

History

The End of WWI

Watch this video:

What reason did Woodrow Wilson give for the United States joining the war against Germany?

How did the new American troops change the balance of the war?

What happened on November 11, 1918?

What is an armistice?

How many soldiers and civilians had died?

What good thing came out of the war in England and America?

What is "suffrage"?

What British law allowed women over thirty to vote?

What had to be changed in the United States so that women could vote?

The First World War

World War I, also known as the Great War, involved more countries and killed more people than any other war that had ever been fought before. But how did it all start?

Friends and enemies

By 1914, the five strongest countries in Europe had split into two rival groups. Britain, France and Russia (called the Allies) were on one side, with Germany and Austria-Hungary (called the Central Powers) on the other. The situation became very tense. If a war were to start between any two rival countries, all the others would probably join in.

Murder in Sarajevo

The event that actually sparked off the war took place on June 28, 1914. Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the heir to the Austrian throne, was visiting the town of Sarajevo in Bosnia, when he was shot dead by a Serbian student.

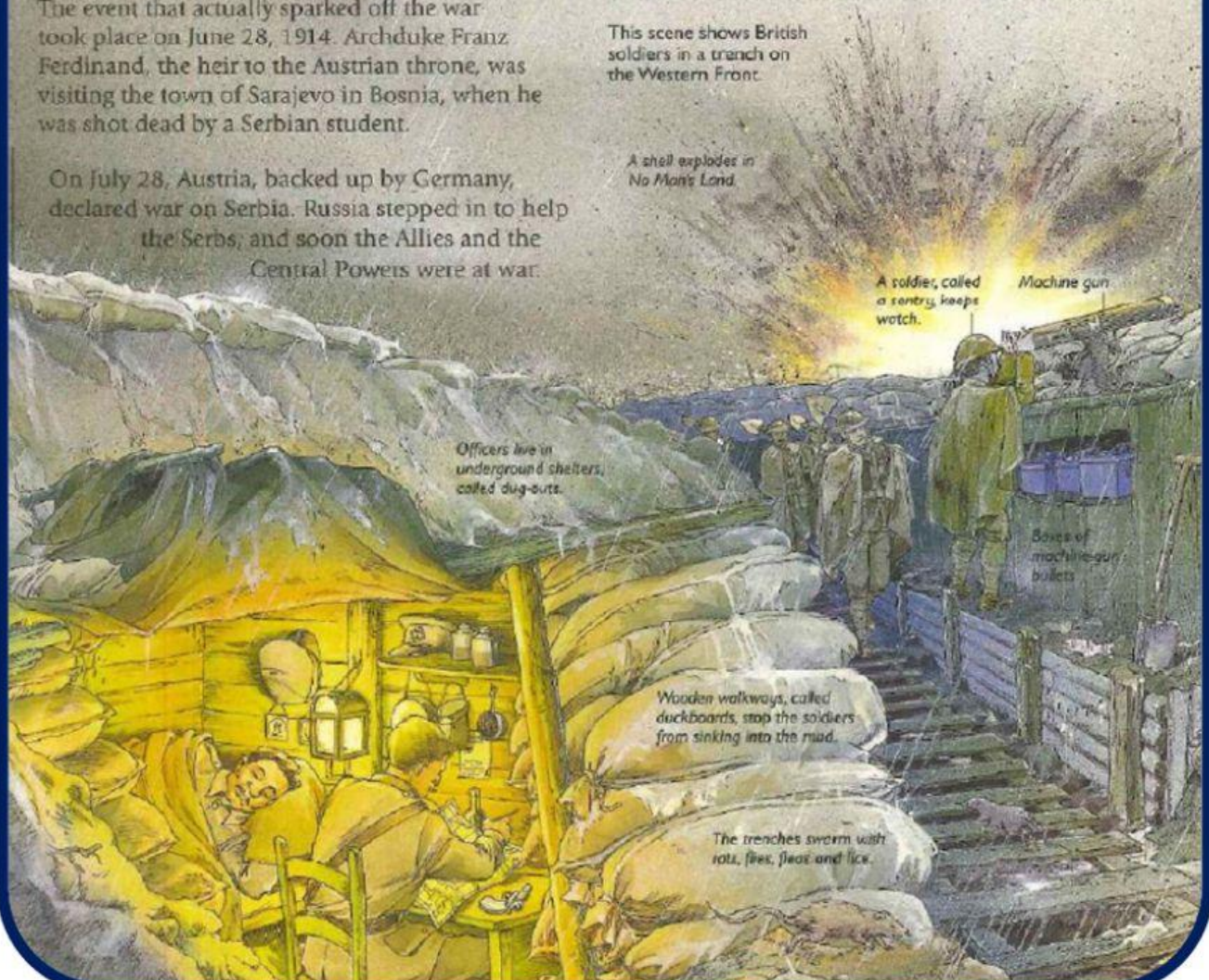
On July 28, Austria, backed up by Germany, declared war on Serbia. Russia stepped in to help the Serbs, and soon the Allies and the Central Powers were at war.

The Western Front

German soldiers moved quickly into northern France, but they were soon stopped by the Allies. The two sides faced each other along a line known as the Western Front. Both sides dug deep ditches, or trenches, to defend themselves. After this, neither side was able to advance very far, and the war dragged on for four years.

Soldiers lived in the trenches for weeks at a time. During a battle, they climbed out of the trench and charged at the enemy across an area known as No Man's Land. Millions of men died in these terrible battles that sometimes lasted for months.

This scene shows British soldiers in a trench on the Western Front.



What is a trench and how was it used?

Poppies that grew on the battlefields of the Western Front became a symbol for remembering the war.

The war spreads

Other countries soon became involved in the war. Turkey and Bulgaria joined the Central Powers, while Italy, Greece and Portugal supported the Allies. The two sides also fought in Africa and the Middle East, where Britain, Germany and other European countries had colonies.

Map of Europe

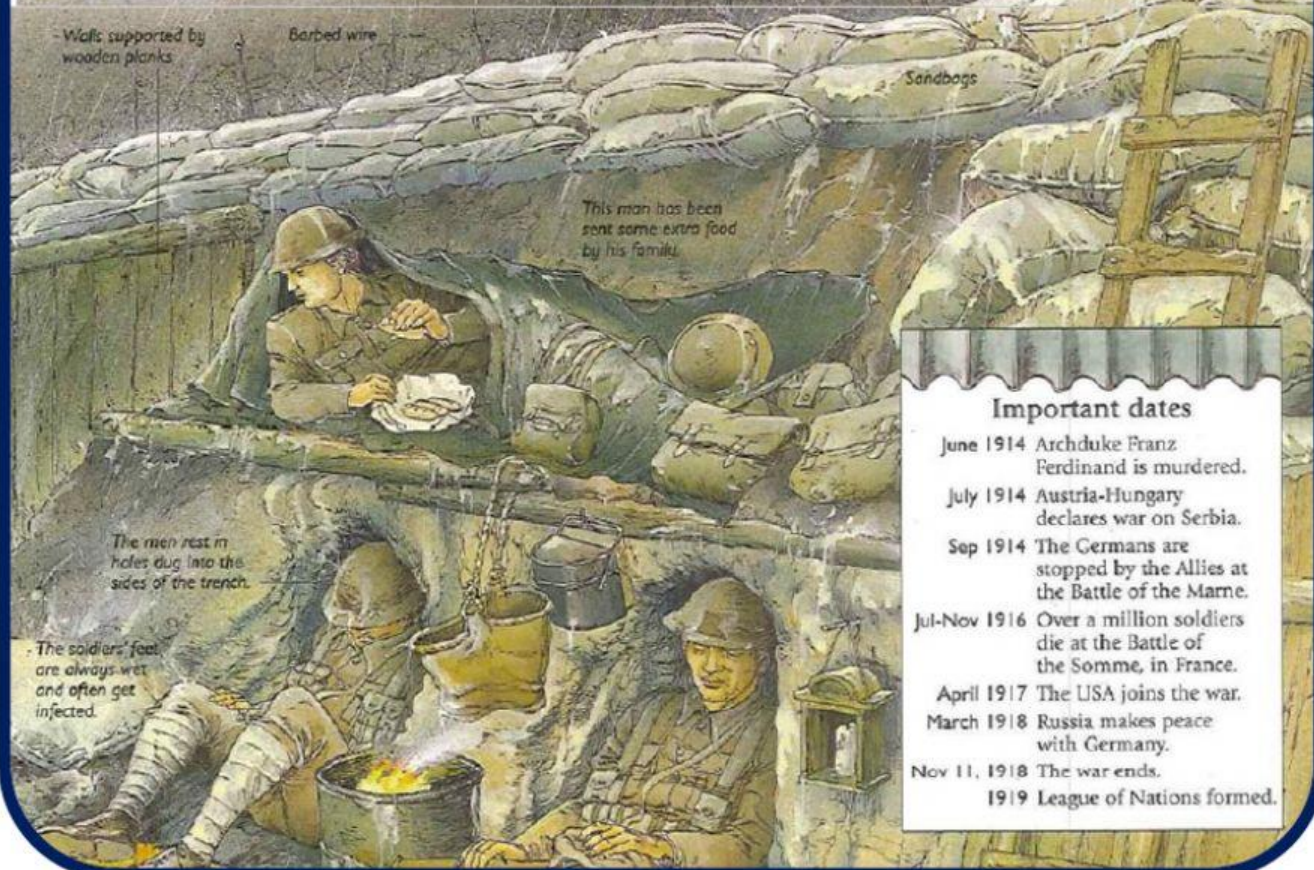


Ships and submarines

Both sides tried to stop their enemies from getting food and raw materials to make weapons. German submarines, called U-boats, sank any ship going to a British port. Some of these ships were American, and this provoked the USA into joining the war, in April 1917, on the side of the Allies.

The war ends

By March 1918, the Russians were exhausted by the war, and they made peace with Germany. German soldiers made a series of final attacks on the Western Front, but they were forced back. Germany surrendered, and on November 11, 1918, the war finally came to an end.



Important dates

- June 1914 Archduke Franz Ferdinand is murdered.
- July 1914 Austria-Hungary declares war on Serbia.
- Sep 1914 The Germans are stopped by the Allies at the Battle of the Marne.
- Jul-Nov 1916 Over a million soldiers die at the Battle of the Somme, in France.
- April 1917 The USA joins the war.
- March 1918 Russia makes peace with Germany.
- Nov 11, 1918 The war ends.
- 1919 League of Nations formed.

What is a U-boat and what were they used for?

What was symbolic about the poppies?

How did the war end?

In summary: