

THE FIRST WORLD WAR

Personal Experiences | Propaganda and Recruitment | Visual Perspectives and Narratives | Global Conflicts



Introduction

The *First World War* portal provides essential access to the experiences of many nations – their civilians, government and military – during the Great War. Covering an array of international perspectives, the resource showcases intimate personal narratives, wartime propaganda and recruitment material, and the role of women in war through various documentary and visual forms.

Personal Experiences

Personal Experiences presents hundreds of captivating personal collections drawn from archives around the world, allowing users to view the Great War through the eyes of the generation of 1914. Themes include:

- Daily life and routines in the army and auxiliary services
- Trench warfare and conditions in the trenches
- Food and supplies
- Battles and warfare
- Training and discipline
- Weapons and equipment
- Camaraderie and friendship
- Health, medicine and death
- Thoughts on the enemy

Primary source content is supplemented with innovative and thought-provoking features, such as a 360° object viewer for digitised artefacts, panoramas and a virtual walk-through of the Sanctuary Wood Trench System in Ypres Salient. Also featured is a collection of oral histories with accompanying transcriptions.



Collection Highlights

- Vera Brittain's wartime diaries and letters
- Personal narratives and trench journals
- Papers of the British, French, Australian and New Zealand troops serving on various fronts
- Letters of Maori soldiers, diaries and letters of soldiers and women working in the auxiliary services
- An extensive collection of German trench newspapers



Propaganda and Recruitment

A wealth of primary sources extensively explore propaganda and recruitment themes through posters, postcards, cartoons, diaries, photographs, aerial leaflets, government and military files, and ephemera. Themes include:

- Recruitment and training
- Morale at home and on the front line
- Development of different forms of propaganda
- Efforts to control public opinion through censorship
- Potential impact of mutinies and revolution
- Dissension



This module features a wealth of foreign language material, providing a crucial international dimension and promoting in-depth, comparative research. A keyword tool enables users to conduct searches across the site in several European languages, generating a wide variety of perspectives on an international scale.

Collection Highlights

- Propaganda literature from various international perspectives, including North and South America, the Far East, North Africa and the Middle East, Australasia, Scandinavia, and Europe
- Instructions on the dissemination of propaganda and volumes detailing the effects of British and German propaganda in the US
- Government and military files, featuring material from the War Press Office in Berlin
- Visual propaganda items, such as posters, postcards and cartoons
- Recruitment booklets and training manuals



Visual Perspectives and Narratives

Sources from Imperial War Museums

Visual Perspectives and Narratives features unique material from the unparalleled holdings of Imperial War Museums. Official and personal photographs, manuscripts, artwork, film and rare printed material present international perspectives on the conflict, the Home Front and the role of women during the war. Other themes include:

- Workers and strikes
- Industry and economy
- Hospitals and casualties
- Societies, organisations and volunteers
- Food and rationing
- Religion and spiritualism
- Education
- Entertainment
- Children
- Demobilisation
- Celebration



Visual and documentary sources combine to provide a firm foundation for study and research, offering students and scholars an unsurpassed resource on the history of the First World War.



Collection Highlights

- Official and personal photograph collections depicting international forces, refugees, women's roles and life on the Home Front
- Diaries and letters covering topics such as training, auxiliary services, nursing, hospital ships and religion
- Art pieces and a selection of artists' commissioning documents, featuring Pictorial Propaganda Committee papers
- Film clips showcasing key events and themes, including the aftermath of Franz Ferdinand's assassination, medical services, propaganda and women's work
- Object photographs of weapons, equipment, vehicles, ephemera and uniforms



A Global Conflict

The truly global reach of the war, far beyond the Western Front, can be explored through primary sources relating to the numerous, but often neglected, empire and colonial troops, as well as the campaigns in Russia, Africa and the Middle East.

Collection Highlights

- British government documentation offers insights into the involvement of Britain's colonies during the war
- Memoirs, diaries and official papers relating to Russia's war and the Revolution
- Personal collections of correspondence, diaries and ephemera detailing the experiences of Canadian soldiers
- Explore relief work and medical aid provided by charitable organisations in the *American National Red Cross* and *British Red Cross records*
- Visual material from Imperial War Museums includes artwork depicting a variety of campaigns, medical work, colonial troops and prisoners of war



Social and political upheavals experienced worldwide during the conflict allow many themes of imperialism, national identity and rebellion to be studied, as well as:

- Campaigns away from the Western front
- The contribution of Chinese labourers and empire and colonial forces
- Perspectives of German, Austro-Hungarian and Italian troops
- Blockades and the war at sea
- Rebellion and revolution in Ireland and Russia
- Post-war demobilisation, relief work and regeneration



Overview

Rich in primary source content from world-class libraries and archives, The First World War portal is a significant resource for the study of this turbulent period. From personal narratives and rare printed material, to military files, ephemera and artwork, the collection showcases numerous dimensions of the conflict, spanning multiple theatres of war.

Key Features

All primary source content is supplemented by comprehensive secondary sources, providing a powerful teaching tool and research guide.

- Eye-catching and innovative interactive maps
- Digitised artefacts viewable in a 360° format
- Virtual walk-through and 360° panoramas of the Sanctuary Wood Trench System in Ypres Salient
- Keyword tool to conduct European language searches across the collection
- Oral histories with accompanying transcriptions
- Extensive visual galleries
- Detailed Great War Glossary
- Illustrated chronology
- Contextual essays from academics and collection specialists



Participating Libraries and Archives

Key libraries and archives include:

- Alexander Turnbull Library, National Library of New Zealand
- Bibliothek für Zeitgeschichte in the Württembergische Landesbibliothek, Stuttgart
- Cambridge University Library
- Glenbow Museum
- Hoover Institution Library and Archives
- Imperial War Museums
- Landesarchiv of Baden-Württemberg (Hauptstaatsarchiv)
- Mills Memorial Library, McMaster University, Canada
- National World War I Museum at Liberty Memorial, Kansas City
- The National Archives (UK)

WEBSITE: www.amdigital.co.uk
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Primary sources for teaching and research

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