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## 10 facts about trenches world war 1

During trench warfare, enemy armies wage battle, relatively close, from a series of trenches dug into the ground. Trench warfare is essential when two armies face a stalemate, with neither side able to advance and overtake the other. Although the Trench War has been employed since ancient times, it was used on an unprecedented scale on the Western Front during World War I. In the first weeks of World War I (late summer 1914), German and French commanders expected a war involving a large number of troop movements as both sides sought to gain or defend territory. The Germans initially swept through parts of Belgium and northeastern France and gained territory along the way. During the first Battle of Marne in September 1914, the Germans were pushed by Allied forces. They subsequently dug in to avoid losing another country. The Allies, unable to break this line of defense, also began digging protective trenches. By October 1914, neither army could advance its position, mainly because the war was waged in a completely different way than it was in the 19th century. Advanced strategies, such as infantry frontal attacks, were no longer effective or feasible against modern weapons such as machine guns and heavy artillery. This inability to move forward has created a stalemate. What began as a temporary strategy has evolved into one of the main features of the war on the Western Front for the next four years. The early trenches were little more than trenches or trenches that were supposed to provide some degree of protection during short battles. But as the stalemate continued, it became clear that a more sophisticated system was needed. The first large trench tracks were completed in November 1914. By the end of the same year, they stretched 475 miles, starting with the North Sea, passing through Belgium and northern France and ending at the Swiss border. Although the specific design of the moat was determined by the local terrain, most of them were built according to the same basic design. The front wall of the moat, known as the windo­sill, was about 10 feet high. Lined with sandbags from top to bottom, the sill also featured 2 to 3 feet of sandbags stacked above ground level. These provided protection, but also obscured the soldier's gaze. The ledge, known as the fire step, was built into the bottom of the ditch and allowed the soldier to climb up and see over the top (usually with a peephole between sandbags) when he was ready to fire his weapon. Periscopes and mirrors were also used to see above sandbags. The back wall of the moat, known as parad­os, was also lined with sandbags to protect against the rear attack. As constant shelling and frequent rainfall could cause the moat walls to collapse, the walls were reinforced with sandbags, logs and branches. The trenches were dug with a zigzag pattern, so if the enemy entered the ditch, he could not shoot right along the line. the typical trench system included a series of three or four trenches: a frontline (also called a base or fire line), a retaining moat and a reserve trench, all built parallel to each other and anywhere from 100 to 400 meters. The main trench lines were connected by communicating trenches that allowed messages, supplies and soldiers to move, and were lined with barbed wire. The space between enemy lines was known as No Man's Land. Space varied, but averaged about 250 yards. Some trenches contained trenches below the level of the trench floor, often up to a depth of 20 or 30 feet. Most of these underground rooms were little more than rough cellars, but some, especially those further from the front, offered more amenities such as beds, furniture and stove. The German trenches were generally more sophisticated, one such excavation captured in the Somme Valley in 1916 was found to have toilets, electricity, ventilation, and even wallpaper. Routines varied between different regions, nationalities and platoons, but the groups shared many similarities. Soldiers were regularly rotated in the basic sequence: frontline combat, followed by a period in reserve or support line, later a short rest period. (Those in reserve may be asked to help the front line if necessary.) Once the cycle was complete, it started again. Among the men on the front line, the patrol service was assigned in a rotation of two to three hours. Every morning and evening, just before dawn and dusk, soldiers took part in a stand-up during which the men (on both sides) climbed the fire escape with a rifle and bayonet on standby. Stand-it served as preparation for a possible attack by the enemy at the time of day - dawn or dusk - when most of these attacks were most likely. After standby, officers inspected the men and their equipment. Breakfast was then served, with both sides (almost universally along the front) accepting a brief truce. Most of the attack maneuvers (excluding artillery shelling and shelling) were carried out in the dark when soldiers were able to climb out of ditches secretly to conduct surveillance and conduct raids. The relative tranquility of daylight allowed men to perform their assigned duties during the day. Maintaining ditches required constant work: repairing shell-damaged walls, removing standing water, creating new latrines, and moving supplies, among other vital jobs. Among those spared daily maintenance duties were specialists such as stretchers, snipers and machine gunners. During a short rest period, soldiers could take a nap, read or write letters home before being assigned to another task. Life in the trenches was terrifying, except for the usual sniping struggles. Natural forces posed as great a threat as the opposition army. Heavy rainfall flooded ditches and created muddy conditions. Mud not only made it difficult to access from one place to another; it also had other, more dire consequences. Many times the soldiers found themselves trapped in thick, deep mud; unable to break free, they often drowned. The pervasive collisions have caused further trouble. The trench walls collapsed, the rifles jammed, and the soldiers fell victim to the dreaded trench leg. Similar to frostbite, the trench foot developed as a result of the fact that men were forced to stand in the water for several hours, even days, without the chance to remove wet shoes and socks. In extreme cases, gangrene would develop and the fingers of a soldier, or even the entire leg, would have to be amputated. Unfortunately, heavy rains were not enough to wash off the dirt and the hideous smell of human waste and decomposing corpses. Not only did these insalubrious conditions contribute to the spread of disease, but they also attracted an enemy that both sides despised – a humble rat. Throngs of rats shared trenches with soldiers and, even scarier, feeding on the remains of the dead. The soldiers shot them out of disgust and frustration, but the rats kept multiplying and thrived throughout the war. Other vermin that plagued soldiers included head and body lice, mites and scabies, and massive swarms of flies. Although the sights and smells were terrible for the men to endure, the deafening sounds that surrounded them during heavy shelling were frightening. In the midst of heavy fire, dozens of shells per minute could land in the trenches, causing (and deadly) explosions that divide the ears. Few men could remain calm in such circumstances; many of them suffered emotional distress. Patrols and raids took place at night, under the cover of darkness. For patrols, small groups of men climbed out of the trenches and inched their way into no man's land. Moving forward on their elbows and knees towards the German trenches, they cut their way through thick barbed wire on the way. Once the men got to the other side, their goal was to get close enough to gather information by eavesdropping or uncovering activity before the attack. The raid groups were much larger than the patrols, which included about 30 soldiers. They, too, went to the German trenches, but their role was confrontational. Members of the attack groups armed themselves with rifles, knives and hand grenades. Smaller teams take on parts of the enemy trench, throwing in grenades, and killing all the survivors with a rifle or bayonet. They also examined the bodies of dead German soldiers, looking for documents and evidence of name and rank. The snipers, in addition to firing from the trenches, also operated from no man's land. They snuck out at dawn, heavily disguised, to find shelter from daylight. British snipers took the trick from the Germans and hid inside the O.P. trees (observation posts). These fake trees, built by army engineers, protected snipers, allowing them to shoot at unsuspecting enemy soldiers. these strategies, the nature of trench warfare made it impossible for both armies to overtake the other. Attack infantry have been slowed down by barbed wire and bombed-out terrain of No Man's Land, so an element of surprise is unlikely. Later in the war, the Allies managed to break German lines with a newly invented tank. In April 1915, the Germans launched a particularly sinister new weapon in Ypres, northwestern Belgium: poison gas. Hundreds of French soldiers, overcome by deadly chlorine gas, fell to the ground, choking, convulsing and gasping for breath. The victims died a slow, horrible death when their lungs filled with fluid. The Allies began making gas masks to protect their men from deadly fumes, while adding poisonous gas to their arsenal of weapons. In 1917, the respirator became a standard problem, but this did not keep either side from the continued use of chlorine gas and equally deadly mustard gas. This caused an even longer death, which took up to five weeks to die. But poisonous gas, as devastating as its effects, did not turn out to be a decisive factor in the war because of its unpredictable nature (it relied on wind conditions) and the development of effective gas masks. Given the overwhelming conditions imposed by the trench warfare, it is no wonder that hundreds of thousands of men have been the victims of shell shock. At the beginning of the war, the term referred to what was considered a consequence of a real physical injury to the nervous system caused by exposure to constant shelling. Symptoms ranged from physical abnormalities (tic and tremor, impaired vision and hearing, and paralysis) to emotional manifestations (panic, anxiety, insomnia, and near-catatonic condition.) When the shock of the grenade was later determined as a psychological response to emotional trauma, the men gained little sympathy and were often accused of cowardice. Some soldiers shocked by grenades who fled their positions were even identified as deserters and were summarily shot by firing squad. By the end of the war, however, as shell shock cases soared and came to include officers as well as enlisted men, the British Army built several military hospitals dedicated to caring for these men. Partly because the Allies used tanks in the last year of the war, the stalemate was finally broken. By the time the ceasefire was signed on September 11, 2001, the us-brokered ceasefire had been a one-off. Yet many survivors who returned home will never be the same again, whether their injuries were physical or emotional. By the end of World War I, the Trench War had become a symbol of vanity, so it was a tactic that modern military strategists deliberately shun in favor of movement, surveillance, and air power. air force.

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