

Black hand essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

It is midnight, there are distant bangs and surprisingly the giant rats are eating away at some other soldiers' boots. I am writing this brief diary because I don't know if I will survive this mess. I haven't done much in life but I want anyone who reads this to know what the soldier, Mr J Woppe was doing in, hopefully not the last days of his life..

. June 1914, Archduke Franz Ferdinand the heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary and his daughter were shot by a terrorist linked to a group called the Black Hand. I read that they wanted to be separated Austro-Hungarian Empire and basically be free. This set off what is known as World War 1. How all the countries came into the war is hard to explain but I should be able to let you understand in these 5 steps: 1.

The murder at Sarajevo – 28th June 1914. Austro-Hungarian gunboat shelled Belgrade (Serbia and Montenegro's capital and largest city.) – 28th July 1914. Germany declares war on Russia – 1st August 1914. Germany declares war on France – 3rd August 1914.

Britain declares war on Germany – 4th August 1914. So as you can see something that seems remotely small has exploded into something Mr J Woppe is involved in, and I third class and live miles and miles away. August 1914, I signed up for the army. Men signed up to the army as a social event to meet new people and to experience something new. That's what my friends and I thought as well, ' you are going to enjoy beer and have a swell time' I recall the recruiter saying.

We were under age, approximately 15 and were coming from a factory. I was given a uniform loaded down with self-catering equipment; this picture taken

of me should show you that this wasn't the ordinary jogging bottoms and top. A friend of mine found out that this equipment was 1/3 of my weight; I was paid 5p a day to carry this. When we had marched for what seemed ages we eventually reached our destination – France, and even after all the rough nights and strenuous days we had to dig trenches.

The trenches stretched for 400 miles from the Channel coast to Switzerland. We dug trenches to protect troops from deadly artillery and machine-gun fire. Firing trenches were backed by cover trenches, which provided a second line of defense in case enemies overran the firing trench. Each was about 1.

8 to 2.5 m (6 to 8 ft) deep. There were also 'luxury' trenches', (sadly I wasn't in one) these contained lavatories, had kitchens and were overall more comfortable. Read analysis of the movie "The Day After Tomorrow"

This table should show you the main features of an average trench:

Name of feature	What it was used for
Barbed Wire (at the front)	To keep enemy soldiers away from a close attack
Dugout	To house and protect me from the wild weather and bullets
Sandbags	To rest on for shooting and to stop shrapnel from getting into the dugout
Machine Gun	To kill soldiers in short range
Fire Step	To help me get up to rest on the sandbags

The war for everyone was dragging and most of the time the general would send soldiers 'over the top.' If you were ordered to go over the top you were expected to get out of your trench and cross no mans land to attack enemy trenches.

My friend Jack was ordered to go over the top and he was shot in a blink of an eye, but he was just one out of a thousand that were mown down by a machine gun. Fortunately I haven't been asked and I hope I never will...While

being in the trenches my health has deteriorated. Fighting in northern France where the atmosphere is damp, the rotting bodies give off nauseating smells and the flesh eating rats carry rabies and all sorts of diseases I had my fair share of illnesses.

The main ones were colds and chest complaints, and most troops suffered ‘trench-feet’ a painful swelling of the toes which was the result of never being able to keep their feet dry. I was also one of the soldiers that suffered body lice and had to attend de-lousing stations as soon as I was pulled back out of the line to rest for a few days. You’d probably think that if they were going to cheat and lie to us they would go all the way and not feed us, fortunately they did; but it wasn’t much. As I remember the ‘cooks’ said that this was what we would eat – our daily rations: 1 pound of tinned meat 1 1/4 pounds of bread 1/2 pound of vegetable A few ounces of bacon, sugar, cheese and jam 1/2 ounce of tea and part of a tin of condensed milk.

(One tin of milk was usually shared between 8 men). To make it even worse the food isn’t properly stored. Slugs and giant rats come and nibble, ‘slugify’ and disease your food. I have to wave it before I put in my mouth to stop the flies getting my rations. Rum was also issued just before an attack to brace the men for the terrifying leap up onto the parapet of the trench and the dash into no-mans-land.

Not surprisingly I was not staying in the same place all the time. There were 4 different stops in my routine, these were: Four days in the frontline trenches, Four days in the support trenches, Eight days in reserve trenches, Fourteen days resting. Unfortunately if a battle was taking place everyone

just had to stay put and fight. I heard that a battalion of the Black Watch regiment spent 48 days in the frontline before fresh troops could be sent to relieve them.

After hearing this I asked the general what if my ' friend' wanted to leave, as I was thinking the same thing. He shouted at me that if my ' friend' wanted to leave the army then he should be killed by our country and rot in hell – I didn't ask anymore questions after that. During these 3 years, I my few friends have been injured badly or killed from these things, just to name a few:* Sharp pieces of flying shrapnel* Lice eating into your skin* Rats chewing through your rations* Skin peeling off* Stray shells that kill* The stink from dead bodies* The face is swollen from insect bites and to get away the itch you scratch your face down to the bone.* Cut rations, just to name a few...

Personally however brave we are suppose to be I really just want this war to stop. Even though I have no wife and kids and many of the other soldiers don't, don't we deserve to live? My greatest fear of being a soldier is just being one. The expectancy of killing someone else, the hatred, and I was brought by my parents not to murder. The way that everyone is turning against everyone is just wrong.

Anyway I need to get some sleep, my friends are and it seems that it is going to be a rough night – though nothing compared to what is going to happen tomorrow. General Writing, This trench has been bombed and the soldier has died. He has represented his country and Britain is proud of him. May God bless him in by being a martyr for us.