17, 1903. Yet the aircraft would soon play a vital role in war.

Most World War I pilots would have as little as 10 hours flying time before being sent into combat. The average life expectancy of a pilot was 11 days.

During April 1917, known as 'Bloody April', the life expectancy of a new pilot was 20 minutes.

Although the parachute had been invented (they were issued to balloon observers) they were not issued to pilots. It was thought that pilots would then be too quick to bail out of a damaged aircraft rather than try and return it to its base.

Because the planes were made mostly from wood and canvas one of the greatest dangers was from the aircraft catching fire.

A pilot in an aircraft that was on fire had three choices. The first was to bail out and fall to his death. The second was to stay with the aircraft and burn to death. Nearly every pilot carried a revolver with him. His third choice was to shoot himself, which most of them did.

It is estimated that more than 14 000 Allied pilots were killed during World War I. The figures for the Axis powers is not known but it is estimated that it was even higher than those of the Allies.

World War I ended with the official surrender of the Central



RECRUITMENT DRIVE: Recruiting posters would often be patriotic or make war seem glamorous and an adventure. Those that did join up found the reality a lot different to what the posters said.

Powers at 11.00 am on November 11, 1918.

It became known as 'The Great War' and 'the war to end all wars'. Yet a mere 21 years later they would be at it again in another war that would result in even more deaths. The Great War was renamed World War I.

I wonder if I would have had the courage to go over the top. Or climb into an aircraft with only 10 hours training, knowing that in less than two weeks I would probably be dead.

Would I have lied about my age to get into the army? Would I have volunteered, knowing full well that there was a strong possibility that I would die?

While you can hate war and all it stands for, you cannot but admire the courage of those that fought, many of them paying the ultimate sacrifice.

At 11.00 am on November 11 most of the world will observe two minutes silence for all those that fell in World War I and other wars.

This year I will be one of those that stands to attention and observes two minutes of silence. It is the least I can do. It is vital that we remember them.

At the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month, we will remember them.

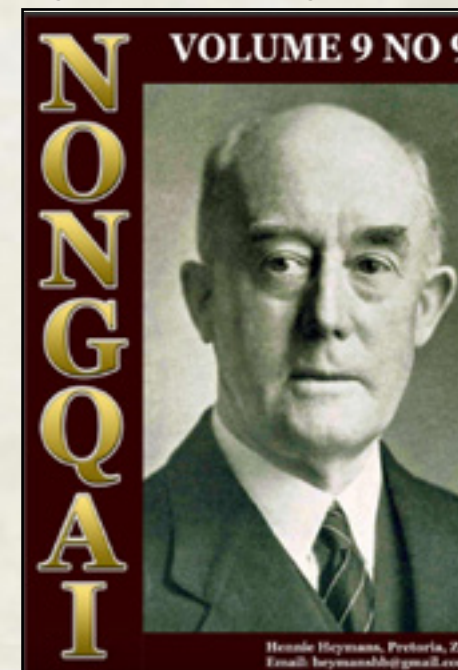
I would like to end this article with the Moth credo which my history teacher told me about. I think it is very fitting.

*They shall not grow old, as we who are left to grow old.
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun,
and in the morning,
We will remember them.*

Useful links

Every month we will be featuring a few useful links to military websites, newsletters and on-line magazines. Stuff that we think our readers will appreciate.

Here are two of our favourites. The first one is Nongqai, the unofficial police newsletter for veterans of the former South African Police Force and for those interested in Police History. The second is Jimmy's Own, the official newsletter of the South African Signals Association. Click on the magazine covers to go to the respective websites.



An unsung hero

Many will have heard of the Tuskegee Airmen, or General Benjamin O. Davis Junior. Yet not that many will have heard of Eugene Bullard, the man who came before all of them. Originally published in the December 2017 issue.

During World War II the pilots of the 332nd Fighter Group and the 477th Bombardment Group had one thing in common - they were all African-Americans. They were better known as the Tuskegee Airmen.

Benjamin Oliver Davis Junior was the commander of the Tuskegee Airmen. He would go on to become the first African-American general officer in the United States Airforce.

On December 9, 1998, he was promoted to four-star general by President Bill Clinton.

He was not the first in his family to break racial barriers. His father, Benjamin O. Davis Senior, was the first African-American general in the United States Army.

Yet while the history of the Tuskegee Airmen has been well recorded, this has not been the case with Eugene James "Jacques" Bullard.

Who, you may well ask, was Eugene Bullard? He was the first black fighter pilot.

Bullard was born in Columbus, Georgia on 9 October, 1895. He was one of ten children born to William Bullard, a black man from Martinique, and Josephine Thomas, a Creek Indian.

His father had fled from Haiti during the Haitian Revolution and, after reaching the United States, had taken refuge with

the Creek Indians.

While still in his teens Eugene had left Columbus and moved to Atlanta by himself. He had been told that the way to escape racial prejudice was to head for Europe. His father had also pointed out that Bullard was a French surname and that at least one of his ancestors had come from France.

He stowed away on a ship bound for Scotland and after arriving in Aberdeen he made his way south to Glasgow. From there he went to Paris.

He like what he saw and the way he was treated, so he decided to settle in France. He became a fairly good boxer and also worked in a music hall.

When World War I broke out in August 1914, Bullard had no hesitation in enlisting to fight for his new country.

At that stage he was not a French citizen and had to join the French Foreign Legion. He was assigned to the 3rd Marching Regiment of the 1st Foreign Regiment as a machine gunner, he saw combat near the Somme River.

It was during this time when he learned Americans and other volunteers were now allowed to transfer to Metropolitan French Army units, including the 170th French Infantry Regiment – nicknamed "*Les Hirondelles de la Mort*," or "The Swallows of Death."

The idea of being part of a unit with crack troops appealed to Bullard, so he put in his request to join the regiment. In February 1916, his request was granted just as the 170th Infantry was sent to Verdun, one of the largest and longest battles of the First World War on the Western Front between the German and French armies. The battle took place on the hills north of Verdun-sur-Meuse in north-eastern France.

It was during this battle that Bullard was severely wounded on March 5, 1916 and sent to a Parisian hospital where he spent the next six months recuperating. During convalescence, he was cited for acts of valour at the orders of the regiment on July 3, 1917 and was awarded the Croix de Guerre.

While convalescing in Paris, Bullard and his friend Jeff Davis Dixon had a bet. Dixon bet \$2,000 that Bullard would not be able to get into the French Air Force.

On 5 October, 1916, Bullard arrived at the French aerial gunnery school at Cazaux. It was there that he met fellow American Edmond Genet, who told Bullard about the *Lafayette Escadrille* and suggested Bullard become a pilot rather than a gunner.

In Mid-October he transferred to the flight school at Tours for pilot training. The training took



Eugene Bullard
9 Oct 1898 - 12 Oct 1961

a few more months, but it was inevitably given Bullard's persistence that it would pay off. Bullard earned his pilot's license and then Dickerson faithfully paid the \$2,000. It was a considerable sum at the time, especially for a gentleman's bet. Dixon admitted that he hated to lose the money, but was delighted that at least Bullard was from Dixie.

The result of the bet was to launch Eugene Bullard into history as a first ever African-American aviator.

After qualifying as a pilot he joined 269 American aviators at the Lafayette Flying Corps on November 15, 1916. American volunteers flew with French pilots in different pursuit and bomber/reconnaissance aero squadrons on the Western Front.

On August 27, he was assigned to the Escadrille N.93 based at Beuzee-sur-Aire south of Verdun. The squad-

ron was equipped with Nieuport and Spad VII aircraft that displayed a flying duck as the squadron insignia. He took part in over twenty air combat missions, and he is sometimes credited with shooting down one or two German aircraft. However, the French authorities could not confirm Bullard's victories. His Spad had an insignia lettered "All blood runs red" and his nickname became the "Black Swallow of Death."

When the United States entered the war, the United States Army Air Service convened a medical board to recruit Americans serving in the Lafayette Flying Corps for the Air Service of the American Expeditionary Forces. Bullard went through the medical examination, but he was not accepted, as only white pilots were allowed to serve.

Sometime later, on a short break from duty in Paris, Bullard allegedly got into an argument with a French commissioned officer and was punished by being transferred to the service battalion of the 170th infantry Regiment of the French army. He was discharged in October 1919 and returned to Paris.

After the war he married and

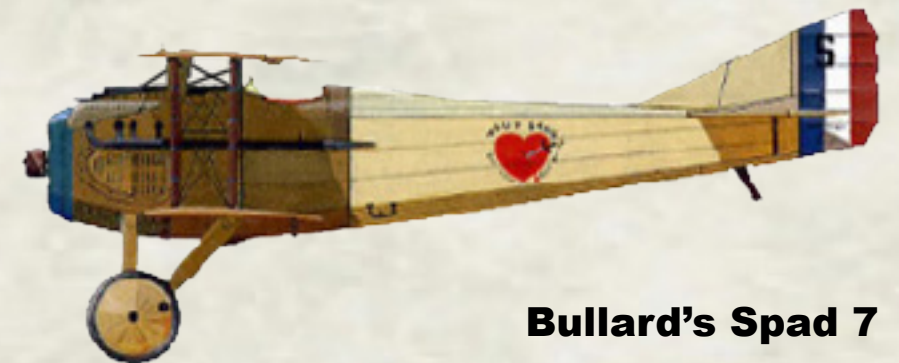
had two children. He bought a bar named "Le Grand Duc" on the north side of Paris.

In the late 1930s, prior to the outbreak of World War II, he was recruited by French intelligence to spy on the Germans who come by his bar. He remained very devoted to France and tried to join the French army but was considered too old. In 1940, he managed to find a way out of German occupied France, biked all the way down to Portugal and returned to the United States on a Red Cross ship. He settled in New York City.

In 1954, along with two other French veterans, he was invited by French Pres. Charles de Gaulle to light the flame of the Unknown Soldier at the *Arc de Triomphe* in Paris.

Eugene Bullard received fifteen decorations from the government of France. He was made a Knight of the Legion of Honor, France's most coveted award. He also was awarded the *Medaille militaire*, another top military distinction.

He died in New York City of stomach cancer on October 12, 1961 at the age of 66 with his achievements all but forgotten.



Bullard's Spad 7

Silent Night

The First World War had been raging for nine months and countless lives had already been lost. Yet on 24 December 1914 the guns along the Western Front fell silent. It was the first Christmas of the war and the opposing soldiers were determined to celebrate the fact. Originally published in the December 2017 issue.

It was called the 'Great War' or 'The War to end all Wars'. It had begun in April 1914 and by the time it ended in November 1918 more than 10 million lives would be lost.

Yet in 1939, a mere 21 years later, the world was at war once again. This new conflict would become known as World War II and the 'Great War' of 1914-18 would be renamed World War I.

By December 1914 the war had become static. An elaborate trench system had been constructed by both the Germans and the Allies. In some places troops faced each other with less than 100m of 'no-man's

land' between them. December 1914 would also see the first Christmas of the war.

A few months earlier Pope Benedict XV had begged the warring governments to declare a truce for Christmas, "that the guns may fall silent at least upon the night the angels sang." The Germans gave it serious consideration but the British angrily denounced the Pope.

On 24 December 1914, Christmas Eve, German troops in the region of Ypres, Belgium, began decorating the area around their trenches by placing candles on trees. The British troops

watched with a mixture of confusion and more than a little suspicion.

Then the Germans began to sing *Stille Nacht*. While the words may have been unfamiliar the British troops could recognise the tune of *Silent Night*. The British troops responded by singing English carols.

The two sides began shouting Christmas greetings to each other. Many of the Germans had worked or studied in Britain and could speak English fluently.

There were calls for the two





FIRE: British guns fire at a German position. During the Battle of the Somme 1,738,000 shells were fired at the Germans. During this battle the British took over 60,000 casualties on the first day of the battle.

sides to meet in no-man's land. Tentatively, in ones and twos, troops began leaving the trenches on both sides. Normally if you showed the slightest part of your body above a trench it would be hit by a bullet within seconds. Now people were climbing out of trenches, exposing themselves to the other side.

It must have been a strange feeling for those involved. Earlier that day they had been trying to kill each other, as they had for the past nine months. Now they were standing face to face with the enemy, shaking hands and greeting one another. Troops began to exchange small gifts such as whisky, jam, cigarettes, cigars and chocolate. The artillery in the region fell silent that night

and, for the rest of the night, an eerie silence fell over the Western Front.

Mourning the dead

Early on Christmas morning troops began meeting in no-man's land again. Both sides took the opportunity to bury the many dead that lay in no-man's land. Proper burials were held and in many instances soldiers from both sides mourned the dead together and paid their respects.

In more than one sector informal football matches were arranged in no-man's land.

In many sectors, the truce lasted through Christmas night, but in some areas, it continued until New Year's Day.

While the troops at the front may have been enjoying the

break, the higher commands on both sides, especially the British, were furious. They ordered the artillery to open fire and gave orders for attacks to take place. After all, this was a war.

British commanders Sir John French and Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien vowed that no such truce would be allowed again, although both had left command before Christmas 1915. In all of the following years of the war, artillery bombardments were ordered on Christmas Eve to ensure that there were no further lulls in the combat.

Troops were also rotated through various sectors of the front to prevent them from becoming overly familiar with the enemy.



THANK YOU FRITZ: British and German soldiers met in no-man's land, exchanged greetings and gifts, and in some sectors even organised a game of soccer.

Celebrated and retold

The Christmas truce of 1914 has been celebrated and retold in songs (such as *Christmas 1914* by Mike Harding; *Christmas in the Trenches* by John McCutcheon; *Belleau Wood* by Garth Brooks; *Pipes of Peace* by Paul McCartney) film (*Joyeux Noel* and *Oh What a Lovely War*) and has also been the subject of a number of books.

In the final episode of *Blackadder Goes Forth*, the protagonists discuss events of the past that led them to their current situation, including the Christmas Truce. Captain Edmund Blackadder (Rowan Atkinson) was apparently still sore over being ruled offside during a football game with the Germans. He also cynically muses that "Both sides advanced further during one Christmas piss-up than they did in the next two-and-a-

half years of war."

During the final episode Blackadder tries to fake insanity to get himself sent back to England. It doesn't work.

As they are about to go over the top, Private Baldrick tells Blackadder he has a plan to get them out.

"At the signal, company will advance! Well, I'm afraid it'll have to wait," Blackadder says.

"Whatever it was, I'm sure it was better than my plan to get out of this by pretending to be mad. I mean, who would have noticed another madman around here? Good luck, everyone. Charge!!!"

On 7 November 2006, Irish singer Chris de Burgh paid £14,400 at Bonham's auction house for an original 10 page letter from an unknown British soldier that records events and incidents with the Germans on that night

describing "the most memorable Christmas I've ever spent".

The letter begins:

This will be the most memorable Christmas I've ever spent or likely to spend: since about tea time yesterday I don't think there's been a shot fired on either side up to now. Last night turned a very clear frost moonlight night, so soon after dusk we had some decent fires going and had a few carols and songs. The Germans commenced by placing lights all along the edge of their trenches and coming over to us-wishing us a Happy Christmas etc.

They also gave us a few songs etc. so we had quite a social party. Several of them can speak English very well so we had a few conversations. Some of our chaps went to over to their lines. I think they've all come back bar one from 'E' Co. They no doubt kept him as a souvenir. In spite of our fires etc. it was terribly cold and a job to sleep between look out duties, which are two hours in every six.

First thing this morning it was very foggy. So we stood to arms a little longer than usual. A few of us that were lucky could go to Holy Communion early this morning. It was celebrated in a ruined farm about 500 yds behind us.

I unfortunately couldn't go. There must be something in the spirit of Christmas as to day we are all on top of our trenches running about. Whereas other days we have to keep our heads well down. We had breakfast about 8.0

On 21 November 2005, the last remaining Allied veteran of the truce, Alfred Anderson, died in Newtyle, Scotland at the age of 109.

which went down alright especially some cocoa we made. We also had some of the post this morning.

I had a parcel from B. G's Lace Dept containing a sweater, smokes, under clothes etc. We also had a card from the Queen, which I am sending back to you to look after please. After breakfast we had a game of football at the back of our trenches! We've had a few Germans over to see us this morning. They also sent a party over to bury a sniper we shot in the week. He was about a 100 yds from our trench. A few of our fellows went out and helped to bury him.

About 10.30 we had a short church parade the morning service etc. held in the trench. How we did sing. 'O come all ye faithful. And while shepherds watched their flocks by night' were the hymns we had. At present we are cooking our Christmas Dinner! so will finish this letter later.

Dinner is over! and well we enjoyed it. Our dinner party started off with fried bacon and dip-bread: followed by hot Xmas Pudding. I had a mascot in my piece. Next item on the menu was muscatels and almonds, oranges, bananas, chocolate etc followed by cocoa and smokes. You can guess we thought of the dinners at home. Just before dinner I had the pleasure of shaking hands with sev-

eral Germans: a party of them came 1/2 way over to us so several of us went out to them. I exchanged one of my balaclavas for a hat. I've also got a button off one of their tunics. We also exchanged smokes etc. and had a decent chat. They say they won't fire tomorrow if we don't so I suppose we shall get a bit of a holiday-perhaps. After exchanging autographs and them wishing us a Happy New Year we departed and came back and had our dinner.

We can hardly believe that we've been firing at them for the last week or two-it all seems so strange. At present its freezing hard and everything is covered with ice...

There are plenty of huge shell holes in front of our trenches, also pieces of shrapnel to be found. I never expected to shake hands with Germans between the firing lines on Christmas Day and I don't suppose you thought of us doing so. So after a fashion we've enjoyed? our Christmas. Hoping you spend a happy time also George Boy as well. How we thought of England during the day. Kind regards to all the neighbours.

With much love from Boy.

On 11 November 2008, the first official Truce memorial was unveiled in Frelinghein, France, the site of a Christmas Truce football game in 1914.

On 21 November 2005, the last remaining Allied veteran of the truce, Alfred Anderson died in Newtyle, Scotland at the age of 109.



HELLO: Descendants of Great War veterans, in contemporary uniform, shake hands at the 2008 unveiling of a memorial to the truce.

Counting the cost

Nearly 8.5 million soldiers lost their lives during World War I. Germany suffered the highest loss with 1,773,700 followed by Russia with 1,700,000. France suffered 1,357,800 casualties and the British Empire, which included Australia, Canada, India, New Zealand and South Africa, suffered 908,371. The United States of America, who entered the war in 1916, lost 116,516 men.

During World War II the casualty figures were even higher. More than 30 million soldiers died, as did millions of civilians. The Russians alone lost more than 13 million troops.

Let us remember the spirit of the Christmas Truce and pray that our generation and generations to come never have to experience a war and that we never have to calculate the cost of World War III.

Is that a fact?

Some facts about World War I. Short, sharp and to the point. Originally published in the March 2018 issue.

Later this year, at 11h00 on 11 November, it will be 100 years since the Armistice was signed, bringing World War I to an end.

Once again at the eleventh hours on the eleventh day of the eleventh month, we will remember those that paid the ultimate sacrifice.

With this in mind, we will be looking at a number of articles on World War I this year.

To begin with, let's look at a few facts about the Great War.

A good chance of surviving

So you're in the army now. Hope your last will and testament is up to date. There's a horde of nasty Huns sitting just across no-man's land from you, just waiting to ventilate your hide. Your chances of survival don't look that good, right. Wrong!

It was rare for a British soldier to be in the firing line for long. Unless they were involved in a battle, a unit would only spend about 10 days a month in the trenches. And of those, only about three days were spent right up on the front line.

It was not uncommon for soldiers to be rotated out of the trench line for as long as a month at a time.

The fact is that nine out of 10 British soldiers survived the trenches. Out of the approximately six million British soldiers mobilised, just over 700,000 were killed. Most of them during battles.

A bit of Beethoven

Most readers will know that after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour during World War II, America declared war on Japan. Between 110,000 and 120,000 Japanese Americans were incarcerated in internment camps.

The ironic thing is that the US 442nd Infantry Regiment, comprising most of Japanese American volunteers, became the most decorated unit in U.S. military history.

What some readers may not know was that this was not the first time it happened.

During World War I there were more than 250,000 Germans living in the USA who were forced to register at a post office and then carry a registration card with them at all times.

Of these, over 2,000 Germans were arrested and put in internment camps.

Many of the interned were the musicians from orchestras, and in one camp they were able to perform a piece of Beethoven.

The Red Signaller

Manfred von Richthofen, better known as the Red Baron, was the top scoring fighter ace of World War I with 80 kills.

Yet he started off the war as a lancer in a cavalry unit. When this unit was disbanded, he was transferred to the Signal Corps.

For over a year he spent his days stringing telegraph wires along the western front, even earning himself an Iron Cross

along the way.

Then, in 1915, he applied to join the Imperial Air Service. He became a legend and was both respected and feared by the Allies.

In April 1918 he was shot down and he crash landed behind Allied lines where he was found dead at the controls. The British and Australians buried him with full military honours.

You can read a comprehensive account of Manfred von Richthofen in the November issue of Military Despatches.

Child Soldiers

During World War I many soldiers, on both sides, lied about their age in order to enlist.

Sidney Lewis was the youngest British soldier. He was just 12 years old when he joined the British Army. Naturally the recruiting sergeant must have been myopic when Sidney claimed that he was 18 years old.

And Sidney was not the only one to lie about his age. Thousands of underage boys lied about their age to fight at the front.

Many of them were motivated by patriotism, wanting to fight for their country. For others though, it was the only escape from the poverty of their daily lives.

No doing the dirty

Come on, let's get real. Most young men have one thing on their minds - the opposite sex



RED BARON: A replica of the Red Baron's Fokker Dr-1

(with a strong emphasis on the sex part). And just because you've put them in a military uniform is not going to change this.

National servicemen in the old South African Defence Force (SADF) would often talk about the importance of the three Ps - Post, Pass and P***y.

The Allied powers during World War I knew that there was no ways they were going to stop their troops from getting frisky with the local females. Condoms were standard issue to all Allied troops in order to keep them protected.

Did I say all? Well, with the exception of the United States. They were the only Allied power during World War I that did not provide its soldiers with condoms. Not that it stopped the troops.

More than 204,000 American troops were wounded during World War I. Yet more than 400,00 US soldiers were infected by STDs (Sexually Transmitted Diseases), with many of them be rendered unfit for duty.

Fake news is nothing new

When America entered World War I in April 1917, the war had already been going on more than three years.

In those three years while America was not involved, British agents were planting stories in US newspapers, stirring up anger against innocent German civilians living in the USA.

And here you thought that fake news was all new and Internet-generation based. Just look at the Bible (New Living Translation). Ecclesiastes 1:9 - "History merely repeats itself. It has all been done before. Nothing under the sun is truly new."

Donkeys and Lions

There is an old saying that the British soldiers in World War I were lions led by donkeys.

The brave soldiers (lions) were led by incompetent generals (donkeys) who lived miles behind the front in luxury and out of touch with reality.

There is an old joke about a British general addressing his

officers just before an attack.

"Remember lads, I'll be right behind you. About 100 miles behind you."

It was claimed that generals never went over the top with their troops. The fact was that standing orders stated that Generals were not allowed to go over the top as they were too valuable to lose.

Still, this didn't stop more than 200 generals being killed, wounded or captured. Most Generals visited the front lines every day. In battle, they were considerably closer to the action than their counterparts are today.

Non sexist tanks

The tank was a weapon that changed the face of warfare. When the tank first made its appearance on the battlefield they came in two models - male and female.

The male version of the tank was armed with cannons. The female was armed only with machine guns.

By the end of the war tank technology had developed, especially in British tanks. It was decided that tanks would be armed with both a cannon and machine guns. This practice continues to this day, so there is not longer a need for tanks to be designated male or female.

Big Bang

One of the things that both sides learnt during World War I was that launching infantry attack across no-man's land was generally a waste of time, and a waste of lives. Not that it stopped the generals from planning the same type of attacks

time after time.

An attack would normally begin with an artillery barrage on the opposing trenches. These would often last for two or three days.

Once the barrage had ended the troops would then 'go over the top', climbing out of their trenches and advancing across no-man's land towards the enemy.

The problem was that the barrage let the enemy know that an attack was coming. They would sit in the relative safety of bunkers dug into the side of the trenches and wait for the barrage to end.

As soon as it had ended the troops would emerge from their bunkers, take up their positions, set up machine guns, and wait for the enemy to advance.

The advancing enemy were normally mown down before they even managed to get half-way across no-man's land.

The Battle of the Somme started with an artillery bombardment that lasted for a week. 1,738,000 shells were fired at the Germans.

In the brilliant television series *Blackadder Goes Forth*, which is set during World War I, Captain Edmund Blackadder (Rowan Atkinson) is talking to Lieutenant The Honourable George Colthurst St. Barleigh (Hugh Laurie) and the dim witted Private Baldrick (Tony Robinson).

"Yes, but Jerry is safe underground in concrete bunkers," he tells them. "We've shot off over a million cannon shells and what's the result? One dachshund with a slight limp"

Both sides came to the conclusion that if going over the top didn't work, why not go under?



BIG BANG: Actual footage of the explosion at Hawthorn Ridge Redoubt during the Battle of the Somme. Click on the play button to view.

Miners from both sides would build tunnels towards enemy trenches. Once under an enemy trench, the tunnel could be filled with explosives and detonated.

On the first day of the Battle of the Somme, the British detonated 19 mines under the German positions.

The mine beneath Hawthorn Ridge Redoubt was detonated at 07h20, ten minutes before Zero Hour. The area beneath the Germans had been packed with 18,000 kg of Ammonal and the resulting explosion was heard in London, 225 km away. The explosion was filmed by Geoffrey Malins.

Truce

There was never any official truce during World War I. That is not to say that they didn't happen.

The most famous one was the Christmas Truce of 1914 (See the article 'Silent Night' in the December 2017 issue of *Military Despatches*).

On Christmas Eve troops began shouting Christmas greet-

ings across the trenches. On Christmas morning some of them began emerging from the trenches into no-man's land. Greetings and gifts were exchanged and the opportunity was taken to bury the dead that had fallen in no-man's land.

In one sector they even arranged a football match. The truce lasted the entire day and in some sectors continued to New Year.

Naturally the top brass were not impressed with this. Didn't the soldiers realise that the entire purpose of war was to kill each other.

There are also reports of smaller truces in 1915 and even 1916. In some trenches, the soldiers adopted a "live and let live" policy, trying not to open fire on the enemy so they would not fire on them.

To counter this the commanders would rotate their soldiers all over the front line to stop them from becoming too familiar with the troops in the trenches across from them.

The Story of Moth O

Early this year the Memorable Order of Tin Hats celebrated its 90th anniversary. This is the story of the man who began the Order. This story was originally published in the September 2017 issue.

Charles Alfred Evenden was a soldier, cartoonist, and author. Yet he will be best remembered as the founder of the Memorable Order of Tin Hats, the Moths.

Charles Evenden was born to John Charles Evenden of Kent and his wife Elizabeth Gregory in London on October 1, 1894. He was the eldest of 13 children.

He was educated at Haggerston Road School in the London Borough of Hackney where, even at an early age, he showed great promise. At the age of twelve he was top of the school and remained there for two years.

His academic achievements earned him two scholarships to the prestigious Charterhouse School. His parents, however, could not afford to send him to Charterhouse and he was forced to leave school and enter the workforce. His parents found him a job in a factory where he earned a mere half-a-crown (about 30 cents) a week. To supplement his income he started selling newspapers.

One of the things that Charles really enjoyed was the newspaper cartoons and he be-

gan to study them. He began attending drawing classes and on one occasion he sent a cartoon to the Daily Express. They complimented him on his cartoon and the psychological effect of this act was to influence his whole life.

At the outbreak of World War I he joined the Australian Army and was posted to Egypt. As a member of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps he took part in the disastrous Gallipoli campaign - a campaign that would see more than 130,000

men die and over 261,000 being wounded.

During this campaign he was badly shell-shocked and evacuated to Malta. From there he was sent back to England where he was hospitalised. At the end of the war he returned to a farming life in Australia.

His farming efforts proved to be financially unsuccessful. He thus took up newspaper work in Melbourne. After a brief period, he decided to try newspaper life in South Africa. In 1923 he arrived in Durban where he joined the staff of The Natal Mercury as its cartoonist under the nom-de-plume of EVO. He remained with this paper from 1924 until 1953.

With the startling simplicity of his ideas he soon made a name for himself. To emphasise his attitude towards politicians and bureaucrats he created two characters 'Dr Mug' and 'Mr Wump'. His brand of Cockney humour had a special appeal for the newspaper's readers.

According to the Dictionary of South African Biography, one night in 1927 after he and the editor of The Natal Mercury, RJ Kingston Russell, had seen a war film, Charles was persuaded to draw a cartoon

on 'remembrance'.

According to the Dictionary, "The cartoon showed a tin helmet surmounted by a burning candle. Around the flames of the candle were six words - True Comradeship - Mutual Help - Sound Memory".

However, the official MOTH website carries a cartoon captioned Forgetfulness and this led to the founding of the Order.

This is confirmed by the Eastern Province Herald which describes the cartoon as follows: "a bullet- and shrapnel-riddled Allied helmet awash in the ocean. In the background a steamship passes over the horizon, leaving the forgotten, ghostly form of a veteran forlornly wading through the water."

The concepts of True Comradeship, Mutual Help and Sound Memory were to become the inspiration of a remarkable organisation of ex-front line soldiers, of all ranks, known as the Memorable Order of Tin Hats (MOTH).

Charles, as the founder of the movement and its guiding inspiration was given the title of 'Moth O' - a position he held until his death. He was also known as Moth EVO.

The membership of the MOTH movement, under EVO's vigorous direction and leadership, grew into thousands.

Men and women of two world wars, of the Second Anglo Boer War (1899-1902) and even those of former enemy forces streamed into its ranks. All who were prepared to keep alive the memories of comradeship and self-sacrifice - the finer vir-

tues that war brings forth - were welcomed and made at home in shell holes with colourful and meaningful names of war-time memories and occasions.

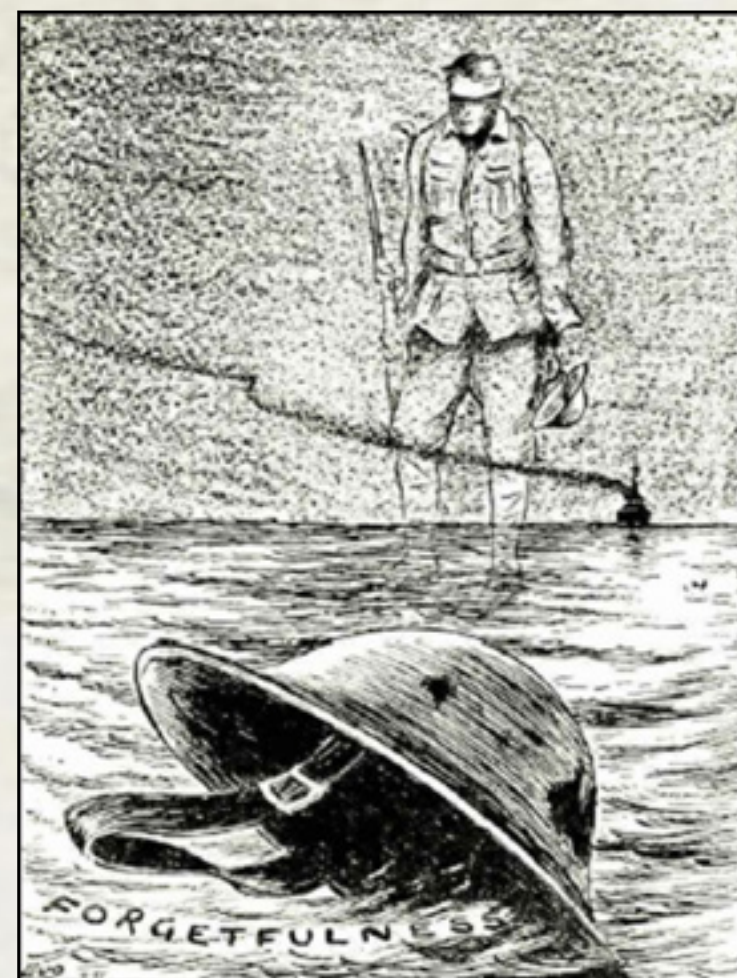
The shell-holes spread to the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand and to Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). Membership was extended to those who had participated in the South African Border War.

The MOTH national headquarters is situated in Warriors Gate, Durban, which is modelled on a Norman design from a photograph given to EVO by Admiral Evans-of-the-Broke. In 1948 EVO opened Mount Memory - a monument to the missing and dead of the Second World War, in the foothills of the Drakensberg mountains.

He married Reenie Carlos and had a son, Barrie, and a daughter. Barrie was posted as missing in action when his ship was torpedoed by a U-boat in the Mediterranean Sea.

He wrote the story of how the MOTH organisation was created in his book *Old soldiers never die* (Durban, 1952). He was also the author of *Like a little candle* (Durban, 1959)

In 1955 he was received by



INSPIRATION: The cartoon that was to become the inspiration behind the formation of the Memorable Order of Tin Hats.

Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, at Clarence House. On 11 November 1955 the freedom of the city of Durban was conferred on him, at a parade of 14,000 Moths, by the then Mayor, Councillor Vernon Esery.

Charles Alfred Evenden, Moth O, answered the Sunset Call in Entabeni Hospital in Durban on April 1, 1961. He was 66 years old. EVO was cremated, and his ashes were scattered over the Durban bay.

For more information about the Moths you can visit their official website at www.moth.org.za or by clicking [here](#).



Centenary of the Two-Minute Silence

On Monday 14 May 2018, the Noon Day Gun in Cape Town fired not once, but twice. And there was a very special reason for this. Article and photographs by Regine Lord. Originally published in the June 2017 issue.

On Monday, 14 May 2018, the Noon Gun of Cape Town fired not just once, but twice, with a brief pause between the two thunderous booms.

The reason for this unusual occurrence was that a special tradition was being commemorated that day: the Centenary of the Two-Minute Silence, which was first introduced right here in Cape Town on 14 May 1918.

In 1918, news of the terrible battles being fought on the Western Front in France, and of the many soldiers killed and wounded, had been reaching their families in Cape Town. When lists of casualties were read out during church services, parishioners were asked to participate in brief moments of silence in honour of the fallen.

Cape Town Mayor Sir Harry Hands was grief-stricken on receiving the news of the death of his eldest son, Captain Reginald Harry Myburgh Hands. After days of continued fighting and being repeatedly exposed to mustard gas, Captain Hands had died during a poison-gas bombardment on 20 April 1918, while off-duty and seemingly safe behind Allied lines.

After a special City Council meeting, at which those present

expressed their sympathy to the Mayor and his wife, one of the councillors, Mr Robert Rutherford Brydone, approached the Mayor in his office at the City Hall. On hearing the boom of the Noon Gun, and the Westminster Chimes coming from the clock tower, they stood up, united in their grief, to observe the traditional Angelus pause that was common practice in the Anglican Church they both attended.

Councillor Brydone then suggested that the observance of a brief period of silence be introduced in the city centre, in remembrance of all those who had fallen in World War I. Mayor Hands was taken by this idea, and after some discussion, it was implemented.

The daily public ritual was synchronised with the firing of the Noon Gun on Signal Hill, to remember the

fallen and acknowledge their ultimate sacrifice, and to give thanks for those who had returned alive, wounded and carrying the scars of the terrible fighting they had endured.

Thus, on 14 May 1918, as soon as the Noon Gun was fired, all residents of Cape Town stopped what they were doing, traffic and trams came to a halt, and all stood in silent prayer, heads bowed, thinking of their loved ones who had given their lives and those who were still fighting on the battlefields of WW1. A bugler on a balcony of the Fletcher and Cartwright building on the corner of Adderley and Darling Streets, played the Last Post and then the Reveille to signal the end of the silence.

In Cape Town, this midday pause continued daily until 17 January 1919; it was revived once more during the Second World War.

A year after the signing of the Armistice had ended the Great War on 11 November 1918, an annual Armistice Day service was being introduced by then King George V. It was to be held throughout the UK and the Commonwealth at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month every year, marking the time and day on which WW1 – ostensibly the War to end all Wars – finally ended.

South African author and



MOTH CREEDO: Dave Revell, Provincial Old Bill of the Cape Western Dugout, recites the MOTH Creed.

*"They shall not grow old,
As we who are left grow old,
Age shall not weary them,
Nor the years condemn them,
At the going down of the sun,
And in the morning,
We will remember them."*



MC: Commander Leon Steyn of the South African Naval Museum in Simon's Town was the Master of Ceremonies for the day.



WAITING FOR NOON: Lion Battery, on Signal Hill, is where the Noon Day Gun is situated. It was also the scene for the Centenary Celebration of the Two-Minute Silence.

political figure Sir Percy Fitzpatrick, who had personally experienced the impact of the two-minute silence in Cape Town in 1918, wrote to King George V, suggesting that it be adopted for the Armistice Day service. The King was so taken by this proposal, that he immediately approved it and gave instructions for its adoption throughout the British Empire.

And thus, this simple yet profoundly stirring ritual spread throughout the United Kingdom, the Commonwealth and beyond.

The special commemoration ceremony at the Noon Gun on 14 May 2018 brought together the SA Navy, the City of Cape Town, the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sports, the MOThs of the Western Cape and other key stakeholders.

Commander Leon Steyn of the SA Naval Museum, acting as the Master of Ceremonies, welcomed the invited guests, explained the historic significance of the event and introduced the various speakers.



RAISING AWARENESS: Western Cape Minister of Cultural Affairs and Sport, Minister Anroux Marais.



RECALLING HISTORY: Councillor Dave Bryant addressing the gathering.

Navy Chaplain Smith said a prayer and spoke a few words that lent solemnity and gravity to the occasion.

Councillor Dave Bryant said that the Noon Gun had become an integral part of the history of the city, remarking that, when it was fired at 12h00 every day, many Capetonians could not help checking their watches, while the unexpected loud boom tended to startle visitors. He added that, “We were not al-

ways aware of the sacrifice so many people made to help create the free and open society we have today.”

Before the new plaque to mark the occasion was unveiled by the Western Cape Minister of Cultural Affairs and Sports, Minister Anroux Marais, she declared:

“We raise awareness of our historical heritage and honour and remember those who have gone before us while shaping the world we live in today. Today, we pay respect to all those who lost their lives for a greater cause, regardless of culture or creed. ... Let us take this opportunity to be mindful of those who died in many conflicts and wars that have claimed a number of fellow South African lives. Let us reflect on their causes and legacies and how each one of us have and will continue to play an active role in the progress of Cape Town and its people.”

Dave Revell, Provincial Old Bill of the Cape Western Provincial Dugout, delivered the MOTH Credo and Prayer, as



THIS IS HOW IT'S DONE: Chief Petty Officer Dudley Malgas explains how the cannon is fired.

the MOThs stood to attention, echoing the promise, “We will remember them.”

Thereafter, Chief Petty Officer Dudley Malgas took the microphone, and shared some of the history of the Noon Gun and his own experience of firing it every day for many years. There are in fact two guns, both of which are loaded, in case one fails. Designed by Captain Thomas Blomefield and cast by Walker and Co., London, these original 18-pounder smooth-bore muzzle-loading guns date back to 1794, making them 224 years old this year. They had arrived at the Cape of Good Hope in 1795, during the first British occupation. They weigh more than two tons each, and are loaded with 1.5 kg of black powder. They are the oldest working cannons in the world.

Originally located at the Imhoff Battery, on the seaward side of the Castle of Good Hope, the two large guns were temporarily moved to the Castle when the Imhoff Battery was demolished in 1896 to make way for Strand

Street and the railway line. A few years later, they were relocated to the newly constructed Lion Battery on Signal Hill on 4 August 1902, no doubt because they were so deafeningly loud.

The custom of firing the gun at noon actually only started in 1903, the year in which Standard Time was introduced in South Africa. The gun was originally fired as soon as the artilleryman on Signal Hill saw a signal flare – and later the dropping of



CENTENARY: The new plaque to commemorate the centenary of the Two-Minute Silence.

a time-ball – at the South African Astronomical Observatory at 12pm. As this manual method proved unreliable, the SA Navy apparently began to use the clock of the City Hall in Darling Street on the Grand Parade to trigger the firing. According to CPO Malgas, however, they soon realised that, while the Noon Gun was using the City Hall clock to determine the correct time, the City Hall clock was in turn using the Noon Gun to reset their clock!

Nowadays, the gun is fired remotely. The Astronomical Observatory (which has an extremely accurate atomic clock) sends an electrical signal down the wires a few milliseconds before noon, thus igniting the firing cap on the cannon and sparking the gunpowder. At the Centenary celebrations, though, the guns were fired manually. CPO Malgas demonstrated charging and loading the gun, inserting a small white bag of black powder into the barrel and pushing it down with a long wooden ramrod.



FIRE: The Noon Day Gun fires, exactly 100 years after it was first fired to commemorate two minutes of silence during the Great War.

As he took his place next to a nearby box housing the remote triggering mechanism, the sentries at the memorial stood ready to lower the SA national flag, and the MOTHs banners nearby were called to attention by Sgt Major Leon Robertson.

The Last Post was stirringly performed by young bugler Zubair Abader, smartly attired in his school's Marching Band uniform. He is a learner from the South African Colleges Schools (SACS), which is the oldest school in South Africa, having been founded in 1829. To this day, SACS continues the tradition of sounding the Last Post at the end of each school day, in front of the honours boards that list the names of past pupils who died on military service during the 20th century. As the last notes died away, the first gun fired a thunderous report, setting off car alarms nearby. Everyone, military and civilian alike, stood quietly and solemnly, as the noise of the alarms died

down and the clouds of smoke billowed and dissipated. All that could be heard was the flags and banners fluttering in the gentle breeze and the distant sound of traffic in the city below.

Suddenly, the second gun fired – BOOM! As the smoke drifted away into the blue sky, the Bugler began to play the Reveille, signalling the end of the two-minute silence.

The spectators' attention then shifted to the Cannon Association of South Africa, whose members had set up three quarter-pounder saluting guns on the hillside overlooking the harbour. Under the instruction of Master Gunner Martin Venter Snr, they fired a ten-gun salute, at precise one-minute intervals – each shot representing 10 years. These small yet surprisingly loud guns are locally cast replicas of original saluting guns, which would have been placed on the gunwales of ships, dating back to pre-1400.

The commemoration con-

cluded with the playing of the SA National Anthem by the SA Navy Band, conducted by Bandmaster WO2 Llewellyn Arnold.

Among the guests at the commemoration service were: Mr Ken Hands, who is one of Mayor Harry Hands' great-grandsons, British Consul General Edward Roman, Gunner Kevin Ashton of the Gunners Association, Mr WP van Zyl of the Bishops Old Diocesan Union, and representatives of the City of Cape Town, of the SA Museum and the SA Naval Museum, as well as military veterans and visitors. Royal Navy Captain Matt Syrett and a group of fellow officers from the HMS Protector, the Royal Navy's ice patrol ship, which is currently in Cape Town harbour for maintenance after a long deployment in the South Atlantic, also attended the ceremony.

And a special visitor had travelled all the way from Bloemfontein to attend: Mrs Joan C. Abrahams, affectionately known as "Tannie Mossie" (Ma



SALUTE: Members of the Cannon Association of South Africa firing three quarter-pounder saluting guns.

Sparrow). A long-time supporter of the military, she has developed a very close bond with, in particular, the South African paratroopers.

Although the Two-Minute Silence is no longer a daily ritual, as it was for some time during World War I and World War II, it is still regularly used at military parades, annual commemoration services, and other public events, with a bugler first playing the Last Post and then signalling the end of the two-minute silence by playing the Reveille.

For Capetonians, the firing of the Noon Gun at 12h00, serves as a daily reminder of this hauntingly beautiful ceremony of giving thanks to those who survived the horrors of war and honouring those who had given their lives and never returned home to their families.

We will remember them.

P.S. I would like to thank Mrs Joan Abrahams (Tannie Mossie) for the information she provided in her draft manuscript, "The

Silent Pause of Remembrance". In it, she clears up the confusion around the origins of the silent pause. Most online sources suggest that the Councillor Robert Rutherford Brydon (without an 'e') had lost his son Major Walter Brydon in World War I, and that this prompted him to propose the introduction of the Two-Minute Silence of Remembrance. The Councillor's surname was in fact spelt with an 'e' – Brydone, and his son's

name was Robert Gilray Brydone; he served as a medic and survived World War I.

Maj Walter Brydon (who was not the Councillor's son), was a South African, whose parents were Jenny Hay Brydon of London and the late William Walter Brydon of Belfast. Maj Walter Brydon served as gunner on the Western Front, in both the 71st and the 73rd Siege Batteries, until he was appointed as the Commanding Officer of the 73rd Siege Battery South African Heavy Artillery. He was wounded three times and then gassed, before being killed in action on 12 April 1918. Coincidentally, both Captain Reginald Hands and Major Nugent Fitzpatrick (the son of Sir Percy Fitzpatrick) served in 'Brydon's Battery' when they were killed. No doubt adding to the confusion of Brydon/Brydone is the fact that the plaque, which was unveiled at the Noon Gun in 2008, spells the Councillor's name as 'Brydon'.



TANNIE MOSSIE: Mrs J.C. Abrahams (Tannie Mossie) with paratroopers Jim Harwood and Pat Loftus.

Weapons & Equipment: WW I

This month we compare the weapons and equipment of the major combatants in the First World War.

British Army

The British Army during World War I fought the largest and most costly war in its long history.

At the outbreak of the war in August 1914, the British regular army was a small professional force. It consisted of 247,432 regular troops organised in four regiments of Guards (Grenadier, with three Battalions; Coldstream, with three Battalions; Scots, with two Battalions; Irish with one Battalion), 68 regiments of the line and the Rifle Brigade (despite its name, this was an infantry regiment), 31 cavalry regiments, artillery and other support arms.

Up until conscription was introduced in January 1916, British soldiers were volunteers.

The standard uniform had changed since the lessons learnt during the Anglo Boer Wars. No longer did they wear the traditional 'red coat', but rather a khaki uniform.

Most troops were armed with bolt-action rifles, such as the Lee-Enfield.

With the introduction of gas to the battlefield, gas masks became vital items.

Another unique weapon was the trench knife. If troops managed to breach an enemy trench, the fighting would be at close quarters, and knives and clubs

were useful for this type of combat. Some trench knives incorporated a 'knuckle duster'.

Infantry Equipment

- A - Combat boots.
- B - Brodie helmet.
- C - Lee-Enfield Mk I.
- D - Webley Mk IV.
- E - Mills bomb.
- F - Lee-Enfield Bayonet.
- G - Trench knife.
- H - Gas mask and case.
- I - Canteen.
- J - Trenching tool.
- K - Mess kit.
- L - Puttee.
- M - Ammo bandolier.
- N - Backpack.

German Army

The Deutsches Heer (German Imperial Army) was the name given to the combined land and air forces of the German Empire.

The Germans wore a field grey uniform. At the start of the war most troops still wore the *pickelhaube*, a spiked helmet. This was later replaced by the distinctive *stahlhelm* (steel helmet).

The Germans used a number of bolt-action rifles during the war, with the Gewehr 98 become the standard issue.

Many troops would make use of a sidearm and a trench knife for *mêlée* combat.

The gas mask was also a vital component of equipment for German troops.

The trenching tool was not only used to dig holes. It was also useful for *mêlée* combat. Some troops would even sharpen the edges of the shovel.

While the standard hand grenade was the M1915 *Stielhandgranate*, the M1917 *Eierhandgranate* was also popular because it was smaller and easier to throw.

Infantry Equipment

- A - Combat boots.
- B - Stahlhelm (Steel helmet).
- C - Gewehr 98.
- D - Mauser C96.

- E - M1915 Stielhandgranate.
- F - Gewehr 98 Bayonet.
- G - Trench knife.
- H - Gas mask and case.
- I - Canteen.
- J - Trenching tool.
- K - Mess kit.
- L - Ammo bandolier.
- N - Backpack.

Pickelhaube



French Army

During the early months of the war the French still wore blue coats and red pants. This, however, was soon changed.

They adopted a uniform that was a light grey/blue.

The standard infantry weapon was the Lebel M1886 bolt-action rifle. Some troops would also use sidearms such as the Ruby M1914.

One of the unique weapons used by the French was the 'French Nail'. These were locally fabricated and converted

bayonets, knives and stabbing weapons. They were crude stabbing spikes made by adding a point to a steel stake which had its rearmost section heated and bent into a crude handle. Three French Nail's could be made from a single Lebel bayonet. The early M2 gas mask was not very effective and these were later replaced by the Ars gas mask.

- C - Lebel M1886.
- D - *Pistolet Automatique* "Ruby".
- E - F1 grenade.
- F - Lebel Bayonet.
- G - 'French Nail' trench knife.
- H - Ars Gas mask and case.
- I - Canteen.
- J - Mess kit.
- K - Ammo bandolier.
- L - Backpack.

Infantry Equipment

- A - Combat boots.
- B - M15 *Casque Adrian* helmet.

US Army

U.S. service members in World War I came to be dubbed doughboys - the term most typically was used to refer to troops deployed to Europe as part of the American Expeditionary Forces.

The standard infantry weapons was the bolt-action Springfield M1903.

The most popular sidearm was the Colt M1911, a pistol that remained in service for many years.

The AEF gas mask and respi-

rator was standard issue to US troops.

Like the British, the Americans favoured a trench knife that was also a 'knuckle duster'. It was effective for *mêlée* combat.

Like the British and the French, US troops wore puttee., a name adapted from the Hindi *paṭṭī* (bandage). The consisted of a long narrow piece of cloth wound tightly and spirally round the leg from the ankle to the knee. They served to provide both support and protec-

tion.

Infantry Equipment

- A - Combat boots.
- B - Steel helmet.
- C - Springfield M1903.
- D - Colt M1911.
- E - Mk 1 Grenade.
- F - Springfield M1903 Bayonet.
- G - Trench knife.
- H - Gas mask and case.
- I - Canteen.
- J - Trenching tool.
- K - Mess kit.
- L - Ammo bandolier.
- N - Backpack.





United Kingdom



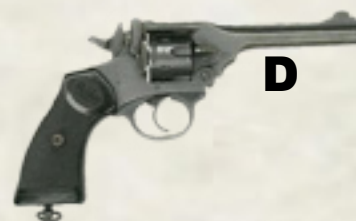
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B



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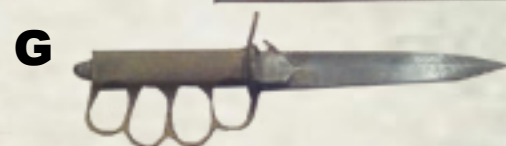
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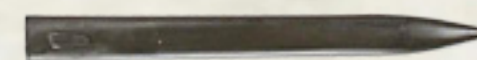
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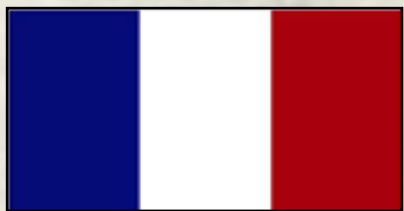
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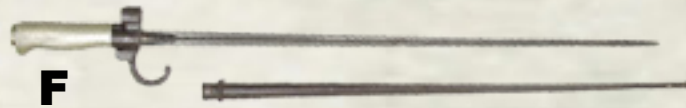
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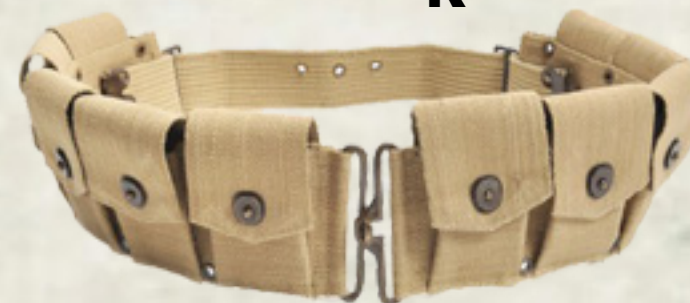
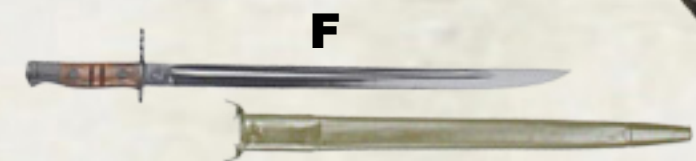
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France



United States



Anthony Beauchamp-Proctor

Andrew (Anthony) Frederick Weatherby Beauchamp-Proctor, VC, DSO, MC and bar, DFC (4 September 1894 - 21 June 1921) was a South African recipient of the Victoria Cross. He was South Africa's leading ace of World War I, credited with 54 aerial victories. Originally published in October 2017 edition.

Beauchamp-Proctor was born on 4 September 1894 in Mossel Bay, Cape Province, the second son of a school teacher. He was attending the University of Cape Town studying engineering when the European war broke out. He took leave from his studies to join the Duke of Edinburgh's Own Rifles (The Dukes). He served as a signalman in the German South-West Africa campaign.

In August 1915 he was demobilised with an honorable discharge. He promptly went to work with the South African Field Telegraph and re-enrolled in university. He managed to complete his third year of college before reenlisting, this time into the Royal Flying Corps (RFC), in March 1917.

He was accepted as an Air Mechanic Third Class. From there he passed on to pilot training at the School of Military Aeronautics at Oxford in England, where he was also commissioned.

Learning to fly presented a slight problem for Beauchamp-Proctor - he stood only five feet two inches tall. This meant he was unable to see out of the cockpit and his feet couldn't reach the rudder bars.

His aircraft seating was al-

tered to accommodate him; his seat was raised so he had a better view from the cockpit and so he could reach controls. Blocks of wood were also fastened on his rudder bar so he could reach it.

On 10 June 1917, he soloed, when he had just over five hours flying time. He crashed upon landing, wiping out the landing gear. Nevertheless, he continued to fly solo. He was passed on to a bomber squadron, Number 84, with a little under ten hours flying experience.

When he joined 84 Squadron in July 1917, it was reforming as a fighter squadron.

France 1917-18

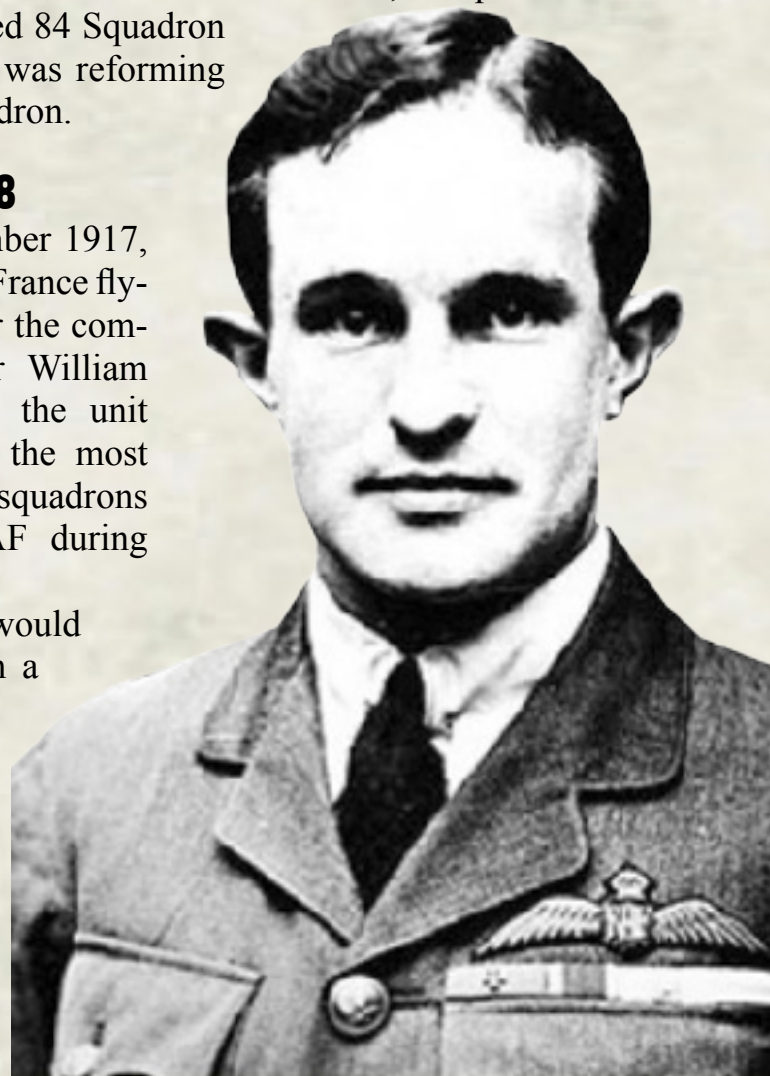
On 23 September 1917, the unit went to France flying SE5s. Under the command of Major William Sholto Douglas the unit became one of the most effective scout squadrons in the RFC/RAF during 1918.

The squadron would be credited with a victory total of 323, and would produce 25 aces. However, Beauchamp-Proctor would be pre-eminent,

with almost triple the number of successes of the second leading ace. He was not particularly esteemed as a flier, but was a deadly shot.

Beauchamp-Proctor's piloting skills can be judged by the fact he had three landing accidents before he ever shot down an enemy plane.

Beauchamp-Proctor continued to fly the SE5 with modifications to the aircraft's seat and controls, something his Philadelphia-born American squadron mate, Joseph "Child Yank"



KNIGHTS OF THE AIR: Beauchamp-Proctor flew an SE5 during his career with the RFC/RAF. Pictured above is an SE5a, an upgrade of the standard SE5.

Boudwin, who stood only two inches taller, also had to use.

The alterations to relatively primitive controls could have contributed to Beauchamp-Proctor's poor airmanship.

His initial confirmed victory did not come until the turn of the year. On 3 January 1918, he sent a German two seater 'down out of control'. He then claimed victories four more times in February, becoming an ace on its final day. Only one of his first five victories resulted in the destruction of an enemy; the other four were planes sent down as 'out of control'.

March brought him four more victories; three of them were scored within five minutes on the 17th. With five kills to his name Beauchamp-Proctor was now regarded as an 'ace'.

The term 'ace' - or, more precisely 'fighter ace' - was first used during World War I to de-

scribe a pilot who had brought down at least five enemy aircraft. The first-ever reference in print to an air 'ace' appeared in an article in The Times of 14 September 1917, which described Raoul Lafayette as 'the "ace" of the American Lafayette Flying Squadron.' The German equivalent was *Oberkanone*, which means 'top gun'.

Although the definition varied from country to country and was never officially approved, it was used during both World Wars, with aces universally hailed as heroes.

In April Beauchamp-Proctor claimed only one kill. Among his 11 victories for the month of May were five on 19 May. On that morning, he knocked an enemy observation plane out of the battle; fifteen minutes later, he destroyed an Albatross D.V scout. That evening, at about 6:35 PM, he downed three more

Albatros D.Vs.

By the 31st, his roll had climbed to 21 victims -16 fighters and five observation aircraft.

The next day marked a change of focus for him; he shot down an observation balloon. For the remainder of his career, he would choose to blind the enemy, choosing to concentrate on shooting down kite balloons and observation aircraft.

Also notable is the drop in his "out of control" victories; from here on out, the record shows destruction after destruction of the enemy.

His June string would only run to the 13th, but in that time, he would destroy four balloons, an observation two-seater and a fighter. Only one fighter went down out of control.

On the 22nd, he was awarded the Military Cross. July would pass without incident. On August 3, he was granted one of the first ever Distinguished Flying Crosses.

The break in his victory string lasted almost a month, as he went on home leave and helped a recruitment drive for the RAF.

On 8 August, he returned and resumed with tally number 29, another balloon. On August 9 Beauchamp-Proctor was leading No. 84 Squadron on a patrol over their base at Bertangles, with Boudwin and six-foot-four tall Hugh Saunders as wingmen, and got involved in a heated engagement at 2:00 pm, that involved the threesome in combat against Fokker D.VII fighters of JG I, led that day by the future Nazi Reichsmarschall

Hermann Göring.

He would claim an additional 14 victories, and end the month with his claims list extended to 43.

One memorable day was the 22nd; he attacked a line of six enemy balloon over the British 3rd Corps front. He set the first one afire with his machine guns and forced the other five to the ground, the observers taking to their parachutes.

His 15 'kills' for August would include five balloons, all destroyed, and two more two-seater planes. He was now up to 43 victories. September claims would be all balloons - four of them.

In the first few days of October, he would destroy three more balloons and three Fokker D.VII fighters, one of which burned. Another D.VII spun down out of control.

On 8 October he was hit by ground fire and wounded in the arm, ending his front line service.

Up until the end of May, he destroyed six enemy planes single-handed, and shared the destruction of two others. He drove ten down out of control, and shared in another 'out of control' victory. Two of his victims were captured.

Certainly a creditable record, and like many other aces, with no conquests over balloons. Balloons, with all the anti-aircraft artillery guarding them, and patrolling fighter airplanes ready to intercede for them, were very dangerous targets. Commonly they were hunted by co-ordinated packs of attacking fighters.

Beauchamp-Proctor's victory

list ran to a total of 54; two (and one shared) captured enemy aircraft, 13 (and three shared) balloons destroyed, 15 (and one shared) aircraft destroyed, and 15 (and one shared) aircraft 'out of control'.

His 16 balloons downed made him the leading British Empire balloon buster.

On 2 November, he had been awarded a Distinguished Service Order, crowned by the Victoria Cross later in the month, on the 30th.

Post war

He was discharged from hospital in March 1919 and embarked on a four month long lecture tour of the USA, before returning to England and qualifying as a seaplane pilot with a permanent commission as a Flight Lieutenant in the RAF.

After his VC investiture at Buckingham Palace in November 1919 he was awarded a year's leave, and this enabled him finish his BSc degree in Engineering.

Death

He was killed on the 21 June 1921 in a training accident flying a Sopwith Snipe, in preparation for an air show at the RAF Hendon.

His aircraft went into a vicious spin after performing a slow loop, and he was killed in the ensuing crash. At least one observer remarked that the loss of control and subsequent crash of the aircraft could have been linked to Proctor's diminutive size.

He was originally buried at Upavon, Wiltshire, but in August 1921 his body was re-

turned to South Africa where he was given a state funeral.

There still exists confusion over Beauchamp-Proctor's given name. For decades he was listed as "Anthony" but more recent scholarship indicates "Andrew", which apparently is the name on his tombstone.

Citations

Military Cross

"For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. While on offensive patrol he observed an enemy two-seater plane attempting to cross our lines. He engaged it and opened fire, with the result that it fell over on its side and crashed to earth.

On a later occasion, when on patrol, he observed three enemy scouts attacking one of our bombing machines.

He attacked one of these, and after firing 100 rounds in it, it fell over on its back and was seen to descend in that position from 5,000 feet. He then attacked another group of hostile scouts, one of which he shot down completely out of control, and another crumpled up and crashed to earth.

In addition to these, he has destroyed another hostile machine, and shot down three completely out of control. He has at all times displayed the utmost dash and initiative, and is a patrol leader of great merit and resource."

MC citation,
Supplement to the
London Gazette,
22 June 1918

Distinguished Flying Cross

"Lt. (T./Capt.) Andrew Weatherby Beauchamp-Pro-



The final resting place of Captain Beauchamp-Proctor. He was one of only 19 pilots that were awarded the Victoria Cross during World War I.

tor, M.C. A brilliant and fearless leader of our offensive patrols. His formation has destroyed thirteen enemy machines and brought down thirteen more out of control in a period of a few months.

On a recent morning his patrol of five aeroplanes attacked an enemy formation of thirty machines and was successful in destroying two of them. In the evening he again attacked an enemy formation with great dash, destroying one machine and forcing two others to collide, resulting in their destruction."

DFC citation,
Supplement to the
London Gazette,
3 August 1918

Distinguished Service Order

"A fighting pilot of great skill, and a splendid leader. He rendered brilliant service on the 22nd August, when his Flight was detailed to neutralise hostile balloons. Having shot down one balloon in flames, he attacked the occupants of five others in succession with machine-gun fire, compelling the occupants in each case to take to parachutes.

He then drove down another balloon to within fifty feet of the ground, when it burst into flames. In all he has accounted for thirty-three enemy machines and seven balloons."

DSO citation,
Supplement to the
London Gazette,
2 November 1918

Victoria Cross

"Between August 8, 1918, and October 8, 1918, this officer proved himself victor in twenty-six decisive combats, destroying twelve enemy kite balloons, ten enemy aircraft, and driving down four other enemy aircraft completely out of control.

Between October 1, 1918, and October 5, 1918, he destroyed two enemy scouts, burnt three enemy kite balloons, and drove down one enemy scout completely out of control. On October 1, 1918, in a general engagement with about twenty-eight machines, he crashed one Fokker biplane near Fontaine and a second near Ramicourt; on October 2 he burnt a hostile balloon near Selvigny; on October 3 he drove down, completely out of control, an enemy scout near Mont d'Origny, and

burnt a hostile balloon; on October 5, the third hostile balloon near Bohain.

On October 8, 1918, while flying home at a low altitude, after destroying an enemy two-seater near Marez, he was painfully wounded in the arm by machine-gun fire, but, continuing, he landed safely at his aerodrome, and after making his report was admitted to hospital.

In all he has proved himself conqueror over fifty-four foes, destroying twenty-two enemy machines, sixteen enemy kite balloons, and driving down sixteen enemy aircraft completely out of control.

Captain Beauchamp-Proctor's work in attacking enemy troops on the ground and in reconnaissance during the withdrawal following on the Battle of St. Quentin from March 21, 1918, and during the victorious advance of our Armies commencing on August 8, has been almost unsurpassed in its Brilliancy, and as such has made an impression on those serving in his squadron and those around him that will not be easily forgotten.

Capt. Beauchamp-Proctor was awarded Military Cross on 22 June 1918; D.F. Cross on 2 July 1918; Bar to M.C. on 16 September 1918; and Distinguished Service Order on 2 November 1918."

VC citation,
Supplement to the
London Gazette,
30 November 1918

Harold Ackroyd

The unassuming, bespectacled World War I medical officer that did everything in his power to save the lives of others. Originally published in April 2018 edition.

Instituted on 29 January 1856 by Queen Victoria to honour acts of valour during the Crimean War, the Victoria Cross (VC) is the highest award of the United Kingdom honours system. It is awarded for gallantry "in the presence of the enemy" to members of the British armed forces. It may be awarded posthumously.

A total of 1,358 Victoria Crosses have been awarded since 1856 and only three people have been awarded a bar to the Victoria Cross. In other words, they were awarded the medal twice.

The greatest number of Victoria Crosses won in a single conflict was World War I, when 628 were awarded.

Without doubt, to be recommended for a VC the nominee would have had to have demonstrated exceptional gallantry. Harold Ackroyd was recommended for the VC not once, not twice, but a remarkable 34 times.

Medical Career

Born in Southport, Lancashire on 18 July 1877, Harold Ackroyd was the youngest son of Edward Ackroyd.

Harold's father had inher-

ited a sizable fortune from his mother's family in 1878 and became Chairman of the Southport and Cheshire Lines Extension Railway, a change in fortune which made a private education possible.

Schooled at Mintholme College and Shrewsbury School, Harold then gained entry to Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge.

He completed his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1899 and continued his medical studies at

Guy's Hospital, London. It was here that he was appointed as a House Officer.

He then went on to hospital appointments at the Birmingham General Hospital and the David Lewis Northern Hospital, Liverpool.

In 1908 he secured a British Medical Association scholarship and became a Research Scholar at Downing College, in the Pharmacological Laboratory and then in the Institute for the study of Animal Nutrition, Department of Agriculture, Cambridge.

Harold worked with Sir Frederick Gowland Hopkins, Professor of Biochemistry and published three papers on Purine metabolism.

While at Cambridge, Harold met Mabel Robina Smythe, the matron of Strangeways Hospital. On 1 August 1908 they married and lived in Great Shelford where their children Ursula (1909) and Stephen (1912) were born.

They moved to Royston,



Hertfordshire where their third child, Anthony, was born in 1914.

Military Career

Britain entered World War I on 4 August 1914. Harold was very patriotic and, despite being deeply involved in scientific research at Cambridge, he decided to join the army in early 1915.

He was commissioned Temporary Lieutenant in the Royal Army Medical Corps on 15 February 1915 and was attached as Medical Officer to the 6th Battalion of the Royal Berkshire Regiment.

They formed part of the 53rd Infantry Brigade in the 18th Division and sailed for France on 25 July 1915. They were posted to the Somme front taking over a portion of the front line held by the 5th Division on 22 August. By the end of 1915 the 18th Division had suffered 1,247 casualties, the quietest four months in its history!

The Somme

Harold was promoted to temporary captain on 15 February 1916. The 18th Division was now part of the Fourth Army

(United Kingdom) under Sir Henry Rawlinson.

On 1 July the British launched what was to become known as the Battle of the Somme. By the end of the first advance, the division had covered 2,743 metres on a 2,286 metre front and had seized Montauban Ridge on the west end of Montauban village. Six hundred and ninety five prisoners had been taken but the division suffered 3,307 casualties.

Delville Wood became the grave of the 53rd Brigade. It was here during fierce fighting for the possession of the wood on 19 July 1916 that Harold Ackroyd acted with such bravery that he was recommended eleven times for the award of the Victoria Cross. He was eventually awarded the Military Cross for this action.

Part of the citation for his medal read:

"For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty during operations. He attended the wounded under heavy fire, and finally, when he had seen that all our wounded from behind the line had been got in, he went out beyond the front line and brought in both our own and enemy wounded, although continually sniped at."

Harold was described as a heroic figure during those two days of July. In his book "The 18th Division in the Great War" Captain G H F Nicholls writes, *"The fighting was so confused and the wood so hard to search that the difficulties in evacuating the wounded seemed insu-*

perable but Ackroyd, bespectacled and stooping, was so cool and purposeful and methodical that he cleared the whole wood of wounded British and Bosh as well."

Harold rescued many of the wounded from the 1st Infantry Brigade (South Africa) and there is a memorial to him in the room commemorating Delville Wood at Fort Beaufort Historical Museum, South Africa. He left the battalion on 11 August 1916 to return to England on sick leave.

Harold had been wounded at Delville Wood, although the nature and extent of his wound is not known. He was granted six weeks sick leave.

After only a week back home, Harold decided that he wanted to return to the front.

He stated in a letter to his brother Edward, dated 4 September, *"I am now quite well and fit to return to duty"*.

He could not understand why he had been given so much sick leave and called the Army Medical Board *"a bunch of old fossils."*

He also said *"I would hate the Battalion to go into action without me"*. He was passed fit for service on 3 October and on 20 October was awarded the Military Cross for his actions in Delville Wood. He rejoined the regiment in November 1916.

Ypres

During July 1917 preparation was being made for the Ypres Offensive, the third Battle of Ypres that became known as



the Battle of Passchendaele.

The battle commenced on 31 July 1917. The role of the 18th Division was to leapfrog the 30th Division (United Kingdom) after they had taken what became known as “the Black Line” through Glencorse Wood.

Disaster struck and by a tragic mistake the 30th Division infantry wheeled to their left and assaulted Chateau Wood instead of Glencorse Wood.

The misleading information that Glencorse Wood was in British hands caused the 53rd Brigade to plunge into a fatal gap.

During 31 July and 1 August the 53rd Brigade fought against a fully prepared enemy for ground which the 30th Division should have taken. This fateful error caused the offensive in Glencorse Wood to be held up for several days with fierce fighting throughout this period.

Captain Nicholls in his history of the 18th Division records “in all that hellish turmoil, there had been one quiet figure, most heroic, most wonderful of all. Dr Ackroyd, the 6th Berks Medical Officer, a stooping, grey haired, bespectacled man rose

to the supreme heights that day. He seemed to be everywhere; he tended and bandaged scores of men for to him fell the rush of cases around Clapham Junction and towards Hooze. But no wounded man was treated hurriedly or unskilfully. Ackroyd worked as stoically as if he were in the quiet of an operating theatre. Complete absorption in his work was probably his secret. When it was all over there were 23 separate recommendations of his name for the Victoria Cross.”

Harold came through 31 July unscathed but died eleven days later on 11 August in Jargon Trench on the western edge of Glencorse Wood, shot in the head by a sniper. He was 40 years old. Harold’s body was evacuated and buried in Birr Cross Roads Cemetery, Zillebecke near Ypres. His headstone reads “Believed to be buried in this cemetery.”

Harold’s Victoria Cross was gazetted on 6 September 1917. A medal investiture was held outside Buckingham Palace on 26 September 1917. His widow Mabel and their five-year-old

son Stephen received both the Victoria Cross and the Military Cross from King George V.

Part of the citation for his medal reads:

“For most conspicuous bravery. During recent operations Capt. Ackroyd displayed the greatest gallantry and devotion to duty. Utterly regardless of danger, he worked continuously for many hours up and down and in front of the line tending the wounded and saving the lives of officers and men. In so doing he had to move across the open under heavy machine-gun, rifle and shell fire. He carried a wounded officer to a place of safety under very heavy fire. On another occasion he went some way in front of our advanced line and brought in a wounded man under continuous sniping and machine-gun fire. His heroism was the means of saving many lives, and provided a magnificent example of courage, cheerfulness, and determination to the fighting men in whose midst he was carrying out his splendid work. This gallant officer has since been killed in action.”



World War I Quiz

This month we’re looking at World War I. Here are 38 questions, some easy, others not so easy. How many of these can you answer? Answers of page 76.

1. By what name was German World War I flying ace Manfred von Richthofen better known as?
2. Who was South Africa’s leading air ace during World War I?
3. What was the first prototype tank in World War I named?
4. Who wrote the book, *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom*?
5. The United States joined World War I after what ship was sunk by a German submarine?
6. The assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife on June 28, 1914 is said to be the catalyst of WWI. What was unusual about the licence plate of the vehicle they were assassinated in?
7. Who was the most successful Allied pilot in World War I?
8. Who was the German 48-ton howitzer ‘Big Bertha’ named after?
9. By what name were tanks originally known as?
10. By what names was World War I also known as?
11. Who shot and killed Archduke Franz Ferdinand?
12. Which was the first country to use gas during World War I?
13. By what name was Margaretha Zelle better known?
14. Who was the most decorated American of World War I?
15. During which battle did the British suffer more than 60,000 casualties in one day?
16. Where was the armistice signed after the end of the war?
17. Who commanded the British fleet at the Battle of Jutland?
18. Which French hero of World War I was tried for treason after World War II?
19. Where was the German fleet scuttled in 1919?
20. At which battle was poison gas first used?
21. When was Archduke Ferdinand assassinated? When did the USA join World War I?
22. Who led Germany to victory over Russia at Tannenberg in 1914?
23. Which Russian general committed suicide after suffering defeat at the battle of Tannenberg?
24. What does the acronym Anzac stand for?
25. Which general led the American Expeditionary Force on the western front?
26. Which German cruiser caused havoc in the Indian and Pacific Oceans before finally being sunk by HMAS Sydney?
27. What was the grim nickname applied to the battle of Verdun?
28. According to the legend, how did the soldiers of the Paris garrison reach the battle of the Marne in September 1914?
29. Which German commander was the last to surrender?
30. Which statesman signed the Treaty of Versailles on behalf of France?
31. Where did the Italian army suffer a disastrous defeat in the autumn of 1917?
32. Who did General Ludendorff and Field Marshal Paul von Hindenburg replace as the supreme command of the German army?
33. On which part of the Turkish coast did allied troops land on 25 April 1915?
34. In which Belgian town did the British Expeditionary Force start and end the war for Britain?
35. Where did the only large-scale clash of the British and German fleets take place?
36. What rank did Adolf Hitler reach in World War I?
37. Was Hitler ever decorated for bravery in World War I?
38. How many times as Captain Harold Ackroyd recommended for the Victoria Cross?

WW I Tanks

They were slow and unreliable, yet the introduction of the tank in World War I changed the face of warfare forever.

By August 1915 the 'Great War' had been raging for more than a year. A stalemate existed along the entire Western Front.

The routine would usually be the same for both sides. An attack would be planned against a section of enemy trench.

The attack itself would be preceded by an artillery bombardment that would sometimes last for up to three days. Tons of high explosive shells were dropped onto the enemy's position.

Once the artillery ceased, troops would climb out of their trenches

and advance, bayonets fixed, at a slow pace towards the enemy lines. The procedure was known as "going over the top."

There was, however, a few problems with this tactic. First of all the artillery bombardments would cause relatively few casualties to the other side.

Those on the receiving end of the bombardment would sit in their bunkers dug into the side of the trenches and merely wait for the bombardment to end.

This was particularly true of the Germans who had well constructed bun-

kers, often made of concrete.

Once the bombardment stopped, those on the receiving end knew that the attack was about to be launched.

They would climb from their bunkers, take up their positions in the trench, and set up the machine guns.

Normally all the artillery bombardment would achieve would be to churn up 'No-man's Land', the

The advancing troops would be cut down. Usually before they had advanced more than a few dozen paces.

Even if the attackers did manage to capture a section of trench, they would

normally have taken heavy casualties doing so.

Front line trenches were usually backed up with a second, third, or more lines of trenches. A counter-attack would be launched and the status-qua would be restored.

The alarmingly heavy casualties were becoming unacceptable. Some weapon or tactic had to be developed to address the situation.

Although vehicles that incorporated the basic principles of the tank (armour, firepower, and all-terrain mobility) had been projected in the decade or so before the War, it was the alarmingly heavy casualties of the start of its trench warfare that stimulated development.

The conceptual roots of the tank go back to ancient

times, with siege engines which were able to provide protection for troops moving up against stone walls or other fortifications.

Research took place in both Great Britain and France, with Germany only belatedly following the Allies' lead.

In Great Britain, an initial vehicle, nicknamed Little Willie, was constructed at William Foster & Co., during August and September 1915. The prototype of a new design that became the Mark I tank was demonstrated to the British Army on February 2 1916. Although initially termed "Landships" by the Landship Committee, production vehicles were named "tanks", to preserve secrecy.

The term was chosen when it became known that the factory workers at William Foster referred to the first prototype as "the tank" because of its resemblance to a steel water tank.

The French fielded their first tanks in April 1917 and ultimately produced far more tanks than all other com-



batants combined.

The Germans, on the other hand, began development only in response to the appearance of Allied tanks on the battlefield. Whilst the Allies manufactured several thousand tanks during the War, Germany deployed only 20 of her own.

The Landships Committee was created by Winston Churchill in February 1915. A requirement was formulated for an armoured vehicle capable of 6 km/h, climbing a 1.5 m high parapet, crossing a 2.4 metre wide gap, and armed with machine guns and a light artillery piece.

William Foster & Co. Ltd were awarded a contract in July 1915. Their brief was to produce a proof-of-concept vehicle with two tracks, based on a lengthened Bullock tractor chassis. Construction work began three weeks later.

They built the 14 ton "Little Willie", which first ran on 8 September. Powered by a 105 hp (78 kW) Daimler engine, the three metre armoured box was initially fitted with a low Bullock caterpillar.

The Landships Committee looked for an appropriate code term for the vehicles. Factory workers assembling the vehicles had been told they were producing "mobile water tanks" for desert warfare in Mesopotamia. Water Container was therefore considered but rejected because the committee would inevitably be known as the WC Committee (WC meaning water closet was a common British term for a toilet).

The term tank, as in water tank, was in December 1915



PROTOTYPE: 'Little Willie' was the first tank to be designed by the British.

finally accepted as its official designation. From then on, the term "tank" was established among British and also German soldiers.

While in German Tank specifically refers to the World War I type (as opposed to modern Panzer), in English, Russian and other languages the name even for contemporary armoured vehicles is still based on the word tank.

The first 50 tanks were delivered to France by 30 August. Tanks were classified as either 'male' or 'female'.

The male tank was armed with two 6-pounder cannon and three Hotchkiss machine guns, while the female tank had four Vickers machine guns and one Hotchkiss.

They carried a crew of eight, four of whom were needed to handle the steering and drive gears. The tanks were capable of, at best, 6 km/h, matching the speed of marching infantry with whom they were to be integrated to aid in the destruction of enemy machine guns. In

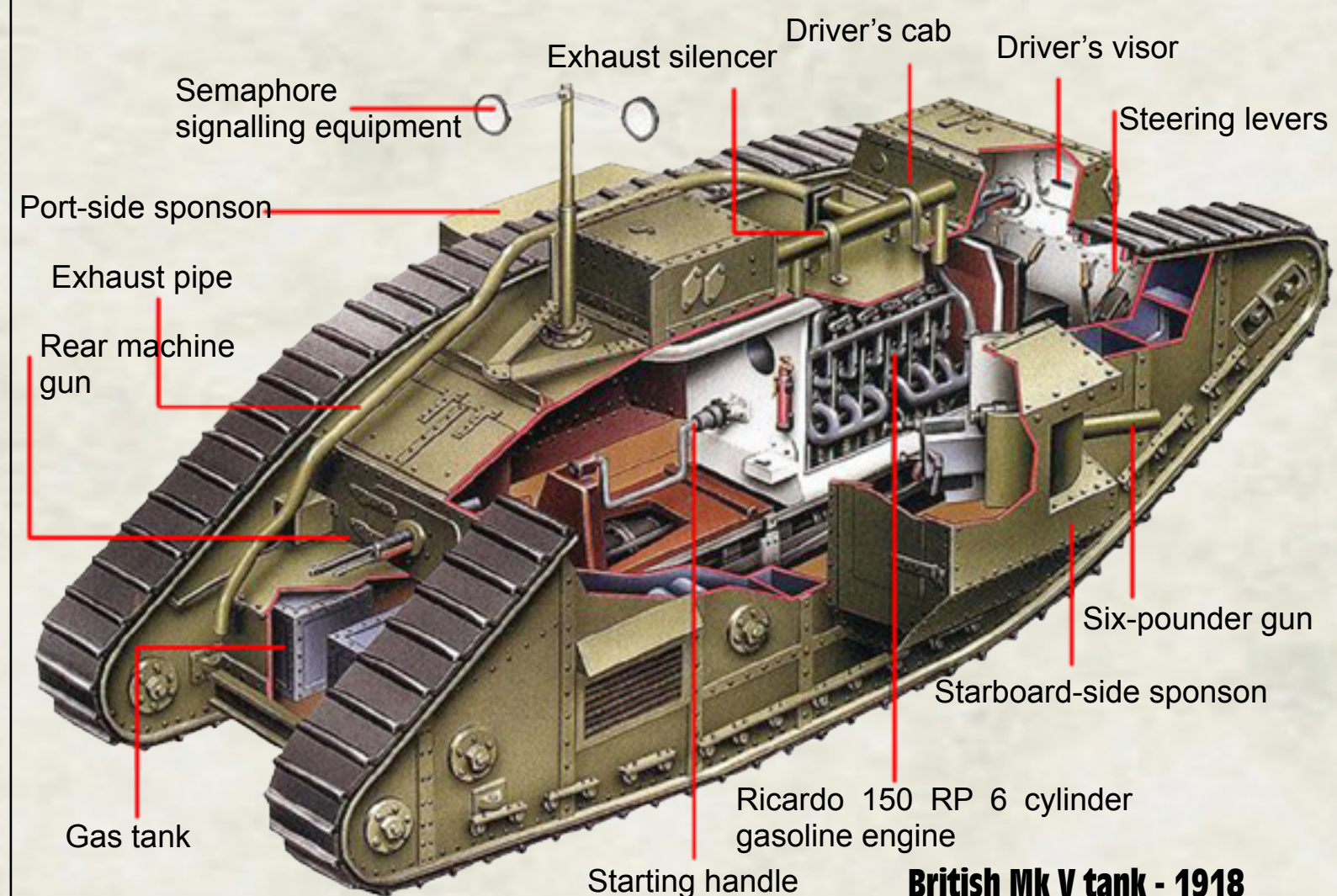
practice, their speed on broken ground could be as little as 1,6 km/h.

The first use of tanks on the battlefield was the use of British Mark I tanks at the Battle of Flers-Courcelette (part of the Battle of the Somme) on 15 September 1916, with mixed results; many broke down, but nearly a third succeeded in breaking through.

Of the forty-nine tanks shipped to the Somme, only thirty-two were able to begin the first attack in which they were used and only nine made it across "no man's land" to the German lines.

The tanks had been rushed into combat before the design was mature enough (against Churchill's and Ernest Swinton's wishes) and the number was small but their use gave important feedback on how to design newer tanks, the soundness of the concept, and their potential to affect the course of the war.

On the other hand, the French Army was critical of the British



British Mk V tank - 1918

employment of small numbers of tanks at this battle. They felt the British had sacrificed the secrecy of the weapon while employing it in numbers too small to be decisive.

Considering that the British attack was part of an Anglo-French offensive while the Russians were also attacking at the same time, Haig felt justified in making a maximum effort, regardless of the limitations of the tank force.

The Mark I tanks were capable of performing on the real battlefield of World War I, one of the most difficult battlefield terrains ever. They did have reliability problems, but when they were working they could cross trenches or craters of 2.7 metres and drive right through

barbed wire.

It was still common for them to get stuck, especially in larger bomb craters, but overall the rhomboid shape allowed for extreme terrain mobility.

Most World War I tanks could travel only at about a walking pace at best. Their steel armour could stop small arms fire and fragments from high-explosive artillery shells. However they were vulnerable to a direct hit from artillery and mortar shells.

The environment inside was extremely unpleasant; as ventilation was inadequate the atmosphere was heavy with poisonous carbon monoxide from the engine and firing the weapons, fuel and oil vapours from the engine and cordite fumes from the weapons. Tempera-

tures inside could reach 50°C. Entire crews lost consciousness inside the tanks, or collapsed when again exposed to fresh air.

Crews learned how to create and leave behind supply dumps of fuel, motor oil, and tread grease, and converted obsolete models into supply vehicles for newer ones.

To counter the danger of bullet splash or fragments knocked off the inside of the hull, the crew wore helmets with goggles and chainmail masks. Fragments were not as dangerous as fire, because of explosive fumes and the large amount of fuel aboard; smoking was prohibited inside and within 18 metres outside tanks.

Gas masks were also standard issue, as they were to all

soldiers at this point in the war due to the use of chemical warfare. The side armour of 8 mm initially made them largely immune to small arms fire, but could be penetrated by the recently developed armour-piercing K bullets.

There was also the danger of being overrun by infantry and attacked with grenades. The next generation had thicker armour, making them nearly immune to the K bullets.

In response, the Germans developed a larger purpose-made anti-tank rifle, the 3.7 cm TAK 1918 anti-tank gun, and also a *Geballte Ladung* ("Bunched Charge") - several regular stick grenades bundled together for a much bigger explosion.

France at the same time developed its own tracked AFVs, but the situation there was very different. In Britain a single committee had coordinated design, and had to overcome the initial resistance of the Army, while the major industries remained passive.

Almost all production effort was thus concentrated into the Mark I and its direct successors, all very similar in shape. In France, on the other hand, there were multiple and conflicting lines of development which were badly integrated, resulting in three major and quite disparate production types.

The first French tanks were poorly designed with respect to the need to cross trenches and did not take the sponson-mounting route of the British tanks.

The first, the Char Schneider CA equipped with a short 75 mm howitzer, had poor mobility due to a short track length

PROTECTION: Splash mask used by tank crews in World War I as protection against shell splinters.

combined with a hull that overhung front and rear. It was unreliable as well; a maximum of only about 130 of the 400 built were ever operational at the same time.

Then industrial rivalry began to play a detrimental role: it created the heavy Char St Chamond, a parallel development not ordered by the Army but approved by government through industrial lobby, which mounted much more impressive weaponry - its 75 mm was the most powerful gun fielded by any operational tank up till 1941 - but also combined many of the Schneider CA's faults with an even larger overhanging body. Its innovative petro-electrical transmission, while allowing for easy steering, was insufficiently developed and led to a large number of breakdowns.

It was Renault's excellent small tank design, the FT, incorporating a proper climbing face for the tracks, that was

the first tank to incorporate a top-mounted turret with a full 360° traverse capability. In fact the FT was in many respects the first truly 'modern' tank having a layout that has been followed by almost all designs ever since: driver at the front; main armament in a fully rotating turret on top; engine at the rear.

French production at first lagged behind the British. After August 1916 however, British tank manufacture was temporarily halted to wait for better designs, allowing the French to overtake their allies in numbers.

When the French used tanks for the first time on 16 April 1917, during the Nivelle Offensive, they had four times more tanks available. But that did not last long as the offensive was a major failure; the Schneiders were badly deployed and suffered 50% losses from German long-range artillery.

The Saint-Chamond tanks, first deployed on 5 May, proved to be so badly designed that

they were unable to cross the first line of German trenches.

Germany concentrated more on the development of anti-tank weapons than on development of tanks themselves. They only developed one type of tank which saw combat in the war.

The A7V *Sturmpanzerwagen* was designed in 1917 and was used in battle from March 1918. It was manned by a crew of 18, and had eight machine guns and a 57mm cannon. Only 20 A7Vs were produced during the war.

The first battle in which tanks made a great impact was the Battle of Cambrai in 1917. British Colonel J.F.C. Fuller, chief of staff of the Tank Corps, was responsible for the tanks' role in the battle. They made an unprecedented breakthrough but, as ever on the Western front, the opportunity was not exploited. Ironically, it was the soon-to-be-supplanted horse cavalry that had been assigned the task of following up the motorised tank attack.

Tanks became more effective as the lesson of the early tanks was absorbed. The British produced the Mark IV in 1917. Similar to the early Marks in appearance, its construction was considered to produce a more reliable machine, the long-barrelled naval guns were shortened (the barrels of the earlier, longer guns were prone to digging in the mud when negotiating obstacles) and armour was increased just

enough to defeat the standard German armour-piercing bullet.

The continued need for four men to drive the tank was solved with the Mark V which used Wilson's epicyclic gearing in 1918. Also in 1918 the French produced the Renault FT, the result of a co-operation between Estienne and Louis Renault. As mentioned before, it had the innovative turret position, and was operated by two men. At just 8 tons it was half the weight of the Medium A Whippet but the version with the cannon had more firepower. It was conceived for mass production, and the FT became the most produced tank of World War I by a wide margin, with over 3,000 delivered to the French Army. Large numbers were used by the Americans and several were also lent to the British.

In July 1918, the French used 480 tanks (mostly FTs) at the Battle of Soissons, and there were even larger assaults planned for the next year.

In Plan 1919, the Entente hoped to commit over 30,000

tanks to battle in that year.

Finally, in a preview of later developments, the British developed the Whippet. This tank was specifically designed to exploit breaches in the enemy front with its relatively higher speed (around 12.8 km/h vs 4-6 km/h for the British heavy tanks).

The Whippet was faster than most other tanks, although it carried only machine gun armament, meaning it was not suited to combat with armoured vehicles but instead with infantry. Postwar tank designs reflected this trend towards greater tactical mobility.

It must have been terrifying for the first German troops that encountered tanks on the battlefield. Watching these steel monsters lumbering towards them and impervious to their bullets.

While early tanks were slow and unreliable, there is little doubt that the introduction of the tank changed the face of warfare.

While Germany may not have paid much heed to the tank in World War I, the lessons had not gone unnoticed. This was something that the world would realise when 21 years later, on 1 September 1939, the first panzer columns rolled into Poland.



Renault FT

For as long as warfare existed, it was fought on land and sea. In 1914, however, the skies over Europe would become a new battlefield.

About 10 years after the Wright brothers made the first powered flight, there was still much to be improved upon. Because of limitations of the engine power of the time, the effective payload of aircraft was extremely limited.

They were made mostly of hardwood (braced with steel wires) and linen fabric doped with flammable liquid to give them the stiffness required to form a wing surface.

Aside from these primitive materials, the rudimentary aviation engi-



neering of the time meant most aircraft were structurally fragile by later standards, and not infrequently broke up in flight especially when performing violent combat manoeuvres such as pulling up from steep dives.

As early as 1909, these evolving flying machines were recognised to be not just toys, but weapons:

"The sky is about to become another battlefield no less important than the battlefields on land and sea....In order to conquer the air, it is necessary to deprive the enemy of all means of flying, by striking at him in the air, at his bases of operation, or at his production cen-

tres. We had better get accustomed to this idea, and prepare ourselves."

– Giulio Douhet
(Italian staff officer), 1909.

The word "fighter" did not become the official English term for such aircraft until after World War I. In Great Britain's Royal Flying Corps – later the Royal Air Force – these aircraft continued to be referred to as "scouts" into the early 1920s.

The U.S. Army called their fighters "pursuit" aircraft (reflected by their designation in the "P" series) from 1916 until the late 1940s. In the French, Portuguese and German languages the term used (and still in use) for fighters literally means "hunter".

This lead has been followed in most other languages, an

exception being Russian, in which the fighter is called "*istrebitel*", meaning "exterminator".

Dogfights

The term dogfight has been used for centuries to describe a melee; a fierce battle between two or more opponents. The term gained popularity during World War II, although its origin in air combat can be traced to the latter years of World War I.

The first written reference to the mod-



RED BARON: A DR-1 Fokker Triplane similar to the one flown by Baron Manfred von Richthofen - the famed 'Red Baron'. His Jasta (squadron) all flew brightly coloured aircraft and were known as 'Von Richthofen's Flying Circus'. Von Richthofen was the top ace of World War I, downing a total of 80 allied aircraft. Von Richthofen was shot down and killed near Amiens on 21 April 1918. He was 25 years old.

ern day usage of the word comes from *Fly Papers*, by A. E. Illingworth, in 1919, "The battle develops into a 'dog-fight', small groups of machines engaging each other in a fight to the death."

Dogfighting first emerged in World War I. Ever since "heavier than air" flight became a reality in 1903, people had been trying to figure out how to use this new technology for warfare.

Aircraft were initially used as mobile observation vehicles, and early pilots gave little thought to aerial combat. Balloons had been used for this purpose since the Siege of Paris by the Prussians in 1871.

The new airplanes proved their worth by spotting the hidden German advance on Paris in the second month of the war.

Knights of the air

Enemy pilots at first simply exchanged waves, or shook their fists at each other. Due to weight restrictions, only small weapons could be carried on board.

Intrepid pilots decided to interfere with enemy reconnaissance by improvised means, including throwing bricks, grenades and sometimes rope, which they hoped would entangle the enemy plane's propeller.

This progressed to pilots firing hand-held guns at enemy planes, such as pistols and carbines. In August 1914, Staff-Captain Pyotr Nesterov, from Russia, became the first pilot to ram his plane into an enemy spotter aircraft.

In October 1914, the first airplane to be shot down by a hand gun from another plane

happened over Rheims, France.

Machine guns

Once machine guns were mounted to the plane, either on a flexible mounting or higher on the wings of early biplanes, the era of air combat began.

The biggest problem was mounting a machine gun onto an aircraft so that it could be fired forward, through the propeller, and aimed by pointing the nose of the aircraft directly at the enemy.

Roland Garros solved this problem by mounting steel deflector wedges to the propeller of a *Morane Saulnier* monoplane. He achieved three kills, but was shot down behind enemy lines, and captured before he could destroy his plane by burning it.

The wreckage was brought to Anthony Fokker, a Dutch designer who built aircraft for the Germans. Fokker decided that the wedges were much too risky, and improved the design by connecting the trigger of an MG 08 Maxim machine gun to the timing of the engine.

Air superiority

The Germans acquired an early air superiority due to the invention of the synchronization gear in 1915, transforming air combat with the Fokker E.I, the first synchronized, forward firing fighter plane.

On the evening of 1 July 1915, the very first aerial engagement by a fighter plane armed with a synchronized, forward-firing machine gun occurred just to the east of Luneville, France. The German Fokker E.I was flown by Lieutenant Kurt Win-

tgens, earning the victory over a French two-seat observation monoplane.

Later that same month, on 25 July 1915, British Royal Flying Corps (RFC) Major Lanoe Hawker, flying a very early production Bristol Scout C., attacked three separate aircraft during a single sortie, shooting down two with a non-synchronizable Lewis gun which was mounted next to his cockpit at an outwards angle to avoid hitting the propeller. He forced the third one down, and was awarded the Victoria Cross.

Technological advantage

Battles in the air increased as the technological advantage swung from the British to the Germans, then back again.

The *Feldflieger Abteilung* observation units of the German air service, in 1914-15, consisted of six two-seat observation aircraft each, with each unit assigned to a particular German Army headquarters location.

They had but a single Fokker Eindecker aircraft assigned to each "FFA" unit for general defensive duties, so pilots such as Max Immelman and Oswald Boelcke began as lone hunters with each "FFA" unit, shooting unarmed spotter planes and enemy aircraft out of the sky.

During the first part of the war, there was no established tactical doctrine for air-to-air combat. Oswald Boelcke was the first to analyze the tactics of aerial warfare, resulting in a set of rules known as the *Dicta Boelcke*.

Many of Boelcke's concepts, conceived in 1916, are still applicable today, including use of sun and altitude, surprise attack,



A PUP WITH BITE: A replica of a British Sopwith Pup, one of the better Allied airplanes of World War I. Others included the Sopwith Camel and Sopwith Snipe. Some of the best French planes were the Nieuport and Spad series. Some of the best German planes were the Fokker series and the Pfalz D.XII. While only 36 Fokker D.VIII monoplanes entered service they were regarded as excellent fighters. It had the distinction of scoring the last aerial victory of the war.

and turning to meet a threat.

British Brigadier General Hugh Trenchard ordered that all reconnaissance aircraft had to be supported by at least three fighters, creating the first use of tactical formations in the air.

The Germans responded by forming Jastas, large squadrons of fighters solely dedicated to destroying enemy aircraft, under the supervision of Boelcke.

Aces high

Pilots who shot down five or more fighters became known as aces. One of the most famous dogfights, resulting in the death of Major Hawker, is described by the Red Baron, Manfred von Richthofen:

I was extremely proud when, one fine day, I was informed that the airman whom I had brought down on the twenty-third of

November, 1916, was the English [version of] Immelman.... First we circled twenty times to the left, and then thirty times to the right.

Each tried to get behind and above the other. Soon I discovered that I was not meeting a beginner. He had not the slightest intention of breaking off the fight. He was traveling in a machine which turned beautifully.

However, my own was better at rising than his, and I succeeded at last in getting above and beyond my English waltzing partner.... The impertinent fellow was full of cheek and when we had got down to about 3,000 feet he merrily waved to me as if he would say, "Well, how do you do?"

The circles which we made around one another were so narrow that their diameter was

probably no more than 250 or 300 feet. I had time to take a good look at my opponent.... When he had come down to about three hundred feet he tried to escape by flying in a zig-zag course during which, as is well known, it is difficult for an observer to shoot.

That was my most favourable moment. I followed him at an altitude of from two hundred and fifty feet to one hundred and fifty feet, firing all the time. The Englishman could not help falling. But the jamming of my gun nearly robbed me of my success. My opponent fell, shot through the head, one hundred and fifty feet behind our line.

Another famous German ace was Ernst Udet. He achieved 62 kills. Not only did he survive the war, he went on to become a general in the German *Luftwaffe* in World War II. He committed suicide on 17 November 1941.

Hermann Göring was ap-

pointed commander-in-chief of the *Luftwaffe* in World War II. He was also one of the most powerful figures in the Nazi Party. During World War I he became an ace with 22 victories and he also commanded the famed "Flying Circus", *Jagdgeschwader 1*.

The top Allied ace of the war was René Fonck of the French *Aéronautique Militaire* with 75 kills. After the war he became the Inspector of French fighter forces from 1937 to 1939.

Canadian Billy Bishop ended the war with 72 kills. He was awarded the Victoria Cross. After the war, in 1929, he became Chairman of British Air Lines.

Edward Mannock of the Royal Flying Corps scored 61 kills. Born in Ireland, he was given the nickname "Mick". He was awarded the VC, DSO & Two Bars, MC & Bar. He was killed in action on 16 July 1918.

America officially entered World War I on 6 April 1917.

Prior to that many American pilots flew for the *Lafayette Escadrille* (Lafayette Squadron) which was established in 1916 under French command. The volunteers had come to France to help during World War I.

Eddie Rickenbacker was the top American ace with 26 kills. He was awarded the Medal of Honor during World War I.

South African pilots in World War I flew for the Royal Flying Corps and later the Royal Air Force. They had six pilots that achieved 20 or more kills and one of them was killed in action.

Andrew Beauchamp-Proctor was the top South African pilot with 54 kills. He first served as a signalman with the Duke of Edinburgh's Own Rifles in the German South-West Africa campaign. He was given an honourable discharge, but joined up again in August 1915 with the Royal Flying Corps. He was awarded the VC, DSO, MC & Bar, and DFC.

Click on the photograph below to take a virtual tour of Warrior's Gate and find out more about the MOTH Order.



Warrior's Gate Virtual Tour

Take a virtual tour of Warrior's Gate, or find out more about the MOTH Order. Click on a thumbnail to view the video.



Virtual Tour



History



Ceremonial



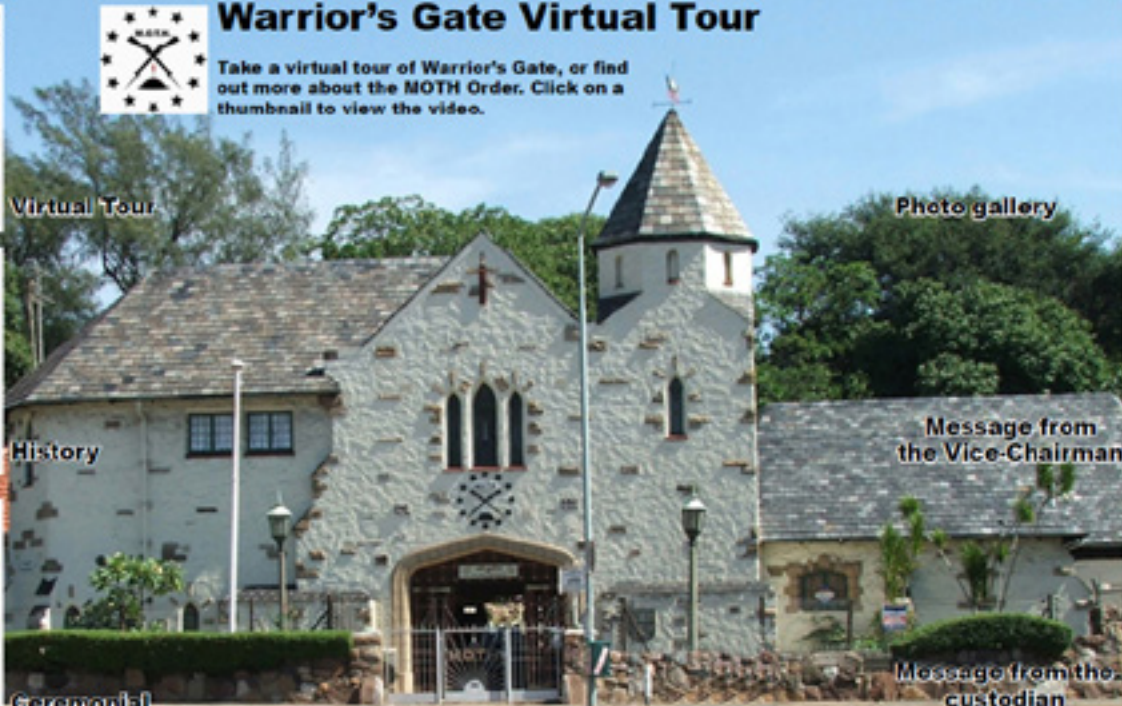
Photo gallery



Message from the Vice-Chairman



Message from the custodian





Eight Great World War II Movies

This month, to coincide with Remembrance Day, we decided to do something a little different.

Instead of doing a movie review, we've decided to take a look at what we consider to be eight of the best movies about World War I.

There have been many good movies about World War II, Vietnam, and some of the mod-

ern wars. Yet there are not that many movies about The Great War.

The movies here were made between 1930 and 2011. They feature directors such as Stanley Kubrick, David Lean and Steven Spielberg.

Between them these films won nine Academy Awards, six Golden Globe Awards, four BAFTA Awards, and three

Emmy Awards.

You can still purchase many of these movies on DVD or find them on media such as Netflix.

To watch the trailer of each of the movies below, use your mouse to left click on the movie poster.

If you think there are any World War I movies that we've left out, drop us an e-mail and tell us about them.



Paths of Glory (1957)

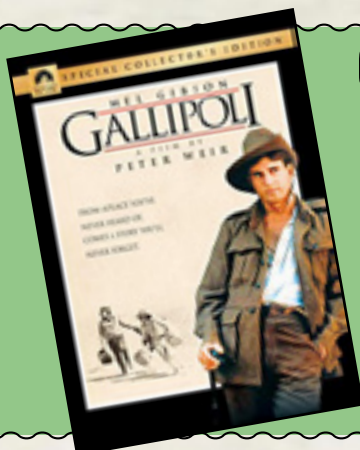
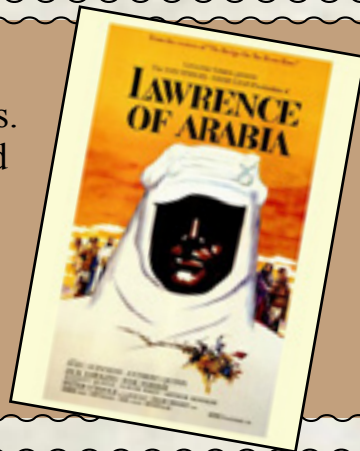
One of director Stanley Kubrick's early films, Paths of Glory is an American anti-war film. It is based on the novel of the same name by Humphrey Cobb.

Colonel Dax (Kirk Douglas) is the commanding officer of French troops who refuse to continue a suicidal attack on German positions. Dax attempts to defend them against a charge of cowardice in a court martial.

Lawrence of Arabia (1962)

Directed by David Lean, it went on to win seven Academy Awards. The film is based on the life of T.E. Lawrence (Peter O'Toole) and it depicts his experiences in the Arabian Peninsula during World War I.

He is torn between his allegiance between his native Britain and his new-found comrades within the Arabian desert tribes. It also stars Alex Guinness, Anthony Quinn and Omar Sharif.



Gallipoli (1981)

Starring Mel Gibson and Mark Lee the film centres on several young rural Australian men who enlist in the army during World War I.

They take part in the Gallipoli Campaign and slowly lose their innocence about the purpose of war. The climax of the movie occurs on the Anzac battlefield at Gallipoli and depicts the futile attack at the Battle of the Nek on 7 August 1915.

All Quiet on the Western Front (1930)

Based on Erich Maria Remarque book, the film follows a group of German schoolboys who are talked into enlisting by their teacher.

The story is told through their eyes and is not about heroism but about drudgery and futility and the gulf between the concept of war and the actuality.

The the first film to win the Academy Awards for both Outstanding Production and Best Director.



The Blue Max (1966)

Lt. Bruno Stachel (George Peppard) is a commoner that has left the trenches in World War I to become a fighter pilot.

He wants nothing more than to achieve 20 kills and win the converted *Pour le Mérite* medal (The Blue Max). He will do whatever it takes to win the medal, much to the disgust of his commanding officer and fellow pilots.

Flyboys (2006)

Before the United States enters World War I a number of Americans volunteered for the French military as pilots. They formed the *Lafayette Escadrille*, whose exploits and heroism become the stuff of legend.

While a fictional version the characters in the film are based upon real people. Jean Reno is brilliant as Captain Georges Thénault, the commander of the squadron.



War Horse (2011)

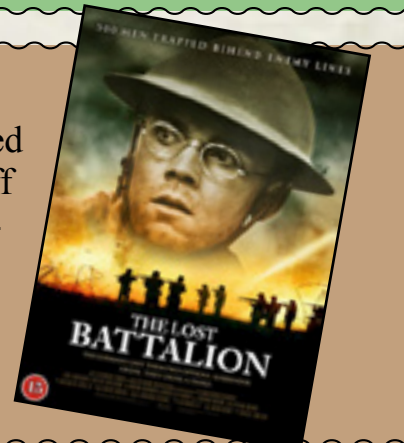
Directed by Steven Spielberg the film is set before and during World War I.

It tells of the journey of Joey, a bay Thoroughbred horse raised by British teenager Albert (Jeremy Irvine), as he is bought by the British Army, leading him to encounter numerous individuals and owners throughout Europe, all the while experiencing the tragedies of the war happening around him.

The Lost Battalion (2001)

A made-for-television movie, the roughly 550 men, of the United States Army 77th Infantry Division have been completely cut off and surrounded by German forces a short distance away in the Argonne Forest.

The Germans give them two options: "Surrender or die." They choose a third option - fight.



Some of the significant military events that happened in November.

1 November

- **1893** - The decisive Battle of Bembesi (Bembasi) is fought in the Ndebele War, Rhodesia. The Ngubi, Mbezu and Nsukamini regiments fought bravely, but were defeated by machine-gun fire. The plaque on the war memorial records the result of the battle and also the bravery of the Ndebele.
- **1899** - Second Anglo Boer War. The Boer forces invade the Cape Colony.
- **1904** - The US Army War College opens.
- **1911** - Italy performs its first aerial bombing on Tanguira oasis in Libya.
- **1914** - Battle of Coronel: Admiral Von Spee's German cruisers annihilate a weaker British squadron off Chile.
- **1914** - Paul von Hindenburg is named commander-in-chief of German forces on the Eastern Front.
- **1918** - Italian naval special operations forces sink the Austrian battleship 'Viribus Unitis', which is in Yugoslav hands.
- **1932** - Wernher von Braun named head of German liquid-fuel rocket program.
- **1933** - German Army creates its first panzer unit.
- **1936** - The Rome-Berlin Axis was proclaimed by Italian Dictator Benito Mussolini following a visit to Berlin by Italian Foreign Secretary Ciano.

Heinkel He 178



- **1936** - Mussolini coins the phrase "The Axis".
- **1939** - Maiden flight of the Heinkel He 178, the first jet.
- **1950** - Korean War. South African No 2 Squadron, known as Cheetah Squadron, comprising of fifty officers and 157 other ranks, including thirty-eight pilots, all volunteers and highly experienced, arrives in Japan. Two weeks later, and after acquainting themselves with the F 51 Mustang, they leave for the operational area. At the end of the war SAAF casualties were thirty-four pilots and ground staff killed, eight pilots taken POW and a number wounded.
- **1951** - The Algerian National Liberation Front began guerrilla warfare against the French.
- **1951** - President Syngman Rhee presents the South African Air Force (SAAF) squadron, placed at the disposal of the United Nations organisation during the Korean War, with the Korean presidential unit citation.
- **1952** - First hydrogen device exploded, Eniwetok Atoll.
- **1954** - Algeria starts rebellion against French rule. Nationalist rioters led by Ahmed Ben Bella (based in Cairo) have wreaked destruction across the Algerian district of Aures. This day later became known as Revolution Day.
- **1956** - The Imre Nagy government of Hungary withdraws from the Warsaw Pact.
- **1963** - South Vietnamese President Ngo Dinh Diem and his brother Ngo Dinh Nhu were killed in a military coup.
- **1994** - Angolan government forces take the oil-producing town of Soyo from the rebel group Unita, which captured it the year before.
- **1996** - Rwandan and Zairian forces bombard each another with artillery along the border, while rebels in Zaire, supported by Rwanda, close in on the town of Goma.
- **2007** - Brig Gen Paul W. Tibbets Jr., who commanded the 'Enola Gay' and dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, dies at the age of 92.

2 November

- **1899** - Second Anglo Boer War. The siege of Ladysmith in Natal starts.
- **1899** - The Canadian government offered a second contingent of troops consisting of infantry, cavalry and field artillery to bolster British troops in the South African War.
- **1914** - Russia declares war on the Ottoman Empire.
- **1916** - Verdun: The French recapture Ft Vaux.
- **1917** - The first US troops are killed in action in France.
- **1930** - Ras (Duke) Tafari is crowned as Emperor Haile Selassie in Addis Abeba, Ethiopia, after the death of Empress Zaudito (Zewditu).
- **1942** - Lieutenant General Dwight D. Eisenhower arrives in Gibraltar to set up an American command post for the invasion of North Africa.
- **1942** - British breakthrough the Axis lines during the Battle of El Alamein.
- **1951** - More British troops are sent to the Suez Canal Zone (the biggest troop airlift since the Second World War).
- **1962** - During the Cuban Missile Crisis, President John F. Kennedy announced on TV, "the Soviet bases in Cuba are being dismantled, their missiles and related equipment being crated, and the fixed installations at these sites are being destroyed."
- **1976** - White mercenaries

and Black troops invade Congo from Portuguese Angola.

- **1990** - Odile Harrington, a South African convicted and imprisoned for espionage in Zimbabwe in 1987, was released and returned to South Africa.
- **1995** - The former South African defence minister, General Magnus Malan, and several former high-ranking officials are arrested and charged with murder. All were acquitted after a trial in 1996.

3 November

- **1839** - The first Opium War between China and Britain began after British frigates blew up several Chinese junks.
- **1893** - Forces of the British South Africa Company force Matabele King Lobengula, son of Mzilikazi, to flee his Great Place in Bulawayo. Lobengula later dies while retreating towards the Zambezi.
- **1918** - Part of the German fleet mutinied at Kiel in the closing days of World War I.
- **1942** - In Egypt, the German Afrika Korps and Italian forces under Rommel begin a retreat westwards after a renewed campaign by the allies under Montgomery. About 9,000 German troops are captured.
- **1942** - Guadalcanal: Marines clear Japanese from Point Cruz.
- **1944** - Japanese begin

releasing 9,000 incendiary balloons to drift to America.

- **1956** - Britain and France agree to accept a Middle East cease-fire in the Suez War if UN forces can keep the peace.
- **1973** - UN Emergency Force reports success in easing tension between Egyptian and Israeli troops at positions west of Suez Canal.
- **1979** - Teheran: Iranians storm the US embassy to take 63 hostages, initiating decades of acrimony and hostility.

4 November

- **1862** - Richard Gatling patented his first rapid-fire machine-gun which used revolving barrels rotating around a central mechanism to load, fire, and extract the cartridges.
- **1899** - Second Anglo Boer War. The siege of Ladysmith in Natal starts.



John F. Kennedy

- **1918** - Austria-Hungary concludes an armistice with Italy.
- **1942** - Lieutenant General Dwight D. Eisenhower arrives in Gibraltar to set up an American command post for the invasion of North Africa.
- **1942** - During World War II, British troops led by Bernard Montgomery defeated the Germans under Erwin Rommel at El Alamein after a twelve-day battle.
- **1950** - US troops retreat from Pyongyang, North Korea.
- **1951** - More British troops are sent to the Suez Canal Zone (the biggest troop airlift since the Second World War).
- **1956** - Soviet Russian troops moved in to crush an uprising in Hungary.
- **1956** - Israeli troops capture the Straits of Tiran and reach the Suez Canal.
- **1956** - British forces enter Gaza, on the western Mediterranean seashore 32 km north of the Egyptian border.
- **1976** - White mercenaries and Black troops invade Congo from Portuguese Angola.
- **1979** - About 500 young Iranian militants stormed the U.S. Embassy in Teheran, Iran, and took 90 hostages, including 52 Americans that they held captive for 444 days.
- **1995** - The former South African defence minister, General Magnus Malan, and

several former high-ranking officials are arrested and charged with murder. All were acquitted after a trial in 1996.

5 November

- **1799** - The 64-gun HMS Sceptre is wrecked in Table Bay and 300 lives are lost.
- **1902** - The "Mad Mullah" and 17,000 troops are advancing on the British at Bo-hodle, Somaliland.
- **1911** - Italy declares war on Turkey.
- **1914** - Indian 6th Div lands at Basra, securing the oil fields.
- **1915** - First US shipboard catapult launch: LT CDR Henry Mustin, off 'North Carolina' (ACR-12) in a Curtiss AB-ZF.
- **1916** - Germany and Austria-Hungary proclaim an "independent" Kingdom of Poland.
- **1917** - Maj. Theodore Roosevelt, Jr, leads the first American patrol into "No Man's Land".
- **1940** - Gallant fight of the armed merchant cruiser HMS 'Jervis Bay' in defense of a convoy from the German pocket battleship 'Admiral Scheer'.
- **1942** - Madagascar: Vichy French surrender to the British at Fort Dauphin.
- **1943** - American aircraft accidentally drop two bombs on the Vatican, which cause minor damage and no casualties.
- **1956** - Britain and France

land troops in Egypt during fighting between Egyptian and Israeli forces around the Suez Canal. A cease-fire is declared two days later.

- **1975** - Numbers of Cuban soldiers and shipments of Russian military equipment arrive in Luanda, Angola, while SA was clandestinely supporting Unita. When SA realised that the USA did not support the operation, the SA troops were withdrawn. The withdrawal was completed by 27 March 1976.
- **2005** - Pirates fire a rocket-propelled grenade and machine guns in an attack on the luxury cruise liner Seabourn Spirit off the coast of the east African state of Somalia. The attack is repulsed and the more than 300 passengers, including six South Africans, escape without injury.

6 November

- **1900** - Second Anglo Boer War. The Battle of Bothaville or Doornkraal is fought with General De Wet surrendering, after heavy losses on both sides.
- **1914** - France declares war on the Ottoman Empire.
- **1917** - During World War I, the Third Battle of Ypres concluded after five months as Canadian and Australian troops took Passchendaele. Their advance, measuring eight kilometres, cost at least 240,000 soldiers.
- **1941** - USS 'Omaha' (CL 4) & USS 'Somers' (DD 381)



Admiral Johann Raeder

intercept the German blockade runner 'Oldenwald' in the mid-Atlantic near the Equator.

- **1960** - *Großadmiral* Erich Johann Albert Raeder, Commander-in-Chief of the *Reichsmarine* (1935-1943), dies on this day at the age of 84.
- **2004** - Nine French soldiers and an American aid consultant are killed in bombing attacks in Ivory Coast's rebel-held north, after the government broke the cease-fire agreement on 4 November. French troops destroy the Ivory Coast air force fleet in retaliation.
- **2004** - New York's "Fighting 69th" arrives at Bagdad to assume its duties in "Operation Iraqi Freedom".

7 November

- **1899** - Second Anglo Boer War. From his conning tower in the besieged Kimber-

ley Colonel Kekewich sees a "living mass" of men approaching and his artillery opens up at almost point-blank range until they realise that the men are 3,000 unarmed Black mine-workers released by De Beer's from the compounds, without informing the military.

- **1901** - Second Anglo Boer War. The National Scouts Corps of doubtful repute, consisting of surrendered Boers who were willing to fight on the side of their erstwhile enemies, is formed under direct British command. They were allocated to various British units as scouts and after the war were ostracised by the whole community.
- **1936** - Spanish Civil War: Battle for Madrid begins.
- **1954** - US spy plane shot down by Russians over Sea of Japan.
- **1956** - The United Nations (UN) General Assembly adopts a resolution calling upon Britain, France and Israel to withdraw their troops from Egypt immediately. British and French declare a cease-fire in Egypt, but Britain says it will evacuate troops only on arrival of UN Emergency Force.
- **1987** - Tunisian President Habib Bourguiba, in office since independence in 1956, is overthrown in a bloodless coup.
- **1994** - Over 2,000 Umkhonto we Sizwe soldiers of the ANC's armed wing are dis-

missed from the SANDF for failing to report for duty.

- **2010** - The German Army holds a formal military ceremony at a restored monument honouring Jewish soldiers who fought in the Kaiser's War.
- **2013** - Manfred Rommel, Luftwaffe veteran and son of Field Marshal Erwin Rommel, dies at the age of 84.

8 November

- **1745** - Bonnie Prince Charlie invades England from Scotland.
- **1923** - Hitler's Beer Hall Putsch took place in the Buergerbraukeller in Munich. Hitler, Goering and armed Nazis attempted, but ultimately failed, to forcibly seize power and overthrow democracy in Germany.
- **1939** - An assassination attempt on Hitler failed at the Buergerbraukeller in Munich. A bomb exploded soon after Hitler had exited following a speech commemorating the 1923 Beer Hall Putsch. Seven others were killed.
- **1940** - The Royal Air Force bombs Munich.
- **1942** - Allied forces under Lieutenant-General Dwight D. Eisenhower begin landings in North Africa, starting the Algeria-Morocco Campaign of World War II (WWII). More than 400,000 Allied soldiers take part in the invasion.
- **1942** - Hitler proclaims the

fall of Stalingrad, somewhat prematurely.

- **1950** - The first jet fighter air duel: Lt. Russell J. Brown's F-86 scores a North Korean MiG-15.
- **1957** - Britain tests its first hydrogen bomb, Kirimati Atoll, in the Pacific.
- **1977** - The French Ministry of Defence will no longer permit delivery of two escort vessels (corvettes) and two submarines, under construction in French naval yards, to South Africa.
- **1990** - President GHW Bush orders 100,000 additional US troops to the Persian Gulf
- **1996** - UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali calls for an international military force to aid and protect a million refugees caught in a civil war in Zaire, but is blocked by the United States in the Security Council.

9 November

- **1914** - HMAS 'Sydney' destroys the German raiding cruiser SMS 'Emden' in the Cocos Islands.
- **1916** - Munitions disaster at Bakaritsa, near Arkhangel, Russia -- 30,000 tons explode, thousands die.
- **1918** - German Kaiser Wilhelm II abdicated his throne in the closing days of World War I and fled to Holland. In Germany, Philip Scheidemann, a Socialist leader, then proclaimed a democratic Republic and became its first Chancellor.

- **1921** - The Unknown Soldier arrives at Washington aboard USS 'Olympia'.
- **1925** - Hitler forms the SS within the Brown Shirts.
- **1937** - The Japanese capture Shanghai.
- **1938** - *Kristallnacht* (the night of broken glass) occurred in Germany as Nazi mobs burned synagogues and vandalized Jewish shops and homes.
- **1938** - Marshal of the Soviet Union Vasily Konstantinovich Blyukher, 48, executed by Stalin for 'espionage'
- **1977** - The Prime Minister of Swaziland says that his government will not allow the country to be used as a base for guerrilla attacks against South Africa. He denies that there are training camps within Swaziland.
- **2004** - In Abuja, Nigeria, Sudan and Darfur rebels sign accords on Tuesday to end hostilities and guarantee aid groups' access to 1.6 million civilians uprooted by conflict in the troubled western Sudan region of Darfur.
- **1979** - NORAD goes on full alert, when a computer glitch indicates a massive wave of incoming Soviet missiles.
- **1989** - The Berlin Wall comes down.

10 November

- **1775** - The U.S. Marine Corps was established as part of the U.S. Navy. It became a separate unit on July 11, 1789.

- **1915** - Fourth Battle of the Isonzo begins and continues to 2 December.
- **1939** - The SA Corps of Military Police (S.A.C.M.P.) is formed as an independent unit under Lt.-Col. R.D. Pilkington-Jordan.
- **1940** - Former British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain dies at the age of 71.
- **1942** - North Africa Vichy military chief in Algeria, Admiral Darlan, orders an end to the resistance against the Allies.
- **1942** - Following the British victory at El Alamein in North Africa during World War II, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill stated, "This is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning."
- **1951** - Allister Mackintosh, pilot and 'father' of SA aviation dies in Port Elizabeth. He earned a D.S.O. in the Battle of the Somme in April 1916.
- **1954** - USMC ["Two Jima"] Memorial dedicated in Arlington.
- **1970** - Charles de Gaulle, leader of the 'Free French', President of France (1959-1969), dies at the age of 79.
- **1988** - Following a press conference of General Staff Lieutenant-Colonel Antonio dos Santos Franca Ndalu, Chief of *Forças Armadas Populares de Libertação de Angola* (FAPLA), during which he declared that his forces had killed over 230



Ian Smith

South African troops in the course of the offensive and had destroyed large numbers of vehicles, the South African Defence Force (SADF) responded by claiming that not all the soldiers that were killed were theirs. SADF admitted to the loss of only twelve soldiers, meaning the rest that were claimed by Dos Santos belonged to South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO).

- **2012** - Birger Stromsheim, Norwegian commando who led the "Heroes of Telemark", dies aged 101.

11 November

- **1865** - Surgeon Mary Edward Walker is awarded the US Medal of Honor.
- **1885** - World War II General George S. Patton was born in San Gabriel, California.
- **1889** - Second Anglo Boer War. Commandant J.H. Visser with 200 men attacks Kuruman, defended by only 35 members of the Cape Po-

lice, 33 local volunteers and a few armed Blacks. They refuse to surrender and the attack develops into a siege.

- **1909** - The US Navy begins construction of a base at Pearl Harbour.
- **1914** - First Battle of Ypres: The British I Corps hold off a desperate attack by German two corps, as the battle ends.
- **1918** - World War 1 ends with Germany and the Allies signing an armistice in a railroad car at Compiegne, France. "At the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, the guns fell silent and World War 1 came to an end."
- **1920** - The "Unknown Warrior" is interred in Westminster Abbey & the "Soldat Inconnu" beneath the Arc de Triomphe.
- **1923** - An "Eternal Flame" is lit at the Tomb of the "Soldat Inconnu" at the Arc de Triomphe.
- **1961** - Congolese rebels murder 13 Italian airmen in UN service.
- **1965** - Rhodesian Prime Minister, Ian Smith, issues a Unilateral Declaration of Independence. Britain says the regime is illegal.
- **1972** - The U.S. turned over its military base at Long Binh to the South Vietnamese, symbolizing the end of direct American military participation in the Vietnam War.
- **1973** - Egypt and Israel sign a cease-fire agreement spon-

sored by the United States, and begin discussions to carry out the pact.

- **1975** - Angola gains independence from the colonial ruler Portugal with Dr Agostinho Neto as president and is known as the People's Republic of Angola.
- **1983** - US cruise missiles arrive in Great Britain.
- **1992** - The Goldstone Commission raids offices of the SADF's Directorate.

12 November

- **1901** - The most southern battle is fought at Kraalbospan, near Darling, Western Cape, with General Manie Maritz leading the Boers.
- **1911** - Combined Turkish and Arab forces in Libya are badly mauled by the Italian Army.
- **1914** - Rebellion leader General C.R. de Wet suffers a crushing defeat by government forces at Winburg, OFS.
- **1942** - SA armoured cars are in pursuit of the German forces and re-enter Tobruk, continuing as far as Benghazi, east Libya.
- **1942** - During World War II in North Africa, the city of Tobruk was captured by the British Eighth Army under General Bernard Montgomery.
- **1944** - RAF sinks the German battleship 'Tirpitz' in a Norwegian fjord.
- **1948** - Japanese General Hideki Tojo and six others were sentenced to death by

an Allied war crimes tribunal.

- **1985** - Over 600 people killed in Liberia in an unsuccessful military coup against President Samuel Doe, led by former Brigadier-General Thomas Quiwonlpa.
- **1995** - Britain ends arm sales to Nigeria.
- **2001** - The Taliban abandons Kabul, as Northern Alliance forces approach.

13 November

- **1899** - Second Anglo Boer War. Generals Piet Joubert and Louis Botha cross the Tugela River and head down the railway line to Pietermaritzburg.
- **1942** - The five Sullivan Brothers from Waterloo, Iowa, were lost in the sinking of the cruiser USS Juneau by a Japanese torpedo off Guadalcanal during World War II in the Pacific. Following their deaths, the U.S. Navy changed regulations to prohibit close relatives from serving on the same ship.
- **1942** - Minimum US draft age reduced from 21 to 18.
- **1954** - Generalfeldmarschall Paul Ludwig Ewald von Kleist, 73, war criminal, died in Soviet captivity.
- **1995** - Israel began pulling its troops out of the West Bank city of Jenin, ending 28 years of occupation.
- **1982** - Vietnam War Memorial dedicated.

14 November

- **1914** - Lord Frederick Sleigh Roberts, (Field Marshall Earl Roberts of Khar-toum) commander-in-chief of the British forces during the Second Anglo Boer War, dies in St Omer, France.
- **1919** - Red Army captures Omsk, Siberia, from the Whites.
- **1926** - Major Friedrich W.R. Albrecht (78), founder of the OFS State Artillery, dies in Bloemfontein.
- **1941** - Aircraft carrier HMS 'Ark Royal' sinks in the Mediterranean after being torpedoed by the 'U-81' the day before.
- **1994** - Having been dismissed from the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) for their illegal strike about poor living standards in Wallmannstal military camp previously in November, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) guerrillas, through their spokesperson Salvador Mkhari, threaten to resume the armed struggle unless their demands were met.
- **1996** - American troops arrive in Kigali, Rwanda's capital, in advance of a multinational operation to feed and help send home more than one million refugees in Zaire, now called Congo.
- **2001** - Operation Enduring Freedom: Northern Alliance forces liberate Kabul from the Taliban.
- **2005** - Former defence minister Magnus Malan joins

former SA Defence Force chief Constand Viljoen in denying any knowledge of mass graves found near a former South African military base in northern Namibia. People's Liberation Army of Namibia (Plan) fighters killed by the SA army and South-West African Territory Force by law had to be handed to the South-West African police for identification and burial. Malan says that questions about the graves should be directed at the United Nations as they were in command in Namibia at the time.

15 November

- **1891** - German Field Marshal Erwin Rommel was born at Heidenheim, in Wurttemberg, Germany.
- **1899** - Winston Churchill, war correspondent of The Morning Post, is captured near Chieveley, Natal, when the Boers ambush an armoured train.
- **1942** - Church bells ring across Britain for the first time since the German invasion threat of 1940, to celebrate victory in the Battle of El Alamein.
- **1943** - During the Holocaust, Heinrich Himmler ordered Gypsies and part-Gypsies to be sent to concentration camps. The number of Gypsies killed by Nazis is estimated up to 500,000.
- **1969** - The largest antiwar rally in U.S. History occurred as 250,000 persons



Bernard Montgomery

gathered in Washington, D.C., to protest the Vietnam War.

- **1988** - Grintek of SA, Saab of Sweden and British aerospace sign a historic contract for supplying military equipment worth about R60 million.

16 November

- **1900** - Second Anglo Boer War. The Battle of Sprin-kaansnek is fought, with General Philip Botha forcing a passage through the neck.
- **1939** - German U-boat torpedoes tanker 'Slidrecht' near Ireland.
- **1941** - US intelligence loses track of Japanese aircraft carriers.
- **1950** - King Farouk, Egypt, demands the "total and immediate evacuation" of all British troops from the Suez Canal Zone.
- **1961** - After the bodies of thirteen Italian UN soldiers are "sold" in a Congo market, UN Secretary-General U Thant orders UN forces to

punish those responsible.

- **1975** - British newspapers report that South African mercenaries are helping UNITA against the MPLA in Angola.
- **1995** - The United Nations charged Bosnian Serb leader, Radovan Karadzic, and his military commander, Ratko Mladic, with genocide.

17 November

- **1887** - British General Bernard L. Montgomery was born in St. Mark's Vicarage, Kennington Oval, London.
- **1922** - Samuel Alfred (Taffy) Long, Herbert Hull and David Lewis, strikers during the revolt, are hung in the Central Prison in Pretoria for committing murder.
- **1958** - The civilian government of Sudan is overthrown by the military; Ibrahim Abboud becomes prime minister.
- **1964** - Harold Wilson, the British Prime Minister, announces in the House of Commons that the British government has decided to impose an embargo on the export of arms to South Africa. Outstanding commitments by the Ministry of Defence will be fulfilled, but no new contracts will be accepted. The contract to supply sixteen Buccaneer aircraft is under review.
- **1975** - A ban on the publication of military involvements in Angola is imposed on South African newspa-

pers.

- **1988** - A SA woman, Olivia Forsyth, allegedly a spy for the SA government against the ANC, who has been holed up in the British Embassy in Luanda since May, leaves for London after being granted an exit visa by the Angolan authorities.
- **1993** - Military rule is re-imposed in Nigeria when General Sani Abacha ousts civilian leader Ernest Shonekan.
- **1993** - The United Nations opened its first war crimes tribunal since the Nuremberg and Tokyo trials following World War II. Judges from 11 nations were sworn in to examine recent mass murders in Yugoslavia characterized as ethnic cleansing.
- **1997** - Six militants open fire at the Temple of Hatshepsut in Luxor, Egypt, killing seventy-four people, sixty-one of them foreign tourists. The attackers are killed by police.

18 November

- **1914** - Naval Battle of Cape Sarych: the Russian Black Sea Fleet defeats a Turko-German squadron.
- **1916** - During World War I, Allied General Douglas Haig called off the First Battle of the Somme after five months. The Allies had advanced 201 square kilometres at a cost of 420,000 British and 195,000 French soldiers. German losses were over 650,000 men.

- **1936** - Germany & Italy recognized Franco government in Spain.
- **1941** - Operation Barbarossa: A Soviet counterattack near Tula causes the German 112th Infantry Division to break.
- **1941** - Last Italian forces in Ethiopia surrender to the British, ending 15 months of resistance.
- **1961** - President John F. Kennedy sends 18,000 military advisors to South Vietnam.
- **1987** - Cuba denies its troops are engaged in fighting against SA forces in Angola.
- **1988** - The three Zimbabwean intelligence officers standing trial for a bomb attack on an ANC house in Bulawayo are sentenced to death.
- **1992** - After a marathon ten-hour Cabinet meeting, President F.W. de Klerk appointed Lt.-Gen. Pierre Steyn as head of all intelligence functions of the South African Defence Force (SADF), including the Military Intelligence (MI).
- **1993** - Nigeria's new military ruler, General Sani Abacha, dissolves all democratic institutions.

19 November

- **1812** - Napoleon begins his retreat from Moscow.
- **1863** - President Abraham Lincoln delivered the Gettysburg Address during ceremonies dedicating 17 acres of the Gettysburg Battlefield as a National Cemetery.

- **1915** - Russia and Italy declare war on Bulgaria
- **1941** - HMAS 'Sydney' and the German merchant cruiser 'Kormoran' clash off the western coast of Australia, both sinking, 'Sydney' with no survivors. The wrecks were located in 2008.
- **1942** - The Russian Army began a massive counter-offensive against the Germans at Stalingrad during World War II.
- **1943** - Following an attempted uprising, the Nazis liquidate the Janowska concentration camp near Lemberg, at least 6,000 Jews are murdered.
- **1950** - General of the Army Dwight D. Eisenhower becomes the supreme commander of NATO.
- **1969** - The first news reports emerged that American troops in Vietnam had massacred civilians in My Lai Village back in March of 1968.
- **1987** - US warships destroy Iranian oil platforms in Persian Gulf.
- **1990** - The Cold War came to an end during a summit in Paris as leaders of NATO and the Warsaw Pact signed a Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe, vastly reducing their military arsenals.

20 November

- **1917** - The first use of tanks in battle occurred at Cambrai, France, during World

War I. Over 300 tanks commanded by British General Sir Douglas Haig went into battle against the Germans.

- **1918** - The 369th "Colored" Infantry, New York National Guard, becomes the first American unit to reach the Rhine and take up occupation duties in Germany.
- **1942** - British Eighth Army recaptures Benghazi, Libya.
- **1943** - The Battle of Tarawa began in the Pacific War as American troops attacked the Japanese on the heavily fortified Gilbert Islands.
- **1944** - US First Army secures Aachen.
- **1945** - The Nuremberg War Crime Trials began in which 24 former leaders of Nazi Germany were charged with conspiracy to wage wars of aggression, crimes against peace, war crimes, and crimes against humanity.
- **1962** - The Cuban Missile Crisis concluded as President John F. Kennedy announced he had lifted the U.S. Naval blockade of Cuba stating, "the evidence to date indicates that all known offensive missile sites in Cuba have been dismantled."
- **1990** - Anti-Gulf War protest marches begin in 20 US cities.
- **1994** - Angolan government signs peace treaty with UNITA.



Charles De Gaulle

21 November

- **1894** - Port Arthur is captured by the Japanese from the Chinese, amidst great slaughter.
- **1900** - Second Anglo Boer War. The Battle of De Wetsdorp, which was to end on the 23rd with the surrender of the British to Chief Commandant C.R. de Wet, starts.
- **1918** - German ammunition trains explode in Hamont, Belgium, 1,750 die.
- **1970** - Operation Ivory Coast: A joint Army-Air Force commando raid on the Son Tây prisoner-of-war camp finds all Americans have been moved elsewhere.
- **1989** - The Citizen reports that the remaining 1 500 South African troops in Namibia have been withdrawn in November.
- **2005** - Alfred Anderson, veteran of the Black Watch, the last survivor of the Christmas Truce of 1914, the last

Scottish veteran of the war, and the oldest man in Scotland, dies at the age of 109.

22 November

- **1847** - General Jacobus Hercules de la Rey, known as Koos de la Rey, is born.
- **1890** - Charles De Gaulle was born in Lille, France. He led the Free French against the Nazis during World War II and later became President of France, serving from 1958-69.
- **1914** - Ypres burns under German bombardment.
- **1917** - German L59 Zeppelin starts flight from Bulgaria to Khartoum carrying much needed supplies to General von Lettow in East Africa.
- **1943** - The Cairo Conference occurred as President Franklin D. Roosevelt, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, and Chinese Nationalist leader Chiang Kai-shek, met to discuss the war in the Pacific against Japan.
- **1963** - US President John F. Kennedy is assassinated.
- **1988** - South African government announces it has joined Cuba and Angola in endorsing a plan to remove Cuban troops from Angola.

23 November

- **1900** - Second Anglo Boer War. Major-General Smith-Dorrien, leaving only the church standing, razes the town of Dullstroom to the ground.

• **1939** - The German battleships 'Scharnhorst' & 'Gneisenau' sink the greatly outclassed armed merchant cruiser HMS 'Rawalpindi' in the North Atlantic off the Faroes.

- **1942** - Japanese bomb Port Darwin, Australia.
- **1946** - Bombardment of Haiphong: The French fleet shells the port, held by the Viet Minh, inflicting heavy casualties and initiating the "First Indochina War".
- **1966** - Gen. R.C. Hiemstra opens the Castle of Good Hope military museum in Cape Town, reflecting various aspects of military history since 1652.
- **1977** - Rhodesian forces attack nationalist guerrilla bases at Tembue and Chimoio in Mozambique, killing allegedly over a thousand people.
- **1983** - The Beirut Barracks Bombing: 241 US & 58 French military peacekeepers, and six civilians are killed when two members of Islamic Jihad detonate a truck bomb.
- **1985** - Fifty-eight die as Egyptian commandos storm a hijacked Egyptian jet in Malta.

24 November

- **1874** - Joseph Glidden patented his invention of barbed wire.
- **1887** - German Field Marshal Erich von Manstein was born in Berlin.

- **1941** - The great tank battle of Sidi Rezegh in North Africa rages unabated in World War 2. The South Africans, outnumbered by their German opponents, are stranded in the open desert but manage to destroy fifty of the German tanks. At about 16:30 all the SA guns are out of action after running short of ammunition and the South Africans are forced to surrender.
 - **1944** - First B-29 raid from Saipan; 111 bombers hit Tokyo.
 - **1956** - Soviet troops invade Hungary as Imre Nagy becomes prime minister.
 - **1964** - Belgian paratroopers, the Congolese army and mercenaries recapture Stanleyville in the Congo from rebels.
 - **1969** - The U.S. Army announced that Lt. William L. Calley had been charged with premeditated murder in the massacre of civilians in the Vietnamese village of My Lai in March of 1968. Calley was ordered to stand trial by court martial and was later convicted and sentenced to life in prison. However, his sentence was later commuted to three years of house arrest by President Richard Nixon.
 - **1992** - The U.S. military departed the Philippines after nearly a century of military presence. In 1991, the Philippine Senate had voted to reject a renewal of the lease for the American military base.
- 25 November**
- **1854** - During the Battle of Balaclava, the famous "Charge of the Light Brigade" takes place. Nearly 600 British light cavalry undertook a frontal attack down a narrow, mile long valley, an action that had no impact whatsoever on the outcome of the battle, while leaving literally hundreds of the troopers dead or wounded.
 - **1915** - Chilean military leader Augusto Pinochet was born in Valparaiso, Chile.
 - **1936** - Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan signed the Anti-Comintern Pact, an agreement to collaborate in opposing the spread of Communism.
 - **1940** - Maiden flights of the de Havilland Mosquito & the Martin B-26 Marauder, one on each side of the pond.
 - **1961** - USS 'Enterprise' (CVN 65), the first nuclear-powered carrier, is commissioned, to commence 51 years of service; decommissioned 2012.
 - **1981** - Forty-five mercenaries from South Africa under Colonel Mike Hoare land in Seychelles, attack the airport and cause heavy damage. Those who are not captured and detained by Seychelles security forces flee by hijacking an Air India plane, which they divert to South Africa. The TRC in 1998 rules the SA government responsible for the attack.
 - **1983** - Syria & Saudi Arabia

announce cease-fire in PLO civil war in Lebanon.

26 November

- **1832** - Doctor Mary Edwards Walker, the only woman to win the Medal of Honor, is born.
- **1943** - British troop transport 'Rohna' is sunk in the Mediterranean by a Luftwaffe Henschel Hs 293 guided glide bomb. 1,138 men are killed, including 1,015 American troops.
- **1940** - During the Holocaust, Nazis began walling off the Jewish Ghetto in Warsaw, sealing in 400,000 inhabitants while denying them adequate food, sanitation and housing.
- **1944** - Himmler orders destruction of Auschwitz & Birkenau crematoria.
- **1970** - Benjamin O. Davis, Sr., the first black American general, dies at 93.

27 November

- **1941** - HMAS 'Parramatta' is sunk off Tobruk by 'U-559'.
- **1941** - Operation Crusader: British troops break the seven month Axis siege of Tobruk.
- **1941** - Joint Army-Navy signal to senior commanders in the Pacific ends with, "This dispatch is to be considered a war warning," and CNO adds to CINCUS Kimmel "an aggressive move by Japan is expected within the next few days".



Winston Churchill

- **1942** - The French Navy scuttles its ships at Toulon to prevent Nazis from capturing them.
 - **1951** - First successful surface-to-air missile test is carried out at White Sands.
 - **1942** - The French Navy scuttles its ships at Toulon to prevent Nazis from capturing them.
 - **1951** - First successful surface-to-air missile test is carried out at White Sands.
- 28 November**
- **1887** - Nazi leader Ernst Rohm is born.
 - **1899** - Second Anglo Boer War. The Battle of Modder River or Tweerivieren takes place, in which both Gen. Methuen and Gen. De la Rey are wounded. Gen. De la Rey's son, Adriaan, is fatally wounded.
 - **1916** - First German air raid on London.
 - **1939** - USSR revokes the Soviet-Finnish non-aggression pact.
 - **1943** - The Teheran Conference began, attended by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and

Soviet Premier Josef Stalin. Among the major topics discussed, a second front in Western Europe, resulting in D-Day, the seaborne invasion of Normandy in northern France on June 6, 1944.

- **1951** - Military coup under Col Adib el-Shishakli in Syria.
- **1997** - Fighting breaks out among President Laurent Kabila's soldiers in Kinshasa, Congo, when he orders the arrest of one of his aides. Eighteen people are killed.

29 November

- **1900** - Second Anglo Boer War. Lord Kitchener succeeds Lord Roberts as commander-in-chief of the British forces in SA and Lord Roberts succeeds Wolseley as commander-in chief of the British army.
- **1917** - The Women's Royal Naval Service (WRENS) is established.

- **1932** - France and the USSR sign a non-aggression pact.
- **1951** - The first underground atomic explosion, Frenchman's Flat, Nevada.
- **1991** - Red Cross says clan battles in Somalia's capital of Mogadishu have killed more than 1,000 people.
- **1996** - U.N. war crimes tribunal sentences Bosnian Serb Drazen Erdemovic to 10 years for the massacre of 1,200 Muslims.

30 November

- **1874** - Sir Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill, war correspondent during Second Anglo Boer War and later premier of Britain, is born in Oxfordshire, England.
- **1885** - Albrecht Kesselring, German field marshal, was born.
- **1934** - Dedication of the Anzac Memorial at Gallipoli, presided over by Kemal Ataturk.
- **1939** - Finland was invaded by more than 20 Russian divisions in the Winter War.
- **1943** - Teheran Conference: FDR, Churchill, & Stalin agree that Operation Overlord will take place in May of 1944.
- **1945** - British Adm Louis Mountbatten accepts the surrender of Japanese Field Marshal Hisaichi Terauchi, who hands over his sword, Saigon.
- **1988** - South African, Angolan and Cuban representatives meet in Brazzaville for peace talks.

World War I Quiz Answers

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| 1. The Red Baron. | 13.Mata Hari. | 28.In a fleet of taxicabs. |
| 2. Anthony Beauchamp-Proctor. | 14.Alvin York. | 29.General Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck. |
| 3. Little Willie. | 15.The Battle of Somme. | 30.Georges Clemenceau. |
| 4. T.E. Lawrence, better known as Lawrence of Arabia. | 16. In a railway carriage at Compiègne. | 31.Caporetto. |
| 5. The Lusitania. | 17. Admiral John Jellicoe. | 32.General Erich von Falkenhayn. |
| 6. It was A 111 118. Armistice Day 11 November 1918. | 18.Marshal Petain. | 33.The Gallipoli peninsula. |
| 7. René Fonck with 75 kills. | 19.Scapa Flow. | 34.Mons. |
| 8. Bertha Krupp, wife of the designer Gustav Krupp. | 20.Ypres, 1915. | 35.Jutland. |
| 9. Landships. | 21.28 June 1914. | 36.Gefreiter (corporal). |
| 10.The Great War, the War of the Nations, and the War to End All Wars. | 22.6 April 1917. | 37.Yes. He was awarded the Iron Cross 2nd class in 1914, and the Iron Cross 1st class in 1918. |
| 11.Gavrilo Princip. | 23.Paul von Hindenburg. | 38.34 times. |
| 12.France. | 24.Alexander Samsonov. | |
| | 25.Australia and New Zealand Army Corps. | |
| | 26.John J Pershing. | |
| | 27.The Emden. The Mill on the Meuse. | |



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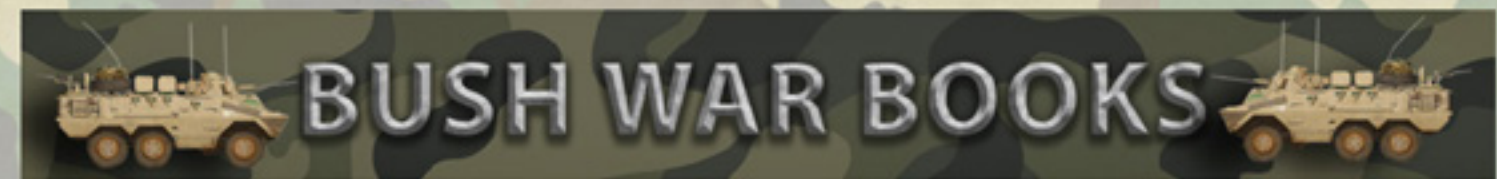
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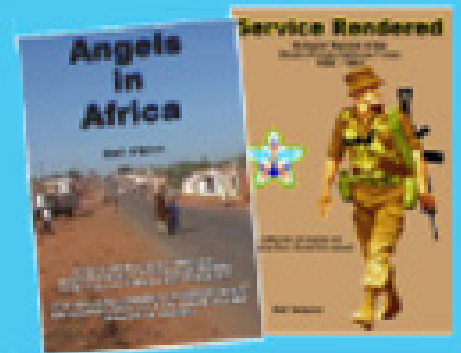
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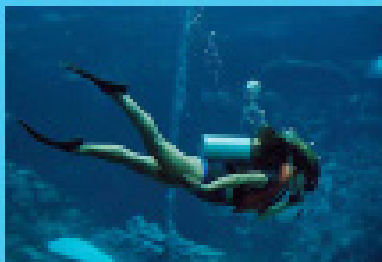
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