

## The British Sector of the Western Front, 1914-1918 (Part I: the War)

Key Dates		
20 June 1914	Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand	<b>Trigger</b> for the war
4 August 1914	Britain declares war on Germany	
Oct-Nov 1914	First battle of Ypres	British casualties were over 50,000 but kept control of Channel ports.
Apr-May 1915	Second battle of Ypres	Germans move 2 miles closer to town of Ypres; first use of <b>chlorine gas</b> ; British losses of 59,000.
July 1916	Battle of the Somme	The Allies advance 5 miles using <b>artillery bombardment</b> to break through enemy lines. This leads to much higher casualties ( <b>400,000 men</b> ).
6 April 1917	America enters the war	Blow to German morale and a decisive turning point in the war.
Apr-May 1917	Battle of Arras	British <b>advance 8 miles</b> ; 160,000 casualties.
July 1917	Third battle of Ypres	Moved the edge of the salient back 7 miles; <b>245,000 casualties</b> .
Oct 1917	Battle of Cambrai	First large scale use of <b>tanks</b> .
July 1918	Hundred days offensive	Allies launch a series of sustained attacks against the Germans which leads to <b>Germany's surrender</b> .
11 Nov 1918	Germany surrenders	End of World War I at <b>11.00 am</b> .

Key terminology	
<b>Barbed wire</b>	Metal wire with sharp points <b>used in no-man's-land</b> to protect from enemy attack. It made it difficult for men to get through without being trapped by the wire.
<b>Blighty wound</b>	A <b>wound serious</b> enough to get a soldier away from the fighting and <b>back to Britain</b> .
<b>Brodie helmet</b>	Steel helmet held with a strap. Introduced in 1915, it <b>reduced fatal head wounds</b> by 80%.
<b>Chlorine gas</b>	Causes burning pain in throat and eyes and can lead to <b>death by suffocation</b> . First used by Germans in the second battle of Ypres, 1915.
<b>First Aid Nursing Yeomanry (FANY)</b>	A <b>women's voluntary organisation</b> which provided medical services on the frontlines such as driving ambulances and emergency first aid.
<b>Machine guns</b>	Guns that could fire <b>450 rounds a minute</b> ; their bullets could fracture bones or pierce organs.
<b>Mustard gas</b>	<b>Odourless gas</b> which passes through clothing to <b>burn the skin</b> , causing internal and external blisters. Gas masks offer little protection against mustard gas, as it goes through clothing. First used by the Germans in 1917.
<b>No-man's-land</b>	The area between two opposing lines of trenches.
<b>Phosgene gas</b>	Similar to chlorine <b>gas</b> but <b>faster acting</b> and can kill exposed person within 2 days. First used end of 1915.
<b>Royal Army Medical Corps (RAMC)</b>	The branch of the army responsible for medical care.
<b>Salient</b>	An area of a battlefield that is <b>surrounded</b> by enemy territory on <b>3 sides</b> .
<b>Trench system</b>	A complex <b>network</b> of trenches in which men could live and fight. Trenches were dug to a depth of about 2.5m in a <b>zig-zag pattern</b> to confuse the enemy. Trenches were built over a distance of <b>400 miles</b> all the way from the northern French coast to Switzerland.
<b>Shrapnel</b>	<b>Fragments of metal</b> from exploded shells.