
Trenches in war

War has been going on for over hundreds of years or so. Countries from all around the world fight what they believe is right. From, our first battle, The Battle of Bull Run to our current day war with Afghanistan and Iraq. They start because of religion, politics, sex, trade, etc. America, being the the “great country” as it’s known to be has had many major & minor battles along the way. So have many other countries around the world. The most common wars have been World War 1 (WWI) & World War 2 (WWII). These wars have shown many improvements and how much we, the world, have evolved. From strategies to technological advancement, we all have come from a long way when it comes to wars. Many countries have many ideas as to how they fight in wars or battles. One of them being trench warfare, a strategy used during WWI when both opposing sides build trenches that shelter each side while fighting. Ever since this has been used, trenches have become home to millions of soldiers and has helped soldiers to being a essential part for being used for shelter and protection from the opposing side.

The American Civil War and World War I were the ones that successfully dug trenches to protect themselves from machine gun firing and artillery. Trenches helped the Germans when they were getting pushed back by the British & France. They dug into the ground to avoid being shot at. Trenches have made a huge impact not just for fighting, trenches were also homes to millions of soldiers as I said before. However, it wasn’t always the best when it came to harsh weather conditions such as snow and freezing cold temperatures. Many good soldiers have lost their lives due to horrible living conditions and disease. Disease was running rampant all year round. Soldier’s feet were severely mutated and due to the muddy and soggy persistent conditions which in most cases the foot would have to be amputated. This is called, Trench Foot, common in almost every soldier. Coming back to disease, trenches didn’t have any sanitation, whether it’s hygiene, food, or even clean drinking water. Soldiers were also dying due to lack of food and water. The trenches had pests living among them including rats, lice, and frogs.

Rats in particular ate the soldier’s food and ate actual soldiers feet while they slept. Another reason why soldiers were either sick or dead. Lice is another problem. Lice gives what is known as Trench Fever, which is another disease as well as Trench Foot. It gives the victims a terrible itching sensation, a fever, headaches, sore muscles, bones and joints. These were some of the reasons why living in these trenches were not good at all however, looking back, it was a tactical point that both sides have made that made a major move in winning the war. Coming back to the trenches itself and how it can be a danger to ever leave is because it would cost the soldiers own life. Going into “no man's land” is literally risking your life for stepping out. For example, take the game Whack A Mole, as the animal’s head pokes out of the hole, you whack it, it’s the same on the battlefield, if a soldier pokes his head out then he’ll get shot at just like the game. “Often those who went ‘over the top’ and into no-man’s land could not be brought back to safety if they were injured” (McCrackin, ‘Trench Warfare During World War I’). This quote means that the trenches are useful because you don’t have the fear of getting killed for switching positions unlike when we’re on the actual field and having the risk of getting shot at while in combat. As the years go by, military generals strategize and place soldiers into different positions> There are three positions, front-line, support line, and the reserve line.

These stations soon became a vital tactic that will be helpful while scoping out enemies from far way when being somewhat safe in trenches. "To some extent this is accurate, at least until about 1916, although the trench-systems were far more sophisticated constructions with not only communication-trenches but often entire additional defense-lines towards the rear, to act as a stop should the front-line system be overrun" (Haythornthwaite, 76) Soldiers would usually spend at least 4-5 days before switching with new people. Same thing goes for sleep schedules. No one person can sleep the full hours of sleep. Each person gets up to two hours to switch turns to watch out. Soldiers were traumatized and in shock emotionally during the war. Their nerves are all out of order due to the shock and the stress that they faced every single day out in combat. Today, it is known as PTSD, a disorder that still takes hold of soldiers today.

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